



1845 1847 1853

LAWRENCE PUBLIC

LIBRARY

ESTABLISHED 1872

LAWRENCE, MASS.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME XIII.

FROM OCTOBER 17, 1874, TO MARCH 27, 1875.

Including No. 307 to No. 330.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED AT NO. 26, WELLINGTON STREET;
AND BY MESSRS. CHAPMAN & HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1875.

CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

Reg. No. 21,494
Shelf 5013
33

CONTENTS.

PAGE	PAGE	PAGE	
A			
CHARMINO Fellow, A Serial Story, by Frances Eleanor Trollope	177	COCOA and Chocolate	231
NARROW Escapè, A Serial Story	210	College Bills, Some old	247
237, 261, 285, 309, 333, 357, 381, 405		Comedie-Française	56
SILENT Witness, A Serial Story by Edmund Yates	1	Comets in China	428
25, 49, 73, 97, 121, 145, 169, 193, 217, 241, 265, 289, 313, 337, 361, 385, 408, 433, 475, 499, 523, 547, 567		Constantinople, Old Travellers' Accounts of	174, 204, 510
ADULTERATION in old times	255	Conway and Treffriw, A Voyage	515
Alfred the Great, burial place of	404	Cooking, A Supplementary Lesson	368
ALROY (a pretended Messiah)	613	Corn and Rice as Food	415
AMAZONS	223	Coroners	346
AMERICA, French Market at New Orleans	257	Cosmas, Upon Astronomy	108
AMERICAN Peat-bogs	201	Crimes, Marco Polo's Visit	31
ANCIENT Travellers	30	Criticism Extraordinary	558
107, 174, 204, 509		Cromer, A Water Poet's Visit to the Crystal Palace, Fireworks at	451
ANIMAL Food	415	Cure of Rontot	372
ART of Making-up	318	Custom House Duties	163
ASTRONOMY and Geography in the Dark Ages	108	DAMASCUS, An Old Traveller's Account of	512
AT the FRANÇAIS	56	Dame Eva's Dole	439
AUBREY	10	David's Tomb, A Legend of	511
BARTBYMORE, Lord	126	David Garrick	82
BATCH of Old Bills	233	Dead Letters	246
BEARDED Women	113	Denbigh's, Lady, letters	243
BECKET, The Moulder of Beds. A History of	319	Derby Porcelain	448
BERKELEY Castle	274	Diabolical Animals	519
BERKELEYA, Tombs of the Biffins, Miss	439	Dictionary of Slang Words	6
BILLS, Some Curious Old	234	Diet, Various kinds of	414
BISHOPS of Bristol	441	Dinner at Richmond in 1509, The Bill for a	235
BLACK Boys, Fashion of Buying	491	Displays of Fireworks	85
BLACK Man, The	439	Dresden China	445
BLACK Prince, The Tomb of the	332	Dress, Noblemen Protesting against Shams in	252
BOLD Smugglers, The	161	DUCIE'S Sweetments	279
BONIFACE at HOME	312	DURHAM Cathedral	60
BRINWILLERS, The Marquise	223	EARLY EASTERN Travellers: Marco Polo	30
BRISTOL Cathedral	438	Mandeville	107
BROWNSRIGG, Elizabeth	223	Busequeius	174, 204
BUCKMASTER'S Cookery	366	A Wandering Jew	508
BUSBEQUINUS	174, 204	EARTHQUAKES at Granada	93
CAFÉ Riche, The	323	ECLIPSES in China	426
CALIPHATES, The last of the	33	ELECTION Bills	237
"CANT"	6	ELectric Cable	472
CANTABRI, Smart Sayings of the	193	ENGLISH Cathedrals: Durham	60
CANTERBURY Cathedral	348	Salisbury	204
CARACTAUS	401	Canterbury	319
CARDS, Games with	331	Winchester	401
CATHEDRALS	60, 294, 348, 401, 438, 511	GLOUCESTER	439
CATHERINE de' MEDICIS	207	Gloucester	541
CERAMIC Art	421, 443	ENGLISH Punishments by Law	105
CHARLES the Ninth—King of France, Courtly Manners of the Period	207	EPPS'S COCOA Factory	281
CHELSEA China	447	ESSEX, Earl of, His Trial, from an Eye-witness	246
CHINA, Eclipses in	426	EXECUTION in Wales, A Sheriff's Bill of	233
CHINA-WARE — HISTORY, Trade Marks, &c.	421, 443	Execution of a Friar at Canterbury, The Bill of Costs	234
CHINESE Proper Names	187	Execution of Saleedo	206
CHRISTMAS in London a Hundred Years Ago	252	Execution, Old Methods of	103
Years Ago		EXCISE Duties and Smugglers	163
FAC-S-PAINTING for the Stage		EXTRAORDINARY Criticism	553
LAW, CRUEL PUNISHMENTS	103	FAC-S-PAINTING for the Stage	318
LAW, PUNISHMENTS under the Norman Kings	105		
LAWS of ANCIENT Rome	103		
LEARNING to COOK, A Supplementary Lesson	366		
LETTERS, Some Old Historical	248		
LEWISON, Mrs.	116		
LICENSOR of PLAYHOUSES	70		
LIEBIG'S EXTRACT of MEAT	417		

PAGE	PAGE	PAGE	
London. Christmas a Hundred Years Ago	252	Poet, John Taylor	449
Long and the Short of It	223	Poet's Voyage to York, A	449
Lord Barrymore	126	Poison-Berries	507
Lunacy Law. A Story. Fatal Fortune	13, 37	Poor Inventor	445
MACMAHON, Marshal	324	Pope Joan	222
Majolica Ware	325	Poopy: A Story	132, 155
Making-up, The Art of	318	Porcelain	422, 443
Mandeville, Sir John, the Traveller.	107	Pottery	421, 443
Manufacture of China	421, 443	Playhouses, the Licenser of	79
Marco Polo	30	Punishments by Law	103
Margaret of Valois	207	Pyrotechnic Art, The	85
Marigold, A Romance in an Old Garden	397, 428, 452, 468	QUEEN Caroline, Epitaph on Queen Elizabeth and Mrs. Lamburn	250
Marriages, Some Strange	254	Recreations	320
Melusine, The Story of	392	Remarkable Women	113, 222, 302
Members of Parliament, Some Singular	532, 563	Restaurant, The Café Riche	323
Mr. Irving's Hamlet	179	Rice and Corn as Food	415
Mürger's Bohemianism	182	Riches, paying for	538
NARRATIVE of an Uneventful Voyage	515	Roman Laws	103
Narrow Escape, A. A Serial Story	17	Rome, An Ancient Jewish Traveller's Account of	509
42, 69, 93, 117, 138, 165, 189, 210, 237		Runaway Husbands	66
261, 285, 309, 333, 357, 381, 405		SALISBURY Cathedral	294
New Orleans, French Market at	257	San Salvador, Earthquake at	93
New Paris Opera House	150	Scene Painting	376
Night in Granada	89	School Board Compulsion	225
Noble Family, A.	126	Scientific Aspects of Nutrition	414
Norway, Vagabonds in	304	Sea-Fight, A	355
Nutrition, Scientific Aspects of	414	Severed from the World: A Story	404
OCEAN Cables	472	Sevres Ware	411
Old Members of Parliament	532, 563	Silent Witness: A Serial Story	1
Old Women	113, 222	25, 40, 73, 97, 121, 145, 169, 193, 217	
Oils, their Use in Food	418	241, 265, 289, 313, 337, 355, 400, 433	
Old Bills, a Batch of	333	475, 499, 523, 547, 567	
Old Chair in Canterbury Cathedral	533	Silvertown	472
Old China	421, 443	Slang Dictionary	6
Old Laws; Cruel Punishment	103	Slavery: Trade in Indian Boys	493
Old Letters	246	Smuggler, The Modern	161
Old Mine Re-opened	6	Snake Women	390
Old Sea Story	355	Solar System, Ancient Ideas of the	107
Opera House in Paris, The New	150	St. Bartholomew's Massacre	203
Our Recreations	329	St. Nicholas, Legend of	293
Oxus River, The	34	St. Swithin	402
PAINT AND CANVAS	376	St. Thomas A'Becket	403
Painter's Ghost Story	282, 299	Staffordshire Pottery	416
Palissy Ware	423	Stories:	
Paradise, An Old Traveller's Tale of	108	Cure of Rountot	372
Paris, The Café Riche	323	Fatal Fortune	13, 37
Paris, The New Opera House	150	Marigold	397, 428, 452, 468
Paris, The Théâtre Français	150	Melusine, The Story of	394
Parliament, Odd Members	532, 563	Poppy	132, 155
Patent Law, The	445	Severed from the World	404
Peat Fuel	201	The Long and the Short of It	223
Penal Legislation	103	What Happened in my Studio: A Painter's Ghost Story	282, 299

PAGE	PAGE	PAGE	
THE THIRD ENTRY—BEATRICE	27	Broken Lily, A	397
THE FOURTH ENTRY—PRINCE MICHAEL'S GIFT	34	Earth Roses	132
THE FIFTH ENTRY—THE RING RESTORED	41	Forget Me-Not	252
THE BREAKING OF THE SPELL	47	Grandfather's Story	563

THE EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1874,

ENTITLED

THE OPAL RING,

WILL BE FOUND AT THE END OF THE VOLUME.

CONTENTS.

PAGE	PAGE	PAGE	
THE WEAVING OF THE SPELL	1	THE THIRD ENTRY—BEATRICE	27
THE FIRST ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE BOOK .	13	THE FOURTH ENTRY—PRINCE MICHAEL'S GIFT	34
THE SECOND ENTRY—THE SECRET OF ALL THE NUBIAN .	19	THE FIFTH ENTRY—THE RING RESTORED	41
THE BREAKING OF THE SPELL			

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 307. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I. MIDDLEHAM'S MURDER.

MIDDLEHAM'S. Nothing more nor less. Fat black letters on a worn brass plate, screwed on to a shabby old swinging door, its upper half of smeared bad glass in prison between two sets of bars, its lower half of wood, once brown and varnished, now paintless, notched and indented with the boot-heels of coming and going clerks, whose ears bristled with pens, whose mouths were temporary receptacles for pendent straps or tape, whose hands were laden with enormous black leather pouches, bills for acceptance or payment fluttering between their fingers, and who had only their knees and feet left, with which to plunge at Middleham's door. Clerks came and went all day, and customers too for the matter of that, for Middleham's was a bank. A bank in a narrow little lane, forming the connecting link between two great thoroughfares in the city, with a provision merchant's next door to it; a very objectionable neighbour, whose huge vans, piled with egg-boxes and butter-tubs, sides of bacon and mountains of cheese, used to block up the little lane, and render it impossible for the coachmen of Middleham's customers, the smart gentlemen from the West-end, or the old ladies from Brixton, to get the neat broughams, or the lumbering landaus, up to Middleham's door. Old ladies, whose feet were run over by eggbox-bearing barrows, old gentlemen, whose hats were crushed by butter-firkins on their downward flight, declared that they would stand this state of things no longer, and

that they would "withdraw their account" from Middleham's. But they never carried out the threat. Few strangers ever commenced business with Middleham's, but the old families who had shown their confidence in the founder of the house more than a hundred and fifty years ago, banked with it still; all the scions of the old families, starting for themselves, took to Middleham's as naturally as to shaving, and spread its business far and wide. Hugh Middleham, who represented the firm in 1860, could recollect that when he was taken into partnership with his father, some five-and-twenty years before, the bank had not half the number of accounts open, and yet there were few new names in the ledgers, no increase in the number of clerks behind the counter, and no decrease in the dinginess, the ink-spottedness and the shabbiness of the counter itself, and in fact, of the entire establishment.

People said, and said truly, that half the success of the bank was due to Hugh Middleham himself. Though a shrewd and sensible man, making his ordinary investments with discretion, but not above an occasional speculative flight for a small amount, and with earned money, there were many commercial men in the city of London who were his equal in knowledge of finance; it was his manner, so frank and apparently sincere with men, so polished and courtier-like with women, to which Hugh Middleham was indebted for his luck. When he was a young man it had won him a pretty graceful girl, with a pretty little fortune, for his wife, and now that he was a white-haired, fresh-coloured old gentleman, invariably in a blue coat, buff waistcoat, and grey trousers, whom the pretty girl had long since left a

widower, the same luck seemed to attend him. Although there was no lady to take the position of hostess, Mr. Middleham's garden-parties, at his lovely villa, at Loddonford, on the Thames, were attended by those persons whom the fashionable world most delights to honour, and he had the opportunity—of which he but seldom took advantage—of intimacy at some of the best houses. He was, in his later years at least, a quiet domestic little man, happiest in pottering about his fine grounds, and giving directions to the gardeners (which would have resulted in the complete destruction of anything like beauty, and which the men received with humility and never acted on) and in lying out in his punt on the river, in the shade of the overhanging trees, reading Horace. Occasionally, perhaps once or twice a month, he would inhabit some rooms over the bank, which he had furnished when a bachelor, and which he still used when business matters detained him in town.

One morning when the provision-merchant, who lived at Highbury, and invariably came into the city occupying the same seat on the same omnibus, descended at the corner of the lane, he found the narrow space usually taken up by his own vans occupied by a pushing surging mass of humanity, a crowd which ebbed and flowed, elbowed and fought, and was hoarse and mad with excitement. The provision-merchant's first idea was that his premises were on fire. That was the haunting demon of his life, ruining his rest at Highbury, and rendering all the pleasures and profit of enormous exports comparatively valueless. But when he looked up and saw the crane peacefully at work, and the firkins as usual dangling in mid-air; when—knowing full well that frizzling bacon and lard will smell—he sniffed, and found no answering odour; when he found no trace of smoke or flame, he was re-assured. It was round Middleham's premises that the crowd was fighting, and at Middleham's door were stationed two policemen. The provision-merchant, whose healthy colour, startled by his first fright, had come back to his pendulous cheeks, turned pale again. He kept a tolerably heavy account at Middleham's, as his father and grandfather had done before him, and over and above the ordinary balance, there was a special sum of five thousand pounds, paid in last week and destined to be that day remitted to his Irish bacon-factors, and it was plain

that the bank was broke! And yet there were none of the usual signs of a house which has stopped payment, clerks went in and out between the policemen, with astonishment and dismay in their faces, but depositing notes and bills in their black leather pouches with customary business regularity, and no written or printed notice of any kind was pasted on the open doors. The provision-merchant could not make it out, and was himself nearly frantic with curiosity; he flung himself into the crowd, and by dint of stamping on feet, and twisting his elbows into stomachs and faces, struggled to the doorstep, and was landed within the rescuing clutch of one of the constables, to whom he was known, and to whom he gaspingly addressed the question, "What's the matter?"

The officer, a full-fed personage, with a red face and gorgeous whiskers, whose tightly buttoned blue tunic seemed to fit him like a skin, paused a moment, in order that his hearer might be duly impressed, and then said, in a fat whisper, "Murder!"

"What?" shrieked the provision-merchant, who would have fallen back had he not been propped up by the crowd.

"Murder," repeated the policeman. "Mr. Middleham—up there!" and he jerked his thumb in the direction of the upper story.

"Good Lord, how did it happen? Who did it? Have they caught him? Tell us all about it!" said the provision-merchant, essaying to steady himself against pressure by leaning on the sturdy blue breast before him.

But the constable pushed him gently off, murmuring, "No time now, sir. They'll tell you all about it in your place, they know all the particulars there." Then in a louder tone he cried, making a rush at the crowd, "now, will you stand back, and let them as has business, come and do it? Will you move on there, I say!"

The news was true. Mr. Middleham had been up in town and at his business as usual on the previous day, and late in the afternoon had sent a message to the housekeeper, the only person who resided on the premises, announcing his intention of sleeping at the bank that night, and desiring that his rooms might be prepared. He left the bank shortly before the closing hour, and returned about nine in the evening. Where he had been in the interval was not precisely known, but he was believed

to have walked to his club at the West-end, and to have dined there. This was his ordinary practice when he remained in town, and there was no reason to think he would have departed from it on the present occasion. At half-past ten the housekeeper, who had been for thirty years in the service of the family, took her master a jug of hot water, which, with the spirit-case and the sugar-basin, she placed by his side on the table at which he was working at accounts. With the freedom which such length of service gave her, the woman expressed her regret that her master should be engaged in business matters so late, and Mr. Middleham replied pleasantly, avowing that though work was little more irksome to him than when he started in life, he should not then be occupying himself but for the absence on a confidential mission on the Continent of Mr. Heath, the principal cashier. Mr. Heath, however, was expected back the next day, and Mr. Middleham laughingly assured the housekeeper that she should not see him for a long time, as he intended to pass his evenings regularly at Loddonford until the bad weather set in. The woman then wished him good-night and left him. That was the last time he was seen alive.

There was seldom any occasion to waken Mr. Middleham. Amongst his country habits was one of early rising, and when he slept in London he was generally up by seven o'clock, and had a stroll to London Bridge to look at the shipping, or through Billingsgate or Leadenhall markets, before breakfast. When, therefore, on the next morning eight o'clock came and there were no signs of her master, the housekeeper fancied that, tired out with the previous night's work, he must have overslept himself, and, going to his room, tapped at the door. There was no reply, and, believing him to be still asleep, the woman went away, returning in half-an-hour's time, when she repeated her knocking, again without effect. By this time, Mr. Frodsham, the second clerk, who in the absence of Mr. Heath, the principal cashier, attended early to make preparations for the opening of the bank, had arrived, and the housekeeper, somewhat nervous, went downstairs, and besought him to accompany her to her master's door. Mr. Frodsham, a highly respectable but rather stupid elderly man, whose stupidity had caused him to be passed over in the bank, and whose chief idea was never to do anything beyond that for which he was engaged, at

first declined, pleading that to arouse Mr. Middleham was no part of his duty; but being further persuaded, and, moreover, finding it necessary to obtain the key of the strong room, which was in Mr. Middleham's possession, he consented, and the two proceeded together to the chamber door.

The woman knocked, and still there was no reply. Then Mr. Frodsham, feeling that he had committed himself by coming, and could only compromise himself a little more by taking part in the proceedings, tried his hand at rapping, and, finding it of no avail, touched the door-handle. To his surprise it turned within his grasp, and there was nothing to prove an obstacle to their entering the room.

They entered accordingly. The chamber was dark, the Venetian blinds being down. Noiselessly they advanced a few steps; then halted.

"Mr. Middleham!" said the clerk.

"Are you awake, sir?" asked the housekeeper.

No reply. No sound at all, save the ticking of the old-fashioned clock on the mantelpiece, where a battered old bronze Time was leaning on an hour-glass, that looked like a couple of inverted kettle-drums, and aiming his dart in the direction of the closed curtains of the bed.

"He sleeps heavily, ma'am, whispered Mr. Frodsham.

"I'm afraid he's ill," said the housekeeper, in the same tone. "Such a regular gentleman and—will you mind pulling up the blind?"

This was clearly not in his engagement; but the old gentleman yielded, with a sigh. The blinds pulled up, the small table which usually stood by the bedside was discovered to be overturned, and the watch, pocket-book, and candlestick on the floor. When she saw this, the woman turned deadly pale and burst into tears.

"I'm sure he's ill!" she said, rushing to the bed and drawing back the curtains. The next moment she fell back with a scream; and the old clerk, bending forward, saw his master's body lying stiff and lifeless across the bed.

"Life had been extinct some hours before the discovery of the body," said a young gentleman of three-and-twenty (vainly endeavouring, by the adoption of spectacles and a shaved forehead to make himself look like three-and-thirty), who was fetched from a neighbouring surgery, where he passed his time in eating Tolu lozenges, out of one of the drawers, and

taking "pot-shots" at a plaster of Paris horse, which stood in the window, with corks which he picked out of another drawer. "The cause? There was not much doubt about that!" And the young gentleman pointed to the face of the corpse, which was of a ghastly, livid hue, and to the swollen throat, on which there were blue marks, and scratches, and indentations.

A horrible idea flashed across Mr. Frodsham's mind. At his first glance at the body he thought his master had had a fit, but he guessed the truth now, and called out in a voice quivering with emotion,

"Good God! Mr. Middleham has been murdered!"

"Precisely!" said the young surgeon, who began to look upon the incident as a great stroke of luck; to see his way to being called as a witness on the inquest; to getting his name into the papers, and perhaps to reaching that much-thought-of turning-point in his career, which, a few hours before, had seemed such a long way off.

"Oh!" cried the housekeeper, who, honestly and sincerely affected, was shedding tears copiously, "was my poor master strangled, then, sir?"

"Strangled is the ordinary word," said the surgeon, settling his spectacles, and concentrating all his energies into looking clever, "we have another term in the profession, which—which, however, I need not enter upon just now. The police must be sent for," continued the young man, who knew the routine of these matters, from having been assistant to the divisional surgeon, "and there'll be an inquest and so on, at which, of course, I shall have to be present. I'll take the liberty of leaving my card upon the mantelpiece: I live quite handy here. Good day, for the present!" And as he went down-stairs, he had a pleasant word or two with an old acquaintance, the sergeant of police, who had been summoned.

The police investigation was of the usual character. The sergeant, a type of his class, steady, sturdy and stupid, after a careful inspection of the body, made with a certain amount of decency and reverence, announced his conviction that "violence had been used," an opinion which seemed to be infinitely consoling to the two constables who accompanied him.

"The crime being settled," prosed the worthy sergeant, looking round upon his little audience of four, "we come to the

motive. And that," he added, after a pause, "I don't at present see. It could not be robbery, for here," stooping down and gathering the articles from the floor, "here is deceased's watch and pocket-book. If the object of the murderer had been robbery, he would not have left these behind!"

"What about the bank?" cried Mr. Frodsham, growing impatient.

"The bank!" said the sergeant, to whom the words conveyed an entirely new idea, but who, nevertheless, contrived to suppress any sign of surprise, "the bank! I was a-comin' to that, sir! We must see if they've been up to any of their games down-stairs."

"We must take Mr. Middleham's keys with us, if you please," said Mr. Frodsham. "There's one on the bunch which opens the safe in the private office, where the key of the strong-room is always kept. I must have that at once, to give out the money, for it's close upon nine o'clock."

But the bunch of keys was nowhere to be found. The housekeeper was almost positive she had noticed them at her master's elbow, when she took up the spirit-case on the previous night, and the dining-room, as well as the bed-room, was thoroughly searched, but without any result.

What was to be done? The time was getting on and the bank must be opened. Then Mr. Frodsham suddenly recollecting that young Danby, who acted as a kind of confidential clerk and private secretary to Mr. Middleham, had another key of the safe. Mr. Danby had probably arrived by that time; they had better go down. So they went down, leaving the weeping housekeeper to perform the last offices for the dead man whom she had served so long in life; the sergeant, who ever since he had heard of Mr. Danby's having a duplicate key of the safe, had been solemnly endeavouring to think, walking with a meditative air, and abstractedly feeling in the hind pocket of his coat for handcuffs.

When they reached the bank, they found most of the clerks already arrived, gathered together in a cluster, and expressing their curiosity as to what could have happened, the only clue having been some mysterious words uttered by the office porter, who had seen the entrance of the constables, and who had concluded therefrom that something was "up." Mr. Danby, standing a little

apart from the others, and in the act of changing his shooting-jacket for an office coat, was quietly beckoned by Mr. Frodsham. He was a good-looking youngster of four-and-twenty, with a frank, ingenuous expression, crisply curling chestnut hair, regular features, and brilliant teeth. Had he a duplicate key of the safe? Certainly he had; but why was he asked? Was anything the matter? Mr. Frodsham shrugged his shoulders and heaved a sigh. The sergeant was heard to murmur something about "words took down" and "not committing yourself;" the key was produced; and the policeman, Mr. Frodsham, and Mr. Danby walked into a private office—Mr. Moger, the recognised wit among the clerks, causing great mirth by whispering that "Danby had frisked the till, and was going to be searched."

There was no necessity for Mr. Danby's key, for the door of the safe stood wide open. Mr. Frodsham could scarcely believe his eyes, and young Danby uttered a loud exclamation of astonishment. The policemen looked on in silence; but the sergeant, with his eye on Mr. Danby, repeated the handcuff-searching process. Mr. Frodsham was the first to speak.

"It's plain enough now," said he; "there's been robbery as well as murder. The villains must have been disturbed and hurried off, leaving the door open!"

"I don't know that," said Mr. Danby, who had approached the safe. "Everything here seems undisturbed; and here is the key of the strong room in its usual position. Mr. Middleham may have forgotten—"

"Bab!" said Mr. Frodsham, taking a sonorous pinch of snuff. "Did you ever know Mr. Middleham forget anything in business? I never did, and I've been with him for thirty years!"

"Better get to the strong-room, gentlemen, please," interposed the sergeant; "talkin's a waste of time in these matters."

The strong-room door was found locked; but when it was opened, there was an end to all doubt as to what had been done. The floor was strewn with bits of cut cord and tape, with seals adhering to it; one of the office candles, in its old-fashioned, heavy, lead candlestick, was on a shelf; two large boxes, belonging to customers, had been forced open, the chisel used in the process lying by them. Mr. Frodsham lifted a sunk lid in a kind of counter across the far end of the room, and looked eagerly into the aperture. Then he cried

out, and beckoned those who were standing stupefied to come to him.

"There were two thousand sovereigns in this till last night," he said, shaking all over. "Two thousand; for I counted them myself, and now there's not one—not a single one!"

"Better look at the notes," said Mr. Danby, taking down something looking like a book, and unbuckling the straps surrounding it. "No!" he said, running his eyes and fingers rapidly over the crisp Bank of England notes, lying flat on each other, and divided into packets of different amounts. "All seems straight here; the thieves must have missed them!"

"Not much of a miss they didn't make!" observed the sergeant forcibly, though ungrammatically; "a sovereign'll go anywhere, but them notes is no good to them, numbers known and stopped, must send 'em abroad, getting, perhaps, three shillin's in the pound, and the large ones not to be fobbed off at any price! They knew what they was about, this lot did, knew what bankin' business meant, into the bargain!"

"What do you mean by that?" asked Mr. Frodsham, indignantly.

"What I say, sir," answered the sergeant, coolly, but with perfect respect. "To my mind this was a put-up job, this was; the parties as were in it knew all about the ins and outs of this establishment, knew their way all about the place, where the keys was kept, and where to lay their hands on this or that, knew the chief cashier—who, I've heard, is a remarkable smart man—was away, and that, no offence to you sir," turning to Mr. Frodsham, "things might have gone a little slack, and discipline not be maintained at the usual very high pitch. What they did not know, and what no one could have known, for he seems to have settled it all unexpected, poor gentleman, was that Mr. Middleham intended to sleep at the bank last night, and that cost him his life."

"Do you think so, sergeant?" said Mr. Frodsham. "Good Lord, what an awful idea—such a mere chance as that!"

"My notion is that they wanted the old gentleman's keys, and the old gentleman would not let 'em have 'em. And—and that's how it came about! However," continued the sergeant, "this is a big business, sir, and I must report it to my inspector. I'll leave my men on the premises, if you please, for when the news gets wind I dare say you'll have a crowd round here.

Mr. Middleham was a well-known man, and it ain't everyday that we has a murder and a bank robbery in the city ! "

As the sergeant passed out of the private door he noticed that business had commenced in the bank, and that much conversation, upon what subject there could be no doubt, was being carried on across the counter. But Mr. Frodsham and young Danby returned to the strong-room, after the former had given out the money for the day, and then pursued their investigation. All the deeds and papers, all the bonds and securities, were there, but a large amount of jewellery, left there for safe keeping, had vanished, and Mr. Danby hunted in vain for some magnificent diamond ornaments, deposited by a foreign customer of the bank, which he recollects assisting Mr. Heath in cataloguing and packing shortly before the chief cashier went away. By the time they had finished their search, and made memoranda of what they supposed to be missing, the inspector had visited the bed-room, the hue and cry had spread, the lane was lined by the crowd, the news had reached the newspaper offices, ragged boys with copies of "Third Edition" hanging over their arms, were charging up Fleet-street, yelling out, "Murder—banker—robbery," the whole London world took it up, and "Middleham's murder" was at once installed as the topic of the day.

Middleham's murder ! It was years since a crime had been committed under circumstances of such daring atrocity, years since a victim of such position, and so well known, had been selected. It was the theme of discussion everywhere, in the city taverns, where the clerks ate their stand-up luncheons at the bar, and the city clubs, where the smart stock-brokers, and the portly old merchants, took their mid-day meal; at the Bentinck, of which the dead man had been a member so many years, and where his elegy was spoken in the words "Middleham played a steady game—your deal;" in society, which bestowed a few words of astonished pity on the manner of his death "so horrid, don't you know!" and forgot him immediately after; up the river where, for a year or two, boating-men would point out the lovely lawn at Loddonford, as the "place" which "belonged to that old banking buffer who was murdered in the city." Daily newspapers published sensation articles about it, and a weekly illustrated journal gave a view of the room in which the crime was committed, a view

which was somewhat blurred and spotty in its general effect, to be accounted for by the fact that it had already done duty as "Bed-room of the Mannings in Miniver place, Bermondsey," and "Rush's kitchen." It was made the theme for magazine poetry, and the text for sermons, and afforded many Little-Bethel divines an opportunity for enlarging on the sin of making money, and keeping a country house.

Middleham's murder ! For murder it was, though some would-be wiseacres hinted at suicide. The coroner (a very pleasant little man, devoted to Thames angling, and well acquainted with the deceased at Loddonford) held an inquest, and the jury brought in a verdict of "wilful murder, against some person or persons unknown." Unknown they were, and unknown they seemed likely to remain, for the police were quite unable to hit upon their track.

AN OLD MINE RE-OPENED.

THE ancient British and the modern English word "Cant" have widely different meanings. So recently as the Elizabethan era its original signification had been lost in the darkness of antiquity. At that day it was applied to what was called the jargon or gibberish used for purposes of secrecy by thieves, tramps, beggars and gipsies, and was supposed to be no language at all, but a merely arbitrary creation of the vulgar and illiterate. Gradually this meaning of the word gave place to that which it now retains—hypocritical and insincere speech. A canting hypocrite is a bad man who pretends to be a good man; a fellow who affects to be better, and holier, than his neighbours, though all the while he may be a scoundrel.

The author of a philological work which was published in 1689, under the title of "Gazophylacium Anglicanum, containing the derivation of English words, proper and common, proving the Dutch and Saxon to be the prime fountains; fitted to the capacity of the English reader, who may be curious to know the original of his mother tongue :" gave a curious etymology for the word "cant." "To cant," he says, is to use canting language, possibly from the Teutonic *Tand*, a ridiculous phantasm; or from the Latin *cento*, idle discourse." This derivation was not

satisfactory to other compilers of Dictionaries—to Johnson and his successor Richardson. The latter held that the terms "cant" and "canting," were probably derived "from 'chaunt' and 'chaunting,' the whining tone and modulation of voice adopted by beggars with intent to coax, wheedle, or cajole." Builey's Dictionary described "Cant" to be gibberish, pedlar's French, and the obscure talk of gypsies and rogues. Dr. Johnson, apparently to his own satisfaction, traced the word from the Latin *cantus*, a song; and gave five shades of meaning to it; first, a corrupt dialect used by beggars and vagabonds; second, a form of speaking peculiar to some certain class or body of men; third, a whining pretension to goodness; fourth, a barbarous jargon; and fifth an auction. For the last of these meanings he cites the authority of Dean Swift. The Latin etymology looks plausible enough, but is erroneous. That which is given in the Spectator is still more amusing than those of Johnson and his predecessors. "Cant," says the Spectator, in an article written by Tickell, "is, by some people, derived from one Andrew Cant, who, they say, was a Presbyterian minister in some illiterate part of Scotland, who by exercise and use had obtained the faculty, alias gift, of talking in the pulpit in such a dialect that it is said he was understood by none but his own congregation, and not by all of them. Since Master Cant's time it has been understood in a larger sense, and signifies all sudden whinings, exclamations, unusual tones, and, in fine, all praying and preaching like the unlearned of the Presbyterians."

Philologists looked so far a-field to make discoveries, only because they were ignorant of the fact that there was an unexplored mine of language under their very feet, and that the old speech of the British people had not so wholly perished from the land as men supposed. Had they known in what direction to turn their researches, they would have discovered that the true root of the word *Cant*, is the Gaelic and ancient British *Caint*, which simply signifies language; the language, in fact, of the British people before the irruption of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes. This language, or part of it, still survives in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland, and has left many traces in the vernacular English as spoken during the last thousand years. Every now and then an old word from this ancient sub-

stratum exudes through the Anglo-Saxon upper crust of modern English, and, if noticed by philologists, is said to be cant, or slang, and described as low, vulgar, and without etymology. The real derivation of a few of these despised, but venerable and expressive words, apropos of a recently published Slang Dictionary, may be of interest at a time like this, when a Celtic revival, begun by German scholars, is slowly extending itself to Great Britain.

The editor of the Slang Dictionary, Etymological, Historical, and Anecdotal (Chatto and Windus, 1874), says, truly, "The word *Cant*, in its old sense, and *Slang* in its modern acceptation, although used by good writers and persons of education as synonymous, are in reality quite distinct and separate terms. *Cant*, apart from religious hypocrisy, refers to the old secret language of gypsies, thieves, tramps, and beggars. *Slang* represents that evanescent language, ever changing with fashion and taste, which has come into vogue during the last seventy or eighty years, spoken by persons in every class of life, rich and poor, honest and dishonest. *Cant* is old; *Slang* is new and ever changing."

The collection of *cant* and *slang*, or, as they were once called, *flash words* and *phrases*, is no new thing in English literature. One of the earliest was published in the sixteenth century, under the title of the *Fraternitie of Vagabonds*. This was followed, some years later, in 1566, by a *Caveat, or Warning for Common Curse-tors*, vulgarly called *Vagabonds*, set forth by Thomas Harman, Esquire, for the utility and profit of his natural country, &c., a new edition of which was published in 1871. This book is principally devoted to an account of the tricks of thieves and tramps, and contains a not very copious glossary of their peculiar words, without any attempt to show their origin or etymology. Various other collections of a similar kind appeared at intervals, until the year 1785, when the most pretentious and important of them was published by Captain Grosse, under the title of "*A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*." This work, however, has long been superseded, and its place promises to be assumed and retained by the far more copious *Slang Dictionary* which has just made its appearance.

I propose to treat only of *Cant* or *Cainnt*, derived from the old British and Gaelic tongue, and shall select from a multitude of

words a few which have incorporated themselves into the vulgar speech—of the upper as well as of the lower orders—and which are heard on every side, both in town and country. Many of them, it will be seen, have forced their way into literary acceptance; and most of them are now, for the first time, traced to their sources.

Beak.—A magistrate, a police magistrate: Gaelic, *Beachd*, judgment; whence *Beachdair*, one who sits in judgment. The Slang Dictionary says the ancient word was *beck*, and was derived from the Saxon *beag*, a necklace or gold collar, emblem of authority. The compiler queries whether the word is connected with the Italian *becco*, which means a bird's beak, and also a blockhead!

Banyan days.—This phrase is employed by sailors, to denote the days when no animal food is served out to them. The word is derived from the remembrance of their childhood on shore, when bread-and-milk days came round twice or thrice in the week. Dr. Worcester, in his Dictionary, says, the Banians are "a peculiar class among the Hindoos, who believe in metempsychosis, and therefore abstain from animal food." The real derivation is to be found nearer home, in the Gaelic *Bainne*, milk, and *bannachan*, a cake made with milk.

Bloke.—This word has recently become popular to signify disrespectfully a man, a person, a party. The Slang Dictionary derives it from the gipsy and Hindoo *loke*, or from the northern English *bloacher*, any large animal. In Gaelic the consonants *b* and *p* are almost identical in pronunciation. The word is of native, not of Hindoo, growth. The Gaelic *ploc*, signifies a round mass, a large head; *plocach*, a stout man; *plocag*, a stout woman; *plocanta*, a stout, sturdy person, one with large cheeks.

Boss.—The master or chief person in a shop or factory. This word, recently introduced into England from the United States, was originally used by the American working classes to avoid the word master—a word which was only employed to signify the relation between a slave-owner and his human chattel. *Bos*, in Gaelic, signifies the hand; whence *bos bluail*, to slap or strike hands, and *bos ghairc*, applause by the clapping of hands. *Bos*, or *Boss*, used in this sense, would mean the chief hand in the business, where all the workmen are known as hands, and would thus become a euphemism for the master.

Brick.—This expression implies the highest commendation of a man's character. "He's a regular brick," i.e. the best of good fellows. The learned have accepted a Greek origin for this phrase, and derived it from an expression of Aristotle's, *tetragōnōs anēr*, a man of four corners. But the derivation, though universally admitted, may, nevertheless, be wrong. At all events a Gaelic root suggests itself for consideration. In that language *brigh* signifies pith, essence, vigour, spirit; and *brigheil*, spirited, pithy, strong; whence by metaphor, a "brick" may mean a man of the right spirit.

Bumper.—A full glass or goblet. Many attempts have been made to trace the origin of this word. Some have derived it from a supposed habit in England in pre-Protestant times of drinking in a full glass to the health of the *bon père*, i.e. the Pope. Others have derived it from *bump*, a protuberance, because in a bumper the liquor flows, or protrudes, over the brim. The Gaelic supplies a third derivation in the words *bun*, the bottom, and *barr*, the top; corrupted in pronunciation into *bumbarr*, i.e. full from the bottom to the top. A bumper house, in theatrical parlance, is a house full from the bottom to the top.

Cabbage.—To steal; originally and still applied to tailors and milliners, who are supposed to cut off for their own use pieces of the cloth, silk, velvet, or other materials entrusted to them to be made up. Gaelic *cabaich*, to notch, to indent, to make square, or blunt, by cutting off the end of anything.

Card.—A person, a man, a fellow; a "queer card," a strange person, an odd fellow, a "cool card," a coolly impudent person. Gaelic *caird*, a workman, a mechanician, a tinker.

Cagg.—To abstain for a certain time from liquor. Grove says this "is a military term used by the private soldiers, signifying a solemn vow or resolution not to get drunk for a certain time, or, as the term is, not till their cagg is out; which vow is commonly observed with strictness;" ex. "I have cagged myself for six months." "Excuse me this time and I will cagg for a year." This term is also in use among the common people in Scotland. Gaelic *cagail*, to save, to spare, to refrain, to economise. *Cagailt*, frugality, parsimony. *Cagallach*, careful, sparing, niggardly.

Corned.—Drunk, intoxicated. Possibly derived, says the Slang Dictionary, "from soaking or pickling oneself (with liquor)

like corned beef." In Gaelic, corn signifies a horn, or a drinking cup, made of horn, whence the eant phrase corned, applied to a man who had lifted the horn, or corn, to his mouth too frequently.

Crib.—A house, a lodging, a place of rest for the night. In Gaelic eriobh signifies a tree; whence tramps, beggars, and vagrants, compelled sometimes to sleep in the fields or by the wayside, or under trees, in default of better accommodation, would speak of their nightly resting-place as their eriobh, or tree.

Cove.—A man, a person, "Originally in the time of Henry the Seventh, cōf or enflin," says the Slang Dictionary, "altered in Decker's time to cove." See Wit's Recreations, 1654, "there is a gentry cove here. Probably connected with enif, which, in the North of England, signifies a lout, or awkward fellow." The word has a more honourable origin, and is from the Gaelic caomh (pronounced caov), which signifies gentle, courteous, polite. The modern English gent is a corruption and abbreviation of gentleman; so that cove and gent are synonymous.

Dander.—To have one's dander up; to be incensed, angry, resolute, fierce. Gaelic, dan, bold, warlike; danarachd, stubbornness, fierceness.

Doss.—A resting-place, a bed; doss-ken, a tramp's lodging-house. "Probably," says the Slang Dictionary, "from doze; Mayhew (London Labour and London Poor) thinks it is from the Norman dossel, a bed canopy. Doss, to sleep, was formerly dosse, perhaps from the phrase to lie on one's dorsum, or back." The true root is the Gaelic dos, a bush, a hedge, a thicket affording shelter, under which the tramp or beggar often found his only available sleeping-place. See Crib.

Fawney-rig.—The trick of dropping a ring. Fawney bouncing, selling rings for a pretended wager. Gaelic, fainne, a ring.

Fuke.—To cheat, to swindle, to get, to acquire, to obtain; a word of various shades of meaning among thieves and tramps. Gaelic, faigh, to find, get, receive, acquire, obtain.

Gammon.—Deception. Gammy, ill-tempered, ill-natured. Game, i.e. "what's your little game?" a question often put by the police to thieves. These words are all derived from the Gaelic eam, crooked, and signifying a deviation from the straight lines of truth or honesty. Gammy signifies crooked of temper, and is sometimes applied by tramps to householders

who know too much about their mode of life to believe in or assist them.

Gum.—Loud abusive language. "Let us have no moro of your gum," Grose's Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue. Gaelic, geum, to low, to bellow like a bull. Geumnaich, the lowing of cattle.

Hookem-snivey.—To feign mortal sickness, disease, and infirmity of body in the streets in order to excite compassion and obtain alms. Gaelic, naigh, the grave; naigneach, desolate; sniomh (pronounced sniov), misery; i.e. misery so great as to suggest approaching death.

Hook it.—Be off! run away, decamp! Gaelic, thugad (pronounced hungat), begone!

Kidney.—Of the same kidney, i.e. alike, resemblant. "Two of a kidney," says the Slang Dictionary, "means two persons of a sort, or as like each other as two peas, or two kidneys in a bunch." Gaelic, cendna (pronounced kidna), identical, the same, similar. Cendnachd, similarity.

Rhino.—Money; the portion or share of the proceeds of a robbery, divided among the robbers. Gaelic, roinn, a share, a portion, a division.

Ran-tan.—To be on the ran-tan, to be roaring drunk; to be, on what the Americans call, the "big drink;" a frolic of drunkenness extending over several days. Gaelic, ran, to roar, to bellow; tan, a liquid, i.e., roaring mad after liquor.

Shine.—A disturbance, a row; "don't kick up a shine;" shindy, a domestic disturbance; a quarrel. Gaelic, sion (s pronounced sh before e or i), a storm, a blast of wind; siontach, stormy, windy.

Slate.—To beat, a good slating, a severe beating. Gaelic, slat, a wand, a stick.

Shandy-gaff.—A mixture of ale and gin, and sometimes of ale and ginger-beer. "Perhaps," says the Slang Dictionary, "from sang de goff, the favourite mixture of one Goff, a blacksmith." Gaelic, sean (pronounced shan), old and deoch, drink; corrupted into shandy-gaff, the old drink.

Skilly.—Workhouse gruel, or thin soup; sometimes called skillingolee. Gaelic, sgaoileadh, distribution; gu, with; liagh (pronounced lee-ah), a ladle, i.e., something distributed with a ladle; a term of contempt applied by the inmates of prisons and workhouses to liquid food, when they would prefer solid.

Toke.—Dry bread; toc (French argot or slang), false gold, anything ugly, deceptive, or of bad quality. Gaelic, tog, to

swell up, to rise, like dough, with the yeast, to puff out, something to fill the stomach with.

Tantrums.—Violent fits of bad temper. The Slang Dictionary derives this word, which is more commonly applied to women than to men, from the tarantula dance, and refers the reader to the Penny Cyclopaedia for an account of the involuntary frenzy and motions caused by the bite of the tarantula spider. Gaelic, dan, violent, furious, hot; trom, heavy; whence tantrum, a hot and heavy fit of passion.

These are but a few specimens of the valuable ore which lies in the great philological mine of the ancient British languages, and in which the Welsh is as rich as its sister, the Gaelic. It is satisfactory to know that the mine is to remain no longer unworked; and that the public may expect, at no distant day, from a fully competent hand, an authoritative supplement to all existing dictionaries of the English tongue; none of which can be considered complete that goes no deeper into the roots than to the Latin, the Anglo-Saxon, and the Norman. Of this great subject, the origin of cant, though but one of the minor subdivisions, is one that is by no means deserving of the contempt of the learned; but one that, on the contrary, merits the respect which is due to high antiquity, and to close relationship with some of the earliest languages spoken by mankind.

A U B R E Y.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, may we be allowed to say, did not act with his usual charming taste when he rather thoughtlessly followed suit to Anthony àWood, and sneered at Aubrey. Where Sir Walter Scott leads, so many people will follow without enquiry, that Aubrey gets laughed at too often; whereas, he was, when you come to know him, a most careful, diligent, and sensible collector of facts, more diligent, and sometimes, we should say, even more correct than Lord Bacon. What makes Sir Walter Scott laugh, and what makes us all laugh, in spite of ourselves, is the fact that Aubrey, with that quiet handsome face of his, had no sense of humour whatever. There are some actors who have the rare gift of discharging every expression from their faces except that of momentous solemnity; Mr. Compton is one of these actors, Levasseur was another.

We have seen Levasseur tell the most awful and unbelievable falsehoods (in *Le Cain*) with an expression so innocently believing that you could scarcely hear the story for the roars of laughter produced by the blank look of the man who was telling it. Aubrey sits down before you, and tells you solemnly the most incredible and dreadful ghost stories, in a way which forces you to laugh, while you are supposed to be horrified. Scott has taken one of the best.

"Anno 1670. Not far from Cirencester, was an apparition: being demanded whether a good spirit or bad, it returned no answer, but instantly disappeared with a curious perfume, and a most melodious twang. Mr. W. Lilly believes that it was a fairy. See *Propertius*." We have seen *Propertius*, and our opinion is, that the lines to which Aubrey alludes are an abominably bad imitation of Virgil, in his description of the disappearance of Venus in the *Aeneid*. But to return to Aubrey. The above story gives a very good specimen of his calm way of stating what has been told him; still it must always be remembered that Aubrey cannot be said exactly to have been a superstitious man. He distinctly says that he never saw an apparition himself, but that it was possible that other people had done so. Now that is rather modest in these days, when your medium can come flying through the ceiling, without disturbing the plaster. We wish, ourselves, that he had seen a horrible ghost, because he would have told us of it in a way which would have given us a most hearty laugh. But we declare that we do not laugh at him, we laugh at his solemn way of telling absolutely incredible things. Few people can create more laughter than those entirely devoid of all sense of humour.

We always have had, and we always shall have, the highest respect for those men who have learnt all that they can in their time. Aubrey was pre-eminently an enquirer, and if Aubrey chose to enquire first into ghosts, dreams, and apparitions, why should he not? His posthumous works show what a diligent antiquarian he was. He certainly believed in the Druids, who are out of fashion just now. We would rather believe in the Druids than otherwise. Every schoolboy knows that there were never such people existing on the face of the earth; we, having seen some of their most magnificent monolithic works (such as the Menhir at Del for

instance), and having read the latest authorities, are forced to come to the conclusion that it is the proper thing to throw over the Druids, and to account for Stonehenge in the best way you can. Who was the first man who asserted that Stonehenge and Avebury, not to mention the Dartmoor circles, and those at Bala-
beeque in Brittany, were built for the purpose of serpent worship? We fancy that he was a more foolish person than Aubrey, because whatever may be true about the British remains, that is impossible about the Breton ones.

Aubrey was a very cautious theoriser; he only collected what he thought to be facts. We are by no means inclined to put him up to the rank of Arthur Young, the finest and shrewdest collector of facts that England has ever produced. Aubrey collected such facts as he could, when the society of England had become disorganised so far that a revolution was necessary. Arthur Young, also, collected facts at a time when a revolution had become necessary in France. We could not in our space give a comparison between the two men; so we will simply say that, in our opinion, Aubrey, according to his light, did exactly as well as Arthur Young. That is to say, he found out all he could. If we laugh at his ghosts, we can respect him at the same time. If Aubrey's own ghost were to come to our bedside to-night, we should not be in the least degree frightened. If Arthur Young's ghost were to come to us with the facts and figures of the pre-revolutionary times in his hand, we should be very much frightened indeed.

In the mean time, let us refresh ourselves with two or three ghost stories from Aubrey before we go on to say a few words about the man himself.

"T. M. Esquire, an old acquaintance of mine, hath assured me that a quarter of a year after his first wife's death, as he lay in bed awake with his youngest child, his wife came into the room out of the closet, and stooped down and kissed him." But Aubrey dismisses his friend in this way, rather curtly, with that charming want of all sense of humour, which is more delicious than wit: "He was hypochondriacal; he married two wives since; the latter end of his life was very uneasy."

This is matter-of-fact enough. But the next history on our list is even more uncompromising in its unadorned plainness of statement.

"Charles the Simple, King of France, as he was hunting in a forest, and lost his company, was frightened to simplicity by an apparition."

That is all the account which Aubrey gives about the matter. He leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions and deductions. Here is another story.

Mr. Jacob, the learned professor of Merton College, Oxford, behaved more strangely than any one ever did after his death. The story was told to Aubrey by the ghost's own brother, and rests on as high evidence as any ghost story ever narrated. The deceased had, it appears, written some very valuable manuscripts, of which some one else had got possession. At his death he tried hard to speak to his brother, but could not. His brother, who was a learned physician at Canterbury, being awake in bed a week after his death, saw him standing by his side; the doctor did not speak to his brother, for which he was sorry for the remainder of his life. The ghost stood there half an hour, when it vanished.

Now, that as it stands is a good and pathetic ghost story; the ghost wanting to be addressed, and the living brother afraid to speak. But Aubrey cannot leave it alone; he goes on to the end of it, and makes it ridiculous in the end. If he had had any sense of the absurd, he would have omitted what follows: "A short time after, the cookmaid, going to fetch wood, saw the late learned gentleman on the top of the wood-pile in his shirt."

More simple things than even his ghost stories are to be found in his other works. Some of the finest things are in his History of Wiltshire, of which we will give the reader a few. The windows of St. Edmund's Church, at Salisbury, were of rare stained glass: "In one of the windows was a picture of (the Deity) like an old man, which gave offence to H. Shervill, Esq., then recorder of the city (1631), who, out of zeal, came and brake some of these windowes, and, clambering upon one of the pews to be high enough, fell down and brake his leg. For this action he was brought into the Starr Chamber, and had a great fine laid upon him, which, I think, did undoo him." Mr. Britton has discovered that the fine was five hundred pounds. Breaking church windows just then was not so cheap an amusement as it became soon afterwards. There is a completeness

in H. Shervill's disaster as related by Aubrey—breaking, as he did, his own church window, his leg, and being fined five hundred pounds by the Star Chamber for doing these things—which would upset the gravity of a judge.

The next story is rather worthy of Mrs. Gamp. Mrs. Bonham ended the first year of her married life by having twins. This alarmed her, and she travelled for a time. But it was no use; on her return home she was confined of seven living children, who were brought into church on a dish and baptised. Laugh as we may there is no possible contradiction to this story; it is in the register of the parish signed by the curate, and the dish or charger was presented to the church and hung there for years. But the story is beaten by that of Mrs. Palmer, loosely described as of "Kent," who had a child every day for five days in succession; and that story was told to Aubrey by her friend Dr. William Harvey, "Author of the Circulation of the Blood," as he is quaintly described.

We cannot help thinking that the following story is an extremely pretty one; but we must shorten the narration rather. "Dame Olave, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Henry Sherington, of Lacock, being in love with John Talbot, a younger brother of the Earl of Shrewsbury, her father not consenting that she should marry him; discoursing one night from the battlements of the Abbey church, said she, 'I will leap down to you.' Her sweetheart replied that he would catch her then; but he did not believe that she would have done it. She leaped down, and the wind did something to break her fall. Mr. Talbot caught her in his arms, but she struck him dead" (stunned him). She cried for help and he was with great difficulty brought to life again. Her father told her that since she had made such a leap she should e'en marry him." It is pleasant to know from another source that she did marry him, and that her estates remain in that branch of the Talbot family to this day.

Here is something worthy of Mr. Morris's attention; as he has the ear of the Times he might copy. "In the peaceful reign of King James the First, the Parliament made an Act for the provision of rooks' nests, and catching crows to be given in charge of court barons, which is by the stewards observed, but I never knew the

execution of it." That as it stands is absolute nonsense, but look at the context. Aubrey is writing about rooks, and their habit of digging up at seed time the grubs of the cockchafer, which, as he says, are the locusts of England. The man is writing pure common sense the whole time, but with no attention to grammar whatever. What Aubrey intended to say was that there was an Act of Parliament for protecting the rooks (or crows), but that it was not observed.

It is noticeable about Aubrey that he never gives any story on his own authority, but on the authority of men better known than he was then. The English world at that time believed in Pliny, Aristotle, Bacon, and Van Helmont for physical science, and believed in no others. Aubrey was no wiser than hundreds of other scholars, he was only a little more diligent in collecting what he thought to be facts. He was in credulity like the late Mr. Jesse; he wrote down everything which was told him, but he never gives his word for believing it. Aubrey has given us a fine collection of absurd stories, but the question is, are they more absurd than those of Pliny? We should say certainly not. Physical science is not yet practically more than two hundred years old.

We fear that we must dismiss this gentle and good man, though we could write a hundred pages about him, and love him more as the pages went on. One thing about him we must mention: there is never in any of his writings a hard word for any human being. Although his estate was very much muddled away through lawyers, he was never angry, he was more gentle even than Scott. He is accused of credulity; our answer is that he never says that he believes in these tales, he only writes them down as they were told him. Scott, who made his one mistake in sneering at him, has told more ridiculous stories in his Demonology and Witchcraft than Aubrey ever did. We must end by saying, that in spite of all his want of knowledge, he is a most charming author. His powers of simple narration are not to be equalled now, when writers give us ten lines of epithet and allegory for one line of narrative. Voluminous leading articles were written not long ago, and, for the matter of that, are written now and then to this day about certain supposed dissensions in the Cabinet. Aubrey would have got rid of it in this way. "July 18, 1874.—

Coming from Westminster did see the great comet. Incontinently afterwards fell out the debate between my lord of Salisbury and Mr. Disraeli. Strabo saith that comets do excite men's minds by the vitriolic humour, not by the saline."

FATAL FORTUNE.

A STORY IN TWO PARTS.
BY WILKIE COLLINS.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

ONE fine morning, more than three months since, you were riding with your brother, Miss Anstell, in Hyde Park. It was a hot day, and you had allowed your horses to fall into a walking pace. As you passed the railing on the right-hand side, near the eastern extremity of the lake in the park, neither you nor your brother noticed a solitary woman loitering on the footpath to look at the riders as they went by.

The solitary woman was my old nurse, Nancy Connell. And these were the words she heard exchanged between you and your brother as you slowly passed her :

Your brother said, "Is it true that Mary Brading and her husband have gone to America?"

You laughed, as if the question amused you, and answered, "Quite true."

"How long will they be away?" your brother asked next.

"As long as they live," you answered, with another laugh.

By this time you had passed beyond Nancy Connell's hearing. She owns to having followed your horses a few steps, to hear what was said next. She looked particularly at your brother. He took your reply seriously; he seemed to be quite astonished by it.

"Leave England and settle in America!" he exclaimed. "Why should they do that?"

"Who can tell why?" you answered. "Mary Brading's husband is mad, and Mary Brading herself is not much better."

You touched your horse with the whip, and in a moment more you and your brother were out of my old nurse's hearing. She wrote and told me what I here tell you, by a recent mail. I have been thinking of those last words of yours, in my leisure hours, more seriously than you would suppose. The end of it is that I take up my pen, on behalf of my husband and myself, to tell you the story

of our marriage, and the reason for our emigration to the United States of America.

It matters little or nothing to him or to me whether our friends in England think us both mad or not. Their opinions, hostile or favourable, are of no sort of importance to us. But you are an exception to the rule. In bygone days at school we were fast and firm friends; and—what weighs with me even more than this—you were heartily loved and admired by my dear mother. She spoke of you tenderly on her death-bed. Events have separated us of late years. But I cannot forget the old times; and I cannot feel indifferent to your opinion of me and of my husband, though an ocean does separate us, and though we are never likely to look on one another again. It is very foolish of me, I daresay, to take seriously to heart what you said in one of your thoughtless moments. I can only plead in excuse that I have gone through a great deal of suffering, and that I was always (as you may remember) a person of sensitive temperament, easily excited and easily depressed.

Enough of this. Do me the last favour I shall ever ask of you. Read what follows, and judge for yourself whether my husband and I are quite so mad as you were disposed to think us when Nancy Connell heard you talking to your brother in Hyde Park.

II.

It is now more than a year since I went to Eastbourne, on the coast of Sussex, with my father and my brother James.

My brother had then, as we hoped, recovered from the effects of a fall in the hunting-field. He complained, however, at times, of pain in his head; and the doctors advised us to try the sea air. We removed to Eastbourne, without a suspicion of the serious nature of the injury that he had received. For a few days all went well. We liked the place; the air agreed with us; and we determined to prolong our residence for some weeks to come.

On our sixth day at the seaside—a memorable day to me, for reasons which you have still to hear—my brother complained again of the old pain in his head. He and I went out together to try what exercise would do towards relieving him. We walked through the town to the fort at one end of it, and then followed a footpath running by the side of the sea, over a dreary waste of shingle, bounded at its

inland extremity by the road to Hastings and by the marshy country beyond.

We had left the fort at some little distance behind us. I was walking in front, and James was following me. He was talking as quietly as usual, when he suddenly stopped in the middle of a sentence. I turned round in surprise, and discovered my brother prostrate on the path, in convulsions terrible to see.

It was the first epileptic fit I had ever witnessed. My presence of mind entirely deserted me. I could only wring my hands in horror, and scream for help. No one appeared either from the direction of the fort, or of the high road. I was too far off, I suppose, to make myself heard. Looking ahead of me along the path, I discovered, to my infinite relief, the figure of a man running towards me. As he came nearer, I saw that he was unmistakably a gentleman—young, and eager to be of service to me.

"Pray compose yourself," he said, after a look at my brother. "It is very dreadful to see, but it is not dangerous. We must wait until the convulsions are over, and then I can help you."

He seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might be a medical man. I put the question to him plainly.

He coloured, and looked a little confused.

"I am not a doctor," he said. "I happen to have seen persons afflicted with epilepsy; and I have heard medical men say that it is useless to interfere until the fit is over. See!" he added. "Your brother is quieter already. He will soon feel a sense of relief which will more than compensate him for what he has suffered. I will help him to get to the fort, and, once there, we can send for a carriage to take him home."

In five minutes more we were on our way to the fort; the stranger supporting my brother as attentively and tenderly as if he had been an old friend. When the carriage had been obtained, he insisted on accompanying us to our own door, on the chance that his services might still be of some use. He left us, asking permission to call and enquire after James's health the next day. A more modest, gentle, and unassuming person, I never met with. He not only excited my warmest gratitude; he interested me at my first meeting with him.

I lay some stress on the impression which this young man produced on me—why, you will soon find out.

The next day the stranger paid his

promised visit of inquiry. His card, which he sent upstairs, informed us that his name was Roland Cameron. My father—who is not easily pleased—took a liking to him at once. His visit was prolonged, at our request. He said just enough about himself to satisfy us that we were receiving a person who was at least of equal rank with ourselves. Born in England, of a Scotch family, he had lost both his parents. Not long since, he had inherited a fortune from one of his uncles. It struck us as a little strange that he spoke of this fortune, with a marked change to melancholy in his voice and his manner. The subject was, for some inconceivable reason, evidently distasteful to him. Rich as he was, he acknowledged that he led a simple and solitary life. He had little taste for society, and no sympathies in common with the average young men of his age. But he had his own harmless pleasures and occupations; and past sorrow and suffering had taught him not to expect too much from life. All this was said modestly, with a winning charm of look and voice which indescribably attracted me. His personal appearance aided the favourable impression which his manner and his conversation produced. He was of the middle height, lightly and firmly built; his complexion pale; his hands and feet small and finely shaped; his brown hair curling naturally; his eyes large and dark, with an occasional indecision in their expression which was far from being an objection to them, to my taste. It seemed to harmonise with an occasional indecision in his talk; proceeding, as I was inclined to think, from some passing confusion in his thoughts which it always cost him a little effort to discipline and overcome. Does it surprise you to find how closely I observed a man who was only a chance acquaintance, at my first interview with him? or do your suspicions enlighten you, and do you say to yourself, She has fallen in love with Mr. Roland Cameron at first sight? I may plead in my own defence, that I was not quite romantic enough to go that length! But I own I waited for his next visit with an impatience which was new to me in my experience of my sober self. And, worse still, when the day came, I changed my dress three times, before my newly-developed vanity was satisfied with the picture which the looking-glass presented to me of myself.

In a fortnight more, my father and my brother began to look on the daily companionship of our new friend as one of the settled institutions of their lives. In a fortnight more, Mr. Roland Cameron and I—though we neither of us ventured to acknowledge it—were as devotedly in love with each other as two young people could well be. Ah, what a delightful time it was! and how cruelly soon our happiness came to an end!

During the brief interval which I have just described, I observed certain peculiarities in Roland Cameron's conduct, which perplexed and troubled me when my mind was busy with him in my lonely moments.

For instance, he was subject to the strangest lapses into silence, when he and I were talking together. At these times, his eyes assumed a weary absent look, and his mind seemed to wander away—from from the conversation, and far from me. He was perfectly unaware of his own infirmity; he fell into it unconsciously, and came out of it unconsciously. If I noticed that he had not been attending to me, or if I asked why he had been silent, he was completely at a loss to comprehend what I meant: I puzzled and distressed him. What he was thinking of in these pauses of silence, it was impossible to guess. His face, at other times singularly mobile and expressive, became almost a perfect blank. Had he suffered some terrible shock, at some past period of his life? and had his mind never quite recovered it? I longed to ask him the question, and yet I shrank from doing it, I was so sadly afraid of distressing him: or to put it in plainer words, I was so truly and so tenderly fond of him.

Then, again, though he was ordinarily, I sincerely believe, the most gentle and most loveable of men, there were occasions when he would surprise me by violent outbreaks of temper, excited by the merest trifles. A dog barking suddenly at his heels, or a boy throwing stones in the road, or an importunate shopkeeper trying to make him purchase something that he did not want, would throw him into a frenzy of rage which was, without exaggeration, really frightful to see. He always apologised for these outbreaks, in terms which showed that he was sincerely ashamed of his own violence. But he could never succeed in controlling himself. The lapses into passion, like the lapses into silence, took him into their own

possession, and did with him, for the time being, just what they pleased.

One more example of Roland's peculiarities, and I have done. The strangeness of his conduct in this case was noticed by my father and my brother, as well as by me.

When Roland was with us in the evening, whether he came to dinner or to tea, he invariably left us exactly at nine o'clock. Try as we might to persuade him to stay longer, he always politely but positively refused. Even I had no influence over him in this matter. When I pressed him to remain, though it cost him an effort, he still retired exactly as the clock struck nine. He gave no reason for this strange proceeding; he only said that it was a habit of his, and begged us to indulge him in it without asking for an explanation. My father and my brother (being men) succeeded in controlling their curiosity. For my part (being a woman) every day that passed only made me more and more eager to penetrate the mystery. I privately resolved to choose my time, when Roland was in a particularly accessible humour, and then to appeal to him for the explanation which he had hitherto refused—as a special favour to myself.

In two days more I found my opportunity.

Some friends of ours, who had joined us at Eastbourne, proposed a picnic party to the famous neighbouring cliff called Beachey Head. We accepted the invitation. The day was lovely, and the gipsy dinner was, as usual, infinitely preferable (for once in a way) to a formal dinner indoors. Towards evening, our little assembly separated into parties of twos and threes to explore the neighbourhood. Roland and I found ourselves together, as a matter of course. We were happy, and we were alone. Was it the right or the wrong time to ask the fatal question? I am not able to decide; I only know that I asked it.

III.

"MR. CAMERON," I said, "will you make allowances for a weak woman? And will you tell me something that I am dying to know?"

He walked straight into the trap, with that entire absence of ready wit, or small suspicion (I leave you to choose the right phrase), which is so much like men, and so little like women.

"Of course I will," he answered.

"Then tell me," I asked, "why you

always insist on leaving us at nine o'clock?"

He started, and looked at me so sadly, so reproachfully, that I would have given everything I possessed to recall the rash words that had just passed my lips.

"If I consent to tell you," he replied after a momentary struggle with himself, "will you let me put a question to you first, and will you promise to answer it?"

I gave him my promise, and waited eagerly for what was coming next.

"Miss Brading," he said, "tell me honestly, do you think I am mad?"

It was impossible to laugh at him: he spoke those strange words seriously—sternly, I might almost say.

"No such thought ever entered my head," I answered.

He looked at me very earnestly.

"You say that, on your word of honour?"

"On my word of honour."

I answered with perfect sincerity, and I evidently satisfied him that I had spoken the truth. He took my hand, and lifted it gratefully to his lips.

"Thank you," he said simply. "You encourage me to tell you a very sad story."

"Your own story?" I asked.

"My own story. Let me begin by telling you why I persist in leaving your house always at the same early hour. Whenever I go out, I am bound by a promise to the person with whom I am living at Eastbourne, to return at a quarter past nine o'clock."

"The person with whom you are living?" I repeated. "You are living at a boarding house, are you not?"

"I am living, Miss Brading, under the care of a doctor who keeps an asylum for the insane. He has taken a house for some of his wealthier patients at the seaside; and he allows me my liberty in the daytime, on condition that I faithfully perform my promise at night. It is a quarter of an hour's walk from your house to the doctor's, and it is a rule that the patients retire at half-past nine o'clock."

Here was the mystery which had so sorely perplexed me, revealed at last! The disclosure literally struck me speechless. Unconsciously and instinctively I drew back from him a few steps. He fixed his sad eyes on me with a touching look of entreaty.

"Don't shrink away from me," he said. "You don't think I am mad."

I was too confused and distressed to know what to say, and, at the same time, I was too fond of him not to answer that

appeal. I took his hand and pressed it in silence. He turned his head aside for a moment. I thought I saw a tear on his cheek. I felt his hand close tremblingly on mine. He mastered himself with surprising resolution: he spoke with perfect composure when he looked at me again.

"Do you care to know my story," he asked, "after what I have just told you?"

"I am eager to hear it," I answered. "You don't know how I feel for you. I am too distressed to be able to express myself in words."

"You are the kindest and dearest of women!" he said—with the utmost fervour, and at the same time with the utmost respect.

We sat down together in a grassy hollow of the cliff, with our faces towards the grand grey sea. The daylight was beginning to fade, as I heard the story which made me Roland Cameron's wife.

IV.

"My mother died when I was an infant in arms," he began. "My father, from my earliest to my latest recollections, was always hard towards me. I have been told that I was an odd child, with strange ways of my own. My father detested anything that was strongly marked, anything out of the ordinary way, in the characters and habits of the persons about him. He himself lived (as the phrase is) by line and rule; and he determined to make his son follow his example. I was subjected to severe discipline at school, and I was carefully watched afterwards at college. Looking back on my early life, I can see no traces of happiness, I can find no tokens of sympathy. Sad submission to a hard destiny, weary wayfaring over unfriendly roads—such is the story of my life, from ten years old to twenty."

"I passed one autumn vacation at the Cumberland lakes—and there I met by accident with a young French lady. The result of that meeting decided my whole after-life.

"She filled the position of nursery governess in the house of a wealthy Englishman. I had frequent opportunities of seeing her. We took an innocent pleasure in each other's society. Her little experience of life was strangely like mine. There was a perfect sympathy of thought and feeling between us. We loved, or thought we loved. I was not twenty-one, and she was not eighteen, when I asked her to be my wife.

"I can understand my folly now, and can laugh at it, or lament over it, as the humour moves me. And yet, I can't help pitying myself, when I look back at myself at that time—I was so young, so hungry for a little sympathy, so weary of my empty friendless life. Well! everything is comparative in this world. I was soon to regret, bitterly to regret, that friendless life—wretched as it was.

"The poor girl's employer discovered our attachment, through his wife. He at once communicated with my father.

"My father had but one word to say—he insisted on my going abroad, and leaving it to him to release me from my absurd engagement, in my absence. I answered him that I should be of age in a few months, and that I was determined to marry the girl. He gave me three days to reconsider that resolution. I held to my resolution. In a week afterwards, I was declared insane by two medical men; and I was placed by my father in a lunatic asylum.

"Was it an act of insanity for the son of a gentleman, with great expectations before him, to propose marriage to a nursery governess? I declare, as Heaven is my witness, I know of no other act of mine which could justify my father, and justify the doctors, in placing me under restraint.

"I was three years in that asylum. It was officially reported that the air did not agree with me. I was removed, for two years more, to another asylum in a remote part of England. For the five best years of my life I have been herded with madmen—and my reason has survived it. The impression I produce on you, on your father, on your brother, on all our friends at this pic-nic, is that I am as reasonable as the rest of my fellow-creatures. Am I rushing to a hasty conclusion, when I assert myself to be now, and always to have been, a sane man?

"At the end of my five years of arbitrary imprisonment in a free country, happily for me—I am ashamed to say it, but I must speak the truth—happily for me, my merciless father died. His trustees, to whom I was now consigned, felt some pity for me. They could not take the responsibility of granting me my freedom. But they placed me under the care of a surgeon, who received me into his private residence, and who allowed me free exercise in the open air.

"A year's trial of this new mode of life satisfied the surgeon, and satisfied every-

one else who took the smallest interest in me, that I was perfectly fit to enjoy my liberty. I was freed from all restraint, and was permitted to reside with a near relative of mine, in that very Lake country which had been the scene of my fatal meeting with the French girl, six years before."

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXII. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF RATHER.

"THERE is very little real gratitude in this world, and I have lived long enough to cease to expect it from most people; still, considering all things, I think I am justified in saying, that it will be unprecedented ingratitude on your part, if you ever forget that I have been the means of bringing you out of obscurity, and putting you in the way of gaining a splendid position."

"I have an excellent memory."

The first speaker is Mrs. Grange. The second is Charlotte, the unprovided-for sister of Mr. Grange, and the projected Fate of poor Frank Forest.

A few words will suffice to put her before you. A woman of five-and-twenty, with brown hair and eyes of precisely the same colour, each brightened by a golden shade. A face whose oval is spoilt by the massive squareness of the lines of the lower part of the face. A girl with a firm, fine figure, just escaping being short, and with a quiet, steady expression of face that betrays nothing.

The conversation takes place in the young lady's bed-room, in Frank Forest's house, the morning after her arrival. She has obeyed a hasty and somewhat mysterious summons from her sister-in-law, and come up from the wildest part of the lake country; and now Mrs. Grange has just succeeded in making the situation clear to her. Charlotte fully understands that she is to conquer and marry this unknown Frank Forest. She also understands that, when married to him, she is to employ his wealth chiefly as if she were Mrs. Grange's steward.

She has listened very patiently to all her patroness has been good enough to put before her. Listened with a fixed attention that Mrs. Grange thinks is very respectful and pleasant, and has already made up her mind as to her course of action. She will follow Mrs. Grange's

advice, she will be guided by that lady's precepts to exactly that point to which it is agreeable and expedient to herself to go. At that point she will stop, and fifty thousand Mrs. Granges will not drag her out of the groove which she deems the best for herself. However, all these resolutions of hers are masked under her imperturbable manner, and Mrs. Grange is perfectly satisfied.

"You will find him rather brusque and hard in his manner at times," Mrs. Grange goes on, "but disregard that, my dear. May was a trifle ungracious with him, she used to insist on asking for 'explanations' at every turn; now that is always foolish while a girl is only engaged to a man; when she is married it is different, if, as in May's case, she holds the position of the one who gives all and gains nothing; now in your case I should recommend—but really I am counting my chickens before they are hatched, and it's quite time you were up, so I'll leave you to dress."

"I am rather tired—" the girl is beginning, but Mrs. Grange stops her.

"Tired! Nonsense, Charlotte; do you want to give him the impression of your being out of health or lazy at once? Men always think you're one or the other if you stay in bed to breakfast," Mrs. Grange says, striding towards the door, and twirling her draperies about her in her usual overpowering way. "No, no; get up, and let him see that you can stand the strong morning light. Your complexion is not to be compared to poor dear May's, but it's very good of its kind, and it's a point you ought not to neglect."

Miss Charlotte Grange listens patiently and without a change of countenance to this harangue, but, as soon as the door is closed behind her brother's wife, she laughs in a noiseless way that would be infinitely disagreeable to any honest person to hear.

"My honoured preceptress and sister is a hard task-mistress," she says to herself. "Oh, how I hate getting up early! oh, how I hate being told to do anything!"

Expression enough comes into the hitherto passionless face as she says this. It is pitiable to think of the long-sustained system of suppression that must have been exercised over this woman's nature, before she can have arrived at this pass of hypocrisy.

As she dresses she counts monotonously over and over again the long years which have elapsed since the death of her parents—the long years during which she has

been the recipient of the bounty that has been doled out to her by her brother.

"It's not his fault, the poor mouse-hearted creature," she thinks contemptuously; "it's that big, overbearing, swaggering wife of his who does all the meannesses, and calls upon me to thank her for them as if they were magnificences. Fancy her trying to teach me how to please and attract a man! when I have been playing the game with more or less success, ever since I knew that to win it was my only chance of freedom."

She has subdued all appearance of the discontent and impatience that is eating into her very soul by the time she reaches the breakfast-room, when she is introduced in a very casual kind of way to her gloomy young host. Mrs. Grange has already said to him,

"As we are all going away so soon, I thought you wouldn't mind my sister-in-law Charlotte being here for a few days, Frank. She's a very quiet girl, and excessively useful to me." To this Frank has responded,

"I don't think I care very much who's here now. Thank Heaven I shall not be here myself much longer!"

There is not a particle of affectation in the utter indifference which Frank betrays to the presence of the new comer. He reads his letters and papers, he pursues his path among the broils and toasts, just as though she were not exactly opposite to him, with the full light of day pouring in upon her golden tinged hair and speckless, smooth, white skin. Presently he comes upon a note that makes him wrinkle his brow and give vent to an impatient exclamation. Then he rises, rings the bell, and when it is answered, says,

"I shall be at home to luncheon to-day. A gentleman is coming here; just see that everything is all right."

Mrs. Constable waits till the servant has withdrawn, and then makes a tearful protest.

"You needn't have taken the trouble to give your own orders, Frank, now I am here."

He almost groans. For one wildly blissful moment he has forgotten that fact, and now that it is recalled to him he does not appear grateful for his privileges.

"It's a confounded nuisance," he says. "Bellairs has written to say he'll come here to lunch, and I can't send him a telegram to go to the club. Just like him; confound him."

"This is much the more proper place for him to come," Mrs. Constable begins, and Mr. Grange chimes in:

"Don't think that we shall object at all, my dear fellow; happy little family party as we are, we can't expect that our circle will always remain unbroken."

Frank is on the brink of a retort that would, if uttered, have brought about a climax of some unseemly sort or other, when his eyes light on the face of the stranger within his gates, and he pulls himself up. For on that face is written, in legible characters, whatever of scorn of meanness, of indignation against impertinence which the owner can feel. Truly that silent face can speak well at times!

"Are you very tired after your journey, or was it a short one?" he asks courteously as they all rise from the table, and he lounges round nearer to where she is standing.

"It was long, and I am so tired that the effort to open my mouth to speak is almost too great a one for me to make," she says, making no attempt to conceal her utter weariness, though Mrs. Grange winks and blinks at her.

"A turn or two in the fresh air in the garden will do you all the good in the world, Charlotte," her brother says, fussing up to her. "Come, get your hat, my dear. Frank, will you stroll out with us?"

Mr. Grange speaks with a jocular assumption of being altogether in the right place, and in the position of one who is able to offer a very pleasant diversion for the passing hour to his anything but affable young host. Evidently there is a certain amount of pride in his pretty sister, bubbling up in the depths of Mr. Grange's shallow and chilly heart. As evidently his pretty sister is not disposed to second him in his endeavours to make Frank feel that all the power and glory is on his side only.

"You were always fond of arranging everything for everybody," she says in her quiet voice. "I used to call you Director General of the Kingdom of Lilliput, if you remember."

"Your brother always spoils you," Mrs. Grange says, coming into their midst like a surging wave. Between her desire to put Charlotte in a becoming light before Frank, and her keen, wifely wish to snub the "other woman" who dares to snub her (Mrs. Grange's) lawful prey, she is "given much discontent," as Pepys would say.

"The atmosphere of the garden is at least freer than that of this room," Frank says with a laugh that is half at the transparent tactics of the Granges, and half at himself for submitting to be the victim, even in appearance, of these tactics

for a moment. But this new chain which they are striving to bind about his feet, is in the guise of an attractive and intelligent looking woman, and poor Frank had been debarred from intercourse with all such for so long a time.

They are still loitering about the open French window. Charlotte is still lingering (judiciously) before she gets her hat, and takes Frank into the solitude of the garden, when there comes a sound of woe and lamentation from the housekeeper's room which is directly opposite to the breakfast room. The excellent cook and housekeeper, who had glorified poor May's brief domestic reign, fights hard with the interloping family whenever cause of fight seems to be justifiable. According to her lights it is justifiable whenever Mrs. Constable gives a superfluous order, and Mrs. Constable gives superfluous orders with marvellous perseverance every day of her life.

There is strife and enmity between these two rival powers now. Jealously as the housekeeper guards her sacred books on most occasions, there are moments when the wariest relax their vigilance, and Mrs. Constable has taken advantage of such a moment now, to discover that the increase in the household expenditure is steady and swift. She is no confiding, easily gulled young creature like May, who was always ready to believe that several pounds of butter, sugar, and other ingredients were required for the formation of one pound cakes. Mrs. Constable has been accustomed to fight the battle against the extortioners over and over again; and though her enemy fires a heavy volley of verbal shot into her now, the spirit of the British matron rises equal to the occasion, and she shrilly repeats her belief in the fact of there being "something wrong somewhere," in a way that tells the housekeeper that it is a forlorn hope she is leading against that "being interfered with," which is as chains and slavery to the proud spirit of the speculating retainer.

There is nothing fleshy or buxom about Edwards, as she is called. She is spare, sallow, severe in aspect, and richly endowed with that spitefully suppressed manner which sometimes renders an inferior so all-powerful. She crosses the hall now, books in hand, full a pace in front of angry, rosy, confused Mrs. Constable, who really feels sore to the very core of her heart that her dear dead May's money should be wasted so scandalously.

"If you are the master here, sir,"

Edwards begins, with an air of respectfulness that strongly inclines Frank to knock her down, "I wish you would say once for all, sir, what my duties are, and what they are not. I engaged to fulfil certain duties, and, as is well known to you, sir, them duties I always did fulfil satisfactorily until others came in here as I didn't know I was to be accountable to; and so I should be glad to hear what I am to do, and what my position is."

"To mind your own business, and not bother me," Frank says hastily; and he has nearly escaped through the open window, when he is pulled up with a jerk by Mrs. Constable.

"It's all very well for you to be careless and indifferent, and to give your orders in a grand way, Frank," she pants; "but when you suffer from being robbed and cheated, you'll thank me for trying to look after things a little for you, and not back that person up in her insolence to me; it's not that I benefit by what I do or try to do," the poor harassed lady continues, as distinctly as the tears—which have all the effect of a cold in the head upon her—will allow her to speak, "but wilful waste is wickedness, and to shut our eyes to being robbed, is nearly as bad as robbing others; and if Mrs. Edwards can look me honestly in the face and say she doesn't see that you are being robbed by someone I'll——"

"For mercy's sake manage as you please, and don't drive me mad between you," Frank says, breaking the moral check-string which has held him during this exposition of feeling and principle, and getting clear away into the garden. Then, as Miss Grange follows him, Edwards clasps her books closer to her heart, and marches back to her own room, from whence she issues orders to her subordinates respecting the luncheon, that drive Mrs. Constable to desperation.

"He won't put out a hand to check the tide of extravagance himself, and he won't strengthen yours when he sees it put out on his behalf," Mr. Grange says, with sympathetic indignation that could be subdued in an instant if Frank re-entered the room unexpectedly. Mr. Grange never for a moment forgets that his beloved mother-in-law has a large fortune entirely at her own disposal, and that her own son, though he is a prig, is far too conscientious to seek to secure aught unto himself by unfair means.

"The truth is, mamma," Mrs. Grange

says, "it was never designed by nature that a young man should be twiddled round an old woman's finger. Frank is not the kind of man out of whom one can manufacture a molly-coddle."

"I think that if your husband were similarly situated, he would not show such contemptuous indifference to the exertions I make for his good," Mrs. Constable says, resentfully, for in her heart of hearts she does not like being called an "old woman;" "though it's far from her," she always avers, "to wish to pass for a girl."

"I daresay he wouldn't," Mrs. Grange says, carelessly, "but Frank is different; come, mamma, make up your mind to it; 'young blood will have its day;' we must all make up our minds to see Frank taking to another life and another wife."

Mrs. Grange says out her sentence bravely, but her husband glances from her to her mother with nervous celerity. The plan of mating Frank to his sister is very pleasant to Mr. Grange, for he does groan over the onus that is on him of providing that young person with food and raiment. But if Mrs. Constable disapproves of it he will be in peril indeed; a helpless bark floating rudderless, between the Scylla of his wife and the Charybdis of her mother.

"Nonsense!" Mrs. Constable says sharply. "One wife and one husband is all it was ever intended that decent men and women should have in this world." Mrs. C. speaks as if she has a hazy notion that matrimonial arrangements may be on a broader scale in the next. "Besides," she goes on, "with that dear baby up-stairs, what can he want with another wife? I shall not be at all pleased if you put such notions in his head, or opportunities in his path." And Mrs. Constable, as she brings her declaration to a conclusion, looks suspiciously at her daughter, and curiously into the garden, where the host and his young guest are sauntering among the shrubs on the lawn.

"Charlotte will think I am neglecting her," Mr. Grange says jauntily, with the hope that Mrs. Constable will not think him accessory to the evil deed of setting his sister as a trap for Frank. Then he goes out uncomfortably, for he knows that Charlotte's organ of veneration has never been properly developed as far as he is concerned, and that she is quite capable of so clearly letting him see that he is not wanted if she does not want him, that he will have no alternative but to come in again.

Meanwhile Frank and Charlotte Grange have taken the whole round of the garden once in perfect silence. There is a sense of relief to them both in the perception each has that the other does not want to talk or to be talked to. At the conclusion of that first round he stops by a seat that encircles the trunk of a copper-beech, and says,

"How utterly you're unlike your brother! Isn't it rather strange that during the whole term of my connection with the family that I never heard of you till yesterday?"

"Then I have been thrust upon you unawares?" she says.

CHAPTER XXXIII. ON A LOWER ROUND OF THE LADDER.

FROM that day on which she was evidently inopportune in the family circle, up to this one on which she comes to the dreary conclusion that she is inopportune in the world altogether, Kate Mervyn has seen nothing of, and heard nothing from, the kin who are so far less than kind to her. The invitation to spend the nice quiet day with the Forests has never arrived, and she lacks the heart and the audacity to thrust herself among them uninvited again. Nevertheless, cut off as she is from social intercourse with her fellow creatures; for Kate has not made any new friends; the time has not hung heavy on her hands. Indeed, on the contrary, day follows day with ghastly rapidity it appears, for each day brings its own wants, and she has not the means of supplying them. The labour she is bestowing on the long story with which she hopes to make a certain meed of success by-and-by, is incompatible with the production of pot-boilers, as they are technically termed. While the grass is growing the steed is starving.

Economise as grindingly as she will, there is still a daily outlay going on that is ruinous to her, yet her heart is so much in her work that she cannot induce herself to put it aside, to weaken or get rusty, in order that she may manufacture more immediately marketable wares. She tries for a long time to keep her eyes fixed on the goal she wants to gain, and to avert them from the innumerable disagreeables and trials that are incessantly about her path. But at length she can do this no longer. She has denied herself everything that is not supremely needful, and now the hour has come when denial is of no avail. Full of the supreme hopelessness which moneylessness engenders, she is compelled to turn her attention to those columns of the daily

papers in which the wants of the wealthy are advertised, and the result of her unwilling venture into this fresh field is that she presently finds herself engaged, at a liberal salary, as companion to an invalid lady in the south of Ireland.

All the passionately intense love of change which is a portion of her nature, and perhaps her richest inheritance (for by reason of it she extracts more pleasure from life than can be imagined by those who are not endowed with it), comes to the fore and vitalises and invigorates her, as she sets forth on the new path. As she steps on to the deck of the steamer that is to convey her from Holyhead to Dublin she is quite ready to bid a joyous farewell to the old romance, quite ready to marvel at herself, for that she was ever ready to be cast down by the failure of it. In her sanguine eyes the future looks very brightly. It will all be new—scenery, society, interests, everything in fact. Novelty and my book to finish in a fresh atmosphere, she says to herself, and with the consciousness that these two elements of pleasure are absolutely in her own possession, for her to enjoy as intensely as she can, she goes down to the ladies' saloon beamingly, regardless of her almost empty purse and the rising storm.

The saloon is spacious, well fitted up, and would be comfortable if it were not thickly strewn with unhappy women, who are already pale and prostrate under the shadow of the expectation of that curse of the sea, its sickness, falling upon them. They are lying prone all around her, three deep, tier upon tier of embodied pain and fear. With that perfect rendering up of herself to any new situation which is an attribute of hers, Kate suffers the stewardess to propel her into one of the lower berths, but a groan from a lady above dislodges her quickly, and she climbs to a top place, from whence she watches despair making rapid strides among her fellow passengers. But presently the thought of the freshness on deck contrasts too vividly with the atmosphere below, and Kate descends in a lively way, that causes a few disturbed ones to groan and hate her for being so well.

"I have followed your example," a quiet voice says, close behind her, as she steps out on the deck; and she looks round, and by the moonlight sees a pretty woman, in a becoming travelling suit of home-spun, following her. There is something attractive to Kate in the perfect integrity which this lady has maintained

in every portion of her toilet. Brief as has been the experience of those below of a life on the rolling deep, they have most of them become tangled as to the hair, and as limp as wet towels as to the figure. This neat trim young woman looks out with clear brown eyes that have a golden tinge over them, from under neatly brushed glossy hair of the same colour. In fact, Charlotte Grange—for the young lady in homespun is no other than Mr. Grange's self-possessed sister—is fully determined to give Frank Forest a favourable impression of her personal appearance under disadvantageous circumstances. He shall see that she is not one of those depressing people who become untied and unpinned and dusty, as soon as their foot is off their native heath. At any cost of trouble and Kalydor, of care and cosmetics, she will keep her gloss on during this trial trip which she is taking with Frank Forest sorely against his will.

"I heard a moaning mandate from my sister-in-law, to the effect that I should stay where I was, as I left the cabin," she says to Kate, "but I should have been overthrown as utterly as she is herself, if I had obeyed her. Is this the first time you have crossed?"

Kate answers her, and they go on conversing in an apparently frank and candid way. But somehow or other Kate finds that she has confided her position, her plans, and her prospects to her unknown fellow-traveller, before she has gained one particle of information respecting that fellow-traveller in return.

Secretiveness being a strongly marked characteristic of Miss Grange, and it being moreover one that has been fostered, and nourished, and cherished, by the circumstances that have surrounded her of late years, she finds herself very naturally despising Kate for that absence of reserve, which has placed her past and present fully and fairly before a stranger.

"You love!" Charlotte Grange thinks, and that quiet smile of hers, which betrays no pain, and expresses no pleasure, passes over her face as she thinks it. "So you are that cousin of his who has been marked dangerous by the family; well, I wish as heartily as ever Constance de Beverley did, that 'my rival fair a saint in heaven might be'; if he sees you in the morning I shall be tempted to cry 'in vain, in vain,' as far as my journey goes."

They sleep a little at odd intervals during the night, but chiefly keep awake

and exchange a few words now and again, being attracted towards one another by an undefinable feeling that is neither sympathy nor liking, but that has something to do with that fascination of repulsion which one human being frequently exercises over another. They are each anxious, for widely different reasons, for the day to dawn and the voyage to end. Kate, whose ideas about Ireland and the Irish have been gathered chiefly from Moore's Melodies and Harry Bellairs, pants for the first sight, and the first impression of its emerald glades, and its chivalrous sons. Charlotte Grange is anxiously expectant as to the result of the meeting, which she fears is inevitable, between the man who may assure her prosperity and the woman who may deprive her of it.

"The sooner it's over, the sooner to rest," the philosophic intrigante thinks, as she takes a hasty glance at her own unruffled appearance in the little pocket-glass which she carries. "I shall make no struggle to avert anything, struggling is unbecoming and useless in these cases; but my prayer is that she may, in her impatience, go on shore before that lazy Mr. Forest brings himself round to join us."

It may be that there is power in the unselfish piety of the prayer, or it may be only that Fortune feels pleasure in helping those who strive to help themselves. At any rate, Miss Grange's radiant eyes become more radiantly golden than usual, as she sees that Kate is one of the first to land at Kingstown, and that she buries herself instantly in the murky recesses of a second-class carriage.

Frank Forest, sauntering up presently, with a mixed feeling in his mind, that it is pleasant to be with quiet, good-looking, sensible Charlotte, and hateful to be in the atmosphere of her brother and sister-in-law, has no more notion than the insensible plank upon which he stands, that the only woman in the world who can make his heart throb is watching him from the window of the railway carriage. "Can he be married again? Can that perfect piece of mechanism be my poor impulsive Frank's second choice?" Kate thinks pitifully. "Oh dear, if it is so, I shall have stronger doubts than ever as to the truth of the assertion, that marriages are made in Heaven!"

Fortune befriends the Granges again at Dublin. Their bourne is Bray, the pretty watering-place which has obtained for itself the designation of the Brighton of

Ireland. Frank's bourne is beyond Bray, at Captain Bellairs's place, which is set like a highly polished gem of civilisation in the heart of the wildly beautiful Wicklow Mountains. It arranges itself naturally enough, and that without much pushing or coarse management on the part of Mr. Grange, that the well-appointed carriage, which Captain Bellairs has sent to meet Frank, shall convey them to Bray. The horses are well-bred, full of corn and fire, and they go off with a dash that sends the mud flying around them. Some of it spatters Kate, who is standing just outside the station door, trying to keep half-a-dozen animated rag-bags, who are touting for outside cars, at bay; and, at the same time, striving to render up a lucid account of her luggage to eager and irrepressible porters.

Amidst cries of "Come along wid yourself," from various quarters, she finds herself aloft at length on what appears to her inexperience as a very perilous slope, on which she is compelled to assume the position of one on a side-saddle that has no pommels. Odours that rival in quality and quantity those of Cologne, assail her on every side, and reluctantly she relinquishes one of her illusions respecting the first flower of the earth and the first gem of the sea. She has been anticipating the spectacle of poverty and perhaps savagery in the byways, but in her imagination it was poverty and savagery of a picturesque order. But here in the highways squalor and pallid misery, decay in the rags that can never have been clothes, disease in the flesh that seems to have lost its life, meet her view.

Between the paroxysms of jerks which the motion of the car administers to her untutored frame, she sees her light escort of little Dublin Arabs, arrayed in holes that appear to be lightly linked together by a few rotten threads, alternately "horooshing" her palpable efforts to keep on this galvanic battery on wheels, and imploring her in the name of all the saints in the calendar for a penny. Gleams of broken windows, of choked-up gutters, flash upon her vision from either side. But, before she has time to be disheartened by all these strange surroundings, she is taken with a queer quick double-twist into Sackville-street, and landed at the door of the hotel at which she has been directed to wait until she is sent for by the invalid lady to whom she has pawned her time and talents for the ensuing twelvemonth.

At length the summons comes. A

steady-looking old man-servant is shown into the room, from the window of which she has kept an amused eye upon the "bustle and the raree-show" of the little world of Sackville-street. He has brought the carriage for her, he says; the open one, because Mrs. Durgan thought she would beliking to see the country. So she starts unconsciously in the wake of the cousin in whom she is still so honestly interested, and is driven away through miles of verdure till the Wicklow hills loom sternly above her, and she is set down at a house that nestles in a glade that is under the shadow of one of them, and that is called by the old name of Bray, Breagh Place.

It is a genuine Elizabethan mansion, standing in the midst of such masses of greenery as makes clear its claim to be one of the fairest portions of the emerald isle. "The Durgans have been here, father and son, since 1600," the old servant tells her; "and now the father is dead, and my lady has no son to leave it to, and it'll go to another name when she leaves us."

"It's beauty itself," Kate says warmly; at the same time her heart contracts. She has pledged herself to stay here, "if she gives satisfaction;" in fact, she has no other place to which to turn; but even in the first flush of her enthusiastic admiration, the solitariness of this "beauty itself" appalls her. Then she tries to cast all fear and doubt behind her, tries to recall and reiterate her determination to do thoroughly and heartily whatever comes to her hand to do, and goes forward with a free, unhesitating step into the new life.

The hall is the key-note which determines the tone and tune of the house. This one at Breagh Place is arranged so that it gives a hearty welcome to every new comer. The carpet is nearly covered with the skins of stags—fat arm-chairs gape an invitation to be sat upon on every side—two or three sweet-eyed red setters with white feathered legs rise up and stretch themselves lazily, and wag affable tails—a wood fire burns brightly and lightly, and before it a little table is drawn up covered with hot rolls and coffee. Huge blue and white china vases stand on either side of the hearth and on the buffet at the opposite end of the room, and these are filled with branches of pink monthly roses and long feathery fronds of fern. All her love of beauty and comfort, of art, and dogs, and flowers, surges up in her heart and forces her to exclaim that she hopes this may be her home for ever. As the words are spoken

the door opens. A chair on wheels is run into the room, and a sweet white-faced woman with forget-me-not eyes holds a cordial hand out to the new comer, and endorses her wish that Breagh Place may be her home for ever.

The invalid lady is Mrs. Durgan herself, the mistress of the house, and all Kate's preconceived notions as to the fractionsness and general habits of self pity which are the portions of invalid ladies, vanish at sight of her. A bright-faced brunette with a smiling mouth, and eyes that match that mouth fairly, with a clear, ringing, healthy happy voice, and a hearty genial air of being glad that she herself and everybody about her is alive. Her face is a trifle pale, as is only natural considering that her only exercise for the last eight months has been to be wheeled about in this chair. But there is no suspicion of sickliness or weariness about her.

"I wonder that anything so fresh and young as you are consented to come and seclude yourself in these solitudes with a woman who might have been a poor paralytic, or a peevish hypochondriac, for anything you knew to the contrary," she says to Kate. "I'm the victim—only the temporary victim I hope—of an accident. My right arm and right leg were badly broken some months since, so I can neither walk nor write; are you relieved?"

"Infinitely," Kate says promptly. Then she laughs a little confusedly and adds,

"Perhaps for me it would have been better if you had been a peevish hypochondriac, for then I shouldn't have been interested away from my work by you. I should have done irksome duty stolidly, and gone to my business for pleasure. Now with you—"

"What is your work?" Mrs. Durgan interrupts with quick, curious sympathy; and when Kate tells her, she says,

"I believe I know someone who knows you, Miss Mervyn; I believe—"

She pauses, and Kate asks,

"In what?"

"In Fate, Destiny, in—in—oh! in there being something very strange in store for us all; and in turn you must believe that whatever happens to any of us, I am very glad that I have been the means of bringing you to dear Ireland."

With all her national enthusiasm, Mrs. Durgan, now that Kate's "work" is under-

stood by her, issues orders from her wheeled throne that quickly transform a room close to Kate's bed-room into a luxurious little study.

"If writing is made so easy to me I shall never write a line," Kate tells herself as she sits down in the midst of the unaccustomed comfort. "And even if I succeed in the mere writing, the matter produced will be so inferior to the conditions by which I am surrounded while producing it. It's impossible she can know any one who knows me, unless she is one of the many my poor fickle Frank adored before he adored me. I'll lead up to his name by speaking of his plays."

She finds her hostess out on a terraced flat, in the rear of the house, with a dozen dogs leaping and rolling about her, and a handsome Irish chestnut mare standing by her side, eating bread and sugar from her hands, in as docile a way as if it had never gone like a wild-cat at a hedge, and nearly killed its rider.

"This lively lady is the cause of my present condition," Mrs. Durgan says, patting her pet's glossy arched neck, "she played me false at a stone fence one day, and when we were picked up, I was found with the broken limbs I just mentioned; but we love each other, don't we, dear?"

The mare responds by a caressing movement of her handsome head, and Kate asks—

"What is her name? the darling! she's like a mare I had once."

"She was named by the person who gave her to me," Mrs. Durgan says, turning her head away, "he called her 'Guinevere.'"

A flush that makes her throb passes over Kate's face, but she resolves to make no more uncalled-for confidences, and so refrains from telling this frank new friend of hers what makes the name of Guinevere so inexpressibly interesting and dear to her. In order to turn the conversation, she says, putting her hand on a little table that is littered over with journals and magazines,

"You're fond of current literature, I see. Do you happen to have read any notices of—or to have seen any of Frank Forest's plays?"

"No—but I have heard of them often from a friend of his, my cousin Harry Bellairs, who is going to bring him here to dinner to-day!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 308. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER II. MIDDLEHAM'S NIECE.

CHAPONE HOUSE, the Misses Griggs's seminary for young ladies, stood upon the verge of Hampstead-heath, with its back to the Highgate-fields, and its front to the open air donkey-riding establishment. It was an overgrown rambling house, far too large for the Misses Griggs, and their servants, and the eight-and-thirty boarders, whose parents were not so sufficiently advanced as to think it necessary that their daughters should attend a college instead of going to school, and be put through a curriculum of study instead of learning their lessons. But the Misses Griggs had taken it on a lease, when worldly affairs were considerably better with them, and they could find no one to relieve them of the burden. So they kept it on like two brave women, as they were, fighting a very up-hill battle, and trying to make the best of it; endeavouring to forget that they had originally been born in a comfortable home and with pleasant expectations; putting up with all kinds of insult and detraction; working like galley-slaves, for nine months in the year, and only too thankful when the holidays arrived, to allow them a little time to sleep, to read, and to talk together, in a half-cheerful, half-melancholy manner, of the happy bygone days.

The holidays had come now, the long midsummer vacation, when during seven weeks the white dimity bedsteads in the young ladies' dormitories were to be untenanted, the long-suffering neighbours were to be permitted to forget that there

were such musical tortures as Czerny's exercises, or the overture to Semiramide, and the Misses Griggs were to sit on the pier at Herne Bay, and quote to each other Byron's lines about the ocean. This in itself was a holiday proceeding, as neither of them could have been tempted by large sums to so much as name the lamented poet of questionable morals during school term.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon. During the whole day cabs and flys had been grinding up the neatly gravelled walk in front of Chapone House, and scuttling off again, bearing away the pupils; the Misses Griggs were ready to faint with the amount of work they had undergone, in superintending the packing of the trunks, and their skinny little hands were almost shaken off with constant adieux. Finally, Miss Hannah, who had been standing on the top step, nodding like a Chinese mandarin, and waving her hand, long after the young lady to whom her farewells were addressed had ceased to notice her, came into the primly furnished drawing-room, and, with a sigh of relief, sat herself down by the side of Miss Martha, who looked equally tired and worn.

"There," said Miss Hannah, "there is Bell Cooke gone for good; a proud, stuck-up girl she was to the last, and would scarcely say good-bye to me after all our being so kind to her. I am almost glad to think she is not coming back, though of course one will miss her account, and Mr. Cooke was very liberal about extras."

"They are all gone now, Hannah, are they not?" said Miss Martha, smoothing her little black silk apron, and looking as though she were about to burst out crying.

"Yes, dear, all except Anne Studley and Grace, and I expect Mr. Middleham, or some one from him, every minute. Now that just shows the difference. I shall be heartily sorry to lose Grace, and would even keep her on for nothing—if we could afford it."

"I am afraid that Grace, good girl that she is, would find such kindness a little misplaced, Hannah," said Miss Martha, "when we think of her expectations and her future. The niece of a rich man like Mr. Middleham, more particularly such a pretty amiable girl, with such excellent principles, is sure to make a good match. What is strange to me is, how she makes such a friend of Anne Studley."

"You never liked poor Anne, Martha," said Miss Hannah, "and I could never help liking her. Of course, I see her faults, but there is something very taking to me in that strong determined nature of hers."

"Well, at all events, her friendship has been of some use to Gracie during their school life," said Miss Martha. "I don't know what that timid and credulous child would have done, more especially when she first came here, without the love and championship of Anne, to hold the other girls in check in regard to her."

"That is just what I say," said Miss Hannah, "Anne has always been the most popular girl in the school. Poor dear, she will want all her spirit and determination now, for I believe neither she nor anyone else has the slightest idea of what is in store for her."

"Well, Hannah," said Miss Martha, who was the elder and more reticent of the two, "we can never say that Captain Studley was behindhand with his half-yearly account; and when Anne leaves Chapone House, which will be in a very few hours, I suppose it is not for us to meddle with her future, beyond, of course, wishing it may be a happy one. And now, dear, I think we might have a cup of tea, and look at the Bradshaw, to see what train we should take on Thursday."

The two girls who had formed the subject of the old ladies' conversation, when the last of their schoolmates had been carried off, becoming tired of wandering in the set and formal garden, had stepped out through the open gate on to the wide Heath, and seated themselves on the short, crisp turf, surrounded by clumps of that beautiful yellow gorse,

which, in those days, flourished so luxuriantly at Hampstead, but which the ravages of the roughs, or the taste of the Metropolitan Board of Works, seems to have almost improved off the face of the common.

They are to play leading parts in this story, and it will be best for us to study them physically and mentally. They are both handsome, but of distinct types. This is Anne Studley, the tall, strongly made girl, with dark hair and complexion, and resolute, earnest eyes; distinguished and intellectual looking though, rather than pretty, with a long low forehead, a short, curling upper-lip, and a round, firm chin; her manner is quick and excited, and she illustrates her conversation with abundant gesture. Not that she speaks very much, for nature, and the small experience she has already had of the world, have combined to make her a thinker, and when with her constant companion, Grace Middleham, she is not called upon to put in many words, for Grace is a determined prattle. One of those pretty, fair-haired girls, with soft regular features, and timid manners, and gentle voices, who are perpetually cooing about everything, and who, though almost always in want of support, or advice, or assistance, render it almost impossible for one to help, owing to their multiplicity of words, and their paucity of sense. Even at that moment, though she knew that her time with Anne was precious, and was most anxious to hear details of her friend's future plans, she scarcely gave her an opportunity of replying to her own innumerable questions.

"Yes, dear, the day which we have so long looked forward to, has come at last," Grace was saying, "and there is an end of our stopping in this hateful place; which would have been more hateful still, to me at least, if I had not had you for my companion; and now what we have to decide is, what we are going to do in our future, and how we are to manage to see each other constantly, or to write when we are separated; and, in fact, to take care that that intimacy which has existed between us for so long is not given up in any way."

"Stop, Gracie, stop!" said Anne, with a grave smile, "or you will faint for sheer want of breath! My pet, don't you think that I too have been thinking that this is the last day we shall be here? though my feelings towards what you

call this hateful place, are very different to yours."

" You always liked it, I know," murmured Grace, as though the fact of her friend's having done so, was rather a personal affront to herself, " you always spoke well of it, and of those two dreadful old Griggses."

" I spoke well of it, because I have been very happy here; quietly happy, as I understand it, you know, Gracie; no delirium, no ecstasy, none of the terrible delights which are reserved for the heroines of romance, I imagine; but with you I have been happier than I shall probably ever be again; and as for those poor old ladies whom you call dreadful, I have had nothing but kindness from them."

" But they are such false old things," said Grace, " and all the time they are praising you for your prettiness, or your cleverness, or any of those absurd things, you know it is all put on, and that they don't really mean it!"

" There is no reason why they should 'put on' any show of affection for me," said Anne. " I am not the daughter or niece of a rich man, to be petted and made much of. Simple as they are, they have enough knowledge of life to appreciate that fact. I am only Anne Studley, with all the world just opening before me!" She said these last words more to herself than to her companion, and as she uttered them her hands dropped into her lap, and there was a strange light in her fixed eyes, as though she were striving to gaze into futurity.

" You are the dearest, sweetest darling that ever lived!" exclaimed Grace, putting her arm round her friend's neck, and softly kissing her cheek. " How dare you talk about rich men's nieces, as though you weren't better than me in every possible way! what should I have done in—yes, I will call it so, this hateful place, if it had not been for you? and how can I ever do enough in the future to show my gratitude? As to having the world before you, it seems to me quite delightful, after having been limited to that dull garden, or this dreary heath. I suppose, that in reality my uncle's place at Loddonford is dull, but after this I shall look upon it as Paradiso."

" And so you ought," said Anne, " I have heard you say it is very pretty."

" Oh, pretty, yes—lawn and river, and flowers, and all that kind of thing—pretty

enough if I recollect rightly, for I've not been there since Aunt Helen died, as uncle does not like children, and, as you know, I have been here holidays and all until now, when I am supposed to be sufficiently old to keep house at Loddonford, or, as uncle writes in his old-fashioned way, 'to preside over his establishment.' But one wants something more than prettiness in one's future home, dear!"

" Does one?" said Anne, abstractedly, her eyes still fixed upon space. " Does one? Yes! I suppose so, comfort—and peace!"

" Comfort and peace—company and parties!" said Grace, with a laugh. " Loddonford is just the place for a fête, garden-party and water-party combined, don't you know; and I believe uncle occasionally gives entertainments of that kind. He has never said anything to me about it, for up to the present moment he has looked upon me merely as a child, but I saw, in an old *Morning Post*, which Miss Martha bought to read about the wedding of one of the old pupils, an elaborate account of the fête at Loddonford, and a list of the guests, who seemed to be very great people. I am sure I could persuade uncle into giving more of these parties—or you could, you have a wonderful power of making people do as you wish, and I shall leave him to you—and then we shall enjoy ourselves, shall we not?"

" You will, I have no doubt dear, but I question whether it would be much enjoyment to me, even if I were there with you. But, my sweet Gracie," continued Anne, taking her friend's hand between her own, and gently smoothing it as she spoke, " You seem to forget that the life which we have been leading is on the point of ending! After to-day, our paths will be in very different directions."

" You have mentioned that fact more than once before, Anne," said Grace, giving in to the petting, but still assuming a somewhat hurt tone, " and though I have each time asked you a plain straightforward question, I have as yet been unable to get it answered."

" Try once more, dear," said Anne, playing with her friend's fair curls, " and I promise you that this time you shall succeed!"

" Well then, I want to know," said Grace, speaking with as much decision as she could summon into her voice, and into

the naturally amiable, and rather weak expression of her face, "why you cannot at once promise that, so soon as I am settled at Loddonford, you will come and stay with me for an indefinite time? Stop a minute!" she cried, raising her hand in admonitory gesture to Anne, who seemed about to speak. "I know what you are going to say—that I must have my uncle's consent, and you must be properly invited? That is so like you, always standing out for formalities, even between us! But, fortunately, that objection is disposed of. In his last letter, my uncle says that I shall probably find the Loddonford house dull, more especially as he is absent during the whole day, and that he wishes me always to have some visitor staying with us. I will read you what he writes," she continued, taking a letter from her pocket: 'Girls, I believe, are famous for making school friendships, which they break about a year after their entrance upon life, and hate the chosen one as much as they formerly loved her!' you don't mind that ridiculous nonsense, do you, Anne? recollect it is only the opinion of a confirmed old bachelor. Now I'll go on. 'No doubt you have been inoculated with this same disease; there is some young lady to whom you confide all your secrets, and wheresoe'er you go, like Juno's swans, still you go constant and inseparable. Well, let her come to Loddonford, and she shall be made heartily welcome. Only she must not expect a return visit from you! It is so long since I have seen my little niece that I intend keeping her all to myself.' There, that's what he says!"

"That letter is full of kindness; you ought to be very happy, Gracie," said Anne, who had relapsed into her abstraction.

"Yes, I know I ought, and I intend to be, if you will help me. But, you see, you're again shirking my question—will you come and stay with me as soon as I am settled in my new home?"

"I am afraid it will be impossible, dear," said Anne, very quietly.

"Impossible! and why?" cried Grace, roused to something like excitement; "don't you care for me any more? haven't you heard my uncle's invitation? do you——"

"What I mean, darling," interrupted Anne, putting her arm round Gracie's pretty waist, and recurring to the soothing process of fondling her hand, "what I

mean is that it is impossible for me at this instant to tell anything clearly about my future."

"Do you mean that you do not know, or that you do not choose to say?" asked impetuous Grace, who was keenly jealous of anything like reticence on her friend's part.

"I do not know what is going to happen to me; I have had no intimation of what my future life is to be," said Anne, slowly, but as though speaking under a sense of pain.

"But surely you must have some idea about it, Anne," persisted Grace, "your father must have said something about what you were to do?"

"My father has given me no confidence; he has never opened his lips to me on the subject."

"Oh, well then, of course it is all easily understood," said Grace, with an air of having settled the difficulty; "you will go home to your father, and remain with him, like a dutiful girl, for a little time, and then come and stop with me at Loddonford. When I once get you there, I'll defy any one to take you away in a hurry!"

"I am sorry, dear, to do away with your pretty illusions in the matter," said Anne, with an attempt at a smile, "but I must do so without reserve. I have spoken to you very little about my belongings and my position, but now, when we are going to part, I feel the time has come when you should know a little more about them. You talk about my going home, but I have no home, Gracie!"

"No home, dear!" repeated Grace, with an awestruck face, nestling up to her friend—"my poor darling!"

"Not what you would call a home," said Anne. "My mother has been long dead, so long, that I can scarcely recollect her, and my father has no settled place in England; his business, I believe, takes him constantly abroad."

"But Captain Studley is in London sometimes," said Grace, "because I can remember more than once, when you have been away for two or three days together. You never said anything about it on your return, but Miss Hannah always said you were gone to your father."

"Oh, yes," said Anne, "there have been several occasions when I have gone to him in that way, staying with him at some hotel in London. But you can scarcely call that going home."

"Of course not, dear!" said Grace. "At an hotel! how strange you must have felt. What did you do to pass the time?"

"I was scarcely in the house at all," replied Anne, "for papa took me out sightseeing in the day time, and to the theatre at night."

"Oh then, he is kind to you?"

"What induced you to imagine the contrary?" asked Anne, quickly, the colour flushing her dark cheeks. "Nothing that I have ever said, I'm sure!"

"No dear, nothing, indeed, and I'm awfully sorry for having made the remark," said Grace, trying her utmost to look penitent, "but it seems strange for a girl, who really has a father, to see so little of him. At least it strikes me so, though never having known what it was to have one, perhaps I'm no judge!"

"Your question was natural enough, dear, and it was absurd in me to be annoyed at it, even for a moment! It must strike you, and doubtless every one else, as odd that there should be so little intercourse between my father and myself. It is so, however, and hitherto I have not been sorry for it. What it is to be now I have no idea."

"You don't mean to say that you don't love your father, Anne?" said Grace, in an awestruck whisper.

"I don't say that, at all, dear," returned Anne, "I suppose—I am sure that I have all proper and dutiful feeling for him. But he is a strange man, very odd and peculiar. I am never at ease with him, and, in real truth, he frightens me!"

"Frightens you!" cried Grace; "you, who are never daunted by any one, to be frightened at your own father!"

"It is a melancholy fact," said Anne, "inexplicable, but horribly true! I have often wondered what can have inspired me, who, as you say, am daunted by nothing, with this terror. It is that which has prevented my asking any questions about what is now to become of me. Papa has volunteered no statement, and I have been actually afraid to ask him what are his intentions concerning me."

"What a coward you are, Anne!" said Grace. "I shall begin to consider myself quite brave in comparison! What could he do? He could only scold you, however much he might be annoyed!"

"He has never scolded me in his life," said Anne, "I have taken care never to give him cause. But I have heard him

angry with others, and have always been fearful of coming under his rage."

"Well, I don't know," said Grace, much crestfallen. "I hope my uncle is not like that, or I don't see much good in leaving school. I used to think that old Martha the crossest old wretch in the world, but now it seems as though one were likely to wish oneself back with her. Do you know, Anne, the name of Captain Studley sounds strangely familiar to me, and I have a strong idea that I must have seen him years ago at Loddonford."

"It is possible, but not very probable, dear," replied Anne. "I have never heard papa mention the name, though he would not be likely to do so to me," she added with a sigh.

"What kind of looking man is he?" asked Grace. "You don't mind my putting such personal questions, do you, dear? I'm really interested about it!"

"A tall, thin, elderly man with iron-grey hair and a heavy grizzled moustache," said Anne, "looking like a soldier, with an upright figure and a smart decided manner. Generally very grave, but studiously polite to ladies in an old-fashioned formal way. I don't know anything else noticeable about him!"

"It must be the same!" said Grace. "I particularly remember the way in which he bowed when uncle introduced him to me, so different from the half shame-faced manner in which young men pull off their hats, as though they knew the sacrifice they were making, and it was almost too much to expect from them! How strange now, to think I should have met your father!"

"I almost wonder papa has never spoken of Mr. Middleham, for he has often heard me talk of you," said Anne, "but he is very reticent, and when we are together I generally chatter for both of us!"

"It was not at uncle's house that I saw Captain Studley," said Grace. "He was walking down the village, and I have an odd kind of idea in my head, and yet that can't be possible, that uncle said he lived there."

"That must be purely an effort of imagination, dear," said Anne, with a grave smile; "from the description you have often given me of your quiet, retired Loddonford, it is, I should think, the very last place in which papa could pitch his tent, if, indeed, he should ever give up the wandering life which he has led so long."

"Oh, it will be all right, Anne, and you must insist upon his settling down in some nice house in London," said Grace, with the easy conviction of one who has generally had her own way. "You should get some of Captain Studley's friends to help you in persuading him."

"You seem to forget that I know none of papa's friends, Gracie: that I scarcely know anything of him," she added, but in an undertone that her companion did not hear.

"I thought you might have seen them at the hotel, or that they might have gone to the theatre with you," argued Grace.

"Now you remind me, I was introduced to the gentleman who went with us to the theatre one night, but I had almost forgotten his existence. His name was Heath."

"Now I am sure that it must be Captain Studley whom I saw at Loddonford," cried Grace, in great exultation, "for I have often heard uncle speak of Mr. Heath, who is the chief cashier in the bank."

"Your argument is not a very close one, dear," said Anne, smiling again; "but still what you say is quite possible. What kind of a man is your Mr. Heath? The gentleman I met was tall and dark."

"I don't know that I ever saw Mr. Heath," said Grace; "and if I had I should certainly not have taken any particular notice of him, as one of the clerks. I—I beg your pardon, dear!" she cried the next minute. "I did not mean to say anything, which might—don't you know what I mean?"

"Perfectly, my sweet Gracie!" said Anne. "There is no need of any explanation. What can this girl want?" she added; "it is evidently to us she is beckoning! Do you want us, Mary? Is anything the matter?"

"Please, miss," said the girl, scarcely able to speak for lack of breath, "Miss Middleham is wanted at once! A gentleman's come to see her, and Miss Martha wishes her to come back immediate."

"We shall be there almost as soon as you, Mary," said Anne. And the girls returned to the house together.

Miss Hannah met them in the garden. Anne noticed at once that the old lady was labouring under unusual emotion. Her voice quivered, and her poor withered hand, in its net-mitten, shook visibly as she laid it on Grace's shoulder.

"Is uncle in the drawing-room, Miss Hannah?" asked Grace.

"It's—it's not your uncle, dear; it's a gentleman from the bank," said the old lady. "He says he must see you at once! Do you know, dear—don't be frightened—but, I think he brings bad news for you!"

"Bad news!" cried the girls simultaneously.

"He said as much to us, and—and Martha told me to break it to you—and—and now I've done it! God bless you, my dear, and sustain you in your trouble!" And the poor old lady burst into a fit of tears.

"You will come with me, Anne, and hear what this is?" said Grace, in a low voice. She was very pale, and her lips were tight set.

"Of course, dear, if you wish it!" replied Anne, pressing her arm. As they entered the room, a gentleman, who had his back to them, turned round. A tall, dark, very handsome man, in whom Anne Studley recognised her father's friend, Mr. Heath.

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

MARCO POLO.

In many respects this remarkable traveller differs from all his predecessors. "Our Mr. Marco," junior partner in the great house of Polo Brothers, of Venice, Constantinople, and Soldaia, trading to the East in jewels, cloth of silver and gold, spicery, rare woods and gums—the greatest of all commercial travellers—was endowed with characteristics peculiarly his own. Like other early travellers, he wandered in the hope of making something by his "journey," and made it; but he had few feelings in common with the brave and astute Ville Hardouin, with the gallant and outspoken Joinville, or with that stout friar William de Rubruquis. The fighting travellers would have looked down upon the noble Venetian as a "huckster," and the envoy of St. Louis would have lifted his hands in horror, at the idea of a Christian gentleman dwelling for the best part of his life among infidel Tartars, adopting their dress, manners, customs, and language, and serving that prototype of antichrist, the chief of the Mongol race, in the capacity of envoy and ambassador to other idolatrous monarchs, more pestilent, if possible, than himself. Nevertheless the Venetian merchant saw more of the great world than any of his contemporaries; wrote, or rather dictated,

a book ; and performed the far more difficult operation of making an immense fortune. His book, although describing travels more extended than those of his predecessor Rubruquis, lacks many of the qualities which distinguish the report of the patient friar, who paints a single expedition with singular power, and exhibits rare good sense in the selection of stories and illustrations connected with his embassy. It is true that the narrative of Rubruquis was written by himself, in a language with which he was familiar, in the calm solitude of a monastic cell, while the book of Ser Marco Polo was dictated during an imprisonment at Genoa, under the disadvantage of being severely "interviewed" by the curious inhabitants. It has, indeed, been affirmed that the interviewing referred to, and the intolerable infliction of telling the same stories over and over again begot in the busy brain of Ser Marco the idea of putting his travels on paper, and thus getting rid of the nuisance for good and all. Be this as it may, a certain Rusticano of Pisa, a Genoese or Tuscan fellow-prisoner, undertook to write down the book from dictation. When it is remembered that the dialects of Venice, Genoa, and Tuscany are exceedingly dissimilar, little wonder will be excited at the work having been produced in French, a language spoken and written by both author and amanuensis with equal inaccuracy. Why it was not writ either in Latin or corrected into "very choice Italian" may excite some astonishment ; but the best authorities, Colonel Yule and M. Pauthier, are agreed that, if not the original notes, the whole work was written at first in a barbarous dialect of the French then spoken. Thanks to this, to a certain want of arrangement, and a general doubt as to when the author is speaking from personal observation and when from hearsay, the famous book of Marco Polo lacks entirely the clearness and coherence of earlier records of travel. In quantity of matter, however, and in vivid description of the empire of Cathay (China), then under the sway of Kublai Khan, Marco Polo stands unrivalled. He was the first traveller to cross the entire breadth of Asia, naming and describing kingdom after kingdom as he passed through the deserts of Persia, the lofty plateaux of the Pamir—the roof of the world—the wild mountain regions of Khotan and Kashgar, and the brilliant court at Cambaluc (Peking). He first re-

vealed to incredulous Europe the wealth and vastness of China, and the marvels of the Indian Seas, studded with islands full of wealth and wonders. First among Europeans he visited and described India, Cochin China, the islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Ceylon, and Madagascar, and pointed out to sceptical Italy that towards sunrise were lands and nations, rulers and cities, compared with which Europe was a dreary waste, inhabited by barbarians wanting almost every comfort and refinement of life.

Ser Marco Polo was bred for business. The family of Polo hailed originally from the opposite side of the Adriatic, and are said to have left Sebenico in Dalmatia to settle in Venice, sometime during the first half of the eleventh century. There they speedily acquired rank, for proofs have at last been found which set at rest the disputed question of Marco's personal claims to nobility. The grandfather of the great traveller, one Andrea Polo, had three sons, Marco, Maffeo, and Nicolo the father of Marco the younger. They were all—after the manner of noble Venetians of the time—engaged in commerce, and were apparently bound together by a species of partnership which was not entirely dissolved by the long absence of the two younger brothers in the east. Marco the elder was undoubtedly at one time established in Constantinople, and had also a branch house of business at Soldaia (Soudak) in the Crimea. Marco the younger was born in 1254—the year of Rubruquis's mission to the east—and was therefore six years of age when the wanderings of the Poli commenced. In 1260, according to Colonel Yule, Christendom had recovered from the alarm into which it had been thrown by the Tartar cataclysm. Albeit in Asia and Eastern Europe scarcely a dog might bark, without Mongol leave, from the borders of Poland and the coast of Cilicia to the Amur and the Yellow Sea ; and the vast empire of Chinghiz nominally owned a supreme head in the great Kaan, practically it was splitting up into several great monarchies, under the descendants of the four sons of Chinghiz. Personally the Tartars had become objects rather of curiosity than terror, and at the Venetian trading ports on the Crimean coast the Italians had abundant opportunities of becoming familiar with the rulers of Asia. At this period, two of the Polo family—Nicolo and Maffeo—were at Constanti-

nople, Nicolo having left his wife and child behind him at Venice. While at Constantinople, they learned that a new and distant, but promising market for costly wares was to be found upon the banks of the Volga, among the Tartars of the West, who, after laying waste a great part of Europe and Asia, had settled down quietly and built cities, notably Sarai and Bolghar near that great river. The brothers started at once on a trading venture to the Crimea, and, taking with them a store of jewels, crossed the Black Sea to Soldaia. Having stayed awhile at Soldaia, they resolved to push into the interior of the country, and travelled—apparently by the route followed by Rubruquis—across the Crimean peninsula, over the isthmus of Perekop, and by the Sea of Azof and the Don to the Volga, till they reached the court of Barca Kaan, a most liberal and courteous prince, who received the Venetians with great honour, accepted the jewels they presented to him, and caused them to receive “at least twice the value of their offering.” At the court of this prince the Poli remained for a year, when war broke out between Barca and Alau (Hulákú, founder of the Mongol dynasty in Persia).

In the end Barca was defeated, but the country between the brothers and the Crimea remained in a disturbed condition, so that “no one could travel without peril of being taken,” wherefore they determined to go forward. Quitting Bolghar, a city which stood on the left bank of the Volga, some ninety miles below Kazan, the travellers proceeded to a city called Ucaca, near the modern Saratov, and then, passing the Volga (styled by Polo the Tigris—from a belief that that river flowed down from Paradise and burrowed under the Caspian Sea), journeyed over a desert for “seventeen days.” This must mean one stretch of desert, as the whole journey from the Volga, across the Ural and Emba rivers, around the northern end of Lake Aral, and across the country between the Jaxartes (Sir Daria) to Bokhara, could not have been effected under sixty days. At Bokhara the brothers found themselves so “fixed that they could neither go further forward nor yet turn back again.” Time in the middle ages was not estimated at the same value as now, and the Poli made a “halt” for three years in the city of Bokhara. Whilst they were sojourning there came envoys from Hulákú—Lord of the Levant—to the Great Kaan of all the

Tartars, and the envoys, when they beheld the brethren, were “amazed,” and entreated them to travel with them to the court of the great Kaan, who, they were assured, would be right glad to see them, and would treat them with great honour and liberality. And it came to pass that they went. They were well received at the court of “Cablay Kaan,” who was greatly pleased with his visitors, and their discourse in the Tartar language, “which they knew right well;” and who, having a great respect for the Pope—mainly, perhaps, on account of the facility with which that spiritual potentate could organise Crusades, and hurl Europe against the East—determined to send the two brothers on an embassy to Clement the Fourth. They undertook this mission in conjunction with one Cogatal—a “baron” of the Tartar Empire; and letters were indited to the Pope, in which the Holy Father was prayed to send presently unto the Kaan an hundred Christians, intelligent men, acquainted with the Seven Arts, well qualified to enter into controversy, and able clearly to prove, by force of argument, to idolaters and other kinds of folk, that the law of Christ was best, and that all other religions were false and nought; and that if they would prove this, he and all under him would become Christians, and the Church’s liegemen. Finally he charged his envoys to bring back to him some oil of the lamp which burns on the sepulchre of our Lord at Jerusalem. And being furnished with a tablet of gold, commanding all men to furnish them with what they might require, the two brothers set out and arrived at Layas (Ayas) in Lesser Armenia, in the space of three years, their progress having been much arrested by snow, heavy rains, and great torrents.

On arriving at Acon (Acre) in the year 1269, they found that the Pope was dead, and as the new Pope was over long in making, thought it might be well to run over to Venice, and visit their households. Here Messer Nicolo found his wife dead, and his son grown to a promising lad of fifteen. For a couple of years the two brothers remained in Venice, waiting until a Pope should be made, but, growing at length impatient, they left Venice, accompanied by Marco, and going to Acre, asked the permission of the legate Tebaldo di Vicenza, to obtain oil from the Holy Sepulchre, and having obtained it, started to return to the Kaan, when tidings

arrived at Acre, that the Cardinals had at length elected as Pope no other than the legate Tebaldo himself (Gregory X.) The new Pope sent messages to recall the brothers, who were then furnished with papal letters, and received the Pope's benediction. Moreover two friars of the order of preachers were associated with them in the embassy. On regaining Layas, however, tidings arrived that Bundükdar, Soldan of Babylon (Cairo) had invaded Armenia with a great host of Saracens, and when the preaching friars heard this, "they were greatly frightened, and said that go they never would." So they made over their credentials and documents to the Poli, and departed in company with the Master of the Temple.

Meanwhile, Marco, his father, and uncle, strayed into Central Asia. Starting from Ays—the ancient Ege, the chief port of Cilician Armenia, on the Gulf of Scanderoon—at which there was then a great trade in spicey and cloths of silk and gold, the Venetians traversed Lesser Hermenia (Armenia) and entered "the province of Turcomania." The inhabitants are described as "worshippers of Mahomet, a rude people, with an uncooth language of their own." Subject to these rude warriors were the degenerate Armenians and Greeks, who occupied themselves with trade and handicrafts, weaving "the finest and handsomest carpets in the world, and also a great quantity of fine and rich silks, of cramoisy and other colours." Under the title of Turcomania, Marco Polo includes a great part of Asia Minor, then subject to the Sultan of Iconium or Couia. Entering now into Greater Hermenia—celebrated for baths and buckram, probably a very different material from that which now bears the name—our travellers pushed onwards. Polo merely halts for an instant to speak of Georgiania—a country towards the north—where there is a "fountain from which oil springs in great abundance, insomuch that a hundred shiploads might be taken from it at one time. This oil is not good to use with food, but is good to burn, and is also used to anoint camels that have the mange."

Pausing to describe the Iron Gate of Alexander, Derbend—not far from Tiflis, on the Caucasus, where the remains of enormous fortifications yet remain—and a convent of nuns, with a miraculous lake, wherein fish were only found during Lent, Marco next speaks of the Sea of Ghel (the

Caspian) and hurries on to talk of the kingdom of Mosul and Bandas (Baghdad) its capital, and the ancient seat of the Kalifat—whence in the middle ages came the rich silk and gold brocades called Baldachini. From their use in the state canopies and umbrellas of Italian dignitaries, the word Baldacchino has come to mean a canopy, even when made of metal or stone. It is a true curiosity of nomenclature, that the town where dwelt the high priest of Mahomed should give a name to the canopy over a Christian altar!

Apropos of Baghdad, Polo fails not to tell the story of the last of the Caliphs—since put into verse by Longfellow—who being renowned for his avarice, was after his capture taunted by Hulákú, his Mongol conqueror, for keeping his treasure locked up, instead of spending a part of it on thews and sinews to defend the rest. "The Calif wist not what to answer, and said never a word. So the Prince continued, 'Now, then, Calif, since I see what a love thou hast borne thy treasure, I will e'en give it thee to eat!' So he shut the Calif up in the Treasure Tower, and bade that neither meat nor drink should be given to him, saying, 'Now, Calif, eat of thy treasure as much as thou wilt, since thou art so fond of it; for never shalt thou have aught else to eat.' So the Calif lingered in the tower four days, and then died like a dog." This story, which varies in some important particulars from the version given by Moslem historians, is followed by an astonishing account of a Christian miracle—a mountain moved from its place by a one-eyed cobbler, who had half-blinded himself, because he had once been tempted into admiration of the shapely extremities of a lady who came to be measured for a pair of boots. This is followed by the history of the later career of the three magi, and the traveller then pulls up at the City of Kerman—reached from Armenia via Tabreez. Kerman was celebrated for its turquoises, its steel, and "ondanique," "hundwánéy," or Indian steel. This is made without passing through the intermediate stage of "blistering," and was doubtless believed in the middle ages, as it still is in India, to be made direct from a peculiar ore, akin to but not identical with that of iron. Colonel Yale says: "An old Indian officer told me of the reply of a native friend to whom he had tried to explain the conversion of iron into steel—'What? you

would have me believe that if I put an ass into the furnace it will come forth a horse!"'

The Poli appear to have found time while at Kerman to make an excursion to Hormuz, then an important city on the Persian Gulf. Crossing a magnificent plain full of fine streams of water, date-palms, and other fruit trees, they reached the famous entrepôt of the East, whither "came merchants from India, with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, cloths of silk and gold, elephants' teeth, and many other wares which they sell to the merchants of Hormaz, and which these in turn carry all over the world to dispose of again." Turning northwards from Kerman, the embassy proceeded on its way through a desert to Cabinan, and through the desert of Khorassan and over the mountains to Balkh, described as a noble city and a great. Ascending the course of the Oxus, the Venetians pushed through Khunduz to Badakhshan, where, owing to the illness of young Marco, they tarried the space of a year, acquiring meanwhile much valuable, and, as it has since been shown, correct information touching the incursions made into India by the Mongols up to that date. Marco gives an account of the Balas ruby mines, describing the ruler of the district as restricting the output in order to keep up prices; waxes eloquent over the beauty of the fine fertile hill country, with abundance of grass, water and trees; and bears testimony to the excellent qualities of the mountain air, which finally restored him to health. Polo now found himself in that heart of central Asia which at the present moment excites the curiosity of geographers and the anxiety of statesmen. Pursuing the great river of Badakhshan—meaning the Panja or upper course of the Oxus—the Venetians rode for twelve days, till they reached Vokhan (Wakhan), and found there many beasts, and among others the wild sheep, since called Ovis Poli. "This plain is called Pamer (Pamir), and you ride across it for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert without habitations or any green thing, so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of. The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying." Recent explorations of the Pamir, or rather Pamirs, are adverse to the idea of its being a vast table land. The officers sent home by that route from Kashgar, by Mr. Forsyth, reported the tract of country as being

broken up into a system of deep valleys, and varied somewhat from the report of Lieutenant Wood, touching the lake variously called Victoria, Sikandara, or Sirikol. Nevertheless the Venetian cannot be accused of much exaggeration when he remarks that the Pamir is "said to be the highest place in the world. And when you have got to this height, you find a great lake between two mountains, and out of it a fine river running through a plain clothed with the finest pasture in the world, insomuch that a lean beast there will fatten to your heart's content in ten days."

Captain John Wood, in his interesting account of the Upper Waters of the Oxus, warmly applauds the description given by Marco Polo, as correct in all its leading points. The native expression, Bam-i-Dümiah, the roof of the world, explains Marco's, "'tis said to be the highest place in the world," and his account of the lake is exact.

According to Captain Wood, "this lake lies in the form of a crescent, about fourteen miles long from east to west by an average breadth of one mile. On three sides it is bordered by swelling hills, about five hundred feet high, whilst along its southern banks they rise into mountains three thousand five hundred feet above the lake, or nineteen thousand feet above the sea, and covered with perpetual snow, from which never-failing source the lake is supplied." Measured by the temperature of boiling water, the exact height of the lake above the sea is fifteen thousand six hundred feet, or sixty-two feet lower than the summit of Mount Blanc. This "roof of the world" would appear to be the highest table-land in Asia and probably in any part of our globe. From Pamir the ground sinks in every direction except to the south-east—where similar plateaux extend along the northern face of the Himalaya into Tibet. Whether the Pamir be or be not justly entitled the watershed of Central Asia, there is no doubt that the mountains which encircle lake Sir-i-kol give rise to many great rivers, such as the Yarkand River, the Sirr or Kokan river, and the Kunar. The inhabitants of the surrounding country claim descent from the ancient Greeks—the chiefs of Badakhshan Wakhan, Darwaz and Chitral tracing their ancestry direct to Alexander the Great, otherwise Hazrat Zekunder, whom the Mohammedans have canonised.

Leaving the Pamir on the south, the

Poli traversed the savage region of Belor and reached Kashgar, then, as now, a place of great trade, and travelled on via Yarkand to Khotan, and then, striking to the north, traversed the southern slope of the Thian Shan range, and crossing the desert of Gobi—invested with many supernatural terrors—they came to Seha-chew, or the “City of the Sands,” where they found, as at many other points of their journey, a mixed population of idolaters, Mahommedans, and Nestorian Christians, who appear to have been tolerated, after a fashion, by most of the early Mongol rulers.

Marco Polo’s remarks, however, on the manners of the Tartars coincide so closely with those of Rubruquis that I shall pass them over with a mere acknowledgment of their general exactitude. On leaving the City of the Sands the Poli entered the province of Tangut, now considered as part of China Proper. At this point the young Venetian undertakes to explain the true nature of the fabled salamander. In the province of Chingintalas, according to Marco “is a mountain in which are excellent veins of steel and ondanique. And you must know that in the same mountain there is a vein of the substance from which salamander (asbestos) is made. For the real truth is that the salamander is no beast, as they allege in our part of the world, but is a substance found in the earth.” After showing his good sense in repudiating the fabled lizard, our traveller shows the curious fitters which enclosed thought in his day by saying: “Everybody must be aware that it can be no animal’s nature to live in fire, seeing that every animal is composed of all the four elements.” These four elements, earth, water, air, and fire, became a sore stumbling-block in the way of philosophic inquiry, at the period when astrology and alchemy were gradually displaced by astronomy and chemistry.

Through strange lands teeming with wonders, journeyed the three Poli for three years and a half, and came at length to the great Kaan Kublai, who was then sojourning at Kemenfu (Kaipingfu) a new city founded some four years before the accession of Kublai. It became the favourite residence of that great monarch, and from 1264 was styled Shangtu or “Upper Court.” This is the Chandu of Marco Polo and the Xanadu of Coleridge—

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure dome decree.

The travellers were well received by the

Khan, who, on hearing through his messengers—regular posts were then established in Tartary—of the advent of the Venetians, sent people a journey of full forty days to meet them and entertain them on the road. At the audience which was at once granted them the Poli presented the credentials and letters which they had received from the Pope, and the oil from the Holy Sepulchre, at which the Kaan “was very glad, for he set great store thereby.” Marco himself, on being presented, was graciously received by the Kaan; and making wondrous progress in learning the customs of the Tartars, their language, their manner of writing, and their practice in war, was held in such esteem by the Emperor that he sent him “on an ambassage of his to a country which was a good six months’ journey distant.”

The young gallant (*jeune Bachelor*) executed his commission well and displayed true Italian acuteness, for “he had taken note on several occasions that when the Prince’s ambassadors returned from different parts of the world, they were able to tell him about nothing except the business on which they had gone, and that the prince in consequence held them for no better than fools and dolts, and would say, ‘I had far liever hearken about the strange things and the manners of the different countries you have seen, than merely be told of the business you went upon.’” Marco therefore, as he went and returned, took pains to learn about all kinds of different matters in the countries which he visited, in order to be able to tell about them to the Great Kaan.”

The system adopted by young Polo of combining the functions of an ambassador with those of a “special correspondent” explains much of what would otherwise be puzzling in a singularly matter-of-fact book. Marco, not content with describing what he saw—generally very clearly—interlards his narrative with many marvellous stories introduced with the orthodox “I heard” or “it was told to me.” During the long time—some eighteen years—that he remained in the service of Kublai, he was sent on missions, to many parts of India, China and Cochin China, and evidently employed much diligence in picking up news to interest his exceedingly royal and liberal master. To this avidity for narrative we are indebted for many of the tales which have thrown discredit on an otherwise veracious narrative.

When Marco Polo discourses on the

personal appearance of the Great Kaan; the number of his wives and children; the curious system of competitive examination in beauty, undergone by ladies aspiring to the honour of dwelling in the imperial harem; the general rule of the country; paper money, messengers and posts; the employment of the cheetah in hunting; the wondrous cities of Cambaluc, Cura-coron, and Kinsay; and the black stones (coal) that are dug in Cathay, and used for fuel, he is almost invariably accurate. Touching the latter item, his accuracy is extraordinary. He says of these "black stones," "if you supply the fire with them at night, and see that they are well kindled, you will find them still alight in the morning," an exact description of the anthracite coal which abounds in Szechuen and Yunnan. In the observations gathered during his Indian and Cambodian journeyings, he is not less accurate, within the limit of his personal experience, and gives graphic descriptions of the oil-head (spermaceti whale producing ambergris), the cameleopard and other curious animals, but no sooner does he commence with "I was told," than some stupendous monster turns up, such as the two-footed serpent—supposed by some to be the alligator, and by others the boa.

Basking in the smiles of the Great Kaan, the Poli waxed mighty in Cathay, but after the space of seventeen years, "they began among themselves to think of returning to their own country." In justice to the Poli, it must be said that their desire to depart was not influenced by sentimental conditions. The Kaan was getting old, and in the east, foreigners were peculiarly liable to forfeiture of their goods on the death of the reigning sovereign, and the successful Poli were not without enemies. Wherefore they applied to him for leave to go, "but he had such a partiality for them, and liked so much to have them about him, that nothing on earth would persuade him to let them go." Fortune, however, favoured the Venetians, for it came to pass that Bolgana (Bolghan) wife of Argon, Lord of the Levant, died, after requesting in her will that no lady should succeed her as Argon's wife, save one of her own family. Wherefore Argon sent ambassadors to the court of the Great Kaan, to bring back a bride of the family of Queen Bolgana. This request was at once entertained by the Kaan, who sent for a lady whose name

was Cocachin—a maiden of seventeen, a very beautiful and charming person.

Meanwhile Ser Marco had returned from India, whither he had been on an embassy, and set on the bridal ambassadors to request of the Kaan that they might be allowed to take home the lady by sea, and that the three Latins, on account of their "great knowledge and experience of the Indian seas," might be suffered to accompany them. With sore reluctance the Kaan consented, and having charged his faithful servants with messages to many Christian kings, suffered them to depart with a great retinue in thirteen ships. After a voyage of eighteen months in the Indian seas, and losing six hundred of their following, they arrived in port (probably Ormuz) and finding that Argon was dead, quietly handed over the lady Cocachin, to his son, after the Tartar fashion. Having performed their duty, the envoys travelled on by Trebizond, Constantinople, and Negropont, to Venice, where they arrived in the year 1295.

On their arrival they found the elder Marco dead, and everybody else indisposed to recognise them; but when they gave a superb banquet, appeared magnificently attired, and exhibited great store of jewels, they were immediately acknowledged as true Amphitryons. The adventures of Marco junior, however, were not yet over. In the great sea fight of Curzola, between the Venetians and the Genoese, he was taken and detained in prison for four years. On returning to Venice he married, had two daughters, and, about the age of three-score and ten, was finally gathered to his fathers. His declining years, however, although sweetened by family ties and abundant wealth, were not without the inevitable drop of bitterness.

Like many other great men, he lived long enough to acknowledge that no man is a prophet in his own country. In the domains of Kublai Khan he had filled the rôle of ambassador to the most powerful monarch of the known world. He made treaties, and conducted princesses to their future homes. His life was full of power, gold, and glory, but when he made the mistake of going home, he sank, despite the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind, into an ordinary Venetian citizen. His enemies rejoiced that he had written a book, and every trumpery paddler in the lagoons had his little joke against Marco Millions—for so they named him, because

he truthfully spake of millions when recounting the teeming population of China. The Venetians, who had never seen a million of men, declined to believe in aught beyond their narrow experience, and nicknamed him Marco Millione, and his house the Corte Millione, a name which abode long after the generation of Poli had passed away. Nay, worse than this, they perpetuated his memory in masquerades as a comic character, who fastened on people and told them ludicrous and impossible stories. Thus through the long decadence of the City of the Sea, was her greatest traveller—at once a merchant, statesman, and diplomatist—depicted to a ribald crowd as a garrulous button-holder and mendacious buffoon.

SUNFLOWER.

A MEMORY.

HERSELF! Least fit of all flower-names to write
Beneath a face so pausy-pure and shy!
Yet memory holds the key. A primrose light,
Rose-rifted, down a waning western sky
Was shrinking slowly. Stretched above, a sea
Of drifted purple and wind-winnowed gold
Surged slumberously. The garden glowed, and she
Whose eye-flushed face I shall no more behold,
Stood midst the leafage by yon tangled bower,
Measuring her maiden height against a sunflower.
A child with a child's fancy! Yet the glance
From her unshadowed eyes did move my heart
Like mountaine music. Oh, that rustling dance
Of wind-stirred woodbine! As a fawn will start
When the fern crisps beneath my wary tread,
So started she a moment, letting slip
The sun-rayed flower that kissed her dainty head;
Then, with a glancing smile that touched her lip
As swallow-wing still water, she did pass
As softly as her sliding shadow o'er the grass.
One mocked me, she who at her bosom bore
The richest of rare blooms. What rustic charm
Might match the pure patrician grace she wore
So proudly? Yet that garden! Seemed there harm
In those dear wanderings when the wilds were low
At eve, and all the winding walks were dim?
Heaven hath no angel whiter than her brow,
Nor is there any seraph's Vesper hymn
More pure than was her greeting, when the light
Waned wholly, and her lips shaped their most sweet
good-night!
That garden! Leafy as green June, and bland
With fragrance as the rose's inmost heart.
See, here bespeaks of dead flowers! Her hand
Gathered them that still eve when, loth to part,
Since parting searched all secrets, at the gate
We lingered. Could the coward in my soul
Abide a keener curse. Pride whispered "Wait!"
When love cried "Clasp!" A dastard self-control,
Born of self-seeking, slew the man in me,
And left me—not one kiss to soften memory.
Was it a tear that twinkled on the rose?
Was it a sob that shook her? So she moved
In through the shadows silently. The close
Of her white curtained lattice chilled me. Loved?
Let these swift tears give answer, shed in vain
After long days. My darling! Nay, not mine.
Oh, bitter doubt, the soul of my soul's pain!
How dare I link unspoken love with thine?
Or hope some hidden future shall make green
The budless branch of passion's barren "might have
been?"

That rare ripe blossom at the breast of her
Who mocked thee, is as dead to me as thine;
But no rich tropic scent shall ever stir
My sense like waftings from wind-blown woodbine.
Pride put thee from me; its desired fruit
Is dust, its gilded boudoir galling shame.
Yet sweet, thy picture smiles; my pleading suit
To linn thee woko that blush; 'tis still the same
As when I fixed it, in that leafy bower,
Thy sunny head upreared against the tall sunflower.

FATAL FORTUNE.

A STORY IN TWO PARTS.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

PART THE SECOND.

V.

"I LIVED happily in the house of my relative, satisfied with the ordinary pursuits of a country gentleman. Time had long since cured me of my boyish infatuation for the nursery governess. I could revisit with perfect composure the paths along which we had walked, the lake on which we had sailed together. Hearing by chance that she was married in her own country, I could wish her all possible happiness, with the sober kindness of a disinterested friend. What a strange thread of irony runs through the texture of the simplest human life! The early love for which I had sacrificed and suffered so much, was now revealed to me in its true colours, as a boy's passing fancy—nothing more!

"Three years of peaceful freedom passed; freedom which, on the uncontradicted testimony of respectable witnesses, I never abused. Well, that long and happy interval, like all intervals, came to its end—and then the great misfortune of my life fell upon me. One of my uncles died, and left me inheritor of his whole fortune. I, alone, to the exclusion of the other heirs, now received, not only the large income derived from the estates, but seventy thousand pounds in ready money as well.

"The vile calumny which had asserted me to be mad, was now revived by the wretches who were interested in stepping between me and my inheritance. A year ago, I was sent back to the asylum in which I had been last imprisoned. The pretence for confining me was found in an 'act of violence' (as it was called), which I had committed in a momentary outbreak of anger, and which it was acknowledged had led to no serious results. Having got me into the asylum, the conspirators proceeded to complete their work. A Commission in Lunacy was issued against me. It was held by one Commissioner, without

a jury, and without the presence of a lawyer to assert my interests. By one man's decision I was declared to be of unsound mind. The custody of my person, as well as the management of my estates, was confided to men chosen from among the conspirators who had declared me to be mad. I am here, through the favour of the proprietor of the asylum, who has given me my holiday at the seaside, and who humanely trusts me with my liberty, as you see. At barely thirty years old, I am refused the free use of my money and the free management of my affairs. At barely thirty years old, I am officially declared to be a lunatic for life!"

VI.

HE paused; his head sank on his breast; his story was told.

I have repeated his words as nearly as I can remember them; but I can give no idea of the modest and touching resignation with which he spoke. To say that I pitied him with my whole heart, is to say nothing. I loved him with my whole heart—and I may acknowledge it, now!

"Oh, Mr. Cameron," I said, as soon as I could trust myself to speak, "can nothing be done to help you? Is there no hope?"

"There is always hope," he answered, without raising his head. "I have to thank you, Miss Brading, for teaching me that."

"To thank me?" I repeated. "How have I taught you to hope?"

"You have brightened my dreary life. When I am with you, all my bitter remembrances leave me. I am a happy man again; and a happy man can always hope. I dream now of finding what I have never yet had—a dear and devoted friend, who will rouse the energy that has sunk in me under the martyrdom that I have endured. Why do I submit to the loss of my rights and my liberty, without an effort to recover them? I was alone in the world, until I met with you. I had no kind hand to raise me, no kind voice to encourage me. Shall I ever find the hand? Shall I ever hear the voice? When I am with you, the hope that you have taught me answers, Yes. When I am by myself, the old despair comes back, and says, No."

He lifted his head for the first time. If I had not understood what his words meant, his look would have enlightened me. The tears came into my eyes; my heart heaved and fluttered wildly; my hands mechanically tore up and scattered the grass round me. The silence became

unendurable. I spoke, hardly knowing what I was saying; tearing faster and faster at the poor harmless grass, as if my whole business in life was to pull up the greatest quantity in the shortest possible space of time!

"We have only known each other a little while," I said; "and a woman is but a weak ally in such a terrible position as yours. But useless as I may be, count on me, now and always, as your friend——"

He moved close to me before I could say more, and took my hand. He murmured in my ear,

"May I count on you, one day, as the nearest and dearest friend of all? Will you forgive me, Mary, if I own that I love you? You have taught me to love, as you have taught me to hope. It is in your power to lighten my hard lot. You can recompense me for all that I have suffered; you can rouse me to struggle for my freedom and my rights. Be the good angel of my life! Forgive me, love me, rescue me—be my wife!"

I don't know how it happened. I found myself in his arms—and I answered him in a kiss. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, I dare say I was guilty, in accepting him, of the rashest act that ever a woman committed. Very good. I didn't care then—I don't care now. I was then, and I am now, the happiest woman living.

VII.

It was necessary that either he or I should tell my father of what had passed between us. On reflection, I thought it best that I should make the disclosure. The day after the pic-nic, I repeated to my father Roland's melancholy narrative, as a necessary preface to the announcement that I had promised to be Roland's wife.

My father saw the obvious objections to the marriage. He warned me of the imprudence which I contemplated committing, in the strongest terms. Our prospect of happiness, if we married, would depend entirely on our capacity to legally supersede the proceedings of the Lunacy Commission. Success in this arduous undertaking was, to say the least of it, uncertain. The commonest prudence pointed to the propriety of delaying our marriage until the doubtful experiment had been put to the proof.

This reasoning was unanswerable. It was, nevertheless, completely thrown away upon me.

When did a woman in love ever listen to reason? I believe there is no instance of it on record. My father's wise words of caution had no chance against Roland's fervent entreaties. The days of his residence at Eastbourne were drawing to a close. If I let him return to the asylum an unmarried man, months, years perhaps, might pass before our union could take place. Could I expect him, could I expect any man, to endure that cruel separation, that unrelieved suspense? His mind had been sorely tried already; his mind might give way under it. These were the arguments that carried weight with them, in my judgment! I was of age, and free to act as I pleased. You are welcome, if you like, to consider me the most foolish and the most obstinate of women. In sixteen days from the date of the pic-nic, Roland and I were privately married at Eastbourne.

My father—more grieved than angry, poor man—declined to be present at the ceremony; in justice to himself. My brother gave me away at the altar.

Roland and I spent the afternoon of the wedding-day and the earlier part of the evening, together. At nine o'clock, he returned to the doctor's house, exactly as usual; having previously explained to me that he was in the power of the Court of Chancery, and that until we succeeded in setting aside the proceedings of the Lunacy Commission, there was a serious necessity for keeping the marriage strictly secret. My husband and I kissed, and said goodbye till to-morrow, as the clock struck the hour. I little thought, while I looked after him from the street door, that months on months were to pass before I saw Roland again.

A hurried note from my husband reached me the next morning. Our marriage had been discovered (we never could tell by whom), and we had been betrayed to the doctor. Roland was then on his way back to the asylum. He had been warned that force would be used if he resisted. Knowing that resistance would be interpreted, in his case, as a new outbreak of madness, he had wisely submitted. "I have made the sacrifice," the letter concluded, "it is now for you to help me. Attack the Commission in Lunacy, and be quick about it!"

We lost no time in preparing for the attack. On the day when I received the news of our misfortune, we left Eastbourne for London, and at once took measures to obtain the best legal advice.

My dear father—though I was far from deserving his kindness—entered into the matter heart and soul. In due course of time, we presented a petition to the Lord Chancellor, praying that the decision of the Lunacy Commission might be set aside.

We supported our petition by quoting the evidence of Roland's friends and neighbours, during his three years' residence in the Lake country, as a free man. These worthy people (being summoned before the Lunacy Commission) had one and all agreed that he was, as to their judgment and experience, perfectly quiet, harmless, and sane. Many of them had gone out shooting with him. Others had often accompanied him in sailing excursions on the lake. Do people trust a madman with a gun, and with the management of a boat? As to the "act of violence," which the heirs-at-law and the next-of-kin had made the means of imprisoning Roland in the madhouse, it amounted to this. He had lost his temper, and had knocked a man down who had offended him. Very wrong, no doubt—but if that is a proof of madness, what thousands of lunatics are still at large! Another instance produced to prove his insanity was still more absurd. It was solemnly declared that he put an image of the Virgin Mary in his boat, when he went out on his sailing excursions! I have seen the image—it was a very beautiful work of art. Was Roland mad to admire it, and take it with him? His religious convictions leaned towards Catholicism. If he betrayed insanity in adoring his boat with an image of the Virgin Mary, what is the mental condition of most of the ladies in Christendom who wear the Cross as an ornament round their necks? We advanced these arguments in our petition, after quoting the evidence of the witnesses. And more than this, we even went the length of admitting, as an act of respect towards the Court, that my poor husband might be eccentric in some of his opinions and habits. But we put it to the authorities, whether better results might not be expected from placing him under the care of a wife who loved him, and whom he loved, than from shutting him up in an asylum, among incurable madmen as his companions for life.

Such was our petition, so far as I am able to describe it.

The decision rested with the Lords Justices. They decided against us.

Turning a deaf ear to our witnesses and our arguments, these merciless lawyers declared that the doctor's individual assertion of my husband's insanity was enough for them. They considered Roland's comfort to be sufficiently provided for in the asylum, with an allowance of seven hundred pounds a year—and to the asylum they consigned him for the rest of his days.

So far as I was concerned, the result of this infamous judgment was to deprive me of the position of Roland's wife; no lunatic being capable of contracting marriage by law. So far as my husband was concerned, the result may be beststated in the language of a popular newspaper, which published an article on the case. "It is possible" (said the article—I wish I could personally thank the man who wrote it!) "for the Court of Chancery to take a man who has a large fortune, and is in the prime of life, but is a little touched in the head, and make a monk of him, and then report to itself that the comfort and happiness of the lunatic have been effectually provided for at the expenditure of seven hundred pounds a year."

Roland was determined, however, that they should *not* make a monk of him—and, you may rely upon it, so was I!

But one alternative was left to us. The authority of the Court of Chancery (within its jurisdiction) is the most despotic authority on the face of the earth. Our one hope was in taking to flight. The price of our liberty, as citizens of England, was exile from our native country, and the entire abandonment of Roland's fortune. We accepted those hard conditions. Hospitable America offered us a refuge, beyond the reach of mad-doctors and Lords Justices. To hospitable America our hearts turned, as to our second country. The serious question was—how were we to get there?

We had attempted to correspond, and had failed. Our letters had been discovered and seized by the proprietor of the asylum. Fortunately we had taken the precaution of writing in a "cypher" of Roland's invention, which he had taught me before our marriage. Though our letters were illegible, our purpose was suspected, as a matter of course; and a watch was kept on my husband night and day.

Foiled in our first effort at making arrangements secretly for our flight, we continued our correspondence (still in cypher) by means of advertisement in the

newspapers. This second attempt was discovered in its turn. Roland was refused permission to subscribe to the newspapers, and was forbidden to enter the reading-room at the asylum. These tyrannical prohibitions came too late. Our plans had already been communicated; we understood each other, and we had now only to bide our time. We had arranged that my brother and a friend of his, on whose discretion we could thoroughly rely, should take it in turns to watch every evening, for a given time, at an appointed meeting-place, three miles distant from the asylum. The spot had been carefully chosen. It was on the bank of a lonely stream, and close to the outskirts of a thick wood. A waterproof knapsack, containing a change of clothes, a false beard and wig, and some biscuits and preserved meat, was hidden in a hollow tree. My brother and his friend always took their fishing-rods with them, and presented themselves, as engaged in the innocent occupation of angling, to any chance strangers who might pass within sight of them. On one occasion the proprietor of the asylum himself rode by my brother, on the opposite bank of the stream, and asked politely if he had had good sport!

For a fortnight these staunch allies of ours relieved each other regularly on their watch—and no signs of the fugitive appeared. On the fifteenth evening, just as the twilight was changing into night, and just as my brother (whose turn it was) had decided on leaving the place, Roland suddenly joined him on the bank of the stream.

Without wasting a moment in words, the two at once entered the wood, and took the knapsack from its place of shelter in the hollow tree. In ten minutes more my husband was dressed in a suit of workman's clothes, and was further disguised in the wig and beard. The two then set forth down the course of the stream, keeping in the shadow of the wood until the night had fallen and the darkness hid them. The night was cloudy; there was no moon. After walking two miles or a little more, they altered their course, and made for the high-road to Manchester; entering on it at a point some thirty miles distant from the city.

On their way from the wood, Roland described the manner in which he had effected his escape.

The story was simple enough. He had assumed to be suffering from nervous ill-

ness, and had requested to have his meals in his own room. For the first fortnight, the two men appointed to wait upon him in succession, week by week, were both more than his match in strength. The third man employed, at the beginning of the third week, was physically a less formidable person than his predecessors. Seeing this, Roland decided, when evening came, on committing another "act of violence." In plain words, he sprang upon the keeper waiting on him in his room, and gagged and bound the man.

This done, he laid the unlucky keeper, face to the wall, on his own bed, covered with his own cloak, so that anyone entering the room might suppose he was lying down to rest. He had previously taken the precaution to remove the sheets from the bed, and he had now only to tie them together to escape by the window of his room, situated on the upper floor of the house. The sun was setting, and the inmates of the asylum were then at tea. After narrowly missing discovery by one of the labourers employed in the grounds, he had climbed the garden enclosure, and had dropped on the other side—a free man!

Arrived on the high-road to Manchester, my husband and my brother parted.

Roland, who was an excellent walker, set forth on his way to Manchester on foot. He had food in his knapsack, and he proposed to walk some twelve or fifteen miles on the road to the city, before he stopped at any town or village to rest. My brother, who was physically unable to accompany him, returned to the place in which I was then residing, to tell me the good news.

By the first train the next morning I travelled to Manchester, and took a lodgings in a suburb of the city known to my husband as well as to me. A prim, smoky little square was situated in the immediate neighbourhood; and we had arranged that whichever of us first arrived in Manchester should walk round that square, between twelve and one in the afternoon, and between six and seven in the evening. In the evening I kept my appointment. A dusty, foot-sore man, in shabby clothes, with a hideous beard, and a knapsack on his back, met me at my first walk round. He smiled as I looked at him. Ah! I knew that smile through all disguises. In spite of the Court of Chancery and the Lords Justices, I was in my husband's arms once more.

We lived quietly in our retreat for a month. During that time (as I heard by letters from my brother) nothing that money and cunning could do towards discovering Roland was left untried by the proprietor of the asylum, and by the persons acting with him. But where is the cunning which can trace a man who, escaping at night in disguise, has not trusted himself to a railway or a carriage, and who takes refuge in a great city in which he has no friends? At the end of our month in Manchester we travelled northward, crossed the Channel to Ireland, and passed a pleasant fortnight in Dublin. Leaving this again, we made our way to Cork and Queenstown, and embarked from that latter place (among a crowd of steerage passengers) in a steam-ship for America.

My story is told. I am writing these lines from a farm in the west of the United States. Our neighbours may be homely enough; but the roughest of them is kinder to us than a mad-doctor or a Lord Justice. Roland is happy in those agricultural pursuits which have always been favourite pursuits with him; and I am happy with Roland. Our sole resources consist of my humble little fortune, inherited from my dear mother. After deducting our travelling expenses, the sum total amounts to between seven and eight hundred pounds; and this, as we find, is amply sufficient to start us well in the new life that we have chosen. We expect my father and my brother to pay us a visit next summer; and I think it is just possible that they may find our family circle increased by the presence of a new member in long clothes. Are there no compensations here for exile from England and the loss of a fortune? We think there are! But then, my dear Miss Anstell, "Mary Brading's husband is mad, and Mary Brading herself is not much better."

If you feel inclined to alter this opinion, and if you remember our old days at school as tenderly as I remember them, write and tell me so. Your letter will be forwarded, if you send it to the enclosed address at New York.

In the meantime, the moral of our story seems to be worth serious consideration. A certain Englishman legally inherits a large fortune. At the time of his inheritance, he has been living as a free man for three years—without once abusing his freedom, and with the express sanction of the medical superintendent who has had

experience and charge of him. His next-of-kin and his heirs-at-law (who are left out of the fortune) look with covetous eyes at the money, and determine to get the management and the ultimate possession of it. Assisted by a doctor, whose honesty and capacity must be taken on trust, these interested persons, in this nineteenth century of progress, can lawfully imprison their relative for life, in a country which calls itself free, and which declares that its justice is equally administered to all alike.

NOTE.—The reader is informed that this story is founded, in all essential particulars, on a case which actually occurred in England, eight years since.—W. C.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV. "SHE COULDN'T BE MEAN!" KATE's first definite feeling is that she is not surprised. As soon as she hears that Harry Bellairs is Mrs. Durgan's cousin, Kate is conscious that an idea had already crossed her mind that he was the person to whom Mrs. Durgan had made reference as knowing her (Kate). As for their coming to dinner, well, she had almost been prepared for that too. "Are they all coming, I wonder," she thinks as she gazes abstractedly before her in silence, and Mrs. Durgan still refrains from watching her. "Frank and that young woman who found me out and went away in the carriage with him, and Harry Bellairs as their host."

Presently, she asks,

"Is anyone else staying with Captain Bellairs?"

"Not that I know of," Mrs. Durgan answers, "and I generally do know the number and the names of Harry's guests."

"I asked," Kate explains, "because a very pretty woman crossed in the steamer with me, and when we got out of the train at Dublin I saw her go away in a carriage with Mr. Forest."

"In a carriage with Mr. Forest!" the pretty widow repeats, turning her usually pale face round quickly, and showing it to be rosy with annoyance and surprise now. "The carriage must have been Harry's; he didn't know when he was here yesterday that Mr. Forest was married again, but how do you know that it was Mr. Forest?"

"He is my cousin."

"Didn't you speak to him when you saw him?" Kate shakes her head and laughs

rather sadly. "We were in ignorance of each other's presence all the time we were on board. I hardly know what I might have done if he had come near me. Can't you understand that cousins are sometimes glad to avoid one another?"

"Harry and I are never that," Mrs. Durgan says decidedly. "Oh, your mention of this unexpected pretty young woman, who may be Mr. Forest's new wife, is a very upsetting thing."

"Brides are objectionable as a rule," Kate says; "but I should think this is rather a good specimen of the genns, if she is a bride. Poor dear Frank! I hope she may be able to uproot the first wife's faction, for they're binding Frank most hopelessly in the tendrils of their family dominion and power." Then she goes on to tell Mrs. Durgan a little about Frank's brief married life, and Mrs. Durgan at the conclusion of the conversation is obliged unwillingly to dismiss from her mind the idea that had entered into it on the first blush of the subject, namely that Miss Mervyn was in love with the talented author of "Duplicity." A little qualm contracts her heart for an instant as she renounces this idea, and thinks simultaneously,

"I wonder what Harry will think of her? Has my cousin Harry ever said much about me, or anything about me to you?" she says carelessly after a time. "He has spoken to me of having met you under rather sad circumstances, I believe, when that poor Mr. Angerstein died?"

"I had seen him before then," Kate says. "No, he has never spoken to me of you. I heard him say once he had no sister, that is the only time he mentioned his family to me."

"He never did say much about me, I believe, while my husband was alive," Mrs. Durgan says in a low voice. "Harry didn't like Mr. Durgan," she continues, abruptly putting her hand on Kate's.

"Didn't he?" Kate says in her direct and most uninterested tone, and Mrs. Durgan relinquishes the idea of telling something which she feels strangely impelled to tell to her new companion.

Meanwhile Kate goes on assiduously petting and patting the mare Guinevere, which has been named—she feels sure of this, now—by her old lover, in memory of that other mare which carried her from Torquay to meet him, in those early days when her love was as strong and wild as the pace at which she rode.

"Yet Mr. Durgan was his own cousin,

I am only his cousin by marriage," Mrs. Durgan goes on dwelling on the subject, with what Kate feels to be most tiresome pertinacity; "he is the next heir, I have only a life interest in this place; that is to say, he is going to let me live here as long as I please, just as if I were the rightful owner, but Harry Bellairs is the real master of Breagh Place."

"He's not a man to care about settling anywhere I should think," Kate says; "the restlessness of a sailor is grafted on that of an Irishman. I can't fancy Captain Bellairs settling down as a country gentleman."

"Can't you? I can!" Mrs. Durgan says, "and I can't fancy anyone settling down more delightfully than he will in time; he's very fond of all kinds of sport, you know, and with a wife who sympathises with that sort of thing——"

"But he may never get a wife who sympathises with that sort of thing," Kate says, thinking of herself solely still, and remembering how very improbable it is that he will ever seek her again, though she could sympathise with him so rapturously if only she had the unassailable right to do so. Whereat Mrs. Durgan gives her head a little shake of acquiescence and says,

"Ah! no, true. It's all uncertain of course, but we live in hope."

"What an unselfish woman she must be," Kate thinks admiringly, "she never fears for a moment that a wife entirely after his own heart might take a fancy for living at Breagh Place." She likes Mrs. Durgan better than ever for this proof of her guileless, boundless confidence in Harry Bellairs. Nevertheless, though she admires Mrs. Durgan, her heart throbs exultantly as she reflects that he has never confided to her the secret of his penchant for the chestnut mare called Guinevere.

It is a nervous hour for Kate Mervyn, that last one before dinner this day. They may arrive at any moment from half-past six to half-past seven, Mrs. Durgan has told her, and Kate finds that her curiosity and anxiety become unmanageable as the time approaches. She fully realizes that though on the one hand this réunion may be intensely, excitingly pleasant, it may on the other be most depressingly disagreeable. It must indeed of necessity be this latter thing, if both these men, who have in former days taken such a strong personal interest in her, develop anything like indifference to her now, or

even worse, betray as strong a personal interest in anyone else. "If they think that I've come here in search of either of them, what a hopeless goose I shall appear in their eyes," she says to herself, as, unwillingly enough, she goes out from the sanctuary of her own room down to the dreaded meeting.

It is all cool, quiet, fresh, and sweetly perfumed with flowers in the drawing-room to which instinct leads her, but beyond this drawing-room is a conservatory, brilliant with bloom, and thickly hung with luxuriant creeping plants. From this conservatory there proceeds a light rippling sound—a woman's voice raised in the mirthful recital of some incident that has evidently amused her.

"You'll both agree that I have not indulged in what Harry calls my 'customary exaggeration,' when you see her," Mrs. Durgan is saying, "a woman I could love and be intensely jealous of, and trust thoroughly, for she couldn't be mean."

Kate hears all this unwillingly enough as she approaches, for Mrs. Durgan's tones are rapid, and her enunciation remarkably distinct. But she determines to make her presence known without further delay, and spare herself the pain, and possibly the mortification, of hearing either of them reply. She pushes open the lightly swinging door, and through the masses of bloom and greenery advances into their midst.

There is genuine pleasure in Frank's start from his ordinary lounging indolence, into animation and actively expressed pleasure. "Kate; my darling!" he exclaims, coming forward to meet her, forgetful as her hands join his eagerly extended ones in cordial greeting, that she is not his darling at all; that she has in fact distinctly refused to be so; and that he has during the last few days allowed himself to be forced into a sort of friendly alliance with Miss Grange.

"I'm inevitable, am I not?" Kate says quickly, "please don't think that I planned a surprise though, Frank. As soon as I heard you were coming to-day, I told Mrs. Durgan you were my cousin, and I thought she would have told you that I was here."

All this time as she speaks, Kate, with a loving woman's natural inclination to hold fast to someone who loves her, has left her hand passively in Frank's, and all this time Captain Bellairs has watched the pair, and marked the attitude with jealous attention.

"I meet another old friend in you,"

Kate says half questioningly, turning to him. Then, as something in his manner—is it distrust of her or of himself—chills her off from him, she shakes off her embarrassment as well as she can, and addresses Mrs. Durgan in lowered tones that are inaudible to the two men.

"I heard what you said as I came along, I'm sorry, but couldn't help it; I want to tell you you're right in one thing—you may trust me."

The quartette are sufficiently at ease with one another, to be all together as it were, in the conversation during dinner. Mrs. Durgan is as far from being a snob as it is possible for a human being to be, still she holds Kate in rather higher estimation than she would have done, had she not discovered that Kate is Frank Forest's cousin, and that the power and intention are Kate's to make a name for herself that will not be inferior to Frank's own. But happily as they unite during dinner, they fall apart with a beautiful apparent want of design by-and-by in the garden, when Frank and Kate stroll away among the evergreens in the moonlight, and Harry Bellairs remains by the side of Mrs. Durgan's chair.

"You have liked that girl very much at one time or other, Harry," the widow begins, as soon as the other pair are out of ear-shot, "and I don't wonder at it, for as I said just now, she's a darling."

"I have liked her very much, I always shall like her very much; she's a girl I can talk to on any subject as easily as I can to a man."

"How long is it since you have left off more than liking her?" she asks quietly.

"You have a reason for asking this," he says reproachfully; "come, Georgie, tell it to me."

Her eyes rest affectionately on his for a moment or two, and he cannot help feeling that they would be very true, tender eyes to which to turn for light along his life-path. Then she averts them, and says,

"Have you told Mr. Forest anything about me?"

"Only that you're awfully nice and clever, and one of the dearest and best little women in the world."

"That's very uncompromising," she laughs, "that's a phrase you apply to every woman who pleases you and listens to you, and seems to like you. Well Harry, I want you to promise that you won't say

more than this about me to him, until I give you leave."

"As you please, Georgie, dear," he says with cheerful alacrity, and her heart sinks a little as she hears him, and sees that his eyes are straining themselves in the direction of that gap in the hedge of shrubs that bounds one side of the lawn, through which the other cousins have disappeared.

"Will you go and bring them back for tea and music?" she says quickly; "and before you go, call Ryan to wheel me back to the drawing-room. Oh! dear! when shall I be independent of Ryan? You don't ask for Guinevere; by the way, Miss Mervyn tells me she had a chestnut mare once called Guinevere."

"I know it."

"Did you know the mare?"

"I did," he says, rising up. "Come Georgie, it's getting damp; I'll call Ryan, and go and bring the truants back, though perhaps they won't thank me for interfering."

She is wheeled in to her drawing-room and her reflections, while he strolls away over the lawn, feeling half angrily that he has put himself in a false position by coming at all. All dread of interrupting a semi-sentimental interview departs from him, however, as soon as he comes near enough to them to hear their voices. Frank is describing the present state of his bondage to the Granges, and Kate is laughing heartily.

"They have quartered themselves at Bray," Frank says, "and Miss Grange has, in the quietest way possible, made me promise, on Bellairs's behalf, that she may come to his house and make sketches of his dining-hall and music-room. I can't dislike her you know, Kate, but I see what they're all about, as plainly as if it were written down. Charlotte's an awfully clever girl; she didn't tell me she had been with you all night on deck when we crossed. I suppose she couldn't find out who you were."

"My dear Frank," Kate says as Harry Bellairs joins them, "Miss Grange must have found me very easy reading. I think you'll marry her, but I hope you won't," she continues candidly. "She'll protect you from the rest, perhaps, but she'll be an appalling guardian angel."

"She is the last girl in the world I'd marry," Frank says decidedly, "but you don't know what a nice sensible girl she is, Kate; just the kind of girl a fellow can have a friendship with, without her trying

to turn it into anything else. She has behaved splendidly, though she must see, as plainly as I do, what the others are aiming at."

"She's aiming at it as cleverly as the others are," Captain Bellairs says coldly. "You can make the arrow glance aside if you like, Miss Mervyn," he adds in a whisper.

Kate turns an angry, appealing face to him. Does he want her to marry her cousin? Does he want to pique her by merely pretending to wish her to do so? How can she tell? All she can bring herself to say is,

"Don't make a mistake, Frank; and now come in and give Mrs. Durgan an account of the unpremeditated way in which the Granges accompanied you, when you tried to flee from them."

Somewhat or other the four do not amalgamate as well, when they get themselves together in the drawing-room after this, as they did at dinner. Mrs. Durgan is not exactly depressed, but she is quieter than usual, and, when an extremely vivacious woman is quieter than usual, she has an excessively depressing effect on those who are accustomed to her vivacity. As it happens, Captain Bellairs is thoroughly accustomed to her vivacious moods, consequently this unwonted fit of quiet strikes him as being awkward, inopportune, and unpleasant altogether. Kate is weary with the weariness that comes on after great excitement, and cannot rouse herself to be at her best before the man whom she feels with a heart-sickening pang is as dear to her as ever he has been. The man between whom and herself an unknown something has thrown a shadow which seems to be separating them more widely than ever. "If he would only make some reference to what has past, and let me know for certain that he means it to be all over, I'd never wince," she tells herself, "but to go on like this and never to know whether he thinks me to blame or not, or what he thinks about it, is horribly hard."

As for Frank he is silent from various causes. Now that he has found Kate here, and discovered Mrs. Durgan to be a brilliant and amusing companion when she chooses, he feels that he is no longer dependent for pleasing female society on the delightful but possibly dangerous Charlotte Grange.

"I won't stay at home while she's sketching his antique furniture and carved

ceilings, and I'll see if that will choke her off," he tells himself, and he makes up his mind that he will disabuse Kate of the notion that as he cannot have her, he will meekly accept his fate at the hands of the first woman who tries to teach him how to throw the handkerchief.

He is roused from his reverie by hearing Mrs. Durgan say, "Then we lunch with you to-morrow, Harry. I shall try and persuade Miss Mervyn to ride Guinevere; it will do my poor little mare so much good to have a lady on her back again."

"I'll come over and fetch her then," says Captain Bellairs; and though she makes a protest against riding, on the score of having no habit, she is overruled by Mrs. Durgan, who has one that she "is sure will fit" to lend.

"My progress is so slow in my invalid carriage," Mrs. Durgan says, holding her hand out to Kate when the two men are gone this night, "that I couldn't have the heart to tire you out on your way for the first time to Harry's place; besides I want to see how you two look together on horseback."

Kate remains silent. All appears to be fair and above-board, but she cannot make up her mind as to whether it is all the result of accident or design, as to whether she is skating on thin ice or walking on firm ground. "I only know that I'll play fair," she tells herself, "but oh! to be alone with him once again!"

CHAPTER XXXV. THE RIDE OVER.

The feelings with which Kate puts on the habit which Mrs. Durgan insists upon lending her, are not solely pleasurable. In the first place the habit does not fit her to that degree of perfection which is essential to the happiness of a thorough horse-woman. This, though a minor grievance, is one that stings when it is superadded to others. In the second place, she cannot help remembering that the last time she appeared in a habit before Captain Bellairs was on the occasion of that befalling her which they can neither of them forget while memory is their portion. Lastly, there is a slight sense of humiliation to her in the fact that these wings wherewith she is flying now are not her own, and Kate is woman enough to abhor borrowed plumage and a feeling of obligation. Mrs. Durgan's is a good and magnanimous position. She is generously attempting to put Kate in the best light. But Kate feels that the light is a trying

one, and shrinks from taking her stand in it, with a sensitiveness that she would declare to be morbid in another person.

She has appealed against the dictum which has gone forth, that she shall ride over alone with Captain Bellairs, and her appeal has been made in vain. Mrs. Durgan, who has quite recovered her light-heartedness this morning, has met and combatted each objection as it has been advanced. "It will be a mercy to the mare," she says, "she has had nothing cleverer on her back than a groom for months, and I long to see how she looks at her best again, and she will look at her best with you on her."

A good many of the meaner feelings of dissatisfaction dissolve into thin air, as soon as Kate finds herself in the saddle. She forgets that the habit does not fit properly; she forgets that the mare bounding beneath her is not her own, and that she is in the place she likes best in the world, by the grace of a stranger, who is, to a certain degree, her rival. She sways to the movement of the slinging galloper, with as unrestrained a sense of enjoyment as she ever experienced in the old days, when the horse she rode was her own, and she was unsubdued by failure and disappointment, by mortification and baffled love. So thoroughly is she carried away by this first flavour of the long untasted pleasure, that Captain Bellairs, looking at her as they pull up at the lodge gates of Breagh Place, sees in her only the Kate of the past, and forgets everything (his cousin included) but that past, and his passionate enjoyment of it.

"We only want the sound of the swirl of the waves in that semi-circular bay, to make us believe that we are back in the old times on the Torbay road," he says as they go more soberly through the gate and out into the highway.

"Just for the moment we might believe it," Kate says, looking straight ahead of her, "because we neither of us are half as much altered as we deserve to be, considering all we've gone through; but the illusion wouldn't last for more than a moment with me—illusions never do."

"What made you stand out against riding over to-day," he asks abruptly, disregarding her cautionary remark respecting illusions.

"I acquiesced meekly enough in the plan before you," she says, and she does long to give him one look which shall assure him that riding alone with him

is a pleasure that is as dear to her as ever. But she remembers the blithe assent of Mrs. Durgan, and refrains, for has not Mrs. Durgan said this of her (Kate) "She couldn't be mean."

"But my cousin tells me she had an infinity of trouble in getting you to stick to your agreement this morning; why was it, Kate? tell me."

"It was a natural desire to do the right thing for once in my life," Kate says, and her face smarts with a blush of emotion, and she feels the tears standing in her eyes. "If they drop, and he sees them, what an emotional fool he'll think me," she tells herself rebukingly, "what on earth did I consent to going through this trial by fire for? I might have known that I should get scorched."

"So you think it a wrong thing even to ride with me any more," he says rather mournfully. "Kate! do let such poor feeling as may exist still linger on, don't kill it by violence."

"I can't hold the mare," she says, slackening the snaffle, and Guinevere goes off at a pace that mercifully spares her rider the necessity of replying to her companion's last remark.

They come to an ugly declivity presently, down which it would be suicidal to do other than walk the thoroughbred mare. With an undiplomatically visible desire to avoid the former topic, Kate starts a fresh one as soon as they pull up.

"I want you to tell me all you know about Frank and this Miss Grange," she begins.

"What an interest you take in Frank!"
"I do."

She says it very earnestly, and then pauses and makes up her mind to tell out the tale of her own weakness as freely as it can possibly be told.

"I do! I take such a hearty interest in him, that I am longing to see the girl, and to find out how he stands with her. You know I had a stronger love for Frank once than mere cousinly affection," she continues looking up at him, "and though that died out, it has vitalised the cousinly affection to such a degree that it will last in all its intensity while I live."

"Perhaps, after all, you only mistook cousinly affection for something warmer," he says, hoping she will accept his amendment and agree with him.

"I tell you no," she says impatiently, "what is the use of trying to tone down what was an error of feeling, and make it appear like a mere error of judgment. I

fell in love with my cousin against every law of reason and of right, and I was punished by knowing that he was ten times more unhappy in his marriage afterwards than he would have been if I had never done so; the truth in this case isn't a pleasant thing to tell, but it's better to tell it."

Captain Bellairs is silent, and devotes great attention to the way his horse steps down a little precipice. He feels in this instance that he could have borne to have had the truth withheld from him.

"Why didn't Frank come with you this morning?" Kate asks, as the silence grows embarrassing.

"He preferred waiting at home, to hold Miss Grange's paint-box, I believe."

"Did you leave her, then, with him?" Kate questions with a laughing air of amusement, which proves her heart free now, at all events, concerning Frank, and so is delightfully reassuring to her present companion.

"No; but she was announced as coming by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Grange, who wrote to ask Frank if from twelve to two would be a convenient time for Charlotte to see the house. I asked him to invite them to lunch. Was I right, or do you wish me to try and keep them apart?" he adds jealously.

"Do you think I'd be mean enough to interpose a finger between him and a heart's desire of his?" she says hotly; "and do you think I'd be doubly mean enough to ask you to do it for me? I have a kind of feeling against her which may be unjust and unfounded, after all; but she found out who I was that night on the steamer, and hadn't the candour to tell me Frank was on board. This may be natural reserve on her part, but it looks like sneaking meanness."

"Your first impression of her was good, was it?"

"Agreeable, certainly. I am taken always with good looks and gentle manners: she has both."

"And you cling to first impressions, after the manner of women, probably, and go back to them with a rush, even if you find occasion to alter them?" he asks.

"Indeed I don't. I'm ready to renounce an opinion or a liking in an instant, if I find either ill-founded."

"What was your first impression of Mrs. Durgan?"

"That she'll never deceive me," Kato answers with heightened colour; "and that if she takes a dislike to me she'll have

dono with me at once, but will never try to undermine or injure me. She's as clear as the air she lives in."

"I have known her a good many years now," he says slowly; "I knew her before I met you, Kato."

"Yes?"

"And I've always found her to be just what you describe—a warm friend and an honest foe; not that she has any foes, poor girl. Georgie Durgan gets good words from all men and women."

"Was she married when you knew her first?" Kate asks hesitatingly.

"Yes, I went to stay with them when my cousin Christopher Durgan brought her home as a bride; I wondered then how it was she had consented to yoke herself with such a prig as he was; and I wondered more at the way she bore the yoke as time went on, and he proved himself to be one of the most wearying fools that ever wore out a woman's affection."

"She'll marry again," Kate says in the tone of a prophetess. Then she laughs at the unintentional tone of solemnity she has employed, and fails to observe that Captain Bellairs takes no notice of her remark.

"You must keep that mare in exercise," he says, as they come upon grass again and break into a canter. "Georgie will be grateful to you for doing it. I shall be delighted, because I shall have to be your escort in default of a better one, and you will have the satisfaction of feeling that you're obliging two people—."

"And of tasting forbidden fruit," she interrupts.

"Why say forbidden when it's freely proffered?"

She shakes her head.

"My conscience tells me—yes I have a conscience, though I daresay you doubt it—that there is a flavour of forbidden fruit about it; doesn't yours?" she adds suddenly. But his horse jibs wildly at the moment, and he is too much occupied in quieting him to answer her.

It is ten miles from Breagh Place to Lngnaquila—Captain Bellairs's home in the heart of the Wicklow mountains. That is to say, it is ten miles by the rather wild riding-road along which he has brought his companion. Mrs. Durgan, who has driven along the shorter high-road, is there some time before them—is there long enough, in fact, to feel depression again assailing her usually light heart, about something which she will not permit herself to analyse.

Kate comes in, looking too much like the Kate of old for the attention of everyone present not to be concentrated on her admiringly. Frank leaves the side of a lady by whom he is standing to come and meet his cousin; and the lady, looking round from her occupation of sketching some richly carved panelling, bows her head with a half smile as she recognises her fellow voyager in Kate. Mr. and Mrs. Grange come forward in perplexity. They are in doubt as to how they shall treat this most obnoxious member of Frank's family; for the fact of her arriving in company with their host, and being altogether treated as an honoured guest, throws them out in their preconceived calculations. They had imagined that as a mere dependant, as Mrs. Durgan's companion, she might be flouted with impunity. To find the dangerous beauty made an object of consideration is confusing.

"You were quite right," Kate says, making her way at once to the side of the sofa on which Mrs. Durgan is lying, looking pitifully pale and helpless by contrast with Kate's heightened bloom and vigour. "I forgot that the mare wasn't my own as soon as I was fairly off, and I enjoyed the road and the ride as thoroughly as if she had been."

"And your cavalier?" Mrs. Durgan asks, smiling.

"My cavalier was all that you, in your kindness, could wish my cavalier to be," Kate says unflinchingly. She would give worlds at this juncture to be able to reassure Mrs. Durgan, and assuage any fears Mrs. Durgan may possibly be feeling relative to this reunion between herself and Harry Bellairs. But Mrs. Durgan has not given her the right to do so, and she dare not assume the right.

Placid, fair-haired, white-skinned Charlotte Grange rises slowly and comes forward now, reminding everyone as she comes of a white pussy-cat who purrs before it springs. At least, they are reminded of the pussy-cat, of its softness and calm, winning ways; but they utterly forget its springing and scratching proclivities.

"I have done nothing but regret that I didn't know you were Mr. Forest's cousin the other night," she says.

"But you must have known it," Kate says out incantiously, for she is yet a tyro in the art of dealing with white pussy-

cats. "I told you my name and occupation. Surely Frank," she continues, turning to her cousin, who is beginning to feel hot and uncomfortable, "you haven't 'kept me dark,' as you call it? Miss Grange must have heard you mention me."

"Over and over again," Frank states with awkward emphasis; and Miss Grange shakes her head with the plaited crown of golden tinted tresses on it, and says,

"Mr. Forest forgets how very limited our intercourse has been; he has not had time to mention any subject, however much it may be in his mind, 'over and over' again to me."

"'Limited,' do you call it?" her brother puts in, with what he designs to be an air of mirthful raillyery, but which in reality is coarsely suggestive. "Considering the time, I call it anything but 'limited,' Mrs. Durgan; they're never apart, I assure you."

But Charlotte subdues him at once by one of her long, steady glances.

"My brother has the knack of saying the thing that comes uppermost invariably when that thing is specially void of point," she says in a low voice to Kate; "these vapid jokes are, of course, of no importance whatever to Mr. Forest, but they are repulsive to me to the last degree."

"They're just so much empty sound; don't let yourself be annoyed by them," Kate says cordially, taking off her hat, and flinging it down. There is something in the womanly aspect, in the womanly quiet and apparent gentleness of this Miss Grange, which appeals to all Kate's strong womanly sympathies. "It is shameful," the latter feels, "for her own kin to put her in the position of the pursuer. I believe Frank is sorry for her too," Kate thinks as she glances round, and sees that Frank looks rather more abashed than the occasion seems to warrant.

Mrs. Durgan's sofa is wheeled up to the table when luncheon is ready. There are two covers laid side by side at the head of the table, and for a moment Miss Grange wavers about Frank, and wonders whether this honour of sitting by him is designed for her by her host. In another moment doubt is set at rest, for Captain Bellairs gives his arm to Kate, and leads her to the coveted post. As he does so his eyes turn to Georgie Durgan, and Georgie gives him what looks like a bright smile of encouragement, but at what cost?

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 309. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER III. MIDDLEHAM'S CLERKS.

MR. HEATH turned, and confronted the young ladies as they ent red the room. Even in the grave circumstances in which they were placed, Anne could scarcely help smiling to herself as she looked at him, remembering the disdain with which Grace had spoken of "her uncle's clerks." Surely there were few better bred looking men than this, dressed simply, yet in perfect taste, and having a cold stern manner, more fitted, Anne thought, for a duke than a clerk. Her ideas respecting ranks had been derived from books, and though they might have been indefinite and cloudy as regards a duke, it was clear that a clerk should be a mean, scrubby-looking person, which certainly could not be said of Mr. Heath.

The bow which he made was comprehensive and included them both, but he gave no further recognition to Anne just then, addressing himself wholly to Grace. "I come to you on a very sad errand, Miss Middleham," he said, in a voice which he had successfully tried to make sympathetic, though his manner was formal and business-like. "I have some bad news to break to you."

"My uncle is ill, I presume," said Grace, who was really very much frightened, but who still had an idea of keeping up her dignity before the "clerk." Anne looked at Mr. Heath in painful anxiety, but though his eyes lit on hers for an instant, there was no response in them, and he turned again to Grace, as he said, "The

news is even worse than you seem to imagine. Mr. Middleham is dead!"

Grace felt very faint, and would have fallen, had not Anne been by her side, encircling her promptly with her strong arm, and whispering words of comfort in her ear. Mr. Heath marked this proceeding, and looked on in silent approval. When Grace was a little recovered, she said, "How very dreadful! It must have been very sudden! I had a letter from him only yesterday!"

"It was very sudden," said Mr. Heath, "and under very painful circumstances. It would be merely false delicacy in me, Miss Middleham, to attempt to disguise from you a fact which you must know within the next few hours. Your uncle was murdered!"

"Murdered!" cried Grace in a low horror-stricken tone, clinging more closely to her companion. "Why, whom could he have offended? He was the kindest-hearted man in the world, and, I should say, had not a single enemy."

"Very likely," said Mr. Heath, whose manner had become sterner and more business-like than ever. "But there was apparently no question of private feeling in this deed, which was committed for the purpose of robbery. The bank has been plundered of a large amount of gold and valuable jewellery, and it is supposed that in struggling with the scoundrels to defend his keys, Mr. Middleham lost his life. These are the details told to me, for I was unfortunately away at the time of the occurrence, having only returned two hours ago from Hamburg."

Grace hid her weeping face on her friend's breast, and Anne, knowing it was best that her sorrow should have its vent, did not attempt to console her with words,

but merely sustained and patted her pretty head. Mr. Heath looked on at the group with a critical eye, and with some slight sensation of pleasure, for a couple of minutes, then he began to drum with his fingers on the chimney-piece against which he was leaning. Anne's quick ear caught the sound, and she looked up at once; there was an expression of impatience in Mr. Heath's face, which fully bore out the impression she had received from the noise.

"You must bear up, my sweet Gracie," she whispered in the girl's ear; "the gentleman has something more to say to you." Then, raising her head, she said, not without a certain air of defiance, "You must be good enough to excuse Miss Middleham, who is naturally very much overcome at this intelligence. You are, doubtless, the bearer of some proposition as to what she shall do, as you are perfectly well aware that all had been settled for her to go to her uncle's house at Loddonford this very day, and not to return again to school."

"I heard something of this from Mrs. Barker, the housekeeper at the bank, to whom Mr. Middleham had mentioned it," said Mr. Heath, coldly. "There was no private intimacy between us, and he rarely, if ever, spoke to me of any but business matters. But as I enjoyed his confidence in those, it has been considered advisable that I should come here and settle with this young lady as to her present movements."

"Has Miss Middleham to decide that for herself?" asked Anne.

"She can say what she would wish to do for the next few days," said Mr. Heath; "whether to remain here, or go to Loddonford. When Mr. Middleham's will is read, we shall, no doubt, find that he, who was such a thorough man of business, has expressed his wishes as to what his niece shall do in the event of his death."

"Then, what is to be decided merely relates to the next few days? You have heard what this gentleman has said, dear," she continued, turning to Grace; "and it is now for you to state your wishes."

"Oh, let me stay here, if you please!" moaned Grace. "I could not go anywhere else just now! Let me stay here with you, Anne!"

"That seems the easiest and most sensible plan," said Mr. Heath, who had had quite enough of this scene, and was anxious to go. "I imagine that the ladies of the

house will make no objection, and we may consider the matter decided."

"Not quite," said Anne, with a rising flush, for she was annoyed at his off-hand, imperious way; "Miss Middleham wishes me to stay with her."

"Oh, yes, Anne! I couldn't remain here without you! Fancy having only Miss Hannah and Miss Martha at such a time! Oh, do stay, Anne!"

"If it rested with myself, there would be no difficulty, dear," said Anne; "but, as you know, I have told papa that this is the day for the closing of the school. He has probably made his plans about me, and he may not like to alter them."

All the time she was speaking, Anne was conscious that Mr. Heath's dark eyes were fixed upon her, and she burned with shame and indignation, as she felt that he undoubtedly would remark the want of confidence with which her father treated her. There was, however, no change in his tone as he said,

"I think I may venture an opinion on that point. I have the honour of speaking to Miss Studley. I did not recognise you at first, but when you spoke, the likeness dawned upon me. I have, as you know, the pleasure of Captain Studley's acquaintance, and I think I may venture to say that he will consent to your remaining with your friend. I shall see him this evening, and will send you his answer to-morrow. Does that assurance satisfy your scruples?"

"Certainly," said Anne; then, with slight hesitation, "provided you are certain of seeing papa this evening. At present he understands that I am leaving here to-day, and I am very particular that, so far as I am concerned, the engagement entered into should be kept."

"That is an unmistakeable sign of your being Captain Studley's daughter," said Mr. Heath, with the nearest approach to a smile which he had permitted himself during the interview; "but I think I can absolve you on this occasion. I will promise you that I will see your father, and represent to him the absolute necessity of your remaining with Miss Middleham while she is here. It will be but for a few days," he added, dropping his voice, "as the funeral is fixed for Thursday, when the will will be read, and Mr. Middleham's wishes as regards the disposition of his niece will be known. May I take my leave in the certainty that you will bear Miss Middleham company until then?"

"You may," said Anne. "I shall not stir from here, until I receive papa's directions that I may do so."

"Then I will go at once!" said Mr. Heath. "Good day, Miss Middleham! Your friend, Miss Studley, has been good enough to undertake to remain with you until something as to your future is decided. I shall probably have to communicate with you from time to time, though I may not always be able to do so in person, as affairs at the bank are naturally in confusion, owing to this unexpected event, and I am required there. Good day, Miss Studley! You shall be sure to have your father's authority for what you have kindly undertaken, immediately after I have seen him." He did not attempt to shake hands with either of the girls, but with a cold inclination of his head, withdrew from their presence.

"Strong-minded young woman that daughter of Ned Studley's," he said to himself, as he whirled away townwards in the Hansom cab which had been awaiting him, "prompt, clear, and determined, as old Ned himself. Coming home, eh? I don't see quite how that will suit the Loddonford ménage, though how he has contrived to keep her so long at school is more than I can make out. She must be getting on for nineteen, and so must her friend, though she's a very different style of person. I should not think Ned will have any difficulty in planting his daughter on Miss Middleham, if he's so inclined. That fair girl can't do anything for herself, and is entirely reliant on 'Anne, dear,' and as she will have plenty of money, she may as well keep both of them; more especially as 'Anne, dear,' will be considerably in our way. I shall suggest that to Ned Studley." And Mr. Heath folded his arms across his chest, and lapsed into a brown study, out of which he roused himself from time to time, to make some entries and calculations in a memorandum book, and then again fell a-thinking.

"No chance of our going to the Bay by the twelve-forty to-morrow, Martha," said Miss Hannah to her sister, after they had had one interview with Mr. Heath, and learned the arrangement decided on. Then seeing the look of annoyance on Miss Martha's face, the old lady, who attended to the pupils' linen while her sister superintended their learning, and

who was afraid she had been too familiar in speaking of "the Bay," tried to make up for her lapse by saying, "I fear, dear, our departure must be indefinitely postponed," a rotundity of phrase of which Mrs. Chapone herself might have approved.

But Miss Martha, seeing there was a chance of her having to put off the enjoyment of the relaxation, the prospect of which had sustained her during so many weeks of hard work, had given up her grandiloquent Chapone manner, and was harsh and practical, not to say cross. "I don't see why," she said, tartly; "I don't see any reason for our altering our plans. Everything is ready."

"Everything," chorused Miss Hannah; "direction-labels sewn on to the holland covers of the boxes, and Coketham's fly ordered at eleven-fifteen."

"Then I am certainly for our doing as we had settled, and starting for Herne Bay—Herne Bay, Hannah—to-morrow morning."

"And leave the girls here by themselves?" said Miss Hannah, her eyebrows almost touching her coffee-coloured "front," in astonishment.

"Certainly," said Miss Martha, sliding imperceptibly into her usual tone. "Their stay will not be prolonged, and they will have the services of the domestics at their disposal, to procure them all they may require."

"Well, yes, that's true!" said Miss Hannah, who never had much opinion of her own, "and of course, now poor Mr. Middleham is gone, there is no one to object, even if it were disagreeable to parents' feelings, for Captain Studley is not that particular about his daughter. Poor Mr. Middleham, what a dreadful thing! I suppose they'll have him at Madame Tussaud's, with his snuff-box in his hand, looking like life!"

Miss Martha looked up with ruffled brow. "The effigies of homicides, not those of their victims, are modelled in wax by the ingenious Frenchwoman," she said. "I have been thinking, however, that this sad event may possibly have one grain of comfort for us. The newspapers, in their record of the tragedy, must necessarily refer to the relations of the deceased, and in that way it will come to light that Mr. Middleham had selected Chapone House as the finishing-establishment for his niece, a choice, which, owing to Mr. Middleham's well-known opulence and taste, may have its effect on others."

"I don't know about that," said Miss Hannah. "I've a notion that parents might not like to put their children to a school where there were murdered person's nieces, for fear it might be catching. However, since you've decided to go to-morrow, I've no time to stand gossiping here, as I've got to tell Rossetor all about the girls' meals, and not to take down the bed furniture, as I had ordered." And Miss Hannah trotted off on her business mission.

Meanwhile, the two girls had again strolled out on to the heath, and seated themselves in their favourite spot. Grace seemed to have recovered herself considerably, and to have much less need of Anne's sustaining arm, which again encircled her.

"This is a most awful thing to have happened, my sweet Gracie," said Anne, "I fear you will feel the shock very much!"

"Yes, dear," said Grace. "Oh, of course, I know I shall. I wonder what will become of me—where I shall be sent to live I mean."

"Poor old man," mused Anne. "What a dreadful ending! Strangled in his bed, fighting with his last breath to defend the keys which were his trust."

"It's quite horrible," said Grace, "I suppose I shall have to go to Madame Sturm, she is the only person I can think of. She is a kind of second cousin of mine, and always lives abroad."

"Do you know," continued Anne, not heeding her, "that though I never saw your uncle, I can picture the scene quite vividly, to myself. Stories of murder have always had a kind of hideous fascination for me. I have pored over them until I could almost fancy the deed done before my eyes."

"Dear me, how dreadful!" said Grace. "I suppose it will be Madame Sturm! But only fancy, Anne, if uncle has made no provision for me in his will, or has not made a will at all; and those people who are so methodical in all other matters, are frequently very careless about that. I shall have to go out as a governess, or do something to get my living."

"That is a prospect which, applied to myself, has not the least terror, but is rather agreeable than otherwise," said Anne. "No doubt you, who have been brought up with other expectations, would feel it differently. But I don't think, dear, you have much to fear. Your uncle was too just a man not to take care of

you, and too business-like not to provide for any contingency."

"Then it will be Madame Sturm!" said Grace. "Did you hear me say she lives abroad, dear? I don't know where exactly, but I hope Paris, though anywhere abroad must be lively after Hampstead, and school! I wonder whether she goes into any society—balls, I mean, and that kind of thing; or whether she only has stupid old people to play cards of an evening!"

"As you are by no means certain that you are ever to see anything of Madame Sturm," said Anne, unable to restrain a smile, "it seems almost too early to speculate on her possible way of life, doesn't it, Gracie dear?"

"Yes, I dare say, but of course I must go somewhere, Anne," returned Grace, "and it looks to me as if Madame Sturm were my only chance! You would come and see me there, wouldn't you, dear?"

"I suppose my coming would depend a good deal upon where I was," said Anne; "but, as I have already told you, I am entirely in the dark as to what I may do in the future. At present I do not even know whether papa may not be annoyed with me for having settled to remain here."

But the next day brought a solution to this doubt. Early in the afternoon Miss Studley was informed that "a gentleman from the bank wished to speak to her," and, on repairing to the drawing-room, accompanied by Grace, Anne found, instead of Mr. Heath, whom she had expected, a fair young man with a boyish figure, a quantity of chestnut hair parted down the middle of his comely head, blue eyes, and regular features. He was very well dressed, too, and looked as little like Anne's idea of a bank clerk as did Mr. Heath.

"Miss Studley?" said this young gentleman in evident doubt, looking from one to the other of the girls as they entered the room.

"I am Miss Studley," said Anne, with a grave bow; though Grace, who seemed quite to have recovered from the shock of the previous day, whispered in her ear, "let me speak."

"I must apologise," said the young gentleman, who looked pleased at the intelligence, "for intruding on you, and for being obliged to introduce myself. My name is Danby, Walter Danby; here is my card," and he laid it on the table; "and my friend Heath has asked me to come

to you as the bearer of a message from him."

" You are one of the clerks in the bank, sir ? " asked Anne, who began to feel that the visitor was giving himself airs.

" Ya—yes," said Mr. Danby, who was taken aback by this abrupt enquiry, and who did not regain his composure until he had glanced at his card, which had the words, " Pelham Club" engraved in one corner. The sight of these words seemed to act as a kind of tonic; and Mr. Danby resumed, " I am to tell you, Miss Studley, that Mr. Heath saw Captain Studley last night, according to promise, and that there is no objection to your remaining here with Miss Middleham. When Miss Middleham goes, Captain Studley will either come or send for you. That was the message," said Mr. Danby, who, all the time he was speaking, kept his blue eyes fixed on Anne, in frank, involuntary admiration.

" Thank you, very much, for bringing it, Mr. Danby," said Anne. " I should have introduced you to my friend, Miss Middleham. That is pleasant news that Mr. Danby brings, is it not, Gracie ? "

" Very pleasant for me, dear, though I'm afraid it will be dull enough for you to have to remain here. Has anything been settled about—my—any of the arrangements—Mr. Danby ? " asked Grace, in hesitation.

" The funeral is fixed for Thursday," said Mr. Danby, quickly comprehending what was meant; " and, as the will is only read after the return from the cemetery, nothing can be definitely known until then. There was a rumour this morning, however, that the bank would be carried on under trustees."

" Yes ; I didn't mean about the bank," said Grace. " You did not hear anything about Madame Sturm ? "

" Madame Sturm ! " echoed Mr. Danby; " not a syllable ! "

" I fear, from your silence on the point, that nothing further has been discovered about the murder," said Anne.

" There is at present not the remotest clue to the murderers. The police are pottering about the premises, and making the usual investigation; but we all know," said Mr. Danby, speaking as though he were at least sixty years old, and had passed his life in such matters, " we all know how much that is worth. And yet it ought not to be a difficult matter to catch them. They carried off some splendid

jewellery, which could be recognised at once if they attempted to sell it. I myself could swear to it in any court of justice in the land."

" That ought to lead to their detection," said Anne.

" And sooner or later it will; I feel convinced of that. Now, I'm afraid I must take my leave. I hope to be selected again as the bearer of news to you, Miss Studley. Can I say anything to Mr. Heath from you, Miss Middleham ? I shall only be too delighted to be of service." And Mr. Danby bowed himself out of the room.

He too had his reflections in the cab which bore him townward. He was not a very wise young man, and was, perhaps, a little conceited. But he was born and bred a gentleman, honourable, upright, and true; and he thought on his homeward drive that he had never seen a girl who had taken his fancy so much as Anne Studley.

" That's what I call a horrid little man," said Grace, as soon as the door had closed behind him.

" I do not see that you have any cause for saying so, Grace ! " said Anne, warmly. " He struck me as being perfectly gentlemanly and polite, and nothing could be kinder than the way in which he offered his services to you ! "

" Oh, you dear Anne ! how easily you can be taken in ! " cried Grace, laughing and clapping her hands. " He was a very nice little man then, and had beautiful curly hair, and blue eyes ! I'm sure you ought to speak up for him, for the way in which he was taken with you, was quite wonderful. I never saw such a case of sudden smite ! "

" How very absurd you are, Grace ! " said Anne, blushing. " I am sure I saw nothing of the kind. Mr. Danby was not here five minutes, and it is only one of the heroes of those novels you are so fond of, who could be what you call 'smitten' in so short a time."

" Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all," cried Grace, laughing again, " a companion to the 'Gardener's Daughter,' by Tennyson, to be called the 'Captain's Daughter,' by—let me look at his card—by Walter Danby ! What a pretty little name ! And he belongs to a club, too—think of that ! You will have to make him give up his club when you're married, Anne ! "

" I will think of what you say, dear,

when the time arrives," said Anne, with a faint smile. She had had enough of the joke, but nevertheless she took the card which Grae had thrown on to the table, and when she was alone in her room, locked it away in her desk among the few treasures she possessed.

During the next three days, when they were left to themselves, the girls talked a great deal about Mr. Danby, for the subject was one on which Grace thought she rather shone in the exercise of her wit, while, though Anne always pretended annoyance, it was secretly agreeable to her. On the fourth morning Mr. Danby came again, and Grace acknowledged to herself how good-looking he was as he advanced towards them—they were in the drawing-room—with a bright flush on his cheeks. "This time," he said, after the first salutations, "I am the bearer of a missive for each of you. This," taking from his pocket a square blue envelope inscribed in broad round characters, "was given to me for you, Miss Middleham, by old Mr. Hickman, the lawyer, who has been constantly at the bank for the last few days. Your packet is not so formidable-looking, Miss Studley; only this little note which Mr. Heath asked me to hand to you." And as he handed it to her their eyes met, both earnest, his ardently, hers quietly, and each full of information for the other.

"Don't read yours until we see what is in mine, Anne," said Grace; "this is a most terrible-looking communication, and I fancy all my future life depends on what it says!"

"Mine will keep very well, dear!" said Anne, glancing at the address of the note which she held in her hand. "It is from papa, and no doubt contains his directions as to what I am to do. Read yours, Grace, I am all impatience to hear your fate!"

Grace broke the lig red seal bearing the letters H. & H., in old-fashioned boldness, without the slightest attempt at monogrammatic combination, and unfolding the square stiff sheet of quarto paper, read as follows:—

"96, Serle Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"DEAR MADAM,—We have to inform you that your deceased uncle, the late Mr. William George Middleham, has by will dated 3rd January last, constituted you, on attaining your majority, his sole heiress and residuary legatee. The will further provides that should the testator's decease take place—as has unfortunately proved the case—while you were under age, you

should be domiciled until the attainment of your majority with your relative, Madame Sturm, she being paid such a yearly stipend for your maintenance, &c., as may be agreed upon between her and Mr. Hillman, the executor of the will. Pursuant to these instructions, we have communicated with Madame Sturm, who is now residing No. 100, Pappelsdorf Allée, Bonn, on the Rhine, and should she accept the charge, our Mr. Hillman will be with you on Monday next, at 6 p.m., for the purpose of escorting you by the night mail, to that place.—your obedient servants,

"HILLMAN AND HICKS."

"That is indeed good news about the money," said Anne, as Grace finished the letter. "I was sure Mr. Middleham's sense of justice would have prompted him to take care of you."

"Oh, is it not excellent?" said Grace. "And you see it is to be Madame Sturm's, after all; but she does not live in Paris, as I thought. What a bore! There's no doubt about her taking me, I should think; she will be only too glad of what these old creatures call in their letter, 'the stipend.' And your note, Anne: you have not told me what that was about?"

"I will tell you presently, dear; it was not of much importance," said Anne, who had read it, and quietly placed it in her breast. It consisted only of a few lines, running thus:

"DEAR ANNE,—Your friend leaves Hampstead, I find, on Monday; so be at the Paddington Station a few minutes before five on that day, and look out for me.—Affectionately yours, E. S.

"P.S.—Don't make any gushing arrangements about correspondence with Miss Middleham, or going to see her, or anything of that kind. I want you to forget her, and everyone and everything connected with your school-days, and to begin quite a new life. I am urgent on this point, so please attend to it."

"Mr. Heath told me I was to bring back an answer to the lawyer's letter, Miss Middleham," said Mr. Danby. "I merely suggest this, without any wish to hurry you."

"Well, then, I'll write it at once. Will you come and help me, Anne? Oh no, of course not; there's not the least occasion for that," she added, looking at her companion; "I can do it perfectly by myself. I've only to say I'll be ready for old Mr. What's-his-name on Monday. Don't you think, Anne, you had better

take Mr. Danby into the garden while I am writing? It is so very hot in this room." And, smiling to herself at the readiness with which this piece of stratagem—the first she had ever attempted—was adopted, Grace applied herself to writing her note.

She had written, and sealed it, and looked into the "Beauties of the British Poets," and shaken up a very streaky bottle of Alum Bay sand, to try and get the contents to mix, before Anne and Mr. Danby returned. Then Mr. Danby took the note, and his leave—Anne, at Grace's suggestion, accompanying him to the door.

"I am sure no mancouvering mamma could be better to you than I am, dear," said Grace with a laugh, when Anne returned, "I feel that I arranged the two opportunities with the most consummate tact, and I only hope you both took advantage of them!"

"You are a ridiculous little goose," said Anne, again blushing, "and I don't understand what you mean."

"I am not very clever, I know, but I have eyes in my head," said Grace. "Of course I'm not surprised at the little man's being taken with you, but that you, my sober, grave darling, should return it so quickly—oh, it's no use your shaking your head, I watched you when he came into the room, and all the time he was talking just now, and I'm certain of it. He is a very nice little man, dear, and very nice-looking, and I'm sure I don't see why—"

"Will you give your attention for one minute to something serious," interrupted Anne. "That note I received was from papa. I could not speak before Mr. Danby, but in it he orders me to give up all further communication with you, and any hope of seeing you again!"

"Not see me again! No further communication! Why, what on earth does he mean? What are his reasons?" cried Grace, sobered in an instant.

"I told you before, he never gives any reasons, dear, he simply issues his orders—which I am bound to obey!" said Anne, with a sigh.

"Yes, but I am not bound to obey Captain Studley's orders, and I don't intend to, that's more!" said Grace, firing up. "He cannot prevent my writing to you, I suppose?"

"But if you had no answers, dear, you would soon grow tired of writing," said

Anne. "No, I fear we must give up all our pleasant plans for the future."

"I will not give them up," said Grace, petulantly. "You are not going to be under your father's dominion all your life, and—and besides, I have a kind of presentiment about this, which I cannot explain. We must arrange some method of communication, in case of our urgently wanting to see each other, Anne."

"It would not be difficult, dear," said Anne. "We could arrange some catch-word as a signal, and state what we wanted, in a guarded manner, in an advertisement in the Times."

"I know, I understand," said Grace, "Ellen Webster used to call it the 'agony column.' Her brother ran away from school, because he could not eat fat, and hid with his uncle, and they only got him back by advertising in the Times that he should have more pocket money, and what he liked to eat."

"We must fix upon some word, and take care to remember it," said Anne. "It should be something striking. What shall it be?"

"I think 'spero' is a nice word," said Grace, "and very safe, because it's Latin, and no one would think that girls would use it."

"Its meaning renders it inapplicable to me," said Anne, with a shudder. "It's nothing, dear," she added, in reply to Grace's tender look of enquiry, "only a shiver ran through me. I suppose I must have taken cold. Now for the word. 'Toesin' is the best, I think; it is uncommon, and expresses what we mean—an alarm-signal, a call for help."

"'Toesin' is quite splendid," said Grace, "and I'll write it down at once in my memorandum-book. I've had the book a long time," she added, "and have never written anything in it yet, except the date of my own birthday, and of course I should have remembered that without. I'm glad I have something to make a memorandum of."

When the time for final parting arrived, there was a very sad scene. Grace completely broke down and wept profusely, and even Anne's sterner nature gave way.

"If ever you are in trouble, my darling, be sure to let me know," were Grace's last words.

"Be sure of that!" said Anne, whose arms were round her. "God bless and guard you, my pet! Remember Toesin."

What could have brought Mr. Danby to the Paddington station? Anne noticed him directly she arrived, looking about in a listless, purposeless way. He caught her eye at once, raised his hat, and seemed about to approach her. But the next minute she felt a touch on her shoulder, and looking round, saw her father.

AT THE FRANÇAIS.

INCALCULABLY more people know the Théâtre Français by reputation than by personal experience. It stands in the centre of Paris life. It presents its colonnaded portals to the stream of after-dinner promenaders, almost as a net opens itself to the entrance of a shoal of fish. The best pieces of the best authors are played there, by the best actors the nation can supply. The pronunciation of the language is a model of purity. The performance is admirably complete, the smallest parts being filled as carefully as the leading characters, and impressing the spectator with the belief that every one of the performers is a star. And yet tourists, as a rule, do not frequent the Théâtre Français. It has always had its own special audience, fit though few; quite recently, indeed, it has become a fashionable rendezvous, but not of passing travellers. They mostly go where their ears can be tickled with bouffoperattic strains; where pictures more and more bright and gaudy stimulate their satiated eyes; and where ever-twinkling feet and legs render needless any appeal to the brain or the heart. The Théâtre Français professes to live by cultivating appeals to the higher faculties, exclusively of most of the rest; and therefore visitors hurrying off to other scenes do not go to its really serious and conscientious performances. Their abstention is both explicable and excusable.

To travellers who don't know French, or whose knowledge does not extend much beyond "Combien?" and "s'il vous plaît," it is all one whether the French they hear be spoken ill or well; and, if they wish to take French lessons, they will probably select some other time and place. But even persons who read French fluently and with ease, although, for want of practice, they speak it with anything but fluent facility, still have a difficulty in following it when spoken, and find that it calls for a certain stretch of attention which they are not, at all times, in a

disposition to exert. After a long and weary day's sight-seeing; after remedying bodily fatigue by a hearty dinner taken in the insular belief that all French wines are "light," people's wits are scarcely in trim to catch the delicate shades of polished acting in a foreign language. Molière delights them not, nor Corneille either. De Musset's bitter satire is unintelligible. They think an intricately and skilfully constructed plot dull, when the dulness lies in their own tired-out senses. The drama, legitimate or not (or even an opera like "L'Africaine," with music not to be appreciated and enjoyed at first hearing), sends them to sleep infallibly. Nor is their taste or their intelligence necessarily defective or to blame. They have simply committed the common mistake, of trying to compress a week's existence into a day. Consequently, as they must spend their evening somehow, and in some way in which they could not spend it at home, they betake themselves to a Champs-Elysian Café chantant, to the equestrian exercises of the Cirque de l'Imperatrice, to the miraculous splendours of the "Pilules du Diable" or the "Pied de Mouton," or to the tuneful, spectacular, and choregraphic enchantments of "Orphée aux Enfers." There, post-prandial hours glide easily away, without much tension of the mental powers. Such travellers are wise in their generation and their holiday trip. If aesthetically wrong, they are practically and prudentially right.

The way to relish and profit by a good representation at the Théâtre Français is this. Don't worry yourself to death with doing Paris the day before, but get the printed plays to be acted as soon as they are announced on the bill. Send to the box-office to take your places, but stop quietly all that morning at your hotel or lodging, and read those plays as carefully as if you were a competitive candidate. Look out in your dictionary every unknown word; ask the meaning of every phrase whose purpose is not clear to you. Take a gentle walk, as if under medical treatment; dine lightly, be in your box or your stall ten minutes before the curtain rises; and you will not regret an evening so prepared and spent, especially if you adopt the good theatrical custom (lost elsewhere) of supping sociably afterwards.

It may be naturally supposed that the Théâtre Français enjoys an honourable and important place, with frequent mention and record in French literature. One of

the most recent of these is to be found in a publication entitled "Foyers et Coulisses : Histoire Anecdotique des Théâtres de Paris, avec photographies ;" the first of the series being two small volumes devoted to the Comédie-Française—its older, more correct, and more honourable title, since it is not so much a theatre as an institution, a society exercising the powers of self-government. The Society dates from 1680, the title from 1689. The first subvention was made in 1682, by the king's granting his comedians an annual allowance of twelve thousand livres (francs).

The triumphs and the tribulations of the Comédie-Française, the risings and ebbings of the tide of its fortunes, make too long a history to be given here; in fact, its fortunes were naturally affected by the fortunes of France. Not unfrequently, it had to shift its lodgings. Political convulsions did it no good, but still could not prevent its surviving to this day. While occupying the building now known as the Odéon, which they inaugurated on the 9th of April, 1782, the Comédie-Française substituted for candles the oil-lamps invented by the Sieur Quiquet, from whom they derived their name. Also at the Odéon, in 1789, the Comédie-Française first announced on the bills the names of the actors who were to fill the respective parts. Hitherto, the names of the pieces only had been given.

At the Revolution, the Comédiens ordinaires du Roi were obliged to alter the name of their establishment; it then took, in 1789, the official title of Théâtre de la Nation. While the public performances were noisy and riotous, the company was divided by internal dissensions; politics had split the once united troupe into two. The democratic half; including Talma, Dugazon, and (not our) Madame Vestris; deserted their comrades and performed at the Palais-Royal, in the former Salle des Variétés Amusantes, which subsequently became the present Théâtre-Français. The royalist actors and actresses remained where they were, but were obliged to conform to the new regulations, and to impress on the pieces which they played a decidedly republican colouring.

Whether a play were written in prose or verse, titles such as Monsieur, Madame, Monseigneur, had to be replaced by Citoyen and Citoyenne. But as there is no convincing a man or a woman against their will, the royalist company persisted in

maintaining an attitude hostile to republican ideas and in playing pieces full of pointed allusions to the excesses of upstart demagogues. In 1793, two new comedies, "L'Ami des Lois," and "Paméla ou la Vertu récompensée," drew down upon them the vengeance of the powers of the day, who swore to exterminate the Comédie, root and branch. Robespierre called the Théâtre Français "the disgusting haunt of the aristocracy, and the insulter of the Revolution." This ended by the closing of the Théâtre and the arrest of the comedians. In the night of September, 3, 1793, the actors of the Odéon were arrested in their own private lodgings and conducted, the men to the Madelonnettes and the women to Sainte-Pélagie. Collot d'Herbois simply required "that the head of the Comédie should be guillotined and the rest transported." Happily, his amiable project was not carried out, and after a short imprisonment the comedians were set at liberty.

On this occasion, the actors' insubordination had been committed out of malice prepense; since then, they have occasionally, though rarely, been disloyal by misadventure. In 1852, a play-bill of the Comédie-Française bore a passably seditious meaning. They gave on the same evening a cantata by some forgotten author, and one of Alfred de Musset's pieces. The two together formed the phrase "L'Empire c'est la Paix. Il ne faut jurer de rien," or "the Empire is Peace. Don't make too sure of anything."

The First Empire restored prosperity, and 1803 found the Comédie-Française installed at the corner of the Rue Richelieu, with an annual subsidy of 100,000 francs, in the house designed by the architect Louis, the same who built the very handsome and commodious theatre at Bordeaux. Bonaparte treated the Society with special favour. During his moments of repose, he invited the Comédie-Française to follow him to the palaces of Versailles, Saint-Cloud, Malmaison, Compiegne, and Fontainebleau. There, he especially delighted to listen to Corneille's tragedies, as acted by Talma (who also gave him lessons in costume, carriage, and deportment), and by Mdlle. Georges, who is reputed to have awakened tender passions in the hero's breast. Mdlle. Mars was his comic Muse, and all her life long she retained the warmest admiration of the fallen conqueror.

Of these now distant theatrical stars we obtain a nearer view through Alexandre Dumas the Elder's telescope. Writing to Jules Janin, by way of gossiping prologue to his "Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine," he reminds him that they used to sup pretty regularly with the two theatrical queens of the day. After "Henri III." they went to eat almond soup at Mdlle. Mars's, the Queen of Comedy, who then resided in the Rue de la Tour-des-Dames. After the performance of "Christine" at the Odéon, then occupied by the company of the Comédie-Française, they betook themselves to the Empress of Tragedy, Mdlle. Georges, Rue de l'Ouest, to eat truffle salad, plentifully seasoned with pepper and allspice. Dumas thinks that almond soup is a fair representative of Mdlle. Mars, whilst truffle salad conveys a happy idea of Mdlle. Georges's characteristics. What joyous times! Didn't they laugh heartily at those suppers! When Mdlle. Georges had taken off the costume of her character and put on her own private evening dress—which, according to the custom of great actresses, she did in the presence of her assembled intimate friends—they left her dressing (and reception) room together, and opening an iron gate of the Luxembourg Garden, of which she had a key, they crossed the garden, and by another iron gate entered the garden which belonged to her house. Long before reaching it, they could see through the foliage, or rather through the branches stripped of their leaves (for it was winter), the bright light streaming from the dining-room windows. On entering the house, a warm and perfumed atmosphere issued forth to welcome them. In the dining-room, an enormous dish of truffles of four or five pounds, awaited them. They sat down to table immediately, and Georges, whose toilette, as already stated, had been completed at the theatre, drew the salad bowl to her, spread its contents on a snow-white napkin, and with her fair royal hands and a silver knife, peeled the truffles with artistic skill.

Among the guests were Lockroy, sharp and full of raillery, but caressing people while he attacked them; Gentil, editor of some review, a brutal, reckless fellow, who boasted of being the first to call Racine a scamp; Harel, the pretended master of the house, but in reality Georges's slave, a charming personage, quick, witty, who made bons mots which

passed for Talleyrand's, and which held their ground as popular sayings; Jules Janin, the indefatigable chronicler and critic; and Alexandre Dumas, who, just arrived from the country, was training himself to narrative and dialogue in the midst of the amusing chatter which went on without respite or flagging during the two or three hours that the supper lasted.

It was different at Mdlle. Mars's. In spite of her age (which indeed was nearly the same as Mdlle. Georges's) she retained, if not absolute youth, a great appearance and a great love of being young. She belonged to 1778, and made no attempt to hide her years from her friends. A small piece of furniture, presented by Marie Antoinette to her mother (who gave birth to Mdlle. Mars on the same day the Queen gave birth to the Dauphine), bore the date of 1778.

Mdlle. Mars contained within herself two perfectly distinct women; the theatrical woman so well known to the public, and the woman of private life—the theatrical woman, with her caressing glances, her sympathetic voice, and infinite grace in every movement; the woman of private life, with her hard eye, her harsh voice, and her abrupt gestures the moment she experienced the slightest annoyance, from whatever source it might proceed. She had a lady companion whom she brought from Bordeaux, to serve as dame de compagnie, reader, and drudge. This companion, Julianne by name, a clever person, took a liking to Dumas, and made him her confidant. One day, after describing a scene in which she had the courage to make no reply to Célimène's scolding, and received his compliments accordingly, she said, "My dear Dumas, you know how to contrive everything, including comedies; can't you suggest some occupation in which I can listen with downcast eyes to the insults she utters, and in which my impatience can find vent, without showing myself openly?"

"My dear Julianne," he answered "suppose you take up landscape drawing."

"But I know nothing about painting," the poor girl replied.

"Good," he answered; "landscape drawing requires no knowledge of painting. All you have to do is to make straight lines, to represent the trunks of trees, and a sort of frizzled green daubing of diverse shades, for the foliage. Although I never yet have handled the brush, I will give you your first lesson

to-morrow. You shall have drawing-paper, a box of colours, and a coloured lithograph of a forest to copy. In fine weather, that is when Céline is amiable, you will do the tree-trunks, you will make straight lines. On stormy days, when she is cross-grained, and your hand trembles with rage, you will put in the foliage. If she notices it, and asks what you are doing, you will say that you are clothing your naked oak-branches with leaves. She can't object to that. You will grumble within your teeth, and your anger will expend itself upon the tree-tops."

The next day he kept his word. Julieenne took to it kindly, and, thanks to her instructor, began one of the prettiest forests ever seen. Whenever he called on Mademoiselle Mars, the first thing he did was to go and look at Julieenne's drawing, standing with its face turned to the wall. If the tree-trunks had increased in number, "Ah, ah!" he would say, "the weather has been calm, and we have cultivated the upright line;" but if, on the contrary, the twigs had been hung with verdure unknown to botanists, "Oaf! poor Julieenne," he would say; "this looks as if there had been a tempest." And then Julieenne would confide her sorrows.

The habit of domineering does not decrease with years. Mademoiselle Mars's colleagues at the theatre, dramatic authors especially, had too often suffered from her wilfulness, not to wish to be rid of it. A reasonable pretext was at hand, but nobody dared venture on its application.

In spite of the success of two preceding pieces, they had refused Dumas's play "Un Mariage sous Louis XV." Mademoiselle Mars instinctively divined one of the causes. "My dear fellow," she said to Dumas, "they have refused you, because you mentioned that the part of the Comtesse was for me; and as they are wishing to be quit of me, they said, 'If she has a new part, we shall have to keep her on a year longer!'" She was not mistaken. Still, who would undertake to bell the cat? Who would depose her and set up a rival queen in the person of Mademoiselle Plessis?

Dumas's material and business affairs were managed by an excellent friend, who had not the slightest idea of the theatrical world. He thought Mdlle. Plessis charming, and he was right; people told him that Mdlle. Mars was old, which he believed, and was wrong: for a woman with Mars's talent is never old. Mdlle.

Plessis's chest was weak: and Dumas's friend, who lived in the country and kept goats, sent her goats' milk every morning. Every evening he went to the green-room, where they all dinned into his ears, "Can you fancy old Mars, at sixty-five, playing the part of a girl of seventeen? Really, somebody ought to tell her to her face that she has forty years too many for the character."

He heard this so often, that he could think of nothing else. One evening, he answered, "But, if somebody ought to tell her, why don't you tell her so yourself?"

"Oh! she would say what she always says—that we want to turn her out of the house through jealousy."

"Very well, then; I will tell her."

"You? You dare not. When will you tell her?"

"To-morrow, at latest."

"Why not to-night? She acts to-night. Look there; she has finished her part, and is gone to her dressing-room. But I see you hang back; your courage is cooling."

"Cooling, is it? I am off at once." And the reckless star-quencher rushed into Mdlle. Mars's "logo" before she had time to complete her change of costume.

"Who's that?" inquired the actress, surprised at the intrusion. "What do you want, coming in without asking leave?"

"'Tis I, Mademoiselle, Monsieur Sandoz. I want to tell you what nobody else has the courage to say."

"And what may that be?"

"That you are too old to play the Comtesse, and that you would be wise to hand over the part to Mademoiselle Plessis."

"Mademoiselle Plessis shall have the part to-morrow, Monsieur. And now, if you please, leave my room. I want to finish dressing."

Next morning, Mdlle. Mars sent back the part and announced that she had done with the Comédie-Française.

OUT ON THE SCAR.

GOLD flashes back to the glowing west,
From the headland, crowned with gorse,
Silver gleams out from the sea's broad breast,
In the manes of the wild "white horses."
Like sapphire shines each clear rock pool,
Where brown, and crimson, and rose,
The sea-flowers, shy, and scentless, and cool,
Are wooed by the winds to unclose;
And the hillocks, like warriors ranking for war,
Steady and regular, sweep to the Scar.

Grey, and jagged, and cruel, and strong,
The rocks lie under the head,
While the breakers sing their mighty song,
The dirge for the mariners dead;
For thick I ween do the sailors lie
Down in the ocean deep,
With the wind's low sob, and the sea mew's cry,
For lullaby o'er their sleep;
Little they reck of the moon at the bar,
Or the fierce surf "calling," out on the Scar.

Many a token of storm and of death
Must lurk in those rocky caves,
Left, when the foam hides all beneath,
And tossed by the furious waves,
The gallant ship strikes hard and fast,
And the blue lights burn in vain,
And the rocket hisses athwart the blast,
And the fearless fishermen strain
To force the life-boat, where crash and jar
Tell how timbers are parting, out on the Scar.

But calm to-night as a babe's repose
Do the tides and their whispers come,
Murmuring aye through the ebbs and flows
With their lips of creamy foam,
Murmuring on 'neath the rose-flushed sky,
Through the lovely gloaming of May;
Till the happy smile creeps to heart and eye,
Sunning all cares away;
And fret and turmoil fade faint and far,
From the heart of the dreamer, out on the Scar.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

DURHAM.

HIGH throned above the winding Wear
stands the shrine of St. Cuthbert, with
its triple towers, its chapel of the Nine
Altars, and of Our Lady of Pity, its
solemn choir and rich dyed and blazoned
windows and vast nave, its bellringer's
walk, its transepts, its chantries, and its
echoing aisles. "Huge and vast," were
the epithets which Sir Walter Scott justly
applied to Durham, which had even struck
Dr. Johnson as of a rocky solidity and
indeterminate duration.

It was to this pile above the river that
in 995, after the Danish invasion, the
monks bearing the restless body of St.
Cuthbert were led, by accidentally hearing
a woman who was seeking a lost cow told
that she would find it at Dunholm. The
monks cleared the hill of thicket and
forest, says the venerable legend, and
built the first church of wattled boughs,
in the Saxon manner. Three years after,
Bishop Aldrin began the stone church
which was known as the "White Church,"
the Earl of Northumberland pressing all
the labourers between the Coquet and the
Tees to help in the holy labour.

The two great bishops of Durham were
Bec and Hatfield. The former was the
proud prelate who led twenty-six stand-
ards to Edward's Scotch war, and who,
Graystanes tells us with horror, once
in London gave two pounds a-piece for

fresh herrings, and on another occasion cut
up his costliest cloth for horse-trappings.
His tomb, on which he was entitled "the
strenuous patriarch of Jerusalem," is
mentioned by Browne Willis.

Hatfield was bishop of Durham in the
reign of Edward III., and built that
stately episcopal palace, Durham House,
in the Strand. His magnificent tomb is
in the choir, and now forms the bishop's
throne.

Durham cathedral was the scene of
one of those disgraceful conflicts, not un-
common in the middle ages, between
the monks and the bishop—Philip of
Poictiers, whom the monks disliked as a
foreigner, and locked out. He blockaded
the cathedral like a fortress, lit fires at
the doors and windows, and stopped all
supplies of food. One day, when the prior
was celebrating mass, he sent in priests to
seize the altar linen; and it was "pull
devil, pull baker," till the strongest bore
off strips of the prize.

Near the Galilee door of Durham cathe-
dral was formerly the sanctuary. "In
the old times," says an old writer, "the
abbey church, the churchyard, and all
the circuit thereof was a sanctuary for all
manner of men that committed any great
offence, as killing of a man in his own
defence, or any prisoners had broken out
of prison and fled to the said church door,
and knocked, rapping at it to have it
opened; certain men did lye in two
chambers over the north door for the
purpose, that when any such offenders did
come and knock, they were instantly let
in at any hour of the night; and did run
quickly to the Galilee bell, and tol'd it,
that whosoever heard it might know that
some had taken sanctuary. When the
prior had notice thereof, he sent his com-
mands to keep themselves within the
sanctuary, that is, within the church and
church-yard, and that everyone should
have a gown of black cloth, with a yellow
cross, called St. Cuthbert's cross, upon
the left shoulder."

St. Cuthbert, like Tom Moore's un-
gallant St. Kevin, hated women, so that
the Galilee was the only spot of the
cathedral open to female worshippers.
Even good and brave Queen Philippa was
turned out at midnight from the prior of
Durham's lodgings, because the monks had
had no intimation of her admission within
the precincts. A blue line of stone in the
floor of the nave still marks the limit
for women, and a monk at noon used

daily to preach to them from an iron pulpit in this Galilee. Stolen and sur-reptitious looks were all the Durham women were allowed of St. Mary's shrine, Our Lady of Pity, and others in the chapel of the venerable Bede.

The Galilee, at the west end of Durham cathedral, consists of five aisles formed by three rows of pillars. The arches are Norman, the windows pointed. These Galilees were used as resting-places for church processions to commemorate the passing of the Disciples into Galilee; each halting-place of the processions having some appropriate name.

It is said that Bishop Pudsey planned some sumptuous additions to the east end of the cathedral, and for that purpose sent abroad for marble columns. But when his foundations were sunk deep, and his walls arose, the stones began to totter and shrink; and it was only too plain at last, even to the bishop, that Saint Cuthbert was offended, and the work was relinquished. Pudsey, thus admonished, then built, instead, the Galilee at the west end of the cathedral for female worshippers and penitents. According to Mr. Walcott, the Galilee was so called from its being used for women and the dead, both being as repugnant to Saint Cuthbert's Benedictines as the Galileans to the true Hebrews.

A beautiful legend of Durham cathedral is thus related by Reginald of Durham. "A monk of Durham, keeping nightly vigil in the minster, sat down in the stalls and thought; he raised his eyes; he beheld in the misty distance three forms descend, and with slow steps come from the east towards the choir steps; each had a bishop's habit, each was comely, venerable, and glorious to behold; and, as they paused, they sang Alleluia with the verse, with the sweetest strains of melody; then, towards the south, where the great crucifix stands, was heard a choir of many voices singing in their several parts the prose, and it seemed as though clerks in their ministries were serving a bishop-celebrant, for there the clear shining of the tapers was brightest, and thence the rich delicious perfume of the incense breathed around. Then the three bishops sang their part, and the choir made answer with chanting wondrous sweet, whilst one celebrated as beseems a bishop, then all was done; once more the solemn procession passed on its way, and disappeared like faint images behind the altar; and they say that they who were at that service lie

asleep, revered in that ancient church, Aidan, Cuthbert, Eadbert, and AEdelwold."

The great Easter ceremonial of the cathedral terminated on Easter-day, between three and four in the morning, when the service was in honour of the Resurrection of our Lord. The two oldest Benedictines came to the sepulchre, which was then covered with red velvet embroidered with gold. They first censed the shrine, then, with due reverence, took out an image of our Saviour, which had had the Holy Sacrament enclosed in crystal in its breast. The two monks then carried the image to the high altar on a velvet cushion, censing it all the time, the choir chanting the anthem of "Christus Resurgens." At the close of the service the image was met at the south choir door by four ancient gentlemen, who bore over it a rich purple canopy, hung with gold fringe and red silk, and who carried the image and sacrament in procession all round the church, the whole choir following with torches and a great number of other lights, rejoicing and praying most devoutly, and finally returning to the high altar, to replace the sacred image, to remain there till Ascension Day. Before this high altar, hung, by silver chains, four silver basins and four great wax candles, which burned day and night.

Easter, indeed, seems to have been a period of the year kept with great solemnity at Durham. It was then, from Maundy Thursday, before Easter, to the Wednesday after Ascension Day, that they erected in the choir what they called the Paschal. As far as we can understand the old account, it consisted of seven huge candlesticks of foliated metal, crowned near the roof of the church by a huge wax candle, and adorned with figures of the four evangelists and four flying dragons.

On Good Friday, two of the oldest monks, bearing a gold crucifix on a velvet cushion embroidered with the arms of St. Cuthbert, sat down on the lowest of the choir's steps, holding between them a picture of Our Saviour. Then the prior first, and after him all the monks, took off their shoes, went down upon their knees, crept to the cross and kissed it, the whole choir meanwhile singing a hymn. This service over, the two monks carried the cross reverently to the "Easter Sepulchre," which had been erected that morning on the north side of the choir, near the high altar, returned it to the sepulchre, placing the sacrament on its breast, and setting two lighted tapers

before it, to burn till Easter-day in the morning.

Defoe in 1771 describes being shown at Durham the old clerical vestments which were still used on Sundays and other holy days. They were rich with embroidery and embossed work of silver, and were quite a load to stand under. In 1634 the vestry of Durham contained several robes of crimson satin embossed with silver cherubim, and black copes wrought in gold and colours, the richest of which were given to King Charles at his visit. Warburton, when prebendary at Durham, in 1779 first threw off the cope, finding the stiff high collar ruffle his great full-bottomed wig. In 1804, copes, says Mr. Walcott, were still worn at Durham cathedral altar on festivals and "gandy" days. It is particularly mentioned in the chronicles of the cathedral that Ralph, Lord Nevill, the victor of the battle of Nevill's Cross, gave the cathedral a vestment of red velvet, richly embroidered with gold, silk, great pearls, and images of saints. His widow also gave the church many vestments with the Nevill arms embroidered on the borders. The offerings at this nobleman's funeral were eight horses, four for war and four for peace, and three cloth of gold vestments interwoven with flowers. It is also mentioned that at the Holy Thursday processions, when St. Bede's shrine, St. Margaret's cross, and St. Oswald's picture were carried through the streets, the Durham prior always wore a rich cope of cloth of gold, so massy that he could not walk upright, unless the gentlemen who bore his train supported it on every side.

Durham cathedral seems to have escaped pretty well during the civil wars, but it was made a receptacle for Scottish prisoners, and four thousand five hundred of these poor wretches starved and pined here, hundreds dying and being thrown carelessly into holes dug for them.

The great church seems to have been a common thoroughfare in the time that Cuthbert Tonstal (Henry the Eighth) ordered the chapter to set up strong gates or screens of iron and wood, with gates round the choir, as in St. Paul's, London, to prevent dishonest folks stealing the books and vestments.

In the infirmary of the Durham convent, under the master's lodge, was the monks' prison for notorious offenders, who were often left a whole year in chains, seeing no one but the master of the infirmary, who

let down the meal through a trap door, "at a great distance from the prisoners." In the infirmary was a chapel, where four old women were pensioned.

On the north side of the abbey gates was a school for poor children, maintained by the monks, and these children were fed with the leavings of the monks' dinners.

After all, we perhaps underrate the pleasures of monastic life. A convent must have been a pleasant club for students of theology, music, and painting. All the science and philosophy of the time was stored in the convent library. There was a great variety of employment, from ringing the bells and guarding the copes, to teaching the young novices or visiting the poor. At the same time there would be monks at mass and monks playing bowls, monks cooking and monks gardening, monks illuminating and monks being buried, monks in the cloister and monks among the bells, monks welcoming fugitives to the sanctuary and monks entertaining guests in the prior's hall, monks in the singing school and monks in the kitchen. Active and passive life, you could follow either there; and, far from all these lesser cares and occupations, there were those daily services of prayer and praise that rose up unceasingly.

The Master of the Novices was generally an old and learned monk, and acted as schoolmaster to the six novices, who remained in the school seven years without wages till they could sing their first mass, and received their twenty shillings a year, like other monks, and found themselves.

The Sacristan's Exchequer was in the north aisle, opposite Bishop Skirlaw's altar, and here he always kept a tun of sacrament wine. His duty was to provide bread, wine, and wax lights for the cathedral. He had also to see the glass windows repaired, the bells and bell ropes mended, and the church kept clean. It fell to him, also, to lock up every night the keys of every altar in the cathedral, and, between seven and eight every morning, to lay all the keys out ready for the monks of each altar who had to say mass.

There were also attached to the cathedral the bowreer, the cellararer, the terrer, the keeper of the garners, and the chamberlain.

This last official had to provide linscye-wolsey shirts, and sheets and socks for the monks and novices who were not permitted to wear linen. He kept a tailor

daily at work under him. The master of the Common House had to provide spicess and figs and walnuts for Lent, and saw to the monks' comfort in hall, and that the hogshead of wine was duly replenished. The prior's chaplain had to receive all his rents and pay all his servants.

The sub-prior's chamber was over the monks' dormitory, so that he might know if any played truant. His office was to open every chamber door about midnight, and call the names. He dined with the monks, said grace, and after five had to see that all the doors were locked till five the next morning.

At the east end of the Frater house stood the table for the novices, their master, and the elects; and every day at meals one of the novices mounted a pulpit at the south end of the high table, and read some part of the Old or New Testament in Latin. When he had done reading, the master rang a silver bell hanging over his head, thereby giving notice to one of the novices to come to the high table and say grace. That ended, they departed to their books.

Within the Cloister Garth, over against the Frater house door, was the conduit, with twenty-four brass taps, where at eleven in the morning the monks washed their hands and faces before dinner. This conduit was of marble roofed with lead, and had seven windows; at the east side of the door hung the monks' dinner-bell.

The priors of Durham Cathedral were always buried in their cowls and boots. When such a dignitary died, he was carried to the "Dead Man's Chamber" in the infirmary, and at night watched by the children of the almery in St. Andrew's Chapel, who sang David's Psalms; and two monks sat all night at his feet watching him. The next morning there was a solemn funeral service in the chapterhouse, and he was then carried through the parlour into the centry garth to be buried, under a fine marble stone, with a silver chalice on his breast. His blue bed was held over him by four monks till he was buried, the sexton receiving the bed as a fee for digging the grave and managing the funeral.

The high altar seems, in old time, to have been very splendidly adorned with hangings of white silk, and garnishings of red velvet worked with gold flowers, and alabaster figures of Our Lady, St. Cuthbert, and St. Oswuld. The canopy over the high altar was crowned with an allegorical gilt

pelican feeding her young. The pix was of pure wrought gold, and the white cloth that hung over it was of fine lawn, embroidered with gold and red silk. The gospeller, who, like the epistler, was a subordinate in the service, carried the books, which were adorned with goldsmith's work.

On the high altar lay a volume richly covered with gold and silver, and with gilt letters, containing the names of all the benefactors to St. Cuthbert's church from the foundation. The altar plate consisted of gold and silver chalices, set with precious stones, gilt cruettes, silver candlesticks and censers, gold, silver, and crystal crosses for processions and silver holy-water founts.

In the south alley of the cloisters was a large hall, called the Frater house, with a stone bench at the west end, reaching from the cellar to the pantry door. This hall was wainscotted and adorned with gilding and carving, having a picture of Our Saviour, the Virgin, and St. John.

In a strong almery by the Frater house door, they used to keep the great double-gilt Grace cup, which the monks passed round every day after meals. There was also stored the great gilt bowl, called "Judas's Cup," which was used only on Maundy Thursdays. The same plate cupboard also contained the famous St. Bede's bowl—a double-gilt black bowl, which could be taken to pieces, and which had in the midst a figure of the holy St. Bede, writing. Every monk had his silver-edged bowl, and the ewer in which the prior washed his hands was embossed with a figure of a mounted huntsman. The meat for the Frater house dinners was served out of the dresser window of the great kitchen, and the wine out of the great cellar.

At the tolling of the prayer bell every monk struck work, and even the transcriber stopped half way in his illuminated letter. The Benedictines always went in pairs, to guard each other. On Wednesdays and Fridays they fasted till three o'clock, and, in Lent, every day till six in the evening. They were not to talk in the refectory during meals; and the readers, waiters, and cooks dined by themselves after the rest. The brothers slept in their clothes. Offenders were expelled the public table and the chapel service. A brother, received again after expulsion, was placed the last in the convent. Every monk had two coats and two cowls, and their old clothes were given to the poor. Each brother had a table book, a knife, a

needle, and a handkerchief. The furniture of the beds was a blanket, rug, and pillow.

At the south side of the cloisters a porter sat on a boarded seat, to keep the door. Near this seat was the long stone bench where the alms-children sat and waited on Maundy Thursdays. Each boy on this day had a monk to wash his feet, and every monk then kissed the feet of a boy, and gave him thirty pence, seven red herrings, three loaves, a wafer cake, and some drink. The custom was continued till the sixteenth century, and was afterwards briefly revived in remembrance of the restoration of King Charles.

But how did these Benedictine monks of Durham Cathedral live, and what were the daily religious duties of those men who raised those roofs and climbed those stairs and knelt to Our Lady of Pity, and talked of Saint Cuthbert's miracles, and who now lie beneath the worn stones of aisle and chantry, once reared by them in bygone ages to the glory of God? To judge from Friar Ænard's résumé of the rules, these monks worked hard at their observances. The Benedictines were obliged to perform their devotion seven times within four-and-twenty hours. At cock-crowing, or the Nocturnal: This service was performed at two o'clock in the morning; the reason for pitching upon this hour, is taken partly from David's saying, "At midnight I will praise the Lord," and partly from a tradition of Our Saviour's rising from the dead about that time. Matins: These were said at the first hour, or, according to our computation, at six o'clock; at this time the Jewish morning sacrifice was offered; the angels likewise were supposed to have acquainted the women with Our Saviour's resurrection about this hour. The Tierce, which was at nine in the morning, when Our Saviour was condemned and scourged by Pilate. The Sexte, or twelve at noon. The None, or three in the afternoon; at this hour it is said Our Saviour gave up the ghost; besides which circumstance it was a time for public prayer in the temple at Jerusalem. Vespers, at six in the afternoon; the evening sacrifice was then offered in the Jewish temple; and Our Saviour is supposed to have been taken down from the cross at this hour. The Compline: This service was performed after seven, when Our Saviour's agony in the garden, it is believed, began. The monks going to bed at eight, had six hours to sleep

before the Nocturnal began; if they went to bed after that service, it was not, as we understand, reckoned a fault; but after Matins they were not allowed that liberty.

The earliest secular tomb in Durham Cathedral, mentioned by Browne Willis, is that of Ralph, Lord Neville, who died 1361 (Edward III.) This was the son of that Lord Neville, who, in the reign of Edward Second, had a dispute about his yearly offering of a stag on Saint Cuthbert's Day as rent for Raby.

After the battle of the Red Hills, where David Bruce was taken prisoner, the victory over the Scots was announced to the Durham people by the singing a Te Deum on the top of Durham cathedral spire. This was at the time of Prior Fossour, the first prior buried within the walls.

In the Galilee, near where the altar of the Virgin once stood, rest the bones of the venerable Bede, said to have been stolen by a priest from Jarrow. They were removed to the Galilee by Richard of Bernard Castle, who was buried near them. Tradition goes that the Rev. Sir George Wheeler Knight, a prebendary of Durham, had himself and several of his children buried as near Bede's body as was possible without desecration. A Bishop Neville, who is said to have erected the Cnþhbert shrine, also lies here; so heresleep, in a cluster, the two saints and some of their special votaries. Bede should, indeed, be remembered with reverence by pilgrims to Durham cathedral. He was one of the first of our Ecclesiastical historians, a strenuous toiler in a barbarous age, and there is something touching in the story of the good old man translating the Gospel of St. John into Saxon on his death-bed.

One of the great glories belonging to this shrine was the rich gilt bauner of St. Cuthbert. In the midst of this crimson and green banner was a small square of white velvet on which was sewn a crimson velvet cross, and within this square of white velvet lay the relic, the corporax cloth, wherewith Saint Cuthbert used to cover the chalice when he said mass. This banner was at the battle of Brakenfield in Henry the Eighth's time, and brought home with it the royal banner of Scotland, and many Scottish noblemen's banners, which were hung in the Feretory. This consecrated standard was thought by north-country people to be one of the most magnificent relics in England, and

was only carried out on great processions, such as Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whit-Sunday, Corpus Christi, and St. Cuthbert's days.

The corporax cloth, which the banner of Saint Cuthbert contained, was that which the night before the battle of Nevill's Cross, Prior Fessour had been commanded in a vision to mount on a spear and carry to the Red Hills to abido the battle on the morrow. The great victory that followed, and the death of seven Scottish earls and fifteen thousand Scotchmen was naturally attributed to St. Cuthbert and his corporax, and in this battle was taken that famous Scottish relic the Black rood of Scotland, a silver cross, miraculously brought by a deer to a Scotch king who was hunting. The sacred banner is said to have been contemptuously burnt by the French wife of that sacrilegious dean, Whitingham.

The long iron-bound chest, which tradition says contained the saint's body, long remained, says Hutchinson, in the bishop's palace.

St. Cuthbert was educated in the sixth century among the Scottish monks at Icolmkill. This apostolic man, at the invitation of the Saxon King of Northumberland, came to Lindisfarne and converted half the Northumbrian nobles. How his body sailed down the Tweed in a stone coffin, and eventually, after several interments, found its way to Durham, is it not written in many a monkish chronicle? Also how a milkmaid guided the searchers for his body is carved in one of the cathedral turrets. It is said that the exact resting-place of the body was a secret revealed to only three Benedictine monks at a time. The offerings at the shrine from 1578 to 1613 have been calculated, says Mr. Walcott, at sixty-six thousand pounds. According to Browne Willis, the saint's body, after the Reformation, was thrown on a dunghill at the time when the deans of Durham turned the old stone coffins of the dead bishops into pickling troughs. In the times of the old faith, says one writer, Durham cathedral was considered so sacred that, till 1310, not even a bishop was allowed to be buried there, and no prior was admitted till 1374. When the first bishop, the proud and wealthy prelate, Anthony de Bec, who brought thirty-two banners to Falkirk, to help his master, Edward the First, against the stalwart Scots, was brought to be buried, the half-frightened monks durst not bring his coffin in at the doors, but broke a hole

in the wall at a distant end. This same proud Anthony was, mark you, Patriarch of Jerusalem and Prince of the Isle of Man.

The shrine of St. Cuthbert must, in old times, have been gorgeous enough. It was, we are told, of green marble, partly gilt, and was so rich in offerings and jewels, that it was allowed to be one of the most sumptuous shrines in England. At the west end of the shrine stood an altar for mass to be said on St. Cuthbert's day, when the prior and all the Benedictine brethren kept open house in the Fratry. At this feast they used to draw up the gilt and painted wooden cover of the shrine with a rope, hung with six silver bells, which "made a goodly sound;" and on this cover were painted Our Saviour, sitting on a rainbow, with a picture of Our Lady with Christ upon her knee, and on the top of the cover were carved dragons, fowls, and many strange beasts. This chapel or feretory of St. Cuthbert had round the wall cupboards, containing the saint's reliques and offerings made to the shrine.

The shrine of St. Cuthbert was defaced at the visitation held at Durham, for demolishing such monuments, by Dr. Lee, Dr. Henley, and Mr. Blittmen, in King Henry the Eighth's reign, at his suppression of religious houses. "They found many goodly and valuable jewels, especially one precious stone, which was of value sufficient to redeem a prince. After the spoil of ornaments and jewels, they approached near to the saint's body, expecting nothing but dust and ashes; but perceiving the chest he lay in strongly bound with iron, the goldsmith with a smith's great forge-hammer broke it open, when they found him lying whole, uncorrupt, with his face bare, and his beard of a fortnight's growth, and all the vestments about him, as he was accustomed to say mass, and his metwand of gold lying by him. When the goldsmith perceived he had broken one of his legs, in breaking open the chest, he was sore troubled at it, and cried, 'Alas! I have broken one of his legs;' which, Dr. Henley hearing, called to him, and bade him cast down his bones: the other answered he could not get them asunder, for the sinews and skin held them so that they could not separate. Then Dr. Lee stepped up to see if it were so, and turning about, spake in Latin to Dr. Henley, that he was intire, though Dr. Henley, not believing his words, called again to have

bis bones cast down: Dr. Lee answered, 'If you will not believe me, come up yourself, and see him:' then Dr. Henley stopt up to him, and handled him, and found he lay whole: then he commanded them to take him down; and so it happened contrary to their expectation, that not only his body was whole and uncorrupted, but the vestments wherein his body lay, and wherein he was accustomed to say mass, were fresh, safe, and not consumed. Whereupon the visitors commanded him to be carried into the vestry, till the king's pleasure concerning him was further known; and upon the receipt thereof, the monks and prior buried him in the ground under the place where his shrine was exalted."

King Henry the Third, it is said, listening to a courtier's whisper, violated the saint's grave, and found hid within much treasure, hidden by the bishops, which he incontinently borrowed.

But rougher hands than Prior Turgot's, or King Henry's men, fell on St. Cuthbert's tomb, at the godless Dissolution. Lambard, a good old Elizabethan antiquary, gives the following graphic account of this third disturbance of the good saint's bones:—

"After St. Cuthbert's body was first translated to Durham, Prior Turgot, Aldwin's successor, and his brethren opened the tomb to see if the saint's body was still entire. Removing the stone, the cowled men found a chest covered with leather, and inside this well-nailed chest another, wrapt in cloth thrice double, in which was a little silver altar, a goblet of pure gold and onyx, an ivory comb, and that Book of the Four Evangelists which fell into the sea, and was miraculously washed ashore. Lastly, opening solemnly the third chest, the eyes of these holy men rested with awe and delight on the incorruptible body of the saint, together with the bones of the venerable Bede, the head of St. Oswald, and the relics of three saintly bishops of Lindisfarne. These relics were removed, all but the head of St. Oswald, which was placed in St. Cuthbert's hands, the saint being laid with due respect on his sacred back. Bishop Ranulphus preached the funeral sermon on the day of translation in the worshipful presence of the abbots of St. Albans, St. Germans, St. Mary's in York, and the Prior Turgot. Long after a bishop of Durham granted a forty days' release from penance for all who visited St. Cuthbert's shrine.

RUNAWAY HUSBANDS.

THE year 1842 was a bad year for husbands. As late as 1841, a husband might run away and rid himself of his wife and children with some moderate hope of success; but no sooner did '42 set in, than his chances considerably lessened. He can still desert, of course, for it is easy; he can still feel, once more, the freedom of bachelor-hood blowing about him, or, if he prefer it, revel in some newer and illegal tie; that is easy too—for a time. A husband can even go so far as to hug himself with thinking he has got clean off from that "old woman" and those "little 'uns," who were so imperious in their demand for food and some sort of a roof above their heads. As much as that is a work of complacency and facility that will not take much genius, and during which the features may wear a smile. But there, it is done. After that short period, there comes the pulling up; the man finds the chain he carries has many links to it, that the liberty he has longed-for is but short-lived. Down comes the hand of the law; helped by the din of the voice belonging to it; and, in a trice, out must come the reckoning.

It is a wholesome change. The little instrument that effects it is the Poor Law Unions' Gazette, a small "weekly," the precise size of a sheet of Bath post, printed only for technical purposes, and posted to every Union in the kingdom, on the Friday evening of every week. By the establishment of this little periodical, the hue and cry for husbands is made loud and piercing; every corner into which a man may hide and skulk is lighted with official gas; and it is in vain for any critical guardian of the poor to complain of the poverty of its matter, to point out how much more varied and graphic its pages might be, to try and get a vote that it shall no longer be "taken in." It is imperative that it be received; that is to say, it is imperative that it be paid for; it is legally chargeable to the poor-rates, whether it be read or not; and as its small price, two-pence a week, must go down in the accounts, that parochial officer would be too unwise who should order it to be cast out into the streets. Free, thus, from any caprice of supervising that shall lessen (or increase) its sale, this smallest of contemporaries goes on its way faithfully, and in its own way does its work.

The scope of it is very simple. It describes every man who has left his wife and children to be maintained by the parish; it says what is his age, his height, his trade, his clothing, his probable destination; it tells all the main facts about him, descending to every particular. It sets out, first and foremost, ever its steady leader, as constant as its title, a quotation from the Vagrant Act. "Every person," it says, "running away and leaving his wife, or his or her child and children chargeable, or whereby she or they, or any of them, shall become chargeable to any parish, shall be deemed a rogue and vagabond." This law, it informs everybody, was passed in the fifth year of the reign of George the Fourth and is to be found in cap. 83. It is supplemented, it says, by other laws, passed in the seventh and eighth of Queen Victoria, cap. 101, by which any woman deserting her natural child, and leaving it chargeable to a parish, shall be equally deemed a rogue and vagabond, and be punished accordingly; a curious coincidence about these laws being that the one relating to men was passed in the reign of a man, and the one relating to women in the reign of a woman. Quick overtaking may come to these offenders, the Poor Law Unions' Gazette makes known. There need be no waiting for any police officer, or any other qualified legal practitioner. It is lawful for any person to apprehend them; to lay on a hand, and cry out "You are a prisoner, come;" and the only other step necessary is to seek the nearest constable and forthwith to yield the captive up into his custody. It is comprehensive, this notice, and it should be admonitory. After it, comes the subject-matter proper of the little weekly. It is just a double-column of cases, about forty in each edition, set out by the clerk of the union, or his assistant, in the terms that he thinks most likely and most speedily to lead to recognition. To give a sample, one case is (altering only names and localities) "Henry Thomas Burn, billiard marker; height about five feet six inches, slightly built, brown hair, whiskers and moustache slightly grey, long thick eyebrows, bald on the front of his head, elderly, with a quick manner of speaking; he is said to be in Manchester hawking about canes, fuses, &c., and has recently been seen in Royal-street, near the Prince's Theatre, and also in Chester-street, and in the neighbourhood of the People's Park;

deserted his wife and three children, and they are now chargeable to the above union;" such union having been set down at the heading as that of Oldport, Glamorganshire, presided over by Mr. Walter Jones, clerk. Another case shall be given; it is that of a woman, very rare, happily, women figuring in only about two per cent. of the whole number of cases. It says: "Marevalley Union, clerk Mr. Samuel Wett. Whereas Sarah Walker, alias Sall Shutup, did some months since desert her two illegitimate children, whereby they became and now are chargeable to the Marevalley Union. She is about twenty-five years of age, five feet two inches in height, has dark brown hair, blue eyes, full fresh complexion, round features, and rather good looking. She generally wears a light-coloured muslin frock and fancy hat. She is a native of Couchton in the Marevalley Union, and she is"—what she had better not be, and what shall not here have mention. Then it says that two pounds will be given for the poor lost creature's apprehension, such reward being in excess of the average, which is generally one sovereign. Will the runaway be found? Will her blue eyes meet other eyes that know them? Will her full fresh complexion turn deadly pale when she hears, "Why, Sall Shutup, I thought I couldn't be mistaken!" and when the sleeve of the light-coloured muslin frock she generally wears is in the captor's grasp? Such a consummation would seem inevitable. The Poor Law Unions' Gazette, it must be remembered, is sent to every union in the kingdom. High and low, far-off and near, Sall Shutup's description runs with her, and she will certainly find it very difficult to escape. It is the same with all the people in this queer calendar. Let any offender get into any "trouble," or apply as "casual" for any relief, in any parish, anywhere, and he will find a relieving-officer perfectly acquainted with his little history, and quite ready to begin a new chapter of it. One man, for instance, has been advertised for who is quite a suggestive man, when thought is given to a certain notorious trial, and one issue of it. He is tattooed. His chest is pricked with the mariner's compass, with a flag on each side; on his left arm, below the elbow, there is a woman; on his right arm there are the initials, or words, Faith, Hope, and Charity, also the initials T. T. A. Can this particular vagrant be "wanted" long? The letters T. T. A. upon him are

the first letters of his own name, Timothy Thompson Atkins; he uses two aliases, which are given; he is a seaman, and also in the Royal Naval Reserve; he is five feet seven inches high; he has blue eyes, light hair, fair complexion; he is thirty-seven years old, and was last heard of at Southend. Surely, when he is next heard of at Southend, there will be a pretty sequel to the hearing. T. T. A. may be triumphant enough now (it is four years, about, since he left his wife and two children chargeable); he may be at sea perhaps, working his passage out to some colony; but if ever he comes again within the circulation of a little gazette he has no thought of, a small bill for bed and board and clothing will be presented to him, and if he do not pay it, he will be sent to prison. Another rogue whose apprehension must be easy is William Heffer, alias Robert Tish. He is a tailor, "late of Chapel End, in the county of Rutland, and he is twenty-two years of age, six feet high, thin face, dark complexion, black hair and moustache, and black hair under his chin; has a scar on his head at the partition of his hair, which shows when it is combed aside; when he went away he wore a black coat with black velvet collar, dark plaid waistcoat with velvet collar, dark plaid trousers, and lace-up boots with brass round the lace-holes, and a low-crowned rough hat; he is a great drunkard, and is fond of singing in low public-houses; he is supposed to be in Gatehouse, Cowhampton, Blackley, or in that locality." But all the cases are not so special as those quoted; neither have they so much space devoted to them. They are commonplace uninteresting men enough, whom two lines describe, personally; one is like this: "Broad flat back, thick lips, hair inclined to curl, has a scar on the shin from a burn;" but nothing is omitted that is needful to discover them, and they may be sure there will be no very great interval between the publication of their little idiosyncrasies and the unpleasant fact of their arrest.

In going through these, was the age of the gentleman who is fond of singing at low public-houses noted? It was exactly twenty-two. Yet the lout (he is six feet high) is described as a great drunkard, and as having a wife and family. It is appalling. But no age seems sacred from this restlessness, this rovingness, this disregard of consequences and responsibilities. In the three numbers of the Unions'

Gazette, from which the facts in this paper are taken, haphazard, there are deserters of sixty years of age, there is one lad younger even than the drunkard: twenty-one. One young fellow of twenty-seven leaves a wife and four children; one of twenty-four leaves wife and three children; another of twenty-three leaves wife and two children; a fourth of twenty-eight leaves wife and three lawful children, namely John, aged six years, Phoebe, aged four, and George, aged one and a half; he has been twice previously convicted. A quarryman of twenty-two years of age leaves wife and one child; an agricultural labourer, age about twenty-four, leaves wife and three children; and so the account goes on. It comprises men of thirty-seven, of fifty-three, of forty-three, of fifty-five, of thirty-three, of thirty-one, of fifty, of sixty. It includes men of all complexions, dark and sallow being the rarest, however, and the generality being of the Saxon character, under the several heads of fresh, pale, ruddy, light, florid, red, freckled, and fair. Men of all occupations find a place in it; including a gardener, a collier, a sawyer, a blacksmith, a tailor, an Heraldic designer, a currier, a freestone mason, a brick-burner, a stay-presser, an officer in the county-court police, an engineer, a coal miner, a clerk, a travelling quack doctor, an engine fitter, a hawker, a butcher, a cabman, a decorator, a letter-carrier, a contractor for asphaltiting, a costermonger, an hotel waiter, a coach-body maker, a baker, a sailor, a horse-clipper, a circle sawyer, a gentleman's servant, a stevedore, and of course labourers, and boot and shoe makers, and men who have no ostensible means of earning a living whatever. It might be an index to the Post Office Directory, Section "Trades," it is so comprehensive. And a selection of the personal marks to be found on the rogues and vagabonds enumerated in this list might be a page from the *Lancet*, or a transcript from the admission-book to a popular hospital or dispensary, it is so surgical, so unsavoury. Among the irregularities, and "casualties," and things "when found to be made a note of," are a scar at the corner of one eye, a mark upon the temple from the kick of a horse, a scar or cut between the left thumb and forefinger, the teeth in the upper jaw projecting outwards, a bloated visage, a tumour on the right arm, a scar on the fore part of the head resulting from a fall, a hare lip, a burn mark on the left cheek, a blue round spot above the wrist, a thumb

slit down at the back, a mark like bran on the nose, a left knee bent a little out, a white spot on the forehead, a downcast look, a squint, a stoop, a lame walk, a mark on the breast like a fig, a middle finger gone altogether. For people who are connoisseurs of eyes, it will be interesting to know that the eyes of the majority of runaway husbands are blue. Out of three dozen pairs selected for this present classification, six pairs are dark, two are rather dark, three are brown, two are hazel, five are grey, and as many as eighteen pairs are of the pure legitimate English blue. To such readers as like to be served with a slice of the comic, or the unexpected, whether coming from the real facts of the case or from the way it is put by the particular clerk undertaking it, it will be pleasant to learn that one runaway husband is "an efficient musician, having been band-sergeant to a volunteer corps;" that another "speaks (as it is termed) through his nose;" that a third "is fond of dancing, and generally wears clogs, and went by the name of Sumatra;" that a fourth "is a draughtsman, formerly employed on the *Illustrated London News*;" that a fifth "plays the bones in a company of niggers;" that a sixth is "usually heard singing 'Brannan on the Moor;'" and that the last who shall be cited "sings at public houses, plays the piano, frequents betting houses, and hawks pies."

There need be very little more said about these Husbands Wanted. The one who has been wanted longest left his post as long since as seventeen years, yet here he is, as freshly indicated, as clearly described, as if he had only shuffled himself out of the matrimonial yoke a sunny day or two ago. And it seldom happens that a husband is wanted directly he has taken himself off. His wife clings to the thought that he will return; she struggles on bravely to keep her little home above her head, by work, by gifts, by that bitter semi-starvation and shifting that thousands of British poor are acquainted with so well. It is only, indeed, after everything has been tried, that the parish is appealed to (save in extreme cases that, unhappily, will have existence), that parish funds are appropriated, that parish officers take notes of all particulars, that one of them dots them down in the shape of "copy," and posts them off for publication in the pregnant columns of the Poor Law Unions' Gazette. This process may take a month,

a year. That it took seventeen years in the case noted only proves how long the deserted wife strove on to be her own maintainer (or had friends willing to undertake her husband's duties), and how she had only to succumb at last, in spite of all her trials and procrastination. That her good man, and all others, may be speedily apprehended, is surely a wish that may have echoing by all.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI. AT LUGNAQUILLA.

The luncheon seems very long to Kate, who, like all other impatient-natured people, is anxious that something else than is happening, shall happen soon. It is long for two reasons. In the first place Captain Bellairs is so situated that he can, without such effort as may command attention and observation from others, pay Kate a variety of those delicate attentions which a man delights in offering to a woman he loves. In the second place Mr. Grange delights in the feats accomplished by the Lugnaquilla chef-de-cuisine, and in the produce of the Lugnaquilla gardens. His taste is varied in the extreme, and he skims over fertile plains of fruit and vegetables, and hovers lovingly over rich plots of fricassee and toast, and pours copious libations of fragrant wine over all these exploits, in a way that sets time and Kate's impatience at defiance.

Quiet Charlotte Grange meanwhile preserves unruffled that masterly inactivity, which induces the great majority who study her to believe her to be such an admirable and trustworthy creature. The man who grabs at the wine, and hangs with greedy voluptuous satisfaction over the fruit is her brother, but not one whit does that consideration harass or disturb her. He has his individuality, and she knows, none better, that it is a detestable one. She has her own, and she knows—none better—that it has already impressed Frank Forest, and may impress this other man who is far better worth winning than Frank Forest. So she bides her time very patiently, saying very little, letting her fair placid presence act as a calming charm upon them, but keeping her eyes wide-open with the innocent gaze of childhood, on the watch for a good opportunity

of working her will in any way that may be shown to her.

It is Mrs. Durgan who breaks up the magic circle presently. "Take Miss Mervyn to the tower, Harry," she says, "and down by the lake, and show her all that's worth seeing (and every bit of it is worth seeing) of dear old Lugnaquilla. I wish I could go with you," she adds to Kate, "I'm so afraid that Harry will miss something; however we'll come again and again till you know it and like it as well as I do."

She does not include Miss Grange in her invitation to Kate to be shown the house and grounds by Harry Bellairs. In fact she pointedly avoids even looking towards that young lady as she speaks, and Frank Forest is disposed to be rather huffy, and to think his friend's cousin a trifle discourteous to the quiet, amiable, pretty woman who has been expressing her artistic appreciation of the beauties of Lugnaquilla. He almost feels as if Kate—his own generous Kate—were guilty of aiding and abetting in this slight on another woman, when, in obedience to Mrs. Durgan's request, Miss Mervyn goes off with her host alone.

Mrs. Durgan's chair is wheeled out into the garden under the shade of a weeping elm, and Mr. and Mrs. Grange seat themselves by her on perilous camp-stools, and proceed to cultivate her, according to their lights, for the sake of the owner of all these glories, whose eyes may be opened to a sense of the rare merit of Charlotte. For awhile after their exit Charlotte goes on sketching assiduously; then she throws her pencil down and says—

"How unkind it was of them not to let me go with them, wasn't it Mr. Forest? This is just the sort of place I delight in—just the sort of place I may never have an opportunity of seeing again."

"I'm but a poor guide in comparison with Bellairs," Frank says, "but do let me do my best to show you what is worth seeing, will you!"

"If we meet them, how then? you will want to join them, forgetful of the wise old saw about two being company, &c., and I shall have to come back alone."

She holds her hand out to him as she says this, as if to plead for a pledge from him, that he will not desert her in the way she describes. He takes it and presses it before he returns it to her, and enunciates a few excited words that are luckily for himself very void of meaning.

"Then we'll go," she says, rising up, and so with just a black lace shawl thrown over her carefully braided crown of rich golden-brown hair, they go out and stroll along dangerously secluded avenues where they are undisturbed by any other person, and where Frank feels himself constrained to utter, in his rapid thoughtless way, all sorts of nonsense, which he had not had the most remote intention of uttering when he proposed coming out.

They go in at last and he takes her to the vast drawing-room, each of whose deep bay windows is curtained off by heavy velvet curtains, and made to resemble a little room. They linger here long, for there is much to be looked at. Paintings and statues; portraits of dead and forgotten ancestors and ancestresses; mosaics from Florence; cameos from Rome; quaint pieces of old Belgian cabinets covered with carving, and enriched with delicate traceries of ironwork; old Spanish mirrors and reliquaries; gold and bronze crucifixes; queer old Delft platters; Dresden monsters, and flowers growing in huge vases in every part of the room.

It is no wonder (design on Miss Grange's part aside) that they linger about in this charmed spot till the afternoon is drawing to a close. They grow confidential in this well arranged solitude. That is to say Frank tells Miss Grange all he can remember about himself that is most interesting to himself, and she—listens and tells him nothing.

The light has grown very soft and low by the time Captain Bellairs and Kate come into the room to tell Frank that all the party have agreed to stay to dinner, and that it is time for him to go and dress. "As I have no toilette to make, I think I'll stay here for a few minutes," Miss Grange says, "then I'll join the others on the lawn." So Kate and the two men leave her, and she gives them a smiling sweet nod, as they turn round to take a last look at her and the room when they reach the door.

In about seven or eight minutes Kate finds herself sauntering back into this room with Frank, who is declaring that he has plenty of time to dress, and that he wants to have five minutes' quiet talk with his cousin. The light, soft and low as it is, is still strong enough for them to see that Miss Grange has vanished—that the room is empty.

"Miss Grange is gone! Ah! she soon got tired of this room that she declared to be

'so entralling,' when you left it, Frank," Kate says out distinctly as she enters.

"Which way can she have gone?" Frank says with a puzzled air, "I have been out in the hall all the time and I don't remember seeing this door open, and she certainly didn't pass me."

"She is one of those softly moving earthly bodies who can pass from one place to another without causing much commotion in the matter about them," Kate says, carelessly. "Well, as she is gone, I confess I am very glad of it, for I want to ask you something that I should be sorry for anyone to hear, Frank."

They are standing a little way from the entrance door as she says this, and she steps back and gives the door a gentle push that just closes it, and then returns to her former place by Frank's side.

"Dear Frank," she begins, and as she speaks, she throws hat, whip, and gauntlets down on a sofa near her, "I may ask you anything. I'm too fond of you for it to be possible for you to be angry with me for anything I may ask you, am I not?"

For answer he whispers, "Yes, dear," and takes both her hands, and draws her towards him, while she as a sister might hold her face towards him for the kiss he is so ready to give her.

"Do you like that pretty smooth-tongued, smooth-faced woman as well as you seem to do Frank, dear?" she questions earnestly, "I wouldn't try to set you against anyone I hated even, if I believed your liking was genuine——"

"Why should you hate poor Miss Grange?" he asks reproachfully.

"I don't," she retorts quickly, with some surprise, "I only distrust her, and I nearly hate myself for doing that, but I can't help it; dear, dear Frank, I know with what fell rapidity you would weary of a fool if you were linked with one—but—will you be perfectly happy with a schemer?"

He laughs aside her question, he mocks at her fears, and hints that jealousy is at the root of them, and Kate bears all he says quietly enough, for as she has truly said she is "very fond" of this man, with whom she is not in love any longer. His vanity is flattered. He is pleased at the sight of Kate's loving anxiety about him, and well contented to hear that Miss Grange is suspected of scheming for him. He would indignantly deny any such feelings if taxed with them, but they reign right royally in his breast nevertheless.

"Well, if you won't tell me now, perhaps you will another time," Kate says with a half vexed laugh, and again they incline their heads towards one another, and he just brushes her forehead with his moustache. Then they go away from the drawing-room together, and as they do so Miss Grange emerges from behind one of the curtains, where she has successfully played the exalted part of listener undetected to the whole of their conversation.

"She couldn't fascinate him into saying a word against me," she tells herself, as she sits down on a sofa, to recover from the slight excitement into which she has been thrown by the unexpected advantage she has been able to take over Kate, "he must be further gone than I thought he was," she adds to herself, and her bosom heaves, and her eyes almost flash, as she feels with a thrill that if she only goes on as discreetly as she has begun, the days of her bondage to her brother and sister are numbered.

She sits there contemplating possibilities longer than she intended. Then she hears Frank's voice evidently approaching from the stair-ease.

"Hallo!" he says, addressing Kate, "have you been there all the time?"

"Yes," Kate answers from a window close outside the drawing-room door, "I've been watching that group on the lawn. How pretty and graceful Mrs. Durgan is, isn't she? oh! do come in here with me, and get my hat and gloves, will you?"

The door is opened without an instant's delay, and Kate and Frank are staring at her in obvious astonishment before Miss Grange can rise and hide herself again.

"You must have been here all the time, and heard us wondering where you were," Kate says, in accents of bitter contempt, which she does not make the slightest attempt to conceal.

Miss Grange laughs long with very forced merriment in reply, and says, "Yes, she was there, and wasn't it a good joke?" And she holds her hand again out to Frank in an apparently unpremeditated burst of friendliness and familiarity, and reliance on his having as keen an appreciation of the "joke" as herself.

"You were here all the time, behind the curtain?" Frank asks. And Miss Grange nods what she wishes to look like a merry assent; and Kate turns her eyes on her cousin. However shocked he may be at the mean trick, however degraded, by her own

low act, he may feel the woman before them to be, he does not show a trace of either of these feelings in the expression of his face.

"But it must have hurt him awfully," Kate thinks, as she turns and walks out of the atmosphere which she feels to be tainted. "It would have been painful enough to find a common acquaintance guilty of such a breach of everything that is honourable and womanly; but it must be agonising to a man, to find a woman he likes very much affecting to glory in and laugh at such shame as this. Poor Frank! he will be obliged to speak of it to me, too, though, to spare her feelings, he tried to look as if he thought it a natural thing that a woman should play the part of spy among her friends."

In the intensity of her desire to spare the found-out sneak the further mortification of being openly slighted before a man who likes her, Kate Mervyn does violence to her own feelings of disgust at, and detestation of, a species of meanness for which there is no forgiveness among the ranks of gentlepeople. It is the "un-pardonable sin" in the estimation of the well-bred; and, as Frank is a gentleman, Kate pictures his mortified disappointment at the conduct of this woman with whom he has been friendly, and between whom and himself a certain amount of gay fooling has gone on. She pictures his mortified disappointment, and pities him for it, and, for his sake, reserves the open exhibition of the scorn she feels for Miss Grange until such time as he may not be by to be hurt by it.

But her own organ of self-esteem has suffered a terrible shock. Having known her, how could he have allowed himself to decline to such a low level, as a flirtation with a woman who could be guilty of this gross offence? "Some instinct ought to have taught a man to shun her," Kate tells herself; and, in her wrath, she resolves that as soon as she can do it, without hurting Frank, she will proclaim the pestilential mental malady, the noxious craving for information at any price, under which Miss Grange labours, and save so much of society as may be infested by her from her baleful influence.

It gives her a pang of genuine, honest sorrow when she goes into the dining-room this day by the side of Georgie Durgan's chair, to hear Miss Grange and

Frank behind her, chatting and laughing as lightly and merrily together as if he had no sense of honour, and she had not lost hers to his knowledge. It almost stings Kate into the taking of instant, open action; it almost makes her proclaim that they are, one and all, unsafe while this creeping thing is among them. But she restrains herself, and only shows anger in her face and manner, which anger is attributed by Frank to jealousy, and by Miss Grange to annoyance at having been overheard by the fair detective to express herself more warmly towards Frank than she would wish all the world to know.

In justice to Kate, be it understood, that no sensation of fear, however slight, assails her heart on her own account. She remembers each epithet of affection she has applied to Frank during that interview; she recalls each kiss she has exchanged with him, and she is neither ashamed nor afraid, though she is fully conscious that Miss Grange will try to use them as weapons when the time comes.

Whatever Frank may feel on the subject, he preserves a most debonair and light-hearted manner, and does not for a minute relax in those attentions to Miss Grange which she has cleverly taught him to pay her. The sharpest, bitterest thought which has poisoned Kate's peace of mind for a long time is this one, namely, that when other people know Charlotte Grange's meanness, Frank will be a lesser man in their estimation than he has been hitherto, for condoning it.

She keeps silence on the point until she is driving home with Mrs. Durgan this night. Guinevere has been sent home with a groom. Then, as soon as they are well away from Lugnaquila, she says,

"What do you think of those people whom my cousin has brought upon yours?"

"I think they're odious," Mrs. Durgan says. "Miss Grange is worse than the others because, though she's more rotten at the core than her brother and sister, she has a sound, attractive exterior. You are arraying yourself against her, I can see?"

"Yes," Kate says, hotly; "I can forgive any crime, any fault, any folly, but I am intolerant to crawling meanness." Then she tells the tale of the conchuant fair one behind the curtain; and Miss Grange may count on two open enemies from this day forth.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 310. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV. SPIDERS AND A FLY.

CAPTAIN STUDLEY smiled upon his daughter, and greeted her with a friendly hand-pressure. He did not treat her to a paternal kiss, because he had a special horror of making himself ridiculous, and there were plenty of people looking on who, as he flattered himself, would not guess the exact relationship between himself and Anne, and might put a false constriction on the embrace. He was, as Anne had described him, a handsome man of about fifty-five, with keen black eyes and hawk-like profile, a partially bald head fringed with carefully-arranged grey hair, grizzled whiskers and moustache. His clothes were quiet in colour and well-made, though with something sporting in their cut; the grey trousers rather tight to the leg, the long scarf with the plain gold horseshoe pin, the cutaway coat with the pockets at the side, and the white hat with a black band. At the same time it must be allowed that the style was purely sporting, and not in the least slangy. Some of Captain Studley's friends were in the habit of saying that he "looked like a duke;" to which he would reply that he would not mind being one, and that he would undertake to "show more fun for the money" than many of those who now held the position. In society he could assume very pleasant manners and pass for being a frank convivial creature, but by nature he was rather reticent and reserved. Now, at the very moment of meeting him, Anne could not make up

her mind whether or not her father had observed her interchange of salutation with Mr. Danby; he had said nothing about it, but that, with Captain Studley, by no means was to be taken as a reason for his not having been cognizant of the entire proceeding.

"You are decidedly improved, Anne," said the captain, eying his daughter with the glance of a connoisseur, as she sat opposite to him in the railway carriage of which they were the sole occupants. "You have become set and womanly. There was a tendency to gangling about you when we last met, which was rather terrible, but it is always so with girls at that age, I believe. I suppose you are glad to have left school?"

"I scarcely know; I have not yet realised the feeling sufficiently to judge whether I am glad or sorry," said Anne.

"Exactly," said the captain. "You will have some regret about parting with your school friends, that is natural enough. There's Miss Middleham, for instance."

"Yes," said Anne. "Was not that a dreadful thing about her uncle?"

"About her uncle?" repeated the captain, looking hard at his daughter. "Oh, yes, to be sure—that was a dreadful thing. Not very bad for her though, as she could not have cared much about him, and comes into all the money, I'm told. By the way, that reminds me. I wrote to you that you must give up all communication and correspondence with Miss Middleham. Did you think that odd on my part?"

"I thought you must have had some special reason for issuing those orders," said Anne. "I did not attempt to guess what the reasons were."

"Exactly, that was quite right! Their's

not to reason why,' as Tennyson says. I read that poem, the 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' at some penny readings which they got up last winter at Loddonford, with great success," said the captain, lifting his hat, and jauntily pushing his hands through his hair.

"Loddonford! is that where our home is. Are we going there now?" cried Anne, suddenly remembering what Grace had said.

"I don't know about our home," said the captain. "Loddonford is where I have a cottage for the present, and where we are going now; but I don't imagine it will be much of a home for you. And that brings me back to what I was saying. Miss Middleham is an heiress, and, as such, a very unfit companion for you who have got your own bread to earn. She would naturally fill your head with all kinds of foolish notions, and, equally naturally, you would be very jealous of her position, and think that you were very much to be pitied. That would not do at all. Indeed, if she had been coming down here, instead of going to Germany, I should not have had you with me at all, but should have found some place for you as governess, and sent you straight off there."

"Oh, I am to be a governess then!" said Anne, quietly.

"Most certainly you are," said the captain. "You didn't think I was giving you such an education as you've had, in order that you might tom-fool upon the stage? That's the only other way for a girl to make money, that I ever heard of. Governess, companion; that kind of thing. You know what I mean."

Yes, Anne knew what he meant, she said. It was coming out exactly as she had anticipated, exactly as she had told Grace. Life, in all its harsh stern reality was about to commence for her at once. She was not disappointed, though she had hoped for some little interval. After all, it might be for the best.

"By the way, how did you know young Danby?" asked the captain, looking hard at her again. "I saw him bow to you just now at the station, didn't I?"

"Very likely," said Anne, struggling to keep down her rising colour; "he is a clerk in Middleham's bank."

"Thanks, very much," said the captain, with a pleasant smile; "so far the court is with you. I knew that already. What I want to know is, how you became acquainted with him."

"Mr. Danby has been up once or twice to Hampstead with messages for Grace Middleham from Mr. Heath and the lawyers," said Anne. "Grace Middleham introduced him to me."

"I see," said the captain, "I see. He is a pleasant young man, but rather too fast for one in his position. However, he comes down to stay with me at this place now and then, and, by force of example and that kind of thing, he will soon get over that."

Mr. Danby fast! Mr. Danby staying at Loddonford! Anne almost doubted the evidence of her ears. Why had he never spoken to her of his intimacy with her father? He must have known who she was, and such conduct was strange, to say the least of it. While she was thinking thus, the speed of the train began to diminish, and her father suggested that she should get her "traps" together, as they were approaching their destination.

"The young lady's box is in the forward van, Mark," said the captain to the porter, who appeared, touching his hat, at the carriage door; "bring it to Banks's fly, please. Now, come with me, Anne. Good day, Banks," this to the flyman, "the porter is bringing my daughter's box, and then you shall drive us home, please."

"It's as well to be civil to the people down here, and I'm quite popular," the captain remarked when they had started, "as I told you I helped them in their penny readings, and I might have been vicar's churchwarden, only I'm called away so often."

"Have you had this house a long time?" asked Anne, breaking her usual rule of reticence.

"It isn't a house, it's a mere cottage," said the captain; "I've had it for about two years; though, of course, I've not been here all the time. The place has its advantages; it is too far from town to be a Sunday resort for cockneys, whom I hate; it is very quiet, and the people are simple and primitive. Besides, there is nobody here to gossip. With the exception of Mr. Middleham's—you can see the lodge-gate down in that hollow—there is not a house of any pretension in the place."

Their drive lasted for a quarter of an hour, but Anne did not speak again, occupying herself in looking about her. The road between the station and the village was sufficiently uninteresting, straight and flat, with corn-fields—at that season vast billowy seas of golden grain—on either side.

As they approached the village, Anno hero and there caught distant glimpses of the shining river, and the village itself could scarcely have been quainter or more picturesque. Not a hundred houses in all, a few low-ceilinged gable-roofed shops, a few two-roomed thatched cottages, mostly ivy-covered, where dwelt the farm-labourers, the fishermen, and others for whom the river furnished miscellaneous employment; the old square-towered church standing in the midst of its peaceful grave-yard; the parsonage, with a bevy of the parson's daughters just returning from a boating expedition; the doctor's red-faced house with a flaming brass-plate on its door; a farm-house or two standing back in the midst of their outbuildings, with patient kine collected in the straw-yard, and vigilant watch-dogs which barked at the passing vehicle. Then another long stretch of field-bordered road, and the fly stopped at a door in a low brick wall overhung with ivy.

"This is the place," said the captain, descending, and opening the door with a key. "Come in, Aune. The man will bring your box. What are you looking at?" he added sharply. "The garden might be better kept, certainly."

What was she looking at? At the abomination of desolation, she thought. So far as she could see, a vast tangled jungle, in which the weeds and flowers, inextricably mixed together, were growing at their own will in riotous profusion. In the background stood a low, square, white cottage, streaked and discoloured by damp, while the air was filled with a thin, chill vapour, the exhalation from a large round pond which stood in the midst of the so-called garden, and which had evidently once been considered a feature of the place, as a little rustic bridge—broken down now, and with its tattered bark casing fluttering mournfully—had been thrown across it. As Anne made her way up the path, which was half choked with weeds, a spider's web floated across her face, and two or three large toads, disturbed in their conference, scuttled into the bushes.

"I'll just show you the house," said the captain, who followed her closely. "It's rather a Robinson Crusoe kind of place; but you might get it into something like order while you are here."

A small flight of stone steps, with a sculptured balustrade and a ghastly funereal urn on either side, led to the

hall door, on which the damp stood in beads, like an unwholesome perspiration. This door was swollen, and made much stubborn resistance to the captain's wrathful efforts to push it open. When he had succeeded, he passed through the little hall, and, opening a door immediately on his left, called to Anne to come to him. She found herself in a square, low-ceilinged room, fitted with shelves, on one or two of which were a little glass and china, and large cupboards or presses. The window, which was only a few feet from the ground, looked on to the garden; and opposite the door by which they had entered was another door, half-glazed, but with the glass portion covered with a ragged red curtain.

"You see, the people who were here before evidently used this place as a sort of store-room," said the captain, looking round. "That door leads into the dining-room, so it would be handy for the pickles and those kind of things. I was thinking you might have in some things, and put it in order. The servant I have is worse than useless. She never thinks of anything."

"Yes," said Anne, trying to smile, though the dreariness of the place seemed to have struck to her heart. "I do not know much about those matters, but I have no doubt it would come in time. I had no idea you were settled anywhere for a permanence, papa; but as it is so, if I succeed, you might let me stop here as your housekeeper." When Grace attained her majority she would come back to London, Anne thought, and to remain there would be her one chance of seeing her.

"Eh!" said the captain; "stop here! I don't think that would do. I am liable to be called out by business engagements at a moment's notice, and never know how long I may have to stay away. Besides, the arrangements here are settled in regular bachelor fashion, and a young woman might find herself out of place. No, I think you must go for a governess, as I said."

They passed through the glass door into the dining-room, reeking of stale tobacco, the fumes of which hung about the stuff curtains, and furnished with an old Turkey carpet, here and there worn into dangerous stringy pitfalls, and a few rickety horse-hair chairs; thence up-stairs to the room immediately above, which was to be Anne's bedroom, and which, though poorly furnished, looked

cleaner than any other part of the house she had seen. Here her father left her, and so soon as the door was closed behind him, Anne lay her arms upon the chimney-piece, and, burying her head between them, burst into a great fit of crying.

It was a foolish thing to do, as practically it could have no beneficial result; but, though strong-minded, she was but a girl after all, and had not seen enough of the world's ways as yet to take hard blows with a smiling face. Moreover, she was wretched at having to part from her friend, tired with her journey, and half dazed with the utter misery of the place in which she found herself. Hitherto, when she had met her father, she had seen him at an hotel, which was smart and fresh, and bright with life. When he had mentioned having a "cottage," Anne's fancy had depicted a little retreat on the Birket Foster model, with swallows twittering on the thatched roof, and roses clustering round the pretty porch; and the shock on discovering the reality was too much for her. Her father's manner, too, seemed altered. Formerly he had been stern and short in speech, but now there seemed to be about him a heartlessness—as evidenced in his determination to rid himself of her at the earliest opportunity—which she had never before noticed. This in itself would have induced her to do her best to meet his wishes by seeking some situation; and, as she looked round the dreary room, and saw through the window the tangled wilderness enclosed in crumbling walls and brooded over by the clinging vapour, she felt thankful that her father had refused her petition for permission to stay there.

On the second evening after her arrival, Anne was sitting alone in the dull dining-room, which she had brightened by the introduction here and there of a few flowers, and made look more habitable by a different arrangement of the furniture and by the never-failing magic of a woman's touch, when the gate bell rang, and, looking up, she saw two gentlemen alighting from a fly. In an instant she recognised Mr. Heath and Mr. Danby, and as her eyes fell on the latter, for the first time since she left Hampstead, she felt that life was not so wholly wretched as she had found it during the last few days, and that there was some one who took interest in her existence. Walter Danby had never said as much, and yet she knew it, as well as if he had spoken in the plainest language,

saw it that instant in the bright flush which mounted into his cheeks, and the glad look which shone in his eyes, as he perceived her at the window. The next minute he was in the room, and by her side.

"You did not think we should meet again so soon, Miss Studley," he said, in a cheery voice and with a frank smile, "and I dared hardly hope it."

"You must have had much clearer ideas on the subject than I could possibly have," said Anne, with something of pique in her tone. "Why did you not tell me that you knew my father? that you were in the habit of visiting him?"

"I did not mention my acquaintance with Captain Studley," said Mr. Danby, looking a little uncomfortable, "because I thought that he would have informed you of it himself, if he had desired you to know it. Besides, I was not certain that you were coming here, or that I should have the pleasure of seeing you again."

"I never was more astonished than when I recognised you at the gate," said Anne. "That is Mr. Heath with you, is it not?"

"Yes," replied Danby; "he has gone up to the captain's den; he has some business to talk over, he said, and did not want my company. You may judge how sorry I was to be able to have a few minutes with you. And so you were surprised to see me! You did not know I was a friend of your father's?"

"Oh yes, he had mentioned your name to me; he saw you that day at the station, but somehow I never thought you would come while I was here."

"And may I ask what Captain Studley said of me?" asked Danby looking rather nervous, "nothing very bad, I hope—only—only he has not seen me under quite the best circumstances. Of course, when I first made his acquaintance, I had no notion I should ever see you, or—or it might have been different."

"Oh no, he said nothing very bad of you," said Anne, trying to smile, "nothing indeed of any consequence, only just alluded to having seen you at Paddington."

The subject was uncomfortable to her, and she was glad to change it, so after a minute she said, "You will be able to make but a flying visit, I'm afraid, the last train to town leaves very early, does it not?"

"Oh, we're not going back to-night," said Danby, "we've engaged beds at the inn. We always do that when we come

down here, because we have—that is to say, Ileath and the captain have business which keeps them up very late."

"It must be very dull for you, having to sit by while they are engaged," said Anne. "How do you amuse yourself?"

"Oh no, not dull, I generally take a hand—I mean a share in—in what they are doing. It—it helps to pass the time, you know."

"Yes, of course," said Anne, who was wondering to herself what induced him to take the journey, for the mere purpose of sitting by while her father and Heath were engaged in their business. At this moment the captain's door was heard to close and the next he made his appearance in the room.

"Good evening, Danby," he said, advancing and shaking hands, "my daughter, I find, you know already, though you did not expect to find her here. She's only making a short stay, for this is scarcely the place for a young lady. Anne, tell the servant to take some candles into my little study, my den, as I call it. Mr. Heath is there and will be engaged for some little time in accounts and that sort of thing. And when you've done that you can go to your own room, please. Mr. Danby and I have some important business to transact, and we will remain here."

"Very well, papa," said Anne. "Shall I see you again?"

"I think not," said the captain. "We may be detained late, long after the hour when it is advisable you should be in bed. You had better say good-night to Mr. Danby, Anne."

"Good-night, and good-bye, Miss Studley," said Danby, venturing to press the hand which she extended to him, "for we shall have started in the morning long before you are visible, I imagine."

"Oh yes, long before," said the captain. "Good-night, Anne. Mind Mr. Heath has two candles, at once." And, as Anne left the room, her father carefully closed the door after her.

"Now, my young friend," he continued, when they were alone, "mix yourself a glass of grog, and let us sit down quietly to our tournament. Women are all very well, but they are sometimes very much in the way. Ah, you don't think so now, of course, but you will when you come to my age. That girl of mine, she must go as soon as I can find a proper place to send her to. However, that does not interest you. Just

help me to wheel this table under the lamp. So. And you will find the cards in the drawer of the sideboard behind you. Here is the key; I keep it locked now my daughter's at home, for all women are afflicted with curiosity. They can't help it; it is natural to them. And it is as well to give them as little as possible to find out."

"Do you mind my setting light to the fire, Captain Studley?" asked Danby. "I see it is already laid; and this room strikes me as chilly."

"By all means," said the captain. "You will find matches on the chimney-piece. It's the damp from that infernal pond. If I were likely to stop here any time, I'd have it drained. But I'm a bird of passage, and it would be useless to spend money on any part of this place.—Talking of money, how do we stand?"

"I am afraid I am forty pounds in your debt," said Danby, with flushed cheeks. "I had a run of ill luck when we last played."

"Exactly; that is the precise sum," said the captain, who had referred to some memoranda in his pocket-book. "Well, to-night luck will change, very likely. Fortune rarely favours me twice in succession. Shall we play three games for double or quits?"

Danby hesitated for a moment. The amount of the stake proposed would, if he lost, be of serious import to him. But he was ashamed to confess it, and, at the same time, he had an odd kind of notion that he would conciliate Captain Studley in order to get opportunities of seeing Anne. So he consented, and they sat down to *écarté*.

A curious sight for a physiognomist and character-student. The rays of the shaded swinging lamp falling on the two players—on the chestnut curls and bright eager face of the boy, leaning forward and hurriedly assorting his cards; on the sparse, grey locks and keen, though composed look of his companion, reckoning his hand at a glance, and perfectly conscious of his own strength. A tumbler of brandy-and-water stood at Danby's side, from which during each deal he would hurriedly sip; but the captain rarely touched stimulants, and never when he had any business on hand. Steadily they played on into the night, rarely speaking save in the jargon of the game, or when at the end of each they agreed upon the state of the account. This was much

against Danby. Fortune seemed far more faithless to him even than she had been on the previous occasion. He had little skill as compared with his adversary, and such as he had he threw away after a few games, when he found he was losing, playing recklessly and staking wildly.

All this time the captain, who was as calm and self-possessed as when he first sat down, had been making occasional memoranda in his pocket-book, and meeting his companion's wild demands that the stakes should be increased with faint protests, which were never renewed. Danby's tumbler had been thrice replenished, and his manner had become more and more nervous and excited, when as, at the close of a game, the captain was completing an entry and Danby was shuffling the cards for a fresh deal, the clock struck two.

"Hallo!" said Studley, as the chimes fell upon his ear; "I had no notion it was so late! No more play to-night, Danby. You've lost heavily enough for once, and must knock off for a little time. No man could stand up against such a run of misfortune. Have you any notion how much you owe me now?"

"I don't know, exactly," said Danby, pushing his hair from off his forehead. "A good deal, I'm afraid! I didn't keep any account of it towards the last."

"There's the statement," said the captain, tearing a leaf from his pocket-book and handing it across the table. "One hundred and fifty-three pounds, exactly."

"Good God! is it as much as that?" cried Danby, with horror in his face. "It can't be—I mean to say I had no idea I had lost so much."

"There it is in detail," said the captain, "and you can judge for yourself. I didn't know what it was myself, until I totted it up; but I knew it was running on."

"Won't you—won't you give me my revenge?" said the young man, feebly; for he was almost stunned by the announcement.

"I'll give you anything you like, my good fellow," said Studley; "but not now, and not, indeed, until you have squared up this account. You see we began to-night with your owing me forty pounds, and that was against all rules, which stipulate for payment at the time of play."

"I will pay you. I had no intention of attempting to shirk payment. I will pay you, indeed." He stood with one hand leaning on the table, the other clasped to his head, endeavouring to collect his senses.

"Of course you will, my dear Danby; I never imagined differently for an instant, but when? The money would be particularly handy just now, for I have my daughter's school bills to settle, and one or two other affairs to meet; and the truth is, I'm confoundedly short."

"I—I can't pay just yet—I mean for a day or two," said Dauby. "I must realise some money which belongs to me, and which I had set apart for something else."

"Ex-actly," said the captain, "which you had set apart for something else, not anticipating any such contingency as has arisen! Well, a day or two would not matter, but it must not be a week or two, because, as I tell you, I want the money."

"You would like me to name a day for the payment. Would Sunday next suit you? It is an odd day to fix upon, you may think, but it is the only one which I have free, and I should like to bring the money down here myself," said Danby, with the secret hope that, after he had finished his business with the captain, he might be able to get a few words with Anne.

"Sunday will do very well, 'the better day the better deed,' as they say, and a better deed than the payment of money to a person who wants it as much as I do, could not well be!" said the captain. "Let us say Sunday then, at three o'clock. That will give you ample time to get down here—for I suppose you lie late on the Sunday morning, take it easy after that regular week-day grind, eh? and then perhaps you will stop to dinner, and if you're bent on having your revenge, you might win all your money back the same night. Now, I think I'll be off to bed."

"And I too, for I feel thoroughly tired out," said Danby. "By-the-bye, shall I tell Heath how late it is?"

"No. I don't think I would disturb him! He has had some intricate calculations to work out in the business which he is arranging for me, and said he might possibly be very late. I don't think the people at the inn need sit up for him. He will probably take a shake-down here! Good night!"

The noise made by the opening of the street door roused Anne to a complete state of wakefulness. She had been conscious, in the semi-sleep into which she had fallen on first seeking her bed, of the rumble of voices in the room beneath her. But this was a soothing sound, and she

gradually fell off into a half doze, in which she was suffering under a very jumbled version of those affairs of her life which most interested her at the time, and from which she was aroused by the noise of the scuffling of feet in the hall, and the scraping of the bolts as they were withdrawn from their sockets. Startled, and at first scarce able to recollect where she was, she sat up in her bed and listened. The rumble of voices was renewed, then the door was opened, as she knew by the gust of wind that came sweeping through the house, then shut with a clang. And then came a wailing sound, which Anne recognised as Walter Danby's voice, which uttered the words, "O, my God!" in deep remorseful tones, and was heard no more.

Meanwhile Captain Studley, extinguishing the lamp in the dining-room after lighting a fresh cigar, and brewing the first glass of grog which he had tasted that evening, made his way to his "den," where he found Heath seated at the writing-table, with a pile of papers in front of him.

"At it still?" cried the captain, who was remarkably cheerful after his winnings, "when are you going to knock off? How does it come out?"

"I've finished!" said Heath, pushing the papers away, and tilting his chair back—"and it comes out better than I thought for. If Van Stuyvesant gives the price—the lowest price I have reckoned—we shall be better by several hundred pounds than I had anticipated. Where's young Danby?"

"Gone to the Lion," said the captain. "I told him you did not want to be disturbed. Besides he was rather upset, and would not have been good company."

"What was the matter?" asked Heath. "Were you two playing, as usual?"

"Yes, we've been at *carte* almost since I left you, and I have had a wonderful run of luck," said the captain.

"You call it luck," said Heath, with a scornful smile; "I wonder what Danby would call it if he knew all."

"It strikes me that he knows quite enough," said the captain. "I never turned the king, without finding that young man's eyes fixed on me in a very suspicious manner. Once or twice he looked very black indeed, and I thought he would have spoken, but he didn't."

"He is evidently on the *qui vive*," said

Heath. "When I first proposed to him to come down with me to-day—it was some days ago—he refused, but afterwards came up and asked me to bring him."

"That was because he had seen Anne in the meantime. He met her at Hampstead, and was hanging about the Paddington station when I met her there. I saw him."

"Poor young fool!" said Heath, gathering up his papers, and sweeping them into a drawer which he carefully locked, handing the key to Studley. "How much have you won?"

"One hundred and fifty three pounds, to a sixpence," said the captain, referring to the memorandum book.

"He will have to draw on that five hundred legacy from his uncle, which he had invested as a nest-egg," said Heath, with a grim smile. "Poor devil! he intended to keep that until he was married!"

"There'll be a good bit of it left, unless he takes his revenge on Sunday, when he is going to bring the money."

"To bring the money! Why doesn't he send it?" asked Heath.

"You have forgotten you were ever young, I think, George," said the captain, shaking his head. "Would you have sent anything that you could have brought ten years ago, when there was a pretty girl in the case?"

"I forgot that," said Heath. "Sunday, eh! Well, he can have plenty of time with Miss Studley after he's finished with you, for I shall want a good deal of your attention myself, that day."

"Right," said the captain; "but I don't care about those young people being thrown too much together. If my daughter is to marry, she must fly at higher game than young Danby. So that I'll send Anne to spend that Sunday afternoon with Mrs. Wells, at the Weir, who has often expressed a wish to see her!"

THE LICENSER OF PLAYHOUSES.

THE Act of 1737 for licensing plays, play-houses, and players, and legalising the power the Lord Chamberlain had long been accustomed to exercise, although readily passed by both Houses of Parliament, gave great offence to the public. The Abbé Le Blanc, who was visiting England at this period, describes the new law as provoking an "universal murmur in the nation." It was openly complained of in the newspapers; at the coffee-houses

it was denounced as unjust and "contrary to the liberties of the people of England." Fear prevailed that the freedom of the press would next be invaded. In the House of Lords Chesterfield had stigmatised the measure both as an encroachment on liberty and an attack on property. "Wit, my lords," he said, "is a sort of property. It is the property of those that have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is, indeed, but a precarious dependence. Thank God! we, my lords, have a dependence of another kind; we have a much less precarious support, and, therefore, cannot feel the inconveniences of the bill now before us; but it is our duty to encourage and protect wit, whosoever's property it may be. . . . I must own I cannot easily agree to the laying of a tax upon wit; but by this bill it is to be heavily taxed—it is to be excised; for if this bill passes, it cannot be retailed in a proper way without a permit; and the Lord Chamberlain is to have the honour of being chief gauger, supervisor, commissioner, judge and jury." At this time, however, it is to be noted that parliamentary reporting was forbidden by both Houses. The general public, therefore, knew little of Lord Chesterfield's eloquent defence of the liberty of the stage.

The Act was passed in June, when the patent theatres, according to custom, were closed for the summer. Some two months after their re-opening in the autumn all dramatic representations were suspended for six weeks, in consequence of the death of Queen Caroline. In January was presented at Covent Garden "A Nest of Plays," as the author, one Hildebrand Jacob, described his production; a combination of three short plays, each consisting of one act only, entitled, respectively, *The Prodigal Reformed*, *Happy Constancy*, and *The Trial of Conjugal Love*. The performance met with a very unfavourable reception. The author attributed the ill success of his work to its being the first play licensed by the authority of the Lord Chamberlain under the new bill, many spectators having pre-determined to silence, under any circumstances, "the first fruits of that Act of Parliament." And this seems, indeed, to have been the case. The Abbé Le Blanc, who was present on the occasion, writes: "The best play in the world would not have succeeded that night. There was a disposition to damn whatever might appear. The farce in question was damned, indeed, without the least compassion. Nor was

that all, for the actors were driven off the stage, and happy was it for the author that he did not fall into the hands of this furious assembly." And the Abbé proceeds to explain that the originators of this disturbance were not "schoolboys, apprentices, clerks, or mechanics;" but lawyers, "a body of gentlemen perhaps less honoured but certainly more feared here than they are in France," who, "from living in colleges (Inns of Court), and from conversing always with one another, mutually preserve a spirit of independency through the body, and with great ease form cabals." . . . "At Paris the cabals of the pit are only among young fellows, whose years may excuse their folly, or persons of the meanest education and stamp; here they are the fruit of deliberation in a very grave body of people who are not less formidable to the minister in place than to the theatrical writers." But the Abbé relates that on a subsequent occasion, when, another new play having been announced, he had looked for further disturbance, the judicious dramatist of the night succeeded in calming the pit by administering in his prologue a double dose of incense to their vanity. "Half an hour before the play was to begin the spectators gave notice of their dispositions by frightful hisses and outcries, equal, perhaps, to what were ever heard at a Roman amphitheatre." The author, however, having in part tamed this wild audience by his flattery, secured ultimately its absolute favour by humouring its prejudices after the grossest fashion. He brought upon the stage a figure "with black eyebrows, a ribbon of an ell long under his chin, a bag-peruke immoderately powdered, and his nose all bedaubed with snuff. What Englishman could not know a Frenchman by this ridiculous figure?" The Frenchman was presently shown to be, for all the lace down every seam of his coat, nothing but a cook, and then followed severesatireand criticism upon the manners and customs of France. "The excellence and virtues of English beef were extolled, and the author maintained that it was owing to the qualities of its juice that the English were so courageous and had such a solidity of understanding, which raised them above all the nations in Europe; he preferred the noble old English pudding beyond all the finest ragouts that ever were invented by the greatest geniuses that France ever produced." These "ingenious strokes" were loudly applauded by the audience, it seems, who in their delight at the abuse lavished upon the French, forgot

that they came to condemn the play and to uphold the ancient liberties of the stage. From that time forward, the Abbé states, "the law was executed without the least trouble; all the plays since have been quietly heard, and either succeeded or not according to their merits."

When Garrick visited Paris he declined to be introduced to the Abbé Le Blanc, "on account of the irreverence with which he had treated Shakespeare." There can, indeed, be no doubt that the Abbé, although he wrote amusing letters, was a very prejudiced person, and his evidence and opinions touching the English stage must be received with caution. So far as can be ascertained, especially by study of the History of the Stage (compiled by that industrious clergyman, Mr. Geneste, from the playbills in the British Museum), but few new plays were produced in the course of the season immediately following the passing of the Licensing Act; certainly no new play can be found answering the description furnished by the Abbé with due regard to the period he has fixed for its production. Possibly he referred to the Beaux' Stratagem, in which appear a French officer and an Irish-French priest, and which was certainly represented some few nights after the condemnation of Mr. Jacob's Nest of Plays. Farquhar's comedy was then thirty years old, however. Nor has the Abbé done full justice to the public opposition offered to the Licensing Act. At the Haymarket Theatre a serious riot occurred in October, 1738, fifteen months after the passing of the measure. Closed against English actors the theatre was opened by a French company, armed with a license from the Lord Chamberlain. A comedy, called L'Embaras de Richesses, was announced for representation "by authority." The house was crowded immediately after the opening of the doors. But the audience soon gave evidence of their sentiments by singing in chorus the Roast Beef of Old England. Then followed loud huzzas and general tumult. Deveil, one of the Justices of the Peace for Westminster, who was present, declared the proceedings to be riotous, and announced his intention to maintain the King's authority. He stated, further, that it was the King's command that the play should be acted, and that all offenders would be immediately secured by the guards in waiting. In opposition to the magistrate it was maintained "that the audience had a legal right to show their dislike to any

play or actor; that the judicature of the pit had been acquiesced in, time immemorial; and as the present set of actors were to take their fate from the public, they were free to receive them as they pleased." When the curtain drew up the actors were discovered standing between two files of grenadiers, with their bayonets fixed and resting on their firelocks. This seeming endeavour to secure the success of French acting by the aid of British bayonets still more infuriated the audience. Even Justice Deveil thought it prudent to order the withdrawal of the military. The actors attempted to speak, but their voices were overborne by hisses, groans, and "not only catcalls, but all the various portable instruments that could make a disagreeable noise." A dance was next essayed; but even this had been provided against: showers of peas descended upon the stage, and "made capering very unsafe." The French and Spanish Ambassadors, with their ladies, who had occupied the stage-box, now withdrew, only to be insulted outside the theatre by the mob, who had cut the traces of their carriages. The curtain at last fell, and the attempt to present French plays at the Haymarket was abandoned, "the public being justly indignant that whilst an arbitrary act suppressed native talent, foreign adventurers should be patronised and encouraged." It must be said, however, that the French actors suffered for sins not their own, and that the wrath of the public did not really reach the Lord Chamberlain or effect any change in the Licensing Act.

For twenty years the Haymarket remained without a license of any endurance. The theatre was occasionally opened, however, for brief seasons, by special permission of the Chamberlain or in defiance of his authority, many ingenious subterfuges being resorted to, so that the penalties imposed by the Act might be evaded. One of the advertisements ran—"At Cibber's Academy, in the Haymarket, will be a concert, after which will be exhibited (gratis) a rehearsal, in form of a play, called Romeo and Juliet." Macklin, the actor, opened the theatre in 1744, and, under the pretence of instructing "unfledged performers" in "the science of acting," gave a variety of dramatic representations. It was expressly announced that no money would be taken at the doors, "nor any person admitted but by printed tickets, which will be delivered by

Mr. Macklin, at his house in Bow Street, Covent Garden." At one of these performances Samuel Foote made his first appearance upon the stage, sustaining the part of Othello. Presently, Foote ventured to give upon the stage of the Haymarket, a monologue entertainment, called "Diversions of a Morning." At the instance of Lacy, however, one of the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre, whom Foote had satirised, the performance was soon prohibited. But Foote was not easily discouraged; and, by dint of wit and impudence, for some time baffled the authorities. He invited his friends to attend the theatre, at noon, and "drink a dish of chocolate with him." He promised that he would "endeavour to make the morning as diverting as possible;" and notified that "Sir Dilbury Diddle would be there, and Lady Betty Frisk has absolutely promised." Tickets, without which no person would be admitted, were to be obtained at George's Coffee House, Temple Bar. Some simple visitors, no doubt, expected that chocolate would really be served to them. But the majority were content with an announcement from the stage that, while chocolate was preparing, Mr. Foote would, with the permission of his friends, proceed with his instruction of certain pupils he was educating in the art of acting. Under this pretence a dramatic representation was really given, and repeated on some forty occasions. Then he grew bolder, and opened the theatre in the evening, at the request, as he stated, "of several persons who are desirous of spending an hour with Mr. Foote, but find the time inconvenient." Instead of chocolate in the morning, Mr. Foote's friends were therefore invited to drink "a dish of tea" with him at half-past six in the evening. By-and-by, his entertainment was slightly varied, and described as an Auction of Pictures. Eventually, Foote obtained from the Duke of Devonshire, the Lord Chamberlain, a permanent license for the theatre, and the Haymarket took rank as a regular and legal place of entertainment, to be open, however, only during the summer months. Upon Foote's decease, the theatre devolved upon George Colman, who obtained a continuance of the license.

The theatre in Goodman's-fields underwent experiences very similar to those of the Haymarket. Under the provisions of the Licensing Act its performances became liable to the charge of illegality. It was without a patent or a license. It was kept

open professedly for concerts of vocal and instrumental music divided into two parts. Between these parts dramatic performances were presented gratis. The obscurity of the theatre, combined with its remote position, probably protected it for some time from interference and suppression. But on the 19th October, 1741, at this unlicensed theatre, a gentleman, who, as the playbill of the night untruly stated, had never before appeared on any stage, undertook the part of Richard the Third in Cibber's version of Shakespeare's tragedy. The gentleman's name was David Garrick. Had he failed the theatre might have lived on. But his success was fatal to it. The public went in crowds from all parts of the town to see the new actor. "From the polite ends of Westminster the most elegant company flocked to Goodman's-fields, insomuch that from Temple Bar the whole way was covered with a string of coaches." The patentees of Drury Lane and Covent Garden interfered, "alarmed at the deficiency of their own receipts," and invoked the aid of the Lord Chamberlain. The Goodman's Fields Theatre was closed, and Garrick was spirited away to Drury Lane, with a salary of six hundred guineas a year, a larger sum than had ever before been awarded to any performer.

It will be seen that the Chamberlain had deemed it his mission to limit, as much as possible, the number of places of theatrical entertainment in London. Playgoers were bidden to be content with Drury Lane and Covent Garden; it was not conceivable to the noblemen and commoners occupying the Houses of Parliament, or to the place-holders in the Chamberlain's office, or in the Royal household, that other theatres could possibly be required.

Still attempts were occasionally made to establish additional places of entertainment. In 1785, John Palmer, the actor, famous as the original Joseph Surface, laid the first stone of a new theatre, to be called The East London, or Royalty, in the neighbourhood of the old Goodman's Fields Theatre, which had been many years abandoned of the actors and converted into a goods-warehouse. The building was completed in 1787. The opening representation was announced; when the proprietors of the patent theatres gave warning that any infringement of their privileges would be followed by the prosecution of Mr. Palmer and his company. The performances took

place, nevertheless, but they were stated to be for the benefit of the London Hospital, and not, therefore, for "hire, gain, or reward;" so the actors avoided risk of commitment as rogues and vagabonds. But necessarily the enterprise ended in disaster. Palmer, his friends alleged, lost his whole fortune; it was shrewdly suspected, however, that he had, in truth, no fortune to lose. In any case he speedily retired from the new theatre. It was open for brief seasons with such exhibitions of music, dancing, and pantomime, as were held to be unaffected by the Act, and permissible under the license of the local magistrates. From time to time, however, the relentless patentees took proceedings against the actors. Delpini, the clown, was even committed to prison for exclaiming "Roast Beef" in a Christmas pantomime. By uttering words without the accompaniment of music he had, it appeared, constituted himself an actor of a stage play.

Some five-and-twenty years later, Elliston was now memorialising the King, now petitioning the House of Commons and the Privy Council, in reference to the opening of an additional theatre. He had been in treaty for the Pantheon, in Oxford Street, and urged that "the intellectual community would be benefited by an extension of license for the regular drama." As lessee of the Royal Circus or Surrey Theatre, he besought liberty to exhibit and perform "all such entertainments of music and action as were commonly called pantomimes and ballets, together with operatic or musical pieces, accompanied with dialogue in the ordinary mode of dramatic representations," subject, at all times, to the control and restraint of the Lord Chamberlain, "in conformity to the laws by which theatres possessing those extensive privileges were regulated." But all was in vain. The King would not "notice any representation connected with the establishment of another theatre." The other petitions were without result.

Gradually, however, it became necessary for the authorities to recognise the fact that the public really did require more amusements of a theatrical kind than the privileged theatres could furnish. But the regular drama, it was held, must still be protected; performed only on the patent boards. But now "burletta licenses" were issued, under cover of which melodramas were presented, with entertainments of music and dancing, spectacle and panto-

mime. In 1809, the Lyceum or English Opera House, which for some years before had been licensed for music and dancing, was licensed for "musical dramatic entertainments and ballets of action." The Adelphi, then called the Sans Pareil Theatre, received a "burletta license" about the same time. In 1813, the Olympic was licensed for the same performances and for horsemanship; but it was for a while closed again by the Chamberlain's order, upon Elliston's attempt to call the theatre Little Drury Lane, and to represent upon its stage something more like the "regular drama" than had been previously essayed at a minor house. "Burletta licenses" were also granted for the St. James's, in 1835, and for the Strand in 1836.

And, in despite of the authorities, theatres had been established on the Surrey side of the Thames; but, in truth, for the accommodation of dwellers on the Middlesex shore. Under the Licensing Act, while the Chamberlain was constituted licenser of all new plays throughout Great Britain, his power to grant licenses for theatrical entertainments was confined within the city and liberties of Westminster, and wherever the sovereign might reside. The Surrey, the Coburg (afterwards the Victoria), Astley's, &c., were, therefore, out of his jurisdiction. There seemed, indeed, to be no law in existence under which they could be licensed. They affected to be open under a magistrate's license for "music, dancing, and public entertainments." But this, in truth, afforded them no protection when it was thought worth while to prosecute the managers for presenting dramatic exhibitions. For although an act, passed in the 28th year of George the Third, enabled justices of the peace, under certain restrictions, to grant licenses for dramatic entertainments, their powers did not extend to within twenty miles of London. Lambeth was thus neutral ground, over which neither the Lord Chamberlain nor the country justices had any real authority; with this difficulty about the case: performances that could not be licensed could not be legalised.

The law continued in this unsatisfactory state until the passing, in 1843, of the Act for Regulating Theatres. This deprived the patent theatres of their monopoly of the "regular drama," in that it extended the Lord Chamberlain's power to grant licenses for the performance of

stage plays to all theatres within the parliamentary boundaries of the City of London and Westminster, and of the boroughs of Finsbury and Marylebone, the Tower Hamlets, Lambeth, and Southwark, and also "within those places where Her Majesty, her heirs and successors shall, in their royal persons, occasionally reside;" it being fully understood that all the theatres then existing in London would receive forthwith the Chamberlain's license "to give stage plays in the fullest sense of the word;" to be taken to include, according to the terms of the Act, "every tragedy, comedy, farce, opera, burletta, interlude, melodrama, pantomime, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part thereof."

Thus, at last, more than a century after the passing of the Licensing Act, certain of its more mischievous restrictions were in effect repealed. A measure of free trade in theatres was established. The Lord Chamberlain was still to be "the lawful monarch of the stage," but in the future his rule was to be more constitutional, less absolute than it had been. The public were no longer to be confined to Drury Lane and Covent Garden in the winter, and the Haymarket in the summer. Actors were enabled, managers and public consenting, to personate Hamlet or Macbeth, or other heroes of the poetic stage, at Lambeth, Clerkenwell, or Shoreditch, anywhere indeed, without risk of committal to gaol. It was no longer necessary to call a play a "burletta," or to touch a note upon the piano, now and then, in the course of a performance, so as to justify its claim to be a musical entertainment; all subterfuges of this kind ceased.

It was with considerable reluctance, however, that the Chamberlain, in his character of *Licensor of Playhouses*, divested himself of the paternal authority he had so long exercised. He long clung to the notion that he was a far better judge of the requirements and desires of playgoers than they could possibly be themselves. He was strongly of opinion that the number of theatres was "sufficient for the theatrical wants of the metropolis." He could not allow that the matter should be regulated by the ordinary laws of supply and demand, or by any regard for the large annual increase of the population. Systematically he hindered all enterprise in the direction of new theatres. It was always doubtful whether his license would be

granted, even after a new building had been completed. He decided that he must be guided by his own views of "the interests of the public." It is not clear that he possessed authority in this respect other than that derived from custom and the traditions of his office. The Act of 1843 contained no special provisions on the subject. But he insisted that all applicants for the licensing of new theatres should be armed with petitions in favour of the proposal signed by many of the inhabitants in the immediate vicinity of the projected building; he required the Police Commissioners to verify the truth of these petitions, and to report whether inconvenience was likely to result in the way of interruption of traffic, or otherwise from the establishment of a new theatre. Further, he obtained the opinion of the parish authorities, the churchwardens, &c., of the district; he was even suspected of taking counsel with the managers of neighbouring establishments; "in short, he endeavoured to convince himself generally that the grant of the license would satisfy a legitimate want"—or what the Chamberlain in his wisdom or his unwisdom, held to be such.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that for nearly a quarter of a century there was no addition made to the list of London theatres. But time moves on, and even Chamberlains have to move with it. Of late years there has been no difficulty in regard to the licensing of new playhouses, and the metropolis has been the richer by many well conducted houses of dramatic entertainment.

FIREWORKS.

A POPULAR belief exists that the pyrotechnic art is due to the ingenuity of the Chinese; but, unfortunately, this theory will not bear examination, for although the Chinese have gone on popping trumpery little crackers and aquatic fireworks for thousands of years, they have never improved upon those primitive contrivances, of which they explode at home, and export to America, a vast quantity. The East doubtless produced wise men in its time, but that time is long since over, and the youth of Asia are at this day the pupils of Western philosophers. Indian Brahmins learn chess out of the famous Handbuch, and the Chinese, when they want really good fireworks, send to London for them.

In Europe a considerable advance on any known form of Chinese pyrotechny was made more than two hundred years ago. Without stirring up the Greek fire, or plunging into the mysteries of mediæval fireworks, I have the evidence of "John Babington, gunner and student in the mathematics" that highly ornamental designs were produced as early as 1635. The geniuses of this gentleman impelled him to write a curious folio, "Pyrotechnia, or a Discourse of Artificial Fireworks, in which the true grounds of that Art are plainly and perspicuously laid downe, &c. &c. Whereunto is annexed a short treatise of Geometricie." This singular volume contains ample instruction in the art of making rockets, wheels, &c., and is embellished with many well-executed engravings, showing with great exactitude the method of making fireworks then in use. According to a fashion which prevailed till a recent date, the foundation of most of the compositions is gunpowder "mealed;" and although many quaint recipes are given for coloured stars, none of them inspire the reader with absolute faith. We are shown how to represent a coat of arms in fire, how to compose a castle of fire, an "antick dance" and "how to make a dragon or any other creature run upon a line." Mr. Babington may have done all these things as well as have written about them; at any rate, he wrote a book representing, if not the deeds, the aspirations of an enthusiastic firework maker, who had long since outstripped the trumpery traditions of the East.

Since Babington's day many noteworthy exhibitions have taken place. In 1697 no less a sum than twelve thousand pounds was spent to celebrate the Peace of Ryswick. In like manner the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was fêted in 1748—in 1814 the hundredth anniversary of the accession of the reigning family was marked by a display in St. James's Park—and in 1856 a grand exhibition of fireworks was given in the London Parks on the conclusion of peace with Russia. On this occasion no special devices, Chinese bridges, temples of concord, &c., were attempted, the display being principally confined to fountains and cascades of fire and aerial fireworks—shells, rockets, and parachutes.

Handsome and brilliant as was this display, it yet wanted the charm of modern fireworks, as shown in perfection at the Crystal Palace, at Sydenham. This consists in the profuse introduction of colour

—an art not more than thirty or forty years old. Tinted fireworks were first exhaustively dealt with by Clertier, in 1840, who was followed a few years later by Tessier, a regularly educated chemist—who, far more scientific than his predecessor, lacked in many respects his technical skill. The researches of these clever Frenchmen have been utilised and their methods greatly improved during the last ten years by Mr. C. T. Brock, Pyrotechnist to the Crystal Palace, who has succeeded in bringing coloured fireworks to a pitch of perfection unimaginable by the last generation.

To the despair of magistrates, the framers of Government bills, and other anti-explosive persons, fireworks must be made somewhere, although the small practitioners have been, if not exterminated, widely scattered by Government inspectors; and it is only under severe restrictions that fireworks are allowed to be made at all. Not within fifty feet of any dwelling-house must the operation be carried on, and the quantity of gunpowder to be kept in store is rigidly prescribed. Wishing to see how all these nice but necessary conditions are fulfilled, I wend my way, an amateur in fireworks, to Nunhead Green, where my attention is at once attracted by a huge board, which, by its grim suggestiveness, almost sends me back to Ludgate Hill by the next train. It is inscribed, "This way to the cemetery—keep to the right." Not yet, I think, while a general "goosey" feeling creeps over my epidermis, but who knows? This firework factory has been going on for about ten years without a serious accident—it is therefore about time that one came off. Perhaps to-day is set down in the law of averages. If so, the cemetery is "convenient."

Revolving these things, I seek for the firework factory, and find it not. Grown-some silence prevails. My first impression is that I have missed my visit, that the entire establishment blew up last night—and that my host, his wife and family, his horses, and his men, his acts and his fireworks are things of the past. I am like the immortal Blenkinsop "preematoer." Mr. Brock is here, alive and smiling, and assures me that "this is the factory."

The term "factory" is associated in almost every mind with the idea of a huge building, crowded to the roof with busy "hands" and pouring out volumes of smoke from lofty chimneys—with the rattle

and clatter of machinery, a certain well-defined oily smell, steam engines, boilers, James Watt, Hargreaves, Arkwright, and other masters of the art of creating and multiplying motion. Mr. Brock's firework factory is a very different "institution." Here is no smoke, no fire, no noise, no bustle, no large buildings. There is a great green square of meadow—some eight acres in extent, dotted over by dozens of little huts at wide intervals, like the plums in a school pudding. These huts are instalments of the firework factory, placed at such distance from each other, that an explosion in any one of them would not affect the rest. Throughout the conduct of the very ticklish business of firework making, this principle is carefully carried out. No more explosive matter is kept on the premises than is needed for the day's work, the stock being regularly replenished from a barge kept "down the river," where people are used to explosions. Chlorates and nitrates are also placed in sheds at a respectful distance from sulphur, and the precautions observed in the mixing and filling sheds are exceedingly numerous. Each shed, capable of holding at most half-a-dozen people, is carpeted with kampalicon, and the "fillers," are moreover compelled to wear woollen slippers while at work. A formidable list of rules is pasted up in every shed. No workman may smoke or carry matches about him within or near the factory; all doors are to be kept unfastened, except by a thin string or latch while people are within; numerous precautions are enjoined as to the treatment of coloured fire, and pails of water must be placed at the door of each shed, the first thing in the morning before work begins. The work-people are also significantly warned that any person setting these rules at defiance is liable to be taken before a magistrate and fined five pounds.

At a very respectful distance from the powder magazine, the firework magazine, and the drying house for coloured stars, are two sheds of larger dimensions than their kindred. One of these is the rolling-shed, and the other contains a collection of the less dangerous components of fireworks. Here are barrels of soft wood charcoal—traditionally of dogwood, but actually made from willow and alder. This is the kind of charcoal used by gunpowder makers, and is largely employed in the manufacture of almost

every kind of firework. Here also are stores of peculiarly fine, thick, and heavy brown paper, hand and machine made from brown rope, and many reams of cartridge and other varieties of white paper; many hundredweight of pins for attaching "quickmatch" to set pieces; barrels of steel and iron-filings and turnings, for producing bright starry coruscations; and chemicals for "colouring"—nitrate of strontia for producing red, nitrate of baryta for green, sulphuret of antimony for white; oxychloride, carbonate and arsenate of copper for blue fires and stars. When great brilliancy is required, chlorates are substituted for the nitrates above enumerated—chlorate of baryta, for instance, producing a more vivid green than the corresponding nitrate.

Before proceeding to explain how fireworks are actually made, it may be well, to save time, to state as briefly as possible the general principle which governs their construction. The motive power of rockets, Catherine and all the more beautiful and complicated wheels which give such a charm to set pieces, is simply due to the rapid evolution of gas. A rocket or a pin-wheel being set alight produces gas, with sufficient rapidity to press against the atmospheric air and impel it onwards in its course, be the same rectilineal or circular. By a nice calculation and arrangement of the various parts of a set piece, the pyrotechnist makes his wheels move in the precise direction and with the exact speed required.

The material of which fireworks are made is not gunpowder, but rather gunpowder debased by the addition of ingredients which reduce its rate of combustion. In olden times and among small makers the practice prevailed of mixing gunpowder with more charcoal, and thus reducing it to the strength required in firework material; but Mr. Brock, who adds sound chemical knowledge to practical skill as a manipulator, soon found that it would be more economical and far more convenient to start from first principles and construct the firework mixture from its proper elements according to a precise formula. This system has been so completely carried out that at Nunhead Green not more than five per cent. of the material used is actual gunpowder. The difference between this and firework "charge" is this: gunpowder contains, in round numbers, six parts of nitre to one part of sulphur and one part of charcoal. Setting aside other pecu-

liarities of its manufacture, this composition would never make good fireworks, simply because it burns too rapidly. The point then to be attained is the due proportion of nitrate or chlorate to carbon, that the "burner" may be checked sufficiently by the quantity of material to be burned.

The result of much thought and many experiments has been the production of a mixture which may be looked upon as forming, with slight variation, the charge for the majority of the fireworks made at Nunhead. Sulphur has been discarded almost entirely, except for illuminating purposes, and a compound of seven parts of chlorate of potash with one part of shellac may be considered a fair type of Mr. Brock's favourite mixture. For the production of certain effects charcoal is indispensable; but shellac is found in the majority of cases to replace it advantageously. To this "charge" is added the colouring matters when required. This operation is very carefully performed, and the charge is now thoroughly mixed, and is ready, according to its proportions, for conversion into coloured stars, rockets, Roman candles, wheels, mines, tourbillons, Chinese trees, golden flower-pots, or slow burning illumination lights.

Stars form an important element of modern pyrotechny. As at the great displays at the Crystal Palace millions of these are shot into the air at once, with the splendid effect familiar to Londoners, it may be imagined that the work of preparing them occupies a large number of hands. Composed mainly of chlorate of potash, the star mixture is made up in various forms. In one busy little hut boys are employed in compressing the dry composition into tiny cylinders by the aid of a neat little hand machine; in a shed hard by the now dingy-looking powder is being jammed into pill-boxes, without top or bottom; while, in yet "another place," a wet paste is undergoing an operation which presents a curious culinary aspect. The paste is laid on a board and only smoothed and patted out till it is of uniform thickness, when an active youth criss-crosses it into tiny squares which, when dry, are broken up into the famous "bright" stars which are the peculiar pride of Mr. Brock.

The "charge" and the "stars" being now made, we proceed to the rolling-shed, where are rolled the paper cases destined to contain these festive combustibles. The first point to be considered in making fire-

work cases is, that they shall be strong enough to hold their contents firmly, and prevent them from burning except in the direction required. Hitherto no material has been found to fulfil these conditions so well as paper, pasted layer by layer over a roller. Iron has been tried, but is too dangerous, in case of explosion, for holiday fireworks, and papier-mâché proved not only costly but weak. The dull months of winter are therefore passed mainly in the rolling-shed, in diligently pasting and rolling millions upon millions of cases. Fireworks as delivered to the purchaser after being neatly covered with white paper, convey no idea of the tremendous wall of brown paper which confines the charge. Well rolled, pasted, and thoroughly dried, the cases become astonishingly hard and solid, and frequently exceed half an inch in thickness. The manufacture of a case for a twelve-inch shell is a highly interesting and amusing sight. The workman is supplied with ample store of the heavy brown paper, previously alluded to, a paste-pot, and a mould of hemispherical form. Into the hollow of this he, like a cook lining a pudding basin with the undercrust, pastes layer on layer of paper, using only just enough paste to secure perfect adhesion. The shell, having been thus made in two halves, is glued together; the joint is firmly secured, and the paper sphere is almost as hard and heavy as if it were made of iron. An aperture is left to admit the filling and the fuse, and the shell is now thoroughly dried. A twelve-inch shell receives a tremendous charge, composed of sixteen pounds, or three thousand five hundred bright-coloured or magnesium stars, and a due proportion of explosive filling. Into an aperture at one of the poles is fixed the fuse, deftly made to burn just long enough to allow the shell to attain its maximum elevation and begin to descend, before it communicates with the bursting charge and scatters its brilliant burden. To the opposite pole is attached a paper cone or, better still, a flannel bag, containing a charge of gunpowder, carefully proportioned to the fuse. To ensure the almost simultaneous ignition of the fuse and the powder in the bag, a line of quick-match is conducted from the fuse round the sides of the shell to the powder and continued in a long string, which hangs outside the mouth of the mortar. This is a vertical cylinder of iron, fitting the shell, not too tightly, and open at the upper end. On fire being applied to the end of quick-

match, hanging over the edge of the mortar, the fuse is lighted, the propelling charge of gunpowder ignited, and the shell shot into the air with resplendent effect.

After the shell the rocket is perhaps the most brilliant of aerial fireworks. As is pretty well known, the civil service rocket is not fired from a tube like its big military brother, but is left to make its own way through the sky on the simple principle already described. Rocket cases are made chiefly of the Arbourfield brown paper, and are prepared with very great care. Strictly speaking, the rocket consists of three parts, the cap, the shaft, and the stick. The latter merely serves the same purpose as a tail to a kite, and may be briefly dismissed, but the cap and shaft are constructed to fulfil exactly opposite conditions. The shaft case is made very strong and solid, in order to retain its contents for a sufficient time; it is made with great attention to proportion, and if carefully filled with the proper mixture, should have a nearly complete tail from the starting point, until the stars are shown by the bursting of the cap. It also, like the shell, should tip over before the head bursts, or the rocket will be seen ascending, after the stars have been scattered—a dreadful sight to the critical pyrotechnist.

The rocket shaft having been skilfully rolled and dried, has next to be filled with a special composition, differing only from ordinary gunpowder in containing a larger proportion of charcoal, and in being in powder instead of grain. Eight parts of saltpetre, two parts of sulphur, and three and three quarter parts of charcoal, compose Mr. Brock's rocket composition, and he insists very strongly that this mixture combines the greatest propelling power with exceeding brilliancy. The charging of the rocket case is a peculiar operation, differing in many respects from that pursued in the case of squibs, Roman candles, &c. To secure the rapid evolution of gas, by which alone a high velocity can be attained, it is necessary to expose a large surface to combustion. To effect this, the rocket shaft, instead of being a cylinder filled full of composition, is, by the insertion of a spindle during the operation of charging, provided with a hollow chamber, which tapers upwards from the base, for about three quarters of the entire length. The workman, seated on a stool made of a section of a tree, perfectly

certain that neither iron nor matches are about, proceeds with the ticklish operation of charging. Scoopful by scoopful the composition is filled in, and rammed down into a firm mass with boxwood rammers or "drift tools," driven home by a mallet—the hollow chamber being preserved by the presence of the spindle. At the top the rocket is closed by a little powdered clay, with the exception of a small aperture to allow the ignition of the contents of the cap. This is made of much lighter material than the shaft, and is filled with bright and coloured stars, and a charge sufficient to ignite them and burst the case. All the processes of making a rocket are conducted with very great nicety, as the slightest mistake would involve ignominious failure.

The manufacture of rockets and shells, pretty and delicate as it is, occupies only one department of the scattered factory. Roman candles are filled in a very peculiar way. As my readers well know, the Roman candle is not a frisky and capricious being like the rocket, nor a noisy impostor like the maroon—whose sound and fury signify that the grand display of fireworks is "just about to begin"—but is quiet, modest and pretty withal, a creature of sweetness and "coloured" light. It is produced by filling a strong case in layers, arranged ingeniously, in the following order—composition or white light, a pinch of gunpowder and a star, composition, gunpowder and star again, and so on. As the composition burns down it lights the star, and on the flame reaching the pinch of gunpowder under the star, this is shot out of the case into the air. It is amusing enough to watch the workpeople making Roman candles, and popping in the variously coloured stars, with their accompaniment of composition, and the necessary gunpowder propeller to every star. Roman candles fill an important part in the peculiar structure known as the "Devil among the Tailors," and in other more or less complicated "pieces"—such as "Bouquets" and "Gerbs" or "Chinese Trees." The latter are often made on a large scale, and at the Crystal Palace appear like immense fountains of fire. Gerb composition is made of six parts of nitre to one of charcoal, and one of sulphur—identically the proportions of gunpowder—added to four parts of iron turnings. It is essential to the production of a brilliant "Chinese Tree" that the iron turnings

should be very thin and light, as otherwise they do not burn rapidly enough. These elegant fireworks require cases of immense thickness, and sometimes contain as much as five pounds of composition.

Proceeding from these very beautiful, but comparatively simple productions, to the vast and complicated "set pieces," I find that these consist mainly of more or less elaborate wheels, connected by hundreds, or rather thousands of "lances"—the technical term for a small tube about the size of a squib, filled with ordinary composition. The making of "lances" occupies many nimble fingers. Letters, figures, and other designs of a "set" character, are all made of these lances, which are ignited by a string of quick-match. In the open air, outside of a hut, the manufacture of this indispensable fire-conductor is going on at a great rate. A piece, many yards long, of lamp cotton, is saturated with wet gunpowder, and is then reeled off and dried. In this state it is only slow-match, and requires to be encased in a tube of white paper before it becomes "quick." To facilitate this operation, it is cut into lengths and then insinuated into the paper tubing. In making this fiery maccaroni, girls are employed, and turn out millions of yards in the course of the year.

Some idea of the labour involved in a grand display at the Crystal Palace may be formed from the fact that three tons of these carefully prepared fireworks are "let off" in a single evening.

Nunhead has been very busy of late in making fireworks of the humbler sort. The weather for grand displays is over; but the time-honoured celebration of San Guido, otherwise Guy Fawkes, makes immense demands upon firework makers. "November goods,"—squibs, crackers, Catherine wheels, blue devils, and snakes—have been carted off in tons during the last few weeks. Of this small fry Guy Fawkes requires at the hands of Mr. Brock about three million pieces. Touching the danger of firework making this gentleman is very sceptical. He is a true enthusiast in his profession, and is inclined to deride the idea of being "blown up." Both as a practical man and a theorist he believes that with proper precautions fire-work making is a reasonably safe, very healthy, and vastly interesting pursuit. May Nunhead long survive to tell the tale!

A NIGHT IN GRANADA.

So the people of San Salvador have nearly rebuilt their town after the late earthquake! Six times already the city of San Salvador had been tossed up, wrenched, grappled, and beset, till tower, and church, and cottage lay prone in a cloud of dust. This last catastrophe makes the seventh. But seven destructions, apparently, have not rooted out the love of birthplace. The inhabitants are building it up again, like to the city I remember, cautious only in the respect that no house shall have a second story. Who will call the Central Americans fickle after this? With all a fine province in which to choose a site, they cling to this one spot, manifestly abhorred of Heaven. It has no particular advantages visible to the foreign eye; or, if advantages it have, the inhabitants don't use them. There is a river, but no commerce. The city has indeed associations, traditions, of no small interest, but San Salvador boasts itself against Costa Rica in the respect of freedom from Indian blood. It may, however, be contested whether Indian or negro make the worse admixture with the white man, and of mulattos San Salvador possesses a number incomprehensible. To the stolid and presumptuous obstinacy of this race may possibly be owing the persistence with which the Salvaderians cling to their fated capital. What manner of courage it is they show, what awful forces they defy, I purpose to tell you in this paper, taking my text in personal experience. Not in San Salvador, however, did I enjoy the adventures here narrated. The newspaper paragraph has but recalled to me a dreadful "scare" which befell in the rival capital of Nicaragua, on the tenth of January, 1866—a day not likely to be forgotten in Granada.

It chanced that several foreigners were in the town, besides myself and my travelling companion; a young Californian, on his way to "see the world;" two gentlemen connected with the mines of Chontales, whereof great things were expected at that time; a man of science from England, geologist or entomologist, I forget which; a professional gambler, "sportsman" he called himself; a Norwegian, on the home track to enjoy a fortune hardly earned; these, with a young doctor from the States, whose diploma "had got lost," made up our motley crew. We were nearly all young, even the gambler,

who boasted that no other profession would have earned him twenty thousand pounds at the age of twenty-four. The amusements of Granada are generally found wearisome up to a certain age, unless one be to the boredom native, so we resolved to give a ball. Whose proposition this festivity was I don't quite recollect, but, when it had been suggested, every one of our party found some peculiar attraction therein.

Said my dear friend Jack, "Now we shall see what these folks can do. They won't work, they don't know how to play. I believe they have concentrated all their energies upon the fandango."

Said Schmit, the sportsman, "Some of the *hombres* might have an ounce or two. I guess I'll look up the old fixins, an' git ready for consequences. I've seen more'n a sample of Greasers, an' I tell you your ball wall be flat as a skatin' floor without my bank."

"Excellent idea," exclaimed the scientific man. "No doubt the Indians will show us their ancient dances, and we may fancy ourselves conquistadores, watching the virgins of the sun dancing before Montezuma!" A soft man, rather, was our scientific.

"My!" said the gentleman on his travels, "this will be something, you bet! I guess I own a pair of pants will rayther delight them Muchachas. I got 'em for Job Peebles's wedding, up to Sacramento; and they was talked of large. A mite long in the leg, maybe; but I'll take in a reef."

So, with universal good wishes, we made arrangements for our ball.

First we hired an empty house, which, when snakes and cats had been dislodged, young trees uprooted, and bats informed that their roosts were wanted for that night, gave us a decent ball-room. From Massaya four Indian fiddlers were engaged, and Granada proved equal to the furnishing of two flutes. Aguardiente and claret we laid in largely, and subscriptions in kind for decoration were invited.

The scientific man lent us some excellent preparations of natural history. Schmit fixed up two buffalo robes, some feather fans, the model of a bark canoe, and a Pawnee idol. The Californian furnished us with portraits of his greatest friends and of several ladies, more or less cherished in his memory. One of the miners insisted on displaying some fine specimens of quartz, which he suspended

on strings. The doctor alone gave nothing special; but the way he chuckled to himself during the consultation assured us of some secret resolve.

The night arrived—a soft and cloudless evening. Stars sparkled out, whilst yet the Western sky burnt orange. Under that gentle light the ruined city took a softness not its own. Its green-edged streets, straight, dusty, and dazzling, loomed romantic. Over them hung palm trees, that glittered icily in the rising moon. The very ruins, gaunt monuments of ruthless war, took a mystery belonging not to them. Very gently the night wind rustled in the green garlands round their heads. There was no warning anywhere of the wild work to come.

I crossed the plaza about eight o'clock. Nearly all the population was assembled there, chatting, love-making, in the moonlight, a picturesque crowd. But as I passed, a cicale suddenly broke into song, so loud, so shrill, that it topped the murmur of the people. It sang from the loop of a great bell, standing upright on the shattered pavement, beneath its broken campauile, which threw a tufted shadow across the grass. Drawn by the sound, great bats swung from aloft, and fluttered almost in my face. A night-hawk skimmed past on ghostly and noiseless wing, sank in the bare, burnt herbage, and rose again under my very feet, with the faintest twittering. To such desolation is reduced the stately capital of Hernandez de Cordova.

The doctor lived in one of those huge palaces which attest the ancient glory of Granada. Few of them escaped the flames when Henningsen, Walker's lieutenant, set all the city "in a lowe, and slokened it with blood." But those spared of the fire are built to withstand the rage of time. There were no lights behind the windows' heavy grating; and my hammer at the doors, full ten feet high, brought no response. I pushed them open, and entered the vast bare hall. It was dark as a grave.

"Doctor!" I cried; "Doctor!" and was groping towards the opposite door, which opened, of course, in the courtyard, when a chain rattled sharply behind me, and arms of overpowering strength grasped me about the waist. I thought they belonged to the doctor, and laughingly tried to disengage myself. Horror! The circling arms were covered with close, fine fur, and a long growl warned me to rest quiet. My nerves were young then and stout. I knew the doctor's puma had me

in his grasp, and though sick with fear, I remained still, hoarsely shouting.

The brute did not loose hold, but he kept his claws hid in their velvet, and rubbed his smooth head against my shoulders, purring like a gigantic cat. I felt his hot breath on my neck, and his body was pressed against mine by iron muscles. It seemed an ago before the doctor answered, coming with a light across the yard. At a word from him the beautiful beast leapt from me, rolling like a kitten on the ground, biting its chain. I staggered into the doctor's arms, which could scarcely hold me, so frightened was he.

This puma was to have been our friend's contribution towards the ornament of the ball-room, and he had fastened it by the doorway in readiness to take with him; but without difficulty I persuaded him to let it stop at home. A stiff glass of brandy brought me round, and we set off together through the moonlit and solitary streets.

The ball had commenced before our arrival; had, in fact, already reached that point when popular enthusiasm demanded the national dance.

Such music as the band struck up I cannot describe. It was a mingling of Spanish energy, always tending towards license, with the melancholic harmony of Indian strains. The result was madness, nothing less. Under the influence of that music one felt one's reason go, not gradually, but all at once. A demoniac possession got hold of us.

The musicians leapt to their feet, and ground their instruments with a passionate flourish. The dancers whirled in a cloud of dust, jerking out interjections. It was a Witches' Sabbath! I, looking on, shouted with the rest. Legs and arms spun together. Such a dance is the Nicaraguense!

The music ceased as suddenly as it begun. Girls, half fainting, were led to their seats. The dust settling down made us all cough like inmates of a consumptive hospital. As the enchantment ceased, our bare walls, scantily covered with flags and blankets, looked more miserable than before. The fat old mulatress who dispensed refreshments—honest creature enough!—seemed a foul Megæra. Through doors and windows, meanwhile, streamed ivory moonlight, flecked with plumey shadows of the palms. And there was Schmit, vulture-eyed, superintending the

arrangement of a faro table. Filled with a nameless disgust, I went out.

Others of our guests followed the example, perhaps with a like feeling. I strolled from house to house in the street, for nearly all were open. Representations of the Nativity, a Christmas fashion of Nicaragua, were yet on view for the edification of the pious. Shall I dare to tell what I saw? It will need the gravest assertion of veracity, the which I here give without reservation of any kind, to convince an English reader that this account is not exaggerated. But it is not only true; it even contains not all the truth, for there are things common in Central America with which I dare not stain these pages.

This then I saw, or the like of it, in half-a-dozen houses. A stage of green baize, three to five feet long, and two to four feet deep. At back, a toy bedstead, with silk or satin hangings. In bed, a penny doll. Hanging over it, another penny doll, dressed in white satin. In front, with his back to the bed, a third, in monastic costume, twice as tall as the woman; this to represent Saint Joseph.

All round, disposed according to principles of order incomprehensible, a crowd of dolls, beasts from "Noah's Ark" boxes, figures off cakes, and plaster-of-Paris images. On the Tower of Babel was set out a doll's tea-service. Tin soldiers marched in order undisturbable under parsley trees, though against them, smiling, but terrible, advanced a China shepherdess with the evident resolve of eating up those little warriors. The lamb she led scowled ferociously. Herod, near by, wore a tinsel helmet. Pontius Pilate shone in a breastplate made of four spangles sewn together. Flying Cupids, each provided with a decent spangle about the waist, hovered over the scene. In the immediate foreground, before the foot-lights, stood as many images of the sort retailed by Italian boys in Europe as the householder could lay hands on. Victor Emanuel, Garibaldi, and the late Emperor Napoleon were everywhere represented. The Venus dei Medici, attired in satin, had her place in several shows; in one, where her figure was larger, she was posted outside the stage for adoration of the faithful.

In another place I saw half-a-dozen women telling their beads before Venus in a blue petticoat; and, not far off, I observed a common statuette, of plaster,

representing a ballet girl piroetting, dressed in blue silk, and offered for worship—not in vain. Such is the religion of Central America. Were not the old idols more dignified?

It was near half-past ten when I returned to the ball room. Before reaching the place, I heard a murmur of evil omen. Jack was standing in the crowd outside, and he hastened up on seeing me.

"Schmit is in a row," he said, "as I knew the fellow would be. They accuse him of cheating at faro. Shall we interfere, or leave him?"

"My dear fellow," I answered, "we have knowingly meddled with the substance called pitch, and are defiled. Let us not mess our fingers more deeply by abandoning a comrade in a fix. At the same time, I don't believe Schmit has cheated on this occasion."

Nor do I, even now.

There is a sort of honour amongst "sportsmen," in America, as there was with the Barry Lindons and Casanovas of last century. Schmit would have swindled his own father in the ordinary way of business, but would not have put an innocent partner into "the hole."

We pushed through. The orchestra was playing a waltz of the trois temps species, and two or three couples circled round. But the crowd was gathered in the left hand corner, where our comrade, pale, but easy, dominated the hubbub—it was not the first time that he had figured as the hero of a similar scene. That man's life, could it be told, would bear the record of a hundred quarrels more perilous by far than this one. His fortune had been slowly won through a succession of them. What were we, you murmur, who joined such a man on terms of equality? You, reader, are an English gentleman, I doubt not, who ask the question. Go for a travel in Central America, and you will understand.

The row was growing hot. What was the gravamen of the dispute, I don't know, but it had passed the bounds of argument. A score of voices were raised in furious contention, two score of fists were brandished in the air, round Schmit. As I pushed roughly through, followed by others, the moment of action arrived. A tin sconce, wrenched from the wall, struck the gambler on his forehead, and battle joined. It was just one of those wild mêlées only seen in Ireland and in America.

We struck all ways, we kicked any limb

in reach. The crowd did, that is, for I was early levelled. But in a second's time, a burly Nicaraguan fell across me, and, unable to rise, did battle horizontally.

The big brute struck with his knees, and bit, and tried to throttle me. I ponded at his head. Round and upon us were trampling feet, unbooted for the most part. My adversary's shirt, coatless he was, yielded at once, and he fought half naked. A heavy foot of some person unknown laid me flat again, just as I aimed a finishing blow at my antagonist. He threw himself upon me, twisting both paws in my shirt collar, and so lay, panting, but throttling me, his face on mine. I could not use my arms. The dusty mist turned red. I was choking—and then—I thought it fancy—the floor upheaved beneath me.

I was tossed up, and fell again, and lay rolling. Fury and pain had been the burden of the uproar hitherto, but now it was a shout of fear. Hurrying feet swept over us, and tripped, and tumbled headlong. My enemy gave way, screaming "tremblor!" with bloody jaws.

In an instant the room was cleared, save for a half dozen who scrambled on the floor. I rose to my feet, dizzily. The air was so full of dust, that no man could see a door. A scream of terror filled not the house only, but the street. Two or three fallen sconces burnt on the floor, dimly, and by the table overthrown flared fire, red in the dust, where a shrieking wretch struggled to put out his ignited shirt. I cleared my eyes, my brain, and ran towards the spot where a door must be. As I ran, the earth surged up again, and tossed me, as one is tossed on a see-saw. The sconces rattled to the ground, rolling and going out. The yell outshrieked itself, and crash—crash—the plaster fell. Red flames appeared on the ground level. I found my feet, only to fall again. Voices of men had died away, or were lost in the dread tumult—crackle of beam, rustle of stout walls settling, crash of tiled roof and timbers. Dust whirled so thick, I could not see the fires, if fires remained. Door there was none. I sat upon the ground, choking, resigned, amazed that death held off. Again and again shivered that sick heave. Unseen objects, falling all round, made the earth shake, but none struck me. Suddenly, after an awful crash, I saw blue light shimmering close by. I gained my feet and leapt towards it, tripped over fallen rubbish, and fell

prone into the street. Before my senses went, I saw the whole house I had just left sink bodily down, like a house of snow, leaving nought behind but thickening dust.

Some time after, I opened my eyes, and surveyed the ruin. Six or eight houses in sight lay overthrown. Smoke and dust rose from them in spirals, and small tongues of flames glanced here and there.

The street was still, but from a distance came dull murmurs, as of a people chanting in mournful cadence. Oh, but it was lovely, the still, blue night above! Not a cloud in the moonlit sky, not a breath of wind. The palm tree over against me drooped its smooth leaves like a banner, unnerved by the convulsion. Bruised and bewildered, but anxious for the safety of my friends, I dragged myself towards the plaza. Everywhere ruin! I passed several houses in a blaze, which none tried to put out. But in the older and handsomer quarters damage was not common. The Conquistadores built for an age, if not for all time, and the powers of earthquake do not easily prevail against their labour. As I went on, through fire and smoke and dust, feeling often a dizzy quiver under foot, the faint hum of chanting grew louder. It came from the plaza.

Soon I heard it clearly, and soon I saw the crowd. First in the march, circling round the plaza, came priests bearing the Host. Bells tinkled before them, and behind a half-score Indians, drawing such wails of terror from their fiddle-strings as never breathed from violin before. Followed all the population of Granada, black clad for the most part, bearing red torches, and moaning to the fiddles. Some corpses were borne along. What faces were those I saw, living and dead, in the ruddy torch-light! Madness burnt in the swollen eyes, madness of fear. Mouths quivered and worked in chanting broken words.

Now and again a woman's scream, shrill and sudden, rang out, and was answered by incoherent wails. I dream of that procession sometimes, seeing again black robes, red flare, and burning, agonised, blood-stained faces; in the midst a calm grey mask, quiet for ever, resting on men's shoulders. I hear the fiddles scream, and the wail of a whole people agonised—ten thousand voices chanting the "De Profundis." I remember what a night and day we passed. Eighty-three earthquakes shook Granada in those twenty-four hours. No safety anywhere, no escape from the

horrible shiver. In the house, death from above; in the open, death gaping below. We all encamped upon such clear ground as there was; but, lo! the plaza split across, and yawned, and closed again in all men's sight. No safety! for the lake swept its beach with such wild waves, boats could not live, and men were drowned far inland.

A time of terror without name, when one seemed to lie under a nightmare of living reality. A fortnight the horror lasted, each hour a torment of suspense. Then quiet returned, and Granada set itself to rebuild, to dig out furniture, to bury its dead, as they are now doing in San Salvador.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII. "THE LITTLE SPECK ON GARNERED FRUIT."

THEY are long, lazy, happy sunny days that follow on this reunion. Though "the rain it raineth every day" in Ireland, still the climate is so joyous that it beams out into the broadest and sunniest smiles immediately after the heaviest showers.

The Granges hold on at Bray with the tenacity of limpets, and with an amount of endurance that is admirable in its way. Mr. Grange goes through the long-drawn-out agony of a swiftly running hotel bill for the sake of his sister, when, but for her, he could live upon his mother-in-law for nothing in London. But his wife points out to him that the end will justify the means, and that he will be thrice blessed in the peace he is purchasing for the future at the cost of the few extra pounds in the present.

On his side it must be admitted that his sister Charlotte, for whom he is making these sacrifices, is not an unmixed blessing. She gibes at him, when they are alone, whenever she has the opportunity, and he gives frequent opportunities for gibing.

"It will not be for long," his wife tells him when he groans under the weight of his chains, and complains that Charlotte has become more arrogant of late, and more insolently self-assured in her demeanour. "It will not be for long; Frank Forest flirts with her now in the most open and undisguised manner; though he must see as plainly as the rest do that his

pet, Kate, of whom he used to think so much, hates her, and I am sure I don't wonder at that," Mrs. Grange continues, "for without being able to fix on any one thing in particular that's objectionable about Charlotte, she is hateful from some cause or other."

"She ought to remember what she owes to you, I am sure," Mr. Grange replies, nervously, for, above all things, he dreads his wife rising against his sister, and perhaps compelling him to take sides against that handsome family incubus. But Mrs. Grange is wiser in her generation than to do this. Better a brief period of acute pain which may result in being freed for the rest of their lives from the cause of it, than the long-drawn out agony of Charlotte for ever unmarried on their hands.

It comes about quite naturally, through the good-natured agency of Mrs. Durgan, that Kate has nearly the daily use of Guinevere, and that Captain Bellairs and Frank are her constant escorts. Two or three times during the course of these rides, a word or two has been said about the Granges, by one or other of the men. But Kate cannot bring herself to respond to them in such a way as to induce Frank to continue the topic.

"Surely he is too honourable himself to really like a dishonourable woman," Kate tells herself sometimes, as she looks at her cousin. But her belief in this being the case is sure to be dashed to the ground the next time she sees Frank and Miss Grange together. If he does not like her he seems to like her, and certainly devotes an unconscionable share of his society and conversation to her. Gradually Miss Grange absorbs him so when the whole party happen to be together of an evening, that Kate has no alternative but to regard his manner to Miss Grange as an insult to the friendship he still sometimes professes for her, Kate.

With all the unguardedness of her honest courageous nature, she shows her cool aversion to Charlotte Grange plainly to her cousin, and he lightly and gaily dis-regards it, makes no allusion to it, treats it with the same affable indifference with which he would treat a fit of futile, groundless jealousy. The worst part of the whole unpleasant affair to Kate is, that she cannot help feeling that Frank's feelings of honour are as blunt as are those of Miss Grange. For, "if it were not so, he must have said something to me about that scene in the drawing-room at Lugnaquilla," she says to

Mrs. Durgan, to whom she has laid bare the secret of the repulsion she feels for the amiable, fair, smiling, courteous Miss Grange.

"A glamour is thrown over him," Mrs. Durgan says; "he's a clever, brilliant fellow that cousin of yours, Kate, but he's as unstable as water and as vain as a peacock. I shouldn't worry myself about him if I were you; let him be snared by her, he doesn't deserve a better fate, if, knowing what he does of her, he can make a parade of preferring her friendship to yours."

"It's that that mortifies me," Kate confesses; "I could have borne to be thrown over by Frank for a superior, but for a woman who is so infinitely my inferior—!"

"It's hard to be thrown over for anybody," Mrs. Durgan says, sadly. "The only thing left, it seems to me, is to say, in the words of the old song, 'I'll never love thee more,' and stick to the determination."

"But I can never say that about Frank," Kate says candidly; "I can't leave off liking him, and I can't leave off feeling ashamed that he should let me think that he is at the feet of a woman who is so much lower than any woman ought to be whose name can ever be associated with his—that's the nuisance of it. People say he was very much taken, or very attentive to, or whatever the stupid phrase may be, with Miss So-and-so and half a dozen somebody-elses, and we all get classed together, and regarded as being of the same moral and intellectual status; it does sting me!"

For a moment Mrs. Durgan's bright face becomes more radiantly bright than usual.

"You're a little in love with your cousin," she says, and her face dims slightly as Kate answers with truthful energy,

"No, I'm not now, not in the least degree; but I have been, you know, and I can't lose my interest in him."

"What would you say if you heard that Harry Bellairs were fascinated by her too," Mrs. Durgan presently asks, and Kate replies steadily enough, though her heart is throbbing,

"There would be nothing unnatural, nothing disgraceful in that; he does not know what Frank and I do, and she's as fair to the eye, as pretty and as pleasant as a woman need be."

"If Harry should prove himself weak, and she's playing for the highest stake, and will only take your cousin when she

has failed to secure mine, cannot you strip the mask off, and tell him what you know her to be?"

"Yes," Kato says, without hesitation; "she may hold her course now as she likes, and I won't shut her out of every honest house by proclaiming her conduct; but if she attempts to mix herself up with the life of anyone I love, that one shall know her for what she is——"

"Then you love Harry," Mrs. Durgan says, quietly; "well, dear, I don't wonder at it," and she holds a frank, friendly hand out to Kate, who stands, scarlet and self-convinced, before her.

Kate takes the friendly hand in all friendliness as it is offered to her; but she says not a word. She is not given to proclaiming her feelings on the housetops, unless she has some well-defined motive or is carried away by impulse. In this case she has been carried away by impulse, but having regained her judgment under the influence of the shock of feeling that she has openly betrayed herself, she tells herself that there is no dishonesty in maintaining a discreet reserve. That Mrs. Durgan has divined what is in her heart about Harry Bellairs, is patent. But there will be no deception, no sneaking treachery in her remaining quiescent about it now, and no attempt at throwing dust in anybody's eyes in the mere fact of refraining from wearing her heart upon her sleeve.

"Is she glad or sorry?" Kate asks herself a dozen times in the course of the ensuing few days, during which Mrs. Durgan is kinder to her than ever. "Does she think I am loving above my state in daring to care for a man who is the head of the house into which she has married? At any rate she never tries to make me feel that I am doing so, she's as generous as if she had no interest in the matter."

Kate makes this admission to herself in utter unsuspicion of Mrs. Durgan having such an interest in the matter, that, though she will not leave a plan unmade that may facilitate intercourse between her beautiful companion and her cousin, every hope that has made life bright to her of late years faints, fails, dies away within her, as she sees how dear that intercourse is becoming to both of them. But she never flags in her course, and never has a harsh thought concerning those who are causing her unwittingly the sharpest mental agony she has ever known.

Happy in her new home life, in the warm sympathy of her new friend, and the constant companionship of Harry Bellairs, Kate still has her mighty trial. Charlotte Grange is the thorn in her pillow, the cloud on her otherwise bright horizon, the bane of her life! She revolts at the sight of this unprincipled woman's visibly growing influence over Frank, and inwardly resents, as the deadliest insult Frank could have offered to her, the sight of the transfer of his devotion to Miss Grange.

But worse things than the enforced passive endurance of the growth and ripening of this bitter fruit await Kate. She finds herself one day, forced by the pressure of the general intimacy which has been established, into an hour's uninterrupted conversation with Miss Grange; and to Kate's great, unfeigned, disgusted surprise, Miss Grange does not shirk it!

That young woman, indeed, appears to be positively pleased at the prospect of holding unfettered communication with Frank's cousin, and in this pleasure there is rank offence to Kate. "If you were ashamed to look me in the face I might be idiotic enough to pity you, and so be tempted to hold my dagger," Miss Mervyn says to herself on the occasion of her finding herself forced into the position of being Miss Grange's entertainer one morning. As it is, misplaced pity has no part with her, and her manner is harder, cruder, more unlike her own than it has ever been to a human being in her life before.

Charlotte Grange has come here with her claws sharpened this day. She is prepared for the battle, for all the sultry calm and quiet of her demeanour. Frank has been dangling after her of late, but he has not been definite. He has paced round and round the trap, but the bait has not been sufficiently tempting to induce him to taste it to his own destruction as yet. Miss Grange has looked around her for a cause for this halting on his part, and in her own heart has decided that his discretion is due to his cousin.

That she will sting that cousin out of even the semblance of affectionate interest in him, and so wound his pride, or his heart, or his vanity, or whatever it is men are wounded in by evil speakers, liars, slanderers, and busy-bodies, is only a natural resolve for Miss Grange to come to.

"It is pleasant to get you alone, and keep your conversation to myself for once," Miss Grange begins with well assumed

friendly interest, as Kate reluctantly opens the disagreeable meeting by asking her unwelcome guest to be seated. "Mrs. Durgan or Captain Bellairs always monopolise you when we meet at Lingnaquilla, and I stand no chance of getting a word from you."

"There are very few people in the world who would stand a chance of getting a word from me when I am able to get a word from either Mrs. Durgan or Captain Bellairs," Kate says. Then she adds undauntedly, half hoping that her words may lead to a climax,

"My cousin Mr. Forest is one of that minority. I have no other acquaintances about me now whom I don't either dislike or despise."

She looks Miss Grange straight in the eyes as she says this, and this composed adversary does not either droop them, or change countenance in the slightest degree, or in any way make manifest that she is conscious of feeling less innocent than a mountain dove.

"Indeed," she says, quietly, when Kate has thrown her verbal gauntlet down. "Indeed; you seem to be so fond of Frank that I wish I had brought him over here to-day to see you; but I thought that it would be pleasant for us to have a little quiet chat together. I don't like to have a man running after me perpetually."

Those women only who have been goaded in the same way can understand how all the hate and rage that have hitherto been dormant in her nature, wake into life in Kate's breast as she hears this mean, undermining intruder grow insolent in her strength, and proclaim her triumph over Frank's credulity. To hear him called "Frank" too, by this woman, who says out the name with the light, easy, familiar air of one who is well accustomed to utter it! Kate feels degraded, as she looks at her successor and knows what manner of woman she is, by the spasm of jealousy which contracts her heart. Not that there is anything degrading in the jealousy itself; it is not the savage insatiate offspring of passion; it is only the natural result of the real honest liking, the genuine affectionate sympathy, the warm anxious regard which she has still for the man whom she once loved.

But Miss Grange mistakes it and its

causes, and there comes a gleam of malignant satisfaction at her own power to pain, into her gentle eyes. Her satisfaction is slightly damped, however, by Kate's next words.

"I am rather surprised to hear that my cousin Mr. Forest should have allowed himself to be swayed even in a trifling matter by you; perhaps you have made yourself mistress of some secret which he desires to have kept, by hiding behind a curtain, or peeping through a key-hole, and you hold it over him as a threat. It is just the kind of thing you would do, I should imagine."

Kate speaks with the precision and cold distinctness of intense concentrated contempt. But the woman she addresses is contempt-proof. Miss Grange merely throws her head up, and ripples out a clear, rather loud laugh, that actually shakes her plump person. That there is nothing genuine in the laughter—that it does not take its rise in amusement, or mirthful feeling, or delicately tickled humour, is little to the purpose. She laughs; as if Kate's accusation were so eminently ridiculous a thing that no sensible woman need attempt to refute it.

"How touchy you are about my having heard—quite by accident—the little advances you made to Frank, my dear," she says, saucily; "you've evidently brooded over it, and come to think a great deal of it. Men are so different, Frank never gets in the least annoyed when I laugh at him about it."

The coarse callous hardihood with which Miss Grange can ignore so entirely her own shameful part in the scene to which she makes this irritating reference, is infinitely more bewildering and enraging to Kate, than is the galling allusion to her own share in the transaction. That at least, even if a little over tender, had been true and womanly; whereas Charlotte Grange had been so entirely contemptible, that Kate feels something of humiliation in holding any communion with her, and is silent through sheer amazement.

But Miss Grange, quiet, undisturbed, and calm, takes advantage of Kate's staggered silence at her laughter to say, "I wouldn't bring Frank with me to-day, because my sister-in-law is so fond of prophesying, and it bores me. She declares that Frank Forest is in love with me—as if I cared whether he is or not!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 311. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER V. A RENDEZVOUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the excitement under which he was labouring, and the despair which seemed to have settled at his heart, Walter Danby slept well that night in the clean fresh-smelling hard bed at the Lion, and had pleasant dreams, in which Anne Studley—not in the least like herself, but still a beneficent angel—played a prominent part.

When young Danby opened his eyes the next morning, he was at once conscious of all the folly that he had committed on the previous night, and never before had the world seemed so distasteful to him. His eyes were heavy, his head throbbed, and to collect his thoughts sufficiently for proper deliberation as to what had best be done, seemed to him an impossibility; so he made his way to the bottom of the inn garden, where a punt was moored for the convenience of bathers, and, after two or three headers into the cool river, he seemed refreshed and reinvigorated. His mind, too, was so much clearer that, as he seated himself on his bed, in a pause during dressing, he was able to face his position, and to consider how he could best get out of the scrape into which he had fallen.

"The moncy must be paid, there's no doubt of that," he said to himself, "and paid at once. The captain did not seem to see the idea of any delay, and, as the day has been agreed upon, it must be kept to. Was it fairly won? that's the question that's racking me just now. Last night I

would have sworn that I saw him shuffling with the cards under the table, and this morning, after my night's sleep, and all the clearing effects of my dip, I am of the same mind. If he had not been Anne's father I would have taken him by the throat, and—what a horrible idea, having such an old scoundrel for one's father-in-law! And yet for her I would chance that or anything else. How sweet she is! so calm, and quiet, and resigned! never grumbling the least at the way in which she is treated; and it is too bad to bring a bright intelligent girl of that kind to a place like this, and bury her alive, without a soul to speak to, or—a hundred and fifty-three pounds! How I could ever have been idiot enough to go on playing until I had lost such a sum as that! Only one way to meet it, since the captain's so keen after his money, and that is to sell out Annt Luscombe's five hundred pound legacy, which I had set apart as a nest-egg in case I ever married. What a charming girl that is; how modest and reticent—and how remarkably good-looking! I wonder whether she knows I care for her—at least of course she does, every girl divines that in an instant—but whether she cares for me! What can old Studley have said to her when he noticed me at the station? Something not too flattering, no doubt. Wonderful fellow to turn up kings, the old man; it could not be all fair! And yet I've no proof, and even if I had, I doubt whether, under the circumstances, I ought to make any row. The best way will be to hold my tongue and never to play again. I'll bring down the money on Sunday, because that will give me a chance of seeing Anne, but I won't dream of stopping, as the captain proposed, or at all events of playing. I'm

sick and disgusted with the life I'm leading now, and there's no chance of promotion in the bank. I've half a mind to cut it, and see what good I could do by emigrating. I would, too, if Anne Studley would come with me. I wonder whether she would; there would be no harm in asking her, and she's just cut out for an emigrant's wife—full of patience and endurance and hope. Heath has never turned up, so I suppose he slept at the captain's. By jove, I must push along, or I shall miss the 'bus to the station!"

But he was in time for that accommodating vehicle; and, as they drove past the captain's door, Heath issued forth and climbed to the seat on the roof next to Danby. His night's work did not seem to have affected him, for he was as cleanly shaved, as neat and precise in his dress as usual. When they were on their way to London in the train, happening to have the carriage to themselves, Heath took advantage of the opportunity to speak to Danby about the card-playing, which had taken place on the previous night. "You lost again heavily, I understand?" he said.

"Yes!" said Danby, with a blush, for he always liked to be thought well of by Heath. "Yes, much more than I could afford."

"I cannot understand your being so extremely foolish," said Heath, coldly. "I am not a card player myself, but I imagine I could judge in a minute when I was overmatched, and if I then continued playing I should only have my vanity to thank. Captain Studley has not merely greater judgment and greater coolness, but far greater experience than you, and all these things tell, I should imagine, in an encounter. Moreover, if those trustees in whom the management of the bank is now vested were to learn that you were gambling, it might seriously affect your position there. My advice to you is—pay up, and have done with it."

"Do you know, Heath," commenced Danby, "do you know—" he was just going to tell Heath of his suspicions of the captain's foul play, but he thought better of it. "I mean, did the captain tell you I promised to take him the money on Sunday next, when he said he would give me my revenge?"

"Take him the money, pay him and come away! Don't play any more, that's my advice," said Heath; "moreover, you won't have the chance, as Studley must

devote nearly all his Sunday to me. Besides, he talks of going abroad next week for some little time."

"Will he take his daughter with him?" asked Danby, anxiously.

"I don't know, I didn't enquire," said Heath; "the subject didn't interest me."

Walter Danby found he could not settle to the bank work that day. The dip in the cold river had but a transient effect, towards noon his head was aching as badly as before, and, worse still, his mind was running on something very different from day books and ledgers. What Heath had said about Captain Studley's intended visit to the Continent upset him very much. For the probability was that Anne would not be left at Loddonford by herself, but would be sent off somewhere; and even were she left at the cottage, he could never venture to call there in the captain's absence. He could not bear the idea of giving her up, of never seeing her again, just when he was beginning to hope that she took some interest in him. And yet what was he to do? Her father would laugh at the idea of giving his daughter's hand to a clerk in a bank with a salary of a hundred and twenty pounds a year. His only chance would be the emigration notion. He would have a tolerable sum to start with, after paying the captain's debt; he could get good introductions in Australia, and if Anne would only share his lot, he would endeavour to prove by zeal and industry that he really deserved her.

After bank hours Walter was in the habit of walking round the West-end, and occasionally of dining at that club, to be a member of which had, at one time, seemed to him to sweeten and flavour existence, but on this occasion he took his dinner at an old-fashioned chop-house in Fleet-street, and afterwards made his way to his lodging, which was situated in South Molton-street, a queer duct which leads from Oxford the commercial to Brook the aristocratic, and which, though so closely bordering on fashionable ground, is unmistakably homely, unpretending, and tolerably cheap. Here, at the top of one of the smaller houses, Walter had a roomy attic, which he had furnished with a view to combine the comforts of bed and sitting-room. There was a writing-table in the window, and against the wall a book-ease fairly filled with something beside railway book-stall literature, and several Burlington Arcade prints of languishing ladies. The

evening was chill, but there was no fire laid in the little grate, nor indeed, even if there had been, would Walter have risked offending his landlady by lighting it. So, after kindling his lamp, and filling his pipe, he threw his travelling plaid over his shoulders and seated himself at the writing-table. Composition did not come easily to him; moreover, he had not, when he sat down, that certainty as to what he intended to say, which is essential to the comfortable progress of a writer; but after a couple of hours, during which the atmosphere had become thick with smoke, and the floor strewn with blotted sheets, he had achieved something like the following:—

" You must not be offended with me for writing to you, as a letter is the only means by which I can hope at present to attract your attention, and hold you as my listener for a few minutes; and you will not, I hope, think me presumptuous in writing to you, after so short an acquaintance, when I tell you that your reply will influence the future tenour of my life. I suppose you must have seen that, from the first time of seeing you, I was irresistibly attracted towards you. If you have noticed my manner I hope you have not been annoyed. I have not, I confess, attempted to disguise my feelings, as there was nothing in them of which I felt ashamed. But I should not have spoken or written to you in this way, at all events just yet, but for circumstances. I am going to take a step which may make or mar me. I am going to give up the situation which I hold in the bank, and to emigrate to Australia. I know it may be considered foolish to throw away a certainty, but I cannot remain in London. I have done nothing really wrong, but I have been very silly, and I feel that I must cast off all association with the place. I tell you this in all honour, as few ought to know it. I have done no real harm, but I have spent more money than I ought in various ways; and I wish to get away, not because I am afraid of being again led into temptation, for I believe I should have strength of mind to resist, but because I am honestly ashamed of myself, and want to try and forget my folly in a new life. I have money enough to make a fair start in a new land, but I want to ask you to share my future. If I thought that I was inducing you to leave a thoroughly happy home, where you were truly appreciated, even with all my desire

to make you my wife, I should hesitate before asking this of you. But, situated as you are, about to be thrown on the world to gain your own living, I hope you will not think me selfish in proposing that the start in our new life shall be made together, and that the heavier portion of the burden shall be borne on my shoulders.

" I do not want an immediate answer from you; think over all I have written, and do not think less favourably because this paper is not filled with protestations of all I feel, and all I profess. If I have judged you rightly, the absence of vows and promises will not cause you to believe that there is any lack of earnestness or sincerity in my proposal. I hope to have your answer from your own lips. I am coming to Loddonford to see Captain Studley, by appointment, at three on Sunday. I shall not be long with him, and I happen to know he will be busy all day. Will you give me five minutes when I come away from him? Five minutes, in which I may learn my whole future career!

" WALTER DANBY."

" It is not very well put!" said Walter, after reading this document for the last time, and placing it in an envelope, which he addressed to "Miss Studley, Loddonford, Berks." "It does not read right straight off, like the lovers' letters in novels; but I think it conveys what I mean. Anyhow, it is the best I can do; and Anne will like it better, because she will see at once that it is all my own, and that there's no flummery about it. And now I'll get to bed, for I'm pretty well tired. I had no idea that writing things, what they call literary composition, took so much out of a fellow!"

During the course of the week, Danby looked through his letters with feverish eagerness, but never found one from Anne. He was not exactly disappointed; he had scarcely expected a reply, and he felt tolerably certain that by not writing she intended to keep the appointment he had proposed. Meanwhile, he carried out his business arrangements so far as seeing his brother and realising the little legacy, out of which the gambling debt to Captain Studley was to be paid. He kept his intention of quitting his situation strictly to himself. He said nothing about it in the bank; nor did he mention it to Heath, who, so far from seeking his confidence, seemed to have become more reserved than ever. There was a rumour among the clerks that Heath was to be appointed

manager of the bank at a large salary ; but he himself neither endorsed nor denied it. He worked very hard at his ordinary duties, and, in addition to these, he was engaged, from time to time, with the detectives, who were still trying to solve the mystery of the murder and to trace the missing jewellery, and whose reports and suggestions were invariably submitted to Heath. Walter Danby sometimes thought that the chief cashier's manner had rather changed to him since their last visit to Loddonford together ; but it might, he reasoned with himself, be merely his fancy, as Heath never alluded to the subject.

The captain was not far out when he asserted his idea that young Danby probably lay late on Sunday mornings. There was something too delightful in hearing the clock strike the abhorred hour of usual rising, and then of sinking back once more into the pillow, with the knowledge that no harm could come of it. Sunday was usually a day, too, for dawdling over dressing, and for delicious dalliance with the breakfast, shared by one or two congenial souls, also victims of week-day oppression, and lightened by the perusal of the sporting newspaper. But on this particular Sunday, Walter Danby awoke early, and, having the full sense of the responsibility of all that he had to go through brought before him, he could not go to sleep again, but lay revolving in his mind how he could best put his case to Anne, and what were his chances of winning it.

"I think I made a good point in the letter," he said to himself, "where I told her I should not have had the pluck to take her away from a comfortable home, to share a chance lot with small means ; and heaven knows I meant it. But, even if one had to struggle for a certain time in the bush, carrying out and doing all those things which one reads of in the emigrants' letters which are published in the newspapers, I don't think it could be much worse for her than living a solitary life shut up in that ghastly, tumble-down cottage, surrounded by that miasma-producing jungle. A sort of place which one reads of as haunted by smugglers or coiners, being far away from any other human habitation, and specially adapted for the carrying on of nefarious practices, by Jove ! Fancy a girl of her bright, earnest temperament hidden away in such a rat-hole, without a soul to speak to, or, what to her I should imagine would be almost

worse, sent away to teach the rudiments of English and music to some wretched children, who would hate her and make her life a burden to her, while she had to bear the patronage of their parents ! Besides, there can be no question of filial love or obedience to interfere. One must do the captain the justice to say that he never pretends any excessive affection for his daughter ; and Anne must see that, though, of course, she would never allow it. To take her beyond the contamination of such a father would in itself be something, though she knows nothing and never must learn anything of half his villainy. I wonder whether that, having me down to his place, was a plant ! I can scarcely think so, because, if so, Heath must have been in it—and yet Heath warned me against playing any more with Studley. I don't think the advice necessary though. I shall take him the money this afternoon, and no one will ever find me playing another card during my life!"

It was a bright, warm autumn afternoon, one of those soft, sweet, mellow days which are preferable to the blazing summer's defiant heat, when Walter started from Paddington, and he was anticipating much enjoyment in his walk from the station at Loddonford to the captain's cottage. He was a country-bred young man, having come to London expressly to undertake his duties in Middleham's bank, and still retained many of his country tastes. But as he journeyed downward, the heavy mists rose on all sides from the newly upturned earth, the sun became an opaque red globe, which was rapidly descending towards the horizon, and the whole aspect of the day was changed. Nevertheless, Danby determined to carry out his resolution of walking to the cottage, and, scorning the offers of the flymen, he set out on the road. His good spirits, however, seemed to have vanished with the sunshine. Exercise had generally the effect of rousing him, even when at his lowest ebb ; but this time he tried it in vain. An indefinable sensation of imminent danger, which it was not possible for him to avoid, seemed to be creeping over him. Everything had a melancholy aspect : the gaunt, bare fields, with the never-ending, never-altering furrows, stretching far away out of sight ; the leafless hedges, yet soaking with the previous night's dew, and in which the spider's slender web hung glittering like threads of silver ; the tall, gaunt poplars, through which the

wind breathed its melancholy dirge. There was no thick foliage now to shut out the view of the river; but the river itself, erst so lovely, was now a brown, brawling stream, thick and muddy, and cumbered with the leaves and branches with which its bosom was wind-strewn.

Through the village now, and out on to the open road beyond, where, on week days, one seldom met a soul or heard a sound, save the labourer's deep admonition to his horses, or the sharp clapper of the bird boy, and which, on Sunday, was silent as the grave. The trees dripped with moisture, the path was dank and sodden, and Danby's heart sank within him as he trudged along. Had he done right, after all, in addressing Anne? Would she look upon his letter, written upon so short an acquaintance, as presumptuous and insolent? He must take his chance of that now; and, after all, he felt that in that instance, at least, he had acted well and wisely. What was it that weighed so heavily on him, with such a presentiment of evil to come? Was it a fear of his own stability of purpose, a doubt lest he should be enticed into playing again and losing more money? That could be easily settled by his not seeing the captain at all. He could leave the money, which he had enclosed in an envelope, with Anne or with the servant, saying that he had been too hurried to come in. At all events, he would see Anne first, and consult her upon the matter. If it were not necessary to see the captain, Walter certainly had no desire to press the point. Having made up his mind to this, he determined not to ring the bell, as usual, but to make his way into the garden through a side-gate, which was known to him, by which he could gain the store-room, which Anne had appropriated as a kind of sitting-room, and where he should probably then find her. What his future proceedings would be would all depend on what answer he received from her.

When he reached the high, ivy-grown garden wall, he turned up a little, narrow lane and found the side-gate open. Pushing it quietly, he passed through, and, making his way through the jungle, he gained the house. The street-door was closed, but, walking round, he found that the full-length French window of the store-room was open; and, as it was there he expected to find Anne, he entered. Anne was not there, nor was there much trace of her recent occupation of the room. The

work-table which she had arranged in the window was wheeled into a corner, and the floor was occupied by two or three boxes and portmanteaus, more or less filled with personal effects. Picking his way through these, Walter looked round him, and, having satisfied himself that Anne was not there, was about to retire, when he heard his own name pronounced.

Listening, for a moment, he heard it again. The voice came from the dining-room. The glazed door between it and the room in which he was, was shut, but stooping down and drawing the red curtain a bit on one side, he could distinctly make out the figures of two men, seated at opposite sides of the table, and when they spoke again, he immediately recognised the voices as those of the captain and Heath. "Danby." There it was again! For the life of him, he must stay and listen to what they were saying about him.

"Bring it!" said Heath. "You need not be frightened about that. He has sold out that legacy money on purpose."

"Five hundred, wasn't it?" asked the captain. "A hundred and fifty makes a very small hole in that! It would be a great pity not to indulge his desire for revenge, and let him leave some more behind."

"It would be useless trying, for he won't play any more," said Heath. "He spoke to me about it the other day, and on the whole I rather counselled him to have nothing more to do with it."

"That was friendly," said the captain with bitter emphasis.

"To whom? to him or to you? I say, to both," said Heath, bringing his hand down on the table. "Haven't we got bigger and better things to attend to, that you should be wasting your time winning a few pounds from a boy?"

"Boy or man, it is all the same to me, provided I win; and I confess I'm not rich enough to look upon a hundred and fifty as a 'few' pounds!" grumbled the captain. "However, I suppose you know best. It is full time the 'boy' was come though. He'll be disappointed at not finding Anne, but I sent her off to Mrs. Wells."

"And the servant, has she gone out?" asked Heath.

"With orders not to return till ten at night," said the captain. "The girl stared with astonishment when I told her."

"Well then, if you don't keep Danby chattering, but tell him at once you're sorry you can't give him dinner, as Miss

Studley is out; and you're very busy, we shall have the house all to ourselves. And there is plenty to do, I can tell you. You must have everything clearly written out to submit to Van Stuyvesant, number and weight of the stones, price required, and all the rest of it, or he'll never do any business with you. You might see Monnier in Paris—the old man, mind, not the son, who is timid and chatters too much—and Lassenaye in Brussels, but I don't think you'll do any real good until you get to Amsterdam, and then Van Stuyvesant is your man. No chance of young Danby's being shown into this room, is there?"

"There is no one to show him; you forget the servant is out," said the captain. "We shall hear the bell, and I'll go and let him in."

"Well then, take him straight to your room, and when you've got the money, get rid of him," said Heath. "As he's not coming here, and there's no window towards the front, we may as well be getting on with our business. Is there a match anywhere about?"

"On the mantelshelf in the corner," said the captain. Then Danby heard the sharp scratch of a match, and saw Heath bend forward to light the swinging lamp above the table. The young man quickly withdrew into the shadow; but after a time he peered again from behind the curtain, and the inner room being now fully lighted he saw a sight which completely entranced him, and from which he could not remove his eyes.

Immediately under the lamp, and midway between the two men, was a case or casket such as jewellers use, made of leather and lined with white satin. This, however, was old-fashioned in its shape, its leather was frayed and its satin soiled and discoloured by age. It was a large casket, and was evidently meant to contain a whole suite of jewels, tiara for the head, necklace, earrings, and bracelets. The latter were still in it, large diamonds deeply imbedded in thick strong gold bands. The tiara was also there, but the spaces for the necklace and earrings were empty. Holding his breath, and with his eyes almost starting from his head, Danby noticed, close by Heath's hands a small polished steel hammer, pincers, and other tools. In front of him lay some gold work, twisted and broken, and in his hand was a paper full of gleaming stones, which he held up to the light and surveyed with eagerness.

"They are superb!" he muttered, as having breathed on them he watched the breath fade instantly away. "Old Stuyvesant must take the strap right off that black leather pocket-book, before he has any of these beauties. And they ought to be worth much," he said, in a still lower tone; "for they were trouble enough to get!"

He moved aside as he spoke, and Danby saw clearly, for the first time, the open case in which the tiara and the bracelets still remained. Surely, these ornaments were familiar to him? Surely he had seen them before—and recently? Meanwhile the captain had taken the jewel-case into his hands.

"You can't get these stones out, I suppose?" he asked.

"No," said Heath; "they are too firmly fixed in the gold, and the gold itself is so solid that it defies any effort I can make with these toy tools. However, you will have quite enough with you for one bargain, and if the old man bites, you or I can easily visit him again. What's that?" he cried abruptly, turning towards the middle door.

"Nothing!" said Studley, looking up and shading his eyes with his hand, "the cat, I suppose. The stores we have put in there have attracted mice, and the cat is always on the watch there now."

The noise, however, had really been occasioned by Walter Danby. A flash of memory had suddenly recalled to him when and where he had seen the jewels and the case then in Studley's hands. They were the very jewels which had been brought to Middleham's bank by the Spanish émigré countess some three months before, the very jewels for which he had given a receipt at Heath's order, had catalogued and deposited in the strong room. As he thought of this, a nervous tremor ran through him, and he knocked down a glass which was on a shelf by his elbow.

The jewels which had been stolen from Middleham's bank, for which the hue and cry had been raised, for which the detectives were in search, for which—ah! great Heavens, the agony of the thought—for which the murder had been committed, by whom there was now little doubt! And one of these two men was her father! Stunned and dazed, Walter Danby closed his eyes, and pressed his hands to his throbbing temples, utterly uncertain what to do.

Where was Anne Studley the while?

She had not gone to Mrs. Wells's; she was standing outside the front gate of the garden, waiting for her lover; waiting to hear those first words of spoken love, the mere anticipation of which set her heart palpitating in her breast.

PENAL LEGISLATION.

THE sinfulness of little sins has perhaps never been more cogently enforced than by Draco's famous recipe. If small offences deserve death, and no greater penalty can be exacted for the highest, we naturally arrive at a system of unsparring and uniform severity. The common instinct of humanity has indeed protected mankind from such sweeping retribution. But the same spirit which finds an utterance in the harsh Draconic maxim, coloured the whole theory of Oriental administrators of the law. Eastern justice has always aimed, so to speak, at picturesque effects. There is something impressive in the idea of the solitary despot of Babylon or Assyria, decreeing, amidst his carved and gilded halls, the banishment of a nation, the extermination of a tribe, or that the site of some many-towered city should be sown with salt. Punishment, in its most hideous forms of death, mutilation, or slavery, was apt to be spread over a wide area, and to involve in similar ruin all who were akin to the culprit. It was on a clan, more often than on an individual, that the wrath of the Great King fell.

Nothing could be more alien to the genius of the Greek nation than judicial slaughter. That lively, witty, and critical race, to whose minds the thought of death was irksome, turned with disgust from the gloomy ferocity of the Eastern world. A Greek was not cruel, either by nature or on principle; and pirate, slaveholder, or mercenary soldier as he might be, was no wanton blood-shedder. Parricide and sacrilege, crimes peculiarly hateful to the Hellenes, would indeed provoke an outburst of superstitions fury; but as a rule, exile, or in extreme cases the painless death by a draught of hemlock, suited better with the public taste as a chastisement for offenders. Carthage, on the other hand, had an evil repute for capricious barbarity, while the stern spirit of the Roman law presently overshadowed Europe. From the first that law, probably drawing its inspiration from Etruscan sources, had been rigid and austere. From the first, too,

it had been eminently unequal, pushing, as it did, the prerogatives of age, sex, and citizenship to the extreme possible limit. A Roman patrician of the early days of the Republic had certainly more authority, social and domestic, than was wholesome for himself or others. He might strike dead the son who displeased him. He might, more leniently, sell him into bondage, and in point of fact, a mock sale, followed by a formal manumission, was the only legal fiction whereby the young man could gain his independence. His wife, like his children, was under his paternal sway, and in the law's regard was in a state of perpetual minority.

As time went on, and wealth and luxury increased, some of the roughest asperities of Roman jurisprudence were smoothed away. A son's dependence on his father, a wife's subjection to her husband, grew less absolute. The wealthy money-lending noble could not grind the plebeians as of old. He had no longer under his banqueting-hall a subterranean Marshalsea or Fleet prison, where scores of groaning debtors, with their wives and children, were cooped up at the disposal of the lordly creditor who was their jailer-in-chief. It was safer and easier now to keep on good terms with the mob of the marketplace and with the well-endowed matron, mistress, by contract, of the dowry that she had brought in marriage. But then a very large proportion of those within and around the Seven-Hilled City were as completely cut off from the benefits and immunities of Roman law, as if they had been the as yet unconquered barbarians of Thulo or Ethiopia. Rome was a close corporation, hard of access, and jealous of privilege; and Roman justice was a two-faced goddess, with a genial smile for the citizen and a relentless visage turned towards the non-shareers in the rights which citizenship bestowed.

Brawling, discontented Cains, longing, in his ragged toga, beneath the portico of the great public bath, and sneering at the gay chariot and Medish finery of some newly-enriched favourite who was a freedman but yesterday, was not so very ill off under the system of later Rome. As a citizen, he had his dole of bread, his seat in the amphitheatre, his personal liberty. He could not, now, be pressed as a soldier. He could not, now, be put to the torture by the noble neighbour who had lent him a handful of sestertes. Some senator or other would occasionally, at election times,

bid him welcome to dainty meats and rich wines, and he might, once and again, be entertained at the cost of Cæsar himself. He was not a very useful member of society, it is true, since he had forgotten how to work or to fight, but he knew his station and the rights that it conferred. The law was indulgent to him, did he but keep clear of rebellion against the S. P. Q. R. and the deified emperor who acted as august wire-puller of that plausible mechanism. At worst, he could but die by a sharp sword-stroke, his citizenship serving for an ægis even on the place of execution, as was approved by the exceptional martyrdom of St. Paul.

Very different was the lot of those swarming slaves, of all countries and colours, who tilled the lands of the Campagna about Rome, or who toiled in Umbrian mines, or on the plantations of the Basilicate or Sicily. Strict discipline was probably needed to maintain order amidst this motley throng, mainly composed of prisoners of war, the captive Briton plying his hoe beside a dusky savage from the Libyan deserts, or the slender supple Greek sharing the labours of some scarred warrior taken on a German battlefield. The freedmen who acted as overseers of the gang, and who with curses and cracking of whips kept the sullen, the sick, and the indolent to their work, had enough to do. Slaves who were unusually troublesome were chained in the mill, and revolt, flight, or pilfering were ruthlessly punished by the nearest magistrate. It was by the unsparing use of the scourge, the branding iron, the gibbet, and the cross, that the subjection of the vast servile population was maintained. No infliction was too severe, in the eyes of the haughty Roman, for a slave, a barbarian, or even one of those provincials who clung to the hem of Rome's garment. There was something contemptuous, always, in the cold cruelty of the masters of the world. The poor wretches, Christian or heathen, whom Nero sawed asunder or tossed to the lions, the victims of Domitian's or Caligula's crazy caprice, were not citizens. The stocks, the yoke, the lash, were kept for foreigners, or for those who, generation after generation, had continued to be regarded merely as chattels of flesh and blood.

We owe to Tacitus an accurate knowledge of the mild spirit which, as compared to the Roman code, distinguished the laws of ancient Germany. Goths and Suevi

and Franks, hardy and warlike as they were, had a respect for the sanctity of human life which was undreamed of by their more civilised opponents. With them all crimes could be atoned for by a money-payment, and a graduated scale of fines was provided for every imaginable offence. No doubt servitude or outlawry awaited him whose purse could not expiate the wrong that he had done, but the dislike to the infliction of capital punishment was deeply rooted in the character of the cluster of nations which then inhabited the darkling forests of Central Europe. Throughout Scandinavia there was the same rule of a cash payment for injury, and in England the "bot" or "wergild" was regularly assessed, even in cases of murder, unequally, it is true, inasmuch as harm done to persons of inferior rank was lightly taxed, but with a persistency which showed an aversion to the deliberate infliction of death, pain, or mutilation. Our rugged ancestors had almost in practice anticipated the principles of the extreme school of modern philanthropists.

With the arrival of the Normans, and still more of the Angevin kings who succeeded William and his sons, a new system came in. The Conqueror had indeed a strong dislike to death punishments, but both he and his successor Rufus must bear the reproach of the wanton and horrible mutilations which they persistently inflicted on rebel, robber, and poacher. Pounding in mortars, putting out of eyes, lopping of hands, continued to be only too common in England until the accession of Henry the Third, about which time the Great Charter began to bear some fruit, and a certain check was imposed on arbitrary cruelty. Compared with Continental countries England was, under the Plantagenet, Tudor, and Stuart reigns, gently governed. Hanging, it is true, was too frequent to attract much notice, although there may be doubts as to the probability of seventy thousand executions for theft during the single reign of Henry the Eighth, and out of a sparse population of five millions. The beadle's whip and the ducking-stool were often in request, and offenders were branded with a hot iron, and ears nailed to the pillory, by judicial sentence. But no corporation records of an English town preserve grisly entries, as in France, of sums paid to the executioner for pouring molten lead or boiling oil into the veins of a malefactor; nor were the ghastly torments inflicted on Ravaillac,

the assassin of Henry the Fourth of France, ever paralleled amongst us.

Somewhat of the old fair-dealing spirit of our forefathers survived to forbid, even under the French-speaking dynasties of the two hundred years that followed the Conquest, the use of torture to extract confession from a suspected criminal. Such a method prevailed in Scotland, where boot and thumbscrew flourished at the close of the seventeenth century. But then Scotland, like Gaul and part of Germany, had accepted the Roman law, by which this convenient expedient for eliciting admissions, true or false, was recognised. Abroad, its employment was all but universal, and in much milder and later days a French, Italian, or Flemish magistrate would have failed to comprehend the scruples that debarred our insular justice from resorting to strong measures for wringing the truth out of our jail-birds. But although the judges of England were removable at the royal pleasure, they consistently, and at the risk of offending the king's highness, pronounced torture to be forbidden by the laws of England. In times of trouble, certainly, a king like Henry the Eighth or James the First might stretch an obstinate prisoner on the rack, or enclose him in the iron grip of the Scavenger's Daughter, but always for state purposes, and always as an irregularity which the nation condoned, but did not approve. The well-known punishment of the *peine forte et dure*, barbarous as it was, differed from all applications of torture to extort confession, inasmuch as it was meant to compel a sullen prisoner, who could not otherwise be legally tried, to plead at bar.

The dreadfully severe sentences passed by the various parliaments exercising local jurisdiction in France often seem, when we peruse their records, quite out of proportion to the offence. Not only sorcery, but some other acts which we should now qualify as misdemeanours, entailed the penalty of burning alive. In 1727, a Parisian lacquey who, with a fellow-servant, had lain in wait for, and beaten, a hackney-coachman, was broken on the wheel in the Place du Grève. A gentleman, who had threatened to strike another with his cane, atoned for the empty threat by three years of prison. In the same year a Catalan highwayman, one Jacques do la Pire, who seems to have levied toll on both sides of the Pyrenees, but against whom no graver charge than that of robbery was brought, was torn with red-hot

pincers as a preliminary to being broken on the wheel. Boiling alive, and the strappado, were, like the *Anto da Fé* itself, of Spanish invention.

There was, certainly, a tendency in England to do more evenhanded justice than was the case beyond the seas. In France, Flanders, and Germany, every man of noble blood, even to the neediest of the untitled gentry from Gascony or Suabia, could claim honourable death by block and axe. When the Regent Philip of Orleans caused a cadet of the princely family of Horn to be broken on the wheel, for the notorious robbery and murder of the Jew broker in the Rue Quincampoix, the sentence was regarded as an insult to the nobility of Europe. In England, although a peer of the realm had a technical right to be beheaded, he was, in practice, occasionally hanged; while junior scions of aristocracy, knights, squires, and bishops, were condemned without scruple to simple strangulation. Louis the Superb, in the fulness of his unbridled power, would have shrunk from sending the poorest chevalier to the gallows where vulgar offenders perished by wholesale; and prisoners in the Bastille were feasted, decently maintained, or kept in a miserable state of cold and hunger, according to their rank. There was, however, one gross blot in our judicial system, and this was the frequency with which, for coining, homicide, theft, or harbouring the king's rebels, women were burned at Tyburn or elsewhere, while their male accomplices received the milder doom of a halter. A great number of reputed witches also were consigned to the flames; but then it is hard for a generation that has outgrown the nursery terror of beldams and broomsticks, to realise the agony of anger and alarm with which our ancestors regarded those who dabbled in the Black Art. And in cases of crime not tainted with the suspicion of sorcery, the formal sentence was often tempered by a rough kind of mercy, as when the executioner strangled the patient before applying a torch to the wood pile.

One practical effect of that English habit of leaving a large latitude to the judge, which has always been one of the marked features of English jurisprudence, was (and is) the great uncertainty which prevailed as to the apportionment of punishment. The law, once upon a time, decreed death for all grand larceny, or theft of any value over one shil-

ling—robbery from the person coming under another category, as when, a hundred years ago, John Strong was executed at Debtor's Door for stealing, with violence, one sixpence and a farthing from Edward Adams. There were then said to be eighty-six or seven capital offences on the pages of the statute book, and some philosophical astonishment has been expressed that any of King George's subjects should have died otherwise than by hemp. It frequently happened, however, that the ermine-clad man of justice, after passing sentence of death, quietly wrote on his notes, "to be imprisoned for twelve months," or "transport to the colonies," and the commutation followed as a matter of course. It is, indeed, recorded of the amiable Lord Kenyon, that he was greatly shocked at seeing a young woman, whom he had just doomed to die, fall into convulsions of terror, and that with the black cap still on his head, he implored the officers of the court to "explain that he did not mean to hurt her," for passing a bad shilling. But there was no security that a judge, in some passing mood of ill temper, or suffering under the physical irritability very usual in those days of gout and port wine, might not act up to the letter of the law, and send half a dozen poor creatures to the gallows before a petition could reach the distant home secretary.

The great error into which both Asiatic and European legislators have habitually fallen, has been that of relying too much upon extreme severity for the repression of crime. Lawgivers have seldom taken into account the strange elasticity of the human nature with which they had to deal; or realised the truth that excessive harshness fails, after a time, even to terrify—as if fear, like other emotions, became dull and blunted by over-much use. In comparatively recent times we have had a notable proof of this in the sad chronicles of Norfolk Island, where despair and misery made the reckless prisoners do their worst, by taunts and imprecations, to provoke the sentries to execute their menace of firing through the bars, and where punishment was thrown away on the savage stoics who had outlived at once hope and apprehension. We know, too, how the judicious kindness of a humane governor tamed the stubborn souls of these ferocious outcasts, and what wonderful reformation was wrought amidst such thoroughly unpromising material.

If sabre and bowstring, impalement,

burying alive, or blowing from the muzzle of cannon would put an end to crime, then the khans, shahs, and sultans of the East would long ago have succeeded in making their turbaned millions virtuous by firman and fetwa. The knout in Russia, the Persian bastinado, and the subtleties of Tartar proficients in the art of giving pain, have failed to extirpate the deathless crop of offences against law. In China, Siam, and Japan much perverted ingenuity has been expended in devising penalties exceptionally appalling; but, fortunately, there is a limit to the sensitiveness of the throbbing nerves and quivering flesh; and arbitrary power struggles in vain against the fatalistic apathy which is a marked characteristic of the widely-spread Mongolian race. Almost the climax of absurdity, in pressing the argument of those who advocate severe punishments, is reached when we find it easy in China to hire a substitute ready to undergo any penalty, even death, in the place of a criminal who can afford the luxury of vicarious suffering. Poor Chang knows that the cangue, and the scourge, and the dungeon, constitute an ugly perspective, and he is no more desirous than are other people of receiving the stroke of the sharp sword-knife across that supple neck of his. But he cannot resist the offer of the money that buys him, as a sheep is bought. He spends, by anticipation, every grain of silver in the bag of glittering dollars that is the makeweight for his poor life, but not selfishly, according to the ethics of the Flowery Land. Those ten taels are Lil's dowry. The tailor who is to marry her asks more, it is true, but a little haggling will close the bargain. Then, when the daughter is established in a respectable position, it is time to think of clever young Ching, the pig-tailed Hopeful of the house. A sharp lad Ching, who can recite already a good deal of poetry, and who paints the neatest verses on every scrap of tinted paper that he can beg or steal. It would be a thousand pities to apprentice so promising a youth to some beggarly barge captain or prosaic cobbler, in default of the thirty dollars for which the literate, his tutor, promises to turn him out a scholar and a budding mandarin. Then there are the joss-sticks, the incense, and red paper to burn at the tiny altar before the images of revered ancestors, who will be ennobled so soon as aspiring Ching wears the glass button and the peacock's feather of a graduate. Add to these a few opium-

smokes, some good dinners of shark's fin and sea slugs, an evening at the theatre, a treat of fireworks, a match at kite-flying, and Chang is ready to kneel, and bend his shaven head and passive throat for the sweep of the scimitar.

In Christendom, at least, the pains and penalties that lie in wait for transgressors have of late years lost much of their sharp edge. The great Revolutionary besom made short work, on the continent of Europe, of oubliette and hunger-hole, of rack and spiked collar. The guillotine itself has grown rusty and unserviceable in Italy and Belgium, and even in France is set up but seldom, and with growing reluctance. Nobody, for years past, has been knouted to death in regenerated Russia. The very galleys are not, save in Spain and Portugal, the picturesque Pandemonia that they were throughout Southern Europe within living memory. Public opinion is now so resolutely opposed to the needless infliction of physical pain, and so averse to bloodshed, that the rough-and-ready methods of old times no longer thin the ranks of the dangerous classes. On the other hand, it is probable that convicts find prison life more irksome than did the degraded jail-birds of a less enlightened age; while the proportion of undetected offenders has a tendency to lessen, year by year, as the lantern of publicity throws its light into the darkling nooks and corners of the social system. One reason for the severities of our forefathers was, that they scarcely knew what to do with an unhang'd rogue. They had no Portland, no Millbank, with their dull, grey monotony of discipline and labour. Their prisons were slovenly dens, where the squalid inmates revelled or starved, according to the liberality or parsimony of friends without; whence escape was common; and where the fever, from which its cells was never free, was wont, as at the Black Assize of Oxford, to hold its own great jail-delivery, in spite of judge and sheriff, of tipstaff and turnkey.

THE OLD BANNER.

THE poor old banner! Give it here, I say! Though king and church are toppling to their fall; I saved it from the Roundheads any way, When black Long Marston made an end of all. Why could not Rupert keep his squadron back? Unbreath'd, they might have broken Cromwell's line, But scattered far on flying Leslie's track! Ah, stanch and true it stood, that troop of mine!

What boots it now, when every oak is down, And even the great seal ring my father gave Melted with all the rest to help the Crown; The old man willed it, speaking from his grave.

Thank God, that I have neither wife nor son To perish in the ruin we have wrought. Poor Katie! waiting till the game is won! Well, here's her flag, from its last battle brought! Her deft hands brodered it. Blood-stained and rent It hangs about the staff. Why, who could guess How gallantly to the gay breeze it beat All gold and glitter, when, amid the press Of shouting Cavaliers, I flung it forth,

And Katie clapped her little hands to see How bravely the battalions of the North Around her banner marched to victory.

To victory! the Ouse runs swol'n and red, Sullenly sweeping to the angry main, With the best blood of bonnie Yorkshire fed, For on her banks knights fell like Autumn grain. Well, life will scarce be long, or ure and block,

Or starving 'mid the Frenchmen, which were best? Oh comrades, slain in fiery battle shock,

I would my time were come to join your rest!

So, to the vaults. I'll leave my flag in trust, To all our long line, wrapt in dreamless sleep. I shall not lie amid ancestral dust,

Nor kin nor vassal live my rites to keep.

And better so! I'll place my treasure close Beneath my father's blazoned coffin lid,

And when, anon, the rebels sack our house,

They'll miss, perchance, a prize so grimly hid.

There's just one diamond left that clasps my plume, Take it to my bright lady's feet, and tell, I leave her banner in my father's tomb, I leave my heart to her, and so, farewell. Whether to die 'mid clashing bow and bill, Or rot in prison, like some noisome thing, Or make my last short shrift on Tower Hill: Who knows, who cares? Not I! God save the king!

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

MANDEVILLE.

INASMUCH as Sir John Mandeville—albeit, not excessively scrupulous as to his facts—exhibits a tincture of science from which other mediæval travellers are remarkably free, it may be well, before following the worthy knight on his wanderings, to put ourselves in the place of an Early Eastern Traveller, by recalling, as clearly as may be, the idea of configuration of the earth which was accepted as accurate in his day. In the year of grace, 1874, it may be affirmed that any average child of twelve years of age, who has been to school at all, has clearer ideas of the solar system than the hardy voyagers who, in quest of pleasure or profit, traversed the Mediterranean in the middle ages. The idea of the earth as a mere satellite of the sun had, it is true, occurred to Pythagoras, as forming part of a Cosmic universe, in which planets revolve around a central fire, or sun; and the sphericity of our world had been taught by Thales of Miletus, and, at a later date, by Aristotle and his followers, until what is called the Ptolemaic system was generally accepted by geographers. This scheme of the universe flattered the vanity

of mankind, by making the earth the centre, around which revolved the sun, moon, and planets. Towards the sixth century, however, the sphericity of the earth fell into disfavour, and, in the general darkness which shrouded the human mind from the fifth to the twelfth century, the theory originally propounded by Xenophanes—that the earth is a high mountain, with stars floating round its summit, was very generally accepted. Sunrise and sunset were explained by the enormous elevation of the centre of the world, which was supposed to cut off the rays of the revolving sun. The evident convexity of surface was ascribed to the lower position of the warmer countries, and this hypothesis was supported by the bold assertion that the rivers which ran southward were infinitely more rapid in their course than those which—owing to trifling inequalities of surface—ran in the opposite direction. Far away to the north, beyond the country of the Hyperboreans and Paradise itself, was the land of Darkness and perpetual night, wherein no man might abide; while to the south lay a fiery tract equally uninhabitable by human beings. Stated roughly, then, the mediæval world was a huge mass—square or round—deflecting somewhat to the south, and consisting of the ancient Roman Empire, the empire of Alexander, the realms of the unconquered Scythians, and India. This world was surrounded by the ocean, beyond which lay, according to Cosmas Indicopleustes, the regions inhabited by men before the flood.

This same Cosmas, who died about 550 A.D., may be fairly considered the best and clearest exponent of the astronomy and geography of the dark ages. In early life a merchant, trading from Alexandria to India, he probably saw a great deal of the world, and becoming in later life a monk at Alexandria, he penned the famous volume which bears his name. His work is of a distinctly controversial character, having been written to confute those philosophers who wickedly persisted in reasserting the doctrines of ancient pagans, who had declared the earth to be a sphere, and insisted on the existence of antipodes. With that intense bitterness which is even more conspicuous in scientific than in theological controversy, Cosmas pulverises his adversaries by argument and sarcasm, and, after going to the length of making a picture of four men, trying to

stand on a globe, about a foot in diameter, dismisses the antipodists with immeasurable contempt. He then proceeds to show that inasmuch as of the four elements—earth, water, air, and fire—earth is by far the heaviest, the earth must naturally be the centre and base of the universe, for “if there were anything beyond the earth it would naturally fall.” The earth is therefore pictured as an oblong mountain, around which, at a considerable distance below the summit, the sun performs its daily revolution—the portion of the hill above the sun being the land of darkness. The base of the vast elevation is washed by the circumambient ocean, of which the known seas were supposed—accurately except in the case of the Caspian—to be inlets or gulfs. At the extremity of ocean, “the inferior parts of heaven descend upon it and the upper part is a vault.”

This scheme of the universe looks very well in elevation, or section, but when reduced to a ground plan or map produces the oddest effect. The earliest mediæval map of the world presents many extraordinary features. It is oblong in form, being longest from east to west. Around the four sides of the parallelogram is a broad margin occupied by the ocean, which in four places penetrates far into the terrestrial portion. These inlets are the Sinus Romanus or Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea. As there were four elements and four gulfs, so also were there four great rivers rising in the terrestrial paradise, a region depicted in a sort of supplementary parallelogram beyond the ocean to the eastward. These rivers were supposed to flow under the ocean, and to reappear in the known world at indeterminate spots. On the north side of the parallelogram, is the “transoceanic land inhabited by man before the flood,” and on the southern side is a similar tract, simply designated “terra ultra oceanum.”

This theory of rivers lasted, with slight modifications, to Mandeville’s time, and is thus set forth by that worthy knight: “Of Paradise I cannot speak properly, for I was not there. It is far beyond (the realms of Prester John), and I repent not going there, but I was not worthy. But as I have heard say of wise men beyond, I shall tell you with good will. Terrestrial Paradise, as wise men say, is the highest place of the earth; and it is so high that it nearly touches the circle of the moon there,

as the moon makes her turn ; for it is so high that the flood of Noah might not come to it, that would have covered all the earth of the world all about, and above and beneath except Paradise. And this Paradise is enclosed all about with a wall, and men know not whereof it is ; for the wall is covered all over with moss as it seems ; and it seems not that the wall is natural stone. And that wall stretches from the south to the north, and it has but one entry, which is closed with burning fire, so that no man that is mortal dare enter. And in the highest place of Paradise, exactly in the middle, is a well that casts out the four streams which run by divers lands, of which the first is called Pison or Ganges, that runs throughout India. And the other is called Nile or Gyson, which goes through Ethiopia, and after through Egypt, and the other is called Tigris, which runs by Assyria, and by Armenia the Great ; and the other is called Euphrates, which runs through Media, Armenia, and Persia. And men there beyond say that all the sweet waters of the world, above and beneath, take their beginning from the well of Paradise, and out of that well all waters come and go."

It is worthy of remark, that, between the time of Cosmas and that of Mandeville, the position of the terrestrial paradise had shifted somewhat. It was still held to be in the East, but was no longer beyond ocean, and the rivers flowed downwards from a high place instead of tunnelling under the ocean, "for," says the knight, "many great lords have assayed with great will many times to pass those rivers towards Paradise with full great companies ; but they might not speed in their voyage ; and many died for weariness of rowing against the strong waves ; and many of them became blind and many deaf, for the noise of the water, and some perished and were lost in the waves." The terrestrial paradise, indeed, presented enormous difficulties to mediæval geographers. At times it appears to have been located in Central Asia ; occasionally it occupies Central Africa ; and always presents the awkward problem of a watershed from which flowed not only the Tigris, Euphrates, and Ganges, rivers bending southwards, but the Nile, which flowed northward from that portion of the earth which was assumed to lie lowest down. Apart, however, from the location of the terrestrial paradise and the difficulty

of reconciling the theory of four rivers with the facts of geography, mediæval map-makers appear to have done well according to their lights, for—puerile as their conceptions may appear to any young gentleman of the nineteenth century, who has struggled successfully through an examination in astronomy and physical geography—it may yet be well to reflect for a moment whether mediæval cartographers were not truly philosophical, in reasoning from the facts already observed by travellers. The size and shape of the earth were necessarily unknown to the ancients, and, as increased knowledge dawned upon the nations, the world only became known bit by bit. Centuries elapsed before the Caspian was recognised as a lake, and ages passed away before China and India were discovered. This truth, that ancient geographers reasoned fairly from the facts before them, was vividly impressed upon me on meeting with Sir John Mandeville's astounding statement that the city of Jerusalem is, and must be, the centre of the world. At the first glance Jernusalem appears the most unlikely spot in the world to select as a central point, and I was inclined to refer the belief as to its central position as due, rather to the fervid faith, than to the geographical knowledge of the author, who was yet a skilled physician and eminent natural philosopher of his day. It occurred, however, to me that it would not be unbecoming in a philosopher of these days to make an experiment, and test the at first sight amazing assertion of a traveller who saw men and cities and wrote an account of them five hundred years ago. I accordingly took a pair of compasses, and making Jernusalem my centre and Iceland my radius, described a circle, and found that it included the whole of the then known world—the immense extension of Asia to the eastward, described by Marco Polo, not being at that time generally credited. I found that within the circle were Europe, North-East Africa nearly as far south as the Sources of the Nile, Arabia, Persia, India as far as the Punjab—the limit of Alexander's victories —Asia Minor, Armenia, Afghanistan, and the vast tract of Asia extending from the Himalayas to the mouth of the Obi. I thus got an almost exact reproduction on a modern map of the celebrated *Mappa Mundi* drawn by Marino Sanuto in the year of grace 1320, and preserved in the library at Paris.

This slight shock to scientific self-

sufficiency prepared me for a second and more careful study of the "Voiage and Travale of Sir John Maundevile, Knight."

In the first quarter of the fourteenth century the spirit of the middle ages fairly melted into another train of thought. One of the "first men of the century" was Sir John Mandeville, knight, of St. Albans, physician, philosopher, and soldier. He commenced the travels which have immortalised his name at a noteworthy period. Joinville and Marco Polo, representatives of the military and commercial schools of travellers, were just dead, as Mandeville, a wandering free lance with a scientific turn—an educated Dugald Dalgetty—started on a tour which lasted for three-and-thirty years. A fervent Christian and a pilgrim to the Holy Sepulchre, then in Saracenic hands, Mandeville was yet a thorough soldier of fortune, and served the Soldan of Babylon (Cairo) so well, that this powerful ruler offered to marry the English knight to a Paynim princess if he would only forswear his country and his faith. Throughout his narrative are indications of that revival of learning, and of that spirit of scientific investigation, which signalled that remarkable period of transition during which Petrarch perfected the sonnet, Boccacio taught the world how to tell a story, Chaucer produced the first important poem, and Mandeville himself wrote the first prose volume in the English language.

Like the French of Ville-Hardouin the English of Maudeville is puzzling to the modern reader, and a habit the good knight had of spelling the same word in half-a-dozen different ways adds to the embarrassment. In clerkship, however, the English knight was far in advance of his French predecessors. He wrote his book in three languages, in Latin, in French, and in English, and states in the French version, which was apparently the first written, "I would have put this book into Latin to devise more briefly; but as many understand French better than Latin, I have written it in Romant in order that any one may understand it, and the lords, knights, and others who comprehend not Latin." It is said that the copy presented to Edward the Third was in French, and it is by no means clear that the English version was written by the hand of Mandeville himself, but there is no doubt that all three versions became extremely popular within a few years after their publication, from

the many copies yet extant among collections of manuscripts. Popular as was the work of Sir John Mandeville during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, very little is known of the author himself. The year of his birth is not exactly known, and the time of his death is variously placed from 1371 to 1382, although the place of his decease was undoubtedly Liège. His own book throws little light on his career. Beyond the incidental mention of his serving in the army of the Soldan of Babylon, whom he appears to have forsaken about 1341, and a subsequent allusion to his having seen part of India, and to his having served for a short space the Grand Khan, the knight leaves us absolutely in the dark as to what he did, beyond performing the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. If we assume him to have started in 1322, the earliest date assigned, an interval of thirteen years elapses between his departure from Cairo and his return to England. What was he about all this time in the Indian Seas? He appears to have visited the court of the Great Khan of the Mongols, for he says distinctly, when speaking of the mechanical peacocks at the Great Khan's table, who "danced, sang, and clapped their wings together," that he busied himself "to learn the craft" of making them; when the master excused himself on the plea that he had "made a vow to his god to teach it no creature but only to his eldest son." This anecdote seems to indicate that Mandeville was a man of some consequence at the Mongol court; albeit his evident borrowings from Marco Polo encourage a belief that he was never there at all, but compiled his account of the Tartars, like many of his other narratives, from older and well-known authors. His book, indeed, is altogether a curious composition. Professing to be an itinerary of the Holy Land, it is a huge compound of what he saw and what he heard; and, although he occasionally prefaces an unusually tough story with "they say," he gives his personal authority to many astounding stories, and mixes his actual and "hearsay" evidence together in a way at once amusing and perplexing. Throughout his book there is, however, an obvious desire to "efface himself." Whether this arose from a Christian humility entirely absent in other travellers, or from a wish to conceal the particulars of a "shady" career, must for ever

remain unknown. All that we know from the knight himself is that at his coming home he went to Rome "and showed my life to our Holy Father the Pope, and was absolved of all that lay in my conscience of many divers grievous points, as men must need that are in company, dwelling amongst so many divers people, of divers sects and beliefs as I have been. And, amongst all, I showed him this treatise that I had made after information of men that knew of things that I had not seen myself, as far as God would give me grace; and besought his holy fatherhood that my book might be examined and corrected by advice of his wise and discreet council."

Mandeville's book was compared with another, by which the "Mappa Mundi" (probably Sanuto's) was made, and received the full approbation of the Holy See; whereupon he bled him northwards, coming home "in spite of myself, to rest, for rheumatic gouts that distress me and fix the end of my labour against my will (God knoweth). And thus taking comfort in my wretched rest recording the time passed, I have fulfilled these things and written them in this book, as it would come into my mind, the year of grace 1356 in the thirty-fourth year that I departed from our country. Wherefore I pray to all the readers and hearers of this book, if it please them, that they would pray to God for me, and I shall pray for them."

One of the most remarkable features of this singular work is the evidence it affords of a great advance in geographical knowledge since the period of the first crusade. Mandeville devotes the whole of a highly-interesting chapter to an attempt to prove the earth a sphere, and the existence of antipodes not only possible but in the highest degree probable. From a scientific point of view this chapter is worth all the rest of the book put together, as it affords evidence that during his long sojourn at Cairo he had become indoctrinated with the systems of Arab geographers. In the beginning, these also, like their western rivals, believed the earth to be entirely flat, but beyond the circumambient ocean placed a mysterious range of mountains. It is, however, well known that the speculations of ancient Greek philosophers were filtered through Arabic manuscripts into the learning of the later middle ages; and it is therefore probable that Mandeville acquired some of the remarkable opinions, expressed by

him in his seventeenth chapter, from an Arabic source. The doctrine that the earth is a sphere had succumbed to the arguments of Cosmas, and was generally discredited throughout the western world; but, nevertheless, Mandeville advances numerous arguments, some of which are apparently so far ahead of his age, as to excite both astonishment and admiration in the modern reader. Contrary to all practice, he advances (on this occasion) physical proof of his theory. When speaking of the island of Lamary, in the Indian Ocean, he says:—"Neither in that land, nor in many others beyond it, may any man see the Polar star, which is called the star of the sea, which is immovable and is towards the north, and which we call the load star. But they see another star opposite to it towards the south, which they call Antarctic. And right as shipmen here govern themselves by the load star, so shipmen beyond those parts are guided by the Star of the South, which appears not unto us. . . For which cause we may clearly perceive that the land and sea are of round shape and form, because the part of the firmament appears in one country which is not seen in another country. And men may prove by experience and their understanding that if a man found passages by ships, he might go by ship all round the world, above and beneath; which I prove thus after what I have seen." Here follow several measurements, taken with the astrolabe, of the height of the Polar Star and others of the Antarctic, whence Mandeville concludes "that these two stars are fixed, and about them all the firmament turns as a wheel that turns on its axle-tree; so that those stars bear the firmament in two equal parts; so that it has as much above as it has beneath. After this I have gone towards the south, and if I had had company and shipping to go further I believe that we should have seen all the roundness of the firmament all about." Calculating his measurements of the Polar Star and the Antarctic, and the proportion of the firmament he had seen, he continues:—"I tell you, certainly, that men may go all round the world, as well under as above, and return to their country, if they had company and shipping and guides; and always they would find men, lands, and isles, as well as in our part of the world. For they who are towards the Antarctic are directly feet opposite of them who dwell under the Polar Star as well as we, and they that

dwell under us are feet opposite feet. For all parts of the sea and land have their opposites habitable or passable."

Pondering over this remarkable chapter, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Mandeville has been done scant justice to by posterity. His popular reputation is that of a teller of old wife's tales, and yet we find him, more than a century before Columbus, demonstrating the spherical form of the earth and the possibility of circumnavigating it.

The great body of Mandeville's book is filled with accounts of distant countries, strangely mixed with the fables recounted by ancient historians and monkish chroniclers.

On visiting Cyprus he records a curious version of a story in the Decameron, and describes a custom of hunting with "papyons," described by some commentators as "large wild dogs;" but as Mandeville says they resemble leopards, there can be little doubt that the practice of hunting with the "cheetah" had, in the middle ages, penetrated as far west as Cyprus. At Joppa or Jaffa were many wonders, among which "may still be seen the place where the iron chains were fastened with which Andromeda—a great giant!—was bound and put in prison before Noah's flood; a rib of whose side, which is forty feet long, is still shown." Mandeville is profuse in his description of the Holy Land, where he probably abode for a while, but is more to be relied on, so far as he confines himself to what he saw, when he speaks of Egypt. Curiously confounding the modern Babylon (Cairo) with the ancient city of that name, he fails not to recount the history of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and then, immediately after, proceeds to describe the actual residence of the sultan under whom he served for many years: "The sultan dwells in his Calahelyke in a fair castle, strong and great, and well set upon a rock. In that castle dwell always, to keep it and serve the sultan, more than six thousand persons, who receive here all necessaries from the sultan's court. I ought to know it well, for I dwelt a great while with him as soldier in his wars against the Bedonins; and he would have married me full highly to a great prince's daughter if I would have forsaken my law and my belief. But I thank God that I had no will to do it for anything that he promised me."

In his next mention of Babylon he dis-

tinguishes clearly between the ancient city and Cairo, for saith he, "you must understand that the Babylon whereof I have spoken, where the sultan dwells, is not that great Babylon where the confusion of languages was first made by the miracle of God, when the great Tower of Babel was begun, of which the walls were sixty-four furlongs high; for that is in the deserts of Arabia, on the way as men go towards the kingdom of Chaldea. But it is full long since any man dare approach to the tower, for it is all desert and full of dragons and great serpents, and infested by divers venomous beasts."

In the fashion customary to mediæval travellers he calls the pyramids the barns or granaries of Joseph, following therein the Saracen traditions, and gives a full account of the river Gysou (Nile) and its overflow, and continues, "this river comes from terrestrial paradise between the deserts of India; and after it descends on the earth, and runs through many extensive countries under the earth; and after it comes out under a high hill"—this corresponds closely with Joinville's account—"which they call Alothe, between India and Ethiopia, at a distance of five months' journey from the entrance of Ethiopia; and after it environs all Ethiopia and Mauritania, and goes all along from the land of Egypt to the city of Alexandria to the end of Egypt where it falls into the sea."

Mandeville now proceeds to depict the phoenix after the manner of Pliny; the apples of paradise, which "though you cut them in ever so many slices or parts, across or endwise, you always find in the middle the figure of the holy cross;" and the "apples of Adam, which have a bite ou one side." At Bethlehem he finds the field Floridus, wherein a fair maiden who had been unjustly accused of wrong was doomed to be burned, and after praying devoutly "entered into the fire, and immediately the fire was extinguished, and the faggots that were burning became red rose-bushes, and those that were not kindled became white rose-bushes, full of roses. And these were the first rose trees and roses, both white and red, that ever any man saw." Of the Dead Sea he evidently speaks from hearsay, for "if a man cast iron therein it will float on the surface, and if a man cast a feather therin it will sink to the bottom;" but he adds, significantly, "these are things contrary to nature."

He also narrates the well-known story of the apples of the Dead Sea, and the

curious mediæval legend of the knight who watched seven days by a certain sparrowhawk and then had his wish. India, where the mysterious Mandeville may or may not have been in the flesh, supplies many wonderful stories. On the way to India is the island Hermes (Ormuz), where there is a great heat, and also "ships without nails of iron or bonds, on account of the rocks of adamant (loadstone), for they are all abundant thereabout in the sea, that is marvellous to speak of; and if a ship passed there that had either iron bonds or iron nails it would perish; for the adamant by its nature draws iron to it; and so it would draw to it the ship, because of the iron, that it should never depart from it." This is one of the extraordinary mixtures of fable and fact in which early travellers take especial delight. The mountains of magnetic ore are the subject of traditions far older than the Arabian Nights; but the "sewed ships" which traded to Ormuz were plain matter-of-fact coasting vessels, which were sewed together, duly payed and caulked, merely on account of the scarcity of iron. Marco Polo gives a lengthy account of these ships, but is far too cautious to refer to magnetic mountains as the first cause of their peculiar manufacture. Another marvel is the Well of Youth, wherof Mandeville drank three or four times and says, forgetting for the moment his rheumatism, "Methinks I still fare the better." Shifting the venue to the island of Dondun, we are introduced to people of wicked ways: so that the father eats the son, the son the father, the husband the wife, and the wife the husband. Whether this arises from extreme affection or from a desire to "utilise waste products," is not set forth, but the customs of the African Fans justify Mandeville's narrative. He next describes the "men with heads beneath their shoulders," and "drags in by the hair" the Cyclops and the "people who go upon their hands and feet like beasts and are all skinned and feathered, and would leap as lightly into trees and from tree to tree as squirrels and apes." These are the veddahs of Ceylon, the aborigines who dwelt in trees and cured venison with honey; but in the next line is an account of people "who go always upon their knees, and have eight toes on every foot." Immediately after this astounding story is an account of trees that bear wool (cotton) "as though it were of a sheep, wherof men

make clothes and all things that may be made of wool." Prester John, whose realms are placed in India, is a Christian potentate living near the "gravelly sea," and near unto him is the Perilous Valley, wherein Mandeville says he went, and after descending upon the Devil's Head in this same valley, gives a capital account of cokernuts and "gerfauntz" (giraffes), which are spotted and a little higher than a horse, with a neck twenty cubits long, and the croup and tail are like those of a hart, and one of them may look over a high house." The porcupine is also well treated; but coal, so admirably described by Marco Polo, is transposed into "a manner of wood hard and strong; and whoever covers the coals of that wood under the ashes thereof the coals will remain alive a year and more." This strange jumble of truth and fiction is easily explained. Sir John Mandeville was a physician, philosopher, and soldier, but employed the common devices of book-making. Being a well-read man he not only availed himself of all the science then extant, but reinforced it with the fables told by ancient writers such as Pliny. No modern reader can peruse his wonderful book without regretting that he did not give more space to his personal adventures and less to difficult and laborious compilation. Had he only written the record of his own adventurous life he would have presented us with a wonderful picture of a mediæval traveller, who combined the perceptive qualities of a physician with the acquisitive faculties of a free lance.

ODD WOMEN.

WE cannot undertake to say whether there are more Odd Men or Odd Women in the world. The former, including the Odd Fellows, are certainly numerous; but the other sex can put in a pretty good claim.

There are, for instance, the women who, through some freak of nature, are compelled to work their way in life without the advantages which come to human beings generally. The blind, the deaf, the dumb, the idiot, are too mournful to be called odd; and the anecdotes referring to them are so well known that they need not be touched on here.

Come forth, Miss Biffin. This lady was born without arms and hands, towards the end of the last century; yet did she earn an honest living for herself, by means of her toes, and two little stumps

where arms ought to have been. She cut out paper-profiles, and painted miniatures, in an odd but most ingenious way, by the aid of stamps and toes. After exhibiting at Bartholomew and other fairs, she was employed by the Earl of Morton to paint his miniature; and the picture when finished was shown to George the Third. The monarch enabled her to receive further lessons in drawing and painting from Mr. Craig; and then she earned a livelihood for many years by the aid of pen and pencil, helped out by a small pension; she abandoned caravan life at fairs, and was semi-professional at her own house. She fell in love with somebody, or somebody with her, and married; but the world still knew her as Miss Biffin, and under this name she died about a quarter of a century ago. Another lady, who in early age exhibited for money, was Miss Hawlin, born so completely without arms that she had not even stumps, and was in that respect worse off than Miss Biffin. Dressed neatly, with powdered hair suitable to the days of old Queen Charlotte, she sat on a table, her naked feet visible beneath frilled trowsers; with her toes she managed to cut out watch-papers, grasping and working the scissors in some inexplicable way; and—still more remarkable—used needle and thread for sewing and stitching.

Bearded women are more odd than loveable; there have been some such to astonish the world. There was one Bartel Gractje, in the sixteenth century, of whom a portrait exists in the Stuttgardt gallery, representing her as a young woman of about five-and-twenty, with a very large beard. Still more remarkable was Barbara Urslerin, the "hairy-faced woman of Augsburg," about forty years later. Her face and hands were hairy nearly all over—sadly like some species of monkey; the beard was almost as long and spreading as the hair of her head. This hirsute lady was not doomed to single-blessedness; for one Michael Vanbeck married her, and carried her about as a show. Two engraved portraits of her are extant, and there is no reason to doubt the veritability of the phenomenon.

What are we to say of pig-faced ladies? There have been claims for many; but the search for their authenticity seems to have been as uncertain as Mr. Thom's search for reliable evidence concerning the alleged age of Old Parr and Henry Jenkins. Country fairs frequently an-

nonced them; foreign populations believe in them; and many exciting stories are told concerning them. One narrative tells that a newly-married lady of rank and fortune, being annoyed by the importunities of a wretched beggar-woman, who was carrying a dirty squalling child, exclaimed, "Take away your nasty pig; I shall not give you anything." Whereupon the incensed beggar retorted, "May your own child, when it is born, be more like a pig than mine!" Alas! the lady's child came into the world with a pig's face; grew up to be a woman, beautiful in form all except the face, but hoggish in feeding and manners, and lived and died in a hospital founded and maintained by her wealthy parents. Equally veracious, we suppose, was the story of a Belgian gentleman who renounced the church and embraced Judaism; the first child born to him afterwards had a pig's face; but in later years, when the father recanted and the daughter was baptised, the face miraculously changed to human form. A third story is that of Janakin Skinker, born in Rhenish Holland in 1618, well proportioned in form else, but pig-faced, and having no other power of language than a grunt. She, or her parents, offered forty thousand pounds to any gentleman who would marry her; many gallants came, but one and all begged to decline when they had seen her. Unfortunately, two printed pamphlets exist, one in English, and the other in Dutch, each a counterpart of the other; but whereas in one she is said to have been born at Wickham on the Rhine, the other assigns Windsor on the Thames as her birthplace; and we may not unwisely disbelieve them both. A fourth story had its era sixty years ago, when a shilling pamphlet gave a portrait and account of a pig-faced lady, residing in style at the West end of London—beautiful in all respects except the facial peculiarity. Her female servant could not be persuaded to live and sleep with her even by the temptation of a thousand guineas a year. That this catch-penny or catch-shilling was really credited by some silly persons, we have evidence in two veritable advertisements. One, inserted in the Times of February the ninth, 1815, stated that "A young gentlewoman having heard of an advertisement for a person to take care of a lady who is heavily afflicted in the face, and whose friends have offered a handsome income yearly, and a premium for residing with her for seven years,

would do all in her power to render her life most comfortable. An undeniable character can be obtained from a respectable circle of friends. An answer to this advertisement is requested, as the advertiser will keep herself disengaged." The other, inserted in the Morning Herald on the sixteenth of the same month, is to the effect that "A single gentleman, aged thirty-one, of a respectable family, and in whom the utmost confidence may be reposed, is desirous of explaining his mind to the friends of a person who has a misfortune in her face, but is prevented for want of an introduction. Being perfectly aware of the principal particulars, and understanding that a final settlement would be preferred to a temporary one, presumes he would be found to answer the full extent of their wishes. His intentions are sincere, honorable, and firmly resolved. References of great respectability can be given." These two persons gave their addresses, the one in Judd-street, the other in Great Ormond-street, London.

Our pig-faced ladies are not even yet exhausted. Another narrative of the kind is of Dublin origin, and relates to a Miss Steevens, who was said to be pig-faced, somewhere in the early part of the present century. Her portrait and a silver trough, out of which she took her food, were announced for exhibition. Dublin believed the story for many years; but the believers believed on the faith of those who told them. The reader has undoubtedly the privilege of deciding for himself, whether or not to accept any of these stories. Meanwhile a heartless writer has revealed the fact that one, at least, of the pig-faced ladies exhibited at fairs was a bear, shaved, ringleted, and elegantly bonnetted; tied upright in a large arm-chair, and having a shawl and skirt to conceal the body!

Among odd women may certainly be classed those who, in earlier years, were wild girls, found in a semi-barbarous state in woods and lonely districts. Peter the Wild Boy and Caspar Hauser have had parallels in the gentler sex, if the narratives are to be believed. In 1731, while a nobleman was shooting near Chalons, he saw two beings in a small lake or pond, who proved to be girls of (apparently) ten or twelve years of age. They were very dark, and had a scanty covering of rags and skins. One made her escape, and was not again seen; the other was secured, and taken to the château of the Vicomte

d'Epinay. She spoke no words, only a kind of wild scream; preferred raw meat and vegetables to cooked; her fingers and thumbs were very strong, owing to frequent climbing and clinging on trees. A shepherd, to whose care she was consigned, had much difficulty in retaining and taming her; for she would scratch holes in the walls and roof of his hut, and escape into the woods. When exhibited before the Queen of Poland, in 1737, she displayed her fleetness in outrunning hares and rabbits. She was baptised as Marie le Blane, but did not live to do credit to her sponsors; her health declined under the influence of civilised usages, and she was sent to a convent, where she passed out of the world's ken. Another instance comes under date, 1767, where some Hungarians were chasing the wild boar near Frauenmark, and followed their prey far over the mountains. Seeing the tracks of human footsteps in the snow, they traced them to a cavern, where they found a young girl unclothed, and very brown in colour. She set up a cry, and gazed on the hunters, who took her away with them. They conveyed her to a hospital near Chemnitz, where she was clothed and made to take nourishment. At first she refused all the cooked food presented to her, preferring roots, inner bark, and other undressed articles of vegetable growth. What became of her we have no record to tell.

Some odd women have lived a life of loneliness, without furnishing anything like a rational explanation of the cause of their isolation. Such was the case of one Louisa, whose surname seems to have eluded enquiry. In the year 1776, a young and pretty woman made her appearance at Bourton, near Bristol, and solicited food. The inhabitants took an interest in her, and would have given her a home; but she would sleep nowhere save under a haystack. She said that trouble and misery dwell in houses; that there is no happiness but in liberty and fresh air. She had refined manners, a slightly foreign accent, and evidently experienced much mental distress, with occasionally a little wildness of demeanour. When ill, she would accept the aid of hospitals; but, when recovered, she returned to her haystack. During three or four years' residence in the neighbourhood she obtained little gifts of food from the villagers; but she neither sought nor would accept employment. She was known as the Lady of the Haystack, for something in her

manner prevented the villagers from regarding her as a common, vulgar person. Her peculiarities led to her temporary confinement in a private asylum near Bristol, from which she was transferred to Guy's Hospital, where she died early in the present century. Nothing was ascertained concerning her identity and history. It was only at incoherent moments that she made remarks which led to the inference that she had been married, had moved in good, if not high, society, and had suffered much ill-usage. The Book of Wonderful Characters gives many of her snatches of conversation; but as we do not know the source of information, and as they were inconclusive in their result, we pass them. Another local celebrity, in a somewhat similar position of isolation, but belonging to a humbler grade in life, was Jenny Darney, who lived alone in a hut lent to her in Cumberland. She picked up bits of wool that lay about the fields in sheep-farms, spun it on a spindle of her own making, and knitted the thread with wooden needles into garments for her own wear. She would accept money from no one, but received food from kind neighbours. She refused to give her name, mention her family, or assign a reason for her strange mode of life. Dates are wanting; all we learn is, that she died at an advanced age early in the present century.

Not so lonely as the mysterious Louisa of the haystack, or Jenny of the hut, but odd enough in her way, was Mrs. Lewson. She was left a wealthy widow in London in the time of George the First; and, rejecting all offers of re-marriage, passed the rest of her days at the residence of her late husband in Cold Bath Square. The house was large and handsomely furnished; and some of the beds were kept constantly made and in trim order, although they had not been slept in for thirty years. Her own room was occasionally swept out, but never washed, and the windows were so encrusted with dirt as to admit scarcely any light. She reasoned thus, when asked for an explanation: — If the room were wetted, she might catch cold; if the windows were cleaned the glass might be broken, and somebody hurt. She never washed herself, for fear of cold; as a substitute she anointed her face and neck with a little milk and hog's lard, finished off with a touch of rose pink on the cheeks. She was methodical in all her habits, eating with one favourite knife,

fork, and plate, and drinking out of one cup. She had excellent health, abhorred physic and doctors, and "cut two new teeth at the age of eighty-seven." She had no near relations, and refused to see those more distantly related. One pleasant characteristic is recorded: she had a large well-kept garden, in which she passed much of her time reading. Although she lived entirely through the reigns of the First and Second Georges, and far into that of the Third, she continued to wear the fashions of the time of George the First, as being those of her married life. Her powdered hair was turned up over a tache or cushion; a cap over it was tied under the chin; and three or four curls hung down to the neck. She generally wore a silk gown, with a long train and deep flounces, very long waist, and tightly laced up to her neck, round which a kind of ruff or frill was worn; the sleeves of the gown came down below the elbows, and were terminated by four or five large cuffs. She wore a large flat bonnet, high-heeled shoes, a large black silk cloak, trimmed round with lace; and carried a gold-headed cane. She walked in such a costume as this round the small enclosure of Cold Bath Square; and was spoken of by the neighbours as Lady Lewson. Her household consisted of one servant (an old man), two lapdogs, and a cat; and these were her only companions. She survived till extreme old age; indeed, we believe she was one of those to whom the attention of Mr. Thom was directed, as claimants to the honour of centenarianism.

Some odd women, poor things, have been rendered odd by compulsory isolation and semi-starvation for many days; such, for instance, as Elizabeth Woodcock, a farmer's wife at Impington, near Cambridge. One February night in 1799, returning from Cambridge market on horseback, her horse became restive; she dismounted, he ran off, and she after him, but unavailingly. Sitting down exhausted under a hedge, she became partly insensible, but was conscious that snow was falling and gradually enveloping her, until at length the thickness of snow rose to the height of her head as she sat. She had just strength and discernment enough to keep open a little hole in the snow, break off a small twig near at hand, and attach a handkerchief to it as a signal. She was conscious of the alternations of day and night, but slept little; heard the church bells, the rolling of vehicles, the barking

of dogs, the bleating of sheep, and the voices of gipsies; but she could neither utter a sound nor make a perceptible movement. Eight days and nights passed in this way; during which time her garments were alternately wet through with melting snow, and stiffened with frost. At last relief came. The horse, on Saturday the second of the month, had trotted home without his mistress; the husband, aided by friends, searched the roads and fields day after day, but could gain no tidings of her. Not until Sunday the ninth was the handkerchief espied by a farmer going to Cambridge; he had to wade through a great accumulation of snow to get at the spot, but there he found poor Elizabeth. Aid was immediately sent for—horse, chaise, blankets, food, drink, and willing hands. She fainted on being lifted, but reached home in safety. She could tell her friends that hunger had not distressed her much during her strange life of eight days under the snow; and that she had quenched her thirst with small bits of hard snow. All her toes, thoroughly frost-bitten, had to be amputated one by one; and blotches of red chilblains covered nearly the whole body. She was carried off in June, partly as a consequence of this terrible episode in her life, partly from other ailments.

Still longer in duration was the enforced isolation and abstinence of a young woman named Cecilia Steers. In 1820, while walking from Doddington to Rodmersham, she fell into a dry well or chalk pit. The pit being thirty feet deep, she could not climb up; and all her attempts to make her voice heard proved fruitless. She lived on day after day, from the eighth to the twenty-second of November, supporting life by a little water that trickled from the melting snow. At last hearing some children playing near at hand, she succeeded in attracting their attention, and was rescued.

One more odd woman shall be a pretty little creature, who had a large heart in a very small body. In the second half of the last century a Polish dwarf, named Joseph Bornwaski, attracted much attention on the Continent, and got into a good position on the estate of a nobleman. Short as he was, about three feet six inches high, he had a sister, Anastasia, very much shorter. The tiny being, elegant in form and gentle in disposition, fell in love with a poor young officer; she "never told her love,"

but endeavoured, in various ways, to assist him without his guessing the source of the assistance. Her love and her life ended together; she was carried off by small pox at the age of twenty-two.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. DRAWING THE SWORD.

It is difficult to say, after this passage of arms between them (which is fortunately interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Durgan), which is the more distrustful of the other—Miss Mervyn or Miss Grange. The former does not for an instant underrated her adversary, although she dislikes her with the dislike that only a woman who feels herself to be supplanted by an inferior, can bring to bear upon that person. But Charlotte Grange goes even further than this in her power of appreciating a foe; she actually credits that foe with the capability of pursuing the same line of conduct as herself, and guards herself carefully against being stabbed in the back, and undermined generally.

It is true that she has during this interval of incessant intercourse (which has been established by means of Grange pertinacity, and antique furniture sketching) acquired the right to call Mr. Forest by his christian name. He calls her Charlotte—a name by the way which he abhors, but which she has taught him to utter glibly—rather than remain on the stolid commonplace ground of mere acquaintanceship, which is indicated by the word "Miss." How he has been led into the error—for he feels it to be one—he does not know. But he finds himself calling her Charlotte, and hears himself addressed as Frank, with the ease of custom, before her people and his friend Bellairs.

The knowledge that his cousin Kate—whom he still likes intensely—intensely dislikes this woman into whose power he is drifting, acts upon him as an irritant rather than a check. He has a feeling, which he does not word even to himself, that Kate, though she does not want him herself, does not want any other woman to have him. He has not sufficient generosity to accredit her with either affection or judgment in the matter. He puts it all down to jealousy of a small order, and tries to make himself believe that she would have developed the same antagonism

had his choice fallen on some universally acknowledged, "perfect woman nobly planned."

A vague sensation of discomfort seizes him, whenever he finds himself alone with anyone who may possibly choose to discuss Miss Grange's claims to his consideration. He has checked Bellairs several times already by the assertion that "she's an awfully nice, clever girl—just the sort of girl to make a heaven of a home for the fellow who's lucky enough to get her." Believing fighting the air to be a feeble practice, Bellairs does not combat the delusion, for "nothing of that sort lasts long with Frank" he tells himself, as he sees Frank winding the coils round himself closer and closer every day.

This morning it has been sorely against Frank's will, that Miss Grange has betaken herself to Breagh Place unattended by him. That she has a motive in doing so, he half fears, for in spite of himself it is impressed upon him that there is a motive in the simplest action of this quiet girl. But he does not for a moment suspect her real motive, which is to sow the seed of belief in his being in love with her in his cousin Kate's mind.

Bray seems very dull to him, however, after Charlotte's departure for Mrs. Durgan's place. He has ridden over from Lugaquilla, intending to loiter about the picturesqe secluded Dargle, and superintend Miss Grange's sketching all day, and, when he finds that he is left to his own devices, while she goes to pay "a mere ceremonial visit" as she says, he feels sulkily disposed to review his position with Miss Grange, and to think that she had no right, "after all," to go off in this way and leave him to be dull, either by himself, or with her "detestable brother and sister."

In fact, the habit of the woman is upon him; and here in this place, where he is cut off from his home pursuits and home annoyances, he has grown too much accustomed to her manner of passing away his time, to patiently submit to being made his own custodian for awhile.

He contrives to stir up his own interest presently, by conjecturing a variety of things concerning the three women who are together at Breagh Place, none of which bear the remotest resemblance to the truth. He pictures Charlotte (who is a capital talker when alone with him) amusing and bewitching Mrs. Durgan and Kate, by the flow of her quiet humour, and power of narrating incidents,

in a way that is prejudicial to the persons to whom they refer, without being openly ill-natured. He knows that she has this art, but he is pleased with her at present, and fancies that it is a womanly and noble one, and feels himself injured rather than otherwise in that he is not present to be edified by it.

Actuated by these mixed feelings, he presently gets on his horse, and rides over to Breagh Place, resolving rather to brave being laughed at about Charlotte, than to bear the burden of himself any longer. "They'll see I'm running after her," he confesses to himself, half shamefacedly, "and Kate will probably get on the stilts; but I can't help it."

A slight chill falls upon him when he finds himself in their midst by-and-by. The mere power of her will has caused Miss Grange to be invited to luncheon by Mrs. Durgan, to whom Charlotte insists on talking rather confidentially concerning "Frank," and his literary prospects, and surface weaknesses. Kate meanwhile sits silently by, half doubting that there is any foundation for this fatal familiarity, and still wholly fearing that there may be.

"He is a man who requires sympathy," Miss Grange asserts; "and he has never had it from his own family; he has told me so himself, and I can see that he feels it bitterly, poor fellow," she adds with malicious emphasis, as she sees Kate wince under the sting of the statement.

"You imagine that you can give it to him, I suppose?" Mrs. Durgan says, with a laugh that is not complimentary to the one whom she addresses. In spite of a certain dagger that Kate is unconsciously pressing well home to Mrs. Durgan's heart, the latter lady likes her well, and is strengthened in that first openly expressed opinion of hers, that Kate "couldn't be mean." Therefore she does not hesitate to draw the sword and use it, when Kate's opponent waves a flag of defiance.

"He imagines that I can, at any rate," Miss Grange says, turning large calm eyes full upon her interlocutor as she speaks. "Frank tells me that you don't know much about them," she continues, addressing Kate as if she were an outsider; "but from what you do know of them, shouldn't you be inclined to think his sisters shallow and frivolous?"

"You forget that you are speaking of my cousins," Kate says, and scarlet waves of indignation ebb and flow over her face as she says it. Then, even as these shells

are bursting, Frank comes in, and, after the usual custom on these occasions, the guiltless look guilty, and the guilty guiltless.

If put to the crucial test of speaking on their words of honour, neither Mrs. Durgan nor Kate would feel themselves to be social sinners. But now, when Frank comes into their midst, and looks at them suspiciously and at Miss Grange sympathetically, they feel as if they had fallen short and been found wanting in some way or other: as if, in fact, they had not been merciful to the stranger within their gates.

"I am so glad you've come," Miss Grange murmurs, with an ardour that is foreign to her general manner. She half holds her plump white hand out towards him too as she speaks, and Frank finds himself taking the extended offering, under the astonished gaze of his cousin Kate, before he thinks of attempting to salute Mrs. Durgan, whom he has nominally come to visit.

"I am so glad you've come," Miss Grange repeats, and this time she laughs blithely and throws a glance aside at Kate, and altogether pourtrays by her manner that she is perfectly at rest now "he" has come, in a way that thrills Kate with wrath at the assurance which she still prays may have no foundation in fact.

They pass a half hour that is disagreeable to the last degree to two of them, and that is not altogether a period of unmitigated bliss to Frank, who feels himself to be a disputed point, and who knows himself to be but a mere weather-cock between the rival blasts of duty and inclination. The former drags him back every now and again, back under Kate's influence, but the latter draws him softly on, and prostrates him, as it were, under the influence of the woman who never lets it slacken for want of incessant attention. In fact Kate represents a past, in which he sustained a defeat, while Charlotte represents a present, in which he may have it all his own way if he pleases.

"They're not engaged yet, take comfort in that thought, and intervene before he compasses his own destruction by proposing to her," Mrs. Durgan says in a low voice to Kate, as Kate makes the necessity for attending to the comfort of the invalid the excuse for murmuring some expression of hopelessness in her friend's ear.

"She seems to be well satisfied with the arrangement, whatever it is, as it stands," Kate says impatiently. "He's encrusted by her wiles now, but if you could see him as he really is, you would know what a dear

fellow he is, and understand why I am so anxious about him."

Mrs. Durgan looks up brightly, hopefully, enthusiastically almost.

"See here, Kato," she says, "a word from you in love, not in friendship!—what man would barter love and slavery for friendship and freedom?—but in love, would bring him—I won't say 'back' to you, because I don't believe he's ever strayed in reality—but away from her. Utter it!"

"I can't," Kate laughs, but there is vexation in her laugh, Mrs. Durgan detects; "don't think that I want him in love—not that he'd come to me if I did—but she's not the one to win him."

"She's the one to woo, and those who woo so artistically often win" Mrs. Durgan says, shaking her head. "Look at them now! there she is, while we are wasting our time in idle talk, making him believe that she has been struggling against circumstances all the morning, and that we have been intensely disagreeable to her; and in short, that she has been playing the martyr's part for his dear sake. Go to him, and be outspoken, Kate, and tell her I want to speak to her."

Kate feels herself impelled, by Mrs. Durgan's energy, to obey Mrs. Durgan's instructions, but she dislikes doing so exceedingly. It is an odious task to set oneself, this of interrupting a conversation between two people, who are openly manifesting the feeling that all the world is nought to them, and that they only want each other. But in this case Kate is led on to do it, partly because she really feels that Frank is worthy of a little sacrifice of pride on her part, and partly because there is a passive defiance in Miss Grange's manner which rouses all Kate's fighting blood, and makes her long to strike a straightforward open blow.

"Mrs. Durgan has made me her envoy to you, Miss Grange," she begins, as she draws near to them, and she sees that Charlotte shrugs patiently deprecating shoulders at the interruption, "she wishes you to go and talk to her about some ferns—you're learned in them we have heard—and I want you for a few minutes, Frank," Kate continues, putting her hand within his arm, with the old caressing gesture that he can no more resist now than he could long ago.

Miss Grange knows the exact worth of every weapon that any adversary can employ in such a warfare as this, and she knows that Kate can strike sharply home

if she pleases. "But she's too refined to coarsely condemn, and anything short of coarse condemnation will fail to affect Frank against me now," the quiet adventuress thinks, as she walks off rather vauntingly, leaving the field open to her enemy, after giving Frank a long, lingering, clinging look, that bespeaks a wealth of intimacy between them.

"And now what is it, Kate," Frank asks, as they saunter out from the conservatory, "if we are going to stroll through these woods, we may bring the others along with us, mayn't we?"

She turns her face and looks at him, and sees that his mouth is twitching, and his eyes dancing with suppressed laughter. He evidently partly fathoms her design of warning him, is mirthfully aware of it, and by no means disposed to thwart her exposition of feeling; at the same time she perceives that he will not be one whit impressed by it. All her fancied eloquence takes flight. She can no more bring herself to utter any cautionary words, now that Miss Grange has fearlessly left the field free, than she could stab that young lady in the back.

"Have you nothing to tell me, Frank?" she asks persuasively, and her manner insensibly becomes impregnated with some of the old fondness, that had been so infinitely delightful to him in the days of old.

"Nothing whatever, dear," he replies, and his manner is abstracted, and his gaze wanders back through the conservatory, and fixes itself upon the lady who is lazily looking at ferns, the lady whose perfect repose is apparently by no means disturbed by the fear that her cause may be suffering during her enforced absence.

"How long do you stay at Lugnaquilla?"

"We're all thinking of making a start next week."

"All! Is Captain Bellairs going so soon?" Kate asks, forgetting the interest of the hour in the interest of her life.

"No, no; Bellairs stays on here—he's sweet on his cousin, I believe," Frank says, as if whether Bellairs were, or were not, was an utterly unimportant matter to everyone.

"Then whom do you mean by 'all,'" Kate persists, recurring to the interest of the hour.

"The Granges and myself," he answers unhesitatingly.

"The Granges have ceased to be obnoxious to you?" she says.

"Have they, by Jove! not a bit of it. That fellow and his wife are two of the greatest bores out."

"Then why do you attach yourself to them, when you could stay on at dear sweet Lugnaquilla, with a man who is less of a bore than any other human being?"

"Because there happens to be a human being with the Granges at present, who bores me even less than Bellairs," Frank laughs. "Now you have driven me into a corner, Kate, and compelled me to decide as to the cause of my recently developed toleration for the Granges, I know it to be that girl," and he inclines his head in the direction of the guileless Charlotte.

"That girl!" Kate repeats with angry contempt; "don't tell me in earnest that she has cast a glamour over you."

"She would be a cleverer girl even than she is, if she could 'cast a glamour' as you call it, over me," Frank says, with genuinely manly conceit; "but she's just the kind of girl that any fellow who sees much of her must fall madly in love with."

"Frank!" Kate gasps.

"Why, you're not surprised, are you?" Frank questions, looking with foolish fondness in the direction of the disputed point. "I didn't quite realise—I never told myself even till you asked me; if you hadn't almost worded it for me, I should have gone on probably in unsuspicion of the real state of my feelings; but now I know that if I could contribute to her happiness in any way, even by giving her to another fellow, I'd do it."

Kate looks at him in pity and surprise, and admires him, in spite of her reason and judgment, for his chivalry. One shot she cannot resist firing, though she knows that it will glance off, and neither kill nor cure his misplaced passion.

"Get some richer man than yourself to marry her, then, if you'd contribute to her happiness, Frank," she says, and Frank looks at her wistfully, and replies,

"You hurt me more than you can imagine, by even feigning to doubt her perfect integrity."

Now ready, price 5s. 6d., bound in green cloth,

THE TWELFTH VOLUME
OF THE NEW SERIES OF
ALL THE YEAR ROUND.
To be had of all Booksellers.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 312. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VI. A DESPERATE DEED.

WALTER DANBY stood looking on at the scene before him, mentally and bodily paralysed, without the power to think or move, for some minutes. When his senses returned his first impulse was to fly. What he had seen was enough to convince him of the lawlessness of the men with whom he had been associated, and of the certainty of their having committed robbery and murder. No! A ray of hope flashed across him which for Anne's sake he was only too glad to welcome—they were the receivers of the stolen property, they might even have planned the robbery, but they could not be the doers of the deed of blood. Heath was away at the time, and Studley—what was that the police-sergeant had said, that the robbery must have been arranged by some person conversant with the premises and the dead man's ways? Heath! Who had given him the diamonds to catalogue and store away, and consequently knew of their exact whereabouts, and their immense value? Heath!

Danby's heart sank within him as he thought of these things. His brain reeled, and he felt sick and faint. He must have air, or he would swoon. He must go out, through the window by which he had entered, give up all thought of seeing Anne that evening, and make his way back to London as best he could. Softly he turned, made out indistinctly the form of the window through which the last faint traces of daylight were visible, and moved towards it. The next moment he

stumbled over one of the open portmanteaus, and fell upon the floor; the next, and the door between the rooms was dashed open, and Danby, still prostrate, felt a heavy weight upon his body, and a strong suffocating grip upon his throat.

"This is your eat!" cried the man who had seized him. Heath's voice, he knew it at once. "What a fool I was to believe you before! Bring the lamp and let's see whom we've got here; no, stay, the wind will blow it out. Help me to carry him into the back room, lift his legs, so!"

They dragged him into the dining-room and Heath knelt down beside him, and put his hand under his chin to force the head back. There was no need for this, however; Walter Danby threw up his head, as well as he could in his cramped position, and the expression in his bright eyes was bold and fearless.

"Danby!" said Heath, under his breath, then turning to Studley, "How did he get here? We heard no bell."

"He must have come through the back gate," said the captain, whose face was deadly pale, and whose thin lips visibly trembled. "Through the back gate—he knows it—I've taken him that way myself."

All this time, Heath's hand had been twined in Danby's neckerchief. He removed it now, bidding the young man get up and seat himself on an old-fashioned, high-backed oak chair which stood close to the wall. Danby obeyed. He had lost his breath in the fall and the struggle, and his heart was beating loudly; but he confronted the two men with calmness, almost with ease.

"Now, sit still, or it will be the worse for you!" said Heath, seating himself on the corner of the table, and swinging his

leg to and fro. "How long have you been in that room?"

"Probably ten minutes!" replied Danby, in a steady voice, and with his eyes firmly fixed on his interrogator.

Heath descended from the table, passed into the outer room, closed the door, and, pulling aside the curtain, peered through the glass, for the purpose of ascertaining what portions of the room were in view; then he opened the door and, before closing it again, bade Studley, "Speak, say something, anything, and in your usual tone."

Finally he reappeared, bringing with him some strips of thick cord, which Danby recollects having noticed lying by one of the boxes.

"He must have seen and heard everything as plainly as if he had been standing by us!" he said, in an undertone to Studley. "See here!" he added, turning to Danby, "you know, pretty well, the situation of this house. There's nothing near it for a mile. You might shout for a month, and no one would hear you. If you value your life, you will hold your tongue; and, in order to prevent your making any attempt at escape, I'm going to tie you to this chair."

As he spoke, he took the longest piece of rope, and, passing it quickly round Danby's body, slipped behind the chair and lashed him firmly to it. Danby made no attempt at resistance; he sat there, pale and anxious-looking, but neither so white-faced nor so nervous as Captain Studley, who stood in a half-dazed state, looking on at Heath's proceedings, his wandering hand now plucking at his chin, now beating the tattoo on the table before him, and from time to time opening his mouth as though gasping for breath.

"There!" said Heath, moving round to his old position on the corner of the table; "and now to settle this matter. Walter Danby, you were, on your own avowal, in that room for ten minutes, during which time I have satisfied myself that you must have seen and heard all that transpired here. Is that so?"

"I saw and heard everything," said Danby quietly. His voice was low and flat, quite different from its usual joyous ringing tone, but there was no tremor in it.

"What did you hear?" asked Studley, suddenly turning upon him. "We were only talking business."

"Business!" said Danby. "Is it your business, besides cheating at cards, to deal with stolen goods and dead men's

property? I recognise those jewels as some which I helped your worthy friend there in cataloguing and stowing away. I know them to be part of the proceeds of Mr. Middleham's murder."

As these words left Danby's lips, Heath jumped from his seat, and rapidly passing his hand to his breast, made a stride towards him. But the captain, leaning across the table, caught his friend by the arm, and whispered hurriedly in his ear, "Stop, for God's sake, think what you're doing!"

"It is because I think what I am doing, that I see the need for stopping this lad's tongue," said Heath, between his clenched teeth, his eyes like deep set coals glowing in his head, and his hand still plucking in his breast.

"Stay!" said the captain, still in a whisper, and pulling at Heath's coat. "Come aside for an instant—come over here—let us talk this out, and do nothing rashly. My risk is as great as yours!"

"Is it?" said Heath, who suffered himself to be led to the other side of the room. "I was not aware of that. But anyhow it's great enough. Too great to be played with, I say."

"Don't make it greater," said Studley, with intense earnestness. "For the last month I have lived in a hell upon earth, owing to your rashness! Night and day I have but one thought in my head, one scene before my eyes! Don't create another ghost to haunt me, or I shall go mad!"

"When you have finished raving, perhaps you will say what would you propose to do with this man?" said Heath. "You've heard his avowal of what he knows."

"Do anything with him—anything but one!" said Studley, holding up his trembling hand to emphasise his words. "Make him take a solemn oath never to reveal what he has become acquainted with today, and let him go, let him go! And see here: we will let him keep the money which I won of him, and which I daresay he has brought. I will give it up. Let him keep that; it will bind him to us more perhaps—only let him go!"

For a moment Heath stared at his companion without speaking. Then he said, "You seem to have lost your head over this affair! You to talk of ghosts and scenes! you, who for thirty years have passed your life—"

"No!" cried Studley, interrupting, "in everything but *that!* not in *that!*"

"Doesn't your common sense—if any of it remains—tell you that this fellow would

not take any oath ; that he could not be bribed by your wretched hundred and fifty pounds ? He is brave, honest, and honourable. His whole soul is filled with loathing for us and for our deeds. To denounce us would seem to him his inexorable duty, and he would surely do it. He has seen these diamonds, which have given him a clue to the robbery ; and I need not impress upon you that a clue to the robbery is a clue to more ! ”

“ I know it. What you say is quite right ; but still—spare his life ! ”

“ His life is in his own hands,” said Heath. “ If he will swear secrecy, I know him well enough to be certain that he will keep his oath. But if he will not swear——”

“ He will ! he will ! ” cried Studley, laying his hand on Heath’s breast, and looking appealingly into his face.

“ We will see,” said Heath, stepping away from him. “ But if he will not, I shall ensure my own safety. See here, Danby,” he added, suddenly turning round, “ you have acknowledged that you have been a spy upon us——”

“ That is false,” said Danby, in the same calm voice. “ I came here by appointment, and walked by accident into that room, from which——”

“ We won’t bandy words,” said Heath. “ You saw what we were doing ; you recognised those diamonds. You could denounce us to the police. You have us in your power ! ”

A scornful smile passed across Danby’s face. Heath saw it, and spoke quickly. “ Morally you have us in your power, but physically you are in ours, from which nothing human can deliver you. Recollect that ! Realise the situation. Hero in a lone house, far beyond the reach of help, shut up with two men whom you have brought to bay——”

“ You need not proceed,” said Danby, “ I know my fate ! ” A change in his voice this time, low and creeping. Drops of cold sweat, too, on his forehead, and a twitching of the nostrils and the upper lip.

“ You’re to have a chance, and you’ll take it, won’t you ? ” said Studley. “ You’ll swear a solemn oath before God, that you’ll never say anything about what you’ve seen or heard, and then we’ll let you go ! You’ll swear it, won’t you ? ”

“ No ! ” cried Danby, “ I’ll make no bargain with thieves and murderers ! Help ! help ! ”

With a sudden jerk he snapped the rope

which bound him to the chair and staggered to his feet, making for the middle door. But Heath, hastily pushing Studley aside, leapt upon Danby and bore him to the ground. The slight lad had little chance against the superior weight and strength of his antagonist, but he knew he was fighting for his life, and he clung so tenaciously to Heath’s wrists, that it was perhaps a minute before the latter could free his right hand, to search for the dagger which he carried in his left breast pocket. Even when he had found it, the boy’s activity was such, that Heath could not make certain of his blow. He struck out, but Danby interposed his arm, against which the weapon glanced aside ; the next instant, the blade was buried in the boy’s heart.

At that moment there was upon the air a shriek of horror, loud and piercing, subsiding gradually into a long low wail. Heath, who had risen to his knee, remained transfixed, his mouth rigid, his eyes starting from his head ; but Studley, who at the instant the blow was struck, had flung himself upon the table, burying his face between his arms, now raised himself slowly, and listened. It was from the window behind him that the sound had come, the closed window looking on to the garden. Walking as a man in a dream, Studley moved towards the window, threw up the sash and looked out. There was something on the ground below, a dark mass—the body of a woman—of Anne—prostrate, senseless.

Studley staggered back against the wall, pressing his eyes with his hands, as though striving to shut out sight and sense. Anne had seen what had occurred. The fearful crime just committed had been committed in vain, so far as their hope of secrecy was concerned. Another witness was ready to rise up against them, and bear testimony to a deed of blood, which had been perpetrated in her presence. Would Heath deal with Anne as he had dealt with Danby ? No, there had been too many horrors, he was her father and would interfere. He would defend her, and at once.

With staggering footsteps Studley sought the door, and was about to open it, when he felt Heath’s hand upon his arm. He recoiled instantly. “ Stand off,” he cried, in a deep hoarse whisper, “ don’t touch me ! there’s evidence of your bloody work upon your hands ! stand off, and let me go ! ”

"That is your daughter lying fainting in the garden?" asked Heath. "You are sure of it, sure it is not the servant?"

"It is my daughter! She saw all, she has swooned, and must be seen to at once. I ——"

"Stop this fooling!" said Heath, roughly gripping his companion by the arm. "Collect your senses, I say, for you will want them now! She has fainted, and there let her lie. When she recovers she will be too weak and too much dazed to do any harm, and meantime we have plenty to do!"

"Loose your hold on me!" said Studley, shaking himself free. "I can't bear your touch! do you know what you've done?"

"Saved your life and my own," said Heath, "that is to say, if we're only quick in clearing up this place before the servant returns!" As he spoke he moved lightly and with careful footsteps, towards where the body was lying. In the struggle the cloth had been dragged from the table to the floor, and with a portion of this cloth, Heath, in following Studley to the window, had covered the features of the dead. He removed it now, very quietly, and bending down, silently contemplated his cruel work. There was one large clot of blood outside the waist-coat, where the dagger-blade had penetrated, and the coat sleeve against which it had glanced was ripped, and ragged, and dark-stained. The mouth and eyes were partly open, and the fair open brow, and the delicate chiselling round the nostrils, were contracted as though by a sharp spasm of pain. The arm with which the last feeble attempt at defence had been made, was bent across the body, the other hung stiffly by the side.

Heath's face, as he noted these different particulars, was void of expression. In it no rage, no sorrow, neither exultation nor remorse, could be discerned. After a pause he stooped, and taking up the pendent arm, laid his finger on the wrist. Then he dropped it carefully, and regaining his feet, beckoned to Studley to approach.

Studley, however, remained motionless. On Heath's repeating the gesture, he waved his hand angrily, in token of disgust, and then placed it before his eyes.

"Will you come here at once?" said Heath, in a low voice—neither of them had spoken above a whisper since the deed was done—"or do you want the servant to return and alarm the village?"

"Is he—is he quite dead?" asked

Studley, bending forward, and for the first time looking towards the corpse. "What—what are you going to do with it? It must be hidden—where can it be hidden?"

"What's the depth of that pond in the garden?" asked Heath, with his eyes fixed upon the ground.

"The pond? about six feet, I think," said Studley. "Young Danby once—good God! I forgot—I mean *he* once plumbbed it with a rake, one day, when he was down here."

"That's deep enough," said Heath, "for our present purposes, at all events. I must have something to wrap it in—some matting, or something of that sort. I will see if there is any in the tool-house."

He made as though he would have moved away; but Studley caught him by the coat.

"Don't leave me," he cried; "I cannot be left with it. I will come with you."

The nearest way to the shed in which the tools, which had been used in the cultivation of the garden, ere it was a jungle, were kept, was through the store-room. Before following his companion, Studley cast a rapid glance through the dining-room window, and saw the dark mass still lying there prostrate, motionless. Even then he had a thought of going out to her; but Heath, in a harsh, hoarse whisper, called to him to "Come on!" and he obeyed.

Groping in the dark shed, they found some matting, which was dank and worn, and a sack, at the bottom of which were a few rotting potatoes. This Heath declared would serve their purpose, and emptying it, he carried it to the dining-room, closely followed by Studley.

As they re-entered the house the sinking horror, which had seized upon Studley immediately after the commission of the deed, crept over him again. It was with the greatest difficulty that he could force himself to enter the room. When he did so, he looked at once towards the body, yet started when he saw it, as though not expecting to find it there. He was not, however, allowed any time for meditation, for Heath angrily called him to give him assistance in the dreadful task in which he was engaged.

"I am coming," said Studley, mechanically. Then, pointing, he added,

"Look down; you see the blood has soaked into the carpet."

"We will attend to that later," said Heath. "I have a plan in my head by

which we can keep everybody out of the house for days, giving us plenty of time to take all necessary precautions; but we must get rid of this first, and for that I require your help."

Not much help did Studley give him, though he strove to do what he was told, and with trembling hands carried out the orders which the younger man gave in short, quick, peremptory tones. The head and upper portion of the body were enveloped in the sack; the feet were tied together by the rope with which the victim had been bound to the chair; then, in silence, the two men lifted the ghastly burden between them, and carried it through the store-room into the cold, damp hall, and through the grimly-sculptured doorway out into the night. It was very heavy, and, though his companion had taken by far the heavier portion of the load upon himself, Studley had several times to call him to stop, while he sought to recover breath and wiped away beads of sweat from his forehead with his trembling hands. It was a close, faint, clammy autumn evening, without a breath of air to drive away the thin gray mist rising as ever from the jungle, without a ray of moonlight to penetrate the thick darkness which had already come upon the earth. So, they went on; crushing underfoot the newly fallen leaves, and brushing away the cold dew which stood in thick drops upon the coarser rank grass, until they stopped by the side of the pond. Here, at a sign from Heath, they deposited their burden; Studley, to his horror, being left alone by the side of the corpse while Heath left him to "look for something heavy," as he hoarsely whispered. Presently he reappeared, bearing with him two huge stones which he had pulled out from among the foundations of the dilapidated rustic bridge. One of these he wrapped in his handkerchief, and making a slit in the sack with his penknife, tied the weight firmly to it. At his instructions Studley did the same with the other stone, which he attached to the feet. Then once more raising the body between them, they bore it to the middle of the bridge, some of the decaying balustrades of which Heath cleared away with one vigorous blow, and then, with great difficulty, for Studley's strength by this time was fast failing him, dropped it into the middle of the pond. It sank instantly. The slow, broad ripple, like a sullen smile, spread over the surface of the stagnant water for an instant, and the

hoarse ery of a raven, flapping slowly on its homeward way, was Walter Danby's dirge.

With the noise, the splash, and the gurgle of the water as it closed over the body still in his ears, Studley was standing gazing at the spot where it had disappeared, when Heath shook him roughly by the arm.

"You seem to have forgotten your daughter," he cried, "though you were so anxious about her a few minutes since. Come, and let us see after her." He turned and strode towards the house, Studley following him in silence.

Yes, the father had been right in his surmises; the prostrate form was that of handsome Anne Studley, who had gone forth but two hours since in all the blushing hope and pride of a first love, to give a ready answer to the man who had asked her to link her life with his. Where was his life now?—gone! Where were her hopes?—blighted and wrecked for ever!

"She knows nothing of this now, for she is still senseless," so says Heath, who has lifted her, not without a certain gentleness, and, looking into her face, would have supported her head against his knee had not her father suddenly interposed.

"Do not touch her. I will not have you lay hands upon her!" he cried, passionately.

"Drop that," cried Heath, turning round upon him savagely; "drop it, now and for ever. In this matter, at least, you are as guilty as I am; at all events, the law would make no difference between us; drop all that foolery about my hands and my touch. If my hands did this, it will be my head that will have to plan our safety; and even when it comes to getting this lady upstairs, I imagine you would not be able to manage much without my help. Stand clear now, and I will carry the girl to her room. Once there, I will give you my idea of what should be done." He stooped down, and lifting her in his strong arms as though she had been a child, carried her up the staircase and laid her on the bed.

"Get her clothes off," he said to her father, "while I go downstairs and clear up below there, and get rid of this ugly mark." He pointed to a pale red stain upon his hand, and Studley shuddered. "You must keep your wits about you now," Heath continued, "for in the next twenty-four hours lies all the danger. If we can tide that over we are safe. Undress her, as I told you, and put her into bed,

throw her clothes down here or there in a tumbled heap; I will bring up the brandy from downstairs, and, if you have a medicine chest in the house, it would be best to place it open on the table. I want to give the room the aspect of sudden illness; she cannot remain in her swoon very much longer, and it ought to be done before she recovers."

Studley did as he was bid; his power of will seemed to have deserted him, and he was entirely reliant on his companion. When Heath returned he found that Anne was in bed, her clothes in a disorderly heap on a chair, and a bottle of sal volatile, a basin and a sponge on the table by the bed-side.

"That is right," he said, looking round. "When I was settling things down-stairs I thought this matter through, and have determined what is best to be done. Now attend to me, Ned Studley," he cried, sharply, for Studley was rocking to and fro in his chair, and his eyes were wandering round the room, "attend to me, and remember exactly what I say. It is now half-past nine, in half-an-hour your servant will come back. When you go to the gate to let her in, you must tell her that Miss Studley has been taken ill, that she has gone to bed, and that you are afraid she is attacked with fever. Ask her to come in and take off her bonnet quickly, as your daughter requires watching and nursing, and you want this girl to sit up with her during the night. If I am any judge of human nature the girl will refuse—she is an ignorant, stupid creature—and will be terribly frightened at the mere mention of the word fever. You must make a show of insisting, declaring that if she does not come in at once you will be compelled to get some one else; she will be too glad to accept the alternative, and will go away to her friends, who live here in the village, don't they?"

"But suppose she is not frightened at the notion of the fever, and is willing to come in and do the nursing, what am I to do, then?" asked Studley.

"Take her straight to your daughter's room, and never leave her out of your sight. If Miss Studley comes out of her swoon, anything that she may say you can treat as ravings of delirium. Don't let the girl go into any other part of the house on any pretence whatever. We can settle what is to be done with her when I come back."

"Come back," cried Studley. "Where are you going?"

"Only to the chemist's," said Heath. "It is most necessary that your daughter should have no clear idea of what is passing around her for the next twenty-four hours, so that when she comes out of her swoon it will be necessary to give her a sleeping draught."

"Well, but I have got some laudanum in my room," said Studley.

"That will be very useful to increase the strength of the dose, but it is better for me to go to the chemist's, where I would take care to purchase some other medicine, to give an air of truth to the story which you will tell to the servant, and which she without doubt will immediately spread in the village. In fact, I shall myself give some hint of Miss Studley's illness to the chemist, and ask him what he thinks would be the proper medicine for it."

"Don't be long—don't be long gone, Heath," said Studley, looking up piteously at him, "for Heaven's sake don't be long gone—I cannot bear to be left by myself to-night!"

"There is the brandy," said Heath, with cold contempt, pointing to the bottle which he had placed on the table; "drink a wine-glass of that, and it may restore your courage, but don't muddle your brains, and don't forget my instructions about the servant girl."

A NOBLE FAMILY.

ABOUT the beginning of the present century, and even recollect by old gentlemen about town who were alive when the first Exhibition was opened, lived some three or four members of an Irish noble family, who enjoyed a discreditable notoriety. Lord Barrymore, the eldest, ran a short career, and bore the nickname of Hellgate. His brother, the Honourable Henry Barry, was lame, or club-footed, and was dubbed Cripplegate; while the Hon. and Rev. Augustus Barry, even less reputable than the other two, went by the name of Newgate, for the rather illogical reason that he had been a tenant of every jail in the kingdom save that one. There was a sister, of whom little is known save that she became Lady Milfort, and that from her ready and copious use of oaths she received from the refined lips of the Prince Regent the sobriquet of Billingsgate.

"His highly polished mind," says one of the toadies, speaking in praise of

the eldest brother, "received its first classical embellishments under the successful tuition of the Rev. Mr. Tickell, at Wargrave"—a gentleman, it may be added, who received the nickname Profligate. "At the age of fourteen he was removed to Eton, where his erudition was confirmed. . . . Discretion had planted her choicest seeds in his understanding; but he was destroyed ere the fertility and richness of the soil became palpable by a full harvest, acceptable to wisdom and to honour. . . . He was bursting hourly from the chrysalis, and would have been soon in full beauty, wing, and request." These are the words of Williams, better known as Antony Pasquin, who belonged to what was an element in the society of the time, the buffooning libeller who made a subsistence out of the terrors of the indiscreet and timorous. This fellow was a retained jester at the fast lord's house, required to promote fun and make his employer and the company merry. His coadjutor was Edwin, the actor; and it is admitted that both earned their wage.

Lord Hellgate distinguished himself by bringing a thousand pounds pocket money to school. He came into a fortune of ten thousand a year, which in a short space of time he had contrived to charge with debts amounting to a couple of hundred thousand pounds, leaving him but a couple of thousand a year to live upon. His extravagance took the most fantastic shapes. His hunting retinue was like the French king's, and he went out with four Africans, dressed magnificently, who played on the French horn during the chase. All the low scum of boxers and cockfighters were in his train. At the same time he delighted in cricketing, then in its infancy, and even held a commission in a militia regiment, where he contrived to fulfil his duties respectably. There was no doubt that he had natural gifts and a good spirit, which, if directed to better things, might have helped him to make a figure. He could turn verses and had a decided literary taste; and was so far musical, that, on returning home from a new opera he could give an idea of the overture. "His lordship," says a pleasant actor who knew him, "was the most eminent compound of contrarieties, the most singular mixture of genius and folly, of personal endowment and moral obliquity. Alternating between the gentleman and the blackguard, the refined wit and the most vulgar bully, he was equally well known in St. Giles's and

St. James's. His lordship could fence, dance, drive, or drink, box or bet, with any man in the kingdom. He could discourse slang as trippingly as French; relish porter after port; and compliment her ladyship at a ball with as much ease and brilliance as he could bespatter a blood in a cider cellar." He was highly popular, the friend and companion of the Prince of Wales and of all the fast men of the time.

The stories told of his freaks give a good idea of the pastimes of the fast man of the day. The most harmless of these took the shape of what are called "sells." Some of them were of the usual "fast" kind; he would take some "spirited companions," and going by night to some village or country town, shift all the various signs of the public-houses, transposing, say, the King's Head and the Red Lion, to the confusion of the owners and their customers. Often, as he and his brothers were driving in a hackney coach, they would imitate the frantic screams of a woman struggling, "Murder, murder! Let me go! &c.," when the passers by would be attracted, follow, and finally stop the coach to rescue the sufferer. The fast lord and his friends would descend, fall on the interposers, who were quite bewildered to find there was no female in the coach, and administer a sound thrashing on the public highway. They would then proceed on their journey.

"Lord Barrymore's fondness for eccentricities," we are told, "ever engaged his mind. It was all the same, he was always in high spirits, thinking of what fun he should have during the day." With a ready versatility he knew how to secure this pastime as occasion offered. Thus having a very high phaeton which he would drive home after a night revel in town, he would whip right and left as he proceeded down the narrow Feather-bed Lane, destroying the windows on both sides, delighted with the noise as he heard them crash. This he called "fanning the daylights." Or he would be driving with a guest and his wild brother "Newgate" in his chaise-and-four, returning to his country place, when, after some halt, the guest would find himself whirling along at a terrific pace, and discover that the postilions were in the rumble behind, and that the two brothers had taken their place.

Some new prank of his was always the subject of conversation. If he met an ill-conditioned waggoner on the road, who

would not give way, his lordship would descend to fight it out; if the winner, he would present the man with a guinea, if the loser, he would shake hands good humouredly. At Newmarket, he would burst into a group asking, "Who wants a horse that can walk five miles an hour, trot eighteen, and gallop twenty?" "I do," was the eager reply from many quarters. "Then," said his lordship, "if I hear there is any such animal to be sold, I will let you know." At Brighton, he fitted a coffin to the back of his servant, taking the bottom off so as to leave room for the man's feet. This was carried with great solemnity to a gentleman's house in the Steyne, and left against the hall door. When the maid opened the door and saw this apparition, she shrieked and fainted away, and the family rushing down, a pistol was discharged which penetrated the coffin barely an inch above the servant's head. Did a particular kind of mild beer run short at dinner, three chaises were sent off in different directions, charged to look for liquor, each returning after some hours with a cask inside.

But it was down at his own house at Wargrave that he had full scope for his humour. There he would collect the band of roysterers and "flappers," and butts, who furnished him with diversion, and there he was able to indulge his passion for the stage, building a handsome theatre, with saloons and other rooms adjoining. He brought down an eminent Covent Garden mechanist, who exhausted his skill in scenes, traps, and other contrivances, so that such embarrassing works as pantomimes could be brought out successfully. Here a series of sterling comedies such as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Every Man in his Humour*, were performed, supported by such amateurs of reputation as Captain Wathen, Mr. Wade, and professionals such as Palmer, Bannister, Johnstone, Incledon, Munden, and others. Captain Wathen and the host excelled in Archer and Scrub, and were painted in these characters. Delpini, a well-known pantomimist, directed behind the scenes, and took the leading part in the pantomime; the "favourite Pas Russe," as performed at the Italian Opera, being danced by Lord Barrymore and Mr. Delpini." Nothing could exceed the reckless extravagance with which this hobby was carried out. The professionals were asked en bloc, and allowed to gratify every whim. All the caterers and mechanists

were specially brought from town, and given carte blanche.

In the year 1788, the prince was induced to come down, occupying a splendid mansion close by; Lord Barrymore, whose house was too small, providing cooks and the rest of the entertainment. The performance did not begin till nine o'clock; all the rank and fashion of the county were present. The prologue was written at short notice by a son of Judge Blackstone, who roused his "fuddled" intellects for the purpose, by wrapping a wet towel round his head.

There was always a "full dress rehearsal," to which the rustics were admitted, and all the rows of the pit were duly filled with red cloaks and smock frocks. For the same reason the noble manager sometimes took the tickets himself, wrapped up in a cloak so that he should not be recognised. He used to tell how one of the farmers presented a ticket that was not available for a particular night, and how, indignant at not being admitted, he threatened to tell James the footman, and get him sent away. The owner of the theatre on this, affecting to look discomfited; the rustic relented. "Coom," he said, "you seem a good sort of a decent sort o' man, and I tell you what, if you'll be agreeable, vy I'll be so. Here's a shilling for 'ee to let I go in." The host took the shilling, and enjoyed telling the story, though, perhaps, he did not quite relish the remark of the rustic, when he was told to whom he had given the shilling. "Vell, an he a lord, vot care I! Odds rabbit it: un he wanted to be treated like a gemman, vy didn't he tell me he was a gemman?" The wondering remarks too of the clowns in the pit were specially to his Lordship's humour. Indeed this taste, though not of a bright quality, is found to have directed all his amusements, and in some degree redeems them from mere vulgar debauchery. He had the humour of his countrymen, or the humour they used to have. In this spirit, when the play was over, there was nothing he enjoyed so much as disgnising himself and a friend for the purpose of following the audience home to the villages, and picking up their criticisms, which he retailed with delight for the performers at supper.

At these carnivals, however, the dramatic element was the least important. Fun and jollity of the most outrageous kind was what were chiefly sought. "I have known the little cottage," says

Angelo, one of his adherents, "crowded, with at least five-and-twenty inmates, most of them men of talents, either as poets, players, singers, or celebrated as bons vivants." Everything was wild, disorderly, and irregular. Nearly all this band had to sleep, or rather lie down, in two small rooms, distinguished by the names of the upper and lower barracks. The night was devoted to orgies, and no one was allowed to retire until five o'clock in the morning, when sleep was allowed. Any one who stole away before that time, did so on the certainty of being "drawn," and receiving a Bacchanalian visit from the whole society.

Every morning a council of the roystering was held, to devise some humour for the day. In this duty Pasquin and Edwin were invaluable. Thus, on some sultry day, it would be proposed that the revels should be al fresco. The cooks were marshalled, and put under the direction of "Jack Edwin," though any one who suggested a novelty became the hero of the hour. Some of these suggested freaks however, were of a scandalous kind, and on one hot day it was actually proposed that the party should form a procession to the next village, and enter it en chemise.

The patronage of this convivial lord was, of course, as precarious as convivial patronage usually is, though his good-nature made him tolerant enough. He had taken a fancy to "a good-natured, simple little squireen," who was dubbed Farmer Stone, and who was taken up to London and duly initiated into the ways of the town. Invited to stop a few days at Wargrave, he remained two months, when his lordship, growing tired of him, said to him, with a simple bluntness, "Be off; go to the devil!" The other replied in his country dialect, "No, doant you, my lord, send oi back. Let un stay a little." "Well, if you'll say a good thing you shall stay a week more." The dialogue is worth noting, as showing what was considered effective repartee in such society. "Well, then, I wishes as how I was the brother next to you, and that you was double-fettered in Newgate, and that you was to be hanged to-morrow!" "D—d good," exclaimed his lordship in delight. "Give me your hand: that is the best thing I ever heard you say. So to-morrow I shall take you to town, and you shall stay a month with me."

One development of the Wargrave humour was an institution known as the

"Bothering Club," whose proceedings, which appear to have been of a diverting kind, have been described by one of the guests:—

"This" he says, "was instituted for the purpose of playing off a confederate annoyance upon some stranger guest, invited for the purpose. Suppose a resident at the house, for instance, sent an invitation, by the connivance of his lordship, to some tavern companion, a grave, topping shopkeeper in London, to come and pass a few days as a guest at his lordship's table, and to partake of the festivities at Wargrave. The person invited was received with great ceremony, and treated in the most courteous manner throughout the first day. On the second, someone, perhaps Anthony Pasquin or the younger Edwin, two wicked, witty ministers of his lordship's waggeries, would hatch up some fallacious charge against him, to place him in a ridiculous point of view to the other guests, most of whom were confederates in the hoax. One present would begin, 'Pray, Mr. Higginbottom, will you allow me to take wine with you?' 'Sir, with great pleasure; but my name is Benson.' 'You are a wag, sir,' was the reply. 'Come, let us hob and nob, sir; but, 'pon my soul, you are so like Mr. Higginbottom, my neighbour, in Elbow-lane, that—excuse me—I could almost have sworn—' 'No, sir, I assure you I know no gentleman of that name.'

"At this moment a confederate enters, and, after bowing and apologising for being so late at dinner, begins to tell his lordship the cause of his delay on the road, when he suddenly exclaims, 'Ah, my old friend Higginbottom! Well, this is a pleasure indeed!'

"Indeed, sir, you have the advantage of me; I am not Mr. Hig—hig—what's his name?" Then a loud laugh at Mr. Benson's expense, when he appeals to his friend who invited him thither, but he has purposely left the table. He then throws himself upon the protection of his lordship, who gravely observes, 'Sir, appearances are against you; your friend has disappeared, and—I know not what to think.' Benson, bewildered, begins to asseverate that he is identically 'John—Jabus—Ben—sou'; when another adds to his embarrassment by declaring, 'Why, Higginbottom, you are smoked!' 'What do you mean, sir?' 'Why, sir, ha, ha, ha, that you are Isaac Higginbottom,

mouse-trap and nutmeg-grater manufacturer in Elbow-lane, and the greatest wag in all London.' And these confederate jokers continue their play upon the worthy cit, artfully plying him with wine, until the fumes of the grape, working with his confusion, bemuddle his brain, so that he ultimately forgets whether he is Benson or Higginbottom.

"Another common frolic at the table, when strangers were present, was for one of the prime wits of the waggish coterie to assume the office of public accuser; when, in the midst of the banquet, some ludicrous or preposterous charge was preferred with mock gravity against some one of the guests. The accused, not dreaming of the roguish confederacy by which he is surrounded, indignant at the accusation, flies into a rage, talks of his honour and reputation, when that arch-traitor to decorum, Anthony Pasquin, exclaims, 'Sir, I can believe anything against a man of your taste.' 'What do you mean, sir, by your daring insinuation?' 'Nay, do not bounce, sir,' retorts Pasquin, with insufferable calmness. 'What—and I will appeal to the company—what is that gentleman not capable of, who shaves himself with the razor with which his wife cut her own throat?'

"Enraged past endurance, the gentleman would leave the room, when the door is locked, and everyone vociferates, 'Put it to the ballot.' The verdict is recorded and read, namely, 'That a man capable of such an offence against good taste must be sent to Coventry;' and the confusion and brawling that ensued left the accused no alternative but to quit the house at midnight, or to enter into the frolic and ribaldry in self-defence, and brave it out by becoming as noisy and as inebriated as the rest of the roaring madcaps."

On other nights this took an even more diverting shape. One of the gentlemen was called on for the favourite Wargrave song, "The Brogue Makers." The unsuspecting guest being prepared to expect a treat of the most humorous and musical kind, the vocalist, after apologising for hoarseness, began in a very loud key, "There were three jolly brogue makers," when he was interrupted by one of the guests, who declared that "he was not in tune." Quietly protesting against the rudeness of stopping a gentleman in his song, who was at best only trying to gratify the company, he began again, only to be stopped at the same place by another

guest, who used even harder terms. The stranger—who was growing impatient—would here indignantly interpose, and appeal to the host on the gross impropriety and coarseness of these proceedings, with whom Lord Barrymore would agree, and declaring it was indecent, request the vocalist to try again, if only to oblige him and his friend. On this the song was recommenced, to be once more interrupted in the same place, and in the grossest manner, by another guest. On this, the visitor losing all patience, would turn on, and generally apply some angry epithet to the person who was destroying the harmony of the evening. This was promptly resented by the rebuked party, who rose to chastise the guest. Both parties began to fall to, when the host explained that this was a piece of "humbug," and a roar of laughter drowned expostulation and anger.

His lordship was not exempt from some singular habits. On arriving at a strange house for the night, his servant's duty was to sew the top of the sheets and blankets together, to prevent the latter touching his face, which, we are told, was "delicately irritable," while the windows were always carefully hung with blankets three deep, to exclude the light.

Living then this strange existence, turning night into day, always in quest of "fun and jollity," this noble roysterer was destined to run but a short course. His death was sudden and of a very tragic kind. He was at Rye with his regiment—and curious to say, he was considered a very painstaking and efficient officer—whence he and some French prisoners were to be sent to Deal under escort. He applied specially for the duty of commanding the party, no doubt hoping for some "fun," or excitement. When they got outside Folkstone, the commander, always goodnatured, halted at a convenient public-house, where he treated the whole party with beer and cheese. He was in great spirits, interchanged jokes with McBride, a jovial admiral, and delighted the landlady by chalking up the score behind the bar, in the usual publican's hieroglyphics, giving as he did so, an impersonation of "Hob," a favourite theatrical character. Being tired of marching, he got into his carriage, which was following, wishing to smoke.

He had his gun with him, which he had used as he marched along, to shoot any stray rabbits and gulls he

might see on the road-side. Lighting his pipe, he handed his gun to his man, who held it awkwardly between his knees, when, as the good-tempered master with his pipe was pointing out to him the coast of France, bidding him note how clear it was, the piece suddenly exploded, lodging the contents in his head. He lived but half an hour, groaning terribly all the while, and expired amid the lamentations even of the French prisoners. A cynic might find an appropriateness in the scene of his last moments—that public-house where he had been so cheerful but a few minutes before. He was no more than twenty-three.

He was succeeded by his brother the "Honourable Henry," known as the lame lord or "Cripplegate." This gentleman, with the worthy parson, were said to be accountable for all the excesses of the elder brother, encouraging him in every conceivable way. The new lord had not the same bonhomie, nor the same love of fun. His humour took a very low shape, as will be seen from the specimens recorded. Mr. Richardson, who knew both, describes this second brother as a strongly built aristocratic looking person, with a considerable share of sense, and such knowledge of the world, as is derived from mixing with the least amiable of its inhabitants. His excesses and oddities also became the public talk. He was considered very amusing, but as Mr. Ritke says, from his want of principle as well as his want of good taste, was avoided by persons of his own station.

One evening after dinner at Windsor, he got into discussion with a Colonel Cowper, as to the practicability of taking the castle, each illustrating his plans by wine-marks on the table. The colonel, a quiet, inoffensive man, was seen to have clearly the best of the argument, when the earl, mystified and half tipsy, grew mischievous, and exclaimed, "You have forgotten the River Thames," and flung a tumbler of water in his face. A scene of confusion followed; but the plea of intoxication was allowed. This was brutal enough; but in the same key was his treatment of an old officer, which was considered at the time a good specimen of jovial manners. Lord Barrymore, it should be premised, had a favourite convivial song, the burden of which, "chip-chow, cherry-chow, fol lol do riddle low," was often rapturously chorused by his associates; and the old general, Sir

Alured Clarke, who had served in America, was inclined to bore people with the rehearsal of his campaigns. The wild lord affected a desire to learn something of the Indians, and asked him "What sort of tribe were the Chip-Chows?" The old general, taken in by the sound, began at once to describe a tribe that was noted for its cruelty. With more interest still, his questioner then asked, "Who were the Cherry-Chows? Of what kind were they?" These were described as a cruel and barbarous race, who were besides known for the habit of eating their prisoners. On this the earl burst into a horse laugh, and with a noisy oath asked, "And what do you think of the Tol-lol-de-riddle-lows?" On which there was a roar from the boon companions assembled. But the old general, though made the butt of this gross buffoonery, behaved with dignity, and had the best of the joke. He rose from his seat, and as he quitted the room, said, "My lord, during my travels I have met many savages, but no such savage as yourself!"

Strange to say, this lord generally escaped chastisement, on account of the buffoonery that was mixed up with these insults. He had indeed a duel with a fat Mr. Howarth, at Brighton. A large crowd attended to see the sport, and was convulsed with laughter when the latter stripped himself to the waist, having an idea that portions of cloth, &c., were often driven in by the bullet. This comic spectacle took away the serious element, and after a random shot the affair terminated.

"Cripplegate" married a girl in Ireland of no family, but whose sister made a conquest of an old French Emigré—the Duke of Castries. He gradually sank into distress and difficulties, his house was assailed by bailiffs, whom, it is said, when he gave a dinner, he used to dress up in the faunish livery. He had finally to retire to France, where he died in great poverty, his brother-in-law, the Duke of Castries, now restored to his estates and honours, giving him shelter. "He was, with all his follies, a man," says one who knew him, "of a generous nature. He had nothing mean in his nature, and preserved his independence of spirit amid great temptations to subserviency." One of his claims to fashionable reputation, was his having invented "The Tiger," the smart juvenile servant who, in those days, was seated beside the owner of the cab, and not standing behind. This tiger was

Alexander Lee, whose name was many years ago found on popular ballads, and whose history, like all in connection with the old "fast" life, was disastrous. He rose from this low position to be joint lessee of the opera, when he formed an unfortunate attachment to Mrs. Waylett, the fascinating warbler of "Bny a Broom!" which amounted to an infatuation. This lady he married, and ruined himself to satisfy her caprices. When she died he removed from the lodgings they occupied; but, wandering about from place to place, he could find no rest, and returned to the same rooms. He locked himself in, and was found a corpse, doubled up on a chair beside the bed on which his wife had a short time before expired.

It only remains now to say something of the career of the Hon. and Rev. Augustus Barry. "I believe," says one of his friends cautiously, "neither the nobility nor the church derived much advantage from his being a member of both classes. He had the curious faculty of exhibiting himself as a perfect gentleman or a perfect blackguard. It would be invidious to say in which of the two characters he most commonly appeared." He had his distinction, like his worthy brothers, and, as we have seen, was said to have been an inmate of every gaol in England, with the exception of Newgate. He, too, died in poverty and obscurity. Of Billingsgate, the sister of the three brothers, little more is known, save the faculty of uttering oaths before described.

Altogether, it must be confessed, the Barrymores were a remarkable family.

EARTH-ROSES.

A GARDEN! Gladder than gay June it seemed; The slanting shafts of summer sunshine streamed Through leafy rifts of closely clustered trees.

The lone Hesperides
Were warded by no broader, branchier wall,
Than those low-sweeping elms, and poplars tall,
And columned cedar-groves majestic,
That sentinel'd that space;
Making a solemn silence in the place,
By tender throstle-flutings broken only.
Yet nothing sad or lonely
Was that screwea secluded garden close,
Where the glad rose
Made summer shine and sweetness everywhere.

And two of happy guise were couch'd there,
Amidst those roses; roses riper red
As Hebe's wine-draught, roses cloudy white
As is the snowiest foam that ever fled
Before a flouting wind on frolic seas,
Tost by the Nercides
In their wild dances. Roses of all hues
That Jane's alchemic sleight may interfuse
To deck her darling flower. There was no spot
In that embowered close, where clambered not

Or trailed some twinéd tuft, or branchéd spray,
Of rare rose blossoms. Every leafy way
Was curtained with white drifts and crimson bossets
Of radiant roses.

In such wild wise that their tumultuous thronging
Stirred at the heart of joy a subtle longing,
Unsearched, unspeakable, for some rare pleasure,
Kin to their lavish lusciousness, in measure
Stintless as their profusion, and of sweetness
Matching their fine completeness
Of still elusive odour, that no draught
May wholly drain.

"Hath any ever quaffed
The rose-balm whom the rose-balm satisfies?"
So whispered he,
Sleeking the soft head prone upon his knee.
From her white breast's embrace a rose she drew,
Red as Aurora's dawn-flush, and, inhaling
Its fragrance keenly, as though through and through
Its full-unfolded petals she would draw
Full answer, veiled her lustrous eyes, and, paling,
Spake mournfully as one who sightless saw
What sense is blind to. "Earth-love's changeless law
Speaks through earth's roses. They must fade and fail

For all their sweetness. Yet do they exhale
Suggestions fair, unspeakable promises,
To souls that may abide the bitter stress
Of mutability.

The rose's balm shall never satisfy,
Till all its fine unfathomable sweetness—
A shoreless sea where the last sense may stray,
A world where wordless thought may soar and play
Tetherless as young love in its first vision—
Breathe in its home land, some rare realm Elysian
Of kindred calm completeness,
Where all is as the rose-scent, sweet as love,
Deep as the heart's desire, deathless as light,
And purer than the silver shaft of night,
Say, hath the earth-rose no such word for thee
From the rose-realm above?"

So spake she, lifting that red-hearted blossom,
Fresh from her ruddier lips' light pressure. He
Stooping as fain to smell
Afresh its fragrance, leaf from leaf it fell
And strewed with scattered crimson her snow-cinctured bosom.

POPPY. IN NINE CHAPTERS.

I.

"WELL, my dear, do as you like!"
"That means, I am to do it at my peril."

"I hope there's no peril in the case."

"Well, under the pain of your displeasure."

"I can't be expected to feel pleasure; but why bandy words, Poppy? You know my opinion. I don't want to tyrannise; perhaps a woman's tact is finer than ours in such matters. We are apt to be a little rough and coarse in our estimate of human nature."

"And so you begin by showing your roughness and coarseness to your wife? But, remember, Max, I never promised to play Desdemona to your Othello!"

"Othello! psha!" said Sir Charles Maxwell, impatiently, as he turned away

and took up his hat. "Don't think I am so ridiculous as to be jealous of your cousin. But there are other things besides jealousy; the convenances, the—"

"Humbug!" said Poppy, curtly; "I'm not going to cut Charlie, to please anybody; not even you, Max."

"There's no question of cutting, my dear. I believe Captain Graham is dying of a broken heart; if you can afford a man in such a situation any consolation, pray do. My feelings ought not, under the tragic circumstances, to be considered for a moment."

"I hate you, when you try to be sarcastic, Sir Charles," said his wife, with a smile that Charles Maxwell didn't altogether like.

He adored Poppy; but he didn't adore her manners, which certainly had not that repose which marks the caste of Vere de Vere. He had married her, though she was only the daughter of his old private tutor; and though many a skilful mother and ingenuous daughter had shown him what a fine fellow they thought him, and how glad they would have been to have ministered, as fireside angels, at his opulent hearth.

"But you see I've come back to you, after all, Poppy," said he, as they lounged back together, engaged lovers, from the snailily old vicarage summer-house.

"And why not?" Poppy asked, shortly. She didn't approve of his pluming himself on his constancy in this complacent fashion. "'After all' what?" she said. "'After all' who, or whom? There ought not to be 'all,' or 'any,' if it comes to that. Why should a man flirt and flutter round a dozen girls, and then give himself a vast amount of credit because he comes back to the one he liked first?"

"And best, Poppy."

"Of course you can say so; you're bound to say it, I suppose. They always do in books, you know."

"And you, Poppy. Have you never flirted since I bid you good-bye in the snow, when your dear pretty little nose was so red?"

"You should have forgotten the red nose, Sir Charles."

"But I haven't. You said it was the frost, but I know you had been crying. By the way, don't say 'Sir Charles,' it's ridiculous now we are engaged people; call me Charlie."

"I couldn't do that."

"Oh yes you could; but what were we

saying? Of course, I remember now; have you never flirted, Poppy, since then?"

He was very much in love with her, and he wished she would be a little more sentimental; it was so nice to hear (though you might have been a *garçon volage* yourself), that a dear pretty little girl like Poppy had been languishing amongst the buttercups and daisies, and watching the sunset, and wondering if your whiskers had grown, and kissing that stud you lost in the garden, all the time you had been away.

"I?" said Poppy, standing still on the gravel path, just in front of the old apricot trees, and facing straight round at her lover, so that he could not but think what a charming picture she made in the afternoon sunshine, with the mellow old pink wall and the tender green leaves for a background, her white dress and pretty daisy complexion seeming to have absorbed all the light into themselves, as she raised her head a little higher than usual. "I? why I have never ceased to flirt, Sir Charles. Papa always says he can't remember when I began it; and yet he declares he recollects my being short-coated!"

It may be doubted whether Sir Charles at all understood to what sumptuary mysteries Poppy referred. But his face became suddenly overcast. So, after all, he might just as well have stayed away. She would never have missed him or fretted at his silence. And some of those girls had certainly been very pretty; not so piquante, perhaps, as Poppy; but, then, a life-long course of startling might not be altogether so agreeable as when it came with the shock of a surprise. To resign yourself to being startled is a paradoxical state of being which no sane man could contemplate with equanimity. He wished she would be serious for a moment; she seemed to take all his love so much for granted, and to care so little whether he were pained or pleased by what she said. But he did her injustice; Poppy's quick sympathetic nature felt in an instant that all the sunshine had died out of his face. She had not meant to hurt him; why this would never do; he ought to know her better; as if the kind of flirtations she had had could matter! But at this thought certain remembrances arose in Poppy's mind, and sent the bright pink colour flushing up into her face.

"Sir Charles," she said, walking on, and speaking more quietly than she had yet done. "I did not mean to offend you;

you have been away so long; you have forgotten that it is my way just to blurt things out. Papa always understands, I never have to explain to papa."

"But I am not your father, Poppy; and when you tell me that you have flirted with every man you came near——"

"I did not say that."

"And that you have never ceased flirting——" He was so really hurt that a sharp pang went through Poppy's innocent guilty heart. She, who picked all the snails off the gravel path to put them on the fruit trees; who fed the mice until she drove the housekeeper to give distracted warning, "all along of Miss Poppy's unconscionable doings," how could she hear the pain in her lover's voice, and not feel sorry? With one of those impulses which made her the loveable being she was, she turned suddenly to him, and throwing her arm with warm frankness round his neck, she cried—

"Don't be angry with me. If I have flirted—ever so little—I have never loved anyone else but you."

"Darling!" cried Sir Charles, in ecstasy, with his arm round her waist, and her head on his shoulder. But Poppy was a fine tall girl, not one of your twigs or slips; and as she so stood, feeling very much confused by the novelty of the situation, her eyes rose above the level of Maxwell's shoulder, and from a distant angle of the garden, she beheld her reverend father approaching, accompanied by the last person she at that moment desired to see.

"Charlie!" she exclaimed, trying to wriggle herself out of Sir Charles's arm.

"Angel!" whispered Sir Charles in his newly-found rapture, thinking the note of admiration was all for him.

But Poppy's slim figure had slipped out of his clasp; and almost before he knew it, he found himself confronted by the two gentlemen.

"You remember," said Mr. Hardwicke, speaking in a full clerical voice, "you remember Sir Charles, my nephew Captain Charles Graham."

Sir Charles bent one joint of his spine; Captain Graham bent one and a half of his; "that confounded prig has turned up again," was his mental comment, as he thus adapted his vertebrae to the circumstances.

"Sorry that scamp is in the neighbourhood," thought Sir Charles, as his dorsal column recovered the perpendicular.

Then they all three walked solemnly down the broad gravel path, Mr. Hardwicke discoursing mellifluously, for the whole party.

II.

THE wedding-day was fixed, and all Poppy's friends were immensely enthusiastic over the matter. "Such a capital match!" they all said; and so it was, but Poppy got sick of the phrases.

"Why is it capital?" she asked. "Because I have no money and Sir Charles has plenty? Don't make out I'm mercenary—besides, it's not flattering to him."

So they understood that they were to moderate their transports. In conclave assembled they still continued to envy the girl's good fortune, and to wonder at the man's infatuation. "Such an insignificant little creature!" said one. "And no manner!" added another. "What can have possessed him?" cried a third. "Run after as he was!" chimed in a fourth. And so the chorus went on, only as Poppy didn't hear it, it did not trouble her. The engagement was so short, that the course of her love could not run otherwise than smoothly. She had no mother to stand out for etiquette, or to entrench herself behind the trousseau. "Just get a few things Poppy, dear," said Sir Charles, "though I declare I shall always love you in your old white gown best, and we can pick up the rest of the paraphernalia in Paris, as we go along."

What a programme, Paris! new gowns! Theatres! Lace! the Champs Elysées, Versailles! and Poppy, who had never been beyond the borders of Berkshire, felt as though she could scarcely wait for the wedding-day.

"You seem to care more about seeing all these things than about being alone with me," said her lover, rather ruefully, after Poppy had been prattling by the hour of her plans for sight-seeing, and theatre-going.

"Of course I do, in a sense," Poppy answered, ignorant of offence, "but, you see, we are only going to be in Paris a fortnight, and I shall be alone with you all the rest of my life!"

"And is that such a terrible prospect?" asked Sir Charles, reproachfully.

"Terrible? Pray don't twist my words in that way, Max; don't you wish me to enjoy myself in Paris? What do you think? Shall we see the Empress? Oh, you must contrive that I shall see her!"

It was too early in their courtship for him to be otherwise than enchanted with all she said and did, and yet she jarred upon him, somehow. He told himself that if he were not in love with her, he should often be very vexed at her sayings and doings; never guessing that the very fact of his being in love made those sayings and doings provoking to him, whereas, to an indifferent person they would themselves have been indifferent.

One small cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, had arisen on their horizon. Sir Charles had been grievously hurt, when he found that Poppy's exclamatory "Charlie!" had been addressed over his shoulder to the distant vision of her cousin, and not, as he had fondly hoped, to himself.

"I know now, why you won't call me Charlie," he said to Poppy next day; "it's because of your cousin."

And Poppy nodded her head in acquiescence, eyeing him wistfully all the time.

"I'm sorry to see that fellow hanging about," Sir Charles remarked, a few days later. "When's he going?"

"He isn't hanging about," Poppy answered with some asperity; "he's just as much on his legs as you are."

Sir Charles looked shocked; but it did not become a lover to reprove the lady of his affections for the freedom of her speech; he would regard her phraseology as parliamentary, and overlook it. But when they were married Poppy must really reform.

"And besides," she went on, "this is his home, as much as he can have a home; he comes here for his long leave when he's nothing better to do. You don't want papa to turn him out, do you?" And Poppy, who was very channish, faced round after her custom, and looked straight into Sir Charles's handsome face.

"No! I don't want him turned out, darling," said her lover meekly; "only, when he sees he's not wanted, he might have the decency to take himself off; and we don't want him here, do we, dear?"

"Speak for yourself, Max!" cried Poppy angrily, giving his arm, which was approaching to caress her, an angry push. "'Love me, love my dog.' That's my motto. I haven't so many relations that I can spare Charlie; and it isn't nice of you to begrudge him to me!"

"Bravo!" cried Captain Graham, from behind the bench where they were sitting. "Take a cigar, Sir Charles?"

"Beast!" said Sir Charles to himself; but he only declined the cigar with politeness, and stalked stiffly away.

III.

"LISTENERS never hear any good of themselves," said Poppy, eyeing the intruder with displeasure.

"Then I'm an exception, my dear," said Charlie Graham. "I heard the best of myself, when I heard your sharp little tongue defending me."

"Besides it's mean."

"Well; I'm not above a meanness or two," said Captain Graham, calmly (and to tell the truth he wasn't). He sat down in Sir Charles's place, and stretched his legs out, and held his cigar between his teeth, and his hands in his pockets, as, with his head thrown back, he talked to his little cousin.

Somehow, Poppy didn't approve of his freedom of speech and manner, but she didn't know how to make him sit up, and draw himself into a more decorous position. He was ever so old; years older than Sir Charles. He had played with Poppy, teased her, brought her sashes and bonbons as far back as her memory could reach. He had kissed her, and patronised her, and asserted all the privileges of mature cousinship over her; how, then, was she to call upon him suddenly to treat her with the respect due to the dignity of the future Lady Charles?

There was a pause. Then Poppy said, imploringly. "Do go away, Charlie!"

"What? Because of Othello?"

"Don't be foolish; it's nothing of the kind."

"Oh! indeed."

"But as you are here, Charlie, I may as well ask you not to kiss me night and morning; you know I'm not a little girl now."

"Ah!"

"And people might think it odd."

"Might they?"

"Yes! that is if they saw it; though of course, there's nothing in it."

"Of course not."

"Don't keep repeating what I say, Charlie; say something of your own."

"But perhaps I might say something you wouldn't like."

"Why should you?"

"Well, of course, I shouldn't if it comes to that. The canons of courtesy call every man a brute who annoys any woman. And you, Poppy, you were not very complimentary just now, when

you ranked me amongst the brute creation?"

"I?" cried Poppy indignantly.

"Yes! you called me a dog. 'Love me, love my dog!' was what you said. Sir Charles appeared to think it exacting that your canine favourites were to share the privileges of his affection. I, being one of the dogs, to whom you politely referred, declare at once that I have no desire to be loved by Sir Charles. A dog is a faithful beast, my dear Poppy; he will take kicks from an old mistress, perhaps, but he may turn and bite a new master. I don't want to snarl; I don't want to show my teeth; you have called me a dog, but I don't want you to degrade me into a malicious cur; but if I have a virtue, Poppy, it is faithfulness. That's a better word than fidelity. And I should be unfaithful, my dear girl, if I didn't tell you that you're making a most confounded matrimonial mistake!"

"Charlie! how dare you?"

"All that a dog may dare, I do. Who dares do more——"

But Poppy had left him.

IV.

AFTER this, Poppy rather avoided Graham. Sir Charles ceased almost to be jealous, and things went more smoothly. There had been a period in Poppy's existence which she would now fain have forgotten. It had been after Sir Charles had wooed and ridden away, or, in plain words, after that farewell parting when "love" was "enough," and no thought of mathematical results had as yet dawned on their foolish young minds. Whilst Sir Charles was doing the grand tour, enjoying his London seasons, his summer at Baden, his Easter at Rome, and the worship at his altar of Mayfair devotees, Captain Graham had perceived that Poppy was a beautiful young woman. At first the discovery came upon him as a surprise; dismay succeeded, and in turn gave place to that sort of leisurely pleasure with which a man of the world, who has seen many beauties blossom out into life, bloom their brief day, and fade away into maternity and butchers' bills, is able to look upon a charming specimen of the sex he adores en gros, but is rather too blasé to care much about en détail. Poppy would sit upon his knee and pull his whiskers no more! Well, these had been charming diversions in their way; but

every age has its pleasures: and perhaps, better than the riding to Banbury Cross and the whisker pulling, was the sight of Poppy in her white gown, with a blue sash round her pretty waist, and her daisy complexion blooming delicately and coolly in the soft summer breezes. Charming, too, was Poppy when, like her flower namesake, she flamed out in scarlet glories of winter hood and petticoat and berry-wreathed hair. Not less refreshing was the sight of her at spring-tide, herself like a May-blossom, the little prickly thorns about her rather enhancing her delicate charms. And so it turned out that Poppy had not sat altogether like Patience on a monument, smiling at grief and Sir Charles's defection, nor had the buttercups and daisies made out all the history of her little humble life.

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. And in the spring of more than a year ago, Charlie Graham had been betrayed into the folly of telling his cousin how lovely he thought her.

"No, really?" Poppy had said, looking up at him gratefully. "Do you mean you think I am, because you love me, Charlie, or that you know I am, because you have seen so many women, and can tell?"

"Both," Charlie declared; and, quite forgetting his wonted prudence, he poured forth a whole pastoral at her feet.

"But I thought you had no money, Charlie?" Poppy said practically, after this discourse had come to an end. "And papa said you were as good as engaged to that rich Miss Steele from Sheffield?"

The very name ran down his spine like a cold blade. What prosaic minds these country folk had; prudent, and practical, and going straight at the pounds, shillings, and pence. But it pulled him up, and he was grateful to Poppy for not "flinging herself at his head;" as he afterwards told himself. He went next week and proposed to Miss Steele, and was driven off with contumely by her mamma. The young lady viewed his suit with different eyes; he was a likely man, and she was tired of the Sheffield connection. "What's the good of having money if you can't do what you like with it?" she said to her mother.

"It's all u.p. with me, Poppy," said Captain Graham, coming back exhausted from Cylinder Lodge. "The Steele mother

is a tremendous woman. I have heard of an iron will, but fancy a steel mother-in-law! I'm well out of it, and the whole metallic business; not for all the gold of Peru could I contemplate such a fate."

"Then you didn't love her, Charlie?" asked Poppy, staring hard at him.

"Love her? How could I love her? Don't I love you, Poppy, and sha'n't I always? But what's a poor fellow to do who has nothing but debts to live upon?"

"You needn't sell yourself, I suppose."

"You mistake the case, my most practical Poppy; it is I that am sold."

"Miss Steele was quite right to refuse you," Poppy said, sturdily.

"Then will you take me?"

"Not at a gift," cried Poppy, whose quick eyes had seen the selfishness of the man's nature by sudden revelation. "But, joking apart, Cousin Charlie, don't speak to me in this way any more; it will spoil everything."

"Very well," said Charlie, dejectedly. He knew she was right; but he contrived to show a tenderness for her in a thousand little ways.

When the wedding-day drew near, Poppy good-naturedly asked Miss Steele to be one of her bridesmaids. "It'll give Charlie another chance," she thought; "and who knows? Perhaps he might get to like her, in spite of the mother-in-law." But the invitation was politely refused in an icy note from that unbending lady herself.

Cousin Charlie gave the bride away.

"It'll be too much for me; don't be surprised if I faint;" he said to Poppy, a day or two before the wedding; but Poppy looked at him seriously, and the joke died away on his tongue.

There was no weeping or wailing at Poppy's wedding. "I shall do my gnashing of teeth in private," said Cousin Charlie. Mr. Hardwicke, pompous, bland, and unemotional, was not a man to feel that all sunshine had departed from his life because his portionless daughter was going to marry a baronet. He ordered a new black-silk waistcoat for the occasion, and was becomingly urbane. He insisted upon doing the whole duty of a man and a father, and read the service in majestic rolling tones himself. "Such a fine delivery," said Miss Simpkin afterwards in the expansion of the wedding feast; "such a noble voice; such a fine way of rounding his periods! I declare I never did the marriage service justice before!"

"Very," said Captain Charlie, with his mouth full of game pie. "Johnson was a fool to him!"

v.

THERE is a certain class of woman (and that not the worst either) to whom, next to the pleasures of having a man in love with themselves, is the pleasure of consoling him for being unsuccessful in his love for another. To Poppy, therefore, it was a pleasant surprise, when, about two months after her marriage the head waiter of the Vier Jahreszeiten Hotel at Wiesbaden brought her a card, upon which was Charlie Graham's superscription, and said the gentleman was waiting to know whether he could be received. "Received?" cried Poppy, springing up; "how ridiculous of Charlie to stand upon ceremony," and she was forthwith rushing to the door, when Sir Charles, putting down his newspaper, asked calmly what was the matter.

"Nothing's the matter!" cried his wife impatiently; "but only think of Charlie coming to Wiesbaden. I wonder if papa told him we were here? So nice of him just to come and see how we were getting on! Did papa tell you we were here, Charlie?" she asked as the elderly cousin entered the room.

"No; I saw your name by chance in the Anzeige, and thought I would look you up. How do?" said Charlie,descendingly, to the happy bridegroom. "Hot, isn't it? But we're on the top of a volcano, you know." And as he said it he looked at Poppy with a wicked twinkle in his nice grey eyes.

"Volcano! Nonsense," Poppy answered. "I know better about geology than that; they are always on the tops of mountains don't you know, the Geyser, and Vesuvius, and—"

"Have you breakfasted?" asked Sir Charles, interrupting Poppy's scientific communications, and wishing Graham were down the crater, like the old man in the poem.

"As much as one does," said Captain Graham; "but don't let me interrupt you." So they set to work on their coffee and rolls again.

"Have you seen papa lately?" Poppy asked. "What's he doing?"

"Being consoled by Miss Simpkin, I think," said Graham; and they both laughed. "She's got a better chance now than ever she had," he went on.

"I knew she'd try it on if ever you hooked it, and, by Jove — !"

Poor Miss Simpkin and her immemorial loves were standing jokes in the Hardwicke household, as such things and persons will be amongst housemates who have lived, more or less, each other's lives. But to explain Miss Simpkin would have been a flat and unprofitable task. To Sir Charles it seemed very poor fooling, and he was shut out of the conversation that followed, by his ignorance of the things, and names, and places of which Poppy and the frivolous Graham kept up a ceaseless chatter. On that occasion no reference was made to Miss Steele; but when she got with her cousin alone, Poppy immediately began upon the subject.

"She'd have me, I think," said Captain Graham; "but there's the Gorgon of a mother."

"That's dreadful, certainly," Poppy replied; "but I think you ought to make a sacrifice. I'm so glad I haven't got one."

"One what? A sacrifice? Let me tell you Sir Charles has somewhat the air of a victim."

"Don't," Lady Maxwell answered. "Sir Charles is the happiest man in the world. A mother-in-law I meant. Altogether it's very nice that Max has no relations," she went on expansively.

"Very, especially for the relations," Charles agreed. And Poppy, who began bursting out with a protest, broke into a sudden fit of laughter as she caught the familiar twinkle of Graham's eye. "But you mustn't talk in that way," she said, "or I shall be offended."

"Don't quarrel with an old friend in a strange land, Poppy," Cousin Charles said pathetically.

"Who wants to quarrel?" Poppy asked. And Graham didn't like to say he thought Sir Charles would like it well enough.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIX. "IT IS CRUEL TO HER AND TO ME."

"ABOVE all things, I detest underground passages," Kate says, when she has brought her account of her brief interview with her cousin to a close; "and yet, Mrs. Durgan, I couldn't bring myself to speak out my detestation of that woman openly. As it is, I have done more harm than

good: I've made him define his feelings to himself, and cast a sort of halo round her."

"I detest underground passages too, but I admit that I take them sometimes," Mrs. Durgan laughs. "Oh, Kate! I wonder, when you find me out, if you'll ever forgive me?"

Kate disregards the question. She would have to unlearn all she has learnt of Mrs. Durgan's sweet, truthful nature before she could begin to conjecture what her emotions might possibly be if any untoward set of circumstances could ever force Mrs. Durgan to take other than a light and open path.

"She asked me, when she was going away, if I had told Frank what she had been saying about his unsympathetic family, and, before I could answer her, she added, 'You found that he shared my views, I'm sure,' just as if she knew ever so much more about him than I do." Kate goes on impatiently, "Her manner towards him when they were leaving was just that of a woman who was engaged to him. How he can endure the demonstration of her power I can't think."

"Probably she will be engaged to him before they reach Bray," Mrs. Durgan says quietly. "Make up your mind to it, Kate, and be glad that the man who is sacrificed isn't dearer to you than your cousin."

Kate is silent. This subject of her stronger affection for someone else than her cousin is one that she cannot pursue with ease with Mrs. Durgan.

Meanwhile the pair under consideration are going back to Bray. The lady occupies the seat on the near side of the car, and Frank rides as close beside her as his spirited, fidgetty horse will permit him to do. But the driver acts as a barrier between them, and the words that Frank utters every now and then, though they are fraught with promise for the future, are not so perfectly binding and unmistakeable as she deems it well they should be.

Accordingly, when they are within a couple of miles of Bray, Miss Grange makes a gallant effort to conquer. She tells herself that if this effort fails, all further ones will be useless; if she does not win to-day, in fact, she must lose.

But the game must be played out quickly now. The expenses of the hotel life at Bray are eating into the soul of her sister-in-law, who begins to demand interest for the money she has expended,

in the shape of assurances of success, which Charlotte is not as yet justified in offering.

"I should like to walk the rest of the way," she cries out to Frank as he comes up to her in a spasmodic and too suddenly arrested trot. "Do you think I may do it? I'm jerked to pieces by the jolting of this car."

Frank responds by pulling up the driver, dismounting from his own horse, and helping Charlotte to alight. Then the car goes merrily bumping along without its fair freight, and the pair are left in the road that is judiciously brightened by the varied tints of the foliage in the hedges, and shadowed by the Wicklow mountains that loom far away to the right and left.

He casts his horse's bridle over his arm, and steps along to suit her slow, unhaunting pace. Even as he does it, he feels that each step is carrying him nearer to the land of bondage; but he fancies that the one who is luring him on to sojourn there with her will make it sweeter to him than any land of freedom could ever be.

"Don't you repent yourself bitterly of the folly if you're ever led into the error of paying a visit of mere politeness?" she says to him.

"I'm never led into that error," he says, with a laugh; "and I should think you were one to take your own line too decidedly ever to fall into it either."

"Don't you understand?" she says quickly. "My brother and sister pull the strings which regulate my actions just at present; they insisted upon it that it was due to Mrs. Durgan from one in my humble position that I should make acknowledgment of the honour she has done me in noticing me at all at Lngnaguilla by 'waiting upon her.'"

"The honour she has done you!" he repeats after her, and she sees that his chivalrous feeling of indignation against anyone who "unnecessarily humiliates a helpless woman," &c., is roused. "You don't mean to say your people ever take that line with you?"

"Never mind what 'my people' do," she says, affecting to speak lightly; "they are powerless to hurt me, I assure you. But let me tell my story out, and you shall hear how these two fine ladies at Breagh Place behaved to me to-day."

An instinct of honesty makes him say, "They have neither of them any of the

unpleasant attributes of fine-ladies about them, surely? I know Kate hasn't."

Miss Grange shakes her head. "They played the part of putters-down of presumption for the first time for my benefit then," she says musingly. "Frank, was it quite what you expected of your cousin, that she should try to break such a butterfly as I am on the wheel?"

"Kate is incapable of doing anything spiteful," he asserts; but the very way in which he looks with questioning eagerness at her as he says it—looks as if he were lounging far too anxiously for her to agree with him—emboldens her to say,

"So much for man's judgment; at least, so much for the judgment of a man whom a falsely-frank manner has beguiled. Why, your Kate became emphatically what women call 'nasty' and men 'spiteful' when I unintentionally wounded her by mentioning you as if I were on terms of equality with you—mentioning you as I should mention any other man who had given me his friendship as you have done; in fact, she drew herself up, and begged me to remember that 'I was speaking of her cousin,' and altogether paraded me before Mrs. Durgan as a mere outsider, in a way that made me vow that my first should be my last visit to Breagh Place."

"It wasn't like Kate," is all he can bring himself to say, in his mortified agitation, as she brings her garbled statement to a conclusion.

In a vague way he feels sure that she is not telling all the truth concerning the manner of Kate—who, as he knew well, would never take a mean and underhand advantage of any enemy. But though he thinks something is held back, in a passive way, by this quiet, sensitive, and sensible Miss Grange, he never suspects her for a moment of the active offence of lying by implication.

"Never mind," she says, presently, "in spite of her fierce demand that I should recognise her claims of kindred to you, I shall find it hard to associate you two together in my memory when I go on my way, wherever it may be. Remembering all your kindness and courtesy and all her rough unkindness, there will be no links to join you together in my mind, I'm glad to say."

Slowly as they are walking, it is the lady who regulates the pace; she feels anxiously sure that the ground is slipping away from beneath her feet far too fast for her purpose. All her

amiability towards Frank, all her animus towards Kate, all her little, premature wavings of the flag of victory and triumph will have been in vain, if Frank walks into Bray by her side this day a free man! So far, all has gone just exactly as she could have wished it to go; but, if a hitch comes now, down will come the structure that need, ambition, and a sort of jealous, contemptuous, but still genuine, love for him has raised.

"Our last walk together, Frank," she says, in a half-absent kind of way, as she slackens speed, and seems to be giving the hedge-side, along which she is sauntering, the benefit of a most thorough investigation. "I can't help thinking that the law of compensation does not work in my case; I am going away from Bray—and you and your cousin stay on here, in a lovely country, with the friends she loves best. What meritorious act has she committed that all the sunshine should fall on her side of the road, and what unpardonable sin have I sinned that all the shade should be on mine?"

She seems to warm with her words; she looks at him appealingly, searchingly, with a look that seems to crave for his sympathy. Hers is not one of those flexible, mobile faces which quiver with every shade of a change of feeling. Nevertheless, it works now under the influence of real anxiety, for time is flying, and Frank is halting.

Against his instincts, against his better judgment—almost against his inclination, so incomprehensible are the workings of this man's mind—he is led on to say,

"You shall neither leave Bray nor me, my darling. If my love can bring sunshine about your path, you shall have it for the rest of my life."

He does not seal his pledge with a kiss, but he tucks her hand in his arm as she responds very definitely and deliberately with acquiescent words to his offer, and he calls her his "own darling," in an impassioned way that rather astonishes himself, and makes him doubt whether he is such a fool for being led on to this, as he was inclined to think himself while he was hesitating a minute or two ago.

"Perhaps you had better speak to my brother at once, Frank," she says, "he is rather peculiar—rather fidgetty I must admit, and if he fancies that anything like concealment is being practised towards him, he will be annoyed."

"I'll have it out with him at once, if

you wish it," Frank says, laughing. "I can't say, for my own part, that I am particularly fond of interviewing male relations on these interesting occasions, but it has to be done."

"I have quite as great a dislike to anything like fuss and parade about these matters as you can have," she says, "but we must do as custom commands, to a certain degree." Then she laughs in her quiet way, and adds, "my brother and sister-in-law imagine they will have the freedom of your house as before, I believe; I shall have the greatest pleasure in dispelling that illusion!"

She says it with a calm enjoyment of their anticipated discomfiture that is rather staggering to him. Her people are unpleasant to him to the last degree, but they are her people still, and it shocks him that she can be so ready to turn upon them, and pay them back evil for the good they have done her in bringing her under his notice. But his lazy habit of allowing things to settle themselves, his distaste for explanations, his antipathy to the Granges, and his vain liking for the woman by his side, all combine to keep him from offering any protest against this cool disclaimer of any debt of gratitude being due from her to her brother.

"Mrs. Constable will be the greatest sufferer in this affair, Frank," she says, presently, "she will have to renounce that cherished child of yours to me, for I will have no interference with my management: understand this, I will be everything or nothing in your house."

"You shall be everything," he laughs, "don't vex yourself by supposing that my soul cleaves to Mrs. Constable to such a degree that I shall oppose her exit from under my roof-tree." Then he goes on to explain that the Constable faction have made him taste of the waters of bitterness perpetually, on account of that money of poor May's, which he is to do as he pleases with while he lives.

Sagacious Charlotte takes in every detail connected with the case, and weighs the consequences well of her marriage with him, even now in the first flush of her engagement. If he dies before her, the money will go to May's child, and she (Charlotte) will have nothing to depend on but the money she may be able to put by out of the income, while she has the spending of it.

"I'll make him work, and settle all that he gets by his writings on me," she

thinks. "I know how to sting him on; when once I am his wife I'll let him know the contempt I have for want of energy in men." On the whole, she thinks that though there might be a possibility of her doing better in the matrimonial mart, the probability is that she would do infinitely worse if she let this opportunity pass by. Therefore she determines that the engagement shall be made known as speedily as possible.

"Frank Forester has asked me to marry him, and I have said yes," she says, the instant they come into her brother's presence, and Mr. Grange tries not to look as overjoyed as he feels, at this blessed realisation of their hopes and schemes.

Frank is rather astonished at the way he is being regulated by his last enslaver. She arranges the time and the terms in which he is to make known to his family the blessing he has brought upon himself. "Miss Mervyn had better understand at once that she must alter her manner towards me, or make the sacrifice of holding no further intercourse with you, Frank," she says. "I have always felt that it is the due of any man I may marry, that his family shall treat me with respect."

"You are not fond of going out and fighting windmills I hope, are you?" he says, with a laugh, and she answers quietly,

"I will alienate you from any one who displeases me; it is not fair to her, nor to me, that she should continue in the error of thinking me a powerless person who may be offended with impunity. I hope you are not annoyed at my being so out-spoken?"

She does not look as if she had a hope about the matter. Her whole manner is fraught with indifference to any opinion he may have about it.

"I always like out-spoken people," he says, evasively; "you know where you are with them." He has begun his sentence with the intention of declaring that he will be as out-spoken as herself, and that she had better understand from the first that nothing will make him forfeit his cousin Kate's friendship; but his love of peace induces him to relinquish his determination, and for the first time in his life he feels himself to be a coward.

Worse than this, he feels himself to be a fool, when, later on in the day, he finds himself alone with Bellairs, and knows that the onus is on him of communicating the intelligence of his contemplated change of condition to his friend.

"You don't mean to say that she has

done you like that, Forest? Why her game has been too plain all along; you must have seen it."

"If a girl loves a fellow she can't always conceal her feelings," Frank expostulates.

"Loves a fellow! that woman hasn't it in her to love anything but ease and luxury; if I were free I'd make her an offer for the sake of freeing you, and then I'd throw her over as remorselessly as I would any other false-hearted cat. Kate fathomed her at once."

"Kate is jealous of her," Frank says, uneasily; "but look here, old fellow; I'm going to marry her, so the less you say the better; we may remember your words awkwardly by-and-by when she's my wife; the mischief's done, and, after all, she's a clever girl."

"Good luck and happiness to you, however it goes," Bellairs says, heartily; "now I must tell you something about myself."

CHAPTER XL. "I'LL HAVE IT OUT WITH YOU."

"My cousin Georgie has asked me to keep it quiet, for some reason or other; but I think the less humbug there is about these matters the better. The fact is, I'm engaged to her," says Captain Bellairs.

"The devil you are!" Frank blurts out, his thoughts reverting to Kate in an instant. Bellairs safely out of the field, Kate might have been his, after all, if only that clever, cautious Charlotte had not taught him to think that it would be a very good thing that he should marry her. Not that a doubt has as yet risen in his mind as to the wisdom of the step he has taken—but Kate free, both hand and heart free, as he hopes, and himself fettered! Unquestionably the position is a perplexing if not altogether a disagreeable one. Small wonder that he feels annoyed with his friend for not having told him before of this engagement with Mrs. Durgan.

"Georgie is a dear little woman, and a clever little woman into the bargain," Bellairs says, rather discontentedly; "but I'm not prepared to swear that I am desperately in love with her, or anything of the kind. I've gone through the real thing, and I know what it is; but our marriage will keep Georgie in the home she loves, which she would have to leave in the ordinary course of events; and I am quite fond enough of her to make her as happy as a reasonable woman can expect to be made."

"I don't see through her object in

keeping it dark so long," Frank urges. "Has she kept it from Kate as well as the rest of us?"

Captain Bellairs turns a shade paler. "I'm sorry to say she has," he says; "and, to tell the truth, I am feeling more about the concealment having been practised towards Miss Mervyn than I like to talk about." As he speaks, his thoughts re-traverse the sunny paths he has been treading with Kate during these last few weeks, and as he recalls sundry unadvised looks and words that have passed between them, he is not conscience-free.

"Kate isn't a girl to make a mistake," Frank says. "You know best how far you have gone with her; but she never magnifies small civilities, and she's not at all the type of girl to deliver herself up a feeble victim to unrequited affection—"

"I'm not conceited ass enough to imagine that she has given me a thought," Bellairs interrupts; and Frank answers (his mind, as usual, full of himself),

"I had myself in view rather than you when I spoke, to tell the truth. It's needless my attempting to conceal the fact that I have been very spooney on Kate, and at one time she cared a good deal for me. However, all that's at an end, and Kate isn't a girl to be jealous of a girl who succeeds her, if she happens to think well of the girl: as it is—" He pauses, and Bellairs takes up the word.

"As it is, she doesn't think well of this girl; and you have more regard than you're quite prepared to allow left for her opinion. Well, Frank, old boy, there's no help for it now."

"I wish you would come over to Breagh Place with me. We will explode the two facts at the same time, and they'll act as counter-irritants one on the other. I have worse things than you have to endure. There is Mrs. Constable to be faced, informed, and finally ousted from my house, which will be the stage for a scene of carnage when she hears I am going to marry again." Frank says all this with a slight effort to be free and unembarrassed, jocular, and at peace in his manner; but he fails, and his air of dejection appears to infect his friend.

"I also shall have torrents of feeling to stem when Cissy Angerstein finds out that I am going to marry Georgie Durgan, and live in Ireland altogether. Poor girl! she has nourished a delusion for years, and it has embittered our intercourse and estranged me from her in a measure; all

the same I don't like the idea of paining her, and I shrink from the task of telling her."

"It's the eternal rain, and this enervating climate that has done for us both," Frank grumbles. "Those infernal cars, too! I have been obliged to hold her on several times when the road has been rough; but we must go through with it now!"

"Look here, Forest," Bellairs says, eagerly; "don't misunderstand me, I am a lucky fellow to have got Mrs. Durgan; she's a woman any man could love and admire and trust; she's one of the dearest and best creatures; don't imagine for a moment that I don't perfectly appreciate her —"

"But you don't perfectly appreciate the luck of which you speak," Frank says.

They are certainly not too happy in their successful wooing, not too pleased with the prospect of being the possessors ultimately of the ladies they are designing to wed. Success has not unduly elated either of them, and the mood in which they start to ride over to Breagh Place the day after Miss Grange made her successful coup near Bray, is a markedly depressed one. But their spirits rise under the influence of the exercise and the conviction that there is a positive necessity for facing this climax which is approaching.

There is something in the manner of the men which prepares the women, who know every expression of the faces before them, for what is to come.

"You have broken our compact, Harry," Mrs. Durgan says, reprovingly; "I can see you have." Then with a heightened colour, she puts her hand on his arm and pulls him down on to the arm of her chair, and whispers to him,

"You don't know what mischief you have done, if you have made mention of an engagement that is very likely to be broken."

He does not love, that is to say, he is not in love with the woman who says this, and with all the force of his passionate nature he does still love Kate Mervyn. Nevertheless, when Mrs. Durgan speaks of the possibility of the breaking of their engagement, that engagement suddenly becomes a dear and valued thing to him, and he resents the idea of any fracture occurring to it, as indignantly and genuinely, as if he had not been, for weeks, wishing to wake and find it all a mere chimera of the brain.

He has all a man's nervous dread of any-

one hearing anything about him that is detrimental to his dignity, or at all subversive of the idea that he is omnipotent with any woman with whom he desires to be omnipotent. In addition to this abstract aversion to being suspected of aught resembling failure, he has a special aversion to the possibility of Kate hearing that another woman, after holding him in the hollow of her hand for some time, can calmly speak of throwing him away, as if it were not an unlikely contingency. These are his paramount sensations. Superadded to these is the human instinct which teaches us to keep every wond concealed.

A moment's observation of Kate and Frank convinces Bellairs that he need not fear detection from them. Frank is eagerly extenuating his own conduct, and trying to prove that Miss Grange's has been such as becomes a modest young maiden (on promotion) throughout; and Kate is listening to him in silence, with a pitying, sorrowful look on her face that damages Miss Grange in her lover's estimation, far more effectually than any words spoken in intemperate haste and anger could have done.

"You see," Frank is urging, "when a fellow can't get the woman he loves, it isn't good for him to live alone, so the only thing to be done, is to take the woman who loves him."

"She does love you then; I am glad you feel that, Frank. Well, dear, all that remains for me to say, is, may you be very happy."

"You have no hard thoughts about me, Kate; bless you for that," he says, but in his secret soul he is rather hurt that she can so entirely renounce him as to have no "hard thoughts" of him, even when she hears that he is going to be married to someone else.

"Bellairs is in the same box," Frank says, with a little uneasy suspicion of being a trifle revengeful about something.

"In the same box? Do you mean that he is in love with Miss Grange, too?" she asks, kindling into real, womanly, jealous wrath in an instant.

"I mean that he is going to be married to Mrs. Durgan," Frank mutters, averting his eyes from the face that is suffused for one moment by a crimson blush, and that pales the next, under the influence of what must be a most heart-sickening pang to run the white flag up above the red in such a sudden way.

"Going to be married!" she says, slowly. "Frank! you are not playing

with me, are you? because you are shaking my trust in her, as well as in him——"

"Thon you have been putting trust in him again, foolishly!" Frank half questions, half asserts, "it's no use giving women lessons, however sharp and thorough they may be; they never profit hy them. That Torquay business ought to have taught you to have guarded your heart against him again."

"Why Frank, I learnt it so badly that it didn't even teach me to gnard my heart against you, at one time," she says, with just a touch of this newly-acquired bitterness of hers. Then she goes on to speculate in lowered tones—for the conversation between the other pair has nearly died away into silence—as to the reason why this reticence has been observed towards her; as to the motive that could be powerfn enough to throw a shade of seeming falseness over one of the frankest souls that had ever apparently belied itself, within Kate's experience.

"She had her reasons, be snre of that," Frank says, caustically. He is not too well disposed towards the sex at present, and is quite inclined to attribute any amount of envy, hatred, malice, and double dealing to any mentioned member of it. The thought of his recently-acquired Charlotte, and of all he will have to endure at her steady, composed, passive hands, stings him into feelings and utterances of injustice against the whole sisterhood.

"She had her reasons, and I don't think we have very far to look for them," he goes on, scanning Kate's changing countenance with angry eyes as he speaks. "I haven't met with the angelic woman in this world yet who would spare herself the pleasant spectacle of a sister-woman making a fool of herself. Mrs. Durgan was too sure of her own position with him to feel any alarm at the idea of your offering him the most potent flattery you could offer; she was all right, she didn't care for your after-smarts."

There is no sympathy for Kate in either his words or his way as he says all this. Further than this, there is no sympathy for her in his heart. In his estimation she has forfeited everything of that kind, both from himself and the world in general, by suffering affections to wander away in the direction of any other man than himself. True, her state smooths all difficulties of feeling on her account out of the way of his marriage with Charlotte;

but he would have preferred a different process of smoothing altogether.

She likes him so well, so heartily and thoroughly still in her generous, forgiving way, that it hurts her to fathom this ungenerous hardness on his part. There was nothing unwomanly, nothing forward nor unworthy in her demeanour, towards Captain Bellairs. It wounds her love of veracity, therefore, as well as her womanly pride, when Frank angrily assumes that there have been these reprehensible things, and that he is sorry to be compelled to openly manifest his disapproval of them.

"We'll turn to the pleasanter topic of your engagement, Frank," she says, quickly. "Let unrealities and vain imaginings alone, and tell me more about the happy reality you have achieved. When and where do you marry?"

"In London, I suppose," he answers, haltingly.

The pleasant topic will not get itself well and easily talked about, it appears. It is projected in a jerky way into their intercourse, and he is sensitively alive to the fact that Kate is aware that it is not the one about which his thoughts twine most tenderly.

"In London! among you all?" she replies, softly.

"I don't know about that. My mother is rather queer, and Gertrude gets on the stilts without a moment's hesitation. She's going to be married to that fool, Clement Graham, you know, and she has it all her own way (as the wealthy ones always have) with my mother just now. She may choose to think that I, being her brother, am making a bad match."

"If you never have the same thought it will matter very little what the rest of the world think," Kate says, encouragingly. "I always like men who gang their own gait without veering about with every contrary opinion that may be wafted forth by their various friends."

"Whether he's right or whether he's wrong?" Frank questions; and when she says "Yes," he remarks discontentedly that he is as far as ever from knowing what she really thinks of Charlotte Grange.

He is obliged by the recognised forces of his condition to go off to Bray soon, and Captain Bellairs goes with him. There are a few constrained parting words spoken between the latter and Kate, but they tell

either very little of the real state of the other's emotions.

"I ought to say something very pretty to you about Frank," he says; "but the fact is, I can't think of anything excepting that I hope he will be happy."

"Thanks; that at least everyone who knows him must hope," Kate answers.

"There's a good deal of risk in it."

"Yes, there's a good deal of risk in every marriage."

"She'll tone him down a bit. The exuberant spirit of youth won't be able to stand out against that depressing, stolid calm of hers."

"You're not too hopeful for him."

"I'm not too hopeful for anyone in affairs of this kind. As far as I have seen, before the fatal day arrives one or other of the contracting parties awakes to a full knowledge of the folly he or she is about to commit."

"I mustn't detain you," Kate says nervously in response to this. "Let me congratulate you at any rate, and then—go."

He takes her hand and gives it a strong, long clasp. He looks into her eyes, with eyes that are lighted by the fire of such passionate feeling for her, that it shocks and staggers her to remember that he is honour-bound to the powerless woman behind them, sitting there in her touching helplessness, watching this scene, which must be fraught with so much meaning for her. With a sudden despairing movement of the head, she withdraws her hand from his and whispers,

"Never think that I have a single hard thought of you; weak as I have been, I have never been weak enough to look forward to a happier ending for myself than this."

She passes down among the tall ferns and flowering plants as she says this, and goes out into the garden, out of ear-shot of the farewells which she fears are being interchanged behind her, hoping for one hour at least to herself in which to battle down, to defeat and kill the crowning misery of her life.

But the two men have not been gone five minutes before a messenger comes from Mrs. Durgan, with a request that "Miss Mervyn will come to her at once."

When she goes, she is greeted with the words—

"Now Kate, I'll have it out with you."

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 313. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A. SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VII. PRECAUTIONS.

THE sharp jingle of the rusty bell startled Captain Studley, endeavouring to piece together his wandering thoughts, and to realise to himself what had occurred. After a hurried glance at his daughter, who was lying moaning in her half-sleep, and tossing to and fro upon her pillow, he left the room, and with quick, nervous footsteps made for the gate.

"Who's there?" he asked, in trembling accents, before he opened it.

"All right," was the answer, in Heath's well-known deep voice.

"You have been a long time," muttered Studley, as he closed the door behind him.

"The chemist had gone to bed," said Heath, "and I had to knock him up; but he was a civil, stupid fellow, and swallowed my tale, and gave me all I wanted with the utmost readiness. Has the servant returned?"

"Yes," said Studley; "she came soon after you left. I spoke to her as we agreed, and it ended pretty much as you anticipated—she was frightened at the idea of infection, and would not come in; so she has gone home, promising to send her mother, who is accustomed to nursing sick people, in the morning."

"So far, so good. By that time we shall know what to do with her," said Heath. "Now tell me about your daughter."

"Not in there—don't go in there," cried Studley to his companion, who was making for the dining-room; "stand here on the steps for an instant."

"Where you please," said Heath, with a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders; "only let me know. Has she come to her senses?"

"Yes," answered Studley; "that is to say, partly, poor girl. She looks round her in a strange dazed way, and does not seem to realise where she is. More than once she has started up in bed with a short, sharp cry, and, when I have tried to soothe her, she has asked me if it were not a horrid dream. Of course I told her it was; but she is in a pitiable state, constantly moaning and tossing about in the bed. I don't know what we shall do with her!"

"This draught will keep her quiet," said Heath, taking a vial from his pocket, "more especially if you add to it five drops from your own landanum bottle. It is of vital importance that for the next twenty-four hours she should be ignorant of all that has passed, and so far helpless as to be unable to leave the room, or hold communication with anyone but you."

As Studley took the bottle he raised his eyes searchingly to Heath's face, saying, "There is—there is nothing in this but what you said, Heath, I suppose?"

"Bah!" said Heath, snatching it from him, extracting the cork with his teeth, and pouring some of the contents down his throat. "I suppose that will satisfy you of its harmlessness. Take it now, put the additional five drops to it, and see that she swallows it at once; and as soon as she drops off come to me."

"Not down-stairs," said Studley quickly; "we can sit on the landing outside her door. It would be dangerous to leave her unwatched."

"It would be a great deal more dangerous to have her listen to what we said,"

said Heath; "but I can satisfy myself on that point when I come up. One word more. She has said nothing but what you have told me? she has made no reference to—to anything that she saw?"

"Not a syllable," said Studley; "indeed she can scarcely be said to have got her senses back yet."

"Give her that, then," said Heath, "and we shall be sure of her for the time we require."

After Studley had gone up-stairs, Heath went into the dining-room and looked round him. The lamp shone brightly; the fire which he had lighted when he came to clear the room was burning in the grate; the jewel-casket and its contents had been removed, and the cloth replaced. One of the hanging corners of this cloth was deeply stained. In making his careful survey he came upon this, and, taking out his pocket-knife, cut off the dark corner, and ripped the cloth above it into jagged strips.

"That looks as if a dog had done it," he muttered to himself. "What was that he said about a mark on the carpet? Ah, here it is!" and stooping down he examined it thoroughly. It was not on the carpet, but on the hearth-rug—an irregular-shaped crimson stain. Heath considered for a moment. Then he thrust the poker in amongst the burning coals. When he had made it red-hot he pulled the poker forth, and holding it immediately above the stain, let it drop, left it there for an instant, and then rolled it three or four times over with his foot, finally picking it up and replacing it in the fender. "I think that will do," he said, looking at it, "nobody could doubt but that that was the result of an accident, and now every troublesome trace is destroyed. A close risk though," he muttered, shaking his head, "and with such a fellow as this in confidence, who can tell when he is safe?" He turned to go up-stairs. Then suddenly looked over his shoulder at the spot where *that* had been. There was a dark shadow there now, he could swear. He stepped back to the table, turned the lamp round, and the shadow was gone. Then with a last sigh of relief he left the room.

He found Studley waiting for him on the landing at the top of the stairs. No sound came from the bed-room, though the door was ajar, and Studley, pointing towards it, whispered "She is sound."

"Did you give her the draught?" asked Heath.

"Yes," said Studley, "she took it quite quietly, and scarcely knew what it was—I believe you can do anything with her now—and in a few minutes she fell into quite a peaceful slumber. Poor girl!" he muttered, "it would be almost better for her if she never woke."

"That is entirely a matter of opinion," said Heath, "but what we have to do is to attend to business. This wretched affair—brought about, mark, by sheer necessity, not by any wish of mine—has changed the whole programme; the money and jewels plainly are no longer safe here, they must be removed by me instead of by you as we originally intended, and no steps must be taken towards parting with the diamonds for months to come."

"Where do you propose to take the things?" asked Studley.

"I think to Paris, but I have not decided yet," replied Heath.

"Why can't I take them?" asked Studley eagerly. "I cannot remain in this place; I shall go mad if I remain here."

"And what is to become of your daughter?" asked Heath, turning upon him savagely. "She cannot go from here; she holds our lives in her hands, and you are answerable for her. You must remain here professedly in charge of your sick child, and all the inquiries that are to be made, and all the work that is to be done outside must be done by me."

"When will he be missed, do you think?" whispered Studley.

"That is the first point on which I intend to assure myself," said his companion. "I shall go to town the first thing to-morrow morning, in order to ascertain if his intention of coming here to-day was known to anyone."

"I shouldn't think it would be," said Studley. "It isn't very likely that a fellow who was coming down to pay money which he had lost at cards, would care to inform anyone of his errand."

"No," said Heath, "I think you are right there. And there is another reason why he should keep silence."

He pointed as he spoke towards the bedroom door.

Studley at first looked up at him blankly, but suddenly he said, "Great heavens! I had forgotten all about that. If she really cared for him, it is enough to turn the poor girl's brain."

"That is an additional necessity for keeping a strict watch upon her," said

Heath, "and that duty and responsibility must necessarily devolve entirely on you. However, she can be safely left now for a few minutes, and I want you to come down-stairs and help me to pack those things in the portmanteau."

When the portmanteau—a strong black one, with Studley's name on it in white letters—was fully packed, it was found to be very heavy indeed.

"You will have some difficulty in carrying this, won't you?" asked Studley, who had to take both his hands to lift it from the ground, "and yet it would not be advisable to give it into anyone else's custody."

"I can carry it well enough," said Heath, "and you may be perfectly certain that no one else touches it, until its contents have been deposited in a place of safety. By the way, I shall want to be up early in the morning, and to get across to the station before the omnibus starts. Is there any chance of obtaining a fly in the village?"

"They keep one at the Lion," said Studley; "but the train before that which the omnibus meets goes soon after seven o'clock."

"That is the one which I intend to take," said Heath. "It would be advisable for me to show early at the bank, and I have rather a hard day's work before me there. I shall lie down in your den for a few hours, and I am sure to wake in good time. You, I suppose, will sleep in the chair by your daughter's bed-side?"

"Yes," said Studley, "I suppose I must."

"You will be guided in your conduct to her by circumstances, remember," said Heath. "From the little I have seen of her she is a girl of great force of character; but you will have sufficient influence over her to keep her quiet for forty-eight hours. In that time I shall be back, and we can consult further. Now good-bye."

He put out his hand, and had held it out for a minute before Studley met it with his own. For an instant an angry flush rose on Heath's cheeks, but it died away speedily as he repeated, "Good-bye; remember all that depends on your care and watchfulness!" When he reached the captain's room, Heath smoked a pipe and read a book—he could not have told you what, the first that came to hand—before stretching himself on the ragged old ottoman which was to serve him as couch. When he had blown out the light and

closed his eyes he fell asleep at once, and slept calmly and peacefully until daybreak, when he arose, and taking the portmanteau with him, walked off to the Lion, where he roused the still slumbering stable people and ordered a fly.

Some of the younger gentlemen attached to the banking establishment which was still known as Middleham's, were a trifle late in putting in an appearance the next day, for on Monday morning they were accustomed, as they described it themselves, to "cut it rather fine." Sunday was for most of them a day of pleasure and recreation; in the summer time they "to the woodlands did repair," and boating excursions and campings out, and dinners at the various pretty suburban places of resort, the return from which was often prolonged late into the night, rendered their forced early rising more than usually disagreeable. Even during the autumn and winter, Sunday was the chosen day for these social gatherings among themselves or with other joyous fellows of the same age and standing in life, the result being that there was immense difficulty in what the witty Moger described as "brushing the cobwebs out of your eyes on Monday mornings."

The relations between the younger gentlemen and Rumbold, the bank porter, who sat on a hard bench immediately inside the ever swinging doors, were of a confidential nature, and much freedom of talk passed between them. In former days they were in the habit of receiving from Rumbold information regarding the movements of Mr. Middleham, who had been by Moger irreverently christened "Old Fireworks," and was generally spoken of by that appellation; and now the same agency was worked, and Rumbold was called upon to report progress in the case of the present manager, who, at the same fount of humorous inspiration, had been dubbed "Hampstead." A stout, red-faced, black-haired man, Rumbold, who was reported once to have been a butcher, and whose knowledge of prime cuts and wing-ribs was utilised by the younger gentlemen at the social feeds, for which he acted as their caterer; otherwise a quiet, unassuming man, with a sharp eye for any suspicious-looking character on the wrong side of the swinging doors, and a power of throwing a whole scuttle full of coals on to the fire at one cast, a quality which did not diminish his popularity with those of the younger gentlemen,

whose fate it was to encounter every buffet of the wind which each customer brought in with him.

"Halloo, Rummy!" said the latest of the younger gentlemen, as he hustled into the bank, looking very blinking about the eyes and very dry and feverish about the lips, "I am a trifle late this morning—has Hampstead come?"

"Come?" said the porter, who, since the occurrence of the murder, had, with his wife, taken up his quarters at the bank, the old housekeeper being pensioned. "Come! I should rather say he had come. He walked in as I was sweeping out the office this morning, just before eight, looking as fresh as paint, and carrying a portmanteau. He told me to ask my Missus to send him up some breakfast—am and eggs, and tea—and when I was last in there to make up his fire he was blazing away at the papers like one o'clock."

"What's he brought a portmanteau for?" asked Mr. Smowle, as he hung up his great-coat and hat in the little passage appropriated to those garments—"he can't be going away?"

"Can't he be going away?" said the porter, whose phrases, whenever possible, were of an interrogatory character, "I should say that he could be going away very much; and more than that, that he is, seeing that he asked me to get him a Continental Bradshaw just now."

"What a lark," said Mr. Smowle. "Then we shall only have old Frodsham in charge, and we can easily fudge him. I shall be able to get a little longer sleep then. I am beastly tired this morning I know. Am I last, Rummy?"

"All except Danby," said the porter, "he ain't turned up yet."

"Danby not come? Why, he's generally the first of all."

"Yes, generally," said the porter, "but I suppose he's been keeping it up, like the rest of you."

Mr. Smowle has hardly perched himself on his rickety stool behind an enormous ledger, when Mr. Heath's bell rings violently. Mr. Smowle breaks off a very interesting story about his previous night's exploits which he is telling to his neighbour, a story in which "three goes of Scotch whisky," seemed to bear a conspicuous part, to remark that "Hampstead is in a rasping humour this morning, Rummy says—he's been here since ever so early, and is walking into the work like knife."

"He will be walking into some of us

like knife I should think, from the manner in which he rings his bell," said Mr. Bentle, the gentleman addressed. "There it goes again. Look at old Rummy running!"

Mr. Heath sat at his desk in his private room up to his eyes in business; the black portmanteau, carefully laid down on the side on which Studley's name was blazoned, was on a chair within reach; and even in the midst of what seemed to be his most pressing business, Mr. Heath would cast an occasional glance at this portmanteau, to assure himself of its safety. When he thought of it and its contents, notwithstanding all the fearful anxiety on his mind, he could scarcely refrain from a cynical smile. If the clerks in the outside office only knew what that portmanteau contained! if the detectives, who were supposed to be still at work, piecing together scraps of evidence! if the newspaper writers who were so sarcastic on the detectives, and so confident that nothing would ever come of their search!

Monday was always a heavy post day at Middleham's; and that morning an enormous pile of letters had been brought in. They were in various languages, but the manager seemed to read them all with the same facility. Many of them dealt with enormous sums, and these he laid aside, reading the ordinary ones through at a glance, and noting his instructions in regard to them in a small, fine hand on the back of each. To the important documents he gave greater time, going into deep thought and heavy calculations, out of which he came with furrowed brow and aching head.

"I am sick of it," he murmured, pushing away a mass of papers from before him. "I must go; this business is telling on my nerve and my brain. Once let me see myself well clear of this affair, and I will quit Middleham's and its reminiscences, for ever. Now for the first step." He rang the bell sharply, that peal which had attracted the attention of Messrs. Bentle and Smowle.

"I wish to see Mr. Danby," he said, glancing over the letter which he held up before his face at the attending Rumbold.

"Mr. Danby ain't arrived yet, sir," said the porter, in a deferential voice, very different from that in which he was accustomed to carry on his conversations with the younger gentlemen.

"Not arrived!" said Mr. Heath, laying down the letter and glancing at the clock

on the mantelpiece. "Ask Mr. Frodsham to step to me and bring the attendance-book." When Rambold had left the room, the manager opened one of the drawers of his desk, and, taking out a small looking-glass, carefully surveyed himself in it. Returning it to its place, he opened another drawer, whence he took a silver flask, which he placed to his lips, and had just restored it to its former position, and turned the key upon it, when Mr. Frodsham entered the room.

"Good morning, Frodsham," said the manager. "I have a bit of special work here which I wanted Mr. Danby to do, and I find he has not arrived. I have not been able to check the attendance of the gentlemen since I took up my position here; but I believe he is pretty punctual, is he not?"

"Most punctual, sir," said Mr. Frodsham, "and I cannot understand his absence, unless indeed he is ill. Now if it had been Mr. Smowle—"

"Yes," said Heath, with a grave smile, "I could understand it very well then. Oh, here is the attendance-book." He took it from the porter, and turned over a few of the leaves. "No, as you say, Mr. Danby is always one of the first to arrive, while Mr. Smowle figures horribly."

"Danby, surely, must be ill," repeated Mr. Frodsham.

"I should hope not," said Heath. "He is generally a steady young man; but he is mortal, like the rest of us; and yesterday was Sunday, and he may possibly have been with some of the other gentlemen on a jollification and have overslept himself, or be suffering from next mornin's headache. Will you be good enough to ask the gentlemen whether Mr. Danby was in company with any of them yesterday?"

Mr. Frodsham departed on his errand, and in a few minutes returned.

"No," he said. He had questioned all the gentlemen, and they had none of them seen Mr. Danby, since the closing of the bank on Saturday afternoon.

"Well, then, it is no use our worrying ourselves further about it," said Mr. Heath, "except that if he has not arrived by twelve o'clock, I wish you would be good enough, Frodsham, to send a messenger to his lodgings, and inquire whether he is really ill."

"I should hope it would be nothing serious," said Mr. Frodsham, "Danby is a general favourite in the bank."

"And he would be particularly useful to me at this moment," said the manager,

"as he writes better French than any of the others, and I shall probably have to leave this matter of Mieville and Company, of Brussels, in his hands."

"Are you going away, sir?" said Mr. Frodsham, with surprise.

"Only for a night or so," said Heath; "but I have information this morning of something going on in Paris which, I think, will require looking into by me presently. If Danby is ill, the Mieville matter must stand over till my return. So see that he is inquired after, please."

Most of the younger gentlemen had returned from their luncheon, and Mr. Smowle was cursing the fate which compelled him to return to work immediately after the mid-day meal, without allowing him to indulge himself in the solace of tobacco, when the faithful Rumbold, in one of the intervals of fire-stoking, sidled over to the desk, and, while pretending to be occupied in moving one of the large ledgers, said,

"There's going to be a vacant stool, I guess, in this establishment, Mr. Smowle."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Smowle, looking up.

"What do I mean?" said Rumbold, as usual, interrogatively, "why, exactly what I say. The guv'n'r sent up a messenger to young Danby's lodgings to see if he was ill, and the messenger has just come back."

"Well, there's nothing much the matter with him, I suppose," said Mr. Smowle. "Monday morning head-ache, eh, Rummy?"

"Oh, isn't there nothing much the matter with him?" said the porter, with a redundancy of negative. "What do you think the answer at his lodgings was? That he went out some time yesterday afternoon, without saying where he was going or when he should come back, and he didn't come home all night; and they have heard nothing of him since."

"Hallo, Walter D.; hallo, my young friend!" said Mr. Smowle, shaking his head; "this looks very bad. I hope you are not going to rob me of my character as the black sheep of this establishment, because that wouldn't do me much good, and might do you an amazing amount of harm. Didn't say where he was going, and didn't come home all night? Ah, well, well, well! What did Hampstead say when he heard that message?"

"What did he say?" said Rumbold. "Why, he shook his head very hard, and didn't seem to like it a bit. Mr. Frodsham was in the room when it came, and he seemed regularly in the dumps."

"No right-minded person, Rumbold," said Mr. Smowle, looking up at him, "could contemplate any lapse from the paths of virtue without feeling, as you are pleased to express it, 'in the dumps.' Besides, Danby, unlike myself, was of some use in this establishment."

"That's just what's put the manager out so," said Rumbold. "He isn't one to take on because one of you gentlemen has a sick head-ache or has been out for a lark; but he wanted Mr. Danby particularly just now. I heard him say so."

"What did he want him for?" asked Smowle.

"To take charge of the foreign correspondence while he is away," said the porter. "The manager's going away to Paris to-night. I told you it wasn't for nothing he sent for the Continental Bradshaw."

"Going to Paris? What, is there anything special on there?"

"From what I could make out, I should say there was," said Rumbold. "Some of them foreign discount agents playing up their games again no doubt, and the manager is going to look after them himself. There would be a fine chance for you now, if you could speak French, to cut in and take Mr. Danby's place."

"Parlez vous Français?" said Mr. Smowle. "There are many to whom this question is addressed"; for the rest vide advertisement. No, Rummy, the French which I acquired during a fortnight at Boulogne is limited, and I certainly could not undertake to conduct a correspondence in that language."

So the day wore on and the evening came, when the younger gentlemen were released from their toils, and went away, bestowing very little thought upon their missing comrade. But the manager remained long after their departure, sending out for some dinner about five, a thing which he had never been known to do before, and at seven despatching Rumbold to fetch a cab.

When he announced the arrival of the vehicle, the porter intended to take the portmanteau, but was surprised to find that Mr. Heath had it already in his hand.

"No, thank you," he said, checking the movement which Rumbold made to take it from him. "I can carry it very well myself, and I want you to look in the address-book and see where Mr. Danby lives, and tell the cabman to drive there. I should like to learn something of him before going."

When Rumbold came out with the address, he found the manager already seated in the cab, and the portmanteau with him, so that all he had to do was to direct the driver to South Molton-street, and to retire into the bank very much puzzled at all that had taken place.

Mrs. Wilkins, the landlady of Mr. Danby's lodgings, was not best pleased on hearing from her maid-of-all-work, "A man wanted to see her about Mr. Danby, please," but on emerging from the underground regions in which she passed most of her time she was confronted by Mr. Heath, and was at once much impressed by his manner. He asked whether anything had been heard of the missing tenant, and seemed quite distressed when Mrs. Wilkins answered in the negative. He took great pains to make the old lady understand that he was the manager of the bank, and that he had called there because Mr. Danby was so highly thought of by his employers. Finally he took his leave, with the hope that when he returned from Paris, where he said he was going, he should find that Mr. Danby was again safely ensconced in what he was sure must be that very comfortable room.

So to the Charing Cross Station and through the night to Dover, across the Channel, and along the Great Northern road to Paris. Two things only were noticeable in him during the journey, and they were that he never parted with the portmanteau, which he now always carried with the painted name of Studley on it well displayed; and that when he staggered from the boat and put his foot upon French soil, or what stands for it, on the slippery, sea-soaked pier of Calais, and was asked what was his name, he replied without hesitation, "Studley." If he had been called upon to produce his passport, the same name would have been found in that document.

THE NEW PARIS OPERA HOUSE.

The great theatre which has just been completed in Paris is professedly the most perfect specimen of its kind that exists. The architect, M. Garnier, is a man of genius, with just ideas upon dramatic art, which he has worked out logically. He has, moreover, travelled over the world, studying the best examples in every city. He has thus combined theory and practice; and the result, after years of labour,

is the splendid temple that stands at the top of the Rue de la Paix.

No such monument could be reared by private exertion. In almost all the cities of the continent of Europe, certainly in all the capitals, one theatre at least is the work of the State or the City. Indeed, it seems only in logical fitness that, where the exchange, the church, the public square, the town hall, have been furnished by the community itself, an entertainment of such importance, which engrosses the attention of thousands, should enjoy the same substantial aid. The dignity of the stage is enhanced when we see some handsome pile standing conspicuous and alone, filling the whole side of a square, and we know by instinct that this is THE THEATRE. In how many cities abroad does this welcome object meet the stranger's eye : as at Bordeaux, Marseilles, Munich, where splendid and architectural buildings, adorned with statues and columns, are among the stateliest monuments of the town.

There is something almost fascinating in the study of these temples of intellectual entertainment, and it is not surprising that the principles of their arrangement and construction should have exercised the genius and ingenuity of many. The larger the building, the more complicated becomes the problem of arranging distinct and convenient departments for the different classes of the audience ; of contriving separate and convenient approaches, and equal opportunities of seeing and hearing for all. There are, in short, so many elements to be considered, so many interests to be harmoniously conciliated, so much temptation to fall into detail, with such opportunities for genius in the direction of simplicity, that into no class of building does logic enter so largely, or the want of it produce such confusion. A well laid out theatre is a grateful and welcome object; and it may be added that this excellence in every way conduces to the dramatic object for which the theatre is built.

During the imperial days, when Paris was being renewed with reckless magnificence, it was felt that the reconstruction would be incomplete without some superb temple of the drama, which should be conspicuous to all the world. There was to be no limit to either cost or magnificence. Everything was done to secure success. A commission was appointed,

not to receive plans, but to enquire into theatrical and scenic principles, and issue a scheme for the guidance of competitors. Machinists, scene-painters, dramatic authors, were all invited to give their opinions ; and finally, after all due deliberation, the plans of M. Garnier were selected. A theatre constructed under such conditions might be fairly supposed to represent all that science and experience has discovered to the present time, and yet it has to be admitted that the result of all this prodigious exertion is a theatre, handsome, indeed, but differing little from other theatres of less pretension. This might seem mortifying, but for its establishing the conclusion that the principles of the stage are of an antique simplicity ; that honest study only leads back to the old primitive system which has endured since the days of Euripides. All really great architects have been successful in their theatres, as no shape of building offers finer opportunities for bold and simple arrangement.

The New French Opera House may then fairly be taken to represent the most complete development of modern ideas. The architect visited the leading theatres of Europe, and prepared a sort of "return," based on a series of exhaustive questions addressed to the directors. He thus discovered the weak places, and, by comparison, ascertained all that was most convenient in practice.

The new theatre has unquestionably a somewhat gaudy, meretricious air, in keeping with the other imperial constructions, and, though bulky, wants dignity. It impresses at first with a certain surprise, but with successive visits it becomes less agreeable.

The different parts of the house can be distinguished from the outside, which the architect intended as a "note" of his building : an oblong block in front holding the entrance hall, &c. ; a dome in the middle, and signifying the "auditorium" ; and a huge temple-like building rising behind and higher than all, and containing the stage, and that vast space above the stage, into which the curtain can be drawn without rolling or folding. This sort of architectural arrangement has a spacious air and looks honest, but the unity of the building is sacrificed. The main element, too, is that vast entrance hall where the spectators are assembled. This is the theatre ; the rest—stage, approaches, &c.—are "dependencies." The dome, therefore, should be the chief conspicuous object, whilst the

having so vast a chamber over the stage is inartistic, and even, for purposes of stage machinery, seems almost unnecessary, as all the changes might be effected from below. But high as is this construction above the dome, which it dwarfs, it would have been still higher but for an architectural artifice, the dome itself being a false one, and the real dome many feet below. Thus it would seem that the older shape of theatres—the larger oblong block, with a coned roof and a sort of portico in front—is more expressive, and less likely to lend itself to any fantastic result, than the result of M. Garnier's architectural ingenuity.

As one of the very first objects to be considered in designing a place of public amusement, which is intended to contain thousands of spectators, is the provision of ample and convenient means of safe and rapid ingress and egress, the first desideratum in a theatre is that it should be isolated. Too many theatres are built with an anxious regard to considerations of space, with all their entrances huddled together in front, and the audience is thus poured into the house, as it were, through a number of conduits placed side by side. In a grand theatre, standing detached, these matters are much more easily and comfortably arranged, and, by the exercise of good sense, M. Garnier has worked out the important problem admirably. The entrances, it is obvious, should be regulated by some sort of relation to the distinct places inside. It is obvious that the readiest approach to the grand tier would be from the front or façade of the theatre, by means of the grand stair leading straight from the hall to the centre of the bend or horseshoe. As the galleries and upper boxes would have to be reached directly by steeper approaches, these, it is evident, would be best placed at the sides, where, too, would be found the entrances to the pit. But there is yet another difficulty as to the approaches, namely, how to divide the carriage and pedestrian traffic. If both these entrances are in front, there are serious dangers or inconveniences, as any one who has attended the Covent Garden Opera on a crowded night has found. The stream of carriages interrupts the many streams of foot passengers, and this not without peril. These two classes it might seem almost impossible to conciliate; but the division of entrances almost solves the difficulty. Thus the tenants of stalls and grand tier

will arrive in carriages, and be set down in front, while the vast mass of the lower division will come on foot, and make their way to the sides of the building. There is yet an intermediate class, who arrive in hired cabs, and to these M. Garnier allots a distinct entrance at one of the sides, at the expense, it would seem, of his hitherto logical arrangement. The subdivision into hired and private carriage traffic confuses the previous division of entrances into what might be called plebeian and patrician: and it involves the inconvenience that tenants of the stalls or grand tier who have come in a cab must, on going away, make their way from their own door to this special one, where they can alone hope to find their vehicles.

The French custom of "control" by which every one entering the house has to exchange their ticket at a central bureau, is maintained, and in the great hall there will be four of these offices, at each of which four officials will be stationed. This system, though it appears costly and troublesome, is in reality cheap and simple, and once more exhibits the nicely logical instinct of our neighbours in business. The system amounts to this, that not only is there only one barrier for taking the tickets, where the ticket takers sit together, and thus "control" each other, but they themselves are controlled by the vouchers they give in return, and which are retained by the box keepers. In England, fraud is favoured by the false arrangement of a money-taker and a ticket-taker being detailed for each department, who are thus in relation, whereas in France the administration receives the tickets from all alike.

A great feature in a well-built theatre should be the grand staircase. This, of course, belongs to the dress tiers and gala portions of the audience, and should lead directly to the boxes. And certainly the effect of such a grand flight is very striking. But as the floor and stalls in M. Garnier's building are some thirty feet above the level of the street, the grand stair, in the new theatre, had to be divided half way up, so to allow those ascending access to the stall flight. There is an air of compromise in this arrangement and a want of boldness, and it virtually makes two flights instead of one. The whole difficulty arises from the false level of the floor, which is, in fact, placed on the second story. The true arrangement would seem to be that the

floor of the house should be on a level with the street, and that the stairs should lead to the boxes. The truth is that the elaborate subdivision of entrances has led to the adoption of these different levels, and consequently to the multiplication of staircases. Indeed to this cause also must be attributed the disfiguring roof above the stage, for, if the stage itself had been fixed on the ground level, there would have been no necessity for carrying this roof to its present unsightly and inharmonious height.

The interior or salle is beautifully proportioned, nearly circular, and giving an idea of vast space. The galleries are of a very solid kind, and by an unusual arrangement, the boxes are placed behind. Thus, each "box" may be said to consist of an exposed "slice" of the gallery, with a little room behind. Like all compromises, this combination enfeebles both elements, but it virtually amounts to the abolition of the box. This is, however, perhaps as well after all, for the encouraging effect on the performers of a house filled to the roof is nearly lost in a theatre that is all pigeon-holes, from which faces languidly peep out. There can be no doubt but that the principle of dramatic effect comprises audiences as well as actors; that the former, by their sympathies and expressed interest, should join in the representation. All the audience here is in the house—the true system—and very different from that of the average theatre, where caverns are hollowed out under the boxes, and where, between the tiers, there are great round absorbing spaces. The Theatre Francais is almost perfect in this sense, taking into account its size and modest pretensions. From the stage it must appear one amphitheatre of faces, confined, as it were, by slender solid ribbons, the galleries being so shallow, the panel work so narrow, and the occupants put so forward. It may be added, also, that the relation of the stage to the house is simply perfect, its height above the stalls being nicely adjusted. The arch, too, is deep and semi-circular; the painted drapery, though old-fashioned, has a grandeur and solidity that contrasts with the tawdry decorations in other theatres, which, too often, only display themselves instead of giving effect to the stage; and the huge rolling folds of a sombre chocolate drapery, which descend almost to the chord of the arch, throw out, with admirable effect, the figures and scenery below.

The question of what kind the curtain

should be seems simple enough, but should be regulated, like everything else connected with the stage, by logical principles. The old dark-green curtain had a not inappropriate significance, and even mystery. Now gaudy pictures, framed in gold, are almost invariably adopted. These formerly did duty as "drop scenes," which descended between the acts, and were indeed supposed to be no more than scenes let down for the nonce, more grateful to the eye and not so final as the curtain.

But there can be no doubt that the usual temples and vast landscapes of the commonplace act-drop are felt to be inappropriate and out of place, and many devices have been tried to improve upon the conventional arrangement. Curtains of plain material have been tried, but they invariably look poor and mean, even in their best days, while those of genuine velvet or stuff which are in use in some houses are open to the objection of growing "shabby," of showing creases, and of getting worn at the folds and collecting the dust. Again, in a great theatre an amount of material much larger than the space filled has to be employed, so as to cause handsome folds, for otherwise the display would be meagre and poor; and where there is a great amount of material the weight to be lifted becomes enormous, and almost unmanageable.

A painted curtain, then, seems most convenient and least incongruous, the folds not being painted too heavily, and the idea suggested being that of a cloth painted. So does the mellow amber curtain at Covent Garden ascend, though the double folding, which sets in when the curtain is half way up, has a most awkward effect. At the Paris "Gaieté" there is a wonderful curtain crowded with figures of all ages and climes, well grouped and painted; yet the effect is bad in exact proportion to the ambition of the effort. As for curtains made of looking-glass and such bizarre attempts, they are mere fantastic tricks, and unworthy of the theatre.

By long-established custom the curtain is let down from the top, but there can be no doubt that, if actual drapery be employed, it should properly fall in graceful folds from each side of the stage. The old green curtain, falling slowly in waves, was certainly effective, and suited the old theatres, but would be wholly out of place where magnificence and glitter reign on both sides of the curtain. Everything

points to the conclusion that the screen interposed between the audience and the stage should be a cloth, richly but soberly painted, in harmony with the front of the house, rather than the back, and in a far more sober key than any of the scenes behind.

The question of lighting is another problem that engages the attention of the architect of a new theatre. Our modern London manager thinks nothing so simple or effective as the sunlight that glares in the roof. In other houses, more old fashioned, chandeliers, following the line of the boxes, are in favour. Yet to these there is the insurmountable objection of inconvenient heat and a kind of interposing glew, as anyone will discover who stoops over the edge of his box. The sunlight is a radically false, coarse, and even detestable mode of illumination. The light thus concentrated is so fierce, that under surfaces are in shadow, and the whole seems laid out in alternate patches of light and darkness. This is net "lighting" in the proper sense of the word.

The audience part of a theatre should be lit like a ball-room or other hall where people in full dress assemble—that is, the light should be diffused, so as to fall with due effect on every part, and show off faces, dresses, and ornaments. The merely furnishing light, pure and simple, is not what is desired. The grand central chandelier, with a mass of light, large instead of intense, is certainly in accordance with the true principle. There is a dignity and beauty in a handsome chandelier, with its glittering crystal drops and elegant design. It must be said, however, that it is open to a very serious objection, which is, that in proportion as it is large and effective, it impedes the view from the galleries. But this is the fault of the arrangement of existing theatres, and the eagerness for profit, through which the frequenters of the galleries are perched away aloft, where they can barely see or hear. If the true principle were applied, of placing the highest gallery no higher than where satisfactory view and hearing of the performance could be secured, it would be found that the chandelier would necessarily be above the line of vision. M. Garnier, indeed, hopes to solve the difficulty by hanging his chandelier in the dome; but this seems an architectural fallacy, as the difficulty is removed by raising the chandelier, and thus preventing it exercising its full function.

Lighting the stage is another difficulty, which has led to endless discussion as to whether the light that illuminates the actor's figure should come from above or below.

In the last century, the stage was lit with great chandeliers, which hung a little in front of the curtain. This, it has been almost vehemently urged, is the true principle; but, as may be imagined, the system is impossible at the present date, where so much glare is required, and where the proscenium is so high. To be effective, the light should be about the same distance from the performers' faces as it is at present; and no amount of ingenuity could contrive this in any other way than by means of the footlights, unless by carrying a screened row of lights across the opening, which would have a strange effect. The truth is, the present system answers well enough, and few, unless reminded of them, would notice the objections to it, viz., casting the shadows upwards, &c.

The French principle, however, of sinking the footlights in a channel, so that they are nearly below the stage, the boards being sloped away in front of them, so as not to interfere with the rays, is a radically false one. The light comes as from an opening in a furnace, and leaves the space above it comparatively unilluminated. The result is, the shadow or darkness on the audience side is too great, and the contrast too strong. Every one sitting in the stalls will have noticed the fierce, unpleasant glare which is cast out of the ground upon the actors as they draw near the orchestra, and which is as opposed to the idea of true lighting as the effect of the "sunlight" is to that of the chandelier. The elder system, namely, of lamps, each with its little screen, as can be seen at Covent Garden, is much more satisfactory; as the light reaches the audience through the open spaces between the screens, and is diffused better in front and behind the footlights, and the glare is net nearly so offensive.

The latest French system is to have the jets below the stage reversed. But the whole light furnished is in excess of what is required, which is owing to the necessity for throwing sufficient light on the figures, whether they are away from the orchestra and far up the stage, as well as when they are close to the orchestra. If the light be strong enough in the first instance, it will of course be too strong in

the second; and if sufficient in the second, it will not be sufficient when the actors are removed to a distance.

These, and kindred difficulties, seem inseparable accompaniments of the artificial requirements of the stage, and can no more be altogether got rid of than a theatrical scene can ever be really made like anything in nature, unless the imagination of the spectator largely assists in the process. To say that M. Garnier should not have been able to overcome them altogether, therefore, is merely to say that the designer of the new Paris Opera House is mortal, like the architects of meaner buildings. There is, after all, a limit to what can be done both before and behind the curtain; and, magnificent as it is, we return to our original opinion that the new theatre will not differ in any startling degree from other houses of similar pretensions.

POPPY. IN NINE CHAPTERS.

VI.

THAT "Charlie" was a standing offence to the young husband. He protested against being called Max like a man out of a German opera. In his tender moments he would beg Poppy to withdraw the name, but she said she couldn't, she didn't care about the name of Charles since it had been borne by a butler in the Hardwicke household, whose boorish propensities had caused him to be ignominiously expelled from further prosecution of his legitimate functions. As to "Charlie," that only meant her Cousin Graham. Max was a delightful name, "and suits you," she said, looking admiringly into the manly face of her husband. She loved him dearly, but she was a little afraid of him; a little bored by his tenderness; a little doubtful of his good opinion; and not a little disposed to assert herself and her family, and her doings and privileges upon every occasion. The thought rankled in her mind that Sir Charles was a little ashamed of her; that he regretted not having thrown the handkerchief to one of those high-bred beauties whereof the fame had penetrated even into the humble Vicarage drawing-room. Country neighbours love "the cackie of the b'rig," and some of the great ladies who called twice a year at the Vicarage, and asked Poppy and her papa to a croquet party or an archery fête, had dropped a word here and a hint there, and

had expressed their congratulations after a fashion a little too much tinted with surprise to be altogether pleasing to Poppy's sensitive spirit. She was jealous of the thought that anything but simple affection could have brought about their marriage. "He loved me, and I loved him, and so we were married," said Poppy to herself, disposing peremptorily of the matter after her own summary fashion of dealing with things. "All the rest's humbug, and I'm not going to worry myself running after ideas. I hate a fool's errand."

Nevertheless, though she claimed privileges for herself which she would at once have denied her husband, she did now and again feel a little uneasy at Captain Graham's influence on their mutual relationship. To Sir Charles she said she was consoling Graham. He seemed to need a great deal of consolation about a woman he had never loved, her husband thought. "And it would be a capital marriage for him," Poppy went on plaintively, "if it could only be brought to pass. I declare, Max, since we have been so happy ourselves, I feel twice as much for the misfortunes of other people."

Sir Charles made a wry face, and kissed her; and a few minutes after she was riding off on a donkey to Sonnenberg, Captain Graham holding the sunshade over her pretty face, whilst Poppy prattled by the way.

"Max has letters to write," she said, "but he wouldn't let me put off the expedition on that account." She expected a note of admiration at her husband's magnanimity; and she felt rather aggrieved when Graham said, "Depend upon it he's glad of the excuse for a shady cigar. Letters to write is too stereotyped an excuse for anything but polite fiction now-a-days, my dear."

"Max doesn't tell stories."

"Nor do you, when you say 'not at home.'"

"That's quite a different thing."

"All recognised official formulas. Letters to write, a bad headache, not at home. They all mean you are misanthropically inclined for the moment; that's all; and as I'm the gainer, Poppy, I'm not disposed to quarrel with him or split straws with you for the turn events have taken."

But Poppy was not to be mollified by the sugar-plum thrown in for her benefit. "It was very kind of Max," she repeated, sturdily. "And I know he had real

business; I felt horribly selfish for not having stayed at home to help him."

Altogether the expedition was not successful. Some slight shade of remorse made Poppy less bright and less sympathetic than usual; and when, after a long silence, she began for the seventh time since they sat out, "Max says—" Captain Graham felt it behoved him to stop this boredom of quotations from Sir Charles at any price.

"I am Sir Oracle!" hey Poppy? "And when I speak let no dog bark." But if a dog don't bark, he bites."

"Charlie!" cried his cousin, all aflame with anger, and in her agitation trying to slip down; "I won't stand it; you are always sneering at my husband; you are always trying to show him in a bad light; you impute motives to him, you insinuate things about him, that are abominable. I know that you are ever so much older than I am, but you have no right to treat me like a little girl now I am married!"

"You'll frighten the donkey," said Captain Graham, coolly. "I never saw you in such a temper before. What's happened to put you out?"

"You!" Poppy whimpered, for she felt quite ashamed of her outbreak, and afraid she had made herself ridiculous.

"I?" Graham repeated. "When I have been plodding like a patient pilgrim by your side. My dear child, you must remember I've loved you since you were as high as the table; and when I am with you I want to have Poppy, not diluted Sir Charles and water."

Poppy made no answer; she hung her head down; Graham talked to the donkey-boy, and whistled during the pauses of the conversation. As they crossed the top of the Kur Garten, at the end of one of the least frequented paths, they saw Sir Charles seated on a bench beside a lady to whom he appeared to be speaking earnestly. The lady hastily drew down her veil as they approached, and rising, disappeared amongst the trees. Sir Charles came towards them with a heightened colour. Captain Graham's and Poppy's eyes met.

"How about the important letters, eh?" asked cousin Charlie.

But Poppy was too indignant to reply.

VII.

"A NEAR shave, that!" cousin Charlie exclaimed, taking off his felt hat, and fanning himself as he lay back in the

carriage. "To see the Ariadne, did you say? I declare if I'd known it was so hot, I don't think I'd have come; the end of October, too!"

"I thought you didn't care about heat," Poppy answered snappishly.

She had been snappish with him ever since that day when the veiled lady had risen and walked away from Sir Charles's side in the Kur Garten. And she was doubly uneasy now, being separated from her husband, whom, at the last moment, she had seen struggling with the crowd in company with a lady whose general outlines resembled that of the fair unknown on the bench.

"Sir Charles is taking it pretty coolly at any rate," said Graham, getting up to put his hat into the net-work, and ruffling his curly hair with both hands as he sat down again.

To this Poppy made no reply.

"We shall get to a station soon, I suppose," she said, after a pause; "and then Max will come into our carriage. It's dreadful the way they pen you up in these foreign waiting-rooms."

Meanwhile, poor Sir Charles was thinking, rather ruefully, that it was a hard thing he and his wife could never be alone together now. At the first station he got out and came to the window, looking somewhat doleful still, but with certain glimmerings of consolation in the background, of which he wisely made no sign.

"Won't you come in, Max?" said Poppy, rising to make place for him next the window.

"I? thanks, no; that is, I'm—I'm smoking—"

"Oh! just as you like. But, as every one smokes here, you might as well finish your cigar in our carriage."

Charlie, scouting the matrimonial battle from afar, said, "Ha! ha!" to himself, and felt pleased. He was rather disgusted with Poppy's jealousy. "To think of a girl being spooney on a prig like that!" he said to himself, and was not sorry that she would have to suffer for her freaks of temper as regarded himself.

"There's the bell!" cried Sir Charles, beating a hasty retreat; and he rushed away to his compartment.

"I bet you any odds," Captain Graham said, "that he is whispering sentimental nothings to some soft, young Fraulein, who little guesses that he has a lawful wife not two doors off. Perhaps the wood-nymph who made off the other day when

his legitimate proprietor appeared upon the scene. Eh?"

From that moment Poppy allowed herself to be fooled to the top of her bent. Charlie Graham should not gibe and jeer at her for a patient Grizzel. She would show him she was a woman of spirit, not a poor little fool, pining after her husband. So, when at the next station, Sir Charles came back like a dog who has buried the bone of contention, but must grub it up again, he found Poppy, with a heightened colour, laughing and talking very loudly with the odious "Charlie." This time, Max was not invited to enter, and he felt rather foolish as he stood at the carriage-door.

"Remember, my dear, you are not alone," he said, in a low voice to his wife, as he prepared to climb into his own compartment again. The carriage had filled up now, and the gates of Paradise were closed upon him.

"Oh!" said Poppy, pertly, "as to that, we're as good as alone; the natives don't understand, yon know!"

"Hit him hard there," said Cousin Charlie, gleefully, as the train rolled away.

"I beg your pardon?" Poppy replied, freezing into sudden dignity; "the train makes so much noise, I didn't quite understand—"

"Not worth repeating," bawled Captain Graham, affecting to believe her.

"Surely Poppy is a little underbred," Sir Charles was saying to himself. "A flippant woman is a dreadful thing." And he sighed over poor Poppy's chances of success when she would have to run the gauntlet of criticism amongst the women of his "set."

His companion little guessed why he was so silent.

"Perhaps you will take care of my wife," Sir Charles said to Captain Graham, on the platform at Frankfort. "I have to go to my banker's, and one or two odds and ends of business to transact, which would bore Poppy."

Poppy's eyes grew round with wonder. She didn't at all approve of Max's way of disposing of her. "However, if he don't mind, why should I?" she asked herself, indignantly. She flushed up scarlet, and then the tears came into her eyes. "I have forgotten something I wanted to ask him," she said, stepping short, and, leaving Captain Graham on the platform, she went back to her husband. "You are not angry about anything, Max?"

"I? No."

"Then why don't you come, too?"

"I will join you at Bethmanns."

Then Poppy's indignation again got the better of her, and her gentleness fled.

"Very well; but I shan't wait for you," she cried, angrily.

"I will come as soon as I can," Max answered. He regretted that he could not go with her; but her manner made him regret it as little as possible.

Poppy drove off in triumphant spirits; she was very witty about Ariadne, and said every woman ought to have a Naxos. Charlie criticised the meretricious effect of the pink curtain, and again declared that he would rather have looked at the statue through a stereoscope; the heat dissolved a man's enthusiasm he said; and a woman who could ride on a panther, had, no doubt, the whip hand of her husband; the modern woman would not shed crocodile's tears on a tiger's back, and human nature was human nature from Eve in Eden down to the present moment. Then Poppy proposed that they should leave the temple, and go and look at the Juden-gasse.

"But how about our knight of the rueful countenance?" asked Charlie.

"If you mean Max, he has business which will detain him; he didn't expect us to wait," Poppy said, shortly. "Let's go to that famous place for coffee don't you know," where you sit between little screens of wickerwork, and drink it in the public street. They give you splendid ices there; Susan Bridges told me all about it."

"All right," said Captain Graham, and accosting a foot-passenger in hideous German began to ask the way.

"The first turning to the right, and the second to the left," replied the stranger, greatly to Charlie's surprise, addressing him in his own vernacular; "you will then be near the statue of Gutenberg, who, together with his colleagues Faust and Schaeffer may be regarded as the greatest benefactors of mankind." And, having characteristically delivered himself of his little item of information, the polite German passed on his way.

"We've had enough statues for to-day, Poppy, don't you think? But how the mischief did the fellow know I was an Englishman? I speak the language like a native."

Poppy made no answer. Her eyes were

fixed in a stare of bewilderment on the much-desired gaol. There were the screens of ivy; there the little coffee tables, trimly decked with dazzling napery; smart waiters were rushing in and out amongst the guests; the sun was shining hotly down upon the street; and there, in one of the charming little retreats, sat Sir Charles with an ice before him, enjoying his solitude à deux. At the same table was the lady with whom he had travelled from Wiesbaden; the wood-nymph, as Charlie had christened her, upon whom they had come in the Kur-Garten; and as Sir Charles caught sight of his wife and Captain Graham staring, transfixed with astonishment at them both, he said a hasty word to the lady, which caused her to drop her veil. It all passed in the twinkling of an eye. In another moment, Poppy, with head erect and distended nostril, had passed by the offending arbour, the skirts of her clothing sweeping Sir Charles in superb contempt, as, without looking to the right or the left, her nose well up in the air, she marched proudly onwards. Captain Graham followed in her train. "That beats cock-fighting!" was his mental comment; "but I always mistrust a prig. Poor dear little Poppy!"

At the corner of the street they stopped and looked into a print shop. It was very hot, they had walked fast, and Poppy was breathless with fatigue and fury. As yet she had not spoken a word. She was glad to lean against the railing and recover herself.

"I say, do you mean to stand that?" said Charlie. "If you do, you're a greater fool than you look."

"What?" Poppy asked, trying to hide her discomfiture, trying to collect her thoughts, trying to gain time.

"What? Well, pressing correspondences, business letters; banker to interview, et cetera, et cetera. That's the Egeria of the fountain, my dear. If I were Mrs. Numa Pompilius I should seek my redress before Sir James Hennen."

"Pray drop your vulgar jokes," Poppy answered, shortly.

"Jokes? I was never farther from joking in my life. However, if you don't mind, Poppy, I'm sure I needn't."

"Of course you needn't. Nor for the matter of that need anybody."

"Philosophy, thy name is Poppy;" cried Charlie, in tragic apostrophe.

"Don't make a fool of yourself," Poppy answered, in a towering rage, "and call that droschky."

"Eisenbahn" was the only word she knew, and rejecting Charlie's offer of interpretation with impatience, she waved him aside, jumped into the vehicle, and shouting the word to the driver, left Charlie standing on the pavement. He took off his hat and bowed low to her.

"They love, they part," said a fat old sentimental German to his wife, who toddled along the pavement, puffing beside him. "Ah! a beautiful thing is youth! Alas! that its joys are so fleeting!"

"Ach Herr Je!" cried the old lady, sighing, "and thou feelest for the pangs they suffer, whilst my infirmities draw no compassion from thee."

"Madame is right," said Charlie in his best manner, "the woes of youth have a remedy; the sufferings of later life can only be lightened by sympathy!"

"Sir, I am delighted," and the stout sentimental German made him a ceremonious bow.

"Besides," Charlie added, "we don't exactly love; we part it is true, but to meet again in half-an-hour. Do not let your tender heart be hurt by our sufferings; they may perhaps chiefly be attributed to temper; to which may be super-added the heat, and the pavement. I cannot absorb so much of your philanthropy under false pretences, agreeable though your sympathy must necessarily be to a man whose feelings are somewhat ruffled."

"Sir, your sentiments do you honour; you are an upright man; allow me," and the brave old gentleman grasped Charlie's hand with effusion. "Du lieber Himmel!" groaned the poor patient lady, who was standing in the gutter during this fine exchange of sentiment, "if they would only do it in the shade!"

After this little episodical flow of soul, Captain Graham began to wonder what he should do with himself for the next two hours. If he followed Poppy, she would turn and rend him. As for that whitened sepulchre of a Maxwell, he would not meet him a second earlier than was absolutely necessary.

VIII.

"CAPTAIN GRAHAM, a word with you," said Sir Charles, walking into the station.

"Now for it!" said Charlie, "he's going to cringe. Let him! I can excuse a fellow making a fool of himself on the impulse of the moment; but a cold-blooded, pragmatical prig like that's incapable of im-

pulse. He wants me to humbug Poppy, I dare say; I hate your mathematical immorality." And, with a lofty sense of virtue, Charlie stalked leisurely after Maxwell. "He can't bamboozle me! he'll try to blazon it out at first; then he'll whimper; then he'll cringe; then he'll grovel. Let him grovel; he won't get a rise out of me, though he go like the serpent till the end of his days."

It was somewhat of a surprise when Maxwell, turning a calm and unembarrassed front to him, said, "You saw me in the arbour just now?"

"I did."

"I was not alone."

"So I perceived."

"It was unfortunate," Sir Charles continued, calmly. "I would fain have spared Poppy the annoyance; but I will settle everything with her when we are alone together."

"I doubt if you will find Poppy so easily 'settled,'"

"That's my affair," Sir Charles answered, with just the slightest touch of hauteur. "But I have a favour to ask of you. It is that you will allow me to return with my wife alone. Such explanations are always made better tête-à-tête."

Charlie bowed acquiescence.

"There will be only two first-class compartments," Sir Charles continued. "I find they have a proverb here to the effect that only fools, Englishmen, and actresses travel first class—"

"I wish he'd drop the conversational," said Charlie to himself; "it looks bad when a man affects that sort of easy manner."

"So that," Sir Charles continued, "I shall not be robbing you of your privileges by asking you to leave me and my wife together."

"Certainly not," Graham assented. "In the scramble this morning, Poppy and I came down second-class, and afterwards it wasn't worth the bore of moving."

"Just so; one's as good as the other," Sir Charles agreed; "only one is less crowded in the first. We shall see you at dinner, I hope?"

"Thanks," Charlie answered. He was dumb-founded. There had been no grovelling, after all.

"Poppy," Sir Charles said, standing at the waiting-room door, "you had better take my arm. The first bell has rung."

"Are we to go without Charlie?"

"Captain Graham is already on the

platform; I have been speaking to him." And he offered her his arm.

"Thank you; I suppose I can walk into the train without your aid."

She passed him without a look. Sir Charles went forward and opened the carriage door for her.

"I prefer the other compartment."

"It is engaged."

"Then I will go second."

"No, not this evening, Poppy."

"And why not this evening just as well as this morning?"

"Because I have a few words to say to you, my dear."

"I decline to hear your words, Sir Charles, few or many. I prefer travelling with my own relations: I shall put myself under Captain Graham's protection. It has suited you to leave me with him all day; it does not suit me to be left with you now."

"People will hear."

"Let them hear; who cares? For the matter of that, they may hear and see too," Poppy cried. "I refuse to move until Captain Graham's presence guarantees me from insult. I decline to be alone with you. I disbelieve your explanations; I reject them beforehand, unheard."

But Poppy's stubborn will could not resist the railway official who at that moment came along the platform issuing his orders with military precision.

Sir Charles jumped in after her, with a smile on his handsome face. Captain Graham was not visible to the naked eye.

"I wanted to say a few words to you about Graham, my dear," Sir Charles said, leaning across to her, when the train was fairly off.

No; flesh and blood could not stand such barefaced hypocrisy, at least, not Poppy's flesh and blood.

"About Graham?" she cried, passion shaking out the words in a shrill treble. "About Charlie? About him? Let him alone; speak about yourself; or, rather, no! Keep silence. The truth you cannot tell me; I will not listen to lies!"

"Poppy," Sir Charles said, angrily: "you are forgetting yourself; this is unmanly, irrational rage."

"I am forgetting myself!" Poppy cried, in a tumult of fury; "and pray what have you been doing? It might have been as well if you had remembered me! It's all very well for you to pick holes in Charlie; you've always hated him; it was easy to see that from the first —"

"You will be the first to confess later that I am Graham's best friend."

"And you would have had me cast him off," Poppy continued, not deigning to notice the interruption. "My own cousin; one of my oldest friends. But I wasn't mean enough for that, and I'm glad of it now."

"Poppy, do you love me?" Sir Charles asked, as though in subduing his own temper he might better bring her to her senses.

"No!"

"Do you believe I love you?"

"No!"

"Poppy have you never loved me?"

"No!" Poppy almost shouted; "and now I hate you! I despise you! I wish I had married poor Charlie when he asked me! We might have been poor, but we should have been happy!"

"Then he did ask you?" Sir Charles said with a nervous flush on his face.

"Yes, he did; more than once; and I was a wretched little fool to refuse him. I thought his open manner betrayed a superficial character: I did not know that a cold crust of reserve could conceal a traitor's heart!"

"You have said enough," Sir Charles replied, with a sort of bitter calm. "You had better compose yourself. I have asked Captain Graham to dinner."

Poppy vouchsafed no reply. She turned her back upon her husband and looked out of the window. She would ask her cousin to take her straight off to England. She would go back to her father. Sir Charles's presence was unendurable to her. Brooding on her wrongs, and hatching her plans for vengeance, she remained sullenly silent during the rest of the journey.

IX.

As Captain Graham sat down in his corner of the big red velvet carriage, he was dimly aware of a female form at the other corner; but his mind was still full of his cousin, and he sat back and closed his eyes in thought. He could not understand Sir Charles, and he didn't at all like the idea of the marital asperities which were likely to pass during the journey. All the better part of him was enlisted in Poppy's behalf. He saw that she loved her husband in spite of her off-hand flighty manner, and this made him all the more bitter against Sir Charles, and all the tenderer in his thoughts of Poppy.

At this moment the lady rose to open the window.

"Erlauben Sie!" Charlie said in his best German, as he took the strap out of her hand.

"Thank you, Captain Graham."

"By Jove!" Charlie said for once in his life, really surprised, "how the —— I beg your pardon, but who could dream of meeting you here?"

"Not you, evidently," said Mary Steele, smiling sweetly upon him. "Mamma and I have been at Wiesbaden for a week. She is taking the baths."

"But why have we never seen you?"

"You appeared only to have eyes for Lady Maxwell."

"Poor little Poppy! It wasn't a question of eyes," Charlie said. "Sir Charles is a brute."

"Is he? How very strange. He always speaks so highly of you."

"Of me?" Charlie asked. "When has he spoken of me? I'm very much obliged to him, I'm sure; but I can't return the compliment. Not that I have any fault to find as regards myself, but to Poppy his conduct is atrocious. But I didn't know you knew him."

"Oh, yes. I had met him in town before Poppy's engagement, and after that I was once or twice at the Vicarage when he was there. I came upon him quite by chance the other day in the Kur-Garten—the day you and your cousin went to Sonnenberg," Mary Steele said, with her bright shrewd eyes fixed on Charlie's bewildered face.

Mary didn't tell him how Sir Charles had explained to her that Poppy was consoling her cousin for the obduracy with which some fair lady had treated him, and how broken-hearted the poor fellow was.

"And I've been over to Frankfort with my maid to get a dress to-day," Mary Steele went on. "Sir Charles helped us out of a difficulty about the tickets, for we neither of us knew a word of German; and he travelled with me afterwards, your carriage being full."

She did not think it necessary to tell him, either, how she had entreated Sir Charles not to mention Graham's presence should he meet her with her mother. "I've had a dreadful time of it," Mary had said, with a kind of grim humour, "since he proposed to me. You know we're a hard sort of people, and I daresay I'm

just as obstinate as mamma. But it would upset her dreadfully if she were to know he is here, and spoil her cure."

"So you have been obstinate?" Sir Charles said. "Well, why master your obstinacy? Exercise it to some end. Charlie Graham's a capital fellow—not rich; but I'm sure you are not mercenary—and a clever woman like you, Miss Steele, might do anything with Charlie."

"Might I?" Mary said. "But I'm afraid he won't give me the chance of trying. He has been so badly treated."

"Then treat him well," Sir Charles said. "I'll undertake that you shall have the chance. Charlie's not a fellow to bear malice." ("Especially with sixty thousand pounds to soften his feelings," he added mentally.)

"Then," Graham said, "it was you in the grove! it was you in the arbour? And, by Jove, Poppy's nothing to complain of, after all!"

"Why should she complain?" Mary asked. "A girl is not to be pitied who has a good husband."

Given the text, Charlie had an extempore address ready in a moment. He was quite equal to the occasion.

"Then you don't love Poppy?" Mary Steele asked, as a preliminary whistle told them they were nearing their destination.

"Love Poppy?" Charlie Graham repeated, with well-feigned surprise. "Why should I love my neighbour's wife when I can love my own? I've known Poppy since she could crawl; and familiarity always knocks all romance out of a man as regards a girl he has watched through the lobbiedehoy stage."

"But she is so pretty."

"Perhaps. 'But if she be not fair to me, what care I how fair she be?' No, Mary, this is the third and last time of asking. If you send me off now, I shan't come back again."

"Well, I suppose it must be," Mary said. After all, Sir Charles was right: her lover was good-looking, good-natured, and a gentleman; and if she were to do battle with her mother, it might as well be to some purpose.

Poppy, still in the sulks, descended from the carriage, and silently mounted a droschky. Sir Charles followed. Half-an-hour afterwards Charlie Graham's beaming face appeared at their sitting-room door.

"May I come in?" he cried. "I have brought a friend."

"How stupid of him!" Poppy thought, "Just when I wanted to be alone." But she rose and moved towards the door.

"Mary!" she cried.

"Yes. Didn't Sir Charles tell you?"

"Poppy wouldn't listen," said Maxwell, coming forward, "so I thought you should tell her yourself."

"You never said a word about Mary; it was about Charlie you began."

"Charlie and Mary are one," said Graham, drawing Mary's hand through his arm.

"Is it true?" Poppy asked incredulously, looking from one to the other.

"True?" Mary repeated, searching about for a metaphor. "Yes, as true as—"

"Steel!" said Charlie gallantly, kissing her hand.

THE BOLD SMUGGLER.

THE bold smuggler has become a tame, vapid, spiritless, unheroic fellow—prosy, dull, unromantic, and commonplace. All the dash has gone out of him. He was once as full of melodrama as the hero of a transpontine theatre: worthy of being ranked with brigands, outlaws, pirates, buccaneers, corsairs, filibusters, and contrabandistas. With keen-edged sword and dagger, and a belt bristling with pistols, he was the leader in many an exciting struggle, and was decidedly admired if not trusted by the lovers of romance. But now all is changed. He sneaks about his work, runs away from his contraband stores, and seldom shows fight against the majesty of the law.

We may perchance be better than our fathers and grandfathers; but it is not on this ground that the smuggler has toned down to a very ordinary sort of mortal, a mean trickster instead of a dashing outlaw. We must look to the tax-gatherer as the main agent in bringing about the change. In the days when customs duties were imposed on several hundred different kinds of foreign commodities, the temptation to smuggling was almost irresistible. If a duty-payable article could be brought into this country without paying the impost, it could be sold at a price so low as to attract eager customers, and still yield a very large profit to the smuggler. Conscience was not sensitive

on the matter. It was deemed no great crime to cheat the revenue, especially when people really believed that the import duties were either too heavy, or levied on too large a variety of commodities. Adam Smith said: — “To pretend to have any scruple about buying smuggled goods, though a manifest encouragement to the violation of the revenue laws, and to the perjury which almost always attends it, would in most countries be regarded as one of those pedantic pieces of hypocrisy which, instead of gaining credit with anybody, seems only to expose the person who affects to practise it to the suspicion of being a greater knave than most of his neighbours.” Hard words these; yet there is sufficient ground for them. The astute economist and moralist did not fail to point out the evils that result from this low tone of public sentiment: — “By this indulgence of the public, the smuggler is often encouraged to continue a trade which he is thus taught to consider in some measure innocent; and when the severity of the revenue laws is ready to fall upon him, he is frequently disposed to defend with violence what he has been accustomed to regard as his just property.”

Before the close of the last century, a committee of the House of Commons investigated the subject of smuggling, and found that it was carried on to an astounding extent. It was computed that thirteen million gallons of French brandy were surreptitiously brought to England in three years; the brandy could be sold on the coast at three shillings a gallon, and yield a sufficient profit: a temptation which the purchasers were not virtuous enough to resist. The tea trade was in those years, and for many a year afterwards, nearly a close monopoly in the hands of the East India Company; but the tax per pound was enormous, and the smugglers defied alike the company and the crown. There were good grounds for believing that, of all the tea imported, less than one-half paid the import duty. The tax-gatherer was cheated on all sides, and often treated with personal violence in addition. The committee had a doleful story to tell the House of Commons: — “It appears to this committee that the illicit practices used in defrauding the revenue have increased in a most alarming degree; that these practices are carried on upon the coasts, and in other parts of the kingdom, with violence and outrage which not only

threaten the destruction of the revenue, but are highly injurious to regular commerce and fair trade, very pernicious to the manners and morals of the people, and an interruption to all good government; and that the public revenue is defrauded” (including the evasion of the exciseman by home manufacturers of many articles) “to an extent of not less than two millions sterling per annum.”

To prohibit trade between two or more countries is another mode of encouraging smuggling. In the early part of the present century, the Berlin and Milan decrees were unintentionally potent instruments towards this result. Napoleon, enraged that he could not humble the “nation of shopkeepers,” tried to ruin us by putting a stop to our European trade. None of the continental states under his autocratic influence were permitted to sell any of their commodities to the much-disliked but much-envied little island, nor to import any commodities therefrom. Of course this occasioned loss and embarrassment; but the English were as far from being ruined as ever. They commanded the sea, which gave their merchant-ships free access to America, Asia, and Africa; and they contrived to carry on a European trade through the intermedium of such states as had not yet fallen under Napoleon’s sway. This was smuggling, no doubt, but a kind of national smuggling which cabinets and parliaments willingly condoned. The Napoleon decrees, instead of annihilating our Continental trade, only threw it into new and exceptional channels. Italian silk, instead of reaching us by the usual route, found its way by almost inexplicable means to Smyrna and to Archangel, from which ports it was brought to England by our unmolested ships; it took a year to reach us by the Smyrna route, and two years via Archangel. On the other hand, continental consumers of tropical produce, such as sugar, tobacco, coffee, and cotton, had to adopt their own special means of evading the decrees. English ships could convey those commodities to such Continental ports as were not under Napoleon’s rule; and then trading ingenuity was brought into exercise, to find routes of transit that might elude the authorities. Some of the commodities were conveyed by English ships to Salonica in the Levant, landed on the Turkish shores, conveyed by horses and mules through Servia and Hungary into Austria, and

then introduced in small packages into various parts of Italy and Germany. Nay, it was known that coffee consumed at Calais, just opposite our coast, had travelled by this extraordinary route, traversing Switzerland and France, after passing through the whole breadth of Turkey and Austria. Of course the prices were enormous, owing to the cost of carriage and the risk of seizure. Loaf sugar, refined in England, was packed in boxes containing two hundredweights each, to be slung on horses or mules employed on the adventurous transit; and, as a consequence of such a mode of trading, the sugar rose in price to six shillings a pound in some parts of the Continent.

The Berlin and Milan decrees were of a political character in their origin or purpose; but the regular smuggler more generally bases his trade on the existence of heavy duties, imposed for revenue purposes or for the protection of home industry. The Spanish contrabandistas, who were in bygone years the heroes of many a romance, flourished because import duties were high. At one time English cargoes, or miscellaneous cargoes in English ships, were landed at Gibraltar on purpose to be smuggled over the frontier into Spain—to the value of a million sterling per annum. As to France, in times long subsequent to the era of the decrees, and when import duties were levied only for the sake of revenue, the land-frontiers were the scene of extraordinary smuggling. Dogs were trained in Belgium on purpose to smuggle goods into France. The animals were of large size, and were trained to carry twenty or twenty-five pounds each; the load consisting of tobacco, sugar, coffee, &c. They were conducted across the frontier in packs from France into Belgium; they were kept all day without food, beaten unmercifully (what a superior being man is!) laden in the evening, and started off. The poor hungry animals made the best of their way to their French homes, usually two or three leagues from the frontier, and were there well fed and kindly treated. In ten years, more than forty thousand of these hard-worked smuggling dogs were destroyed by the French Customs' officers, three francs being given as a bonus for the capture of each. Sometimes a dog would be found laden with nearly fifty pounds' worth of smuggled goods.

English or French, Spanish or Belgian,

it is found to be pretty much the same with all nationalities in this particular; where import duties are very heavy, there will the smuggler make his appearance. "It has been invariably found," says McCulloch, "that no vigilance on the part of the revenue officers, no severity of punishment, can prevent the smuggling of such commodities as are either prohibited, or loaded with oppressive duties. The smuggler is generally a popular character; and whatever the law may declare on the subject, it is ludicrous to expect that the bulk of society should ever be brought to think that those who furnish them with cheap brandy, geneva, tobacco, &c., are guilty of any very heinous offence. The prohibition of foreign produce, or the imposition of heavy duties on foreign or native produce, does not take away the taste for them. On the contrary, it would seem as if the desire to obtain prohibited or overtaxed articles acquired new strength from the obstacles opposed to its gratification." Nor is this confined to any one class of society, or to persons whose narrow means compel them to economise. "The prohibition of foreign silks, which existed previously to 1826, did not hinder the importation of immense quantities. The vigilance and integrity of the Custom House officers were no match for the ingenuity, daring, and douceurs of the smuggler. At the very moment when the most strenuous efforts were made to effect their exclusion, the silks of France and Hindustan were openly displayed at Almack's, in the drawing rooms of St. James's, or in the House of Commons, in mockery of the impotent legislation by which it was attempted to shut them out."

The present race of taxpayers can hardly realise the multiplicity of imposts that were at one period levied on foreign commodities. Even the most petty and trifling things were included, either to raise revenue or to protect home trades. Asses, caraway comfits, eels, sucking pigs, aquafortis, sausages, bitumen, maccaroni, buttons, nutmegs, medals, eamomile, beeswax, cow-hair, wheel spokes, blacking, willow chips, cream of tartar, books, candlewicks, black puddings, tinfoil, onions, beads, whetstones, singing birds, tar, bladders—nothing was forgotten; each item had its particular tax or duty specified, and each had the sharp eyes of the Custom House officer upon it. Some articles were loaded with a series of duties

one after another, until they were nearly smothered beneath the weight. At one time French paper of the finer kinds, used mostly for prints and drawings, had no fewer than thirteen distinct import duties to bear, the result of an equal number of Acts of Parliament.

Ever since the termination of the great European war in 1815, the tendency of English fiscal legislation has been to lessen the number of different articles on which Customs duties were imposed, and to rely more especially on a few great items. The late Sir Robert Peel swept off more than four hundred items in one year; and yet there were several hundreds still left on the tax-book. The result was important. The Commissioners of Customs reported that "With the reduction of duties, and the removal of all needless and vexatious restrictions, smuggling has greatly diminished, and the public sentiment with regard to it has undergone a very considerable change. The smuggler is no longer an object of general sympathy, as a hero of romance; and people are beginning to awaken to a perception of the fact that his offence is not only a fraud on the revenue but a robbery of the fair trader. Smuggling is now almost entirely confined to tobacco, spirits, and watches." A few significant hints were given to ladies, indicating that smugglers were not all of the rougher sex:—"Lace, silk, and other trifling articles are still occasionally seized on the persons or in the baggage of unprincipled passengers; but all such instances are on the wane. The thoughtless habit, however, of so packing dutiable articles within the folds of ladies' dresses as to answer the purpose, or at least to give the appearance, of fraudulent concealment, still prevails among passengers arriving from abroad, and gives rise to many disagreeable disputes. This practice is the more indefensible, because the very parties who thus dishonourably endeavour to frustrate the purpose of a partial, rapid, and polite search are the loudest and most vehement in their complaints if that search be minute and tedious." Just so.

Owing to these and other causes, Will Watch the Bold Smuggler is dead, or dying; there are only paltry smugglers now, too small to give a dash of poetry to their adventures. There are, it is true, two or three hundred seizures every year, made by the Custom House officers on or near our coasts; but the smugglers do not

show fight; if likely to be detected, they run away. A favourite mode of smuggling consists in packing dutiable articles in the midst of others admitted duty-free, and thereby cheating the revenue under the guise of fair trading — a more cunning but more despicable habit than the hardy "running" of illicit cargoes on the coast.

How many acts of smuggling are perpetrated, no one knows; we are only cognizant of those which are found out—on the principle that

What is hit, is history;
But what is miss'd, is mystery.

In a recent year, a hundred and thirty pounds of tobacco and cigars were concealed by one of the engineers in a hollow beam in the engine-room of a steamer; the Argus eyes of the Customs' officers ferreted out the secret when the steamer entered port. In another instance, a vessel came over from Stettin in the Baltic, with several casks of camomile flowers among the cargo; in the very midst of the camomile the officers found a hundred and fifty pounds of cigars. A similar mode of illicitly introducing a hundred and thirty pounds of cigars was about the same time adopted in a vessel hailing from Hamburg. Early one morning, nearly twelve hundred pounds of tea were found quietly reposing in a furze-brake in Guernsey, evidently waiting for a favourable opportunity of transit to some part of the English coast, there to take its chance of evading Customs' duty. On another occasion, several cases of glue were found to have more than eleven hundred pounds of cigars snugly embosomed in their midst. One day a coast-guardsman near Portsmouth saw a boat laden with barrels of snuff drifting about; the quantity was no less than four thousand six hundred pounds; the owners were probably not far off, but did not deem it prudent to come forth and show themselves. A French fishing barque, the Jeune Henriette, came into an English port with forty pounds of tobacco concealed among the fish and the tackle. In one instance, six hundred pounds of tobacco were found concealed in some bags of hops, in a vessel coming from Ostend; on conviction, the owner could not or would not pay the duty and fines; so he was put "in durance vile." A cask of potatoes was the hiding-place of another batch of smuggled tobacco. One ingenious rascal outdid most of the others in inventiveness; he concealed four pounds

of Cavendish tobacco inside two loaves of German bread!

Let us give two more instances; and let them be of recent occurrence, as recorded in the last annual Report of the Commissioners of Customs; both occurred a few months ago. "On the top of a bank, rising directly from high water mark in one of the muddy creeks of Southampton Water, stands a wooden hut commanding a full view of it, and surrounded by an ill-cultivated garden. There are houses near, but the hut does not belong to them, and appears to have been built for no obvious purpose. An old smuggler was traced to this hut; and from that time for nearly two months the place was watched with great precaution, until, at midnight on the 28th of May, two men employed by us being on watch, a boat was observed coming from a small vessel about a mile from the shore. The boat, containing four men, stopped opposite the hut, landed one man and some bags, while the remainder of the crew took her some two hundred yards off, hauled her up, and then proceeded to the hut. One of our men was instantly despatched for assistance, while the other remained watching. On his return with three policemen the whole went to the hut, where they found two men on watch outside, and four inside asleep. A horse and cart were also found in waiting, the cart having a false bottom. The six men were seen and sent to the police station; a boat was then procured, the vessel whence the men had come was boarded, and found to be laden with tobacco and spirits. The result was that the vessel, a smack of about fifteen tons, with eighty-five bales of leaf tobacco, six boxes of Cavendish, with some cigars and spirits, was seized, and four of the persons concerned in the transaction convicted of the offence." The other instance was as follows:—"On the arrival of a steam-vessel at one of the north-eastern ports from Hamburg (one of the foreign ports where manufactured tobacco is most readily obtainable at the lowest price), she was rummaged by our officers, i.e. searched in the ordinary way to ascertain whether any goods liable to duty were concealed on board. On spitting the coal in the bunkers, unusual resistance was felt; and on the coals being removed, a discovery was made of bags containing two hundred and forty-four pounds of Cavendish, a hundred and eight pounds of cut tobacco, fourteen pounds of cigars,

with a cask and demi-john containing a small quantity of spirits."

Considerable ingenuity is displayed in such schemes as these; but still the fact is apparent that the Dashing Smuggler, the cut-and-thrust terror of Custom House officials, is a thing of the past, so far as England is concerned.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XL. "THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT!"

FRANK is back in town, engaged in the (to him) terrible task of "toning down," Mrs. Constable's feelings about his new engagement. As fast as he assuages one fear, and lays it to rest as it were, another rises up strong, and active, and his work recommences. Worse than all, he is unassisted in his endeavours. He has no one to back him up, and cheer his oft-times fainting spirit. For there is a division in the family camp, and for the time being Mrs. Constable is at openly proclaimed war with her daughter, the successful general who has led Charlotte Grange's forces on to victory. Accordingly, Mrs. Grange has taken her husband and his sister away to her own home, leaving Frank to fight the ignominious battle of self-justification alone.

He is paying a heavy penalty for all his want of purpose, all his weakness of will, all his contemptible inability to stand out against the machinations of the worst of the women who happen to be about him, already. His love of present ease, his intense deeply rooted desire to keep things smooth for himself for the present moment, is taxed to the uttermost now. From the wails of his mother-in-law he can only turn to the withering words of wisdom of his mother, and the cool contentedness with which his sisters regard his as a most pitiful position, and one for even tolerating which they are inclined to highly applaud themselves.

There is still more acid in Gertrude's views as to all things than there is in Marian's, although Gertrudo's prospects are golden, gorgeous, grand in their security from all the evils flesh is heir to, when it has not money enough to supply its highest needs. She is constantly mentally contrasting Frank Forest, her brother, the genius out of luck—as far as

his natural selection of women with whom to share his life is concerned—with her lover Clement Graham, the fool who has by some rare chance secured her!

The contrast annoys her more day by day as she dwells upon it, and sours her originally not too sweet temper, and makes her morbidly desirous of finding out flaws in the women Frank has chosen. But Charlotte Grange defies her! not openly, not impertinently, but with a quiet force that there is no withstanding. She is an amiable, plump, placid invader, to all appearances, and those whose territory she has invaded can divine nothing of her set, mercenary purpose, under her sneaking mantle of profoundly candid calm.

To give Charlotte Grange her due, hers is no easy part to play, and she plays it admirably. She is perfectly conscious of the family feeling against her, she is also perfectly conscious that the family feeling is not altogether ungrounded. At the same time she determines to keep perfectly at peace, so long as they may have the power to frustrate any one of her aims. But as soon as she has Frank so securely for her own, that he must seem to take part in her conduct, whatever it may be, she will, with the most delicious candour, allow the family to understand her real opinion of it.

Meantime, she pursues her path unmolested among them all, compelling Mrs. Forest to advise her about her future arrangements for Frank's domestic comfort, and beguiling Gertrude into confidences about her trousseau in a very feminine and pleasing way. She does not force herself upon the Forests, but just shows herself to be amiably gratified when they call upon her—as Frank compels them to do occasionally—and she takes very little notice of the baby, a course of conduct which is eminently pleasing to its father, after his late experiences.

In spite of all the hard bitterness of feeling, which reigns in Gertrude's heart against this woman who is to be her brother's wife, a certain amount of confidence seems to spring up between them. Gertrude is not at all proud of Clement Graham, but she is well satisfied with the position she will be able to attain, with the money which Clement Graham has in his possession. Charlotte openly congratulates Gertrude on this, and Gertrude relaxes some of her vigilant dislike under these congratulations, and so it comes about

that the two brides-elect see a good deal of each other.

Verily there is a skeleton in the closet of every house—a bitter drop at the bottom of the most intoxicatingly successful cup. Clement Graham can give Gertrude a splendid house, and the use of vast wealth, but he cannot give her the safe feeling that he may not at any moment make a fool of himself, and abash her before her relations.

As in the old days, when he spoke to ill-purpose and spoilt Kate Mervyn's life, Clement Graham still invariably intervenes at the wrong time, and interferes with the wrong person.

Just at present his fear is that Charlotte Grange is monopolising too much of the time and attention of his own Gertrude, for Charlotte Grange to be at all a pleasant or acceptable fact to him. Despite his vast stock of self-love and self-complacency, Clement Graham cannot flatter himself that the ill-tempered good-looking young woman who has consented to link her lot with his, likes him in the least, or regards him in the remotest degree. At the same time, she has accustomed him to a certain need of attention, and he will have it from her now, though it vexes his soul to be obliged to exact it thus—to be compelled to entreat her to "seem, at least before other people, to think a little more of him, than she does of the make of her new dresses, and relative acceptability and worth of her various presents."

Gradually he develops a snappish autogonism to Charlotte Grange, on the few occasions of family gatherings, which would be "unbearable," she tells Frank, "if it were not so ridiculous." He differs with her on every subject that comes under public discussion. He makes taunting allusions to the audacity and forwardness of women who follow men up closely, and finally beguile offers from them, which the men, as a rule, repent themselves of most bitterly, before they can fulfil them. In a word, he rouses all the spirit of revenge which lies concealed in Miss Grange's soul, and makes her resolve upon taking a subtle form of it which will suit her purpose well.

She bears it all with a smiling, amiable patience, that commands a certain amount of admiration even from the Forest family, who (with the exception of Gertrude) dislike her intensely, but who cannot blind themselves to the fact that she is

receiving more ignominious provocation from Clement Graham than a gentlewoman ought to be subjected to at the hands of any man. The petty contradictions, the sneering allusions, the thinly veiled sarcasms, fall around her thickly, but she remains queen of herself, unbowed by them, unresentful of them.

At length, in sheer dismay at his want of success in irritating her, he desists, intending to maintain a sulky reserve and to ignore her utterly. But she will be no more ignored than she will be irritated by him. She creeps nearer to him daily, enveloping him in her influence as quietly and surely, as impereceptibly and fatally, as one is enveloped by the effects of a foul atmosphere.

He soon begins to find himself watchfully anxious for her coming, not in order that he may carp and cavil at her, as heretofore, but that he may listen to her interesting exposition of the enviable fate of a woman who marries a man with a "beautiful home in the charming country;" and who has the prospect of frequent foreign travel before her. Now both these delights will be Gertrude's; but Mr. Clement Graham's discrimination does not tell him that Charlotte is perfectly conscious of the fact. He imagines that she is groping in the dark, and that she has blindly hit upon, as more delightful than any other form of happiness in the world, those very circumstances of wealth with which he will be enabled to endow the happy woman who may become his wife.

It is difficult for the unbiassed few who are watching the game to determine whether or not Gertrude is pleased at the change in her future husband's demeanour towards her brother's future wife. As has been said before, Gertrude is not a good-tempered woman. On the other hand, it must be urged in her favour, that she is neither dishonest, treacherous, nor a sneak. But now, though she must see as plainly, at least, as Marian does, that Charlotte Grange is taking exceptionally subtle trouble to win Clement Graham's liking, at least, if not his love, Gertrude makes no sign. She is, or she feigns to be, perfectly indifferent. She withdraws no single mark of friendship or favour from Charlotte; she exercises no supervision over Charlotte's intercourse with Mr. Graham; she makes no attempt to outvie Miss Grange in the latter's eloquent delineation of the joys of a country place and foreign travel. In short, she either has

the most profound reliance on her own charms, or on Charlotte's honour.

She is not dishonest. Long ago she stated, in reply to some questioning on the part of her sister, that she "did not like Clement Graham, but that she meant to marry him." Now, in reply to some further close questioning on the part of that keenly-affectionate observer, she says,

"Don't be alarmed, Marian; it must end as I intend it to end. Whether I'm taking a false step or not, in marrying him, I can't tell yet; but certainly I shall take it."

"You don't quite know Charlotte, any more than I do myself," Marian says; "she is taking incessant, fatiguing pains to please Clement."

"She takes incessant, fatiguing pains to please us all."

"Ah! that's natural; we might influence Frank. Clement is powerless to do that. I wouldn't rely on her desire to please the family at large, or on her honour, too much, if I were you."

"No; but I rely on his constitutional dislike to getting into hot water with any one who can punish him," Gertrude says, coolly. "My dear Marian, don't imagine that I deceive myself about Clement: he's a moral and physical coward; but I shall never expect anything but moral and physical cowardice from him; and so I shall never be disappointed."

It is not an enthusiastic, it is not even a moderately hopeful view to take of her future relations with the man with whom it is her purpose to link her fate. But, then, the Forest girls are not of a specially enthusiastic order, nor are they given to uttering their hopes aloud in the market-places. Marian's sole commentary on her sister's remark is—

"Well, I hope you're right, I suppose you are; I wonder what Frank thinks of the change from discord to harmony between Charlotte and Clement. We're such an amiable family in these latter days, that perhaps he likes it too."

"If he can make up his mind to be jealous of Clement Graham, I can't," Gertrude says; "it's Clement's nature to be either always stupidly surly or savage to people, or servilely pleased with them. As I mean to marry him I must put up with the idiosyncrasy; at any rate I'll never worry myself about it."

The subject drops here, and passes away from the thoughts of both sisters apparently. As for the rest, they do not seem

to notice it, and one day it is Charlotte herself who broaches it to Frank.

"I can't congratulate Gertrude on her future lord and master," she says, coming out from a room in which she has been having a lengthy tête-à-tête with the subject of her remarks; "he may be wealthy but he certainly isn't wise."

"I don't like the fellow myself, and never did," Frank says, remembering the part Clement Graham has played in the drama of Kate's life; but that's neither here nor there; Gertrude likes him, I suppose."

"I suppose she does; nothing else but 'liking' would induce her to marry him, I should think?"

"Well, I don't know about that," Frank says, with touching candour as regards his sister's possibly mercenary motives; "Gertrude has always had a keen eye for the main chance; every happiness in life that money, and money alone, can give, will be hers when she marries him, if she only plays her cards properly."

"Money can't give much happiness if there's no love in the case I should think," Charlotte says sweetly; "poor Clement! he's too weak to chain her heart, I fear; do you know, Frank, that for days past he has been trying to make friends with me, evidently thinking that it won't look well to the world if he goes on showing contempt for me simply because I have no money of my own; that is the secret of his dislike to me, I'm sure, and now he tries to conceal it."

"I shouldn't take any notice of the mean-spirited fool if I were you," Frank says, carelessly, and Charlotte infuses still more sweetness and suavity into the tones in which she answers,

"Oh! it's not worth while to bear malice; he can't hurt me. I only mentioned it to you, because I was afraid that you might think that I was vain enough to imagine that his altered manner arose from real liking on his part, but believe me, Frank dear, I know better."

It is strange, at least, if not suspicious, that the very day after this conversation she should be strolling alone with Clement Graham in one of the most secluded avenues in Kensington Gardens.

"I must admit to myself that I am doing wrong in meeting you in this way," she says to him, as he comes up to her eagerly, "but my desire to be with you, and to listen to you, is stronger than my sense of right, stronger than my appreciation of all the advantages I should gain by keeping to my engagement with Frank."

In his fatuous folly he really believes her; how indeed could he distrust such smiling, quiet, sweet, womanly eyes, and manners. He really believes her. He really thinks that she is ignorant of the immense worldly advantages he possesses over Frank Forest, and that she is here, risking her reputation and future comfort for love of himself alone.

"Gertrude either thinks it bad form to be demonstrative, or she has no feeling for me to express," he says, "all the time she has never said as much as you've just said to me, and a fellow gets very tired of it."

"They're a cold-hearted family, I fear," Charlotte Grange says, shaking her head.

"As for Forest, he can't blame us for changing our minds before we married," Clement Graham goes on, "he nearly did it himself two or three times before he married May Constable, I understand; I don't believe you would ever be happy with him."

"I don't believe I should—now," she replies.

"Then don't risk it," he urges, flushing up a little; "there's no need for us to make any fuss or to let it be known" (he grows pale again at the thought of the possible consequences of its being known), "we'll get it over quietly, and start off for Boulogne at once; we'll telegraph the intelligence to them from there, for I don't want to do anything underhand."

"I understand you so thoroughly," she says, and, to do her justice, she does.

On December 3rd will be published,

THE OPAL RING

BEING THE

EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER

FOR

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 314. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VIII. A REVELATION.

ALTHOUGH the younger and the bolder villain slept through the night following the commission of his latest and worst crime, his accomplice, hardened as he had been by years of wickedness, was unable sufficiently to stifle his conscience and his fears to allow him to get the repose which he stood so much in need of. When Heath retired to rest, Captain Studley once more took up his position by his daughter's bedside, where he remained, vainly endeavouring to compose himself to slumber; now succeeding so far as to drop off into a state almost of forgetfulness, from which he would be aroused by the overbalancing of his nodding wearied head, or, worse still, by a loud shrill cry resounding in his ears. He would start up, look around, and find all quiet—Anne, with the influence of the sleeping-draught still on her, lying motionless in the bed, her breathing coming regularly through her parted lips, her eyelids not quite closed, her face very pale, but placid and motionless. Without, no sound broke the intense stillness, and Studley, after rubbing his eyes, and straining his ears, would again settle himself in the chair, pulling his dressing-gown lightly round him, and dropping off into another fitful slumber, from which he would again be similarly aroused. Later on, in the early morning, about four o'clock, it seemed as though sleep were no longer possible to him. He sat upright in the chair, staring straight before him, recognising at last the impossibility

of shutting out from his mental vision the horrible scene of the previous day. Do what he would, he could not turn his thoughts in any other direction; it was there present to him, with many a detail such as he had not noticed at the time, such as perhaps had never existed, obtruding itself upon him. No fear of the consequences alarmed him, he was wholly fascinated and entranced in what was passing through his mind, a recollection so vivid that he finally rose, staggering from his seat, with the sweat standing in huge drops on his brow, and locked the door—with the idea of keeping out something, he knew not what, which was making its way up the stairs.

In the reaction following the excitement, the sleep which he had so long sought came upon him, deep, heavy, and stertorous, and held him in its grasp until he was roused by the sharp clattering of the gate-bell. At the first instant of returning consciousness he gazed round him as though in doubt where he was; at the second, he knew all, and the thought at once flashed across him that Danby had been missed, and that the police were already at the gate. A moment's reflection dispelled this fear, and when the bell rang again, after a glance at Anne to assure himself that she still slept, Studley descended the stairs, casting a hurried look into the dining-room, the door of which stood open, and crossing the garden, opened the gate. The early visitor was the servant-girl, who had come to ask after Miss Studley, and to say that her mother had some washing to do, but would be in attendance by noon. The captain informed the girl that Miss Studley had taken a sleeping-draught which had been sent by the chemist, and had slept quietly through the night, that noon would probably be quite soon enough for Mrs.

Marks to assume her position as nurse, and that he would be glad if the girl would call at Dr. Blatherwick's, and ask him to see Miss Studley as soon as possible. All this being settled, the girl took her leave, and the captain turned towards the house.

"Half-past ten," he said to himself, after consulting his watch. "Blatherwick will have gone on his morning rounds and will not get the message until his return. That will give me plenty of time to have it all out with Anne before he comes here. She has slept very long, and—there could have been nothing in that draught which Heath brought in? No! I remember now, he tasted it himself to prove its innocence! If she does not wake soon of her own accord, I must rouse her. It is most important to find out how much she really saw, and what she intends doing about it. Anyhow, we must clear out of this! I wish I had never seen the place, I had a presentiment about it from the first. I recollect saying I thought it was a damp, slimy, cut-throat kind of crib when I first saw it, without any idea my words would have turned out so correct! Heath over-ruled me then, as he does in everything, and I dare say he was right in saying that we should never find a quieter neighbourhood, or one where—Let us hope the quiet won't be broken for the next few days! that fellow's cursed temper has upset the plans of months!"

And the captain stamped his foot with rage and vexation as he remembered the money and the jewels which but twenty-four hours before were in his keeping, and which in the flurry and agitation consequent upon what had been done, he had suffered to be taken from him, and carried off. The captain had often had occasion to curse his want of nerve, but never previously had it commited him so deeply. The fact of being an accessory in a crime of such magnitude, which had hitherto so seriously disturbed him, almost vanished from his mind, as he recollects the blind obedience with which he had assented to Heath's proposition that the booty which had been acquired with so much trouble and danger, should be taken away to some locality, then unknown to him, and to which he would always have a difficulty in obtaining access.

It was done, now, and could not be helped—that was his first consolation as he went up-stairs again.

All silent in the bedroom still; that draught must surely have been of extra power! No! as he stood by the side of

the bed, Anne's eyes opened slowly, and rested on him looking down at her.

No nervousness, no start, not a quiver in her eyelids. A faint flush rose on her cheeks and throat, but died away as quickly as it had come. She lay there motionless, but awake, with her attentive eyes fixed upon her father.

It was he who grew uneasy under that searching gaze. "Awake at last, Anne!" he said, bending over her, "how do you find yourself now? You've had a long sleep of it!"

"I am quite well," she replied, raising her head, and speaking in her usual calm voice, "have I slept long?"

"A great many hours, but not too many!" said the captain, "a good long sleep was necessary for you, Anne! You've been ill—you know that?"

"No! I did not know that, I do not know it now! And yet," she continued, sinking her voice to a whisper, "I know all that has happened, father! I remember everything!"

As his ear caught these words, the captain, who was stooping over the bed, rose abruptly and closed the door. Then, returning to his former position, with an anxious expression on his face, which he strove in vain to conceal, and with a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to infuse a jaunty tone into his voice, he said, "I do not know that anything particular has happened, Anne! You really have been ill, and are possibly under the influence of the fever!"

She raised herself on her elbow, and, leaning towards him, said in the same low tone, "Was it under the influence of the fever that I, standing at the window, saw Walter Danby stabbed to the heart by Mr. Heath, as you stood by? I saw that foul act committed, father, that base, treacherous, cowardly deed was done before my eyes! I remember nothing further; I may have been ill, as you say, I have a dull numbing pain in my head still; I do not know what day it is, what length of time has elapsed since I fainted, but I do know that I saw murder done, and I thank God I am alive to avenge it!"

"Hush Anne!" cried the captain, holding up his hand in warning, "for Heaven's sake keep silence!"

"For Heaven's sake?" she repeated, shaking her head sadly, "do you invoke Heaven, after witnessing such a crime, without an attempt to prevent it?"

"What was I to do?" said the captain, doggedly. "I couldn't — I don't know what you're talking about," he muttered, suddenly changing his tactics, "the delirium hasn't passed away yet, I fancy!"

"Ah, father!" said Anne, stretching out her hands appealingly "why attempt to bewilder me any more? If an angel were to come from Heaven to testify to the truth of what I saw, my own certainty of having seen it would not be greater! Rather make such amends as you can for your cowardice——"

"My cowardice, Anne?" interrupted the captain.

"Was it not cowardice? What else could it have been which prevented you from interposing between a man, bound hand and foot and unarmed, and his assassin?"

"It was done in an instant, before I could interfere! I had no notion of what was coming," muttered the captain, with his eyes on the ground.

"It was done in an instant; but it was no less murder, base, treacherous, cowardly murder!" cried the girl, raising her voice. "You had no notion of what was coming, you say; and I believe you! Life can be little enough to me for the future; but I would pray to be taken at once, if I thought otherwise. But, then, all the more reason for you to join with me in denouncing the murderer."

"What!" cried Studley, staggering back, aghast; "do you think of doing that?"

"What else could be done?" said Anne, sitting upright in the bed, with her eyes wide open, and her hair streaming over her shoulders. "Father, do you imagine, for an instant, that I could live with the knowledge that the man who murdered Walter Danby was unpunished? We have been together so little that you have no idea of my character, and take me probably for the quiet, long-suffering, little-saying person I have always seemed to you. If so, you could scarcely be more widely wrong."

"Have you thought what would happen, if you were to take such a step as that you have just named?" asked the captain, drawing a chair to the bedside and seating himself.

"Mr. Heath would try to kill me, perhaps, as he killed Walter! But then, at least," she said, with rising scorn, "you would interfere! Not that I fear him!" she cried. "If he is here, and dares to see

me, I would tell him exactly what I have told you!"

"There would be other consequences besides that which you have named," said Studley, quietly. "Heath is not here, and you will never see him again—at least, I think not!"

"I will see him in the dock at the Berks Assizes," said Anne, with intense earnestness, "and my evidence shall send him thence to execution."

"Then you will send your father at the same time," said Studley, looking steadily at her. "You must be prepared for that, Anne!"

"You, father? You had no hand in this foul deed, if you did not interfere in time to prevent it!" she said, in astonishment.

"'An accessory before the fact' is the technical term for a person in my position, and death is the inevitable penalty," said the captain, deliberately. "You must be prepared for that result, so far as I am concerned, before you take any move in the matter."

"But, father, I, who was the witness of the frightful scene—I, who saw it all, would tell them that you were innocent, and that he alone——"

"Look here, Anne!" said Studley, suddenly bringing his hand down heavily on the bed; "there must be an end to this foolery!"

She looked up at him in wonder, and saw that his brows were knitted and his teeth set.

"I have something to say to you," he continued "and now seems to me about the fittest time for saying it. You must have known it sooner or later; and perhaps it is better that you should hear it from me, than from any other person. You say rightly that we have been thrown together very little; but that we have been kept apart was as much out of kindness to you as out of policy on my part. From the same mingled motives, I had arranged, as you know, that your being here should be but a temporary measure, and that our lives in future should be as distinct as they have been hitherto. What has happened has changed those plans, and what may become of either of us it is impossible to say. But, in the humour in which I find you now, it is advisable that you should know that, in denouncing Heath, you denounce me, and that, though it is perfectly true that I had no act or part in this crime, I am so bound up with him in others, as to be entirely at his mercy!"

"You, father!" she murmured, falling back—"you, implicated in crime!"

Anne's horror at the revelation seemed to have no effect upon her father. There was a temporary resumption of his old jaunty manner as he said,

"I have endeavoured, not unsuccessfully, to keep the knowledge from you; but the fact is so, nevertheless." As he marked the freezing look of horror stealing over his daughter's face, however, he changed his tone. "It is true," he said, doggedly, "and has been true for years."

"Ah, father!" whispered Anne, "you are saying this to try me? I am weak, far weaker than I thought. Spare me, I implore you!"

"I speak in order that *you* may spare *me!*" said Studley, with a kind of savage frankness. "You have been brought up with the knowledge that you had a father, but with scarcely anything more. How I lived you were never told, for the best of reasons. No one knew but myself, and it did not suit me to take you into my confidence then, though it does now. I was recommended to leave the army, and, following the principle adopted by the well-bred dog, I went before I was kicked out. There had been a great deal of gambling in the regiment, and I had been particularly lucky, so lucky as to give rise to unfavourable comments, and, after an interview with the colonel, I thought it better to send in my papers. Your mother was alive then, and I soon found out she had discovered what had occurred; not that she ever mentioned it to me, but I felt certain of it. Other people, who had neither the same reason nor the same desire to keep it quiet, came to know it, and very soon I found that the world's cold shoulder was turned toward me. If that had not been so just then, my whole life might have been different; for I was young at the thing, and easily impressed, and your mother, without showing her hand in any way, did what she could to keep me straight. But when I found myself cut, right and left, my back was up, and I thought that if I had the name of being a swindler—ah! you may hang your head, and put up your hands to your ears, but that's what they called me—I might as well have some of the profits. It's not a nico story," he continued, after a pause, "and there's very little variety in it. I think I kept tolerably quiet until I lost your mother; but, after that, I grew reckless, and the more I was talked of the

better I liked it. I was part-proprietor of a gambling-house in Paris, and another in Brussels, and was considered by the foreign police to be the sharpest and cleverest Englishman they had ever met."

The captain's voice had a kind of triumphant ring in it as he recounted his exploits, and he was apparently too much occupied in his reminiscences to notice that Anne had thrown herself prone upon the pillow, and that so much of her face as could be seen was burning with shame.

"Just about that time," he continued, "I fell in with Heath, and I soon found that, whatever I may have thought of my own skill, I was not to be compared to him. I was the older man, but in a short time he acquired a complete ascendancy over me. For years I have been less his confederate or accomplice than his slave, going here and there at his command, and doing everything he desired. It was at his instructions I took this cursed house; it was by his advice I was going to send you out as a governess, in order that your presence here might not interfere with his plans."

"Would it be impossible to break these bonds?" asked Anne, without raising her face.

"Wholly impossible, and now more impossible than ever!" said Studley. "I would have liked to free myself years ago, but I could hit upon no plan. I am bound to that man, body and soul, for life. I must fall when he falls! Do you now, in the full knowledge of that fact, propose to denounce him as a murderer?"

There was a pause of some minutes. Then Anne said, in a broken voice,

"No, father, after what you have said, I suppose I must forego my vengeance. Mr. Heath is quite safe, so far as I am concerned."

"You speak with remarkable prudence and discretion, Anne!" said the captain, bending forward, and laying his hands on his daughter's head.

"Don't touch me!" she cried, shrinking aside. "I—I did not mean that, but—I am still weak and nervous. What you have told me now has completely stunned me. I knew—I could guess—that your life had been unsettled, but I had no idea that it had been criminal. What my future existence will be, with that knowledge upon me, I cannot imagine."

"I intended to have kept it from you," said Studley, "and I should not have told you now, if I had not been obliged. But

when you talked of denouncing Heath it was time for me to speak, for our interests are so bound up together, that where one goes the other must go too. I don't wonder at your horror at what he has done; I felt the same, and I would have prevented him had it been possible. But it was not possible, and what we have got to do now is to make the best of it."

"What you order me to do will be done," said Anne; "only one thing I implore you. Keep that man out of my sight!"

"You shan't see him, my dear!" said Studley, reassuringly; "he has gone away, and will be away some time; and as to my 'orders,' they can very easily be obeyed. Jane has gone home. I told her you had fever, and she was afraid to stop, but her mother will be coming here presently, and to her and the doctor, whom I also expect, you must play the part of an invalid. You understand?"

"Perfectly," said Anne. "My life henceforward is to be one course of deception, and the part is easily undertaken."

"Your looks couldn't be better—I mean better for our purpose," said the captain, examining her with a critical eye. "Pale, languid, and distraught, exactly the effect that is required. I need not warn you not to talk much, for you're always silent and reserved, and when they ask you questions give general answers—head hot, sense of languor, depression, you know the sort of thing!"

"I know it well enough," said Anne, with a shudder, "there will be but little need of deception so far."

"There's a ring," said the captain; "the nurse, no doubt! Now just one final word. Don't let her leave your room on any pretext. It is most essential that she should not go prying about the house, as such women generally do. I shall be downstairs and shall probably hear her if she attempts to come down, but you must prevent her in the first instance. The bell again! Don't forget what I have just said!"

But little skill would have been required to deceive the nurse, a kindly, motherly woman, who called Anne "my dear," and whose principal idea of fulfilling her functions was to manufacture a very raspy and gritty kind of gruel, and to go to sleep. Her power of compelling slumber under difficulties was truly marvellous, and even when her energies seemed to be absorbed in gruel-making, she would pause in the act of stirring, and drop gently

off, spoon in hand. Her daughter had spoken to her of Anne's kindness and sweet nature, and the old woman was, when awake, as tender with her patient as if she had been her child. And Anne, in her state of agitation and wretchedness, found inexpressible comfort in looking at the calm old wrinkled face with its decorous surrounding of snow-white hair, and in listening to the tones of the pleasant homely voice.

Later in the day came Dr. Blatherwick, in his green gig, with the wall-eyed white horse, so well known for twenty miles round. A rotund rubicund little man, Dr. Blatherwick, always, when on professional visits, dressed in solemn black, with a bunch of gold seals hanging just beneath his waistcoat, as the only relief to his sombre appearance; but much given, when off duty, to the wearing of a pot-hat and an old suit of dittoes, and sitting in a punt in the middle of the river, attended by his factotum. Dr. Blatherwick had an idea that the treatment of lunacy was his forte, and he had persuaded the friends of a poor harmless creature to yield him up as a patient. The little doctor believed implicitly in "the power of the eye," and declared that by that power he had completely tamed the poor wretch who was so constantly subjected to it; the fact being that the lunatic was a mild being, whom nothing but the insults of the rude street boys, who put out their tongues at him, and pulled his coat when he took his walks abroad, could rouse out of mental torpor. Even on his other patients the doctor was in the habit of trying his power, declaring that he could arrive at an accurate diagnosis with a single glance. "Ha!" he exclaimed, laying his head on one side like a bird, and looking at Anne. "Skin dry, cheeks drawn, eyes suffused, lips set in fever! Quality not pronounced, able to tell next visit."

"You find it fever, as I mentioned I thought, doctor," said Studley. "She must be kept quiet, I suppose?"

"Perfect quiet, rest, barley-water, dry toast, medicine which I will send her! What should I say to cause? Impossible to say. Only just come home, has she? Where from—Hampstead? Explained at once—sudden change from dry air to moist air, from bracing to relaxing—quite enough to cause this illness. No danger, nothing to alarm yourself about, see her to-morrow. Good day, captain! hope you'll give us another reading this winter—shall

never forget ‘charged the six hundred’—capital! excellent!” and the little doctor hurried off in the hope of getting an hour or two’s fishing that afternoon.

The captain busied himself in the lower part of the house until the evening. He went through a vast accumulation of papers, with a great deal of care, burning and destroying many of them. He looked through his guns and fishing tackle, greased his fishing boots, passed in review his sticks and whips, and generally “tidied up” his den. His occupation did not take him into the dining-room; indeed, he very carefully eschewed that apartment, eating the steak which he broiled for himself in the kitchen where it was cooked. The dining-room door was closed when the doctor paid his second visit—he had had capital sport in the punt, and looked round in his fishing-clothes—and when he put his hand on the handle, and prepared to go in to write a prescription, Captain Studley deftly shunted him into the den, where, as he said, pens and ink were handy. The doctor found his patient much in the same state, declined to specify the exact kind of fever, but rejected the captain’s suggestion of “intermittent” with the greatest scorn.

When he had seen the doctor out, and locked the garden gate behind him, the captain made his way to his daughter’s room, and intimated his intention of relieving the nurse from any further attendance that night. The old woman expressed her perfect willingness to sit up, but the captain was peremptory, telling her that if the illness lasted, all her strength would be needed, and insisting on her retiring to the room until lately occupied by her daughter, which was at the other end of the house.

As the sound of her retreating footsteps died away, the captain drew his chair to the bedside, and said in a low voice—

“You’re doing it very well, my dear, very well indeed, but to-morrow you must be worse. I’ve been thinking it will probably be necessary for us to keep up this fiction for some days, and in order that we may do so, you must be decidedly worse to-morrow, please. A little more restlessness would be effective, I think, and perhaps now and then a touch of delirium. It is a great comfort to think that in your doctor and nurse you have two worthy but perfectly idiotic people, who could be fooled by a far less skilful person than yourself.”

“I will do what you wish,” said Anne,

“though you have no idea of the difficulty! As I lie here, my whole brain is on fire! All that I have seen, all that you have told me, all that I dread in the future, occupies my mind! Sometimes I feel that I can contain myself no longer, and that if I do not speak I shall go mad! Father, will you not help me in this strait! Think of what I have to bear, and have some mercy on me!”

“Hush, Anne! a little lower! these old women sometimes have horribly quick ears!” said the captain, raising his hand. “I don’t see what could be done, or how I could help you!”

“By taking me away from this dreadful place, far away and at once,” said she, raising herself in the bed, and speaking with earnest rapidity. “Let us go, you and I, far away to some place where we shall be out of the reach of that man, and where we might have more chance of forgetting him, and his dreadful associations! Father, will you do that for me, will you take me away?”

“Well, I could not say for certain, without a good deal of consideration, Anne,” said the captain, after a pause. “There is no particular reason why we should stop here, and I shall be certainly glad to get away from Heath—for a time at least.”

“For ever, father! Your most earnest wish must be to have done with him for ever!” said Anne, sinking back.

“Well, perhaps you’re right, Anne, and I’ll certainly think of what you’ve said. Try and get to sleep now, my dear; you’ve had a long and a very anxious day!”

“Quite impossible,” the captain muttered to himself, when he had made sure that Anne had yielded to the fatigue, and was in her first sleep. “No moving from here for me! Supposing Danby to have been missed, and traced, even a portion of the way, to this house, if suspicion and detection are to be averted, it can only be done by my remaining on the spot!”

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

BUSBEQUIUS. IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

In Auger Gislen, Seigneur de Busbec, we encounter a traveller of very different complexion from the scientific condottiere, Mandeville. Instead of fighting for the Soldan of Babylon, the Grand Khan of the Tartars, and other worshippers of Mahound and Termagant, and asserting the spherical

form of the earth at the imminent risk of everlasting perdition, Busbequius lived and died a scholar and diplomatist in the service of the Emperor of Germany. Doubtless an adroit ambassador, for he died in harness, he is still more distinguished by his literary skill, and the calm and scholar-like fashion in which he recounts events which to the vulgar would be "sensational." Like many men who have played an important part in the great world-drama, Augerius Gislenius Busbequius—as he loved to Latinise himself—bore the bar-sinister in his escutcheon. His noble father, Gilles Gislen, the proprietor of the Castle of Busbec, Busbeq, or Busbecq (spelling was a mere matter of fancy in olden times), on the river Lys, between Commines and Menin, hesitated to contract what is now called a "hymeneal alliance" with a base-born maiden, but, to do him justice, spared neither pains nor expense in educating his son to the highest pitch of perfection then attainable, and in pushing him on in the world when he was able to take his part therein. Young Busbee, who was brought up in his father's house, at an early age made such remarkable progress in his studies, that his delighted parent hastened to obtain from the Emperor Charles the Fifth an imperial rescript, legitimising him. It is not on record that he enjoyed the advantage of studying in an English university, but this omission was in some measure repaired by a residence of several years at the universities of Louvain, Paris, Venice, Bologna, and Padua. Having acquired a knowledge of seven languages—to wit, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, German, Flemish, and Slavonic—and imbibed much philosophy and an elegant taste for antiquities, botany, and zoology, he was now fit for work. Whether he spoke all the languages above enumerated "like a native" I know not; but I can testify that he wrote Latin in an elegant and smooth, yet vivacious style, a study of which would be invaluable to the Gresham lecturers of the present day.

In 1554, being then thirty-two years of age, Busbec commenced his diplomatic career in the suite of Don Pedro Lasso, ambassador at the English Court from the titular King of the Romans, afterwards Ferdinand the First, Emperor of Germany, and in his official capacity was present at the celebration of the ill-omened marriage between Philip the Second of Spain and Mary of England. On his return to Flanders, he received at

Lille a letter from Ferdinand, commanding him to present himself at Vienna, preparatory to going on an embassy to Constantinople. Appointed to this important mission, Busbec made no longer stay than to visit his home and take leave of his father and friends; and, taking Tournay in his way, hastened to Brussels. Here he met Don Pedro Lasso, who "spurred him on" to the voyage, and the young diplomatist immediately took horse and hastened towards Vienna.

On arriving at his destination, he was at once introduced into the presence of King Ferdinand by the Secretary of State, John Van der Aa, and was delighted at his reception: "The prince received me with the respect he used to show to those persons of whose probity and faithfulness he had conceived a great opinion." Ferdinand had, it seems, promised the Pacha of Buda that his envoy should be at Buda by the beginning of December, and there was, therefore, need for haste, for the King of the Romans was by no means willing that the "Turks should take any advantage to break their agreement upon the pretence that he had failed in the performance of his." Only twelve days remained—to modern minds a long while to take in going from Vienna to Buda—but, in the opinion of Busbec, very short for the preparation and performance of a "long and tedious" journey. Moreover, one of these days was "cut off" by a command of the king, who sent his new ambassador to visit John Maria Malvezius, then at Comora. This veteran diplomatist had been long resident at Constantinople, was well acquainted with the manners and disposition of the Turks, and was at this moment dying of a disease contracted during a two years' incarceration in the Seven Towers—a hideous state prison at the southern corner of Constantinople, wherein the Turks were apt to lock up foreign ambassadors upon very slight provocation. It had been originally intended to send Malvezius again among the Ottomans; but, worn down by his malady, he refused to go, and Busbec was substituted for him.

Away rode Busbec from Vienna to "Comora, a castle seated on the confluence of the Danube and the river Vaga (Waag), a frontier garrison against the Turks"—the famous virgin fortress Komorn—whither he brought instructions to Malvezius, to "coach" him for his mission. It was not a very encouraging or inspiring entertainment for the new

envoy to the Turks to be closeted for a couple of days with a man who had been injured unto death in the very position he was himself about to occupy; but he profited much by the interview, and husbanded the hints of the dying diplomatist as to what he was to do and avoid in his daily conversation with the Turks, and how to escape the impositions of those heathens. Preparations being at length complete, Busbec set out from Vienna, and, passing through Komorn, crossed the Waag, and pushed on to Gran, "the first garrison of the Turks I came to in Hungary." The governor of Komorn, one Colonel John Pax—an awkward name for a soldier—"had sent sixteen horse with me (of those that the Hungarians call Hussars)," and before long the party met a body of Turkish horse, sent forward to meet them. The Turkish cavalry excited the admiration of the scholar, who says: "To a man unaccustomed to see such sights, it was a very pleasant spectacle, for their bucklers and spears were curiously painted, their sword-hilts bedecked with jewels, their plumes of feathers parti-coloured, and the coverings of their heads were twisted with round windings, as white as snow; their apparel was purple, or at least dark blue; they rode upon stately prancers, adorned with most beautiful trappings." Busbec was conducted straightway to Gran, where he was entertained, "not after a courtly, but after a military manner;" for, instead of beds, the Turks spread coarse shaggy rugs upon the hard boards for his attendants. The prudent scholar here indulges in a self-satisfied chuckle. "Thus my following had a taste of Turkish delights (forsooth); as for myself, I fared better, for my bed was carried along with me wheresoever I went." At Gran, Busbec "marvelled much to hear the croaking of frogs in such a cold season of the year as the month of December; the cause was, the waters, stagnant in those places, are made warm by sulphureous exhalations." Pushing on to Buda, he there witnessed the manoeuvres of the Turkish cavalry, who "began to show me some sport, curveting and discharging one against the other; they threw their bennets on the ground, and, galloping their horses with full speed by them, they took them up by the points of their spears, and many such ludicrous pranks did they perform." Here also he got the first sight of the dreaded Janizaries, at that time the most numerous and the best-

disciplined corps of infantry in the world. Busbequius, saturated with ancient history, compares them to the Roman praetorian guards, but was clearly astounded at the ascetic manners of the Janizaries, who fulfilled at this period other functions than mere fighting. "Their number, when it is filled, is twelve thousand, and their prince disperses them all over his dominions—either to garrison his forts against his enemy, or to be safeguard to Christians and Jews against the injurious rage of the multitude; for there is no well-inhabited village, town, or city, wherein there are not some or other of these Janizaries to protect Christians, Jews, and other helpless persons from the fury of the rabble. The castle of Buda is always garrisoned by them; their habit is a long garment down to the ankles; upon their heads they wear the sleeve of a coat or cloak, for from thence, as they say, the pattern was drawn; their head is put into part of it, and part of it hangs down behind, flapping upon their shoulders; in the front or fore part of it there arises a silver cone, somewhat long, gilt over, and wrought with jewels of an ordinary sort. These Janizaries usually came to me by couples; when they were admitted they bowed their heads and made obeisance, and presently they ran hastily to me, and touched either my garment or my hand, as if they would have kissed it; and then forced upon me a bundle or nosegay of hyacinth or narcissus, and presently retired backward." These visits were not altogether mere demonstrations of respect, "for," continues the ambassador, "when I had given them money (which was the only thing they aimed at) they bowed their heads again, and giving me thanks with a loud voice, they wished me all happiness, and departed." Busbequius could not sufficiently admire the behaviour of this highly-drilled corps, and remarks that "they stood, with a great deal of modesty and silence, with their hands upon their breasts, and fixing their eyes upon the ground, so that they seemed more like our monks than their soldiers. Yet these are the Janizaries that carry such a terror with them wheresoever they come." Again, when at the end of his journey, the ambassador was admitted to an audience of the great Solyman, he remarks: "Among the rest, I most admired the Janizaries. Though there were several thousands of them, yet they stood at a distance from one another, silent and

motionless, as if they had been statues; so that I, who was at some distance from them, at first thought they had been statues, till, being told to salute them as the custom is, I saw them all bow their heads at once by way of re-salutation unto me."

Busbee's account of the Janizaries reflects the greatest credit upon his powers of observation. His comparison of their demeanour with that of monks is perfect; but it is somewhat remarkable that he should have made no inquiries into the origin of the famous corps which so strongly excited his interest. The Janizaries were, in point of fact, military monks, like the knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Amurath, like all absolute monarchs, felt the want of a regiment of guards, attached to him alone, who should have neither tie nor sympathy with his subjects, should be completely ignorant or utterly careless of customs, and know no law but his command. To this end the corps of Janizaries was founded, and was wholly composed of Christian youths, the children of the conquered, "caught young," brought up most carefully in the Mohammedan faith, and trained for war. They were not allowed to marry, Amurath being apparently of the opinion of Lord Bacon, that he that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune, and is less valid for great undertakings than a bachelor. Even in the last degenerate days of the Janizaries, when marriage was permitted among them, no married man was ever advanced in rank, the lead being reserved for the single. At the time when Busbee saw them, these singular soldiers were at the highest pitch of efficiency, and had forty-two years earlier shown their praetorian proclivities by deposing Bazarjet the Second.

During his short stay at Buda, the Turks often dropped in to sup with the imperial ambassador, "and were mightily taken with the delicious sweetness of my wine; it is a liquor that they have but little of in Turkey, and therefore they more greedily desire it, and drink it more profusely when once they come where it is. They continued carousing till late at night; but afterwards I grew weary of the sport, and therefore rose from table and went to my chamber; but as for them, they went away sad because they had not their full swing at the goblet, but were able to stand upon their feet." These persistent guests generally contrived to get on very well without

their temperate and learned host, who oft allowed them to drink their fill after he had left. "Being thus accommodated, they tippled it out till they were even dead drunk, and, tumbling down, lay fast asleep on the ground." This determination to pursue a carouse to the end arose from the careful application of Turkish logic to a case which presented some difficulty: "You must know that it is a great sin in Turkey to drink wine, especially for those who are well stricken in years; as for the younger sort, they think the offence to be venial. But seeing they expect no less punishment after death for drinking a little wine than if they drank ever so much, when once they have tasted of that liquor they go on to drink more and more; for having once incurred the penalty of their law, they think they may sin gratis, and account drunkenness as a matter of gain."

With these agreeable companions, and in visiting the hot springs and other curiosities of the neighbourhood, Busbee passed his time pending the convalescence of the Pacha of Buda, who had been thrown into a violent sickness by the loss of a large sum of money. To his despair, his own physician, Heer William Quaqueleben, was requested to attend the pacha, for "if he had died, the Turks would say my physician had killed him; and by that means the good man might have run a great hazard, and I myself might also have borne part of the infamy as being accessory thereto." However, the pacha got better, and, after an unsatisfactory interview, allowed the embassy to proceed on their journey in boats down the Danube to Belgrade. This was quicker, and, moreover, safer than the land route. "The vessel in which I was, was drawn along by a lesser pinnace, in which there were twenty-four oars. The mariners rowed night and day without any intermission, except only a few hours that the poor souls borrowed to sleep and eat in. In my passage down the river, I could not but observe the venturousness, not to say temerity, of the Turks, who were not afraid to sail on in the mistiest weather and the darkest night, and when the wind blew very hard too; and, besides, there were many water-mills, with several trunks and boughs of trees hanging over the banks, which made our passage very dangerous; so that sometimes our vessel, by the boisterousness of the wind, was driven to the bank, and there dashed against old stumps

of trees hanging over, so that it was like to split; this is certain, that she lost some planks out of her hull, which made a terrible crack and noise when they were loosed therefrom. This noise awaked me; leaping out of my bed, I advised the mariners to be more cautious; they lifted up their voices and gave me no other answer than 'Alaure,' i.e., God will help; and so I might go to bed again if I would."

After a five-days' voyage the travellers arrived safely at Belgrade. At the sight of this great city, which had only been wrested from the Christians in 1520, Busbec remarks that in the preceding generation this bulwark of Hungary, although vigorously assaulted by the Turks, first under Amurath and again under Mahomet, was valiantly defended, and the barbarians beaten off with great loss; but that at the time of Solyman's invasion, Belgrade, either by the neglect of young King Lewis or by the discords of the factious Hungarian nobles, was destitute of a garrison capable of defending it, and thus fell an easy prey to the enemy. He attributes the utter ruin of Hungary to the loss of Belgrade. That door being once opened, "an Iliad of miseries broke in upon poor Hungary." Disaster followed disaster, until King Lewis the Second, at the head of twenty-five thousand Hungarians, made a last desperate stand at Mohacs, and was utterly defeated by Solyman and two hundred thousand Turks! Nodoubt the Hungarians, enfeebled by constant losses and racked by internal dissensions, were greatly outnumbered; but no careful historian attaches much weight to figures. On the fatal field of Mohacs the Hungarians lost their king, seven bishops, and an entire army. The Turks now overran Hungary, took Buda, and enslaved Transylvania. For, saith Busbec, "the Ottomans are herein not unlike to great rivers, whose swelling waves, if they break down any part of the bank or dyke that keeps them in, spread far and near and do abundance of mischief; so the Turks, but far more perniciously, having once broke through the obstacles that stopped them, make a vast spoil wherever they come."

At Belgrade, Busbec found an opportunity of gratifying his taste for antique coins, in the collection of which he took a great delight. His physician, Quaequeleben, fitted him "to a hair, for he was as much addicted to those studies as myself. I found a great many pieces which on one

side represented a Roman soldier, placed between a bull and a horse, with this inscription—*Taurannum*." On the road to Constantinople the party put up at caravanserais, where "nothing is done in secret." Busbec abhorred this sort of lodging, because the eyes of all the Turks were continually upon him. Moreover, the custom was to send to every guest a pilau—"a great wooden dish almost as big as a table; in the middle a platter full of barley boiled to a jelly, with a little piece of flesh, and about the platter were some small loaves, and here and there a piece of honeycomb." He tried desperately hard to back out of eating this mysterious mess, as his own supper was being cooked by his servant, and he was naturally averse to spoiling his appetite with an unknown and infidel dish; but the host "took it amiss," and hinted pretty clearly that it was eaten by "three-tailed bashaws," and therefore was good enough for a Christian ambassador. Sorely pressed, poor Busbec made up his mind to "execute himself," and tackled the pilau like a philosopher. He was agreeably surprised. "The relish of it pleased me well, for it is of the kind commended by Galen—very wholesome and not unpleasing to the taste."

On arriving at Constantinople in January 1555, our traveller found that Solyman was not there, but at the head of his army at Amasia, a city of ancient Cappadocia. Solyman at this time was well stricken in years, and was ruled almost completely by his wife Roxalana and his son-in-law, the Grand Vizer Rustan, the last great financier that Turkey produced. These two had by their intrigues recently brought about the death of a promising son of Solyman, Mustapha—the idol of the army, and therefore detested by Roxalana, who desired the succession for her own children. Busbec does not hesitate to apply the epithet "contemptible" to the means adopted by Rustan to raise money: "For he laid a tax on herbs, roses, and violets, which grew in great men's gardens; he caused the armour, coats of mail, warriors' horses of such as were taken prisoners in war, to be sold; and by such ways as these he got together such a mass of money that Solyman was very secure on that part. There is a chamber in the Seraglio at Constantinople over which there is this inscription—'Here is the money obtained by the diligence of Rustan.'"

While preparing for the journey to Amasia—esteemed a mighty serious busi-

ness—Busbec observed the curiosities and humours of Constantinople. Like the Roman Cardinal—who having never observed any sea but the Mediterranean, was startled to find the river Thames running upwards as he arrived with the tide—the Fleming admired much the “nature of that sea which always runs downward with a vast stream, and never recoils with any tide.” He regrets that the fear of swelling his epistle to too great a bulk prevents him from dilating on Chalcedon, the city of the blind; but being, like most scholars, somewhat of an epicure, he mentions the great variety of fish caught in the Bosphorus, and smacks his lips at the recollection of those highly-flavoured importations from the Palus Maeotis—botargo and caviare. He finds space also for the well-known story of the artificer who undertook to raise the obelisk in the hippodrome, and finding the ropes slack under the strain, wetted them till by their shrinkage they raised the obelisk to its position—emphatically a tough story, told also of the obelisk at Rome. More interesting were the panthers, leopards, and lions, trained by some Van Amburgh of the period till “they were so gentle and tame that I saw one of the keepers pull a sheep out of a lion’s mouth, so that he only moistened his jaws with the blood without devouring it. I saw also a young elephant so playful that he would dance and play at ball.” Busbec evidently feels that this statement is a crust for the incredulous; so, after alluding to Seneca’s elephant dancing on a rope, and that astute animal spoken of by Phiny as understanding Greek, he continues: “But that you may not think me an egregious fibber, give me leave to explain myself: when this elephant was bid to dance, he did so caper or quiver with his whole body and interchangeably move his feet, that he seemed to represent a kind of jig; and as for playing at ball, he very prettily took up the ball in his trunk and sent it flying therewith.”

On his way to Amasia, our learned gossip passed through Nicomedia to Nice, hearing by the way a mighty noise “as of men that jeered and mocked us.” This was his first introduction to the hyena. At Nice there was much to admire, and the antiquaries, Busbec and Quacqueleben, no doubt enjoyed themselves hugely in poking about among the excavations then being made by the Turks; but one fine day they encountered a terrible rebuff from a

truly Mohammedan “navvy.” This worthy fellow and his “mates” were hard at work, digging out stones from the ruined baths of Antoninus to build houses withal. Finding the statue of a soldier in his armour, curiously wrought and almost entire, they quickly battered it with their hammers before the tortured eyes of the visitors. This was more than flesh and blood could bear, and the travellers hesitated not to express their displeasure at this rude violence; but all the answer they got was this—“What, will you bow down to worship this statue as you Christians use to do to yours?”

The white-haired goats of Angora come in for great admiration, as do also the broad-tailed sheep, albeit the traveller dreads that his account of the heavy sheep-tails being laid “upon a plank running on two little wheels” will not secure absolute credence. Here also were found “devil-birds,” which make a sound like unto a postboy’s horn, and, better than all these marvels, Greek and Latin inscriptions, more or less illegible, and abundance of coins of Constantine, Justin, Valens, and other of the later Roman emperors. “All my delight was as soon as I came to my inn at night to inquire after old inscriptions, coins, and rare plants.” Coins he found in plenty in the cities of Asia Minor, where the Turks were in the habit of using them for weights—viz., of a drachm or half-a-drachm—and called them “Giaur Manguri,” the money of pagans or infidels. “At Amasia there was a brasier who grieved me very much, for, demanding of him whether he had any old coins to sell, he answered me that a few days ago he had a large room full of them, but melted them down to make brass kettles, as thinking them of little value and fit for no other use. When I heard this story it troubled me much to lose so many choice monuments of antiquity; but I paid him back in his own coin, by telling him that I would have given him a hundred guilders for them; so that my revenge was suited to his injury, for I sent him away as sorrowful as he did me for losing the coins.”

MR. IRVING'S HAMLET.

“Do not imagine for a moment that in what are commonly called the ‘palmy’ days of the drama, people knew nearly so much about Shakespeare as they know now.”

This remark was addressed by the elder

to the younger of two gentlemen who, having formed part of the vast throng assembled within the walls of the Lyceum Theatre to witness Mr. Henry Irving's performance of Hamlet, were now seated at a table in their club-room to discuss the evening's experience, and to con over the reminiscences which it might have awakened.

"Well, I have been told," observed the junior, "that in bygone days nothing delighted fellows of my age more than the announcement that Edmund Kean, say, or Macready, would appear in one of his noted Shakespearian parts; that, in order to see the play, they would run the risk of being crushed almost to death in the pit entrance; and that the word 'slow,' as applied to one of our standard tragedies, would have been altogether unintelligible. Now I have known the theatrical world of London for some few years, and I can safely affirm that I never in my life saw anything approaching the excitement which everywhere prevailed, as the time approached for the appearance of Mr. Irving as Hamlet."

"You have been correctly informed, and what you say is perfectly true," said the senior; "but you have inadvertently thrown together two names that represent distinctly separate orders of things. Mr. Edmund Kean took the Shakespearian plays as he found them adapted for the stage by some one of his predecessors, and illustrated them by his brilliant acting; whereas Mr. Macready, a gentleman of decided literary taste, was a dramatic reformer, who did much to dispel that ignorance of Shakespeare to which I have just referred. With him began the practice of reverting to original texts, instead of accepting without question the modifications of a Garrick or a Kemble."

"Pardon me," interposed a listener, looking up from his arm-chair; "but if I recollect right, the credit is due to Edmund Kean of restoring King Lear to something like the shape which it wore before it was spoiled by Nahum Tate."

"The fact had escaped my memory," replied the senior, "and I stand properly corrected. But the restoration to which you refer did not go a great way. As far as the virtuous personages were concerned, Nahum Tate made the story end happily. The old king recovered his reason, and Edgar was rewarded with the hand of Cordelia, who did not die, and had never been married to any king of France. Mr.

Edmund Kean, reviving the play after its representation on the stage had been prohibited for many years, on account of the malady of George III., restored Shakespeare's tragical termination. Lear and Cordelia both died, but the love passages between the latter and Edgar, of which Shakespeare, as you know, is perfectly innocent, were retained, and the Fool remained in the abyss of nonentity into which he had been flung by Tate. The circumstance that Lear, on the rare occasions when it is now performed, accords with the Shakespearian text, has its origin in Mr. Macready's management of Covent Garden. This takes me back to the assertion which I made just now, that people know much more about Shakespeare now than they did in the olden time. That nothing like a return to Tate's Lear would now be tolerated I am certain."

"Are you not illustrating the old adage which teaches us that over familiarity is not accompanied by increase of respect?" asked the junior. "The people who accepted a sham Shakespeare for the genuine article, at any rate showed veneration for the name. They might not consult the text at home, but they went to the theatre, happy to obtain what they could get; they cheered histrionic excellence with enthusiasm, and they went away perfectly satisfied that they had seen a work of the immortal bard, the fact of modification being to them utterly unknown. We seem now to have lost in enthusiasm what we have gained in learning."

"How can you say that enthusiasm for the name of Shakespeare has lessened, after what we have witnessed this evening? Do not estimate merely the numerical force of the audience—though that is great indeed—but observe the mood in which the entire performance of Hamlet is watched. People admire intensely, but they will not allow their expression of admiration to mar their intellectual enjoyment. They will applaud to the echo when applause does not cause interruption, but while Mr. Irving is speaking they want to hear him."

"Just here comes my puzzle," interposed the junior. "I have seen Hamlet tolerably often—indeed, much too often for my personal comfort—but I don't recollect, on former occasions, either the enthusiasm which shows itself in numbers or that which is manifested

by self-control. The impression had gradually been made upon me that Shakespeare, except for the studious, is an institution of the past, not fitted to the play-goers of the present day. I don't suppose that we are more frivolous than the fellows were forty or fifty years ago, but we are hard-worked, very hard-worked indeed, and in our hours of recreation we want to be amused."

"And is the hard work of which you complain so highly intellectual, that the need of change renders it impossible for your recreation to be intellectual likewise? As far as your own individual feelings are concerned, the impression of which you speak must have been entirely effaced; for, as far as I can judge from appearances, no one could have been more thoroughly gratified by this evening's performance than yourself."

"Nay, I was pleased, certainly," said the junior. To tell you the honest truth, I had never thought much of Hamlet before. My general notion was that he was a man who indulged in the habit of making long speeches to himself, and of doing everything that he told the players to avoid."

"You never thought that he was a human being like yourself?" asked the senior.

"Oh dear, no," was the response. "I never thought that he belonged to humanity at all. The poet sang—

Oh, cuckoo, shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

In like manner I have regarded Hamlet as a stationary speech."

"But to this view, if I may venture to surmise, Mr. Irving put an end?" said the senior.

"Most decidedly," answered the junior. "And I was much annoyed at the observation of some old-fashioned folks in my immediate vicinity, who evidently thought that the entire importance of the character depended on the number of points which the actor had an opportunity of making."

"That worship of points, as they are called, was one of the prevalent vices of my early days," observed the senior. "One would ask how Hamlet looked when he first saw the ghost, and quote the recorded miracle of Betterton, who is said to have turned as white as his own neckcloth. Another object of curiosity was the manner in which, after killing Polonius, Hamlet enquired whether the victim was the king. Many persons seemed, indeed, to think

that the sole purpose of the actor's art was to produce a number of startling effects, and that he who could make seven points was a better man than he who made only five."

"Now I begin to understand," remarked the junior, "why Shakespeare becomes such a bore. The points had all been learned by heart, and consequently ceased to produce the wonted result, and the intervals between them were all filled up with stilted declamations that awakened no sympathy. Now when I reflect on the performance of this evening, the very last things that occur to me are those isolated points about which so much fuss has, it seems, been made. I look upon Mr. Irving's Hamlet as a personage in whose joys and sorrows I can readily participate; nay, if he came back from the grave, like his father, I should be very happy to make his acquaintance."

"What sort of a personage, then, did you consider him to be?" asked the senior; "I mean as regarded in the new light."

"Well, I look upon him," replied the junior, "as a man with a large heart, placed amid circumstances under which a keen sensibility could be only a source of mental agony. As Mr. Carlyle said of Dante, he was the sorrowfullest looking person I ever saw. And it is to Mr. Irving's power of exhibiting this sustained sorrow that I ascribe the greatness of the performance."

"Your expressed opinion seems to point towards rather a dismal sort of entertainment, and to be somewhat one-sided. Surely there is nothing sorrowful in the advice to the players," objected the senior.

"Certainly not," answered the junior; "but the cheerful familiarity with which it was given is perfectly in keeping with the rest of the part. I have heard some people talk of Hamlet as of one melancholy by nature, but I am sure that the portraiture of such a man is not contemplated by Mr. Irving. A melancholy man can stand many hard buffets and bear many heavy fardels; but he who is of a cheerful, genial disposition, is just the one who suffers most, when his yearnings for reciprocal affection meet no response. Under pleasant circumstances I can fancy Mr. Irving's Hamlet being even lively above the average; but as it is, the man's spirit is crushed, and he can only be merry by fits and starts. He lives in a court where he knows that he is regarded by the reigning monarch with suspicion and

dislike, where he is disgusted by the indecorous marriage of his mother, and where he feels that everyone, with the single exception of Horatio, is a spy. The youthful innocence of Ophelia seems alone to defy mistrust, but even his confidence in her is at last shaken, and the conviction is forced upon him that she is but one of a bad lot."

"Of course," asked the senior, "you approve of the unusual arrangement by which, in the third act, the listeners are made visible to the audience?"

"Entirely," was the reply. "And I am not ashamed to confess that I now comprehend for the first time why Hamlet so suddenly loses his temper."

"Ay," observed the senior, "even the most inveterate point-seeker may find ample matter for admiration in the scene with Ophelia, and in the subsequent scene with the two courtiers. How wild is the storm of rage!"

"And how very transient!" added the junior. "How the whole deportment illustrates the nervous irritability and irresolution of the character! You remember Horatio's description of the ghost as having 'a countenance more in sorrow than in anger?'"

"Certainly," answered the senior.

"Well," continued the junior. "And yet this was the ghost of a murdered man, who had no doubt as to the crime committed against him. Does not the description, especially when taken into consideration with the tenderness with which the ghost always regards the queen, justify us in assuming that the 'pigeon-livered' disposition of which Hamlet accuses himself in the soliloquy which becomes such a splendid psychological essay in the hands of Mr. Irving—that his 'lack of gall' is in a great measure hereditary, and that the absolute incapacity for a thorough-going hatred, of the sort that Dr. Johnson would have commended, is to be regarded as a family failing."

"From which," interposed the senior, "the uncle is assuredly exempt."

"No doubt," was the reply; "and observe that in the very speech to which I have just referred, Hamlet, after bestowing upon his uncle such a variety of opprobrious epithets, adds the word 'kindless' as the climax of them all."

"Then I suppose," said the senior, "that you object to the restoration of Hamlet's soliloquy in the third act, uttered while the king is at prayer?"

"Not at all," replied the junior. "In the first place, it is useful for the purpose of the fable; in the second, I agree with those who regard the horrid sentiments uttered by Hamlet as really alien from his nature, and intrinsically no more than a pretext for deferring the deed of vengeance. But what do you think of that more startling innovation, the omission of visible pictures in the closet-scene?"

"That question is not to be hastily answered," said the senior, gravely. "In the text there is no direction by which the stage-manager can be guided, and so far the interpretation seems left to the discretion of the actor. On the other hand, the words 'counterfeit presentment of two brothers' apparently indicate something more material than mere creations of the fancy."

"But again," objected the junior, "Hamlet's description of the picture seems more properly applicable to a vision of the mind than to an actual painting. At all events, Mr. Irving's representation of the workings of a vivid imagination is so accurate and effective, that one is inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt."

"Agreed!" ejaculated the senior. "And let us rejoice that we once more have a tragic actor who, unfettered by convention, is able from his own mind to work out such a consistent whole as Mr. Irving's Hamlet. The time, I trust, has come when the serious study of Shakespeare, which is a characteristic of the present day, being utterly distinct from the ignorant worship of the past, will find its expression in the encouragement of that poetical drama which is among the glories of our country. The Americans have always stood high as Shakespearian scholars; and if that desired reform takes place, it will be in a great measure due to the American gentleman who now rules the Lyceum Theatre, and has given Mr. Irving the opportunity of which he makes so noble a use."

KAROL, THE FRIEND OF MÜRGER.

To Henry Mürger has been attributed the discovery, even the invention, of what is called Bohemianism; but he was rather the historian and chronicler of that peculiar state of life. His books gave it shape and substance in the eyes of an uninformed public, for he related under a thin veil of fiction the actual adventures and experiences of himself and his friends. They

were Bohemians of necessity in a great measure, although, no doubt, something of their method of existence was due to choice. They disliked restrictions and opposed formality; they found pleasure in surprising and shocking those, whose own rather commonplace character kept them always safely within the boundaries of respectability. And although not so very long ago, still this was at a time when the world in general seemed indisposed to recognise as legitimate industries the Bohemian professions—for so they have been described—of art, literature, and the stage; the which, in that they dispensed with articles of apprenticeship, and needed other qualifications than such as could be conferred by formal certificates and diplomas, came to be accounted rather as idle, disreputable, and even mischievous callings, that led worthy men's sons astray, promoted dissipation, and entailed poverty and ruin. Mürger's writings were at once a manifesto and a revelation. He glorified the outward condition of himself and his brother Bohemians, lent it almost a romantic interest, showed how picturesque it was, how full of adventure, how frolicsome, how intensely humorous. So far he seemed to protest against and ridicule the prescriptions of society and its reprobation of Bohemia. But he did not conceal the fact that his picture had a dark side: a very dark side. With something of cynical frankness he exposed the miseries of his own manner of life, its privations, penury, and squalor. Altogether *La Vie de Bohème* is a very melancholy book. But one more melancholy still is the memoir of Mürger himself—*Pour servir à l'Histoire de la vraie Bohème*—published after his death, by three of his friends, calling themselves *Les Buveurs d'Eau*, from a little artistic club of that name of which they, as well as Mürger, had been members. The general public, perhaps, did not fully know until then how absolutely true to fact his fictions had been; that his books had been *lived*, even to the smallest incident they narrated; that his career had been a most wretched round of suffering, from indigence, sickness, even absolute destitution. He was but thirty-eight when he died, in the Hospital Dubois, after some years of deplorably infirm health. He had become a constant inmate of the Paris hospitals. But a few days before his death, he wrote upon a scrap of paper

—he had been forbidden to speak—“Ricord et les autres d'avis d'aller à la maison Dubois. J'aurais mieux aimé Saint Louis. On est plus chez soi là-bas.” It had come to that. He was more “at home” in one hospital than in another. In those few last words of his, how much of the story of his life is told!

Karol was the friend of Mürger, and is regarded by *Les Buveurs d'Eau* as “la plus étrange et la plus sympathique figure de Bohème dont on ait jamais ouï parler.” Karol appears in Mürger's novel as the eccentric painter Lazare. It is not clear, however, that Karol had followed very closely or arduously any of even the Bohemian professions. Certain vague aspirations in regard to literature and art seem occasionally to have stirred within him, although with little practical result. Now and then he produced very execrable verses, or sketches in water colours of very indifferent quality. But he more often declared the main object of his life to be the liberation of Poland: a subject that occupied and exercised the last generation a good deal, although little is heard of it now. For Karol believed himself a Pole, and invariably so described himself.

All the friends of Mürger were poor, but Karol was so poor that it is difficult to understand how he could have subsisted at all. Yet he seems to have had it in his power now and then to render real services to his comrades and acquaintances, in the way of providing them with shelter and food. *Les Buveurs d'Eau* speaks of him in terms of extraordinary affection. The biographers of Mürger have recorded many passages in the life of Karol. It was felt that, if only because of his eccentricity, he was a real credit to Bohemia. For eccentricity, if it be of a humorous tendency, and may therefore be justly credited with elements of pathos and tenderness, is very highly esteemed in Bohemia.

The physical aspect of Karol was at least remarkable. He was thick-set, beardless, his face of a Tartar type, his complexion dark olive, his hair red-brown, his eyes large, his nose flat. He entertained, however, a harmless measure of vanity in regard to his personal appearance. He was sedate and self-possessed in manner, somewhat impassible even. He could not be moved to laughter, although Bohemia might be indulging its most extravagant disposition towards the

jocular and the ludicrous. He was of prodigious muscularity. In this respect he might have sat for the portrait of the Porthos of Alexandre Dumas. He could burst a strong lock with a blow of his fist; he was reported to have stopped, by sheer strength of wrist, the runaway horses of a diligence! Yet, as *Les Buveurs d'Eau* write of him, he was Bayard, Don Quixote, and St. Francis de Sales all in one. Often-times he preferred to overlook provocations and insults he might, with little effort on his part, have severely punished, rather than use his giant's strength like a giant—tyrannously. He was extremely charitable, he was very brave, he was chivalrous even to craziness. So his friends have described him.

Of his origin it was only known that he was the son of a soldier of the Empire who had married a Polish wife. Wounded or exhausted, he had dropped out of the line of march, tarrying near Wilna, on the road back from Moscow to France. He had there received hospitalities, and repaid them by bestowing his hand and name upon his hostess. Subsequently he had returned to Paris, and, dying there, had left his widow and two children—Karol, and another concerning whom there is nothing to relate—to subsist as best they could. She opened a very humble restaurant in the Rue Mignon, with a table d'hôte at thirteen sous, especially designed for the accommodation of Polish refugees. Gathered round her board were to be seen many victims of national disaster—the bowed figures, worn faces, the bald, wrinkled brows and enormous moustaches of the soldiers, gentlemen, and nobles of Poland, exiled from their native land and sorely impoverished by their patriotism. Karol rarely appeared in the Rue Mignon, however. He refrained as much as he could from taxing his mother's slender means or diminishing the poor resources of her dinner-table. Sometimes there was no help for it. He was penniless. He could earn nothing, even by colouring prints and toys for children, or by executing the rough lithographs and drawings on wood which adorn songs and fly-sheets sold in the streets. But even then he dined as frugally as possible at that very frugal board. And he was careful to carry away with him, for the support and comfort of his comrades in misfortune, Mürger and the rest, the scraps and crumbs of bread which the poor emigrants had left upon the table after their very meagre

dessert. Be sure they were very small fragments: still Bohemia was glad to get them, Bohemia being, as indeed often happened, in very dire straits at that time.

Karol was understood for a time to have been without any fixed abode. His home at night was in the avenue of Saint Cloud—the fifth branch of the third tree on the left of the road from the Bois de Boulogne. It was his boast that his branch afforded good sleeping accommodation for ten, at least! But he was afterwards the tenant of a garret in the Rue St. Jacques, from the door of which he was careful to remove the lock, so that his friends—indeed, all comers—might obtain admission at any time they listed, under any circumstances.

To Karol, *Les Buveurs d'Eau* ascribe the ingenuity of a Red Indian and the inventiveness of Robinson Crusoe. But with these qualities was combined a degree of unconscious absurdity, which usually rendered them abortive. He had extraordinary expedients for earning money, and, with this view, often engaged in much earnest toil, carried on, however, after rather an impulsive and spasmodic fashion. He would, no doubt, have profited very much more if the same measure of labour had been bestowed upon less eccentric objects.

He had a plan once for manufacturing pipe-tubes of briar and cherrywood, under advantageous conditions, for he proposed to steal his materials from the Bois de Boulogne. For months he kept watch over eligible twigs and branches, training and straightening them, and nipping off with his nail superfluous shoots. The time came, at last, when he was to gather in his harvest. Assisted by a comrade, who should, perhaps, rather be styled his accomplice, and hidden in the thick under-wood, he collected his sticks, binding them together into a faggot form. But to carry them away unobserved by the authorities was a task of some difficulty. There were sentries and guards at every entrance to the wood. Karol sauntered out, carelessly, with his hands in his pockets; then, as he had previously arranged, he proceeded, stealthily, some two hundred paces outside the wall of the park; there he stopped, throwing over a stone as a signal to his friend within. The friend whistled, by way of signal in reply, and then promptly hurled over the wall the faggot of pipe-stems. Karol secured the booty and

hurried off to Paris with it. The friend, looking as innocent as circumstances would permit, followed him at leisure.

Then came the labour of perforating the stems for smoking purposes. A fire was lighted, and wires of different sizes were made red-hot. The difficulty was to force the wire in a straight direction through the stem, without setting it on fire or reducing it to charcoal. Karol performed this task creditably enough, if in rather an amateurish way. A hard day's work resulted in the completion of a dozen pipe-tubes from three to five feet in length. They smelt abominably, as both the operators agreed, and would have exercised a poisonous influence upon any tobacco smoke that passed through them. But, as Karol explained, *that* did not signify to the manufacturers of the pipes, who were not going to smoke them. He boldly entered the best tobacconists' shops in Paris, and offered his wares for sale. Upon this mission his friend decidedly declined to accompany him. Karol stated, with an air of dignified simplicity, that the pipe-stems were manufactured by "an unfortunate Polish refugee!" His labours, however, never produced him more than forty sous per day—and oftentimes very much less. In fact, the demand for his pipe-tubes was never at all pressing, and ultimately he abandoned the speculation.

At one time Karol was occupied with a scheme for the suppression of footpads and robbers. He planned to traverse Paris at midnight, and submit himself to the operations of these malefactors, purposing by means of his superior strength to turn the tables upon them. He did not, however, contemplate handing them over to the officers of the law. He had ruder notions of justice. He designed to inflict punishment upon them with his own sturdy right hand; and lest by any chance that formidable weapon should fail him, he carried a pistol about with him.

This plan was not attended by the consequences he had looked for. Karol took innumerable nocturnal promenades, but his anxiety to be assaulted was never once gratified. The thieves of Paris gave him a wide berth. Probably his appearance deterred them. He did not look rich—anything but that; and he looked uncommonly muscular.

This monomania of his, however, betrayed him into a grievous error. Returning very late to his dingy lodgings, he discovered a crouching figure in a dark

corner of the staircase. He believed that at last he had really encountered a thief. Three times he cried "Qui vive?" There was no answer. Then, madman that he was, he fired his pistol. A groan of agony was heard. He had shot a harmless old woman who had fallen asleep upon the landing of the stairs, while waiting the return home of her son who lived with her, and had carried away with him the key of their lodging.

Karol's remorse was great. He was tried for murder; but medical evidence was forthcoming, and he was acquitted on the ground of insanity. He gravely stated in court, however, his plans for the protection of society and the suppression of crime; but, after this most miserable adventure, he was careful to put away his pistol far from him.

There were other grave troubles in store for Karol.

A man calling himself Romanzoff, professing to be a Prussian and an engraver, of curious appearance, miserably clad, but yet of distinguished manners, had been frequently seen in the society of Karol.

Suddenly, Romanzoff, it was reported, had become rich. He lived in style; his house was superbly furnished; and his domestic affairs were placed under the direction of the mother of Karol, who had entered his service as housekeeper.

Then followed the arrest of Romanzoff, charged with the issue of forged notes to a very large amount upon the banks of Austria and Prussia. Karol's mother was accused of being an accomplice in this crime.

It was a remarkable case. Romanzoff was a man whose method of life was apparently irreproachable. He seemed to be strictly religious—was almost an ascetic in the rigour of his devoutness. That he was an ingenious and systematic forger was, however, indisputable. Still, it was proved that the profits of his crime had been expended almost wholly in works of beneficence and charity. It was conjectured that he had been influenced simply by political motives: that he had laboured to inflict severe injury upon the governments of Austria and Prussia. As it happened, this was altogether a miscalculation. The loss resulting from his forgeries fell, not upon the banks, but upon the innocent holders of the false notes. It was, of course, in vain that the extreme purity and simplicity of his life were pleaded in mitigation of his punishment. The Pro-

cureur de Roi insisted that the full penalty the law allowed should be exacted. Romanzoff was condemned to the galleys for life. There was even a proposal to treat the female prisoner with equal severity. "Who can have any pity to bestow upon such a creature?" demanded the procureur cruelly.

"I have," exclaimed Karol, greatly excited. "I am her son! I love and venerate her!"

He was immediately ejected from the court. But the poor old woman was acquitted. There was indeed little evidence of her cognizance of Romanzoff's guilt, still less of her connivance in his frauds.

The marriage of Louis Philippe's eldest son, the Duke of Orleans, was celebrated with great festivity in Paris. The city was illuminated; there were superb displays of fireworks in the Champs de Mars. Karol and certain of his associates were present at these exhibitions, in the hope, it would seem, of securing some of the rocket-sticks—probably for firewood, it is not conceivable that any intention existed to convert them into pipe-tubes. The crowd was very great; there were many grave accidents; several of the sightseers lost their lives, owing to a sudden panic taking possession of the concourse. "Save my child!" cried a man, half suffocated, owing to the severe pressure. He was deadly pale, exhausted with fatigue; his voice was feeble and parched. He held his little boy aloft upon his shoulder. Karol heard the man's cry of despair, and forced his way to the spot. He succeeded in saving both child and father, and brought them to some sheltered place, out of immediate danger from the surging crowd. He had carried the little boy upon his shoulder from the Pont Royal to the Pont Neuf. The father's gratitude was unbounded. He was of something more than respectable appearance; there was an air about him almost of affluence. He was affected to tears: he was profuse in his expressions of gratitude. He tendered his card, and entreated he might know the name of the preserver of his child, that he might demonstrate his gratitude in any way possible to him.

Now Karol's friends were in hopes that he would condescend to accept a pecuniary recompense for his services. They were very hungry, as, indeed, was he. They were without money: he had none. A loaf of bread would have been a real prize to them. That the adventure would

afford them all something to eat and drink seemed a very reasonable conjecture. But Karol could not resist the opportunity of attitudinising in his most esteemed character.

"Tell me at least your name," said the stranger, imploringly.

Karol assumed an air of supreme dignity. His final expression was majestic.

"I am a Polish refugee," he said, drawing back and proudly thrusting his right hand within the bosom of his blouse—he wore no waistcoat. Then he bowed with amazing politeness, and walked away in his most solemn and stately manner. The stranger was to understand that he had been assisted by an exile, possibly—most likely—of noble origin, who could accept no reward for the services he had rendered.

It was an absurd fiction, but it did no injury to anybody but Karol, unless we are to count his friends, who were certainly disappointed. They had hoped for refreshment; the gratification of Karol's foolish pride was an insufficient substitute.

The day came at last when even Karol's passion for the eccentric and the extravagant seemed to know satiety. Probably all Bohemians are conscious at times of a certain weariness of Bohemia, and long to have their passports visé, their trunks packed (supposing them possessed of any), and the journey made to some other country, where, if the laws are stricter, and the citizens more controlled by authority, the climate at any rate is milder, and food and raiment can be obtained upon comparatively easy terms. Besides, Bohemia is only for the young, blessed with strong constitutions, and having, or thinking that they have, time to waste, and a future before them in which compensation and atonement may be made for the past, and possibly brilliant success achieved, in the light of which all early faults and failings and follies may be securely forgotten. Karol was growing old. The majority of the friends of Mürger died young.

He began to perceive that a man who has no money in the funds, and is otherwise unprovided for, must work steadily for his bread, if he would have his loaves supplied to him at all regularly. His friends, *Lcs Buveurs d'Eau*, record that, with great courage and energy, he entered upon a life of sober, steady industry. Still, his occupations were often of a strange and incongruous kind. Throughout one winter he rose at four o'clock in the morning, and earned a few sous by

wearing sabots and polishing the waxed floor of a manufactory on the Boulevard Mont Parnasse. He spared no exertion to satisfy his employer. Afterwards he turned his physical gifts to account. He lent his muscular figure on hire—posed as a model in the Atelier Suisse. Perhaps by this time he had ceased to believe himself a Polish refugee. Certainly his new employment must have jarred with his sense of respect—have almost destroyed the air of dignity which had once been so habitual to him. And his experiences in this life-school were trying. The art-students had little mercy or consideration for this humble servant of their art. It is to be feared that Karol was to them something of a butt—shafts of ridicule fell thickly about him. He was often wounded sorely, but he made no complaint. He held his peace, earned his wages, resumed his clothes, and went his way. At last he was roused to reply, and during a pause in the lesson he wrote in chalk upon the floor of the model's throne an impromptu epigram which he had of course long before prepared for delivery. It was not a production of much point; it simply invited attention to the fact that a model was not, as many seemed to believe, merely a creature of flesh, but was possessed of feelings as well. Unfortunately there was an orthographical error in Karol's lines. Upon this the students fastened, to the neglect of the intention of the epigram. He incurred increase of ridicule, and appears at last, on this account probably, to have relinquished his career as a model.

For months he had disappeared—none knew what had become of him. Then came sad news. Karol—le meilleur de nous tous, as his friends fondly write of him—had died at Constantinople! He had tried to establish himself there as a teacher of French; but it seemed that he had not found any pupils.

CHINESE PROPER NAMES.

In China the names of men and places form part of the language to a much greater extent than they do in our own country, and they thus have a definite meaning, many of them consisting of words in every-day use.

Among the Chinese the family or clan name (answering to our surname) is termed the *sing*, and what we call the Christian name, is with them the *ming*;

in addition to these a man of letters has his *tsze*, or literary appellation, by which he is very generally known, especially in literature, and he very often adopts besides, one, and sometimes more, pseudonyms or *noms de plume*, which the Chinese comprehend under the expression *piēh hao*. The *sing* is usually expressed by one character, and the *ming* commonly by two, and therefore called *shuang ming*; poor people, however, as a Chinese graduate once told us, are frequently *tan-ming-til*, i.e. they have but a single character in their *ming* or Christian name. In speaking of a person we place the title of courtesy and the Christian names before the surname; but the Chinese, with that curious contrariety of usage which pervades many of their habits and customs, do exactly the reverse. We say "Robert John Jones"; they put it "Jones Robert John"; we say Mr. Jones, but a Chinaman reverses the order. With them the equivalents of Mister are *Seün-shêng* (elder born) and *Lao-yeh* (aged or revered grandfather), the latter being generally applied to the lower grades of civil and military officials. Consequently Mr. Jones becomes Wang *Lao-yeh* or Wang *Seün-shêng*; Wang (literally "prince") being about as common a family name in China as Jones is with us. In formal written documents the practice is reversed, and the contrariety of the Chinese is again apparent. In addressing (say) a despatch to an official, we put the names of the offices which he holds, after his name, but the Chinese do the opposite. The following is a good example of their practice in this respect. The individual addressed is a high official, whose Chinese surname is *Chi*, but who was better known to foreigners, thirty years ago, as *Kiying*; at the end of a despatch addressed to this person would appear in a perpendicular column:—"A member of the Imperial family of His Majesty the Emperor of the Ta-ching* Dynasty, Imperial Commissioner, a junior guardian of the heir apparent, a President of the Board of War, and governor general of the two Kiang provinces, *Chi*." It may be interesting to mention that this official, in writing a despatch to another, would commence with the same string of titles followed by his surname. In familiar conversation, however, and in unofficial notes, the

* "Ta-ching;" literally "Great Pure," the Chinese appellation of the present Tartar Dynasty.

Chinese place a man's title after his family name; thus in speaking familiarly of the official just mentioned, a Chinaman would call him Chi Tsung-tu, in reference to his rank as Tsung-tu or governor general of the two Kiang provinces, and the same remark holds good even with regard to military titles.

The number of family or clan-names in China is limited, as is indicated by the expression for "the people" or "the populace," viz., po-sing, the literal meaning of which is the "hundred surnames." We must not, however, be understood to assert that the implication contained in this expression is exactly and literally correct, for, in point of fact, the number of patronymics actually in use is somewhat more than four hundred. In China, as in England, there are Smiths, Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons; for Chin (gold), Chang (long), Wang (prince) and Shih (stone) are quite as common surnames in the Celestial Empire as our own much-ridiculed patronymics are with us.

With regard to what we call Christian names, the Chinese, as we have said, usually have two, the characters for which, though they individually have meanings, are not by any means necessarily connected in meaning with the character for the family name. Thus Chin (gold)—the Chinese "Brown"—may have for his ming, or Christian names, Chien-tê (i.e. Behold Virtue), his complete designation being Chin Chien-tê or Gold Behold Virtue. A Chinaman often has for his ming, or Christian name, simply his number in the family, with the word ta (great) prefixed; e.g. Ta-lin (great six), and in this case our friend would become Chin Ta-lin (gold great six). In writing his name on his visiting card or elsewhere, he would place the characters vertically in the order given.

"In some provinces it is common amongst intimates to add the familiar prefix of Ah to the second character of the name (ming). . . . And this will account for the numbers of Ahfoos, Ahehows, Ahlums, &c., to be met with amongst the natives of Canton. It is the usual practice with Chinese servants, especially those belonging to that province, when engaging themselves to foreigners, to give in merely their names with this familiar prefix, and many wealthy brokers and compradores in the trade are thus known and designated amongst foreigners. But the habit has its rise in the contempt

which the Cantonese affect to have for foreigners, and it would not be tolerated amongst themselves either between master and servant or in business relations. Many and many a time have I experienced the greatest difficulty in inducing Chinese, who have come before me to have agreements with British subjects attested, to discover their proper surnames and names, there being such a rooted aversion in their minds to commit themselves by name to any arrangement entered into with a foreigner."*

The names of gems, flowers, virtues, &c., are commonly given to Chinese women, who, be it observed, when married, assume their husbands' family or clan-names—the custom in that respect coinciding, for a wonder, with our own. When, however, a married woman is mentioned in connection with judicial processes, she is frequently described by both her married and maiden surnames; thus we have seen in Chinese documents such expressions as the following: "A woman of the town of Hêng-yang, of the name of Lo by birth and Tan by marriage, accuses &c.;" and afterwards the official, in writing of her case, alludes to her by both surnames, calling her "the woman Tan-Lo." We believe that this peculiarity is not very generally known; at any rate, it does not appear to have been noticed in any work upon Chinese manners and customs. The Chinese equivalents of Mrs. are She or Tai-tai, placed after the family name (the latter term, we believe, being the one usually applied to the wives of officials); so the wife of Mr. Brown would be called Chin She, literally "Gold Madam."

The names of the provinces of China all have some meaning, commonly an allusion to their geographical position; e.g., Hu-pe, north of the lakes; Hu-nan, south of the lakes; Ho-nan, south of the rivers; Kiang-si, west of the river (Yangtze); Kiang-nan, south of the same; Shan-tung, east of the mountains; Shan-se, west of the same; &c. The island of Formosa (so named by the Portuguese) is called by the Chinese Tai-wan or "great bay." "Hong-kong" is the Cantonese pronunciation of Siang-chiang (or Hiang-kiang), the meaning of which is "fragrant stream." Huang-ho is the "Yellow River," and Ta-kiang (better known to

* "The Foreigner in Far Cathay," by W. H. Medhurst, H.M.'s Consul at Shanghai.

Europeans as the Yang-tsze) is the "Great River." The same is the case with regard to towns, to many of which the Chinese seem to have taken a delight in giving felicitous names; e.g. Foo-chow, happy district; Tien-ching (Tientsin), heavenly ford; Tai-ping, great peace; Wu-ning, military rest; Shang-hai, upon the sea; Han-kow, mouth of the (river) Han; Kiu-kiang, nine rivers. Chang-chia-kow—a town just within the great wall and generally called Kalgan by foreigners—means "the pass of the Chang family." Amoy, one of the treaty ports, gets its name, through the local dialect, from Sia (or Hia)-mén, the meaning of which is "summer gate;" Pekin is a French way of writing Pei-ching (northern capital), and, as usually pronounced by Europeans, bears hardly any resemblance to the Chinese sounds. It may be remarked that the Chinese seldom speak of this place by the distinctive title "northern capital," using merely the expression ching, i.e., capital, and even in its immediate neighbourhood the name Pei-ching is, to the best of our recollection, but rarely used.

From what we have said, the reader will perceive that a page of a Chinese book, in which the names of persons and places occur, must be very puzzling, especially to a foreign student; and to obviate the difficulty which arises on this score, it is usual for the native teacher to mark the names of provinces, towns, &c., by drawing in red ink two parallel perpendicular lines at the side of the characters denoting them, the names of persons being distinguished by a single line similarly placed.

The opening sentence of the well-known novel, *Hao-chiu-chnau* (to which English translators have given the title "Fortunate Union") illustrates so well some of the peculiarities of the Chinese collocation of words, that we will quote a portion of it here. Hua shuo chien chao Pei-chih-li Ta-ming-foo yu yi-ko siu-tsai, sing "Tieh," shuang-ming Chung-yü &c.; these words literally mean "The story says,* former dynasty, Pei-chih-li Ta-ming-foo,† have one Siu-tsai‡ family name Tieh

(iron), double name Chung-yü (middle gem);" or as we should put it; "As the story goes, once upon a time, there lived in the prefectural city of Ta-ming, in the province of Pei-chih-li, a Bachelor of Arts, named Middle Gem Iron."

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLII. MRS. DURGAN "HAS IT OUT" WITH KATE.

"YOU'RE angry with me, and suspicious of me, now," Mrs. Durgan begins, as Kate, unwillingly enough, commences the task of listening to an explanation which she misguidedly thinks must be derogatory to herself.

"I am not angry with you," Kate answers. "There was no reason in law or nature why you should have selected me as your special confidante, and I'm not suspicious of you. Of course, you can trust Captain Bellairs so thoroughly that there was no need to watch me."

"I can trust him thoroughly, I do trust him thoroughly," the widow says, quietly. "I know Harry so well, that I felt sure, from the first, that he would be true to himself—and to you. He has always been honest to me. When circumstances compelled him to think that offering to marry me would be the kindest thing he could do for me, he did it; but he never deceived me. He told me, then, that he loved another woman better, but that mischievous fate forbade his marrying. He did not tell me that woman's name then, Kate; but, when you came, I knew that you were she, and I took the only course I could to secure your happiness and his."

"You have done evil that good may come," Kate says, dejectedly; "and 'good,' in the way you mean, can't come of it. If I could take advantage of your generosity, if he could be ungenerous to you, how heartily he and I would despise, and very soon dislike, each other."

"And what do you think that I shall do?" Mrs. Durgan asks with very natural candour, "if I find that he and you urge each other on to try and make me marry him? Why, I wouldn't do it for my own sake, putting you out of the question altogether—not that I can put you out of the question one bit, but even if I could. Oh, Kate, don't make me try to be reasonable about it; only believe that all my nature,

* Every chapter of a Chinese novel usually begins with these words.

† The word foo denotes a first-class city; also the prefecture of which it is the chief town; and it is further used as the title of the civil officer presiding over the same.

‡ A Siu-tsai is a literary graduate of the fourth or lowest degree; the superior grades being 1, Han-lin; 2, Chio-shih; 3, Chu-jen.

all that's best in me, revolts against my taking any other course than this." "Which it half kills me to take," she adds to herself, but Kate does not hear the aside, and so is not pained at it.

It is such a difficult matter to explain this, that the settling of the sentimentally unpleasant business rests with Captain Bellairs and not with herself, that poor Kate feels inclined to lie down and let the whole thing drop. But Mrs. Durgan is one of the people who are comfortable and phlegmatic, to all appearances, for "a time," and who let things that are unpleasant in themselves "drop," only that they may pull them up in renewed health and unpleasantness hereafter.

"I must say something more before you hand me over—a chattel, to be 'rejected' or 'taken,' just as Captain Bellairs pleases," Kate pleads in an agony of jealous wounded pride. "You say it shall all be 'so-and-so,' and 'so-and-so,' to save my social standing! to win my social crown! And I say it shall not be so, for the sake of a footing that would be ten thousand times firmer even, for a crown enriched by jewels far finer than any that you or I could ever covet. It shall not be so, not because of its moral worthlessness! Georgie, I am not the woman to tell you that I would not take the lover who was mine before he was yours because the doing so would be morally wrong—but I am the woman to tell you that while I think a human being's love so choice a boon that it is worth perilling the world's opinion for, I think it so worthless a thing if it is divided that I'd give up the lover without a moment's hesitation."

"It's not divided," Mrs. Durgan asserts, promptly; "it is not too pleasant a conviction, but I have the conviction upon me strongly, that he has never had a particle of that sort of love for me. He has been affectionate to me, and thoughtful and considerate for me; but he has never for a moment either felt passion or feigned it. Should I not be an unwise woman, should I not be wanting in common sense as well as common delicacy, if, knowing this truth well, I were to marry him?"

"I won't argue against your view of the case, I'll only stand by my own," Kate says, resolutely; "inclination, love, folly, all urge me to be guided by you; but to quote your own words, 'should I not be wanting in common sense as well as common delicacy' if I, knowing well what I

do know about both myself and him, were to think of marrying him? Moreover, he hasn't asked me, nor shown the slightest inclination to do so."

"He has been tongue-tied by his pledge to me."

"He must remain tongue-tied to the end now, as far as I am concerned."

"False pride, Kate. You're evidently preparing yourself to go considerably out of your way to make yourself and other people unhappy; I won't injure his cause though by saying anything more about it. You only strengthen your obstinacy by your own arguments; you feel bound to act up to every rash declaration you make, in order that you may seem to yourself to be consistent."

"I never tried to be consistent in my life," Kate says, truthfully; "only I don't want you in your generosity to force me to be mean; besides," the girl continues, with a half laugh, "I needn't make a fuss about resisting temptation before it's put in my path. It's altogether unfortunate, altogether wretched, that you should have made discoveries, or, rather, that I should have been weak, been honest enough to tell you anything; but all the harm that shall be done is done. My happiness has been knocked about so, that if it were assured, there would still be something wanting; a thing that's battered and worn out isn't worth patching up and putting a gloss on."

"How you like to play the part of a played-out person," Mrs. Durgan says, smiling. "You dare to do it, because your vitality asserts itself perpetually and proves to yourself and to everyone about you that you have the power and the will to go on enjoying life at any moment that enjoyment is offered to you; it's different with me!"

"How?" Kate asks, thoughtlessly.

"How!" the other rejoins, sadly; "are you so accustomed to the sight of my sufferings, Kate, that you have ceased to see that they don't decrease; why, your saying that makes me doubt that you love Harry as I would have him loved. If you were properly anxious and observant for him you would shrink (as I do) from the thought of his marrying a woman who promises to be a helpless incapable all her life."

"He'd be better mated even in that ease," Kate says, bitterly, "than he would be with a woman who had learnt to distrust both him and herself; don't you

understand? the time is past for us! If it were arranged smoothly now—if by any strange possibility I could be induced to believe that he wished it to be again all that it might have been so joyously long ago, something would occur to mar it, and I should have the misery of knowing that I had been accessory to the attempt at executing another failure."

"I am a fatalist, and I shall see you happily united to him yet, Kate," Mrs. Durgan says, with an air of bringing the conversation to an end, of which Kate is only too glad to avail herself.

It may be believed that Kate is infinitely not "happier," perhaps, but more at rest after this. The act of renunciation gives us firm ground whereon to take our stand, whereas we are on a quivering morass while we cling to the hope that something will occur which the slightest accident of fortune may render an impossibility—or at best a probability which can only be compassed at the cost of such humiliation, suspense, and disappointment, as will render the prize a worthless one, even if it be gained eventually. On this firm, safe, hopeless ground, Kate takes her stand now, and feels that while she maintains her footing on it, she will be protected from those violent gales of intense emotion which hurled her hither and thither in the old days. Pain there may be in the situation, but there is also peace; and she has come to the pass now when cool, calm, peaceful pain is deemed by the sufferer to be preferable to the scorching agonising alternations of the fever of hope and despair.

A week or two passes, and no further attempt is made to undermine her resolution, either by Mrs. Durgan or Captain Bellairs. He comes to Breagh Place as frequently—rather more frequently in fact—until his visits come to be looked upon as natural and inevitable daily events. His presence among them is not confusing to Kate, neither is it in the least degree painful. At sight of him, if no thrill of joy causes her heart to throb, neither does any spasm of pain cause it to contract. As she has said, herself, "the time is past" for those things, and she is perfectly at peace as regards the man she has taught herself to view as her friend's future husband. But the peace that is purchased at the price of love and hope—at the sacrifice of not daring to indulge in a single warmer wish than that rest and quiet may continue to

be the portion of the one who makes the bargain—is apt to leave that saddest expression of all on a face, the look of fire too suddenly put out.

Meantime, her "work," which she intends shall be the chief object of her life now, absorbs her considerably, and progresses well. It is fast approaching completion now, and though the original plot and scheme of it have been altered by the circumstances which have surrounded her of late—though the unshaded plan of success which she had designed for her heroine, at starting, has been modified by her own recent experiences, she knows that her last pages have greater breadth and strength, greater force and meaning, than her first ones. Sorrow and disappointment are splendid teachers, however reluctantly we may accept their lessons.

The quiet way in which these two women at Breagh Place take him for granted in their daily routine, beguiles Captain Bellairs into the belief that the subject mooted by his cousin at their last confidential interview is settled and done with, and that matters stand exactly where they stood before, between Mrs. Durgan and himself. He still regards himself as an engaged man, still vaguely imagines that "some day or other, when Georgie is all right again," they will marry in prosaic fashion, and settle down to live together, without being troubled by any nonsensical notions of any particular happiness resulting from the union. As for Kate, he hopes that about that time she will remove herself entirely out of his orbit, for though he has entirely relegated the idea of a marriage with her into the realms of things that "might have been," he mistakes the peace that has come down upon her for indifference, and he does not care to have it brought under his observation.

Gradually the feeling of safety, and of everything being fixed and unalterable, deepens between them, and some of the old habits are resumed, some of the habits which Mrs. Durgan's rash appeal to Kate upset for awhile. For instance, they ride together again without embarrassment, and speak freely of Frank, and of the pitiable weakness which has led him, against such better judgment as he has, into the error of this projected marriage with Miss Grange.

"It's a little your fault, yon know," Bellairs always tells her, "if you had held

up your hand even after that sketching humbug set in, she would have gone back as she came," and Kate always makes the same reply—

"My conscience is sore enough on that point already; at any rate I should have done Frank more good than she will."

It is almost a pity—he feels it to be a cruel mistake, and a grave error of judgment—when Mrs. Durgan breaks the charmed spell of the feeling of security which has set in with them, by asking him one day "How long this is to last?"

"It's no use your pretending to misunderstand me, Harry," she says, when he begins a question as to what she means, "I have a great gift of patience, but it's hard to me to see you frittering away the chances of a happiness that is within your grasp. You and Kate Mervyn have loved each other long, and there's nothing to come between you now—"

"Excepting that we don't do so any longer," he interrupts; "putting myself out of the question altogether, she has grown as indifferent to me as if we had never been anything but the most commonplace acquaintances."

"Oh! you call that 'indifference' do you?" Mrs. Durgan asks, dryly; "I am glad I am not quite as dense as a man."

"Besides," Captain Bellairs goes on arguing, "even if I were not looking forward to my marriage with you, Georgie, as about the very best thing that could happen to me, the other business would be a bad one; warmed-up affections lack the freshness that was their charm before the fire ever went out of them. Kate being a woman, might imagine that I ought to renew all the wild emotions of my youth at her shrine, whereas a hearty regard for her would be all that I should be able to achieve, even if I were justified in endeavouring to achieve anything."

Then Georgie Durgan tells him very clearly, and decidedly, very gravely, but without any morbid exhibition of sorrow and regret, that he is justified in doing exactly as he pleases in the matter. She makes him understand that she herself can

never be his or any man's wife. She pleads to him for Kate, from the almost sacred ground of her own terrible affliction. "Before I knew Kate," she says, "I let myself hope and pray that I might be the one to give you the most perfect happiness. That prayer has not been answered, that hope has been crushed out of my heart; let me at least feel that even in my helplessness I may be the means of furthering your happiness in another direction. Bring hope back to Kate's heart, and the shadow of what you mistake for indifference will roll away quickly enough."

He is touched by her generous unselfishness, he is thrilled by her confident allusions to Kate's easily re-awakened love. But he is not yet convinced that he will be a wise man if he listens to her arguments.

"It is definitely understood between Harry and myself that we are not going to be such wicked fools as to marry," Mrs. Durgan says to Kate this night.

"Then I suppose we shall not see him here again," Kate says.

"I fondly hope that we shall see him here, more often, even, than ever; but that depends on the will of another, not on mine."

"I can't believe (of course I know what you mean) that anything can end well that has been brought about by a series of such violent wrenches," Kate says, nervously.

"You have administered a good many of the wrenches to yourself, my dear," Mrs. Durgan replies, "thank Fate and your friends for straightening some at least of the wry places in your life."

Now Publishing,

THE OPAL RING:

BEING THE

EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER

FOR

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 315 NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLOW," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IX. ACTIVE AND INTELLIGENT.

For two whole days the little household at Loddonford remained in much the same state, the only difference being that Anne Stndley's simulated illness began to assume somewhat of a real character; the frightful mental pressure under which she was labouring had its effect, and symptoms of fever, of a mild type indeed, but sufficient to cause the keenest anxiety to her father, made their appearance. The captain's watch was unduly prolonged, and, even when relieved by the nurse, he could not make up his mind to take his proper allowance of rest, but was constantly flitting to and fro between the sick chamber and his own, nervously watching the invalid's state and inquiring as to her progress, in the fear lest some unguarded word should have escaped her lips. In the worst phases of her illness, however, Anne managed to maintain her self-control, and neither Dr. Blatherwick, who visited her twice daily, and who was really anxious about her, or the nurse, heard anything that might not be reasonably expected from a patient in her condition.

The captain, moreover, had another source of perturbation. Shut up in the cottage, which he dared not leave, he was absolutely ignorant of all that was passing in the outer world. He knew nothing of Heath's movements, nor could he learn that any inquiry had been made concerning the disappearance of Walter Danby; though, from the absence of any intelli-

gence in the newspapers, he concluded that such had not been the case.

On the third morning the postman brought him a letter, written on blue quarto-paper, and addressed in a round, clerk-like hand. The captain opened it nervously, and hastily ran his eye over its contents. They were as follows:—

"Middleham's Bank, Wednesday.

"DEAR SIR,—On my return from a short trip to Paris, whither I was called two days since on important business connected with this establishment, I discovered, to my surprise and regret, that Mr. Walter Danby, one of the clerks employed in the bank, who was absent from his duties, as it was imagined on the score of illness, on the day of my departure, has not yet returned. Inquiry made at Mr. Danby's lodgings has elicited the fact that he went out from there on Sunday last and has not been seen since; and, as Mr. Danby's previous conduct was of a nature to render any suspicion of voluntary irregularity unreasonable and uncalled-for, I am, I confess, beginning to take alarm at his prolonged absence. As I am aware that there was some slight acquaintance between you and Mr. Danby, I venture to ask whether you can assist us in the investigation, which it has been considered necessary to institute by means of the police. If this be possible, I shall be obliged by your calling at the bank on Friday next, between the hours of ten and three, when I will make you acquainted with the steps which have been taken in the matter.—I am, dear sir, obediently yours,

"GEORGE HEATH."

This letter was written in the same clerk-like hand as that of the address, but the signature was Heath's own.

When the captain had read it through

he laid it down with a great sigh of relief. "So far so good," he muttered. "What a clever fellow it is! This is a regular official letter written by a clerk, taken off by a copying machine and entered in the books of the bank, and yet it conveys to me exactly the information for which I was so longing, that, up to this point, all is safe. He knows perfectly well that I do not mean to leave this place for an instant, nor would it suit his purpose that I should, but I must tell him that in the business-like style which he has adopted to me."

Then the captain carried the letter from the garden, where he had been reading it, into his den, and wrote the following reply—

"Loddonford, Thursday.

"DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, which has caused me very great surprise and alarm, Mr. Danby being, as you surmise, a young acquaintance of mine, for whom I entertain a sincere regard. Willing as I should be to aid you in your investigation to the best of my power, I regret to state that owing to the severe illness of my daughter, Miss Studley, upon whom I am in constant attendance, it is impossible for me to quit this house, even for an hour. If, therefore, it is thought desirable to see me, I would suggest that you or your representative should call upon me here, where I am certain to be found at any hour; although I must add that I am not likely to be able to throw any light on what you rightly characterise as Mr. Danby's mysterious disappearance, not having seen or heard anything of him for a period of three weeks. I am, dear Sir, your obedient Servant,

"EDWARD STUDLEY."

"And now," said the captain, as he folded the letter, and laid it out for despatch for the post by the next tradesman's boy who should call at the house, "now to prepare for the visit."

At twelve o'clock the next day a sharp ring of the bell was answered by the captain in person. On opening the garden-gate he found himself confronted by Heath and a wiry-built man of middle height, with cold blue eyes and close shaved face, in appearance and dress—a cut-away pepper-and-salt coat, tight trowsers, undeniably boots, and a pot-hat—something like a professional horse-trainer.

"Ah, Mr. Heath, glad to see you," said the captain, with an assumption of

pleasant astonishment, shaking hands with his friend. "You see I am obliged to act as my own porter, and in fact, butler, housemaid, and everything else; for directly the servant learned it was fever with which my poor daughter had been attacked, she refused to remain in the place, and, with the exception of the nurse, I am alone here."

"I was extremely sorry to read in your letter of Miss Studley's illness," said Heath, speaking in an unexcited and business-like tone, in strict contrast to the captain's flippancy. "I trust that she may be considered progressing. Under any other circumstances I would have endeavoured to spare you this visit, but the matter on which I wrote you naturally assumes day by day a more serious and alarming shape, and it is necessary that the investigation which has been commenced should be carried through without delay. This," indicating his companion, "is Sergeant Francis, of Scotland-yard."

"Delighted to see the sergeant," said Studley, in acknowledgment of the detective's bow. "Please to walk in, both of you. Quite a fine morning after the mists and fogs which we have had lately; at least, in this part of the world. The river, Mr. Heath, is a delightful place in summer, but in winter I confess I prefer London or Paris."

"Quite a wilderness of a place you have got here, sir," said the officer, with a glance round, which took in the garden and included the pond. "Your gardener must have taken fright along with the other servants, I suppose."

"No," said the captain, after a passing shudder, which he explained by declaring that the air was still chill, "no," he said, as he preceded them towards the house, "the house is not mine: merely a furnished residence, which I anticipated leaving before this, and should have left but for Miss Studley's illness. This way, if you please," he continued, opening the door of his den, "this is my little snugger, where we shall find pens and ink, or anything that we may require. May I, before proceeding to business, offer you a glass of sherry, Mr. Heath? No! Will you take one sergeant, or a nip of something stronger—it is all handy here in this cellarette?"

When the officer had declined present refreshment, Mr. Heath commenced the conversation. "After the statement in

your letter, Captain Studley," he said, "I should scarcely myself have thought it worth while to trouble you with this visit, but Sergeant Francis was of a different opinion. It is better that he should speak for himself."

"In the matter of the disappearance of Mr. Walter Danby, sir," said the sergeant, referring to a note-book which he produced, and addressing the captain, "I understand from Mr. Heath, the manager of the bank, now present, that you cannot throw any light upon the subject, it being a period of three weeks since you saw the missing gentleman?"

"Quite correct," said the captain, with a confirmatory nod.

"But," continued the sergeant, "the reason of my visit to this house will be plain when I tell you that, from information I have received, I have reason to think that Miss Studley might be able to give some later news of Mr. Danby's movements than you could."

"What!" cried the captain, apparently in profound astonishment, "Miss Studley—my daughter?"

"Miss Studley, certainly," said the detective, "and your daughter, sir, I presume?"

"Will you be good enough to give me your reason for this conjecture, sergeant?" said the captain sternly. "Such a supposition strikes me as extremely absurd, for, so far as I know, my daughter had no more than a mere passing acquaintance with Mr. Dauby, founded on the few occasions when he has been a visitor at this house."

"You are wrong there, sir, so far as I am able to judge," said the sergeant. "My inquiries," he continued, referring to his note-book, "lead me to believe that the acquaintance between Miss Studley and Mr. Danby was first formed at Chapone House, Hampstead, boarding-school for young ladies, kept by the Misses Griggs."

"You amaze me," said the captain. "I had no idea of this."

"Nor of what is to follow I suppose, sir?" said the sergeant; "which next is documentary evidence to the effect that Mr. Danby and Miss Studley were lovers, and that she expected to see him at or about the date of his disappearance."

"What!" cried the captain, starting to his feet in well-feigned wrath. "It is to be hoped for your sake, officer, that you have warrant for what you are saying, or

it will be worse for you. Where, pray, did you get this precious information?"

"It was put together, sir," said the sergeant, without the smallest sign of annoyance, "piece by piece, from some papers which I found in the drawer of a writing-table in Mr. Danby's lodging. The first rough draft of a letter I made it out to be, with plenty of blots and scratchings out, but still legible enough to show what I say. Being a draft, there was no address to it, of course, but on the blotting-pad in the same drawer, there was an address which had been taken off the ink while wet, and which, held up to the light, read quite plainly, 'Miss Studley, Loddon-ford, Berks.' That's my case at present, captain," continued the detective, drawing himself up stiffly. "I don't pretend it's complete, but it is enough to give colour to what I say; and I am not in the habit of speaking without warrant, as you can find out by inquiry at the Home Office."

The man was evidently offended. Heath knit his brows, and the captain saw that he had overdone his displeasure.

"What do you propose doing?" he asked, in a much milder tone.

"My wish would be, sir," said the sergeant, "to see Miss Studley and ask her a few questions, telling her at the same time that she was not bound to commit herself, and that whatever she said——"

"Yes, yes; we know all about that," interrupted Heath. "The point is, can Miss Studley be seen?"

"At present, most decidedly not," said the captain; "at least, not on my responsibility. The doctor makes his first visit at noon, and I thought it was he when you rang the bell. If he chooses to authorise an interview with his patient I, of course, shall make no objection, but my belief is that, in my daughter's present condition, it would be quite impossible to question her upon any subject whatever, more especially one which might be supposed to agitate her by giving her information of Mr. Danby's disappearance—a fact which, if the sergeant is right in his supposition about this letter, it would be absolutely necessary to conceal from her."

"I was afraid, from your account of Miss Studley," said Heath, "that she would scarcely be in a condition to——"

"There is Dr. Blatherwick," interrupted the captain, as a sharp ring at the bell

made itself heard through the house. "It will be better, I think, that I should not see him alone, as there must be no semblance of collusion in this matter; so, sergeant, I will ask you to be good enough to step down and open the gate."

When the police-officer had disappeared, Studley turned eagerly to Heath; but the latter held up his hand in warning, and, merely whispering, "Everything going right, all depends on to-day," turned to the window and remained looking out there, until the doctor, followed by the sergeant, entered the room.

"Will you be good enough, Dr. Blatherwick, to see your patient, and then give us five minutes' conversation here?" said the captain. "Your opinion is required on a very important matter."

Until the doctor's return, dead silence reigned amongst the three: Heath retired to his position at the window; the sergeant took up an illustrated newspaper, lying on the table; and the host busied himself in mending the fire.

"Well, what news, doctor?" he cried, as the little man hustled into the room.

"In much the same condition as last night, captain," said the doctor; "highly nervous and excited state—fever approaching crisis; better able to say something definite within the next forty-eight hours."

"I will ask you, Dr. Blatherwick, in the presence of these gentlemen," said the captain, speaking deliberately, "to give me your professional opinion, whether Miss Studley is in a condition to answer rationally certain questions as to matter of fact?"

"Most decidedly not, my dear sir," said the doctor, emphatically. "If any such attempt were made, I should wash my hands of all responsibility. In Miss Studley's present state the slightest disturbance might be fatal to her reason, or even to her life."

"That is your decided opinion, doctor?" asked Heath.

"My decided opinion," said the doctor; "and one which, I am sure, would be endorsed by any member of the College of Surgeons or licentiate of the Apothecaries' Company. Nothing more to ask me? Then, good day. I shall look in this afternoon, captain, at my usual time."

"I was right, you see," said Studley, turning to the detective, when Dr. Blatherwick had gone. "I felt convinced that any attempt to arouse the patient in her present condition would be worse than

dangerous. I regret this very much. As an old servant of Her Majesty, my desire is to afford every facility for the pursuance of inquiries like these; but Providence is stronger than the law, sergeant, and, in this instance, Providence has interposed."

"All correct, sir," said the sergeant, rising from his seat; "you could not do more than you have done, and the doctor's evidence is, as one may say, conclusive. When the young lady gets better, as I hope and trust she may, you would not mind, perhaps, dropping me a line to Scotland Yard, and letting me come down and see her?"

"By all means," said the captain, warmly. "Directly the doctor gives his permission, I will write to you. And now, sergeant," he added, going to the cellarette and producing therefrom a bottle, a wine-glass, and a biscuit-tin, "just one toothful of very old whisky, which I get from a friend in Ireland, and a rnsk, to bring out the flavour."

"Will you be going back with me, sir?" asked the sergeant, as he disposed of these delicacies, turning to Heath.

"I hope not," interposed the captain. "I hope you will be persuaded to stay and take a bit of early dinner with me. It would be a charity; upon my life, it would. For the last few days I have had nothing to look at but my poor sick child and the old nurse, and not a soul to speak to. I am nearly moped to death, I am, indeed."

"I think I must stay with the captain, Francis, under these sad circumstances," said Heath, with a smile. "I suppose, until Miss Studley is convalescent, we can do no more? But, just turn the subject over in your mind, and come and see me at the bank to-morrow."

When the captain returned from seeing the detective to the gate, which he carefully locked behind him, he found Heath seated in a chair before the fire, buried in thought, with his chin resting on his breast.

"Well!" exclaimed Studley, "that part of the play is over; and we are now able to speak without the chance of being overheard. What do you think of the position of affairs?"

"It is impossible for me to say until I have seen that letter which Francis spoke of," said Heath. "By its contents our whole future course of action must be guided."

"It struck me so, too, at the time he

mentioned it," said the captain; "but how to find out what was in it?"

"If Francis was right in his description of it—if it was, in fact, a love letter—there is every chance that your daughter has preserved it somewhere; girls keep such things until they know better. She has a desk, I suppose, or writing-table, or something of the sort?"

"She has a desk," said Studley, "which is now in her room. I can easily fetch it without her observing me."

"Do so," said Heath; "you may depend upon it we shall find the letter there."

He was right. When the captain returned with the desk, reporting that his daughter was asleep, the lock, which was a common one, was easily forced by an application of Heath's strong-bladed knife, and poor Walter Danby's letter was the first object that met their view. Heath took it out and perused it eagerly, and then handed it to his companion.

"The detective is cleverer than I imagined him to be," said he, with a grave face and a nervous twitching of his hands. "This is evidently the letter, the blotted draft of which he found at Danby's lodgings, and there is enough in it to hang us both!"

"What!" cried the captain, bending forward with wild eager eyes and working lips, "where?"

"Read this paragraph," said Heath, placing his finger upon it.

"I hope to have your answer from your own lips. I am coming to Loddonford to see Captain Studley, by appointment, at three, on Sunday. I shall not be long with him, and I happen to know he will be busy all day. Will you give me five minutes when I come away from him?—five minutes, in which I may learn the whole of my future career?"

When Studley raised his eyes from the paper, his face was deadly white, and his voice shook as he said, "You are right, by—! There is death in that, but—but we can destroy the letter."

"The letter can be destroyed, but the fact remains," said Heath, scornfully. "They have gained some suspicion of that fact from the blotted draft, in which, however, there must have been some omission or illegibility, or their suspicion would have become a certainty. So much for the letter itself," he added, throwing it into the flames, which speedily consumed it; "but I know the way these fellows work. Francis will go back to that draft

and pore over it, and hammer away at it night and day. If he deciphers any more, if his suspicions be again—ever so slightly—directed towards the truth, they will insist upon putting your daughter into the witness box."

"My daughter Anne!" cried the captain, in terror.

"You have not two daughters, that you need ask the question, have you?" said Heath, savagely, "at all events, only one is mixed up in this matter. They would insist upon her evidence. What would be the result of that you can judge."

"She—she would do her utmost to screen us," stammered Studley, conscious of the lie sticking in his throat.

"Would she?" said Heath, looking at him. "I have my doubts as to that. But even suppose she were willing, for your sake, to suppress the truth, how would she fare, do you think, under cross-examination?"

"She is a clever girl," said the captain, "and I do not doubt that—"

"Clever!" said Heath, contemptuously, "She has, I believe, the usual accomplishments, and more than the usual amount of common sense, but what would this avail her if she were in the grasp of Badger, Q.C., or even of Netherton Whiffle? They would make her contradict herself and commit herself at every sentence, and when she left the box our ruin would have been accomplished."

"It is a desperate case," muttered the captain moodily. "Is there no way out of it?"

"Yes," cried Heath after a moment's pause, bringing his hand heavily down upon the table, "there is one way out of it, and only one. Desperate cases need desperate remedies, and this is one which could only be taken as a last resource. If your daughter gives evidence against me I am lost. It must be my business to put it out of her power to give such evidence."

"What!" cried the captain, starting up, with renewed horror in his face, "do you dare to suggest—"

"Sit down, fool," said Heath, angrily pushing him back into the chair. "Do you think I am like a wild beast, insatiable for blood. My proposition is not what you imagine, though as effective, and less dangerous. Before these detectives hit upon the trail, your daughter must be my wife!"

"Your wife?" cried the captain; "Anne

your wife? Even if such a thing were possible, I fail to see how it would help us."

"It is possible, and it must be," said Heath, coldly. "Your acquaintance with the law is limited, or you would know that the performance of such a ceremony would completely take the wind out of the detective's sails, inasmuch as the wife of an accused person is not a competent person to be examined for the prosecution or the defence. They might call her as much as they like, but she could not be examined against me, her husband, and without her testimony their proof would fail."

But the captain still shook his head. "I have no doubt that you are right as to the law," he said, "but she would never consent to it—it never could be!"

"She must consent to it, and it shall be," said Heath, quietly. "It is the one sole chance of my safety, and I am not going to throw it away. Your daughter must become my wife, and at once, mind. I am speaking for myself now, and not for you. It would be perfectly easy for you to hang me, and save yourself from any further punishment than penal servitude, by permitting your daughter to give her evidence, but though that might, as a last desperate resource, be your game, it would not, either first or last, be mine. When that girl is once my wife her lips are sealed for ever, and come what may, it is out of her power and yours to do me any detriment. Therefore, there is no choice or deliberation about it; the thing must be, and you must take immediate steps to bring it about."

"She will not consent, she will die first," said the captain.

"Oh no, she won't," said Heath, calmly. "She may say so, but she won't do it. You must let her know that your own safety depends on her consenting quietly and quickly. There is nothing more natural than that an engagement should have for some time existed between your daughter and her father's friend; such an engagement indeed would best account for our intimate association, and would in itself be a safeguard against suspicion."

"But to bind her for life to you, whose character she knows, whom she saw under such terrible circumstances! How can she ever be reconciled to such a fate?"

"That," said Heath, "is your business, and with it I shall not interfere. You may make any terms you please with her,

only let it be understood that I marry her simply as a safeguard for myself, that I have not the slightest feeling of liking for her, and that she may be as free of me as she likes when once the danger is tided over and appearances are saved, but my wife by this day fortnight she must make up her mind to be!"

He took up his hat as he spoke, and, with a nod to his companion, left the room and the house.

FACETIA CANTABRIGIENSIS.

JUST fifty years ago, a Cantab, too modest to put his name to his work, collected together, under the above title, sundry "anecdotes, smart sayings, satirics and retorts, by or relating to celebrated Cantabs." As in all collections of the kind, we find therein no lack of old familiar friends and plenty of "wit," that has long lost what little savour it had, but a residue remains from which we may extract something amusing.

It was said of Dr. Farmer, Master of Emmanuel, that there were three things he loved—old port, old clothes, and old books; and three things he could not be persuaded to do—to rise in the morning, to go to bed at night, or to settle an account. Dr. Howard, sometime rector of St. George's, Southwark, could only be accused of the last little failing, and in his case it arose rather from want of means than want of will. Some parochial business obliging him to call upon his grocer, the worthy parson thought it advisable to anticipate any allusion to his little bill, by inquiring whether he did not owe a trifle? "Yes," said the grocer, "seventeen and sixpence." Putting his hand in his ill-supplied pocket, the doctor pulled out some copper, a little silver, and a solitary guinea. Astonished at seeing the piece of gold in such hands, the shopkeeper exclaimed, "You have got a stranger there, sir!" "Indeed I have," said the doctor, quietly replacing the coin in his pocket, "and before we part we will be better acquainted!" Burke would seem to have been an equally bad paymaster, for he left his son's college bills so long unpaid that he received a reminder, suggesting that if it were inconvenient to pay the principal, perhaps he would pay the interest; whereupon eloquent Edmund informed his creditor it was neither his principle to pay the interest, nor his

interest to pay the principal. Lord Mansfield punned to much better purpose when, wishing to save a watch-stealer from the gallows, he directed the jury to assess the time-keeper at ten pence. "Ten pence!" cried the indignant prosecutor, "why, the very fashion of it cost me five pounds!" "Oh," said his lordship, "we must not hang a man for fashion's sake."

Novelist and poet having combined to take Eugene Aram out of the rank of murderers, and elevate him into a hero of romance, it interests one to learn that Paley, then a lad of sixteen, was among the rapt listeners to the melancholy usher's well-worded appeal. The great churchman never forgot that day in the York assize court, but the chief impression left upon his mind by Aram's speech appears to have been that it justified the old saying that he who advocates his own cause has a fool for his client; for, years afterwards, conversing with some friends upon the number of obscurities admitted into the Biographica Britannica, somebody instanced Eugene Aram as an example. "No," said Paley, "a man that has been hanged has some pretence to notoriety, especially a man who got himself hanged, as Aram did, by his own cleverness."

The proverb says, "In courtesy rather pay a penny too much than a penny too little." Archbishop Herring, bearing the proverb in mind, required a poetical young clergyman, named Faukes, for a flattering dedication, by giving him a general invitation, saying, "the oftener I see you, the more I shall be obliged to you." Faukes shrewdly took the prelate at his word, engaged lodgings at Lambeth, and every day for more than nine months put his legs under his lordship's mahogany, turning a deaf ear to the broadest of hints that his visits were too frequent to be pleasant. At last, finding it was no use giving his flatterer hints, the archbishop gave him a couple of valuable livings, and so got rid of his troublesome guest, who had taught him that it does not always answer to pay a penny too much, even when it is only a pennyworth of politeness.

A couple of tolerably good stories convict Bob Acres of precipitancy in announcing that damns had had their day, since they had not quite gone out at Cambridge, if extinct in good company elsewhere. A collegian named Neville stammered sadly in his talk, except when using bad language, then he could be fluent enough. Taking a ramble one day, a countryman stopped

him, to be set right in his road. "Tu-tu-turn," says the student, "to-to-to,—damn it, man, you'll get there before I can tell you!" Dr. Craven, the venerable master of St. John's, having given a rascally student "an imposition," the latter determined to pay the doctor out for it. One fine day, as he was looking down from his "sky parlour," he spied the doctor sunning himself below, and seizing a huge jar of water, emptied its contents over the master, and sent the jar to follow. As soon as the frightened old gentleman recovered from the shock, he summoned the delinquent into his presence, to hear him coolly declare he was merely trying some hydrostatical experiments. "Hydrostatical experiments!" exclaimed the master, "I'll thank you, sir, when next you pursue your hydrostatical amusements, not to use such a d—d large pitcher!" As might be expected, anecdotes of Porson are plentiful in our Cantab's collection, but the only ones worth telling are too well known to bear repetition; although we may perhaps venture to record the learned bear's retort upon Dr. Jackson, when the latter sought to compliment him at the expense of his University, by declaring he was the only man that ever left Cambridge learned in Greek: "And you, Doctor," answered Porson, "are the only man that ever left Oxford with any learning at all:" and his odd rhymed account of his continental experiences—

I went to Frankfort and got drunk
With that learned professor, Brunk;
I went to Worts and got more drunken
With that more learned professor, Runken.

Epigram writing, to judge from our author's samples, was certainly not a Cambridge accomplishment. Garrick, who, according to Johnson, could knock an epigram off in five minutes, would scarcely have cared to own any one of them. Here is one on the marriage of a very thin pair—
St. Paul has declared that, when persons, though twain,
Are in wedlock united, one flesh they remain.
But had he been by, when, like Pharaoh's kine
pairing,
Dr. Douglas of Benet, espoused Miss Mainwaring,
The Apostle, no doubt, would have altered his tone,
And have said, "These two splinters shall now make
one bone."

A publican took down his old sign of Bishop Blaize, and put up Dr. Watson's head in its place, provoking an undergraduate to write—

Two of a trade can ne'er agree,
No proverb e'er was juster;
They've ta'en down Bishop Blaize, d'ye see,
And put up Bishop Bluster.

Lord Sandwich, otherwise Jemmy Twitcher, had the right of appointing a chorister to Trinity College. He exercised it in favour of a voter for the borough of Huntingdon, who had neither voice, ear, taste, nor musical knowledge to qualify him for the situation; so that there was truth, if nothing else, in the quotation—

"A singing man and cannot sing!
From whence arose your patron's bounty?
Give us a song—" "Excuse me, sirs,
My voice is in another county!"

We have heard worse puns than the double-shotted one perpetrated by the Johnian, who, as the master of his college passed by on horseback, informed an inquisitive stranger, "That is the head of St. John on a charger." Not bad either was the unintentional joke of the wine-overcome member of Maudlin, when challenged as to his identity, "I am Nott, of Maudlin," leading the disgusted proctor, not unnaturally, to exclaim, "I asked of what college you were, not of what college you were not." The story, however, is scarcely consistent with the fact that the men of Maudlin were notable for their wineless lives, and were subject to so many jibes in consequence, that one of them resolved to remove the reproach at any cost. Inviting a party of twelve to his room, as soon as he got them inside, he set his back to the door, and poker in hand, vowed that not one should leave the place again until the bottle of wine he had provided for the occasion was emptied! The truculent tempter's notion of a big drink was on a par with that of the "pious Queen's man" who excused himself for leaving some friends very early, on the ground that he had not recovered from the previous night's debauch, when he sat up till ten o'clock, and drank two bumpers of plum wine.

Undergraduate wits delighted in drawing up mock examination papers, but the fun to be found in them is not over-powering, nor the satire of the fiercest, as the following specimens, taken at random, will prove:—Should you, upon consideration, say that the ancients could find the way to their mouths in the dark as well as the moderns? Prove the non-identity of Sylla the dictator and Scylla the sandbank; and does not the sea or c make all the difference between them? On what occasion did Mr. Lethbridge's hair "stand on end?" correct the solecism, and give your reason for the alteration. Determine the least possible quantity of material

out of which the modern dress of a fashionable female can be constructed. Given the three sides of a steel triangle immersed in sulphuric acid; required a solution of the triangle. Seven funipendulous bodies are suspended from different points in a common centre at the Old Bailey, to find the centre of oscillation. Given a Berkshire pig, a Johnian pig, and a pig of lead, to find their different densities. State logically, how many tails a cat has? To the last query the answer is appended, namely:—"Cats have three tails. No cat has two tails. Every cat has one tail more than no cat—ergo, every cat has three tails."

The best example of this species of parody is a metaphysical examination, in the form of a dialogue, between a professor and a student, attributed to Porson. The subject of this metaphysical disquisition is a common salt box. Let us drop the questions, and see what comes out of the answers. First, then, a salt box is a box made to contain salt. Secondly, it is a salt box and a box of salt, a distinction arising from the fact that a salt box may be when there is no salt, while salt is absolutely necessary to the existence of a box of salt. Salt boxes are also divided by a partition, the use of which is to separate the coarse from the fine—no, the fine from the coarse. They are further to be distinguished as possible, probable, and positive. A possible salt box is a salt box yet unused, because it hath not yet become a salt box, having never had any salt in it, and it may be applied to some other use; for a salt box which never had, hath not now, and perhaps never may have, any salt in it, can only be termed a possible salt box. A probable salt box is a salt box in the hands of one going to buy salt, and who has sixpence in his pocket to pay the shop-keeper; and a positive salt box is one which hath actually and bona fide got salt in it. The idea of a salt box is that image which the mind conceives of a salt box when no salt box is present, whilst the abstract idea of a salt box, is the idea salt box, abstracted from the idea of a box, or of salt, or of a salt box, or of a box of salt; it is not a salt idea unless the idea hath the idea of salt contained in it. An abstract idea cannot be either salt or fresh, round or square, long or short, which clearly shows the difference between a salt idea and an idea of salt. An aptitude to hold salt is an essential property of a salt box, but if there be a crack in the bottom of

the box, the aptitude to spill salt would be termed an accidental property of the box. Finally, the salt, with respect to the box, is called the contents, because the cook is content to find plenty of salt in the box. Despite Darwin, we believe, with the poet, that "man is man through all gradations," but there is certainly a mighty difference between the logical individual who can evolve so much out of a salt box, and such a specimen of humanity as Wordsworth's matter-of-fact hero of yellow primrose fame.

PEAT FUEL.

SOME time back Her Majesty's Government was given to understand that peat, available for fuel, was to be found in considerable quantities in various parts of the United States, and that operations were being undertaken for its collection, with a view to its being used as a substitute for coal. Earl Granville, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, consequently instructed Her Majesty's Consuls there to furnish reports "as to the production and preparation of peat for fuel . . . together with particulars respecting its price and the relation of such price to that of coal." Some of the replies, which have recently been made public, present features of considerable interest, and deserve more than a passing notice.

Consul Denis Donohoe, who, judging from his name, should be competent to speak with authority on the subject of peat, reports from Baltimore that, though the article is abundant in some of the tide-water districts of Maryland, it is used solely as manure; but that in the State of Virginia, about twelve miles from Norfolk, and extending into North Carolina, there is a place called the "Dismal Swamp," which is nothing more nor less than a "peat bog." In the Virginian portion of the "Dismal Swamp" alone there are some twelve square miles of bog, and the peat is from six to eight feet in depth. Two companies have been formed at different times to carry on the preparation of peat here, but both have come to an untimely end. So we may fairly presume that their operations were found to be unprofitable, though one of the companies did endeavour to float itself by selling three hundred tons of peat at three dollars and a half (say fourteen shillings) per ton.

Consul Henderson, writing from Boston, states that peat, generally of very good quality, exists in vast quantities in Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire. In the latter States it has not been used to any extent as fuel, but in Massachusetts, during the war and the continuance of the want of coal, it was very extensively used, both for domestic purposes and in factories. Since coal has become cheaper, however, the production of peat has been virtually abandoned as being too costly: and in evidence of this, one instance will suffice. A manufacturer, though possessing close to his factory an abundant supply of peat, for the preparation of which he had erected machinery, and which he used for some time with advantage, now finds it more profitable to procure coal from a distance, for which he has to pay four dollars per ton prime cost and three dollars per ton for carriage. Whilst peat was being used, continues H.M.'s Consul, various processes were adopted, with more or less success, for preparing it as fuel; but the difficulty of properly drying and compressing it by artificial means was never thoroughly overcome.

In the Charleston, Mobile, and New Orleans Consular Districts, we learn that nothing has been done to utilise or prepare peat for fuel, though it exists in considerable quantities, as wood can be had from the forests almost for the mere trouble of cutting and hauling it.

Consul-General Archibald sends us a very interesting and instructive report from New York, from which we condense the following information. In almost all the northern portion of America, he says, there are extensive peat-bogs, formed by decomposition of plants, amid much moisture, and from the accumulation of mosses, which, while their lower parts are being converted into peat, throw out new shoots in their upper parts, thus gradually changing shallow pools into bogs. The remains of forests not cleared off the ground, by converting it into marsh-land, also make peat-swamps, in which trees are deposited *in situ*; and even the long-continued growth of one kind of vegetation, by exhausting the soil, tends to produce peat. On the peninsula of Michigan peat-beds of every kind of density are found, and seventy-five per cent of the fuel used in the Lake Superior Iron Furnaces in that region is obtained from these beds. As compared with wood, experiments in iron

works show that two hundred and forty to three hundred and sixty cubic feet of peat are required in the production of a ton of blooms, or from two hundred to two hundred and eighty cubic feet of wood.

Peat bogs, easily accessible by rail or water, exist in several Eastern States, but not much is known about them. At White Plains in New York there are thirty thousand acres in one body.

In Ulster County, in the same State, there are very extensive bogs of heavy, compact, dark-brown peat, averaging twenty-eight feet in depth; and allowing for water, it is estimated that each acre will yield nine thousand six hundred and eighty tons of peat-fuel, at a cost of at least two and a half dollars per ton. A geological report on these deposits states that the rocks forming the basin belong to the dislocated, indurated salt formation; and with this alteration, are the same as those which yield petroleum in parts of Pennsylvania and Western Virginia. It is thought possible, from the richness of the peat and the lively white flame it gives, that these rocks have imparted a certain amount of petroleum to the peat, specimens of which, not pressed, but sawed into slices and baked for some hours in ovens, sink in water and burn down to an impalpable white ash of less than four per cent. Charcoal made from compressed peat is found to be almost equal to that made from wood.

The manufacture heretofore of peat-fuel in the United States, continues our Consul-General, except in cases where coal is very costly or difficult to procure, has been a complete financial failure. The causes are obvious and to be looked for in the extensive labour required in handling a mass four or five times the bulk eventually fitted for transportation and market, and in the expense of compressing an article, naturally as elastic as sponge, unless under such long-continued and powerful pressure as to be too costly for any but ornamental purposes. Besides, to make a good fuel, it is not sufficient to break peat up, but it must be reduced to a pulp as fine as that used in the manufacture of paper. The use of artificial heat for drying and for furnishing the motor of mechanical operations—thereby consuming a disproportionate amount of fuel to that secured—the cost of transportation, the low prices and abundance of competing coal, are all causes that operate against peat as a fuel.

During and immediately after the civil war, the scarcity of coal greatly stimulated attempts to manufacture peat. Forty-seven companies, with capital varying from fifty thousand to five million dollars, were organised for the purpose of raising and preparing this fuel. These have all failed. At present, whilst no statistics exist of the actual production, it is not probable that in the United States ten thousand tons per annum are manufactured, of a character fit for transportation or market. At the Berlin bog, we are told, on the Hartford and New Haven railroad, in Connecticut, a practical utilisation of peat by new machinery has been attempted. The bog embraces seventy-five acres; the peat is dug and raised, one ton at a time, by a steam-dredge, and deposited in tubs with perforated bottoms, through which the water drains, whilst the tubs are being moved to a wooden platform eighteen feet high, twelve feet wide and fifteen feet long. On this platform are two boom derricks, raising and discharging the tubs on the platform. The peat falls, through openings on the platform, on an Archimedean screw, feeding into a mill where revolving knives of different dimensions convert the fibre and undrained water into a thick paste, which falls into a hopper; under the hopper are moulds resting on wooden tramways, so that when one mould is full, another takes its place. The full moulds are lifted into cars and conveyed to a drying ground, where each mould is overturned and the peat left on the grass. It soon dries, and after an exposure of forty-eight hours, it is said neither frost nor rain will injure it. The machinery is capable, if required, of turning out one hundred tons per day for the one hundred and fifty working days from April to November. The selling price of the prepared peat is five dollars per ton.

Consul-General Archibald concludes his report by pointing out that the main difficulty experienced in working peat-beds has consisted in the want of machinery to render the substance cohesive and compact enough to fit it for handling and transportation; but, with the invention of appliances that will accomplish this in an economical and effective manner, another and valuable material would be made more generally available for fuel.

Consul Kortright reports from Philadelphia that peat-beds are found in the States of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan, and when the price of coal has risen in

the market, efforts have, from time to time, been made towards the introduction of peat as a substitute, but the cost of cutting and preparing it for the market, in States where the price of labour is so high, together with the facility of obtaining coal, and the large quantity of wood still existing in those parts, render it highly improbable that peat will be manufactured with any degree of commercial advantage. In the northern portion of Indiana—where there is no stone coal and wood is becoming scarce—it may, under certain conditions, become utilised.

Peat has, however, been consumed in considerable quantities at the College of Notre Dame in St. Joseph's County, Illinois. The following extract of a letter from Father Lemmonier, the principal of this College, is interesting, as showing their experience in the use of peat fuel:—

"We have used from six hundred to eight hundred tons of peat every year for the last six years, and our experience of it during that period obliges us to give it up for economy's sake, coal being cheaper. A ton of peat costs four and a half dollars at the College; a ton of coal of good quality is equal to two and a half tons of our peat. In other words, our peat contains thirty per cent. of combustible matter, while coal of the best quality contains eighty to ninety per cent. A ton of our peat, which is far inferior to the peat found in Ireland, is not better than a cord of wood of good quality. I think it was remarked by our fireman, that six hundred tons of peat make two hundred tons of residue."

Several attempts have been made at different times to utilise peat for commercial purposes in the State of Maine, reports Consul Murray, and companies have been formed with this object, but it could not compete with wood and anthracite coal, the former of which was to be found within a stone's-throw of each cottage door. It was tried for domestic purposes and for locomotive engines, but unsuccessfully. For the former, though it gave a steady heat, it left a very large amount of ash, and in the latter case, besides being dirty, its action was not quick enough, and owing to the high price of labour, it was found more expensive than wood. Peat has also been used, charred and powdered, as a deodoriser, and found to be very efficient. The greatly increased price of fuel may induce capitalists to turn their attention to peat again, but it is probable that "some

years must elapse before it will become an object of renewed speculation, seeing that large profits are the only inducements that will tempt an American company to risk even the very smallest capital."

The foregoing statements afford food for serious reflection, for if our go-ahead and enterprising cousins on the other side of the Atlantic, with all their remarkable skill for adapting machinery to almost every conceivable purpose, have hitherto failed to turn peat to good account as fuel, the question naturally arises, can we in the mother country, exasperated as we are by fluctuations in the price of coal, hope to find in it a substitute for or even a competing rival of our "black diamonds"? Apparently we cannot hope for much aid at present from America.

THE HELEN.

"So you're haek again among us;
I'se glad you've gien us a call;
Step in, and welcome, and take a seat,
The pot's on the boil, an' all.
Oh, I'se well and purely, thank you.
I am but dowly a bit,
I gets thinking of the old man, you see,
When I has the time to sit.
He's master of the Helen;
She's sailed for the North, you know,
I feel as a knifo went throngh my heart,
When the wind gets up to blow.
But there's not a braver bark afloat,
Nor better manned and found;
George says to me, as we walked her deck,
They'd not match her, England round.
Our Mary? come thou hither, I say.
She's shamefaced there, fond lass.
She's promised to young Charlie Clare,
A hides above the Pass.
Her father made him mate this spring.
I heard him tell her int' court,
The banns should be up the very day,
The Helen rode in port.
The neighbours? Oh, aye, they mind on you,
Old Bess? Well, her man was lost,
In the fearfu' gale when the Royal Rose
Struck, on the Norway coast.
Her little un's grown a bonny lad;
Our George has tu'en him afloat,
He said, 'He'd be a sailor too,'
When first he framed in the boost.
And Bess was fain her one son's start,
Should be with my good old man,
He'll give the fatherless kindly heed,
And the pick of the berth and the ean.
And Annie? her with the golden hair?
Aye, she thought too much on her curls;
But she steadied when she married Bill,
It's often the way with girls.
Poor lass, he sailed in the Helen,
Three days on the bairn had come.
She'll talk to the morsel half the day
How 'Daddy will soon be home.'
Who else is in the Helen?
Why Ned, from the cot by the heek;
You made a picture of him and his lads,
Heaping the nets on the deck.

And John, who steered the life-boat
 Right through the surf on the shore,
 When the blue lights burnt from the Niobe,
 On the reef where the breakers roar.
 His blind old father? he's yonder,
 He'll say as he sits on the pier,
 'I can't see the Helen heave in sight,
 But I'll know my brave boy's cheer.'
 And Harry Hudson, do you mind?
 His father were drowned at sea,
 And the mother faded like a bud,
 When a blight has struck the tree.
 And Harry, who'd hardlins twenty year
 Kept the bit of a home together,
 And worked for it, and the eight poor bairns,
 Summer and winter weather.
 George has ta'en him out in the Helen,
 Where was a good wage to be had,
 He wrought a'most too hard ashore,
 For nobbut such a lad.
 Aye, owners may talk of her cargo,
 But we mun give our prayers,
 For a richer and dearer freight than that,
 The hands that the Helen bears.
 Was the drum up as you passed it?
 I reckon I'm fond to speer.
 She's far enough from the angry winds,
 That lash our sea-board here.
 But oh, we women who sit at home,
 With our men so far away,
 It is only we who know how the waves
 Can thunder in Whitby Bay."

* * * * *

Oh, long, long may the ingle side
 Its blaze of welcome keep;
 And long, long may the pale wife strain
 Sad eyes o'er the tossing deep;
 The wedding gauds the maiden prized
 May yellow where they rest;
 The bright babe spring to the sunburnt boy,
 By a father's lips unblest;
 The widow may pine her gray life through
 For the help of her son's right hand;
 The kindly fishermen's nets may rot
 In the boats, far up on the sand;
 The blind old man may see his son,
 Where the light of Heaven shines clear,
 And know his voice in the angels' song,
 But not upon Whitby Pier.
 For the Helen never showed her flag
 In the Roads beyond the Scar,
 And never echoed the joyous cheers
 As she swept o'er the harbour bar;
 A smack picked up a broken boat,
 Adrift at sea, on the flow,
 With her timbers stove, and her rudder gone,
 And "The Helen" upon her prow.
 And that is all we shall ever hear,
 As the desolate months go by,
 Of the ship that sailed with her gallant crew,
 'Neath the calm October sky.

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

BUSBEQUIUS. IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

RUSTAN being for the moment ostensibly out of favour, the Grand Vizier Achmet received the embassy in the absence of the sultan, but regarded them with a sour and frowning visage. A few days later they were introduced into the sublime presence of Solyman the Great. "He was an ancient man; his countenance and the mien of his body very majestic, well

beseeming the dignity which he bore; he was frugal and temperate even from his youth. In his younger days he was not given to wine nor other excesses, and all that his enemies could object to him was that he was uxorious overmuch, and that his over-indulgence to his wife made him consent to the death of his son Mustapha. He is a very strict observer of the Mohammedan religion, and is as desirous to propagate that as to enlarge the bounds of his empire. He is now sixty years of age, and for a man of his years, he enjoys a moderate proportion of health; and yet his countenance doth discover that he carries about him some hidden disease—it was thought a gangrene or ulcer in the thigh; yet at solemn audiences of ambassadors he hath wherewithal to paint his cheeks that he may appear sound and healthy to them, and therewithal be more dreaded by foreign princes, their masters. Methought I discovered some such thing at my dismission, for his countenance was as sour, when I left him, as it was at my first audience."

In fact the embassy of the Seigneur de Busbec was so nearly a complete failure, that he only obtained from the sultan a six-months' truce, to enable him to return home and consult his master, Ferdinand.

Nevertheless, he bore the Turks no ill will; but, in the spirit of a scholar, inclines to follow the example of Tacitus, and extol the barbarians at the expense of his own countrymen. He never tires of lamenting that a superb country and a city like Constantinople, fit to be mistress of the world, should be allowed, through the divisions and quarrels of Christian princes, to remain in the hands of the infidel; and takes a savage pleasure in pointing out the causes of Turkish supremacy. The people are "remarkable for cleanliness" he remarks, in a tone which leaves us to imagine that washing was not the besetting sin of a Flemish gentleman of that day, and he also points out the affection existing in the East between the horse and his rider. But he draws far more severe contrasts than these between Turk and Christian. At his audience there was a full court, "for a great many governors of provinces were there with their presents . . . but among this vast number of courtiers there was not so much as one eminent for birth and parentage; each one by his valour and adventurous achievements was the carver out of his own fortune. Their honour

ariseth from their preferments; so that there is no dispute about precedence, but every man's pre-eminence is according to the office which he bears. And those offices are distributed at the mere will and pleasure of the prince, who does not regard the empty name of nobility, nor value a rush the favour of the multitude or of any other particular man; but, considering only the merits and disposition of the man, rewards him accordingly. And by that means employments are bestowed upon such persons as are best able to manage them; and every man hath an opportunity to be the hammerer out of his own honour and preferment. . . . Thus in that nation, dignities, honours, offices, &c., are the rewards of virtue and merit, as on the other side dishonesty, sloth, and idleness, are among the most despicable things in the world; and by this means they flourish, bear sway, and enlarge the bounds of their empire more and more. But we Christians, to our shame be it spoken, live at another manner of rate; virtue is little esteemed among us, but nobleness of birth, forsooth, carries away all the honour and preferment." Very pretty this for an imperial ambassador! Whence "my freedom herein," which other men "may not be able to bear?" Is it the son of the high and mighty Seigneur Gilles Gislen, or the offspring of the low-born lass who listened to a tale of love by the bank of the Lys, who holds forth in this dashing style? or is it not, after all, the scholar, envoy, and ambassador of Cæsar, who, like other advanced thinkers of his day, had recognised that feudalism had become a public nuisance, and that hereditary offices and the monstrous pretensions of a noble caste had made all good government impossible? A sight of the well-disciplined troops of Solyman, and the recollection of Mohacs, had evidently produced in the mind of Busbec a profound disdain for feudal armies, and he was probably the first to recognise that the Tartar hordes, trained by a long succession of wars and victories, must be met by very different material from that which had been recently opposed to them, before the tide of Ottoman invasion could be checked. On this subject Busbec composed a treatise, wherein he sets forth with considerable minuteness the elements of strength and weakness in the Turkish military system, recommends certain precautions to be observed by European generals when encountering an Ottoman

army, and acquits himself admirably as a writer on tactics.

Returning from his unsuccessful mission, Busbec tried his best to escape the responsibility of any future dealings with the Turks; but no other person being at hand to undertake the charge, he was in a measure "pressed into the service," and in November left Vienna to undertake a second voyage to "unhospitable Pontus." This second embassy lasted longer, and was far more successful than the first, for Busbec was absent seven years, and at last achieved a good sound treaty, having, in the meanwhile, been complimented by an invitation to change his religion, and remain an ornament of the Ottoman court. He appears to have suffered but little annoyance at his temporary exile, and to have endured the tediousness of protracted negotiations with excellent philosophy. "I keep myself within my own doors, conversing with my old friends—I mean my books—in which is all my delight. It is true, for my health's sake, I have made a bowling-green, where before dinner I use to play, and after dinner I practise the Turkish bow." The other kind of bow, proverbially dear to travellers, was not drawn by Busbec, whose scholarlike scepticism effectually protected him against legends of the cock-and-bull class.

The house in which he dwelt was not exactly an abode of bliss. "There is nothing of beauty or novelty that can entertain your fancy; no garden belonging to it, to give a man the pleasure of a walk; there is neither tree, shrub, nor green herb to delight your eye. You have only many wild beasts as your troublesome intimates and companions. Snakes you have in abundance, store of weasels, lizards, and scorpions; so that sometimes, when you would fetch your hat in the morning from the place where you left it the night before, you find it surrounded with a snake as with a terrible hat-band." Oddly enough, the ambassador was not content with the fine, natural productions of the spot, but took a keen pleasure in collecting strange birds and beasts from distant lands, and is especially instructive and amusing, when dilating on the curious affection of animals for certain human beings. A lynx, brought from Assyria, was so mightily in love with one of his servants, that the creature was never happy but when he was present, and, on his going on a long journey, pined

away and died. In like fashion a Balearic crane affected the company of a Spanish soldier, whom Busbec had "redeemed out of his chains," and disturbed the whole house unless she was allowed to lie under his bed. Now and then the grave diplomatist amused himself with excursions, and makes many quaint and acute remarks on the customs of the natives; and having, during the conduct of his second and successful embassy, made a great collection of ancient coins, inscriptions, drawings of rare plants, and "whole waggon-loads, if not ship-loads, of Greek manuscripts," he returned to Vienna, where he was received with much honour, and, despite his professed wish to pass the rest of his life in learned leisure, was appointed tutor to the young princes, sons of Maximilian the Second. In this honourable employment he passed the eight years of his life between 1562 and 1570, but in the latter year was entrusted with an important mission, which actually decided the future domicile of the learned Fleming. The Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Maximilian the Second, was about to be married to a poor, passionate, sickly, weak-headed, leaden-hued boy—one Charles, the ninth of that name, King of France—who, with such heart as he was endowed withal, dearly loved gentle Marie Touchet. Busbec was charged to conduct the princess to Paris, and during her short married life officiated as a sort of lord-steward of the household to the Queen of France. At the conclusion of Charles the Ninth's miserable life, his widow returned to Germany, leaving Busbec behind as her representative. His position as ambassador at the French court was confirmed by the Emperor Rudolph, to whom he wrote a series of remarkable epistles between the years 1582 and 1585. It is well to be thankful for what is given to us, but these charming letters—written in elegant Latin, enriched with the reflections of an advanced philosopher and witty man of the world, and enlivened by piquant anecdotes of the court of Henry, the last of the Valois, sometime King of Poland, and afterwards King of France, murderer of the Balafré, and victim of Jacques Clément—only inspire a lively feeling of regret that Busbec had not earlier taken up the line of a "special correspondent." He was probably present in Paris during the massacre of St. Bartholomew, on the famous day of the Barricades, when this peculiarly Parisian style of warfare was first introduced, and

remained there to witness the death of Henry of Valois and the succession of Henry of Navarre, but did not survive to witness the entry of the latter prince into the capital which he thought "well worth a mass." The extant epistles of Busbec contain no reference to these great events, but are filled with curious details of the intrigues which preceded the death of the Duke of Anjou, better known by his previous title of the Duke of Alençon, the king's brother. Evidently the collection published at Louvain in 1630, only thirty-eight years after the author's death, is incomplete; for he commences the first epistle with an allusion to the long interval which had elapsed since his last letter. His first interesting bit of news concerns William of Nassau, whose life had been attempted by a valet named Jourigny, who had fired a pistol in his face. "The prince," says Busbec, "will live and reign, but his wife has been carried off by a pain in the side." A prime piece of real Paris gossip next turns up in the account of the execution of one Salcède. With philosophic doubt and intelligent incredulity as to the exact nature of the crime of this man, Busbec relates what came under his own notice: "This Salcède, of whom I have spoken in my preceding letters, has undergone a severe sentence, for what crime I know not, but doubtless for some enormity, judging from the sharpness of his punishment, of which only one instance occurs in Roman history, when it was inflicted on Suffetius by Hostilius. Whether he conspired against the life of Alençon, or of the king, or of both, I know not. He was condemned to be torn in pieces by four horses. At the first effort of the horses he cried out that he had still something to declare, and his deposition having been received by a notary, he begged that his right hand might be loosed for an instant, either that he might write something or sign his deposition. His hand having been refastened, and the horses, pulling each in an opposite direction, failing to quarter him, he cried out to the king—who, with his mother (Catherine de Medicis) and sister (Margaret of Valois and Navarre), looked down upon him from a window—that mercy might be shown to him. Then his throat was cut, his head afterwards severed from his shoulders, and his heart torn out; after which, the horses tore the remainder of his body apart. His head was sent to Antwerp, with a command to expose it in the most

public spot. This was the end of a man of prodigious audacity and roguery. He made false money, and bought a farm with it; but the vendor, having discovered the fraud, complained to the king, who restored his farm to him. Now, Salcède, fearing that he should be thrown into boiling oil—the penalty decreed against coiners—took flight, but previously set fire to the farm by night, so that the master had a narrow escape from being burned in his house. The king, who sometimes visited Salcède in prison, reproached him for attempting to consign to such a death a man whom he had already deceived with false money. Salcède replied to his majesty, ‘He wanted to boil me; I tried to roast him.’”

“What must have been,” adds Busbee, “the mind of a man who, in such evil case, could not abstain from jokes!”

Next comes a pretty sample of the courtly manners of the period. “I hardly know whether it is worth the trouble to refer to what occurred lately at Antwerp. Saint Luc was in Alençon’s room. He, as, unless I mistake, I have mentioned before, having lost the favour of the king, attached himself to Alençon, in whose presence another nobleman, I know not whom, contradicted Saint Luc in an offensive tone. Hereat this one did straightway smack him on the mouth before the very face of Alençon. The Prince of Orange, who was present, was outraged at this conduct, and did not restrain his anger, but told Alençon that such a piece of insolence ought not to go unpunished, and that if such a thing had been done before the Emperor Charles the Fifth, the offender would have been severely punished, let his rank and dignity be what they might; for the chambers of princes are sacred and inviolate places in which no violence may be done. To this replied Saint Luc, almost in these words—‘Ha! you talk about Charles, who, if he were alive, would have your goods and your head as well!’ This said, he burst out of the room, leaving all astounded with wonder at his audacity.”

Farther on we find Catherine de Medicis in a whirlwind of fury at the king’s fits of devotion, which caused him to neglect affairs of state. The fiery Florentine gives Father Edmund, the Jesuit confessor of the king, a piece of her mind, winding up a passionate diatribe with a bitter sneer, “Out of a king you have made a monk.” Next we are entertained with a fine royal family “row.” The king having become

fearfully pious all at once, determines on stopping other people’s cakes and ale, and especially those of his sister Margaret, a queen overmuch given to joyous living. On being commanded to leave Paris and join her husband, the lady feels horribly outraged, declares that she and the Queen of Scotland (Mary) are the two most unfortunate people in the world, and exclaims, “Would that someone would poison me; but, alas, there is no hope of this, for I have neither friends nor enemies.”

Now the friends of Margaret, if not “all shot,” like the enemies of Narvaez, had undergone a gradual process of thinning by the gentle methods then in practice—to wit, the torture of the boot, decapitation, and the free use of rapier and dagger. In fact, the “friendship” of this accomplished and witty princess had become proverbial for bringing death or disaster to those unfortunate enough to share it. Nearly all her blood-relations perished miserably. As was said at the time, the “hand of God was laid heavily on the race of Valois.” Margaret was the youngest of the seven children of Henry the Second. When only seven years old she lost her father, who fell by the lance of Montgomery. Her brother, Francis the Second (husband of Mary Stuart), died young, under suspicious circumstances. Charles the Ninth died wretchedly, haunted, it is said, by the ghosts of St. Bartholomew; but this statement depends on Protestant evidence. Henry the Third fell by the dagger of a frantic monk, and the Duke of Alençon died strangely, probably by poison. Even her husband, Henry the Fourth, who divorced her, failed by these means to shake off the spell, and died by the knife of Ravaillac. Her epithalamium was the rattle of musketry, the clink of sword and halberd, and the shrieks of murdered Huguenots. Arquebusiers and pikemen pursued their prey into her very bed-chamber, and the horrors of St. Bartholomew defiled her honeymoon. Her “friends,” whether loved by the gods or not, had a knack of dying young. La Mole lost his head on the scaffold, and Bussy d’Amboise, the champion bully of the period, always referred to by Margaret herself as “the brave Bussy,” was done to death by the Count de Montsoreau. Just before uttering the passionate exclamation recorded above, she had lost a remarkably useful friend. This gallant gentleman, “of illustrious race,” saith Busbee, was known

as the Baron de Vitaux, and was, if possible, a rougher edition of "the brave Bussy." He was a celebrated duellist, and an eminent assassin, having in the course of his career distinguished himself equally in open duel and in secret ambuscade. He had served the joyous Margaret right well on a memorable occasion.

Soon after the accession of Henry the Third, the Queen of Navarre found that she had lost her best friend in her brother Charles the Ninth, and that the mind of Henry was turned from his sister by the intrigues of Du Gua—a prime favourite of the king, described by the witty Margaret as a "sort of pumpkin of the period." Du Gua and Margaret were at daggers drawn, and in the long run the king's favourite got the worse of the battle. One night a lady "of the highest rank," traversed the dark and dangerous streets of ancient Paris, seeking the convent of the Augustines. Here lay hidden a man—who feared to show himself while the blood of a recent victim was yet wet upon his dagger. The noble lady saw him, and "prevailed by her blandishments on one accustomed to the blood of his enemies, and incited to slaughter by his success, to become the avenger of her injuries and of his own." Next day, being the Eve of All Saints, 1575, as Du Gua lay sick in his lodgings in the Rue St. Honoré—having retired from those he usually occupied, which were guarded by a file of soldiers—there entered to him the Baron de Vitaux, "with three of his lions," says Brantôme, "for thus were called his confidants who assisted him in his murderous resolutions and enterprises." The baron and these worthies drew their swords, and dashed straight at their prey, Du Gua seized a pike, and strove to defend himself, but being crippled for space soon fell a victim to the baron, who struck him with a "certain short sword, without which he never stirred." The lions finished M. du Gua, and de Vitaux walked resolutely out of the house, and got clear off into the country. Margaret in her memoirs alludes to this affair in the most amusing way: "Le Guast was now dead, having been killed by a judgment of God while he was carrying out a course of diet. Thus his body, which was infected with every disease, was given up to the rottenness which had long invaded it, and his soul to the devil, to whom he had done homage by magic and every kind of wickedness." Whether the king regretted his favourite,

as affirmed by Brantôme, or failed to take his loss to heart, the baron was never troubled in the matter—"Alas!" says Brantôme, plaintively, "one great friend of mine killed another friend. They accused the Baron de Vitaux, who was my great friend and brother by marriage, to whom I said often, 'Ah, my brother and best friend, you have killed another great friend of mine; might it have pleased God that you had not done it, I should love you more.' He always denied it, but appearances were against him." This delightful person had thus managed to reconcile himself with the court, and for several years went his way merrily, killing and slaying right and left, out of pure lightness and gaiety of heart. His lively and useful career was brought to a close in the following manner. The son of a man whom he had killed "fearing," said Busbec, "that he should be punished if he assassinated the said baron," called him out in due form. Attended by a servant on either side, and a common friend "to see fair," the combatants met in a field near Paris. The weapons were rapier and dagger, and the combat was only to cease with the death of one of the duellists. De Vitaux ran his adversary through the arm, and brought him to the ground, but disdained—for a wonder—to profit by this advantage, and told his man to get up and try again. He did so, and "excited by the pain of his wound," made so furious an attack on the murderer of his father that he "let daylight" into him, and slew him then and there. Thus perished the Baron de Vitaux, through having, in a rash moment, given way to a flash of magnanimity. It is not recorded that any public and spontaneous expression of regret attended his demise.

With true Roman brevity, Busbec contrives in one sentence to notify his master that the plague is ravaging France, that violent winds are blowing both from east and west, and takes occasion to implore his imperial majesty not to forget his ambassador's Greek books. Discoursing on the health of the Duke of Alençon, he does not hesitate to mention the popular belief that the duke had been poisoned, but adds that "some think his lungs are gone, on account of a great vomiting of blood." At this time the king, who was never very popular at any time, had disgusted everybody by his eccentric fits of piety, and lashed the nobles into fury by abolishing many important offices about

the court. One day the king was within an ace of utterly disgracing himself. At the council was present a certain knight of Malta, the grand prior of Champagne, a man of turbid mind. As the king was speaking of some important matter, the prior interrupted him, thus, "If, O king, you would speak the truth, you would recollect . . ." "What!" said the king, "do I seem to thee to lie? Down on thy knees and beg pardon instantly." This done, the king pardoned him, on condition that he should never again show himself in his presence. However, the prior delayed in going, and holding some further discourse, so enraged the king that he drew his sword, and would have run him through the body, if he had not been restrained by those present. A bishop of Paris was wounded in the hand by seizing the naked sword-blade. "Thus," quoth Busbec, "the king, with all his penitence, was on the brink of committing an unworthy crime." At the entreaty of many persons, the king again pardoned the prior, but on condition that he should depart from the court and never again appear in the king's sight—"which is no small punishment for a man brought up at court, and who would know no happiness elsewhere."

The death of Alençon on the 10th of June, 1584, of "the same disease which killed his brother Charles—to wit, an ulcer on the lungs"—shook the stern soul of Catherine with "no feigned grief!" but the tears of others are attributed to "ostentation and hypocrisy." This was a most important event, as it made Henry of Navarre heir apparent to the French crown, and brought a shower of honours upon him. It was followed by a catastrophe of European significance. Writing on the 25th July, Busbec says, "It is certain that the Prince of Orange (William the Silent) has been killed by a pistol-shot; his murderer has been arrested and put to the torture, which failed to extort from him the anthon at whose instance he had perpetrated so great a crime—he has simply left a manuscript in which he says he was drawn to it by the desire of delivering the provinces of such a tyrant." This terrible event was followed by numerous embassies from the revolted provinces to the French king, and in the midst of the negotiations arrived an ambassador from England. Anxiously expected, he came at last with an "ample and splendid" retinue. "His name is Comes de Herbei (Herbert). The English

account him of royal race. He was met by a procession than which nothing could be more splendid, was assigned lodgings near the king, and two hundred golden crowns daily for his expenses. The ostensible pretext of his embassy is to bring the insignia of the Anglican Order (the Garter), which the queen sends to the French king, but the real motive certainly concerns the Belgian business. The king received the order in the church of the Augustines, the last day of the past month, at the hour of vespers. The knights of the Holy Ghost were present, and also all the ambassadors, even those of Flanders, to the great offence of the Spaniards." With the intrigues set on foot by the princes of the House of Lorraine to recover their lost influence, and which at a later date brought them to a tragical end, the concluding epistles of Busbec are occupied, and the series breaks off suddenly on the 8th October, 1585.

In 1592, he obtained permission from the emperor to leave Paris for six months, to make a journey to Flanders, to look after his property there. In an evil hour he chose the route through Normandy. He was amply furnished with passports both by the king and by the Leagno; but in spite of these precautions was robbed and maltreated by a party of Leaguers at the village of Cailli, near Rouen. On ascertaining his character, these ruffians no longer dared to retain either him or his effects. But the mischief was done. Busbec, at the age of seventy, succumbed to a fever brought on by excitement and terror. Feeling very ill, he caused himself to be carried to the Château of Mailloc, and took to his bed. The governor of Ronen, hearing of the outrage to which he had been subjected, made every kind of excuse, and promised to punish severely those who had insulted him; but Busbec characteristically replied that he cared more about calming his own mind, than for avenging the insult to his quality. He never rallied, but, after lingering for eleven days, died. He was buried in the neighbouring church, but his heart was carried to Flanders and placed in the tomb of his ancestors.

Thus this great diplomatist and elegant scholar, who had lived for many years unharmed among Turkish barbarians, was destined to receive his death-blow from a band of Christian cut-throats, solemnly sworn to protect the interests of the church of Rome.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*,"
&c. &c.

CHAPTER XLIII. "CAN FRANK AFFORD IT?"

MISS FOREST is not afflicted with the keen-sightedness of love, but she has such a keen eye for the main chance, that very few things that immediately concern herself escape her observation. At the same time she is not endowed with a mean-spirited or underhand nature. Charlotte Grange recognises these characteristics of her future sister-in-law clearly and comprehensively, and—being Charlotte Grange—acts accordingly.

No one who sees her at this juncture can imagine that the fair, gentle woman, who goes on making her preparations so placidly for her approaching marriage with Frank, is in reality poised herself upon the brink of a precipice every day, and is, further, in mortal dread of falling over it. If Clement Graham should be premature, if she herself should be unguarded for an instant, if, in fact, the explosion occurs one moment before it would be well for it to occur, she, and not the others, will be blown up and irretrievably ruined.

All these considerations cause Charlotte Grange to walk with even more than her customary caution and discretion in these days. Full well does she realise the truth of the old adage, that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Nevertheless, the song of the bird she has in her hand is so flat and tame in comparison with the warblings in which the one in the bush indulges as to country places and all the appurtenances thereof, and to foreign travel, and all the joys that foreign travel may bring to a pretty, captivating woman who likes to captivate.

Still, in spite of the dazzling vista opening to her view, Miss Grange goes on her way warily, watching her opportunity for putting in a word that may be detrimental to Gertrude particularly, or to the Forest family generally, with the subtle skill that women who listen behind curtains are capable of evincing. We cannot say in the words of the great German poet, that she is "like a star unhaunting, unresting," for there is something pure, clear, and above the sordid interests of the world in a star. But she is as "unhaunting" as phlegmatic-natured creatures of the lower world usually are, and as "unresting" as the dry rot.

Gradually, as the day draws nearer and nearer for these double marriages to be perpetrated (it is difficult to avoid speaking of such unions as if they were crimes) she withdraws herself more and more from the social family gatherings which Frank labours so strenuously to organise. Common sense justifies her in acting thus. Family gatherings, as a rule, are the most depressing of social errors, and the gatherings that are convened for the purpose of inaugurating a new order of things in the way of matrimony, and of introducing new members into the clan, are the most depressing of all. Nevertheless, the Forests felt that it was a daring and suspicious thing when the new member, whom they had been so ready to black-ball, was the one who showed herself almost indifferent to all the joys, and advantages, and terrors of the club.

She is fighting a double fight, to tell the truth, for her heart and taste are at variance with her keen, inborn, and carefully cultivated sense of what is expedient. Clement Graham's meannesses and smallnesses are of a different order to her own, and so are especially revolting to her. He has a habit of relating the prices that have been asked of him for articles that he has eventually, after much haggling, procured at a lower rate. He schemes small economies, and laughs over them, in a self-satisfied way, in a minor key. He quotes his own narrow experiences of the world, and seems to proclaim them as infallible. He makes mistakes in speaking of topics that are public property. He is grossly ignorant of politics, of literature and art, and of everything, in fact, that is outside the service he has left. In a word, he is a petty-minded, ignorant, conceited, mean man. But, for all that, both Gertrude Forest and Charlotte Grange mean to marry him.

He has not shown himself mean, however, as far as the value of the love gifts which he has bestowed upon Gertrude is concerned. Looking upon jewellery as property, and sensibly reflecting that he can at any time after their marriage take them from her and turn them into cash again, he has loaded Miss Forest's fingers with rings, and her arms with bracelets of price. These things represent his wealth, and his power of being munificent; and though he refers to them constantly, and makes Gertrude and all her family feel that he is perfectly conscious of his own extreme liberality, he does not regret

having given them—for will not they be his own again?

In the days of his dislike to Miss Grange, it had been pleasing and soothing to him to see that Frank did not lavish the same sort of pledges of affection upon Charlotte. But now that the dislike has given place to a feeling that he believes to be genuine, heaven-ordained love, it pains him to see the plump white fingers and arms, which are a part of the creature he worships, unadorned.

"He doesn't spend much of his money on you," Mr. Graham observes to Charlotte one day, as they saunter round the precincts of the Old Kensington Palace, "those flat plain gold rings are cheap enough to be given away as parting gifts to faithful servants, and people of that sort. I should never have thought of offering one to you as our engagement ring."

The whole tone of the sentiment is coarse, and Charlotte hates him for it. Nevertheless she sighs to see the flashing diamond and the changeful opal on her own fair fingers and well rounded arms.

"In any case I should think more of the giver than of the gift," she says; "but a poor ring can't bind the heart more than a rich one, can it, Clement?"

"You said the other day that you liked opals above everything," he rejoins, hurriedly, dragging a little case out of his pocket. "I've got the whole set for you, but I have only brought the ring out as a specimen; throw that thin poor little bar of gold away, and put this on instead."

She puts it on, her heart beating triumphantly the while. They are fine opals, and they flash out a variety of colours, as she holds her hand out to him to see the effect. Altogether it is most pleasing earnest of what is to come.

"You must keep that on now," he says, as he looks at his own gift with an appreciative eye. He longs to tell her what the set cost, but he does manage to restrain himself, though with much difficulty.

"If I wear it, questions will be asked," she says. "Frank is so unobservant of such things that my fingers might be covered with rings, and he'd never see them; but his sisters would see it at once, and, with true Forest feeling, would grudge me the possession of anything prettier than has fallen to their share."

"Just such another ring has fallen to Gertrude's share, let me tell yon," he says,

in a tone of annoyance. "I gave her four rings when we were engaged, and I don't know how many since. I'm glad I didn't give her a whole set of opals; they're deuced expensive, you know, and she may stick to the presents when the engagement is broken off."

"She may: the Forests are not to be relied upon in any matter of delicate feeling," Charlotte says, shaking her head and looking as mournful as if the Forests' iniquities had caused her much tribulation.

"I say, Charlotte, whatever made you accept the fellow?" Clement Graham asks grumbly. Infatuated as he is, he cannot blind himself to the fact that to all appearances Charlotte had been very well pleased with her position, and very well satisfied with her lover.

She looks up at him plaintively, and shakes her head. "You forget that I had not seen you then," the arch-hypocrite murmurs. "I have had another standard since I knew you, Clement. Don't be harsh in your judgment of my errors of judgment before that time."

In his vast belief in his own superiority to any and every man who has not as large an income as himself, Clement Graham never doubts for a moment that she is uttering words of singleness and truth.

"Poor girl!" he says, patronisingly; "it's an awful sell for you that you should have been let into the engagement, and it would have been worse still if you hadn't been saved from the marriage. For my own part, I shall be glad now when the explosion is over, and we are free to please ourselves."

"So shall I," she says, with a little shiver that is partly real and partly affected; "but there will be a good many difficulties to surmount before we are 'free,' as you say. The Forests cling tenaciously to their own interests, and love money from the very bottom of their hearts."

It is on the tip of his tongue to say, "Frank didn't show himself to be very sordid when he proposed marrying a penniless girl like you;" but he fears that Charlotte may take the reminder amiss, and he does not desire to offend her at all, for he is getting to rely very much on her subtle flatteries.

"I suppose Gertrude has said a good deal to you about the figure she'll make when she has my money to spend?" he says, and Charlotte answers regretfully,

"Oh, yes, it has been terrible to me to

hear a mere girl speaking of it, as if it were the sole aim and object of marrying at all. I can't feel remorse about having won your heart from her, Clement, for I don't believe she prized yours or gave you hers in return: it was just a question of so many pounds, shillings, and pence with her."

"By Jove, she'll find the difference when, instead of the allowance I should have made her, she'll have to go back to her mother's pettifogging little pocket-money," he says exultantly; "she'll find the difference then."

"I wonder what the allowance was?" Charlotte thinks. "If he tells me, he will be ashamed to make mine less when we are married." Then this disinterested young woman remarks,

"Gertrude has very extravagant views. She has spoken before me of the allowance you proposed, but I confess I did not get the impression of its being——"

She stops in apparent embarrassment, and appears sorry that she has been led on to say so much.

"Didn't give you the impression of its being liberal, you were going to say, only you don't like to," he cries eagerly. "Well, Charlotte, when I tell you that I proposed allowing her four hundred a-year for herself, I don't know what you'll call it!"

"Most munificent!" Charlotte says in an ecstasy, and in saying this she overshoots her mark, for he at once makes up his mind that she has not expected half as much, and that therefore he shall only allow her two hundred a year, and will expect a perennial stream of gratitude to flow from her for it.

Their plans are nearly matured now. They have been altered and modified very considerably since the first blush of the affair. Mr. Clement Graham has been taught by Charlotte to consider her worth the price of a special license, and they have settled that they will be married in one of the City churches, and then go away at once to the sanctuary of their own home. From that sanctuary Clement feels that he will have courage to telegraph the intelligence of their nuptials to the family they are tricking. He is only deferring the happy day, out of the natural repugnance every man has to proclaiming himself a scoundrel.

"They have asked me to dine with them to-night," Charlotte tells him presently, shrugging her shoulders, "and Frank will

be there, talking of what he will do when he's settled again, and has dislodged Mrs. Constable; altogether it will be most trying. I hope you won't be there, to be pained too?"

"I'm asked, and I suppose I must go, or they'll think it odd," he says. The fact is, Miss Grange has hung such chains about him, that he cannot shake them off. Wherever she is he desires to be, especially if Frank is present also. For jealousy has stepped in to Charlotte's aid, and Clement Graham cannot endure either to witness or to picture the privileged caresses, which Charlotte makes him believe Frank is perpetually bestowing upon her.

On their side, the Forests' are not much more elated at the idea of the family gathering which is to take place round their hospitable board this night, than are the pair who are stealing a march on them.

"I shall be very glad when they're all married, and the necessity for these abominably dull and expensive little dinners is over," Mrs. Forest says to Marian.

"Frank, for the first time in his life, is weak," Marian laughs; "he thinks that the more we see of Charlotte, the better we shall like her. Now Gertrude never commits that egregiously foolish mistake about her bargain."

"If Gertrude doesn't rule that man absolutely from the very first, she will lead a miserable life with him," Mrs. Forest says. "There is no lot so hard as that of the wife of a fool who has found out that he can have his own way."

"We had better not interfere, or advise," Marian rejoins. "He'll be bad enough for Gertrude to endure, but Charlotte will be harder for Frank."

"There is a certain amount of sweetness about Charlotte," Mrs. Forest says, deprecatingly.

"I detest such sweetness; she'll talk to one person with that cloying smile of hers upon her face, and all the time her eyes are straying away, in search of the impression she may be making upon other people. I wonder what poor Kate thought of her!"

"I wish I could hear that Kate was happily married," Mrs. Forest says, wistfully. "The thought of her wandering about, now here, now there, without any settled home, embitters my life."

"Oh, Kate's one of those people who always light on their feet," Marian says, hopefully, for she does not wish her mother to come to the family gathering in a depressed frame of mind.

They find Gertrude playing hostess to Charlotte in the drawing-room. Miss Grange is the first to arrive. Her opal ring is on her finger, and she sees that Gertrude's eyes light on it instantaneously.

"The twin to mine," Miss Forest says, holding out her own hand.

"Yes; but I have the whole set, brooch, bracelet, earrings, necklace, and all," Charlotte replies, triumphantly.

A shadow darkens Gertrude's face. She has quite regard enough for her brother to feel sorry that he should be spending his substance on this grasper, and, besides, she feels a little annoyed at Charlotte outshining her in the matter of the opals.

"Can Frank afford it?" she asks rather sharply, and Charlotte says, insolently,

"Take my advice, and don't question him on the point, my dear. He does not bear interrogation on such matters well, even from me."

"I am not in the habit of interrogating my brother about his private business," Gertrude says coldly; and Charlotte feels with satisfaction that her galling warning has saved her from exposure for a time. As Gertrude's will is potent in the family just now, there will be nothing said about the set of opals in public. As for Frank's curiosity in private, "I'll baffle that through his vanity," she thinks, complacently; "and if I can't, and he will have an explanation, why Graham will be compelled to show a little courage for once in his life, that is all."

She hardly realises yet, that relying on Graham's courage in any emergency is about as insecure a proceeding as relying on the false light the will-o'-the-wisp shows.

CHAPTER XLIV. CISSY ONCE AGAIN!

"What 'a laggard in love,' you are, Harry!" Mrs. Durgan says, with impetuous zeal to her cousin, one day, when he comes back to her after a long ride with Kate, and answers, in reply to some eager questioning, that he has not said anything which directly or indirectly can be construed into a declaration to Kate.

"The fact is the bloom is off the rye," he confesses.

"Nonsense! she's as beautiful in person, and as bright in mind, as she can ever have been," she rejoins.

"Yes, she's all that, but somehow or other the keenness of my appreciation for her beauty and her brightness is worn off. My heart remained very faithful to her during all those years when she was in-

accessible; now that she's accessible I am conscious of being in a lowered temperature about her."

"Yet it has not wandered to any other woman?" she half asks, half asserts.

"You're right there; in fact I love her still in reality, but the glow is gone from it, and Kate's a girl to detect that directly, and to suffer from it, and to wear her own soul out first in efforts to rekindle it, and then in punishing me and herself when those efforts fail."

Mrs. Durgan heaves a tired sigh.

"The truth is, Harry," she says, "that you'll never be happy apart, and you'll never be as happy together as you thought you ought to be in the first flush of your love's young dream."

"It's exactly that; what on earth shall I do without her? but, on the other hand, what on earth should I do with her? I love her still, and it still would be the greatest happiness I could know to make her my wife; but I should disappoint her at every turn, and her's is not a nature to bear pain and disappointment."

"Taste the greatest happiness, and don't fear your fate too much," Mrs. Durgan counsels, and he cannot help feeling that if he had only been in love with her, she would have suited him much better than Kate, who will expect so much more of him.

However, inclination, propinquity, a certain craving to know whether or not she is still passionately attached to him, and above all, that admiration for her which he has never cast out, all impel him on, and he pleads to her to give him her heart and hand, as ardently as if he had never thought that such pleading would be unwise.

There is something sadly prophetic in the way she answers him.

"'Love you still,' Harry! yes, more than ever—why shouldn't I tell you the truth—more than ever! But it will end badly, it's resuscitating a corpse."

He laughs away her fears, for he is a man who quickly throws aside an impression, whether it be pleasant or the reverse; and since he has brought himself up to the point of putting it to the touch, he has not feared his fate too much.

"I suppose it won't all be 'blue unclouded weather' with us any more than it is with other people," he says, "but we have a very fair prospect before us, Kate. After all, we have stuck to each other through a good many trials——"

"You will persist in affecting to forget that there have been interludes," she interrupts. "We shall never be exactly as we should have been to one another if we hadn't cared for other people in the meantime."

"You're a better lover than philosopher, Kate," he laughs, but in his heart he thinks, "I wish she wouldn't be so ready with her recollections; I'm quite willing to take things as they are, and to be perfectly happy and contented with them. We ought to leave the longing for the impracticable and the impossible to younger and less experienced people."

It is always a bitter drop in her cup to a woman, when her lover not only remembers that she is older than she was, but words his remembrance of the fact, and Captain Bellairs has an unhappy knack of doing this very often in the most unintentional way.

"On the whole I think it's a lucky thing for us both that circumstances compelled us to wait and sober down, and have done with the follies of youth before we came together," he says to her, one day, while their engagement is still quite a new thing.

"Yes, so do I," Kate says with that remarkable promptitude which is not at all the offspring of an acquiescent, but rather of a wounded, spirit. "For my own part I feel awfully old, much too old to have anything to do with the folly of marrying at all."

"We have neither of us grown younger," he says sententiously, and the observation is not one tended to soothe the lovingly anxious spirit of an over-sensitive woman.

"We are neither of us made exactly of the stuff to 'wear well' as people call it," he goes on; "we neither of us belong to the lymphatic order of beings, and you especially intensify every emotion to such a degree that it must tell on you physically. Now that stolid creature Frank is going to marry will wax smoother and fatter, but she'll never have any lines of passion or of pain for anyone but herself, drawn on her fair face."

"I know, from the way in which you speak, that you dislike that type as much as I do, Harry," she says, and she feels consoled in a measure for his vivid recollection of Time having been a thief, and having robbed her of her freshest youth, by his scarcely veiled repugnance to the ceaseless "well-liking" beauty who has tricked Frank into an engagement.

On his side he is rather pleased with the way in which he has expressed his im-

pression of Miss Grange. It must be understood that Captain Bellairs is not a dogmatic man, nor is he a man addicted to the habit of speaking as if he were speaking to an audience. But he is human, and he likes to feel that when he talks well, he is listened to with attention by someone who is capable of giving a verdict on both the matter and the manner of his speech.

"There's another woman I could mention, who will never burn herself up," he goes on. "Cissy Angerstein will keep that pretty childishly flexible face to the end, and only look like an aged baby when she's eighty."

"I wonder what has become of her?" Kate says meditatively. "Poor Cissy! we were so very much thrown together such a little time ago, and now we're nothing more to each other than if we had never suffered, and sorrowed, and cried, and laughed together; the reflection bothers me sometimes, Harry."

"Rest assured it never bothers Cissy," he says, laughing. "My dear Kate, don't look vexed; it is weakness to be wrath with weakness. Cissy Angerstein hasn't the power of feeling strongly for anybody who isn't conducting to her immediate comfort; we can no more censure her for the flaw than if she had been born blind, or deaf, or dumb. She hasn't the faculty, and you have it, that's all."

"That's all," Kate assents.

"It makes her very easy to deal with," he goes on. "Provided you give her everything that conduces to her own comfort or pleasure, she's happy."

"In fact, if every desire of her heart is gratified, she's satisfied."

"Precisely so."

"But, Harry," Kate goes on, feeling irresistibly impelled to argue the point, "how can you extol or even tolerate such unmitigated, unreasonable selfishness?"

"I don't extol it; I have simply accepted it as the prominent characteristic of the case I undertook to guard some years since, as I have told you."

"Hers is such an exacting nature," Kate says, thinking and speaking more petulantly about Cissy Angerstein than she had ever suffered herself to think and speak before.

"Well, yes it is," Captain Bellairs admits blithely. "Odd you should have said that of her to-day, for I've had a letter from her this morning, in which she prefers a most peculiar request."

"Yes?" Kate interrogates, trying not to let her tone sound too anxious.

"It's one that I don't exactly see how I can refuse to grant," he goes on. "I can't plead want of space, or want of means, or any other insurmountable barrier. The fact is, poor Cissy has come to the end of her resources very nearly, and she wants me to let her come and live in some little house on my estate, as she understands she can live for nothing in Ireland."

He looks questioningly at Kate as he tells her this, and Kate discerns at once that he has no repugnance to the plan.

"And you have told her —?" Kate begins, then she pauses and leaves him to supply the remainder of the sentence.

"I have not written to her yet; I waited to consult you. For my own part I see no objection to the plan; I could let her have that pretty little place belonging to the home farm at Lugnaquilla, and could look after her and see——"

"That she has every comfort and pleasure she may set her heart upon," Kate puts in coldly.

"Exactly," he says, in utter unsuspicion.

"Does she know of our engagement?"

"Her letter is partly an answer to one which I wrote to her announcing the fact."

"Any message to me?"

"No," he says laughingly. "Just like Cissy that, to leave out the very point which she ought not to have omitted. She's thinking too much of her own pecuniary difficulties, I fancy, to have much thought for other people."

Kate rides on in silence. Of what can he be thinking, to have so little regard for her comfort and happiness, as to contemplate planting this Cissy Angerstein close to Lugnaquilla as her (Kate's) nearest neighbour? Her heart swells with wrath that is partly jealous, and partly just, and wholly human.

"Well, dear, what do you think about it?" he asks, presently, in a cheerful tone, that shows he is utterly unobservant of the shadow of gloom that has fallen upon her.

"Consult the dictates of your own judgment and heart, entirely without reference to me," she says, making an effort to be cheerful and magnanimous. "As you say, it has fallen to your lot to be Cissy's guardian, you must be true to your trust in the way you think best."

"I have been that always, thank Heaven!" he says, frankly. "Whatever mistakes poor Cissy may have made, I

have never aided her in the commission of one of them."

She believes him thoroughly, believes most earnestly and implicitly in his honour and integrity. Nevertheless, she does wish that he did not deem that he was fulfilling his duty towards Cissy in the best and kindest way, by having her at the pretty cottage on the Lugnaquilla home-farm.

She mentions the subject casually, and with well-affected indifference, to Mrs. Durgan by-and-by.

"I shall have my old friend, Mrs. Angerstein, as my nearest neighbour at Lugnaquilla. Has Harry told you that she's going to live on the home-farm?"

"Good gracious! No," Mrs. Dargan replies. "Why, I thought the woman was one of those pestilently selfish creatures whom all sensible people would keep at a distance, if possible. What has induced you to bring her upon yourself?"

"I didn't want her," Kate says, wincing. "Can't you understand?—She has asked for a home. She has asked to come to Lugnaquilla; and what can he do, and what can I say?"

"He had far better make her an allowance, and keep her the other side of the Channel. I should say exactly the same if she were his widowed, helpless, and most disagreeable sister; and Cissy Angerstein is not his sister. These family arrangements never answer. If you don't like to speak to Harry I will."

"I shall certainly never say a word about it," Kate says.

"Then I shall," Mrs. Durgan replies. "Don't think that I will speak as your mouthpiece, Kate. I'll tell him what an idiot he is, right out from myself, on my own responsibility."

"I'm sure he's doing it for the best," Kate says; "but I honestly confess I don't like the anticipation."

"And you'll like the reality even less. Now, Kate, if I were in your place," (her cheeks flush as she says this, for she remembers how very recently she has been in Kate's place), "I'd tell Harry out openly that I didn't like it. Don't do it sentimentally; but tell him that it will be a bore to you to have a whimpering widow at your door when you can do just as well for her afar off."

"Things must take their course," Kate says; "if I said that to Harry, he would remind me that we had passed the golden age of romance, and had entered the leaden-hued one of common-sense and expediency:

besides, he seems to think it expedient that Cissy should come."

"Resignation is an admirable quality, but resignation to a perpetual nuisance that you can avert, is nonsense," Mrs. Durgan says. "However, it's useless saying any more to you. But I will speak to Harry!"

Accordingly she speaks to Harry that very day, launching out into the subject with her customary fearlessness.

"Kate has been telling me about Mrs. Angerstein. What wild plans men make and carry out if they are not liable to feminine supervision!"

"You don't like the plan, then? Kate does."

"Oh! does Kate? Well, I won't drag Kate's name into the discussion, but I'll tell you openly I don't. This Cissy Angerstein has been as fetters on your feet ever since you undertook the charge of her, and now you want to plant her down at Lugnaquilla and make her a yoke on your wife's neck!"

"My dear Georgie, be reasonable," he says, in that magnificent tone of mental superiority which the best and most delightful of men are apt to indulge in at times. "Poor Cissy has come to the end of the wretched pittance left her by her husband, and I must do something for her, and see after her. Now it's easier for me to do something for her, and to see after her here at Lugnaquilla, than if she were at a distance. While I was unmarried I couldn't do it."

"And now that you're going to be married you oughtn't to do it."

He laughs good-temperedly. "You women have such absurd notions," he says. "I have another and more cogent reason still to give you in favour of the plan; I'm bound to maintain the poor thing and her children, and the Lugnaquilla coffers are not absolutely over-flowing. As a married man I shall have to keep up a very different establishment, and altogether live more expensively than I do now. If she's at our very gates I shall hardly feel the additional expense of her little ménage, but it would be a different

thing if she were living elsewhere. Killing sheep and pigs as we do constantly at Lugnaquilla, and with that tremendous stock of poultry to fall back upon whenever she feels inclined, Cissy won't know what a butcher's bill is."

"I can say nothing against your argument; if you can't afford to keep her anywhere else, and can afford to keep her luxuriously on the Lugnaquilla home-produce, 'at your gates,' as you say, then it would be cruel on my part to interfere further—cruel at least to Mrs. Angerstein."

"I am glad I have convinced you," he says, affectionately, "I want to see all you women friendly and happy together. The children are dear little things, and poor Cissy, in spite of her foibles, has a very affectionate nature."

"You dear, generous, unwise fellow!" his cousin says, shaking her head at him. But he is too well pleased and satisfied with the way the matter has arranged itself, to ask her in what way she thinks him unwise.

"I shall write to Cissy Angerstein tomorrow, Kate, and tell her she needn't bother herself any more," Captain Bellairs says to Kate that night. "I'll tell her you'll see to any alterations that may be needed, and overlook the furnishing, and then she'll rest satisfied that it will all be done tastefully and well."

"If I were Kate I should just let Mrs. Angerstein come and exert her own lazy lymphatic little mind about it all herself—if she is to come," Mrs. Durgan says.

But Kate only bows her head and answers,

"As you please, Harry."

Now Publishing,
THE OPAL RING:
BEING THE
EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER
FOR
CHRISTMAS, 1874.
PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

All THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 316 NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X. A BARGAIN.

CAPTAIN STEDLEY rose with a heavy heart on the morning after the detective's visit to Loddonford, and the subsequent conversation with Heath. He had undertaken a task, the performance of which would be attended with enormous difficulty, even if it could be carried through at all; and he was compelled to acknowledge to himself that recent events had had a considerable effect on him, and that his nerve was nothing like so steady as it had been. A kind of pity and a gentler feeling than he had known for many years had lately sprung up within him, when his thoughts turned towards his daughter, whose life, never from the first an easy or a happy one, was now overshadowed by the dreadful secret of which she had become the unwilling possessor, and which, so far as her father could see, must leave its blight upon her for ever.

Meantime, the captain could not avoid paying a tribute of admiration to the cleverness with which Heath had found the only clue by which they could be extricated from the difficulty, and his recognition of this cleverness was not the less sincere when he perceived, as he did on reflection, that the means to be used were far more beneficial to his accomplice than to himself. As Heath with cynical frankness had pointed out, it was his life which would be endangered by Anne's evidence, which would prove that the captain was an unwilling and unconscious accessory, whose connection with the crime would

probably be sufficiently punished by a light sentence of imprisonment or penal servitude. Nor would the captain be relieved from any pecuniary burden by his daughter's marriage, not even from the necessity of supporting her. Heath had been perfectly clear in letting it be understood that his marriage was merely a matter of business necessity for him, and that Anne would be free to follow her own fancies, so soon as the performance of the ceremony had rendered it impossible for her to give evidence against him. The captain knew his friend too well to imagine that he would for a moment consent to be burdened with a wife, unless she brought him fortune or position; and he saw plainly that for the future he and his daughter must live together, as it would be absolutely necessary that a constant watch should be kept upon her movements, and an immediate veto placed upon any undesirable acquaintance which she might be inclined to form.

"It won't be so bad for me," the captain argued to himself; "we shall leave this infernal hole, with all its horrible associations, and make straight for the continent, where we can make sure of bright skies and cheap living, and where one finds agreeable manners and pleasant faces, instead of that insular superciliousness with which any person having under three thousand a year is greeted here. It will be very agreeable to have some one to talk to in the morning, and to walk with when I take my constitutional, and women have a knack of managing matters so that they can give an air of comfort even to the dreariest foreign lodging; but it will be dull work for Anne, desperate dull work. She must be called Mrs. Heath, and I must give out

that she is a widow, I suppose; but how she will manage to get through her life, I have, I declare, not the remotest idea. However, that is her look-out; and not mine. I have got quite enough to do to attend to myself; and the first and most unpleasant task of all is to break this business to her."

On entering his daughter's room, the captain found the patient quieter and more composed than she had been since the first day of her illness. Her skin was cooler and more moist, and her eyes had lost the wildness which had lately characterised their expression; altogether, her father considered her to be in a tolerably tranquil frame of mind, and able to bear his intelligence.

When he had sent away the nurse to get a little much-needed rest, he seated himself by the bedside, and after a few preliminary words as to her state of health, said, "I am glad you feel yourself better, as there is a subject upon which I must talk to you, and which admits of no delay. Mr. Heath was here yesterday."

"Oh, father," cried Anne, "spare me any mention of that fearful man! Though my senses have been wandering, he has been ever present in my mind, always acting as my evil influence, and now, directly I wake, his is the first name I hear."

"I would not enter on the subject, Anne, if it were not absolutely necessary," said her father, "but there is no help for it. Mr. Heath was here yesterday, and with him a detective officer."

"Father!" cried Anne, springing up in her bed.

"Compose yourself, my dear," said the captain; "there is no immediate cause for alarm, though, unless our precautions are prompt and sufficient, the worst consequences may ensue."

"What brought them here—what discoveries have they made?" asked Anne, aghast.

"They have not discovered much at present," said the captain; "but they have hit upon a clue which might be dangerous. It seems that—that—that unfortunate young man was in love with you, and wrote you a letter declaring his passion, and asking to have the answer from your own lips on the day when—when he came down here."

Anne's pale cheeks were instantly suffused with a burning flush.

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"He would have told no one, I know; and his letter has never been out of my possession."

"The draft of that letter was found by the police in the drawer of a writing-table at Danby's lodgings, and from it they have obtained an idea that he was coming to see you on that fatal day. So they are anxious to ask you whether he came, why he did come, and all the rest of it."

"Father," said Anne, raising herself on her elbow, and speaking earnestly, "if I am questioned, I shall speak the truth. I am not ashamed to say now that I had for Walter Danby a feeling such as I had never had for anyone before, and, when I think that it was owing to his having come to see me, to plead his cause with me, and to ask me to be his wife, that he met his fearful fate, my blood boils within me, and my infinite desire for vengeance is not to be appeased! Yes, if I am questioned, I shall speak the truth."

"What!" cried the captain, in a loud key, his emotion getting the better of his prudence. "Don't you recollect the conversation we had three or four days ago, when you promised me you would forego these ideas of vengeance?"

"I promised you I would not denounce that man, nor would I; but, if suspicion is thrown upon him by other means—if the hand of Providence moves, as it will, I know, in this affair, and I am asked what I know about it—I shall speak the truth."

"And, by your evidence, condemn me at the same time," said the captain, doggedly.

"No, father, no!" cried Anne. "I will appeal to the judges; I will tell them all I saw. The very fact that I am giving my evidence truthfully, and for the sake of justice, will have weight with them; and I will tell them that you were innocent of this horrible crime; ignorant that it was about to be committed; impotent to prevent it. They will listen to me, father; and, while judgment falls upon the guilty, you will be spared."

"You think so now, and you mean well, Anne, I know," said the captain; "but the programme that you have prescribed for yourself is not very likely to be carried out. Even if you said what you propose to say, and they listened to you—which they would not do—it would have no effect. But the real fact is, that in cross-examination by a clever lawyer, you would be frightened and bullied; the meaning of your words would be distorted, and my

fate would be sealed. You would have your vengeance then; but it is for you to consider whether it might not be somewhat dearly bought at the price of your father's degradation!"

"I suppose you are right," said Anne, sadly. "They used to call me strong-minded at school; but I have lost what little nerve I had. I should soon be broken down. It would be better that I should not give my evidence at all."

"But, my good girl, you do not seem to understand that they will make you give your evidence," said the captain, sharply. "The police are aware of the existence of this letter, and desire to question you concerning it. It was only by pleading your illness, and getting Dr. Blatherwick to back me up, that I succeeded in obtaining delay."

"Could we not get away from here?" said Anne, eagerly. "Go abroad somewhere, where we could not be found?"

"If we did that," said the captain, "I might just as well print a confession in the newspaper, and deliver myself up at the nearest police-station. The fact of our running away would immediately draw the attention of the authorities upon us, and, with these confounded extradition treaties, there is scarcely a place in Europe to which it would be safe to make one's way. No; there is only one chance of securing my safety, and that is in your hands."

"Will you name it, father?" said Anne, lying back in her bed and closing her eyes.

"It is one which—I do not attempt to disguise it from you—will involve a sacrifice on your part, equivalent, almost, to that of your life. It will only be by thinking over the incalculable advantage to me—the difference, indeed, between my ending my days in prison or passing them with you—that you will be able to force yourself to consent to it; but, so far as I am concerned, what I have mentioned is the issue at stake, neither more nor less."

"Will you tell me what I am to do?"

"Well, you see," said the captain, with many signs of trepidation, "the great point to be managed is to prevent your evidence being given at all; for so sure as your voice was heard in a court of justice Heath would be hanged, and I am so intricably mixed up with him that an almost equally unpleasant fate would await me. The proposition which you made just now of running away, is, as I

have shown to you, impossible to be carried out; but there is a position in which your lips would be sealed for ever, legally sealed, mind, so that the law must abide by its own work and dare not ask you to compromise yourself or others."

"What is that position?" asked Anne, with a sigh, her eyes still closed.

"That of wife to the accused person, when no——"

"Oh, my God!" One short, sharp, cry of agony; then a long moan of despair, her arms spread wildly out before her, and her face buried in her pillow.

"I told you of the magnitude of the sacrifice which was required," said the captain, speaking hurriedly, "but it is the only way. A wife cannot be called upon to give evidence against her husband, and if you were once Heath's wife all possibility of our conviction would be removed."

She raised her head from the pillow and turned round upon him. There were no traces of tears on her face, the expression of which was stern and defiant.

"This is the result of your plotting and caballing," she said, with scornful emphasis; "this is the scheme which your accomplice—bolder, prompter, and more resourceful than you—has proposed as a solution of the dangerous difficulty in which he finds himself. You might well say that the sacrifice which you proposed to me was great, so great that I wonder that you should have dared to suggest it—should have dared, I say! Was it not enough to dispel all illusions, as you did a few days since, by telling me what your manner of life had been, but that you should make yourself the mouthpiece of this man, and ask me deliberately to blight the remainder of my life, and destroy any hope of future happiness on earth? Do you know what you are asking me to do? To marry a murderer, whose hand is yet stained with the blood of the one man who ever addressed loving words to me, the only man who ever seemed to appreciate and pity my forlorn position; and I am to do this, I, still comparatively a young girl, to condemn myself to hopeless misery—for what? to save this man whom I would willingly see trembling on the gallows. Not I, indeed, the law must take its course without any interference of mine."

"The law must take its course on me too, I suppose," said Studley, sullenly, "for all you would care." He had been sitting in mute astonishment at his

daughter's outbreak, and now, when he spoke, scarcely raised his head.

"And why not?" she cried, in the same tone, and the same excited manner. "Is it because you are my father that I am to sacrifice myself for you? What fatherly sacrifice have you ever made for me? What care or affection have I ever received at your hands? I should be grateful, I suppose, that you gave me education, and kept me apart from you; or rather I should be grateful to circumstances which prevented my sooner being required as an accomplice in your villainy—that is what you wish to make me now—what you bid me become. Do you think I have been so little mindful or unobservant, not to have noticed the difference between myself and the children of other parents? When I was left for months to the care of those old ladies, to whom whatever little I have of good in me is due, without seeing you or hearing from you, and without one single tie to remind me of a father or a home, I made no complaint. I should utter none now under ordinary circumstances. But when you ask me to make this fearful sacrifice, I deny that you have the smallest right to do so, I utterly repudiate your claim, and I refuse—do you hear me, I refuse!" As she uttered the last words she once more flung out her hand as it were in defiance of her father, then sank back fainting and exhausted.

The expression on Captain Studley's face, which had been growing darker and darker as his daughter proceeded, was now very black indeed. His brow was knit, and his lips, opened on one side, showed his teeth, like a snarling dog just about to bite. When Anne made an end of speaking he glared at her from under his bent brow, and shook his fist threateningly but stealthily; then, after a pause of a few moments, his mood seemed to change, he shrugged his shoulders, nodded his head, and commenced speaking in a half whining, expostulatory tone.

"I have no answer to make, Anne," he said, "to all that you have said against me, except to acknowledge that it is in the main correct, though I confess I never thought I should be taunted with it by you. You never would have known the style of life I had been leading had not circumstances compelled me to make the disclosure; and, though I do not profess much, I may inform you that it was as painful to me to have to tell the story of my degradation, as it could have been to

you to have to listen to it. My own idea was, at the time, that it was a kindness to you to keep you at your school, and to prevent the necessity of your sharing my shiftless vagabond career; but even had it not been so, I could not have acted otherwise, the exigencies of my life compelled me to be constantly on the move, to start at a moment's notice, and to undergo long spells of travel and fatigue, under which you would have broken down. I do not pretend to have been a model parent, but I thought I showed consideration in that."

He paused for an instant, as though expecting her to speak, but she remained silent and motionless.

"And now with regard to this proposition which I have just laid before you, that you should become Heath's wife," he continued, speaking slowly, and with greater emphasis. "Do you think that when it was first put to me I did not hear it with horror only a little less than yours? Do you think that I would have laid it before you, if I had not been hunted down and cornered; if I had not seen it was the last and only chance by which there was a possibility of saving myself? I do not want to save Heath, I would sooner he swung, as he richly deserves. I hate that man, Anne, hate him from the bottom of my soul. Your loathing of him can scarcely be greater than mine; for, while yours is the natural aversion to a blood-stained criminal, mine, in addition to all that, is founded on a series of insults and indignities which I have undergone at his hands. I have been his tool and slave for years, and he has tyrannised over me as only such a brutal nature could. If you do what I ask you, you will ensure his safety, it is true, but at the same time you will ensure mine; and not merely that, but you will give me the opportunity which I have so long looked for, of giving up the desperate existence I have led, and beginning life anew."

Those words told on her, as he had expected, at once. She turned her eyes upon him and looked up in his face.

"This is the chance I have been waiting for," he repeated; "will you give it me?"

"Can I give it you?" she murmured in a low tone.

"You can, and you alone, by doing this," he said. "Listen, Anne," he continued, bending over her. "The condition now proposed to you sounds terribly hard, but the suffering which it entails may be

modified, as I will explain to you by-and-by. A compliance with it prevents the possibility of your being placed in a position which you have probably not yet contemplated, that of being the instrument of your father's life-long punishment. You told me, truly enough, that I have no fatherly claims upon your gratitude or your love; but you are my daughter, after all, and I do not think, degraded and crime-stained as I am, I would change feelings with you, when you reflected that I, an old man then, was toiling in the winter's storm on the bleak moor, under the summer's blaze in the blinding quarry, with no hope of respite or release—and that I had been sent there through you."

He looked eagerly at her as he said these words; but her eyes were closed again, and there was a hard and pitiless expression on her face. The struggle that was going on in her mind found no mirror there—the struggle between the strong repulsion to her father, which was growing in her every hour, and her natural horror of being the means of his ruin and condemnation. But the indented forehead, and the fixed and rigid lines round the mouth, gave their own warning; and Edward Studley saw from them that he had not yet carried his point. His shrewdness told him that all hope of winning her to his purpose by appealing to her filial affection was gone, and that it was only her sense of duty, and her consequent hope of effecting his moral rescue, which would prompt her to accede to the proposition. He changed his tactics accordingly.

"Do not think I make much of the punishment which would necessarily fall upon me; I have deserved it, and should bear it as best I could. But there is another way by which a term of probation and repentance might be afforded me, less severe, but, I hope, not less effective. By yielding to the terrible condition imposed upon us, you are not only securing yourself from ever being obliged to injure me, but you will give me such a hold over Heath as will enable me at once, and for ever, to break the villainous contract existing between us, and to set him at defiance. Yes, Anne; I should be free. No threats of that man would have any further terror for me; no allurements to crime would have any attraction. I should be enabled to devote the remainder of my life to you, and to you alone. To you, and you alone, should

I owe the redemption from the degradation in which I have so long been living."

When he ceased speaking, Anne opened her eyes.

"Leave me, please, now," she said, "and come to me again in half-an-hour."

When Captain Studley returned, at the end of the appointed time, he found his daughter in a half-recumbent position, propped up by pillows, and, to all outward appearance, quite calm and collected. Whatever wild storms of passion had been raging within her; to whatever accesses of despair she had delivered herself during his absence; or under what influence she had finally arrived at the determination which she afterwards announced to him, he never knew. Certain it was, that with the exception of the excessive pallor which had marked her since the commencement of her illness, they had left no traces on her face.

"I want you to give me one or two assurances," she said. "I have been considering what you have asked me, and I have decided to do what you require, on one or two conditions."

"My dearest child," said Studley, placing one knee on the bed, and opening his arms as though about to embrace her.

"Pray spare me, father," she said, lifting up her hand. "You will not require me to state why I have come to this conclusion; and whatever may be our relations hereafter, you must perfectly understand my feelings now. I want you to pledge me your solemn word that, if I accept this condition, I shall not look upon this man's face until I stand beside him at the altar."

"Of course not, my dear," said the captain, emphatically. "I can guarantee that—there is not the smallest reason why you should; and further understand me, Anne, all that is necessary in this marriage is that it should be performed by the parson, and duly registered—the merest matter of form. I shall not quit your sight from the time you leave the church. It shall be given out that you are going abroad on a bridal tour, and it really will be necessary, for the sake of appearances, that you should cross the channel; but I shall be with you the whole time, and I will take care that you and I part company with him the instant we land at Boulogne."

"You will swear that?" said Anne.

"I will, most solemnly," said the captain.

"That is all I require," said Anne, throwing herself back in the bed, and motioning him to leave the room; "now you can make what arrangements you wish."

When the captain stood outside on the landing, with the bed-room door closed behind him, he paused for an instant and stroked his chin thoughtfully. "I could not say less," he muttered to himself; "she would not have done it without. Not that I am at all sure that I shall be able to perform my promise, if Heath sees any difficulty about it—but it will be time enough to see to that when the occasion arises. One thing is quite clear, that if I hadn't promised, it would have been impossible to get her to consent."

When Dr. Blatherwick came down-stairs from visiting Miss Studley the next day, he was confronted in the little hall by the captain, who shook hands with him, and said, jocosely, "Now, my dear doctor, I am not going to ask news of you today. I am going to tell you of my own conviction, that you found her better—much better!"

"I will not deny it, captain," said the doctor, "Miss Studley is decidedly improved. But how were you aware of the change? because it all arose from a prescription of my own."

"This improvement is none of your work, man; it is mine," said Captain Studley, poking his companion in the ribs.

"I really do not understand you, Captain Studley," said the doctor, stiffly.

"Then I will explain myself at once," said the captain, in his jauntily familiar manner. "I will let you into a secret, my dear doctor. The original source of this illness, the fons et origo, was a lovers' quarrel—tiff, disagreement, misunderstanding, taken to heart, and all that sort of thing; you know the way of young people. When I saw matters growing serious I took the case in hand myself, had the gentleman down here—you saw him the other day, good-looking man, Mr. Heath, manager at Middleham's Bank—talked to him like a parent, arranged affairs between them, and as soon as you, my dear doctor, will certify that your patient is sufficiently recovered, why 'the village bells shall ring, shall ring.'"

"Do you know," said the doctor, smiling, laying his head on one side, and trying to look very wise, "I had my suspicions of something of the kind from the first.

More a case of nerves, I said to myself, than any actual illness, and I was right. I congratulate you, my dear captain. The bride and bridegroom will, of course, get away for the honeymoon, and change of air and of scene will entirely restore your daughter's health."

A FEW MORE ODD WOMEN.

WAS there ever a Pope Joan; and was Joan a man or a woman? These questions have been discussed with a good deal of animation for centuries past. According to the legend or popular story, a young woman, a native of England in the time of Alfred the Great, was educated at Cologne, Rome, and Athens; assumed the garb and manner of a man; and became known among the learned as Joannes Anglicus, or John of England. At Rome she took holy orders, attained one ecclesiastical dignity after another, and at length became Pope, which exalted position she held for two or three years. Scandalous events in her private life led to a disclosure, and Pope Joan disappeared from the scene. Volumes and essays in no inconsiderable numbers have discussed the rights and wrongs of this story. No documents relating to it can be traced further back than the thirteenth century; and the subject was not much considered till the sixteenth. Men of erudition generally discredit the story. The point of disproof most relied upon is this: that in examining the pontificates of Leo the Fourth, Nicholas the First, and Benedict the Third, no gap can be found that would make room for the popess, at the period when the daring lady is alleged to have occupied the chair of St. Peter. Altogether, it would be prudent to disbelieve in Pope Joan; so we will not admit her among our odd women.

Women there have been, and probably still are, odd in so far as they renounce their own sex, and follow avocations fitted only for men.* Women soldiers have been found in most European armies, marching and fighting, and leading barrack life, for periods varying from a few days to several years, before their secret was discovered. One such really did excellent work in the closing years of Napoleon's military career, fighting on the side of the Allies at Leipsic

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 7, p. 448, "British Amazons."

as bravely as any of her comrades in the regiment. Women-sailors have been fully as numerous as women-soldiers; in one instance the secret was well kept for a dozen years, during which time the damsel became a thoroughly competent sailor on board an English ship of war. In most episodes of this kind, disappointed affection, or a wife's anxiety for an absent husband, has led to this singular donning of male attire. Of the real Amazons, women who have fought well without any pretence of concealment of sex, every reader can call to mind instances in authentic history. Margaret of Anjou, Joan of Arc, and the Maid of Saragossa are household names to all of us.

Not only soldiering and sailoring, but other manlike occupations, have been taken up by odd women now and then. In the time of Charles the First there were no fewer than five women barbers in Drury-lane; and very queer women they were. It is known that even the offices of judge, magistrate, sheriff, churchwarden, and overseer have occasionally been open to the gentler sex. Some women will not admit this term, gentle sex, at any price; preferring to show that they can match the rougher sex on their own terms. One example of these was Phœbe Bown, whom the late William Hutton met while journeying in the Midland Counties early in the present century. She was a well-built woman of about thirty, with a manly step, and a walking power equal to forty miles a day; her usual dress was, as to the hat, coat, and spencer, masculine; but, as to the rest, feminine. She could lift one hundredweight with each hand, and carry fourteen score; she never gave affront, but would offer to fight any one who affronted her; her voice was so masculine and deep-toned that she could make it heard a mile off; she was an excellent markswoman, and so well skilled in the equestrian line that she could always get employment at horse-breaking.

We hardly know whether to include Bloomerism among the attempts to disguise femininity; but it certainly made a great noise twenty-three years ago. Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, sometimes called Mrs. Colonel Bloomer, editress of an American temperance journal, appeared at a ball given at Lowell, Massachusetts, in a short skirt, with trousers tied in at the ankles. The lady afterwards wrote at much length on the subject, pointing out the advantages and proprieties of such a dress, especially

in muddy and ill-swept streets. In the autumn of the same year, another American lady lectured on the subject in London, attired in black satin jacket, skirt, and trousers; and urged upon English women the adoption of the new costume. But the attempt quite failed; and Mrs. Bloomer's name is quietly placed in the long list of unsuccessful reformers.

Some odd women have been so atrocious, that the sooner we get rid of them the better. Such was the Marquise de Brinvilliers, whose chief delight in life seems to have been to poison other people. The wife of the Marquis de Brinvilliers, from whom she soon separated, she led a life even more scandalous than that of most other noble dames at the time, and thereby got herself and others into trouble. Chance made her acquainted with an Italian, who revealed to her many drugs and processes calculated for secret poisoning. Handsome, and moderately wealthy, she nevertheless conceived the fiendish idea of employing her newly-acquired knowledge as a means of destroying all who might be inimical to her. She practised on some of the patients in the Hôtel Dieu, with poisoned biscuits; and then proceeded to make away with the members of her own family, in order that she might inherit the family property. She killed her father with poisoned broth, then her two brothers, and would have similarly treated her sister, had not the latter entertained suspicions which induced her to flee. The public deemed the deaths strangely mysterious; but the truth did not dawn on them till one day an accomplice and paramour of hers, named St. Croix, was suffocated while mixing poison, and died. Another accomplice imprudently made a claim on the property of the deceased man; his manner of doing so brought the law down upon him, and he was tortured until he confessed all he knew concerning the poisonings. The abandoned woman escaped into the Netherlands, but was captured and taken back to Paris. After offering immense bribes to effect her escape, and then trying to destroy herself by swallowing a pin, she was formally tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be beheaded and then burned.

A far humbler criminal in our own country was Elizabeth Brownrigg, who was long execrated as Mother Brownrigg; more humble, but with a considerable touch of the diabolical. Early in the reign of George the Third, a house-painter, named Brownrigg, lived in Flower de Luce

(Fleur-de-lis) Court, Fleet Street. To aid in supporting a large family of sixteen children, his wife practised as a midwife, and also took in female parish apprentices, chiefly for the sake of the five pounds received with each. Three of these poor girls—Mary Mitchell, from St. Dunstan's; Mary Jones, from the Foundling Hospital; and Mary Clifford, from the precinct of Whitefriars—were treated with almost incredible barbarity by their mistress, who was aided in the fell work by her husband and one son. The details we gladly pass over; suffice it to say that stripes and starvation put an end to the lives of two of the charity apprentices; and that Mrs. Brownrigg forfeited her own life thereby.

We are not quite certain whether trustworthy historians accept the narrative in its entirety, but there is a story of a Scottish lady (Mrs. Margaret Lamburn, we believe), who once told the truth to Queen Elizabeth in a very fearless way. Misery brought into the lady's family, by the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, impelled her to threaten vengeance on Queen Elizabeth. She came to London, put on male costume, concealed two pistols about her, and got near the queen. The accidental dropping of one of the pistols led to her detection. When brought before the queen she boldly confessed her scheme, and said, when asked for her motives, "I will tell you plainly, provided you will please to let me know whether you put this question in the quality of a queen, or in that of a judge?" "In that of a queen." "Then your majesty ought to grant me a pardon." "But what security can you give me that you will not make another attempt upon my life?" "Madam, a favour conferred under such restrictions is no more a favour; and in so doing your majesty would act against me as a judge." The tale goes that the queen pardoned the lady, and, turning to her attendants, said, "I have been thirty years a queen, but do not remember ever to have had such a lecture read to me before."

Another determined lady was Catharine, widow of one of the Counts of Schwartzberg, in the days when Germany was cut up into almost numberless petty principalities. The Duke of Alva, the cruel representative of a cruel king of Spain, had been fighting in the Netherlands. When the Spanish troops were about to return to their own country, the countess permitted them to pass through her territory, and to obtain food at reasonable

prices, provided they abstained from violence and plunder. The Duke of Alva, with Prince Henry of Brunswick and his son, sent word that they would breakfast with the countess on a given morning. She received them, and reminded them of the safeguard she had received from the emperor Charles the Fifth. While at breakfast, a domestic called her out of the room to receive a messenger, who told her that the Spanish soldiers were harassing the villagers and driving off their cattle. She gave quiet orders to her retainers to arm themselves, keep within the castle, and bar every exit. Returning to the breakfast chamber, she complained indignantly to the duke of his breach of faith. He said, laughingly, that such liberties must be allowed to soldiers. She boldly contradicted this, and, giving a signal, soon had the chamber well filled with armed retainers, who placed themselves behind the chairs of the self-invited guests. So she kept them, until the duke and the prince had signed the necessary orders to the soldiers, to behave peacefully and honestly during their passage through that part of Thuringia. As Charles the Fifth was the most powerful man in Europe at that time, the duke and the prince deemed it prudent to carry the matter no further.

We have had to mention two or three queens; and now we may attend to another, who was certainly an odd woman in her way. This was Margaret Finch, Queen of the Gipsies. The old dame lived from the days of Charles the First to those of George the Second, and died at a very advanced age. In the neighbourhood of Norwood she was a well-known character, eking out a living by telling fortunes. A constant habit of sitting on the ground, with her chin resting on her knees, had brought her sinews gradually into so contracted a state, that she became at length unable to rise from that position. Many portraits of her were drawn and engraved, in that posture, with a pipe in her mouth. When her funeral was about to take place, nothing like a coffin of regular shape would have admitted her poor, old, distorted body; so a deep, square box was made instead. A hearse conveyed the body to Beckenham churchyard, and was followed by two mourning-coaches and a great concourse of people. Queen Margaret is said to have been succeeded on the gipsy throne by her niece, Queen Bridget, whose niece, another Margaret, was the next holder of the honour.

Scotland has produced quite a remarkable number of damsels and dames, whose claim to oddity has rested upon resoluteness of character and quickness of intelligence. Sir Walter Scott has immortalised many of them, in the more purely Scottish of his novels; and everyone's reading will supply additions to the number. Redoubtable Jenny Geddes, who threw the stool at the dean's head, is not likely to be forgotten. In the time of James the First, bishops were first introduced into the Scotch church; and Charles the First, prompted by Archbishop Laud, endeavoured to introduce a service book, based on the English prayer book. On a certain day, the new book, by royal command, was to be used and read in every parish church in Scotland. The dissatisfaction and mutterings were so general that many ministers hesitated to comply; but the royal mandate was obeyed at the principal church in Edinburgh, the chancel of the old Cathedral of St. Giles. Judges, magistrates, a bishop, a dean, and other persons of consequence were present. The body of the church was filled by a large congregation of middle-class and working-class folk, strong in the feminine elements of citizens' wives and maid-servants, who, in accordance with the custom of the time, each brought her chair or folding stool to sit upon. When Dean Hannay opened the new service book, and began to read the prayers, a great ferment arose; clamour and loud voices, abusive epithets, in which the "de'il" was abundantly brought into requisition, disturbed the whole building. Jenny Geddes, one among many excited women, adopted the summary plan of throwing her folding stool at the dean's head; which missile was followed by a whole shower of small bibles from other members of the congregation. Dean, bishop, and magistrates endeavoured to restore order; failing in this, the malcontents were expelled by force. This is not the place to trace what followed; suffice it to say that forty years' agitation on Ecclesiastical matters is considered to have virtually begun by Jenny Geddes throwing her stool at the dean's head.

Are Lapland women in England necessarily odd women? Perhaps not; but it was odd how they got here. In the second half of the last century, a baronet of some fortune in the North laid a considerable wager that he would go to Lapland, and bring home two women of that country, with two reindeer, within a given time.

He won his wager, and the short, stumpy natives of the northern land resided in England about a year; then, wishing to go back to their own country, they were furnished with the necessary means and facilities.

Somewhat wanting in loveable characteristics must have been the widow who so complacently sold the dead body of her husband. The couple had lived at Rushel, in Norfolk, in the time of George the Second, and quarrelled so much that the poor man, to put an end to his troubles, put an end to his existence altogether by hanging himself. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of *Felo-de-se*; and the virago, to prevent the burial of the body at the cross-roads, not only sold it to a surgeon for half-a-guinea, but actually helped to cart it to its destination.

NOTE.—We find, through the kindness of a correspondent, that we did less than justice to that most interesting little lady, Miss Biffin.* It would have been clever to do with her toes the many things which she really accomplished; but it was still more clever to achieve those results without toes at all. Nature had denied her such appendages. Her mouth was her best friend, in aid of the very short arm-stumps. Our correspondent possesses a sketch made by Miss Biffin in 1811, comprising a group of feathers and her autograph; it was presented in recognition of kindness shown to her. To draw well, paint well, write well: many of us with ten toes, and ten fingers and thumbs to boot, fail to do so much as this.

UNDER COMPULSION.

JOHN BULL, whether he be of lordly race, stamping, snuffing, and snorting in rich pastures, or linked to a heavy burden which he—somewhat hopelessly—assays to draw up the hill of life, is an awkward animal to deal with. He loves to say that he may be led but not driven. This protestation is not entirely true, but has about as much truth in it as most national vaunts. It is not very difficult to lead him when he has once been persuaded to move, but it is no slight undertaking to communicate the necessary momentum. To drive him is truly a ticklish business. Plantagenet and Tudor knew how to apply the goad, and

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 13, p. 113, "Odd Women."

drove John at a pretty pace, but the Stuarts proved very poor herdsmen, and came to grief accordingly. Since their day very few attempts have been made to drive the patient animal. Recently, however, a reaction has taken place in favour of paternal government, and the policy of letting things alone has been departed from. It has been discovered that honest John has many faults. He is, it is considered, over much given to selfishness, and indulges in beer when his family wants bread; it is supposed that he cares little for the education of the little Bulls, but much for the money they may be made to earn; and in cases of doubt and difficulty—when his soul is vexed—he is said to be too apt to ill-use Mrs. Bull, even to the extent of baiting that long-suffering matron with dogs. It seems indeed that—according to these new lights—our old friend is in rather bad case, and that his industry, energy, and perseverance are nearly outweighed by his selfishness and brutality.

Very much in this spirit has John (and even in some cases the widow Bull), been taken in hand by inexorable School Boards, who have hardly given these slow and passive creatures time enough to understand the change introduced into parental responsibilities by compulsory education. While plans of analogous character were applied in other countries, the juvenile Bull was almost entirely uncared for by the State. The family doctrine was accepted in its entirety, the parent was considered the best possible guardian of his children, and the person most likely to look out keenly for their future; but experience and careful investigation revealed the unpleasant truth that a very large number of Britons are utterly unfit to manage a family, and that it was high time that the State stepped in to rescue children from the negligence of parents. It was decided that the care of the rising generation belonged to the State, and that young Bull should be educated—or at least taught the elements of education—whether he and Bull “*père*” liked it or not.

Few will be found to challenge the justice of this decision, and he would be a hardy man who should propose a return to the old “*laissez aller*” principle; but although compulsion be a necessity, as in this it undoubtedly is, it must be obvious that there are many ways of compelling people to do their duty. Leading old

Bull to send his children to school proved a miserable failure, and there is now no alternative but to drive him—the question being only as to the best method of getting him along. He is apt to be restive, and unfortunately his pastors and masters have given him only too much cause to resist viciously. For some unaccountable reason, functions which might well have been delegated to the police, have been assigned to what are called School Board Visitors. These persons, for a salary of eighty pounds per annum, employ their time in hunting up recalcitrant parents, and give intolerable offence in making inquiries, which, if preferred by a policeman, would be answered as a matter of course. It is no doubt an excellent thing that some kind of employment has been found for a number of persons, of a turn of mind unlikely to endear them to mankind in any other capacity, but it must occur to any thinking person, that an “active and intelligent” police officer would get through as much of the peculiar work required in two or three days as a School Board Visitor can manage in a month. Moreover, the policeman would have the immense advantage of being acquainted with the classes with whom he would have chiefly to deal, and would be restrained by special knowledge from overstepping the bounds of prudence.

The Visitor is placed in an awkward position. Receiving eighty pounds per annum, he must at least make a show of doing something for it, and, however disagreeable he may make himself and his office in the eyes of the poorer and more ignorant classes, he feels bound, as it were, to justify his existence by raking up a few cases and bringing them before a magistrate. Occasionally, in a stupid attempt to prove “that in England there is not one law for the rich and another for the poor,” the School Board Visitor gets out of his depth altogether, and intrudes into houses whence it is a wonder that he is not violently ejected. It is, however, only now and then that, in desperation for want of something to do, he ventures into the houses of the wealthy, but he knows well how to become a nuisance in the mysterious region occupied by the “shabby genteel.” He haunts these unfortunates like a spectre, infests them with impertinent inquiries, and lies in wait to question children at the street corners. The feelings aroused by this course of action may be easily imagined. In this country, people do not object to taxes, or if they do object to them, they

pay them without making many wry faces; but any legislation of an inquisitorial character accumulates gradually a mass of indignation, which will most assuredly, sooner or later, sweep it away. Shabby genteel people are particularly tenacious of their "gentility," and rage at the visits of persons who can hardly be regarded as regular functionaries of the law. Serving an elective body which, by its theological squabbles, has done much to reduce its dignity in the eyes of the people, the School Board Visitor is looked upon in much the same light as the deputy assistant of an "annoyance jury," and excites emotions wherein hatred and contempt are about equally mingled.

It is not, however, the "lower middle classes" who have the greatest cause of complaint. They are annoyed, and feel themselves insulted, but they are not exposed to the operation of the stringent clauses of the Education Act. It is on workmen and those unfortunate widows of workmen who are left with the responsibility of supporting a large family, that the power of School Boards falls with the greatest weight. Hard-working women who, poor souls, have enough to do to keep themselves and their little ones alive, are remorselessly called before the judgment seat, and, in many cases, the magistrate has no option but to convict. It is much to be regretted that more discretionary power has not been allowed to the stipendiary magistrates of large towns, who, as a rule, exercise their difficult and laborious functions with rare ability, and from a constant experience of the wants and failings of the poor, are excellently calculated to temper justice with mercy, and firmness with common sense. In some extreme cases, such as that in which a widow with four children was summoned for keeping her little girl at home to mind the baby while she herself was out charing, it seems a pity that the persecuted woman should have no remedy against her tormentors. Magisterial censure conveyed in a declaration that not only is a summons dismissed, but ought never to have been taken out, produces no terror in the soul of School Boards. It is roundly stated that in every division of London are ladies and gentlemen who are united in what is called a "benevolent work. They investigate at great pains every case, they see every parent, and they direct every step; and the question is carried before a magistrate, subject to the Committee of the

Board, at their instigation." If this be the case, with what measure of common sense are endowed the busy ladies and gentlemen who drag poor charwomen into court, for detailing one child to take care of another, or who intervene to prevent a large number of children from picking up a few shillings, during the pantomime season? Does it not appear to these wiseacres that poor children are as well employed in acting in pantomimes as richer children in looking at them—and even better, if their childish efforts help to make the pot boil at the most inclement season of the year?

It is no doubt true that a system of compulsory education cannot be introduced without a certain amount of "friction," but it is not therefore necessary to produce the maximum. Perhaps no measure ever carried through the legislature has produced, first and last, so much friction as the Education Act. The protracted wrangling between rival sects, which seriously interfered with the passage of the bill itself, has now been transferred to the School Boards themselves, the London body especially having earned an unenviable notoriety in this respect. To an ordinary observer it would seem that the London Board is mainly occupied in theological quarrels. Perhaps this is the reason why so much of the real work, which is supposed to be performed by the Board and its various committees, is deputed to the benevolent busybodies, who are doing their best to make education a thing of terror to the poor. There is clearly too much of this. There are too many committees, and too much meddling altogether. Perhaps this fault arises from the inherent clumsiness of the national character. The mania of wealthy John Bull—and be it said, alas! of Mrs. Bull also—for boards, committees, sub-committees, executive committees, and divisional committees, is beginning to shake the faith of those who long trusted in local government. Nothing can be done without endless talk and voluminous reports, and incessant references, which have at last the effect of completely getting rid of individual responsibility. The English Minister of Public Instruction is supposed to be the Lord President of the Council, but he is assisted by a Committee of Council on Education, and the bulk of the work appears to devolve on the Vice-President of the Council. It would be un-English to call the Duke of Richmond

the Minister of Public Instruction, John Bull preferring rather a government of committees. For certain purposes committees are well enough, but it is abundantly clear that Elective School Boards, reinforced by local and divisional committees, compose but a cumbrous and inefficient engine for educating the people. Let us lay to our souls such flatteringunction as we may, we cannot deny that compulsory education is a paternal, despotic, and imperial piece of legislation, and should therefore be carried out on imperial principles. Attempts to mingle local government with a great central scheme produce irregular and spasmodic action. Sometimes the wheels run too fast, sometimes too slowly, while an important object—the gradual familiarisation of the British mind with a despotic measure—is entirely neglected. This is the necessary consequence of entrusting great powers to enthusiastic ladies and gentlemen, whose energy is at times liable to outran their discretion.

Compulsory education can hardly be successfully imposed upon England, unless it be by gentle yet constant pressure, administered, not by elective boards and local committees, but by a competent staff appointed by the Crown and supplemented by the police. There appears no sound reason why these education officials should not, each one of them, do the work of a couple of School Boards, to the great saving of money and patience. This may be Cæsarism. Very possibly, but it is far preferable to handing over the poor to too-zealous local committees, and thus making a clumsy endeavour to carry out an imperial scheme with ordinary local machinery.

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT.

It was disappointing, certainly, to say the least of it. I had missed the train by half a minute, as a porter—apparently *the* porter of the station—kindly explained to me, although I was already informed of the fact, thanks to my own unaided powers of observation. I had arrived in time only to hear the loud ringing of the bell, the parting scream of the engine, and the grinding and groaning of the train as it passed out of the station—slowly at first and painfully, with much asthmatic panting, then more and more rapidly, as though it had drawn a long breath, and

made up its mind for a very quick run indeed—there being no other course open to it. A frantic whirling in the air of coloured lights, a final scream in the distance, and then it was completely gone—the red lamp behind it, which had been glaring upon me after a malign and blood-shot fashion, quickly fading and dimming into a mere spark, and at last dying out and disappearing altogether.

It was the more vexatious, that the dog-cart in which I had been borne to the station had vanished. The driver had failed to appreciate my position. He was drowsy, I had noticed, and, no doubt, anxious to get home again and to bed. I had been staying, I should mention, at Roe Hall, the country seat, in Yorkshire, of my old friend Richard Roe, and I was journeying back towards London. It was late at night, very dark, and rather cold. There would be no other train for some hours. I was left stranded at a lonely country station, with very undecided views as to how I should dispose of myself, and of the measure of time that had, like an inconvenient liability, suddenly devolved upon me.

I handed over my luggage to the charge of the porter, and then, acting upon his advice, I quitted the station—he spoke of it disparagingly as a place where nothing to drink could be obtained—in search of a Railway Hotel, which he described as being in the immediate neighbourhood. I found it with little difficulty: a new building—in appearance something between an ordinary public-house, and what auctioneers call “a villa residence.” It smelt strongly of size, and paint, and varnish; a potent flavour of damp mortar pervaded it very completely. However, it afforded me refuge and shelter: advantages by no means to be underrated, in view of the special circumstances of the case.

I entered the coffee-room—a lofty chamber with map-like damp-stains upon its plain unpainted walls, very barely furnished, and feebly lighted by a single jet of gas issuing from an ugly rectangular arrangement of piping suspended near the ceiling. I rang the bell, and ordered some hot brandy-and-water. I did not really need refreshment of any kind, still less of that particular kind, for I had but lately quitted Roe’s hospitable table; but “the good of the house” had to be considered. Moreover, a feeling of depression was fast coming over me.

The room being very elongated with

tobacco smoke, I did not at first perceive that a man, a stranger, was sitting in an obscure corner, reading, or affecting to read, a newspaper widely extended before him, the while he smoked furiously. I took out my cigar case. It seemed to be one of those occasions when it behoves a man to smoke as a matter of self-defence.

I raised my hand to obtain a light from the gas jet above me. I failed to reach it. I was not tall enough.

"Allow me," said the man behind the newspaper.

Thereupon a long arm was stretched forth. In a moment he handed me a flaming spill. My surprise was so great that I was unable just at first to avail myself of his polite attention. He had but half risen from his seat with a sort of uncoiling action. It was clear to me that he was of most prodigious stature.

"A giant!" I exclaimed, rather abruptly than politely.

"Just so," he said gloomily. "Yes. I'm afraid so. The fact can hardly be disguised. I must admit that I am a giant." And he hid himself again behind his newspaper. And now I felt assured that he was not really reading it, for I could see that he held it upside down.

No doubt his head was rather small in proportion to his stature. Giant's heads are usually small, I think. And it was not an impressive head. It was indeed a rather weak, sheepish-looking head, with a vacant facial expression, sloping forehead, retreating mouth and chin, and blank watery blue eyes. He was not a giant to inspire terror. He was more likely to enlist sympathy and pity. He wore the depressed cowed air of meekness maltreated, and humility outraged. He seemed to me, if I may say so, a giant who had been "put upon." He was quite a young man, with small fluffy whiskers, and a colourless downy beard. He had blushed violently in speaking to me.

I felt curious concerning him. It was so strange, meeting so monstrous a creature, at that hour of the night, in that lonely Yorkshire Railway Inn. There was something altogether very quaint, as I fancied, attending upon the circumstances of our encounter.

"A dark night," I observed presently, by way of saying something.

"I'm glad it's dark," he said. His voice was of agreeable tone, though it might lack force and firmness somewhat. "Dark-

ness suits me best. If ever you should chance to become an object of exhibition," he added, after a pause, "you'll understand the advantage of darkness. Does it rain, might I ask?"

I told him that although it did not actually rain then, I thought it threatened to be rainy before long.

"I hope it won't rain," he said, "for I've a long way to go, and in my case, you know, an umbrella isn't of much use. I mean as regards one's legs."

I understood him. The legs of such a man must always be remote from the shelter of his umbrella.

He sighed heavily. He put the newspaper from him, and, leaning his elbows upon the table, rested his head upon his hands. He had ceased to smoke. An empty tumbler stood before him. He sighed again, and then he yawned. He looked very weary and woo-begone. It even seemed to me that there were tears in his eyes.

"I must be going soon, I suppose," he said after a while.

I entreated him to remain, if but for a little longer. I explained to him the accident that detained me, until the next train for London should stop at the adjoining station. I plainly stated that he much interested me. I begged permission to have his glass refilled. He smiled, blushed a bright rose colour, and consented.

"I am happy to meet you," he said, timidly, but pleasantly. "Indeed, I don't mind saying it's a comfort to meet any one who does not want to pinch me, to see if I'm real. I'm sure you're not one that would wish to stick pins in my calves, to make sure that I'm not walking on stilts hidden inside my trousers. But that's a way the British public has, sir, sometimes to a most inconvenient extent. I may say that I've suffered very much from the inquisitive and the incredulous nature of the British public."

"And do you feel bound to endure such treatment? Are you never tempted to use your giant's strength tyrannously like a giant?"

"Shakespeare! I understand the allusion. But you see, sir, I'm an object of exhibition. In that capacity I have to undergo publicity, and all it brings with it. Punches here, and pokes there, and, as I've stated, pins run into my calves. And then there's the question of remuneration. I must not make myself too cheap. I can't afford to exhibit gratis. Yet it's trying work, I do

assure you, living cooped up in a van. It's trying even to dwarfs, and fat ladies, and albinos, and boa-constrictors, but to a party of my size, it's, I may say, crushing. Whatever you may be, sir, or in whatever position of life you may find yourself, never wish to be a giant. Take my word for it, it's a trying state of things, and giants are subjected to more inconveniences than people in general have any idea of. Air and exercise I must have, and so I walk at night, from village to village, or from fair to fair, race-course to race-course, as the case may be, hoping that I may be observed as little as possible. For, you know, when folks have once seen you outside of your caravan for nothing, they can't be persuaded to pay money to see you inside of it. That's human nature, I suppose. But, as I said before, it's a trying life, sir. Don't wish to be a giant, sir, whatever you may be wishing yourself to be."

I may note that I had never, at any period of my life, wished to be a giant, and that I was fully convinced of the futility of wishes of that kind. Further I may state that I am of but limited height—I think, five feet two inches only, according to my latest measurement—and that, if not absolutely satisfied with my dimensions, I am at any rate resigned to them. But, necessarily, I had never, even in my wildest dreams, contemplated exhibition of myself in the character of a giant.

The giant was a pleasant-spoken young man; but he was much oppressed with a sense of his superior proportions, by no means inclined to vaunt himself on that score. Indeed, it was obvious that his size was a matter of keen distress to him.

I had not been prepared for a giant of this meek kind. To tell the truth, I had not considered giants much as a subject of study. Such information as I possessed concerning them—if it can be called information—was derived, I think, from early perusal of nursery literature. I must have said as much to my new friend, for presently, I remember, he was discoursing with some energy on the injustice that, time out of mind, had been done to persons of his size. I had by chance, and half-jocosely, mentioned the well-known work, called Jack the Giant Killer. My new friend denounced it seriously as a most pernicious volume. He affirmed that it had done a great deal of mischief. He then asked me if I believed it to be a faithful record of actual events?

I was scarcely prepared with an answer. I said, after some delay, that it seemed to me that many of the circumstances mentioned in the book were of an incredible kind; that, supposing some truth to be contained in the story, it was yet much intermixed with fiction, and that exaggeration and extravagance were certainly apparent throughout it.

"It has been the misfortune of us giants that we have always been written about by dwarfs," he said. "It has suited them to deal with us with a view to their own greater glorification. They have misrepresented us, I must say, most shamefully. Unfortunately, we have usually been inclined to silence. We have rarely been authors; we are seldom great talkers. I never yet knew or heard of a giant who had ever printed or published anything. Suppose some of us had said our say or written our opinion on the subject of dwarfs, don't you think *they* would have looked very small? A set of upstarts! They think of nothing but their own aggrandisement; while their disregard of truth is really scandalous. This Jack the Giant Killer must have been a dwarf. Only a dwarf could have been so boastful, so self-satisfied, and, I must say it, so false and treacherous."

The giant was now speaking in a very excited manner. It seemed as though much pent-up thought, regarding the injuries borne by his kind, was at length finding expression.

"Why should he have troubled himself about the giants?" he resumed. "Did they ever do him any harm? He calls them cannibals! I warrant they never wanted to eat such a little whipper-snapper as he was! And, mark his treachery and cunning, and his base ingratitude! How did he get the better, for instance, of Cormoran, said to be eighteen feet high and three yards round—a gross exaggeration of course. There never was a giant of that size or anything like it; search all the caravans in Europe, and you wouldn't find such a one. How did he get the better of Cormoran, I was asking? Why, he dug a pit and Cormoran fell into it, and then Jack took what I should call a mean advantage of him: hit him—when he was down—a blow on the head with a pickaxe, and killed him. Then there was that Welsh giant, how was he treated? A kind, hospitable, trustful soul, who brought out, for the breakfast of himself and his shameless guest, two great bowls

of hasty pudding—clearly the Welsh giant at any rate was no cannibal. Then another giant, one with three heads if I remember rightly—a piece of wild extravagance of course, for who ever saw a giant or anybody else with three heads?—but this other giant Jack overcomes by basely pretending to be his cousin, forsooth. Cheating the poor creature out of his coat of darkness, Jack, being invisible himself, cuts off the legs of his benefactor! Was there ever conduct more infamous, or cowardly, or inhuman? Was there ever a more wretched little monster than this Jack? And yet the story of the miserable imp's exploits, as they are called—franks and crimes I should rather say—is put into the hands of children: is a work highly esteemed, as I am informed, in most respectable nurseries. Can parents wonder that their offspring should oftentimes grow up deceitful and presumptuous, cruel and ungrateful? What we want, sir, is the story of Jack re-written by a giant. Take my word, sir, that would be a book of genuine worth. I don't say that it would be brilliant. We giants do not pretend to be brilliant. The firefly glistens—not the elephant. We are plain, simple, straightforward, truthful folk; there's nothing low or mean about us. We are strongly opposed to smallness of every kind. But we've been peaceful, patient, long-suffering; too much so and too long I fear. We've let things take their course and said nothing, when we ought to have said something—a good deal, indeed; and so we've somehow come to be a persecuted race—despised and underrated. The dwarfs have had it all their own way, and now they crow over us and treat us contemptuously. The fact is, we've not thought enough of ourselves, and have allowed people to overlook us. It's all wrong, sir, take my word for it—though I don't pretend to be the man who can put it right."

His face was flushed as he concluded, and his forehead was moist. He paused for breath as it seemed, and then he was moved to surprise at his own animation, at the length of his speech. He looked at me apologetically.

"I did not intend to speak so warmly," he said. "But your air of sympathy tempted me to express myself more fully and freely than is usual with me. And I own I lose patience when I think of the errors that have so long prevailed on the subject of giants—the injustice we have

suffered at all hands. Perhaps," he added with a smile, as, with his forefinger—it was about the size of one of those candles of which four make a pound—he tapped lightly his tumbler, which was now empty. "Perhaps this extra glass of grog has made me too loquacious. I beg you will pardon me if such has been the case, or if my violence of speech has given you any offence."

His glass was again empty. I insisted upon its being refilled. He made many objections to that course being adopted; but when the brandy-and-water had been duly placed before him he did not hesitate to consume it.

Then he gave me certain particulars of his own career. He was of humble origin, he frankly admitted, and had even in early life worn the quaint dress of a charity-boy. His father was by trade a shoemaker, and his mother had gained a livelihood by charring. They were persons of average stature only, and it was not until he had attained the age of fourteen that his own height had become at all remarkable. Then he had with much suddenness grown taller and taller. He even pretended to say that his increase in height had been distinctly perceptible to close observers of him. At any rate many had ventured to aver that they could absolutely see him grow. He had been put to one or two trades, but without avail. Fault had been found with his size. People all declared that he was too young to be so tall. He was like a large piece of furniture in a small house. Room could not be found for him. It was necessary to take down doors to let him in or out. At last his father, who was impatient by nature and often inflamed by drink, said angrily, "Hang the boy! He can do nothing but grow tall," and without further speech turned the youth into the street. He then lived as he could, which, at times, was very badly indeed. He was often, as he said, very empty—and always very tall. He suffered more from emptiness, he needed more filling than most people, owing to his exceptional size. At last a situation as potboy was offered him in a public-house "out Whitechapel way." It was held that "a giant pots"—as he was styled in the neighbourhood—would attract visitors to the bar of the establishment, and that great consumption of liquor would result therefrom. The experiment disappointed expectation, however. Too many, it seemed, avoided

disbursement and yet gratified their curiosity by peeping in at the chink of the doorway, and viewing the "giant pots" for nothing. In the end the giant had accepted a permanent and more profitable employment, and attached himself to a caravan travelling the country from fair to fair, and market town to market town. London he rarely visited—although now and then he had been much tempted by handsome offers to appear upon the stage in pantomimes at Christmas. Upon the whole he preferred the country.

"It's dull, but then perhaps it suits me the better on that account—for, you see, I'm dull too."

I deprecated such a statement. I tendered him hearty thanks for his most intelligent and interesting conversation.

"It's very kind of you to say so, sir, but the British public has quite made up their minds that we giants are a dull lot—and that settles the matter—for it's never any good whatever arguing against the British public. If one can't agree with it, one must shut up, and that comes to much the same sort of thing. I'm dull to begin with, and now, I'm duller than I'd any right to be owing to—owing to very peculiar circumstances."

Here, much to my surprise, he burst into a sudden flood of tears.

I had noticed previously that his articulation had thickened. Something, no doubt the brandy-and-water, had had to do with this, inducing, perhaps, in addition, a certain disposition to sentimental emotion and expression. Still the giant could not be said to be intoxicated. He was excited, as much, I think, by the unusual amount of narrative he had delivered himself of, and by the sound of his own voice, as by any other cause.

"Weep not," I said to him, scarcely knowing what I said.

"Please let me," he answered feebly. "It does me so much good. I'm very unhappy. I'm one of the most miserable of men. I'm in love."

"Well, and why not? Surely a man of your magnificent proportions need not despair of success. Surely any woman—"

"It is plain that you do not know Miss Tiddler," he interrupted.

I confessed that, to my sincere regret, I did not enjoy that privilege.

"And, of course, you don't know Jecker's Van?"

I said I thought not.

"If ever you come across Jecker's Van,

ask to see Miss Tiddler. In point of fact you'll see her without asking, if you pay your admission at the door. And you'll see me. But that's nothing. I'm nobody. Besides, you have seen me. But Miss Tiddler will surprise you. You'll find her a real treat. You see in her, sir, a perfect woman. They call her the Peruvian Pearl, or the Princess of Lilliput. But that's only Jecker's way. She's English, and speaks no language but her own; but she speaks that very freely, especially when she's roused. It's nonsense about Peruvia; as a matter of fact she was born in Pimlico; and she's never grown an inch since she was four-and-a-half years old. Amazing isn't it? And delightful I call it."

"A dwarf!"

"Well, what people call a dwarf. Perfection in a small compass, that's my view of her. There's nothing of the dwarf really about her, when you've once overlooked her small size. And then how charming she is! But you must see her to appreciate her. For my part I love her to distraction. I can't call it by any other name."

It was plain that he loved, as a giant might be expected to love, in a large way. As he spoke he trembled, swayed to and fro, indeed, and turned up his eyes in a languishing fashion that had something almost of craziness about it. This giant in love was rather a grotesque sort of creature, it must be confessed.

"And Miss Tiddler is obdurate?" I enquired.

"Miss Tiddler is adamant. Miss Tiddler will not listen to me, or listens to me only to mock me. In plain words, she chaffs me."

"What is her objection to you as a suitor?"

"Well, her objections are of a very general kind. But chiefly she finds fault with my size. The fun she makes of me on that account! It's wonderful to hear her. I laugh in spite of myself. I laugh at myself, in fact. She's so clever and says such sharp things. Still it's hard, you know. I've a difficulty in believing that it's really so ridiculous to be so tall as she makes it out to be. But she thinks it's very ridiculous, indeed. Perhaps it appears so to her, you know, she being so little. And then she calls me stupid."

"But that may not be such a bad sign. I've heard of many lovers who liked to be called 'stupid' by their mistresses. Very likely it's mere playfulness on her part,

that conceals some measure of true affection for you."

"I'd think so if I could, but I can't. No, she thinks me tall and stupid, and I feel that she's right. I am tall and stupid, and that's the fact. I'd alter it if I could, but I can't. I'm sure I'd be very glad to change places with a brighter and a shorter man. But I can't grow brighter, try hard as I may; and I can't grow shorter, though I've tried that too."

"You've tried to grow shorter?"

"Yes, over and over again. I'm forever trying to grow shorter. I carry heavy weights on my head: lift that box for instance." As he spoke he drew from beneath his chair a substantial looking black box with iron handles. I tried to raise it, but I failed completely. It seemed to be of enormous weight. "I've walked miles and miles with that box on my head. It contains pig-iron. I thought that it might compress me. But it hasn't as yet, so far as I can see. I've tried all manner of ways indeed of packing myself into a smaller space, but all in vain. Miss Tiddler only laughs at me. 'Come to me when you're shorter, Doddy' (she always calls me Doddy—it's not my real name, which is something very different, but somehow it seems to please her to call me that—and I don't object; how can I?) 'Come to me when you're shorter, Doddy,' she says to me, 'and then, perhaps, we'll see about it.' She only says perhaps, you observe. No, she never means it to be; it never will be." He sighed heavily and noisily. "The plain truth is, that I'm too long, and she's too short."

"Yes, I suppose that's the long and the short of it," I said abruptly.

For a moment he seemed hurt at what he might reasonably have thought to be levity on my part. Still his look was meek and diffident.

"I must go," he said, rising. "I've many miles to walk to-night, with my box on my head. Thank you for listening to me, for your sympathy, and—good-bye."

"But you won't really resign all hope of winning Miss Tiddler?"

He looked at me despondently, shook his head, but said nothing.

"Don't despair. Miss Tiddler may yet be yours. Remember, after all, extremes meet."

"She's not short enough for that, even if I'm tall enough. Although I'm a giant, I can't think of her as a dwarf. She's

really a very pretty size. And I love her! How I love her!"

So saying he grasped my hand tightly and painfully. My fingers seemed quite crunched in his. They crackled like dry twigs as he compressed them. I had never shaken hands with a giant before; I never will again.

My last glimpse of him revealed a surprisingly tall, gaunt figure striding across the open country. The rising moon elongated his shadow with an effect that was suggestive of caricature. He carried his box on his head. He proceeded rapidly, yet not, I think, very regularly. Once it seemed to me that he was staggering, like one intoxicated; and once, I thought, he called out to me. But it occurred to me, afterwards, that the sound I had heard was, in truth, rather a hiccup than an articulate cry.

I never saw him again. I can add no further particulars touching his career. I can supply no proper termination to his love story. Jecker's Van I did chance to meet at a later period; but that exhibition did not then number among its attractions either Miss Tiddler, the dwarf, or her lover, the giant.

For my part, on taking leave of him, I had but to think of returning to the railway station, there to await the arrival of the train that was to take me back to London. I had first, however, to pay a rather heavy bill for brandy-and-water consumed at the Railway Hotel.

A BATCH OF OLD BILLS.

In the year 1769, the sheriff of Flintshire, unable to persuade any native of the principality to aid in the disposal of a Welsh housebreaker, as justice commanded, was put to extraordinary trouble and expense ere he could execute the sentence of the law. Not caring to lose his money for the public benefit, he petitioned the Treasury for repayment, setting forth the following items:—Travelling and other expenses fifteen pounds ten shillings; a man in Salop engaged to do the business, gave him five guineas; two men for conducting him, and for their search of him on his deserting them on the road, and charges on inquiring for another executioner, four pound ten shillings. After much trouble and expense, John Babington, a convict in the same prison with Edwards, was, by means of his wife, pre-

vailed upon to execute his fellow-prisoner; gave the wife six pounds six shillings, and Babington six pounds six shillings. Paid for erecting a gallows, materials and labour, a business very difficult to be done in this part of the country, four pounds eighteen shillings. For the hire of a cart to convey the body, a coffin, and for the burial, two pounds ten shillings; and for other assistance, trouble, and petty expenses on the occasion, at least five pounds—the sheriff's little bill comes to just a shilling short of fifty pounds; how much he recovered from the Treasury is not recorded.

Half a century ago, the authorities of Newcastle-on-Tyne expended twenty-five pounds on the hanging of an unfortunate woman, namely—To seven serjeants, thirty-five shillings; to twenty constables, seventy shillings; to sixteen free porters, four pounds; to tolling St. Andrew's great bell, two shillings and sixpence; to executioner, three pounds; to halter and cord, three shillings; to a cart and driver, fifteen shillings; to mourning coach, fifteen shillings and sixpence; to nine horses for officers, forty-five shillings: to swearing the constables, five shillings; to joiner's bill, eight pounds five shillings and three-pence; to joiner's allowance, six shillings. In 1636, a couple of victims to superstition, William Coke and Dick Alison, were burned at Kirkaldy, for practising witchcraft, the Kirk-sessions and the town bearing the cost between them. The official accounts, being in Scots money, look rather formidable, but setting the amounts down in English money, we find the total to be something under three pounds. Of this the Kirk-session paid—to Mr. Miller when he sent to Prestowee for a man to try them, three shillings and eleven-pence; to the man of Culross, the executioner, when he went away the first time, one shilling; in purchasing the commission, fifteen shillings and threepence; for coals for the witches, two shillings; for one to go to Finmouth for the laird to sit upon the assize as judge, sixpence; for "hardens to be jumps for them," five shillings and tenpence; for making them, eightpence. The town paid five shillings and sevenpence for coals, one shilling and two-pence for a tar-barrel, sixpence for tows, four shillings and tenpence to the man who fetched the executioner, and fifteen shillings and tenpence to that functionary for his pains. In 1539, the good folks of Canterbury hanged and parboiled a friar, spending but fourteen shillings and eight-

pence upon the double operation, the account running thus:—For half a ton of timber to make a pair of gallows for to hang Friar Stone, two shillings and sixpence; to a carpenter for making the gallows and the dray, one shilling and fourpence; to a labourer that digged the holes, threepence; expenses setting up the same, one shilling; for a load of wood, and for a horse to draw him to the Dungeon, two shillings and threepence; paid two men that sat at the kettle and parboiled him, one shilling; to three men that carried his quarters to the gates and set them up, one shilling; for halters, Sandwich cord, and screws, one shilling; for a woman that scoured the kettle, twopence; to him that did execution, three shillings and eightpence. Turning over the pages of an almanac for 1666, once the property of a resident of Cambridge, we come upon the following memorandum, which we take to be a copy of an account sent to the nearest relation of a defunct collegian, at whose obsequies there had been no stint of cakes and ale:—"For little Hall, funerall. It. four bottles of sack. It. in ale, one shilling and sixpence; cakes, one shilling and sixpence; Naples basket, six shillings and fivepence; for ringin, one shilling; gravemaking, two shillings and sixpence; churchwardens, three shillings and fourpence; clark, ninepence; affidavit, sixpence; a coffin, two shillings and sixpence; beriall suit, two shillings; to the poore, two shillings; flagin ale ringin, twopence; pd. Mary her wages (you gave her for twelve weeks one shilling), sixshillings; too letters sent you one shilling; for ye bayliff, five shillings; Scotsman for ritein, two shillings." The last item indicates letter-writing to have been beyond our almanac owner, an undertaker probably, since, with the foregoing exception, he has made a note of nothing save the number of deaths occurring in the town.

When Edward the Third invaded Scotland, in 1336, Thetford furnished his ever-fighting majesty with two light horsemen; the bill the townsfolk had to pay for this contribution to the royal forces amounting to three pounds five shillings and elevenpence halfpenny. Of this sum two pounds went to the troopers; their uniform cost six and elevenpence, their boots two shillings and eightpence, and their gloves and staves twopence. Their horses cost thirty-five shillings and a halfpenny, not reckoning fourpence for shoeing them, and a shilling for four days pro-

vender; the sum total being made up by threepence to a lad for going to Lynn, a distance of fifty-three miles, to look after the horses, and another threepence to a boy for carrying a letter to the same place. Money's worth was great in those days, as is shown by William Sunnyng's account for repairing a house in Cornhill, twenty-three years later:—Paid to a tiler for two days' wages for tiling the rooms of the said tenement, one shilling and twopence; for his man, the same time, tenpence; for their drink, twopence. Also for five-hundred tiles, four shillings; for a cart-load of sand, fourpence; for six sacks of lime, one shilling; for two small wedges, one shilling; for four cart-loads of stone for the pavement, ten shillings; for twenty-four cart-loads of gravel, eight shillings; for pavior's work, six shillings; for timber and ponehons to mend the walls, three shillings; for one thousand five hundred laths, two shillings and threepence half-penny; for one thousand five hundred trenails, one shilling and sixpence; for one thousand five hundred spriggs, one shilling and threepence; for nails, fourpence. The wages paid the tiler were the current wages for carpenters, masons, plasterers, and other workmen employed in building, all working twelve hours a day, except upon Saturday, when they struck work at four instead of seven o'clock, so that the artisan of that period worked sixty-nine hours a week for a wage of three shillings and twopence. Now, a London carpenter receives ninepence an hour, showing that, as regards labour, the purchase power of money was nearly fifteen times as great five hundred years ago as it is at the present time. Should labour go up, or money go down, at the same rate for the next five hundred years, the workman of 2374 will be earning something like five guineas a day; whether he will be any better off only time can decide.

In 1361 Robert de Brynkeleye, citizen and mercer, undertook to take charge of the son of a deceased brother mercer, and employ the three hundred pounds the lad's father left him to the best advantage in his own trade. Thirteen years afterwards he rendered an account of his stewardship to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, showing he had paid two shillings a week for the boy's board at the school of Oxford; expended six pounds six shillings and eightpence for ten years' schooling; twenty shillings a year for the same period for "riding in Oxford and elsewhere, and

moneys laid out upon a teacher for the said Thomas;" and a like sum for sundry other needs, besides two pounds per annum in finding him in clothes and shoes. The honest guardian claimed thirty pounds a year for his own trouble, making altogether, five hundred and nine pounds eighteen shillings and eightpence to be deducted from Master Thomas's little fortune; upon which, according to the custom of the City, he had to pay twenty per cent. interest. The son of Hugh-at-Bow had little reason to complain of the result of the arrangement. He had been fed, lodged, clothed, and educated for thirteen years, and at man's estate was master of five hundred and seventy-one pounds, instead of the three hundred bequeathed him by his sire.

In the reign of Henry the Eighth; the corporation of Faversham were able to entertain the King and the Emperor Charles the Fifth at the cost of twenty-three shillings and threepence. We doubt not the fare was worthy of the occasion, for, when a party of court officials dined together at the Star and Garter at Shene—better known to us as Richmond—in the year 1509, their bill, presented with many salutations, came to exactly one pound sterling:—For brede, one shilling; ale, three shillings and fourpence; wyne, tenpence; two legges moton, eightpence; maribones, sixpence; powdered beef, fivepence; two capons, two shillings; two geese, one shilling and twopence; five conyes, one shilling and threepence; one legge moton, five lb. weight, fourpence; six plovers, one shilling and sixpence; six pigeons, fivepence; two dozen larks, one shilling; salt and sauce, sixpence; butter and eggs, tenpence; wardens and quynces, one shilling; herbes, one penny; spices, two shillings and fourpence; flour, fourpence; wight cups and cruises, sixpence. Eighty-five years later, a dinner at the Star Chamber, provided by Elizabeth's Most Honourable Privy Council, cost more than a pound a head, the sum total being twelve pounds eleven shillings and eightpence; while only ten persons sat down to table. The provisioning was on a rather extravagant scale, although meat was conspicuous by its absence, and the ten diners must have had extraordinary appetites if they succeeded in disposing of three old lings, four green fishes, two salt salmons, three great pikes, six great carps, four tenches, twelve knobbards, four perchs, five pair of soles, one conger, four barbels,

two hundred prawns, eighteen flounders, four crabs, six lobsters, two turbots, twelve whittings, three gurnards, five dories, eight plaice, sundry small carp, pike and grey fish, two capons, four chickens, and four rabbits; with strawberries, gooseberries, apples, pears, quinces, oranges, lemons, barberries, and butter in unstated quantity. If this fishy feast was comparatively costly, at any rate there was plenty for the money. That much might be said too for the more modest meal to which Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer—prisoners for conscience sake—sat down together; when salmon, ling, oysters, bread, butter, chese, pears, ale, and wine appeared on the board, and the three famous churchmen had to pay ten pence a-piece. Such Lenten fare would scarcely have suited the eight lovers of good living, whose dinner bill (in 1751) came to eighty-one pounds eleven shillings and sixpence; and included the following items:—bread and beer, fourpence; haunch of venison, two pounds twelve shillings; salmon, one pound ten shillings; partridges in champagne, one pound ten shillings; ten ortolans, seven pounds four shillings; butter and cheese, two shillings; oranges and lemons, five shillings; ice creams and fruit, five pounds five shillings; forced fruits, sixteen pounds sixteen shillings; market fruits, two pounds two shillings; coffee and tea, ten shillings and sixpence; lemonade, sixteen shillings; Spa and Bristol waters, six shillings; usquebagh, ten shillings: Burgundy, six shillings; claret, one pound ten shillings; hock, twelve shillings; white-wine, two shillings; Madeira, one shilling and sixpence; Cape, two pounds; Cyprus, three shillings; Neuilly, ten shillings and sixpence; sack, one shilling and sixpence; and champagne, seven pounds ten shillings. In odd contrast to this is the bill of expenses incurred by a gentleman in 1823, who wagered he would travel two hundred miles, eat and drink on the road, sup and sleep at a good hotel, and yet have something left out of a sovereign. His fare from London to Birmingham, one hundred and twenty-seven miles, cost him ten shillings and sixpence; breakfast—a roll and milk and water, threepence; dinner—bread, chese, and ale, fourpence; supper at the Swan, Birmingham, of poached eggs, toast, and ale, not forgetting the waiter, one shilling and sixpence; bed and chambermaid, two shillings and sixpence; fare to Sheffield, seventy-threemiles, four shillings; breakfast and dinner as

before, sevenpence; leaving fourpence unexpended.

When Sir Frechville Hollis told Pepys that he feared, if he stood for Grimsby, he should have to follow his predecessor's example, and spend three hundred pounds in ale, and fifty-two pounds in buttered ale, the disbelieving secretary took the statement to be one "of Hollis's lies." He might well do so, if would-be members of parliament were then accustomed to get off as easily as the candidate for Bath did in 1646. Mr. Harrington dined with the mayor and citizens one Saturday, which cost him three shillings, "for strong beer and metheglin." The following Monday saw him duly elected, and three days afterwards, he celebrated his return by entertaining the mayor and four citizens at the George Inn, spending eleven shillings and fourpence upon victuals; seven shillings and two-pence in drink; and four shillings and fourpence in tobacco and drinking vessels. Altogether, from first to last, his election cost Mr. Harrington three pounds seven shillings! Very different notions prevailed in Somersetshire, when the representation of the county was in question in 1813, the landlord of a small inn at Ilchester scoring against a candidate in a single day, three hundred and fifty-three bottles of rum and gin, at six shillings; fifty-seven bottles of brandy at half-a-guinea; five hundred and fourteen gallons of beer at two shillings and eightpence; and seven hundred and ninety-two dinners at half-a-crown each. Aspirants to parliamentary honours have had still stranger claims made upon them. One of the items in the bill sent to Sir Francis Delaval by his attorney ran, "To being thrown out of the George Inn, Andover; to my legs being therby broken, to surgeon's bill, and loss of time, and business, all in the service of Sir F. B. Delaval, five hundred pounds." By way of promoting his client's cause, this limb of the law invited the officers of the regiment quartered at Andover to dine with the mayor and corporation upon the king's birthday; and sent a similar invitation to the town officials in the name of the colonel. The dinner went off capitally, but unluckily before the party broke up, the colonel got upon his legs and thanked the mayor for his hospitality. The mayor replied that the obligation lay on his side. The colonel produced his card of invitation, the mayor trumped it with the one he had received, and the hoax was discovered. The attorney in some way betrayed that he

was the author of it, whereupon the angry men of war pitched him out of the window, thereby entailing the personal damage for which the victim of his own cleverness chose to hold Sir Francis answerable.

Another candidate, quite innocent of encouraging cannibalism, upon examining his election accounts discovered he had paid "for eating thirty-six freemen upstairs, for eating six freemen downstairs, and for eating a parson, his two friends, and a dog." He was not the only man who had done so, witness Bryan Garratry's bill against Sir Mark Somerville, still preserved, as such a curiosity deserved to be, at Somerville Hall:—"16 April 1826. My Bill.—To eating sixteen freeholders above-stairs for Sir Marks at three shillings and sixpence a head, is to me two pounds twelve shillings. To eating sixteen more below-stairs, and two priests after supper, is to me two pounds fifteen shillings and ninepence. To six beds in one room and four in another, at two guineas every bed, and not more than four in any bed at any time, cheap enough God knows, is to me twenty-two pounds five shillings. To eighteen horses and five mules about my yard all night at three shillings every one of them, and for a mare which was lost on the head watching them all night, is to me five pounds five shillings. For breakfast or tay in the morning, for every one of them and as many more as they brought, as near as I can guess, is to me four pounds twelve shillings. To raw whisky and punch, without talking of pipes, tobacco, as well as for porter and as well as for breaking a pot above-stairs and other glasses and delf for the first day and night, I am not very sure, but for the first three days and a half of the election as little as I can tell it, and to be very exact, is in all or thereabout, as near as I can guess it and not to be too particular, is to me at least seventy-nine pounds fifteen shillings and ninepence. For shaving and cropping off the heads of the forty-nine freeholders for Sir Marks at thirteenpence for every head of them by my brother as has a vote, is to me two pounds thirteen shillings one penny. For a vomit and nurse for poor Tom Kerman in the middle of the night, when he was not expected, is to me ten hogs. I don't talk of the pipes or for keeping him sober as long as he was sober, is to me fourty pounds ten shillings. The total one hundred and ten pounds eight shillings and sevenpence. You may say one hundred

and eleven, so your honour Sir Marks send me the eleven hundred by Bryan himself who and I prays for your success always in Trim and no more at present.—Signed in the place—Jenny Car's wife Bryan Garratry + "his mark."

The Irish innkeeper's comical statement of accounts was doubtless sufficiently intelligible to its recipient, which is more than could be said of a Beddgelert lodging-letter's bill for "bettadoes, twopence; abes, one shilling and twopence; begn, cne shilling and ninepence; fluar, one shilling; four loofs ot geas, eightpence; eggs one penny;" articles resolved aftersome cogitation into potatoes, apples, bacon, flour, oateake loaves, and eggs. Quite as original in his orthography was the Essex host who took a horse into his stables for a night, and sent him home next morning with the brief bill of charges—"To anos four shillings and sixpence; to ogitinonimom sixpence;" although his customer was not likely to be so puzzled as the gentleman who, having rejected a wheelbarrow and received another in its place, found himself set down as a debtor,

To a wooden barrow and a wooden do. four shillings and sixpence.

To a wooden barrow and a wood do. four shillings and sixpence.

or the Devonshire tourist whose washerwoman demanded OOo III of him, taking it for granted he would understand the large Os stood for shillings, the little one for sixpence, and the Is for pence.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLV. BLOOD IS THICKER THAN WATER!

"As our dear Kate is going to marry so brilliantly and happily, she may think it very unkind of us if we abstain from writing to wish her well," Mrs. Forest says to her daughters one morning, when they have finished reading Kate's letter announcing the fact.

"She might have thought it equally unkind of us to abstain from writing to wish her well if she had been going to marry badly and miserably," Marian says; "but you're right, mamma! it's the one marriage in the family from which we may expect good things."

"Wishing joy on such occasions is utter nonsense," Gertrude says, pettishly, "we shall each and all have our allotted share

of good and evil; I for one expect so little of what some people would call happiness, that whatever comes (unless it's poverty) I can't be disappointed."

"That's what I call facing the unknown in a proper spirit," Marian says, laughing. "Te tell the truth, I don't fancy that Charlotte is much more enthusiastic."

"Frank is a man to inspire love in any girl, remember," Frank's mother observes.

"How ridiculously extravagant Frank is getting," Gertrude says, seriously; "did you see that ring he has given her? It's like mine, and she tells me she has the whole set."

"Frank didn't give it to her," Marian explains in surprise; "surely she told you that."

"All she told me was, not to question Frank about it, as he bore interrogation badly; as if I were addicted to idle curiosity! Her caution was another proof of her want of tact."

"Another proof of her tact, I think," Marian says; "only she should have warned the family all round, and fettered the fraternal tongue. I spoke to Frank about that ring, and he knew nothing about it."

"As she is to be our brother's wife, it will be as well not to question her about every bit of jewellery she may put on," Gertrude says, scornfully. "She's just the woman to get presents from every man she meets; she's a wily, luring woman, and one doesn't suspect her until one finds her out, because she's so fair and placid."

"You rather liked her at first," Marian says, in some surprise, "have you found her out?"

"Yes," Gertrude says, contemptuously, "she's trying hard to get Clement now, and she thinks that I am blind to it all because I make no sign."

"Perhaps it is your natural jealousy of any portion of his attention being given to anyone else, that makes you think this?" Mrs. Forest says, languidly. "I am sure Clement scarcely treated her with common civility at first, and even now he hardly takes any notice of her."

"Jealousy!" Gertrude echoes. "Dear mamma, if I liked Clement Graham well enough to feel jealous of any other woman on his account, I should pity myself profoundly, I assure you."

"But we were talking about Kate," Marian says; "who's to write to her, mamma?"

"I think, considering the very advanta-

geous match she's going to make, that it would not be amiss if we all wrote to her. I did hope to have had him for a son-in-law at one time," Mrs. Forest adds, as Gertrude quits the room, "but as it is we must not forget what is due to my only brother's only daughter."

"No, we have forgotten that too long," Marian says, seriously. "Mamma, if I were Kate, I should return my relatives' letters, with the one little remark that their kindness came too late."

"Kate won't do that."

"No, Kate won't do that, she's too——" Marian stops, and Mrs. Forest asks,

"Too what?"

"Too strong, mamma; she must feel that we have all been so 'little' to her, that it would seem to her like breaking a butterfly on the wheel to revenge herself on us in the smallest degree."

"I should like her to be married from here, the same day the others are," Mrs. Forest says meditatively, ignoring Marian's last remark. "It would be the fitting and proper thing that she should go from her own aunt's house."

Meantime there has been a little conversation on the subject of the much-disussed ring, between Frank Forest and his betrothed. He is not a weakly-curios man, nevertheless it does excite a certain amount of desire to know about it in his mind, when he sees this ring flashing forth its myriad hues, on the same finger whereon he has placed his plain bar of gold, as a pledge of his engagement to her.

"That's a very pretty ring," he says, taking her hand up to examine it more closely. He has just strolled in this morning to pay her one of his very brief visits—brief because he cannot constrain himself to stay long in Mr. Grange's house.

"Yes, they're very fine," she says quietly, "I like opals better than anything."

"One of the wedding presents?"

"I suppose I may say yes."

He will not directly ask her who gave her the ring, but he looks as if he would like to know, and Charlotte marks his looks, and laughs within herself at the idea of what he would feel if she told him.

"Your sister Gertrude is evidently surprised at my having any friends well enough off to give me anything beyond the value of sixpence," she laughs. "You should have seen her blank stare of amaze-

ment when I told her I had the whole set, necklace, bracelets, earrings, brooch, everything."

" You have the whole set?"

" Yes, and it's superb," she says, and her face lights up with a gleam of genuine, ardent love for the jewels.

" Your friend—whoever he or she may be—is very generous; I hope several more of the same sort will turn up and treat you with equal liberality when you're married."

He says this carelessly, and his unconcern is not feigned. He is not at all jealous of his Charlotte. Remembering how very hard she tried to win him, he cannot think that she will lose him lightly. After the manner of confiding man, he trusts the wrong woman, in the wrong place.

Presently she startles him by saying,

" Your family are hardly behaving to me in a way that is calculated to make me eager to become a member of it, Frank; your mother and sisters are civil—just civil—because you are here to enforce civility from them; but I have never had a line of congratulation from your cousin Kate. I suppose Captain Bellairs and you mean to keep up friendly relations. Between you, you ought to insist upon her being commonly courteous to me."

Frank gives a grunt. Feminine quarrels are things to which he has a peculiarly strong distaste. He has a theory about everything that is a little out of joint righting itself, if only there is no undue interference. He also has a belief in his cousin Kate's ability to stand out against any amount of insistence either on his part, or that of Captain Bellairs.

" It's hardly my place to dictate to another man's wife," he says.

" But it is your place to see that your own wife is treated properly by your own family."

" On my word, Charlotte, I didn't think you were a woman to make a fuss about nothing. I have had so much of that sort of thing to put up with lately," the young man continues, dejectedly; " I looked forward to that form of misery ceasing when I married you."

" In fact you thought I was so tame that I might be insulted with impunity," Charlotte says, bringing a few tears into her eyes.

" Don't cry, for Heaven's sake," he says; " it won't alter my opinion, and it won't improve your appearance."

Her rage at this last remark is so great, that she longs to rise up and tell him that she has done with him, and that she has a brighter fate than any he can offer her in store. But she dares not do it, for Clement Graham has decreed that the time is not ripe yet, and she is too wise in her generation to risk the substance for the shadow.

For in spite of her burning desire to bear Mr. Graham's name, and to have a rightful share in his wealth, she distrusts and despises him, as thoroughly as it is possible for one mean-natured creature to despise another. She knows well that, under the pressure of the smallest difficulty, he would renounce her, as readily as he would cast away an old glove.

It is not a reassuring conviction to have, with regard to the man with whom she hopes to pass the remainder of her life. But she has it so strongly that she curbs her impulse to tell Frank she can do without him very well, for fear of the evil effects which may result from a premature avowal. This hope supports her; she will taunt him well with his weak trust, and his vain blindness, as soon as ever she dare do so.

" My appearance is the last thing I think of, Frank," she says accordingly, with well simulated meekness.

" Lucky thing for you, dear," Frank says good-humouredly; " for you're getting so fat that very soon you'll have no appearance worth mentioning." Then he takes a sheet of paper and a pencil, and makes a sketch of what she will be in a year or two, preserving a likeness to her plump person, but exaggerating it greatly.

" I think you stick on too much gear," he says presently, his mind still dwelling upon that appearance of hers which she professes to so entirely disregard, and unobservant of the wrath and fury that flash from her offended eyes. " All these puffings and furbelows are very well for the sylphs, you know, but you ought to go in for the plainer lines and the darker colours."

Nothing in all her intercourse with him has irritated Charlotte Grange to such a degree as this speech of his, which savours of disapproval of her style of dress. She is a woman who loves rich textured silks of light hues, and grand expanses of white lace. It must be admitted that from the dressmaker's point of view these things become her. That is to say, they look well on her, whether or not she looks well in them is immaterial.

But Frank is an artist, not a milliner.

"I know who has taught you to like plain lines and dark hues," she says, bitterly; "your cousin Kate, she thinks they suit her. What a pity!" she adds with a laugh that is very derisive, although it is melodiously sweet, "that she doesn't allow someone to show her how to make the best of herself. She has got hold of those antiquated notions about simple white muslins, and flowing draperies, and beauty unadorned generally. It was all very well while she was struggling along in obscurity, but when she is Captain Bellairs's wife, when she occupies the position of a gentlewoman——"

Disgust has kept him silent up to this point, but now he speaks.

"Another word in that strain, and every bond which exists between us is broken, Charlotte."

"Do you mean that you will break off your engagement to me?" she asks; and a vision of the possibility of getting damages out of him, before her engagement to Clement Graham is made public, crosses her pure mind.

"That shall be as you please," he says, disappointing her by the remark; "but if you do marry me, you'll quickly learn that I will have no slighting mention made of my cousin. If you venture to make it, you shall suffer for it."

"How manly to threaten me!"

"You shall suffer for it in a way that would be very painful to a delicate-minded woman," he goes on calmly; "I shall tell Bellairs and his wife that you are the cause of the cessation of intimacy there will be between us, for that I am afraid of your disgracing yourself by an exhibition of vulgar spite, and so making me ashamed of you."

She has no real courage. Furious as she is, she dare not resent this severe rebuke, for is she not still uncertain of her ground with Clement Graham? Like a half-bred hound, she quails when a determined hand is raised against her. Like a half-bred hound, she is willing to crawl to the heel that kicks her, rather than stand up against the severity. All she dares to do is to smile that false, set smile of hers, which adapts itself to every occasion, and passes muster for sunshiny amiability in the eyes of the unobservant.

"You have a most forgiving spirit,

Frank. I like that in a man; you have no angry feeling against her because you couldn't get her to love you."

He gives his head an impatient shake. Knowing, as he does, how well he had got his cousin Kate to love him at one time, it is rather hard on him to be told that he has failed to win her affection altogether. However, his manliness constrains him to be silent under the taunt.

"A very forgiving spirit," Charlotte goes on, quietly; "for not only did she fail to see your merits herself, but she tried so hard to make me see your demerits."

"And love made you blind, I suppose you mean me to believe," he says, laughing lightly. "Come, now, Charlotte, don't try any humbug of that kind on with me; it might answer if you had an ass like Graham to deal with——"

He pulls himself up in his scoffing speech, for, to his surprise, the lady of his love has become scarlet in her usually pale face.

"How you all profess to despise Mr. Graham," she says, "and yet how gladly you all jumped at him for your sister!"

"Look here, don't make mistakes," he says seriously. "Gertrude is wilful, and the way she chooses to go she will go; but if any sacrifice on my part could separate her from that fool, I'd make it gladly."

For a moment, as the tones of the perfect contempt he feels for Clement Graham ring in her ear, she feels inclined to stick to the man and relinquish the cur. But she thinks again of the money that will be her portion, and the mortification that will be the portion of the Forests, when she has compassed her present ends. These reflections save her from being honest for once in her life, so she merely twirls the ring of promise upon her finger, and tries to caress Frank into a state of apathy about her actions and intentions, until the time is ripe.

Now Publishing,

THE OPAL RING:

BEING THE

EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER

FOR

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

All the Year Round

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"Household Words"

No. 317. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1874.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XI. THE BARGAIN CARRIED OUT.

THE "Mysterious disappearance of a banker's clerk," although a taking headline for the contents-bill of the penny newspapers, did not create any deep or wide-spread sensation. In the first place it occurred too soon after the murder of Mr. Middleham, and in the second it lacked a person of some social distinction for its hero. Bankers are persons of influence and position. Mr. Middleham was known to, and recognised by, many of the great in the land; he would be missed at his club; the wealthy clients of the bank would no longer find him, polite and even deferential, in the parlour; and when the summer came round again the fact that the Loddonford garden-parties were things of the past, would revive a recollection of the host who used to preside over them with so much courtesy. But that a banker's clerk should disappear, had no interest for any one save his own immediate friends and relations. So long as the books were carefully kept, their gold shovelled out to them across the counter, and their notes separated with duly moistened forefinger, the customers did not care by whom these duties were performed; and as Danby's work had not brought him into immediate contact with the public, he was but little missed, and the enquiries about him were singularly few.

At the same time the case was not lost sight of by the police, amongst some of whom a certain theory obtained strong favour. It was remembered that the

young man had acted as a kind of private secretary to Mr. Middleham, whose confidence he enjoyed, and that, at the time of the discovery of the murder, he was the first to call attention to the absence of some jewellery, of great value, which, as he avowed, he had assisted Mr. Heath in cataloguing and putting away. This was not mentioned to Sergeant Francis until some time after the case was placed in his hands—he only knew of the Middleham murder by report, having been engaged in hunting a fraudulent bankrupt through the United States when it was committed—but as soon as he learnt the fact a new light dawned upon him. His impression hitherto had been that Danby had been the victim of some foul play, and all his action had been taken under that presumption. Now, his idea was that the young man had deliberately planned and carried out his escape from justice. "Not that I think he murdered the old gent," the sergeant said, under the seal of conjugal confidence, to his wife, whose good sense had more than once prompted valuable suggestions to him; "from all I can hear he would seem to be a mild kind of young fellow, without pluck enough for a job of that kind; though the murder itself was only done out of necessity at the moment, consequent upon Mr. Middleham's catching hold of 'em, or hollering, and hadn't been originally meant. This Danby must have stood in with the others, taking the diamonds for his share of the swag, and waited for his opportunity of getting clear off. His letter to the young woman, so much of it as can be made out, points to that; foreign land, new life, and all that caper. She being took ill upset that game, and he had to make himself scarce, and be off by himself. But he'll write as soon as he is settled, for

her to come out with him, and we shall have to stop that earth. Not that I believe for an instant that she's in it or knows what is up ; but her father struck me as being downy to the backbone, and it wouldn't a bit surprise me if he knew where the young fellow was to be found ! ”

Thns thought Sergeant Francis ; but, beyond his wife, he took no one into his confidence, and kept his opinion to himself.

At the bank no such suspicion was entertained. Danby had always been looked upon as a young man of high principle and strict integrity ; and, in the first days after his disappearance, much anxiety was displayed by his brother clerks as to his fate. But interest and speculation soon died out, a general promotion of the juniors was made, a new candidate was appointed to the vacant stool, and all things went on as before.

One morning Mr. Smowle happened to arrive unusually late, even for him ; he had just reached his desk and was making a great spluttering with a dry quill pen on the pages of his ledger, in order to convey the idea that he was very busily engaged, when Rumbold, the porter, worked his way round the office, and under cover of his coaling operations, took occasion to enter into a short conversation.

“ Pity you hurried yourself this mornin’, Mr. S.,” he commenced ; “ we was thinking of sending out for the Morning Post, which is not among the papers taken here, to see what fashionable game you was up to. You won’t be able to fluff ‘em much longer, I can tell you ! ”

“ Don’t you try to be funny, Rummy, or you might hurt yourself,” said Mr. Smowle, waving his pen in a deprecatory manner. “ And don’t laugh at your own jokes, you middle-aged orphan ; you’re gettung purple in the face, and apoplexy is imminent. Have I been asked after ? ”

“ Asked after ? ” repeated the porter, “ I should rather say you had been asked after. That party from Gambrion’s was here again, and I ain’t going to tell him you’re out of town any more. It was all I could do to keep him out of the parlour this morning, and I advise you to settle with him, for he means mischief.”

“ I’ll settle with him, Rummy,” said Mr. Smowle ; “ that is, I will give him three pounds on account and order a new suit of clothes, which he will like better even than money. But I didn’t mean that ; I meant, has Hampstead been asking after me ? ”

“ No, he haven’t,” said the porter, “ he’s got too much to do, clearing up his work, to pay any attention to you and your affairs just now.”

“ Clearing up his work ! ” said Mr. Smowle, in astonishment, “ what do you mean by that, Rummy ? One would think that Christmas and that confounded last day of the old year, when we have to balance up all those blessed old books, were close at hand.”

“ He is clearing up his work all the same,” said the porter, decidedly ; “ he’s going away again.”

“ What’s the matter now,” asked Mr. Smowle ; “ more of these foreign fellows trying their games again ? ”

“ Not a bit of it,” said the portér, with a fat chuckle ; “ this is a start, this is ! ”

“ You don’t mean to say it is anything about poor little Walter D——, nothing been heard of him, has there ? ”

“ Nothing, and never won’t be,” said the porter ; “ that’s my opinion. No, this is quite a different caper. You would never guess if you tried till lunch time, which it can’t be far off, so I don’t mind telling you. The governor is going to be married.”

“ What ! ” cried Mr. Smowle, in so loud a key that some of the elder clerks turned round and indignantly said “ Hush ! ” “ Hampstead going to be spliced ! How do you know that ? ”

“ I heard him telling it to Mr. Frodsham, yesterday,” said the porter, “ when I was putting away the private ledgers in the private safe. ‘ You will have to take command here for a short time,’ he said. ‘ Oh, indeed sir,’ says old F., who is uncommon polite now to the governer ; fancying, I suppose, that he is always likely to get the sack. ‘ Are you going away on business, sir ? ’ he says. ‘ Well, no,’ says the governer, with as much of a smile as he ever treats himself to. ‘ I suppose I ought to call it pleasure. The truth is, I am going to be married, Frodsham.’ ‘ I wish you joy, sir,’ says old F., though his face didn’t look much as if he highly appreciated matrimony himself, which I don’t wonder at, having met him one Sunday afternoon in High-street, Islington, walking with Mrs. F., who must be called a corker. ‘ Do I know the lady ? ’ ‘ I think not,’ says the governer, very stiff. ‘ We have been engaged some time. She is the daughter of an old acquaintance of mine—Captain Studley.’ ‘ Studley ? Studley ? ’ says old

F., 'I don't recollect that name among the accounts here.' 'I daresay not,' says the governor, 'but no doubt I shall persuade Captain Studley to bank here henceforward. However, I shall be going away at the end of the week,' he says, 'and shall be away about a fortnight, and you will have to take charge.'

"That is a go," said Mr. Smowle. "Well, one comfort is, one can do pretty much as one likes when Froddy's in charge. Fancy this one getting spliced, though. He don't look the figure for the part. I shouldn't care about playing Joan to his Darby, on a dull evening in October, in a back parlour in Camden Town, before the gas was lit. I've seen old Studley—military looking, swaggering old buck—he has been here to see Hampstead once or twice, and I pointed him out to Bentele at Tattersall's one Sunday afternoon. Well, that's one pound sterling out of my pocket."

"What do you mean by that, Mr. S.?" said the porter, looking up at him.

"Why there will be a subscription got up to present him with a neat and appropriate offering on the occasion of his marriage," said Mr. Smowle: "of course—a pickle trophy, or a wine cooler, or a gentle cow on the top of a butter-dish, with a suitable inscription, which old Froddy will prepare, with the assistance of the secretary of the Mechanics' Institute at Peckham."

"I suppose there won't be anything of the nature of a spread?" said the porter, in a grumbling tone. "No, the governor ain't one of that sort. It is enough to bring the tears into your eyes, when you have taken the trouble to get him a streaky loin chop, as is a perfect picture both before and after it goes on the gridiron, to find it don't give him no more satisfaction than if it had been bought off a stall in Clare Market on Saturday night."

The news which was thus commented upon by Mr. Smowle and his associates of the bank created some little excitement in the village of Loddonford, where it was sedulously spread by Dr. Blatherwick directly he became acquainted with it. Captain Studley, though frequently away from home, and, even when in residence at the cottage, mixing but little with the inhabitants of the place had, as has been said, made himself popular by the gracious manner in which he had joined the penny readings during the previous winter. The

villagers, moreover, whose only permanent visitors were an occasional artist or two, who would put up at the tavern during the summer months and carry away a sheaf of valuable sketches for completion at home, were very proud of counting a man of such distinguished manners and appearance as the captain as one of themselves. Their absolute ignorance of his resources and occupation, of the purpose for which he would suddenly quit the cottage and of his destination, which he himself only vaguely alluded to as "on the Continent," all served to enhance his position in the opinion of the gaping rustics. Nothing, indeed, was personally known of Anne; but that was no reason why the worthy people of Loddonford should not take an interest in her. It was not Dr. Blatherwick's fault if they did not, for she served him as the staple subject of conversation for many a long day. Her extraordinary illness, the cause of which he had defined directly he saw her—directly he saw her, my dear madam. He had been young himself, and had not forgotten all he had undergone in those days, but it was not for him to speak; all he had to do was to watch the case from a professional point of view, and, when he had carried it through successfully—and he might venture to remark, in confidence to you, that, at one time, it had caused him a certain amount of anxiety—the father, Captain Studley; rather a remarkable man, my dear madam, with a short, prompt way about him, like those used to command; had confessed that this illness had sprung from a love quarrel; but matters had been put right, and the gentleman had been brought to book, as anyone who knew the captain could very well imagine, and the marriage was to take place directly; so soon, at least, as he, Dr. Blatherwick, could guarantee that his patient was sufficiently recovered. How was she getting on? Well, she was making sure, but not rapid, progress. Pretty? Well, it was impossible to say; there are so many different opinions about beauty, but he should say interesting rather than pretty, and, between ourselves, my dear madam, rather dull, and lacks the vivacity which distinguishes the father, and is singularly silent and uncommunicative. The gentleman? Oh, yes, the doctor had seen him but once, and then only for a minute—tall, dark, good-looking man; manager at Middleham's Bank—you recollect, my dear

madam, Mr. Middleham, who was murdered—and who had, I should say, a very excellent position.

If it had not been for Dr. Blatherwick's prattling, the outside public would not have known even thus much of what went on within the walls of the cottage; for the nurse, who came away when all the supposed danger was over, yielding up her place again to her daughter, had nothing to report. The young lady had been ill, and had got well again, that was all that could be said, except that her father, the "Captaining," was devoted to her, and had sat up with her o' nights, and given her her medicines as regular as regular. As to the love affair and the marriage, that was all new to her; she hadn't heard talk of any young man, but her Emma knew the name of Heath, and had often seen the gentleman at the cottage before Miss Studley came down there, which no doubt he was making it all right with her pa. So the villagers were compelled to put up with this meagre amount of information, and to await the wedding-day with patience.

Meanwhile, all that the captain had promised in the last important interview with his daughter, he had strictly performed. She had been left to herself, and though he had remained constantly at home; knowing it to be necessary for him to be on the spot, in case Sergeant Francis might take it into his head to pay another visit to the cottage; he never attempted to intrude on Anne's privacy, and beyond a duty-visit to her room in the morning and evening, he saw but little of her. The fact was that the captain was only too glad of an excuse, to remain as long as possible out of his daughter's presence. The fearful secret which was in their joint possession could neither be ignored nor alluded to, and, though the captain took particular care never to refer to it, the knowledge of its existence created a gloom, which even his jaunty self-complacency, which had returned to him in fullest force when he saw his safety assured, was unable to pierce. On more than one occasion he tried to interest Anne in a subject which he imagined must appeal to every female heart, and asked her what arrangement she intended making in regard to her wedding-dress; but the answers which he received were so short and vague, so utterly hopeless and uncaring, that he saw it would be necessary for him to give the requisite orders in the matter.

Came, as all things will come if duly waited for, the wedding-day, soft and warm and bright with radiant sunshine, as though it had become detached from July, and wandering in outer darkness ever since, had only just found its way again into the world. The hanging woods clothing the upland and fencing off the keen east wind from the stately manor-house, woods which had hitherto been dull and sombre masses, now, in the genial light, displayed their various autumnal tints of russet-brown, and fiery-red, and pale diaphanous yellow; the gorged and swollen river, so long opaque, save in its crested wavelets, danced and glittered in the brilliant sunlit rays, as though remembering its bygone summer sheen; the very birds were cheated into a belief that winter must have somehow slipped by unobserved and spring had come again, and strained their throats to give it welcome. In the churchyard—bordered by the peaceful backwater, the haunts in the summer time of boys in search of the islands of lovely lilies, then floating on its surface, but now abandoned to the water-rats, by which its banks are honeycombed—in the churchyard, with its billowy graves sleeping in the shadow of the square, old, gray church tower, the villagers are assembled, waiting the arrival of the bridal party. In the church itself, dotted here and there among the high oaken pews—relics of a barbarous age, eyesores which the vicar has hitherto been unable to rid himself of—are the élite of the inhabitants. There are the parson's daughters, with the summer bronze still on their healthy cheeks, ready to form an amateur body of bridesmaids in case assistance is required; and there is their mother, a hatchet-faced little woman, whose whole existence is soaked in soup and bound up in flannel, and whose one available reminiscence is of having had the bishop of the diocese to breakfast on the occasion of a confirmation. There is Dr. Blatherwick, with his professional suit of sable, relieved by a very bright blue silk scarf in which glistens a fat carbuncle pin, and with a large white favour pinned on to his breast, looking like a prize turkey at Christmas time. There, too, are three or four of the leading farmers' wives, and old Mrs. McMoffat, who has the riverside place next to Mr. Middleham's, and makes an income by letting it during the summer months. Major Gylkes, of the Manor House—who

is reported to be slightly cracked, because he never goes to bed till 5 a.m., passing the night in devising methods for screwing additional rents out of his tenants, but the method in whose madness would be at once appreciated on your endeavour to get the better of him to the amount of say four-pence—is still outside in the church-yard talking to Rushthorne, his water-bailiff, about the proceedings of certain suspected poachers; both of them looking askant at Bob and Bill Nightline, sons of the widow Nightline, hostess of the "Gaff and Landing Net," where the best of fish is to be procured both in and out of the season.

Vehicular access to the church being impossible, Granger's fly, drawn by a fleabitten grey horse, and driven by a young man whose emblems of festivity, in the shape of white Berlin gloves, have such preternaturally long fingers as to render it difficult for him to feel the reins, draws up at the wicket-gate at the entrance of the lime avenue. From it descends Captain Studley, buttoned up to the chin, having tightly strapped his jauntiness in obedience to the solemnity of the occasion. When he hands his daughter out, quite an appreciative thrill runs through the little crowd. Ordinary brides at Loddonford are healthy, hearty, blowzy young women, with apple-cheeks, occasionally tear-moistened, but soon breaking out again into hearty, happy grins. Very different in appearance and demeanour is the young lady now descending the steps of Granger's fly. Her face is perfectly pale, her expression calm and dignified. This pallor does not suit the taste of most of the bystanders, and a certain amount of disappointment is audibly expressed, but "what could you expect after her going through an illness like that?" turns the tide of popular favour, and she is universally allowed to be amazingly "gen-teel." She lays her fingers lightly on her father's arm, and they proceed together up the avenue. Little Mr. Weavill, the organist, who has grateful recollections of compliments paid him by the captain on his performances during the intervals of the penny readings, gathers himself up behind the red stuff curtains of the organ-loft, ready for a spring into the Wedding March so soon as the ceremony shall be ended; and a tall, grave man, who has stepped out from behind the sculptured tomb of Sir Roger Gylkes, and advanced towards the altar, is discovered to be the bridegroom by the parson's daughters, who are much exer-

cised by his being unaccompanied by a "best-man."

Twenty minutes after, Mendelssohn's glorious music surges out upon the air, little Mr. Weavill doing full justice to his theme and to his instrument, and the bridal party comes forth, Captain Studley doing all the handshaking and gratulation receiving, while the newly-made man and wife walk straight off to the attendant fly. But the captain is not long behind them, and as he takes the back seat, good-natured Bill Nightline, who puts up the steps, fancies he hears him mutter the odd words, "Safe at last!"

Sleep is on the town of Calais, as a town; on the empty, deserted, narrow streets, in which the huge signs of the closed shops seem, in the hazy dawn, to assert themselves even more prominently than in broad daylight; on the bristling arsenal, and the gate which Hogarth painted. But all is brightness and bustle in the flaring terminus of the railway station—where bloused porters are wheeling up enormous barrows, piled high with luggage just arrived by the incoming steamer—and the restaurant, at which the pale and sea-sodden guests are warming themselves with steaming bouillon, before starting on their flight to Paris. Not to stop here, however, but to make his way to an hotel, is the intention of the tall, elderly Englishman in the huge Ulster coat, with a Scotch bonnet pulled well down over his forehead, on whose arm a fragile, delicate-looking girl is hanging. To the Hotel Dessin, he tells the commissioner, pointing to a little pile of luggage set aside in a corner by itself; and, perfectly conversant with the way, strides off in advance with his female companion. As they enter the vast porte cochere, she looks round in terror over her shoulder, and he, noticing the action, bends his mouth towards her ear, and whispers quickly,

"As I promised; he is gone!"

"This, then, is the salon; and this, with the door opening out of it, the bedchamber of mademoiselle. The bedchamber of monsieur is on the next floor, number forty-two, if monsieur would like to see it. Monsieur and mademoiselle must be tired after their travelling, and would like some refreshment. No? Then I will have the honour to bid them good-night, and the femme-de-chambre will attend to the wants of mademoiselle."

The speaker, a short man with close-clipped, coarse black hair like a blacking-brush, bows himself from the room and leaves the travellers alone. Then Captain Studley turns to his daughter, and with an air of self-importance, says, "The promise which I made to you, Anne, has been kept, has it not? You have had no annoyance from that man, who has now gone his own way, and you are here under the protection of your father."

She says "Yes," faintly, and without sufficient sense of gratitude to please the captain; but she is evidently weak and tired, and he bids her "Good-night," promising to disclose his plans on the morrow, and comforting himself, before retiring to rest, on reaching his own bedroom, with a cigar, a glass of cold brandy-and-water, and a happy retrospect of the day's proceedings.

This retrospect is with him when he wakes the next morning, pleases him as he dresses, and sends him, well-disposed towards everybody, walking jauntily down-stairs to the salon and humming a tune. The door leading from the salon to mademoiselle's chamber is closed, and the captain raps lightly thereat. Getting no answer, he raps again, more loudly, and on turning round finds himself accosted by the femme-de-chambre, of whom he had had a glimpse last night, and who tells him that mademoiselle has gone out.

"Gone out!" repeats the captain in astonishment.

"But certainly," says the woman. "Mademoiselle went out at seven o'clock this morning—without saying where she was going, or when she would return."

END OF BOOK I.

DEAD LETTERS.

THE fourth report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, which has recently appeared, contains a vast quantity of documents of great value and importance for the purposes of history, both national and local, and, in addition to these, numerous and interesting papers in the shape of letters, &c., which throw considerable light on manners and customs, chiefly in the seventeenth century. To this latter class, as being of more general interest than the documents relating more particularly to public affairs, we desire to call our readers' attention; and, in so doing, we would state that, so far as we

are aware, none of the documents cited have ever been made public before, and that, in dealing with the enormous mass of materials before us, we have thought it better to observe, as nearly as possible, the order in which they appear in the appendix to the report of the commission, without attempting a more exact chronological arrangement.

The first letter we cite is in the possession of Lord Bagot, at Blithfield, in Staffordshire, and is from R. Adderley to W. Bagot, is dated June 9th, 1600, and gives a short account, by an eye-witness, of the trial of Robert, Earl of Essex, and notices the queen's indignation against Raleigh. It runs thus:—

"SIR, of Thursday last my lord of Essex was at York House before the Lords of the Council and other lords, the Queen's Attorney, and Bacon; who shewed himself a pretty fellow, and answered them all well without any touch, but only in some disloyalty towards Her Majesty. She would have had him to have confessed these arties, which were aggravated against him in the Star Chamber. But my Lord yielded to nothing, but only submitted himself to Her Majesty. It is doubtful he shall lose his offices, some of them, but she would have all, and yet stand at Her Majesty's pleasure, and he is at his own house as he was before. There were some that said they would move Her Majesty for my Lord's liberty; and that was Mr. Secretary, and he said he did not doubt but to bring a discharge before it were long; which God grant it may be. I doute he speake not as he meant. My lord is merry and in helth, thanks be to God; he was at York House from eight of the clock in the morning until almost nine at night without either meat or drink; he kneeled two hours by the clock. They would have had him to have stood, but he would not so long as the matter was a talk betwixt Her Majesty and him. . . . Rawlegh is gone into the country with bag and bagage on his wife and children, and Her Majesty calld him worse than cat and dog."

1568, July 8th, George Saunders writes to his brother-in-law, Richard Bagot, and sends to his sister a sugar-loaf; to his cousin Margaret he sends, inclosed in a pare [probably a box shaped like a pear] a skene of thrydd and a dossin of Spanish nedyls; and he concludes by giving some news from Flanders, notably the death of the Duke of Alva.

Richard Broughton thus describes to his father-in-law, Richard Bagot, the queen's reception of Duke Casimir:—

"Feb. 1, 1571. After the little of discourse of the great entertainment of the Duke Cassemere at his first arrival in London, the city gave him five hundred pounds. At his coming to the court at Whitehall, Her Majesty shewed him greatest countenance, and upon his coming, meeting with him, offered to kiss him, which he humbly altogether refused. Upon Her Majesty bringing him thro' the great chamber into the chamber of presence Her Majesty would have him put on his hat, which in no wise he would, offering himself in all things at her highness' commandment. She then replied that if he would be at her commandment, he should put on his hat; he expounded that it should be in all things, save in things to his reproach. Since he has been accompanied with the lords to Hampton Court, to Windsor, and my Lord of Leicester's house of Wanstead; and this 1st of Feb. great tilting at court and to . . . barryers and other shews; and so the time passeth in pastime. My Lord of Essex, after these shews ended, goeth to Cambridge, upon whose going my brother and . . . stayeth, and in the mean time seeth a little the Court fashion."

The following extract from a letter, dated April 25th, 1593, from the same to the same, is somewhat curious:—

" . . . After my coming from the parliament, Sir Walter Harcourt got one Mr. Essex (a ward of Sir J. Fortescue's) to marry his daughter; wherewith Sir J. Fortescue, being greatly displeased, did angrily checke Sir Walter with bitter terms of cosener, bankrupt, &c. Sir Walter did return some cross words, so that Sir John did commit him to the Fleet, and the next morning the Queen caused him from the Fleet to be sent to the Tower, where he yet remaineth. Sir John Fortescue saith he shall not come thence until he be paid the double value of marriage, and that afterwards he shall be sent to the Fleet to be subject to execution."

On November 19th (year not stated) Walter Bagot writes his father, R. Bagot, a brief account of a very odd marriage in London. "A gentleman was bound on forfeiture of all his lands to marry a citizen's daughter by a certain day. He, suspecting her with another, offered a large sum to get off; the father refused; so he

got all his friends, each with a horn about his neck; they met at the church, and he married her with a ring of horn, and, after the marriage, every one blowing a Rechate solemnly, his bride and he parted."

College bills, nearly three centuries ago, must have been rather more moderate than they have since become, as witness the following "Account of expenses of Lewis Bagot [at Exeter College] from his return at Christmas to Ladyday, 1603. Battles, 4s.; his part of a load of wood, 3s. 4d.; candles, 8d.; servitor, 4s.; landress, 2s.; chamber for study, 7s. 6d.; an ointment, 6d.; hourglass, 3d.; mending stockings, 1s. 1d.; soling a pair of shoes, 10d.; buttons and mending clothes, 2s. 6d.; for a pair of shoes four soaled, 2s. 2d.; paper, 4d.; books which are but bespoken and not brought home shall be to be reckoned next quarter. Total, £3 13s. 2d. Signed by EDWARD CHETWIND."

Here is another bill, curious in its way, from the same collection.

	s. d.
For making your cloak of meale collar cloth, cloke lyned with bajes	2 6
For seven buttons and loops of a collar, silke and gold, with olive heads	12 0
For silke to the same cloke	0 6
Velvet to line the collar	5 6
Yard of cotton to pack it in	0 8
Total	<hr/> 21 2

	s. d.
6 yards of greene propertance at 4s. the yard	24 0
2½ yards of stuff for the sleeves and color and lyne the skirts and fad (face) the dublet	10 0
1 aell of green and white tafeti	0 7
3 oz. of galowne lace and of (?) at 2s. 4d. the oz. for hose and dublet	7 7
7 dozen buttons	2 4
Sewing and stitching silk	0 20
3 yards of green fustian	2 6

(This bill is for Mr. Richard.)

Straight canvas, 14d.; stiffning for dublet, 2s.; ribbin for collar, 20d.; bags for hose and dublet, 6d.; 3 yards of homes fustian to bind the hose, 4s.; millicom fustian for the pockets, 12d.; binding for the wast, 2d.; ribins for the knees, 10d.; making his hose and dublet, 7s.; hamper, 1d.—Total, £3 0s 1d.

The manuscripts of the Earl of Denbigh, at Newnham Paddox, are stated to be a collection of a most interesting and valuable character. Among the family letters there are many from "the Duke of Buckingham and his brother, Christopher, Earl of Anglesea, to the Countess of Buckingham. The style of both," says Mr. R. B. Knowles, "is charming, and, in the way of a graceful antithesis, it would be difficult to match the third letter," which is from the duke (undated), and

runs thus:—"Dere mother, give me but as manie blessings and pardons as I shall make faults, and then you make happie your most obedient sonne, G. Bucking-ham." The letters of Elizabeth Bourchier, the second Earl of Denbigh's third wife, are very interesting, and of a loving nature, as the following examples will show:—"Deare, sweet joy, here comes many frightfull newes to towne. I heare the king has taken Coventrye, and that S^r John Hoptone has Plimouth, and thatt hee has seventy thousand men, and that the king has store of forces in Yorkshier. S^r John Bowsier is taken prisoner in Yorke. I heare the king will come to towne, and will doe strange cruelties, as burning the town. Oh, my hart, soe you were safe I did not carre iff I wear dead. Itt is a grieve to mee you woulde leave mee. You cannott imagine whatt I woulde give to see you. Iff I had you, to gain ten thousand worlds you should not goe from mee. Oh, dear God! what wowlde I give to see you. For God's sake, ritt (write) to mee and come as sounē as may be. Stay not from your dutifull and obedientt wife and humble servant, E. Fielding."

"In almost all of this loving lady's letters," remarks Mr. Knowles, "there is at least one postscript, with occasionally a note added in some corner. In the present, turning the letter upside down, I find the exclamation—'Dear, how thy Bety leves thee!'" From an interesting postscript to the same letter, it appears that the writer's sympathy with the cause in which her husband was enlisted was not strong: "Heare is a booke in print," she writes, "about the duke, your unkell. Itt troubles me, and I beleeve will doe the like to you . . . Oh, without doubt, God will lett just judgments fall on them that publish itt, for itt [w]rongs the dead and the iinnoect. Itt says both the duke and the king poysned King James. The Parliament is sayd to defend itt, and though they deny the putting of itt forth, yett they defend itt. Your good grandmother is in the booke. See (so) Good (God) blesse you and send you all hapinesse, and, for your sake, their armye; ells (else) they doe nott deserve my prayers nor noo bodys ells. If my letter bee broken open att the Comitty, I care nott, for your frind's hommers is equall with my owne, and itt is a damnable booke. Wode (would) itt had been in print befoar you went. The king may have faults, but

note like the publishing this vilaines pamphlett."

"Dear hart, I am reselved not to mise [miss] any occasion that I can have to present my humble dutye to y^r los^p [lordship]. I hope you will faver mee wth y^r deare letters as often as y^r cann, for truely my lord you put y^r selfe upon see many hazards y^r I can never bee satisfied wth hearing from you, for I ame in perpetuall feare of you, and soe are all y^r frinds. Dear joy, have a care of thy selfe, for in thee lyes all my hapines, and nothing is so great a greife to me as to be bar[r]ed from seing you and having y^r company." Addressed to LORD DENBIGH "att Stafforde."

August 24 (1644).—" . . . Thus having noe more to say, I take leave desiring you to beleve that I will allways approve myselfe to be yours ever to com'nd and see fare as it may stand with God's glory and your good. My name I need not tell you. Farwell, my dear hart. You may send to me by my freind that brings you this. If I had but your nam[e] in a bit of paper from your one [own] hand with aswerance [assurance] of your health, it would bee welcom to mee. Good night, my dear."

July 2, 1644.—" . . . Dear joy, I long extreamly to see you, for I love you wth an intier affection. I shoulde have been glade to have been wth you y^e 8th of July, because itt is our weding day, but if itt bee not my good fortune to obtaine y^r hapines, my la: Su: Hambleton [Hamilton] and I will have three chery pies and drinke y^r health, and I will thinke of you all day long, and wishe my selfe wth you. If God bleses mee wth life I intend to doe this, and I desir[e] to live cheifly becaus I love thee and to injoy thy dear company. Else this world is so miserable y^r I shoulde n^t car[e] to live in itt."

As a pendant to the last extract, we make the following, in its way equally characteristic:—

"Pray, sweet heart, doe mee y^e faver if musk millions bee in season, as I hear they are, as to send mee some, for I have a great minde to eat som[e]. And pray, my lord, give Harry Hill order to by mee some combs, boxe and ivory ons [ones], for I want some extreamly. And pray get some body, if it bee to much troble to you, as I know itt must needs, to by mee a tafaty hoode, and a curle one, and two maskes for mee and to [two] for my la: S: Hambleton, and each of us a blacke scarfe either laced or plaine as you please, and either

of us a dozen of gloves, my paterne and hirs."

The manuscripts of Earl De La Warr, (Baron Buckhurst) at Knole Park, Kent, are a very large and important collection, especially from an historical point of view. Here is found "a petition to King James, with Sir Walter Raleigh's autograph at the foot, doubtless the original presented to the king, . . . valuable because the petition has hitherto been known only from copies, and the copies give a wrong date."

Among the petitions, which are very numerous, there is also one by the widow of Meric Casaubon, and two by John Florio (the Holofernes of Shakespeare), who had been tutor to Queen Anne. There are many letters from well-known persons, among which the more noticeable is one from the poet Sir John Suckling, to Mr. W. Wallis, at the Earl of Middlesex's, dated Brussels, May 5, 1630. This letter is said to be "full of wit, and treats of their religion, which, he says, 'suits us young men,' and about confession." We extract the following portion, which is all that the report furnishes us with:—

"I am come out of a country, where the people are of so poor conditions that the greatest part of them would do what Judas did for half the money, and am arrived where the condition of the people is so poor that were there an enemy to be betrayed and a Judas ready to do it, yet would there want a man to furnish out the thirty pieces of silver; where beggar and pride are as inseperable as paint to a court ladies face, or hornes to a citizen's head; where it is as rare a thing to see a man have money, as in London to see a Lord Mayor have store of wit; where the inhabitants have miriads of crosses in their churches and their streets, yet want them in their purses; where the people quake if you talk of millions, and are very infidels concerning the ever coming home again of a plate fleet. In a word, in order to let you understand their state right, it is almost as poor as my description of it. This premised, you will not much wonder if I, with His Majesty's bare picture only, make people bow before me with as much reverence here, as he himself does with his own personal presence at Whitehall, &c., &c. Coining is a forgotten art."

The perils and difficulties connected with travelling in the year 1642, may be guessed from the following summary of a letter (dated November 12) from the Countess of Middlesex to Lord ——:—

"Coming to town to take physic, her coach was stayed by a sea captain, named Mannyard, who sent musquettiers to guard her coach to the Lord Mayor's house; the Lord Mayor sent her, and Lord Buckhurst, and Sir Kenelm Digby, casually to the Counter in Wood-street, notwithstanding he had a protection dated November 8, written and signed by Lord Say and Seal, Lord Wharton and others. Prays him to do as an old and living friend."

In Lord Fitzhardinge's collection at Berkeley Castle there are some Royal Letters; we give the summary of a curious one from Queen Elizabeth:—

Elizabeth R., to my good George Lord Hunsden, my Lord Chamberlain.—"Good George, Because I have hard that before your departing from Bathe nayther your speech was becom much better nor your leggs any strongar," desires to know of his state; she sends the bearer to inquire if the operation of the water has been good. . . Is glad he is no furder (further) from the way of her somer journey; it may be she shall not stick to make 20 or 30 myles compass to visit him "except my present choler against those extreame Waterpowrars do stay me."

The manuscripts of J. J. Rogers, Esq., of Penrose, Cornwall, give some political and social news in the latter half of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century; e.g., 1670, the last of February, London. Jo. Pennecke to John Rogers:—"The Parliament not like to rise by Easter, though the bill for Subsidie gonue by to the House of Lords, and preparing of another bill for an additional excise which will not reach to private families; the first will fall heavy enough on them which are to pay 12d. in the pound out of their just value. . . . I cannot learn of any fleet going out this summer: public money never scarcer, and so I think private also, though the vanities of this place [are] as much as ever; everybody in coach and cloak endeavouring to surpass one the other, and the actions of both sexes I think never worse. There was a great ball to be at Whitehall last night, but 'twas suspended, on what score I know not. Saturday last at night was killed a beadle, the constable's assistant, for attempting a house in or near Whetstone Park, a scandalous place, where was the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Albemarle, and the Duke of Somerset with others at a very unseasonable time. . . . At the same time, though in some

other place, was killed my Lord Hollis's eldest son by a groom which had married my Lord Cullies' daughter, which indignity he thought to have avenged; and also in some other place was one of the Life Guard killed in a duel by one of his fellows."

Amongst a number of poetical transcripts in the possession of Col. Towneley at Towneley Hall, Burnley, has been discovered Chesterfield's Epitaph on Queen Caroline, A.D. 1737, to which Lord Stanhope alludes in his History of England, in the following passage:—"She [the Queen] was censured as implacable in her hatred even to her dying moments, as refusing her pardon to her son, who, it was added, had sent humbly to beseech her blessing. 'And unforgiving, unforgiven died!' cries Chesterfield in some powerful lines which were circulated at the time, but which I have not been able to recover." They are entitled, "Epitaph on Queen Caroline, Consort to George II., who died Nov. 20th, 1737," and are as follows:—

Here lies un pity'd both by Church and State
The subject of their flattery and hate,
Flattered by those on whom her favor flowed,
Hated for favours impiously bestowed.
She ever aimed the Churchmen to betray,
In hopes to share the [ir] arbitrary sway,
In Tindall's and in Hoadeley's paths she trod,
A hypocrite in all but disbelief in God.
Promoted luxury, encouraged vice,
Herself a slave to sordid avarice.
True friendship's tender love ne'er touch'd her heart,
Falsehood appeared, in vain disguised by art.
Fawning and haughty, when familiar rude,
And never gracious seemed but to delude.
Inquisitive in trifling mean affairs,
Heedless of public good and orphan's tears;
To her own offspring mercy she denied,
And unforgiving, unforgiven died.

At Emmanuel College, Cambridge, is preserved Bennet's Register of the College, "a work compiled from its earliest records and probably other sources, some of which are no longer in existence. It forms two small folio volumes, closely written upon paper, and bound in rough calf. It bears marks of great industry in its execution, and was compiled (or, more probably, it being a very laborious work, brought to a conclusion), by William Bennet, Fellow of the College, in 1773. He became Bishop of Cork in 1790, and of Cloyne in 1794. At p. 72 of this work is found "Manners of the University in 1534," beginning with the following curious passage:—

"Upon Shroffe Sunday at night there were 27 or 30 getters abroad from their Colleges; and that night they coursed the V.-Chancellor's Depute, Dr. Buckmaster, yn at the King's Hall Gate, and

when he had gotten in, he called them knaves, and they made answer, if they had him without they would make him a knave. . . . The same night was Parson Yaxley drinking at the Angell untill nine o'clock, and in going then about the back door of Burdon Hostel, he lost his gown and his tippet; and the next night there was stripes given betwixt Mr. Alyson of the King's Hall and Symson, and either hurt the other with daggers very sore. The Sunday in the Cleansing week [week before Passion week] the warden of the Grey Freyers, Bachelor Disse, preached, and after the prayers he was so abashed and astonished, that he could neither say it by harte, nor rede it on his paper, and so he was faine to come down from the pulpit with this protestation, 'That he was never in that takinge before.' St. Deny's night they came to the Vice-Chancellor three or fourscore getters abroad, knocking, and bid the company, 'Come out, knavys, cowards and heretics;' whereupon the company drove them away with stones and staves, and they cried fyre, to fyre the gates, and they called a Congregation in this manner:—'Congregatio Regentium tantum in Scholis publicis, cum gladiis et fustibus;' that night also, between seven and eight, they got Mr. Polley of Christ's College out of the house by a train [deviee] and so bate him sore and pulled off his hair; and Mr. Goldston, of Peter House, for fear leapt over the College wall and so came naked to Trumpington [a village some two miles distant!]; for he thought, verily, when he heard the noise, that the outcry had rison to destroy the University."

These curious specimens of academic morals, we are told, are taken from a kind of journal which seems to have been kept by one of the University Bedels. The following is a copy of a curious letter to one of the masters of the College, Dr. Sancroft (uncle of the Archbishop), from the Earl of Westmoreland [Mildmay Fane], dated "Apthorpe, 1633;" "Master, For so I must still call you, as being a member of your College still, though discontinance perhaps hath wiped my name out of your buttery tables, or raz'd it quite out of your manciple's books; yet being to wayte upon his majestie, who, I hear, intends very shortly to grace our University with his presence, I crave the favour of a second admittance into your Colledge for that time; for I would be loth to lodge in any other then where I suckt my first milk, and where by descent my love and

best endearments must ever be entayled on all occasions to do you the best offices I can, with the title of your truly affectionate friend—WESTMORLAND."

At page 253 of the work to which we have been alluding, there is a very singular account of a prophecy, made by John Sadler, fellow of Emmanuel, and afterwards master of Magdalene, and town clerk of the City of London—a somewhat curious conjunction of offices, by the way. Being ejected from the mastership at the Restoration, he retired into Dorsetshire, where Cathbert Bound, minister of Warmwell, copied down the following prophecy, as uttered by him; from the dictation, he alleged, of a spirit seen by himself in the room at the time:—

"The matter in the paper was as
the City 'ave
h

corporal punishment was inflicted upon undergraduates in this University, as late as the year 1669. This confirms the assertion made by John Aubrey, the antiquary (hitherto subjected to considerable doubt), that similar discipline was in use at Oxford; and it shows that there is no great improbability in the story told of Milton having had to submit to similar punishment, when an undergraduate at Christ's, a college which had close relations with Emmanuel."

At St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, there is an old admission book in existence—a small oblong volume—which professes to begin with the year 1642. In this the names of several remarkable persons are mentioned as having been admitted. In 1671, John Beversham, pensioner, and his brother Benjamin, in 1675. They were sons of Dr. James Beversham, of Keltishall, and nephews of Sir William Beversham. After being committed to prison, by Dr. Eachard, master of the College, acting as Vice-Chancellor, for the offence of robbing a tinker of six pounds on the highway, were, at the ensuing assizes, sentenced to death. King Charles the Second, however, sent his order (15th March, 1681)

Sheriff to stay execution, and they finally released, James surviving, it is believed, to succeed to the baronetcy.

February, 1676, is the entrance of Cutts, fellow-commoner, afterwards famous in history as the "Lord Cutts," of Brough's times. Under April 20th, the same year, is the admission of Wotton, as pensioner; he was nine years and eight months old when admitted, and took his degree when thirteen years old. Monk, in his Life of Bentley, that Dr. Eachard has made this entry against his admission, "Vix decem virorum, nec Hammondo nec Grotio fundus;" this note, however, is now nowhere to be found. Wotton was the "Vice-Chancellor's Senior Optime," on taking his degree (an honorary position given to three of the persons who graduated at the same time as the first, or Senior Wrangler, and who were selected by the Vice-Chancellor, and the Senior and Junior Proctor, respectively, their names appearing in the list before that of the person who, in reality, was the Second Wrangler; this usage ended about 1791).* Bentley, who was afterwards Wotton's

before the Deputy
the county, and made
the truth of this, before
Colonel Giles Strangways
, many of whom are yet alive,
ree or four days after he told it
named, CATHBERT BOUND."

in the 'Admonition Book' of the
me.—Sir, the commissioners remark in

"From, among many other curious
College, &c., there is evident proof that
their rep-
particular

* This custom will not appear quite so unaccountable, when we mention that until 1753 Wranglers and Senior Optimes were included in one class.

great friend and literary coadjutor, came out Third Wrangler in the same year. In 1679, the year in which Wotton and Bentley graduated, Benjamin Beversham, above-mentioned, graduated also. At this College there is also a paper folio, known as "Daniel Mills's Register," among the entries in which is that of Oliver, second son of Oliver Cromwell, of Huntingdon, (afterwards the Lord Protector) who was admitted as a pensioner of this college. It is believed that this fact is not mentioned anywhere else.

We will bring this paper to a conclusion with a very curious document in the collection of the Honourable Mrs. Isabella Erskine-Murray, of Aberdona, in the county of Clackmannan, relating to Lewis, or Ludovick, the second Duke of Lennox, whose family were the nearest heirs of King James the Sixth, on the father's side, and for whose "virtuous nurture and honourable education" the king issued written instructions from Holyrood House, on December 1, 1583. Notwithstanding the duke's royal and sumptuous upbringing, he early entered into the known as the "pasement bond," a with John, the Earl of Mar, and several other noblemen, interdicting them from wearing clothes, &c., with "ments." The original bond, in this tion, runs as follows:—

" We, vndersubscrivand, cons how we ar abusit be counterfaitements of gold, siluer, and silk sett our clothing of tymes without our lege and direction, quhilk shortil cumis sa vncumly and vnhonest th coist isoissit. Thairfoir, and for vtherisonable causes moving ws, we have av and interdytit our selfis from weirin ony clething to be maid in tyme cur after the daite heirof that salbe ony begaried, laid ower, or smered with o kynd of pasimentis greit or small, plai or a jowir, bissettis, lilkynnis, cordownis, or frengeis of gold, siluer, or silk, within or without, quhill the term of Witsunday in the yeir of God 1^m v^c four scoir fourtene yeiris, under the pane of ane hundredre pund money of the realme to be pait be every ane of ws doand in the contrair toties *quoties* to be bestowit vpoun the banquet in Johnne Killochis hous, and forfalting of the garment to the vse of the first fidair that can espy it, and that every ane of ws salbe executour of the effec of this our band aganis vtheris als oft as neid beis. In witness herof we haue

subscrinit thir presentis with our handes at Edinburgh the sext day of May the yeir of God 1^m v^c four scoir threteeen yeiris.

" Prouiding that we may weir away our claithis alreddy maid, without prejudice heirof

ALEXR. L. HOME.	LENOX.
A. L. SPYNIE.	J. E. MAR.
S. JAMES LYNDSAY.	J. MORTOUN.
MICHAELL ELPHIN-STOUN.	J. MELROS.
S. THOMAS ARESKYNE.	THO. MR. GLAMMISS.
SIR W. KEITH.	BLANTYRE.
J. LOWYS.	DAVID SETON OF FARBROTH.
	SIR G. HOWME.
	" J. LESLY.
	" J. HAY."

These noblemen and gentlemen thus set their fellow-countrymen a good example in avoiding shams, which might be followed with great advantage at the present day.

For

HUNDRED.

WE cannot better term a series of sketches of London life presented itself in the year seventeen and seventy-four, than by a notice doings at the festive season of Christ.

One Mr. Dobson exhibited his

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 224, "New Year's Day in London One Hundred Years Ago;" Vol. 11, p. 561, "Easter in London One Hundred Years Ago;" also, Vol. 12, p. 25th summer in London a Hundred Years Ago."

whims and humorous oddities," three times a day, at "Punch's Theatre, being a commodious room at the White Hart, on the Terrace Walk in Oxford Street, near Portman Square." Besides the whims and oddities, there was rich store of other attractions—a drama of Princess Elizabeth, played by "artificial comedians as large as life;" a hornpipe by Little Ben the Sailor; a pantomimic entertainment; a "grand piece of mechanism, called the Temple of Apollo, with the heathen gods and goddesses;" and the coronation of King George and Queen Charlotte. Another aspirant for public favour was a foreign Hussar, who exhibited at the Ram's Head, in Tooley Street, "mathematical, philosophical, and uncommon deceptions, which were never attempted by any person but himself." He also performed "an act of gunnery," and gave some singing. The room (he took care to inform his visitors) was illuminated with wax-lights, and kept comfortably warm; and (humble enough, in all conscience) the performance would commence at seven o'clock "if ten people were in the room." In a room at the Queen's Head, opposite the Adelphi, an amazing mermaid made her Christmas débüt. She was declared to be "the only one of its kind ever seen in England, or in Europe, since the Archiduck of Austria's, which is upwards of two hundred and twenty-six years old. This wonderful nymph of the sea, half a woman and half a fish, is near three feet long, and has fins, gills, ears, arms, hands, fingers, breasts, and shoulders; as also a contiguous scale covering the fish part."

The royal doings comprised a state visit of the king to the House of Lords. It was on Christmas Eve: the royal assent was given to several bills, and the House was prorogued for three weeks. The king and queen took their departure from London on Boxing Day, and went in a post-chaise to Kew, there to pass a few days. The Right Honourable Lord North, during the holidays, held a levée at the Cockpit in Whitehall—a curious name for an official residence. The master and wardens of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, a little before Christmas, presented the almanacs for the ensuing year to the Archbishop of me.—Sioury, the Bishop of London, and

"Friend Chancellor, "according to ancient College, " Bluecoat boys appear to have their regarded much more as really poor particular than they are now; for we are told

that, on Christmas Day, a gentleman gave them rice plum-pudding for dinner; he allotted half-a-pound to each, at a cost of about one penny per head; and it was remarked, as "a pity that this wholesome article (rice) is not more used among the poor." Prisoners, like Blue-coat boys, were worse treated then than they are now: it was the age of imprisonment for debt, when defaulters who were badly off in the world had hard fare indeed. An advertisement was issued at Christmas, from Wood Street Counter (a gaol long ago removed) to the effect that, "We, the poor prisoners of the Crown Wards of the above prison, return our thanks to Stephen Sayre, Esq., a late worthy sheriff, for upwards of two hundred stone weight of good beef and other things (over and above our common allowance) sent us in weekly during his shrievalty—a most seasonable relief to a great number of real distressed debtors." Fleet Prison yearned for such kindness as was shown at Wood Street: "The poor prisoners, belonging to the begging grate of his Majesty's Prison of the Fleet, most humbly implore charity and assistance of all good and well-disposed Christians at this severe season of the year. We being nine in number, and not having any daily allowance, are almost perishing for want of the common necessities of life, not having any firing, or scarcely clothing."

At that very time, John Howard, the philanthropist, was exerting himself to bring about improvements in the cruel rigour of our prisons. Visiting one of the gaols, and wishing to go into one of the dungeons, he found that the door could not be opened. Further search revealed the fact that the place was filled with rubbish and dirt, which some felons had flung in at a side window. They had worked diligently under the straw of their cell, making a large hole in the floor, and digging through eighteen inches of foundation, with the intention of escaping that very night. The destitute prisoners were, in those days, almost starved; while the ronches were so badly guarded that they frequently escaped.

The two Theatres Royal had their Christmas pantomimes, more genuinely humorous, but much less gorgeous and less prolonged, than those of modern times. Sadlers' Wells had a medley of entertainments, not forgetting the "real water," which was a great attraction. The Italian Opera was open. A curious advertisement

appeared in the daily papers from a luckless Italian singer, calling to mind the days when there were no swift steamers to shorten the voyage from Calais to Dover, and no railways thence to London:—"The manager of the opera having insisted on Signor Lovattini performing this night in 'La Buona Figliuola,' notwithstanding the violent cold and cough which he contracted in crossing the sea, and going in an open eart from the seashore to Deal, upwards of three miles, in the rain, which has confined him ever since his arrival in London, so as to prevent him making his appearance soon, and still continues so very ill as to put it out of his power to perform his part, Signor L. begs the indulgence of the nobility and gentry and the public, and hopes that they will, with their wonted humanity and generosity, attribute to his indisposition whatever deficiencies may be found in his performance of this night." Poor signor! he seems to have been rather hardly used by his task-master. Another advertisement, in the Morning Post, illustrates a singular mode of expressing disapproval of managerial doings. "Many subscribers to the Opera present their compliments to Mr. Yates; beg the favour to know whether he intends to regale them during the season with a Spilletta, a Sestini, and that young thing that sings the dumb part in La Buona Figliuola; as they have paid twenty guineas for each subscription, expect from him singers that will not offend the ear and the sight. They assure Mr. Yates they have never seen such incapables before at the theatre." Somewhat similar is the following:—"One of the disappointed public wishes to know the reasons which induce the manager of Covent Garden Theatre to continue Mr. Bensley in the part of Iago, when he has enrolled Mr. Lee in his company, who is universally admired in the part." We may shrewdly guess that Mr. Lee himself, or one of his friends, penned this feeler.

Two or three amusements of an impromptu kind enlivened the Christmas. "On Saturday night two tradesmen, passing through Clerkenwell, called at a public-house, and after drinking awhile, grew so very generous that they called in every passenger who chose to be treated; and at eight on Sunday morning had to pay for seventy pots of beer and thirty-six quarts of ale, besides Geneva, &c." The two tradesmen would doubtless have found equally willing

visitors at any time during the last hundred years. One must not approve of Lynch-law; nevertheless there is something delectable about the following:—"A Jew cheated a sailor in a West India ship in the Pool, by selling him a ring and pair of buckles of base metal as of gold. The sailors stripped him, tarred and feathered him from head to foot, and set him ashore; he was then hunted by men and children to his home, two miles distant."

Two or three weddings supplied food for newspaper gossip. A Mr. Thomas Benson, aged seventy-six, married Miss Naney Robson, a lady about one-fourth that age, said to be highly accomplished, and to have a fortune of two thousand pounds. Whereupon a moralising correspondent said, "To describe the behaviour of both during the ceremony would be needless. Let it suffice to say she received the old dotard with her beautiful eyes bathed in tears, while her heart seemed to disavow the action of her hand. How often do we see the most adorable, whose fortunes are dependent on their avaricious parents, sacrificed to persons they cannot love! Short-sighted mortals, is it thus you consult the happiness of your children?" On Boxing Day, and the day after, more than forty couples were married at Shoreditch church, including a venerable pair whose united ages amounted to a hundred and forty-nine years. An ardent bridegroom at the West End appears to have met with a mortifying check:—"An eminent tradesman near Piccadilly set off in wedding haste to Scotland, with a rich young lady, a neighbour of his, in order to be married: but being overtaken on the road by some relations of the lady, who had great ascendancy over her, the journey ended, and she returned to town with her friends, leaving the disappointed lover to the melancholy reflection of having lost twelve thousand pounds." People often inserted matrimonial advertisements in the papers, then as now; but there was one in the Morning Post of a queer kind:—"Any lady of extensive fortune, of any age, to whom a title of great dignity to herself and heirs for ever would be desirable, may receive a proposal strictly honourable and delicate, and very material to her future happiness, independent of the title, which is highly respectable." But this was beaten by another advertisement, which appeared in the same newspaper about the same time,

and which purported to come from Mrs. Collier, of Bandyleg Walk, Bermondsey, who was to be applied to by any one who wished to forward an answer to the advertisement:—"An undeniable baronet of England, though reduced, is willing to marry any lady that is so generous as to alter his present distresses." His excellencies of mind and person are duly set forth, with hints at a prospect (more or less shadowy) of his coming into a fortune some day or other. "An open display of his circumstances will be made, and expects as generous a return to be repaid in the bosom of the strongest fidelity and honour, whose gratitude will ever bestow the most lavish love, in return for her immediate relief to his distresses."

Public meetings were occasionally held in those days, though with nothing like the frequency to which we are now accustomed. One was of a very curious character. A meeting of the publicans of the different parishes of Westminster and its liberties was held at the Queen of Bohemia's Head, Wych-street, to raise a sum of money for carrying a bill into parliament, "Obliging all persons who send for beer out of doors to find their own pots, which will be a means of their losing not so many as they daily do." It would not be easy to beat this in our day.

If we would know what kind of household arrangements prevailed in the Cripplegate neighbourhood, we find that, at a house in Moor-lane, where a child of four months old was left in bed while the mother was cleaning another room, a hog entered, dragged the child out of bed, and before discovery took place, ate off the fingers and part of the face. If we are discussing the serious question of juvenile delinquency, we find an illustration in the fact that, at that particular Christmas, among eighty-four persons of both sexes imprisoned in Newgate under sentence of transportation, seventy-six were under twenty years of age. At one morning's police sittings, five charity children, none of them more than eleven years old, were brought before the sitting alderman at Guildhall, charged with picking pockets; on their examination, the fact came to light that these neglected urchins were accustomed to go out in a gang into the streets at nights, pick pockets, and sell the pocket-handkerchiefs, good and bad alike, at fourpence each, to a buyer in

Whitecross-street. If the bailiff-world is occupying our attention, we learn that, "On Tuesday afternoon a man, being pursued by a bailiff, ran up two pair of stairs at a house in Whitechapel, the door being open. The bailiff ran up after him. When despairing of escape by any other means, the man got out of the window, and dropped to the pent-house, and from thence to the street. The constable followed him out of the window, but fell and broke his leg in two places." The man of ingenuity was here too much for the man of justice. About the same time, disaster fell in the opposite direction. "A gentleman in Red Lion-street, dreadfully threatened by a bailiff last week, went to bed in great agony, and the next morning his hair was turned perfectly grey from a very deep black." If a question were asked whether people were run over in those days, when the streets of London were worse paved but less crowded than now, we may read that "A coroner's inquest sat on the body of John Bolton, at the Sun in Clement's-lane, Wych-street, who was run over by His Majesty's state coach. Verdict, accidental death. A messenger was sent to enquire what family he had; and as he has left only a widow, an annuity of twenty pounds a year was settled on her for life." What the king's state coach had to do in Wych-street, we are not informed.

In these days of adulteration, we may perchance imagine that the public were better served a hundred years ago. But let us dismiss the thought; for we find that a butterman sold Epping fresh butter at sixteenpence per lump, and that the butter was found to be good when tasted; but when an unwary purchaser took home a lump, he (or she) found it to be mainly a picco of white clay, plated with only a thin layer of butter. If we marvel at being told that the American war of the revolution, then just commencing, affected the lighting of saloons and elegant rooms in London, we find an explanation thus: "On account of there being no importation of wax from America, the wax-chandlers in London are reduced to the necessity of employing mutton suet to supply the deficiency; by which means we have no wax candles this season in London." If a gunpowder explosion at Hounslow, such as we have every now and then, should lead us to enquire whether that locality was free from such disasters a hundred years ago, we have only to read the following:—

"Yesterday, was buried at Honnslow church, the remains of the person who was blown up on Monday last, at Mr. Taylor's powder mills there. The day after the accident, they found his head a quarter of a mile from his body."

Advertisements have ever been among the best signs or indications of the state of society at a particular time, in regard alike to domestic usages, food, dress, home accommodation, luxuries, trade and industry, division of employments, travelling, and the multitude of things and doings that make the sum total of everyday life. This was not less the case a century ago than it is now.

Let us put together a bundle of wants—advertisements relating to things or persons wanted. Apothecaries are now regarded as professional men, who may be articled, but not apprenticed, to learn their craft: a century ago, however, the case was different, as the following will show—"Wanted, a journeyman apothecary; good wages will be given." An application for a master, who will do his duty to an intended apprentice, is remarkably straightforward and honest—"A tradesman of London, in some reputation, wants to place his son apprentice to a creditable tallow-chandler and shopkeeper, in a large trading town in the country, not further than forty or fifty miles off, or a less distance. The shopkeeper must be a sober, industrious, good man, of the Church of England, who will keep a strict eye over his apprentice." Niggers were not slaves when in England; yet was their position tinged with something like servitude, as this curious advertisement shows—"Ran away from his master's service, on Saturday last, a negro young fellow, called Trim, lately christened James Smith by a negro parson. If the said servant will return to his duty, his former errors will be forgiven; but, if he doth not appear in a few days, a reward will be offered for apprehending and securing him." In these railway days of ours, when a man may travel anywhere and any day without troubling himself about the doings of other travellers, the following reads oddly—"Wanted a third in a postchaise, with a gentleman and a little boy, to Grantham or Stamford, any day this week." A person who made a purchase while drunk, adopted this singular mode of settling matters right with the shopkeeper—"Whereas, a person looked out a parcel of linendrapery goods on Wednesday, the twenty-first

instant, and paid, in part, some of the money; the shop supposed to be in or near Gracechurch Street, but being in liquor has forgot the same. It is desired that the shopkeeper, where these goods were bought, will bring them to Messrs. Sliskith and Wilson, opposite the Monument, and shall receive the remaining part of the purchase-money." An advertiser wanted five shifts, which had disappeared thus—"Stolen, yesterday, out of Mr. Courtoy's dining-room in Oxendon Street, near the Haymarket, about one, by a man dressed like a servant, drest in a drab-coloured coat, leather breeches, and a round hat, five callico shifts, some marked in the bosom with A.P., one callico, one holland, and one with broad tuckers." The way in which the masculine garments are mixed up with the feminine in this description is rather droll. One advertisement puzzles us—"Lost, on Friday last, a sack fat, marked B. & J. L., going from Carnaby Market to Clement's Inn. Five shillings reward." What is, or was, a sack fat? Watches and their appendages, in those days, must have differed greatly from those we are now familiar with—"Left in a coach, a green fish-skin watch, set round with six rows of small silver studs; on the dial-plate is marked Nicklin, Birmingham. It had a double steel chain, with a steel seal, viz., a dove standing on a pedestal, with an olive branch in her mouth." Among the wants were places under government, for which money was offered in the most unblushing way, with the assurance that "strict secrecy may be relied on."

Advertisements of things on sale, or services offered, were, of course, as they always are, more abundant than those relating to things or services wanted. An astrologer advertised his skill for the service of farmers and the public generally; pointing out that, owing to the position of the Sun and Saturn among the constellations, the bad weather would end at the close of the month, Mr. Wilkes would rise in dignity and influence, and the American war would prove disastrous to the British government. Messrs. Kirkman, whose descendants still flourish as pianoforte makers, announced that the harpsichord made for the Empress of Russia might be seen, for a few days, before being packed for shipment; while Messrs. Birch, an equally well-known name in Cornhill, announced real turtle at eight shillings a quart, at six hours' notice; with the addendum, that they "have

beginn to make the much-admired plum cakes for Twelfth Day." Another Cornhill man advertised anodyne necklaces, at five shillings each; "after wearing of which about their neck but one night, children have immediately cut their teeth with safety, who were just before on the brink of the grave with their teeth." The belief in anodyne necklaces seems to have pretty well passed away. An advertiser who pitched his tent at the Marquis of Granby, Fleet Market, had for sale "a very curious collection of canary birds, firm in feather and full of song; sing the nightingale's, titlark's, and woodcock's notes to great perfection." A bee-servant advertised that "If any gentlemen will be pleased to try his performance, he assures them that he will double their stock every year; if they begin with twenty stall hives, the second year they shall have forty, the third year eighty, &c." We know something about the sale of advowsons in the church, but an advertisement offering a chaplaincy for sale reads strangely:—"A chaplaincy of Dragoons in the British establishment to be disposed of. None but principals need apply." There was an "order" of some kind or other held at the Queen's Head in Lincoln's Inn Fields (a Queen's Head Yard now turns out of that street, probably denoting the site of the hostelry). An advertisement stated that "The Noble Grand earnestly requests the favour of your (the members') attendance at the lodge, to be held this day, at eight o'clock precisely; as some affairs of consequence to every individual of this Order will be debated on."

Altogether the newspapers of a hundred years ago show us a series of strange pictures of our ancestors—as strange to us, as our habits and modes of life, as exemplified in the broad sheet of to-day's supplement of the Times, would, in all probability, be to them; and with this reflection we take leave of the England and the Englishmen who were spending a merry Christmas a century ago.

THE FRENCH MARKET AT NEW ORLEANS.

ONE hears but doleful accounts, now-a-days, of New Orleans. Her glory has departed: on her once bold and brilliant brow is written Ichabod. What with the disastrous results of the American Civil War, the damage to commerce, the mis-

rule of ignorant negroes, the ravages of "carpet-baggers," crevasses (or extensive inundations from the Mississippi), and latterly downright bloodshed, and temporary revolution, only stamped out by the heel of military authority, the once proud and prosperous Crescent City is at a deplorable discount. Excepting hapless Charleston, her pioneer in secession, no Southern metropolis has suffered so much. The whilome opulent and prodigal cotton and sugar-planters, whose business and expenditure constituted two-thirds of the prosperity of the place, are ruined, or struggling ineffectually to accommodate themselves to an entirely new and half-chaotic state of things; the brokers and merchants are impoverished; the people generally discouraged, and all but despairing. In common with all the South, they have paid, and are paying, a terrible price for the folly of secession; the bitterness of the punishment being enhanced by the inevitable reflection that they brought it upon themselves. For there now are but few intelligent Southerners who will not acknowledge that the attempt to destroy, or at least to dismember, a real republic, in which liberty was the rule and slavery the accident, and to establish a sham one, on the basis of their baleful "institution," was a mistake, if not a crime.

But how great was the prosperity of New Orleans in the old ante-secession times, despite its origin! What a wonderful sight was its levee! correctly described by an American writer as "a spectacle without parallel on the face of the globe, because presenting the whole scene of the city's industry in one view." What miles of steamboats there were; what acres of cotton-bales and sugar hogsheads; and how various, how picturesque, how busy were its population! Besides the diversities of native growth and colour—in themselves continental—there you beheld a miscellaneous concourse of English, French, Germans, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, Greeks, and Sicilians; exhibiting quite a kaleidoscopic medley of the human family. How brilliant, too, was Canal-street, with its beautiful Creole belles of American descent, faultlessly-attired transatlantic Frenchwomen, and dark-eyed representatives of the Spanish inhabitants of the city! What monuments of garish prosperity and semi-tropical brightness, luxury and profusion, were its vast hotels, where the planters' wives and

daughters flaunted in morning silks and satins, and low-necked dresses, and sparkling jewellery, and innumerable rings over their kid-gloved fingers; while their husbands and fathers would "knock down a few bales" before breakfast, in treating friends to "champagne-cocktails;" or congregate in the far-famed Rotunda of the St. Charles; or stroll out to survey the melancholy rows of wistful-looking, decently-dressed slaves, standing on view outside the "auction-marts;" and to look at their teeth, or "feel of" their thews and sinews, with no more delicacy or consideration than if they were so many horses. From their labour, indeed, was the opulence of New Orleans mainly derived. And wherever you went, or whatever you saw, the trail of the serpent was over it all—the omnipresent, sickening taint of slavery. It was that which made the brilliant Crescent City, notwithstanding its many attractions, a kind of national Alsatia, whither tended, by natural gravitation, all the scum and sediment of an heterogeneous population, to openly practise, with perfect impunity, all the vices conceivable, and revel in a perennial carnival of licentiousness, rowdyism, and murder. Such was New Orleans up to the time of its punishment and comparative purification by the scourge of civil war.

Perhaps there was no more characteristic locality within its precincts than the famous French market, situate on the townward margin of the levee, adjacent to Jackson-square. It comprised three separate divisions, devoted respectively to the sale of meat, vegetables, and seeds. There was nothing remarkable architecturally about these erections, which were only so many open sheds, containing shops or stalls; but their salesmen and frequenters—the scene in general—formed one of the acknowledged "lions" of the city.

To see the French market to advantage it was necessary to get up pretty early; most businesses being transacted in New Orleans, as in other semi-tropical or tropical localities, before the heat of the day. Accordingly we will cross the square named after the hero of the city at six a.m.; what time the sun, whose good example we have imitated, is making a long and fantastic shadow of the equestrian statue in the centre, and throwing it slantwise athwart the shelly paths. After pausing at the book-stalls at the further angle of the square, and glancing at the German and other publications there

exposed for sale—with their queer, old-fashioned illustrations, which are involuntarily suggestive of Albert Durer, and in which the faces, animals, trees, and sky all seem carved in lignum vite—into the meat market we plunge incontinently.

A great clatter of coffee-cups, a cheery chumping, as of chopping meat, various cries and polyglot invitations to buy, an omnipresent hum and bustle, with other sights, scents, and sounds of traffic—all these await us. The butchers are naturally lords paramount of the scene. Here are butchers rotund, sturdy and civil, the Anglicism of their features Americanised by three generations' descent; butchers of the old French type, so elderly, clean-shaven, and obsequious, that you would not be surprised at a pigtail being whisked into your face during their brisk gesticulations; butchers akin to the modern Parisian, with the closest-cropped heads and the most hirsute of beards; butchers more or less remarkable, but all busy and all more or less animated. Here, also, are some negro butchers, but generally in a subordinate capacity. The demeanour of all present, whether buyers or sellers, white, black, or parti-coloured, is less brusque and practically democratic than that observable at a similar scene in the North. There is, indeed, a mutual, simple courtesy, very pleasant to contemplate. It contrasts remarkably with what one sees at some of the minor markets of New York City, say Jefferson, with its horrid avenues of bleeding and greasy carcasses; its bawling butchers, its shouldering, pushing, crowding, and jostling purchasers; its noisome and rat-haunted floors. A butcher from such a locality would be out of place in the French market of New Orleans—a roaring phenomenon, frightening away, instead of attracting, customers.

Let us stand aside from the throng and scrutinise some of the most characteristic personages of the scene. There is one, an old lady, quietly dressed, perhaps in mourning, attended by her one negro, dutifully carrying her market-basket, to convey home her humble purchases. Upon that slave his mistress absolutely depends for her subsistence: he "hires out" to some hotel or merchant, bringing her his earnings every Saturday night, to be rewarded by a third of them and general kindness of treatment, and devoting Sunday to waiting on her. The

time will come when that negro will run away to enlist in a Northern regiment, leaving the old lady to do her marketing alone, with ragged halves of dollar bills and street-car tickets for money, when it will be very bad for her—a type of thousands of Southern folks. Poor old body! she has no cause for quarrel with the Union, and will wish she had never outlived its disruption, especially if any who are akin to her (as is but too probable) lay down their lives on some of the bloody battle-fields of that tremendous conflict.

Observe that shrewd-looking, business-like man, dressed in a suit of black alpaca, resembling broadcloth, at whose appearance a butcher—the one possessing the best-furnished stall in the market—promptly abandons two or three less important customers, turning them over to the attentions of his less popular assistant. Sharply he glances over the goodly joints of meat on the counter, or dependent from the row of hooks; decisively he gives his orders, respectfully are they listened to, and promptly obeyed. With the air of a man whose time is of value, he bustles off to the poultreer's, the fishmonger's, the vegetable market, whither we will presently follow. Could you mistake him? That is the caterer for some great hotel or popular restaurant, who, whatever the prices, must have "the best the market affords." A Northern man by birth, like nearly all of his class, he has made money in "Dixie"—is, indeed, rich—and assimilated himself intensely to the feelings and convictions of its inhabitants. You may more easily convince a born Southerner, that there is anything wrong in slavery, than him.

See, he has just exchanged a nod and a word of recognition with another personage, worth looking at. This is a middle-aged man, attired in white from head to foot, with a broad-brimmed Panama hat, and smoking a curiously-curved and angular cigar, of choice "plantation" brand, which he probably imports from Cuba himself. He is clean-shaven, and looks not unlike an English country gentleman or merchant; though his countenance is, perhaps, too sunburnt, light-toned, and nervous to entirely justify that comparison. His mien is quiet, intent, and self-respecting—less demonstrative than that of most Northern men; albeit, very likely beneath that tranquil exterior slumber fiery passions, apt enough to blaze

forth on occasion. That is some sugar or cotton planter, whom curiosity has tempted from his luxurious bed at the St. Louis, the St. Charles, or the Veranda, to view the scene. He owns some thousands of acres, up or down the river, or in the interior, and perhaps a couple of hundred negroes, who love him as much as is possible in such a relationship; indeed, their greatest apprehension is that his death will someday necessitate a sale or division of them—one of the direst contingencies inevitable to slave life. He is, in sooth, a kind master, and a liberal and courteous gentleman. Visit him on his plantation, you shall be entertained with the utmost hospitality. Only on one topic he is a monomaniac—of course that of slavery. If he could but look forward a few years and foresee what it is to cost him! His sons will not be persuaded from accepting commissions in the Confederate army; his slaves will run off; he himself will be ruined; perhaps his very plantation will be turned into a Yankee camp. Happily he is all unconscious of the future, and so strolls on pleasantly enough, enjoying the spectacle, his cigar, and the fine summer morning.

Let us rest awhile at this coffee-stall, and refresh ourselves with a cup of that fragrant beverage, eschewing, however the small strips of highly-bilious pie-crust, gratuitously thrown in by the vendor, a civil negro, who talks French with surprising correctness. Here we can continue our observations, and indulge in such random physiognomical disquisitions as suggest themselves to us.

Why do Frenchwomen look agreeable, not to say charming, without bonnet or head-dress, out-of-doors, when other women—English, American, or German—appear bold, or dowdy, or both? How, with so little capital of real beauty to trade upon, do they contrive to produce so generally pleasing an effect? Why are the countenances of the lower order of Frenchmen, both at home and abroad, not unfrequently so coarse and expressive of latent bad passions, that we instinctively identify them as the legitimate representatives of the sans culottes of the First Revolution? Did the author of *Manon Lescaut* surmise, when he transported his heroine to New Orleans in a convict-ship, that the lineaments of the French felon, as of the honest emigrant, poor, starved, beaten Jacques Bonhomme,

might survive for over a century, and be recognisable in their descendants, in the French market, of a Sunday morning? Lastly, why do Frenchwomen, when aged, grow loose in figure, corpulent, and shabby? and why are some old Frenchmen so awfully ugly? There is one (battling over a dish of attenuated sausages and cocks'-combs) whose countenance resembles that of a misanthropic toad, and whose old toothless jaws work and work, even as his wrinkled fingers fumble in his porte-monnaie for the grudged and stipulated price.

Leaving this department, its frequenters, an overpowering smell of meat behind, we emerge upon an irregular open space, occupied by stalls and sidewalk pedlars. Here is a little world of traffic, including all sorts of miscellaneous merchandise. Bakers' stalls, stalls for the sale of cheap jewellery, and ornaments, confectionery, tinware, boots and shoes, essences, pipes, sausages, crinoline, thread and yarn, brooms, plants, crockery, hose, fruit, cheap edibles, and much more than one can either recollect or chronicle, engross the entire area, bordered to the right and left by a lane of al fresco merchants, and terminating on the other in an island of three dusky red houses. Of course these out-of-doors' tradesfolks—the gnerillas of commerce—and their wares have their peculiarities. Here you may see the sharply-cut face of a French bakeress retailing bread in a shape which literally justifies its appellation of the staff of life, or fashioned like a hoop, or an immense eel tied in a double knot and pulled tight; there is a fat negress, her head decorated with the inevitable turban-handkerchief, tempting a comely mulatto-woman, with a soft-skinned, curly-haired boy clinging to her skirts, by the display of gingerbread fishes or dolls that resemble rudimentary babies; elsewhere, a slight girl, whose refined face would proclaim her lady, were her dress thrice as shabby as it is, turns away from a fantastically-shaped eau-de-cologne bottle enthusiastically recommended by a hook-nosed Italian. Nor these alone; there are entire groups that, skilfully transferred to canvas, might make a painter's reputation.

Such, for instance, as that Indian family of three women, as many children, and two young men, the latter looking on in bright tartan shawls and lordly idleness, while the squaws squat silently

upon the ground awaiting customers for their stock of roots, herbs, and gumbo—the latter material for delicious soup, looking like green powder. There is a brisk demand for it, especially among the coloured population, and the contents of the little sacks diminish apace, while plenty of "picayunes" and "bits" are put into the almost passive hand of one of the women. All the party have long, straight black hair and faces corroborative of the Tartar hypothesis of the Indian race.

Passing amidst and through the motley throng of Creoles, Degoes, Indians, Negroes, Sicilians and others (by the way, why do all Sicilians look sinister, as if they carried knives and yearned to test their sharpness on you?) we enter the vegetable market, and find ourselves surrounded by the bountiful Pomona and Flora of Louisiana. Groves of bananas of various colours, from green, through pale yellow, up to deep red and purple-black, apples, oranges, limes, and lemons, grapes, cocoa-nuts resembling the eggs of monstrous unknown birds, with a good deal of hairy nest adhering to them, onions curiously bound on little sticks, yams, potatoes, cabbages, celery, carrots, spinach, and flowers, environ ns. As for the latter, I had better not try to catalogue their glorious prodigal variety. Only the flower market of Paris can equal it.

Here are more stalls, which now exhibit a tendency to tin-ware, lamps, and a very mixed population. I suppose, nowhere, since the dispersion of the builders at Babel, could be heard such polyglot vociferations as proceed from the sidewalk pedlars in the French market at New Orleans. On one side the gesticulative Ganl rolls his r's with absolutely canine emphasis, in the utterance of his native language, or gallicises the English appellation of the most popular of vegetables into "Pa—ta—ta—s!" or informs you that the price of a bird is "Two bit! two bit!—you no like him, you no hab him!" On another the guttural German vociferates, with as harmonious an effect as might be produced by the filing of a saw; while on a third and fourth, the Creole, Sicilian, and Dego, rival each other in vocal discord. Fancy all this, and throw in any amount of obstreporous, broad-mouthed, gleeful negro laughter, and you have some slight idea of the sounds audible at the locality I have undertaken to describe.

From the stalls we approach the seed

market, which also includes various miscellaneous wares. Besides grain—in the shape of pearly rice, beans, peas, and other kinds, contrasting pleasantly in colour, and put up in plethoric little sacks—there are fish, poultry, and game: the former lying on cool, leaden counters, and with a large flag-weed inserted in their mouths, for the convenience of purchasers. The display of shell-fish is amazing. There are enormous oysters, of various shapes, many of which it would certainly be necessary to cut up into four mouthfuls, before eating; tubs full of live crabs and lobsters, holding on to each other with desperate tenacity; and shrimps, alive and dead. Dried fish there is, also, in great variety. At the poultry-stalls one sees the queer announcement, "Creole eggs," which has a ludicrous effect to a stranger, though it simply means eggs of native production—not imported. And among the game are many specimens of what one might at first be excused for mistaking for a diabolical bat, split open, with a rat's head and longish legs, but which is, in reality, that African delicacy, a "coon." I believe it tastes something like pork, only richer.

Emerging from the seed market, we come upon carts and waggons, containing corn, wheat, hay, and fuel, in various shapes, and other country produce, and a great crowd of chattering negro-teamsters. Beyond, stretches the levee, with all its multifarious activities in full operation.

Yes; a notable place was the French Market at New Orleans before the war. I wonder what it is like now?

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE,"
&c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVI. SHOWING HOW POWERFUL ARE THE WEAK.

"It will be hard on me, but I think it will be better for you," Mrs. Durgan says.

"I think it will be as well perhaps; but very unpleasant," Kate half assents.

"Why, in the name of Heaven, should family feeling come to the fore now, just to make things disagreeable all round?" Captain Bellairs puts in. "Tell them that you'll be married where you like, Kate; and, for mercy's sake, like to be married without parade and fuss."

These speeches are uttered with reference to a proposal made in Mrs. Forest's rather

florid letter of congratulation. The proposal is to the effect, that her hitherto slighted and neglected niece shall go up to be made much of in the eyes of all men, on the occasion of her auspicious marriage. As it happens, the proffered honour is rather a white elephant, for Kate had contemplated a quiet wedding, shorn of all ostentatious show and fuss, from Breagh Place.

Still, these Forests are her only relations, and she does like the idea of her own tribe coming to the fore with a recognition of her existence, now that she is to be taken into the tribe of a stranger. The blood tie is a strong one, after all, and few women of respectable birth fail to feel its influence at any momentous crisis of their career.

"As far as my own feelings are concerned I'd rather take the leap in the dark from Breagh Place," Kate says; "but I know what the general impression will be if I do it—that I'm an utter waif and stray."

"I think as a matter of social expediency Kate is right to go to you from under the family roof-tree. Harry, grasp the olive-branch always, no matter how feeble the pretext under which it is held out."

These words from Mrs. Durgan decide this vexed point. But there still remains that other and more important one of Mrs. Angerstein to be settled. That Cissy is to come and be a resident in the pretty house on the home-farm, close to the gates of Lugnaquilla, is a settled thing. But Kate has not agreed yet to the proposition that Cissy shall be her own familiar friend, to whom shall be granted the full and entire freedom of the place.

If she lived in the Palace of Truth, Mrs. Durgan would be compelled to confess, in spite of herself, that the arrangement is only one degree less painful to her than the other one, which would have taken Kate as a bride from Breagh Place, would have been. Can any woman conscientiously say that she would like to be the witness of the highest tribute the man she loves can pay to her rival? If she can do this, may she be removed to a purer sphere without delay, for unquestionably she is no longer fit for earth.

At any rate Georgie Durgan is not at the present juncture, a "creature far too grave and good for human nature's daily food." She is of the earth, earthy to this degree, that she does not pant to put the last

faggot on her own heart's funeral pyre. "He will marry Kate, and all blessings attend him," she says daily. But she is relieved when she finds that neither generosity nor womanly sympathy commands her to go and attend that marriage ceremony, and look as if she liked it very much.

It is the day before Kate's departure, and fortunately for both these women, there is so much to be done, that they have no time to grow low-spirited, or emotionally confidential. Kate has purposely left all her packing arrangements to be done on this last day, and so, during the morning, her intercourse with Mrs. Durgan is very brief and business-like. They have already settled that there shall be no formal leave-taking between them. "You'll be back so soon as Mrs. Bellairs," Georgie says heroically, "that it is not worth while my taking a fond farewell of you as Kate Mervyn."

"I might just as well go straight to Lugnaquilla from here, taking the church on my way," Kate says; "it would save time, and I might put the money the journey will cost me into my trousseau; however,—"

"However, we won't cavil at the plan, now it is settled," Mrs. Durgan interrupts. "You'd never feel properly married if you went straight from here to Lugnaquilla, even if you did take the church in your way; and to go through life with a kind of vague feeling that you had never done anything to turn yourself into a correct occupant of Lugnaquilla would be unpleasant."

"As things have come about, I had much better have run away with Harry nine years ago," Kate says half laughing. "Fancy at our time of life having the awful ordeal of having to get used to each other still before us."

"You have a worse ordeal than that before you," Mrs. Durgan says smiling. "You'll have to get used to Cissy Angerstein. Harry, in his liberality, will make things so excessively comfortable for her that she will remain at your gates for the remainder of her life, I foresee."

"I have had so many troubles in my life, that I won't regard her as one," Kate says with decision. She quite means what she says, and honestly resolves that, however untowardly Mrs. Angerstein may be thrust upon her, she will not look upon that interloper as anything but a mere crumple in the rose-leaf. "After all, she

cannot mar such happiness, as mine will be if I am reasonable," Kate tells herself philosophically.

The packing goes on until late in the day. She is taking up hampersful of hot-house and other flowers, wherewith to decorate the heads and hands of the bridesmaids, and the delicacies of the breakfast-table. Her wedding-dress, veil, and wreath await her at her aunt's; they are to match those of the other two brides.

"They are miracles of good taste and simplicity," Marian has assured her, and the same informant has added, "you will look beautiful; Gertrude will look very proper and dignified, but neither of you will come near our admirable Charlotte in purity of expression. She has, I can see, for the last week or two been cultivating the Clytie droop of the head, and, really, she doesn't do it badly. Her eyes betray her, though; they contradict the serene brow, and the soft expression, and the smiling mouth the whole time."

Kate shakes her head over this; but to find that her own impression of Miss Grange is verified by Marian does not grieve her very much. As Frank is so callous about his fate, why should she be keenly alive to it? "Probably he will rub on with her very well," she thinks. "She will look pretty in public, and in private—Well, we shall all have our skeletons at the feast with us in private, I dare say."

She is called down from her pleasant task of striving to make flowers and fern-fronds travel comfortably together, by the announcement that Captain Bellairs wants to see her at once on business; and she goes to him, with a half-foreboding that there is something wrong, and with a half-comical sense of its only being in the natural order of things that there should be "something wrong" invariably between him and herself.

He awaits her in a room alone; in this emergency, which has arisen in every way against his will and wishes, he is not even assisted by the saving presence of his cousin Georgie. In his hand he holds a letter, and, when he has put his arm round her and kissed her, he tenders this letter to her with the words,

"An untimely effusion from Cissy, which I want you to read, Kate."

Forgetful of her good resolution of the previous hour, Kate is on the point of refusing the letter, with a gesture of im-

patience. But the angel of peace prevails for awhile, and induces her to begin reading it.

"She 'must see a little of you before you are married.' Harry, what an unfortunate nuisance the woman is!" Kate says, pausing after the perusal of the few first lines, and standing a step or two away from her lover; "do put a definite end to this folly, or she will come here and make herself, and you, and me ridiculous."

"Just read on," he says, uneasily; "she has stolen a march on me." Kate does read on, with darkening eyes and a blushing face.

She gives him back the letter when she has finished it, without a word, and walks away to the window, where she stands for a few moments, looking at the far-stretching line of mountains, wishing how heartily that she could flee away to them—beyond them, and be at rest.

"Well?" he says, presently, interrogatively. "Won't you say anything about it, Kate?"

"I'll say that I think it disgusting of her," Kate says, with vigorous emphasis, turning round quickly, "to insist upon coming here to you now, just as I am going away—just as you are going to be married, when, if she were reasonable at all, she might reasonably suppose you must have plenty to do, without being hampered by the knowledge that she is near enough to interrupt you at any moment with her folly."

"All this is very true," he says, quietly, "but what I ask you is, what am I to do?"

She shakes her head, at the same time she reminds herself that the situation is as disagreeable to Captain Bellairs as it can possibly be to her. Mrs. Angerstein has without beat of drum borne down upon him, and has merely written to say—just as if it were the most natural thing in the world—that she will be at the new home he has so kindly provided for her to-night, with all her children, and one servant, and will he see that provisions are sent in for the approaching army, together with some person who is competent to cook them.

"You must send your own cook—and chops, I suppose," Kate says at last, laughing a little in spite of her unconquerable chagrin.

"The place isn't ready; at least it isn't fit for Cissy and her children to come into it," he says, in a vexed tone.

"But if women will come to places, before the places are ready for the women?"

"I sent down all the servants with directions to provision the ship," he goes on, disregarding her remark, "and I rode round just before I came here to see if it was comfortable. It was not that or anything like it, Kate. The fact is, they can't go there to-night."

"Where will they go, then?"

"To Lngnaquilla, if you please?"

"If you please," she answers, promptly, "let her come when she pleases, where she pleases. We have outlived the date when it would only have been decorous for me to oppose this plan, and for you to pay some attention to my opposition."

"Now, Kate," he says, deprecatingly, "this is nonsense."

Truth to tell, she feels that he is right. It is nonsense, everything will be nonsense between them now, that is not a tacit admission of the reign of romance being utterly and entirely over.

"You are right, Harry; I must have had a foreshadowing of dotage, and have dreamt myself back into my youth when I spoke as I did; do your hospitable best for her, dear."

"That's right," he says, kissing her heartily; "it's so much better to have your course marked out, if possible. I know she's a foolish little woman, and all that sort of thing, Kate; but we must put up with the folly, you know, as she's my charge, in a measure; still now, if Georgie and you would only come over and meet her to-night?"

The rage in her heart is tearing at that organ like a vulture, still she manages to speak calmly at this pass.

"I'll come if you wish it, Harry. I can defer my journey, and—our marriage."

"I'd forgotten that," he cries, impetuously—he means the journey, not the marriage, but Kate thinks he means the latter—"things happen so crookedly."

"They do, indeed," she says, despairingly, wondering the while whether any suggestion of hers, any action of hers, may not even now put this crooked matter straight.

"Well, you can't help it, dear, so we must make the best of it," he says, lightly, still thinking of the journey, while she continues to believe he is thinking of the marriage. "It's rather hard on us both; but we're going to bear the hardships bravely together, are we not?"

How can he smile, how can he look at her in that way, when he is openly acknowledging that he regards his contemplated union with her as "a hardship," she asks herself in an agony. He can take her and his future as unavoidable evils, and contemplate the endurance of them smilingly!

"That's all settled, then," he says hurriedly, for he hears the wheels of Mrs. Durgan's chair approaching, and he puts the unpleasant letter away hastily into his pocket; "it's a bore, of course, but we must make the best of things, Kate. I shall come with you as far as Kingstown, to-morrow, you know."

"I can go alone, as I came," she says rather coldly; "it will be rather soon for you to leave your guest; think of her claims upon you!"

He has not the most remote idea that Kate is employing the weapon of sarcasm against him. In imagination he has wandered very far away from the disturbing Cissy, and it does not occur to him that she is still rankling in Kate's breast.

"I've been thinking," he says presently, "that we needn't come back and settle down here for some months to come. I don't want a Christmas here. The people on the land shall have the bloated bullock, and the barrelled beer, to their heart's content, but we will take deeper root in the soil before we throw out our social tendrils. I should like to winter in Rome, and come back to Lugnaquila early next summer."

She hails his proposal delightedly. It augurs well for her; she feels that he is ready to isolate himself from all his land-ties for her sake.

"They won't regard you as an absentee, and shoot you through the head as an expression of their regard when you return, will they?" she asks. "If we can do it with impunity, let us stay away for ever—so long."

The last two words come out so languidly, that he is impelled to ask,

"Don't you like the place; don't you like the idea of living in Ireland, dear?"

"I love it," she says. Then she thinks of Cissy Angerstein, and says no more.

"But you like the idea of Rome and novelty better for a time, and I like

the idea of taking you to all the places I used to cruise about in my youth."

"It will be dull for me without you," Georgie says politely, but she, too, feels that the plan has its advantages. On the whole it will be pleasanter for her to meet them when they have settled down into sober man-and-wife-hood, than it would be to witness them bestowing those blandishments upon each other, which bridegroom and bride are apt to indulge in, regardless of the presence and feelings of outsiders.

There is nothing very pathetic in the parting between Captain Bellairs and Kate this night. They will meet again very shortly, and will be married this day week, therefore pathos would be out of place under these circumstances. She dismisses him cheerily enough, and bids him "take care of Cissy, and make her as comfortable as possible," almost as heartily as if she were not wishing Cissy at Jericho at the present juncture.

"I shall drive over to Lugnaquila some time to-morrow, and see if I can't make some suggestions that will hasten on the preparations of that helpless Cissy's house," Mrs. Durgan says when they are going to bed. "She's not one to put her hand to the wheel for herself, is she?"

"No; especially when a turn of the wheel may—" Kate pauses, doubtfully.

"May what?"

"Move her from a state of positive comfort and luxury, into one that is only comparative."

When she says this, Mrs. Durgan knows that the same thought is in Kate's mind as is in her own, namely, that Mrs. Angerstein will be uncommonly hard to detach from Lugnaquila house itself.

Now Publishing,

THE OPAL RING:

BEING THE

EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER

FOR

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 318. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SWAN," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER I. ORACE.

TRAVELLERS of the present day, who make the recognised round through Belgium or Holland, scamper up the Rhine, branch off to have a glance at Frankfort, and a glimpse of Baden, and return via Strasburg, in order that they may compress within their month's holiday the chances of a couple of days in Paris, are under a delusion indeed, if they imagine that they have seen anything of one of the loveliest rivers in the world. People who tear up and down its banks in express trains, from the windows of which they catch fleeting glimpses of beetling rocks and tarred crags, with here and there the shining river in between; people who crowd the spacious deck, or, in wet weather, box themselves up in the plate-glass saloons of the high-pressure steamers, see nothing of the Rhine. More than twenty years ago the sober-going, contemplative Germans used to laugh at the "mad English,"—there were, comparatively, very few American travellers in those days—for the hot haste with which they were accustomed to perform that journey. Hot haste in the eilwagen, with its two fat horses, with clubbed tails, driven by a glazed-hatted postillion at the rate fully equivalent to five English miles in an hour! Hot haste on board the Königin Victoria, at that time the fleetest boat in the service of the Cologne and Düsseldorf Company, which, taking you from Cologne at an unholy hour in the morning, managed, by dint of much struggling,

to land you on the busy wharf opposite the "Giant," at Coblenz, while the shades of evening were falling! Pleasant, cosy way of travelling, sitting on the deck with Hermann, most anecdotal of conductors, and listening to his stories of the strange people, English mostly, with whom he had been brought in contact during his many years' experience; pleasant the dinner served under the awning in the open air; pleasant the tinkling of the little bell swinging in the bows of the boat, giving notice of our approach to the white-faced villages bordering the river, or the quaint old towns dotted down here and there, with the crumbling half-decayed tower of some ancient church or castle, rising in their midst. Now the train whirls through, or the express-boat hurries by, and no chance is given for an exploration of the towns or an investigation of the characteristics of their inhabitants, both of which would seem sufficiently strange to English inquirers.

Where, for instance, in England, could you find any place like the dear old flat un-interesting town of Bonn? It is a university town, but those who come to it with reminiscences of Oxford and Cambridge, expecting to find grand churches and stately colleges, will be undeniably disappointed. The quaint Minster stands in the midst of it, and the Elector's Palace, in which the students are now congregated, is a sufficiently imposing building; the shops in the old quarter are small and quaint, the streets are narrow, and resound at night with the tread of the Burschen and Renowners, who, mostly with their arms round each other's necks, go home singing the refrain of amorous or patriotic ditties, most popular at the Kneipe, which they have just quitted. The professors are scattered

here and there throughout the town, but the majority of them are to be found domiciled either in the Grüne Strasse or the Poppelsdorfer Allée. The houses they inhabit are, for the most part, neat little white residences, of two stories high, with a dining-room, and a best bedroom on the ground floor; the first-floor being devoted to the company-room, and the study of the professor, where huge tomes cumber the walls and the floor, where the china stove is flanked on either side by sanded spittoons, where a rack of porcelain pipes occupies an important place amongst the furniture, and whence, whenever it is not lecture time, are wafted clouds of fragrant tobacco smoke.

To this town, and to one of the houses just described, came Grace Middleham, in so short a time after the first shock and bewilderment of the murder of her uncle, that she had scarcely had time to think about the strangeness which awaited her. To her, everything had been strange; the calm of her school-life had ended in a convulsion; the confidence and peace of her girlish friendship had ended in an inexplicable separation; the projects she had formed for her future home-life had ended in homelessness. On her journey she was attended only by a maid—for she had been quite ready to assent to the proposition made by Mr. Heath, that as the professor, her aunt's husband, was a stranger to her, there was nothing to be gained by bringing him over to England, to escort her to Germany. Mr. Heath had been most kind and attentive. Everything had been arranged for her on the most liberal scale, and her personal requirements attended to with almost feminine forethought and propriety. But she had found it impossible to get anything like a full and detailed account of the event which had so changed her prospects. She had indeed seen the newspaper reports, but they merely recorded the inquest, and the "open" verdict, and she could learn no more. Mr. Heath had at once silenced her questions, by treating the subject as one which could not possibly be discussed by, or in the presence of, Miss Middleham; and when she ventured to say that a rumour had reached her that one of the clerks, Mr. Danby, whom she had seen on that terrible day at Hampstead, was "missing," and asked Mr. Heath whether that circumstance could be in any way connected with the murder, he evinced so much consideration for her, and was so

indignant at the idea that she had been troubled with "gossip of this kind," that she had been irresistibly reduced to silence.

Grace pondered on all this, during the journey to Bonn. She felt that she had never before realised the terrible nature of the event which had occurred. But now she was going to see her aunt, her murdered uncle's own sister, and it was with almost terror she asked herself: is she like him? Should she have before her, day after day, a face to see, a voice to hear, which would constantly remind her of the kind relative who had never been interesting until made so by his tragical death? Should she find her uncle's sister dreadfully eager for the discovery and the punishment of the murderer, and angry with her, because she had brought her no clearer and more circumstantial report of the steps which had been taken? Grace was as ignorant of the machinery of life, of the way any of the serious business of life is conducted, as the greatest stickler for feminine inutility could desire a girl to be; but she did dimly discern that she had been told little or nothing more than the one horrid fact, and that her aunt, and her aunt's husband, "a professor too," thought Grace in a parenthesis, might be displeased with her vagueness. She had very little data for her imaginings concerning the house to which she was going, and its inmates. She could not remember to have heard her uncle mention his sister half-a-dozen times, and he had never even alluded to the professor. The communications which had taken place, relative to Grace's future residence with her only relatives, had been of the driest and most formal kind, and were confined to Mr. Heath and Mrs. Sturm. The professor made no more assertion of himself, than during Mr. Middleham's lifetime; and her aunt had not thought it necessary to communicate with her directly, at all. She had a fair field for free fancy, and she felt inclined, in her present mood, to people it with beings by no means attractive. How constantly and longingly her thoughts recurred to Anne! The events of the past few weeks had gone far towards the maturing of Grace Middleham's mind; and in no way was this more evident than in her humble and convinced admission (to herself) of Anne's superiority. How strong Anne was, she thought; how ready-witted, wise, and composed! Anne would not have endured vagueness, she would have set aside the views of other people as to what was or was not good for her, as to

what she ought or ought not to know, and she would have known and done precisely what she would have judged it well and wise to know and to do. If she could only have Anne with her, she would hardly feel at all afraid. Grace's mind even attempted the high flight of contemplation, implied in wondering what it was that made Anne so different from herself, since their training, so far as school-life was concerned, had been identical; and they were both motherless, and singularly lonely. She found no answer to the question, however, and soon abandoned it.

The companion of her journey, her maid, was another component of the atmosphere of vagueness and strangeness with which she was surrounded. The young woman, Lucy Dormer, had been only two days with Grace before they left England, and, as she was reserved and her young mistress was timid, Grace had no sense of companionship in her matter-of-fact attendant's ministrations. It was not surprising that she should look wistfully at the figure of Mr. Heath, as he stood upon the platform at Victoria, and watched the departure of the train, which carried away the very last object of his responsibility towards his late employer. Things were a little better with Grace by the end of the journey. She was too amiable and unpretending to fail of winning the good graces of her inferiors, and she got on very well with her maid; so that she reached her destination feeling much less miserable, and looking much more like the blooming and pretty girl who had talked with Anne Studley on that summer day, on Hampstead Heath, than she had felt and looked when she started. She had even mentioned Anne to her attendant, and found her sympathetic. Lucy Dormer, also, had friends whom she was loth to leave; and so, as Grace expressed it in her thoughts, it was a great comfort to her that Lucy was a nice creature, and they could be lonely together.

Grace Middleham could not have declared, that nobody could possibly be more unlike what she was expected to be than her aunt, because she had never reached the expectation stage in her thoughts concerning her. They had stopped short at speculation; but it was quite true that the Frau Professorin did not in the least resemble any of Grace's fancies about her, and that she presented, physically and mentally, a complete contrast to her late brother. When Grace

had been introduced to her aunt—a solemn ceremony which did not take place until nearly noon on the day after her arrival—she ceased to wonder that Mr. Middleham had had so little to say about his sister. It was in a large apartment, with painted window blinds, and a huge stove; with enormous presses in the walls, and a very small piece of carpet on the highly-polished floor; with a vast bed raised on an estrade, and a great square table between the stove and one of the windows, on which was heaped a multitude of small pieces of many-coloured silks, that Grace had her first audience of her aunt. On entering this large room she was sensible that a medicinal atmosphere pervaded it; and the object, next to the stove, which most distinctly impressed itself upon her was the table, with its load of shreds and patches. Before she was dismissed from Madame Sturm's presence, she had learned that her aunt's chief objects of interest in life were physic and patchwork. In these great facts she believed with intensity and constancy—in all facts outside of them she felt a very tepid interest. If her niece could impart to her a new theory in medicine, or a new combination in patchwork, she would regard her advent with interest. If on both subjects she had nothing to say, then she would have no more interest for Madame Sturm than anybody else's niece.

Madame Sturm was seated in a great arm-chair, with a high footstool; by her side was a basket full of snippings, and in her mitten'd right hand was a large pair of very bright scissors, which she transferred to the left on her niece's approach. She was a very small, shrivelled woman, of about fifty-five, with a meaningless, wrinkled, little face, and an attenuated frame. She wore her grey hair in old-fashioned bandeaux, under an old-fashioned cap composed of black gauze, and her mourning dress did not coquette with any one of the numerous materials which are used as the trappings and suits of modern woe, but was made of honest, respectable, and expensive bombazine. Her thin little feet, encased in black bombazine shoes, rested on the high footstool like wooden feet, and her sharp little right arm put itself out towards Grace like a wooden arm.

"How do you do, my dear?" said Madame Sturm, and poked her hand into Grace's. She evidently had not the slightest intention of betraying any warmer saluta-

tion upon her niece, and the perception of this fact made Grace feel hot and uncomfortable for a moment; but she replied quietly,

"Quite well, thank you, aunt. I have to thank you for allowing me to come to you, and for the kind preparations you have made for me. My room is delightful!"

Here Grace stopped, but there was no reply. Madame Sturm merely made a snipping noise with her scissors, and began to arrange some scraps of card into an octagon, as they lay on the table before her. Grace resumed,

"My uncle—the professor has given me leave to call him uncle—has been so kind to me. I was sorry I could not see you last night or earlier to-day. Uncle Sturm told me you were not well."

"I am seldom very well," said Madame Sturm, in a gentle and resigned tone.

"But seldom very ill, I hope. I think I gathered that from my uncle."

Grace had "done it," now! Her aunt sat up twice as stiffly as before, and suspended the snipping of the scissors and the arranging of the octagon of cards.

"Everybody who sees the professor may gather *that* from him," she said, with a spiteful emphasis. "The professor, I regret to say, because I should wish it were possible for a young person resident in our house to respect him, does not believe in anything. He is, in his own opinion, much too clever for belief. Among other things, he does not believe in my suffering state. He will be convinced of more than that, some day, to his cost."

Here she slowly wagged the black gauze cap, over the melancholy prospect of widowhood for the professor in this world, and perdition for him in the next.

"Oh, aunt, I assure you, he was most sympathetic; I——"

"We will not discuss the professor, my dear. At my age, with my experience, and my health, I know how to suffer and be strong—strong in one sense, I mean, of course. Sit down; it fidgets me to see anyone stand."

Grace took a seat at the table. She was much abashed, for she had conceived a sudden liking for the professor, and her aunt's sally disconcerted her. After a little more snipping and arranging, Madame Sturm resumed,

"Have you good health, my dear?"

"I never was ill in my life."

"So much the better; for, if you were to be ill here, you would not meet with much consideration. I don't, after all the

years of illness I have gone through. I am expected to be as ready and as active as if I never had anything the matter with me. The professor actually wanted me to write to that man in London, about your coming here, myself—that man who managed for my brother, you know."

"Mr. Heath," said Grace, with a slight start, caused by the unconcerned reference to the dreadful subject which she knew must be mentioned, but feared to introduce.

"Yes. When all that wretched business happened, and knocked me up so, that I had two new tonics tried without the least result, of course, I was forced to read the letters; but I really don't believe there is another man alive, excepting the professor, who would have been capable of expecting me to answer them."

"It was very good of him to do so," said Grace, tremulously; "and I am very thankful for a home with you. When I lost my dear uncle——"

"It was very sad," said Madame Sturm, "but we will not talk of it. Subjects of that kind unstring my nerves, and my digestion is so weak that the least agitation becomes serions. Indeed, Lisbeth will be here presently with my twelve o'clock tonic. I thought I would not take it until after I had seen you. A first interview is a little trying, you know. But, as I was saying, we will not refer again to my poor brother. I always had my fears about him, though we had not met for years; he was never strong, none of the Middlehams are strong, and the most obstinate man alive in the way of neglecting his health. We see what has come of it."

Once again she wagged the black gauze cap over the mournful subject, as sagely as if medicine had been in her brother's case a neglected antidote to murder; and, as her aunt had evidently dismissed the subject altogether, and showed no signs of originating any other, it was borne in upon Grace's mind that she was expected to go. She was beginning to say something about her aunt's being busy, when she was saved further trouble by the entrance of a tall prim woman, with a drab-coloured complexion, and hair and eyes to match, who carried a small tray with a medicine bottle and a packet of powders upon it.

"This is Lisbeth," said Madame Sturm, "and now I must take my tonic. Good-bye, my dear."

"Good-bye, aunt; but you are coming down presently, I suppose?"

"Not until the afternoon. I never do; my nerves require a good deal of quiet, and the restlessness of the professor distresses them. The professor walks up and down when he is studying his subjects, and he is always studying them; consequently I keep my room a good deal."

"That must be lonely for Uncle Sturm."

"Restless people with 'subjects' are never lonely, and besides, one cannot consider anything else where health is concerned. If you had lived twenty-five years in the house with a man who must walk up and down to study his subjects, and never left off studying them, you would keep your room a good deal, I assure you."

To this Grace assented smilingly, and left the room, just as Lisbeth deliberately pinned a towel under the chin of the Frau Professorin, prior to administering her twelve o'clock tonic.

Grace was taken aback by the disclosure of her aunt's idiosyncrasies, but she speedily made up her mind that the oddities of the Frau Professorin would not make themselves irksome to her, if she should treat them with good sense and forbearance, and that they would certainly give her the disposition of her own time. The impression she had already derived of the professor—what he professed Grace neither knew nor wanted to know, she accepted his learning as she accepted his snuff-box, as something inseparable from him—was very favourable. He had received the doubly-orphaned girl with true kindness, and she already felt at ease with the "foreigner," of whom she had entertained a certain amount of awe, while contemplating a residence in his house. When she descended from her brief audience of her aunt, Grace found the professor engaged in the objectionable and denounced occupation of walking up and down in the long book-lined room, which, though it did not resemble the ordinary "study" of an English man of letters, was an unusually presentable apartment for a German luminary of literature. Not only was the professor walking up and down, but he was softly playing on his left arm, with the fingers of the right hand, a delicate "movement" of Mendelssohn's, of which he gently hummed the mellifluous notes; while his fat smooth face, drab coloured like Lisbeth's and the faces of nine-tenths of the men and women of his nation, was overspread with a smile, absent-minded, but serene and full of contentment. Next to his

"subjects," which were philology and ethnology, the professor loved and lived for music. The first supplied his occupation the latter sufficed for his amusement, and he was thoroughly happy, though his English wife held his country in general and himself in particular contempt, and isolated herself from him, his friends, and his pursuits, with a persistent avoidance which had reduced the professor's domestic life to a minimum. The fat little man was, however, as free from angularities of mind as of person, and phlegmatic and philosophical as well as professional, and he made the best of the infelicitous bargain which he had concluded twenty-five years ago, and whose motives had been a profound mystery to everyone who was acquainted with the high contracting parties. Why Miss Martha Middleham had married Professor Sturm, and why Professor Sturm had married Miss Martha Middleham was a mystery which nobody could understand—their niece, after she had lived a few days in the house with them, less than anybody.

Professor Sturm was a characteristic German, of a not unpleasant type; he wore spectacles, a big ring on his forefinger, and ill-made clothes, but he was not dirty in his ways, nor dogmatic in his speech; and though he had few moral prejudices, and no religious opinions, his instincts were harmless, and his infidelity of a cheerful negative description. He had books, languages, and races of men to study, and music to enjoy, in this world, and he was not at all interested in inducing other people to leave off believing in another. He was very good-natured, and could not bear to see anyone suffer from any real and removable cause; but he was quite devoid of sentiment—except when poetry and literature were in question—and he regarded his English wife as a middle-aged fool, whom he was not called upon to "humour," because it would do her no good. He had tried the experiment of humouring her when she was young, but found it useless, and, after a fair trial, had relinquished the fruitless and thankless task, like a practical philosopher as he was.

The professor had been visited by misgivings, when the arrangements for Grace's going to live with her aunt were made. That the girl could not get on with his queer unaccountable wife, and would be wretched, he feared was very probable; but there really was no other place for her to

go to, and his philosophy came reassuringly to his aid, reminding him that it would only last, at the worst, until Grace Middleham should be of age, when an establishment would be formed for her in London. He felt equally doubtful of his own power to contribute to the happiness and well-being of a young English girl—who probably would adopt her aunt's prejudices—and of his inclination to devote himself to the task; but he would see. Grace came, and the professor did see. She was just the sort of girl he had not expected her to be. The only talent or accomplishment to which she laid claim was music; she was decidedly unlike the only Middlehams he had ever known, his wife and her brother, and she was as gentle and unaffected as she was pretty and prevenante. During their first evening tête-à-tête (for the professor actually relinquished a quartett party at the house of Professor Drang, over the way, to welcome the Englanderin) Grace made a fast friend of her new uncle. How, when she joined him in the book-room, his prominent light-coloured eyes twinkled with amusement at the undisguised wonder and discomfiture in the girl's face! He took her hand, patted it with his own fat fingers, and said soothingly,

"Soh! you did not find the aunt motherly, or sisterly, or even auncly! Never mind, never mind, it is only her way. She has had her own little will, and her own little way too long. Never mind; you shall have your own little will, and your own little way, too. Ach Gott! Let us be thankful for the physic and the patch-work, and make the best of it mit Mendelssohn and oders. Never mind—"

"I don't mind, Uncle Sturm, only—only she never said a word about poor Uncle Middleham's dreadful death!"

The professor's face changed, and he answered her, hurriedly,

"Yes, yes, my dear child, I understand. But you must not mind; for I—I myself, would rather never talk to you about that. Death is a nasty thing, the King of Terrors in truth, whenever, and however it comes, and it is worse when it comes as murder—it makes me nervous, it gives me creeps. We will never, never talk of Uncle Middleham, my dear."

He patted her hand again, released it, seated himself at the piano, and began to play a brilliant fantasia, in a masterly manner, which contrasted strangely with his lumpish figure and heavy animal face.

Thus Grace Middleham's new life, in a new country, and among strange people, was inaugurated. Every link with the past was broken, and as she became habituated to her new surroundings, she began to recover the cheerfulness proper to her age. But she could not wean herself from the longing for Anne, from the constant thoughts of her, and misgiving about her, which had beset her ever since their parting; and after she was "settled" in her new home, in the feminine sense of the term, when all her belongings had been put in their places, and her life had assumed shape and order, she devoted a portion of each day to recording its events in the form of a journal addressed to Anne Studley.

WINTER RESORTS FOR INVALIDS.

It becomes a very anxious question in many families, as the winter closes around us, how some loved member may best be shielded from its severity. One-eighth of the mortality of our country is due to diseases of the chest, and there are comparatively few families who have not, directly or indirectly, some acquaintance with this distressing class of complaints. In many homes, those whose lives are bright and fresh in the happy summer, as the winter draws on, seem to decline and "consume away." As the days grow brief, as the sunsets are thin and watery, as the air is loaded with dank unhealthy moisture, as the fogs thicken, as the winds grow keener and colder, the delicate-chested invalid finds that warning symptoms reveal themselves, and that the hours are fewer during which, though armed with a respirator, he can venture into the open air. Very soothingly and pleasantly comes the vision of gardened villas, nestling beside the deep blue sea, beneath a serene, windless sky; and so, as the winter draws in, these, our flocks of invalids, who, swallow-like, as far as they may, leave winter behind them, and seek the southern shores of England or France.

In some typical healthy happy home there has, perhaps, been growing up some vague feeling of apprehension and alarm respecting the health of some one of the elder children. It is the tall languid son, who seems to have outgrown his strength, and is too feeble for the vigorous pursuits that would suit his age and taste. It is, perhaps, the tall elegant girl, whose sweetness of nature and manners have made her the darling of home, and the

cynosure of drawing-rooms. The good mother has tried all her arts and her remedies. She has hesitated about sending for the doctor, partly because she may be making a serious matter of what she hopes may be only a trivial matter, and partly because it is easier to get than to get rid of a medical man. Perhaps she and Paterfamilias resolve that they will ask a famous physician to call, or will go for the purpose of a consultation to his house. If they live in the country, they will probably ask their own medical practitioner to give them a line of introduction to some town physician, some great man, probably, with whom he was connected in the old hospital days, and with whom he naturally desires to keep up a connection. Perhaps the patient's friends desire to see the great fashionable physician, Sir Theodore Raven, who is just now at the top of the tree, and to whom people resort as to an oracle. The great man's secretary will make an appointment with you for Tuesday week, and if you are very lucky, you may see him then. Ordinarily, however, the patient goes to one of a small cluster of eminent men, who have gained a high reputation by making this kind of case a specialty.

It is decidedly nervous work going to a consulting physician. You may, perhaps, resolve to go early, hoping to get it over soon. But this brilliant idea has occurred to many other patients besides yourself, and so the room is full. It is a dreary hour to wait. Your own anxious feeling and the knowledge that all around you are more or less anxious, are further elements of uneasiness. There is hardly any conversation among the patients. You look at yesterday's *Times*, or smile, somewhat grimly, over last week's *Punch*. A serving-man in black, something like a bishop's examining chaplain, beckons one of us after another into the presence of the celebrated physician. In how kindly and courtly a fashion he receives you! At the same time he is Rhadamantine in his integrity, and will tell you the sternest truth. I do not say that he will tell a delicate young lady that she is hopelessly ill, but he will take care that the mother or guardian that accompanies her shall know the exact truth. There have been many strange sad scenes in consultation rooms. I have known a medical man laughingly assure a patient that there cannot be much wrong with her; and then, as he listened through his stethoscope, a look of horror passed

into his countenance as the unerring sounds revealed a horrible extent of mischief. I have known of men who have passed to a consulting room with the idea that they were strong and healthy, and have left it with the knowledge that their lives were doomed. The main great advance in medical science has been in the direction of the diagnosis of diseases of the chest. What with stethoscope and laryngoscope, what with tests and tubes, skilful doctors read off the interior of the chest like an open book. They have not, indeed, prevented the frequency of these illnesses, which ought to be a principal aim of medical science, but they have discovered modes of resistance, and, speaking humanly, have greatly lengthened the average duration of diseased lives. A generation ago, the average life of a consumptive patient was two years; but the Williamses, father and son, have shown, from an indication of a thousand cases in private practice, that this average, under favourable conditions, has been increased from two years to ten or twelve. Phthisis is an illness where everything depends upon skill, care, and foresight, a terrible game of chess between flagging powers and recuperative tendencies.

It is quite likely that in our supposed case of delicate youth or maiden, the kind physician will be able to speak in a most encouraging way. We have been altogether mistaken about the meaning of the symptoms; there is no real occasion for alarm. Still it is always best to be on the safe side. There is nothing like a change, the physician thinks. The young patient will be quite strong again, if he or she will only go away somewhere for the winter. So we shake hands, and go away, pleased at heart. The next patient may be very far gone. His days, almost his hours, are numbered. But the life which cannot exist in the foggy air of London may yet be prolonged for some time in the delicious air of Torbay, or by the shores of the ultramarine Mediterranean. In this case also a winter resort is directly prescribed. A third case has for the medical man a much higher degree of scientific interest. It is the case of a patient whose chest disease has made a decided amount of progress, but it may be palliated or even healed by remedial agencies. Various medicines will be suggested, the oil of the liver of the cod taking the principal place; but the most imperative part of the prescription will again be the necessity of a health resort for the winter.

The late Sir Henry Holland was one of

the great advocates for change. He used to say that if a patient could not change his house he had better change his room, and if he could not change his room he had better change his furniture. A great many questions will arise, all deserving the most careful attention, respecting the direction in which the change may best be made. The most obvious, easiest, and most general change is to the sea-side. The patient gains quietude and rest, an alteration of old habits, the shelter of the cliffs, and the ozone of the ocean. The Americans, instead of sending their patients to the sea-side, have a weakness for sending them inland, selecting dry localities of some elevation; but the English doctors hardly regard the result as very favourable. No climate is free from phthisis, though the frequency of it increases as we come from the pole to the equator, and from the hills to the valleys. Madeira used to be considered the finest climate in the world, but in Madeira itself the natives die of consumption.

The three main groups of marine climates are the British, Mediterranean, and Madeira groups. The marine climate is valuable for the ozone and the iodine, the warmth of the air, and the equability of the temperature. It does not follow that the more distant localities are always the best; for some classes of cases the moister and cooler British climates answer better. The Mediterranean has a three-fold advantage. It has hardly any tide, scarcely a difference of two feet in the water-marks. It has a larger amount of saline matter than the Atlantic under the same latitude. Its temperature is many degrees higher than that of the Atlantic under the same latitude. Most exquisite is the scenery of this golden garden region all along the Riviera. Near Cannes all the atmosphere is redolent with the odours of jessamine, cassia, and geranium, which are planted in whole fields. At Bordighera we have the tall, tropical palm tree. San Remo is sheltered by a vast olive grove, which for miles covers a protecting range of hills. At well-sheltered Mentone the lemon tree attains a luxuriant vegetation, and all along the coast the sloping hills of this subalpine region are clothed with myrtles, the heath, and the pine. The English patient who goes out to this sunny land may in January imagine that it is June. The dust is lying upon the roads; the sun shines with the brightness of an English summer; the chill, and the damp, and the

fog are all gone. For many hours the patient can sit, or walk, or drive, or take Sydenham's grand specific of horse-exercise. It is only at sunset that he recollects that it is winter.

There is something of a reverse side—not very much, indeed, but let it be stated—to be presented to this picture. There is a mysterious, but inseparable, connection between the dirty and the picturesque. You only find very rudimentary imitations of English cookery and English comforts. The prices are simply outrageous. At Nice they have been doubled within the last twenty years. There is no real reason why this should be the case. There is many an exquisite nook on the Italian side of the Riviera, where one may obtain all the climatic advantages for a sum very much below what is usually found to be necessary. But English people crowd together, and create famine prices. As Sir Francis Head says—"Somehow or other our country people are like locusts; for they not only fly in myriads to distant countries, but, as they travel, they congregate in clouds, and therefore either are they found absolutely eating up a foreign country, or not one of them is to be seen there." If an English family have the intrepidity to settle down upon fresh ground, they are presently followed by gregarious friends; and then the pension, the hotel, the doctors, the English clergyman, the guide-book maker, all follow in orderly succession, until the English settlement is complete. In choosing among various localities, medical advice should always be sought. The underlying medical principle is extremely simple. The sea air is of a very stimulating kind, so much so, that many people get wretched nights from sleeplessness; and therefore those who suffer from inflammatory symptoms should seek Hyères, or, for perfect stillness of atmosphere, should go to Pau. When such symptoms are absent, marvellous benefits are reaped from the climate of the Mediterranean seaboard.

There is a tendency of late rather to underrate Madeira, I think, undeservedly, as I have met with many who speak well of it from experience. The committee of the Brompton Consumptive Hospital sent out twenty patients here, but not more than three received any benefit. The misfortune was that these poor people, from some reason or other, had to do without cod-liver oil and tonics, the very base of all English treatment. The climate is very mild,

but is said to have altered for the worse, since the Oidium ravaged the vineyards.

The British climates are not so warm, but they are moister and less excitant. If a case is a hopeful one, the more bracing kind of climate is selected; if the case is not a good one, a very mild relaxing climate. I think I know a doctor who sends his good cases to St. Leonard's, and his unfavourable cases to Torquay. I can speak very favourably of both localities. There is a considerable number of watering-places which are not only favourite localities for the summer, but which, on the score of their bracing qualities, invite patients to stay there for the winter. Let me say, however, that such pleasant places as Worthing and Dawlish, where existence is a positive delight for ten months in the year, are peculiarly exposed in early spring to the assassin violence of the east wind. A better case may be made out for Ilfracombe. The temperature is not below that of Torquay, owing mainly to the fact that the Gulf Stream comes up the Bristol Channel to a greater extent than it does up the English Channel. The Ilfracombe attractions of scenery can hardly be exaggerated. Some nooks on the north-western sea, and the Isle of Bute, are recommended by some, but we would recommend hardly anyone to go north of an imaginary line drawn westward from London. The further westward you go, as a rule, the milder becomes the climate. There is Ventnor, with the whole exquisite scenery of the Undercliff, sheltered by the imposing hills beyond. Notice just beyond Ventnor that splendid group of buildings, the Cottage Convalescent Hospitals. I remember sending a young man down there from what seemed a dying bed, in a dense London Court, and a few months afterwards I found him walking cheerfully about Ventnor town, having abdicated his position as an invalid. There is Bournemouth, sheltered by its pine groves, and Torquay girdled by its hill. Torquay styles herself the "Queen of Watering Places," but I observe that Brighton, Scarborough, and other localities, claim that enviable and somewhat lucrative position. There are other places, unknown to fame, where the climate is quite as good. Salcombe for instance, where hardly anyone goes, is more southerly than Torquay, and the gardens have still more striking proofs of the mildness of the winter. Then we get to the lovely sheltered

nooks of Cornwall, always remembering that in the rear there is a bleak windswept ridge of table land. Some of the villages on the estuary waters of the Fal are the warmest places in the county. When you come to Penzance, the climate is something marvellous. Italians have been known to leave Italy, in order to try the climate of Penzance.

I am bound to say that on all these health resorts on our south coast the greatest attention is given to the comfort and health of the visitors. The ways of invalid folk are studied and understood. The towns return a large part of their profits in expensive and thorough sanitary improvements. You are almost sure to find clever and sympathetic medical men, who are by no means behind their brethren in town in the art of palliation and cure. The clergy leave their cards, and some of the regular residents find us out in a kindly way. The invalids, as they move about the Esplanade, begin gradually to know one another by sight, and to take an interest in each other's cases. They meet in shops and reading-rooms, and sometimes in the houses of common friends. Many a man regrets that just when he has made the most charming friends, he is obliged to bid them adieu, and laments the insularity which has kept him isolated so long. We take a lively interest in the charitable institution of the Convalescent Homes, which have been established for the benefit of our poorer fellow-sufferers. We are rejoiced when we see some fellow patient fling away respirator and wraps, and a gloom gathers over our spirits and countenances when we hear of another that he is not so well as he was, and is not reaping the good which he expected from the climate of the place. It is when the winter has worn away, and we come upon some ethereal day of spring, which has wandered out of its proper place in an Italian summer, that we gain the crowning point of our winter's sojourn. Then the invalid is able to join his friends or the strong members of his party, the pencils and paint-box are brought out, some expedition is planned to some famous castle, or seacove and cavern, or neighbouring islet, and when we get back to town, as the season is at the brightest, the dominant impression of your winter resort is that you have had a festive and prolonged holiday.

You go back to that dreaded consultation room. The doctor listens again at chest and back. He taps, and punches, and

measures you all about. He then shakes hands. He pokes you playfully perhaps in the ribs. He tells you that you have made pounds and pounds of flesh. He will probably let you off any more medicine, except a trifle of iron or quinine; but, perhaps, tells you that for the next winter or two you had better go as before to some winter resort. On the whole, you do not, perhaps, feel very sorry to hear this. It is, you think, and not without reason, the most admirable of prescriptions.

GOING TO BED.

ALL the world goes to bed, in some mode or other; but the fashions of so doing present singular variety. Some folk have no other bedstead than mother earth, no other bed-clothes than the skins of animals, no other night-gear than the same garments as are worn by day; whereas at the other end of the scale are found the utmost refinements of splendour and lavish cost.

Among such ancient nations as we know most about, and in many Oriental countries of more recent times, the floor of a room or the flat terraced roof of a house served the place of bedstead. A mat or cushion, coiled up during the day, was spread out at night—a simplicity of arrangement which almost dispensed with the duty of "making the bed." In Russia, to the present day, the semi-Europeanised peasant seeks his repose on the top of the immense stoves used in that country, covered with coarse mats or blankets. The Orientals of old, when well-to-do in the world, substituted cushions for mats, and made them elegant as well as comfortable, with rich silks on the outside, and a stuffing of fine wool, down, and feathers.

The ancient Egyptians used a pillow of wood, with a recess or hollow to receive the neck. The Israelites had sheep or goat-skins for beds, or bags of goats' hair; the better kinds stuffed with wool, cotton, or feathers: most usually, however, the pillow only was so stuffed. It was such a pillow as this that Michal had put upon the bolster, in the bed on which the image was laid to save David from the emissaries of Saul. "The Egyptian bedstead," says Mr. Blyth, in his interesting little work on this subject, where he notices the period of the sojourn of the Israelites in that land, "although there seems to have been considerable diversity in the shape of the canopy and the means by which it was decked with hangings, and although it

sometimes resembled the modern four-poster, was generally similar in form to our couch. It manifested a considerable amount of taste. One end was raised, and receded in a graceful curve; the legs were sometimes straight, sometimes curved, and the feet were often fashioned to resemble the claws of animals. The fittings for the day seem to have been different from those used at night. In the daytime there were spread over them coverings, on the gorgeous decorations of which those who were able were lavish in expenditure; they then answered much the same purpose as our sofa. Thus we are told that when the murderers, bent on their deadly work, went to Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, they found him at home lying on his bed. When, too, the deputation waited on David to thank him for conferring his crown on Solomon, he must have been reclining on his bed, for it is said that in token of his pleasure he raised himself thereon. It is also related of Jacob, in his dying interview with Joseph, that he laid himself on the head of his bed." That at the time of the prophet Amos the Jews indulged in much luxury of beds and bedsteads, when they had the means of so doing, is proved by the passage, "They lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall." Solomon's bedstead, we know, was of cedar of Lebanon, with a bottom of gold, pillars of silver, and covering of purple.

We are prone to believe that the spring mattress is quite a modern invention, a product of the age of elastic steel plates and coiled wires; but there is reason to doubt the correctness of this conclusion. The ancient Egyptians appear to have had an article somewhat similar in character, if not in the construction, at least in its purpose: it consisted of a flat web or surface, constructed of transverse pieces of bamboo cane or palm branches. This was very much in use, often serving, when placed on the floor, the threefold purpose of bedstead, bed, and mattress. The Assyrians, a luxurious people in many ways, knew how to make and to use voluptuous couches. When King Ahasuerus gave a great feast, the guests reclined on couches of silver and gold; these conches were placed on a pavement of porphyry, marble, alabaster, and blue coloured stone; while the hall which contained them was surrounded with hangings of white and green velvet,

fastened, with cords of fine linen and purple, to silver rings and marble pillars. It was customary in those days, at the houses of the great, to recline on couches at meals, not to sit on chairs or stools; and sometimes the couch used for this purpose by day served as a bed at night. The Greeks and Romans adopted the use of these couches rather extensively. The framework was sometimes very gorgeous, being resplendent with gold, silver, amber, carving, inlay, and veneered with ivory. The bedding was quieter in tone, consisting of quilted mattresses of cotton, woollen, or leather, stuffed with wool, weeds, or dry leaves; over this was thrown a cloak, often the same that served the wearer during the day. Two or three coverlets, according to the temperature of the season, covered the sleeper; a round pillow was used, stuffed like the bed. In later effeminate days, when the manliness of the Greek character had been nearly worn out, the bedsteads and bedding became still more gorgeous; and such was also the case with the Romans in the days of the empire. The trading and middle classes were, of course, much less sumptuously accommodated. Their bedsteads were of common wood, bottomed with planks pierced with holes for the admission of fresh air, or of leathern thongs fastened one over another. Sometimes a sort of hammock or slung bed was used, strong cord netting fastened to four pillars.

Coming down to later ages, and to our own country, we find that in Anglo-Saxon wills, mention was often made of straw beds and pillows, bed-clothes, coverlets, and curtains. A common bed, such as was in use among the poorer classes, was nothing more than a sack stuffed with straw. The bedsteads were, for the most part, short boxes, with an inclined frame to support a pillow, on which the head of the sleeper rested. In better households a larger box was used, having four posts or pillars to support a canopy or tester—perhaps the original pattern whence our four-poster was derived. The illuminations or coloured drawings, with which old manuscripts were so often adorned, afford curious testimony to the bed-gear of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. Among the Harleian MSS. is one decorated with a picture of a bed-room, with three beds; they are what we should call stamp bedsteads, with four posts rising a little above the level of the bedclothes; two are plain at the sides, the other railed or balustraded.

The pillows are propped up so as to be nearly vertical. In another example, shown in the Cotton MSS., a child's cot is shaped in a peculiar way; it somewhat resembles a boat, hung at the ends by hooks from two uprights; these uprights spring from a framework or carriage, provided with four wheels—altogether a snug and convenient arrangement.

In the Norman period, even the better classes had little more than plain wooden bedsteads, with coarse bedding; while the commonalty had to be content (more or less) with straw for a bed and skins for bedding. Some estates, in the curious days of feudal tenure, were held on condition of the recipient supplying clean straw for the king's bed, when the royal personage was journeying that way. There is a wardrobe account extant, in which a sum of fifty shillings (large in those days) is set down for silk, taffety, fustian, and cotton for King John's bed. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the bedstead was customarily shaped like a crib or cot, and was placed in a kind of recess, at the side of the room; but the style adopted by royalty was ornate enough, with its velvet, satin, silk, and ostrich feathers. There was in fact a strange mingling of splendour with rudeness, luxury with bareness, in the arrangements of those days concerning bedsteads, beds, and bedding. Among the Royal MSS. is one with an illumination, representing apparently some Anglo-Norman king, lying on a low bedstead, with a dark wrapper or coverlet, and a bolster and pillow so very much raised that he occupies nearly a sitting position; curtains, suspended from a rod, form a kind of half-tester. It gives us an insight into some of the usages of the time, that, although the royal personage has a crown upon his head, he is wholly without body linen—in plain English, a night-shirt. In another pictorial representation, the bedding is ample enough to wholly hide the bedstead; the tester is as large as the bedstead, and is provided with small side curtains. Among the Cotton MSS. are two still more curious, representing ladies' bed-chambers. In one of them is a bedstead with a fringed tester, ample coverlets, the undersheet brought up so high as to be drawn over the head of the sleeper, and the pillow nearly vertical. In the other, some of the carving of the bedstead is shown, and the valence of the tester is embroidered with stars. The

materials employed were often rich and costly. Chaucer knew something about this when he wrote—

" Of downe of pure dove white
I wol give him a feather bed,
Rayed with gold, and right wel clad
In fine black satin d'oufremer,
And many a pillow, and every bere
Of cloth of Raynes, to sleep on, soft."

Raynes is supposed to have been Rennes, in Bretagne, where fine linen was woven.

Bequests of beds with worsted hangings were frequently recorded in those times. About the middle of the fourteenth century the Countess of Northampton bequeathed to her daughter, the Countess of Arundel, "a bed of red worsted, embroidered;" still later, Lady Despencer gave her daughter Philippa "a bed of red worsted, with all the furniture appertaining thereto;" and later still, Lady Elizabeth Andrews gave to William Wyndsore "a red bed of worsted, with all the hangings." These details are given in the *Testamenta Vetusta*. The cradle honoured by the bodily presence of Henry the Fifth, when an infant, was a box or crib about thirty-eight inches long, nineteen inches wide, and twenty-nine inches deep; it was suspended on two carved uprights, on the top of each of which was the figure of a dove. In the reign of Henry the Sixth, Lady Abergavenny bequeathed by will a bed and its trappings, which were described with all the minuteness of a loving connoisseur in such matters:—"A bed of gold swans, with tappetes of green tapestry, with branches and flowers of divers colours, and two pairs of sheets of Raynes; a piece of fustian, six pairs of other sheets, six pairs of blankets, six mattresses, six pillows; with curtains and vancours that belong to the bed aforesaid. A bed of cloth of gold, with leopards, with the cushions and tappetes of very best red worsted, that belong to the same bed; also four pairs of sheets, four pairs of blankets, three pillows, three mattresses, a bed of velvet, white and black paled, with eushions, tappetes, and forms that belong to the said bed. My bed of silk, black and red, embroidered with woodbind flowers of silver; and all the casters and apparel that belong thereto." We can imagine how proud the noble dame must have been of all these dainty luxuries. During the Wars of the Roses, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, splendour and comfort alike declined, and many classes of the community were stricken with dire

poverty. The beds of the common people became, as they had been some centuries earlier, a mere layer of straw or skins, placed on the floor or on a trestle; while the pillow was little other than a block of wood.

During the Tudor period, when the middle classes were becoming by degrees a power in the country, their improved position enabled them to provide better furniture for their sitting-rooms, and better beds and bedsteads for their sleeping accommodation. The tester and the four-poster reached the houses of families deprived, until that period, of such comforts. Of course, royalty and nobility were provided in more ornate and luxurious style. There is extant the order issued, and, we may presume, acted upon, for the daily making of Henry the Seventh's bed; it is most elaborate, prescribing what portions of the duty are to devolve upon the yeoman of the wardrobe, the gentleman usher, the groom of the wardrobe, the yeoman of the body, the squire of the bed, the yeoman of the chamber, and the yeomen of the stuff. It might, perchance, strike some of us, that this formality must have been nearly equivalent to Dick and Tom helping Harry to do nothing; but the persons concerned evidently did not think so; exhausted nature required refreshment after such labours, and, accordingly, we are told, these palatial domestics retired from the royal bedroom to an antechamber, where they partook of meat, beer, and wine. The bed on which Henry the Eighth slept contained straw beneath its finery; and a curious order was issued regarding the making of this bed. The usher was directed "to search the straw through with a dagger, that there be none untruth therein; and to tumble over on the down bed for the search thereof." This, if our surmise be correct, was a precaution against possible intended mischief to the royal person.

Nevertheless, throughout even the sixteenth century, the sleeping accommodation for the middle and working classes was very rough. Henry the Eighth's rush purveyor, who supplied one of the materials for making rushlights and for strewing on the floors, was directed also to provide straw for the slumbers of the king's servants, the said slumbers being enjoyed in the kitchen. Straw beds and wooden pillows were in use among the peasantry, down to the very close of the Tudor period.

It affords a notable proof of the magic power exercised by Shakespeare, that a

mere brief mention of the Great Bed of Ware has made an abiding impression for more than two centuries and a half, and bids fair to do the like for two centuries and a half to come. The passage occurs in *Twelfth Night*, where, in the second scene of the third act, Sir Toby Belch urges Sir Andrew Aguecheek to write a challenge to his supposed rival:—"Go, write it in a martial hand; be curt and brief; it is no matter how witty, so it be elegant and full of invention; if thou thou'st him some thrice, it shall not be amiss; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the Bed of Ware in England, set 'em down." No earlier mention of the said bed has been found; but as Shakespeare speaks of it so familiarly, we may infer that it was known before his time. However this may be, the bed acquired a double celebrity—for its large size, and for Shakespeare's mention of it. In his day, it was in the manor house at Ware, Hertford, the residence of the Fanshaws; but whether it was made for a Fanshaw, why it was made of such large dimensions, and who were the sleepers who reposed in it, we have no means of determining. The bedstead is ten feet nine inches in length, about the same in breadth, and seven feet six inches in height. The two posts at the foot are very massive; and nearly the whole of the bedstead is elaborately carved, especially the paneling at the bed's head. Certainly, since the days of Og, King of Bashan, there have been few such four-posters as this. At some date not now known, the bedstead was transferred from Manor Park to one of the inns at Ware; and here it became an object of pilgrimage and, in such wise, was, doubtless, financially beneficial to mine host. Stories are told of twelve people sleeping in it at once, merely to test its capacity; and, at one time it was customary to drink a can of beer on coming into the august presence of the mighty bed—doubtless, for the good of the house. Four or five years ago this Shakespearian relic (if we may so term it) was purchased by the proprietor of the Rye House, who built an ornate wooden structure to contain it, as well as the tapestry and carved fittings which had been kept in the same room.

It was in Shakespeare's time that James the Sixth of Scotland, afterwards James the First of England, went to Copenhagen to bring over his young bride, Anne of

Denmark. She brought with her "a ne stately bedstead, made of walnut-wood, and elaborately ornamented with carved figures." This royal relic is, or was recently, in the possession of the Earl of Elgin.

In advancing into modern times, through the Stuart period into that of the Georges, there is, of course, a multitude of gossip concerning beds, bedsteads, bedding, and bed-clothes; but it will suffice for us here to refer the reader to an article in a former volume, where the modern aspects of this subject are pretty fully treated.*

UNDER THE COCOA TREE.

TWICE a year immense excitement prevails at the corner of Duke Street and Piccadilly. In the bright, if chilly, May weather, or under the warmer sun of early June, there is racing on Epsom Downs, and chasing and hurrying at Fortnum and Mason's. Legions of fowls and countless flights of pigeons have been done to death, to furnish forth an English holiday. Wide wastes of dreary moorland have been ransacked for plover's eggs, another article as necessary on the Derby Day as a card and a pencil; flocks of tender grass-lambs have been compelled to yield up their juicy fore-quarters, and innumerable lettuces have supplied the complementary green to the scarlet crustacean, christened by the Parisian who had never seen him alive, the "cardinal of the sea."

At the period when people make vows and resolutions, to be broken in fitting season—and turn over new leaves—soon to be consigned to the waste-paper basket—there is bustle of another kind in Piccadilly. The battaglia of pickle bottles shrinks for a moment into obscurity; chutney and other combustibles, peppers of Cayenne and Nepaul, pungent curry and mysterious casaripe, retire into nooks and corners; while the space generally occupied by these provocatives of hunger is partially occupied by grinning boars' heads, truilled turkeys, poulettes de Mans, and hams of Montanchez. But these solid comestibles occupy but little space. Their merits are of the more silent class, and are for the moment completely outshone by the splendid trifles peculiar to the season. Every appliance of ingenuity has been pressed into the service of that "sweet tooth" which new-fashioned doctors tell us is not destructive to health. Within the

memory of many weary fathers of families the primeval "sac" was considered sufficient envelope for the sweeties of the season; but all this is changed, the bonbonnière has developed into a thing of beauty, and is often solid enough to prove a joy for ever. Crystal and enamel now decorate the boxes of "goodies" which fly about at Christmas and the New Year, and the vehicle of a pound of sweetstuff may easily cost a ten-pound note. Boxes there are of silk and velvet, cannily gilded, pinched, carved, and puffed, filled above with sweetmeats and below with sweet sounds. Conspicuous among the more curious articles are the spoils of the animal kingdom, the magnificent plumage of a peacock being often employed as a screen for lollipops. Another curious feature of the present season is the profuse introduction of animals carefully modelled and covered with satin. Old-fashioned dogs and elephants, covered with the woolly substance dear to our youth, are put to shame by their sleek successors, who reflect the light prettily from their highly-polished sides. Here is an elephant, with a coat of satin, which most assuredly has been dyed expressly, so admirably is elephant-colour copied. Gorgeously attired in scarlet housings, and bearing a castellated howdah, the wise and mighty monster is a literal rendering of "out of the strong came forth sweetness." A quaint device, also, is that of the woman who lived in a tree; and those who like quantity as well as quality in sugar-plums would rejoice over a faggot of sticks, life size, garnished internally not with vipers but with sugar-coated almonds, rocky pralines, and cunning boluses, which, when crunched by the faithful, reward them with a suspicion of delicious liqueur. Grouped around these are bunches of early carrots, crisp cabbages, and curling lettuces, rich with hidden sweetness. Albums of victorious German leaders also abound, and are eagerly bought up, although a bon-bon box is an odd place for a picture of that grim and uncomfortable statesman, Prince Bismarck. Kaiser William and Count von Moltke, also, look out of place among the sugar-plums, which we may rest assured were never made by French hands. Switzerland is responsible for this cross-reading of "sweets to the sweet," and also for another violation of the maxim, "a place for everything and everything in its place." Even as nauseous powders are wrapped by crafty and inhuman mothers

in folds of jam, so is scientific teaching obtruded in the guise of sweetstuff, by the hard-headed Switzer. This enormity is perpetrated with a cold-blooded, remorseless premeditation, frightful to think upon. In a glittering box are ranged layers of small squares of chocolate, each of which is wrapped in a piece of paper forming a section of a map. Arranged in proper order, the little squares compose perfect maps of Switzerland, France, Germany, and Italy—tinted with all the colours of the rainbow. With fiendish ingenuity each square is made to do double duty—so that two complete maps must be mastered before consumption sets in. It would have been perhaps an extenuating circumstance, had the puzzle been so arranged that after learning the names on each section the chocolates could have been promptly devoured, but diabolical malignity has imposed a double dose of knowledge to a single mouthful of chocolate. As if to exhibit the full depth of depravity which may be reached by an alliance of science and sugar, yet another instrument of torture is displayed. This consists of a map of Switzerland, rolled round a particularly massive staff, containing an interior shaft filled with sweeties. The use of this dreadful instrument is only too obvious. The map is to be unrolled, and the victim brought close to it to be examined in the geography of that very important country, Helvetia. Success is to be rewarded by part of the inside of the roller, failure with a sharp application of the outside. Imagine the feelings of an unhappy child, who having once tasted the sweets, becomes so excited at their neighbourhood as to break down in its task, on being compelled to undergo castigation with an implement which maketh the knuckles to smart, while the ears tingle yet more acutely at the rattle of unattainable sugarplums!

Very noticeable among the "goodies" of the season is the increasing employment of chocolate, either as a sweet in itself, or as a mask for other toothsome morsels. Time-honoured forms of sugar-coated almonds are now as ever "to the fore," and dates deftly stuffed with delicious paste try to put plums similarly treated out of countenance, dainty "pruneaux fleuris," a recent introduction, and the sweetly acid "pistoles," compete sharply with the good old plum of Orleans, but to all kinds of preserved fruit, richly flavoured creams, and ethereal jellies,

chocolate, in its purest form, is now frequently applied as a jacket—light, agreeable, and nourishing withal.

At holiday time, Fortnum and Mason's is a vast pantomime to which the public are admitted free of charge, but from which it is difficult to get away, without investing in something useful, amusing, or sweet. In Piccadilly we are "in front" of the theatre, may see and enjoy the show, but, if we want to step behind the scenes, view the property room, and see the scene painters at work, we must visit the pretty Théâtre Duclos, where goodies are not only sold, but made. None but a heavy-handed Briton, engrossed with business, could pass the window in Oxford-street, hard by the Princess's Theatre, without looking upon the wonderful stuffed fox—erect, cocked-hatted as a vigilant gendarme should be—who leads, as a prisoner, an unhappy, tearful-eyed rabbit, who has just been caught in flagrante delicto, and carries the fatal cabbage, the evidence of guilt, on his furry brown back. M. Duclos is justly proud of his "salon," gay with the prettiest and quaintest of French conceits. In a plain birdcage, a humming bird—marvel of marvels—pipes a merry tune, and many bonbonnières owe their originality and beauty to the birds' heads and plumage lavished upon them. Several mountebanks are constructed with true artistic taste. These singular creatures, with the head and feet of the kingfisher, attached to bodies dressed in the true costume of the Saltimbanque, are beating the big drum, balancing the sword, and performing all kinds of juggling tricks—to the envy and confusion of a rival band of rabbits and squirrels.

Charming as are these receptacles for sweets, it is impossible to do them proper justice, for now or never is the time to see the skilful confectioners, the light-handed artists in sugar and chocolate, at their work. Passing through the office of courteous M. Duclos, I observe that the walls are well lined with the works of the immortal Carême, and that Gouffé and other masters of the sublime art of confectionery—the true school for a "chef" of the highest rank—are here in force. Near the works of these great "professionals" is the bulky "Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine," the last production of an illustrious amateur who took more pride in his salads and his "poulet à la ficelle" than in the creation of Athos, Porthos,

and Aramis. Descending to the lower regions I find work going merrily on.

Sundry old women are busy in preparing chestnuts for their great destinies as "marrons glacés," &c. The chestnuts used here are not the ordinary produce of our English parks, but the famous marrons de Turin, whence they are imported into this country; chestnuts, like truffles, thriving best under a warmer sky than that of Albion. These precious nuts, after being boiled and carefully trimmed, are immersed in a bath of hot syrup, where they remain for many hours in company with sundry pods of costly vanilla. Near these interesting cauldrons are lively black-eyed Frenchmen preparing the dainty caramels—a confection of sugar, boiled till it attains a certain degree of tenacity, and puts on a brilliant lustre. These showy and agreeable sweetmeats, like all confectionery of the very best kind, must be eaten fresh to be thoroughly enjoyed, and their manufacture, therefore, goes on unceasingly. The saccharine fabric may be flavoured with pine-apple, apricot, vanilla, tea, orange, cherry, lemon, or pistachio, but caramels, combined with chocolate cream, are more highly esteemed than others, and are interesting as showing how the fruit of Theobroma cacao is making its way. Curious activity is displayed in making the bon-bons which form the heart or core of the dark brown sweetmeats which, viewed superficially, are merely rough lumps of chocolate. One youth is hard at work at a bowl of crème—which, in French cookery, does not always signify cream—of strawberries. The contents of the spouted bowl he is carefully stirring or "working" are of a beautiful pink colour, and of about the consistency of thick paint. When the mixture is perfectly smooth the artist turns to his moulds, made of the finest and driest starch, indented with cavities just large enough to contain the half-mouthful required for a bon-bon. Seizing now upon a knife, and pouring from the spont with the other hand into the first cavity, he cuts off the viscid sugary stream at the exact moment when the cavity is filled, and proceeds thus to fill row after row of indentations. The box of starch, now neatly spotted with pink, is removed to make way for more, and the tiny bon-bons are, when dry and cool, lifted from the starch mould and are ready to receive their chocolate husk.

Large cakes of chocolate of the finest kind, made at M. Duclos's factory, are now

placed on a hot stove, and are gradually worked into a paste of proper warmth and consistency. Some considerable knack is required in the manipulator who "dips" the bon-bon of whatever composition it may be, into the chocolate, and withdraws it, covered with a dusky mantle, like a lady in gay ball-dress of white, pink, or pistachio-green, who enshrouds her glittering finery in a dark-brown domino. In order that the lady may be properly attired, it is indispensable that the cloak be of the best kind; in fact, almost pure cacaoa, with the slightest possible admixture of sugar.

Unlike the sweets to which chocolate merely acts as a disguise, there are many others made of the same material mixed with more sugar, to give it greater consistency, and then cast in moulds. This is considered as one of the most elegant forms of chocolate, inasmuch as the success of the sweetmeat depends entirely upon the quality of the chocolate and graceful shape of the mould, without any adventitious aid from lurking creams.

The application of chocolate to pastry, an interesting process, is also going on, as well as the confection of all sorts of cakes and knick-knacks, very "pretty to see," but conducted in a tepid atmosphere which suggests a speedy retreat to the upper air.

Having now disposed of "fancy" chocolate, the fruit of the cacao in its loftiest and most delicate expression, let us stroll to the Euston-road, hard by the Regent's Park, to Epps's cocoa manufactory, where may be studied the making of cocoa on a stupendous scale, giving a just idea of the value of these articles, not as luxuries, but as actual food.

For long ages before the Spaniard set foot in the empire of the Aztecs, the natives of that, till then, favoured region, had employed the nut of the great shrub, known scientifically as *Theobroma cacao*, in the production of liquid food. Their conquerors learned the art of making chocolate from them, as the rough Romans of early days acquired learning and eloquence from the children of Hellas. The name of the laurel-like cacao tree, has proved the source of much confusion in these Britannic isles, where, until lately, might be seen depicted on the cart of a cocoa manufacturer a faithful image of the cocoa palm—which bears the cocoa nut—with its feathery crown and smooth trunk, at the foot of which a boy was occupied in collecting cacao beans. These actually grow upon a far lowlier but very handsome tree, of

which they are the seeds. The fruit of *Theobroma cacao* is a long pod, in which the seeds are ranged in rows embedded in pulp. After being gathered the husks are removed, the beans and pulp are thrown in heaps to ferment, the watery particles drained off, and the seeds, after careful drying in the sun, are packed in sacks and shipped to this country, to undergo curious transformations at the will of the maker.

Mr. Epps converts cocoa beans into prepared cocoa, cacaoine, and chocolate. In making all these more or less easily cooked articles the initial processes are identical. Conducting me through a warehouse filled with long rows and tiers of sacks, Mr. Epps explains that these contain the simple cocoa bean of commerce. Like another excellent friend of man, the coffee bean, cocoa must undergo a fiery ordeal before its lurking aroma consents to be developed, and to this end it is consigned in quantities of about a hundred-weight and a half to the interior of huge iron cylinders revolving over a strong, but steady fire. An hour's subjection to the torture produces no apparent effect on the bean; but, in reality, two great changes have taken place in its constitution. The cocoa butter, as the fatty principle, of which one-half of the bean is composed, is generally called, has developed that peculiar volatile oil, which gives flavour, and the thin husk, or shell, has, together with the kernel, become brittle enough to be crushed easily between the fingers. After being allowed to cool, the beans are next consigned to the "nibbing mill," which makes short work of them, breaking the kernels into small pieces and winnowing away the light dry husks. Through many winnowings, siftings, and dustings the crushed beans now pass, until, thoroughly freed from husk and dust, they become the cocoa nibs familiar to the public as the source of a possibly wholesome, but, unless carefully prepared, exceedingly disagreeable, beverage. It is well to observe that the husks were not always, and sometimes now are not, removed with the care described. In making "flaked cocoa" of the common kind, the husks are ground with the beans, a method responsible for much of the indigestibility frequently ascribed to cocoa. The larger pieces caught by the sieves are now carefully picked over, the good kernels separated from dross and husks, sticks and stones, and the nibs are passed through a mill not only propelled, but well heated by

steam. This warmth is necessary in order to melt the cocoa butter. As the mill turns round, a semi-liquid paste issues from it, which, after passing through a smaller mill, issues in the form of a dark-brown cream, highly aromatic, and slightly astringent to the taste. The pure cream of cacao—the simple result of grinding and partially melting the nibs, without any foreign admixture whatever—having been produced, one of two things must be done to render it soluble. It is perfectly clear that a body composed of fifty per cent. of fat, ten per cent. of water, and only about ten per cent. of farinaceous matter to thirty per cent. of solids of various kinds, would not produce, when mixed with boiling water or even when boiled, a very satisfactory article of food. The fat would swim at the top, the solid residue would sink to the bottom, and no result, at all approaching the cocoa or chocolate of every-day life, would or could be attained. Two, or rather the proverbial three, courses are open. Sugar and farina may be added to the cream; a large proportion of the cocoa-butter may be removed by pressure; or no farina, but a great deal of sugar, may be added. By the first, “prepared cocoa” is produced, soluble in boiling water; by the second, “cacaoine;” and by the third, chocolate: both of the latter requiring a certain amount of boiling or cooking. Now, as English folk are but indifferent cooks, and hate any culinary operations which give too much trouble, it is easy to understand why they prefer prepared cocoa to all other shapes of the bean.

To produce this the finest loaf sugar and West Indian arrowroot are mixed in due proportion, ground together and added to the cocoa cream, the whole forming, when thoroughly incorporated, a stiffish paste of such composition as to enable it to be held in suspension in boiling water. This is now filled into huge moulds, containing each eighty-four pounds, and is then placed in a cool warehouse, where, in the course of a few days, it becomes perfectly solid and extremely hard. In this apartment scores of tons of “block” cocoa lie piled in huge heaps, to mature properly. The quantity of cocoa generally lying in this department may be imagined from the magnitude of Mr. Epps’s factory, or rather factories, which turn out some fifteen hundred tons of cocoa per annum, of an average value of a hundred and twenty pounds per ton. Thoroughly seasoned, the cocoa is ready for breaking up, and, to that end,

the block is placed on a moving bed, which forces it gradually, but irresistibly, against a breaker, like a magnified nutmeg grater, slowly revolving. Broken roughly in this way, the material is now ready for the mill, where it is ground into the fine powder sold by the retailers. Before being consigned to their care, it is carefully packed by a regiment of girls in foil and paper. The favourite size is the quarter-of-a-pound packet, and the amount of labour expended on packing alone appears great, when it is considered that a ton of powder fills eight thousand nine hundred and sixty packets. These are filled much as a tobacconist fills his packages of bird’s eye, with a frame and rammer. The packets are then labelled and packed in the boxes seen in every grocer’s window.

The effect of this process is a fine powder, perfectly soluble in boiling water, and producing, owing to the whole of the cocoa-butter having been retained, a highly agreeable and nourishing beverage, gently stimulating, also, from the presence of theobromine, a principle akin to theine and caffeine.

For persons not endowed with sufficiently robust digestion to encounter so much fatty food, “cacaoine” has been devised. This is simply the pure cocoa-cream, without the addition of arrowroot and sugar, and deprived of a certain per centage of its native butter. The cocoa-cream is put into very thick bags, which are packed in a hydraulic press, previously heated, between slabs of iron, also moderately heated. When the press is full, heavy pressure is applied for about an hour and a half. By dint of heat and pressure a large proportion of the cocoa-butter is squeezed out, a device by which the solubility and lightness of the material is greatly increased, at the cost of considerable loss in weight. The cakes are now re-ground, made into blocks, and reduced to powder, in the same manner as prepared cocoa. The result is, pure cacao, minus a large proportion of original fat, affording an exceedingly light and digestible food, less nourishing, of course, than prepared cocoa, but especially fitted for delicate persons at all times.

Chocolate may be dismissed in a few words, as it is simply cocoa-cream, to which a large addition of sugar has been made. For special purposes, a proportion of the butter is abstracted by many manufacturers, who thus produce an article midway between cacaoine and chocolate proper. To no kind of chocolate, however,

is farina added, and it is therefore necessary, whatever printed rules are supplied, to boil all chocolate, cacaoine, and kindred preparations in either milk or water.

Mr. Epps makes not only cocoa, but those curious lozenge-shaped transparencies called jujubes. I have read of the jujube tree, but can conscientiously hold that much-maligned growth innocent of any share in the sweet stickiness of to-day. Jujubes, which may be flavoured with anything, are a mixture of the best gum arabic, glycerine, and sugar. This mixture is spread in shallow pans and is carefully dried in a species of kiln, till it acquires the necessary toughness to recommend it to its admirers. So far as cocoa is concerned, I am equal to tasting it in almost every stage, but must confess that the jujube possesses a toughness which overcomes one not regularly trained to it.

Few more interesting spectacles can be witnessed even in London, than a great cocoa factory. The work goes on untiringly and smoothly through the winter's morning, until the magic hour of dinner lulls the great grinding mills to rest, and I am at leisure to stroll through the silent workshops, full of cocoa dust, and up and down the stairs, slippery with cocoa butter. Above, below, and around, I gaze upon, smell, taste, and feel nothing but cocoa, and wonder, as I take my departure, whether those who make it, eat or drink it at their humble breakfast; or whether, like the emancipated pastry-cook's 'prentice who fainted at the sight of a jam tart, they abjure cocoa when "out of business."

WHAT HAPPENED IN MY STUDIO.

A PAINTER'S GHOST STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

I HAD occupied my studio, which was situated in one of those old squares which fashion has long since passed by, for about two years.

The locality was essentially an artistic one, and the whole of the house in which I was domiciled was let out in studios. The ground floor was occupied by my particular friend Duncan, who went in heavily for stained glass and tiles. I occupied the first floor front, with another friend, Middleton, on the same floor at the back. Overhead were a landscape painter and a lady artist, who, from the fact of their spending a great deal of time in the country, occupied their studios in the square only for a day or two now and then, and frequently

at long intervals. The lower premises consisted of a wilderness of kitchens, sculleries, pantries, areas, and cellars, which I had never had the courage thoroughly to explore, and which I believe were a terra incognita even to the old couple who, until within a week or two of the events I am about to narrate, lived in one of the kitchens, and undertook the small amount of attendance which was required by the occupants of the studios.

Duncan, Middleton, and I all lived at some little distance from the square, and were only there by day. The landscape painter, Howarth, slept in a room adjoining his studio whenever he came up to town, and Miss Rehden also had rooms on the second floor, in addition to her studio.

We were, all of us, somewhat matter-of-fact people, quiet, methodical, and industrious. Our lives were as plodding and free from romance as can well be imagined. To my friend Duncan, who was not, however, the chief actor in the strange event I am about to narrate, I would give the palm for imagination. His imagination did not, however, run away with him, for he immediately reduced its wildest flights to a practical form on paper, thence transferred them to glass and tiles, and burnt them into immortality in his adjacent kiln. That he lived in a world of dragons and ghouls, angels and cherubs, saints and devils, I will not deny, and in one form or another they were scattered pretty freely about the house; but they had no possible bearing on my tale, and I mention them merely to give my readers a fair idea of the house and its inmates.

Previous to my taking possession of it, my studio had been occupied by an artist who had died there, very suddenly, of heart disease. He was seized with the attack which carried him off, while at work, had staggered back, and expired upon a sofa which was just behind him. He had been a man of undoubted ability. His later works were even much sought after, and realised a considerable sum in the market. He possessed, however, singularly retiring habits, and one of his peculiarities was, that he never would allow even his most intimate friends to be admitted when he was at work, and would never allow a picture to be seen until it was completed. I had not been personally acquainted with him, but had gathered these particulars from Duncan, who knew him well, and was the last person who had seen him alive.

From reasons which it is unnecessary to explain, the old couple to whom I have referred as having been in charge of the house, were obliged to leave somewhat unexpectedly, and for several days we were unable to find any suitable person to take their place. During this interval no one slept in the house at night, as both the occupants of the upper floor were absent. We had made a temporary arrangement with a man who was occasionally employed on odd jobs, to remain in the house until nine o'clock, to answer the door, in the event of any one calling. After that hour, if we wished to visit our studios, which was not very frequently the case, we were obliged to let ourselves in with our latch-keys. A box of matches and a candle were always left on the mantel-piece in the hall, so that we could obtain a light when it was required.

I have written the foregoing description without any particular attempt at seriousness, and with that strange feeling uppermost in my mind which impels people to laugh at a funeral, or under other solemn circumstances in which the feelings are really very deeply moved. When I say that the event which I am about to describe affected me so deeply that I have never since entered that studio, and that nothing would ever induce me to do so, it will be at once understood that I regard it in a very serious light indeed.

I had been spending the evening at the house of a friend who lived in the neighbourhood of the square. I left him at about eleven o'clock, and as I had been for some days expecting a letter of considerable importance, I thought I would take the opportunity of looking in at the studio, on my way to the station, to see if it had arrived. We had had a long discussion at my friend's house on the subject of spiritualism, and I had, as usual, expressed in tolerably strong terms my entire disbelief in those who professed to hold converse with the spiritual world, by means of a table; and who were, nevertheless, so little impressed with the startling issues involved—supposing their belief to be well founded—that they could sit down afterwards, and eat a hearty supper off the very table which had been the means of producing such wondrous manifestations. Many marvellous stories of supernatural appearances had been related by some of the guests, not as evidence of so-called spiritualism, but in proof of our occasional intercourse, under exceptional

circumstances, with the spirit world, and some of these, which it was difficult to explain away on natural grounds, were dwelling vividly in my mind as I opened the hall door in F— Square.

The night was dark, and, even with the door open, I had some difficulty in finding my way to the mantelpiece where the candle and matches were usually deposited. Just as I had struck a match a puff of wind through the open door blew it out, and I was compelled to go to the door, and close it, before I attempted to light another. It was but a few paces from the door to the mantelpiece, but as I retraced my steps in total darkness after closing the door, the consciousness of being alone in the gloomy old house, and the intense darkness and stillness seemed to come upon me quite suddenly with an unaccountable chill. Probably the recent conversation at my friend's house had a good deal to do with this, but it is certain that even after I had lighted the candle, and was pursuing my way up the broad stone staircase, that undefinable dread of the supernatural, which the most matter-of-fact people at times experience, was strong upon me. After I was in my studio, however, with the familiar objects of my work-a-day life about me, the sensation soon vanished, and I sat down, to contemplate by the dim light of the candle a picture upon which I had been working during the day. I observed that it had almost slipped from the frame, and being a full length and somewhat heavy, I determined to get a nail and fasten it more securely, fearing some catastrophe, if I left it in its present condition.

My hammer and nails were always kept in an old oak press, which stood opposite the door. It was a quaint piece of furniture covered with curious carvings, and had belonged to my predecessor, Mr. Heseltine, whose sudden death had cast such a gloom over the place. I had taken it, together with some fixtures, at a valuation, when I entered upon the occupation of the room, and, as it was heavy and cumbersome, it had never been removed from the dark corner where I had found it. The upper part contained a cupboard in which I kept all sorts of odds and ends, my tools included. As the door of this cupboard had a chronic tendency to swing open, I usually turned the key when I shut it, leaving the key in the lock. On this occasion, however, I found the key was gone, and I naturally concluded that it must have

fallen out on to the floor. Holding the candle close to the ground I looked about for it, but it was not to be seen. Concluding that I must have inadvertently locked it and put the key away somewhere, I gave up the idea of nailing in the picture that night, as it was getting near the time for my train. I therefore pushed it close into the rabbet of the frame, knowing that it would not be interfered with until I came in the morning. I then took my candle, left the room, and locked the door. Taking out the key, I proceeded down-stairs and placed the candle on the mantelpiece in the hall, and I was just lifting my hand to put on the extinguisher, when the action was arrested by the sudden shutting of a door upstairs. The sound was so loud and distinct that, coming as it did unexpectedly, and at that late hour, it caused me to start violently. It came evidently from the first floor. Had I not shut and locked my studio door myself, I should have declared from the direction of the sound that it was my door which had thus awakened the echoes of the empty house. The only other door near it was the one leading to the studio of Mr. Middleton, and in the quick rush of thought that followed the sound, I reflected that he must have left his room open, and that the wind had caused the door to slam. There was no time for further reflection, however, for, before the sound caused by the slamming of the door had died away, I heard footsteps coming down the second flight of stairs. For a moment I was really alarmed. The previous death-like stillness of the house, the lateness of the hour, and the extreme improbability of any of the inmates being there at that time, all rushed into my mind and brought back, with a sensation which amounted to positive pain, the strange chill I had felt on first entering the house. Fears of the supernatural, however, are soon dissipated in the presence of substantial bodily forms, and I drew a breath of relief as I saw by the dim light of the single candle on the mantelpiece, a human figure, clad in a matter-of-fact coat and trowsers, descending from the landing of the first flight. The noise and the unhesitating step had caused me at once to dismiss the idea of burglars, and I knew it must be either Howarth or Middleton. I had again taken the candle in my hand, and was shading the light from my eyes so that I might better discern the approaching figure. My utter amazement may be imagined when I at length made out the features, and found

they were those of an entire stranger. He had reached the bottom of the stairs and was coming towards me with a quick step along the centre of the hall, looking neither to the right nor left, but going straight towards the hall door. There was nothing remarkable in his appearance. He was a man of middle height, well dressed, in a frock coat, grey tweed trowsers, and a tall hat, which he wore somewhat off his forehead. He had a long brown beard and moustache, an open intellectual expression of countenance, and a gentlemanly bearing, which impressed me so favourably, that any suspicions as to his motive in being there at that hour were at once dispelled. I naturally thought that, being a stranger, he would offer some explanation as to his presence at such a time, but he passed on without taking the slightest notice of me. When he came quite close I perceived that the left eye, the one next to me, was fixed as if the sight were gone, but this was no explanation of the fact of his not speaking, as he must have seen me as he came downstairs. Had there been anything in the least degree suspicious in his appearance, I should have claimed the right, which I felt was mine, to challenge his motive in being there at that hour; but his whole bearing forebade this, and I could only attribute his silence to an absence of politeness, which seemed at variance with his refined bearing.

He had passed me by, and was within a few paces of the door, before I had fairly recovered from the surprise the whole affair had occasioned. I was determined, however, that he should not leave the house without a word, and advancing a step or two behind him, I said simply, "Good evening." The moment I had uttered the words he stopped suddenly, turned quite round, so as to command me with his right eye, looked at me attentively for a second or two, passed his hand rapidly across his forehead, and then, without a word, turned again towards the door, opened it by pressing back the handle of the spring lock, and passed out into the street, closing the door behind him.

I was so utterly amazed, that, for a moment I stood motionless. This feeling was succeeded by one of intense annoyance at the man's rudeness. "Hang it," I thought, "I will insist on some explanation. It is quite right that I should do so." Even as I said this, however, the thought of the fine pensive face seemed to deter me. In spite of the defect of vision,

there was an intensity of expression, a melancholy, together with a tenderness in the face, which made it seem like an intrusion to question him. I felt, however, that there was a responsibility on my shoulders, and hastily putting out the light, I opened the door and passed out.

The square was perfectly quiet. The night was fine, and the lamps lit as usual. There was no turning for at least fifty yards on each side of the house, and certainly not ten seconds had elapsed between the time of the exit of the stranger and my reaching the door-step. Yet he was not to be seen. I looked to the right, I looked to the left, I looked carefully at the high spiked railings of the square garden opposite. Not a soul was to be seen. My suspicions returned with renewed force, and I felt that I had been duped by that placid deceitful countenance. It was evident that he must have taken to his heels, and run away at top speed, the moment he was outside the door, very possibly with some valuables from the upper rooms in his pocket. Vexed beyond measure at my own stupidity in letting him pass, I turned towards the station. Not ten yards from my door I came upon a policeman going the rounds, to ascertain whether the hall doors of the various houses were securely fastened. He was passing on in the direction away from my studio, so that I concluded he must have been quite near my door when the stranger emerged. "Did you see anyone come out of No. 30 a few minutes ago?" I asked.

"No, sir. I was standing in the doorway of No. 34 when you came out, and I waited a moment to see who it was; but no one came out before you."

"Oh! you are mistaken. A person left the house a few seconds before me, and he has rather excited my suspicions by making off as fast as his legs can carry him. I was hoping you would have seen which way he went."

"Excuse me, sir; but if he had come out, I must have heard the door, and must have seen him, for I was close by."

What was I to think? I could not doubt the evidence of my own senses. Yet the man seemed equally positive. Had my spiritual experiences caused my imagination to play me this trick? and was the whole thing merely a creation of my own brain? I could not believe it. The policeman must have been too much occupied with his scrutiny of the adjoining door to

notice anything else. I bade him good night, and passed on; for I had only a few minutes to catch my train.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNÉ*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVII. CISSY MAKES THINGS PLEASANT.

As Captain Bellairs rides home this night, it does not occur to him that Kate can have any objection, beyond the fear that it may inconvenience him, to the fact of Mrs. Angerstein being quartered upon him for an indefinite period, until indeed such time as her own house shall be ready for her. That the idea of Mrs. Angerstein being domesticated with him, even for the shortest time, is obnoxious to Kate, in a delicately fine womanly way that need not be defined, is a thought that never crosses his brain. "Poor little woman; she has always been a bother to me," he says cheerfully to himself, as he gallops up the avenue to his own door. A faint flash of hope that Mrs. Angerstein may be gone peacefully to her repose irradiates his path, but this is put out the instant he enters the house.

"The lady's waiting to see you in the library, sir," the servant tells him; and to the library he goes, wishing, for all his chivalry and hospitality, that Mrs. Angerstein were either at the other side, or at the bottom, of the Channel.

Cissy comes to meet him, looking prettier than ever he has seen her look. The faded, haggard expression has vanished; for Mrs. Angerstein is one of those women who always beautify under conditions of absolute physical comfort, if they have, at the same time, some sort of assurance that the comfort will be a permanent thing with them. Their good looks are not dependent on anything like mental excitement or pleasure. If they are well-dressed, well-fed, and well-housed, they look pretty. If they are none of these things, they look most disenchantedly plain and uninteresting. Cissy, being all these just now, looks almost lovely.

She is dressed in one of those softly falling silver-grey cashmeres that are never too much or too little for any occasion. Her blonde hair is brushed plainly back, and tied in a bow behind her shapely little head with a silver-grey ribbon. She has on a few well-chosen ornaments of jet, and his manly taste, which is always for

simplicity, when simplicity is united with beauty, approves her highly.

She speaks—which is rather a pity, as the women who depend entirely on these accessories should never open their mouths—

"You have come back at last, Harry. I ought to have known I wasn't wanted here, now that you have to give every moment and every thought to Miss Mervyn."

There is a very spiteful ring in her voice, as she utters Kate's name, but Captain Bellairs will not notice it. The woman before him has a good many claims on his consideration, he reminds himself; her father was his friend, and one of the best fellows going. Additionally, Cissy herself is looking very pretty in the picturesque room which Charlotte Grange had deemed it would not be love's labour lost to sketch, and the becoming grey cashmere.

He extends both his hands, and she yields him hers. He smiles a smile of honest, frank welcome down upon her, and she bends her head beneath it with a blush, as he says heartily,

"I knew your comfort would be well attended to in my house, dear; and you knew that it was impossible for me to be here in person to tell you how glad I am to see you. Kate leaves for England to-morrow."

Her eyes widen and glisten in surprise and delight.

"Leaves for England! and you are here?"

"Yes, but only for a couple of days. Her people will have her, you know; so we are going into harness together this day week, in company with the other two couples. Before I start I must see you down at your own little place happy and comfortable, for Kate and I won't be back for some long while to look after you."

Her eyes widen with surprise and annoyance now. "Is it so near as that?" she asks, piteously; "you might have let me know; you might have given me a little more time than this, Harry."

To be taken unawares, and charged with not having rendered up a fuller account of himself, as if it were a fault, staggers him for a moment, and he contemplates making a lame excuse, but thinks better of that in an instant, and changes the subject.

"It's warmer here than across the water, isn't it, Cissy? Was she a good steamer that you came by? But, of course she was; they are all good from Holyhead to

Dublin. How did the children stand it? Have you had supper?"

She frets under each question. If the steamer had been ten times more comfortable and equable than she was, Cissy would find cause of complaint against her, and all in authority in her, now.

"The steamer may have been good enough, but never mind, that's past, and thank goodness I haven't to cross in her again directly. The stewardess was very negligent, very negligent indeed, Harry; I wanted her several times, and she wouldn't come to me, because she was attending to other people. I was very much disgusted with her, very much indeed; and now to come here, and find that you are going away directly!"

The form swathed in the soft falling grey cashmere sways away from him, and makes for the sofa, where it reclines with a bent head, and handkerchief to its eyes.

He feels that she is a fool for making this display of false and uncalled-for feeling. He also feels that he is a fool for being influenced by her conduct even for a moment. At the same time he knows that he is, and that he will continue to be influenced by it, and he is most sorely vexed with himself, and savage with her for giving him cause for vexation.

But, again, she looks so utterly weak and helpless, and both by her manner and by her words she proclaims herself to be so entirely dependent on him, that he cannot help pitying her, and, in a measure, feeling affectionately towards her.

"I wish you would have some supper, and then go and get a good night's rest, Cissy," he says, practically. "I shall want to have you strong and well, and able to see about things with me to-morrow, down at your own little place, you know."

"Is it a very little place?" she asks.

"Well it's not a mansion, you know," he says lightly; "originally it was a little farm cottage, but it's been added to, and improved into what I think you'll call a very pretty picturesque little place."

She looks gloomily into space for a few moments, then she says discontentedly,

"Won't it be very lonely for me, if you're going away?"

"There are some very nice people living about here, and you'll soon know them."

"But is there no town or large village near?"

"There's a very good market town about seven miles from here."

"Seven miles!" she holds her hands

up in horror; "how am I to do my shopping?"

"My dear Cissy, you surely didn't come expecting to find the Haymarket stores and Leadenhall-market in the heart of the Wicklow mountains, did you?" he says good-naturedly. Then he adds, "Let your mind be at rest though, Cissy, you can always have the car from here to go and do your shopping."

"I never like driving in a borrowed vehicle," she says.

"Then I'll see about getting you one of your own."

"And who is to drive me? it's nonsense talking about giving me a car when I shall have no one to drive me, Harry," she says pettishly.

"You can always have one of the men from the stables here."

"Thank you; but I dislike borrowed servants as much as I do borrowed carriages. It would be different if you were going to be at home to order things yourself for me; but as soon as I come you're anxious to go away, or you're persuaded to go away, or something, and I am to be left to do the best I can in a strange place, that I know will never agree with me, among a set of people that I know I shall never like."

If he were not benefiting her to the great extent he is doing, the words which rise to his lips would pass them. They are,

"Then why the devil did you come?" but he remembers just in time that she is utterly dependent upon him, and checks himself.

"You'll find the people and the place better than you anticipate," he says, cheerfully; "and when Kate and I come back, you'll be all right."

She shakes her head in a dolefully petulant way, and replies,

"Ah, no! it will not be a bit like it would have been if you hadn't been going to marry. You won't be like the same person to me when you have a wife to interfere between us; I know you won't."

"You just wait and see," he says, with vivacity that is rather forced and strained. Arguing with a fool is never a very pleasant process, but when selfish ill-temper is added to the folly, the work becomes laborious to the last degree.

"And what am I to do about servants?" she goes on, peevishly. "I only brought a nursemaid with me; and so I suppose I shall have to put up with anything I can get here."

"You'll get very good ones—at least, I have," he says.

"Ah! you think you have. Men never know whether their servants rob them or not; but I am very particular, and I know the servants will give me trouble. I feel sure they are not clean?"

He is an Irishman to the very core of his heart, and this aspersion which she casts upon his compatriots galls him sorely. Still he will not allow himself to show any annoyance with the helpless, defenceless little woman, who is acting upon him like a moral blister.

"And they're all such fearful liars," she goes on, fractiously. "I know they are, Harry. I have always heard that they are; besides, I have found them out when I have had anything to do with them."

"Come Cissy, your experience can't be very large," he laughs. "You have been about twenty-four hours in the country, and you have met with bad specimens, or you may have made a mistake: give them the benefit of the doubt."

She feels so bitter, from the effects of wounded vanity, and despair of ever weaning him away from Kate, that she waxes ruder and ruder in her wrath, after the manner of baffled, ill-tempered women.

"I know a great deal about the Irish character, as it happens," with a derisive laugh that sounds something between a sniff and a snort; "and I thoroughly despise it. High and low, they're all deceitful alike; not one of them to be relied upon; not one of them to be trusted."

"Have you had occasion to distrust me once during all these years?" he asks gravely, but gently—with the gentleness that only a thorough man can show to a snarling, scratching cat of a woman.

She has meant to gall, to insult, to wound him about the nationality which is so dear to him; but now that he shows himself to be ever so slightly stung by her, she repents herself of the exploit. Her repentance is not the fruit of remorse for having pained him, but is solely caused by a fleeting dread she has that she may have taxed his patience too far, and that he may be less regardful of her for the future.

To tell the truth, he would condone all her offences against Ireland, good taste, and himself, if she would only release him now and let him go off to rest. He knows well that he will have a hard time of it with her to-morrow. His prophetic soul warns him that she will carp at the house, the furniture, the situation, the scenery, and

both the society and the want of it, which are to be her portions here. To combat all these cavillings will be fatiguing. Therefore, again he reminds her that her journey has been a long one, and that she will need all her strength to-morrow, and this time he is successful; for Cissy says, with a pout that had been pretty fifteen years ago,

"It's evident that you don't want me, Harry. I'm sure, if I had thought I should be so terribly in your way, I wouldn't have come."

"This kind of thing will become a bore if it isn't stopped before Kate and I come back," he says to himself with a yawn, as he lounges up to bed at last; "probably, though, she's a little out of gear. She's not accustomed to travelling: she'll be all right to-morrow."

In view of this brighter possibility, his spirits rise again, and he feels almost glad that poor Cissy has come to be taken care of by Kate and himself under the very shadow of his own roof-tree. He is either ignorant of, or has forgotten, the fact that women of the Cissy calibre are always "a little out of gear" about something.

Unquestionably Cissy is in a better mood next morning. She is a woman who can very quickly throw off the recollection of one of her exhibitions of abominable ill-humour, and she labours under the impression that what she has forgotten other people are vilely inhuman and narrow-minded to remember. She has got up a little fit of enthusiasm about "the delightful novelty it will be to drive in an outside car over to her own house, which she has never seen yet," and she is childishly impatient to start.

Her ardour suffers no diminution at sight of the house, which is a pretty cottage prettily furnished. She plans flower-beds and abodes for fancy poultry and fancy pigeons. Hesitatingly, but still as if the thought of it were very near and dear to her, she suggests that "perhaps a little conservatory—quite a little unpretending one—might be run out from the drawing-room window." She reminds Harry that during the term of her residence at Barnes she had been surrounded with every comfort and elegance, and that it would be unnatural in the extreme to expect her to do without these things now.

In his delight at the gleam of sunshine which has succeeded the bitter frost of the previous night, Captain Bellairs promises the conservatory, the poultry, the pigeons, and a few other trifles which are entered in her list of essentials to her well-being. But for all his acquiescence in her schemes, the sunshine is more evanescent than the clouds have been. When they reach home they find that Mrs. Durgan has driven over to call on the stranger, and Cissy's suspicious soul is in arms at once.

"She surely might have given me a day or two to rest before she came over, prying, to see what I am like, and what I am going to do. I don't think I shall go in."

This she says to Captain Bellairs as they get off the car at the door, and are told that Mrs. Durgan is within, waiting to see them.

"All right," Captain Bellairs says carelessly. It matters very little to him whether Cissy makes her appearance at the luncheon table or not. He has a good deal to say to his cousin; and a little quiet conversation with her will be a relief to him, after the gusty interview he has been having with Cissy.

But to find herself relinquished so lightly, to find that he is equally resigned to her absence as to her presence, is not at all what Cissy has anticipated.

"I suppose you mean that I needn't take the compliment of her call to myself at all, Harry? I've no doubt that she didn't come to see me. I'm not so easily blinded: of course she has come to see you. I can believe that readily enough. But all the same she would like to have an opportunity of picking holes in me, and I won't give it to her. I shall not come in."

Nevertheless, in spite of this strongly announced determination, Mrs. Angerstein does come in, and does give all the powers of her very small mind to the task of striving to find Mrs. Durgan out in any attempts to "pry and spy" into her plans and antecedents. Failing to do this—for Mrs. Durgan is a gentlewoman—Cissy waxes sulky and silent while Captain Bellairs is with them; and when he leaves them for a time, she warms into a sham confidence, and tells Mrs. Durgan that it is very hard that she should be compelled to come and "pass the rest of her life in a place that will never agree with her; never! she feels sure."

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

All THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 319. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER II. THE TOKEN IN THE TIMES.

It was a strange life which Grace led in the quaint, old German university town; in strange contrast with the school-days at Hampstead, surrounded by companions of her own age, full of youthful life and prattle, and with always Anne's strong common sense and quick brain to fall back upon when counsel and aid were needed. The dull, decorous quiet of the little house in the Poppelsdorfer Allée stood out in strong and not too pleasant relief against the mirth and merriment, the piano playing, and the games which remained to her as reminiscences of Chaponne House—the darker side of her association with the old ladies, the enforced studies, the never-ending practice, the backboard and the deportment, being temporarily forgotten. She had offered, in the early days after her arrival, to assist her aunt in the management of the little household, and to relieve her of such domestic duties as might be supposed to come within a young girl's ken; but the Fran Professorin was fidgetty in these as in other matters, and, not too graciously, declined, declaring that though it had pleased Providence to afflict her more than most mortals, she would struggle against her ill-health in the performance of what she had to do, and would, until absolutely precluded by sickness, relegate the supervision of the professor's comforts to no one. So when, after breakfast, the good man, with a struggle, had laid aside his pipe, and muffling himself in his long,

flapping overcoat, had gone forth to his lectures, and when her aunt was busying herself and harassing Lisbeth with the preparation of some new decoction, Grace, attended by Lucy Dormer, would start out for a sharp, brisk walk, from which she would return with a glowing complexion, and an appetite which would cause almost as much wonder as alarm in the Fran Professorin's mind. Winter is an early visitor in Rhineland; ice had formed in the river sufficient to impede all navigation; the tops of the Siebengebirge were covered with snow, and the lake in the pleasure-garden was covered with skaters: tight-waisted, spectacled Prussian officers, and blonde, long-haired students, with slashed faces and eccentric dress. To many of these latter, and to some of the former—for Professor Sturm was highly respected by the authorities—the pretty English girl was personally known. As she walked on the banks of the lake, numerous wore the now high-flown, now clumsy, compliments paid to her; numerous were the entreaties she received to accept a seat in one of the hand-sleighs of elegant device, in which ladies were propelled across the glistening surface.

There was no chance of her being encumbered by her aunt's chaperonage on such an occasion; at the first breath of the cold weather the worthy lady established herself, with her tonic and her patchwork, in the immediate vicinity of the porcelain stove, whence no allurements might have drawn her.

Ah, the dreariness of those days! By the time she had returned to the house the glamour of the morning had departed, and she had to sit down to the homely dinner—a meal which, when its component

parts were taken into consideration, completely justified the Frau Professorin in complaining of indigestion—and to answer her aunt's queries as to where she had been and whom she had seen. Madame Sturm's questions were sharp, constant, and incisive. Deprived of the power of taking exercise herself, she had made it an established grievance that others should be able to do so; while, beyond smiling at her from time to time, in a benevolent manner, the professor was unable to come to Grace's assistance, as his head was too full of what he had been teaching during the morning, and what he had to teach during the afternoon, to allow him to divert his thoughts to any smaller subject.

When the professor had started off for his afternoon's work, and the table had been cleared by Lisbeth, the Frau Professorin took up her position by the stove, surrounded by her patchwork, and within half-an-hour her intimates, mostly wives of the other professors, would arrive, each dame duly provided with woollen knitting needles, and, forming themselves into a circle, would hold a woman's parliament. As Madame Sturm presided, the subjects in which she was most interested were naturally those which received the greatest amount of discussion, and innumerable were the remedies for the cure of indigestion which were propounded and controverted. But, as they sipped their coffee, these worthy women let their tongues range over an infinite variety of topics, all without the slightest interest to Grace, who found that the small amount of German which she had imbibed from Herr Steinberg in his bi-weekly attendance at Chapone House, was not sufficient to enable her to follow the metaphysical and sanitary talk which prevailed, or the occasional digressions into the region of women's rights, which some of the bolder spirits among the speakers were in the habit of bringing forward. It was better in the evening, for then the ladies had dispersed, and the dear old professor was at home, generally surrounded by some of his colleagues, whose talk, though always grave and earnest, was full of sedate wisdom, and to whose criticisms on the general literature of the day—for the books of all countries seemed to be familiar to them—Grace listened, well pleased. Better still was it when the supper—always in Germany a more comfortable, and in Madame Sturm's establishment a mere

succulent and toothsome, meal than the dinner—had been cleared away, and the professor seated himself at the piano, letting his fat fingers wander over the keys, producing now the weird incantations of Weber, now the melancholy plaints of Mendelssohn, while from time to time some of the invited students would sing in faultless chorus the *Burschenlieder* which had been handed down from generation to generation; and the grave seniors, to whom they were familiar, though with voices gone they were no longer able to take part in them, beat measured time with the stems of their long pipes.

When Grace was left to herself, which was not so often as she could have wished, for the Frau Professorin was never so well pleased as when she had a patient listener, to whom she might pour forth the long catalogue of her ailments and her cares, one question rose persistently in the girl's mind, which was, "Is Anne faithful to the plighted friendship? and, if so, why has she made no sign?" It seemed impossible that the answer to the first portion of this question should not be in the affirmative, for Grace in small matters had had ample opportunity of proving her friend's fidelity, and of recognising that all Anne had said was not in the nature of mere lip service. What then could be the cause of her silence? Was it possible that she had become so completely subservient to her father's wishes as to determine to obey him in every tittle of the law, in regard to his expressed desire that all correspondence between the two girls should cease? Grace had a vivid recollection of their conversation on this subject when Captain Studley's letter had been brought to Chapone House by Mr. Danby; and although Anne had intimated her intention of yielding implicit obedience to her father's inexplicable command, her friend thought that, on reflection, seeing the harmlessness of it, she would be induced to give way. In this view, immediately on her arrival, she had written to Anne, under cover to the Misses Griggs, who, she thought, would probably be acquainted with some address where Captain Studley could be found; a short letter, stating that she had reached Bonn in safety, that she would write further shortly, and that meantime she hoped to learn something of Anne's whereabouts and future. As no answer was received to this, Grace, in pursuance of her plan,

determined to write again; and she did so, in the following terms :

" 100, Poppelsdorfer Allée, Bonn.

" **MY DEAREST ANNE,**—You will, I am sure, give me credit for an extra amount of charity and magnanimity when you receive this letter, knowing, as you must in your secret heart, that you have behaved very shabbily in leaving my last unanswered. Do not imagine that I forget what you told me about that ridiculous edict from your father, desiring that all communication, even correspondence, between us should cease. I remember it perfectly, and all we said about it at the time, immediately after the letter had been brought out to Hampstead by a certain person, of whom I hope you manage to see something sometimes. But I thought that you would stretch a point, even at the risk of incurring paternal wrath—if he knew anything about it—and let me have one line, giving me an idea of what your life is likely to be. You have not done this, so I make one more attempt by letter to learn something of you. Should this fail, I have not forgotten the plan which we agreed upon, to advertise in the *Times*, nor the selected word. I shall not write it, because I do not know into whose hands this might fall; but that expedient was only to be made use of in case of urgent need, and although I am most anxious to hear of you, there is no occasion for resorting to this at present. Meantime, though I am sometimes nervous as to what may have become of you, I am glad to think that nothing serious can have happened, or you would have availed yourself of that special means of communication. Before quitting England I made Messrs. Hillman and Hicks arrange that the *Times* should be forwarded to me, and it comes regularly, to the great delight of my aunt, who, as you will see from the enclosed, is a thorough hypochondriac, and who spends a certain portion of every day in perusing the advertisements of the patent medicine vendors.

" 'The enclosed' is, as you will see, a kind of diary, or journal, which I have kept, partly with a view of amusing myself, but principally that you should be an informant with the style of life I am leading. It will not be very amusing reading, dear Anne, I am afraid—monotonous and full of needless repetition—but that is an exact reflection of what it purports to record. Nothing can be more wearisome and eventless than my existence; the actors in my

little drama never vary; they say the same speeches, do the same things, advance and retire with the regularity of clockwork, and are all flat, stale, and unprofitable. You should see my aunt, Madame Sturm! I often think with shame and self-abasement of the manner in which I used to speak against those dear old Griggses. In comparison with Madame Sturm, Miss Hannah was an angel, and even Miss Martha a pleasant and agreeable person. If it were not for my aunt's husband, the professor, I do not know what I should do; but he is a kindly old creature, and although dreadfully hen-pecked, manages to stand between me and a small portion of the immense amount of boredom under which I am gradually being crushed. He is very musical, plays the piano charmingly, and has a circle of friends who sing choruses in a manner which is to me a revelation. But oh, my dear Anne, the young men! the students, of whom we used to talk! You recollect our ideal pictures of their long locks and their romantic aspirations. Ideal pictures, indeed! Many of them have very long locks, which stand in serious need of combs and brushes; their hands, adorned with hideous common rings, are generally very dirty; and as for romantic aspirations, such at least as I have been favoured with the hearing of, they are simply ludicrous.

" This letter will give you the key-note to the journal, and from both you will gather that the existence I am leading is not a particularly agreeable one. Indeed, if the time for attaining my majority were not tolerably close at hand, I should write to Messrs. Hillman and Hicks, and see if I could not be removed to some place in England; but when that important event arrives, I shall be my own mistress, with full power to do what I like, and plenty of money to enable me to carry out my designs; the first of which, my dearest Anne, will be to look for you, and see if I cannot make some arrangement by which you would be relieved from the paternal tyranny—it is a harsh word, but in your case a true one, I am afraid—under which you are now suffering, and allowed to pass as much of the remainder of your life as you choose—that is, of course, until somebody comes to claim you—with Your devoted and affectionate " G. M."

" P.S.—If you receive this letter, but find yourself prevented, either by your own pledged word or by other circumstances from replying to it, understand that in a

month's time I shall take advantage of the means of communication which we agreed upon; that the pledge which you gave to respond to that is stronger than any which may have been wrung from you since, and that I shall look for and entirely count upon your reply."

A few days after the despatch of this letter, as Grace, who had been hindered from taking her usual exercise by the bad weather, was sitting at the window, looking out at the fastly-falling snow, she was startled by an exclamation from her aunt, who was cowering down by the stove, looking through a copy of the Times, which had just arrived, and, as usual, devoting most attention to that portion containing the advertisements.

"Well, I declare," cried the old lady; "that is a very remarkable thing! Fancy a person being called 'Tonics'!"

"Being called what, aunt?" asked Grace, turning round.

"'Tonics,' my dear. The word caught my eye in an instant, as I am always on the look-out for such things, and I thought, of course, it was the advertisement of some medicine; but this is what it says:

"'Tonics.—If 'G. M.' hears this alarm, she is urgently prayed to send her address to her friend at the Hotel de Lille, Paris, within ten days from this date.'

"What?" cried Grace, turning deadly pale as she heard these words. "Let me look at the paper, please. I must see it. As I thought," she said, returning it, after a hasty glance. "The word is not 'Tonics,' but 'Tocsin.'"

"Lor now, so it is!" said the Frau Professorin. "I declare I am quite disappointed. I thought I had found out either somebody called 'Tonics,' or something about tonics; and it seems to be only one of those rubbishing people who run away from their friends, and are advertised for under ridiculous names."

"Do you know what that really is?" said Grace, turning upon her with savage earnestness. "That is a cry of distress—an appeal for help, wrung out by sheer despair, and addressed to me by one whom I care for beyond all other persons in the world. I am the 'G. M.' who is there invoked, and should be grateful to you that it caught your eye. I have waited and expected it so long that now it has come I might perhaps have overlooked it."

"Dear me, what a very extraordinary thing!" said the Frau Professorin,

holding up her hands. "I hope it's strictly proper."

"Strictly proper!" repeated Grace, with scorn. "The person who makes this appeal is a girl, my old school-fellow and dearest friend. It was arranged between us that such invocation should not be made on either side, unless there were dire necessity. That dire necessity has come to her—she calls upon me, and I obey."

"Well, I do not know that there would be any harm in your writing to her," said Madame Sturm, holding her hands placidly over the newspaper, "and sending your address. And one might make arrangements in the matter of board, though of course it must be understood that she could not sleep here; but Mr. Schmidt, of the Golden Star, is a most respectable man, and she could have a room in his house, or—"

"You need not trouble yourself about perfecting your arrangements," said Grace. "There is no question of her coming here. She might be too ill to travel; she might not have the money—a hundred other reasons. No, I shall go to her."

"You go to her?" cried the old lady, referring again to the Times. "Why, she's to be communicated with in Paris!"

"And what is to hinder my going to Paris, instead of writing to her?" asked Grace.

"You go to Paris!" cried Madame Sturm; "without escort—for the professor would not be able to get away from his lectures, and even if he would, I do not think I should trust him so far from home—it would be impossible."

"I should have Lucy Dormer," said Grace, quietly.

"Lucy!" cried Madame Sturm, "I should have very little opinion at any time of her, but less than ever just now. For the last few days she has been hanging down her head and moping about the house like a sick fowl. I have no patience with her."

"The fact is, that the girl is not well," said Grace; "but she never complains. I taxed her with it, and she could not deny it. The change will do her good; she is quite devoted to me, and, as I travelled without any other escort from London to Bonn, I do not think there is any fear of our being molested between this and Paris. At any rate, I am determined to go; and I shall take her with me!"

Madame Sturm said but little more at the time, though she regarded Grace's

proposition as more or less savouring of lunacy; but she determined to thoroughly indoctrinate her husband, and let him deliver his mind upon the subject to Grace.

The poor professor, accordingly, had more than an uncomfortable quarter of an hour when he came home to his dinner, for, before allowing him to sit down to the meal, Madame Sturm required him to take up a penitential position in the neighbourhood of the stove, and there to listen to the "flagrant violation of decorum," as she called it, which was contemplated by her niece. The worthy man, who had touched nothing since he swallowed his bowl of bread and milk before eight o'clock in the morning, and whose appetite plagued him sorely, listened with much inward fretting to this discourse. Outwardly, however, he showed no signs of impatience; but, while seemingly agreeing with his wife's view of the matter, declared that he could not adjudicate upon it hurriedly, and that he would wait until his return in the evening before expressing his opinion to Grace.

As it happened, there were no visitors that night, and, when supper had been discussed, Lisbeth brought Grace a message, telling her the professor wished to see her in the library. There she found the good old man, clad in his long, grey flannel dressing-gown, and with his pipe in his mouth. He rose at her entrance, and, encircling both her hands with his fat fingers, led her to a seat.

"I have sent for you, my child," he said, "in consequence of something which your aunt has told me, and at which I am very much surprised. It is the opinion of continental nations that you islanders are singularly cold and phlegmatic, not liable to anger or other emotions. So far as anger is concerned, that is a part of the proposition which I, having been for some time married to your aunt, an English-woman, am in a position to deny; but in regard to the other emotions, more especially to those which your cynical writers are in the habit of enumerating as romantic, to this moment I have believed in the truth of the dictum. To this moment, when my preconceived notions are rudely overturned by the fact that you, a young English girl, propose to yourself to carry out a piece of romance greater than ever could have entered the heads of any of our German maidens. Like the virgin celebrated in the Irish lieder of Thomas

Moore, you are prepared to set forth on your travels unescorted, but without fear. Is it not so?"

"Not quite, Professor," said Grace, with a bright, frank smile, which won the old man's heart. "I shall not be quite so gorgeously clad as was the Irish lady, and I imagine that, railways being unknown in her time, I shall enjoy greater facilities in travelling."

"But, seriously, my child, is not what you propose to yourself not merely romantic, but silly? During this short time that you have been an inmate of our little household, I have noticed with pleasure—and not without surprise, as so different to your aunt—the plain, simple common sense by which you have been on all occasions distinguished; and that you should do this thing now seems to be a departure from that rule."

"Dear uncle," said Grace, laying her hand lightly on his, "for no blood relation could have been kinder to me than you are, when you know my motive for this sudden flight, you will not think me, I believe, either romantic or silly. All the time I was at school, with fifty acquaintances, I had but one friend, the dearest, the kindest, the most sensible girl in the world. You have spoken of my common sense, but I was looked upon as giddy and foolish in comparison with her. A kind of obscurity hung over her relations; she knew but little of her father, and, though she herself made the best of it, that little, when explained to me, did not strike me favourably. Before we parted she received a short note from him, peremptorily ordering that all communication and even correspondence between us should cease on our leaving the school; and though I have twice written to her since I have been with you, I have received no reply. But I had a kind of presentiment that evil days were in store for Anne—that was her name—and I insisted upon our arranging some signal between us which, seen by either, would give warning that the other was in danger and wanted aid. That signal I saw this morning in the Times. I know my friend well enough to be perfectly certain that unless she was in extremity she would not have appealed to me, she is far too self-reliant and too proud; but, having seen the appeal, nothing earthly will induce me to ignore it, and I shall start for Paris to-morrow morning."

"Ein braves Mädchen bist Du," said

the professor, wiping his eyes, as he drew her towards him, and impressed a solemn kiss upon her forehead. "There is to me no legal right to stop you, and, after what you have said, I have no desire. It will be difficult to convince Madame Sturm of this, but I will take the burden on my back, and bear it as in my time I have borne many others."

"You are not sorry to get away from Madame Sturm's, I suppose, Lucy?" said Grace, to her maid, as they stood in the waiting-room at Cologne, expecting the arrival of the direct Paris train, "and the change will do you good, I hope, for you have been looking anything but well lately."

"And I have been feeling anything but well, Miss, if I must tell the truth," said the girl, "though I would have died before mentioning anything about it there. The living was dreadfully unwholesome, as I am sure you must have found, and them heated rooms with the big stoves in them nearly killed me. I hear they have fire-places in Paris, Miss, which is more Christian and natural, though burning wood, and I dare say I shall feel all right when once I get there."

But Lucy Dormer did not feel all right on their arrival at the Hotel de Lille at Paris; was indeed so ill, that Grace directed that a physician should at once be sent for to see her.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

SALISBURY.

FROM far nooks of the Wiltshire Downs, twelve and fourteen miles away, across leagues of crop-eared down, spiteful furze bushes, long ranges of wood violets, and dark battalions of fir woods, the tall spire of Salisbury cathedral is seen pointing ceaselessly in silent warning to Heaven. The lone rider, the musing or benumbed shepherd, the lonely fisherman, the eager huntsman, the laughing county family in the family barouche, the rifleman hurrying to the butts on the downs, the drayman approaching the county town, all these hail the old spire as a landmark, a guide, and a familiar friend. If Time were to break off and carry away that spire, as Captain Blood filed in two and carried off Charles the Second's sceptre, there would be such a hue-and-cry in Wiltshire, as was never heard before or since the Deluge. It would be like

the outcries of Chancier's Jack Straw mob, it would be like the lamentation of Rachel mourning for her children, and the Wiltshire folk it would be impossible anyhow to comfort.

Even as early as the warlike reign of Richard the First, says Sir Richard Colt Hoare, one of the best of the Salisbury historians, the monks of old Sarum became tired of their barren and first chosen spot, the old hill of the chapel of the Celtic fortress, which Bishop Herman (chaplain to Edward the Confessor), had turned into the capital of a see. Herman's successor, Osmund, a nephew of the Conqueror, had built a cathedral at Sarum, in place of the old hill fortress of the Belge, and here, when the Conqueror was threatened by Canute the Fourth of Denmark, and Canute's son-in-law, the Earl of Flanders, William, just arrived from Normandy with legions of Franks and Bretons, convened a meeting of nobles and bishops, sheriffs and knights, to exact from them a sacred oath of fealty. Osmund, according to an expression of Pope Gregory the Ninth, in a letter to his vassal Bishops of Bath and Coventry, magnificently reared the said church from its foundations, and enriched it with books, treasures, edifices, possessions, and lands from his own property. From his broad lands in Wilts and Dorset this generous Osmund provided for the cup and sup of one dean, thirty-two secular canons, and four archdeacons (two for Wilts and two for Dorset). To aid this new House of God even the Conqueror opened his clenched hand, and let pass one-fourth of the whole area of Sarum fortress. The old Salisbury cathedral, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, was consecrated by Osmund himself, assisted by two bishops, on April 5, 1092. The new ritual for the Sarum cathedral service, established by Osmund, was long celebrated.

The very site of this first cathedral of Salisbury was unknown, till the great drought of 1834 suddenly compressed the ground closer and closer, and gradually disclosed it. In the centre of the old fortress the lines of the nave, transept, and choir then showed themselves clearly. The first church had been, it was found, above two hundred and seventy feet long and seventy feet wide. In 1835 the foundations were again laid open, and the walls were then found to have been six feet thick, and the foundations sunk eight feet in the solid chalk. Near the site

of the high altar a skull, presumably that of a young priest, was disinterred, and not far from it were dug up two old keys, and fragments of stained glass, charcoal, and window lead. The workmen, on the south side of the altar, came (as they believed) on the vacant tomb of the founder, Osmund, removed to the second cathedral in 1226. The plan of the first building seemed to have been a plain cross, the transepts being flanked with double aisles, like its beautiful successor.

The building of the new cathedral was long delayed by the exactions of John and the civil war that followed, but during the lull that followed the accession of Henry the Third, the old wish to select a better site for the Wiltshire cathedral was revived, and the foundations of the new building were duly laid on April 28th, 1220. King Henry was then away, receiving Welsh ambassadors at Shrewsbury, but the Earl of Salisbury (Longsword), the great baron of Wiltshire, and governor of old Sarum, was there with his countess. The bishop laid the first stone for the Pope, and the second for the Archbishop of Canterbury. The fourth stone was laid by the great earl himself, and the fifth by the countess, and then several by other nobles. In 1225, at the first mass, when the cathedral, though not yet finished, was consecrated for divine service, the Papal legate and the Archbishops of Canterbury and Dublin were present. On the Friday after, King Henry himself and his great Justiciary, Hubert de Burgh, attended mass and made their offerings.

William Longsword, the great Wiltshire earl, who had been so conspicuous at the laying the foundation stone of the new cathedral, never lived to see the completed temple. He died the year of the consecration, on his return from a campaign in Gascony; his first act on his return having been to go to the new cathedral and offer thanksgivings for his deliverance from a terrible storm in the Bay of Biscay. Many thought he was poisoned by Hubert, the justiciary (Shakespeare's Hubert), who, on the earl's supposed death in the storm, had prepared to marry the rich countess to his nephew. When the Bishop of Sarum entered the dying earl's sick room, bearing the Host, the earl tied a noose round his neck, and prostrated himself upon the floor. The body of this warrior was the first interred in the new cathedral.

The special legend, however, of Salisbury Cathedral is that of the Boy Bishop, and it is connected with an earlier legend of old Saint Nicholas, the special patron of children, whose festival was for many centuries held in Salisbury on the sixth of December.

"According to Catholic story," says one of their writers, "St. Nicholas was a saint of great virtue, and disposed so early in life to conform to ecclesiastical rule, that when an infant at the breast, he fasted on Wednesday and Friday, and sucked but once on each of those days, and that towards night. A story is related to his credit which is of considerable curiosity. It is told, that 'an Asiatic gentleman,' sent his two sons to Athens for education, and ordered them to wait on the bishop for his benediction. On arriving at Myra with their baggage, they took up their lodgings at an inn, purposing, as it was late in the day, to defer their visit till the morrow; but, in the meantime, the innkeeper, to secure their effects to himself, wickedly killed the young gentlemen, cut them into pieces, salted them, and intended to sell them for pickled pork. Happily St. Nicholas was favoured with a sight of these proceedings in a vision, and in the morning went to the inn, and reproached the cruel landlord with his crime, who immediately confessed it, and entreated the saint to pray to Heaven for his pardon. Then the bishop, being moved by his confession and contrition, besought forgiveness for him, and supplicated restoration of life to the children; whereupon the pickled pieces reunited, and the reanimated youths stepping from the brine-tub, threw themselves at the feet of St. Nicholas, who raised them up, exhorted them to return thanks to God alone, gave them good advice for the future, bestowed his blessing on them, and sent them to Athens with great joy to prosecute their studies. The Salisbury Missal of 1534, fol. xxvii. contains a prayer to St. Nicholas, before which is an engraving on wood of the bishop with the children rising from the tub; but better than all, by a licence that artists formerly assumed, of representing successive scenes in the same print, the landlord himself is shown in the act of reducing a limb into sizes suitable for his mercenary purpose. There are only two children in the story, and there are three in the tub of the engraving; but it is fairly to be conjectured that the story was thought so good as to be worth

making a little better. . . Ribadeneira says of St. Nicholas, that 'being present at the council of Nice, among three hundred and eighteen bishops, who were there assembled together to condemn the heresy of Arius, he shone among them all with so great clarity, and opinion of sanctity, that he appeared like a sun amongst so many stars.' It will be remembered that he is affirmed to have given Arius a clarifying 'box on the ear.'

The miracles, or rather the parables of St. Nicholas, which follow, says Mrs. Jameson, "are to be found recorded in the chapel of St. Nicholas, at Assisi, on the windows of cathedrals at Chartres and Bourges, and in the ancient Gothic sculpture. As the legends were evidently fabricated after the translation of his relics, they were not likely to occur in genuine Byzantine art. The legends run thus:—

"A certain Jew of Calabria, hearing of the great miracles performed by St. Nicholas, stole his image out of a church, and placed it in his house. When he went out, he left under the care of the saint all his goods and treasures, threatening him (like an irreverent pagan as he was) that if he did not keep good watch, he would chastise him. On a certain day, the Jew went out, and robbers came and carried off all his treasures. When the Jew returned he reproached St. Nicholas, and beat the sacred image, and hacked it cruelly. The same night St. Nicholas appeared to the robbers, all bleeding and mutilated, and commanded them immediately to restore what they had taken. They, being terrified by the vision, repaired to the Jew and gave up everything, and the Jew, being astonished at this miracle, was baptised, and became a true Christian.

"This story is represented on one of the windows of the cathedral of Chartres; in the next legend St. Nicholas figures as the guardian of both life and property.

"A certain man who was very desirous of having an heir to his estate, vowed that if his prayer were granted, the first time he took his son to church he would offer a cup of gold on the altar of St. Nicholas. A son was granted, and the father ordered the cup of gold to be prepared; but when it was finished, it was so wonderfully beautiful, that he resolved to keep the cup for himself, and caused another, of silver and of less value, to be made for the saint. After some time the man went on a voyage to accomplish his vow; and

being on the way, he ordered his little son to bring him water in the golden cup he had appropriated, but in doing so the child fell into the water and was drowned. Then the unhappy father lamented himself, and wept, and repented of his great sin; and, repairing to the church of St. Nicholas, he offered up the silver cup; but it fell from the altar; and a second and a third time it fell; and while they all looked on astonished, behold! the drowned boy appeared before them, and stood on the steps of the altar bearing the golden cup in his hand. He related how the good St. Nicholas had preserved him alive, and brought him there. The father, full of gratitude, offered up both the cups, and returned home with his son in joy and thanksgiving.

"Of this story there are many versions, in prose and rhyme, and I have frequently seen it in sculpture, painting, and in the old stained glass; it is on one of the windows of the cathedral of Bourges; in a bas-relief engraved in Cicognara's work, the child, with the golden cup in his hand, is falling into the sea."

A cup figures again prominently in the third story.

"A rich merchant, who dwelt on the borders of a heathen country, but was himself a Christian, and a devout worshipper of St. Nicholas, had an only son, and it happened that the youth was taken captive by the heathens, and being sold as a slave, he served the king of that country as cup-bearer; one day, as he filled the cup at table, he remembered suddenly that it was the feast of St. Nicholas, and he wept. The king said, 'Why weepest thou, that thy tears fall and mingle in my cup?' And the boy told him, saying, 'This is the day when my parents and my kindred are met together in great joy to honour our good St. Nicholas; and I, alas! am far from them.' Then the king, most like a pagan blasphemer, answered, 'Great as is thy St. Nicholas, he cannot save thee from my hand.' No sooner had he spoken the words, when a whirlwind sheek the palace, and St. Nicholas appearing in the midst, caught up the youth by the hair, and placed him, still holding the royal cup in his hand, suddenly before his family, at the very moment when his father had distributed the banquet to the poor, and was beseeching their prayers in behalf of his captive son.

"Of this story also there are innumerable

versions, and as a boy with a cup in his hand figures in both stories, it is necessary to distinguish the circumstances and accessories; sometimes it is a daughter, not a son, who is delivered from captivity. In a fresco by Giottino, the family are seated at table, and the captive, conducted by St. Nicholas, appears before them; the mother stretches out her arms, the father clasps his hands in thanksgiving, and a little dog recognises the restored captive."

Bishop Osmund's ritual, "ad usum Sarum," as the well-known old ecclesiastical phrase ran, was very minute and elaborate. The ancient regulation book of Salisbury, adorned with pictures of strangely-interwoven birds and grotesque animals, still exists. The volume, which includes in itself missal, portiforium, manual, and breviary, is a general rubric in itself.

The precedence of the various dignitaries of Salisbury cathedral was carefully arranged by Bishop Osmund, in his thoughtful Ordinale. At the entrance, by the "sounding" choir, to the west and on the right side, sat the dean; on the left, the chanter. At the east end was placed the treasurer, and, opposite him, the chancellor; next the dean came the stall of the archdeacons of Dorset and the subdean; while beside the chancellor nestled one of the archdeacons of Wilts. Between these ranged the chief canons, then the older vicars, presbyters, and deacons; next the chanter sat the sub-chanter and the archdeacon of Berks; next the treasurer, the second archdeacon of Wiltshire. After the minor canons were grouped the deacons and the rest of the clerks. In the first form the chorister boys were seated according to age. At solemn chapters the dean and chancellor were placed next the mitred and jewelled bishop. The usual service was opened by a boy, in a surplice, reading from the Martyrology. The deaths in the brotherhood, since the last chapter, were then announced, and a priest, standing behind a reading-desk, responded—"Anime eorum, et animae omnium fidelium, requiescant in pace." (May their souls and the souls of all the faithful rest in peace.)

The same boy then read a lesson, and, after the benediction, descended from the desk and read "the Table." This was a list of the duties of the regulators of the choir and the canons, and the chanters of the mass for the fifteen following days; also, a list of the lesser officers—such as those who were

to bear the candelabrum, the censers and the wafer—the acolytes who assisted at mass, the boys who were to repeat the Gradole, and the boys of lower rank who were to repeat the Alleluias. The clerks of Salisbury, without exception, wore black copes, except on double feasts, processions, or at mass, when they affected silk. The regulator of the choir indicated the wishes of the precentor to the choir by waves of an ornamented staff—hence, perhaps, the marshal's baton of the modern orchestral conductor. No canon or clerk of Salisbury was allowed to absent himself or leave the city, even for a night, without leave of the dean. On entering the choir, if to the east, the clerks of Salisbury were directed, "ad usum Sarum," to bow, first to the altar, and then to the bishop; if to the west, first to the altar, then to the dean. They bowed again twice on quitting the choir, and, indeed, never passed the altar without equal marks of reverence.

The monuments of this "Lilly" of English cathedrals are of much interest. Though not so rich in old tombs as many other English shrines, Salisbury possesses several very precious relics. Foremost among the more venerable, and cruelly marked by Time's hard knuckles, comes a rude effigy lapp'd in chain armour, with surcoat, long kite-shaped shield, and broad massive sword. This cross-legged figure is supposed to be the effigy of William Longsword, eldest son of the first great earl and Ela his countess. Matthew of Paris celebrates his venturous chivalry and pious wrath against the infidels, which ended in his falling at last under their keen flashing sabres, near Cairo, in 1250.

A figure in prelatial robes, with staff and mitre, and a dragon at his feet, represents Bishop Joceline, King Stephen's great enemy, whose body was removed as a sacred relie with that of Oswald, when old Sarum yielded up its treasures to the new building at Merrifeld. A border of scroll work and birds once enclosed the effigy of the bishop.

A third altar tomb, crowned by an effigy in armour, was erected in memory of John de Montacute, younger son of William, first earl of Salisbury. The armour is half mail half chain, and of workmanlike construction, and the broad transverso belt is richly ornamented. On the nave side of this knightly tomb are shields crowded with mouldering armorial bearings, sunk in

quatrefoil panels. This brave gentleman fought in the thick at Cressy, and also served under the banner of Richard the Second, during his campaign against the Scots. In his will Sir John de Montacute desired to be buried either in Salisbury Cathedral, or, if he died at London, in St. Paul's, near the font where he had been baptised. There was poetry even in those days.

On this grand altar tomb of fine white alabaster, now bronzed by time, lies Robert, Lord Hungerford, obit. 1459, wrapped in complete mail, a costly collar of S.S. round his stony neck, his sword and dagger at his belt, his hands closed in eternal supplication, his mailed feet resting upon a dog. This Hungerford served under the old Regent, Duke of Bedford, in France, in Falstaff's time, and married Margaret the heiress of Botreux. His lady, who survived him, founded the solemn Hungerford chapel at the east end of the cathedral.

An ominous blank altar tomb, without inscription or ornament, commemorates that unfortunate Charles, Lord Stourton, who, whether impetuous or wicked, was hanged in the market-place at Salisbury in March, 1656, for murdering, with the help of his four sons, his two obnoxious neighbours, Mr. Hartgill senior, and Mr. Hartgill junior, and burying them afterwards fifteen feet deep.

In the middle ages the Confraternity of Salisbury cathedral was a well-known one. The advantages which this privilege was supposed to convey may be estimated from the forms of admission. The candidate, or some person accredited in his behalf, appeared in the chapter-house, and preferred his demand prostrate. Admission being given by a regular vote, the suppliant was addressed in the following words, by the Dean, or received the formulary engrossed on parchment. "In the name of God, Amen. We, the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Sarum, with the assent and consent of our brotherhood, receive you into our confraternity. We will, and grant, that you participate, as well in life as in death, in all the masses, prayers, fastings, vigils, and every other meritorious work, which may be performed by us and our brotherhood, the canons, vicars, and other ministers of this church, and its dependencies." The candidate then rose, returned thanks, and respectfully saluted the dean and chapter.

Such Gothic architecture as that of Salisbury has this peculiar distinguishing characteristic from Greek—that the one is horizontal in its tendency, the other vertical. The one is full of the repose of the level desert, and of Eastern calm, and delights in deep shadows and broad surfaces of light; the other is restless and aspiring; its character is drawn from the tree-top, growing up into the light, from the mountain peak, gilded by the sun. The Greek decorations delight in the human form, the Gothic in external nature; the one in abstract beauty, the other in character and contrast; the one is stern, serious, and calmly beautiful, the other grotesque, vigorous, and earnest.

The northern builder longed to raise pinnacles, that the clouds might wander round; the southern delighted in the level roof, like a meadow in the sun, or the glassy sea in a summer noon. The northern became, by degrees, petty in detail, and lost, at last, all appreciation of calm beauty, grace, and quiet truthfulness. The southern grew insipid with his ceaseless calm and rest, and recoiled at the exaggerated stare and energy of the Goth; the one was strong and powerful, the other beautiful; the one active, the other passive; the one had more of the male, and the other of the female principle of art.

Mr. Ruskin, who loves the grey cliffs of our old cathedral towers, round which the winds beat, and the wild birds float; those grey crags round which sculpture spreads, as the purple thyme blooms upon the rock, has given us, in his Sea Stories, an exquisite and highly-finished picture of such an old cathedral as Salisbury. He says, "Let us go together up the more retired street, at the end of which we can see the pinnacles of one of the towers, and then through the low, grey gateway, with its battlemented top and small lattice window in the centre, into the inner, private-looking road or close, where nothing goes but the carts of the tradesmen, who supply the bishop and the chapter, and where there are little shaven grass-plots, fenced in by neat rails, before old-fashioned groups of somewhat diminutive and excessively trim houses, with oriel and bay windows jutting out here and there, and deep wooden cornices, and eaves painted cream colour and white, and small porches to the doors in the shape of cockle-shells, or little, crooked, thick, indescribable wooden gables, warped a

little on one side; and so forward till we come to larger houses, also old-fashioned, but of red brick, and with gardens behind them, and fruit walls which show here and there, among the nectarines, the vestiges of an old cloister arch or shaft, and looking in front on the cathedral square itself, laid out in rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk, especially on the sunny side, where the canon's children are walking with their nursery maids."

So one of the greatest of our word-painters has sketched the surroundings of Salisbury cathedral.

A REBUKE.

Why are you so sad? sing the birds, the little birds,
All the sky is blue,
We are in our branches, yonder are the herds,
And the sun is on the dew;
Everything is merry, sing the happy little birds,
Everything but you!

Fire is on the hearthstone, the ship is on the wave,
Pretty eggs are in the nest,
Yester sits a mother smiling at a grave,
With a baby at her breast;
And Christ was on the earth, and the sinner He forgave
Is with Him in His rest.

We shall droop our wings, pipes the throstle on the tree
When everything is done,
Time unfurleds years, that you soar eternally
In the regions of the sun,
When our day is over, sings the blackbird in the lea,
Yours is but begun!

Then why are you so sad? warble all the little birds,
While the sky is blue,
Brooding over phantoms and vexing about words
That never can be true,
Everything is merry, trill the happy, happy birds,
Everything but you!

WHAT HAPPENED IN MY STUDIO.

A PAINTER'S GHOST STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

I PASSED a restless night. The feeling uppermost in my mind was that I had allowed a man to leave the house in the square who, I was more and more convinced, was there for some nefarious purpose, and I blamed myself more than I can express.

At an early hour the next morning I started for town. All the superstitious feelings of the previous night were dissipated by the sunshine and the fresh morning air, and, as I neared the studio, I quite laughed at myself for the flights I had allowed my imagination to take. On arriving at the door, I met Middleton, who came from another direction; Dun-

can, who lived at no great distance from the square, was already in his room. Asking Middleton to accompany me, I went in to Duncan, whose rooms, as I have already explained, were on the ground-floor. I thought it better to confess my oversight of the night before without delay, and to institute a careful search up-stairs, to ascertain if anything were missing.

"I am afraid I did a very foolish thing last night," I said; "I happened to look in here very late, and saw a man come down-stairs and go out of the door in rather a suspicious manner. Thinking he came from one of the upper rooms, I let him pass unquestioned. In fact, I was thrown off my guard by his very respectable appearance; but I have since thought I ought to have ascertained the object of his visit. I want you both to see if there is anything missing in your rooms."

"There could not be from mine," rejoined Middleton; "for I locked the door and took away the key."

"Nor from mine," added Duncan; "for I did the same. It must have been some one belonging to Howarth or Miss Rehden. It's odd, too, for they are both in the country; and I don't see why they should want to send any one here at that time of night. Besides," he added, "no one could get into their rooms, for I happen to have the keys in my desk. They asked me to take care of them when they left."

A sudden thought flashed through my mind as Duncan finished his sentence—the recollection of the door I had heard slam the previous night.

"You must be wrong, one of you," I answered; "for I distinctly recollect hearing a heavy door slam upstairs, just before the mysterious stranger made his appearance. I know I locked my own door, and you say all the other doors were locked; but this could not have been the case, or, at any rate, if they were, the man must have had a key."

"Oh! that's impossible," rejoined Duncan. "None of the doors have duplicate keys. If he had been in one of the rooms, he must have picked the lock. It certainly seems suspicious. What sort of a looking fellow was he?"

"Well, that's the provoking part of it! He was such a dunc'd good-looking fellow that he excited no suspicion. He was perfectly well dressed, had a most intellectual countenance, and the complete bearing of a gentleman. The only thing that spoiled his good looks was the loss of the sight of

one eye. He had what I should call a wall eye."

Duncan had been sitting in a listless position in an easy chair during the foregoing conversation, but at the mention of the wall eye he suddenly looked up.

"That's rather an odd coincidence," he said. "Poor Heseltine, who died in your room, had what we always used to call a wall eye."

The words were spoken in a musing kind of tone, as if the speaker did not attach much importance to them; but they were no sooner uttered than I again felt that superstitious thrill which had come upon me so strongly the night before. Duncan went on as if he were intent on tracing some imaginary likeness between the mysterious visitor and the deceased artist.

"Had he a beard and moustache?—a long, brown beard?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered, getting more and more astonished, "and a wonderfully taking, though mournful, countenance, and wore his hat pushed back off his forehead."

Duncan rose from his chair, looked at me for a moment with a most peculiar expression; then, without a word, walked to the table and began turning over the leaves of a photograph album. I watched him in some surprise, with a dim kind of pre-science of what was to follow. He took a loose photograph from the book and came towards me.

"Did you ever see poor Heseltine?" he asked, holding out the photograph.

"Never," I replied, as I took it from him. The next moment I had staggered back into a chair as pale as a corpse. "Good God! Duncan," I gasped; "this is the man I met in the hall last night."

There was dead silence for a few moments; then Duncan said very composedly,

"That's impossible; for poor Heseltine has been dead two years. It's an awfully queer thing, though; for Heseltine was not an ordinary looking man, and he hadn't a relation a bit like him. Who in the world could it have been?"

"Duncan," I answered, very solemnly, "you may laugh at me, if you will; but I tell you distinctly that this is a portrait of the man I met in the hall last night; there is no shadow of difference: features, expression, character, are all exact. What it means, Heaven only knows; but I would swear to the man in any court of justice."

They were both impressed by my words and manner, though it was evident they still thought me under some delusion.

"I declare," said Middleton, "you begin to make me feel there is some truth in the report that the house is haunted."

"Haunted!" I echoed.

"Oh! yes," said Duncan; "they have said that ever since poor Heseltine died—but that's what they always say of a house where a murder, or suicide, or sudden death, has taken place. Don't tell Miss Rehden," he added, with a laugh, "or she'll be giving us notice to quit."

"Upon my word," said Middleton, "we ought not to be standing here without inquiring into the matter. Ghost or no ghost, it's as well to examine the rooms."

Mechanically I followed them from the room. Although I could not expect to impress my companions with the feelings that filled my own breast, I could no longer doubt that one of those mysterious decrees of Providence, which bring us at times into communion with beings from another world, and concerning which I had previously been so sceptical, had actually taken place in this case. If I had ever seen either Heseltine or his portrait, my imagination might have played me this trick; but his features had been utterly unknown to me, and I was positively convinced, though I failed to impress this on my companions, that the man I had seen the previous night, and the person represented in the photograph, were one and the same. I was utterly confounded, and could with difficulty bring myself to speak, or even to think, of other subjects. What could have been the purport of this visitation? I could not believe that the appearance was purposeless, or for any idle end, and I longed to penetrate the mystery in which it was at present enveloped. I was so lost in thought that, for some minutes, I was regardless of the proceedings of my companions.

They had loitered on the landing, and Duncan was talking.

"You have never heard about the lost picture?" he said.

"Never," replied Middleton.

"Oh! I thought every one in the house had heard about that."

"I have never heard it," I interposed.

"Is it anything in connection with poor Heseltine?" asked Middleton.

"Well, yes, it is; a very important matter in connection with him. At least,

very important, as far as the family are concerned, as it is a loss of several hundred pounds to them."

"Tell us about it."

"Why, it seems that at the time Heseltine died, he was at work on a very important picture. No one had seen it, for you know his peculiar feeling about showing his works before they were finished; and he was more than usually strict about this one. He had sold his previous picture for five hundred pounds, and he told his wife he quite hoped to get half as much again for the last, which was nearly completed. Strange to say, after his death the picture was not to be found. It was known that he had been working on it the previous day, for he mentioned having advanced it immensely, and that it was near completion. I was the first to go into his room after the servant gave the alarm. The picture then on his easel was a portrait. I saw nothing of the subject picture he was engaged on. I locked the door myself, and, until the family arrived, I know no one entered the room; yet the picture was never found."

"What a very odd thing!"

"Yes, and a most annoying one into the bargain. The only explanation we could arrive at was, that Heseltine had himself sent the picture away somewhere, and that whoever had it was not honest enough to reveal the fact. Inquiries were made everywhere, advertisements inserted in the papers, and even rewards offered; but to no purpose. No trace of it has ever been discovered. If it should turn up now it would be a godsend to the family, for they have just lost a lot of money in that confounded bank failure the other day; and, heaven knows, they had little enough before, poor things!"

"What a rascally thing of anybody to keep the picture under such circumstances," said Middleton.

During the latter part of this conversation I was fumbling with my key in the lock of the door, which I could not turn.

"Why, what's come to the lock?" I said. "I can't turn the key."

"For the best of all reasons," replied Duncan, advancing, and turning the handle. "It's already unlocked."

I stared at the door in amazement.

"I declare I locked it last night," I said, "and took the key away with me."

"I'll tell you what it is," rejoined Duncan; "the less you say about your last night's proceedings the better. It's

more and more evident to me that you had been dining out, and I'm not quite sure you have recovered from the effects yet."

Before he had finished the sentence I had crossed the room, and was standing in amazement before the old oak press.

"What's the matter now?" asked Duncan, seeing my look of astonishment.

"What in the name of Heaven does it all mean?" I gasped. "I declare that press was shut and locked when I left last night. I know it was; for I wanted to get something out of it, and couldn't find the key; now, here is the key in the lock, and the door open."

"Come, come, that's too much! Confess, at once, that you had exceeded your usual quantum last night. It's evident, old man, that you don't quite know what happened."

I thought he seriously believed what he said, although he knew me to be one of the most abstemious men living. I felt really annoyed.

"Duncan," I rejoined, "I never was more serious in my life. I never was more clear-headed than I was last night. I remember, distinctly, every circumstance that occurred, to the minutest particular. There is something more in this than you seem to imagine, something which impresses me more than I have the power to express. I wish to Heaven that I could induce you to consider the matter in a serious light."

Middleton had gone into his own room.

Duncan turned and shut the door, and then sat down on the sofa with a more serious face than before.

"The fact is," he answered, "I do regard this in a more serious light than you imagine; only, as you and I are the persons chiefly implicated, I don't wish to alarm the house. I was impressed with your face and manner when you looked at the photograph, and your description of the person you saw is so exactly that of poor Heseltine, that, whoever it was, it amounts to more than a coincidence. I can't attempt to explain it; but it makes me feel anything but comfortable, I can assure you. Have you made up your mind what to do?"

"What can be done? The figure, whatever it was, took no notice of me, and, with the exception of this open cabinet, it has left no results."

"What is the day of the month?" Duncan suddenly asked.

"The 20th. What has that to do with it?"

Duncan turned pale.

"This is the very day he died," he said, in a low tone, "and on this very sofa. It was here I found him, lying with his head on one side, and with quite a peaceful smile on his lips."

"Duncan," I said, after a few minutes' reflection, "will you come here with me to-night? The thing may be all a delusion; some strange, inexplicable coincidence, and flight of fancy; but still I feel it a sort of duty to try and solve the mystery."

"Unfortunately, it is impossible. I must go to Folkestone this afternoon, as I have to meet a man there this evening—a very particular appointment about a church window—before he goes abroad. Stay, though," he added, "it would be possible for me to come back by a late train. On second thoughts, I would rather not stay there the night. Give me a Bradshaw."

I handed him the required book. While he was looking over it, Middleton returned. He said he had been all over the upper floors: the rooms were every one locked, and there was no sign of any one having been there the previous night.

"Your imagination must have been playing you a trick," he said. "Still it was an odd thing about the photograph."

Duncan left the room, taking the book with him, "I'll see you again by-and-by," he said, as he departed.

Middleton stayed to help me replace the picture which had slipped out of its frame the night before. Half an hour after, we were all busy at our respective tasks, and had to a certain extent banished from our minds the strange event which had happened the night before.

Later in the day, Duncan came in to me again.

"I'll tell you what I have decided on," he said. "I cannot help thinking that this mysterious affair, coming at such a time, and when the family are in such need, has something to do with the lost picture. I don't know why, but it amounts almost to a conviction. I've made up my mind to come back to-night, and will join you here if you will come. If nothing more happens, I think we may safely conclude that it is some delusion. Are you certain you never saw that photograph of poor Heseltine, when looking over my book?"

"I am quite positive I never saw it, for I never looked into your book; in fact I never knew you had one in your room. I am equally certain I never saw anyone

like the figure I met in the hall, for it impressed me deeply. Had I seen him or his picture before, I must have remembered it. What time shall you be back to-night?"

"I find there is a train which will bring me to Charing Cross at 10:35. If it is in decent time I ought to be here by eleven o'clock. I suppose you won't care to be inside alone. Will you meet me at the door, say at eleven, sharp?"

I reflected a few minutes.

"I don't wish to lay claim to any extraordinary amount of pluck," I said, "and if I consulted my inclination, I should propose to meet you at the door; but really, even after all that has occurred, it seems to me too absurd to think that I should be afraid to enter the house for fear of ghosts. If it is really a supernatural appearance, which I can hardly bring myself to believe, it is sent with some object, and I don't see why one should shirk it. I shall employ myself in my room until you come, and when you knock I will let you in. We can keep a light burning in the hall."

"You need not take the trouble to come down; I can let myself in with the latch key. It's as well to mention this," he added, with a feeble smile, "for if I came upon you unawares, you might take me for the ghost, and do me some bodily injury."

"No fear of that, old man; you are not a bit alike, so you may consider yourself safe for the present. Well, then, at eleven, or thereabout, I shall look for you. Be as early as you can," I added.

"Trust me for that; at present my feeling is one of intense curiosity. What it will be by-and-by, I won't venture to say."

He left me, and I went on working for the rest of the day in a tolerably equable frame of mind. Towards evening, however, I must confess that a feeling of nervousness came over me, and I thought, after all, that the arrangement I had made was rather unwise. Even supposing the whole thing to have been a delusion, still, with my nerves in their present excited state, my imagination might play me such a trick as to produce the most disastrous consequences. I began to repent, but there was now no help for it; besides, if there were any object in this appearance—and I could not bring myself to believe the contrary—it was manifestly my duty not to shirk the task of endeavouring to discover it.

I left my studio early, intending to go home to dinner, and return late in the evening. When I got out into the busy streets, I was again almost inclined to laugh at myself, for my superstitious fancies. The matter-of-fact people moving about the streets, the children playing in the square, the passing cabs, the gay shops, seemed to render the idea of any supernatural visitant so supremely absurd, that I almost regretted any arrangement had been made for my return.

When I returned to the square, at about half-past nine, the lamps were lit, and the partial darkness of a fine summer night had settled softly over the great city. I lingered a few minutes on the door-step, to finish my cigar in the cool air, so refreshing after the heat of the long summer day.

There was a deep orange glow still lingering in the north-western sky, and the last low twitter of the birds among the trees in the square came softly to the ear. All was so peaceful around, that I could hardly believe in the object which had brought me back at this hour. It seemed like a dream, and I was almost disposed to adopt the old insane plan of pinching myself, to ascertain whether I was awake or not.

I turned to go in. As I did so, Holmes, the square keeper, came in sight. I knew it was just about the time for his departure, and I concluded he was on his way home. The fancy came into my mind that I should like to have him within call.

"Good evening, Holmes," I said, "I suppose you're just about thinking of getting home?"

"Yes, sir, I've had pretty nearly enough of it for one day. Tiring work being on your feet so many hours, I can tell you."

"I suppose it is. I hardly like to make the request, but I've a particular reason for asking you to remain later to-night. I can give you a glass of beer if you'll step in. I expect Mr. Duncan here at eleven, and we shall not want you to stay many minutes after that."

"Of course if it's any convenience to you, sir, I shall be very glad to stop, but I hope there's nothing wrong."

"No, all I want you to do is to remain near the door, and watch carefully who comes in and out."

"Very good, sir."

Holmes looked surprised, but as I did not volunteer any further information, he made no remark.

I opened the door and we went in. I am compelled to confess that it was a relief to me to have Holmes with me. The matches were on the mantelpiece as usual, and having obtained a light, we went upstairs. I supplied Holmes with his beer, and we spent half-an-hour in talking over the various pictures in my room, which Holmes inspected by the dim light of my reading lamp; the gas in my studio, according to my custom in summer, being disconnected.

When Holmes left for his post outside the house, I sat down to write some letters. I had been considerably reassured by his presence, and had, to a great extent, banished those vague superstitious feelings which had previously pervaded my mind. The last ray of daylight had now disappeared from the western sky. The lower part of my window was covered with the conventional green baize, but looking out above this, I saw the stars shining brightly, and the dim lustre of the moon just beginning to touch the chimneys on the further side of the square. My lamp was hardly sufficient to light the whole room distinctly, still there was light enough to discern the various objects without much difficulty.

My letters were of importance. The contents so completely absorbed me that I lost all consciousness of the lapse of time, and suddenly started on hearing a neighbouring clock strike eleven. I could hardly believe it possible, and I took out my watch to see if I had not been mistaken. No; it was really eleven, and I reflected, with a certain amount of satisfaction, that I should not in all probability be alone many minutes longer. As I sat at my writing table my back was towards the door, and the old cabinet was also behind me on the other side. I had one more letter to write, and was just dipping my pen in the ink, when a slight noise behind me caused me to look round.

In an instant the blood rushed to my heart in one wild flood. I started from my chair, and, grasping the edge of the table, stood leaning against it, quivering in every limb.

Close in front of the cabinet stood the figure of the previous night. Its hand was on the key, which it turned with a quick firm motion, and threw open the door. Without pausing a moment it then walked towards the door of the room. In another second it would be gone.

"In the name of God," I gasped, "tell me what you wish."

It stopped suddenly, as if arrested by the sound, then turned as it had done on the previous night, and looked fixedly at me. Then it approached.

I felt like one turned to stone. Yet involuntarily I recoiled. It seemed to detect the motion, and stopped with what seemed a half reproachful expression. Then its left hand was raised, and it pointed towards the cabinet.

In vain I tried to articulate. In vain I attempt to describe what I felt! By a desperate effort I recovered myself.

"The cabinet?" I again gasped out.

The mild melancholy face seemed almost lit with a smile; the head was bowed in response; then the figure turned, and slowly passed out at the door.

When Duncan arrived at ten minutes past eleven, his train having been delayed, he found me stretched on the floor of the studio in a deep swoon. He happened to have some brandy in his travelling flask, and by a judicious administration of this, together with a plentiful application of cold water, which he found in the room, he presently brought me to my senses. The condition in which he had found me, and my wild look of alarm when I recalled what I had witnessed, were quite sufficient to assure him that something serious had happened, but it was some time before I grew sufficiently calm to describe what I had seen. I was yet too weak to take the initiative, but as soon as Duncan heard my recital he moved instinctively towards the cabinet, and, by the aid of my lamp, began searching the interior, while I sat watching him with intense anxiety. His search, however, was in vain. The inside of the cupboard, the drawers and smaller recesses were subjected to the most severe scrutiny, but without effect.

A keen sense of disappointment stole over me as I watched his fruitless efforts; yet, so convinced was I that something connected with that cabinet had been the cause of the ghostly visitation of the last two nights, that my impatience overcame the bodily weakness consequent upon the shock I had experienced. I rose hastily from my chair, and snatching the lamp from Duncan, commenced a careful scrutiny on my own account.

Not a word was uttered while I pursued my search. Duncan stood by, conscious that he had himself explored every crack and

creanny with the utmost care, and with an expression in his face which indicated the hopelessness of any further search. Still I went on, urged by an impulse which was perfectly irresistible, examining the same places over and over again, and passing my hand over every portion in the hope of discovering some secret spring or slide. At length Duncan said, "It is useless; there is positively nothing there." I did not reply. I could not. The sense of disappointment was still so strong, and the perfect conviction that something yet remained to be discovered. At length I also felt that it was useless to pursue the search any further, and I turned away.

As I withdrew my eyes from the upper compartment, a sudden thought flashed into my mind. I still held the lamp so high that all the inside of the cupboard was visible, and at this moment it occurred to me that the colour of the panel at the back was not the same as at the sides. Hastily thrusting in my hand, I again passed it carefully over the panel, and with a thrill of anxious expectation felt that there was a space of scarcely more than a quarter of an inch between it and the top of the cupboard. With some difficulty I inserted the point of my finger and pulled it forward. It fell flat before me, an exquisite work of art, painted on panel, placed so that it might not be seen, at the back of the cupboard, face inwards, and fitting the space almost exactly. A great cry of delight broke from us both as we held it with trembling hands to the light.

It was the Lost Picture!

THE VAGABONDS OF NORWAY.

Of late, many persons, especially sportsmen, have chosen Norway as a place wherein to spend their seasonable holiday, but few know anything about a nomadic race, that spreads itself over the whole country, unless, indeed, at the time we are writing, it has entirely faded out. This race, which is called "Tater"—not to be confounded with "Tatar"—seems to have been a branch of the gipsy people; it is clearly of Oriental origin, and it talks a language, termed, like that of more southern gypsies, "Rommani."

The knowledge of the Norwegians themselves respecting these shifting and shiftless neighbours, might be compared to a Londoner's perception of the houses opposite to his own, during the prevalence

of a tolerably dense fog. They were aware of their existence, and they sometimes came into contact with them; but they never arrived at anything beyond a mere outline of their ways and manners, till within the last thirty years.

In 1847, however, a theological student, Eilert Sundt, taking a tour through Western Norway, learned so much about the mysterious wanderers, that he thought he would like to know more. He made enquiries among the peasants, in various districts; he visited the prisons, where much information was obtained; and as his zeal assumed something of a missionary character, and he was animated to raise the outcasts from their wretched condition, he at last acquired so great a mass of knowledge, that the Government made him a sort of commissioner over everything connected with "Fants"—a term, including vagrants in general, without particular distinction of the Taters. The results of his investigations and studies, in the course of which he had completely mastered the Rommani language, were published in a large book at the Government expense; but they were given to the public in a smaller compass, and in the German language, by Herr von Etzel, about four years ago. To Eilert Sundt ultimately, to Herr von Etzel proximately, is the outer-world indebted for all that is known about the Vagabonds of Norway.

Great was the astonishment of some twenty newly-baptised Taters, when, assembled together for their "first communion," they heard Eilert Sundt read the parable of the Prodigal Son, in the Rommani language. This language had been the stronghold which had enabled them to resist all foreign incursions, and even a partial communication to outsiders had been treated as a capital offence. In the land of the stranger, where they had dwelt for centuries as a separate people, it had been to them of infinite service, allowing them to converse aloud with each other, in the presence of the uninitiated, who could not in the least divine the meaning of what they heard. Sometimes under the roof, and even the nose of a simple Norwegian, who had afforded them hospitality on a stormy winter's night, they could discuss, in full detail, how the house which sheltered them could most conveniently be robbed, without awaking a shadow of suspicion in the mind of their host. Sometimes, too, they would address a benefactor in a manner

which seemed to imply a gratitude that almost descended into servility, uttering, all the while, the heaviest imprecations against their alien oppressor. For it was not a weakness of the Taters to allow their countenances to betray a secret, which they would not trust to their tongues. The art of smiling, and murdering while they smiled, they had brought to perfection, and excelled even the great William the Silent in that talent for saying one thing, while meaning another.

Now, in spite of all quasi-masonic precautions, hero was a Christian pastor, who discoursed fluently in classical Rommani, before a critical congregation. How was this possible? One shrewd old Tater indulged in the hypothesis that there was a certain Eilert Sundt, originally sprung from the chosen (or rejected people) who had flourished greatly at Christiania.

In the case of Eilert Sundt two results were clearly possible. He might have been torn to pieces, even by his own converts, or he might gain an ascendancy over them by his unexpected exhibition of unprecedented smartness. Fortunately for himself, and information-seeking mankind, the latter result was attained. The Taters were overawed. They looked at him as the spirits in the Hall of Ahrimanes looked at Manfred, and acknowledged that they had met their match. The great secret was broken, so there was no reason to be careful about petty mysteries. Eilert Sundt might ask what questions he pleased with the fair chance of an answer.

Fortune favours the bold, and Eilert, who had acquired his knowledge of Rommani under great difficulties, was fortunate enough to find in some prisoner a remarkably intelligent and learned Tater, who was able to tell him what he could not readily have learned elsewhere. Through the influence of circumstances, the Tater proper has degenerated, and a specimen of the genuine article is not every day to be found. But the eruditè prisoner, who was baptised during his incarceration, and became respectable, with the new name Frederick Larsen, was an admirably qualified instructor. He had been the constant companion of his old grandfather, a grey-headed chief, who had lived in the old orthodox way, and, after having completed his hundredth year, had, after the orthodox fashion, terminated a life of which he was weary, by leaping into a torrent. Also, on the decease of this good old man he had become a chief himself.

Such a teacher was not to be hastily despised, and, it may be added, Larsen's communications, however incredible they might seem, never lost their value through the evidence of other witnesses.

From Frederick Larsen the remarkable fact was learned that the Taters have an independent mythology, consisting mainly in a worship of the moon. Previously it had been supposed that they were content with a primitive Hobbism, accommodating things to the particular Leviathan within whose reach they might chance to fall. To the rite of baptism they were so much attached that they even tried to procure the successive baptism of a child in different churches, hoping that on each occasion god-fatherly gifts would be bestowed, confident, too, that a certificate of baptism was useful as a sort of passport in dangerous districts. Their relatives in other lands had treated the saints of the Roman and Greek church with the most touching respect, and had even complied with the more exigent requisitions of Islam. Hence the whole body has been exposed to satire. The Wallachians say, that the gypsies once built a church with bacon, their favourite viand, and that the dogs ate it up during the night. The Norwegian peasant is not so good-humoured. Hating the Asiatics, who had intruded among the fair-haired people, he insisted that they worshipped the Evil One. Nay, out of this opinion a local Faust-legend arose. A female Tater, it is said, who had attached the hearts of nine children and made of them a present to the devil, struck a bargain according to which she might do whatever she pleased, and enjoy herself to the full extent during her mortal career, on the condition that, after death, she would become the property of her malignant benefactor.

Of the real religion of the Taters nothing whatever seems to have been known to the outer-world, before the secrets of his race were revealed by Larsen to Eilert Sundt. Now we are aware that the central figure in their mythological system was Dundra, the son of the "Baro Devel" (Great God), who was sent by his father to the Taters, who had not then left their proper home, the city Asas in Assaria, wherever that might be. The mission of Dundra, who assumed the human form, was to make known to the Taters the secret code of laws that prevails among them to this day. The good work having been accomplished, and the laws having been written down in a book, he quitted

the earth, and with the new name Alakos, by which he has since been called, established himself in the moon. This seems to be the orthodox creed, but it is held by some that the departure of Dundra from the earth was not involuntary, inasmuch as he shared the common lot of the Taters in being driven from Assas by the Turks, and was even wounded in the battle which preceded their flight. All, however, are agreed that Alakos is the best friend and protector of the Taters, in their conflicts with their numerous enemies, and that some day he will lead them to victory, and restore them to their proper home. At present he is beset by hostile demons, who attempt to drive him out of the moon, and when the luminary is on the wane it is a sign that they are getting rather the best of it. But he makes good use of his sword and spear, and beats back the intruders, the joyful event being certified by the appearance of the new moon, and its increase till the time when the full face of Alakos beams upon his children, and these, falling upon their knees, glorify his victory.

At the first glance, Dundra's history may look like a corruption of Christianity; but the Taters, though for worldly purposes they may comply with ecclesiastical usages, have no real sympathy with Christians. On the contrary, the Redeemer, whom they call "Gern," is one of the adversaries with whom Alakos has to contend. A belief in the incarnation of the Deity is common to many systems among the Aryan peoples.

The Taters of Norway, of Sweden, and of Russia have each a supreme chief, who keeps in his possession a small image, carved in stone, representing Alakos as a man, standing upright, with a pen in one hand and a sword in the other. About Midsummer, the three divisions, each with its chief, meet together in one of the three countries, each of the three chiefs being president by rotation. On these occasions images of Alakos are set up, while a wild hymn is sung, after the termination of which the president delivers an address and gives his blessing to the assembly. Newly-married couples appear now before the images to receive a special benediction, for which they give a fee to the president; and children are formally named for the first time. If they have been already baptised, the Christian rite is set at nought, and they are newly consecrated in the name of Alakos. The whole solemnity ends with

a sumptuous banquet, at which brandy and bacon are freely consumed.

We have written in the present tense, but it is doubtful whether the worship of Alakos is now to be found, in the perfect state which we have just described. Even to the oldest Taters the great Moon-god seems to have a figure of the past, though his might was acknowledged in 1833, when the circumstance that, while many Norwegians fell victims to the cholera, not a single Tater perished, was ascribed to his protection of the chosen race.

That the Taters, regardless as they are of the laws of the people among whom they reside, are strongly bound together by a code of their own, there seems to be no doubt. By matrimonial fidelity they are as honourably distinguished as the gypsies in other lands. The maintenance of purity of blood is also strictly enjoyed, and, according to the ancient laws of the Taters, a woman of the race, who was even married to one of the white men, whether he was rich or poor, high or low, was burned at the stake. A man who trespassed in an analogous manner was less severely treated. With a gag in his mouth, and his hands fastened behind his back, he was compelled to stand in a state of nudity, surrounded by a picked body of his fellows, who passed sentence upon him. This done, the circle of the judges opened, and the offender was driven away with whips, by any women that chanced to be present, and was considered an alien for ever.

In spite of all precautions, the identity of the Tater race is preserved with difficulty, and the union of its members is every day growing weaker. The frequent imprisonment to which they are subject brings them into contact with vagabonds belonging to another stock, and they are particularly liable to be commingled with a nomadic body called the Sköiers, who are classed with them by the Norwegian peasants, under the common name "Fant," generally follow itinerant trades, and talk a jargon, composed of the slang of all nations called "Ro di," which is totally distinct from the Rommaui. Of old there was the deepest hatred between the Taters, who trace their origin from the ancient land Assaria, and the Sköiers, who are deducible from anywhere or nowhere; but, both being vagabonds alike, fell into the same common trouble, and nothing tends more to make friends than a common enemy.

Maternal affection appears to be very

strong among the Tater women, and from the researches of Eilert Sundt, we get a pretty picture of the career of an imaginary young bride and mother. Early marriages, as with Asiatics generally, are usual, and we may suppose the case of a girl, whom we should reckon almost a child, espousing a lad not much older than herself. When, after a short courtship, they have been formally married before the image of Alakos, the bridegroom expresses his thankfulness to his father-in-law by presenting him with a bottle of brandy, and a dance of the whole assembled horde, licentious after a fashion of its own, but not in the least resembling the French can-can, immediately ensues. The young couple have now to begin life, furnished with no other capital than a large stock of audacity and courage, which are first employed to obtain possession of a horse and the appurtenances necessary to a wandering life. We may imagine them for some time, during the warm summer days, wandering about happily enough, and in the enjoyment of their vagabond freedom, looking down with compassionate contempt on the hard-working Norwegian peasant and his assistant labourers. But a felicity of this exceptional kind is too bright to last. The very endeavours to obtain a horse by some means or other have led to the arrest of the husband, who is sentenced to pass many years in a House of Correction, and the young wife, about to become a mother, wanders on alone. Winter comes on, tramping becomes difficult, and the Norwegian peasant women are sufficiently moved with compassion to grant the wanderer a meal by day, and a lodging somewhere for a night, and at last two lodgers instead of one, a mother and her infant, are found in the place of rest. The hostess is good-humoured and parts with a few rags to clothe the little stranger, and is also induced to give a band or some cords that the child may be properly fastened to its mother's back. Bearing the beloved burden, the Tater trudges on from house to house, her natural proficiency in the eloquence proper to mendicancy being raised to its highest point of effectiveness by the baby's cries, and contrives to continue existence, until her husband's term of captivity has expired, or has been ingeniously shortened, and then proceeds to meet him at an appointed spot, leading the child, who, too big to be carried, now toddles. Great joy on all sides is the result of the meeting, and the

ultimate result of many such meetings and partings in the course of a somewhat long life, is a large growing family; and as want sharpens wit, the intellectual activity of the mother, no longer young, receives an abnormal development. She begs, she utters prophecies, and falsehoods of other kinds; she cheats, and she steals, and she bewitches, or rather pretends so to do, heedless of snow and rain, defying harshness and contempt. The only end is to get sustenance for her children, and that end attained all means are indifferent. Let it not be supposed that these bantlings, for whom so much is undergone, are in any way spoiled; the boxes on the ear are far more numerous than the caresses bestowed upon them by their mothers. It is only when some one tries to take them away that the maternal affection is displayed in all its force. Good Christians frequently feel it their duty to rescue the little vagrants from their disreputable mother, and place them in some sort of Reformatory. They must not fancy that their task is over, when the child is placed within the precincts of possible amelioration. The bereaved mother hovers about the walls, and, in a language intelligible to none but her offspring, so pertinaciously denounces the officious philanthropist, that the children become convinced by her eloquence, and think themselves lucky if they can escape the abode of benevolence, and return to their old allowance of maternal cuffs and shakings.

Whether the intense love of the Tater women for their children meets with a grateful return seems to be very doubtful. Indeed, there is a widely-diffused belief that the custom of putting the aged to death is among Tater usages. Thus, a Norwegian peasant stated to Eilert Sundt, that on one occasion, when a horde of Taters had found shelter in his father's premises, a very old woman was heard sobbing and groaning during the night; and that one of the others, on being questioned as to the reason of this display of grief, had simply answered that she was their eldest living ancestress, and that she knew that she had reached her last day. This statement admits of various interpretations, and other cases might be equally explained away. The old lady might simply mean that she was aware of the approach of death, without implying any dread of unseemly acceleration. The Taters themselves rebut this charge of habitual matricide; but they admit that

the aged among them are given to commit suicide, as a means of escaping from the miseries of life.

A peculiarity among this nomadic people is an elaborate system of signals, by means of which the comparatively few families of which it is composed, however scattered about the country, can always be assembled together. When a body of them, wandering through a district, come to a cross-way, they lay three twigs of fir on the right side of the road along which they proceed, securing their fixity by a stone. The ordinary passers-by take no notice of the "patoon" (as the signal is called), but it is at once recognised and understood by the initiated, and is found excessively useful to those of the race who have just escaped from prison, and wish to rejoin their associates. In the winter, a mark in the snow, made with a whip and resembling a tied-up sack, answers a similar purpose.

The strong feeling of fraternity that exists among the Taters is productive of furious quarrels. An outsider may express his contempt for them with impunity, but the slightest insult from the lips of a brother provokes a desire for satisfaction, and a fight ensues. The chief weapon, called the "Tjirkin," is apparently a whip, and can be used as one; but it has peculiarities which are concealed from the eyes of the uninitiated by a case of linen or skin: its length is about that of a walking-stick, and it is generally made of a cane, with a leaden knob at each end. It is held in the middle, and is whirled round, passing from one hand to the other as the exigencies require, its manipulation being exceedingly like that of the Irish shillelagh, and it even frequently leads to a "faction fight." But there is also a more civilised duel fought with pocket-knives, by two men fastened to each other by a thong attached to the waist. A combat of this description furnished a subject to the Swedish sculptor, Mollins. It is a law of the Taters that with the termination of the duel all animosity ceases; and there never has been an instance of a man, worsted and wounded in the conflict, betraying his victorious antagonist to the police.

The Taters enjoy a high reputation as healers of cattle diseases, and, generally, they are rather dignified in their professed avocations, despising the trades pursued by less exclusive nomads. Their fastidiousness, however, does not exclude the work

of what we call a knacker; and this is the more fortunate, as in many districts of Norway the peasants have an unconquerable aversion to meddling with dead animals. Even the removal of the hide from an ox is regarded with abomination. Great then was, on one occasion, the unadmitting surprise, when a party of dexterous Taters came to the assistance of a peasant, who desired the death of a young horse, that had accidentally broken one of its legs. Neither the peasant nor any one of his neighbours was equal to the required operation: but the Taters, having stipulated that part of their payment should consist of a bottle of brandy, went to work without scruple. When the horse had been duly killed, they cut from the body a choice morsel, which they roasted on a fire made for the occasion, and then ate, drank, and made merry, to the infinite disgust of all beholders. The repast finished, the head of the party gracefully expressed to his host a wish, that when he again came that way, he might have to slaughter an equally fine, fat horse, under similar circumstances.

Where the profession of a knacker is deemed aristocratic, it seems hard to guess what would be considered vulgar. Information is not wanting as to this point. Among the nomads of Norway the knacker looks down upon the tinker and the knife-grinder, and all of them despise the chimney-sweep.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE DAY BEFORE THE WEDDING.

THE day before the three weddings arrives, and all things remain very smooth on the surface. Mr. Clement Graham has not strung his noble soul up to the point of telling the Forests, or letting the Forests suspect that he designs to rob them of that priceless boon, Charlotte. She has tried all her arts upon him, to induce him to do this, for, in spite of her vanity, she knows that the Forests will relinquish her without hesitation. She has tried wheedling, she has tried covert sneers at vacillation, she has tried loving busyness; and all have failed. Clement Graham will eat dirt freely enough, but he will eat it at his own time, and in his own way. He will not be hurried. Ho

will have as little as possible of the excitement and scenic effects which will be produced immediately his change of determination is known in the family. In the meantime all he asks is "love and peace," and he gets plenty of both, for Charlotte can feign most admirably.

But on this last day, before the three happy pairs are to be united, Miss Grange becomes just a little more anxious and exacting than she has ever shown herself to be before. That she will be led to the altar seems to be a fixed certainty, but then it is tantalising—even to Charlotte Grange—not to know by which man she will be led there. "He can't mean to let things take their course, until we all stand before the altar, and then announce the change in the programme, surely?" she asks of herself, as she rises from her bed very early this morning, "and yet, if he doesn't take me away to-day I shall feel compelled to go on, as the Forests expect me to go on, for I won't be left in the lurch by both men."

It happens that Frank comes upon the scene very prematurely, as she thinks, this day. In spite of her normal placidity, she is too much excited by the harassing uncertainty of her position, to be able to bestow that amount of attention upon him which is necessary in order to keep him in a state of unsuspicion. It is difficult even for her to respond to Frank's remarks relative to what they will do, and where they will go on their wedding tour, when she is expecting anxiously to be married to another man. She tries to pass off her pre-occupation, and watchfulness, as the effects of certain doubts and fears she is entertaining relative to her packing and her dresses.

"I feel that instead of staying here talking to you, Frank, I ought to be upstairs superintending Mrs. Grange's maid. I shall never know where to look for a single thing, if I let her do all the packing, without me," she says, at last, as her impatience to get safely rid of him overmasters her sense of its being expedient not to let him see that she is so. A grinding fear assails her that Clement Graham may come in at any moment, and that he, being utterly unreasonable, may resent the fact of Frank's being there, or that Frank may resent Clement Graham's unaccountable appearance, and so bring about an explanation which may end in her confusion.

"Never mind the packing; things

always turn up when you want them, I find. If I were you, Charlotte, I wouldn't take too many boxes. You won't want anything like dress, you know: we're not like Graham and Gertrude, going to swell about in Paris. A yachting dress, and one or two things of that sort, will be enough for you."

She draws the corners of her mouth down a little in disdain at his limited ideas of feminine need in the matter of dress, and smiles in derision at the thought of how surprised he will be when he finds that it is "Graham" and herself who are "swelling" it about in Paris or elsewhere, and that a seaside retreat with a single yachting dress is far more likely to be Gertrude's portion.

"Please let me be the judge in these matters, Frank," she says, rising up, for she hears a visitor's knock, and her prophetic soul tells her that it is Clement Graham. She tries to keep the peace to the last; tries to mutter something coherent about the packing; tries to give him her hand and a loving smile heartily and feelingly. But her eyes wander restlessly to the door, and Frank has a sudden instinct that all is not well, that there is some screw loose, that in some way or another he is being imposed upon and tricked.

"What is it, Charlotte?" he asks, holding her detainingly. "This is hardly the way to take leave of me the day before our marriage. This—"

The door is opened, and Mr. Graham is announced, and Charlotte makes one strong effort to free her hands from Frank's, but he continues to hold them as coolly as possible, the while he bestows a stare of unmitigated surprise on the intruder.

"You here, Graham?" with an air of eager inquiry, which he checks and turns into one of his ordinary nonchalance, as Charlotte somewhat violently wrenches her hands from his, and goes with an agitated greeting to the new-comer.

"Yes, I'm here," the other man replies, awkwardly; and Charlotte feels with a tremor that if it comes to open war he will be such a poor ally. "I came to—I came to see—what the deuce have I come for," he winds up with, impotently, looking angrily, and at the same time beseechingly, at Miss Grange.

"You have come, I suppose, to see me, and to give me your good wishes," she says, promptly. "Why on earth Frank

should think it necessary to call you to account for being here, I don't know."

She pauses, out of breath with the vehemence with which she has defended the situation, and almost paralysed by her dread that they will try to outstay each other, and that Clement will be the one to give in and go first. If he does this how shall she know in what way to act? how shall she know which man she is to marry? how shall she be relieved of the soul-subduing fear, that she may come to the ground between these two stools after all.

Quivering with fear inwardly, but externally maintaining her composure, she says, as a sort of forlorn hope,

"I was just saying good-bye to Frank, for I am too busy about this tiresome packing to give any more time to anyone to-day. But you will like to see my sister-in-law, Mr. Graham. I will send her to you as I go on my way about my business."

Both men accept her dicta—Frank because he does not understand what she is aiming at, and Graham because he understands it very well indeed. She goes away from them with a light nod; and Frank, who has an antipathy to Mrs. Grange, and a horror of meeting her, finds himself constrained to say good-bye, and leave his esteemed future brother-in-law in possession of the field.

It strikes him as odd that Charlotte is not lingering about to take one more private farewell of him; but he is not really in love with her, and the oddness of it does not hurt him at all. Just outside the drawing-room door, at the foot of the stairs that lead to the upper regions, he stands for a moment and calls out, "Good-bye, Charlotte; I'm off," little thinking that it is good-bye, and that he is off from her for ever.

Her heart gives an exultant bound as she hears him; but though she hears him, she makes no response, for she dreads that a response may have a detaining effect upon him, and she does long to have it out with that chicken-hearted successor of his in the drawing-room. She waits till she hears the hall door close after him, and then she goes down, just in time to intercept Mrs. Grange, who is surging in the direction of Mr. Graham.

"What does he want here?" the married lady says, in a loud whisper. "Busy as we are to-day, he needn't have come here interrupting us. I think Frank might have had more consideration than to bring

him here to-day; and to leave him here too! But it's just like Frank, to have no thought for anyone but himself."

"Frank is too tiresome about everything," Miss Grange assents. "But you needn't see him: I'll go in and get rid of him, and tell him you're too much engaged to receive him."

"I shall be very glad, very glad indeed, when it's all over," Mrs. Grange grumbles. "The trouble and expense it has entailed upon your brother and myself are things that I hope you won't forget, Charlotte."

"No, no, no!" Charlotte answers impatiently. "I'll remember everything—and pay you for it," she adds, with an amount of bitterness that makes Mrs. Grange regret she ever took the young lady and her matrimonial prospects in hand.

"Now let me go in and—and see what is to be done with him," Charlotte adds in a very low tone; and then, as Mrs. Grange flounces down-stairs, breathing audible wishes for everybody's discomfiture who may interrupt her this day, Charlotte goes in to have her fate decided.

She feels that the arbiter of her destiny is personally and mentally obnoxious to the last degree as he stands before her, glowering and stammering with rage at the unlucky contretemps which brought him face to face with Frank.

"You should have managed better," he says angrily—and his anger is so small and spiteful a thing that she is almost inclined to turn her back upon it and him for ever. "You've played your cards very well all along, but it wasn't very good taste on your part to let me come in at the last and find you spooning with him—he holding your hands, and all that kind of nonsense."

"Do remember that you have tied my hands, and never ceased to impress upon me the absolute necessity for being careful," she says, as pathetically and imploringly as she can.

"Yes, but my wanting to see you careful didn't mean that I wanted to see you caressed! I believe you're afraid," he continues sardonically. "I believe you're holding on to him because you think that you may have to take him in the end, and not out of deference to my wishes."

She longs to tell the truth, and flout, and scorn, and defy him. She longs to show him how contemptible he is, even in her eyes—contemptible as she may be herself. All she does say, however, is—

"You will know me better by-and-by, Clement."

"I am harassed out of my life," he goes on. "Mrs. Forest is bothering about settlements being signed to-day, and I've had to make so many excuses about not going there till this evening, that my brain seems to be going. By this evening I hope we shall be far out of their reach, away from it all. Are you ready?"

"Ready to——?" She does not like to say "ready to be married," because that might sound indecorously definite; and she does not like to say "ready to go," because that, on the other hand, might sound indecorously indefinite. Accordingly she pauses, and leaves him to finish the sentence.

"Ready to be off with me, to be sure," he says, rather roughly.

"Shall we go and be married at once?" she asks, falteringly.

"Well, there will be a difficulty about that. We have wasted time this morning, and it's past the hour already. But you had better get away from here some time to-day, and we'll be married the first thing to-morrow morning."

She trembles a little, and hesitates about giving her assent to this plan. She has not a particle of trust in this man, and at the same time she knows that if she exhibits anything like distrust, he will resent it in the way she will feel most, namely, by throwing her over altogether. Accordingly she tries to temporise, to hide her real motives as much as possible, and to give false ones as it is her nature to.

"I can't get away from this house, and remain away for any length of time, without raising the alarm; it wouldn't matter a bit if we could be married and get away without delay, but if I have to wait about until to-morrow ——"

"Say you're going to the Forests?" he suggests.

"My sister-in-law would think it so strange, so indelicate of me to go there to-day."

"Nonsense! indelicate! they'll have their eyes completely opened by a telegram to-morrow; why should you mind what they think to-day?"

"Why can't I leave this house early to-morrow, and meet you at the church," she urges.

"Because I tell you that to-morrow, from the moment you wake, they'll be on guard over you, to see that you're properly rigged, and all that sort of thing. You'll

not have a moment to yourself, you'll have no chance of slipping away. No, I tell you plainly, if you're coming to me at all, Charlotte, you must come to-day."

"Then I will come to-day," she says, and then, practically and quietly, she takes down the address of the lodgings which he has taken for her until to-morrow.

"I shall have to leave all my trunks, all my jewels behind me," she says, in a vexed tone; "but there will be no difficulty about them, will there? My brother is very strange—and mean, not to put too fine a point upon it—but he will hardly detain things that have been given to me."

"You haven't taken off that shabby little gold band yet," he said, disregarding her question, and pointing to Frank's engagement ring. "Take it off at once;" and he enforces his request by pulling it off her finger, and throwing it down on the centre table.

"Won't Mrs. Forest be in a fine frenzy to-night when she finds I am not there to sign settlements!" he says presently, grinning maliciously. "They'll have their lawyer there, and no end of fuss. How pleasant Gertrude will make it to everybody!"

"How carefully her interests were to be looked after before she became your wife," Charlotte sighs softly. "As for me, I am going to take the leap in the dark entirely, as regards money."

"Ah, yes; it's a different thing with you," he says, carelessly: "with her it was all fair and above-board."

It is a very large and disagreeable pill, but she swallows it, as she will have to swallow many another before she attains her object, and obtains complete empire over his soul. She waives the subject off as gracefully as she can, reminds him that his staying longer will arouse suspicion in the household, appoints an hour at which to meet him later in the day, and finally gets rid of him without having been subjected to the smallest interruption.

But her time of trial is at luncheon; for then her brother, with naturalquisitiveness, will keep on asking her what that "young man who is going to marry Miss Forest wanted here to-day." Mrs. Grange, too, out of a sudden access of good feeling, adds to her confusion. Now

that Charlotte is on the brink of leaving them, Mrs. Grange tried hard to forget all that is unlovely and unseemly in the character of her sister-in-law. She tries to remember that Charlotte's has been a hard, up-hill kind of life, and that there have been times when she (Mrs. Grange) has been wanting in Christian and womanly forbearance towards the sister of her husband. Fraught with this feeling, she has a kind of desire to make up for all things by extra kindness on this last day, and she sets about her work by making the most uncomfortable proposal which it is in her power to make.

"We'll spend the afternoon cosily together, Charlotte," she says. "I have just had a note from mamma, saying she would like to come round and pass a few hours with me; but I have sent back to say that I feel that I belong to you to-day, and that I had rather she waited, and came a day or two hence."

"I am sorry you put Mrs. Constable off on my account," Charlotte says awkwardly; "the more so as I have promised to go to the Forests for a little time."

"Go to the Forests! how very odd! to-day!"

"Frank wished it," Charlotte says despairingly. "There's a sort of gathering there, and Frank wished it."

"Is the gathering this afternoon or this evening?"

"Really, I hardly know," Charlotte answers, with tears in her eyes. "I am so knocked about, I feel so over-driven. I believe I have to go there this afternoon."

"Shall I drive you over?" Mrs. Grange asks.

"Oh! no, no, no!" Charlotte says, with something that resembles a sob, "I'm best alone for a little time, indeed I am; let me go over alone."

She carries her point; she gets away from her brother's house without further let or hindrance, but her heart sinks awfully low as she pulls up unmolested at the door of the lodgings that have been taken for her, and reflects on the insecurity of it all.

About ten o'clock that night the Forests are startled by the advent of a messenger from Mrs. Grange, questioning them concerning the whereabouts of Charlotte.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 320. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER III. HIDE AND SEEK.

CAPTAIN STUDLEY gazed in blank astonishment at the femme de chambre. She was a rosy-faced woman, with a pair of roguish black eyes, which twinkled merrily at the Englishman's discomfiture. At another time, the captain might not have been indisposed to take some more special notice of the pleasant countenance in such close proximity to his own; but now his thoughts were full of the extraordinary news he had just heard, and he looked very rueful indeed.

"Did you see mademoiselle go out yourself?" he asked, rubbing his chin, "or were you told she had gone by somebody else?"

"But certainly I saw her myself," responded the femme de chambre. "Mademoiselle came out from the bed-chamber as I was sweeping the salon, and wished me good morning as she passed through."

"Did she have any luggage with her—a sac de nuit, or anything of that kind?" asked the captain.

"Not the least in the world," replied the woman; "the baggage of mademoiselle is yet in the bed-chamber, where it was placed last night. Monsieur may see it for himself, if he wish it. It is closed, and, I believe, locked. Nothing seems to have been disturbed."

"But she had a night's rest, I suppose?" said the captain. "She was thoroughly tired out by the voyage, and seemed anxious that I should leave her to herself."

"Oh, yes," observed the woman; "the

bed had been slept in, no doubt; but mademoiselle had, I imagine, been occupying herself with writing before she retired to rest: the bureau, where the inkstand was kept, has been opened, and there were several scraps of torn paper littered about it."

"Scraps of torn paper!" cried the captain. "No letter of any kind?"

"None," said the woman. "The scraps were still there; monsieur could inspect them, if he chose."

The captain did choose. He dismissed the woman with a nod and a word of thanks, went into the bed-room, seated himself at the bureau, and looked carefully through the little mass of fragments collected together in one corner. He examined each individually, more than once; he found nothing to repay his curiosity. He took the blotting-book to the window, and held the leaves against the light; odd lines of writing in French and English became visible—quaint expressions, which would have amused him at another time, but which had no bearing on his present purpose. He pushed them all on one side; and, returning to the salon, lit a cigar and began moodily walking up and down, pondering on what it were best for him to do.

His daughter was acting on some preconceived plan, that was plain enough. The idea of escaping from him had not suddenly come upon her since her arrival in Calais, but had been the result of forethought and deliberation. He himself had given her a small sum to make some few purchases which had not been made, and the money would, doubtless, be used in aiding her to elude him. What could be her object, in withdrawing herself from his society and protection at that juncture?

Was her absence part of a deep-laid scheme, of which her apparent acquiescence in his plans and obedience to his commands had been concomitant portions? Was it possible that her acceptance of the terms imposed upon her had been merely wrung from her by fear, and that she had taken the first opportunity of returning to England, with the determination to undo all that had been so carefully planned? Could it have been that she had merely yielded her assent with the view of recovering her liberty, having secured which she would carry out her original intention of denouncing the perpetrators of the crime? The position which she occupied with regard to Heath had, indeed, secured his safety; but the captain grew hot all over, as he reflected upon the considerable jeopardy in which his own liberty, not to say his life, would be placed, if Anne were still bent upon revenging Danby's death. This was a matter upon which he had better take council with himself at once, and come to a rapid decision as, in case his latest suspicions were right, he must take the earliest opportunity of getting further away from the land of his birth, and domesticating himself in some region where extradition treaties were unknown.

But a few moments' thought threw a more roseate hue over the prospect. Such a line of conduct, the captain argued with himself, would be scarcely compatible with Anne's previous training; and, with all that she had gone through, it was most probable that she had slept well, had risen early, and had strolled into the town to pass the time before breakfast. She was an independent kind of girl, accustomed to shift for herself; and, being in a new place and that kind of thing, what more likely than that she should desire to look about her? Still, as it was not desirable that she should get into conversation with any chance acquaintances, the captain thought that he would ramble out and try and find her; and, after a few courteous words of salutation to the old lady and gentleman who, in the half-office, half-parlour, were each engaged with a huge ledger, he turned into the street and made his way towards the pier.

The morning was bright, and the quay was crowded with its motley population, littered with high-piled egg-boxes and crates of garden produce, and resounding with those prolonged shrieks which Frenchmen alone are capable of giving or understanding. The scene was not an

unfamiliar one to the captain, and, as he picked his way along the pier, he gazed at it with a feeling of pleasant amusement. It was a happy characteristic of his nature to be able, temporarily at least, to throw off any care, and to enjoy to the utmost the pleasure of the passing moments.

"Most amazingly agreeable set of people," he muttered to himself, as he stood by, watching a group of blue-bloused men engaged in loading a barque, who, in their intervals of labour, exchanged practical jokes among themselves and verbal repartees with some neighbouring poissard. "Much more amusing than our people of the same class, who are lumpish and heavy, and nothing like so intelligent and refined; and the air too," lifting up his head and inhaling it, "bright and exhilarating—like champagne, by Jove! When I think of the mist which used to hang over that confounded place on the river, I wonder I stood it so long, and I wouldn't go back there now for anything that could be offered me. It will be denced hard if this girl runs counter, just when I had made all my arrangements for a pleasant sojourn abroad, and thought I should have her to look after me, and all that kind of thing; but I imagine it will come all right. It is pretty clear that she hasn't got away yet; the mail-steamer this morning left before she was up; there is the 'Scine' lying alongside the port, just clean swabbed and made ready for her passengers; and the direct London boat don't go till midnight, so here, somewhere, she must be."

The captain was an old and a good hand at killing time; he had been accustomed to the occupation from the period when he first entered the army, and had to get through the never-ending days in remote Irish quarters; he had practised the art many a time and oft, when he was lying by patiently waiting for a coup to be landed, a horse to be watched, or a human being to be settled, mollified or "squared," but it needed all the resources at his command to work through that morning at Calais. He confined his patrol to the pier for several reasons; it was the most amusing place of observation for himself, it was the likeliest place of promenade for a stranger, and from it alone could Anne—had she been so disposed—have effected her retreat, for her father's ideas regarding her only pointed to her return to England, and never contemplated the possibility of her

going further into the country. So, to the immediate neighbourhood of the harbour the captain confined himself, the extent of his peregrinations being the end of the Rue des Thermes, where he entered into pleasant conversation with one of the keepers of the lighthouse, who was eating his mid-day meal of cabbage-soup in the lodge at its base. He loitered up and down the pier, watching the bonnes and their charges, the red-legged soldiers gazing at the ocean with that look of vacant wonder which seems natural to the youthful tonlouron—the old gentlemen interchanging snuff-boxes and congratulations in the bright sunlight, and the sturdy Britons promenading for constitutional purposes at a prodigious rate, and inhaling, with open mouth and nostrils, the air blown towards them from the land of freedom on the other side of the channel. When the mail-boat was getting her steam up, he took his station by the shifting gangway leading to her deck, carefully inspecting everyone who descended into her, and remained there until he could convince himself that Anne was not of the number. The day was getting on, and Anne must have satisfied her curiosity and returned from her stroll; but when the captain arrived at the hotel, they told him that mademoiselle was not there, and that, indeed, nothing had been seen of her since the morning.

When Anne Stadley had first retired to rest on the previous night, she was so thoroughly exhausted by the events of the day and the long journey which she had performed, that she had scarcely the strength to undress herself, and was in a sound sleep almost as soon as her head touched the pillow. This refreshing slumber, however, was not of very long duration; in the middle of the night she woke with her limbs indeed yet aching with fatigue, but with all her faculties in full play, and her mind singularly bright and vivid. Heretofore, in the long, solitary hours which she had passed during her illness, her thoughts had been principally employed with the past; involuntarily she had occupied herself with mental pictures of the horrible scene she had witnessed; with the dread discovery she had made in regard to her father's life and character; with the uprooting and admonition of those hopes and schemes which she had dreamed over in her school-days. When the proposition regarding her marriage with Heath was once made to her, the necessity for an

immediate decision occupied her mind, to the exclusion of every other thought. The mere fact of a compliance was in itself so horrible, that she had scarcely permitted herself to think over what it would bring about in the future. In the state of semi-stupor to which illness and nervous prostration had reduced her, she had been content to accept her father's insistence of the urgency of his demands, and his promise that a compliance should liberate them both from any future connection with the hated man, with whose fortunes their destiny seemed to have inextricably associated them. But now, as she lay in the neat white bed, with everything new and strange around her, gazing at the slowly-expiring logs, whose flickering flames were reflected in the glazed tiles of the fireplace, and listening to the carillons which, from time to time, rang out sadly, but sweetly, from the belfry of the town-hall, Anne's clearness of perception and resolute habit of foresight came back to her in all their strength; and she set herself to the task of boldly facing the future, and seeing what it was best for her to do in it.

What was it best for her to do? It was not, perhaps, until that moment that she clearly realised what she had done, that the importance of the step which during the last twenty-four hours she had taken was plainly revealed to her, that she appreciated the perils position in which she had placed herself. The promise under which her father had wrung from her a reluctant consent, had been kept so far, it was true; Heath had occupied another compartment in the train to Dover, had not addressed them on board the boat, and had disappeared among the crowd on landing; and the captain had triumphantly referred to this as an evidence of the fulfilment of his pledge. But what guarantee was there that this man, her husband, might not return at any moment, when her father, even if he had the will—and his own confessions and her observation had placed him in a very unfavourable light in Anne's judgment—would have no power to shield her from him. His was the right, no matter how acquired, and all unscrupulous as he was, he would hesitate but little in exercising it. For his own safety he might think it necessary to have her with him, and such a demand once made could not be resisted. Even at that moment he might be merely temporising

with her, might have absented himself to give colour to his confederate's story, but on their arrival at the first place whither they were bound, might appear, determined to claim his position, and defying any attempt at disobedience or even compromise.

The thought was too horrible—it must not, it could not be!

Better poverty, starvation, death itself than such degradation. Whatever was to be done must be done at once, and unknown to her father, who, while powerless to protect her in case of need, would doubtless insist upon having her always as a companion, looking upon her presence as a means by which his own safety would be assured. She sat up in bed, throwing back her long hair over her shoulders, endeavouring to clear her brain for thought, and trembling as there stood out plainly before her the magnitude of the danger, and the inadequacy of the means of combating or flying from it. She was there alone, without a friend, with such an acquaintance of the language indeed as is to be obtained at modern finishing-schools, but wholly unskilled in the ways of the world, unaccustomed hitherto to take any practical part in the great battle of life upon which she was entering. Her resources, too, were very scanty, only three or four pounds, and when this modest sum was exhausted, she knew not where to look for more. There was no hoarding it either, it must be broken into at once. Flight, that was the first thing to be thought of—flight from that place, and from her father. Strange as it seemed to her, in analysing the difference in the feelings which once possessed her, and which ruled her then, she confessed to herself that absence from her father would be a positive relief, that escape from him would mean a severance of those hateful ties which bound her to the recent past, and that, so long as she remained with him, her sense of degradation would still exist.

Escape—but whither? It was absolutely necessary that she should have taken her departure before her father was astir, but whither could she bend her steps? Not to England. She had no home there now, there were no persons willing to receive her and give her shelter, save, indeed, the old ladies at the Hampstead school; and though Anne knew their kind-heartedness would prompt them to do what they could, their means were limited,

and their timidity was great; their house would be immediately thought of as one where she might probably seek retreat, and, under the pressure which would be brought to bear upon them, they would yield her up at once. She must remain in France, in hiding somewhere, not in Calais, where search would be made for her directly, nor as yet in Paris, whither it would probably be conjectured she had at once proceeded; she must find some quiet town en route, where she could remain for a few days and elaborate her plans for the future.

Amidst these wild and whirling thoughts, which passed rapidly through Anne Studley's brain, the idea of appealing to Grace Middleham, in the manner arranged upon between them, never once found a place. Of course her mind reverted frequently to Grace, but in a dreamy absent manner, as one who had played an important part in the earlier and happier portion of her life, but who, her whereabouts now being unknown, was inaccessible, and not to be counted on. The scene of horror which Anne Studley had witnessed, and the illness supervening upon that scene, had given her a mental shock greater than those around her suspected, or than she knew herself; broad facts remained by her, but minor detail was forgotten or confused, and although she felt it odd that she had not her friend to turn to for sympathy, if not for aid, she did not recollect the pact between them, or the means of intercommunication which they had arranged.

She dressed herself hurriedly, and opening the bureau, seated herself at it with the intention of writing a letter to her father, to be posted on the following day, setting forth her reasons for escape, and her determination that all attempts at discovery and pursuit should be fruitless. More than half of this letter was written, when she suddenly changed her mind and tore the paper into the scraps which were afterwards found. Then, with nothing but a small hand-bag, in which was her scantily furnished purse, she passed into the salon, where she spoke to the femme de chambre, as the woman had said; down the broad staircase, which blue-bloused Jacques, with brushes strapped on to his feet, was busily engaged in bees-waxing and polishing; and so into the street.

Early as yet, the closed houses presenting a somewhat wall-eyed appearance,

though the late autumnal sunshine is beginning to wake and struggle into existence, touching here and there the green shutters, the gilt and brazen images, ensigns of the various crafts pendant over their shops; the square bit of carpet, which, preparatory to shaking, Jeanne, the bonne, has hung from the balcony, or the gaily-striped curtains which she has pushed through the widely opened window, and which are fluttering in the sea breeze. More life now in the streets; a band of female scavengers, old women with clinging, skimpy garments, and handkerchiefs tightly bound round their heads, feebly wielding their brooms and volubly chattering over their work; a tilt waggon, and a tumbril drawn by white and roan Norman horses, with their blue sheepskin collars and red tassels, and their cheery driver yelling comic execrations at them from his position on the shafts; a few soldiers dotted here and there, with their red trousers standing out in contrast against the picturesqe costume of the Artois peasant-women coming into the market, and audible above all the hubbub, the shrill whistling of the engine at the station, and the dull roar of the complaining sea.

When Anne reached the station, she found a very different scene from what she had witnessed on her arrival the night before: hurry and bustle there was none; the excited mail passengers had been whirled away in the early morning, and no more of them were expected until the afternoon; a train was going to start—a local train—having its final destination at Amiens, and calling at all stations en route. Amiens was a quiet place, she supposed—one which the majority of travellers did not think of stopping at, and which would, therefore, be suitable for her purpose for a few days. Not without much trepidation did she venture to take her ticket, and then ensconced herself in a corner of the waiting-room, anxiously eyeing her intending fellow-passengers. They were, however, nearly all French, of the artisan or peasant class, but so accustomed to the presence of English as to take no notice of her shrinking figure.

At Amiens, Anne found a clean, cheery, and cheap room at the Hotel du Rhin, standing in the midst of a little garden near the station, which she thought must be beautiful in summer time, and which, even then, with its chrysanthemums and evergreens, was a relief from the inter-

minable poplar-bordered chaussées, and where she was looked after by the kind-hearted Alsatian landlady, who pitied and sympathised with her evident sorrows without prying into their cause. By the advice of this good woman, Anne went, soon after her arrival, to visit the cathedral, and, when once she had made acquaintance with the solemn stillness of the long-drawn aisles and the beauty of the richly-decorated portals, the best portion of her days was passed among them as, in a kind of dream, she saw the services going on before her; caught vivid glimpses of the interior of the chapel; saw gleams of rich colour, and listened to the grand, sonorous tones of the organ swelling out suddenly, and dying away with melancholy cadence. Anne Studley had not been brought up as a Catholic—the good old ladies of Hampstead would have fainted at the idea of any of their pupils subscribing to any of the tenets of that faith—but she was in a sore strait just then, a great longing for the peace of God and for the Divine counsel was upon her; and before the great figure of the Saviour, the “*Beau Dieu d’Amiens*,” before which so many thousand heads and knees have been bowed, she poured forth her supplications and her plaint.

That night—Anne has always declared it was in answer to her prayer—there suddenly came back to her the recollection of her conversation with Grace, in which they had decided upon the advertisement in the Times, and agreed upon the catch-word. Brightly and clearly it all stood out before her, and as she thought it over, the dawn of hope arose within her stricken and benumbed soul, and she felt that she was no longer friendless and forsaken. Now that she had the power of making the appeal to Grace, it seemed to her as though it were already responded to, so convinced was she of her friend’s loyalty and fidelity. She knew that she was justified in sounding the tocsin for aid, and had no doubt of the result.

Next day the advertisement was prepared—she obtained the address of the Hotel de Lille, in Paris, from her hostess, who had served her apprenticeship to the craft there, and was still in correspondence with its owners—but then came the difficulty of forwarding it, and procuring its insertion in the great journal. With the exception of the Misses Griggs, Anne knew of no one in London in whom she could confide, and the old ladies,

though they were well and kindly disposed to her, would be frightened to act in any matter which was not absolutely plain and straightforward, and would at once scent danger and impropriety in so apparently suspicious a missive. At last Anne bethought her of a woman who in the early days of her residence had been a servant at Chapone House, but who had married well, and still retained the affection, with which kindness shown to her during an illness, had induced her to regard the two friends. To this woman Anne wrote, imploring her for the love of Heaven to do her bidding, without enquiry, and without delay, and then having despatched her letter and its enclosure, she determined on making her way to Paris, and there awaiting the result. Accordingly the next day she took farewell of her kind hostess of the Hotel du Rhin, and started once more on her journey. She had to wait some time at the station, for the tidal train from Paris en route for Boulogne was stopping there, and the passengers were crowding the restaurant and promenading the platform. As Anne was gazing at them through the glazed doors of the waiting-room, a familiar form attracted her eye, and she suddenly and swiftly drew back and remained hidden behind the little throng until the train had started. Captain Studley, for it was he who had caused her fright, had no notion of his proximity to his daughter. He was smoking a cigarette at the door of the carriage devoted to ladies, and apparently making himself very agreeable to one of its inmates; and when Anne was sufficiently tranquil to reason with herself, she had the satisfaction of knowing that there was no chance of meeting her father in the city to which she was being rapidly conveyed.

Late that night, she arrived at the Rue du Nord; the bustle, the lights, the shouting of the porters, the hurried inquiries in a foreign language were sufficiently embarrassing; but, at last, she obtained a fiacre, and, with her bag containing the few purchases she had made while at Amiens, was driven to the Hotel de Lille. But even at that well-conducted establishment chaos seemed to reign. Anne inquired for a letter addressed to herself, but was informed that none had arrived. In great tribulation she was turning away, when the landlady told her they had an English lady in the house who was very

ill; and while she was speaking a femme de chambre came running downstairs, and to all Anne's hurried questions she could get from the girl no answer but the words, "Elle se meurt! elle est à l'agonie!"

THE ART OF MAKING-UP.

WHEN, to heighten the effect of their theatrical exhibitions, Thespis and his playfellows first daubed their faces with the lees of wine, they may be said to have initiated that art of "making-up" which has been of such important service to the stage. Paint is to the actor's face what costume is to his body—a means of decoration or disguise, as the case may require; an aid to his assuming this or that character, and concealing the while his own personal identity from the spectator. The mask of the classical theatre is only to be associated with a "make-up," in that it substituted a fictitious facial expression for the actor's own. Roscius is said to have always played in a vizard, on account of a disfiguring obliquity of vision with which he was afflicted. It was as an especial tribute to his histrionic merits that the Romans, disregarding this defect, required him to relinquish his mask, that they might the better appreciate his exquisite oratory and delight in the music of his voice. In much later years, however, "obliquity of vision" has been found to be no obstacle to success upon the stage. A dramatic critic, writing in 1825, noted it as a strange fact that "our three light comedians, Elliston, Jones, and Browne" each suffered from "what is called a cast in the eye."

To young and inexperienced players a make-up is precious, in that it has a fortifying effect upon their courage, and relieves them in some degree of consciousness of their own personality. They are the better enabled to forget themselves, seeing that their identity can hardly be present to the minds of others. Garrick made his first histrionic essay as Aboan, in the play of Oroonoko, "a part in which his features could not easily be discerned: under the disguise of a black countenance he hoped to escape being known, should it be his misfortune not to please." When Bottom the Weaver is allotted the part of Pyramus, intense anxiety, touching his make-up, is an early sentiment with him. "What beard were I best to play it in?" he inquires. "I will discharge it in either

your straw-coloured beard, your orangetawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow." Clearly the beard was an important part of the make-up at this time. Further on, Bottom counsels his brother clowns: "Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps;" and thereto are especial injunctions to the effect that Thisbe shall be provided with clean linen, that the lion shall pare his nails, and that there shall be abstinence from onions and garlic on the part of the company generally.

Old John Downes, who was prompter at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields from 1662 to 1706, and whose *Roscins Anglicanus* is a most valuable history of the stage of the Restoration, describes an actor, named Johnson, as being especially "skilful in the art of painting, which is a great adjument [sic] very promovent to the art of elocution." Mr. Waldron, who, in 1789, produced a new edition of the *Roscins Anglicanus*, with notes by Tom Davies, the biographer of Garrick, decides that Downes's mention of the "art of painting" has reference to the art of "painting the face and marking it with dark lines to imitate the wrinkles of old age." This, Waldron continues, "was formerly carried to excess on the stage, though now a good deal disnsed. I have seen actors, who were really older than the characters they were to represent, mark their faces with black lines of Indian ink to such a degree that they appeared as if looking through a mask of wire." And Mr. Waldron finds occasion to add that "Mr. Garrick's skill in the necessary preparation of his face for the aged and venerable Lear, and for Lusignan, was as remarkable as his performance of those characters was admirable."

In 1741 was published an Historical and Critical Account of the Theatres in Europe, a translation of a work by "the famous Lewis Riccoboni of the Italian Theatre at Paris." The author had visited England in 1727, apparently, when he had conversed with the great Mr. Congreve, finding in him "taste joined with great learning," and studied with some particularity the condition of the English stage. "As to the actors," he writes, "if, after forty-five years' experience I may be entitled to give my opinion, I dare advance that the best actors in Italy and France come far short of those in England." And he devotes some space to a description of a perform-

anco ho witnessed at the Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, dwelling especially upon the skill of an actor who personated an old man. "He who acted the old man executed it to the nicest perfection which one could expect in no player who had not forty years' experience. . . . I made no manner of doubt of his being an old comedian, who, instructed by long experience, and, at the same time, assisted by the weight of years, had performed it so naturally. But how great was my surprise when I learned that he was a young man of about twenty-six! I could not believe it; but I owned that it might be possible had he only used a trembling and broken voice and had only an extreme weakness possessed his body, because I conceived it possible for a young actor, by the help of art, to imitate that debility of nature to such a pitch of exactness; but the wrinkles of his face, his sunken eyes, and his loose and yellow cheeks, the most certain marks of a great old age, were incontestable proofs against what they said to me. Notwithstanding all this I was forced to submit to truth, because I know for certain that the actor, to fit himself for the part of the old man, spent an hour in dressing himself, and that, with the assistance of several pencils, he disguised his face so nicely and painted so artificially a part of his eyebrows and eyelids, that, at the distance of six paces, it was impossible not to be deceived. I was desirous to be a witness of this myself, but pride hindered me; so, knowing I must be ashamed, I was satisfied with a confirmation of it from other actors. Mademoiselle Salle, among others, who then shone upon that stage, confessed to me that the first time she saw him perform she durst not go into a passage where he was, fearing lest she should throw him down should she happen to touch him in passing by." Assuredly a more successful make-up than this could not be desired. In conclusion, Signor Riccoboni flatters himself that his reference to this matter may not be thought altogether useless; "it may let us know to what an exactness the English comedians carry the imitation of nature, and may serve for a proof of all that I have advanced of the actors of the English theatre."

Dogget, the old comedian of Queen Anne's time—to whom we owe an annual boat race upon the Thames for a "coat and badge," and, inferentially, the popular burletta of *The Waterman*—was remarkably skilful, according to Colley Cibber,

"in dressing a character to the greatest exactness . . . the least article of whatever habit he wore seemed to speak and mark the different humour he represented: a necessary care in a comedian, in which many have been too remiss or ignorant." This is confirmed by another critic, who states that Dogget "could with the greatest exactness paint his face so as to represent the ages of seventy, eighty, and ninety, distinctly, which occasioned Sir Godfrey Kneller to tell him one day at Button's Coffee House, that 'he excelled him in painting, for that he could only paint from the originals before him, but that he (Dogget) could vary them at pleasure, and yet keep a close likeness.'" In the character of Moneytrap, the miser in Vanbrugh's comedy of *The Confederacy*, Dogget is described as wearing "an old threadbare black coat, to which he had put new cuffs, pocket-lids and buttons, on purpose to make its rustiness more conspicuous. The neck was stuffed so as to make him appear round-shouldered, and gave his head the greater prominence; his square-toed shoes were large enough to buckle over those he wore in common, which made his legs appear much smaller than usual." Altogether, Mr. Dogget's make-up appears to have been of a very thorough and artistic kind.

Garrick's skill "in preparing his face," has been already referred to, upon the authority of Mr. Waldron. From the numerous pictures of the great actor, and the accounts of his histrionic method furnished by his contemporaries, it would seem, however, as though he relied less upon the application of paint than upon his extraordinary command of facial expression. At a moment's notice he completely varied his aspect, "conveying into his face every possible kind of passion, blending one into another, and as it were shadowing them with an infinite number of gradations. . . . In short," says Dibdin, "his face was what he obliged you to fancy it: age, youth, plenty, poverty, everything it assumed." Certainly an engraved portrait of Garrick as Lear, published in 1761, does not suggest his deriving much help from the arts of making-up or of costume. He wears a short robe of velvet, trimmed with ermine, his white wig is disordered and his shirt front is much crumpled; but otherwise his white silk hose, lace ruffles, high-heeled shoes and diamond buckles, are more appropriate to Sir Peter Teazle than to King

Lear. And as much may be said of his closely shaven face, the smooth surface of which is not disturbed by the least vestige of a beard. Yet the King Lear of later times have been all beard, or very nearly so. With regard to Garrick's appearance in the part of Lusignan, Davies relates how, two days before his death, the suffering actor, very wan and sallow of countenance, slow and solemn of movement, was seen to wear "a rich night-gown, like that which he always wore in Lusignan, the venerable old king of Jerusalem; he presented himself to the imagination of his friend as if he was just ready to act that character."

Charles Mathews, the elder, no doubt possessed much of Garrick's power of changing at will his facial aspect. At the theatre of course he resorted to the usual methods of making-up for the part he played; but the sudden transformations of which his *At Homes* largely consisted were accomplished too rapidly to be much assisted by pencilling the face, as were indeed the feats he sometimes accomplished in private circles, for the entertainment of his friends. In the Biography of her husband, Mrs. Mathews relates how his advice was once sought by Godwin the novelist, just before the publication of his story of *Cloudesly*, on a matter—the art of making-up—the actor was held to have made peculiarly his own. Godwin wrote to him:—"My dear Sir—I am at this moment engaged in writing a work of fiction, a part of the incidents of which will consist in escapes in disguises. It has forcibly struck me that if I could be indulged in the pleasure of half an hour's conversation with you on the subject, it would furnish me with some hints, which, beaten on the anvil of my brain, would be of eminent service to me on the occasion," &c. A meeting was appointed, and at an early date the author dined at the actor's cottage. Godwin, anxious not to outrage probability in his story, sought information as to "the power of destroying personal identity." Mathews assumed several disguises, and fully satisfied his visitor upon the point in question. "Soon after," writes Mrs. Mathews, "a gentleman, an eccentric neighbour of ours, broke in upon us as Mr. Godwin was expressing his wonder at the variety of expression, character and voice, of which Mr. Mathews was capable. We were embarrassed, and Mr. Godwin evidently vexed at the intruder. However, there was no help for

it; the servant had admitted him, and he was introduced in form to Mr. Godwin. The moment Mr. Jenkins (for such was his name) discovered the distinguished person he had so luckily for him dropped in upon, he was enthusiastically pleased at the event, talked to Mr. Godwin about all his works, inquired about the forthcoming book—in fact, bored him through and through. At last the author turned to my husband for refuge against this assault of admiration, and discovered that his host had left the room. He therefore rose from his seat and approached the window leading to the lawn. Mr. Jenkins officiously following, and insisting upon opening it for him, and while he was urging a provokingly obstinate lock, the object of his devoted attention waited behind him for release. The casement at length flew open, and Mr. Godwin passing the gentleman with a courteous look of thanks, found to his astonishment that Mr. Jenkins had disappeared, and that Mr. Mathews stood in his place!" Students of Clondesley may discover therein the result of Godwin's interview with Mathews, and their discussion concerning the art of making-up and disguise.

Some fifty years ago Mr. Leman Thomas Rede published *The Road to the Stage*, a Player's *Vade Mecum*, setting forth, among other matters, various details of the dressing-rooms behind the curtain. Complaint was made at the time that the work destroyed "the romance of the profession," and laid bare mysteries of the actor's life, such as the world in general had small concern with. But Mr. Rede's revelations do not tell very much; at any rate, the secrets he deals with have come to be things of common knowledge. Nor are his instructions upon the art of making-up to be accounted highly in these times. "Light comedy calves," he tells us, "are made of ragged silken hose;" and what may be called "Othello's blacking," is to be composed of "burnt cork, pulverised and mixed with porter." Legs coming before the footlights must of course be improved by mechanical means, when nature has been unkind, or time has destroyed symmetry; but art has probably discovered a better method of concealing deficiencies than consists in the employment of "ragged silken hose." The veteran light comedian, Lewis, who at very advanced age appeared in juvenile characters, to the complete satisfaction of his audience, was famed for his skill in costume, and making-

up. But one night a roguish actress, while posted near him in the side wings, employed herself in converting one of his calves into a pincushion. As soon as he discovered the trick, he affected to feel great pain, and drew up his leg as though in an agony; but he had remained too long unconscious of the proceeding to persuade lookers-on of the genuineness of his limb's symmetry. With regard to Othello's complexion, there is what the Cookery Books call "another way." Chetwood in his *History of the Stage*, 1749, writes, "the composition for blackening the face are (sic) ivory black and pomatum; which is with some pains cleaned with fresh butter." The information is given in reference to a performance of *Othello*, by the great actor Burton Booth. It was hot weather, and his complexion in the later scenes of the play had been so disturbed, that he had assumed "the appearance of a chimney sweeper." The audience, however, were so impressed by the art of his acting, that they disregarded this mischance, or applauded him the more on account of it. On the repetition of the play he wore a crape mask, "with an opening proper for the mouth, and shaped in form for the nose." But in the first scene one part of the mask slipped so that he looked "like a magpie." Thereupon he was compelled to resort again to lamp-black. The early Othellos, it may be noted, were of a jet-black hue, such as we now find on the faces of Christy Minstrels; the Moors of later times have been content to paint themselves a dark olive or light mahogany colour. But a liability to soil all they touch has always been the misfortune of Othellos. There was great laughter in the theatre one night when Stephen Kemble, playing Othello for the first time with Miss Satchell as Desdemona, kissed her before smothering her, and left an ugly patch of soot upon her cheek.

Another misadventure, in regard to the complexion of Shakespeare's Moor, has been related of an esteemed actor, now and for many years past attached to the Haymarket Theatre. While but a tyro in his profession, he had undertaken to appear as Othello, for one night only, at the Gravesend Theatre. But, not being acquainted with the accustomed method of blackening his skin, and being too nervous and timid to make inquiry on the subject, he applied to his face a burnt cork, simply. At the conclusion of the performance, on

seeking to resume his natural hue, by the ordinary process of washing in soap and water, he found, to his great dismay, that the skin of his face was peeling off rather than the colour disappearing! The cork had been too hot by a great deal, and had injured his cuticle considerably. With the utmost haste, although announced to play Hamlet on the following evening, the actor—who then styled himself Mr. Hul-singham, a name he forthwith abandoned—hired a post-chaise and eloped from Gravesend.

Making-up is in requisition when the performer desires to look either younger or older than he or she really is. It is, of course, with the first-named portion of the art that actresses are chiefly concerned, although the beautiful Mrs. Woffington, accepting the character of Veturia in Thomson's Coriolanus, did not hesitate to assume the aspect of age, and to paint lines and wrinkles upon her fair face. But she was a great artist, and her loveliness was a thing so beyond all question that she could afford to disguise it or to seem to slight it for a few nights; possibly it shone the brighter afterwards for its brief eclipse. Otherwise, making-up pertains to an actor's "line of business," and is not separable from it. Once young or once old he so remains, as a rule, until the close of his professional career. There is indeed a story told of a veteran actor who still flourished in juvenile characters, while his son, as a matter of choice or of necessity, invariably impersonated the old gentlemen of the stage. But when the two players met in a representation of the Rivals, and Sir Anthony, the son, had to address Captain Absolute, the father, the humour of the situation appealed too strongly to the audience, and more laughter than Sheridan had ever contemplated was stirred by the scene.

The veterans who have been accused of superfluously lagging upon the stage, find an excuse for their presence in the skill of their make-up. For the age of the players is not to be counted by the almanack, but appraised in accordance with their looks. On the scene to seem young is to be young, though occasionally it must happen that actors and audience are not quite in agreement upon this question of aspect. There have been many youthful dramatic heroines very well stricken in years; ingénues of advanced age, and columbines who might almost be crones; to say nothing of "young dogs" of light comedians, who, in

private life, are well qualified to appear as grandsires, or even as great grandfathers. But ingenuity in painting the face and padding the figure will probably long secure toleration for patriarchal Romeos, and even for matriarchal Juliets.

Recent discoveries have no doubt benefited the toilets of the players, which, indeed, stood in need of assistance, the fierce illumination of the modern stage being considered. In those palmy but dark days of the drama, when gas and lime-lights were not, the disguising of the mischief wrought by time must have been a comparatively easy task.

However, supply as usual has followed demand, and there are now traders dealing specially in the materials for making-up, in theatrical cosmetics of the best possible kind at the lowest possible prices: "superfine rouge, rose for lips, blanc (liquid and in powder), pencils for eyebrows, creme de l'Imperatrice and Fleur de riz for softening the skin, &c." Further, there are the hairdressers, who provide theatrical wigs of all kinds, and advertise the merits of their "old men's bald pates," which must seem a strange article of sale to those unversed in the mysteries of stage dressing-rooms. One inventive person, it may be noted, loudly proclaims the merits of a certain "spirit gum" he has concocted, using which, as he alleges, "no actor need fear swallowing his moustache"—so runs the form of his advertisement.

Of Mademoiselle Guimard, the famous French opera-dancer, it is related, that her portrait, painted in her early youth, always rested upon her dressing-table. Every morning, during many years, she carefully made up her face to bring her looks in as close accord as possible with the loveliness of her picture. For an incredible time her success is reported to have been something marvellous. But at last the conviction was forced upon her that her facial glories had departed. Yet her figure was still perfectly symmetrical, her grace and agility were as supreme as they had ever been. She was sixty-four, when, yielding to the urgent entreaties of her friends, she consented to give a "very last" exhibition of her art. The performance was of a most special kind. The curtain was so far lowered as to conceal completely the head and shoulders of the dancer. "Il fut impossible aux spectateurs," writes a biographer of the lady, "de voir autre que le travail de ses jambes dont le temps avait respecté l'agilité et les formes pures et délicates!"

By way of final word on the subject, it may be stated that making-up is but a small portion of the histrionic art; and not, as some would have it, the very be-all and end-all of acting. It is impossible not to admire the ingenuity of modern face-painting upon the stage, and the skill with which, in some cases, well-known personages have been represented by actors of, in truth, totally different physical aspect; but still there seems a likelihood of efforts of this kind being urged beyond reasonable bounds. So, too, there appears to be an excessive use of cosmetics and colouring by youthful performers, who really need little aid of this kind, beyond that application of the hare's-foot which can never be altogether dispensed with. Moreover, it has become necessary for players, who have resolved that their faces shall be pictures, to decide from what part of the theatre such works of art are to be viewed. At present many of these over-painted countenances may "fall into shape," as artists say, when seen from the back benches of the gallery, for instance; but judged from a nearer standpoint they are really but pictorial efforts of a crude, uncomfortable, and mistaken kind.

A LEGEND OF THE RED SEA.

HALF starved the fisher Abib stands,
Upon the Red Sea's lonely sands,
And beats his breast with bleeding hands.

The coral reef has torn his net,
That nightily has in vain been set;
His flimsy boat is leaky wet.

The sun has pierced him thrust by thrust,
His hooks the night dew blunt and rust;
In Allah Abib has no trust.

He snaps his ears upon his knee,
Cursing the neighbouring tamarind tree
That shed its fruit so lavishly.

He turns, and lo, a bright star fell
From where the happy Hours dwell
(What men think Heaven is often Hell).

It falls, and as it touches earth,
It breaks to fiery dust—with mirth
Of unseen goblins comes the birth.

An Afrit, insolent and proud,
Hall fire, bat fire half veiled in cloud,
Arises—Abib shrieks aloud.

"Thou foolish child of clay," it said,
"Mourn not for Deity that's dead,
I too am god where'er I tread."

"Your other god is but a thing
Born of a madman's dream—a king?
A god without brain, hand, or wing.

"In vain this paing; there is gold,
More than thy crazy bark can hold,
In this dull sea; be prond and bold.

"Fools only kneel; up on thy feet,
The world beneath them scornful beat;
P'wer to the strong and wise is sweet.

"Let down thy net before the sun,
His circle of the day has run,
Thy insct life is but begun.
"A mist arises from the sea,
My simoom horse has come for me;
Curse Allah and be rich and free."

* * * * *

When Hassan rises from his trance,
The moonbeams on the waters dance,
The slow tides inciting break and glance.
Without a prayer his net he threw,
The quick cast in a circle flew,
Then settled slowly sure and true.
He drags, and lo! a teiling weight,
A burden poulderous and great,
The glimmer of a golden freight.
A dead man's hair mats all the rings,
A golden garment laps and clings—
A blazing crown with jewel wings.
A frown is on the dead man's face,
His lips are pressed in stern grimace,
His hand is on his arrow case.
Mark on his signet's jewellcry,
"Phareah, the son of Isis, he
Who rules both Egypt's, kneel to me."
Now Abib to his home returns,
The signet in his turban burns—
See! this is what God's chosen ears.
They crown him lord of every feast,
With cruel jests he spurns the priest,
Though hurrying to the Holy East.
The genii's blessing is a curse,
From bad glides Abib on to worse,
His greedy guests soon drain his purse.
A cohort comes and fires the town;
And Abib, with his head hung down,
Upon a cress wears Egypt's crown.

A GREAT PARISIAN RESTAURANT.

Who that knows Paris is unacquainted with the Café Riche? Even though circumstances of a private nature, which delicacy forbids us to discuss, may have prevented him from entering its doors, he will certainly recollect the long white façade, fringed with a row of tables and iron chairs, where luckier mortals seek an appetite in absinthe, or a digestive in coffee and cognac. Eating-houses of renown there are by the dozen in Paris, but none like the Café Riche. Across the Boulevard, almost opposite, stands the Anglais, always quiet, mysterious, veiled with long muslin curtains. Below, at the corner of the Chausée d'Antin, is the Foy, through whose narrow windows and open door one steals a glimpse of white and gold, long mirrors in every niche, divans of red velvet, and the heaviest of Russian "swells" seated theron. The Anglais, ever discreet, encourages no loitering about its doors. The Foy has but a single line of chairs along its Boulevard front. These people know best their own

clientèle, and the proof of their judgment is that the dozen seats before the Foy are all too many for the occupants; whilst at the Riche you may prowl for ten minutes before you find sitting room in the long double row. I am inclined to think, indeed, that M. Bignon ainé is a benefactor to his neighbourhood. Fashion is ever on the move. That Palais Royal which, when we first knew Paris, was the very centre of delights, the quarter where one must live if professing to be anybody, is now a desert. The Boulevards and the Grand Hotel have cleared it. If the mad world of gaiety could but take with it the Café Riche, I believe it would move further still, towards the Champs Elysées.

What a sight that is one can behold, sipping one's absinthe at the corner of the Rue Lepelletier! I am not given to the joys of meditation. Few scenes in the world's show can entice me to look on, a passive spectator, for many minutes; but this is one of them. I grant you that a fine day will bring men more famous and more powerful, women more beautiful, past your window in Piccadilly; that your morning paper, which, like the queen's drum-tap, encircles the world betwixt sunset and dawn, has here no parallel. Life is not so absorbing of interest in any way, but it is brighter, and what interest it has is more concentrated. They show you ministers and generals of every nation in Pall Mall, and merchants whose names are good for millions, and barristers of renown, and manufacturers whose trademark is in honour over all the world. But somehow one can't feel such an interest in these people as in those who pass before the Café Riche. Observe that white-haired, grey-bearded gentleman with two big boys, who laugh out loud at the tale he is telling them. The young journalists beside me recognise, and repeat the clever snub he lately passed upon some financiers who wished to make money, sideways, out of his last play. Whilst everyone is talking of the Tour du Monde, at the Porte Saint Martin Theatre, few recollect that M. Verne was once a clerk of the Stock Exchange, who wrote fantastic novels and plays unaccepted, after his day's work was done. But some members of the Stock Exchange recollect, and when his famous play was taken at the Porte Saint Martin, they waited on the former clerk and offered him a sum unknown, only to set one tableau of his journey round the earth in the land which they were "finan-

cing." In reply, M. Verne—so these journalists tell me—produced a placard of the theatre. "Gentlemen," he said, "what you ask is nothing less than to change the title of my piece. It has been advertised as the *Tour du Monde*; you would wish me to make of it a *Tour au Monde*." A witticism not to be translated in perfection, but we get near the spirit of it in transforming a "Trip to take in the world," into a "Trick to take in the world."

Before one has finished that silent applause with which a "good thing" is greeted in company, arrives a small, grave man, heavily spectacled and moustached, who seats himself with an air of suspicion, orders absinthe confidentially, as though some enemy lurked near with poison, glances to right and left, and sits bolt upright, resolved to give no excuse for a quarrel. The journalists amaze me with his name. This is the man who wrote the frankest, sweetest of all operas bouffes! whom I had pictured the most candid of all composers living. They tell me he is resolved never to risk a première in Paris, where he was born; Brussels, or London, or New York he will trust, but never Paris, for there every man is his personal enemy, and neither he nor anyone else knows why. Who is that lady, veiled like a Sphinx, who has descended from her carriage fifty yards away, and comes spying gingerly amongst us? Be sure, my young friends know all about it: who she is, whom she wants, and what she wants of him—even why she is free tonight. Here is a slender old man, who looks tall, though he isn't. A few people lift their hats to him, and he replies with a quick salute: a face thoroughly Irish, though not of the prognathous-Hibernian cast. His narrow face and forehead, steel-bright eye, and mouth, not resolute but firm, mark him for the right-hand man of some great soldier. Marshal MacMahon it is, my friends tell me, with an evident impression that he treats his country with scant honour in promenading thus, unattended by fifty clattering dragoons. Looking at the marshal critically, I should say, from his appearance, that he is sadly waiting orders. As no one is there to give, no one, at least, whom his loyalty will accept, he makes of mere discipline his master, and serves it faithfully. Sitting at the Café Riche, one sees everybody in Paris. Not on the evening I noted events for this paper, but more than once, I have marked a shambling, powerful figure pass

by—a figure and a face to notice, if but for the pertinacity with which it looks straight on. The face, indeed, is not striking—a heavy, broad countenance, roughly bearded, and unprepossessing to approach. This is the ex-dictator. Those who know him not may take for mere self-containment that studied look ahead, beneath eyelids heavily drooping—and, possibly, they are right; but I recollect an interview with the dictator—no “*ex*” about his title then—which suggests to me another explanation. In the frankest manner he threatened to shoot me, if certain events occurred again, and, whilst doing so, he restlessly moved the papers on his desk, keeping his profile only in my sight. I ventured to argue the point; and then, throwing back the long hair which always droops over his face, M. Gambetta looked at me for an instant. Well, I confess, I don’t forget that look, though I had gone through many perils before, and many since that November morning four years ago. What we both said doesn’t matter much. I left the Prefecture with an excellent opinion of M. Gambetta; and I hope, if he remembers the event, the credit of English “specials” did not suffer in my hands. But when I see pass by the great man fallen, I can’t but think I know why he keeps his face averted. They say he mutilated himself because his father would not take him from a school he disliked.

But it is not such wandering memories as these which I purposed to tell, in beginning to write of the Café Riche. I wanted to show what a great French restaurant is, what capital it uses, what is the system which produces results that all Europe envies but cannot equal; for, with all honour to its rivals, the Foy and the Anglais—the first of these was founded by the owner of the Café Riche, and ceded by him to a younger brother—with all honour to these, they don’t come near the establishment of Bignon ainé. Very many of your readers have dined at his house, and have probably grumbled at the “addition.” I am not going to defend the bill, but I shall try to explain it: “A restaurateur,” says Brillat Savarin, “is a man whose business is to have a feast always ready for the public, of which the dishes can be split into portions at the request of the consumer.” Both the word and the business are barely a hundred years old. Even the traiteur, and the cabaretier who dealt in étables, are so modern that Louis

the Fourteenth was the first monarch who undertook the regulation of their affairs. The traiteur was then forbidden to supply his clients with plates of meat; they must take the joint or nothing. The cabaretier, before Louis the Fourteenth’s legislation, could serve people standing outside his half-door, and was bound to turn the vessel publicly upside down when it was returned to him empty—for what reason former sovereigns only know. The Grand Monarque allowed cabaretiers to supply food and drink at their option and convenience, but taxed them unmercifully. These people, however, made both ends meet, and something over, during the pious period of Louis the Fourteenth’s reign. But when he died, and every man was free to feast in his own house, the cabaretiers came to a sudden and violent bankruptcy. In 1770 their business again entered into repute, as I have said, under another title. But we first hear of the Café Riche fifteen years after, in 1785, when Louis the Sixteenth demolished the old walls of Paris, and threw open the Boulevard des Italiens. Some worthy citizen, of name unknown, immediately built a restaurant upon the site of the fortifications. In fact, two worthy citizens rivalled each other in enterprise, for whilst the Café Riche took up its station on the very spot it still occupies, the Café Hardi arose beside it; but on which side is curiously doubtful even now. When our grandfathers rendezvoused in Paris, under circumstances which it is not necessary to recall, the Café Riche and the Café Hardi were favourite haunts with them—or, rather, with such of them as happened to have plenty of money. There was a proverb about them which translates into English without loss. “Rich must he be who dines at the Café Hardi, and hardy must he be who dines at the Café Riche.” The former of these, its very name indeed, vanished in 1830, and the Riche fell gradually in reputation from that period till 1858, when it was bought by M. Bignon. He had given up the Foy nine years before, and in the interim had bought farms and vineyards. Like a good general, he was resolved to have a sound basis for operations before attempting his great campaign. Bringing to bear the results of science and of English practice upon perhaps the worst cultivated land in France, he has gradually gained such fame and success as have transformed the wild Bourbonnais into a model district. Honours, home and

foreign, have been showered on him, and the owner of the *Café Riche* is now more decorated than most generals.

But this by the way. In 1858, the building we know so well scarcely ranked higher than a third-class eating-house. Where the chairs stand was a small garden, from which steps led to the house. The new proprietor's first care was to add a floor, not on the top, but on the bottom. He employed a great architect, the same who built the Vendôme column, and they suspended the house bodily on great beams, raising it several feet. All the area was then cellared, and model offices sunk underground; this work complete, they rebuilt the ground floor and united it to the airy structure overhead. No expense was spared in these constructions. I find, for instance, that the kitchen floor is thus composed: on two feet thick of puddled earth rests a stratum of bricks, then a stratum of rolled charcoal, and, finally, a composition of lime, sand, and hot cinders, all beaten and ground together. After a polishing with pumice stone this floor is black and smooth. It absorbs as much moisture as you can throw on it, yet becomes dry again in very few minutes. This is the only *café* I know where smoking is forbidden in all the offices—never any one had courage to "try it on" at the *Riche*.

The house completed and furnished throughout, at a cost of near thirty thousand pounds, it remained to establish the personnel. Of course, a perfect batterie de cuisine was indispensable. English people, and French too, speak of a batterie de cuisine as though it related to pots and pans. This is quite an error, as I learn upon the highest authority. The cooks are the batterie, which to be perfect must count twelve persons, besides assistants. Thus—one chef, the master of the kitchen. One chef saucier, whose business is sauce. One chef rotisseur, who attends to roasting. One chef entremetier, who looks after the entremets. One chef du garde manger, whose care is the meat, cooked and uncooked, the cold dishes, &c., and so on through all the more important departments.

Salaries, of course, will vary, but I suppose those paid to-day may be taken to represent the average. The chef then, receives six thousand francs a year, say two hundred and forty pounds; each of the sous chefs two thousand four hundred francs, say ninety-six pounds. Every one

of these five officers has his special assistant, who earn one thousand two hundred francs apiece; except the aide of the chef garde manger, who gets about one thousand francs. The eleventh person of the batterie is the glacier, to make ices, at three thousand francs. And the twelfth, the fournier, at three thousand francs also, makes coffee. None of these officers receives any perquisites, and their salaries seem moderate enough. But we must remember that an education in the *Café Riche* is itself a fortune. Graduates of this school carry their diploma over all the world, earning honour and money everywhere. The personnel of the kitchen is completed by two officiers attached to the ice and coffee stalls, at one thousand two hundred francs apiece, and two garçons de cuisine, who do the dirty work. These latter have no wages to speak of, but they claim all débris and broken meats, which give them a profit troublesome to collect, but rising to five or six thousand francs a year. Besides all these, in the nether regions, dwell knife and plate cleaners, the coutelier, the argentier, the bûnnisseur, and three officiers. The six are all paid alike, one thousand francs a year. In the cellars is a chef sommelier, and three assistants, whose salary I have not been able to ascertain.

The personnel du service, that is, of the upper regions, consists of a first and second maître d'hôtel, at six thousand francs each, and a third at half that sum. Twenty waiters, or thereabouts, attend your pleasure. They are paid by those coppers which visitors leave on the plate—one year with another this sum may amount to eighty thousand francs, say one hundred and sixty pounds apiece. They have, I believe, some small perquisites besides. The cases are very numerous in which garçons de café make a fortune, but the greater part of them have not such habits of economy as other working men of Paris. The life is very hard, much more so than that of their English comrades. There is no closing act in France, and, if you ask a waiter in one of these fashionable establishments what hour will end his service, he cannot tell you. It is indeed to be noticed here that all those who minister to the pomps and vanities of life in France, work three times harder than Englishmen, for considerably less pay.

To enumerate all the personnel of a grand restaurant, it remains only to

mention the four Dames du Comptoir, who relieve each other upon a dais more or less gilded, and greet the new-comer with a stare and a bow, more or less reserved. They earn from one thousand five hundred francs to two thousand five hundred francs. And there are two cashiers, receiving one thousand two hundred francs each. Every person employed in the establishment is allowed his or her food.

The working capital of a restaurant like that I am describing may be put at eight hundred thousand francs to a million—thirty thousand to forty thousand pounds. The rent, on the Boulevards, will amount to eighty thousand francs—three thousand four hundred pounds a year. Cost of installation, furniture, and the purchase of such necessary wines as must be on hand in quantities, will reach thirty thousand pounds. The grave, white-haired chef of the cellar can show you some curiosities at the Café Riche which dukes might envy. Red wines of the Côte d'Or, dated 1811, and so well cared for that never a complaint of corkage has been raised; Sauternes of 1819, that fabulous vintage; a Romanée of 1842, bought at the sale of M. Allain, and famed the world over; an absolutely complete collection of Burgundies, dated 1858, the finest crns on record. As to the foreign wines, Steinberg, Johannisberg, Tokay, all guaranteed by a princely signature, the growers themselves would too gladly buy them back at the retail price. Remark that group of Sicilian wines, 1820 vintage; and that Madeira, of whose age the old butler confesses himself ignorant. In the London Exhibition of 1862, and of Paris in '67, a sample of this cellar distanced all competitors. Mounting from that case of treasures, it is droll to see the owner of them dining soberly on plain roast beef in a corner, and drinking a modest pint of old Medoc, value eighteen pence.

It appears, then, that the capital invested in an enterprise of this sort comes to a very large amount, and that a first-rate restaurant in Paris must be considered a very serious enterprise. If Englishmen put such a sum into their business, mightn't they obtain results somewhat more creditable than those we grumble at? M. Biganon, however, has special advantages in that base of operations I have alluded to, the properties to which he gave nine years of life to bring them into conjunction with his new restaurant. I don't at all hesitate

to declare that beef like his, the plain joint, cannot be found in England; in France, of course, it is a miracle. He grows it himself. So does he the fruit consumed, a large part of the vegetables, and a large part also of the common wines. What must be bought also, he buys himself, visiting the market every day, and the vineyards each year at proper seasons. Expenses of this sort amount to twenty-eight thousand pounds a year, or thereabouts.

Let us now go down into the kitchen; the salons above are too well known to need description. At foot of a very black winding staircase lies the garde manger, where the grand chef receives his visitors. Here, on a stone slab, fish are arranged as if for sale, and lobsters all alive, and game, and great joints of meat. Here, too, which is more interesting, one sees sauces in their solid state, and foie gras in process of confection, and terrines of game. It is a mistake to suppose that from Strasbourg now come the best of those pies which bear its name. All the houses in Paris which respect themselves make their own foie gras, to the great profit of humanity, if tales be true. I look with awe upon the mysteries of that famous sauce, the despair of rivals, which is named from the café itself. Accustomed only to see it liquid, curdling over filleted soles like a scarlet cream, I am rather astonished when they show me a solid substance in a pot, but slightly rosy. Just a taste of tomato, I learn, deepens its colour for the table. And how do they make it? Ah, there's the secret. With the slightest possible stare at my insular audacity, the chief rattles out a long farrago of technicalities, from which I can gather only that cray fish pounded, and cream in quarts, have something to do with its composition. Dropping this subject, I turn to another brown pot on the row, which appears to hold frozen lard. That, as they readily tell me, is Bechamel in its solid state. On the principle of taking information when you can get it, I note that this sauce is composed of purée de volaille, that is, of fowls simmered to a liquid state two litres, mixed with five litres of cream, and an indeterminate quantity of mushrooms and champagne. I gather that it takes ten fowls to make a litre of the purée. Think of that, and then order your Bechamel with a clear conscience if you can. Our chef is also a person of ingenuity. He displays vial on vial of summer vegetables, preserved absolutely without loss of flavour.

And he finishes by producing a whole leg of mutton, not pickled nor cooked, which, by his peculiar process, has been kept good for the last two months.

From the garde manger one passes round a corner—designed to keep out the heat—to the chef's peculiar domain. A fire such as that at which they roasted martyrs—*teste Foxe's* illustrations of the subject—burns in a monstrous grate. All these offices are far below the level of the soil, and absolutely no air penetrates, by window or grating, with the nether regions. But the atmosphere, though intensely hot, is not close. In front of the huge fire—huge even to one born in Staffordshire, and accustomed to grates holding a hundred-weight—in front of the huge fire turns a spit, of the same model as those we remember in college kitchens. The spit is moved by a current of air, descending beside the chimney, which pours some hundreds of square feet of frost into the room each minute. But not from the grate only comes heat. Your chef would be even more helpless than an English kitchen-maid, had he not his stove. In the middle of the room that stove is placed—a solid structure of brick, always red-hot with the charcoal in its stomach. I don't know how many places there are for the insertion of pots, pans, bains-maries, and fish kettles, but the stove is twelve feet long and six feet wide. At one end, in a copper tray, sauces simmer everlastingly. The chef makes boast that the essence of beef he uses for gravy and such purposes is four times stronger than the jelly we call Liebig. He tells me, and offers to prove by figures—as I did not tackle the figures I can form no judgment—but he tells me that for each pound of meat consumed up above, two pounds, taking sauces all round, are spent in the kitchens below. That's what you see stewing endlessly on the red-hot copper of the stove. With this information, gentlemen, take your pleasure at the Riche.

No more perfect kitchen could be built than this. Being altogether new, constructed upon principles in which the experience of cooks ancient and modern has been utilised, it could have no excuse for an imperfection. The floor I have described; the walls are tiled. Along one side runs a tank for fresh water fish, where carp and trout and crayfish await the moment of their destiny. I learn with interest that no fish born in Seine water, saving only gudgeon, are allowed

admittance to that tank. That there is something peculiar, something to affect delicate persons, in the water of the Seine is admitted by all doctors, but the chef tells me that he or any first-rate cook would starve on a crust rather than serve a funny habitant thereof. In the middle of our gossip, a maître d'hôtel interrupts. Two or three papers he gives to the chef, who takes them, reads, and affixes his initials. Then he draws a big knife, and with the haft of it taps the resounding cover of the stove. "Attention, Messieurs!" The sous-chefs all look up, and stand motionless;

"Potage à la fantaisie!"

A roar on the left, meant to signify "Entendu!" This from the entremetier, who looks after soups in his leisure.

"Poisson à la chose!"—Roar in centre from the chef saucier.

"Filet de pré salé à l'idéal!"—Roar in corner from the rotisseur.

And so on through a half-dozen dinners, with roaring appropriate to each case. "How do they remember?" I ask the chef, who is sticking the papers on a nail. "I don't know," he answers with the utmost frankness. The secret of the mystery lies in this, I think, that no drink is allowed in working hours. Ah, if our workmen would but submit to have their liquor stopped, how triumphantly would they vanquish rivals who ridicule whilst they fear them!

I confess that my respect for the chef suffered a little, when, examining the fish tank, he declared a fine tench to be a trout de rivière; yielding the point, however, he explained his ignorance by saying, "Ça, vous savez, l'est l'affaire du garde-manger!—Je n'ai pas la pretention de connaître les poisons de vne—Je démands une truite! On me la donne toute écaillée—mais ne croyez pas que c'était une carpe anparavant," with a big laugh. Thereupon we turn to the science of the "high kitchen," and I learn many facts, too many to transcribe here. It appears there is, in cookery, one grand mother sauce, the Française. From that grande mère spring five others, called the sances mères, the Espagnole, the Allemande, the Béchamel, the Velouté, and the mère Tomate; out of these five, aided, of course, by their grandmother, spring two thousand little ones, within the cognisance of my friend the chef. All of them, however, have a direct descent from the mothers, though it needs a practised

palate to tell from which exactly each of them has sprung. There is not any real connection betwixt the name of the sauce and its meaning. All are French purely, and all date from an antique period. Homard Américaine is not seen in America, any more than point lace d'Angleterre is manufactured in England. These are mere names to distinguish French productions.

It resulted to me, from my investigations in a great Parisian restaurant, that I have not since grumbled at my bill. After all, one may dine at the Riche itself twenty per cent. cheaper than at a decent English hotel, and the contrast between one and the other I should not dare to explain.

OUR RECREATIONS.

RECREATION, in the true sense of the word, is by no means so simple and easy of attainment as it may be deemed to be. To play well, as to work well, implies no inconsiderable amount of progress on the part of a nation. Savages, even under the most favourable conditions of soil and climate, have too little imagination to be apt at the contrivance or enjoyment of pastimes. There is, indeed, a wonderful sameness in the diversions of barbarous tribes, with whom a festival is almost uniformly a synonym for some magical incantation or religious ceremony. The tap of the Lapland drum and the mumming of the Lapland wizards are reproduced on the fever-haunted banks of the Congo, or among the wigwams of a Comanche camp. One set of grotesquely-dignised conjurors may wear the blue fur of the Arctic fox, another may masquerade in the skins of lions, and a third may muffle themselves in the shaggy hides of the bison, but the entertainment itself is sure to be nearly identical. There will be the monotonous music, the dull, ceaseless throbbing of the drum, the wailing of the reed-flutes, the hoarse roar of couch-shell or walrus-horn, the weird chant, the mystic dance. But all this is no more recreation than were the mysteries of Eleusis, or the rites of Juggernaut.

Recreations, properly so called, had little place in the social system of those ancient empires whose records of brick and stone supply us with such minute details of the national life. Hunting was the privilege and the pride of Assyrian monarchs, their satraps and chieftains, and to a less degree of the warlike aristocracy of Egypt; but

the pursuit of wild beasts was looked on rather as a species of warfare than as an amusement. The king who slew a lion set up a monument to commemorate the benefit thus conferred on the servile population of shepherds and delvers whom, probably, the lion might have eaten. Much the same idea permeates the Greek myths that precede prosaic history. Hercules is deified for the slaughter which he makes among the noxious animals that are a terror to the rustics. It was not for sport's sake that Atalanta and Jason gave chase to the monstrous boar of Calydon. As for more peaceful diversions, one radical distinction exists from all time between the Asiatic and the European. The latter is too active to content himself with the part of a mere spectator. The former hires persons of inferior position to amuse his hours of indolence. That proverbial Oriental who, after watching the gyrations of many waltzers in an English ball-room, naïvely inquired why the dancers did not bid their servants take all this trouble in their stead, was but expressing the sentiments which have always prevailed from Canton to Constantinople. Jugglers and buffoons, dancing girls and musicians, have been from all time in great demand throughout the East; but the Indian rajah or the Chinese viceroy, who takes his languid pleasure by lolling among silken cushions as he watches the performances of these despised hirelings, would stand aghast at the proposition that he should personally take a part in some trial of skill or strength. Certainly there is a quoit-throwing game in much favour among the Sikhs; mounted hockey players abound in Assam, and Turks, Arabs, and Persians, retain some of their antique proficiency in swordsmanship and hurling of the jereed, but these warlike exercises came into being, not as sports, but as a preparation for the battle day.

Keenly as the Greeks enjoyed the theatre, where actor and dramatist were stimulated to do their best by the applause or the censure of the most subtle-witted audience that ever fronted a stage, they loved the Isthmian and Olympic games better still. The chariot race, where the skill and coolness of the driver were of as much account as the speed of the fiery steeds that hurried the flashing wheels so swiftly through the yellow dust; the wrestling match, in which every art of the gymnasium was invoked to supplement the strength of straining muscles, the contest

of fleet runners, were objects of almost painful interest to a nation that had striven to raise physical perfection to its highest point, and that held force and beauty in as great esteem as even the loftiest qualities of the intellect. Somewhat of this spirit influenced the Romans themselves, until luxury had done its worst for them. The period of Horace and Ovid was no age of hardy innocence, yet there still lingered among the rich Quirites a belief in the civic virtues of athletic exercise. Some excuse was felt to be needed for the indolent youth who neither ran nor wrestled, who "feared to touch the yellow Tiber," who did not, in fine, take a manly part in the rough pastimes which had trained the early Romans to many an exploit in war. Now and then a patrician condescended to share in the perilous pastimes of the arena itself; but as wealth and corruption increased, the citizens of the world's capital came to the comfortable conclusion that it was best to look serenely on at the mutual slaughter of trapped wild beasts and professional gladiators.

Mediaeval Europe had a most eclectic taste where amusements were in question. It is true that the theatrical exhibitions of the classics were but poorly represented by mysteries and miracle-plays under clerical management; while the humble bull-bait was a feeble travesty of the gigantic hecatomb of lions and elephants, of sea-cows and ostriches, of German bears and Numidian panthers, which the prodigality of the emperors had provided for the Roman amphitheatre. But the tournament, with all its accompaniments of bright colours, glittering arms, and richly caparisoned horses, its tiers of gaily-dressed spectators, its pavilions decked with fluttering flags, must have afforded a spectacle more brilliant than those gladiatorial encounters which were the delight of the contemporaries of Sylla or Nero. The tilt-yard was not, at any period, so sanguinary a scene as the circus had once been, but broken bones and pierced breast-plates were sufficiently common to prevent the sight from being considered as a mere pageant, while the performers were not, as of old, manumitted slaves or prisoners of war, but volunteers of the noblest families, fighting, each one, for the honour of the well-known cognisance on shield and helmet. For aspirants to the golden spurs of knighthood, there was the mimic encounter with the quintain, the riding at the ring, fencing, the vaulting horse, and the

leaping-bar. The 'prentice lad and ploughboy were invited to compete at cudgel play for prizes given by the feudal lord. Mimes and drolls, minstrels and morris-dancers, the glee-maiden and the juggler, were welcome at fair and feast. Whoever could sing the newest song or the oldest romaut to viol or lute, whoever could practise the world-old tricks of knife swallowing, fire-breathing, and sleight of hand, the jester, the tumbler, the story-teller, might be sure of a livelihood which, if precarious, was at any rate more lightly earned than that of the ill-fed mass of the population.

As the invention of gunpowder and the growth of professional soldiership gradually caused the knight's martial services to be dispensed with, hunting and hawking usurped the place that had once been assigned to feats of strength. It might have been supposed that the fine young English gentleman of the Elizabethan period, for instance, could have had but few idle hours on his hands, so numerous were the now neglected branches of learning in which he was supposed to be versed. Public opinion demanded that he should be well acquainted in theory and practice with the different species of falcon, with merlin and goshawk, with hobby, tarcel gentle, and ger-falcon, their food, tempers, training, and diseases, how to tend, teach, and fly them. He was expected to possess a naturalist's knowledge of the habits of wild beasts and birds, with a smattering of farriery, an acquaintance with dogs and horses such as only trainers and veterinary surgeons can now boast, to follow the slot of a deer with an accuracy that would do credit to a red Indian, and to have an ear fine enough to distinguish every blast of the hunting-horn, from fanfare to hallali. Nor was it enough to be adroit in field sports, since a gentleman was then, as the attendant at a lunatic asylum is now, presumed to be musician enough to play on at least one instrument, and to take part in a glee. Dancing, too, was studied, and that in no frivolous spirit, but as a stately exercise which even high legal dignitaries were proud to practise before the discriminating eyes of the queen's highness. Add to these acquirements a fair amount of Latin, a dash of French, and a larger infusion of the more fashionable Italian, and a young man might be regarded as having his hands pretty full. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the palmy periods of gambling, a vice that flourished in rank luxuriance in every

stratum of society, from the courtiers who staked their broad pieces on the turn of cards furnished by the king's groom-porter down to the ragged urchins squabbling over their chuck-farthing among the gravestones of some neglected churchyard. Then it was that French ingenuity devised the game of billiards, and that white-wigged doctors of divinity thought it no sin to play at bowls on summer Sundays, testing their reverend skill against that of the parishioners for whose edification the sermon of the morning had been preached. Less harmless were the spotted cubes of ivory which dicers were wont to carry in the pockets of their embroidered waistcoats, ready at any moment to rattle a box and call the main. Chicken hazard, however, and the other games in which dice are essential, were never of very good repute, and were used but not approved of, whereas cards were countenanced even by prelates and princesses, and no polite education was considered as complete unless it included the methodical shuffling and cutting, dealing and marking, at basset, put, and ombre, and many a forgotten game. How much time was squandered upon card playing between the coronation of James the First and that of George the Fourth would be a calculation too stupendous for even an astronomer royal. Ladies in particular were flagrant offenders in this respect, and would contentedly devote hundreds of consecutive evenings to the study of painted pasteboard. But to appreciate the important part which cards once filled in the social drama, we must remember how slight was the intellectual pabulum then within reach of an idler. Reading was by no means general; a scholar and a bookworm were objects of popular derision; the fine gentlemen who hung about St. James's complained that a book gave them a headache. Periodical literature can scarcely be said to have existed before the first issue of the Spectator, and those who followed in the wake of Steele and Addison reaped but moderate harvests. The newsmongers which were the precursors of printed journals were often, no doubt, both piquant and amusing, but they were necessarily so short as to be soon perused; and the same may be said of the starved and stinted newspapers of a time when the press was in the leading-strings of repressive law. Novels long continued to be pompous rhapsodies concerning classical or Oriental personages of exalted rank and grandiloquent conversation. Science and learning

were made as dry and unattractive as the most severe scholiast could desire, while the study of music and foreign tongues had fallen into desuetude. It is perhaps hardly wonderful if cards were welcome to thousands who would otherwise have found it tedious indeed to dispose of their leisure hours.

More active recreations than gambling in any shape lay within the reach of the humblest of the people, and their form was Protean. Football, which is at the present day almost wholly confined to the playgrounds of our great schools, was once kept up on a scale of imposing magnitude, parish being pitted against parish, and county against county. Foot-races, in which the rustic maidens took a conspicuous part, were as common as the matches of leaping, wrestling, and cudgel play to be seen at every wake and church-ale. A fair, when Anne was queen, was at any rate the scene of much frank and hearty enjoyment. Somewhat yet survived of that blithe spirit which once earned for the lower classes of Englishmen the repute of being the most reckless roysterers and inveterate sightseers in Europe. It is hard in this epoch of thoughtfulness and sensitive feeling to realise the completeness with which those who went before us could yield themselves to the delights of a holiday. We should stare at the spectacle of a score or two of wealthy civic families, headed by a lord mayor and lady mayoress, nutting or maying in Epping Forest, and frisking as wildly as so many colts in a paddock. Our ancestors drove dull care away the more readily because they were not tormented by the uneasy sense of responsibility which now besets the best of us. Social problems troubled them not at all. Doctor Pangloss was not better satisfied with this best of all possible worlds than was a well-fed Paterfamilias of the Tudor or Stuart reigns, and no Utopian projects or scruples were lurking about to infuse bitterness into the cup of joy.

There is unquestionably a kind of Arcadian haze, more or less rose-tinted, thrown over the old village life of the picturesque England that has departed. How pretty must have been the innocent dance around the tall Maypole, the shaft of which was hidden by the flowery garlands entwined around it; and how poetic the annual ceremony of crowning the Queen of the May! The chase of a well-soaped pig, or a jumping match in sacks, unintellectual in itself, might perhaps have moved the bucolic

mind to guffaws of good-natured laughter. We may, if we choose to be indulgent, regard the festive villagers as a set of overgrown children at blameless play. It is different to be equally lenient towards the cock-throwers of Shrove Tuesday, the mob that gladly contributed every available cur for the annual baiting of the town bull, the lookers on at the bloody contests of hireling sword-players, or the bawling rabble swarming round the bear-pit as Bruin grimly held his own against the clinging mastiffs. It was not only the unpitied pain of the brute creation which furnished a favourite show for the multitude. A hanging was still more attractive than a horse-race, and to pelt a bankrupt in the pillory, to watch a ring-dropper as he winced beneath the executioner's whip, or to witness the burning of a female coiner, was considered as a legitimate, and indeed edifying source of amusement.

Very different was the spirit in which the men in sad-coloured raiment viewed the manifold amusements of their countrymen. The Puritan, like Draco, condemned all culprits to the same doom, and in his eyes mirth and vice were synonyms. If anything, the frivolity of the gentry, and especially of the fops and fine ladies, angered him more deeply than the barbarous sports of the bull-ring and bear-garden. To plead that a diversion was void of harm was futile. The spokesmen of his party boldly denied the lawfulness of pleasures in any form; and during the reign of the Commonwealth strong efforts, bitterly resented by the mass of Englishmen, were made to put these severe theories into practice. Penn himself, though not naturally of an austere temperament, did not hesitate in the midst of the gay society of the Restoration, to publish his deliberate condemnation of amusements in whatsoever shape. He triumphantly inquired, "What recreations had the old Adam?" and whether the patriarchs had esteemed pastimes as indispensable, while his imagination converted the Dives of the parable into the very presentment of a hunting, hawking squire, with "his pack of dogs." Extravagant as was this wholesale opposition to all merriment and to all art, there can be no doubt but that the deeper convictions and more genuine earnestness of the present day are due to the leaven of Puritanic opinion, and that we owe a debt of gratitude to the awakeners of the national conscience.

The history of the theatre, in Catholic France and in Protestant England, is singularly alike. In both the drama has been fostered by the capricious favour of some monarchs, and blighted by the indifference of others. Henry the Fourth and his magnificent grandson may take rank as patrons of the stage with Elizabeth and Charles the Second. The clergy in one country, and the Puritans in the other, from the first regarded the theatre with no friendly eye. In Paris, as in London, the new entertainments afforded too much pleasure to be dispensed with. But the actor was in France denied Christian sepulture, and in England the law labelled him as a vagabond. On both sides of the Channel the poor strollers, who carried their Thespian show from province to province, were liable to the petty tyranny of minor officials. Justice Oldmixon's grandfather would have thought it as good a deed to set Romeo in the stocks, and to commit Juliet to the county bridewell, as some governor of a French fortified town to order a "bastonade" to be administered to some offending member of Gros Guillaume's company. Oddly enough, the very classes that could not forbear from attending a theatrical performance, cherished a strange prejudice against those who ministered to their amusement; and even the stern citizen, who scowled on the playhouse as on an unhallowed thing, was less contemptuous in his conduct than the bucks and bloods who sucked oranges as they lolled in their chairs upon the stage, rapping out their oaths and criticisms with the most artless scorn alike for actors and for audience.

The second half of the nineteenth century has witnessed, in matters of recreation, some notable changes. The mushroom growth of music halls is a mark of one alteration in the national tastes, and the excessive esteem in which athletic exercises are held denotes another. There is now a deeper interest felt in a struggle between two racing eights, manned by university crews, than in the hardest run heat between the swiftest horses in the world. There is a fashion, at times inexplicable to any but the most patient student of human nature, in the amusements of a people. Sometimes a new pastime is introduced, as cricket was during the Georgian epoch, while now and then a sport is modified until its original character is destroyed. The Italian game of palla, or ball, is an instance of this, dating as it does from

classic times, and having been thoroughly popular from the days of Nero to our own. Yet for centuries the ball has been gradually increasing in size and weight. Four hundred years ago, the warlike citizens of the Italian republics tossed about a ball so light and soft that it seemed fit for ladies' handling, whereas its present representative, weighing no less than twenty-eight ounces, and slightly inflated with air, needs in propelling it the full force of a strong arm, and can give a serious warning to the careless wight whom it may strike unawares.

That, by fair means or by foul, people will have diversions for the leisure hour, is a truth which legislators are sometimes too apt to ignore, and to which many well-intentioned persons wilfully shut their eyes. A coal-miner, for example, who spends his holidays, as some do, in perfecting his knowledge of some musical instrument, or in learning to take a creditable part in the glee club to which he belongs, is a worthier member of society than if he insisted on improving the shining hours by patronising dog-fights and badger-baiting, beer and pugilism. The worst of it is that the needful taste for and instruction in a mild accomplishment are not always present, while the rougher and coarser modes of enjoyment force themselves but too readily upon the notice. It is an error to suppose that while work requires care and fore-thought, pleasure-seeking is an art spontaneously acquired. No form of amusement can by possibility be discovered which cannot be abused or perverted, but of the great majority of existing diversions it may confidently be alleged that the good which they occasion largely outweighs the incidental evil, and that this would be a worse as well as a gloomier world could there be an end put at once and for ever to our recreations.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLIX. LEFT IN THE LURCH.

THEY get through the hours very quietly indeed, very unsensationally and pleasantly in fact, in the Forests' house the day before the triple marriages are to take place. Captain Bellairs has come up, and been received by the family as its future nephew and cousin in the most approved and conciliatory way. He has not made much of

the Cissy difficulty to Kate, but still he has let Kate perceive that Cissy, short as her sojourn has been under his roof-tree, has been a most unmitigated nuisance to him. It must be admitted, little as she says, that Kate is not altogether displeased at the discovery.

The hours pass away pleasantly enough, Kate is so happy, though she does try hard to keep her happiness within bounds, that she diffuses an atmosphere of sunshine around her, and even Gertrude begins to think that nothing can end very badly in which Kate will have such a large share as she will have in the ceremonies of tomorrow.

The two brides elect who are quartered together are very pleasant to look upon.

Frank is with them all the afternoon and evening in a state of lazy gratification at their appearance, and not at all sorry that Charlotte is not by to be compared or contrasted with them. He likes the way they have dressed for the occasion. He likes the way in which they abstain from appearing to be absorbed or pre-occupied by their packing. Apparently his sister and his cousin let their clothes and jewels alone to take care of themselves. It is only his future wife who makes these things of paramount importance.

"Clement Graham is coming in this evening to sign settlements and let us see the last of him as a bachelor," Mrs. Forest says to Bellairs, when the latter is going away to dine at his club, "will you come back, later on, and finish your evening with us?"

"Well, I may do it," Captain Bellairs says; but he makes a mental reservation to the effect that he will not do it, for he has no desire to meet Clement Graham and fraternise with him, for one moment longer than is strictly necessary. Then a few more words are said as to the time at which they shall all meet at church the next morning, and Captain Bellairs goes away, leaving the family alone, to meet as best it may the blows that are shortly to be dealt out to it.

They discuss their respective plans for the bright immediate future of the honeymoon season with interest. The Grahams are going to Paris, and Gertrude kindles into animation at the thought of Worth and his brethren. The others are going on, as has been said, to Italy and Spain. "Harry made an immense number of friends while he was stationed for three years in the Mediterranean," Kate says,

"we're not indiscreetly going to rely solely upon each other for society and amusement. Frank! you're the bravest or rashest of us all. I hear that Charlotte and you mean to go and be all-in-all to each other at some dull little seaside place?"

"I want to get somewhere where I can work," Frank says tersely.

"It will be lively for her while you're so employed," Marian says, laughing.

"We shall combine economy and sentiment in seclusion," Frank explains; "the fact is that baby has cost at the rate of a cow a day according to Mrs. Constable's accounts; therefore, I shall have to look to my expenditure rather carefully for a time."

"Yes, with a great deal going out afresh, and nothing more coming in," his mother assents, sententiously. Then she remembers how very miserable this only son of hers will probably be with the woman he has most unadvisedly chosen, and her heart melts within her, and she puts her hand on his shoulder and adds,

"Never mind, Frank; Marian and I will not require much; I can always help you."

"And as for Gertrude," Frank laughs, "she will never find a pleasanter way of spending her money than in making magnificent presents to her only brother."

"I wonder Clement has not come in, mamma," Gertrude says, nodding good-humouredly; "the sooner I have the sum assured to me out of which I am to make magnificent presents to my only brother, the better I shall be satisfied."

"It's just ten; dear me! I hope Clement doesn't contemplate keeping us up late to-night," Mrs. Forest says, uneasily. She does not want the effect of the rich, sheeny, white satin dresses to be spoilt by the faded looks of their wearers to-morrow.

"He ought to see the tables to-night," Marian puts in, "to-morrow we can't expect him to have an eye for the barley-sugar temples which have been erected, and the yards of ribbon which have been unrolled in his honour. All concerned ought to see what's done for their glorification to-night."

"It would have been unkind to her brother and sister, otherwise I should have asked Charlotte here this evening," Mrs. Forest says, apologetically, and Frank replies,

"Probably she would have pleaded her packing and wouldn't have come. There must be something uncanny about her

clothes, I fancy; they must get out of the trunks as fast as they're shoved in, or else she has the biggest tressian mortal woman ever invested in, for she's been packing for the last month."

"I really wish Clement Graham would come," Mrs. Forest says, changing the subject pettishly, "On such an occasion he really ought to have been in good time."

"I declare these preliminaries make one wish that we had never had anything to do with the man or the marriage," Gertrude says, impatiently.

"No one can say that I have made difficulties, my child. Mr. Graham appointed his own time, and though I thought it was driving it off rather late to leave such things till the night before the marriage, I raised no objection."

Mrs. Forest says this in her grandest tone. The tone, together with Clement's abrupt promotion to "Mr. Graham" sounds ominous, and casts a gloom over the family gathering. They all glance surreptitiously at the clock. Never has Clement Graham's advent been so ardently wished for in that family before.

A little silvery toned bell tingles out the time from its home in a delicate temple of alabaster. "Half-past ten," Mrs. Forest ejaculates, fanning herself vehemently, "if Mr. Graham is as much behind his time to-morrow—"

"There will be no marriage at all; don't distress yourself, mamma, I am really resigned to the prospect, I assure you," Gertrude says, coolly; but though she speaks coolly, her heart is hot within her at the idea of resigning the money, though her calm resignation of the man is genuine enough.

Even as she speaks there comes a sharp ring at the bell, followed by a loud impatient knock, and in spite of everything they have said, and of all the bitterness they have been harbouring in their hearts against him, they do cast relieved looks at one another now that they think Clement Graham is coming.

Amiability reasserts itself, they breathe more freely, and prepare to greet the truant lover with an amount of affectionately facetious reproach that they have never lavished upon him before. Mrs. Forest involuntarily turns up the tenderly shaded lamp that stands on a bracket by her side, and Gertrude, half against her will, accepts and places in her waistbelt a gorgeous crimson rose that goes well with the fawn-coloured silk. While they are

doing these things, the door is opened by a servant, who asks,

"If you please, ma'am, Mrs. Grange has sent round to ask if Miss Grange is here and ready to go home?"

They all, even the man who is about to marry her, dislike Charlotte more or less by this time. But there is consternation among them when this message is delivered. She is no mere casual acquaintance of whom they can say, "Oh! we haven't seen her, we know nothing about her." She is so nearly one of them that it would be indecorous on their part not to show the anxiety they feel. They question, cross-question, bewilder, harass the messenger, and all they can elicit is that Miss Grange went out about five o'clock in the afternoon, declaring that she was going to the Forests, and that since then nothing has been seen or heard of her.

"It's like an instalment of a novel," Marian whispers to Kate, "I want the next chapter—how I want the next chapter!"

"The next chapter won't unravel the mystery," Kate says, "but don't let Frank see us conjecturing; that's a most wearying thing when a person is conjecturing himself."

"I believe she's putting an end to her past life somewhere or other before she enters upon the new," Marian says scornfully.

"I believe she's the kind of woman who destroys her records as she goes," Kate answers. "Charlotte isn't a person to leave prudential measures to the last moment."

Meantime many minutes have passed, and it is now very nearly eleven o'clock.

"Kate!" Mrs. Forest says, in a tone of anguished appeal, "do go to bed; you, at least, have nothing to wait for nor to fear; and if you could get Gertrude to go with you——"

"Gertrude requires no persuasion, mamma," that young lady interrupts. "Wild horses wouldn't drag me to church to-morrow after this; I shall go to bed and rest as well as I can; but all this is not calculated to have a very soothing effect upon one, you know, mamma."

"I suppose you will go round to the Granges?" Mrs. Forest says, turning to her son.

"Well, no, mother; as they sent here for information, it's no use my going to them for any. I shall send in the morning to hear if Miss Grange is ready to keep her appointment at the church with me,

and if she is, I suppose I must go through with it."

"It really seems to me that there will be as much trouble and awkwardness in going on with it now, as in dropping it altogether," Marian puts in.

"We may as well lock up the dining-room, there will be no one in to see the breakfast now," Mrs. Forest says, and so gradually they accustom themselves to the situation, and go quietly off to their respective rooms.

Presently Kate is disturbed by a knock at her door, and the entrance of Gertrude with one of the twin brides' dresses hanging over her arm.

"Pack this up in your box, Kate, you can as easily wear out two of these things as one, and it won't be old fashioned at Lugnaquilla, however long you stay away romancing on the shores of the Mediterranean."

"I don't like your taking it for granted that you won't want it yourself," Kate says, nervously, for she dreads a discussion on the subject, having no honest hope in her heart that it can be other than a black and treacherous affair.

"I shall not want to wear it for that man to-morrow at any rate," Gertrude says, quietly, "and I wouldn't bring even so much of an association as that would be with him, into my marriage with anybody else, if anybody else will have me, after my having been jilted in this way."

"You're not sure that he has done so yet, and at any rate you never cared for him," Kate says, dealing out two widely different kinds of comfort at one blow.

"But I shall have to behave as if I had cared for him," Gertrude answers, "there would be something indecent in my showing relief at being rid of the man, when I shall not be able to help showing that I am wretched enough at the loss of the money. Kate, I have been spending freely both in imagination and reality, for the last few weeks; it will be dreadful to come back to nothing, to worse than nothing, to the knowledge that so much has been spent about my wretched trousseau that mamma will have to screw for it, for months."

"If the worst comes to the worst, Aunt Marian will be just enough to remember that it is not your fault," Kate says, as comfortingly as she can.

"But she will remember that it is my misfortune, and I'd just as soon have the one remembered against me, as the other. I gave a guinea apiece for some of my

pocket handkerchiefs, and now I shall be ashamed to see them."

"All these are minor matters," Kate, who has not given a guinea apiece for handkerchiefs, says.

"Yes, but it's the minor matters that are about one everyday, while the mighty ones only affect one twice or thrice in a life-time. Well, Kate, I ought to leave you, and I shall leave you the dress; may you be happy."

"May you be happy too, in spite of your fears to-night," Kate responds.

"My dear Kate, I should never be 'happy' with him, that's quite out of the question, but the money would have been pleasant. And now I must return the jewels he gave me, and shall have to return to those abominable lockets and velvets, and other make-believes, that I thought I had done with for ever. I wish I had never seen the man or his presents."

"So do I, with all my heart," Kate says, fervently, for she remembers for how many years Clement Graham's unwarrantable interference has kept her from tasting happiness. How, indeed, it has nearly blunted her perception of what constitutes happiness, and made her painfully doubtful of her own power of appreciating that which is now within her grasp.

"I do wish with all my heart that we had none of us ever seen or heard of him, Gertrude; he's narrow-hearted, as well as narrow-minded; such men are always odious."

"I know that he would have been very odious to me, but so it will be odious to me to resign everything that I have been looking forward to for so long; one can't have everything, and I had made up my mind to endure him, for the sake of the rest."

"Take care, don't say any more," Kate pleads, "you may have to endure him after all." But Gertrude shows her doubtfulness of there being any foundation for this hopeful view of the case, by saying,

"No; I shall have to endure returning the presents instead. I declare I shall want one of Pickford's vans to convey back all the things he has given me; it makes me ill when I think of that wretched woman wearing them."

"What wretched woman?"

"Why, the one he has married, or will

marry. We won't speculate about her name; we shall hear that soon enough to be pleasant to all of us. How did you think Frank bore the news of Miss Grange's flight?"

"I don't think it will break his heart," Kate says. And, to tell the truth, though she is going to be married to Captain Bellairs, she feels a good deal of pleasure in the conviction she has that Frank is not cut to the heart by Charlotte's defection.

The night wears itself away, and the morning breaks, and it is not to be wondered at that all in that house are on the alert at a very early hour. In spite of themselves, they are anxious for further intelligence. In spite of themselves, they cannot quite bring themselves to give up all expectation of seeing or hearing something of one or other of the absentees. But the hour for the weddings arrives, and, lo! one bride and one bridegroom are still deaf to the roll-call.

Frank bears his part as a guest at his cousin's wedding gallantly and well, and the friendly, curious crowd, who have assembled to see the union of the happy pairs, find it hard to believe that he is the man who has been left lamenting on the very eve of the wedding-day. They find it harder to believe this story of Gertrude, who is an object of general admiration and attention, by reason of the sumptuousness of the costume she wears. The costume had been selected to do honour to the state of Mrs. Clement Graham; but Gertrude wears it as gracefully now as if she had never designed it for another occasion.

Just as they reach home, two telegrams are handed in. One is from Charlotte Graham to Frank Forest, and contains these words, "My change of name will account to you for my failing to keep my appointment with you this morning."

The other is from Clement Graham to Mrs. Forest. It is touching in its simplicity, "Anything that may have to be returned may be addressed to me at Grahamshill, near Chester."

Now ready, price 5s. 6d., bound in green cloth,

THE TWELFTH VOLUME
OF THE NEW SERIES OF
ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

To be had of all Booksellers.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 321. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER IV. AT THE HOTEL DE
LILLE.

THE position of Grace Middleham when, arriving at the Hotel de Lille, after her long journey from Bonn, she found that the poor, bright, simple country girl whom she had brought with her from England was not merely, as she at first imagined, suffering from the change of food and climate, but was seriously and dangerously ill, was a very trying one. Although completely prostrated by the fatigue of travel, she had to have her wits about her in a more than ordinary degree; for, though the people of the house were very kind, they had the usual continental prejudices against sickness, and when the physician had pronounced poor Lucy's to be a case of fever, though loud in their asseverations of compassion, they contented themselves with bringing what was required to the door of the room, where Grace and a sister of charity, acting as garde malade, were nursing the sick girl. A strange position for the young heiress to find herself in, but one which brought out much of her innate goodness and sweet temper. She was away from her self-imposed duties only for one hour during the course of the day, when she would take a sharp walk in the Tuilleries Gardens: her bright, healthy complexion, undimmed as yet by the effect of sleepless nights and anxious days, rendering her a cynosure to the bonnes, the soldiers, and the feeble old gentlemen sunning themselves on the promenade. Then she would

return to the sick room, bringing with her some few flowers or some grapes for the poor patient, who lay there in a semi-comatose state, scarcely heeding what was done for her, and only able to express her thanks by feebly touching her mistress's hand.

Ah, the long days and nights which Grace passed in that oblong room on the second floor, with the furniture of which she grew so painfully familiar that every detail of it will remain for ever impressed upon her memory! The bed in the alcove, on which the poor sufferer lay, helplessly tossing from side to side; the stuffy red velvet sofa, on which the nurses passed the night; the washing-closet, with its little white basin and jug on a shelf, and its gleaming brass ewer underneath; the two looking-glasses, one reflecting you as of a green, the other as of a bright saffron complexion; the red velvet mantelpiece bearing the black marble clock; the bureau, surmounted by the imitation alabaster vase of faded flowers; and the omnipresent and eternal smell of combined stiffness and cabbage soup—these were Grace's first impressions of that Paris, to visit which had been the dream of her young life. The window opened upon the court-yard, and when the dull rumble under the porte cochere announced the coming of a vehicle, Grace would pull aside the muslin blind, and watch with an interest which a few days before she would not have thought herself capable of possessing, the arrival or departure of travellers; the waiters crossing the court-yard at a trot, with huge trays of plates and glasses neatly balanced on the upraised palms of their left hands; the merry faced concierge calling general attention to all new-comers by clanging a

large bell; the postman with his suspended black box full of correspondence; the blanchisseuse publicly bearing aloft garments which are not usually exposed to view. All these became familiar objects to Grace Middleham, and when she turned away from the window she would find the poor invalid still tossing restlessly on her couch, and her companion, the sister of charity, if not engaged in her ministrations, with her eyes rigidly fixed upon her prayer-book.

The doctor who had at first been summoned to attend poor Lucy Dormer, at the recommendation of the people at the hotel, was a Frenchman of grave, if not melancholy aspect, and stern politeness. He was not given, as he frankly remarked, to the modern systems of cure, which he regarded as new-fangled and dangerous; but had great faith in the use of the lancet, and the medicaments finding most favour in his eyes were the tisane and the cataplasme, the virtues of which combined ought to be sufficient to cure the most obstinate malady. It was the peculiar English defect of Lucy Dormer's constitution which, according to Monsieur le docteur Gouvry's opinion, prevented her from thriving under his treatment. Certain it is that poor Lucy not merely did not thrive, but became so evidently worse, that Dr. Gouvry's services were dispensed with, and an English physician was called in. At first it seemed as though the change was about to have the desired effect. There was something in Dr. Meredith's bright eyes and pleasant smile, and in the cheery tone of his voice, which bid the despairing hope; and if Lucy Dormer did not rally as quickly as her mistress had anticipated, it seemed at all events as though the progress of the disease were stayed. The illusion, however, was soon dispelled; the vital fire had been allowed to sink too low, and all Dr. Meredith's efforts to restore it were in vain. On the third day of his attendance he told Grace that she must prepare for the worst, and his anticipations seemed likely to be rapidly realised. Grace, under the influence of her grief, had made the doctor's opinion known to the sister of charity, who, in her turn, had mentioned it to the femme de chambre; and the latter, with the usual ignorant impetuosity of her class, at once assumed that the worst had arrived, and that poor Lucy Dormer lay at the point of death.

It was Sister Marie's hour for absenting herself from the sick room and taking a

little rest—an interval which she generally employed in prayer at the neighbouring church—and Grace was left alone on guard, sorely troubled at what she now knew must be the inevitable fate of the poor girl whom she had brought away with her from her happy English home. Her nervous system had been considerably overtaxed, and she started as a sharp rap came at the door; started more, and gave a slight scream, as, looking up, she saw Anne Studley advancing towards her. "Thank God! Oh, thank God!" was all that Anne Studley could at first find to say: by nature she was essentially undemonstrative, but here she was, with her arms tightly clasped round her friend, whom she was straining to her breast.

"Do not think me mad, Grace," she said, half hysterically; "though joy at seeing you again, coupled with all I have gone through lately, is enough to turn my brain."

"You have only just arrived, dear?" asked Grace.

"This instant," replied Anne. "I came here in the hope of finding a letter from you, and when I was told there was none for me I was going away in despair, when the servant coming down-stairs called out that someone was dying. I enquired who it was; and hearing that it was an English lady, was prepared to offer my services, when the landlady mentioned your name. I turned faint, sick, and thought I should have fallen to the ground. Then, summoning all my strength, I made my way up-stairs, in the full expectation of finding you seriously ill. And now," she said, smiling through her tears, "now that I see the mistake that has been made, the reaction is almost too much for me."

"Your anxiety on my behalf misled you, dear Anne," whispered Grace. "I have not been ill; but poor Lucy Dormer, who went with me from England to Bonn as half maid, half companion, lies there in a condition which I fear is almost hopeless."

She pointed to the alcove as she spoke, and Anne, advancing noiselessly, pulled back the curtain, and gazed with a softened and compassionate expression at the occupant of the bed.

"My own recent experience of illness," said she, shaking her head gravely, "tells me that there is but little hope to be expected for that poor girl. Heaven help her! it seems hard for her to pass away in a strange land, far from all her kin and belongings! It is a case for deep sympathy; and yet so rejoiced am I at finding you

safe and well, that I can think of nothing else."

"But what of yourself?" said Grace, tenderly, "you used, with reason, to be proud of your strength and health, but in this comparatively short time you are wholly changed, and seem to me to be reduced to the shadow of your former self. You spoke of recent illness, too, dear; are you sure you were in a condition to undertake this journey?"

"You know, Grace, that I was never very much given to exaggeration, and you may judge therefore of the necessity I felt for seeing you, once more, when I tell you that, if I had been dying, I would have insisted on being carried to the appointed place of meeting between us."

"Your need for sympathy and aid must have been urgent indeed, my darling," said Grace, who seemed unconsciously to have resumed her old position of petted favourite, and who was reclining on Anne's breast, with her arms round her friend's neck, "I knew it must be so when I read the advertisement. I told the good old man who has married my aunt, to whom I was forced to give some explanation of my hurried departure from his house, that, knowing you as I did, I was perfectly certain that unless you were in extremity, you would not have appealed to me. You were far too proud and self-reliant, I said, and that therefore, when you thought it necessary to sound the tocsin, nothing earthly would prevent me from obeying its summons."

"And you answered it in person," said Anne, passing her hand softly over Grace's shining hair, "instead of by letter, which was all I dared to ask."

"Dared to ask!" repeated Grace, raising her head in astonishment. "You talk about daring to ask anything of me, when all that I have in the world, my life if I could give it, is yours, darling." She spoke with all the warmth and romantic affection of their school days. But a few weeks had passed since then, and yet the words and the tone in which they were uttered sounded strangely in Anne's ears. She had gone through a lifetime of experience in those few weeks, during which the glamour of existence had faded away, and she seemed to feel it difficult to realise that anyone could still believe in it.

"I know the warmth of your love for me, dear," said Anne, looking at her with a deep glance of unutterable affection; "it did not need this great proof, your journey

here, to convince me of it. I shall have to make further trial of it very soon, to impose very heavily on your loyalty, your fidelity, your patience."

"When they are exerted in your cause, my darling, you will find all three capable of great endurance," said Grace, with a faint smile. "Make the trial when you please, but rest and refresh yourself now; you look pale and horribly fatigued, and the air of this sick chamber is anything but reviving to those unaccustomed to it. Oh, have no fear about me! Sister Marie and I have shared the nursing between us, and will continue to share it until the end, which, I think, is very close at hand. Tell them to give you a bed-room on this floor, and lie down for two or three hours, by which time I shall have a brief respite from my watch, and you can tell me all that has happened to you since we parted."

All that had happened since they parted! The phrase rang in Anne Studley's ears as she paced to and fro in the bed-room to which she had retired, not, as Grace had begged her, to rest—there was no chance of that—but to deliberate upon the course to be pursued. In a moment of supreme despair she had called to her friend to come to her aid, and, now that the appeal had been heard, she knew not what to do. There was something in Grace's childlike affection for her which was startling to Anne; it seemed like a new revelation. To no one on earth, even the strongest minded and most worldly, would it be possible to hint at the reasons which had induced her to fly from her home and appeal to her friend for protection; and how much less possible was it for her to make herself intelligible to a gentle graceful creature, void of all guile? And yet it was absolutely necessary that immediate action should be taken. Grace would have her own story to tell, the history of her life in Germany, with its innocent and petty details, and then would naturally expect to hear her friend's story, above all to be informed of her reason for making the appeal.

What was she to do? The fact that Grace, a delicately-reared girl, unaccustomed to the world, instead of answering her by letter, which in itself would have been a complete fulfilment of the compact between them, at that inclement season of the year had started off on a long journey—bringing her personal succour and support—proved to Anne how entirely sincere was her friend's love for her, how strong was her loyalty, how thoroughly she was

to be trusted. Under that affectionate and child-like demeanour there lay, as Anne well knew, a vein of clear common sense which had never been worked, but which would come out brightly, and stand comparison with the product of many more pretentious intellects. Under any circumstances less dreadful, Anne felt that she could have taken such a friend wholly and unreservedly into her confidence; but this was, of course, impossible. After a few minutes' reflection, however, she convinced herself that Grace's fidelity and love would stand a test almost equally high. She would ask Grace to accept, without further questioning, her assertion that her appeal for aid was necessary; she would implore her friend to allow her to remain silent as regards all that had happened since they parted, and to begin, thenceforward, a new life under a new name, all connection with her former existence being dissolved. She could do that, she felt, without the risk of bringing either danger or disgrace upon her friend; with Grace's assistance she could do something to earn her own livelihood; and, though at first the thought crossed her that, contaminated as she was by her associations, she had no right to bring the taint of vice across that pure and spotless life, yet, upon reflection, she felt that her father, though a gambler and a villain, had not been, in a primary degree, concerned or taken an active share in either of the two desperate crimes of which she had become cognisant, and that, therefore, the fact of her being his daughter need not prevent her from asking Grace to extend to her the sorely-needed help and protection.

What was her future life to be? That was another subject which required immediate consideration. She had no resources of her own, and situated as she was, with the absolute necessity of concealing her identity, and of passing the remainder of her life under a false name, it would be only by Grace's aid and countenance, that she would get the chance of making her livelihood. She knew it would be Grace's intense desire that they should not again be parted, that she should remain attached to her friend in some capacity. But what position could she fill? Anne had sufficient knowledge of the world to perceive that on Grace's return to the guardianship of Madame Sturm, under which the young heiress must necessarily remain until she came of age, her own position must be definitely

settled—she could not be a kind of redundant personage in the German professor's household, nor would Madame Sturm and her husband be likely to receive her without making inquiry as to her antecedents, or as to the reasons which induced Grace to look upon her with so much favour.

Then an idea dawned upon Anne Studley, to be rejected at first, but to recur again and again, the possibility of carrying it out appearing greater each time. From what she had heard from the femme de chambre, who declared that she was merely repeating the doctor's opinion, and from what she herself had seen, she had no doubt that the shadows of death were already closing round poor Lucy Dormer, and that the days of her service with Grace were ended. Why should she not take upon herself the position thus vacated? The duties which would be required of her by her friend would not merely be light, but would be such as to bring her always in the closest proximity to Grace. In the relative positions of mistress and maid, their being constantly together would create no astonishment, would give rise to no inquiries; her antecedents would pass unquestioned, and she would not merely be able to pass her immediate future in tranquillity, but in security; for surely the safest place in the world, both from her father and her husband, would be in a house, among the tenants of which were the sister and niece of one of their victims.

The more Anne thought of this project, the more feasible it seemed. To be with Grace, to feel secure from the pursuit of the villain to whom she had been so strangely united, to be shielded from any chance of recognition by her father, who, without meaning her ill, might be led by anxiety for his own safety to insist on her remaining with him, Anne would have undertaken any menial work. But the position of poor Lucy Dormer, as Grace had explained, was that of companion as well as servant, and Anne was too well acquainted with the delicacy of her friend's nature, not to know how considerate would be her treatment. Her own identity she felt would be completely lost in the time during which it would be necessary for them to stay in the quiet German town; she would be completely forgotten by the two men who alone had an interest in her existence; and, as for the future, it would be sufficient to determin-

what should be done when the time for decision arrived. A tap at the door, immediately following which, Grace entered. In her friend's sorrowful, tear-stained face, Anne at once saw what had happened.

"Yes, dear; the poor girl has gone," said Grace, replying to the question conveyed in Anne's uplifted eyebrows. "She died almost immediately after you left the room, quite peacefully, and with such a sweet smile upon her face as I had not seen since the beginning of her illness. She had just enough strength left to raise my hand to her lips, and thus to bid me a silent farewell."

"Poor girl," said Anne; "her's seems a sad fate, dying so young and in a foreign country, and there is no chance even of her relations being able to pay her the last tributes, as, of course, according to the law in France, she must be buried before any of them could reach her."

"She had no relations," said Grace; "she was an orphan, without belongings of any kind, and I had hoped to stand in the place of the sister with whom she had lived since her childhood, and at whose death she came to me."

"The blackest cloud has its silver lining," said Anne. "Had I not been overwhelmed by trouble, I should not have been here at this instant, and you would have been left alone; while now, at least, I am able to be a companion and a comfort to you."

"You take up your old position of strong-minded girl, Anne," said Grace, with a smile, "forgetting that it is you who have uttered the cry for help, and I, the all-powerful, have come to your assistance. These troubles that you speak of, darling; I am dying to hear all about them. You are so patient and long-suffering, that they must have been serious indeed to affect you as they have done."

"My darling," said Anne, solemnly, taking one of Grace's hands in her own, and putting her other arm round Grace's neck, "I have been thinking how I could possibly tell you the occurrences of my life since we parted, and I have come to the determination to ask you to trust me wholly, unquestioned and silent. Do not think, dear, that any danger accruing to myself alone would prevent my sharing my confidence with you, whom I regard as my second self; it is only the knowledge that my breaking silence would imperil those with whom I am unfortunately connected, which seals my lips."

"Danger to those connected with you?" murmured Grace.

"Most closely connected," repeated Anne. "Grace, my appeal to you, made first in the columns of the newspaper, and repeated now, is to implore you to save me from my father!"

"Your father?" answered Grace, drawing back.

"Do not draw away from me, Grace. You imagine I have lost my senses, but I am, unfortunately, sane in this matter. I told you, when we used occasionally to speak of him in our school days, that, though he was my father, I had seen but little of him, that his ways and manner of life were comparatively strange to me. I know them now, Grace; to my horror and shame—I know them now!"

"My poor darling," said Grace, pressing her lips upon her friend's forehead; "you need not think any more of it; henceforward you will be safe with me."

"That is what I want, Grace," said Anne, excitedly, "to be safe from him, to give up my identity, to be utterly lost to the world, to be imagined to be dead, that is what I want, Grace, that is what you must manage for me."

"Whatever you wish shall be done, dear, of course," said Grace, soothingly.

"There is only one way in which it can be managed," said Anne, in calmer tones, and with something like a return to her old business way; "only one method, the adoption of which Providence seems to favour. The death of this poor girl gives me the opportunity; let me fill her vacant place, let me return with you to your aunt's house in Germany as your maid. You can prepare her for my reception in a letter, telling her of poor Lucy Dormer's death, and of your having found a person in Paris—a widow, I think you had better say—to supply her place."

"But, Anne darling, how can I ever think of you in such a position?"

"It is the only way, Grace, depend upon it. I have thought it over carefully, and see no other. Listen, dear. It is absolutely necessary that I should be hidden away. Were my retreat discovered, my security, perhaps my life, would be endangered. I may seem to you to speak wild and whirling words; but in reality I am talking the sober language of common sense, unadorned and unexaggerated. In taking this dead girl's place I extinguish my own identity, and all trace of Anne Studley is lost for ever."

Grace was silent for a moment. Then she said, "You will not imagine my hesitation arose from any lack of will to serve you, darling; simply I have a horror of having to speak to you in the presence of others in any other way than if you were my sister; but I can think of no other expedient, and so we will carry out what you propose. During the time we remain in Germany we shall always be together in my rooms; and at the end of the twelvemonth, when I come of age, perhaps the necessity for your disguise will have passed away, and we can travel together in security and comfort." Then Grace embraced her friend warmly once more, and went away to give directions for poor Lucy Dormer's funeral, and to write a letter to Madame Sturm, in which she explained that not merely had her visit to Paris been fruitless, as she had not been able to find the friend whom she came to seek, but that poor Lucy had died, and that she had supplied her place with a young English-woman, a widow of whom she had received the highest recommendations.

That night, when Grace, upon whom the long endured fatigue of nursing was beginning to tell, lay in a heavy slumber, Aune seated herself at the bureau and wrote to her father the following letter:—

"I write these few lines in lieu of any spoken farewell, which circumstances rendered impossible. It is the last time you will ever hear of or from me, the burden of life is too heavy for me to bear any longer, alone and friendless as I am. I do not doubt your desire to serve me as far as possible, but I know you to be in the power of a merciless wretch, and wholly incapable of defending either me or yourself. I have therefore resolved upon releasing myself from life, and I send you these as my last words of adieu. Accept them as such, and make no further inquiry about me; it will be useless, as I have taken measures for finding a place among the nameless dead.

"A. S."

This letter was sealed, and directed to the hotel in London at which she had been in the habit of seeing her father, and where the captain's letters were invariably addressed.

BONIFACE AT HOME.

IT is always worth while to hear "the other side" of any great question, especially when it includes the private opinion of other people concerning ourselves. All classes are the better for a

little chastening of this kind, except, perhaps, literary, artistic, and theatrical folk, whose general humility and freedom from vanity render their further abasement unnecessary. Possibly no sort or condition of men have had it all their own way for so long a time as travellers—that is to say, so far as talk is concerned. Boniface of course has had, and will probably continue to have, much the better of them in essentials; but the "victims" cannot be called "silent." In every tongue, in every written character, in every style of prose, and in every kind of verse, Boniface has been held up to derision and contempt. He has been cursed for his pomposity, and kicked for his servility. He has been identified with Barabbas, who is said (by a learned professor of my acquaintance) "to have gone after his release into business as an innkeeper, a profession for which his previous career had admirably prepared him." The story of Procrustes has been explained in many ways, all reflecting severely on Boniface. The learned authority already quoted remarks that "the apparently conflicting traditions concerning P., in some of which he is described as a robber, and in others as an innkeeper, who stretched out or cut short his guests to the length of his bed, are only explicable on the hypothesis that he, after the manner of his kind, combined the two professions." Dr. Durchschlag continues—"The bed story is a curious specimen of the agglutinate myth. P. clearly kept an hotel, managed according to the first crude conception of the so-called American plan. All travellers were charged a fixed sum, whether they were short or tall, big or little, rich or poor, whether victuals were vouchsafed to them or not. Rich travellers were afterwards waylaid; and P., as a road-agent, relieved them of such riches as had escaped him in his hotel-keeping capacity."

These whips Boniface has to endure from the learned traveller. Flippant persons scourge him with scorpions. No detail of his business escapes them. They denounce his house, if old, as a rambling, tumble-down barn; or, if new, as a ghastly prison-house of stucco, in which the traveller loses his identity, is numbered like a convict, and is reduced from a human being to a mere arithmetical expression. If the house be without lifts, stories are invented about tired travellers having fallen down and died of exhaustion on the stairs while endeavouring to find

the remote apartments assigned to them. If there be a lift, dismal legends are circulated about guests who have stuck fast for hours between two floors, or of others who have been let down with a run, and have either been killed on the spot or have since dragged on a miserable existence as helpless cripples. Terrible tales are told of the linen being made "a double debt to pay"—"a sheet at night, a table-cloth by day." No pen can do justice to the abuse heaped on the food. If English, it is coarse, heavy, indigestible, and uninteresting; if German, it is greasy, flabby, vinegary, overcooked, and detestable; if French, it is composed of kickshaws and messes, recooked, and served up over and over again, until some poor wretch, frantic with hunger, devours the horrid stuff and dies; in Italy, everything is oily and garlicky and impossible; in Spain, there is nothing to eat at all; in America, there is plenty, but everything except the oysters is uncutable. Not satisfied with general statements of this kind, travellers circulate mysterious tales of hotel organisation. Beef is declared to be too often the flesh of cows and of horses; veal is of that peculiar variety known as "Staggering Bob;" cats, or as they are called in Germany, "roof-hares," are served up rabbit-wise; pigeon pies are made of rooks; and the solemn crow is made to appear in the guise of the cheery partridge. Worse than this, certain hotel-keepers, dead to all the better feelings of humanity, are said to nourish—on oyster shells and gingerbeer bottles—a peculiar breed of fowls, destitute of wings, but endowed with four legs.

The cellar of Boniface is sneered at by every youth who knows Bordeaux from Burgundy. His port wine is an unholy mixture of logwood, elderberries, turnip-juice, "red Spanish," and raw spirit. His sherry is not only "plastered," blended, and brandied in Jerez itself, but is made at Hamburg out of sugar and water and poisonous chemicals. People drink it, and fall down dead. Boniface's hock and moselle are made of sulphuric acid; his champagne, of rhubarb and gooseberries; his Chambertin and Château Margaux, of the coarse wines of Roussillon and Catalonia, villainously commingled at Cetze. His brandy is not cognac at all, but a hideous concoction of "high wines;" his whisky is new and raw; his gin watered; and his beer sour.

His servants are monsters of vice and

rapacity. The master charges roundly for attendance, but the minor demons sulk if they are not fee'd handsomely all round. The waiters, if brisk and active, are fliprant and impudent; if slow and steady, are lazy rascals, not up to their work. Chambermaids are miracles of perversity. In a fiendish spirit they put things away in places where it is impossible to find them, and fling slippers far under the bed in order that the guest may scalp himself, or have an apoplectic fit, in seeking for them. They jam trunks up against the wall so that it is impossible to open them, and virulently pounce upon and burn any manuscript inadvertently left on the table. In the morning they make a horrible noise, to drive out the tortured traveller, that they may infest his room with their presence. They are insolent to ladies, and cruel to children. Worse than these are hotel clerks, who make it the business of their lives to snub and crush the unhappy voyager. Inferior menials are even more depraved. Porters, unless paid heavily, dash to pieces the trunks entrusted to their care; messengers either take letters to the wrong house, or put them in their pockets and dismiss them from their minds; and hostlers starve the horses and steal the oats.

This is the realm of Boniface, as depicted by his customers and critics. Now let us hear what Boniface, speaking through the mouth of Herr Edward Guyer,* has to say for himself:—

For convenience, Boniface divides the travelling world into three classes: the commercial, the holiday, and the invalid. To the first of these the prosecution of his business is the main object, to which all other considerations are subsidiary. There are, among "commercials," travellers and travellers, the great banker or merchant-prince or his representative, and the smaller operator who, in America, would be called a pedlar or a drummer. To the great man expense is of small moment when compared with the speed and comfort of his journey, the time and well-being of a commercial magnate being of far greater importance than mere travelling expenses. This noble gentleman is a cherished guest of Boniface, who clearly prefers him to the more numerous but less splendid class of regular "commercials." The latter not only travel quickly, but cheaply, select that hotel which is nearest to their business connexions, and, more-

* "Das Hotelwesen der Gegenwart," von Edward Guyer, Zurich, Orell Fussli, 1874.

over, keep a sharp look out for "feeding time," and expect, or rather indulge a faint hope, that they may get their money's worth.

Holiday travellers are either with or without their families, and on this depends their plan or skeleton route, and in a large measure their choice of hotels. They are warned to make up their minds as to what they really mean to do—whether to see as much as possible in the time, or to see things really; enjoy the beauties of nature, and study the peculiarities of lands and nations.

Invalids care more for quietness and comfort than anything else. They desire, above all things, to travel safely, and on their way will select the hotels most conspicuous for good service. In certain places, such as mineral baths, the hotel becomes a residence for visitors afflicted with a certain class of malady, and their peculiar wants engage the entire attention of sanitary Boniface.

To the philosophic traveller are presented many hints. Boniface tells him that, having made up his mind as to the object, he must next lay down the plan of his journey. It is no indifferent matter whether the voyager be bound for France or Germany, Switzerland or Spain, England or Italy, Norway or Greece, and his own nationality and its relation to the country to be visited are matters for profound consideration. Difference of language and manners, the diversity of commercial customs, and the value of exchanges, should be the subject of diligent inquiry and earnest thought. A thousand annoyances will be spared to him, who, if not skilled in the language of the country through which he travels, can yet speak that understood in the hotels. In this respect Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans are much better off than the natives of less favoured countries. Boniface contemplates with horror the position of an "only-his-native-language-speaking" Swede in Italy, and does not forget to point out the advantage of travel in his own country, the privileged object of travel to all nations whose constant visits to Switzerland have impressed upon the natives the necessity of acquiring foreign languages.

It is depressing to find that Boniface is not so thoroughly impressed as he should be with the immense superiority of Englishmen over all other nations whatsoever. The Englishman carries his own habit of life with him everywhere—including, probably, the pernicious habit of frequent

washing—and only under the most absolute necessity relaxes his stringent rule. Unless his stomach be appeased after the English fashion, and his comfort be thoroughly attended to, true enjoyment is impossible to him. Love of nature, locality, and sightseeing, are with him merely secondary considerations.

The Prussian hardly makes a more favourable impression. The German desires above all things to accomplish the object of his journey, and then wants to see everything. He is an uneasy spirit, and, through downright irresolution and eternal questioning, never arrives at true enjoyment. The southern German, Austrian, and Hungarian, is a better-natured, easier-going creature, and less restless than his northern brother. Like unto the Englishman is the Dutchman, whose custom is eagerly sought by Boniface. But even the Hollander has his faults. He is apt to be critical as to his lodgings, and above all things abhors that "getting up stairs" which has been imposed upon latter-day travellers.

The Frenchman—in sovereign contempt of all geographic knowledge—mixes states, mountains, lakes and rivers together; seldom knows where he is, and never whither his road leads him. But in compensation he is a humorous person, and cares greatly for joyous society. He gets into all kinds of embarrassments, but generally escapes with a jest, and amuses himself vastly.

The Americans, who as valuable customers might have expected some mercy from Boniface, are satirically handled. When an American visits Europe, his chief care and the principal item of his baggage is a lead pencil. Without a pencil, no American. Every circumstance is duly cheeked off by this dreadful instrument, and the owner—even when he is well "posted" on a subject—worries people to death with numerous and searching questions, and is overjoyed when he, having gained over others a supposed advantage, which he attributes to his own keenness, he can afford to disregard their opinions. The great meal with an American is breakfast; and he often asks when the next train starts before he has well arrived.

Italians are easier to deal with. Throughout their travels they preserve a cheerful calm. Less uneasy than the Frenchman, to whom he is far less like than is generally supposed, the Italian accepts information

readily, because he is not so much wrapped up in himself. Nevertheless the Italian, like the Frenchman, has the serious defect of no longer caring for the beauties of nature.

Russians are of two kinds. The noble Russian, travelling slowly and majestically with his family, is a guest to be looked for hopefully, treated well, and, possibly, charged in proportion. But there are Russians and Russians. The inferior Russ is the terror of hotel-keepers and the joy of upholsterers, whose services are immediately required to repair the damage occasioned by his filthy habits.

A large hotel is subject to visits from these very different persons, and not unfrequently takes its character from that of its guests. At different periods the aspect of the establishment varies greatly. In the morning of one day may be found a few polished German families, with Russian, English, American, and French folk of rank and position. At table the conversation is calm, cheerful, and polite. The service is punctual and regular, because the guests, accustomed to habits of order, are themselves punctual, and relieve the waiters of the hurry occasioned by irregular people. Calm reigns in the house. There is no shrieking and yelling in corridors and on staircases. Children are kept in order, doors are closed, and no furniture is broken. All goes smoothly and well. The parting and the coming guests are equally well cared for. Next morning, a wild horde invades these tranquil regions. First to arrive is an American family—whose head has made a fortune in fat contracts during the war, or found a petroleum spring in the back garden—knowing verily not what to do with their money. Every precaution is taken by these people to impress upon Boniface and his acolytes the wealth and importance of the family. Servants are scolded and general rules overridden. Other guests are treated disrespectfully, and the destruction of furniture and carpets still farther endears these guests to Boniface. Next, drop in a few Germans who, in thundering tones, criticise everything, and deem imperfect all out of Berlin. Like unto these, is a mob of Frenchmen, who love nothing out of Paris, and express their disgust so loudly as to excite wonder why they travel at all, and why outraged Boniface does not rise against them. "Englische swells" are the worst of all. They are conspicuous by their rudeness, and only too happy when

their ill-manners attract attention. Noise and disquietude render night hideous, the servants are discouraged, and Boniface is compelled to step in, and give those who push things a little too far a lesson in manners.

Having liberated his soul on these important subjects, Boniface next proceeds to dilate upon the generally unreasonable nature of travellers who expect that a simple telegram will smooth all difficulties, and make room whether there be any or not. He is particularly strong on the erratic customs of continentals, which lead them to eat and drink outside of what is, for the time being, their habitation. Englishmen are prized, because in them the bump of order is largely developed. The insular guest is sure to appear punctually at dinner, rarely fails to take his tea, and arranges his excursions so as not to clash with meal-times. On the other hand, the German loves freedom. He likes to breakfast when and where he pleases, and the most astute Boniface can never be certain whether his guest will dine in the house or elsewhere; and, therefore, in an hotel frequented by Germans, he can never arrange his bill of fare on any solid basis.

On many other important subjects, such as that of "trinkgeld," does Boniface deliver himself; and he favours his confrères with much valuable information touching the site, building, and management of the hotel of the future; but the really important part of his work is that in which he gives his guest "one for himself." Boniface insists, and very properly insists, that the keeping of an hotel is a business like another; and, albeit he adds a treatise on the art of making out hotel bills, which appears to be sufficiently understood, his argument is sound in the main. This truth has long been recognised in America, where the faculty of "keeping an hotel" is considered the highest expression of human genius. For some unexplained reason, European Boniface has long been under a cloud; but it is cheering to see that he has at last stepped out of the sacred penetralia of the hotel office and taken his own part. An hotel-keeper, far less than a railway company—for the latter is a monopolist working under special privileges—has no right to be considered the slave of his customers; and it is cheering to see that much-blaboured Boniface has at last plucked up courage to "heave half a brick" in return.

CORONERS.

"FREEHOLDERS of Middlesex, whom will you have to be your coroner?" asked the Sheriffs of London, the other day, at a wooden hustings-booth at the top of Portland Place. The question was put to some fifty people at most, counting gaping errand boys and idlers—none necessarily freeholders at all. The adherents of one candidate shouted for him, whereupon the adherents of the other candidate shouted for their man; and a poll was demanded. Thus it occurred that the writer of the present paper became acquainted with much that needs to be set right in the matter of coroners, as well as a little that is generally interesting.

A coroner derives his name from the fact "that the death of every subject by violence is accounted to touch the crowne, and to be detriment unto it."* Until 1848, he also represented Majesty more directly, for up to that time whenever violent death was occasioned by any personal chattel, the coroner was charged to secure it as a forfeit to the crown. Since then, *deodands* have been abolished.

The office is one of extreme antiquity, certainly dating from before A.D. 940, in the reign of Athelstan, and possibly existing under Alfred the Great. Dr. Richardson, F.R.S. (scarcely less eminent as a scholar than by his discoveries in anaesthetics) told a public meeting, that "when the people came to Athelstan to ask their king to prosecute those who had worked violent death to others, he had (in familiar language) replied—Let one of your own head-men enquire into this matter; let him call in others to his assistance, and then if *prima facie* grounds for prosecution are shewn, I will certainly prosecute." And this, the learned speaker declared, was the origin of the "Crowners' quest" inherited by ourselves.

Edward the First, however, first created coroners by statute. All were men of importance, and their power and dignity are constantly referred to, up to the reign of Elizabeth, when a very learned statesman distinctly declares them to be "of the meaner sort of gentlemen." Perhaps this was the mere opinion of an individual, for in later reigns they were again in high esteem. At all events their statutory powers under Edward concerned them with pleas of the crown, and deputed

them not only to enquire into deaths, but also as to abandoned wrecks and treasure-trove; and they were further authorised to act in many matters where exception was taken to the sheriff. Thus it is that the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench is Chief Coroner of all England and Wales, and can exercise this jurisdiction in any place. In Ireland, things may be on a different footing; in Scotland, they certainly are, but it may be mentioned that the latter country long had its coroners.

So, in statutory law, the powers of coroners remain to the present day, for (although Edward the Third is said to have removed a coroner, because he was "merely" a merchant) the only subsequent legislation has been directed towards fixing their emoluments, and the mode of their election. And in both these respects subsequent legislation has been faulty.

Henry the Seventh, by Act, allowed the coroner thirteen shillings and four-pence for each inquest held; George the Second increased this to twenty shillings, and further allowed nine-pence a mile travelling expenses from the coroner's abode to the spot of death. In our own reign, three acts have been passed, two giving power to award a consolidated salary in lieu of fees and road expenses, the other regulating the election of coroners.

But all coroners are not elected; of the two hundred and thirty-three coroners in England and Wales (with emoluments ranging from two pounds to two thousand pounds a year), eighty-two are simply appointed. Indeed it would seem there are three classes—coroners by virtue of some other office (as mayor of a town with a charter); coroners by grant to some lord or corporation to appoint them; and coroners by election of freeholders. All borough coroners appear clearly to be the nominees of municipal corporations. It is the county coronerships which are peculiar. Several are filled by the nomination of the Duke of Beaufort, either by charter or by prescription. Here and there one is in the gift of some other landowner, titled or untitled. One is appointed under the will of a "Lord of the sokens;" some by "grants from the crown;" very many by lords of manors; one on the voice of the tenants of a particular manor; several "by privilege" of Lord This or Mr. That; many by the Duchy of Lancaster; one or two under "peculiar jurisdictions;" another by authority "unknown;" two by

* Sir T. Smith's *English Commonwealth*, 1584.

privilege of the "lords of the franchise;" one by the "Lord Paramount of Cleveland," an equally odd title with that of "Lord of the Forest and Royalty of Bowland," who appoints to a coronership in Yorkshire. However, the greatest curiosity of all is connected with the coronership of the Peak, in Derbyshire, in the very heart of which stands the ducal Chatsworth. There the appointment is in the gift of "Henry Greaves, Esq., of Chapel-en-le-Frith, by right of possession of the Horn of Ulphus." Doubtless the lands of Mr. Greaves were originally granted "on a tenure held by service of cornage," as feudists have it—the "winding" (or blowing) the horn at the first approach of an enemy, to call resistance; and the possessor of the horn (which presumably goes with the lands) nominates one coroner for the county. Whether the horn in question is a metallic or other horn is not stated, but judging from analogous antiquities in the case of the Cinque Ports, it may well be a ram's horn.

As to county coroners by election, the Act of 1844, under the marginal heading, "Who to elect," defines the electors in the following marvel of perspicuity:—"A majority of such persons residing within such district as shall at the time of election be duly qualified to vote at the election of coroners." So, after this, Lord Campbell and two other great judges held that the common-law qualification now only availed, and nothing short of a freehold could give a vote. The intention, it may clearly be seen, was that the freeholders should reside within the county as well as that his qualifying freehold should be there too; the oath, however, unfortunately, simply is that the voter has a freehold property in the county, and that his place of abode is so-and-so—anywhere in fact.

This Act did nevertheless, in some measure, regulate elections for such counties as had been divided into districts. But what was done in the counties where the jurisdiction of the several coroners was general and not divided into special districts? In the election for East Suffolk (for example) in 1859, numerous persons resident in London and elsewhere, but owning freeholds in the county, were brought down to vote. They took the oath, stating their abodes truly, and the sheriff had no power to refuse their votes. Again, one polling place only (Ipswich) was allotted to the whole constituency, to

the grievous inconvenience of voters and cost to the candidates.

In 1860, however, came another Act, to some extent remedial of such glaring faults. Chester, York, and Lincoln became subject to general laws. The undivided counties were put on the same footing as those already divided into districts; and one day's polling at elections was substituted for seven or even fifteen days in some cases.

Nevertheless, there is still room for great abuse in elections. A "freeholder" can claim to vote irrespective of the value of his freehold. It is within the knowledge of Parliament that unscrupulous persons have thus voted in right of a flower-pot of mould! Grave-owners vote, legally, perhaps, sometimes. "Free watermen" have voted, possibly illegally. Small absconee freeholders are taught to make their "abode" in the district by sleeping in it the night before the election, and then (with elastic conscience) taking the oath if required. These and many other more discreditable practices have often prevailed even in elections held in the capital.

There, as in other places, no register can possibly be kept of persons entitled to vote. Indeed, a freeholder is often in difficulty to learn at which one of fifteen or twenty booths his vote will be received. He may find at that nearest his residence that, his qualifying property being at the other end of the county, he has to go to a booth a mile off; arrived there, he may find that his property is classified as just outside the place named, and he may be referred to a third booth, where votes are taken for places other than those specifically allotted to other booths. When he reaches the third booth (if ever) it is just possible he may find he cannot vote at all, because he lives on the wrong side of the road, and is out of the arbitrary, non-defined district. Or if his vote be at last admitted, an accredited agent of a candidate against whom he is about to vote, capiously requires the sheriff to put him upon oath, for the purpose of permitting only as few adverse votes as possible being taken before the clock strikes four—when all is over. The candidates take care, in their own interest, to prevent inconvenience to voters as far as they can. If they did not, it is certainly not too much to say the poor puzzled freeholders could never find their way to vote at all. Practically, any man may be a coroner, by simply instructing an able election agent

to win at any cost. A coroner cannot be unseated for bribery.

One of the most satisfactory points in the recent election for Central Middlesex, is that all improprieties appear to have been scrupulously avoided on both sides; an honourable and enlightened course, which, however, any unscrupulous partisan could have defeated, had not the sheriffs of London lent their cordial co-operation. The issue was thus fought upon the plain proposition—Will you elect a lawyer or a doctor as coroner, to enquire into the cause of death? And the constituency said, we will have a doctor. The arguments pro and con need not be entered into here. It is matter for gratulation that, as it happens, a coroner has been chosen who has already done half a life's work in the way of Sanitary and Hygienic Reforms.

A word or two as to coroners' juries. They consist generally of fifteen men. But although twelve are clearly sufficient to return a verdict, nobody really can say how few may go to make it good. The last dictum on the point is that of the Lord Chief Justice Abbott, in 1825—if less than twelve in fact had agreed, the Queen's Bench would nevertheless assume the verdict to be good, as if at least twelve had agreed; not, however, that he was prepared to say that less than twelve should agree. The inference from the whole judgment is, that if only half-a-dozen, or fewer, agreed, and the coroner once returned the verdict, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to set it aside.

Jurors should however, on all accounts, be summoned differently, and from different classes of persons. As it is, beadles have a great deal too much (if not everything) to do with the matter. A Christmas-box often keeps away a summons—a Christmas-box refused sometimes provokes the direct threat of one immediately. Black-mail of this sort, levied in different ways upon different people, is none the less demoralising because it is very petty. But parish beadles are elected for life, are freeholders in virtue of their very office, and are altogether so sacred an institution, that they can afford to go great lengths very fearlessly. The coroner should have power to fine for contempt; he can now only return an offender's name to the justices, and it is noteworthy that this process of fining a juror forty shillings for non-attendance has cost the county as much as eighty-three pounds!

The new coroner in the heart of the

capital may initiate a good example, by summoning on his juries men who will not be a reproach to the ancient and useful institution of which he is a leading representative—for in the highest position amongst coroners stands the coroner for central Middlesex. He has before him the opportunity of educating "crowners' quest" juries into thinking for themselves; he may teach them that the sole object of a jury is that each man's own opinion should direct a decision—and this on facts only. He may encourage them to feel that the best security for justice and liberty depends upon firm, upright, discriminating jurors doing their duty. Let juries know plainly in what this duty consists, if even by printing a few plain rules of conduct on the back of the summons. Let them be emboldened to ask questions pertinent to correct views of facts—a distinct duty in itself of a juror. They will be all the better citizens for it in the long run, and coroners' courts will be much improved.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

CANTERBURY.

THRONE high above her sister shrines, and more remarkable than all for historic memories and in great associations, stands Canterbury Cathedral, the place where that unconquerable A'Becket was first murdered and then adored.

High above her children, St. Alphage, St. Mary Bredin, St. Mary Bredman, St. Mary Magdalen Burgate, St. Mary Northgate, St. Mildred, Holy Cross Westgate, and the sites of those bygone churches with the quaint old names, St. Mary de Castro, St. Mary Queninggate, and St. Michael Burgate, the great cathedral dominates from her post of power.

The old chroniclers all allow that as early as the landing of Cæsar, Canterbury was one of the three great sites of the Cantui, the tribe which ruled over the eastern end of Britain. Ptolemy, the geographer, who wrote in the reign of Trajan, and probably published in the reign of Antoninus Pius, also mentions Daruenum (Canterbury), while Antoninus, in his Itinerary of Britain, describes it as a great Roman station, joined to the port of Dover by the old Watling-street road which passed over Barham Downs. In the opinion of some old controversialists, Cæsar, with the seventh legion, took it on his second expedition the morning after his arrival in Britain.

Canterbury afterwards became the Saxon capital of Kent, and the Venerable Bede has rolled down to us this fact that the town in his time was called the chief city of King Ethelbert, and "the head of the empire." Being unfortunately, so near the two wintering islands of the Danes, Canterbury was twice sacked and gutted by those hardy robbers. In the last foray, the savage axemen are said to have left only four monks and eight hundred poor people of Canterbury alive, out of a thriving population of nearly eight thousand. The Kentish men, who tried in vain to hold the walls, they cast bleeding from the ramparts; while the weeping women and children they carried with them, and also the good Archbishop Alphege, whom the reckless pagans soon afterwards stoned to death at Greenwich, for steadily refusing to pay the exorbitant ransom they demanded. Lionig, the next archbishop, the man who crowned King Edmund Ironside, repaired the cathedral roof, which the Danes had burnt, and his successor, Agelnoth, is famous for having purchased at Rome (when he went to receive his pall) an arm of St. Augustine (there were several arms of this saint in the ecclesiastical market, but this was the finest) for one hundred silver talents, equal to six thousand pounds, and one gold talent and sixty pounds weight of gold. This is, of course, an impossible price, and is, no doubt, a lying exaggeration of the real sum.

Erasmus, visiting the shrine of the pseudo-martyr, describes the splendour of this profitable tomb with muchunction and his usual caustic contempt. At the north side of the north aisle stood the great armoury, where the monks of Canterbury cathedral stored their reliques—skulls, jaw-bones, teeth, arms, hands, and fingers, all impossible to disprove, and all duly kissed by the thin lips of the learned Dutchman, who, no doubt, sneered piously each time he bent his thoughtful head. A MS., marked Gilba E., in the Cottonian Library, says Haxterd, says that the vestry of Canterbury cathedral was, during the middle ages, brimmed with jewelled candlesticks, cups, pixes, and crosses, pastoral staffs, copes, and other vestments of many-coloured velvets, richly embroidered in gold and silver. Almost every archbishop and prior, since Becket's time, had made some costly gift at the altar of this stout defender of the Faith or, rather, of the Pope.

Archbishop Stratford had given a costly cope and his best mitre; Archbishop Arundel presented a golden mitre, studded with jewels, and twenty-two copes; while Archbishop Morton, with more lavish splendour, bequeathed the cathedral eighty copes, embroidered with his name and his heraldic emblazonments, for these good churchmen despised all petty distinctions of rank and birth. According to Erasmus, the shrine of St. Thomas, that most unsatisfactory of martyrs, was in the chapel of the Trinity; a cover of wood enclosed a coffer of gold, which cover, when drawn up, disclosed heaps of incalculable treasures, principally gold plate and jewels, some larger, says Erasmus, than a goose's egg.

The central legend of Canterbury cathedral, in spite of the wild stories of Blne Dick and the Puritan image-breakers, who made mince-meat of the great painted windows, and tore up the broidered copes for trumpet flags and coverings for Commonwealth drums, is, of course, that of the murder of Becket. The four knights who were so eager to relieve King Henry of so mutinous a prelate, first bearded Becket in his palace. Becket, urged by his attendants to seek sanctuary in the cathedral, entered the north transept by a door and a flight of steps in the west wall, opening on the cloister. The attendant monks then carefully barred this door to keep back the four knights who were following like blood-hounds on the track; but Becket unbolted the transept door with his own hands, and flung it wide open, saying,

"The church must not be turned into a fortress."

The knights, upon this, instantly rushed into the church. It was about five o'clock, on Tuesday, December 29, 1170, O.S. Vespers had already commenced; but, on the news of the approach of the knights, the monks, who first gathered round their archbishop, scattered like frightened sheep to the various altars and hiding-nooks, and three brave and faithful men alone remained beside Becket. These were Robert Canon, of Merton, Becket's old tutor; William Fitzstephen, his chaplain, who afterwards wrote an account of the murder; and Edward Grim, a humble Saxon monk. These trusty disciples persuaded Becket to ascend to the choir where the shrines of St. Dunstan and St. Alphege the Martyr lent special sanctity to the spot, and where the patriarchal chair was; and Becket had already mounted

several stairs when the knights rushed in. Reginald Fitzurse, who was first, came round the central pillar, and, at the foot of the steps, shouted, "Where is the archbishop?" Becket immediately stopped and returned to the transept. He wore his white rochet, with a cloak and hood thrown over his shoulders, and he planted himself between the central pillar and the massive wall, between St. Benedict's altar and the choir steps. There the rough knight closed in upon him, and endeavoured to drag him out of the church; but Becket, dogged as ever, kept his back to the pillar and resisted with all his might; while Grim, the Saxon monk, threw his arm around the prelate, to keep him from his assailants. Grappling with the knight, Becket threw Tracy down upon the pavement. A fierce altercation then ensued, the archbishop replying with sharpness and bitterness. At last, Fitzurse, in a sudden frenzy at the prolongation of the struggle, struck off Becket's cap with a sweep of his sword. The archbishop feeling that his end was come, and, covering his eyes, commended himself to God and St. Denis of France, St. Alphege, and the other saints of the church. Tracy then, no doubt irritated at his fall, sprang forward and smote the archbishop. The faithful Grim, who still clung to Becket, held up his arm to avert the blow, and the limb was nearly severed by the stroke, at which he flew to the altar of St. Benedict, hard by, for sanctuary. The same blow that cut off Grim's arm also wounded Becket, who, after two other sweeping strokes, fell flat on his face before the corner wall. Richard le Bret then crying, "Take this, for the love of my Lord William, the king's brother," struck him so fiercely that he severed Becket's scalp from his skull, and the sword snapped in two on the transept pavement. Hugh de Horsea then also struck the dying man, and scattered his brains over the floor: and all this time Hugh de Moreville, the fourth knight, kept the entrance of the transept. The four knights then rushed back through the cloisters to the archbishop's palace, and, after plundering it, galloped off on Becket's favourite horses.

The morning after the murder, the monks, afraid of the threatened return of the knights, buried Becket's body hastily at the east end of the crypt. There it remained, till the grand translation of the martyr's body, in July, 1220, after two years' notice, circulated throughout

all Europe. The Archbishop Stephen Langton opened the grave by night; the next day, Randolph, the Pope's legate, the archbishops of Rheims and Canterbury, and Hubert de Burgh, the grand justiciary of England, carried the chest of sacred bones on their shoulders to the great shrine prepared for them behind the high altar. Countless bishops were present in the stately procession, which was led by the young King Henry the Third, then only a boy of thirteen.

The shrine of the martyr resembled, it is said, that of St. Cuthbert, at Durham. The altar stood at its head; below were marble arches, against which sick and lame pilgrims were allowed to rub themselves, in hopes of obtaining a cure by the intercession of the saint. The shrine was covered with a wooden canopy, which could be suddenly drawn up by the attendants, disclosing the inner structure, plated and damascened with gold, and embossed with jewels. At the sight of this shrine, the pilgrims always fell on their knees outside the iron rails that surrounded it, and the prior then came forward, like a showman, and with a white wand touched the various gems, naming the donor of each. The chef d'œuvre of all was "The Regale of France," an enormous carbuncle, presented by Louis the Seventh of France. It was said to have been as large as a hen's egg, but for hen we should probably read wren, as Henry the Eighth afterwards wore it on his thumb-ring. The legend was, that Louis, at the last moment, was unwilling to part with this precious jewel, but that while he hesitated, the stone of itself leaped from the French king's ring and stuck itself firmly into the door of the shrine. The stone was said to burn at night like fire. How these carbuncles were used to light enchanted caves, we have all read in the Arabian Nights. Louis of France visited Becket's tomb in 1177, having first obtained a promise from the new saint that he should not be wrecked in the Channel passage.

It was to the eastern part of the crypt, the work of English William, as the architect was called, that Henry the Second came to perform penance four years after the murder. The tomb was then surrounded by a wall, at each end of which were two windows, for pilgrims to reach through and kiss the tomb, which was hung with votive candles and waxen legs and arms, testimonials of miraculous cures

effected by the sacred body. The king walked bare-footed from St. Dunstan's church to the cathedral, and, after kneeling humbly in the Martyrdom Transept, was led into the crypt: there, removing his royal cloak, he placed his head within one of the openings of the tomb, and received five strokes with sticks from each bishop or abbot who was present, and three from each of the monks. He passed the whole night in the crypt, fasting and resting against one of the pillars, and finally departed, says an historian of the cathedral, fully absolved. That very day, Heaven smiling on penitent England, William the Lion, the Scottish king, was taken prisoner at Richmond, and, on his return to Scotland, William, remembering this act of penance, founded the Abbey of Aberbrothick to the memory of St. Thomas of Canterbury.

In St. Andrew's Tower, part of the cathedral built by Lanfranc, now used as a vestry and formerly as a sacristy, the more privileged pilgrims used to be shown several special reliques of the martyr—his pastoral staff of pear-wood, crooked with black horn, his handkerchief stained with blood, and a black leather chest filled with linen rag, which he used as pocket-handkerchiefs as used by ordinary mortals.

Modern antiquaries, of whose researches we thankfully avail ourselves, trace many memorials of the martyrdom in the existing building, much altered as it is since the days of Henry the Second. The actual door leading into the cloisters by which Becket and the pursuing knights entered the cathedral on the night of the assassination, is still existing, with some of the original Norman walls. The wall between the chapel of St. Benedict, and the passage leading to the crypt, in front of which the archbishop fell, also still remain unaltered. The pavement in front of the wall is supposed to be the original pavement. It is made of a hard Caen stone, and from the centre of the flags a small square has been cut, tradition says, as a relic to be sent to Rome. The stone is said to have been deposited in Santa Maria Maggiore with a fragment of Becket's tunic and several small bags of his brains. Where the martyr fell a wooden altar was at the time erected to the Virgin, and called "the altar of the sword point," a portion of the saint's brains being shown under a slab of rock crystal, and the fragment of Le Bret's sword handed to the ecstatic pilgrims to kiss.

The sword worn by Hugh de Morville,

says the author of Murray's Guide to Kent, was for some time preserved at Carlisle Cathedral, and is still to be seen at Bragton Hall in Cumberland. The stairs which Becket was ascending when the knights called to him, have disappeared.

In spite of the gold and jewels of the shrine (two chests full) carried off by Henry the Eighth, with twenty-six carts of offerings, the saint's figure still shines in several of the windows, especially in those of the Trinity chapel. Canterbury was, indeed, the very centre of mediæval idolatry. Christ and the Apostles cowered away in side chapels, while Becket reigned supreme at the high altar. No danger, peril, or necessity but this Kentish saint could remove, or, at least, mitigate. This was the first English shrine at which Coeur de Lion knelt, when he escaped from Anstrian chains, and walked hither from Sandwich to give thanks "to God and St. Thomas." Richard's cruel brother, John, came to the same altar full of the same faith, and here Edward the First offered the golden crown of Scotland unjustly won. Henry the Fifth came to Canterbury after the hot mêlée at Agincourt. Emanuel and Sigismund both knelt to the same pseudo-martyr. Henry the Eighth and Charles the Fifth came to the cathedral to seek the same idolatrous reliques, with Wolsey, swollen with pride and ambition, preceding them in the same procession, on the road where, centuries before, Chaucer's merry and questionable pilgrims had ambled. Churches, indeed, says a modern writer on Canterbury, were dedicated to Becket throughout every part of Christendom.

The thirteenth century windows of the Trinity chapel are pronounced by judges to be very fine, excelling in some respects those of Bourges, Troyes, or Chartres. They are excellent in drawing, harmonious in colour, and pure in design. They prove the unqualified idolatry with which this mischievous prelate was regarded, ranked as he was above all other martyrs of the church, even St. Stephen, who perished by the hands of pagans and aliens, whilst Becket was killed by his countrymen and by Christians. In the medallions he is seen restoring sight to the blind, and the sense of smell (no great gift in the middle ages, one would suppose) was recovered at his shrine. By English fishermen in Norway he was often seen walking on the sea in the twilight, and once when the Crusaders were in peril he de-

scedded like a flame of fire. In a window to the north of the saint's shrine a series of Becket's miracles is represented.

The son of a Saxon knight named Jordan, the son of Eirulf, is restored to life by water from St. Thomas's well, into which the saint's blood had dripped, and bottles of which water were always carried off by Canterbury pilgrims. The knight neglecting an offering he had vowed to the martyr before mid Lent, the son sickens again and dies. The knight and his lady though stricken, like all the household, with illness, crawl to Canterbury to perform their vows, and the son is again restored. Another medallion in a northern window represents the martyr issuing from his shrine in full pontificals to sing mass at the high altar. This vision Benedick, a monk, who wrote on Becket's miracles, says he himself witnessed.

In the original great window of the transept the Virgin was pictured in "seven several glorious appearances," but in the centre of all shone the real deity of the place, Becket, at full length, robed and mitred. This insolent usurpation of the throne of the saints so provoked the Puritan zeal of "Blue Dick" (Sir Richard Culmer), the great image-breaker of Canterbury during the civil wars, that with a long pike he "rattled down proud Becket's glassy bones," narrowly escaping martyrdom himself, a malignant throwing a stone and all but knocking out his fiery and over-zealous brains. The long flight of steps from the crypt under the new Trinity chapel to the choir, were always ascended by the pilgrims on their knees, and still show the scoopings produced by such repeated ascents to the shrine of this false god.

The place where the martyr's shrine once stood is uncontested. The Mosaic work still existing in the chapel of the Trinity was immediately westward of the old shrine. A groove in the pavement still marks, as it is supposed, the boundary line for the humbler pilgrims, who knelt while the prior discoursed on the jewels and other offerings to the shrine. In the roof above is fixed a wooden crescent supposed to have some reference to the hospital of St. John of Acre, where St. Thomas was specially worshipped, he having saved the city from the Saracens, as it was generally reported in monastic circles. There were formerly iron staples near this crescent, which probably supported flags and spears, won from the Paynim in Egypt and the Holy Land.

A nobler relic than proud mutinous Becket's brains is to be found, however, in the chapel of the Trinity, and that is the tomb of that brave knight, Edward the Black Prince. We do not say that the wars in France in which he figured were especially just or necessary, but they were at least useful as beating into France the assurance that Englishmen were not to be easily conquered, and were enemies to be regarded with prudent respect. For the crypt of Canterbury the Black Prince seems always to have had a veneration, for he founded a chantry there at his marriage with the Fair Maid of Kent, and in his will, dated the day before his death, he directs his interment to be in Canterbury crypt. Yet after all he was buried in the chapel above, where his brazen effigy, once richly gilt, still keeps solemn sentinel, far from his father at Westminster, and his murdered grandfather at Gloucester. His real armour, which shone at Poictiers in the cross storms of swords and spears, still hang above the young warrior's grave. His brass gauntlets, his leopard helm, his wooden shield covered with stamped leather, his velvet surcoat studded with royal blazonings, and the scabbard of his irresistible sword are there still. The weapon itself Cromwell is said to have carried away. Round the tomb are the well-known feathers and the prince's motto—"Houmont" (high courage) and "Ich dien." On the canopy of the tomb is an emblem of the Trinity, but without the dove. Round the tomb are hooks for the hangings left in his will: black, with red borders, embroidered with swans and ladies' heads. By the prince's own wishes, expressed in his will, his body was to be met at the west gate of Canterbury by two chargers, fully caparisoned, and mounted by two horsemen: the one to represent him as in war, the conqueror of Crecy and Poictiers; the other, in black, to represent the victor at peaceful tournaments.

Immediately opposite the Black Prince lie Henry the Fourth and his second queen, Joan of Navarre. The king was buried in the cathedral by his own express wish, for he had contributed largely towards the new nave. The body was brought by water to Faversham, and thence by land to Canterbury; and the funeral took place in the presence of Henry the Fifth and all the great nobility. The tomb bears the arms of England and France, Evreux and Navarre. The ground

of the canopy is diapered with the words, "soverayne" and flying eagles, the king's device, ermines, collared and chained, and the queen's motto, "Attemperance." The Yorkists declared that in a storm at sea, during the voyage to Faversham, the king's body had been thrown into the sea, like that of a fatal Jonah, between Gravesend and Barking. To refute this partisan story, the royal tomb was opened in 1832, in the presence of the Dean of Canterbury. Two coffins were found, and that of the king was sawed through. After removing a layer of hay, on the surface of which lay a rude cross of twigs, an inner case was discovered, and, on that being cut into, the head was unwrapped from its foldings. The face of Henry the Fourth was perfect as in life: the nose, high arched, the beard thick and matted, and of a deep russet colour, the jaws perfect, with all the teeth entire. The whole was then reverently replaced. In the north wall of Trinity Chapel, near the tomb, is a small chantry, founded by Henry the Fourth, for two priests to sing and pray for his soul.

At the feet of the Black Prince lies Archbishop Courtenay, the persecutor of the Wyclifites, the executor to the Black Prince, and a great benefactor to the cathedral.

The beautiful corona—a sort of apse, built by English William—at the extreme east end of the cathedral, contained the shrines of Archbishops Odo and Wilfred of York and a golden reliquary, supposed to hold the scalp of Becket. In this corona was also buried Cardinal Pole, the last archbishop buried at Canterbury. Pole had his troubles in the reign of Henry the Eighth; but Mary made him her archbishop, and he had his turn at the Protestants who had baited him.

In St. Anselm's Chapel is the tomb of Simon de Mepham, an archbishop who died in the fourteenth century, broken-hearted at the resistance offered him by a bishop of Exeter, whose armed retainers repulsed him at the west door of the great Devonshire cathedral. Above the chapel, where the great historical Archbishop Anselm was buried behind the altar of St. Peter and Paul, was a small room, with a window looking into the chapel, used by the monks as a watch-chamber to guard the rich shrine of St. Thomas. Sometimes the shrine was protected by a pack of fierce dogs, and here, King John of France is foolishly said, for a time, to have been imprisoned.

In the choir immediately west of Anselm's chapel, is the tomb of Simon of Sudbury, one of those great spirits of the middle ages, who ruled, created, and helped to form England. Simon built the west gate and part of the walls of Canterbury; he forbade superstitious pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Thomas; crowned Richard the Second; and eventually was beheaded by the wild Kentishmen who shouted at the heels of Wat Tyler. Some years ago, says Stanley, the tomb was opened, and the body found perfect and wrapped in cerecloth, a leaden ball doing service for the lost head. In gratitude to such a wise benefactor of the town, the mayor and aldermen of Canterbury used, for centuries, to pay an annual visit to his tomb, to "pray for his soul." Next Simon of Sudbury reposes Archbishop Stratford, grand justiciary and regent for Edward the Third during his absence in Flanders; and behind the archbishop is the tomb of Archbishop Kemp, which is remarkable for a quaint double wooden canopy that resembles the tester of an old-fashioned four-post bed.

In the south-east transept which, like many other parts of the old cathedral, is William of Sens' work on Erwulf's Saxon walls, completed by English William (the architect who took the place of the French architect, when he was injured by a fall from the choir scaffolding) are the ruins of the tomb of Archbishop Winchelsey, who wrangled with Edward the First about clerical subsidies; but who, nevertheless, was a noble soul, and gave away to the poor two thousand loaves every Sunday and Thursday when corn was dear, and three thousand loaves when corn was cheaper. No wonder that he came to be regarded as a saint, and oblations were offered at his tomb; but the Pope, disdainful of such unobtrusive goodness, refused to sanction him by canonization. His tomb was destroyed at the same time as Becket's shrine.

Close to the broken pillars of Winchelsey's tomb is the old Purbeck marble chair, which tradition declares to have been the old chair of St. Augustine, in which the pagan kings of Kent were once enthroned, and which, presented by Ethelbert to St. Augustine, has since served as the consecration chair of the cathedral. A French antiquary has, however, proved that the chair does not really date back further than the thirteenth century, and has no claim to the antiquity of

the thrones at Aix-la-Chapelle, Augsburg, and Ratisben. Archbishop Sumner was personally enthroned in this cold dignity.

West of the transept, against the south wall of the choir, is the dilapidated effigy of Archbishop Hubert Walter, who fought beside Cœur de Lion and Archbishop Baldwin in the Hely Land, a sturdy member of the Church Militant,

Who proved his doctrine orthodox
By Apostolic blows and knocks.

Walter, on his return from the Saracen wars, acted as a faithful grand justiciary to King Richard. Beyond this tomb is that of Walter Reynolds, an archbishop of a very different temper, who basely deserted Edward the Second in his evil days.

Opening from the south transept, the arrangement of which exactly resembles that of the transept of the martyrdom at the time of Becket's murder, is St. Michael's, or the Warrior's chapel, as it is often called. It is Perpendicular work, and the builder is unknown. This chapel is famous for its tombs of illustrious people. The chief or central one is that erected by Margaret Holland to her two husbands John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, half brother of Henry the Fourth, and Thomas of Clarence, the second son of Henry, killed by a lance thrust in the face at the battle of Bannockburn, in 1421. Through the eastern wall protrudes oddly enough the stone coffin of that great statesman Archbishop Langton, who effected at least two great things—the obtaining Magna Charta, and the first division of the Bible into chapters. It is supposed that an altar slab once covered the coffin, a distinction usually reserved for eminent saints. Few saints were, however, more useful in their generation than Stephen Langton, and he was especially reverenced at Canterbury, where he had led to the translation of St. Thomas's body. Among the other monuments, as a strange contrast to those of warriors or such wise prelates as Langton, stands Lady Thornhurst's tomb (temp James the First); her ruff and fardingale are portentous, but then her epitaph places her beside Venus, Juno, and Minerva.

The crypt or Undercroft of Canterbury is as old as Ernulf. It is one of five great English crypts, say the antiquaries, founded before 1085, after which crypts grew rare, and many of the Saxon capitals remain still unfinished. The whole crypt is dedicated to the Virgin, and at the east end is the chapel of our Lady Undercroft

which is surrounded by late Perpendicular open stone work. In beauty this shrine exceeded Walsingham, while it equalled it in wealth. Only very great persons were allowed to see it, but Erasmus found admission, and describes it as being surrounded by a double iron rail. The window over the altar for the Virgin's figure still remains, and the bracket is carved with the scene of the Annunciation.

In the centre of the chapel pavement is the tombstone of Archbishop Morton, a worthy man, who ended the Wars of the Roses by marrying Henry of Richmond and Elizabeth of York, thus blending the two great parties. His monument in the south-west corner was mutilated by indefatigable Blue Dick. In another part of the Lady Chapel lies Lady Mohun of Dunster, who, in the fourteenth century, founded a perpetual chantry here.

This crypt was handed over by Queen Elizabeth, for the use of the French and Flemish Protestant refugees, who fled to England from the Duke of Alva and the persecuting Spaniards. Several hundred of these clothiers and silk weavers, "gentle and profitable strangers," as Archbishop Parker kindly called them, were allowed to fix their silk looms in this crypt. There are numerous French inscriptions still visible on the roof, and in the south aisle their descendants still worship in the troublous days. This French chapel is entered by the Black Prince's chantry, which he founded on his marriage with the Fair Maid. The arms of the sable champion, that terror of France, and of his father, Edward the Third, are still visible on the vaulting. To support this chantry the prince left the manor of Vauxhall to the cathedral. Further east is St. John's chapel, divided in two by a stone wall, adorned with curious tempera paintings, but quite dark. Pugin, wise in such matters, believed that this part of the crypt was formerly intended for hiding the treasures of the church in the dark hours of need.

The north-west tower of Canterbury cathedral was rebuilt as late as 1840. The old Norman tower that preceded it bore the name of "Arndel Steeple," from a ring of five bells placed in it by the archbishop of that name. The south, or "Dunstan Steeple," was the work of archbishop Chicheley and Prior Goldstone. The great central or "Bell Harry Tower," from a bell hung at the top, was Prior Goldstone's work alone, and replaced the famous "Angel Steeple," so called from the gilt

figure of an angel that once crowned it, and was the first object of reverence seen by the approaching pilgrims. The corona had never been complete till Mr. J. G. Scott took it up in 1862.

AN OLD SEA STORY.

A MODEST little tract, undated, but printed apparently about the end of the seventeenth century, tells in stirring, if somewhat too grandiloquent language, a tale of the sea, deserving to be told again.

England and Spain, for the nonce tired of war, had come to terms, and merchants eagerly embraced the chance of doing business with the quondam foe, whose ports had so long been closed against them. Hoping, like many another, to make a little hay while the sun of peace shone, the owner of "The Three Half-moons" resolved to try his fortune with the Spaniards; and one fine morning the good ship, well rigged, well victualled, well furnished, well armed, and manned by thirty-eight stout mariners, sailed from Portsmouth Harbour for Seville. For awhile all went well with her: "gallantly for many days did she hold up her head, and dance on the top of the billows; her masts standing stiffly up like so many trees moved by enchantment, whilst the big-bellied sails made haste to fly after, blistering and puffing in scorn or anger, yet never overtaking them." Alas, this pleasant prologue was to usher in a very direful tragedy! "The Three Half-moons" had no sooner entered "the Straits" than she found herself beset by eight Turkish galleys, evidently bent upon mischief. The wind suddenly died away, the vessel lay like a log on the water, and there was nothing to do but prepare for the worst.

The master armed himself with sword and target. The sailors seized upon the first weapons that came to hand, and then all waited for the coming of the enemy, every man encouraging his neighbour to fight valiantly as became an Englishman, and to die, if die he must, honourably as became a Christian. Presently the galleys came swooping down upon the fated ship, the scimitars of the Turks flashing in the sunshine. Some were seen basely preparing to toss balls of wild-fire, "as if the ocean was their tennis-court;" others marched between the lines of rowers, encouraging, threatening, striking the galley-slaves already tugging their hardest at the oars. As the galleys neared the

English ship, John Reynard, the gunner, plied his demi-cannon and culverins so briskly that the sea appeared as if all afame, and the galleys could not be seen for the smoke. Doggedly, however, the Turks rowed on, and soon grappled with their prey. "Look how a company of hounds hang upon a goodly stag, when with their noise they ring out his death, so hang these galleys upon the body of her; nothing could be seen of her for smoke and fire; she was half-choked with the flames, and half-stifled with the waters. Yet as you shall often see a bull, when his strength seemeth to be spent and he is ready to faint and fall upon his knees, cast up on a sudden his surly head, and bravely renew a fresh and more fierce encounter; so did this ship break from the galleys like a lusty bear from so many dogs, or rather like an invincible lion from so many bears." The Turks leaped out of their vessels, and like rats nimbly climbed up the tacklings of the ship. But the English mariners so laid about them with swords, brownbills, halberts, and morrice-pikes, that in so tragical an act, it was half a comedy to behold what tumbling tricks the Turks made into the sea backwards. Some of them, catching hold of the upper decks, had their hands struck off; others, clasping their arms about a cable, lifting their bodies into the ship, lost their heads, and so knew not which way to go, though it lay before them. It was hard to tell which would prove the victors. The Turks would not draw back, tho' English scorned to yield. "Fight it out, as you are Christians!" cried the boatswain, as he fell wounded unto death; and only one of the little band showed the white feather. But the odds were too great. The swarming Turks gradually overbore all opposition, and, without yielding, the English found their ship a prize, and themselves prisoners.

The victors, however, had not much to rejoice over. The ship had been so badly injured in the conflict, they were forced to abandon her, after removing everything worth carrying away, including such of her defenders as were left alive. These were taken to Alexandria, where their hair and beards were shaved off, previous to sending them to the galleys, to be clad in thin canvas, dieted on coarse bread and stinking water, laden with heavy irons, lodged upon the cold earth, and bastinadoed continually. Before many months elapsed, all save one were ransomed—the

owner and master by good friends, the rest by death. John Reynard, the gunner, managed to live through all, and bore the hardships of a cruel captivity for some years, until its rigour was relaxed, and he and half-a-dozen other old prisoners were permitted, on condition of paying their keeper something out of their earnings, to work outside the prison bounds, and to go to and fro at their pleasure. For fourteen years the gunner endured this servitude. He then began to think it was about time he was back in old England, and only waited for an opportunity to try and get there. One winter, when there were two hundred and sixty-six Christians, of fifteen different nations, in the prison—among them only two Englishmen besides Reynard—all the galleys were dismantled, their crews dispersed, and their commanders sent upon duty elsewhere. The homesick gunner thought the long-hoped-for chance of winning his freedom had come at last, and determined to risk all upon the cast.

A short distance from the prison stood a victualling-house, kept by Peter Unticosa, a Spaniard, who had been captured thirty years before, and lived, to all appearance, as contentedly as though he had forgotten he was born among Christians, and did not desire to be buried among them. Judging the Spaniard by himself, Reynard opened his mind to him, and found he had not mistaken his man. Another old prisoner was taken into confidence, and these three met again and again in consultation, and after debating the matter for seven weeks, agreed upon a plan of escape. This they confided to five others upon whose discretion and courage they felt they might rely, and it was finally resolved not to be contented with obtaining their own liberty, but to set free every Christian in durance vile. To this end they contrived to furnish every one of them with a file, giving him solemn injunctions to have his shackles off by a certain hour the next night; wisely holding that the more swiftly execution followed determination, the less likelihood there was of their hazardous attempt ending in failure.

According to arrangement, the eight leaders assembled at Unticosa's house, ostensibly for the purpose of making a night of it. When it grew dark, Peter took a message in the name of one of the city authorities, asking the keeper of the prison to come down to the Spaniard's upon

important business. Never suspecting the genuineness of the message, the keeper obeyed the summons, and returned with the messenger, ordering the warders to leave the gates unbarred until he returned. Meanwhile the conspirators armed themselves as best they could, Reynard securing a rusty old sword blade without a hilt, and extinguished all lights. Soon afterwards the expected pair arrived. Struck by the utter darkness, the keeper drew back on the threshold, but ere he could fly Reynard clove his head open, and the rest despatched him, making assurance doubly sure by cutting his head off.

This done, the eight resolute men made their way with all speed to the prison, passed through the unsecured gates, made short work of the surprised warders, and armed themselves with their weapons. The gates were then fastened, and a cannon placed so as to command the prison entrance, in charge of a man who stood, linstock in hand, ready to fire if occasion required. Having obtained the keys of the fortress, the prisoners were set free, and all set to work with a will, some ramming up the gates, some gathering sails, oars, and spars, while others were busy launching the largest galley in the roads. Meantime, eight Turks had managed to reach the prison roof. Reynard and Unticosa led a party after them, and a sharp fight ensued, in which the Spaniard was killed, and the Englishman received three shots in his clothes, but none of the Turks escaped. One of them, as he received his death-wound, fell from the top of the wall, making so much noise in his descent that it brought some revellers out of a house near the prison; sobered by the sight, they raised an alarm, but all too late. Before the soldiers arrived upon the scene, the galley was launched, and with spreading sail, speeding through the waves as fast as a favourable wind and desperate arms could take it; while, swarming like locusts on the shore, the Turks impeded each other's movements as they tried to launch galleys for pursuit, and the gunners of the forts wasted their shot upon the sea.

Burthened as she was, the flying vessel was not in the most manageable trim, and a gale rising, she was buffeted almost helplessly about for days and days, until supplies ran short, and eight men died of sheer starvation; but on the twenty-ninth day land blessed the sight of the weary, worn men, and they found themselves at Gallipoli. Here they were heartily wel-

comed by the Abbot of the Convent of the Americates, and well tended by the brethren, who would not listen to their guests departing until they had thoroughly recruited themselves; and insisted upon retaining Reynard's blade, which had done so much towards delivering so many Christians from barbarous thraldom. At Tarento the galley was sold, the proceeds divided, and then every man shaped his way to his own land excepting Reynard. He went on to Rome, had an audience of the Pope, who advised him to proceed to Madrid, and gave him letters of commendation for presentation to the King of Spain. Reynard took the advice, and His Catholic Majesty immediately put the brave gunner upon the pension list; but he hungered to see his native land, and came home to tell his story and, it is to be hoped, to live happy ever afterwards.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER L. THE BRIDE'S TRIUMPHS.

THERE is no vain repining in the Forest family when these tidings are told. There is a vast deal of unpleasantness in the position, but not a particle of pain. "You're the gainer in every way; in pocket as well as respectability," Gertrude says to her brother, "but I am an actual loser, for I shall have to give up what I have come to look upon as entirely my own."

"You don't mean to tell me that you hanker after the jewels the blackguard gave you, do you?" he asks in disgust.

"They were the only things that made me tolerate the sight of the man," she says with careless candour. "Think, if I would have married him for the sake of them, what I shall feel at giving them up."

"Why, I should think you're cheaply off the Graham with the loss of the gems," Frank says laughing. "As for myself, I forgive Charlotte freely for all her offences against me, in consideration of the awful punishment she'll endure in being his wife."

"He's quite good enough for her, at any rate," Gertrude says with a brief flash of loyalty towards her faithless lover. "We can't afford to think that either one of them has been sacrificed in the transaction."

To his supreme annoyance, the Granges will insist on regarding, treating, and speaking of Frank as a greatly injured and

much-to-be-pitied man. Now that she is safely off their hands, and not likely ever again to be an expense to them, Charlotte is regarded very much more affectionately by her brother, and very much more tolerantly by her sister-in-law. "It is a terrible loss to you," Mrs. Grange says the first time she sees Frank after his bereavement. "Very strong persuasions must have been used by Mr. Graham to induce her to waver for a moment in her fidelity to you. Few people know her as well as I do, and I am quite sure, when more is known about the matter, we shall find that she has not been to blame. Mr. Graham must have used very powerful arguments indeed to win her love."

"He probably mentioned his income to her," Frank says.

"Money was one of the last things Charlotte would think of, in a matter that concerned her life's happiness, and the life's happiness of another," Mrs. Grange says piously. She cannot help remembering that Charlotte will be able to bring good gifts to her and hers, if only she (Mrs. Grange) speaks on all occasions sufficiently well of her now exalted sister-in-law.

"She owes us a good deal," Mrs. Grange reminds herself in strict secrecy, "and she must be a meaner natured, more deceitful thing even than I think her, if she refuses to pay us when I speak well of her so publicly."

Acting on this theory, Mrs. Grange goes into the highways and by-ways, speaking good words of the woman who has been a thorn in her flesh, and a severe trial to the economical part of her nature, for many a long year. "She was a prize!" Mrs. Grange tells every one who will listen to her on the subject, "What wonder that she was contended for eagerly? Mr. Graham won her from a man we all esteem and pity. But who can blame Mr. Graham for having done his utmost to attain such an object?"

There is very little said, even by maliciously sympathetic friends, about Gertrude's share in the matter. That young lady departs herself in a way that does not for one moment suggest desertion, even to the most morbidly sympathising mind. She openly mentions what had been her plans only the other day; she openly states that a suspicion of either Graham or Charlotte daring to carry out such a scheme of deception had never entered her mind, or roused one fear; she

openly laments being obliged to return the jewels, and relinquish the money.

"It's no use your trying to check me in my truthful utterances, Marian," she says, when her sister attempts a remonstrance. "I had all the annoyances of an engagement with a man I was thoroughly ashamed of, for nothing; the sting of the annoyance remains, but the soothing influence of the wealth that would give me ease and freedom from every form of social discomfiture is gone, together with the jewels which represented that wealth. I can't pretend, after having made the sacrifice, not to regret that I made the sacrifice in vain."

She says this to her sister, as she superintends the packing up of the bracelets, and necklets, and rings, and lockets, which Clement Graham had given to her, while he believed he should shortly be in a position to claim them as his own again. She makes out a list of all the things he has given her, in a clear, bold hand; and the contents of the box, which is finally sealed, corded, locked, and sent off to Grahamhill, tallies exactly with that list. "There were several bouquets, mamma," she says, when she has completed her uncongenial task, "if you like I will order a dozen from Covent Garden, and send them to the bride."

"I don't see the lock of hair he gave you, or the little miniature of himself?" Mrs. Forest says, disregarding her daughter's offer as to the bouquets; "you can hardly keep them, trifles as they are."

"Unfortunately, I burnt both the day he gave them to me," Gertrude confesses. "You see, if I could have foreseen this, I should have kept them to return, but when I believed that I was to have that hair and the original of that photograph about my path for the remainder of my life, why it was natural to burn them, wasn't it?"

The safe receipt of the box containing the trinkets is acknowledged satisfactorily a few days after their having been dispatched by Gertrude. The acknowledgement is a characteristic one. It is written on a sheet of note paper which blazes with the Grahams' crest and motto in crimson and gold, and is in Charlotte's handwriting. It is concise and to the point.

"Mrs. Graham, of Grahamhill, acknowledges the safe receipt of all the jewellery belonging to her, which has been in Miss Forest's possession."

Just about the same time Mrs. Grange

bears down upon the Forest family with an extended olive-branch. She has threatened the invasion through Frank for several days, and Frank has been compelled most unwillingly to sound a note of warning in the ears of his mother and sisters.

"That horrible woman says she can never feel herself to be a good Christian again, until she has been here to say a few 'extenuating words,' as she calls them about Charlotte," he tells them, with a vexed laugh. "I can't fathom her motive for doing it, for she used to detest Charlotte like the devil, when she had to cater for that healthy and hearty young lady."

"Her motive is easily explained," Marian rejoins. "She wants to pander to Charlotte's sweet, smiling, spirit of spite, by detailing to her how wretched we all looked when we heard the grandeur of Grahamhill enlarged upon. I know she'll do it; Charlotte is just the woman who will pay well for that kind of trouble being taken on her behalf."

"If I were Gertrude I wouldn't see her," Mrs. Forest says.

"I wouldn't miss hearing her perjure herself on any account," Miss Forest replies. "I have had pain enough out of the transaction; do let me get a little pleasure out of it as well."

"Charlotte has sent me a number of the local papers, giving an account of all the festivities that are going on in their honour," Mrs. Grange says to her mother peevishly, as she swoops down into the midst of that lady's undisturbed maternal seclusion one morning. "She is so disgustingly selfish," the aggrieved Mrs. Grange goes on, "she doesn't say a word about our visiting them; but she tells me of all their fine doings, and says she shall look upon it as a slight from me, if I don't let Frank and the Forests understand how happy and socially successful she is."

"She's a nasty deceitful thing," Mrs. Constable, who has never forgiven Charlotte's endeavour to supersede May, says with energy. "If I were you, I would let her do all her ill-natured work for herself; not but what I am humbly grateful that that fellow Graham has taken her away from coming here, to make this poor dear darling innocent baby's life a burden to it. I'd have nothing more to do with her and her ways if I were you."

"It's all very well your saying that,

mamma; but I am not justified in neglecting any opportunity that's given me of repaying myself for the trouble and expense I have had with her. If she had married into poverty, I should have agreed with you quite; as it is, she ought to remember, and she shall remember, that her brother and I have been her best friends, and she ought to do a great deal for us from Grahamshall."

As is but natural, Mrs. Grange sings in quite a different strain to this when she goes to see the Forests. She tones down to them her elation at the position Charlotte has attained, and her natural antipathy to that successful person to a decorous degree. There is nothing either in her manner, or in her mention of Mrs. Clement Graham, with which they can find fault openly. She goads them, she irritates them, she covertly insults them, as only such a woman, with such an end in view, can. But she does it all within the law of social observances. They have no reasonable grounds for rising up and smiting her either mentally or physically, but she upsets their digestive organs, and weakens their spirit of Christian charity and forbearance by her strained enthusiasm for the good qualitics which Charlotte does not possess, and her elaboration of snrprise at any one being found uncharitable enough to suppose for a moment that any other woman in the world would have resisted the temptation to which Charlotte ("after much solicitation," she observes in parenthesis) has succumbed. But she stings them all more sharply than by any of these falsifications of facts when she brings her visit to a conclusion with the remark that, "Of course, everyone who knows anything at all about the matter must pity Frank most deeply."

"If Charlotte only knew with what whole-heartedness, and with what a splendidly time-serving spirit, her emissary came here and worked her will, she would pay her liberally," Marian says, when the indefatigable agent of Mrs. Graham of Grahamshall takes her departure at last. Then they turn to the perusal of the local papers which Mrs. Grange has left with them, telling them that she "feels sure they will like to see how well poor dear Charlotte has been received by the neighbourhood," and everything about the recently promoted lady seems to savour of sumptuousness and success.

"Yet we're led to believe that it is only the upright who secure honour and success

in the end," Gertrude says, laughing contemptuously as she throws the most laudatory of all the journals down. "Look here, Marian! you and I appreciate glitter and glory to the full as highly as Mrs. Graham does: our means of gaining it have failed, hers have succeeded: the argument of necessity is that her means were the right ones. 'Merit ensures reward.'"

"We are not at Grahamshall," Marian replies. "'The Babbler' of The Cheshire Cat may be a connterjnper in a general huckster's shop in Chester, with very misty ideas as to that about which he is writing, when he describes Grahamshall as the 'princely residence of Clement Graham, Esq.'"

"There must be a little fire for so much smoke, though," Gertrude replies. "She's on a bed of roses evidently, even if the roses are not of the very rarest description; and she must have what she will like, and that is absolute power over such a weak nature as Clement's."

"It's a case then of glorying to reign in hell rather than to serve in the heaven it would be to be apart from him," Marian says; but Gertrude rejects this view of the case, and still nourishes the belief that her rival has won a crown.

Time goes on. The long winter drags its weary length out, and finally gives place to the exhilarating presence of "the boyhood of the year." Now it is, when they picture to themselves their home set in the midst of a delicate mosaic of spring flowers, and surrounded by miles of such emerald green verdure as is refreshing to the memory even of any one who has ever caught so much as a glimpse of Ireland, now it is that Captain Bellairs and Kate begin to talk of coming back.

During their absence they have had very little news from Lungnaqnilla or Breagh Place. The agent left in charge of Captain Bellairs's property, on accepting the responsibility, had resolved to keep all the minor cares and bothers which could not be averted, to himself, during his employer's holiday. Cissy has only written to them once, and her letter was dated only about a month after their marriage. Her communication was not interesting to either of them, for it was a mere moan, a mere whining exposition of her own effete inability to make herself comfortable and happy, in the home that had been liberally provided for her. "My own house seems so terribly lonely," she wrote, "that I

haven't been able to make up my mind to go away from Lugnaquilla yet; and as we don't interfere with anyone here, I think I shall stay a week or two longer, if you will let me. Mrs. Durgan has been most intrusive and disagreeable in her manner to me; she has been here twice, and each time she has asked me if she can't do anything to expedite my move into the cottage. Your agent, Mr. Corkran, appears to be a most sensible man. I have had to consult him several times, and to appeal to him when the servants have not been behaving as I know you would wish them to behave. Tell Mrs. Bellairs that when I picture her in that humble little home in which I saw her first in Somersetshire, I can hardly realise her as the mistress of Lugnaquilla. What changes! what ups and downs there are in life, to be sure!"

"It's a pleasant letter; just exactly like Cissy," had been Kate's sole comment on this epistle, when she handed it back to her husband. In the first flush of her long-deferred happiness, she had no feeling of anger or annoyance against the writer of it: Cissy at that distance was no stumbling-block, she was a mere easily-bent-aside twig in her path.

But now the time had come for them to go home: to go back to that home in which her children ought to be brought up with the knowledge that she reigned there as supreme queen; and she did begin to feel curious as to what would be the aspect of affairs when she should arrive there. Mrs. Durgan's communications had been few and brief, and in them she had never made any mention of Mrs. Angerstein. "I want you home," she had said several times; "the property wants you home; the people on your land, and the servants in your house, will all be the better for your return." They read her letters, and said to each other, "How hearty she is, and how she loves us!" but they never suspected that any stronger motive than mere desire for their presence impelled her to write as she did.

"I do hope Cissy will not come up to the house the instant we arrive," Kate said to herself once or twice in the course of their busy, happy journey home. She had very little time to ponder upon how

intensely disagreeable and disappointing it would be if Cissy should invade her almost immediately, but she had a pervading sense of how agreeable it would be to be installed at Lugnaquilla without any external aid. Her life abroad with her husband had been one of such unbroken happiness, that, anxious as she was to know well the place in which her lines were cast, she did shrink from the interruption to that life, fearing that any change, however slight, might shake the conditions of perfect satisfaction by which she was surrounded.

In the idle, luxurious happiness of their life abroad, Captain Bellairs was astonished to find how much of romance there really was in his marriage. The universal admiration which her beauty and freshness excited pleased and flattered him. Knowing himself to be lord of her mind as well as of her heart, it pleased him well that other men should show themselves ready to lose their heads on her account. It did not affect Kate injuriously, but it gratified her to a certain extent, as being a recognition of the merit of his choice; and so it made her develope fresh brilliancy, and altogether became her well.

But now they are going home, and life will be altogether more prosaic. Kate is not fool enough to fear that she will not find happiness in the substantial forms of it that will be about her on every side; at the same time she does not wish to have this romance which is passing away rudely swept aside by an outsider. "It will slip from under our feet; and Harry and I will feel ourselves standing on firmer and more lasting ground before we are aware of the change probably," she tells herself, "but we must go through the transition state alone."

They reach Dublin about eight in the morning, and find a carriage waiting for them, and Mr. Corkran, the agent, in attendance to welcome them back. All along the road, Kate, in glorious bursts of thankful, grateful joy, reverts to and recalls that former drive of hers along the same road, when she was going in her desolation to be companion to the invalid lady at Breagh Place. "Nothing can depress her now," she feels, as she drives up to her own door.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

All the Year Round

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"Household Words"

No. 322. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER V. PEACE.

On the day after Lucy Dormer's funeral, Grace proposed that they should start for Germany. "You recollect," she said to her companion with a faint smile, "all the plans we used to make about visiting Paris together, and the hours we passed in discussing them, long after the other girls were asleep; what visionary milliners' bills we ran up; what theatres and operas we went to; and what wholesale destruction we caused amongst the hearts of the young marquises and counts of whom our society was to be composed. And now what has been the reality? My experience of Paris is confined to a sick room overlooking the courtyard of an hotel and to a certain portion of the Tuilleries Gardens, where, like the prisoner of Chillon, I should think my constantly pacing feet must have worn a path; I am wearing the mourning which was made for me at poor uncle's death, and have not crossed the threshold of a single milliner's shop; the young counts and marquises are represented by Baptiste, the waiter, and Etienne, who brings up the wood; and the whole thing has turned out a mockery and a delusion."

"There's a chance for you now, dear," said Anne. "Your self-sacrifice is over so far as poor Lucy is concerned, and there is no reason why you should not see as much of Paris as you may wish. Madame Bavardé, the landlady, would act as your chaperon."

"And what would you do?" asked Grace.

"I would remain here," said Anne, "making preparations for our departure."

"You would not come with me to join in all the festivities?" asked Grace.

"Oh no," replied Anne quickly, with a look of terror in her face; "I must not be seen here or anywhere in public. Of course, in the quietude of Bonn it would not matter, but here in Paris there might be—some people who would recognise me, and that would be destruction."

Grace looked curiously at her friend. This was not the first time she had seen her entirely lose her self-possession at the idea of being seen and recognised by some persons, whose names she had never mentioned, to whose actions she had never alluded. It was very strange, Grace thought; but if Anne did not volunteer her confidences, it was not for her to seek them. Moreover, her pallor and tremulousness left no doubt of the reality of her hesitation, and so Grace said, consolingly, "There shall be no question of your being seen, dear, and I myself have not the spirits to attempt to enter into any gaiety. We will leave our explorations of Paris, and our fascinations of its inhabitants, for some happier days. You shake your head, Anne, as though you did not believe that such times were in store for us: the fact being that you are horribly upset and entirely out of sorts, your nerves are unstrung, and you are labouring under mental depression, which I take to be the reaction from severe excitement. I am sure that the best cure for that will be peace and quiet, such as you will find in my aunt's house. Not with her, perhaps, because she is fidgety and hypochondriacal; but I shall take care to interpose between you, and shall hand you over to be dealt with by the professor, who is the

dearest old creature in the world, and whose very aspect is suggestive of a benign calm. You still shake your head?"

"I am something of a fatalist, I am afraid," said Anne, with a dreary smile; "and though I love to hear you talk of the peace that awaits us in your German home, I cannot get rid of the presentiment that, so far as I am concerned, it will not be of long duration. I only hope that the trouble which I cannot explain, but with which I fancy myself threatened, may not be reflected on you."

"I would willingly take my share of it, dear," said Grace, embracing her affectionately, "if by doing so I could relieve you; but it will be time enough to talk of it when it comes. To-morrow we will leave this place and commence our journey, but my idea is to travel very leisurely—we are not pressed for time—and I think that your strength will not be equal to much fatigue."

Grace had gauged her friend's condition with tolerable accuracy. Although her desire to get away from Paris—where, had she ventured into the streets, she would have run the chance of being encountered by her father, or, worse still, by the man who had a legal right to call himself her husband—had given to Anne Studley a kind of fictitious stamina, they had made but little progress on their journey before this utterly gave way; and Grace, whose intellect and power of will had been much strengthened, since she had been compelled to depend upon herself, saw that all her fears were about to be realised. At first Anne would not hear of any delay, but when Grace promised to avoid the great towns, and declared, what certainly had some foundation of truth, that she herself was anxious to take the opportunity of visiting the quaint old Belgian cities which lay almost in their road, Anne could make no objection. She knew, too, that there was no danger in the proposal. Brussels she had heard her father speak of as one of his haunts. There were gaiety, luxury, and society—all of which he loved; and, in a town of clubs and coteries, Captain Studley would find little difficulty in combining profitable business with his pleasure. But cathedrals and mediæval town-halls; belfries, and watch-towers; the masterpieces of Rubens and Van Eyck; the memorials of Alva and Artevelde, were not likely to rouse the faintest interest in his breast. So the two friends passed several days in exploring Ghent and Bruges, and Grace noticed

with delight that Anne, freed from the influence of terror, was daily regaining her health and spirits.

Journeying thus by slow degrees, and stopping on their route wherever they thought amusement or distraction was to be found, they arrived one bright afternoon at the little German town which was for some time to be their home. Anne was delighted with the first glimpse which she caught of its first appearance. Nestling in the valley, the dark towers of its ancient buildings and the green doors of its modern houses standing out in sharp relief against the snow, with which the streets were rendered dumb; the ladies, with their attendant cavaliers, well wrapped in furs, driving in elegant sleighs, the horses attached to which made music with their tinkling bells; the peasants in jackets and kittels of their own knitting; the dreamy-looking students, scorning any increase of clothing, and braving the rigours of the frost with open necks and uncovered hands—these sights were new and strange to Anne Studley, and aroused in her a pleasant interest such as she had not felt for many a long day. Their arrival had been expected; and Franz Eckhardt and Paul Fischer, two of the most studious and best regulated young men of the professor's flock, had been sent to meet them. Fully appreciative were the two students of the honour thus conferred upon them, and before the train had come to a standstill they were at the door of the *damen-coupé*, caps in hand, full of congratulations to Grace on her happy return, and of almost openly-expressed admiration of the friend who accompanied her. Selected for their staid bearing and their scholastic acquirements, the natural taste of these youths impelled them to give the preference to a calmer style of beauty, and to manners less capricious and exacting than those of Miss Middleham; and as they walked off from the station, after having seen the ladies safely despatched in a sleigh, it was evident, from the confidences exchanged between them, that both Franz and Paul had been struck by Anne Studley's saddened countenance, and tranquil demeanour.

"The little *Engländerin* is well enough, see'st thou," said Franz, the elder of the two, as he stopped to light his pipe. "There is much prettiness in her fair hair and blue eyes, but she is light and frivolous, and lacks the repose which her friend suggests."

"The newly-arrived one," said Paul, who had endeavoured by hard study to rid himself of a temperament which by nature was intensely romantic, and had not quite succeeded, "the newly-arrived one I should judge by her countenance to have undergone much suffering, and thus to have accomplished that self-purification which is only taught by sorrow. The other is conceited and satirical—more of the character usually ascribed by English romancists to their heroines; the newly-arrived one has a soul which one can see shining through the depths of her eyes."

"Thou speakest like the Ghost of Uhland," said Franz. "All the overpiling of mathematics and metaphysics which thou hast laid over the fire of romance, innate within thee, has been insufficient to extinguish it. It is a dangerous spark for thy peace of mind, so before again encountering the young ladies, let us try to quench it with a glass of beer at the verein hard by."

A proposal of this kind is never unacceptable to a German Bursch, however romantically he may be inclined, and with a nod of acquiescence, Paul accompanied his friend into the tavern. There, in a large room on the ground-floor, they found some dozen young fellows assembled. On the bare table stood many huge beer-glasses, the atmosphere was thick with tobacco-smoke; while the walls of the room were covered in every direction with excellent caricatures in crayon, many of them life-sized, of the members of the club. Both of our friends were represented, of course, but, oddly enough, both in one character—that of Faust. In the face of the old man, bent and grizzled, listening with uplifted hand to the roaring chorus of the students beneath his window, were to be found the bold and somewhat heavy features of Franz Eckhardt; in the delicate lineaments of the youth, who was kneeling to an unseen Gretchen, was to be found an unmistakable resemblance to Paul Fischer.

A shout of welcome greeted them as they entered, and before they were seated they received a dozen challenges to drink.

"We were talking of thee, Paul," said a tall fellow, whose somewhat sodden face was adorned with a couple of recent scars, and who, from his position at the end of the table, seemed to be regarded as the president of the society; "we were saying that since the day when thou wert prevented from throwing thyself into the

river, on account of the rejection of thy suit by the daughter of Jacob Groll the glover, it would seem as though thou hast been cured of thy love mania."

"Philemasium, in Aristonetus, told Emmusus that there was no cure for love melancholy, to be compared with hard and constant study," said another sententiously. "That is the advice which our Paul is following; he sits at the feet of the ancient Sturm, instead of at those of a formosa puella, and, swearing by Minerva, has abandoned Venus."

"We will get Arnst to change the faces of the Faust," said a third. "Paul Fischer has lost his youth, and henceforth should be represented as the philosopher, while as for Franz ——"

"Not so fast, not so fast," said Eckhardt, with a laugh, "I am here to answer for myself; but before you obliterate Arnst's rendering of Paul, in which character and features are alike accurately delineated, you must hear me. What should you say, brothers Burschen and Renowners, if I were to tell yon that our Paul is still true to that character—that within the last half hour he has lost his heart, and is ready to commit any folly to prove his admiration?"

This statement was met with loud shouts of "bravo!" mingled with cries of "her name!" Paul Fischer rose in protest, but his rising was the signal for indiscriminate yelling, some calling upon him to speak, others to sit down.

"Silentum!" roared the president, bringing his glass with great effect down upon the table. "No one should expect the young one to give the name of the lady with whom, according to Franz, he is so suddenly and so desperately smitten; nevertheless, that will not prevent us from drinking prosperity to the newly-born attachment. Paul, my son—prosit!" He rose to his feet, and, as he spoke, lifted the glass to his lips, and swallowed the contents. All the others did the same, uttering the same word.

Meanwhile, all unconscious of the honour thus done to them, the two English ladies had driven to the house in the Poppolsdorfer-Allée, on the steps of which the worthy professor, divested of his favourite schlaf-rock, and clad in a wondrous blue coat, which was only brought out on occasions of the highest festivity, stood bare-headed to receive them. His eyes glistened with delight behind his spectacles as the sleigh drove up, and as soon as

Grace alighted, he took both her hands into custody with his plump little fingers, and kissed her on each cheek with frank heartiness; he then turned to her companion, and was evidently quite taken aback by Anne's appearance. The letter which Grace had written from Paris to the Frau Professorin, had prepared the little German household for the advent of a person in a professedly superior position to that which poor Lucy Dormer had occupied; but, although Anne was dressed with particular plainness, the quality of her clothes being such as would be scorned by many a young lady's-maid, there was a high-bred look about her which could not be hidden, and an air of quiet suffering which could not fail to awake interest in a kindly sympathetic soul, such as tenanted the quaint and homely body of Professor Sturm. It was not possible that anyone with such an expression, the professor thought, could be employed in a menial occupation; and even if she were the servant of his young English ward, from him, whose sympathies were radical and expansive, she would be entitled to respectful recognition; so the professor offered his arm to assist Anne to alight from the sleigh, and courteously motioned her to precede him upstairs, to the room where Madame Sturm was waiting to receive them.

Speculation, as to the manner in which the Frau Professorin would receive her friend, had occupied Grace's thoughts a great deal during the journey, and occasioned her no small mental trouble. She knew her aunt to be narrow-minded and obstinate, a great stickler for caste, and resolutely opposed to favourable first impressions. Poor Lucy Dormer had been decidedly superior to the generality of her class; but that fact had had no weight on the Frau Professorin, who treated her with marked disdain, and had been accustomed to speak of her as "that young person." Grace knew Anne's sensitive spirit would recoil at anything like a sound of harshness, and she was more than anxious to discover the effect, which the manners and appearance of the new inmate of their household would have upon her aunt.

This information came speedily and satisfactorily. When Anne had been half-presented, half pointed out to the Frau Professorin as Mrs. Waller, by Grace; had answered a few questions; in her own quiet way had relieved Grace of her wraps, and arranged Mrs. Sturm's medicine bottle and glass, which were in a dangerous posi-

tion on the table, and had retired to unpack the boxes, the old lady took advantage of the opportunity to deliver her opinion about the new-comer.

"I like that Waller of yours," she said, with an emphatic sniff of approval, as soon as the door had closed behind Anne. "I am very quick at observing, and the way in which she saved that bottle and glass from falling, showed me that she has her head screwed on in the right place—a woman who, I should think, knew all about medicines and that kind of thing, and who will be a comfort to have in the house, and able to look after herself; not like that poor girl you took away with you, who was always ailing and moping, as though one invalid in the place was not enough at a time. Quite a superior kind of person, too; and that makes one difficulty of knowing what we shall do with her. We could never expect her to sit down in the kitchen and eat her meals with Lisbeth. No, as you say, my dear, of course not; especially as Lisbeth has a taste for blut-wurst, black-pudding, and onious, which Waller probably would not share; so I fancy it will be best for her to have her dinner in that little room which you make a sitting-room, next to the professor's study, and I will have the sewing-machine moved up there, so that she can take a turn at it when she is not particularly engaged for you; for when people have been in trouble they are apt to be idle and mournful, and there is nothing to make them forget their miseries like giving them plenty of work. By-the-way, you never found your friend, Tonics, who advertised for you to come to her?"

"No," said Grace, with a blush; "I imagine I was too late."

"Ah! I wish you had met Tonics, for I had a kind of feeling that she knew something about medicine, and that some good would come to me, after you had seen her. Fancy that Dormer girl dying though!"

"Yes, poor creature," said Grace, "she sickened soon after we started, and never had strength to make head against her illness."

"She was a weak thing at best," said the Frau Professorin, "and Lisbeth told me, after you had gone, that she never could get her to eat buttermilk-soup, and that she always left the cranberry sauce with her roast veal. Now Waller is a woman of a very different kind, and, if my judgment is right, will prove a treasure to you. Where did you pick her up?"

"The landlady at the Hotel do Lille, in Paris, recommended her," said Grace, speaking very quickly. "Her husband was known to them, and she had very good recommendations."

"I should think she would be a very great comfort indeed to me, when you are not requiring her services," said Madame Sturm. "She seems a sensible person, that I could trust to bring me my medicines at the proper hour, and be sure that she would never overdo the dose; and the truth is, my dear Grace, I begin to feel even more dependent on my medicines than I was before."

The truth was that Grace had noticed a considerable change in her aunt, since she made her hurried departure from Bonn. The tricks which she was constantly playing upon herself, by eagerly swallowing every new nostrum of which she heard, and the disinclination to take exercise, which had now grown into a positive inability, had told severely upon the old lady's constitution. In the course of a few days she had become thoroughly accustomed to, and dependent upon, Anne's kindly ministrations; and knowing how far the comfort of her friend was dependent upon the goodwill felt towards her by the Frau Professorin, Grace waived her claim as much as possible to Anne's society, and allowed her aunt to benefit by it. The conversations between the old invalid and the young girl, whose hopes had been wrecked so early in life, would have been curious and instructive had there been any bystander to listen to them. The past was but rarely touched upon. At the outset of their acquaintance Madame Sturm, urged, not more by feminine curiosity than by a real interest which Anne's kindness to her impelled her to feel in the fortunes of her new acquaintance, would ask her now and then about her family, the circumstances under which she had married, and the cause and manner of her husband's death. Anne replied to these inquiries calmly and in a general way, describing herself as an orphan who had married to secure a home, and who, upon the loss of her husband, was again cast upon her resources. The old lady accepted this story in good faith, and only occasionally recurred to it, her favourite topic of conversation being her niece's future. Grace would be of age in a twelve-month, and, as a great heiress, would naturally be called upon to quit the shelter of their humble roof, and take up her posi-

tion in the world of London. Who was to undertake the duties of adviser and chaperon to the young heiress, sorely puzzled the worthy Frau Professorin. Her weak state of health rendered it impossible that she should undertake the position, and as to giving it up to some one to be nominated by those lawyer-men, from whom Grace was in the habit of receiving periodical reports of what was happening to the property, the old lady declared it unlikely that a pair of musty old attorneys could have any knowledge of what was proper in such a matter. She did not hesitate to declare her own wish that Anne should have a voice in the affair, and having obtained from her favourite a declaration of her readiness to undertake the charge, professed her intention of seeing the notion carried through.

The relations between Grace Middleham and the friend of her school-days, notwithstanding that so much of Anne's time was taken up in attending to the Frau Professorin, remained as affectionate and as intimate as ever. The promise which Grace had given to trust her friend wholly and unreservedly, and never to question her as to any of the occurrences which had happened during the time they were parted, she had faithfully kept, and Anne Studley's life, from the time she quitted Chapone House, to the day when she entered poor Lucy Dormer's bed-room at the Hotel de Lille, was a sealed book to her friend. More than this, so particular was Grace to avoid even the slightest appearance of curiosity, that, finding as she did that Anne showed a strong disinclination to be told anything concerning the bank and its affairs; topics which, of course, formed the staple of the communications made from time to time to the young heiress by Messrs. Hillman and Hicks; she was quite satisfied to keep her confidences to herself. She could not tell Anne anything about the bank and its affairs, without alluding to Mr. Heath, and Mr. Heath was, as she instinctively felt, connected in some way or other with Anne's unhappy remembrances of home. This much Anne had learned, and Mr. Heath, and any matter in which his name must necessarily be involved, were henceforth tabooed subjects. What the mystery was, Grace, of course, knew not; but she could not believe that there could be anything in it personal to Mr. Heath, whom she knew her uncle had always highly valued, and of whom, for her uncle's sake, she entertained the highest

opinion; but out of kindly feeling for her friend she was content that there should be absolute silence on the point.

The constant attendance upon the Frau Professorin, whose desire for Anne's presence and ministrations became greater as her infirmities increased, and Grace's constantly-sought opportunities for her friend's society, absorbed so much of Anne's time as to give her but little chance for self-communing. The little German town stood out to her as a green spot, an oasis in the desert of life. Resting in it, she had gradually been enabled to overcome the dread of detection, the terror of pursuit, which had beset her immediately after her flight. Constantly occupied by her domestic duties, she had lost the habit of recalling those frightful scenes through which she had passed as in a dream, and a dull and confused memory of which still occasionally haunted her sleep. And upon Anne Studley, as upon so many other afflicted ones, the power of music exercised its blessed influence. Within a very short time after her arrival at Madame Sturm's, the question of her position in the household was satisfactorily settled. The old lady herself would not hear of her favourite being shut out from their better society; she was introduced to their guests as Miss Middleham's friend and companion, and when company was present—or better still, during the long evenings when they were alone—Anne would sit silent and motionless, rapt and entranced at the weird and mystic music, which flowed out from the piano under the quiet touch of the professor's melody-compelling fingers. All throughout the house was harmonious and tranquil, the Frau Professorin's querulous complaints were no longer heard, and under the shelter of her roof Anne Studley found a haven and passed a year of peace.

LEARNING TO COOK;*

A SUPPLEMENTARY LESSON.

It is a delight to leap back into school-days by sudden contact with fellow-boy, with fellow-girl; with tutor, governess, book, box, slate, toy, sum, skotch, them. What vivid pleasure, consequently, came to some of the old pupils of the cooking-school, when they caught sight of a new advertisement, "Buckmaster's Cookery!"

"Charming! Charming!" Parisina

cried; running off into her peculiar ardour and eloquence. "I must read it! I must have another peep at that fierce little Mistress Tart, and that grand Mrs. Born, and that nice Mrs. Sweetman! Besides, I may now, really, learn something; and, since I have neither been useful nor ornamental all my life, grow, at last, to be a little bit of both!"

Parisina said a little more, too, about the visions that were conjured up before her. "I can see skimmers," she declared; "and salamanders, and flour-dredgers, and sauce-boats, and lemon-squeezers, and egg-whisks, and cutters, and rolling-pins, and marble paste-slabs! It is new life to me; or, rather, it is the return of the old life, after I had thought it was past and gone."

And after this enumeration, Mr. Buckmaster's book was energetically opened.

There was his list of kitchen-requirements, duly set down. A bain-marie was in one lengthy column, so was a purée presser, so were trussing-needles, larding-needles, oval tin-dishes for gratins, a brazing-pan, a mincing knife, a pestle and mortar, cylinder moulds for creams, six sieves, a thermometer, weights and scales, and a kitchen clock. The cost (roughly) was thirty-three pounds.

"Thirty-three pounds. Oh! Some items have yet to come, too, my sharp eyes tell me. There is a blank at, 'a thermometer in wire cage to measure up to five hundred degrees.' There is a blank at, 'one pie mould, selected according to convenience.' There is a blank at, 'eight or ten stewpans (various) with covers,' and a pretty filling-up that blank will ask for! And there is a blank at the brazing-pan, which is to be twelve inches by eight inches, and seven inches deep. Supposing we put the odd seven pounds to the thirty-three pounds, for these other things, and make it, roundly, forty pounds. Supposing, then, we make a pause to think of it, and show our amusement and amazement in an enjoying laugh. The idea!"

Modesta was at hand (being inseparable from Parisina) and tried for a little modification. "In the fine kitchen of a fine house all those things would be necessary, surely?" she suggested. "Wouldn't rich people want them? Or a baronet; or a baron; or an earl, a marquis, a duke, a prince? Anybody, in short, who lived in a castle, a hall, a tower, one of the best streets, or a Belgravia Mansion?"

"Undoubtedly they would!" exclaimed

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Nos. 301, 302, 303, 304, 306.

Parisina. "And there you have the whole absurdity. Is Mr. Buckmaster trying to teach the cooks who ask fifty pounds a year wages, a hundred pounds, two hundred, three hundred? Is Mr. Buckmaster hoping to enlighten their ladyships the mistresses of cooks, male and female, who enjoy such annual incomes? It is absurd, my dear. The cooks—as far as they are concerned—would scornfully treat Mr. Buckmaster to the whole of their minds; their ladyships, languidly, would ring the bell for Mr. Buckmaster to be carted clean away!"

The truth lay in this forcible exposition; contemptuous as it might be. In Fratelli, in Ude, in Soyer, in many cooking books of repute, there is every direction for the serving and ennobling the rich man's table; Mr. Buckmaster and his small Band of Sisters need not try to elbow themselves into a place amidst them. It is the middle-classes, the lower-classes, the very very poor, who are wanting instruction, and amongst whom Mr. Buckmaster says he is wishing to push his instructions; but he is losing his way fatally, in discoursing to these of dishes that want a paraphernalia costing forty pounds to make them. It is true the paraphernalia would only have to be procured once; but it is equally true that even forty pounds worth of kitchen implements would want a vast deal of supplementing. They would want crockery; they would want cutlery; they would want flannels, and cloths, and finer napery; they would want a kettle, a coal-sentle, a toasting-fork, candle-box, salt-box, a score of things omitted by Mr. Buckmaster. They would want fire-irons, table, chairs. They would want, more especially, the fine foods and condiments that were the reason for their existence.

"Cookery," says Mr. Buckmaster, in his preface, "is the art of making every scrap of food yield the greatest amount of pleasure and nourishment of which it is capable." Mr. Buckmaster says well. So is he again quite true and good when he proceeds about the dinner of the working-man. He knows it may be "and often is, of odd scraps; but it may be so cooked as to be tender, savoury, and even turned into delicate morsels." Then he knows "how difficult it is to cook or do anything with the grates and appliances usually found in the houses of the poor. Their only resources are a dirty frying-pan during the week, and sage and onions and a baker's oven on Sunday." And Mr.

Buckmaster, being aware that "science has not yet produced a good economic fireplace suitable for the homes of the working classes," hopes that, "with improved dwellings for the working classes, such as I see on the Shaftesbury Estate, we shall have improved arrangements for warming and cooking, with plenty of pure air and water." "The best offering," he announces, in another place, "you can make the poor, is to instruct them in the art of cooking, and teach them what constitutes food." The quotation comes, "Blessed is he that feedeth the poor;" but, says Mr. Buckmaster, very properly, "still more blessed is he who teaches the poor to feed themselves." And he relates, of charitable ladies, "I have seen them on a cold winter's day, collecting scraps of cast-off vegetables at Covent Garden, amid the jeers and scoffs of vulgar well-dressed people. With these vegetables, and odd pieces often begged from houses, savoury and wholesome food has been prepared from materials which would otherwise have been trodden into mud." Mr. Buckmaster wants the poor to know "that from vegetables alone a wholesome, economic, and nourishing diet may often be prepared. Why," he asks, "are Haricot beans, peas, lentils, oatmeal, macaroni, Indian meal, and rice, not more used?" His own answer to his own question is, "Because people are ignorant of the value of these foods; and the art of making them savoury by cooking has yet to be learnt." He repeats, in a subsequent lecture, "Lentils, peas, and beans, are not so much used in England as on the Continent . . . yet . . . by a little careful cooking their raw uninviting flavour may be removed without impairing their nutritive value, and this"—it requires noting—"this is one of the problems for the Cookery School to solve."

Exactly. It is precisely the *raison d'être* of the Cookery School; it is precisely the position Mr. Buckmaster is expected to take; and in all of it there may be nearly perfect agreement with him. A little doubt may come as to whether the odd scraps composing a working man's dinner could, even with forty pounds worth of machinery, be metamorphosed into delicate morsels. The desirability, too, of introducing more largely into the poor man's diet, "peas, beans, lentils, and other leguminous plants," may be questioned, when the same are pronounced, with all the authority of book and lecture, to be very

indigestible. It is to be hoped also that Mr. Buckmaster has been misinformed when he sets down, "It is said that railway-contractors practically recognise the principle of food as an exponent of work, by discharging those labourers whose appetites fail." Are contractors in the habit of standing by their navvies at meals (or appointing assistants to do so), and of watching with what gusto the polony or the cow-heel will disappear? Are navvies, also, learning to practise deception, and to thrust sausages and so on, clown-wise, into big pockets or anywhere, rather than let a detective discover failing appetite? So is Mr. Buckmaster soaring off into the bewitching regions of impossibility when he declares, "The family dinner of every poor man ought to be a daily social elevating influence—a time when men exchange with their wives and children the courtesies of civilised life." "There is nothing," he maintains, "to prevent the poorest labourer striving for such a civilisation." If there is nothing, then is the labourer a very different individual to what he has been persistently pronouncing himself to be. Then is he— But let Parisina be heard over this. She is in loud excitement, panting for the opportunity.

"Dear me! dear me!" is her cry. "I do wish people would leave off being absurd! Nothing to prevent a labourer making his dinner a time for exchanging courtesies with his wife and children! Has Mr. Buckmaster ever seen a labourer at his dinner, I wonder? It is brought to him mostly in a yellow basin, tied up in a coloured pocket-handkerchief. He sits down on the road, or on a bench, or on bricks, or anywhere; and he has to eat it without even a table, within a stone's throw of his work. If a man has risen to the grades above a labourer, and so gets more wages, he buys something at the butcher's, and goes off to a very near coffee-shop or public-house to cook it; and he does cook it, and he sits down with a score more skilled workmen, and they do have a table and a manufactured seat, and there they 'pass the time-o'-day,' and have to be very sharp, for fear they overstay their dinner-hour. Why, with most working-men living a mile, two miles, from their 'shop' or job, with hosts of clerks farther off still from counting-house or office, how many married men of the lower classes can ever hope (except on Sundays) to be at home to dine?"

It is true. But, laying aside these little blemishes, it is excellent to find Mr. Buckmaster making such firm and steady approach to the ground where reform is wanted. Here it is, in full view. "What is now called cooking in the houses of the humbler middle and the working classes is little better than that of the Ancient Briton." This is slightly strong, possibly; for the lecturer's erudition leads him to announce that "the Ancient Briton lived chiefly on coarsely-bruised barley mixed with milk; sheep were unknown; meat was not much used, and was generally eaten raw; . . . man bruised or ground his food between stones called querns, . . . and with the paste or dough, formed by mixing the meal with water, he prepared an unleavened cake, which was baked in live ashes or in an oven." Ancient Briton is an error, most likely, for Anglo-Saxon; a race whose food, according to the same authority, "consisted of broth, barley-bread, with milk, butter, eggs, cheese, green vegetables, and beans;" a diet that, with the addition of tea and beer, is much nearer that in use by the poorer classes of to-day. It is so grateful, however, to be spared an allusion to King Alfred and his method of burning cakes (without His Majesty having had the chance of learning to cook), that no quibble shall be raised here about it, and Mr. Buckmaster's good intention shall be taken precisely as if his illustration had been left out. This good intention is brought to the front when he speaks of alcohol. "Alcohol," he says, "contains no flesh-forming principles, and can add nothing to the substance of the decaying tissues." It is not in the least hidden, either, over treacle. "Treacle, which is often used in the poorer families in place of butter, is especially during the colder months of winter, a very inferior substitute for it." A sigh is heaved for these poor poor, driven from poor food to poorer, from bad cookery to worse. It cannot be helped; but there is glad anticipation of the good work the cooking-school is going to do, when it shall have caused all this to be altered, and its severities and horrors to be past. There comes no fear that the cooking-school is not going to alter it. Mr. Buckmaster is treading up to the goal so undeviatingly, we cannot but have confidence in him. His words are: "I know there are difficulties . . . for arrangements for regular instruction in cookery in every girls' school . . . but an earnest purpose overcomes everything;

. . . and, in this way, soups, stews, rice, macaroni, Indian meal, oatmeal, pea-meal, beans, lentils, and other foods scarcely known among the poor, might be introduced with advantage, and their prejudices gradually overcome." And these words are so clear, the purpose is so defined, entire faith is placed in what is being done, in what there is power to get done; that we turn the page hurriedly, to get at, and devour, the free straightforward scientific rules that are to be sown with generous hand: that are to be teaching everybody, near or far, how this good-doing is to be effected, and by what first simple steps it is to be begun.

Alas! what do we find? Where is this manner of cooking odd scraps tenderly and savourily, of making wholesome food of materials which would otherwise have been trodden into mud? A committee, a cooking-school, a batch of cooks, a lecturer, clerks, a superintendent, assistants, national attention, and a book, have all been called up for this; and where is it? Nowhere. It is positively and conspicuously absent. It seemed satisfactorily present on alighting on the dish kedgerce. A flavour of "cadger" pervaded the title, and made it welcomed with as much avidity as if it had been the shaft of a long-searched-for mine. It is placed, moreover, at the end of the Tenth Lecture, a Lecture on the Education of Girls, in which hard cold dumpling gets depressing scorn, in which bread and cheese are slighted, in which the refuse-collecting in Covent Garden is contrasted proudly with the acquirement of "the Greek of Porson, and the Geometry of Euclid." "I know how feeble words of mine are to alter the habits and prejudices of society," says Mr. Buckmaster, at the close of this lecture, with fine emotion, "or to promote any united action for good among those who are separated. To work, to hope, to love, and to pray—these are the things that make men happy. They have always had the power of doing this, and will have the power to the end of time, and whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. The proper management of a household has always had a close fellowship with the best of virtues. The boiling of a potato may be dignified by the intelligence and the motive which inspire the doing of it, and there is no duty imposed on us so menial but may be done to a high purpose, and thereby ennobled by doing it." This is precisely as it stands (and is an admirable specimen of Mr.

Buckmaster's style), and as Kedgerce is the very next word to it, is not even over a leaf, has only the space of white paper before it necessary for clear printing; it surely was not too much to expect that kedgerce was the crown and outcome of it, the essence for which all the principles and axioms had been expressed.

Then what is kedgerce? "An excellent breakfast or luncheon dish." Half-a-pound of cold fish to be taken; three ounces of rice are to be washed, boiled, and drained; two eggs are to be cut into half-inch cubes; an ounce of butter is to be melted; pepper, salt, and cayenne, are to be added for seasoning; all are to be covered with bread raspings, and put to brown in an oven. Is it not wonderfully appropriate to the text, to the promises, to the overture, to the mise-en-scène? To match it, there is pease pudding. "It is a very sensible and nutritious dish for working people—served with fat pork" (the pork being the back-bone of it), flourishes Mr. Buckmaster. No doubt. How is it to be made? The peas called "marrowy melters" are humorously recommended (though, in the hard dry peas for a pudding, it could scarcely be thought that such a distinction could be assured), and they are to be beaten up with one or two eggs, and an ounce of sweet butter. How odd it is that insistence must be made upon the impossibility of getting on without one or two eggs, and an ounce of sweet butter! It is precisely these eggs, it is precisely this butter, that the poor have to do without. To speak of these things as being within the reach of the poor, though not within their wisdom, is precisely on a par with the sense of the speech Mr. Buckmaster had the honour to make to the Queen.

"May it please your Majesty," the lecturer began, "the specimen of cooking which is now to be presented, takes only five minutes, and is within the reach of almost the poorest of your Majesty's subjects. The materials cost four-pence, and they furnish a savoury and nourishing dish . . . It is never found in the homes of the poor in this country."

Parisia was not to be kept back at the reading of this.

"An omelette never eaten by the poor in this country! No, poor souls, truly. An omelette costs four-pence, and is four-pence a sum that a poor man can afford? Is any thought given either to the solidity of an omelette, or to how much hunger an omelette would

abate? I suppose three omelettes would about satisfy a working man, with proper supplies of bread and vegetables; and it is too ridiculous. Besides, Mr. Buckmaster's directions are, under the heads 1, 2, 3, and so on, that an omelette is to be quickly cooked, that an omelette is to be eaten immediately; and, with a man away at his sawing, at his road-making, at his quarrying, at his hedging, his painting, his teaching, his bank, or his books, how is he to do his quick eating, and who is there near him authorised to cook?"

With these disadvantages then, these three dishes mentioned—pease pudding, omelette, kedgeree—cannot be said, in any way, to be fulfilling the conditions required, or to be enforcing anything that had not been thoroughly well known before. Two other recipes shall be put on the file beside them. These are good; these do, at last, grasp the scrap question, and look in the face of it. They eventually become one though, and had better be reckoned at that number; for the first is the stock for soup, and the other is the soup made from the stock. Previously-cooked meat and bones are to be taken, however, in both cases; and though it is not said that the two carrots, the two turnips, the two onions, and the bouquet garni, to be added to these, are to be picked up in Covent Garden, there is no doubt that, if they were, they would answer the identical purpose, and their flavour would be the same. The inevitable ounce of butter is to be added; but, still, old scraps and bones do get honourable mention, and Mr. Buckmaster shall have the credit of it. After it, comes Poor Man's Soup; a soup of water, not stock; requiring only "one ounce of butter, or dripping, or skimmings of saucepans" (this last suggestion has the right ring in it), some onions, potatoes, parsley, flour, bread, salt, and pepper; and there are some dozen other recipes for vegetable soups, all of a certain cheapness, because there is no meat in them, and no stock made from meat. Nearly every one, however, has a bar-sinister across it, spoiling its escutcheon, and making it a broad fair target for any wandering aim. Let Spanish onion soup be set down as an example. It is all well as far as taking a shredded Spanish onion is concerned, and as far as taking an ounce of butter or dripping, some salt, and pepper, and bread, and flour; but then the directions are, to "add a milk or cream liaison," and a liaison

(the best way) is to be made of the yolk of an egg for every pint of soup, and of a quarter of a pint of cream, or half a pint of milk, for every yolk! Then let there be a glance at *soup maigre*. For it, two onions, or a quarter of a head of celery, a small carrot, and turnips (undefined quantity), are to be shredded, and stewed for twenty minutes in half an ounce of butter. This would seem to add a culinary problem to the financial one; at any rate, the finance question stands out prominently in the three-quarters of a pint of green peas that are to be "taken," and in the fresh quantity of the previous vegetables that are to be cut into wheels or stars with a vegetable-cutter. But these are soups, let it be remembered. Apart from them (it shall be repeated) there is not one single recipe for turning scraps into delicate morsels, for making a good dinner, in the French way, from what has hitherto been flung out into the gutter. To pop everything into a soup-kettle, and turn it out a liquid, has nothing of the *bonne bouche* incident about it, it must be insisted. The secret, too, of making very indigestible lentils, beans, Indian meal, and so on, savoury by some new art of cooking, is never once divulged. As might be expected, there is a place found for macaroni. Macaroni is to be boiled, is to be strained, is to be eaten. Good. But as much as that has been known for some time. There is more, though. Macaroni "without,"—i.e. macaroni just boiled and strained, with nothing else, is not "savoury." It wants milk, it wants sugar, it wants eggs (unless it is only for thickening soups). According to Mr. Buckmaster, it wants two ounces and a half of melted butter, pepper, salt, and a neat hillock of grated cheese, either Parmesan or Gruyère. And this is Mr. Buckmaster's system throughout. Dinners costing nothing but skill are wanted; scraps are to be made delicate, refuse is to be nice and nourishing; the School will do it; the School is instituted that it shall do it, and—Mr. Buckmaster teaches how to make (his index shall be followed, and alphabetically) Apple Charlotte, Brabant broth, Chickens à la Marengo, Duck braised, Eggs curried, Fowls marinated, Grouse roasted, Hare jugged, Italian ices, Jardinière, Mullet baked, Omelettes soufflées, Pheasant salmi, Rissoles, Sole au gratin, Tomatoes à la Provençale, Veal fricandean, and Whitebait!

There are one or two more errors,

moreover, into which Mr. Buckmaster falls. He declares stoutly, without a falter, that "except the set dinner-party, which is often an opportunity for waste and extravagance, there is no such thing as regular, comfortable, inviting meals in the houses of the middle classes." This is simply monstrous, and so is this other piece of exaggeration. "The English, perhaps more than any other people, were once distinguished for their love of home. . . . But one cannot fail to observe the gradual loosening of all the cords which once held husbands and fathers to their homes. Thousands of married men go home every night by late trains; they prefer drinking and smoking and spending their evenings anywhere rather than with their families." Does Mr. Buckmaster recollect that London has stretched itself out lately into lengthy suburbs, these stretching again into suburbs of themselves; that husbands, poor men! must come home by late trains because business keeps them, and home is so ruinously far away? Husbands may have consolation in learning that Mr. Buckmaster announces himself to be unpopular. He speaks of "his disgust and contempt for men who try to make twenty per cent. out of dwellings for the labouring classes . . . who have run up dreary rows of houses . . . and at every corner erected a beer-shop;" and he says, proudly, "I have denounced them over and over again in the parish vestry, which is principally made up of enterprisers and publicans, until they all hate me." Do not the husbands think the hatred can be understood? If a man is to have a value in a vestry (or a cooking-school) he should take care that he has looked at his subject on every side of it, and obtained its accurate measurement, and, above all, he should not talk random nonsense. He should not say, "In this country it is common, after we have carefully extracted much of the flavour, gelatine, albumen, and fat, from turkeys, fowls, beef, legs of mutton, green peas, and bacon, to carefully throw away the water in which they have been boiled." He should not say, "A French peasant would live comfortably on what English people throw in the gutter." He should not say, "Many ladies, except the first lady in the land, never enter their kitchens." He should not say, "A servant of all-work generally begins life by wheeling for hours on the pavement a perambulator with two children, crying, or sucking vigorously at

the ends of india-rubber gas-tubing." He should not add, "At last she becomes the wife of a soldier or a bricklayer's labourer, and the one room called a home is a den of filth and misery, and with a baby in her arms she goes into the streets to sell lucifers." If Mr. Buckmaster will persist in throwing such fitful glares and shadows, he must expect hands held up against him, and the chairman declaring his motion lost. He must expect ironical laughter, too; and questions that will probe. In respect of Her Majesty's personal supervision of her cooks and scullions, for instance, it may be enquired of him which of those underlings was it who told him it was her gracious custom. Failing this back-stairs mode of knowledge, did Mr. Buckmaster acquire it from the queenly lips themselves? In respect of the gas-tubing sucked by children (after fit acknowledgment, by laughter, of the excellency of the joke), there might come the question, Is it an unrighteous thing for servants to begin life by taking children out for an airing? It is, at all events, as useful an occupation as writing such books as this of Mr. Buckmaster's.

In respect of the French peasant's mode of living, it may be asked, is not Mr. Buckmaster referring to the pot-au-feu? Does he not order pot-au-feu to be made of six pounds of fresh beef; and does he mean to insinuate that English people make their gutters acquainted with that? From another side, too, might come a jeer about Mr. Buckmaster's experience of salads. He says, "the dressing is often served up in a twisted bottle, and the wet vegetables are heaped up on a dish, like food for cows." Mr. Buckmaster is singularly unfortunate. He is unaware of the financial advantage of the division of labour (making it cheaper to buy some things ready-made than to stop to make them), he is offended because a bottle is twisted; he has found people without skill enough to shred a lettuce. Then, in lighting a fire, he tells the cooks to take some crumpled-up paper or a letter. Now, does Mr. Buckmaster expect this to pass without protest? It is meant as a most smart lesson in economy; but most masters and mistresses would admit that it is full of danger. "Wash your hands, clean your nails, and read over slowly and thoughtfully the recipe," says the good gentleman again. It will not do. If this piece of flippancy is meant for a servant, it would make her toss her head; if it is meant

for a lady, it is equally impertinent. Then, says Mr. Buckmaster, "Why parsley is used" (for garnishing) "I cannot understand; it cannot be eaten, and before carving it is always removed." Alone, this will do very well. If Mr. Buckmaster cannot see the prettiness of parsley, that is his affair; but when he tells people to put a white-paper frill round the knuckle bone of a roast leg of mutton, what does he mean? There is no non-understanding, then, about the paper frill? That may be eaten? Ah, well, the subject shall be left, and we will pass on to take further note of Mr. Buckmaster's over-vigour of expression. He tells of perquisites. "No invention of the devil," he cries, "has been a more fruitful source of dishonesty and of waste, and mostly among servants." Now, the over-vigour is noticeable; it is sheer waste; but let the eye rest upon that "mostly." Can perquisites have a place, except among servants? Can a master take perquisites from himself? More unnecessary vigour is expended on the subject of the struggle for appearances. "Men are fortunately not possessed with this devil to the same extent as women," hammers out Mr. Buckmaster. It is equally unnecessary, in another way, for him to tell the ordinary English reader, as he does at page 63, that Ruth "was a young widow, living with her mother-in-law Naomi. These two came down to Bethlehem in the time of barley-harvest, and Ruth went to glean in the field which belonged to Boaz, &c., &c." Mr. Buckmaster may rest contented that these are incidents pretty generally known. It is not so well understood that there are such words as osmazome, liaison, liquefy, soufflers, and oxidation; popular spelling would put them differently; but as these are only marks of carelessness, they are only mentioned as a peg on which to hang the remark that scrupulous care is wanted in all recipes and directions; and that, as these errors have been lighted upon, there may be others, all of which should be cleared away in subsequent editions.

It remains now only to say a word, and a concluding word, about Mr. Buckmaster's ideal Mode of Meals. It shall be given to Parisina.

"Well, and out of all the bits and scraps, the gutter-pieces, the dust-bin throwings, the lentils, vegetable ends, and so on, how does our good writer order the meals of the day? Ah, I see. He says, 'The

breakfast, being a meal of secondary importance, I shall only say that the remains of the dinner can always be used at the next day's breakfast, by adding eggs, vegetables, fish, or bacon.' Oh, is that new? Is that worthy of school teaching? Is that economy? And then, I see, we are led on to dinners, and we are left. There is nothing else. Only those two meals. As for dinners, instead of excessive cheapness, excessive skill, excessive novelty, we are to have on Monday, soup, beef, rabbit, salad, vegetables, and apples, with butter and sugar; on Tuesday, soup, veal, vegetables or fish, and stewed fruit; on Wednesday, soup, mutton, vegetables or salad, cheese, fruit, or jams; on Thursday . . . but I will read no more, except this on Sunday. It says, 'It is better to have a simple dinner, in order to avoid much cooking.' So the dinner is to be soup, beef, roast chicken with water-cresses, cheese, fruit, or jam. Now, can any one say that this is a whit more simple than the fare for either of the other days? It is simply a pretended bow to Sabbatarians, with firm adherence to good living. I am enraged; I am upset; I am disappointed. I only see one pudding down, too, for all the week. It is on lucky Thursday, when there is sweet mention of cherry. A bill of fare written out by a man, assuredly! No women's palates consulted; no grown or growing-up children! I think as much might have been concocted, without the assistance of Mr. Buckmaster!"

And we agree with Parisina.

THE CURE OF ROUTOT.

"I AM not much for priests, I," said Despard, taking a little wisp of tobacco, and a tiny morsel of paper from his pouch, and deftly rolling them into a cigarette; "but there is one of the cloth for whom I have a great respect. He saved the life of myself, and of fifty gallant men. Messieurs, I drink to your good health, and to the health of the brave Curé of Rountot!"

A general clinking of glasses ensued, of glasses of every size and shape, from the little gilt liqueur glass, that held as much as a thimble, to a tall goblet that one might have put half a bottle of wine into. There was even a coffee cup among the vessels presented to be "trinqué." Nor were the liquid contents any less varied than their receptacles. There was euraçoa and vermouth, absinthe, good red wine, and brandy that was so-so—in fact, as many

drinks as men. We were all seated about the marble tables of the Café Lion d'Or, with its hanging lamps of petrole, and its comptoir hedged about with an irregular palisading of bottles, where mademoiselle sat entrenched, dividing her attention between a little morsel of needlework, an apparently complicated set of account-books, and the requirements and disbursements of her customers. In the middle of the room a great round stove, eased with white enamelled earthenware, diffuses a very moderate degree of warmth. In fact, what with the white stove and the white curtains, and the mirrors, and the marble tables, and the parquetté floor, the general air is rather of chilliness and discomfort to an English eye, when viewed with the accompaniment of howling winds and November rains outside. A glass of "hot grog," and one's feet on a fender in front of a good coal fire, would be more in accordance with your secret wishes. But our companions are content, and so perforce must we be, and we suppress our shiverings as well as we can, and try to enter into the spirit of the hour.

"And pray," we ask as soon as the chinking of goblets has subsided, "what is the history of the Curé of Rountot, that his name is thus popular?"

Half-a-dozen voices were about to give a voluble explanation, when one of the party, who seemed to hold the position of chairman of the gathering, interposed, and cried in an authoritative voice, "Hold, my children, it is M. Despard who ought to relate to M. l'Anglais the history of that occurrence, as he was himself one of the principal actors." Everyone seemed to acknowledge the justice of this, and, after a moment's polite hesitation, in fear lest he should weary the company, Despard, a short, bullet-headed man, with a close-shaven chin, and huge black moustache, began the following narrative:—

"It was in the disastrous winter of 1870, when Rouen was abandoned, and the outposts of the Prussian army were pushed forward on either bank of the Seine, that I found myself, by the illness of my captain, in command of a company of Franc-tireurs, in which I held a commission as lieutenant. I did not desire the responsibility, but there was no help for it. Our corps was detached to observe the progress of the enemy, and we were marching hither and thither, our clothes in tatters, and our shoes worn to nothing. It was tramp, tramp, always tramp, tramp, sleeping under a hedge or

beneath a tree, rarely within the four walls of a house; for shame to say it of my countrymen, but true it is, that every door was shut in our faces by the peasantry. It was only at the point of the bayonet that we could obtain the hospitality of our own countrymen, for they were mortally afraid of the Prussians, whose cruelties to the Franc-tireurs and those who harboured them had been rumoured far and wide among the paysans.

"Well, I found myself one evening encamped with my company on the borders of the Forest of Bretonne, which, as you know, occupies a peninsula enclosed by the waters of the Seine between Rouen and Havre. It was a country tolerably familiar to me, and my own home was not very far distant; but I dared not visit it—the place was occupied by the Prussians, who were settling themselves comfortably in my chambers and making merry with my wine, whilst I was encamped in a ditch under a tree, wet and hungry, and in a very bad humour. I was stamping up and down and blessing the Prussians in my heart, when I heard the sentry challenge an approaching footstep, and presently a peasant was brought before me who was making his way through the forest, with a stick and a bundle of clothes, in the direction of the river. He was an inhabitant of Rountot, he told me, a village about three miles off, and had left his home half an hour before to avoid the Prussians, who had just placed a detachment in occupation of the village. It was a post, it seemed to me, a good way in advance of the general line of the army; and from what I could gather from the countryman, who was a rather intelligent fellow, there were no other Prussian troops within four or five miles of the place.

"All of a sudden it occurred to me that, being in such close proximity to the Prussians, it was my duty to beat up their quarters so as to prevent their resting too comfortably. There was an opportunity to distinguish myself that might never again occur. If by a quick surprise I could capture this Prussian post, the whole country would ring with the exploit, and I should find myself recorded with honour in the annals of my country. The love of glory is with us, monsieur, the most powerful of motives; it burnt as ardently in my breast at that moment as if I had been a youth of twenty or so, and not a grizzled old fellow, the father of a family. And yet the risk was enormous.

The advance of the German armies might at any moment envelope us in its folds, and for us Franc-tireurs, and for me their commander, there was no quarter to be expected, if once we fell into the hands of the Prussians. For myself, I was willing enough to run the risk; but I had no right, perhaps, to risk the lives of my comrades.

"I called my company together, and harangued them in a short speech delivered under the shelter of an oak, whose spreading branches still bore a canopy of withered leaves. My men responded to my oration with the unanimous cry, 'Lead us against the Prusse!' To come to a hand-to-hand encounter with these enemies, hitherto known to us only by their destructive missiles, their huge volcanic shells, their monster coups de canon—the thought filled us with exultation. But it was necessary to be circumspect.

"Night was coming on, and a thick mist from the river was spreading itself over the plain. Darkness would soon be upon us, and we had already done a fatiguing day's march. We were even afraid to light a camp fire, lest its light should alarm the enemy and put them on their guard. It was impossible to find our way in the fog and darkness. We must rest as best we could during the darkest hours of the night. By the earliest dawn we would be on the march, and would catch these lazy Prussians in their beds. We detained the young man who had given us the information, to act as our guide in case of need. He was overcome with terror, and earnestly begged us to let him go. He would be shot by the Prussians, he said, if he were caught in our company, and bitterly bemoaned his hard fate. We made rather merry with this young man and his fears, twitted him with his want of patriotism, and promised to place him in the front rank when we delivered our charge upon the Prussians. I never saw a man more abjectly miserable than he. His fear seemed to give him a kind of desperate audacity, and he tried to break away from us; he fought with hands and feet; and when we were finally obliged to tie him up with cords, to prevent further violence, he bit and gnawed at his bonds like a fox who is caught in a trap.

"During the night the peasant managed to make his escape. I know not how it was; the man who had charge of him, perhaps, took pity on him and kept his eyes shut. I simulated extreme anger; but in reality I was almost glad the poor wretch had got away. To have acted as guide to a company

of Franc-tireurs would have been sufficient to condemn him to speedy death if he had fallen into the hands of our enemies. As for a guide, the spire of a church was visible from a knoll a little beyond our camping-ground.

"At the very first appearance of daylight in the sky, I aroused my men, and we fell silently into column of march, and made our way at the double towards Routot. To possess ourselves of the main street, overpowering the guard, and shooting down the Prussians in detail as they endeavoured to form: this was our plan of operations, and, as far as we were concerned, it was carried out to the letter. We carried the streets of Routot with a rush; there were no defenders visible, and then we called upon the rascally Prussians to come out and surrender; but none responded to the call. The village was sleeping tranquilly when we arrived, but the tramp and bustle of our footsteps and the rattle of our arms must have awakened the sleeping inhabitants. A few heads, here and there, cautiously peering forth from behind the curtains were the only signs of life, however. Every door was kept carefully closed; not a single person came out to salute us.

"At once I established my head-quarters at the little auberge, and called before me the trembling aubergiste. Ah, she knew nothing of the Prussians, she said; they had been here yesterday; but when they went, or where, she knew not. But if monsieur and his gallant comrades would kindly take themselves away, and not expose a poor widow to the vengeance of the Prusse—

"That was the tale everywhere. The whole village seemed completely cowed and frightened, more intent on saving their own skins and paltry household goods than upon the honour of France or the glory of our arms. Struck with sadness at the sight, I yet determined to respect their neutrality as much as possible. Levying a requisition of meat, and bread, and wine for the service of the army, my men made a camp fire in the middle of the street, and breakfasted merrily enough, their hearts cheered by the good meal and wine, and the warmth of sun and fire. But I, who had upon my mind the safety of my command, strolled away from the bivouac and made for the church, with the intention of climbing to the top of the tower and reconnoitring the country around.

"The sacristan was already in the church, preparing to ring the bell for early mass, and he pointed out to me the entrance to

the winding staircase that led to the summit of the tower. The morning was fine and sunny, and the prospect below me was charming. The long reaches of the river sparkling in the sunshine; the wooded hills beyond, tier upon tier; the green pastures, dotted here and there with cattle; the long rows of poplars and willows bordering the river; the dark forest close at hand; and the blue roofs and curling smoke-wreaths of the village just below me. All these were exhibited to my sight like a vast panorama. All was so peaceful and tranquil, that you would have thought it impossible that, among these charming scenes, men were now busily marching to and fro, to compass death and destruction for their fellows. Ah, I said to myself, why, for the sake of emperors and potentates, should honest men like us, and those Germans there—who, perhaps, are honest men too, for that matter—be cutting each other's throats, and knocking each other on the head, this beautiful sunny morning? And then I dismissed these thoughts as incompatible with my duty, and began carefully to scrutinise the country around.

"I could see nothing to excite any misgivings; but a little study of the position showed me why the Prussians had deemed it an object of importance to occupy the village, and had pushed forward an advanced post so far. Five good roads converge upon Rontot; which thus resembles somewhat a spider lurking in the middle of its web. My attention was principally confined to the country to the south and east, for it was from those quarters that the Prussian forces were pushing forward. But as I turned round and cast a careless glance on the ground we had lately passed over, I was struck with sudden alarm. Once, twice, I caught sight of a brilliant sparkle of light that danced like a will o' the wisp among the ditches and walls that hemmed about our track, towards the encampment we had quitted at dawn. It was the sparkle of steel—I knew that well enough; and though not a soul was visible, I felt that, surely as death, we were betrayed and surrounded. And next moment I heard a sound equally ominous—the tramp and clatter of cavalry upon two of the converging roads; whilst almost simultaneously there appeared upon a third the dark, spiked helmets of the advanced guard of a regiment of Prussian infantry.

"In the short time that elapsed before I reached the foot of the tower, half a dozen

projects had shaped themselves in my brain. To seize the principal houses and defend them, to cut our way through our enemies, to hold the church and churchyard, which were somewhat capable of defence—all were equally hopeless. We might sell our lives dearly; but there was no chance of eventual escape. As I reached the churchyard, I found it crowded with villagers, who were awaiting the arrival of the curé to begin the mass. They thought, no doubt, that in the church, and attending the holy office, they would find the safety that was so dear to them. At my hasty signal, my company had fallen in, and I addressed them shortly, pointing out that we were surrounded by the enemy, and asking them to sell their lives dearly for the honour of France. 'We shall get no mercy,' I said; 'and better die with arms in our hands than be fusilladed.' At this, there was a murmur from the ranks. 'Perhaps, if we surrender without fighting, they will spare our lives?'

"'I tell you no!' I cried, gnashing my teeth with rage. 'Are you pothouse rascals?'

"At this juncture a young man stepped forward from the ranks. 'Mon capitaine,' he said, 'I have known this place in other days; it is impossible for our enemies entirely to surround us, for there is a marsh between the village and the river which cannot be crossed after the heavy rains we have had. But there is a path known to the inhabitants—a causeway which is now no doubt covered by water. Alas! I do not know the way, but any of the villagers will be able to conduct us.'

"These words put renewed life into my breast. It was the work of a moment for me to spring over the low fence that divides the road from the churchyard, and to address the countrymen gathered in the churchyard.

"'Frenchmen,' I cried, 'a guide is wanted to conduct us through the marsh, and to save your countrymen from the overwhelming forces of the Prussians. Let the one of you best acquainted with the way step forward. It is France requires you.'

"Not one of them stirred. They all hung down their heads and stood clustered together like a flock of sheep.

"'Hasten,' I cried, in a voice tremulous with shame and anger, 'hasten, some one, to volunteer to save your countrymen. What, is it possible! I no longer wish to live, then, since Frenchmen have grown so base.'

"'Listen, monsieur,' cried an old man, stepping forward, a grey-headed old man of some seventy years. 'It is not that we

would not help you if we could, but the Prussians will be among us again in a few moments ; if we help you our village will be burnt, ourselves shot, our wives and children driven homeless upon the world ; we wish you well, monsieur, but we dare not help you.'

"Even as he spoke I heard a cavalry trumpet ringing loudly in the distance, and the heavy tramp of approaching infantry. For me the agony of the moment was overpowering. I had no doubt of my fate if I were captured. Was I not already known to the Prussians as an active Franc-tireur? And to be put out of the way thus, not in battle as a brave man, but shot as a spy or a plunderer! I thought of my wife, of my children, desolate, destitute, and in the hands of our enemies; and then the keen pang of self-reproach that I had led my comrades into this trap, the remorse I felt at my own rashness and want of caution! All these thoughts were intolerable. I almost lost my senses with rage and despair.

"At this moment the curé appeared upon the scene, walking quietly to the church door, his breviary under his arm. Aware of the noise and agitation of the community, he came himself forward, and looked inquiringly towards me. Hastily saluting him, I told him the cruel position in which we were placed.

"'What!' he cried, looking round among his parishioners with lofty surprise, 'is there no one here who will risk his life for the love of God and the sake of his country?'

"He was a fine handsome young man, this Curé of Rountot; and as he stood there in his long cassock and biretta, looking down over his people with eager indignant expectation, I thought that I had never seen a nobler looking young fellow in the garb of a priest. But his people stirred not a foot.

"'Give us the mass, mon père,' cried the old man who had spoken before, 'and trouble yourself not with what does not concern you.'

"The priest drew himself up to his full height, and his eyes flashed fire.

"'Yes,' he cried, 'I am a priest; but I am a Frenchman first of all.'

"He flung his book of offices on the ground, twisted up his cassock, and girt it about his loins.

"'Now, mon capitaine,' he cried, seizing me by the arm, 'take me to the head of your column. I will show you the way.'

"We stole away like ghosts, with the priest at our head, and cleared the village just as the head of the Prussian column entered it. A squadron of Uhlans galloped after us, but halted when they saw the ground they would have to cross, and, after exchanging a few shots with us, retired, no doubt, to seek some route by which to cut us off. The party in ambuscade to intercept us, saw nothing of us till we were almost out of range of their rifles, although they were well within reach of our chasse-pots. So they wisely sounded the retreat, and drew off. Half-an-hour's march brought us to the Seine, where we possessed ourselves of a barge that was anchored in the stream, and floated quietly down the river, till we found ourselves once more within the lines of our own army. The curé was unable to return to his commune, which was in the hands of the Prussians, who would have given him speedy preferment to another world for the share he had in our escape. He had nowhere else to go, and made up his mind to remain with us a clerical Franc-tireur. He shared all our fatigues, dangers, and adversities, and proved himself an excellent comrade and good fellow. When peace came, he returned to his duties as curé, not without, I fancy, some little regret."

"And what," we asked, as soon as the buzz of comment and chat that followed the conclusion of Despard's narrative had ceased—"what became of the man who gave the information to the enemy, if he did betray you?"

"Who knows?" said Despard, with a shrug. "Let the past be forgotten, and let us hope that another time France will not be betrayed by her own children."

PAINT AND CANVAS.

VASARI, the historian of painters, has much to say in praise of the "perspective views" or scenes executed by Baldassare Peruzzi, an artist and architect of great fame in his day, who was born in 1480 at Florence or Volterra or Siena, it is not known which, each of these noble cities of Tuscany having claimed to be his birth-place. When the Roman people held high festival in honour of Giuliano de' Medici, they obtained various works of art from Baldassare, including a scene painted for a theatre, so admirably ingenious and beautiful, that very great amazement is said to have been awakened in every beholder. At a later period, when

the Calandra, written by the Cardinal di Bibiena—"one of the first comedies seen or recited in the vulgar tonguo"—was performed before Pope Leo, the aid of Baldassare was sought again, to prepare the scenic adornments of the representation. His labours were successful beyond measure; two of his scenes painted upon this or upon some other occasion, Vasari pronounced to be "surprisingly beautiful, opening the way to those of a similar kind which have been made in our own day." The artist was a fine colourist, well skilled in perspective, and in the management of light, insomuch that his drawings did not look "like things feigned, but rather as the living reality." Vasari relates that he conducted Titian to see certain works of Peruzzi, of which the illusion was most complete. The greater artist "could by no means be persuaded that they were simply painted, and remained in astonishment, when, on changing his point of view, he perceived that they were so." Dying in 1536, Baldassare was buried in the Rotondo, near the tomb of Raffaello da Urbino, all the painters, sculptors, and architects of Rome attending the interment. That he was an artist of the first rank was agreed on all hands. And he is further entitled to be remembered as one of the very earliest of great scene-painters.

In England, some six-and-thirty years later, there was born an artist and architect of even greater fame than Peruzzi: Inigo Jones, who, like Peruzzi, rendered important aid to the adornment of the stage. In his youth Inigo had studied landscape-painting in Italy. At Rome he became an architect; as Walpole expresses it, "he dropped the pencil and conceived Whitehall."

Meanwhile a taste, even a sort of passion, had arisen at the English court for masques and pageants of extraordinary magnificence. Poetry, painting, music, and architecture were combined in their production. Ben Jonson was the laureate; Inigo Jones the inventor and designer of the scenic decorations; Lanier, Lawes, and Ferabosco contributed the musical embellishments; the king, the queen, and the young nobility danced in the interludes. On these entertainments three to five thousand pounds were often expended, and on more public occasions, ten and even twenty thousand. "It seems," says Isaac Disraeli, "that as no masque writer equalled Jonson, so no 'machinist' rivalled Inigo Jones." For the great architect was wont to busy

himself in devising mechanical changes of scenery, such as distinguishes modern pantomime. Jonson, describing his Masque of Blackness, performed before the court at Whitehall, on Twelfth night, 1605, says, "for the scene was drawn a landscape, consisting of small woods, and here and there a void place, filled with huntings; which falling, an artificial sea was seen to shoot forth, as if it flowed to the land, raised with waves, which seemed to move, and in some places the billows to break, as imitating that orderly disorder which is common in nature." Then follows a long account of the appearance, attire, and "sprightly movements of the masquers." Oceanus, Oceania, Niger and his daughters, with Tritons, mermaids, mermen, and sea-horses, "as big as the life." "These thus presented," he continues, "the scene behind seemed a vast sea, and united with this that flowed forth, from the termination or horizon of which (being the head of the state, which was placed in the upper end of the hall) was drawn by the lines of perspective, the whole work shooting downwards from the eye, which decorum made it more conspicuous, and caught the eye afar off with a wondering beauty, to which was added an obscure and cloudy night piece, that made the whole set off. So much for the bodily part, which was of Master Inigo Jones's design and art." Indeed, Inigo was not simply the scene-painter; he also devised the costumes, and contrived the necessary machinery; in regard to many of these entertainments, he was responsible for "the invention, ornaments, scenes, and apparitions, with their descriptions;" for everything, in fact, but the music and the words to be spoken or sung.

These masques and court pageants gradually brought moveable scenery upon the stage, in place of the tapestries, "arras cloths," "traverses," or curtains drawn upon rods, which had previously furnished the theatre. Still the masques were to be distinguished from the ordinary entertainments of the public playhouses. The court performances knew little of regular plot, or story; ordinarily avoided all reference to nature and real life; and were remarkable for the luxuriously fancifulness and costly eccentricity they displayed. They were provided by the best writers of the time, and in many cases were rich in poetical merit; still they were expressly designed to afford valuable opportunities to the musical composer, to

the ballet dancers, mummers, posture makers, and costumiers. The regular drama, such as the Elizabethan public supported, could boast few attractions of this kind. It was altogether without moveable scenery, although possessed of a balcony or upper stage, used to represent now the walls of a city, as in King John, now the top of a tower, as in Henry the Sixth, or Antony and Cleopatra, and now the window to an upper chamber. Mr. Payne Collier notes that in one of the oldest historical plays extant, Selimus Emperor of the Turks, published in 1594, there is a remarkable stage direction demonstrating the complete absence of scenery, by the appeal made to the simple good faith of the audience. The hero is represented conveying the body of his father in a solemn funeral procession to the Temple of Mahomet. The stage direction runs: Suppose the Temple of Mahomet—a needless injunction, as Mr. Collier remarks, if there had existed the means of exhibiting the edifice in question to the eyes of the spectators. But the demands upon the audience to abet the work of theatrical illusion, and with their thoughts to piece out the imperfections of the dramatists, are frequently to be met with in the old plays. Of the poverty of the early stage, in the matter of scenic decorations, there is abundant evidence. Fleckno, in his *Short Discourse of the Stage*, 1664, by which time moveable scenery had been introduced, writes: "Now for the difference between our theatres and those of former times; they were but plain and simple, with no other scenes nor decorations of the stages but only old tapestry, and the stage strewed with rushes."

The simple expedient of writing up the names of the different places, where the scene was laid in the progress of a play, or affixing a placard to that effect upon the tapestry at the back of the stage, sufficed to convey to the spectators the intentions of the author. "What child is there," asks Sir Philip Sidney, "that, coming to a play and seeing Thebes written in great letters on an old door, doth believe that it is Thebes?" Oftentimes, too, opportunity was found in the play itself, or in its prologue, to inform the audience of the place in which the action of the story is supposed to be laid. "Our scene is Rhodes," says old Hieronymo in Kyd's Spanish Tragedy, 1588. And the title of

the play was also exhibited in the same way, so that the audience did not lack instruction as to the purport of the entertainment set before them.

The introduction of moveable scenes upon the stage has been usually attributed to Sir William Davenant, who, in 1638, evading the ordinance of 1647, by which the theatres were peremptorily closed, produced, at the Cockpit in Drury Lane, an entertainment rather than a play, entitled "*The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Pern*, expressed by vocal and instrumental music, and by art of perspective in scenes;" an exhibition which Cromwell is generally supposed to have permitted, more from his hatred of the Spaniards, than by reason of his tolerance of dramatic performances. The author of *Historia Histrionica*, a tract written in 1699, also expressly states that "after the Restoration, the king's players acted publicly at the Red Bull for some time, and then removed to a new built play house in Vere Street, by Clare Market; there they continued for a year or two, and then removed to the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, where they first made use of scenes, which had been a little before introduced upon the public stage by Sir William Davenant." It is to be observed, however, that inasmuch as the masques, such as the court of Charles the First had so favoured, were sometimes produced at the public theatres, and could hardly have been presented there, shorn of the mechanical appliances and changes which constituted a main portion of their attractiveness, moveable scenery, or stage artifices that might fairly be so described, could not be entirely new to a large portion of the public. Thus the masque of Love's Mistress, or the Queen's Masque, by Thomas Heywood, 1640, was "three times presented before their Majesties at the Phoenix in Drury Lane;" Heywood expressly acknowledging his obligation to Inigo Jones, who "changed the stage to every act, and almost to every scene."

It must not be supposed, however, that the introduction of scenery was hailed unanimously as a vast improvement upon the former condition of the stage. There was no doubt abundance of applause: a sufficient number of spectators were well pleased to find that now their eyes were to be addressed not less than their ears and their minds, and were satisfied that exhibitions of the theatre would be presently much more intelligible to them than had hitherto been the case. Still the sages shook their

heads, distrusting the change, and prophesying evil of it. Even Mr. Payne Collier has been moved, by his conservative regard for the Elizabethan stage and the early drama, to date from the introduction of scenery the beginning of the decline of our dramatic poetry. He holds it a fortunate circumstance for the poetry of our old plays, that "painted moveable scenery" had not then been introduced. "The imagination only of the auditor was appealed to, and we owe to the absence of painted canvas many of the finest descriptive passages in Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and immediate followers." Further, he states his opinion that our old dramatists "luxuriated in passages descriptive of natural or artificial scenery, because they knew their auditors would have nothing before their eyes to contradict the poetry: the hangings of the stage made little pretensions to anything but coverings for the walls, and the notion of the place represented was taken from what was said by the poet, not from what was attempted by the painter."

It need hardly be stated that the absence of scenes and scene-shifting had by no means confined the British drama to a classical form, although regard for "unity of place," at any rate, might seem to be almost logically involved in the immovable condition of the stage fittings. Some two or three plays, affecting to follow the construction adopted by the Greek and Roman stage, are certainly to be found in the Elizabethan repertory, but they had been little favoured by the playgoers of the time, and may fairly be viewed as exceptions proving the rule that our drama is essentially romantic. Indeed, our old dramatists were induced by the absence of scenery to rely more and more upon the imagination of their audience. As Mr. Collier observes, "If the old poets had been obliged to confine themselves merely to the changes that could at that early date have been exhibited by the removal of painted canvas or boarding, we should have lost much of that boundless diversity of situation and character allowed by this happy absence of restraint." At the same time, the liberty these writers permitted themselves did not escape criticism from the devout adherents of the classical theatre. Sir Philip Sidney, in his *Apology for Poetry*, 1595, is severe upon the "defectious" nature of the English drama, especially as to its disregard of the unities of time and place. Now, he says, three ladies "walke

to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden; by-and-by we hear news of shipwreck in the same place, and then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock; upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster, and then the miserable beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while in the meantime two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?" Dryden, it may be noted, in his "*Essay of Dramatic Poesy*" has a kindred passage as to the matters to be acted on the stage, and the things "supposed to be done behind the scenes."

Of the scenery of his time, Mr. Pepys makes frequent mention, without, however, entering much into particulars on the subject. In August, 1661, he notes the reproduction of Davenant's comedy of *The Wits*, "never acted yet with scenes," adding, "and, indeed, it is a most excellent play and admirable scenes." A little later, he records a performance of "*Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark, done with scenes very well, but, above all, Betterton did the prince's part beyond imagination." It is satisfactory to find that in this case, at any rate, the actor held his ground against the scene-painter. Under another date, he refers to a representation of *The Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher, "a most simple thing, and yet much thronged after and often shown; but it is only for the scene's sake, which is very fine." A few years later, he describes a visit "to the king's playhouse all in dirt, they being altering of the stage, to make it wider. But my business," he proceeds, "was to see the inside of the stage, and all the tiring rooms and machines; and, indeed, it was a sight worth seeing. But to see their clothes, and the various sorts, and what a mixture of things there was! Here a wooden leg, there a ruff; here a hobby horse, there a crown, would make a man split himself to see with laughing; and particularly Lacy's wardrobe and Shotrell's. But then, again, to think how fine they show on the stage by candlelight, and how poor things they are to look at too near at hand, is not pleasant at all. The machines are fine, and," he concludes, "the paintings very pretty." In October, 1667, he records that he sat in the boxes for the first time in his life, and discovered that from that point of view "the scenes do appear very fine indeed, and much better than in the pit."

The names of the artists whose works

won Mr. Pepys's applause, have not come down to us. Of Robert Streeter, sergeant-painter to King Charles the Second, there is frequent mention made in the diary of Evelyn, who highly lauds the artist's "very glorious scenes and perspectives," which adorned Dryden's play of the Conquest of Granada, on its representation at Whitehall. Evelyn, not caring much for such entertainments, seems to have frequently attended the plays and masques of the court. In February, 1664, he saw acted *The Indian Queen* of Sir Robert Howard and Dryden—"a tragedy well written, so beautiful with rich scenes, as the like had never been seen here, or haply (except rarely) elsewhere on a mercenary theatre." At a later date, one Robert Aggas, a painter of some fame, is known to have executed scenes for the theatre in Dorset Garden. Among other scene-painters of distinction, pertaining to a comparatively early period of the art, may be noted Nicholas Thomas Dall, a Danish landscape-painter, who established himself in London in 1760, was long occupied as scene-painter at Covent Garden Theatre, and became an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1771; Hogarth, who is reported to have painted a camp scene for the private theatre of Dr. Hoadley, Dean of Winchester; John Richards, a member of the Royal Academy, who, during many years, painted scenes for Covent Garden; Michael Angelo Rooker, pupil of Paul Sandby, and one of the first Associates of the Academy, who was scene-painter at the Haymarket; Novosielsky, the architect of the Opera House, Haymarket, who also supplied that establishment with many notable scenes, and, to pass over many minor names, De Loutherbourg, Garrick's scene-painter, and one of the most renowned artists of his period.

It will be remembered that Mr. Puff in the Critic giving a specimen of "the puff direct" in regard to a new play, says: "As to the scenery, the miraculous powers of Mr. De Loutherbourg are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most, the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers." Shortly after his arrival in England, about 1770, De Loutherbourg became a contributor to the exhibition of the Royal Academy. In 1780 he was elected an Associate; in the following year he obtained

the full honours of academicianship. His easel-pictures were for the most part landscapes, effective and forcible after an unconventional fashion, and wholly at variance with the "classically composed" landscapes then in vogue. Turner when, in 1808, he was appointed Professor of Perspective to the Royal Academy, is said to have taken up his abode at Hammersmith in order that he might be near De Loutherbourg, for whose works he professed cordial admiration. The old scene-painter's bold and strong effects, his daring treatment of light and shade, his system of colour, bright even to gaudiness, probably arrested the attention of the younger artist, and were to him exciting influences. Upon De Loutherbourg's landscapes, however, little store is now placed; but, as a scene-painter, he deserves to be remembered for the ingenious reforms he introduced. He found the scene a mere "flat" of strained canvas extending over the whole stage. He was the first to use "set scenes" and "raking pieces." He also invented transparent scenes with representations of moonlight, sunshine, firelight, volcanoes, &c., and obtained new effects of colour by means of silken screens of various hues placed before the foot and side lights. He discovered, too, that ingenious effects might be obtained by suspending gauzes between the scene and the spectators. These are now, of course, but commonplace contrivances: they were, however, distinctly the inventions of De Loutherbourg, and were calculated to impress the playgoers of his time very signally. To Garrick, De Loutherbourg rendered very important assistance, for Garrick was much inclined to scenic decorations of a showy character, although as a rule he restricted these embellishments to the afterpieces, and for the more legitimate entertainments of his stage was content to employ old and stock scenery that had been of service in innumerable plays. Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790, refers to a scene then in use which he remembered so far back as the year 1747. "It has wings and flat of Spanish figures at full length, and two folding doors in the middle. I never see those wings slide on but I feel as if seeing my old acquaintance unexpectedly."

Of later scene-painters, such as Roberts and Stanfield, Grieve and Telbin, and to come down to the present time, Beverley and Calcott, Hawes Craven, and O'Connor, there seems little occasion to speak; the

achievements of these artists are matters of almost universal knowledge. It is sufficient to say that in their hands the art they practise has been greatly advanced, even to the eclipse of the efforts of both actors and dramatists. Some few notes, however, may be worth telling in relation to the technical methods adopted by the scene-painter. In the first place, he relies upon the help of the carpenter to stretch a canvas tightly over a frame, or to nail a wing into shape; and subsequently it is the carpenter's duty, with a small sharp saw, to cut the edge of irregular wings, such as representations of foliage or rocks, an operation known behind the curtain as "marking the profile." The painter's studio is usually high up above the rear of the stage—a spacious room, well lighted by means of skylights or a lantern in the roof. The canvas, which is of course of vast dimensions, can be raised to the ceiling, or lowered through the floor, to suit the convenience of the artist, by means of machinery of ingenious construction. The painter has invariably made a preliminary water-colour sketch of his scene, on paper or cardboard. Oftentimes, with the help of a miniature stage, such as school-boys delight in, he is enabled to form a fair estimate of the effect that may be expected from his design. The expansive canvas has been sized over, and an outline of the picture to be painted—a landscape, or an interior, as the case may be—has been boldly marked out by the artist. Then the assistants and pupils ply their brushes, and wash in the broad masses of colour, floods of light, and clouds of darkness. The dimensions of the canvas permit of many hands being employed upon it, and the work proceeds therefore with great rapidity. But the scene-painter is constant in his supervision of his subordinates, and when their labours are terminated, he completes the design with numberless improving touches and masterly strokes. Of necessity, much of the work is of a mechanical kind; scroll-work, patterned walls, or cornices are accomplished by "stencilling" or "pouncing"—that is to say, the design is pricked upon a paper, which, being pressed upon the canvas, and smeared or dabbed with charcoal, leaves a faint trace of the desired outline. The straight lines in an architectural scene are traced by means of a cord, which is rubbed with colour in powder, and, having been drawn tight, is allowed to strike smartly against the canvas, and deposit a distinct mark upon its surface. Duty of this kind

is readily accomplished by a boy, or a labourer of little skill. Scenes of a pantomime order, in which glitter is required, are dabbed here and there by the artist with thin glue; upon these moist places, Dutch metal—gold or silver leaf—is then fixed, with a result that large audiences have never failed to find resplendent and delightful. These are some, but, of course, a few only of the methods and mysteries of the scene-painter's art.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "*DENIS DONNE*," "*NO ALTERNATIVE*," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LI. REWARDED.

THE fluent pen, and fervid imagination of the enthusiastic correspondent of *The Cheshire Cat*, had undoubtedly led him away when he described Clement Graham's residence as "princely." It is very pleasant, in its roomy, solid, picturesque, seventeenth century substantiality and respectability; but it is not "princely."

It is well situated, lying midway up a hill that shelters it from the northern blasts, with a fine sweep of wood and water, stretching away to the south of it. The well-cultivated, well-stocked farms that stretch around it, form the Grahams-hill estate, and bring in heavy rents to their owner. The grounds are extensive, well kept up, and remunerative, for Clement Graham makes his head gardener render him a strict account of all the surplus fruit and vegetables. The house is handsomely furnished, with every comfort, but the furniture is neither antique nor modern, "It is just old-fashioned, and nothing more," Charlotte tells herself contemptuously, when she sees it for the first time; and she makes up her mind to supersede it with chattels of her own choice, as soon as possible.

She makes out a mental list of the things for which she has lied, and schemed, and planned, and linked herself to a man she loathes. Her love of luxury, of bright, dainty-coloured elegance, and glittering grandeur has been kept in check all her life, nipped by the biting frost of poverty; but she will fan, and encourage, and indulge it freely now. Full of comfort, full of the evidence of wealth as the house is, there are none of the frail, luxurious superfluities about which she sighs to see as marks of her taste, indications of her rule having commenced.

She arranges her mental list very methodically, and prepares to unfold it

before her husband when they have been settled at Grahamshall for about a week. Just at present she has a plentiful supply of ready money, and the allowance for housekeeping expenses is liberal in the extreme. But nothing has yet been said about her private annual allowance; to the best of her knowledge her husband has not made a will since his marriage; and he has not taken any notice of the hints she has thrown out as to the imminent need she is in of a lady's-maid.

"I shall have all I want," she tells herself, "but it would be more gracious on his part if he gave them to me without my asking for them; however, he will soon learn to anticipate my wishes—and how unpleasant it will be for him if he fails to supply them."

She tells herself this with an exultant throbbing in her heart. The woman who has borne poverty, dependence, privation, humiliation so placidly, determines to be revenged on her former fate now. She resolves upon being envied, admired, courted, copied, exalted! She resolves also upon eventually snubbing all those who are powerless, who may so envy, admire, court, copy, and exalt her.

Before she can set about her noble mission, it is necessary for her to gauge exactly the extent of her influence over her husband, and over her husband's purse. She believes both to be unlimited, at any rate she fully intends stretching the limits to the utmost.

It is easy enough to incline him to parade himself, and his riches, and his handsome, well dressed wife, about the neighbourhood, in order the more fully to display them. But when it comes to the question of making a return for these hospitalities, the old Adam crops up, and Mr. Clement Graham avows that he does not see the necessity for "doing anything of the kind yet." Directly the propriety of his opening his own portals is suggested to him, he begins to sigh for a little quiet, and finds out that "late hours do not agree with his health." Being uncertain of her ground still, and finding that he holds the purse-strings, that they will not relax unless at his free will and pleasure, and that the servants are unable to order anything "unless master checks the order," the mistress of Grahamshall finds herself compelled to relinquish the grand series of dinner parties and at homes, by means of which she had designed to glorify herself, and to popularise her reign at Grahamhill.

At first there is variety enough in being driven about in a well appointed carriage, for the woman whose career has been so monotonous. But after a while, even the belief that people are pointing her out as the lady whose beauty made Mr. Graham false to his vows to another woman, palls upon her. It is dull work, lunching, and dining, and spending the long winter evenings alone with a man who has not an idea in his head, or a good feeling in his heart. If he were only a clever demon she thinks she could tolerate him better; and if he were an amiable fool she really might become fond of him, in this solitude. But he is neither of these things, and gradually she comes to hate him, and to be weary of her existence.

It is useless reminding him of his promise that she should taste the joys of foreign travel. He has had enough of it himself, and, now that he no longer wants to bait his trap with promises, he openly announces that he has no intention of "bothering himself and upsetting his household" by breaking up his establishment again. "You're placed here now, and precious well placed too," he reminds her, "and you must make yourself as well contented as you can; at any rate I've no intention of taking you away."

"Not even to London?" she asks sulkily one day, and he tells her "No, he had enough of London while he was philandering after Gertrude Forest; but that she can go up, if she likes to go and stay with her brother."

Now to go and stay with her brother—to breathe the same atmosphere which she was obliged to breathe while she was in bondage—is a course against which all Charlotte's nature revolts. She dislikes a good many of her fellow creatures, but she hates her sister-in-law. "To be in that woman's house again would be purgatory to me," she says to herself; "but to be in luxurions little lodgings near her, to mortify her day by day with the contrast between 'then and now' would be paradise."

But until all is settled, until she has clearly ascertained what will be the state of her funds, she dare not openly proclaim her sentiments on the subject to Mr. Graham. For the latter has developed in domesticity one of those carping, fault-finding, disagreeable spirits that crows a whole household, and makes every other human being under his roof-tree nearly sacrifice their rights of humanity, rather than "put out" the ruling evil genius.

"There will be my four hundred a year

pin-money, but of course you will make me some extra private allowance for the month or two I am in town?" she says to her husband one morning, and his answer is not auspicious.

"We will talk about your 'pin-money,' as you call it, by-and-by; but why the devil you calculate on having four hundred a year to squander on your private follies, I don't understand," he answers, peevishly.

She feels that now the tug of war between the lesser mind and her own is coming, and she moves very warily.

"You spoke of that sum as the allowance you intended making your wife, Clement," she says, temperately. "When I took Gertrude's place, I thought that I took upon myself all the responsibilities and privileges with which she was to have been endowed. I know very well that you will never grudge me anything, and you know very well that I shall never abuse your confidence; therefore, if you object to the stated sum as being too matter-of-fact an arrangement between us, husband and wife as we are, let me have a few blank signed cheques, and then you will have no more trouble about my little personal expenses?"

"It's no use your trying your canting and carneying on me," he answers roughly, "if you're such an affectionate wife as you pretend to be, why the devil don't you stay here with me, instead of wanting to go and have a shine in town without me? As to allowing you four hundred a year, I'll see you—"

He checks himself, and grunts by way of finishing the sentence, and she puts in tremblingly—for all the happiness she can ever taste in life while this rough master of hers lives, is in the balance—

"What will you let me have for my own, then, Clement dear? I ought to know, for it will trouble you if I have to come to you for every penny I shall be compelled to spend, in order to present myself fittingly before the world as your wife."

She says it all deprecatingly, meekly, rather sweetly in fact, for she hopes to move him, by a betrayal of her own sense of her utter inability to help herself, to a more generous frame of mind. She does not quite realise as yet that she is dealing with a nature that is even lower than her own. The touch of helplessness, the crowning appeal, will not help her hero.

"You can present yourself before the world as my wife very fittingly on fifty pounds a year," he says, with a little snigger, that does away with every particle

of conscience she has in the matter of "doing him" in the future. "Remember, my dear, how much less you had to live and dress on, when I saw you first, and just reflect what a very respectable appearance you can make on fifty pounds a year!"

"Oh, Clement," she cries, becoming genuine for once in her astonishment and pain, "you can't mean it, you don't mean it. Think of the house of which I am mistress; think of the jewels you have given me, and ask yourself, How can I clothe myself in a way that will befit either of them, for such a paltry sum?"

"Oh! make your mind at rest on that point," he says, carelessly; "I mean to pull in the expenditure of the house pretty considerably. And as for the jewels, why I have thought over it; you won't have many of them to consider, for they're unbecoming to your station, and to the manner of life I've decided upon living here, and so I shall dispose of them again."

He looks at her askance as he speaks, and she dare not rise up and defy him, nor dare she urge that he has brought her to this pass by false pretences, for the pretences on her side have been even falser. In that hour they come to a clear understanding with each other, and they are not elevated in one another's estimation. He has the power and the purse, but she has the cunning and the credulity of a fool to deal with. "I'll get what I want, however I get it," she says to herself; while he says, "I'll know how every penny that woman spends goes. She had little enough before she knew me; what can she want with more for herself now?"

There is a fierce battle over the vexed question of her going to London, or rather over the way in which she shall go. She will not go to her brother's house, and she will not agree without a struggle to her husband's other proposition, namely that she shall send all her bills in to him, if she goes into lodgings. She desires to be free, to be free to flaunt herself, in a way that she imagines will be painful, before the eyes of those against whom she cherishes a degree of vindictiveness for which she herself cannot account. She is only conscious of this one fact, that she is a disappointed woman, and she longs with all the force of the feminine longing within her, to wreak her vengeance for her disappointment upon somebody.

In her impotent rage she acknowledges to herself, and declares to him, that she has bartered and degraded herself for nothing. He is neither angered nor softened by the

confession. "To tell the truth," he says, with his irritatingly small laugh, "he has suspected something of the sort all along; he has been prepared to find out that she was trying to trick him, and it is as well she should understand now that he has seen through her from the first."

In her powerlessness she is obliged to confess to herself that she cannot alter this. She is compelled to dwell here in this well-to-do obscurity which has become odious to her (for even the local papers have given her up), with the knowledge impressed upon her mind, and upon the minds of all the household, that she is not of as much importance at Grahamshall as are the upper servants. They at least have the power of being extravagant in their several departments. But she is debarred even from this dubious luxury, for if she indulges in it, intuition tells her that she will have to pay for it out of her fifty pounds a year.

Grahamshall is a far grander goal than any she had ever hoped to gain before that unlucky day on which Mrs. Grange, her sister-in-law, "took her up" with a well-understood purpose. At the same time, Grahamshall, grand as it is, is not what she bargained for. She panted for freedom, and she has procured servitude of the lowest description.

She makes two or three efforts to free herself from the thraldom that is so infinitely irksome to her—efforts that are ignoble in themselves and that tend towards an ignoble end. Mean as he is, unmanly as he is, unworthy as he cannot fail to feel himself to be, her husband does desire to maintain a certain status of respectability in the county in which, by right of his landed property and wealth, he has a certain influence. In learning this fact, she learns, also, that she has a hold upon him; for she is aware that he has bachelor secrets which, as a well-reputed landowner, he would desire to keep from the light of day.

It matters little to Charlotte that she can never discover what these secrets actually are by fair means; she is quite ready to try foul. It matters little to her the knowledge that any moral degradation which may befall him will be visited upon his children—if he has any. The woman who has retained her good looks by means of the placidity with which she has re-

garded every evil that has not immediately affected herself, says now, "Let the next generation look after itself. If I can bend him to my will without exposing him, I'll do it; if I can't, I'll expose him. He would not serve me more gently."

The correspondent who has told in *The Cheshire Cat* the tale of the handsome Mrs. Graham's reception at Grahamshall and in the neighbourhood, is defrauded of the opportunity of narrating some rather sensational events that occur at that "princely residence" during the ensuing months. Only the well-esteemed master of that place knows that he has detected his wife, in the act of rifling his private papers by means of a duplicate key to his secretary, when she believed him to be in bed and asleep. Only the wife knows, through the mediumship of these papers, that she is in a spurious position; and that the title of Mrs. Clement Graham belongs by right to a poor, forlorn, abandoned, helpless, good girl, who believes in Clement Graham still, who is left to her own devices in a miserably uncomfortable home with her brother, a farmer, in Canada. From the moment that she makes this discovery, and is discovered in making it by the bigamist, Charlotte Graham submits to every condition he desires, preferring rather her state of shame and ignominy, which is unknown to the world, to the open hurling down which would be her portion, if she dared be true to a decent womanly impulse and expose him.

The picture of what that life at Grahamshall will be flashes itself vividly before us, and will be painted. We can see the pair, between whom there is neither legal nor love-tie, growing older in each others' enforced companionship. We can see the unhappy children of this evil union, passing from childhood to years of understanding, in an atmosphere that is composed of eternal threatenings and false re-alliances. We can hear the bitter reproaches that only such a man and woman can utter to one another—the cowardly taunt met by the fierce, half-maddened retort—the unfeeling indifference that can bear the sight of any pain, simply because that pain is powerless to hurt it.

But we can never know how much remorse is felt by either of these people for that which they have brought on one another, and on the children who are innocent.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 323. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER VI. COMING OF AGE.

"GRACE had a letter from England this morning," said Madame Sturm, as she sat, placidly sipping her coffee, one afternoon, with Anne acting as her companion, and reading out such scraps from the newspaper as she thought might interest the old lady; "a letter from the lawyers, men, on that dreadful blue paper, and in that horrible round-hand which always reminds one of Chancery Lane. There was a young man—such a handsome fellow he was—but, I recollect, he didn't wear any shirt-collar, only a black-satin stock, rather frayed with rubbing under his chin, and two large pins in it, tied together by a little chain. He was a clerk in our bank in the old days, before my poor brother took the management, and he used to see me sometimes come in the carriage, to fetch father away, and he became rather smitten with me, poor fellow. I forget his name now; but I can see him just as though it were yesterday." The old lady placed her coffee-cup upon the table, and fell into a reverie, slowly passing one hand over the other and looking straight before her. "What could have made me think of him now, after so many years?" said she, rousing herself. "Oh! I recollect. He grew bold enough to send me some letters, and they were all written on that blue paper, and in that same round-hand, and he called me, 'Dear Miss;' only he wrote 'Dear' 'Dr.', just as though I had been a physician, don't you know; and then it was found out, and all put

a stop to. Did Grace show you the letter, my love?"

"Yes, Madame Sturm," cried Anne; "I have just returned it to her."

"Oh, then you know all about it?" said the old lady. "The time is fast approaching now when I shall have to lose my niece. She will be a great lady; and, I suppose, like all the rest of the world, will forget her humble friends."

"I don't think that is likely," said Anne, warmly; "and you will allow that in such a matter I may speak from experience."

"You are quite right, my dear; and I am an old fool for giving utterance to such a sentiment; but I am not very strong either in mind or body now, I think, and I'm beginning to get anxious about that dear girl's future. You have discussed it often with her, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Anne; "it is constantly present to both our minds; and the responsibility which will devolve upon dear Grace is so great, that I, at least, cannot contemplate it calmly."

"Nor I, my love," said the old lady. "The only one thing which reconciles me to it, is the knowledge that she will have you at her right hand to counsel and guide her."

"I am sorry to tell you that you must give up that idea, dear Madame Sturm," said Anne, laying aside the newspaper. "Grace and I have talked it over thoroughly, and I have proved to her that, however much I might wish it, it will be impossible for me to accompany her to England."

"Impossible for you to go with her?" said the Frau Professorin, in alarm. "Why, what can be the reason of that?"

"Some private family matters, with

which I need not trouble you," said Anne, coldly.

"Oh, indeed," said Madame Sturm, shortly. "Something about those bothering Wallers, I suppose?" Then, relaxing a little in her tone, she added—"Well, I call that a great blow. I had thoroughly counted upon your being with her; and it was the only comfort I had."

"I do not think I need tell you how keenly I feel it," said Anne; "but we have talked it all out, and, though Grace would not hear of it at first, she is now half reconciled to the idea, in thinking that, for some time, at least, I shall be able to remain with you."

"You are a sweet angel, Waller," said the old lady rapturously, bending forward her face for Anne to kiss; "and in my wretched state of health are of the greatest possible comfort to me. So long as I live, you shall never want a home; but your heart will naturally be with Grace, and I should have thought myself a horribly selfish old woman to keep you away from her. However, as these bothering Wallers prevent your going, that part of the question is settled. What we have to think of now is who shall be Grace's companion?"

"Grace was about to suggest, and I am therefore breaking no confidence in mentioning it," said Anne, "that the professor should go with her to London, and remain with her there, at least for a short time."

"The professor!" cried the old lady; "why, what are the girls thinking about! Who is to undertake his lectures, and what is to become of me?"

"I shall remain behind to take care of you, dear Madame Sturm," said Anne; "and as for the lectures, one of the professor's colleagues could act for him in his absence, and the little change and rest would do him undoubted good."

"That is quite true," said the old lady, meditatively; "I have been thinking for a long time past that the professor has been working too hard. There is no reason why he should go grinding on morning and night at the university, for we have quite enough money to keep us in peace and comfort. But the idea of him going to London! He is the simplest-minded, and most easily-bothered man that ever was; and London, even in my time, was a dazing place, but now, what with underground railways, and Thames embankments, and things of that sort, I cannot imagine what it must be like."

"You must remember," said Anne, with a smile, "that Grace has a perfectly clear head of her own, and, in all every-day worldly matters, is quite capable of taking care of herself. Where business is concerned she will have the advice and assistance of the lawyers, Messrs. Hillman and Hicks, and also of the trustees to her uncle's will, under whose management the bank is now conducted. It will be necessary that she should have some one connected with her—that she should not be alone in fact—that is all."

"I see what you mean, my dear," said the old lady, with a laugh, "'a figure-head,' as my poor mother used to call it; and the professor will do very well for that. The only question is, whether he will go?"

"There Grace counts upon your persuasion, dear Madame Sturm," said Anne. "He would find himself in a new world, whither his reputation had preceded him, and no doubt would be heartily welcome amongst the scientific men of London."

"Some years ago he often used to express a wish to visit England," said the old lady; "but he is no longer a young man, though, no doubt, as you say, the pleasure of finding himself known to celebrated people would act as an incentive to him, for we are all of us vain, my dear, more or less; and I sometimes think that I ought not to grumble about my poor health, as, without it, I might have fallen into many temptations." And the Frau Professorin smoothed her soft grey hair as she spoke, and contemplated her features in the looking-glass with a deprecatory smile.

The idea thus struck out was not suffered to slumber. That same evening, when the worthy old professor's heart had been cheered by a good supper and a bottle of Rauenthaler, and when he had lapsed into a dreamy state in listening to a selection of simple Scotch and Irish melodies which Anne had been playing to him, and which he dearly loved, the impossibility of Mrs. Waller's accompanying her friend to London was laid before him, and the suggestion made that he should go in her stead.

That such a notion should be broached at all astonished him, but that it should emanate from the Frau Professorin, to whose apron-string, according to the familiar saying, he was supposed to be tied, transcended his powers of belief. He was far too much overwhelmed to give any

definite answer at once, and his companions, knowing his peculiarities, were content to allow him to ramble on in an historical account of the Royal Society, and discourse on English literary and scientific celebrities, until bedtime. It was evident that the idea was not displeasing to the old gentleman, and the next day the Frau Professorin called into council two or three of her husband's colleagues, who, properly indoctrinated, took the opportunity of proving to him that his lectures could be easily arranged for; and that his visit would not merely be a source of pleasure to himself, but of honour to the university, of which he would be looked upon as a kind of non-official representative. The intercourse between the commercial men of Germany and England is constant and unlimited, but the personal relations of "scientists" and littérateurs are still restricted; opportunities of intercourse are not frequently offered, but, when offered, are eagerly seized upon. Thus Herr Pastor Budde wished to be made acquainted with the style of Dean Stanley's preaching, and Herr Regierungs-rath Holthausen yearned for an exposition of Lor' Cock Burn's sentiments on probate law; Hof Arzt Kraft could give Wilhelm Jenner a few wrinkles on the treatment of typhoid fever, and Landwehr Commandant von Stuterheim was anxious that the Herzog von Cambridge should know his opinions on the respective merits of Krupp and Armstrong ordnance; and each and all of these gentlemen had the intention of making Professor Sturm the medium of their ideas. Urged on, first by his wife and then by his colleagues, and pleased with the notion of temporarily entering upon an entirely novel existence, in which he should play no undistinguished part, the old gentleman determined to accompany his niece to England, and at once began making preparations for his departure.

"It will be hard work parting with you again, darling, after being so closely and so constantly together," said Grace to her friend on the evening when this decision had been arrived at; "but there is no help for it, and we must accept the inevitable as best we can."

"Not in all your other goodness and kindness to me," said Anne, putting her arm round Grace's neck, "has your trust been so thoroughly shown, as by your acceptance of my assurance of the necessity

for silence, in regard to that portion of my life which occurred between our parting at school, and our meeting at Paris. I would give all I possess—little enough, Heaven knows, and entirely owing to your bounty," she added, with a smile, "to go with you now; but it is impossible; and you must accept the fact without asking for an explanation."

"I do accept it," said Grace, "and ask no more; my one comfort is in thinking that I shall not be so very long away from you, for as soon as business matters are arranged I shall leave London, and we can either continue to live on here, or go for a year's travel, as we may think fit."

"You are not making allowance for all the attractions which will await the young heiress in the world of fashion," said Anne, with a sad smile. "It would be unnatural, indeed, if you, with all the advantages which wealth and beauty can command, should abnegate your position and waste the brightest period of your life."

"It would be absurd of me to sneer at temptations of which I know nothing," said Grace, "but the anticipation of them certainly never occupied my thoughts. I shall stop in London, I suppose, because the lawyers and business people will want me there; but I do not imagine that my arrival will cause any great excitement in the fashionable world."

"You are an heiress, which in itself will render it quite sufficient for you to be sought after; but in addition to that, there are many of your uncle's friends who will be anxious to make things pleasant to you. You will—you will go to Loddonford, I think you said?" she added, with an irrepressible tremble in her voice.

"Oh, most certainly not," said Grace promptly, and without noticing her friend's emotion. "My poor uncle laid so many plans for our mutual happiness there, that I could never think of it without recurring to him, and all the details of that horrible tragedy, which, for the first few months, haunted me night and day, and which I seem only just to have forgotten, would return. I shall give instructions to have the place sold, and never let its name be mentioned before me."

"There you are right," said Anne. "There is no reason why you should retain any link to bind you to a disagreeable past; your future, thank Heaven, bids fair to be bright enough, and with that you should occupy your thoughts."

"And the most pleasurable part of it is that it will be passed with you," said Grace, affectionately.

"We will not speculate too much upon that, little one," said Anne, stroking her friend's shining curls. "The natural future of all girls is marriage—the happy future, I firmly believe, of many." Her voice shook a little as she spoke. "But," she continued, "it is impossible to assure it, we are told; but what is possible you possess. A husband will come for you, my darling, and take you away from me, and rendering you a source of happiness to him, and others to come after you."

"And you also, Anne," said Grace, earnestly; "why should not such a lot be yours?"

"Why not?—for—for many reasons, pet. I must be the maiden-aunt to your children, and contented enough in that."

"I think you are talking very absurdly," said Grace, suddenly. "I don't see any necessity for my being married; I am sure I have never seen anyone yet that I could care about."

"That is because the right 'anyone' has not yet presented himself," said Anne. "I can understand your being heart-proof against the admiration of Paul Fischer, and remaining unsubdued by the fascinations of little Dr. Kraft; but the conquering hero is yet to come. Qui que tu sois voila ton maître—you, with your beauty and riches, are most unlikely to form an exception to the rule."

"Well," said Grace, with a blush and a smile, "it will be time enough to talk of the 'hero' when he arrives. Whoever he may be, I am certain of one thing, that I shall never love him as I love you, and the first condition of my accepting him, would be that you and I should not be separated."

"We will consider these points, as you say, dear, all in good time," said Anne, faintly smiling; "but, from all that one has heard, a husband never fancies his wife's friends; and the closer the intimacy, the less likely are they to find favour in his eyes."

"My husband will have to do as I choose," said Grace, tossing her head; "and I shall take care that 'those lawyers,' as Aunt Sturm calls them, give me proper authority over my own affairs. What are you smiling at, Anne?"

"At the confident way in which you are speaking, darling. 'He jests at scars who never felt a wound;' and you, who

have never yet had Love's yoke laid upon you, cannot comprehend the possibility of subjugation. You will think differently some day, little one."

"One would think you spoke out of the plenitude of your own experience, Anne," said Grace. But her friend did not reply to her, and the conversation dropped.

The resolution to part with her property at Loddonford, which Grace had adopted, and which she clung to with unswerving tenacity, had given Anne Studley very great satisfaction. She would not have originated the idea: firstly, because she had laid down for herself the strict rule never to interfere, even by a suggestion, in the management of Grace's business matters; and, secondly, lest on such a subject she might be led by her anxiety to betray so much interest as to awaken suspicion. In all their communings, Anne had never given her friend the least hint as to the place where her father had resided. Beyond the fact that it was in a country village somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Thames, Grace knew nothing; and as she reiterated her determination of parting with the lovely villa, where her banker-uncle had dispensed so much renowned hospitality, Anne felt relieved from any apprehension that her friend should discover any part of the truth by being resident in the accursed neighbourhood. Not that there was any danger, Anne thought, of Grace's coming across her father—it could be no part of the captain's scheme to continue to reside in a place, which, even to his dulled moral sense, must be filled with horrible reminiscences, and fraught with peril. Thus the dread of encountering him had not wholly actuated her in her strong resolution not to accompany her friend to England. It was not likely, she thought, that the captain, once abroad, would give up a life on the Continent—which, as he had told her, was agreeable to him—and return to a place where he would be under the surveillance, and at the beck-and-call, of his more daring and more prosperous associate in crime; for that Heath's absence had been only temporary, and that he had long since returned to London and resumed his position in the bank, Anne knew for a certainty. His name, as has been said, was never mentioned between the friends. Grace knew that—for some reason of which she was ignorant, and into which her delicacy and sisterly feeling did not allow her to inquire—any reference to it was

painful to Anne; but the periodical letters from the lawyers, which the young heiress always handed to her friend, were filled with complimentary allusions to the ability and steadiness manifested by Mr. Heath, under whom the affairs of the bank were more prosperous even than in Mr. Middleham's time, and it was perfectly evident that the "managing director," as he was now styled, possessed the confidence and goodwill of the trustees.

Of course a man like Captain Studley, who took care to be kept informed of everything in which his own comfort and safety were in the slightest degree concerned, would necessarily be acquainted with this state of affairs; and, as he had a holy horror of Heath, to whom he had confessed his inferiority in scoundrelism, he would naturally keep away, to avoid anything which might lead to his falling into his late companion's clutches, and again becoming his tool. Anne felt, indeed, that there was more probability of her encountering her father on the Continent. There was no likelihood of his visiting such a place as Bonn, where there was neither pleasure nor business to attract him; but the travelling tour, which Grace had hinted at their taking after her return from London, had more possible elements of danger in it. That, however, would be an after consideration. The long interval of rest and peace which she had enjoyed, Grace's never-failing affection, and the regard and confidence bestowed upon her by those among whom she had lived for so many months, had had a quieting and salutary effect upon her once bruised and aching heart. The fear of pursuit and detection under which she laboured on her first arrival in Germany had now almost entirely left her. She no longer passed anxious hours of the day and night in wondering what had become of her father; and she could go through her daily task of reading the English newspapers to the Frau Professorin, without the omnipresent fear, which at first haunted her, of finding in them some record of the captain's discovery and disgrace.

Nor did she brood now, as she had erst been in the habit of doing, with sickening terror, over the details of Walter Danby's death. Time, the consoler, against whom we rail for blotting out from our memories the features of the lost loved ones, and the details of many happy bygone scenes, as a compensation, acts a beneficent part in throwing a haze over reminiscences of

former trouble and distress. The hideous scene which Anne Studley had witnessed came back rarely to her now, and then but as some fragment of a perturbed dream, vague and indistinct. The illness consequent upon her discovery, the fearful bargain wrung from her in her terror, its accomplishment, and her flight, all seemed as fantastic and unreal. A new life had commenced for her at her meeting with Grace, and, with the recollection of her troubles and her wrongs, had passed away her desire of avenging herself on those who had been the cause of her suffering. When she lay tossing on her feverish couch in the secluded house at Loddonford, her sole prayer had been for strength to bring down retribution upon Walter Danby's murderer; but that feeling had died out, and now she only prayed for a continuance of the peaceful life which she was leading. She had hoped to be forgotten, but better than that, she had learned to forget. That she was forgotten she had not a doubt. Both her father and the man who had the right to call himself her husband, when they found that her intentions were not openly hostile to them, when they had learned that her existence was not necessarily associated with the idea of danger to them, would soon let her lapse into oblivion. Throughout her life, with the exception of a few weeks, she had been as nothing to her father; and it was not likely that Mr. Heath, who seemed to have lived down any suspicion of his double crime, and to be immersed in prosperous business, would bestow a thought upon her. Not even, Anne imagined, would the sight of Grace, with whom he must necessarily be brought into contact, revive the suspicion of the managing director against her whom he had first met in company with the young heiress; and even were the recollection to arise in Heath's mind, Anne had no apprehensions for the result. She knew that Grace's discretion was as absolute as her devotion, and that she would never be betrayed into any avowal which might compromise her friend's safety, or reveal to another the secret which she herself had never sought to penetrate.

Tranquillity of mind had conduced to Anne Studley's bodily health, and her renewed vigour and stamina had contributed greatly to the improvement of her personal appearance. The look of sadness and suffering which illness had impressed on her countenance, and which so fas-

cinated the romantic Paul Fischer on her first arrival, had entirely disappeared. She was grave still, it is true, with a gravity beyond her years, but the Fran Professorin often declared that that was "Waller's style," and suited her better than any other; and, when particularly amused or pleased, her face would light up with a smile, which, from its very infrequency, was doubly pretty and doubly welcome. From the moment of their arrival at Bonn, Grace had insisted upon paying her friend a liberal salary, and Anne was thus enabled to dress well, in her quiet, simple taste, and was not ashamed to take her place among the visitors, from time to time gathered together at Madame Sturm's musical evenings. From one and all of these she received the utmost courtesy and consideration, for nowhere in the world is society pleasanter, less formal, and more thoroughly natural than in that class which occupies a middle position between the ennobled and the bourgeoisie in the German nation. It is possible that this arises as a reaction from the ridiculous pride and pompous vanity of the "vons," as well as from the beer-swilling boorishness of the lower classes; but be this as it may, it exists as a fact, and from the families of the professors and the professionals, of which Madame Sturm's society was composed, Anne, as the humble companion of the young heiress, received a welcome and a kindness such as she would have been a long time obtaining in England.

Nor was her popularity confined to the stocking-knitting dames and the dreary old gentlemen, who gathered round Madame Sturm's coffee-table and the professor's piano. With the young men she had a very great success; and, although the erratic Paul Fischer had long since transferred to another shrine that romantic devotion which he had imagined himself to have experienced at the first sight of Anne, but which he never had the courage to declare, there were many others on whom the grave and matured beauty of the young English girl had worked its due effect. Foremost amongst these was Franz Eckhardt, who, by nature very differently constituted from his younger, more impulsive, and more demonstrative companion, had in him much of that sweetness of disposition which, mingled with rugged honesty and stern fidelity, is so often found in the German character. To such a man the mixture of good looks

and good sense, of womanly sweetness and the power of comprehension and endurance, but rarely accorded to women, which Anne possessed, came as a new revelation. Never in his experience had he met with anyone so completely realising his idea of "a perfect woman nobly planned;" and, although somewhat slow of conviction, when he had once adopted this idea he held to it firmly, and determined to do his best to win Anne Studley for his wife. On one point, that of his power to maintain her in proper comfort, he was completely assured; for his father, who had been a brewer in a large way at Hamm, had died soon after Anne's arrival at Bonn, and Franz was his sole heir. Not for him, though, the vats and brewery, and all the sterling accessories of commerce; he had always determined to part with the business, and with the proceeds derived from the sale to lead a lazy dilettante life, occupying himself with painting and music, the two arts which he loved, and in the pursuit of which he excelled. If he could only get the English girl to share that life, what happiness there would be in store for him! He waited long, for he was modest and diffident, as are most brave men; but he took heart of grace at last and spoke to Anne, who, of course, rejected him—kindly, but decidedly. She gave him no gleam of hope, and he went out of her presence saddened, but loving her as much, and respecting her perhaps even more.

And Anne Studley kept her own counsel, and added this last to the secrets already locked in her breast.

SNAKE WOMEN.

THOSE who delight in being in at the death of a good story, or in witnessing its dissolution into a myth, with that pleasure which destructive philosophers alone enjoy, may perhaps be interested in following the various mutations undergone by the Lamia story, and its curious adaptation to the mental wants of the middle ages. In ancient Greece no doubt was entertained as to the existence of snake women, who tapered off from a beautiful female torso into a colubrine lower extremity. Endowed with melodious voices, these land sirens—like their marine cousins—lured beautiful youths into the woods and devoured them. This is the crude form of the Lamia—a semi-serpentine witch, who tempted men to their destruction.

The next shape is that portrayed by Philostratus in his Life of Apollonius the philosopher. Here we have Lycius, a handsome youth, strolling on the high road near Corinth, "thinking of nothing at all," when he becomes aware of a fair damsel, whom he discovers to be not only beautiful, but rich exceedingly, dwelling in a fine house in Corinth, surrounded by wealth and luxury. At their wedding feast enters Apollonius, who denounces the damsels as a Lamia, or serpent witch, and in spite of her entreaties, continues to speak on, till all at once the lady, the house, and all the show of gold and jewels within it, vanishes utterly. This thing, saith Philostratus, was known to many, for it was done in the middle of Greece.

Keats, taking hold of this story, recast it, and attracted the sympathy of the reader for the unfortunate Lamia, by making her, instead of a witch, a damsel temporarily thrown into a serpent form by enchantment, from which she is released by Hermes, only to expire at her marriage feast under the "glittering eye" of tough old Apollonius, who appears to have added to his profession of philosopher that of a witch diviner, and in that capacity would have been invaluable, both in Scotland and in Massachusetts, in the days when it was unsafe to be an old woman.

The Lamia of Keats is therefore a complete but beautiful perversion of the old faith concerning the Lamiae, who are always spoken of by the ancients with the greatest abhorrence.

More akin to the sentimental idea of the Lamia is the charming mediaeval legend of the daughter of Ypoeras—possibly Hippocrates, who ruled in the island of Cos, where the scene of the story is laid. According to the fourteenth century version: "Some men say that in the isle of Cos sits the daughter of Ypoeras, in the form and likeness of a great dragon that is an hundred fathoms in length, as men say, for I have not seen her. And they of the isles call her the Lady of the Land. And she lyeth in an old castle, in a cave, and sheweth herself twice or thrice in the year. And she was thus changed and transformed, from a fair damsel into the likeness of a dragon, by a goddess called Diana. And men say that she shall so abide in that form of a dragon unto the time that a knight come, that is so brave that he dare come to her and kiss her on

the mouth, when she shall turn again to her own kind and be a woman again, but after that she shall not live long. And it is not long since that a knight of Rhodes, that was hardy and doughty in arms, said that he would kiss her. And when he was upon his courser, and went to the castle and entered into the cave, the dragon lifted up her head against him, and the knight, seeing her in that form so hideous and so horrible, he fled away. And the dragon baro the knight upon a rock—maugre his head—and from that rock she cast him into the sea, and so was lost both horse and man. Also a young man that wist not of the dragon went out of a ship, and went through the isle till he came to the castle and into the cave, and went so long till he found a chamber, and there he saw a damsel, that combed her head and looked in a mirror, and she had much treasure about her. And he abode till the damsel saw the shadow of him in the mirror. And she turned her towards him and asked him what he would? And he said he would be her lover. She asked him if he were a knight, and he said nay. Then she said that he might not be her lover; but she bade him go again unto his fellows, and get him made a knight, and come again upon the morrow, and she would come out of the cave before him and he should then come and kiss her on the mouth. And said she, 'Have no dread, for I shall do thee no manner of harm, albeit that thou wilt see me in the likeness of a dragon. For though thou see me hideous and horrible to look upon, I would have thee to know that it is made by enchantment. For without doubt I am none other than thou seest now, a woman, and, therefore, dread thou naught. And if thou kiss me thou shalt have all this treasure, and be my lord, and lord also of all this isle.' And he departed from her and went to his fellows to ship and let them make him a knight, and came again upon the morrow for to kiss this damsel. But when he saw her coming out of the cave in form of a dragon—so hideous and so horrible—he had so great dread that he fled again to the ship, and she followed him. And when she saw that he turned not again, she began to cry, as a thing that had much sorrow; and then she turned again into her cave, and anon the knight died. And since then might no knight see her but that he died anon. But when a knight cometh who is so hardy as to kiss her, he shall not die; but he shall turn the damsel

into her right form and kindly shape, and he shall be lord of all the countries and isles abovesaid."

It is curious to observe that in this story the ancient Lamia myth is completely transformed. All our sympathies are enlisted by the daughter of Ypocras, while the fate of the knights who could not pluck up courage to embrace a dragon two hundred yards long, excites no compassion whatever. Her cry of despair, "as a thing that had much sorrow," is the crowning incident, and the death of a few knights—more or less—is passed over with complete indifference.

Strangely enough, the next kindred story occurs in the annals of the Plantagenet family, and here again the transformed woman is the ill-used person. The early Plantagenets could hardly be designated amiable princes. Their existence was cheered and enlivened by parricide, abduction, sacrilege, mutilation, and other pastimes of a like inspiriting character. The intensity of hate which they bore each other exceeded ordinary family spite, as the fury of a Berserk excels the poorest quality of Dutch courage. In the indulgence of this mutual hatred they gloried, esteeming it a noble tradition of the family, and by all means to be kept up. One day a priest came, cross in hand, to Geoffrey, son of Henry the Second, begging him to become reconciled to his father, and not to imitate Absalom. "What!" said the young prince, "do you wish me to waive my birthright?" "God forbid, my lord," replied the priest, "I wish you no harm." "You do not comprehend me," said the Count of Brittany. "It is the destiny of our family not to love each other. This is our heritage, and not one of us will ever renounce it."³ The grandfather of this agreeable youth, also a Geoffrey Plantagenet, drew upon himself, on the occasion of his cruelly maltreating a bishop, the severe remark of St. Bernard, "From the devil he came; to the devil he will go." Now St. Bernard was far too great a master of language to use such a sentence as this, without some special reason, and the neatness of the application will be learned from the following legend. Far back in the history of the Plantagenets lived an ancient Countess of Anjou. She appears to have been an excellent wife, but "peculiar in her ways." She never went to mass, and had a custom of slipping off quietly

by herself, no man knew whither. The husband, instead of letting her have her own way—like a sensible man—fretted and fumed himself into a fever of curiosity and jealousy. Catching her one day, just as she was preparing to make off by herself, he took it into his head to order four of his squires to hold her fast. A terrible scene took place. Leaving her mantle in the hands of those who vainly essayed to retain her, and leaving as well two of her children rolled up in its folds, she seized the remaining pair of olive branches, vanished through the window, and was never seen again.

This warning to inquisitive husbands recalls very strongly the story of Melusine —be the same of Poitou or of Dauphiny—the progenetrix of the noble house of Lusignan. Brantôme, in his life of Charles of Bourbon, Count of Montpensier, relates that the Queen Mother—Catharine de Medicis—to whose service he was particularly attached, after arranging a truce between two of her hopeful brood, took a fancy to go somewhat out of her way to visit the ruins of the Castle of Lusignan, a Huguenot stronghold, destroyed a few years before by Montpensier. It appears that the ruins of Lusignan were magnificent, for Brantôme—after the method of Thucydides and Sallust—inserts a long speech, or rather lament, of Catharine over the destruction of the "antique pearl of all the king's palaces." "I had never seen it," said the queen, "except when I was very young, and passed by it on the way to Perpignan, but on account of my youth did not then form that impression of its beauty and grandeur which I now receive from its ruins."

"Behold," continues Brantôme, "the pitifulness and ruin of this place. More than forty years ago, I heard an old veteran say that when the Emperor Charles the Fifth came to France, they brought him to Lusignan for the delectable pastime of hunting the deer, which in this, one of the most beautiful and ancient parks of France, were in great numbers. He never tired of admiring and praising the beauty, size, and superb workmanship of this palace, built (what is more) by a certain lady, concerning whom he made them tell him several fabulous tales, which are there known to all, even to the good old women who washed out the lye at the fountain, whom the Queen Mother would also question and listen to.

"Some of these said that they saw her

sometimes come to the fountain, to bathe in it, in the form of a very beautiful woman, and in the dress of a widow. Others said that they saw her, but very rarely, and that on Saturday at the hour of vespers (for while in that state she did not let herself be seen), bathing, half of her body being that of a beautiful lady, and the other half a serpent. Some said that they saw her fully dressed, walking with very grave majesty, and others that she appeared on the top of her great tower as a beantiful woman, and as a serpent. Some said that when any great disaster was about to come upon the kingdom, or a change of reign, or death or misfortune to any of her relations—the greatest in France, evcn kings—three days before she was heard to cry three times with a very shrill and terrible cry. This is held to be perfectly true. Several persons of that place, who have heard it, are positive, and hand it down from father to son; and also when the siege took place, many soldiers and gentlemen of honour who were there, confirmed it. But above all, when the sentence was passed to throw down and ruin her castle, she uttered her loudest cries and wails. This is very true, on the testimony of honest folk. Since then she has not been heard. A few old wives, however, say that she has appeared, but very rarely.

"Finally, and in positive truth, she was, in her time, a very wise and virtuous lady, both as wife and widow, from whom sprang those brave and generous princes of Lusignan, who by their valour made themselves Kings of Cyprus, among the chief of whom was Geoffrey Big-tooth, who was represented as of lofty stature on the portal of the great tower."

Thus far Brantôme, who is disposed to treat Melusine—snaky or not—with all fitting honour; a feeling also expressed in a very characteristic way by several great families. The houses of Luxembourg, Rohan, and Sassenaye altered their pedigrees in order to claim descent from Melusine; and the Emperor Henry the Seventh felt especial pride in being able to number among his ancestors the beautiful colubrine bride of Raymond of Poitou.

Oddly enough, some of the lady's own undoubted descendants, actual members of the house of Lusignan, displayed a singular want of appreciation of the qualities of their ancestress, and tried very hard to shnille off the snaky coil. A certain doctor

of theology, one of the order of preaching friars, the Reverend Father Stephen of Cyprus, of the royal house of Lusignan—immensely penetrated with the grandeur of his family—produced a volume of genealogies, wherein he, after a certain clumsy critical fashion, tries to demolish the supernatural character of Melusine. The reverend father does not for a moment doubt the possibility of fairies and transformations. There were many of them, he says, both in England, Spain, and France, "who were nothing more than downright devilish sorceresses," allowed to work their wicked will by the permission of God, because "the people were infidels." "They transformed themselves," continues Father Stephen, "sometimes into queens, sometimes into animals, and caused themselves to be greatly loved, by the aid of the devil, who fascinated and deceived the eyes of those who had not the knowledge of God. And what those did formerly the sorceresses of to-day (1587) do much more, but not to those who believe faithfully and firmly in God, and give by active works sufficient proof of their faith." It was, then, not the supernatural that Father Stephen objected to. His main difficulty appears to have been with his precious genealogies, wherein he could not or would not find a place for his Ophidian ancestress.

A couple of hundred years before the time of Father Stephen, Jean d'Arras, secretary to the Duke of Berry, received orders to collect all the information extant concerning Melusine, and in the course of his labours "interviewed" the Sire de Serville, who defended the Castle of Lusignan for the English against the Duke of Berry. In the presence of that prince, the said Serville swore upon his faith and honour that three days before the surrender of the castle there entered into his chamber (though the doors were shut) a large serpent, enamelled blue and white, which struck its tail several times against the foot of the bed whercon he was lying with his wife, who was not at all frightened at it, althongh he was very considerably so; and that, when he seized his sword, the serpent changed all at once into a woman, and said to him, "How, Serville, you who have been in so many battles and sieges, are you afraid? Know that I am mistress of this castle, which I built, and that soon you will have to surrender it." When she had ended these words she resumed her

serpent shape, and glided away so swiftly that he could not perceive her.

Collecting all the information he could, Jean d'Arras found among other things that the mysterious Melusine came from beyond sea, from the Islands of the Sirens which lie beyond Gaul, that is to say, the British Islands. According to his charming book, a certain king of Albany (Scotland)* became a widower, and going out hunting one day in a forest near the sea, he was overcome with a great thirst, and bent his steps towards a certain beautiful fountain. Approaching this, his ears were saluted by delightful sounds, and dismounting from his horse, he crept gradually towards the fountain, and there beheld the most beautiful lady he had ever seen in his life. He was so entirely overcome by the beauty of the lady and the melody of her voice that he forgot all about the hunt, and—wondrous in a Scot—forgot that he was thirsty; indeed he was so enchanted that he did not know whether it was day or night, whether he was awake or asleep.

After a stately courtship the king married the lady, who exacted from him a promise that when she presented him with an addition to his family he would on no pretence visit her, but would studiously keep out of her way. It appears, however, that King Elinas was rather a feather-headed person, for when his fairy queen Pressina gave birth to three little girls at once, Melusine, Meliora, and Palatina, and his son Nathas brought him the news of this happy event, he immediately dashed off to see the babies, and came into the room where Pressina was bathing them. He was not well received. Pressina reproached him bitterly with breaking his covenant, thus bringing ill-luck on himself and consigning her to everlasting perdition; and, catching up her three children, disappeared from his sight forever.

Now it came to pass that Pressina betook herself to the Isle of Avalon, called the Lost Island, and brought up her three daughters to the age of fifteen. Every morning she took them up on a high mountain, whence they could see the country of Ybernic (Hibernia), and, bewailing her sad fate, at length revealed to them the story of their father's folly. Melusine and her sisters determined to revenge their

mother's wrongs, and being half-bred fairies, caught the thoughtless king and chained him in the heart of the mountain "Brumbeliyois in Northumbelande." When they informed their mother of this pretty piece of work, she raised a fearful outcry, and like a forgiving wife and a good mother, proceeded to punish her children all round. Palatina was shut up in the mountain Guigo with all her father's treasure, until should come a knight of her kindred who should deliver her, possess the treasure, and conquer the country. Meliora was banished to a castle in Armenia, where she was to watch a falcon till judgment-day; while such knights as should come and also watch by it through the twentieth day of June without slumbering, should have their wish in all worldly things except in taking Meliora to wife; but in the event of their expressing this wish, would be unlucky even unto the ninth generation.

Melusine—because, as her mamma said, she was the eldest of the triplet, and therefore "of all of them ought to have known better"—was condemned to bee every Saturday a snake from the waist downwards; but if she could find a man to marry her, and who would faithfully keep his promise never to look upon her on that day, she should run her course of life like an ordinary woman; but, if deceived by her husband, should wear her snaky shape once a week till the day of judgment. Going sadly on her way, Melusine wandered amid the woods and fountains of Poitou, where fell out this strange adventure. Aymery, Count of Poiton, a great nobleman, had adopted Raymond, the younger son of the Count de la Forêt, a poor but not otherwise undeserving relative. While out boar hunting one day, this handsome youth and the Count of Poitou became separated from their attendants, and having pursued the boar into the depths of the forest of Colombiers, lost both him and their way, and, as night came on, were fain to camp out. Gazing up at the sky, the Count Aymery told Raymond that, by reading the stars, he knew that the subject who at that moment slew his lord would become a great and powerful prince, the founder of a line of kings. Hereat arose a great noise, and a huge wild boar appeared on the scene. The huntsmen were so completely taken by surprise, that they made a clumsy attack upon the beast; the count was overthrown, and Raymond rushed at the boar with his

* There were in the later middle ages no less than three Albaniæ: one the ancient Epirus; one Northern Russia, including part of Siberia; and another, that indicated in the text, Scotland.

sword, which, glancing off his tough hide, transfixed the unfortunate count. With another stroke he laid the boar at his feet, and then perceived that his friend and adopted father was dead. Overcome with horror, Raymond sprang on his horse and rode desperately away, not knowing whither he went. At last he reached a beautiful glade bathed in soft moonlight, where, at the foot of a mighty rock, sprang up a fairy fountain. Around the fountain were sporting three beautiful damsels, of whom she who appeared to be the chief advanced to meet the strange huntsman. To this beautiful creature Raymond unfolded his horrible adventure, when the serpentine side of Melusine's character showed itself at once. She recommended him to "play possum"—to mount his horse and go quietly back to Poictiers, as if nothing had happened. The hunt had been scattered, the various members would drop in singly, and when the body of the count was found, the carcase of the dead boar would explain the catastrophe. Escaping one difficulty, Raymond plunged into another. He fell violently in love with the beautiful fairy, and, after following her recommendation to obtain of his kinsman as much ground around the fountain as could be enclosed by a stag's hide (*Dido rediviva*), was wedded to her in the magnificent palace erected on the piece of ground so craftily obtained. On the wedding day, Melusine made him reiterate a previous promise that he would on no account seek her on a Saturday, and the enamoured knight confirmed his pledge with many oaths and declarations of eternal love.

For a while all went well. Melusine increased the size of the castle and added to its fortifications, and named it after herself, Lusinia or Lusignan. The love of Raymond for his beautiful wife survived the appearance of a large family, and Melusine might have gone down to her grave in peace, had it not been for her husband's relations. The Count de la Forêt, his brother, was always hanging about Lusignan, and apparently endeavouring to poison Raymond's mind against his wife. One Saturday, he rode over post-haste to Lusignan, and after dinner inquired for Melusine. Raymond simply said that his wife was busy on Saturdays, but would be glad to entertain him on the morrow. This did not of course satisfy a brother-in-law, who straightway said that the country was full of curious stories concerning Melu-

sine, and that her absence on Saturdays was by some attributed to a gallant, and by others to the practice of witchcraft. Hereupon, Raymond, like a fool, got into a terrible fury, and rushing into his wife's apartments, came at length to an iron door. Drilling a hole in this with the point of his sword, he peeped through, and beheld Melusine in an immense bath, changed from the waist downwards into a serpent. When he saw this sight, his heart smote him, for he recollects him of his oath. With some difficulty he restrained himself from killing his brother on the spot, and gave way to terrible lamentations, for he well knew that he must now lose the beautiful wife who had been his chief glory and delight. Some time passed without any sorrow coming upon him, till one day news came to the castle that one of the sons of Raymond and Melusine, called Geoffrey Big Tooth, had attacked and burned a monastery and a hundred monks, among whom was his own brother Froimond. On hearing of this crime, the father exclaimed to Melusine, who was endeavouring to console him, "Away, false serpent, contaminator of my honourable race!" At this unmerited reproach, Melusine fainted, and having been at length "brought to," embraced her husband tenderly. A very touching scene now occurred, in which Melusine displayed great beauty and elevation of character, and finally bidding her husband adieu, fled through the window of the castle, leaving the imprint of her foot upon the window-sill, then changing into a serpent, flew three times round the castle she had built, uttering "such heartrending cries that every one wept for pity," and amid a frightful storm of thunder and lightning, finally disappeared.

In compiling his romance, Jean d'Arms clearly did not confine himself to the Melusine traditions alone, but used up any other mediæval legends which came to hand. Palatina shut up in the mountain, bears a singular resemblance to the daughter of Ypcorus; and Meliora, in her Arneian castle, is the well-known Lady of the Sparrowhawk, mentioned by many early travellers. It is also patent that in the histories of Pressina and Melusine, he tells the same story twice over. Nevertheless, the beauty of great part of his work makes ample atonement for some confusion and a few repetitions, and it would be difficult to find a more favourable

specimen of mediaeval romance, than the Melusine of Jean d'Arras.

Those possessed of special critical acumen resolve the founder of the great house of Lusignan into a mere myth, and Mr. Baring Gould gets rid of Melusine ingeniously enough. She was a water-fairy, a siren, a mermaid. The demi-fish is as old as the hills and the fountains. Our old friend Dagon of the Philistines, and the Mexican god Coxcox, were both fish-gods, with finny lower extremities. These figures indicated the sun, which, according to ancient cosmogony, passed one half of his time above the earth, and the other half in the sea, into which he disappeared nightly. Rejoicing in the name of Dagon, On, Oannes—why not Johannes, John, or Jack?—this deity was represented on Assyrian seals as half-man, half-fish, and this curious figure is the primeval progenitor of all sirens, mermaids, and lamiae whatsoever. It may be objected to this theory, that Melusine was not a mermaid, but a true snake-woman; but a still more fatal bar exists to this resolution of the difficulty. It is that in referring lamiae as well as mermaids to Dagon or the Sun, the mythists have completely overlooked the very important point that the serpentine form is, in most of these legends, imposed by a higher power upon a fairy or demi-goddess during a certain term of punishment. In the Melusine story, the colubrine transformation is inflicted by a fairy mother on her child, condemned to expiate in that shape her crime against her father. In the far East this identification of the serpentine as an expiatory form is so distinct as to admit of no possible doubt: the transformation in the Chinese version being not partial but complete. *Pih Shay tsing Ke* (The History of the Spirit of the White Snake) is a Chinese romance founded, precisely like the story of Jean d'Arras, upon a popular legend; the only difference being that the events narrated by the Frenchman were supposed to be comparatively recent, while the Chinese tradition dates from remote antiquity.

According to the legend, a woman is compelled by Fo to wear the form of a white snake, in order to expiate during centuries the faults of her previous life. At the end of eighteen hundred years the god decides that the star Wen-sing (the star of literature) shall descend upon earth, and receive the highest honours. The woman is allowed to resume her mortal

form and to marry one Hân-wen, in order to give birth to Wen-sing. After passing through innumerable difficulties and adventures, during which she meets a blue snake expiating crimes like herself, she brings Wen-sing into the world, and is then buried under the pagoda of Louïpong. Twenty years after, when she has fulfilled her term of expiation, she is raised up to heaven. I have reason to believe that this story is little known to collectors of folk-lore, although it was long ago presented to them by the learned Stanislas Aignar Julien, and I therefore make no apology for introducing it as a new element of interest in reference to the legend of Lusignan.

The story of Melusine has, of course, been explained in various realistic fashions. Michelet, with that splendid disregard for facts which is eminently characteristic of his countrymen, declares the "true Melusine made up of contradictory natures," to have been Eleanor of Guyenne, "the mother and daughter of a diabolical generation. Her husband punished her for the rebellion of her sons, by holding as a prisoner in a strong castle her who had conferred upon him such vast possessions."

It is not impossible, however, that an easier explanation of the Melusine story may be found. It is clear that she was a Scotch lassie, uniting the beauty of a woman with the wisdom of a serpent, a sort of north-country Haidee, the daughter of Mac Lambro—a fine old pirate of the period, and a direct ancestor of Sir Andrew Barton, the loss of whom, with his ship and pinnace, brought about the battle of Flodden Field. She was foolish enough to marry a Frenchman, and endowed him with great wealth in gold and ships. She was therefore a sea-daughter, and invested by the yokels of Poitou with marine attributes. Building castles for her lord, she, by degrees, acquired great sway in the country, till she got old, when her husband began, like a shabby foreigner, to check her accounts and otherwise vex her life. One fine day this treatment became unbearable, and she took ship to Scotland and refuge among her own kindred. Her departure had to be explained somehow, and her shabby husband therefore invented the snake story to cover his own delinquencies, and justify him in ill-treating his children. As Mrs. Grundy says, "these foreign marriages seldom turn out well."

A BROKEN LILY.

SHE stood beneath the linden's lengthening shade,
Fair English Lily, chaste and calmly glad;
False Hope her maiden trust had no'er betrayed,
Nor Memory made her stainless bosom sad.
For still, in that serene and guileless breast,
Sweet Love and steadfast Faith abode, us one;
So waited she, alone, in perfect rest,
As sleeping flowers await the climbing sun.

"He left me when the lily last was white,
And now again it blossoms. Happy flower!
His honey-lips shall touch thy cup to-night,
Where now I press it. Happier I, a shower
Of so sweet kisses waiting! Waiting? Dear,
I chide not thee, nor the slow-loitering days.
They have left no shadows, for the hour is here
That brightens all with its meridian rays.
"Sweet lily! Lo, he set thee for a sign
Between us; and my heart is wholly clear
Of one disloyal wandering thought, as thine
White chalice is of stain. I should not fear
Could he so search my soul as one may scan
This chaste cool cup. Should one not wholly
shame

To lay on Love's pure altar other than
The perfect gift that fits its puré flame?"

The linden shadows lengthened. Still she stayed
The lily at her lips, which tremulously
Shook from their soft repose. The deepening shade
Crept down the primrose of a cloudless sky.
Was it dim eve that drove the happy rose
From that sweet face? Stars shook in night's
blue dome,
And still she stood, that lily clasp'd close
To a cold heart, and murmured, "he will come."
But he came never. All the lilies died,
And strew'd the sullen earth with sad shed leaves.
Not the new year's new rose, in all its pride,
Could gladden her again. As one who grieves
So gently that the sorrow seems new sweetness,
She paled and slowly passed. On her dead breast
They laid a lily, type in chaste completeness
Of a pure heart now sunk to perfect rest.
She lies beneath the yew-tree's changeful gloom.
Her gentle soul, left of its comrade, Love,
Went seeking him beyond the undreaded tomb,
And finds him far, in fairer fields above.
While one who loathes the leaden, lingering years,
Creeps sadly on through life, unloved, alone,
Bathing with sorrow's unavailing tears
The broken lily sculptured on her stone.

MARIGOLD.

A ROMANCE IN AN OLD GARDEN.
IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"As great a beauty of a rose as ever I seen in my born days!" said old Peter Lally, straightening his bent back, and gazing tenderly at the exquisite bloom, which was the product of his skill. "To think that the likes of it must ever and always be sold to the stranger, and never a master or mistress at Hildebrand Towers to take pride out o' it!"

The old gardener sighed impatiently, and gazed around on the mossy lawns, glowing parterres, and verdant slopes fringed with flowers, which had been to him as a little kingdom for sixty years. Every-

thing was in perfect order, not a leaf nor a pebble out of its place; even the ivy on the walls of the Towers was clipped trim and close, and the urns on the quaint old balustrade were blazing with oleanders. No one could have supposed that Hildebrand Towers had been long almost as deserted and forgotten by the world, as the far-famed palace of the Sleeping Beauty.

A young woman was walking slowly through the deep purple-green shade of an ancient mossy avenue, that led up from one of the entrance-gates towards the gardens of the Towers. For years no wheels had cut the soft green turf under her feet, over which the trees met and the sunbeams flickered. Behind the solitary figure the path lost itself in a rich gloom, and there was a dreamy mystery in the air, as the girl moved slowly and thoughtfully through the solitude. The thrush uttered a few lazy notes, and a blue dragon-fly perched on the feathery grass; but no other sound or movement disturbed the stillness of the spot.

The girl's graceful figure was clothed in a gown of homely print; a faded scarlet shawl was folded across her bosom, and tied loosely round her waist; her coarse straw bonnet had fallen backward on her shoulders, leaving uncovered a ripe sunburned face, and golden head. She carried a large round basket, which dragged upon the turf as she walked. Leaving the avenue, she threaded a maze of winding paths, and opened a little green door in the high jasmine-covered wall of a vast old-fashioned garden, where roses and tall lilies sheltered under apple-trees, and where the rich perfume in the air accounted for the enthusiastic humming of the bees.

"Peter!" she cried, "Peter Lally, I am come to see you!" and went calling on, by peach-covered walls, under ripe pears that hung down to her mouth, picking her steps between musk and lavender, and startling flights of butterflies from the hearts of the moss-roses.

"Why, it's Marigold," replied the old man, at last rising suddenly out of the raspberry bushes; "and glad I am to see your purty faco afther the night's dhramin I had about yon! I thought the Masther of Hildebrand Towers had come home to us at last, and brought a bride with him; and I met the lady walkin' among the flowers, an' a white

satin gown upon her; an' when I looked at her again, I saw it was Marigold! 'An', by the powers!' said I to myself, 'there'll be the wars of heaven an' airth when Ulick hears of this!' An' I let a screech, an' took to my ould heels!"

The girl laughed.

" You might have waited to see where I was going," she said; " for sure I am that I was running away too. Your master, whoever he is, would be a bad exchange for my Ulick, Peter Lally."

" It's aisy to talk," said the old man, shaking his head, " when the masther's not to be seen—I wish he wus! Not that you would be a match for him, Marigold, my girl; for the Hildebrands is a fine, mighty family, an' must marry as sich."

" Yon needn't say so much about it, Peter. I belong to Ulick, and, if I were a Hildebrand, I would marry him all the same. As I am only a poor girl, no Hildebrand, in a dream or out of a dream, could tempt me to give him up."

" It's the right kind of love," said the old man, solemnly. " Stick you to that; an', take my word for't, everything yon plant'll grow."

" But I get all my plants ready made, yon know, Peter; besides, as you say, there is no Mr. Hildebrand, and so we needn't fight about him."

" He's somewhere," said Peter Lally, sticking his spade in the ground and leaning on it meditatively. " Hildebrand Towers isn't waitin' all these years, so neat and so beautiful, for nobody. Many's the time I tould you of the lovely Kate Hildebrand, that married a poor man, and was cut off by her family. That woman had childher, whatever come of them, an' sure I am that a grandson o' her's 'll come walkin' in to us some fine mornin', with the Hildebrand mark as clear as prent on his face."

" May be so," said Marigold; " bnt he's a long time coming, and I like the place very well as it is. Perhaps I couldn't get my plants so easily, if a flock of grand people were always sweeping in and out of the gardens."

Peter left his spade standing, disengaged his thoughts from the fortunes of the Hildebrands, and proceeded to fill the basket which the flower-girl placed before him. Long ago Peter Lally had given a wife and children to the earth, and in return the earth had given him beautiful creatures to comfort his loneliness: stout trees of his own rearing, and fair lilies and

roses, whose innocent loveliness had filled the void in the old man's heart. Over and above his devotion to his calling, the gardener cherished two prominent ideas in his mind. One was a loyal attachment to the family, in whose service he had toiled for sixty years. His father had been gardener at Hildebrand Towers, and at sixteen Peter, spade in hand, had entered the gardens where he had since remained to see the oaks spreading, the ivy thickening, and the Hildebrands coming into the world and going out of it. They were a singular family—handsome, adventurous, and remarkable as having often been the subjects of the strangest freaks of fortune. The first Hildebrand had come from some northern country over the seas, having first married the widow of an Irish merchant, who had been his partner in trading to the Indies. After her second marriage the lady inherited this property in her own country, and from some distant seagirt town came sailing with her foreign husband to take possession of it. Story-tellers related how Hildebrand the first brought a chest of gold with him, which had to be carried up the staircase by six stalwart men. However that may be, there was certainly great wealth in the family, and when the last owner of Hildebrand Towers died, a childless widow, she left a large fortune behind her, for which no heir had as yet been found. The deceased old lady, good friend and beloved mistress of Peter Lally, had firmly believed that there were Hildebrands in existence who might yet appear and claim their own; and by her will she had arranged matters so that until the rightful heir should appear, everything must be kept in good order in the house and grounds, as though the master were expected from hour to hour. For years this state of things had been going on at the Towers: the gardens were trim, the house was swept and garnished. People sometimes came out of curiosity to inspect this waiting home, and ask questions about the family; but the watched-for owner had not yet walked in at the gate, and the world had grown tired of expecting him. Peter Lally was the only person who believed that the expectations of his departed mistress with regard to the heir would be realised. Most people shook their heads incredulously when they were spoken of, and looked for the day when the property would be divided among distant connections of the family.

The other prevailing sentiment of Peter's mind was a tender interest in the fate of Ulick and Marigold, who had long looked on him as a friend. The fortunes of these two young people were singularly alike: each was alone in the world, and a certain sympathy, sprung from this circumstance, had drawn them together. Marigold was the child of a poor gentleman, who had come, sick and a stranger, to a roadside cottage, standing between Hildebrand Towers and the town of Ballyspinnen; and had there died, leaving his little daughter alone among the cottagers. The child remembered that she had come a long journey over the sea, and had lived in many different places; but she knew of no friend that she had possessed except her father. She grew up a waif among the poor, and was supported, out of charity, till such time as she was able to provide for herself. She had picked up a little education, could write a good hand, and spoke and carried herself with a certain natural dignity and refinement. Almost from the first, old Peter Lally had taken an interest in her, paying her small sums for weeding flower-beds, and making many an easy job for her small fingers, in order that she might early taste the sweets of independence. As she grew older, he instructed her in the art of gardening, and taught her to make an honest livelihood by selling plants and flowers in the town. Marigold (as the old man had named her, because her name was Mary and her hair like gold) had her special customers in Ballyspinnen, whose greenhouses and window-gardens were entrusted to her care. Her own home was a tiny, spotless room, in a cottage, half-way between the gardens and the town, and was wont to contain little besides Marigold herself, her flowers, and a few sunbeams. When, some four or five years ago, Ulick had arrived, a tall, awkward youth, to seek his fortune in Ballyspinnen, the happy, flower-crowned face of little Marigold had met him on the high road with the smile of a friend. Friendless, travel-soiled, and hungry, he had fallen in despair by the wayside, when she had shared her dinner with him, and placed all her little money in his hands.

Ulick was now a clerk in a business-house in the town, having risen from the post of messenger; but, then, he was only a vagrant who had ventured forth from a workhouse, determined to fight his way in the world. The friendship made between

pity and gratitude on the high road had never been broken, and the years which had made man and woman of these two had endeared them to one another with a love that was everything to each.

"Let the basket stand here, Peter Lally," said Marigold; "for I want to go round to Poll Hackett, and see my chickens." And Peter returned to his spade; while, by many winding paths, Marigold reached the back of the old house, where, at an open window, sat the house-keeper of the Towers at her needle-work, with one eye on the poultry-yard and the other on a neighbouring kitchen-garden. Poll Hackett was a buxom, lively widow, as fond of variety in her thoughts and opinions, as of colours in the pattern of her dress. It was a real pleasure to her to change her mind, and a still greater pleasure to invent and explain her admirable reasons for doing so. As she had many lonely hours, sitting in the vacant old house in hourly expectation of an imaginary master, she must have been sadly in need of occupation for her active mind, had it not been for this talent of constructing and demolishing, and reconstructing her beliefs and opinions on all matters that came under her notice. Whether or not the race of Hildebrand should be looked upon as extinct, was a question upon which she was never weary of ringing the changes; and her feelings of friendship towards Peter Lally fluctuated with her convictions on this subject. After a long gossip with Peter over the matter, she returned to her solitary sewing, inflamed with ardent expectation of the coming of the unseen and unknown being in whom the old man put his faith. She had been even known to go so far as to air the sheets in the handsomest bedchamber, and fill the larder with provisions, which she herself had been afterwards obliged to consume. At such times as this, her affection for Peter Lally was as lively as her sympathy with his sentiments; and the only fault visible to her in his character, was a too great carelessness in his preparations for so great an event as the arrival of the master of Hildebrand Towers.

"There yon go," she would cry, "landin' off the flowers to yon girl, to be scattered over the country, instead of makin' your greenhouse shelves look handsome for the man that owns them. He'll take you at a short yet, Peter, an' I wouldn't wonder if it was this very night of all nights that he

would come walkin' in, axin' for his dinner; an' never a bokay you'd have to put on the table."

"Aisy, woman, aisy!" Peter would say; "he won't ceme just that sudtent but what we'll have time to dig the potatoes and lay the cloth."

The next day, however, Poll Hackett was sure to be in a state of irritation, because the sheets had been aired in vain, and she had made an unnecessary sacrifice of her faveurite pullet. Before evening she was sure the master was dead, and would never appear, and the next day she was certain he had never been born. Having adopted this view of the question, she at once set to work to invent her reasons for having done so; by the end of the week she was ready to die for her faith in the utter extinction of the race of Hildebrand from the earth; and the next time Peter Lally came in her way, she tossed her head in disdain, and woudl scarcely speak to him.

This variable dame now met Marigold with smiles of welcome, and fluttering out to the poultry yard in gown of brilliant stripes, and flowing cap-ribbons, proceeded to count six little gold-feathered chickens into the young girl's lap.

"They'll be quite a little fortune for you towards house-keeping," she said; "but you mustn't handle them too much. Come into the house and rest yourself a bit. Sure it's as good as my own house to ask anyone I like into, for it was only yesterday I made up my mind that there will never be master nor mistress here but myself."

"Take me up to the handsomest rooms then," said Marigold; "for I have a fancy to walk through them this evening."

Poll led the way, and Marigold's auburn head glimmered along the old brown winding passages, which brought them to the front of the house. The flower-girl took her way through the old-fashioned but beautifully-kept chambers, walking solemnly round the dining-room, with its dark panels and shining bronzes, and studying the faces of the dead Hildebrands that gleamed out of the twilight on the walls, intensifying the air of solitude in the place with the fixed gaze of their lack-lustre eyes. She visited the drawing-room, with its long polished floor, queer old china, and faded satin furniture, stepping lightly, and touching delicate ornaments softly with her finger-tips, as if she liked the contact with anything

that was dainty and refined. Poll Hackett hurried her on, however, to a certain wardrebe chamber, where hung many rich gowns and draperies, which were the housekeeper's pride and delight. Poll was glad of any excuse to shake these out and admire their varieties, and she now threwh a rusty satin robe over Marigold's peasant dress, hung a tarnished gold-striped Indian shawl upon her shoulders, and a veil of coffee-coloured lace upon her head. Seeing her reflection in a long antique glass, Marigold caught the spirit of the fun, laughed merrily, snatched up a huge spangled fan, and swept about the room with a comic assumption of dignity.

"It's a quare long time," cried Poll, enraptured, "since satin tails whisked over yon stairs to the draw'n'-room. Come down, Lady Madam! come down! and let the poor ould gimeracks see the sight of a misthress among them again!"

Marigold laughed and obeyed; and in a few minutes she was walking up and down the deserted drawing-room, giving mock commands to Poll, in a voice and with a manner that made the housekeeper stare.

"Well, well!" gasped Mrs. Hackett at last, wiping her eyes, "it's in the blood, I suppose. See what it is to be come of gentlefolks."

"I'm tired of it, Poll," said Marigold, pulling off her veil, "and I don't want to be reminded that I come of gentlefolks. I beleng to peor folks."

She sat down on a couch, and gathered up the Indian shawl on her arms; the fun had dropped away from her with her veil, and she sat now gazing before her with an abstracted look on her face.

"I don't know where it comes from," she said, "or what it means, but I feel now as if I had surely worn clothes like these before, and sat in a chair like this, and wrapped such another shawl about my shoulders. It never could have been me; perhaps it was my mother, though I do not remember her, or know anything about her. Here, Poll Hackett," she said, throwing off shawl and gown and flinging them to the housekeeper, "take these, and never make such a fool of me again!"

Marigold walked out of the house and back to the gardens, where Peter Lally put the basket of plants on her head, bade her good evening, and closed the garden gate behind her.

She was crossing a mossy glade, which formed a green terraced recess between two groves of ancient trees, when she saw a figure coming to meet her. It was Ulick, who took the basket from her head, saying—

"I hope I shall soon take it down for good. Let it stand here a little, while we enjoy ourselves."

"You must not despise my flowers, or I shall think you are ashamed of me."

"You shall have as many as you please in your little garden and in your windows, but you shall not wear them any more upon your head."

He took her hand, and they sat upon an old moss-eaten stone seat under shelter of a venerable sun-dial, the roses and geraniums at their feet. Ulick had a fine, intelligent face, and a look of manly independence in his bearing; he did not seem fanished, nor miserable, nor dispirited now.

"Ah, Ulick," said Marigold, "when I see you looking every day more and more like a gentleman, I often wonder how you content yourself with me."

"And oh, Marigold," said Ulick, "when I remember the day you gave your dinner on the road to a poor ragged boy, I can hardly believe that you, who are come of gentlefolks, do not cut my acquaintance."

"But you are come of gentlefolks yourself, Ulick."

"And that is the only thing that interests you about me?"

"Oh, Ulick!"

"Come, come, my love! let us trouble ourselves no more about those who are dead and buried, and as unknown to us as to the rest of the world. We were well met, and we have been and are going to be very happy. I have seen a little cottage that will suit us exactly, and in a few weeks more——"

"You can't afford it yet, Ulick."

"But I can, Marigold; I have got a rise in my salary, and I can, and I will."

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

WINCHESTER.

FROM all the six principal approaches to the ancient city of Winchester there are glimpses of the old cathedral. The best are those from the hill road to Portsmouth, past the Downs, across the vale of Chilcomb, and from the Romsey side of the road. When you stand at these stations and look at the cathedral, you are looking at an ancient British city.

By the early Celtic invaders, who found their way here from Porchester, the forest-circled city was called by the bright and rejoicing name of Caer Gwent, or "the White City," and from thence, one after another, fresh swarms of Celts were, it is supposed, alternately sent to found and people Winchester, Dorchester, and Shaftesbury. When those two martial brothers, idealised by Shakespeare in his *Cymbeline*, *Guiderius* and *Arviragus*, rebelled against *Claudius*, according to Matthew of Westminster, *Claudius* was besieged by the Britons at Winchester. At the close of Vespasian's campaign in England, his successor, P. Ostorius Scapula, who defeated the *Cangi* and *Silures*, fortified Winchester in the good old mathematical Roman way. The site of the summer camp used by the Roman garrison of Winchester is still to be seen on Catherine Hill, a mile from Winton. It was a strong isolated fort, with the river on one side, and the Roman road leading from Winchester to Porchester on the other. There are still traces to be seen of such old Roman roads between Winchester, Silchester, and old Sarum. *Arviragus*, that sturdy Guerilla chief of these early British wars, being at last finally defeated in North Wales by the Romans, was given up by the Brigantes, and sent in chains to Rome. *Claudius*, struck with his invincible courage and pride, generously gave the Celtic champion his liberty, and sent him back to reign in England—the province of the *Belgae* being his dominion, and his capital Winton, not Gloucester, which the grateful *Arviragus* had built, and which he had christened in honour of his conqueror *Clandins*, i.e., *Claudioecastra*. This *Arviragus* of Shakespeare is, our readers should be reminded, the *Caradoc* of our old Welsh bards and the brave *Caractacus* of ordinary English history. Thenceforward *Arviragus* rechristened himself *Tiberius Claudius*—King and Legato of the august emperor in Britain and conqueror of the *Cogidubni* (people of Gloucestershire).

The fiery insurrection of Boadicea followed, and Winton would soon have fallen before her knives and scythes, had not Parlinus, the Roman Proprætor, stopped her march forward by lopping down eighty thousand of the infuriated Britons. That Amazonian heroine, that Celtic Joan of Arc, was buried, it is said, at Wilton. This daughter of *Caractacus*, alias *Caradoc*, alias *Arviragus*, was praised for her beauty

and virtue by Martial, and with her husband, the senator Pudens, is commended by St. Paul in one of his epistles, as eminent among the saints. The son of Arviragus was Marius; the son of Marius was Coelius (old King Cole), and the son of old Cole, Lucius, the first Christian king of the world. This Lucius, we may observe, was called by his Wiltshire subjects, "The Great Light."

The special legend of Winchester cathedral, however, refers not to these half-apocryphal early British kings, but to Alfred's honest friend and adviser, Saint Swithin.

St. Swithin shared with St. Neot the glory of educating our Alfred. He was chancellor under Egbert and Ethelwolf, and "to him," says Lord Campbell, "the nation was indebted for instilling the rudiments of science, heroism, and virtue into the mind of the most illustrious of our sovereigns." He also accompanied Alfred on his pilgrimage to Rome, and became Bishop of Winchester; a learned, humble, and charitable man without a doubt; a devout champion of the Church, and munificent in building, like most of the prelates of that time.

St. Swithin figures in our Protestant calendar as the Jupiter Pluvius of our Saxon ancestors—we will come to the story by-and-by—and, in this character, says a clever writer, "perhaps a water-spout would be his most appropriate attribute; but he has still graver claims to reverence. He ought to be conspicuous in a series of our southern canonised worthies, bearing the cope, mitre, and pastoral staff as a bishop, and the great seal as chancellor; and, thus distinguished, he should be placed in connection with the kingly Alfred, the wise St. Neot, St. Dunstan the skilful artificer, and St. Ethelwald the munificent scholar."

Among the notable miracles alleged to have been worked by St. Swithin is this—that after he had built the bridge at Winchester, a woman came over it with her lap full of eggs, which a rude fellow broke, but the woman showing the eggs to the saint, who was passing at the time, he lifted up his hand and blessed the eggs, "and they were made whole and sounde." To this may be added another story—that when the saint's body was translated or removed, two rings of iron, fastened on his gravestone, came out as soon as they were touched, and left no mark of their

place in the stone; but when the stone was taken up and touched by the rings, they of themselves fastened to it again.

In the year 865, says a second miracle-monger, St. Swithin, Bishop of Winchester, to which rank he was raised by King Ethelwolf the Dane, dying, was canonised by the then Pope. He had specially desired to be buried in the open churchyard, and not in the chancel of the minster, as was usual with other bishops, and the request had been complied with; but the monks, on his being canonised, taking it into their heads that it was disgraceful for the saint to lie in the open churchyard, resolved to remove his body into the choir, which was to have been done with solemn procession on the 15th of July. It rained, however, so violently on that day, and for forty days succeeding, as had hardly ever been known, which made them set aside their design as heretical and blasphemous; so, instead, they erected a chapel over his grave, at which many miracles were said to have been wrought.

In Poor Robin's Almanac for 1697, an old saying, together with one of the miracles before related, is noticed in these lines:—

In this month is St. Swithin's day,
On which, if that it rain, they say
Full forty days after it will,
Or, more or less, some rau distill.
This Swithin was a saint, I trow,
And Winchester's bishop also,
Who in his time did many afeat,
As Popish legends do repeat;
A woman, having broke her eggs,
By stumbling at another's legs,
For which she made a woful cry,
St. Swithin chanced for to come by,
Who made them all as sound or more
Than ever that they were before.
But whether this were so or no
'Tis more than you or I do know;
Better it is to rise before,
And to make hay while sun doth shine,
Than to believe in tales and lies
Which idle monks and friars devise.

The satirical Churchill, says one of Hone's clever writers, also mentions the superstitious notions concerning rain on this day:—

July, to whom the dog-star in her train,
St. James gives oysters, and St. Swithin rain.

The same legend is recorded by Mr. Brand, from a memorandum by Mr. Douce; "I have heard these lines," he says, "upon St. Swithin's day:—

St. Swithin's day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain no mair.."

Ben Jonson, in *Every Man out of his*

Humour, has a touch at almanac wisdom, and on St. Swithin's power over the weather:—

Enter SORDIDO, MACILENTE, HINE.

SORD. (*looking at an almanac*). O rare! good, good, good, good! I thank my stars, I thank my stars for it.

MACI. (*aside*). Said I not true? 'Tis Sordido the farmer—a boar and brother to that swine was here.

SORD. Excellent, excellent, excellent! as I could wish, as I could wish! Ha, ha, ha! I will not sow my grounds this year. Let me see what harvest shall we have? June, July, August?

MACI. (*aside*). What, is't a prognostication raps him so?

SORD. (*reading*). The xx., xxi., xxii. days, rain and wind; O, good, good! the xxiii. and xxiv., rain and some wind; the xxv., rain, good still! xxvi., xxvii., xxviii., wind and some rain; would it had been rain and some wind; well, 'tis good (when it can be no better); xxix., inclining to rain; that's not so good, now; xxx. and xxxi., wind and no rain? 'Slid, stay; this is worse and worse; what says be of St. Swithin's? turn back, look, St. Swithin's, the xv. day—variable weather, for the most part rain, good. For the most part rain; why, it should rain forty days after, now, more or less; it was a rule helü afore I was able to hold a plough, and yet here are two days no rain; ha! it makes me muse.

And Gray alludes to the same superstition in these lines:—

Now, if on Swithin's feast the welkin lours,
And every penthouse streams with hasty showers,
Twice twenty days shall clouds their fleeces druin,
And wash the pavements with incessant rain.

At the time of the Heptarchy, when England was slowly consolidating into one powerful kingdom, the cathedral city of Winchester was a place of such importance that, when Egbert conquered Cornwall, drove back the Welsh, and overthrew the Mercians on the banks of the Wily, his first act, after he became sole monarch of England, was to turn Winchester into his capital and metropolis, and, in Winchester cathedral, he was solemnly crowned "King of all England." But fresh troubles awaited the conqueror and master of England. The savage Norsemen cast their hungry swarms upon our shores; their black sails began to appear at Southampton, Portland, in Devonshire, the Isle of Thanet, Northumberland, and Lincolnshire. In one year alone of Ethelwolf's reign, three bloody battles were fought with the savage invaders at Rochester, Canterbury, and London; and Ethelwolf himself was defeated off Charmouth in a fierce struggle with thirty-five sail of the Pagan enemy. In this battle it was that Herfrith, the Bishop of Winchester, and another warlike Saxon prelate were slain. This unfortunate bishop was the successor of the great St. Swithin, to whom Egbert had

confidently entrusted the education of his son Ethelwolf. It was the dread of these Danish hordes, the robber colonists of the frozen yet teeming north, that induced King Ethelwolf to grant a charter, with special privileges, to priests, in approval of which pious concessions the Bishop of Winchester for the time being set apart every Wednesday of the week, as a day of general supplication to God against the Danes. This charter, at first confined to Wessex, was, in 851, at a council of the lesser states, held at Winchester, extended to all the other Anglian and Saxon nations.

It was in a lull during these fierce forays of the Norsemen, that the Bishop of Winchester made a pilgrimage to Rome, taking with him the David of King Ethelwolf's household, his youngest and best-beloved son Alfred, a child then only in his fifth year. Followed by a splendid retinue of English nobles, the boy-prince passed from cathedral to cathedral of France, and eventually visited the court of Charles the Bold, whose child-daughter, Judith, then in her eleventh year, he married.

But Winchester and its cathedral—for, after all, the history of the two is inseparable—were soon witnesses of an event more important for the future than even the throning of Egbert or the great charter of the Saxon clergy. It was in the ancient city of Winchester that the principal citizens and traders of the place formed themselves into a brotherly and defensive association, under royal sanction, and called themselves a guild, a full century before those great trade unions of the masters of capital were founded.

There is no doubt that the brave, wise, and good King Alfred loved the city where he had assumed the Saxon crown. He had royal palaces at Chippenham and Wilton, one in Somersetshire, and one in Hampshire. But Winchester—the Winton or Venta Castrum, the harbour-fort of the Romans—was the favourite residence of Alfred the warrior and the philosopher, and here he kept the public records and the celebrated Codex Wintoniensis or general survey of his new kingdom, which was, undoubtedly, a precursor of the better-known Doomsday Book of our Norman Conqueror. Here, too, King Alfred fixed his chief and central court of justice, as we find noted in the trial of certain Danish pirates who, breaking the treaty of Heddington, had again landed as rough

foragers in England. No wonder, therefore, that Asser, the chronicler, emphatically calls Winchester the royal city. All that Alfred could do for Winchester he did: he gathered there the great and wise of the land; and there, with Asser, his faithful Welsh monk and secretary, he sat in friendly converse, translating the philosophic maxims of Boetius. And when the king resolved, one day, in a pious inspiration of regretful friendship, to found a monastery to Saint Grimbald, that good French monk whom he had allured from France to conduct his new university at Oxford, Alfred chose Winchester for the site of the building, which was afterwards erected on the south side of the cathedral. And this place became the chief of the monasteries—Athelney, Shaftesbury, and St. Mary's, Winchester—that this wise and pious king erected. And when Alfred died, worn out by the cruel disease that had racked him for thirty years, he was buried in a porphyry monument in Winchester cathedral, till his own grave in the newer abbey could be completed. Edmund, a son whom Alfred had himself caused to be crowned during his lifetime, was buried in the cathedral, and his inscribed gravestone and coffin-chest are still shown. Edward, Alfred's second son, on the death of his brother, succeeded to the throne, completed his father's monastery of St. Grimbald, and endowed it with lands; and in this new minster Alfred's widow then hid her sorrow, and was in time admitted to the Church's calendar as a saint.

The first bishop chosen by King Alfred for Winchester was, so tradition says, the worthy Denewnulphus, the very herdsman of Athelney marshes in whose hut the king had sheltered when in such imminent peril from the Danes. It is supposed that Denewnulphus's wife must have died before he accepted the bishopric. He seems to have been an energetic prelate and a zealous counsellor of Alfred's. On the death of the herdsman-bishop, the king, probably impatient of all inferior persons, kept the see vacant for seven years, till the Pope threatened him with excommunication. Denewnulphus's successor, Frithsten, a pupil of St. Grimbald, behaved in a most unepiscopal way, for he resigned his see after twenty-two years, even surrendered that key, more powerful even than St. Peter's, the money-box key, and gave up the calm sunset of his days to contemplation.

Frithsten's successor was another scholar of Grimbald, a quiet charitable man, free from pride, who used to spend hours every day pacing round churchyards and praying for the dead. His successor was St. Elphege the Bald, a nephew of the mischievous St. Dunstan.

The next bishop, Elfinus, not content with that good mouthful, Winchester, secured Canterbury also, and then hurried to Rome in mid-winter to secure the Pope's blessing and assent. In crossing the Alps the snow was so deep, that the new bishop and his retinue had to kill their horses, and roll themselves up in their warm flesh. Nevertheless the bishop died, and was carried back to Winchester cathedral for interment.

Many a better man than the old saints, who had for so many centuries glorified her with light, and hymn, and incense, lies in this venerable cathedral. First and foremost among these worthies of Winchester we should place that honest fisherman, Izaak Walton, who lies in Prior Silkstede's chapel, among proud knights and nobles, whose hearts were hard as their own armour. It was, no doubt, owing to Walton's kind friend and patron, a Dr. Morley, the Bishop of Winchester, that he ended his life during the great frost in December, 1683, at the house of Prebendary Hawkins, who spread the great black marble slab, still existing, over his honoured corpse.

In the reign of Athelstane, who was a grandson of King Alfred, but despised by many of the Saxon nobles from his being illegitimate, a conspiracy was brewed at Winchester. The leader, Elfrid, being arrested, and denying all knowledge of the crime, was sent to Rome to swear his innocence at the altar of St. Peter. While repeating the oath, Elfrid fell down in a fit, and died three days afterwards at the English school in Rome. The king's brother, Edwin Athelstane, escaped on board a decidedly undermanned vessel, seeing that he had only an armour-bearer to look to sail and helm. The young conspirator, in despair at the helplessness of the vessel, soon threw himself headlong into the waves; but the armour-bearer reached the coast of France in safety. Athelstane, in remorse at the death of his rash brother, condemned himself to seven years' penance, and founded, in expiation, the Abbey of Milton in Dorsetshire.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DENIS DONNE," "NO ALTERNATIVE," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LII. (AND LAST) CUTTING THE KNOT.

THERE is a sound of many feet pattering away in all directions as the Bellairs enter their own house. The sound is one that is very delightful in the ears of anxious parents, when they have been apart from their offspring for a long time. But a bride, entering her new home for the first time, may be forgiven for finding something jarring to her nerves, in the rush of little hurrying feet and the shrill treble of childish voices.

It is very confusing to Kate. As she enters the hall a little boy tears past her mounted on a huge walking-stick, and disappears from sight through an open door, which he bangs loudly behind him. A little girl, with a doll's cradle in her arms, advances tumultuously towards the intending mistress of the house, stares at her in silence for a moment or two, and then vanishes with a whoop, just as an irate nurse comes forward, screaming out a series of excited and unintelligible commands to her refractory charges.

"Why, they're the little Angersteins, Harry!" Kate says, hopelessly; and Mr. Corkran smiles in a friendly but respectful way, and tells her, "Yes, they are; and that they have grown much too wild for their mother to manage."

"What are they doing here?" Kate asks, turning hastily into the library. To her own chagrin, and to her husband's disappointment, she feels herself incapable of responding warmly and cordially to the hearty greetings the servants are giving her. Instead of coming back to an abode of graceful peace and quiet, she has come back to a disorderly bear-garden.

"What could have made Mrs. Angerstein send her children up here, to distract us with their noise and presence the instant we arrive?" she asks her husband impatiently, disregarding the presence of Mr. Corkran. Captain Bellairs being unprepared with a satisfactory solution of this problem, he holds his peace, and Mr. Corkran responds for him.

"I know Mrs. Angerstein told them to keep them out of the way until you had rested and she had seen you herself," he explains; "but they're wild young things, and like to have a look at everyone who comes into the house. She's got the nursery at a distance from all the dwelling

rooms, too, but they find out by magic if anyone is coming, and they're all over the house like mad in a moment."

"Got the nursery at a distance from the dwelling rooms—all over the house in a moment like mad?" she repeats in bewilderment.

"To be sure," Mr. Corkran answers, his face deepening in hue a shade or two, as he speaks; "your coming home was so sudden a thing, Mrs. Bellairs, that Mrs. Angerstein has not been able to change her residence from Lugnaquilla to her own house yet; but she has taken care to arrange it so that the children will not be the slightest annoyance to you."

The actual wrong is not a great one, perhaps, but to Kate at this juncture it is almost intolerable. She feels that it will hardly be possible for her to bear it; that it has dashed the bloom off her happiness at once; that it will corrode it altogether if it is to continue. Nevertheless, indignant, saddened as she is, she cannot help seeing that there is something ludicrous in the situation. The weaker vessel has so entirely got the whip-hand of those who are actually in power; the shallow-brained woman has so utterly defeated the clever one. Happily for them all, she sees the reverse of the shield at this juncture—the absurd side of it presents itself before her mental vision, and, to the infinite relief of both her husband and Mr. Corkran, Mrs. Bellairs begins to laugh.

"You seem to know all about her movements, Mr. Corkran," she says, good-temperedly. "When am I to have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Angerstein? As she is living in the same house, she will hardly, I suppose, wait to pay a formal call later in the day?"

Mr. Corkran fidgets, blushes, and finally rings the bell. He knows very well where Mrs. Angerstein is, but he would rather leave it to the servants to account for her.

"We had better send and say we are at home, and leave it to her to come or not, as she pleases, hadn't we, Harry?" Kate asks; and as he assents, and frames the message a shade more cordially, the servant tells them that "Mrs. Angerstein has gone to spend the day at Mr. Corkran's house."

"What a blessing for me, but what a bore for Mrs. Corkran, I should think," Kate says to her husband when the agent leaves them. "My dear Harry, this is too terrible. I have shrank appalled, to tell the truth, from the thoughts of her at

the house on the home-farm: but to be here, to be one of us, to come between us at every turn of our domestic life! Am I unjust, am I unreasonable, when I say that I would rather never have been your wife, than have purchased the blessing of being it at this price?"

She speaks from her heart, vehemently, earnestly—jealously, perhaps, but not unreasonably. Her vehemence, and her earnestness, and her jealousy bother him considerably, but he cannot make even himself believe that they are overstrained or out of place. "If she would only take things quietly, and just accept poor Cissy—the little nuisance—as a necessary evil, we should get along all right. Heaven knows, I don't want the little woman and her flock here; but, as she is here, it's awful that Kate will insist on making the worst of it."

So he soliloquises when he is left to himself by-and-by, while Kate makes her way over so much of the house as has not been annexed by Mrs. Angerstein. That lady has made herself very comfortable at Lugnaquila. Thanks to the courtesy of Mr. Corkran, the agent, she has had three or four rooms made to open one into the other, and certainly they form a very handsome suite. They are painted and papered to perfection, and are altogether the most comfortable and convenient rooms in the house. Quietly, and in the most matter-of-fact way, the housekeeper, who is guiding Mrs. Bellairs through her own territory, speaks of what Mrs. Angerstein does, and of what Mrs. Angerstein intends to do, until the young wife writhes within herself and says:

"It is a nightmare! it is a nightmare! Better fifty thousand times that he had never married me, than that he should have hampered himself with both of us."

Her house is not her own. This conviction deepens upon her hour by hour, as the day—the first day of her reign—drags itself along. At every turn she is met by some reminder of Mrs. Angerstein. Hoops are lying about in unseemly places; a rocking-horse stands in the anteroom to the drawing-room; abominable work-bags of striped ticking and ribbon assail her eyes; a hairless, shivering toy-terrier (a species of dog for which she has a peculiar aversion) yelps at her at every step she takes, and she is told that he is a "pet of Mrs. Angerstein's." Altogether, she is sorely tempted to fly her married home

for ever on this first day on which she enters it."

Captain Bellairs, going about, seeing to the state of some young horses who have come on and been broken since he left; inspecting some new farm buildings, and looking over the state of his property generally, finds the burden of Cissy Angerstein very easy to bear. Things have prospered in his absence. Mr. Corkran has done his duty ably and well, and Captain Bellairs goes home to dinner rather inclined to chant his agent's praises.

He finds Kate up in her dressing-room, having the finishing touches put to her toilette, and in a painful state of depression. Without regarding this very much, he at once dashes into the subject that is absorbing his own interest just now.

"Things are in splendid order," he says. "That fellow Corkran is invaluable; worth three times what he gets for the agency. During the two years he has held it he has doubled the value of the land. I must see about making him more comfortable; that house he is in, as far as I remember, is rather small and cramped."

"I'm delighted to hear it; to hear about the land, I mean," Kate says languidly.

"Aren't you well, Kate?"

"Yes; no. I hardly know what I am."

"Have you seen Cissy?"

"Seen her! Yes Harry; seen her and felt her; in fact, I am pervaded by a sense of Cissy. She came into the drawing-room, drawling out an order to one of the servants behind her as she came, and met me quite as if she were receiving me in her own house."

"What a little donkey she is, to be sure," he says, but he laughs as he says it. The annoyance is one that a man cannot gauge, it is out of his province, it seems too small a thing, and is altogether too immaterial for him to grasp at. As Kate makes no reply to his remark, he reverts to his former subject—Corkran.

"He has not neglected a single thing. The decoy had got thoroughly out of order; and when I came to the place I let it stay as it was; but he has had it re-stocked and drained, and put it in splendid order. He's kept the gardeners up to the mark, too; you'll find your gardens looking very different to what they did when you saw them before you were married."

"I am glad you are so well pleased with him. Come, Harry, go and dress, and come down with me; I feel as if I couldn't face what is below, alone."

"Does Cissy dine with us?" he asks, leisurely rising up, and strolling towards his own room. He asks the question with about the same amount of interest he would infuse into a question about the soup.

"I suppose she does; I take it for granted that she will do exactly as she pleases; she seemed annoyed at my having changed the dinner-hour from seven to eight."

He goes on into his dressing-room, and she hears him whistling and singing in a light-hearted way, which proves that he does not feel the Cissy grievance to be a bitter one. In sheer impatience with her situation, Kate goes down, and finds Mrs. Angerstein already dressed in the drawing-room, with her three children by her side.

It is not in Kate's nature to be morose or reserved with children and dogs. She takes the little things, for whom she had sacrificed and worked in the old days, upon her lap one after the other, and feels pleased and touched by the way they remember her, and fall into the habit of responding affectionately to her caresses.

"I like to have them down to dessert every day," Mrs. Angerstein says; "it humanises them, and teaches them good-manners." Then Kate observes that the little girls are in white muslin with blue sashes, and that the boy is dressed in a velvet suit. "Cissy must manage well to do all this on her slender means," she thinks, but she only says, "I think you are quite right to have your children with you as much as possible."

"They will be with me a little too much for my comfort when I have to go into that little house down there," Cissy says, grumbly nodding her head in the direction of her future home.

"I am rather anxious to see your house," Kate says, politely.

"It's little enough to see—a mere hole of a place it looks after this; but of course I must be contented with anything. Mr. Corkran has done all he can to it to make it habitable for me; but unless it's enlarged as the children grow up, I shall be stifled there."

"Harry will do everything to make it comfortable for you, I'm sure," Kate says, restraining her wrath, and trying not to look as if the end of all things were come, for just now Captain Bellairs comes in.

Cissy rises, and advances to meet him in a fluttered way, that would strike Kate as being very pretty and becoming, if Mrs.

Angerstein were advancing to meet an acknowledged lover. As it is, it strikes Mrs. Bellairs as being anything but pretty, and vastly unbecoming.

"Corkran is coming in to talk over things with me this evening," Captain Bellairs says to his wife, when the servants have left them alone with the dessert. "Shall I bring him into the drawing-room when we have done our business?"

Kate hesitates. Mr. Corkran is very suave, almost subservient in his manner. There is nothing wrong with either his dress or his grammar. He is an honourable, conscientious, straightforward man of business, and is serving her husband faithfully and well. But, brief as her personal experience of him has been, she knows he is not a gentleman, and it does seem to her rather a hard thing that she should be expected to receive him as if he were one.

"It will be putting things on a false footing if you do," she says, frankly; "his wife, probably, is no better bred than himself. It will be impossible for me to be on terms of social intercourse with her, and therefore it will be awkward to establish them with him."

"He has no wife—it's his mother lives with him," Cissy puts in; and Cissy's face grows scarlet as she offers the explanation.

"Oh! his mother, is it? Well, most likely his mother is even more impossible than his wife would be," Kate says calmly.

"He is the best and kindest friend I ever had," Mrs. Angerstein says emphatically. "You may look astonished, but I repeat it—the very best and kindest friend I ever had. You have always been generous to me, Harry; but Mr. Corkran has been more."

"He must have been kind to a fault, I should say, for Cissy to speak well and gratefully of him," Kate thinks; but she says nothing, for she has an uncomfortable feeling that she has made a mistake in that untoward remark she has made relative to things being put on a false footing, if Mr. Corkran should once be admitted to her drawing-room on terms of social equality.

Her silence is infectious. Captain Bellairs is glad to change the conversation, and more rejoiced still to get himself away from the room presently, before he can be drawn into a fresh fray. The atmosphere about these two women—the wife whom he loves most dearly, and the

old friend who has the claim of habit and dependence upon him—when they are alone together, is depressing to the last degree. "It will be miserable if this kind of thing lasts," he tells himself, gloomily, as he begins to puff a soothing cigar. "Kate is less happy than I have seen her for months, and far less satisfied than she was at Breagh Place, when she thought there was no chance of our ever coming together again; and as for Cissy! I never knew before that it was possible for a woman to make herself utterly disagreeable, and look amiable and meek at the same time."

His thoughts are turned from this moody channel, and concentrated on Mr. Corkran and business almost immediately, and in the discussion of plans that will largely increase the value of the Lugnaquilla property and aggrandise his own position in the county, the time slips pleasantly away. But it is borne in upon him strongly, delighted as he is with Corkran and with Corkran's capacity for business, that Kate is right. It would be giving him a false position to bring him into her presence on terms of social equality.

Meantime the two women are enduring each other in the drawing-room. Mrs. Angerstein is feeling almost as much aggrieved as is Kate, for Mrs. Angerstein is in possession of some secret information concerning herself which, secret as it is, ought, she fancies, to permeate the air, and influence other people in their bearing towards her. "She might be contented," the waspish little widow thinks; "she has tricked Harry away from me, and trapped him into marrying her; she needn't grudge his hospitality to me for the little time I shall need it. Poor fellow! I shall pity him when I am obliged to go and leave him alone with this disagreeable woman."

"I suppose," she says aloud presently, that you will have your friend Mrs. Durigan over here to-morrow. You are very odd about her, I think."

"Yes: in what way?" Kate asks.

"Why keeping up such a parade of friendship and intimacy with her, after you had got Harry to break off his engagement with her. Ah! you think because you told me nothing about that that I know nothing, but I have heard the whole

story since I came here. I really wonder that she likes to come here, not that I do wonder at anything she does, for I think she's an odious woman."

"I shall die of Cissy," Mrs. Bellairs says despairingly to her husband this night when they are alone. "Don't laugh, Harry; I mean it. At any rate, I can't live with her. She lowers my tone altogether; she makes me uncharitable, ill-natured, sour, suspicious—everything that I hate myself for being; she will poison my life. It comes to this," she continues energetically—"she will drive me from Lugnaquilla, or make me a miserable woman."

"She will do neither," her husband answers heartily. "Thank Heaven, she won't compel you to adopt either alternative. Corkran has taken me into his confidence to-night. He is going to marry her now in a week or two. I am sorry to say I shall lose him, for he has got a new berth that will make him a comparatively rich man—the management of an estate in England. It's a blessed stroke of luck getting rid of her. Poor Kate, it's been a near thing for you, for I doubt if I should ever have had the heart to turn the poor little thing out."

"Never mind what you would have done," Kate cries: "nothing will alter the resolve of the admirable Corkran, let us hope. Oh! I'll bear her so beautifully during these inevitable few weeks; but if she had once driven me away from you and home, I should never have come back to either."

"We've had a narrow escape of getting astray from each other, and no mistake," he says anxiously. "It's been a nearer thing than it was ten years ago. After this, don't you think we had better agree to speak out to each other before we resort to extreme measures, eh, dear?"

ON THE 27TH INST. WILL BE COMMENCED

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

By the Author of "Aunt Margaret's Trouble,"
"Mabel's Progress," &c.,

ENTITLED,

A CHARMING FELLOW.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 324. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER VII. THE HEIRESS AT HOME.

"MOGRIDGE'S" is not an establishment calculated to instil much respect for our inn-keeping faculties into the minds of our foreign visitors. It is one of those hotels, situated in the neighbourhood of the Adelphi, which advertise regularly in Bradshaw, describing themselves as equally contiguous to the City and the West End, the Bank of England and the parks, and which apparently placed great reliance in the fact of their having a night-porter in attendance; a dreary, dirty old house, with dim narrow staircases and black passages, in which the gas is constantly burning, and which lead to nowhere. Moggridge himself had long been dead, and the successive proprietors had put in a piece of new furniture here, and some fresh carpeting there, which stood out in relief against the original decorations, and only served to render them more dingy and forlorn. It was known as "a Yorkshiro house," the first Moggridge having hailed from Bradford, and was frequented by clerical dignitaries from York; white-headed solicitors, who dressed in rusty black, carried their watches in their fobs, and consumed an immense quantity of snuff; fluffy mill-owners and agriculturists from Wakefield; and apple-faced, wiry squires from all portions of the county. Mr. Hillman, senior partner in the firm of Messrs. Hillman and Illicks, solicitors to the Middleham estate, had imbibed his first knowledge of the law in an attorney's office at Thirsk, and still kept up his con-

nexion with the northern county; and it was by his advice that Grace, on her first arrival in London, took up her quarters at this dismal old hostelry. The place, as might be expected, had not a brightening effect upon her spirits, and, for the first two or three days after her arrival, she fell into the depths of despair.

"It seems," she wrote to Anne, "as though I were doomed to be disappointed in all my anticipations. You will recollect the notions we had formed about our first sojourn in Paris, and what was the result? In a somewhat similarly enthusiastic spirit I had looked forward to my stay in London; and you may judge of my feelings when I tell you that I have spent the last two days in a large dark dining-room, furnished with hard, slippery, horse-hair chairs; a rickety sofa of the same material; a round mirror stuck high up on the wall; and an enormous mahogany sideboard, garnished with a set of cructs. There is a window which is supposed to look towards the Thames; but the panes are so dirty that one can see nothing through them, and I am only aware of the proximity of the river by hearing the puffing of the steamers. Mr. Hillman has been twice to see me—a kindly old gentleman, but evidently very much frightened of ladies. He sits on the edge of his chair, and, as he speaks, brings the tips of his fingers together, separates them, and brings them together again as though he were weaving a kind of mystic charm, reminding me of Vivien and Merlin—with a difference. He calls me 'madam,' and interlards his conversation with a vast amount of quaint phraseology; but as far as I can make out, the bank has been singularly prosperous since my poor uncle's death, and I am considerably richer than

I had anticipated. I have already explained to the old gentleman my determination to effect an immediate sale of Loddonford, at which he was very much astonished, not to say shocked. He represented that, owing to the improvements made in it, the estate had very much risen in value, and expressed his opinion that "a lady of my consideration," as he was pleased to phrase it, would do well to retain such a possession. I adhered to my decision; but nothing is to be finally settled until I have had an interview with Mr. Bence and Mr. Palmer, the trustees under my uncle's will, who are coming to see me to-morrow. They may say what they please, but I shall be firm upon the matter; a residence at Loddonford would keep my poor uncle and his sad fate perpetually before my mind, and, so far as I have seen of England at present, I have no desire to make it my permanent home. The sooner I am back with you, the better I shall be pleased, and we can then commence our projected tour of Europe.

"As for the professor, it is half ludicrous, half pitiable to watch him. He is constantly polishing his spectacles, under the impression that it is to their dimness, and not to the want of daylight, that he is unable to see half an inch beyond his nose; and he gasps for breath so much, that my own chest aches in sympathy. He is afraid even of lighting his pipe, for fear of adding to the density of the atmosphere. I have been out with him once or twice into the Strand; but he is so dazed by the noise of the traffic, and the number of the vehicles, that he stands with hands uplifted, like Dominie Sampson, crying, 'Was für eine stadt!' to the amusement of the passers-by. He has now gone out, under the charge of a commissionaire, to the British Museum, to visit which institution has been, he told me, the dream of his life.

"I have as yet seen nothing of Mr. Heath, who has gone to Manchester upon some business connected with the bank; but Mr. Hillman is loud in his praises, and ascribes the whole success of the management to his energy and tact."

The day after the despatch of this letter, the two trustees paid their promised visit. The elder and more important of them, Mr. Bence, was a dull, prosy, commonplace man, with an overweening sense of his own importance, derived entirely from his wealth. His ostensible profession was that of a stock-broker, head of a firm in a city court; but, besides this, his sources of

income were many and various: he owned a mast, oar, and block factory at Poplar, and a bone-boiling establishment at Vauxhall; the Vallombrosa Association, for importing genuine corks and bungs, and the Pay-at-your-own-time-and-what-amount-you-please Furnishing Company, meant Jonas Bence; he held a mortgage on the lease of the Champagne Charley Music Hall, and paid the printer's and paper-maker's bills, and the salaries of the contributors, of the Stiletto satirical newspaper. He lived in a big house in Westbourne Terrace, kept carriages and horses, entertained lavishly, and parted with his money freely; but for all that he had been unable to satisfy the one longing of his life, which was to get into society. The families of the old-fashioned city people, with whom he did business, visited at his house, it is true; but he wanted something more than that: he wanted to be among the "swells," as he called them; and he intrigued by every means in his power to that effect, but, somehow or other, it was not to be done.

Mr. Palmer, the other trustee, was a man of quite a different stamp. For more than thirty years he had practised as an attorney in Bedford Row, and, having amassed a considerable fortune, he bought an estate in Surrey, and devoted the rest of his life in endeavouring to forget his past career, and to induce those who knew him to do the same, and regard him as a country gentleman. He was a wiry little man, with a sharp, terrier-like face, bright eyes, bits of grizzled whisker, and closely-cut hair; he wore a suit of check ditto clothes, a pair of brown gaiters, and a low-crowned hat; he carried an ash stick, with which he was always slashing his legs. He spoke of himself, and tried to get other people to speak of him, as "the Squire," and played an important part in his parish, where he was chairman of the local government board and a J.P., in which latter capacity he was humbly reliant for legal advice on the town-clerk to the magistrates, occasionally taking up the volume of Archbold's Practice, which that functionary was in the habit of consulting, and looking at it as a rare work with which he had not been previously made acquainted; and never failing to poke his fun at the lawyers, by humorous references to their proverbial sharpness and greed of gain.

So far as Grace was concerned, these gentlemen had one failing in common—

that of joy that the heiress had come of ago and their trusteeship was at an end. It had not troubled them much, it is true, considering that they had left all the business detail to Mr. Heath. They had accepted the trust because, when they had been first named to it, each of them had been in a poorer and less prominent position; and, when it fell to their lot to take it up, both felt that there was a certain éclat in being connected with the administration of the affairs of the gentleman whose murder had caused so much public talk and such regret in polite circles.

"How do you do, my dear?" said Mr. Bence, waddling slowly up the room, and shaking hands with her. If Grace had been a governess, or a young lady entirely unknown to fame, it is probable that Mr. Bence would never have vouchsafed to her his acquaintance; or, if he had, he would merely have wagged his head at her and got rid of her as soon as possible. But, as she was an heiress, he walked up to her, and conceded to her his hand.

"How d'ye do, Miss Middleham?" chirped little Mr. Palmer, walking in the rear of his portly co-trustee, like a dingey at a Dutch galley's stern. "Gad, what a frightful atmosphere! I wonder anyone can exist in these close London streets!" Mr. Palmer had, during thirty years of his life, passed his days in an office in Bedford Row, and his nights in a second floor back overlooking a mews in Great Ormond Street.

"Well, my dear," said Mr. Bence, who had by this time planted himself comfortably, with his back to the fire; "we are glad to congratulate you on coming into your property—lands and money, rent-rolls and estates, carriages and horses. Nice things, my dear," continued the fat man solemnly, and as if he really did think them very nice indeed.

"Yes, Miss Middleham," said Mr. Palmer, seeing the chance of edging in a word; "for my own part I not merely congratulate you upon your coming into the property, but I am not sorry that the responsibility is off my shoulders—plenty of my own to look after, and naturally enough one's own comes first. Not that your affairs have not been properly taken care of, and every justice done to it. Now there is Loddonford, for instance: that place has improved, I should say, fifteen per cent. since poor Middleham's death. Nice property, too; arable and meadow; subsoil drainage capitally carried out;

river frontage worth twelve hundred pounds an acre, if it is worth a penny."

"I am glad to hear so good an account of the Loddonford property," said Grace quietly. "It ought to sell for a large sum."

"A large sum, indeed," repeated Mr. Palmer; "but you are never thinking of selling it?"

"You are surely never thinking of parting with Loddonford, my dear?" said Mr. Bence, to whom the notion gave quite a new train of thought.

"I have thoroughly decided upon doing so," said Grace firmly. "I could never have any pleasure in the place, connected as it is with reminiscences of bygone happiness, and with anticipations which were never fulfilled. I had determined on this step long since, and should have carried it out even at a loss; and now, since these glowing accounts which you have given me, I can feel no compunction, if only from a business point of view."

"The sale will attract an immense amount of attention," said Mr. Palmer, reflectively. "There has been nothing going down in that part of the country, since Wandsworth's came under the hammer, when Chivers was smashed. Sir Thomas Buffam is sure to have a try for Loddonford, for those water-bordered meadows are just the grazing grounds for his Devons."

Bence said nothing for some minutes, being lost in a reverie. Suppose he were to go in to purchase this beautiful place, and become a landed proprietor—would not that give him the position in society which he so earnestly longed for, but which he had hitherto failed in obtaining? People in London knew everything: everybody knew about the stockbroker's office, and many suspected the bone-boiling and cork-cutting establishments, and the ownership of the music-hall and the satirical journal. Now down in the country nothing of this would be known. He would be Mr. Bence of Loddonford; perhaps Squire Bence, J.P.—why not Deputy-Lieutenant Bence—and at once, in virtue of his wealth, he would take up his position among the county magnates. Elsewhere, he might find it difficult; but there he would have peculiar facilities. As trustee of the late Mr. Middleham, who was so well known and so much respected in the neighbourhood, he would come, as it were, with an introduction which the most fastidious could scarcely refuse to recognise. It was a

good idea; and when he had thought it out, he said :

" I do not see the absolute necessity for any public sale, Palmer. If Miss Middleham has made up her mind to part with the estate, it might perfectly well be arranged by private contract."

Mr. Palmer, who saw at once what was intended, but who had no reason for opposing the designs of his co-trustee, chirped his acquiescence.

" However, we will see all about that later on," said Mr. Bence, after another pause. " The lawyers will have to be consulted, and that sharp fellow who manages at the bank—what's his name? Now, my dear, it only remains for me to say that we shall be very happy to see you at dinner at Westbourne Terrace on Sunday next at seven. Your uncle, a German gentleman, accompanies you, I understand? Let him come too; he will be welcome. No use asking you, Palmer, I suppose; you will not be in town?"

" Not I," said Mr. Palmer; " as a standing rule the rector dines with me on Sundays to talk about School Board matters."

" Ah, very interesting," said Mr. Bence. " I cannot get a rector for you, my dear; but you will find some not undistinguished people. Till Sunday then, at seven." And the two trustees left Grace to her reflections.

Later on in that same afternoon, while the professor was still engaged in delightfully exploring the wonders of the British Museum, a card was brought to Grace, who was in her bed-room, bearing the name of " Mr. Heath." " The gentleman," the maid said, " was anxious to see Miss Middleham; but, if not convenient, would wait upon her at another opportunity." Grace sent to beg that he would be seated, as she would be with him at once.

Miss Middleham had only seen Mr. Heath once or twice, and then at a period when she was in great trouble, and her recollections of him were consequently somewhat confused. She remembered him as a well-bred looking man, and unlike her idea of a banker's clerk; but she was by no means prepared for the strikingly handsome man who, with a winning smile which illuminated his ordinarily stern expression, rose from his seat and greeted her entrance.

" I am somewhat late in paying my homage, Miss Middleham, but I may plead that my absence has been on your business and in your service. Your majesty," he

continued, with a gay air, " has already, I presume, received deputations congratulating you on your accession?"

" Such deputations," said Grace, very much pleased with his meaning, and fully entering into his humour, " have waited upon me, but I am assured by them, and by all, that the state of prosperity in which I find my kingdom and my affairs is wholly due to the zeal and ability with which they have been watched over by my prime minister, to whom I am glad to express great gratitude."

" The prime minister is sufficiently thanked by the knowledge that his work has had any good results," said Heath, bending low, " and by the fact that it has given any pleasure to his sovereign. But, dear Miss Middleham," he continued, raising his head, and looking round him with an air of great disgust, " how is it that I find you in such an extraordinary place as this?"

" It is rather dull, is it not?" said Grace ruefully.

" Dull? it is even sufficient to have a depressing effect upon the spirits of one entering life with your advantages and your prospects. I cannot say more. But how on earth did you come here? what curious topographical law enabled you to discover such a rococo establishment in such a bygone locality?"

" I had nothing to do with it," pleaded Grace; " I was recommended to come here by Mr. Hillman."

" Of course," said Heath, laughingly, " I might have guessed that. However, I will see the old gentleman at once, and impress him with the necessity of your being directly moved to more rational quarters."

" Do you think that is worth the trouble?" said Grace, " for my stay in London will be so short."

" I am by no means so sure of that," said Mr. Heath. " Coming into a large property, though everything has been kept pretty straight, is not so easy as people imagine. There is a very great deal of business detail to be gone through, and whether you like it or not, you will have, perchance, to remain here much longer than you had any idea of on your arrival. But I hope you will like it—it will be my pleasure to make you do so—and you must not judge of London life, as seen through the begrimed windows of an old-fashioned hotel, in a back street off the Strand."

" I am in the hands of my lawyers and

trustees," said Grace, "and of course must do as they bid me; but, if I have to remain, I should like, I confess, to go to some livelier neighbourhood, not only for my own sake, but for the professor's."

"The professor?" said Heath, elevating his eyebrows. "Oh, yes, I recollect, Dr. Sturm, who has accompanied you from Bonn. It is too bad to think that he should have derived his ideas of London from this place."

"So I felt," said Grace, "although it does not much matter to him, dear old soul, so long as he has the British Museum or the Royal Society, or one of those receptacles of learning to go to."

"Still, such a man ought to see ns at our best," said Heath, "and I will take care that he has all proper introductions to the places and people where he is likely to be appreciated. But before anything else I must see to your comfort; it is not right that you should be left here by yourself with only a few old men of business, like myself, to look after you."

When he had taken his leave, Grace could not resist smiling at the idea of his classing himself with the other "old men of business." How handsome he was, and how excellent were his manners, so easy and careless, and yet thoroughly well-bred! So different too from all that she had been accustomed to lately, from the stiff, conventional courtesy of men like Franz Eckhardt, or the sighing romantic nonsense of idiots like Paul Fischer! Her recollection of Mr. Heath was that he had been stern and unpleasant, short in speech and brusque in manner. How wrongly she had judged him! He was kindness itself, not merely towards herself—that was to be looked for, perhaps, on account of the position which she held—but to the professor, about whom he spoke with so much interest and forethought. How singular that Anne should always have shunned the mention of Mr. Heath's name! She cannot surely have known him, or she would have been taken with his appearance and conversation. In that first conversation on the subject which she had had with her friend during their school-days, Grace remembered some mention of Mr. Heath as being acquainted, and, she thought, engaged in business, with Anne's father, Captain Studley.

That was perhaps the clue to the mystery. Although Anne had implored that direct reference to her father should

not be made, she had not scrupled to avow that he was a wicked man, and that she was anxious to forget him and her connection with him. Captain Studley must have behaved badly to his friend Mr. Heath, Grace thought, and that was the reason why Anne avoided the mention of his name. That Mr. Heath could be in any way in fault, Grace could not imagine for an instant; the trustees and the lawyers had been unanimous in volunteering their testimony to his excellent management, under which the bank business had so largely increased, and she herself had proved all his kind interest in her, his proffered services to Dr. Sturm, and his determination that her stay in London should be rendered as agreeable as possible.

She had but little knowledge of the world, this young lady, whose experience had been confined to the school-house at Hampstead, and to the sober life in the quiet German town, and it was not wonderful therefore that she should mistake electro-plating for the sterling metal. The skilled and observant eye would have noticed the exaggeration, the restlessness, and above all, the complete want of repose, which are so eminently characteristic of under-bred people; but skilled and observant eyes are seldom found in young ladies of twenty-one, and there was no doubt that Mr. Heath was exceptionally good-looking, and had made himself very agreeable.

Two days afterwards he called again, and was graciously received.

"I have not been forgetful, Miss Middleham," he said, "of the worthy German gentleman who has accompanied you to England, and I have brought with me a few orders for Dr. Sturm's admission to the meetings of the various scientific societies during the week; I have also had his name placed as an honorary member of certain clubs, where he will probably meet congenial spirits."

Grace thanked him heartily. "And for myself?" she said with a smile.

"You may depend upon it you have not been forgotten. I could not bear the idea of your remaining in this gloomy place, so I have had rooms secured for you at Fenton's, and on my way upstairs took the liberty of instructing your servant to remove there at once with bag and baggage; but this is only a temporary measure."

"Only temporary!" cried Grace. "What is finally to become of me?"

"Nothing unpleasant, I trust," said Mr. Heath, with a bow and a pleasant smile; "but the fact is that I have been going into business details thoroughly with Mr. Hillman; and we have agreed that it will be quite impossible for you to carry out your idea of returning to Germany, at least for some time."

"Not return to Bonn!" cried Grace, with a half look of disappointment.

"Not yet," said Mr. Heath; "but I trust we shall be able to make your stay in London more pleasant than you appear to anticipate. In truth, my dear Miss Middleham, if you will permit me to say so, you scarcely appreciate the position which you are called upon to fill. I have consulted with the trustees; and, though though they no longer have any legal power over you, they have authorised me to state that they concur with me in thinking that under the circumstances the proper thing to be done for you is, that a house should be taken in London for the season, and that you should be properly launched into society under the auspices of a lady of quality, who should be retained to act as your chaperon."

"Dear me," said Grace, innocently, "is it possible that ladies of quality are to be found who dispense of their services in that way?"

"They are to be counted by the score," said Mr. Heath with a smile.

"I hope you won't bring me a dreadful old dragon," said Grace.

"You may depend upon my discretion," said Mr. Heath. "May I tell Mr. Hillman that you consent to the plan?"

"I am entirely in your hands, Mr. Heath," said Grace, with a blush. "I am sure you will advise me for the best."

SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF NUTRITION.

THE due supply and proper use of food can never fail to be an object of deep and vital interest to mankind at large. Not merely life, but health, morality, and civilisation are indissolubly connected with that great question of daily bread which, of itself, absorbs the hopes and the energies of by far the larger portion of the human race. Taking, from a scientific standpoint, a survey of the world, we shall find that both aliments, and those who subsist on them, have a natural tendency to arrange themselves in distinct and different groups. Men may be classified, roughly, but with

sufficient accuracy for all practical purposes, into four sections; namely, hunters dependent on animal food eked out by a few fruits, roots, and vegetables; pastoral people, who add a little bread and more meat to much dairy produce; the purely agricultural races, with whose members grain is the mainspring of the social mechanism for national support; and, lastly, the omnivorous commercial communities, the materials of whose diet are drawn together, by the magic of superior wealth, through all channels, and from all available sources.

Food again, broadly speaking, ranges itself under certain well-known heads. There is a technical difficulty, no doubt, in distinguishing where vegetable life merges into that of the animal creation, and where the mollusc, rooted to its rock, ceases to take precedence of the almost equally sentient plant. But, in a popular sense, the distinctions between animal and vegetable food are fairly well marked. Fish, flesh, fowl, with eggs, butter, milk, and other animal products, belong to one category; the cereals, fruit, fleshy vegetables, herbs, fungi, gum, starch, sugar, alcohol, and peculiar vegetable extracts, such as tannin, nicotine, and theine, to the other. The traditional standard, however, by which the relative value of food is measured, is essentially of an empirical character, and is founded on local prejudices which vary considerably; but which, in all instances, date from days anterior to those which have witnessed the important discoveries due to the recent progress of organic chemistry. To convince an untutored, or even a semi-educated person, that nearly all the merits of a juicy and succulent steak might, by judicious cooking, be derived from the humble bean, the disregarded oak-mushroom, and the despised onion, would be a task not much less arduous than Galileo's demonstration that our earth was round. And yet it is unquestionably true that the esculent fungi, the most nutritious of the grains, and some leguminous plants, contain a very large proportion of that nitrogen which renders meat so costly and highly valued an article of diet.

We cannot, in the Old World, find, within the limits of the historical period, a race that might be regarded as fair specimens of the primæval hunter. Ovid's highly-coloured picture of the noble or ignoble savage is but the dream of a poet; while the Sestrygonians of Herodotus, even if accurately described, formed at

best but a handful of exceptionally situated barbarians. It was not until the broad waters of the Atlantic and Pacific had been repeatedly ploughed by European keels, that civilised mankind encountered, face to face, nations that in some respects realised the fancies of the courtly laureate of Augustus, and that literally lived on the produce of bow and tomahawk, of spear and boomerang. There is no reason for suspecting exaggeration in the estimate that the Red Indians of North America, two centuries since, amounted to nearly six millions, a population equal to that of the England of the period. All these relied on venison and bison-beef, on the wild turkey, the shad and the salmon, the globe-fish and the sand-grouse, for their sustenance. The many thousand natives who peopled the mainland of Australia, and the great neighbouring island of Tasmania, led a more precarious and degraded life on the spoils of a chase, of which the objects, owing to the singular lack of large mammals in Australia, were few and hard to capture.

An instructive lesson is to be learned from careful observation of the results of an almost exclusively animal diet, combined with much exercise, on the Indians of North America. A considerable degree of physical development, of grace, vigour, and even of beauty, is certainly to be found under these conditions. A stature superior to the average height of Europeans, large and well-shaped limbs, and a commanding presence, are very commonly to be met with. Again, the stately figures of the flesh-fed Indians of the prairies can be instantly distinguished from the shorter and more ungainly forms of those who belong to the fish-eating tribes, as, for example, the Chinooks; while the dwarfish and hideous Root-Digger shows, in his stunted growth and anxious face, how powerfully diet may act in the formation of national character. Yet it is equally beyond dispute that an ordinary white man of active habits is not only the Indian's superior in muscular strength, but also in speed of foot, and even in endurance of fatigue; while within the comparatively narrow limits of the ancient empires of Mexico and Peru a kindred stock far surpassed in numbers, in industry, and in the arts, their scattered brethren of the northern continent.

The prolific powers of a race appear to reach the highest point when the pastoral stage has been passed, and when the com-

munity has become, like that of ancient Egypt or of modern Hindostan, purely agricultural. Nomadic tribes that depend for nourishment on the milk, and in a lesser degree on the meat, of the cattle that are their sole wealth, compare unfavourably in point of numbers with the swarming millions of such regions as the Nile Valley or the Delta of Bengal; but, on the other hand, the bodily health and robustness of the individual members of the community will usually be found to reach a very high standard. The high renown which the Swiss mercenaries acquired during the Italian wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was due not only to the valour, but also to the vigour of the mountaineers. To the slightly-built citizens of the medieval Town-Republics, the strength and activity of the herdsmen of Uri appeared as something portentous, just as the physical prowess of the milk-fed Goths had astounded the degenerate Romans of the Eastern Empire; and, at a later period, the muscular force of the Seljukian and Ottoman Turks became proverbial among the Romance-speaking nations of Southern Europe.

A population, which—like that of Bengal, of Siam, of ancient Egypt, or of mediæval Lombardy—relies for its subsistence on grain crops and garden produce, seems under certain conditions of soil and climate to be capable of almost indefinite numerical increase. In such communities the average of bodily and mental power will usually be found to reach a moderately high level, which few will surpass, but below which, on the other hand, few will fall. In muscle, as in brain power, mediocrity is likely to be the rule. It is in countries such as these, that the effects of the great historical famines have been the most fearfully felt.

A monotonous diet is invariably the token, either of a sterile soil, or of an indolent people. It was the barren ground and the backwardness of agriculture which condemned the Norwegian to mingle sawdust with his black rye bread, and which limited the Scottish peasant to his oatmeal porridge. A rich and invigorating climate has taught the Polynesian islander to be satisfied with the spontaneous bounty of Nature; the bread-fruit that hangs in heavy clusters before his hut; the yams that grow, without care on his part, in the cane-fenced garden; the fish whose many-coloured shoals swim in the translucent water between the coral reef and the yellow sands

of the beach. In the tropics, as for example in Jamaica, the easily contented negro finds that the lightest labour is rewarded by a perennial supply of dainty fruits and vegetables; while on the coasts of Malabar and Ceylon a native family finds it no difficult matter to subsist on the products of the hereditary clump of cocoanut palms, and the cluster of jack-trees, whence fall the gigantic fruit that furnish them with their subsistence during summer.

A considerable amount of popular error prevails with regard to the diet of remote nations, and to the nature and quantity of the nutriment, on which the dwellers in hot climates are maintained in a condition of health. Beyond a vague notion that Asiatics live upon rice, few ideas are entertained as to the food of by far the larger portion of the human race. No belief could well be more mistaken, than that which attributes to the staple grain of South-Eastern Asia the qualities which render corn the staff of life. What is true of wheat and of maize is not true of rice, which latter constitutes a food too bulky, insipid, and innutritious for existence to be maintained on it alone.

In Ceylon, Malabar, and the Malayan peninsula, it is notorious that the hardest-working coolie cannot consume a pound of boiled rice; whereas an Irish labouring man in Ireland can, and does, require seven or eight pounds of potatoes for a single meal. But the very poorest natives of the East, however frugal and abstemious their mode of life may be, are urged by the pressure of necessity to eke out the daily ration of rice with grain of some sort, such as millet or jowarce; with coarse varieties of pulse, such as dall and grain; with garden vegetables; and with oil or clarified butter. The consumption of ghee throughout India is very great, while the most orthodox Bengalee will not decline to mingle with his curry the small dried sea fish which are carried from the coast into the inland districts, and even on festival occasions to partake of a little goat's flesh, dried and powdered, which the Hindoo faithful are permitted to eat by the special dispensation of the priestly caste.

In Siam, Burmah, and China, where, as is the case of all Buddhist countries save Thibet and Mongolia, no dairy produce is attainable, bean-oil, fish-oil, pulse, and the cheaper kinds of animal food supplement the insufficient diet of rice, which is often erroneously assumed to be the sole resource of the people. Persia, on the other hand, a wheat-growing country, where from

various causes the price of grain rules high, can offer to her poor population little beyond the encurbitous plants for which her sandy soil is famous, but which are apt to fail in seasons of drought and famine.

The Maoris of New Zealand afford a remarkable instance of a well-grown and athletic race, robust in body and mind, to whom Nature appeared to deny any but the most niggardly supplies of food. There is no reason to doubt the substantial truth of the Maori tradition that the forefathers of these so-called aborigines were emigrants from some remote Austral island; but it is certain that their new home, however favoured as regards climate, was, at the period of their arrival, one in which a less intelligent and vigorous tribe might have perished for lack of sustenance. The paucity of animal life in New Zealand is one of the most marked features of that singular country. Excepting the gigantic wingless fowl, the now extinct Dinornis, there was no game worthy of the name, while the Maoris were destitute of the bow which was the common property of all the barbarous races of the Old World, and had no missile weapon save the javelin. Nor was New Zealand one of those luxuriant lands, where the wild fruits alone afford a perennial banquet to the needy, and where the banana and the plantain furnish daily bread, without the necessity for exertion. It was highly characteristic of this hardy and astute nation, that its members could secure a subsistence on fish and fern-roots only, until the arrival of the white men with hogs and horned cattle, with seed corn and vegetables hitherto unknown, and could win the respect, if not the liking, of the European intruders. Yet it would be a serious error to attribute the sterling qualities of the Maoris to their stinted diet, since chronic hunger and perpetual anxiety as to the means of existence have commonly contributed to keep the inhabitants of sterile countries in a condition of hopeless barbarism and squalor. The degraded tribes that range along the coast of Oman, seeking their scanty food from the capture of shell-fish among the rocks and sand-bars, would scarcely be recognised as the countrymen of the bold highlanders of Nejd; and the anxious countenances, and meagre frames, of the natives of Terra del Fuego testify to the influences of a life spent in doing battle with cold and famine.

The ignorance of our ancestors, with respect to the constituents of animal food,

led them to regard flesh meat as a simple instead of a compound substance, and to give the preference for nutritious properties, weight for weight, to fat meat. In the absence of microscopic or chemical analysis there is nothing wonderful in the fact that such an opinion should be formed. Animal fat has, indeed, especially in cold climates, peculiar merits as a heat-producing article of food. Were it not for the oleaginous nature of the diet on which the Esquimaux subsist, life could not be supported by dwellers within such high latitudes, where even a fire is an unattainable luxury, and where whale-blubber and seal's fat have to do duty, not merely for food, but actually for fuel as well. Within the Arctic Circle there is a constant struggle between animal vitality and the benumbing effects of a rigorous climate. The seal, the walrus, and the other cetaceous mammals, subsist on a regimen of fish or of marine animalcule and molluscs; the white bear, the Arctic fox, and man himself, live entirely on animal food; while the reindeer derives the needful amount of warmth from the well-known moss which furnishes its winter provision, and which, as has been lately ascertained, is extraordinarily rich in sugar.

Fat, itself a compound, is by no means the most valuable and essential of the constituents of meat, containing as it does but a small dose of nitrogen, in proportion to the hydrocarbon of which it mainly consists. The albuminous or gelatinous portion of the meat, the alkaline salts, and the solid residuum or fibrine, co-operate with the utmost efficiency in the complicated process of nutrition. The high price and comparative scarcity of fresh meat have of late years suggested several methods for providing an inexpensive substitute for so costly an article of diet, the earliest and best known of which is the famous Extractum Carnis, to which Baron Liebig stood sponsor. The scheme promised well, introduced as it was under the auspices of so renowned a chemist, while the proposal was one which commended itself both to the philanthropist and the student of political economy. It was undoubtedly a pity that the carcasses of myriads of cattle, slaughtered for the sake of their hides and tallow, should be left perishing in South America, while the under-fed millions of European poor were almost wholly without animal food. To compress into small compass, so as to reduce the cost and difficulty of transport to a minimum,

all that was best worth having of the tons of beef daily flung to the vulture and the Pampas fox, was an idea likely to prove beneficial to the consumer, while a source of profit to the authors of the system. Accordingly a very large importation of the extract took place, and in Germany, in especial, the use of this condensed form of food promised to become general.

Even the scientific opponents of the extract have never denied that it justifies the assertions of the prospectus, by affording the materials for exceptionally strong soup, or that it is, as it professes to be, a highly concentrated essence of such portions of the meat as were amenable to the process employed. The first note of alarm was, however, sounded by Monsieur Muller, a young doctor of the Faculty of Paris, who boldly challenged the claim of soup itself to take rank as an article of diet. According to Doctor Muller, the soup or broth, which is a household word with all classes on the Continent, is not itself an item of food, but simply a tonic and an aid to digestion. If this audacious theorist may be believed—and he fortifies his position not merely by quotations from Brillat-Savarin, but by other authorities of greater weight in controversy—his own countrymen are not actually nourished by the soup on which the poorer of them believe themselves to dine, but merely employ their broth to render palatable the solid adjuncts of the meal. Nor will he allow the extract of meat, which contains no gelatine, no fat, and an infinitesimal quantity of albumen, to be entitled to a place among alimentary substances properly so called. He maintains that the best part of the meat has been left behind, and that the essence consists almost wholly of alkaline salts, and chiefly of the salts of potash, valuable as a tonic, but useless in a nutritious point of view, and more apt to provoke than to allay hunger.

It is very probable that national animosity may have had some share in lending acerbity to the criticisms which French chemists—for Monsieur Muller's example has been followed by several of his colleagues—have lavished upon Baron Liebig's celebrated extract. But no partiality can easily be attributed to the testimony of an Austrian experimentalist, Monsieur Kemmerich of Vienna, who in 1869, tried how long life could be maintained in dogs, fed exclusively on a minute quantity of the extract, while others of equal size were supplied with water alone. It was found

that the latter survived the former, and proved capable of being brought into a condition of normal health by a renewal of their ordinary regimen. At the same time other dogs lived contentedly on the refuse meat exhausted of its essence, but sprinkled with common salt to replace the alkaline salts which had been withdrawn. Many fairly authenticated cases attest that no aqueous infusion of meat can alone provide all the necessary elements of nutrition, and that we are not as yet rendered independent of our customary supplies of animal food, by any chemical process.

It is not as generally known as it deserves to be, how large is the share which oil, of animal, and still more of vegetable origin, takes in the nourishing of the great majority of our fellow-creatures. The globe-fish, which is an absolute reservoir of oil, does the same service to the Indians of North-Western America, that the seal does to the Greenlander, in enabling them to support the severity of the long winter; while the tunny and the eel yield an unctuous food to the Neapolitan, and the negro ekcs out his scanty store of flesh with the produce of the groundnut, and the Shea-butter tree. The dinner of a Maltese peasant family consists of slices of bread steeped in the fresh oil of the olive; while in Spain, Portugal, and the South of France, onions and raw garlic, the latter of which is remarkably rich in the essential oils to which it owes its pungency, are found to allay the hunger of a frugal and abstemious population, rarely well supplied either with dairy produce or with meat. Wherever there is a warm climate and an abundant vegetation, it will be found that oil in some form or other enters largely into the popular bill of fare, and that by its aid the natives are enabled to reconcile themselves to privations which would be otherwise insupportable. Sugar, starch, oil, and fat, are all, however, heat-producing substances, of undeniable merit in their degree, but not sufficing as single and permanent sources of nutrition. The same may be said of gelatine, and the injurious effects of a diet on which it is often attempted to nourish children or elderly invalids—jelly, arrow-root, sago, and other aliments of a similar kind—are but too well known to every experienced physician.

For thorough and perfect nutrition the elementary substances should beyond doubt all be present in their fitting proportions—gluten and gelatine, fat and fibrine, starch

and sugar, with the alkaline salts so indispensable for the formation of the blood. Proceeding one step further we may safely predicate that, besides oxygen, which must be looked upon as an active assimilating agent, promoting but not imparting nutrition both in plants and animals, nitrogen, hydrogen, and carbon in adequate amount should be combined in the materials of all healthy nourishment. The merits of what is popularly styled a generous, or in other words a highly nitrogenised, diet, are widely known; yet the hard work of the world, so far as physical exertion is concerned, is certainly performed on a limited allowance of inferior food by manual toilers, whose very labour enables them to elicit the utmost amount of benefit from every ounce consumed. All who have made a long sea voyage, such as that to Australia or China, must remember the increase of appetite which succeeded to the customary nausea of sea-sickness, and which, in the case of emigrants ill-supplied with provisions, frequently amounts to raging hunger. This excessive inclination for food abates after a time, although a person in perfect health still craves for more nutriment at sea than ashore; yet the rations of seamen are none of the most bountiful, while there is less of bodily ailment among the stinted occupants of the forecastle than among the officers, who naturally receive an unlimited supply of food.

The French soldier's rations have of late been slightly increased, but for many years they remained fixed at a standard, which was adopted as one fit to maintain the men at the average rate of health and strength to be found among the French peasantry. Half a pound, or, in rough numbers, eight and a half ounces of beef, with vegetables, furnish the soldier with the two meals of soup and bouilli which represent his breakfast and dinner, and which, with a pound and a half—or, say, about twenty-seven ounces—of bread, constitutes his whole sustenance. This dietary compares unfavourably with that of the English private, with his twelve ounces of meat; but since the time of Louvois the French army has been, theoretically at least, managed on principles of strict economy. To young men of the poorest class and from the poorest districts, such as Poitou, the Landes, or Dauphiny, this nourishment represents comparative abundance. The youth who, from infancy, has been better used to chestnuts than to bread, or whose ordinary dinner has consisted of rye-meal porridge,

as in the Sologue, or of cabbage-soup, as in Morbihan, is contented with his treatment beneath the colours; while the sturdy French-Fleming, or large-limbed Norman, finds it hard to reconcile himself to the pittance granted by the state. Yet, as a rule, the health of the troops maintains itself at a fair average, when contrasted with that of the civil population in time of peace, while that of the Prussian privates (whose bread-ration is smaller than that of the French, but with whom the deficiency is supplied by a larger weight of potatoes) is considerably above that of the rest of the people of the country.

There are theorists who maintain that brain-work exacts a more liberal diet than that which will suffice to sustain the health of those whose exertions are wholly muscular. This proposition is often disputed, on the ground that some of the leading thinkers, both of antiquity and of modern times, have been not merely abstemious, but even ascetic in their habits. In such a case as this, it is obvious that no general rule can safely be laid down. Some of the foremost leaders of civilised opinion, some of the mighty workers, whose names shine the brightest on the roll of fame, have led lives which would be popularly considered as severely self-denying. Others, no less renowned, have used, and in some instances notoriously abused, what our forefathers were accustomed to call the pleasures of the table. It would, however, be illogical and absurd to argue that the energy which impresses itself upon the world, or the genius that dazzles contemporary eyes, is a consequence either of the frugality or the luxuriosness of the individual in whom it is conspicuous. Many dull people of both sexes eat of the fat and drink of the strong without any remarkable reason or result, and a much larger number lead lives of enforced abstinence, that nevertheless effect nothing towards the development of the intellect.

Precisely as the habit of continuous manual labour enables human beings to subsist on a moderate amount of food, from which nature, thus stimulated, contrives to extract all the available pabulum, so does physical inaction occasion contradictory phenomena in the constitution. It may appear paradoxical to assert that the idle need, or at least crave for, a greater bulk and weight of food, and a larger variety of aliments, than the industrious; but the experience of every day tells us that this is the case.

It has been found necessary to concede a better supply of food, not only to the insane patients in asylums, but to criminals in prison, than that which would suffice to maintain them when at liberty. Convalescents in a well-managed hospital recover in direct proportion to the liberality with which they are fed, and, in spite of the proverbial parsimony of workhouse authorities, it has been found practically imperative to grant to paupers a diet somewhat more nutritious than that of the class from which they are chiefly recruited. A besieged garrison, passively cooped up in a blockaded fortress, feels the pangs of hunger to a far greater extent than does an army compelled to march and fight on insufficient nutriment. It has long been known that deep grief, and, indeed, any passion which exhausts the nervous system, promotes a craving for food which frequently appears inappropriate and unnatural in the eyes of non-scientific spectators, while, on the other hand, extreme muscular exertion often indisposes both men and animals for partaking of solid sustenance.

Gum, starch, sugar, and the many gelatinous and saccharine substances supplied by the vegetable kingdom, slight as is their power of contributing to genuine nutrition, possess the valuable property of deferring, so to speak, the assaults of hunger due to the wasting of the tissues, and of enabling life to be provisionally supported in the absence of azotised or stimulating food. The early traders on the Guinea Coast were astonished at the strange endurance displayed by the Ashantee scouts, who in war-time were accustomed to perch themselves among the highest branches of some lofty tree, and to remain, for days together, on the watch for the movements of an enemy, wholly, as it appeared, without nourishment. At last it was discovered, that the negro spics carried with them some rude lozenges of a reddish gum, native to the forests, and that on these, and on a little water contained in a calabash slung to the girdle, they could subsist uncomplainingly for a considerable time, but with a perceptible diminution of weight and strength. The use of pemmican among the Indians of North-Western America, and that of pellets of lime and albumen among the Texan hunters, is well known, and it is probable that the earth-eating propensities of the natives of Guiana and Venezuela arose from a similar wish to deaden the throes of famine; while the black alluvial soil deposited by the rivers of

South America, singularly rich in undecomposed organic matter, might actually yield some modicum of nutriment. The morbid taste for earth-eating peculiar to negroes on the African coast, and which, when once acquired, is said to be a habit as pernicious and as difficult of cure as dipsomania itself, may possibly have had a similar origin.

The vexed question, as to whether alcohol ought or ought not to be regarded as food, has been already elaborately and almost exhaustively discussed. But, at any rate, the enemies of alcohol, while denying it all nutritive properties, have never attempted to deny the stimulating effects which have rendered it popular, or the remarkable power, as a supplement or substitute for solid food, which it unquestionably possesses. That it cannot be so employed without serious injury to health, by no means disproves the existence of this quality, which it shares, however, with other stimulants and narcotics, not merely with opium and the juice of the Indian hemp, but with nicotine, with the active principle of tea and coffee, and with the essence of cocoa. A Peruvian peon who has once imbibed the fatal liking for the chewed leaves of the cacao tree, is regarded as presenting as hopeless a case as that of the confirmed dram-drinker of Europe, or the opium-smoker of China. Yet cacoaine, like the bhang of the Oriental Mussulman, or the arsenic of the Styrian mountaineer, during the earlier stages of its influence, appears to treat its victims more mildly than is the case with ardent spirits or morphine. It gives, or rather lends for a time, and at a fearful and usurious rate of interest, extraordinary vigour, speed, and sprightliness; and it is but gradually, and as the appetite for wholesome nourishment dies away, that the serviceable slave becomes the imperious taskmaster, demanding the slow sacrifice of health, strength, intellect, and life itself.

On passing in review the various alimentary staples on which the different branches of the human family subsist, it becomes obvious that nitrogen, whencesoever derived, is the element of nutrition that is the most instinctively and persistently sought for, and without which the remainder afford but an insipid and unsatisfying diet. Now, we can easily produce an article of food that shall be almost, or absolutely, deficient in nitrogen, but it would be impossible to discover any alimentary substance that should exclude hydrogen and carbon, while

including azote. A poorly-nourished population, depending, it may be supposed, according to latitude and national customs, on the potato, on rice, or on the gourds, melons, and other watery cucurbitous plants, cannot yet afford entirely to dispense with nitrogen in its daily sustenance. It will therefore be found that in those countries where bread is beyond the reach of the poorer classes, and where flesh-meat is regarded by them as an unattainable luxury, the deficiency is in part made up by milk, butter, cheese, or some oil, which, like dairy produce in general, contains a large percentage of nitrogen. The bean, the mushroom, and other highly nitrogenised vegetables, are of infinite value in this respect; while the large amount of gluten which wheat contains enables a wheat-fed people to be comparatively independent of animal food, at least in its most concentrated form. The effects of the imagination on the human appetite are well known, as is the truth that food which is palatable, and therefore relished, is the most likely to conduce to healthful nutrition, and it is thus an advantage that civilisation and commerce have enabled most nations to vary their diet at will, and to make it embrace many flavours and materials which in a ruder state of society were unknown. Still, however, the same problem continually presents itself, both to savage and to civilised man, how most conveniently to provide for each day's recurring wants; and this can never be satisfactorily solved by any regimen which does not include, in at least an approximately adequate proportion, the above-mentioned essentials of nutrition.

VOX NATURÆ.

Low heard the river-reeds among
The wind responds with whisper'd sigh,
To that sweet chant by wavelets sung,
As onward to the marge they lie.
Or, roaring thro' the forest blown
Till branch with branch is interlock'd,
The north makes all the woodland moan
In rude embrace unceasing rock'd.
Who would not own the magic spell
To probe the purport of the breeze,
To glean what zephyr soft would tell
When gone a-woeing 'mong the trees?
What means the fond confession made
By airy sighs in even's ear,
What message breathes from shade to shade
In ev'ry rustle that we hear?
Doth brake to briar its tidings send,
Doth leaf with leaf a converse hold,
When breezes thro' the upland wend
And die again along the wold?
Mayhap we view an angry strife
Twixt oak and ash, 'twixt beech and elm,
And envy mars the sylvan life
When storms, we think, the woods o'erwhelm.

Such fancies stir the dreaming mood
Of worshippers at Nature's shrine,
And add a charm to solitude,
Amid her mysteries divine;
When clearer to the sense reveal'd
Comes all her varied utterance,
And what to dullard ears is sealed
Makes eloquent the poet's trance.
Be ours the drearier thrice refined
The eye with inner sight endow'd
To catch the voices of the wind,
And shape the changes of the cloud.

JOHN BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

I DON'T propose to discuss at length the events which led to the rise and progress of the present extraordinary mania for pottery, although the enemies of Cole, C.B., are never tired of deerring the expenditure of national money on crockery-ware for South Kensington; and the excellent Registrar of the Royal School of Mines, after surveying his neat and instructive collection, beats his breast, and proclaims himself a sinner in having aided to encourage the prevailing epidemic. Both of these gentlemen may console themselves with the reflection that, even as there were strong men before Agamemnon, so were there ceramaias before the present outbreak. Through the reigns of buxom Mary and her successor, "mighty Anna," a rage for crockery seized upon all persons pretending to wit and fashion. Chinese and Japanese monsters fetched fabulous prices, and the famous definition of a perfectly well-bred woman—"mistress of herself, though China fall"—points distinctly to the estimation in which curions Oriental china was held. It does not appear that at the Queen Anne period, the artistic triumphs of Italian and French artists found much favour in the eyes of persons of quality, who loved blue Japanese dogs and grinning dragons, far better than what was then loosely classed as Rafaelle-ware. Perhaps the taste of the period, except so far as literature was concerned, inclined towards the grotesque rather than the symmetrical. Araminta and Belinda rejoiced in negro pages, petted monkeys, and treasured the hideous fancies of Oriental ceramists. The recent revival, although responsible for an infusion of Japanese style into art, is yet due to a higher appreciation of the beautiful than that exhibited by our ancestors of a century and a-half ago. The extreme importance of elegant form, in the productions of the potter, has been so persistently and eloquently insisted on, that some indistinct idea, that a hideous outline cannot be atoned

for by any splendour of material, has taken possession of the public mind. No doctrine could be sounder than this, and it is curious to observe, in taking a hurried survey of the great centres of porcelain manufacture, that, with all minute attention to detail, the one important element of true form has, in western countries, rarely been neglected. To the collector, however, mere beauty is often subservient to rarity, and a specimen of a peculiar paste, exhibiting a certain highly prized texture or colour, and duly marked with the monogram of the artist and the manufactory, will possess for him a curious, and, to the uninitiated, an extraordinary value.

Without plunging into speculations concerning the pottery of pre-historic times, and without pausing to consider whether the first potter was one who, walking upon clayey soil moistened by inundations or rain, first observed that the earth retained the print of his footsteps, or was rather the cunning savage who first strengthened his calabash with a covering of clay, and communicated to early pottery an outline never since lost—it may yet be well to mention that the art of the potter is as honourable as it is ancient, and as beautiful as it is interesting. From vases constructed to hold the ashes of the illustrious dead, we gather curious particulars of their mode of living, and by the area over which relics of ancient pottery are found, can trace the limits of antique empires. Ancient Greece has left a clearly defined map of its extent, its colonies and conquests, in vast quantities of funeral pottery; and the utmost limits attained by the god Terminus are written in the remains of Roman cups and vases.

Ceramic art, perhaps more than any other, has enlisted the good-will of monarchs. By granting high premiums, and often by less gentle methods, the Chinese emperors promoted the manufacture of the famous egg-shell porcelain. Chinese ceramic history is not without a martyr, since canonised and worshipped as the patron saint of potters. Pousa, whose little corpulent figure is often met with in collections, was a working potter sorely vexed by the command of the emperor to produce an effect in porcelain, till then deemed impossible. Renonstrances produced no effect upon the brother of the Sun and Moon, who only became more obstinate with each successive failure of his servants. Finally the mandarin charged with the execution of

the emperor's commands called the manufacturers and the workmen together, and administered the bastinado all round to quicken their inventive faculties. Some slight improvement resulted from this vigorous action, but success not yet being attained, the mandarin kept the bastinado going briskly. The workmen, sore in body and in mind, at last gave way to despair, and one of them, named Pousa, to escape further ill-usage, sprang into the furnace and was immediately consumed. When the firing was completed the furnace was opened, and the porcelain was found perfect, and just as the emperor desired it, and Pousa—the martyr—was appeased by divine honours.

In Europe the Dukes of Urbino fostered by their patronage the production of the beautiful majolica. Henry the Second of France and his wife Catherine de' Medici protected Palissy from the zeal of their own followers, and helped much to develop his genius. In the case of the true porcelain manufacturers of Europe, the effect of patronage was even more distinct, for the art was only introduced in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and in less than fifty years' time rose to its greatest perfection. Augustus the Strong, Maria Theresa, Frederic the Great, Catherine of Russia, and Madame de Pompadour took a keen interest in the new art, and "Butcher" Cumberland supported the famous establishment at Chelsea, which, at the death of its patron, was abandoned for want of encouragement. Not even Wedgwood escaped royal patronage—his newly-invented earthenware having been introduced under the patronage of Queen Charlotte.

To avoid confusion, it may be well to state the difference between pottery and porcelain—properly so called. As already mentioned, the manufacture of porcelain was unknown in Europe previous to the last century, but has probably been practised in China for about two thousand years. Porcelain differs from pottery in possessing a beautiful translucency, and may be regarded as an intermediate substance between pottery and glass—some specimens, indeed, as those of early Chelsea, are little better than semi-opaque glass. The name "pourcelaine" sufficiently indicates this quality. Existing in the French language long before the introduction of china to Europe "pourcelaine" was applied to that beautiful lining of marine shells, called by us mother-of-

pearl. The application of this word to china-ware is probably due to the Portuguese. "Porcellana" is the word which they apply to cowrie shells, and was transferred to the translucent ware, either on account of a certain similarity in appearance, or, as is more probable, from a belief that china was made from the shells themselves. Edeardo Barbosa, who died in 1576, says it was made from marine shells and egg shells buried in the earth for eighty or a hundred years; and this belief was entertained by Jerome Cardan and Scaliger. M. Jacquemart gives what Guido Pancirolli or Pancirollus wrote in Latin—"Past centuries have not seen porcelains, which are merely a certain mass, composed of plaster, eggs, scales of marine locusts, and other similar kinds, which mass, being well united and worked together, is secretly hidden underground by the father of a family, who informs his children alone of it, and it remains there eighty years without seeing daylight; after which his heirs, drawing it out and finding it suitably adapted for some kind of work, make out of it those precious transparent vases, so beautiful to the sight in form and colour, that architects find nothing in them to improve upon. Their virtues are admirable, inasmuch as if one puts poison into one of these vessels, it breaks immediately. He who once buries this material never recovers it, but leaves it to his children, descendants, or heirs, as a rich treasure, on account of the profits they derive from it; and it is of far higher price than gold, inasmuch as one rarely finds any of the true material, and much that is sold is unreal."

"Porcelain," according to Marryatt's definition, "is composed of two substances—the one fusible, which produces its transparency; the other infusible, which gives it the property of sustaining without melting the heat necessary to vitrify the fusible substance. The infusible ingredient consists of alumina or clay called Kao-lin; the fusible is composed of felspar or petrosilex, and is styled Pe-tun-tse. These two materials correspond almost exactly with the china clay and china stone of which such huge quantities are exported yearly from Cornwall. Kao-lin being discovered in 1769 at St. Yrieix, near Limoges, Sèvres at once produced fine porcelain; and a similar effect followed its detection at Meissen, where what is called Dresden china was first made. One John Schnerr, an iron master, riding near Aul, observed

a soft white earth clinging to his horse's feet, and considering that this might be used as a substitute for wheat flour as hair-powder, carried some away with him, and it was subsequently sold for this purpose at Dresden in large quantities. Böttcher, the director of the royal potteries at Meissen, finding his hair powder heavier than usual, was induced to examine it, and subsequently to use Kao-lin in porcelain manufacture, where its employment was long kept a profound secret. The establishment was a complete fortress for the confinement of the people employed, and "Be Secret until Death" was placed on the walls of the workshops. In this country the discovery of Kao-lin took place as late as 1755, when William Cookworthy of Plymouth discovered that certain clays near Helstone, Cornwall, were of the same character as specimens of Kao-lin he had seen brought from Virginia. Associated with Lord Camelford, Cookworthy worked the china clay at St. Stephens, near St. Austell, and established the porcelain manufactory at Plymouth, afterwards removed to Bristol. In this neighbourhood, and at Lee Moor, near Plympton, in Devonshire, the Kao-lin is prepared for the cunning hand of the potter. Decomposed granite rock is broken out, and exposed on an inclined plane to a fall of water which washes it down to a trench, whence it is conducted to catch-pits. "The quartz, schorl, mica, and other minerals present are chiefly retained in the first pit, and as the water charged with clay flows onwards it deposits the grosser particles, and eventually the pure and fine clay is deposited in tanks prepared to receive it, and the mass is allowed to consolidate. The clay is then run into a roofed building, beneath the floor of which hot air circulates freely. Thus the clay is dried perfectly. It is then cut into oblong lumps, and, having been scraped, to remove the dust from the outside, is sent to the potteries."

China stone is the production of the granite rock which forms the Kao-lin, but in a less state of decomposition: the felspar still retaining much of its silicate of potash or soda, associated with the quartz and scales of a greenish-yellow talcose substance.

These, then, are the substances, on the possession of which the manufacture of true porcelain depends. More ancient western productions of fictile art are more truly earthenware—highly glazed and otherwise decorated—than true porcelain.

For thousands of years before the introduction of porcelain to the western world, soft pottery—"fayence à pâte tendre," had been produced in forms of surpassing beauty. It was "unglazed," "glazed," and "lustreous"—under which three heads the ancient pottery of Egypt, Greece and Rome, may be classed, as well as the more modern kinds in common use among all nations—and "enamelled," of clay, sandy or chalky, covered with thick enamel, composed of stone or quartzose sand, with oxides of tin and lead. Under this fourth class fall the splendid productions of the renaissance known loosely as Faenza, Majolica, Gubbio and Rafaelle ware.

A peculiar and interesting feature of both pottery and porcelain, is that its makers were probably the first human beings who signed their work with a monogram or trade mark, a practice jealously maintained through long ages. The beautiful coralline red ware commonly known as Samian, and discovered in considerable quantities in the centres of the old Roman civilisation, almost invariably bears the potter's name. On a handsome vase of this lustreous red ware, appear the letters OF. VITAL: signifying Officina Vitalis, from the workshop of Vitalis. The manufacture of pottery of a bright nasturtium red colour appears to have been carried on with great activity in the countries under Roman rule; and as the colour produced is of one uniform shade, it is reasonable to suppose that the potter first set about to procure a sufficiently colourless clay, of the proper density, and then gave it the proper shade of colour by the introduction of red ochre. This red ware was probably baked in moulds, impressed with the design, and the potter's name, which appears at the bottom of a pattern, thus, VRSVLVS. In London, many fine specimens of red ware have been discovered, some of which are marked OF. RVFINI—from the workshop of Rufinus—some, TITIVS enclosed in a circle—and others, VLIGGI M., or manū-made by the hand of the potter Uliggs.

Although many of the arts bestowed upon conquered nations by imperial Rome, were retained by them long after the central power was defunct, the somewhat ill-defined period known loosely as the dark or the middle ages present, so far as its pottery is concerned, a miserable figure by the side of classic ages. So far as form—the most important consideration—

is concerned, the productions of mediæval potters are open to severe criticism, and it seems almost incredible, that mankind having once acquired the possession of useful and beautiful outlines, should have degenerated into the use of vessels at once hideous and inconvenient. Much of this ugly crockery-ware was deeply glazed with a green glaze, and it appears to have been very largely used up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. In admirable symbolism of their chances of life, and of comfort during their respective tenure of life, the great lords drank from pots, goblets, jugs and bowls of gold, silver, or other metal, while those of the meeker sort drank from "green pots" their huge draughts of fat ale. The poor earthen pots stood but a poor chance in those days. If they said nothing they were ground into the dust: if they spake aloud the metal pots speedily crushed them.

While thus the manufacture of decorative pottery was entirely lost in Europe, Mohammedan invaders, finding some traditions of ceramic art in Spain, introduced the manufacture of the tiles of enamelled earthenware, with which the mosques of Persia and Arabia were adorned. By these beautiful tiles the footsteps of the Saracen may be traced, from the shores of Africa to Seville, Toledo, and the fortress palace of Granada. Not only tiles, but magnificent vases of elegant and dainty workmanship were produced, especially under the later period of Moorish domination. The most ancient pieces of this manufacture are enriched with blue and manganese colours, as well as yellow lustre, and are painted with arms and interlaced ornaments. As the art advanced, metallic lustres were introduced; a brilliant copper-red being the richest and latest of these improvements. In Malaga, Valencia, and Majorca was carried on an important manufacture of Hispano-Morisco pottery, of which large collections exist in the Louvre.

From this work it is supposed that the Italian potters learned their trade. So highly was the infidel pottery esteemed, that plates or bacini of it are found incrusted in the walls of the most ancient churches of Pisa, as well as in those of other towns in Italy. Those in the Pisan churches came chiefly from Majorca, where warriors, coming home from the crusades, stopped to bring home this peculiar earthenware. In 1115 the Pisans took the Balearic isles and an immense booty,

among which much enamelled pottery was doubtless included; but nevertheless it took some considerable time before Italian majolica was produced. Not before the year 1300 did the ceramic art assume a decorative character under the Malatestas, lords of Pesaro, a town in the duchy of Urbino. A body of red clay was covered with a thin coating (engobe) of very white earth procured from the territory of Siena, and called "terra di San Giovanni," which served as a ground for the coloured patterns. The vessel was partly baked, and then covered with lead glaze, after which it was carried to the kiln to receive its final firing. "This overlaying of an opaque white substance," saith Mr. Marryatt, "formed quite a new process, and may be considered the starting point of majolica. The colours employed were yellow, green, blue, and black. The lead glaze, being soft, and liable to be affected by external influences, imparted to the ware the metallic, iridescent lustre by which the 'mezza majolica' is characterised."

Between the time referred to, and that of the fine majolica, occurred a period of transition, during which a new glaze was introduced. The merit of applying stanniferous enamel to terra-cotta reliefs doubtless belongs to Lucca della Robbia, goldsmith, sculptor, and potter; but it is by no means clear that he invented the said tin glaze. Some refer the invention to Chaffagiolo, and others to Germany; but Lucca was the first to apply it to important works. At first he confined himself to working in two colours, and produced bas-reliefs, executed entirely in white on a blue ground. He subsequently introduced other colours—green, maroon, and yellow, but was very sparing in the use of any colours but white and blue. Lucca della Robbia did not sign his works, which are distinguishable from those of his brother by great purity of style, and an excessively delicate use of colour.

While this manufacture of glazed terracotta was going on in Florence, the makers of mezza majolica continued to improve their work under the patronage of the house of Sforza, to whom the lordship of Pesaro had been sold by the Malatestas. Special privileges were granted to manufacturers by the new rulers, and were afterwards confirmed by the dukes of Urbino. Pesaro soon acquired a great reputation for its pottery, and by the year 1510 majolica was formally enumerated among the trades of that city. Early

specimens of mezza majolica are generally adorned with a kind of Moresque ornament or with family arms, the heads of saints, heathen goddesses, contemporary princes, and popes. To these are attached mottoes explaining the subject. In this peculiar pottery the outlines of the figures are traced in black or blue; the drawing is correct, but hard and dry, the figures flat and lifeless; but what mezza majolica wants in these points is amply made up by the extraordinary beauty of the glaze, the mother-of-pearl-like splendour of which has never been surpassed. The finest productions of this kind are by an unknown artist who flourished at Pesaro about 1480. The dishes are large and thick and were evidently made for show, not use, the circular projections of the back of them being perforated with two holes, to admit a string for suspending them. Blue and yellow are the colours employed, and these are highly iridescent. This metallic lustre was afterwards applied to "fine majolica," as will be seen presently.

Some years after the death of Luca della Robbia, the white stanniferous enamel came into general use at Florence, and at Faenza. Fine white ware was the first product of this beautiful enamel glaze, but long after, when the Florentine potters, following the example of their brethren of Urbino, decorated their ware with coloured designs and arabesques, they often preserved the white ground. At the end of the fifteenth century, the white tin enamel came into use among the potters of the Duchy of Urbino, and the manufacture of fine majolica commenced. This differed in many important particulars from its predecessor. In mezza majolica, the flesh-coloured clay was covered with an "engobe"—already described—on this designs were traced in manganese, and certain parts of them were filled with the yellow colour, which the firing rendered glittering like gold. In the case of fine majolica, the same colours were applied upon a tin enamel, and the process of manufacture also varied in several important particulars. The piece was half-fired, "a bistugio"—concerning which practice, it is worth while to note that, as early as 1361, mention is made of one Giovanni dei Bistugi—John of the Biscuits. It was next dipped into the enamel, composed of oxido of tin and lead, with other combinations. This vitreous opaque coating concealed the dirty colour of the paste, and presented an

even white surface, to serve as a ground for the painting. The artist now laid his colours on the moist glaze, and when he had finished his work, and painted a yellow line round the rim, the piece was dipped into the "marzacotto" glaze, and returned to the furnace to receive its final firing. The metallic lustre was added afterwards, and made a third baking necessary.

Shortly after these innovations, majolica reached its most palmy period: the finest qualities of the mezza majolica being given to the new ware, which was also ornamented with far greater artistic skill. The famous lustreware manufactured at Gubbio has attained a world-wide reputation. It would seem that about the year 1485, Giorgio Andreoli, a gentleman of Pavia, came with his brothers to Gubbio. He was granted rights of noble citizenship, and subsequently served as gonfalonier. Sculptor and painter by profession, Maestro Giorgio executed several bas reliefs in the style of the Della Robbia family, but is chiefly known by his majolica plates, glowing with the richest and most brilliant colours. His favourite hues were the golden-yellow and ruby-red, and in the use of the latter he had no rival. His subjects are generally encircled with a border of fiery red and gold-coloured arabesques, on a blue ground. His works are dated from 1518 to 1537, but he was alive as late as 1552. This was the famous Maestro Giorgio of Gubbio, whose works are now so eagerly sought for. His work is not invariably signed in the same way, but his customary mark was "M^o G^o," for Maestro Giorgio, and many of the finest specimens are dated. Many of these also contain the artist's name at greater length, as "M^o Giorgio da Ugubio." Touching this great artist, M. Jacquemart remarks as follows: "The idea, enounced by Vincenzo Lazari, and propagated by several English authors, that Giorgio, inventor of the secret of metallic lustres, would have reduced himself to becoming the itinerant vendor of a sleight-of-hand secret, and have put his process up to auction in every workshop, is impossible to believe now. In the first place, Andreoli was not the inventor of the lustres; next, painters respected themselves too much to obliterate their art in the possession of a chemical mixture, and allow an arcanist to substitute his name for theirs, after having spread some golden ground or disfigured certain compositions by speckling them with touches of mother-

of-pearl or ruby-red." Maestro Giorgio certainly had many assistants, among whom were his brothers and his son, whose signatures are difficult to distinguish.

The manufacture of majolica was carried on with great spirit at the city of Urbino, the birth-place of Raffaelle. First among the ceramic artists of his own or any other country is Orazio Fontana, whose works are specialised by their boldness and breadth of drawing, as well as by their admirable fusion and brilliant glaze. A magnificent cup in the possession of Baron Rothschild is, like many of Fontana's works, inscribed thus, FATE-IN-BOTEGA - DE - ORATIO - FONTANA; but many of his productions are merely signed with the letter O in a cartouche, and many more are unsigned. All over the Duchy of Urbino the ceramic arts flourished; as, in addition to the manufacturers at Gubbio, Pesaro, and Urbino, the city of Castel Durante supplied potters and painters to the greater part of the workshops of Italy, and sent ceramic colonies to Flanders and Corfn. The majolica of this city is famous for its beauty of execution, rather than for novelty and boldness of design. It is often marked IN CASTEL DURANTE, and sometimes the name of the artist is added. One of the Castel Durante marks—FATTO IN BOTEGA DI PICCOLO PASSO—recalls the name not only of an artist, director of a botega, and a chevalier to boot, but author of a treatise on the art of making and decorating majolica. This curious work was written about 1550, and the manuscript has found its way at last to South Kensington.

Whatever may be the value of the claims of Faënza to extreme antiquity as a producer of pottery, this certainly has imposed its name on the French language as the representative of all soft pottery, as china in this country signifies porcelain. All Faënza pieces are covered with a rich-glazed marzacotto; many among the older pieces are enamelled in "berettino," a pale blue or starch colour. Often a broad border of blue ground has, in a paler camaïen or in various enamels, full-faced masks with pear-shaped heads, terminated below by a beard widened into acanthus leaves, which expand and mix themselves with elegant scrolls. At a later date the style of Faënza majolica assimilates closely to that of Urbino, decorative work being cast aside for pictorial design. Faënza ware is

frequently signed at full length, FATTO IN FAVENZA, or sometimes IN FAENÇA, 1561, or with the name of that famous establishment, the Casa Piota.

The great name of Bernard Palissy has invested the history of French pottery with a halo of romance; but his extraordinary life and peculiar style of work are too well known to need recapitulation. There is high dispute among crockery maniacs of the highest grade as to whether the famous cup, which inspired the glass-painter with the ambition to pursue a nobler calling, was of Italian work or the product of the famous French potteries already established at Oiron; but, after all, this is of small moment, as in his own work he imitated neither the one nor the other, but, like a true genius as he was, founded a style for himself—now rendered too familiar by modern reproductions to need description. The Palissy ware is sometimes graven with a monogram of B and P, but it rarely has any mark.

ECLIPSES IN CHINA.

FOREIGNERS, and especially foreign missionaries, have done much of late years to unfold to the Chinese the wonders of nature, and to familiarise them with the knowledge attained by their more highly-civilised brethren of the West in all branches of scientific research; and, amongst other means of accomplishing this end, a magazine, printed in Chinese, is published every week in Shanghai under the title of "Wan Kwoh Kung Pau" ("Chinese Globe Magazine"), in which such subjects as the comet of last summer and the transit of Venus were explained in a popular manner. Notwithstanding these efforts to instruct this self-sufficient people—efforts which are worthy of all commendation, and which will, we doubt not, gradually but surely effect the object in view—the vast majority of the enormous population of the empire still remains intensely ignorant in regard to scientific and kindred subjects, and clings affectionately to their old-world traditions and superstitious observances. During the year 1874 their equanimity was constantly disturbed by the occurrence of an unusual number of celestial phenomena; and under these circumstances it will, perhaps, not be uninteresting to our readers if we place before them a brief narrative of some of

the strange customs and ideas of the Chinese in regard to eclipses, comets, &c.

"Throughout Chinese history," says an old writer on China, "the phenomena of nature, such as an eclipse, the appearance of a comet, a vivid meteor, an earthquake, as well as pestilence, excessive rains, drought, locusts, and famine, have been regarded as signifying the displeasure of Heaven, and have induced a real or feigned desire to repent and reform. General pardons have been granted, measures taken to alleviate the distresses of the poor, and imperial proclamations issued, inviting persons to speak pointedly and freely their opinions of what they deemed amiss in the sovereign's conduct." The great sage and philosopher, Confucius, recorded thirty-six eclipses of the sun, most of which have been verified by European astronomers. This fact, however, does not prove that the Chinese understood the science of astronomy in those days, but merely that they were careful observers of celestial phenomena; and it is also useful as proving the authenticity of their historical annals.

The Imperial Almanack, published in the first instance by the Board of Rites at Peking, and afterwards by the various provincial authorities, does not, so far as we are aware, mention beforehand the coming eclipses of the sun and moon; but the imperial astronomers, some time previous to their occurrence, notify the board of the very hour when they may be expected to be visible, and this information is at once transmitted, through the high provincial officers, to all the subordinate officials throughout the empire, whose duty it is to "save the sun and the moon" from being devoured by some celestial monster; for the Chinese nation at large has no definite notion of the actual cause of eclipses, as may be inferred from the terms by which they denote them, viz., "jih-shih" and "yüeh-shih," literally meaning an eating of the sun and moon respectively. The agent in the matter is usually thought to be the omnivorous dragon; but some believe that there is a dog chained up in the sky, who, when he can get loose, sets off to eat the moon! These absurdities are bad enough, but a well-educated Malay writer, who was an acute and intelligent observer of men and things, remarks in his recently published autobiography that "half of the Siamese say that the sun is being married to the moon, but the latter dislikes the junction,

and so runs away, and the sun after her, and, as he snatches her, it becomes dark."

The Chinese view an eclipse with wonder, mingled, to a great extent, with fear and terror, and most of them take some steps to aid the sun or moon, as the case may be, in the hour of need, the principal agents employed being, of course, gongs and gunpowder, without which no ceremonial observance of any kind is complete. The officials at their several yaméns (official residences), go through a regular set ceremonial on these occasions. They call in the aid of Taoist priests, and an incense-vase and a pair of large candlesticks, containing red candles for luck, are placed on a table in the hua-ting, or audience-hall, but sometimes in the court in front of it. When the eclipse is beginning, the red candles are lighted, and the official enters, dressed in his robes of state. He takes some lighted incense-sticks in both hands, and bows low in front of the table, waving the incense about according to custom before placing it in the vase. He next proceeds to perform the ceremony of "ko-tou" (lit. knock head), kneeling down thrice, and knocking his head nine times on the ground. He then gets up, and huge gongs and drums are beaten to frighten the devouring monster away; and finally the priests march round the table in solemn procession, repeating certain prescribed formulas in a sing-song tone, until the termination of the eclipse.

The officials are, of course, always supposed to be successful in their endeavours to rescue the sun and moon from their perilous position, and the ignorant masses in China fully believe that the happy result is brought about by the ceremonies just described. They have seen the orb more or less obscured, or, as they have it, swallowed up by some monstrous beast, and after a time returning to its former condition, and they are quite satisfied that the deliverance has been effected by their own exertions and those of the officials. We have also heard that on these momentous occasions some of the people beat in their own houses a species of winnowing instrument, made of bamboo splints, in the hope that the din they raise may aid in averting the dire calamity from the sun or moon; and on the occurrence of an eclipse of the latter, sailors on board native junks always beat gongs with very great heartiness and goodwill, and the noise they thus make is suffi-

cient to drive anyone but a Chinaman distracted. We do not for a moment affect to suppose that Chinese officials, generally, actually believe in these absurd customs and mummeries, though they are obliged to observe them in obedience to the behests of their imperial master, and in deference to the superstitious feelings of the populace; for fully two centuries ago the Roman Catholic priests, who were then in high favour at the Court of Peking, taught them the main principles of astronomy, how to foretell eclipses, &c.; and many well-educated Chinese are acquainted, through the medium of translations, with some of our best works on this and cognate subjects.

In times gone by, the errors and ignorance of the Chinese in regard to eclipses have sometimes been made the pretext for offering insane adulation to the Emperor. It is on record that in the twelfth moon of the seventh year of Chén Tsung, of the Sung dynasty (about A.D. 996), an eclipse of the sun, which the astronomers had predicted, did not take place, and that on this occasion the ministers congratulated his Majesty, as if for his sake so unlucky an omen had been dispensed with. Again, Dr. S. Wells Williams, in his "Middle Kingdom," mentions that some clouds having prevented an eclipse from being seen, the courtiers joyfully repaired to the emperor to felicitate him because the heavens, touched by his virtues, had spared him the pain of witnessing the eating of the sun!

If the Chinese view an eclipse with fear, still more are they alarmed at the advent of a comet. "According to their shape and appearance," Sir John Davis tells us, in "The Chinese," "comets are called by the Chinese, broom stars, hairy stars and tail stars, and they are said to point the tail towards the region of whose ruin they are the presage. . . . The Chinese affect to draw presages from the appearance of comets, and here they bring into play their foolish theory of the five colours. If the appearance be red, particular consequences are to follow; if dark, they expect the overthrow of regular government and the success of rebellions, &c." The comet of last summer caused considerable alarm amongst the ignorant, and was by them, in accordance with their superstitious beliefs, connected with the invasion of the island of Formosa by the Japanese. But during the reign of Hsi Tsung of the Tang dynasty (A.D. 865 to 879), a dreadful

phenomenon appeared in the sky to bewilder and terrify the superstitions Celestials, for two falling stars or meteors shot across the heavens with a motion repeatedly intersecting each other's track, the appearance of which was similar to threads interwoven; they appeared of the size of a large bowl, and, adds the native historian, whose account of the occurrence we quote, "the circumstance was regarded as very extraordinary!"

All these little peculiarities and eccentricities of the Chinese, at which we have thus briefly glanced, will doubtless call up a smile to the face of an English reader in this latter half of the nineteenth century, but they are not alone in their superstitious absurdities, as witness the following anecdotes (to go no further afield for examples), which appeared in the columns of a London paper in July, 1873. "During a storm which lately raged around that place, (Clermont in France) the lightning struck the steeple of a chapel in a neighbouring commune, just as four persons were assembled therein to ring the bells in order to drive away the terrible visitor." Again:—"It is on record that in 1852 the Bishop of Malta ordered the church bells to be rung to mitigate the fury of a gale!" Mindful of these and similar superstitions practices prevalent among some classes in our own and other civilized countries, we must look with a lenient and pitying eye on the follies of the Chinese, and hope that the day may not be far distant when, through the aid of the civilising influences now at work amongst them, they will be brought to behold in a more appreciative manner the wonders of the heavens.

MARIGOLD.

A ROMANCE IN AN OLD GARDEN.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

MARIGOLD was sitting in her own little room, sewing busily at a dress which lay across her knees. It was of a pretty light grey woollen material, and, by the evident pains she took with the stitching and folding and gathering, the making of this gown was an important affair. Marigold did not say, even to herself, that it was her wedding dress, yet visions of a figure, not unlike her own, clad in this robe, and standing proudly beside another person who scarcely knew her in such delicate attire, did rise up again and again within her mind while she worked. Glimpses of the same figure, moving about a pretty

home, flitted also across the background of her thoughts; for this would be her holiday dress for many a day to come, and Ulick had almost taken that coveted cottage, in which they two were to be happy for the rest of their lives. As Marigold worked, she thought proudly and tenderly of Ulick's faithfulness and devotion to herself. Once he and she had been equals, but now it was a different state of things, and the rising business clerk might have chosen a wife from among many who looked down on the poor flower-girl. There was scarcely anyone, besides herself and Peter Lally, who knew what Ulick had been some five or six years ago, or of that meeting on the high-road, the recollection of which remained so vividly upon the young man's mind.

"Ah, if I had only pushed myself into some more respectable employment," thought Marigold; "if I had been a clever dressmaker, or a shopwoman, and worn stylish clothes, no one would then ask where I came from, or what right I had to lower a respectable young man by presuming to marry him. As for my poor father's being a gentleman, nobody ever thinks of that, or whether I can write a good hand, or speak English. I am simply a friendless girl, who carries a basket of flowers through the streets, and wears a plain print gown, and a faded shawl. I'm sure I need not care for myself, since Ulick does not care; and many a time he has told me that I was far more of a lady than the girls who make so much fuss about him, with all their fashionable finery. I remember he said to me once:—'How much more becoming is this load of fresh flowers on your head, than that miserable little bonnet covered with artificials, that I have just passed on the road!' I ought to think of that, and be content with myself: only I do hope that his employer won't be angry when he hears of the marriage, and think less of him on account of it!"

The dusk gathered round Marigold as she worked and thought, and the firelight from the cottage kitchen began to gleam redly round the edges of her room door, which stood ajar. In the kitchen, Kate, the cottager's wife, was rocking her baby's cradle; a knock came on the outer door, and Lizzie, a milliner, from the town, came in to pay a visit. Kate received her hospitably, poked the fire, and hung the kettle on; while Marigold, in the inner

darkening room, dropped her sewing, and sat, face between hands, lost in her happy reflections.

Kate and Lizzie, meanwhile, fell to work like true gossips, and discussed the affairs of their acquaintance. It was not long before they arrived at the subject of Ulick, and his intended marriage.

"I believe it's to be very soon," said Kate.

"I don't believe it will ever be," said Lizzie. "I hear more in the town than the birds sing to you about in the country."

"What do you hear?" said Kate, "I like the girl, and I'd be sorry for her disappointment."

"I don't know what you see in her," said Lizzie, "but that's not the question. You'd be sorry for her, and others would be sorry for others they know about. You don't suppose he has no more sweethearts nor one?"

"I don't believe he has," said Kate.

"You were always a simple one," said Lizzie. "I suppose you think it wasn't a toss-up with your own John, whether he'd have you or some other girl?"

"I don't know," said Kate, "I hope you're not frettin' on my account, Lizzie. Some one said lately you were gettin' very thin. I wouldn't like I had anything to do with it."

"Oh, as to that," said Lizzie, tossing her head. "You were welcome to my share of him. I couldn't marry out of my station."

"I never put myself above you, Lizzie."

"And I never put myself so low as you, ma'am, except such as now, when I come out of my way to pay visits to my inferiors. However, if you're talking to that young woman of yours, shortly, you may tell her what I demeaned myself by coming here to make known to you, that her sweetheart has left his situation, and is goin' to England on the spot—which isn't very like marryin', as far as I can see!"

"I don't believe it," said Kate, "even from so great a lady as you've turned out to be, all of a sudden. An' if I was you, Lizzie, I wouldn't make so little o' myself as to stay here any longer."

"I'll stay till I've said my say, an' I'll go when it fits me," said Lizzie, "seein' is believin', and when Ulick is gone, I'll come back an' have my crow over you. Nobody disbelieves in his going, nor wonders at it, but yourself; for it's the only way he can get rid of the girl, after all the talk that's been about it; an' it's not to be doubted that he could do better in England nor marry a tramp of a young

woman, that knocks at people's doors with a lot of flower-pots on her head!"

"I never liked your jealous ways, Lizzie," said Kate, "an' you've gone and wakened the child with them!" The mother lifted the crying baby out of the cradle, and the visitor, seeing that she could no longer hope to claim Kate's attention, marched wrathfully out of the cottage, and shut the door violently behind her.

As Kate bent over the child, she was suddenly hugged from behind by two stronger arms than baby's. Marigold gave her a hearty kiss, and then stood laughing before her.

"I heard it all, Kate, every word of it. Why did you not remember the door was open?"

"I wasn't thinkin' about it at all."

"You're a good kind soul, Kate, and I'll never forget it to you. I didn't know you cared so much about me."

"Why God bless the girl! what would you had me to say? Didn't she put my own John into the same box with your Ulick, an' me as little to be thought of as yourself. It's not true, is it, about his going to England?"

"True! how could it be true? Give me the baby, Kate, for a little, and let me sit with you here and talk. I feel lonely, somehow, to-night, and inclined to be angry at people. But I won't speak ill of your John, nor of anybody else. We'll talk nothing but baby-talk, and watch the sparks flying up the chimney."

"You're different company from Lizzie, I must say," said Kate, as she seated herself contentedly at the fire, needle in hand, and a torn jacket of John's upon her knee, prepared to take advantage of the unemployed happy moments, to get a necessary piece of work done. Between her stitches she admired her "company," the baby extended luxuriously on Marigold's knees, with rosy baby-toes, spread out to the heat, and wondering baby-eyes, fixed on the beautiful sun-browned face, and golden head, which smiled and dimpled and shone above him; Marigold chattering pleasant nonsense to the child.

The latch was lifted, and Ulick appeared on the threshold.

"Come in, come in!" said Kate, beaming upon him. "It's a late visit you're paying us, but baby an' me are obliged to you all the same. It's a terrible thing that John's gone out, for of course it was to see him that you come," and she dusted a seat for

the guest, twinkling all over with amusement at her own little joke.

"We'll manage to get on without him," said Ulick, taking the seat and showing great interest in the child. His face was flushed, and he seemed possessed by an excitement which he strove to restrain. Now and again he glanced with a peculiar look at Marigold, who sat silent and happy, stroking the baby's little fat legs, and listening to the conversation between her lover and friend.

"We've just been having a visitor," continued Kate, in her bantering way; "an' a visitor that knew more about you nor either Marigold or me did. She told us you're going to England."

Ulick started, and looked very grave. After a few moments' silence, he said, in an altered tone—

"It is true; I am going to England. I came to tell Marigold."

Marigold's hand stopped stroking the baby's legs, and she turned her eyes on Ulick in silent amazement.

"But you have not given up your situation?" cried Kate.

"I have given up my situation," said Ulick.

"Oh, my goodness!" exclaimed Kate. "And you, that was to have been—"

"I want to speak to Marigold, Kate. I must see her alone."

Marigold got up, and, silently putting the child in its mother's arms, led the way into her own little room. There lay the wedding-dress, into which she had stitched her happy thoughts so lately. The distant lights of the town twinkled through the darkness beyond the window; an hour ago she had watched them springing up like so many joys in her future. With the coldness of deadly fear upon her heart, Marigold closed the door, and waited for Ulick to speak.

"Marigold, you must trust me."

The girl drew a deep sigh of relief. The words she had expected to hear were—"Marigold, we must separate for ever."

"Yes, Ulick."

"That's my brave girl!"

"Tell me more, Ulick."

"I will tell you all I can; but it's a strange affair this that is taking me away."

"I mnstn't ask what it is, Ulick?"

"No dear; that's the trouble of it. I have made up my mind that it is better not to tell you."

"Will you come back again, Ulick?"

"I do not know. I may come back—

that is what I hope for—or I may ask you to come to me. I am strangely, wonderfully uncertain as to the future."

Marigold turned away her head, and looked out on the dreary, shivering lights in the distance. The sudden change from happiness to desolation chilled her. Some confused idea of all she should have to bear with after Ulick had left her, passed across her mind; the taunts of such as Lizzie, the heavy sense of loneliness, the involuntary fears of her own heart.

"Is there no help for it, Ulick?"

"None at all, love. Sit down, and let us talk about it. This has come with as great a shock upon me as upon you. This time last night my head was full of our plans; I thought, going to sleep, of you and our little cottage; but this morning brought me a letter which I think it wiser not to show you. It obliges me to go to England at once, and to remain there some time."

"I did not know you had friends in England," said Marigold.

"I did not know it myself. It seems, now, that I have both friends and enemies, or, at least, there are people who may turn out to be either. It depends upon how things go between them and me, whether I return here or remain in England."

"Which way will it work, Ulick?" asked Marigold, fearfully. "Will the friends or the enemies send you back?"

"The friends would send me back," said Ulick, tossing up his head with an air of pride and triumph. "They will, if they can. But don't you imagine that the enemies are going to cut me into little pieces, or to put me in jail. The worst they can do is to take away from me the wish to return to this place. And, in that case, the world will be wide before me. With you by the hand it does not much matter where I turn my steps."

"And England is such a rich place," said Marigold. "There will be plenty of work to be had."

"Plenty," said Ulick; "I am not afraid. The worst of the whole thing is, that we must part for a time; our marriage is put off, and the future of our lives, though they must be linked together, is uncertain. If you were a different kind of girl, you would take this very badly. But you and I have trusted each other long, and understand each other perfectly."

"You will write to me, Ulick?"

"Constantly. When I cease to write, you may cease to trust; but not till then.

Of course, you must remember, however, that a letter will occasionally miscarry."

Marigold lifted her head and smiled. The worst of this trial seemed already over. Lonely she must be, indeed, for a time; but she would not be desolate or dispirited.

"You know I am an obstinate hoper," she said; "you often told me so. It will take a great deal of your silence to break my heart."

"If you want it broken," said Ulick, "you must get some one else to do it; for I will never try."

There was a silence now which was not heart-breaking, as the lovers sat with clasped hands, looking from each other's faces to those distant lights of the town—stars which shone again with even more than their old lustre, only, now and then, sinking into a wistful glimmer. Marigold was happy, though a period of undoubted pain lay before her. It is such an exquisite pleasure to an honest woman to be supremely trusted by one she loves.

After a time, Ulick spoke again.

"Marigold, I must ask you for those little old reliques of my mother, which I gave you to keep for me. I must not leave them behind me."

He said this with a certain difficulty, as if he felt that such a request might sound strangely; but Marigold found nothing odd in his desire to take these treasures out of her keeping. It was a beautiful thought of his, she felt, to wish to have them with him. She went to a corner of her room, unlocked her little box, and brought forth a package, which she placed in Ulick's hands.

"They are all there," she said; "the letters, the locket, and the little bag of odds and ends. Open them, and see if they are right."

The packet was untied, and the contents laid in Marigold's lap. There were a few faded letters tied up with a ribbon, a small bag of tarnished silk and velvet containing some little trinkets and trifles, a locket enclosing hair and initials, and the miniature of a man. Marigold fetched a light, and held it close while Ulick examined these treasures anxiously, before sealing them up once more in a packet, and placing them in his breast.

After this there were many more words to be said, and then came the parting. Marigold went with Ulick to the cottage door, and watched him as long as his figure was discernible in the night. Ulick became only a black streak, and at last

vanished; and the lights on the horizon grew dim again, and Marigold's heart felt such a dead weight within her that she had to stop a little while outside the threshold, to get her thoughts right again, before returning to Kate's fireside. There she must return and talk about Ulick, or Kate would believe he had really deserted her.

The baby was asleep again, and Kate was busy at her patching. Marigold drew a stool to the fire and sat down, trying not to shiver, and spreading out her cold hands to the blaze.

"And so he's really goin' to England?" said Kate in a tone of wonderment.

"He sets out to-morrow morning early," said Marigold.

"Dear, dear! To think of that Lizzie being right after all. I'm as sorry as can be, if it's only on account of her crowin'."

"She's not right in all she said though, Kate," said Marigold smiling. "He is not going away to get rid of me, but upon business of his own that cannot be avoided."

"Of course I know that," said Kate; "and you do speak so nicely that it makes a person quite sure to hear you. I wish I could remember, 'business of his own that cannot be avoided.' I'll say the words to them when they come to me with their gossip."

"I wonder what makes the world so unkind, Kate," said Marigold, a little bitterly. "I never did those girls any harm. They have always been better off in a sort of way than I have been. I never grudged them their fashionable clothes, nor their better employment, nor their good fathers and mothers, nor their lovers. I have always had little enough, Heaven knows. One only great blessing was sent to me, and that seems to make them dislike me."

"Heart alive!" said Kate; "don't you see the meanin' o' the whole of it. They're all strivin' to be ladies, an' not one o' them can manage it. If you were in rags, the lady's in you, and it shines out o' you before their eyes. The beautiful language comes off your tongue as natural as the flower comes on the bush, an' sich quality ways is hurtful to them that has envious hearts. But don't speak as if a handful of wasps was the whole world around you. We're not all o' one temper."

"No, no, Kate; I never meant to say it. You're not the only one I know who stands by me. Don't give me up now;

for I shall have a pretty bad time, I think, until Ulick comes back."

As Marigold sat there by the fire, though she did not realise all the sorrow of the future, yet a heavy foreshadowing of trouble was upon her. She felt lonely, with that peculiar pain of loneliness which parting leaves behind, when time and place of future meeting are uncertain. For five years—ever since the period when childhood's thoughtlessness had begun to leave her—the nearness of Ulick, with all its protecting influence, had been a vivid reality of her life. To be left alone now, so suddenly, within an hour; obliged to sit down and realise the idea of great distance which had never occurred to her before; to feel utterly incapable of forming any picture in her mind of Ulick in an unknown place with unknown surroundings; above all, to think of a great unseen, unimaginable ocean, which possibly must be crossed by her before they could meet again, under new circumstances and in strange scenes; all this scared, chilled, and oppressed her. Fortunately for her, her life was too active to admit of her long abandoning herself to absorbing reflection. She bade Kate a cheerful good-night, folded up the pretty wedding-dress and laid it away, with neither sighs nor tears, but only some sprigs of lavender among its folds; and, in the end, fell asleep with a heart full of prayer and hope.

Ulick in the meantime went his way, his heart beating so thick and high with strange excitement that he scarcely felt the pang which, a week ago, he should have suffered at the thought of leaving Marigold. The feverish spirit which he had controlled while in her presence seized upon him now, and carried him on his way as if swept along by a wind. His mind was crowded with conflicting hopes and fears—such hopes and such fears as beset the soul of a man when he sees a prize of ambition before him, which seems placed within his grasp, but may yet be missed and lost.

ON THE 27TH INST. WILL BE COMMENCED
A NEW SERIAL STORY,

By the Author of "Aunt Margaret's Trouble,"
"Mabel's Progress," &c.,
ENTITLED,

A CHARMING FELLOW.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 325. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER VIII. THE LADY OF QUALITY.

MR. HEATH was justified in saying that his recommendations were certain to be carried out. The trustees were mere puppets in his hands; and Mr. Hillman, though a shrewd and long-headed attorney, had been so won over by the fidelity and sagacity which Heath had shown in the management of the bank, that he would not for an instant have dreamed of controverting any suggestion he might make. Mr. Bence highly approved of the idea that Grace should be launched into the world with a good house and establishment of her own, as the adoption of such a course promised to secure for him and his family a certain position in society, as the connections of the young heiress; while the engagement of a qualified chaperon would relieve Mrs. Bence—a fat, placid old woman, with a tendency to go to sleep after midnight—from the necessity of sitting up and looking after their young friend. As for Mr. Palmer, he professed to be entirely astonished at anyone electing to live in London, no matter for how short a time. It was all right, he dare say; and, of course, different people have different tastes, and Miss Middleham was a young woman new to that kind of thing, so, of course, he had no objection to make; and whenever Miss Grace wanted a little fresh air, he and Mrs. Palmer would be delighted to see her at the Manor House, and would find room for her sheep-dog also—ha! ha! her sheep-dog! And Mr. Palmer,

apparently much tickled at the expression, repeated it with great glee.

So, having received the necessary sanction, Mr. Heath proceeded to carry out his plans. The first thing to be done was to find a furnished house; for, though Grace and the professor were very comfortable at Fenton's, it was not merely thought desirable that the young lady should be installed at the head of her own establishment as soon as possible, but dismal letters had been received from the Frau Professorin, in which her own failing health was pointedly alluded to, and a strong desire for her husband's immediate return was expressed. The only thing which kept her up, Madame Sturm said, was Waller's unwearied attention, and the prospective pleasure of hearing all about the professor's enthusiastic reception by the English scientific world. There is never a lack of furnished houses to be let in London, and one was very soon found which Mr. Heath said he thought "might do," and with which Grace expressed herself content. It was a tall, ten-roomed house, in Eaton-place, belonging to a retired Indian colonel, who dwelt in it from October till February very comfortably, getting his chat at the Junior, and his whist at the Portland, and regularly dining with all his old friends; and, by letting it during the London season, realising an income which enabled him and his wife to live, with perfect ease to themselves, at German spas or English watering-places, or wherever their fancy might lead them. The furniture was useful rather than elegant; the chairs in the dining-room were hard and slippery, and the family pictures on the walls appalling. There was one, in particular, of the colonel's mother—a farinaceous-looking old lady, with a

flaxen front, a pale countenance, and two lace lappets tied under her chin in a manner so ghastly suggestive, that the former season's tenants had unhooked and hidden it away during their stay; while another, of the colonel's uncle, who had originally sent him to Addiscombe—an aggressive old gentleman, in powdered pigtail and Hessian boots—glared down upon the intruders, and seemed to want to know their business there. The back room was a kind of deep tank, all available space in which was occupied by a round card-table, a case of stuffed birds, and the colonel's library, consisting of the Army List, the Peerage, and two odd volumes of Napier's Peninsular War. The stair-carpets had been "shifted," to hide the parts most worn; but the landing-place was a triumph, for on it was a piece of upholstery supposed to resemble a jaguar, and covered with the skin of that animal—an impossible beast, with a cracked glass-eye, and a protruding tongue made of red cloth; and out of it led the conservatory, a stuffy glass-house, six feet square, into which the black rain dripped with hollow, plashing sound.

There were not too many ornaments in the drawing-room. Such as were there were of Oriental origin—cheap carved ivory work, sandal-wood boxes, banner screens with Japanese figures, and framed photographs of Indian temples. Nor were the appointments of the bed-room such as were likely to find favour in the eyes of a young lady, to whom cheval-glasses and large wardrobes were necessities; but where money was no object, such additions could be easily supplied, and the accommodation being sufficient, and the address undeniable, the house was taken for the season, and the colonel and his wife sent on their way rejoicing.

To most persons, the selection of a chaperon, for an heiress wholly ignorant of the world, would have presented many difficulties; but the trustees had been content to leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Heath, and that gentleman numbered among his acquaintances a lady, whom he considered exactly fitted for the important post. The Honourable Mrs. Crutchley was a lady whose clearness of vision in all that concerned herself, and whose readiness and obedience where any profit was to be made, had evoked the bank-manager's admiration, in certain matters of business in which they had been engaged together. In the first place,

she fulfilled the condition of being a widow, which was an absolute necessity. There was no shady husband in the background to interfere with her schemes, or claim his share of her earnings. Then her title was indisputable; her manner, excellent; and her recognition in society undoubted. Thirty years previously—when, as Harriet Staunton, she lived with her father, the old commander of the coast-guards, at St. Beckett's, in a little white-washed cottage, overlooking the sea—her greatest ambition was that the rector's wife would die, in which case she thought she had a chance of succeeding to the vacancy; or that Mr. Meggs, the apothecary, would repeat in earnest, what he had so often said in jest, and make her the sharer of his heart and practice. But though the apple-faced little medico had no idea of committing what he would have considered an act of folly, he was the unconscious means of bringing about the girl's destiny. One evening, as Harriet sat chewing the cud of fancy—which was to her always less sweet than bitter—in the twilight, she heard the sound of wheels at the front door. Access to the lieutenant's cottage was generally obtained over the sloping shoulder of the cliff, and through the garden which led out to it; vehicular accommodation, too, was limited in those parts; and the girl knew at once that the visitor could be no other than Dr. Meggs. It was he indeed, as she found when she opened the door. He was not alone; and instead of seizing her by both hands, as was his usual custom, he addressed her somewhat formally.

"I have come to you, Miss Staunton," he said, after the first salutation, "on an errand of mercy. This gentleman," pointing to his companion, who still remained motionless in the gig, "has met with an accident, while gull shooting, at St. Ann's Head. He missed his footing, and though he was providentially saved by a jutting portion of the cliff, his ankle is dislocated, and he is severely shaken. One of your father's men, who saw the affair, hailed me, as I was passing; and, fortunately, meeting the lieutenant, I obtained permission to bring the stranger here. He is staying with Sir Thomas Walton, at Whitethorns," he added, dropping his voice; "but it would be impossible to attempt to get him there to-night, and equally impossible to take him to the Trawlers Net, or to any of the cottages in the village. If you will let him be

carried to that little spare room, which Master Harry occupies when he is at home, and let old Jane foment the limb, and do what I tell her, I have no doubt I shall be able to rid you of him tomorrow."

Harriet Staunton, delighted at the idea, was only damped at the thought that the room in which her brother Harry (a mate in the P. and O. Company's service) occasionally passed a few nights, would not be suitable for the reception of a gentleman who was in a position to be at Whitethorns; but the practical little doctor soon quieted her scruples; and the stranger, who was still insensible, was carried upstairs in the strong arms of two of the coastguard men. Old Jane's fomentations, renewed throughout the night, were not, however, so efficacious as Dr. Meggs had expected. On visiting his patient the next day, he heard from the young man that he was in no condition to be moved, and that unless it was the absolute desire of his host, he declined to be taken from his present quarters.

The fact was that Captain the Honourable James Crutchley—for such was the visitor's name and title—while still supposed to be in a state of coma, looking up under his dropped eyelids, had seen a face peering at him over old Jane's shoulder: a face which, though not strictly beautiful, was fresh and young, with bright gleaming teeth, and soft wavy hair, and different in every respect from the countenances of old Lady Walton and her two spinster nieces, who were the only women whom he had looked upon for six weeks. With no game of his own to play, and with a sincere regard for the girl, whom he had known since her childhood, the old doctor humoured his patient. The Waltons had already been informed of the accident, and a messenger was now despatched to Whitethorns, telling his friends that the removal of the patient was for some days impossible, and assuring them that all due care was being taken of him.

That same afternoon Sir Thomas Walton rode over on his cob, peeped through the door at the patient, who was supposed to be sleeping, shook hands with Lieutenant Staunton, whom for twenty years he had hitherto only honoured with a nodding acquaintance, stared very hard, while saying a few polite words with Harriet, and went away, earnestly wishing that he had had her for a nurse, when he dislocated his collar-bone during the last cub-hunting.

James Crutchley's dislocation took a long time to heal—longer than one would have thought from the speedy manner in which he contrived to avoid the necessity of keeping his couch, and to get down-stairs. In these cases, however, it is, perhaps, bad to attempt too much at first, and his undine hasto entailed upon him the alternative of either lying upon the couch in what was politely called the drawing-room—because Harriet's cottage-piano was, and the lieutenant's meerschaum pipe was not, allowed there—or of calling for a supporting arm, the strength of which need not be very great, to help him in his rambles along the garden or over the cliff. The end of this it was not difficult to foresee. Jim Crutchley was not a handsome man—indeed, he was called "Joco" in the regiment, from his fancied resemblance to an ape; he was small, and lean, and brown, with mean little black eyes, open nostrils, an enormous upper lip, and projecting teeth; but he had good hands and feet, dressed well, and was unmistakably a well-bred gentleman. Harriet Staunton had never seen anyone like him. She had no thought of the person now, except that he was fat and forty, and that it did not matter how long his wife lived; no thought of Dr. Meggs, except one occasionally of gratitude towards him for introducing the captain, no thought of anyone or anything save the captain himself. Not that Harriet worshipped him, adored him, raved about him, as is the custom of many young ladies under similar circumstances. She knew he was plain, but found him agreeable and amusing, with more to say that was interesting to her, than any one with whom she had been before brought into contact; and she saw in winning him a chance of rescuing herself from the dull, solitary life against which she had so long repined in vain.

As for the Honourable James, there was no doubt about the state of his feelings. During all the dozen years in which he had been knocking about London, and the garrison towns where his regiment had been quartered, he had contrived to keep himself tolerably heart-whole, having had, of course, a great many "affairs" of all kinds, but none of them with anything approaching to a serious result. His respected father, the Earl of Waddledot, had often bitterly bemoaned to his eldest son and heir to the family honours, Viscount Podager, his grief that Jim was so "confoundedly plain-headed." If he

had been a good-looking fellow, he might have succeeded, the earl thought—for he had plenty of “impudence,” and talk, and that kind of thing, don’t you know—in marrying some rich gal; a contingency which would not only have restored his own very fallen fortunes, but would have enabled him to lend a few thousands to his father and elder brother, who were both sadly impecunious. But while his noble relatives were thus kind enough to busy themselves with his affairs, the Honourable Jim had held on his course very straight, and had not suffered himself to be entangled by any of the fascinations which he found in the fashionable world, although, on more than one occasion, with very little trouble, he might have stood the chance of carrying off a moneyed prize. It was not his ugliness that stood in his way; as John Wilkes said, at the end of half-an-hour’s conversation, no woman would think that he was plain. But it was not with the women that he had any difficulty—rather with their fathers and brothers, who, when informed by their spouses that Agatha, or Hermengarde, had waltzed several times with James Crutchley, would look grave, and shake their heads, and mutter hard words about a “bad lot,” “vaurien,” a “person of bad character,” and other deprecatory criticisms. The fact was that his allowance from his noble father being very small, and very irregularly paid, the Honourable Jim, finding that money was necessary for existence, had to trust to his own wits, to his experience in horse-flesh, and to his knowledge of games of skill, such as billiards and cards. His transactions in horse-dealing had been extensive, and one of them created such an interest in certain circles, that he had thought it advisable to exchange into another regiment, on a hint from his colonel, a man of liberal views, but holding the opinion that the line must be drawn somewhere. Still he remained a member of two or three leading clubs, occasionally obtained information which was not only early, but correct, about “good things” which were likely to come off, and made a very fair younger son’s income, by the clearness of his head and the steadiness of his hand.

Why a man of this stamp should fall in love—absolutely in the good old-fashioned meaning of the term—with such a girl as Harriet Staunton, is difficult to explain. There was no doubt, however, about the fact that the Honourable Jim’s experience,

vast though it had been, had not given him a notion of anyone combining so much beauty with perfect modesty, simplicity, and quietude of demeanour. His mother had died, when he was yet very young, and he had no sisters; and in his barrack-room, and racing-hotel life, he had had no opportunity of studying woman in her domestic sphere. Had such a chance been afforded him in the plenitude of his health and insolence, he would probably have sneered at it; but, although the fact of being tended by so charming a nurse had induced him to adopt that course of tactics, which is known by sailors as “shamming Abraham,” and by soldiers as “malingering”—though he made the worst of his wrenchéd ankle, and leaned more heavily, and more frequently, on the support which was at his command, than was at all necessary—it was certain that he had received a severe shock from his fall, and that his nerves were jarred and out of order. Doubtless this bodily weakness conducted to bring him into a tenderer and more impressible frame of mind; and it was not to be wondered at, that when he saw Harriet Staunton going the round of her domestic duties, listened to the confidences reposed in her by the old women of the village (the recipients of her benefactions), marked the thoughtful care with which she administered to her old father’s wants, and by her industry and earnestness, supplemented the small means at her disposal, by playing the part of Lady Bountiful of the neighbourhood, it was but natural that he should succumb to an influence such as he had never previously encountered, and become her very slave.

When a young man and woman are thus predisposed towards each other, it is not very difficult—more especially when the girl has plenty of foresight, and has her feelings well under control—to predict the result. One evening when the old lieutenant was smoking his pipe and slowly mastering the contents of the newspaper, the Honourable Jim took advantage of the temporary absence of Harriet from the room, to declare the state of his feelings, and to demand her hand. Her own consent he had, he said, already obtained; and then, striking at once into the business part of the question, he declared that though he had no regular source of income beyond his pay, which would be sacrificed at once, as he intended disposing of his commission, he would take care that Harriet had all the comforts of the posi-

tion, which, as his wife, she would enjoy. But little eloquence—even less than that employed upon the subject by James Crutchley—would have been sufficient to induce Lieutenant Staunton to acquiesce in any arrangement which his daughter looked upon as calculated to ensure her happiness; and long before his intended son-in-law had reached his peroration, the old gentleman was thinking, with vague wonderment, what the cottage would look like, when the light of Harriet's presence was withdrawn from it, and how he should manage to scrape along when left solely to the ministrations of old Jane. The fate of the old man had not, indeed, been considered by the young people as part of their scheme, but he accepted it easily enough, gave them his consent and his blessing; and three weeks after, when the banns had been duly published, took farewell of his daughter with streaming eyes and a saddened heart, never to look upon her again.

The consternation which fell upon the household at Crutchley Castle, when the news of the Honourable Jim's marriage with the pretty and penniless girl was received there, can scarcely be described. The inferior portion of it, though not unaccustomed to seeing their master in what they called his "tantrums" on the receipt of letters pressing for money, and the occasional visits of duns, had never beheld him so much moved as under the present circumstances; and the "cussin' and swearin'" in which Lord Podager indulged considerably transcended his ordinary performances, by no means despicable, in that line. The old earl's ungovernable fury brought upon him a fresh and fierce attack of his old enemy, the gout. He had never thought much of Podager, on whom Nature had bestowed a malformed foot, and with it, as is frequently the case, a sullen and forbidding temper; but thought that Jim, with his commission in a crack regiment, his popularity in society, his natural brightness and readiness, and his full knowledge of the family circumstances—which, it was but just to say, had never been in the smallest degree concealed from him—Jim ought to have made a better return than this. Lord Waddledot spoke of it as "a return" in pure simplicity, but wholly ignoring the fact that James Crutchley's original commission, and his subsequent steps, had been purchased for him by an uncle, since deceased; and that

he himself had done practically nothing for his son's advancement in life. A suggestion that they should spend a few weeks at Crutchley Castle, made by the Honourable Jim, in deference to his wife's wishes as necessary for her recognition, but with a full knowledge of what it would entail on them both, was promptly negatived; and the happy pair remained in London, whither they had hastened after their marriage, while Jim sent in his papers, and eventually received the price of his commission. A small house, in a decent suburb, was then taken; and Harriet set to work to undo the mischief which, to say the least of it, the suspicious nature of many of her husband's proceedings in earlier life had wrought. She was recognised and called upon by some of the more remote members of the family, who were so struck with her simple, lady-like manners, that they bore forth a favourable report to others, which, in due time, reached the ears of the earl. An invitation to the castle followed; the proffered hospitality of a week was extended to two months; and, when the Honourable Mrs. James Crutchley took leave of her father-in-law, she had not merely the pleasure of feeling that she was on the best of terms with that august nobleman, but that she had so far ingratiated herself with the people of the county as to be reckoned an ornament rather than a discredit to the family, and the more permanent satisfaction of knowing that, by her tact and *savoir faire*, she had obtained for James the adjutancy of the Limpshire Militia, which was a certain, though small, source of income.

Harriet Crutchley was not a woman to stop when she saw the ball at her feet. Step by step she persevered, until, in the acknowledgment of her social charms and domestic virtues, all reminiscences of the Honourable Jim's early peccadilloes faded away; and, although he still played billiards and *carte* with remarkable success, and had what was generally a most wholesome book on the principal events of the year, these pastimes were but regarded as the ordinary and legitimate amusements of an English gentleman of rank. So agreeable did she make herself, too, to the erewhile hostile Podager, that, when that young nobleman succeeded his lamented father, and found that, by the connivance of the family lawyer, the estate was by no means so heavily dipped as had been imagined, he consented to make an allowance of five

hundred a year to his younger brother; and when, after ten years of fairly happy married life, the Honourable Jim succumbed to an attack of fever, caught on a wet St. Leger day, his lordship was graciously pleased to continue it to the widow.

Ten years had passed since the Honourable Jim had been laid in the family vault at Crutchley, and Harriet, a buxom woman of forty, retained her hold on the affections of her late husband's family, and on the general respect of society; further, she retained the five hundred a year and the benefit arising from the shifting investments of the proceeds of a policy on her husband's life, which she had induced him to enter upon shortly after their marriage. In these investments she had the advantage of the advice of her second cousin, Mr. George Heath, of whom she had seen nothing since her early childhood; but whom, when she found him in a high commercial position in the city, and able to direct her little financial operations to profit, she took up very warmly, and frequently invited to her comfortable, well-furnished rooms in Ebury-street. During all the years of her widowhood, Mrs. Crutchley had assiduously and successfully striven not to lose, or in any way to compromise, the position in society which her marriage had obtained for her. Always well-dressed in rich and ample black silk—a comely matron, wearing a pretty lace cap, over her still luxuriant fair hair—always good-tempered, agreeable, and ready to oblige, Harriet Crutchley was a favourite with the old, to whose foibles she showed a pleasant forbearance, and with the young, whose extravagances she was, when it suited her, generally ready to condone.

Such was the lady selected by Mr. Heath as chaperon for Grace Middleham.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

BRISTOL.

ABOUT the derivation of the word Bristol, the antiquaries, according to their habit, widely differ. Some say it was called Caer-Brito, the British city, to contrast it strongly with Avon or Clifton, the Roman city, nearer the sea. Others hold that Brit, in old Celtic, means "separated," as "Britain, the separated or lonely island," marking the separation of the early British city from the Roman outpost. The Saxons, however, according to Leland, seem to

have called it "Bryght-Stowe," the bright or illustrious city. Bishop Gibson, with considerable plausibility, held that its real name was Brigstowe or City of Bridges, a by no means impossible derivation.

However that may be, Bristol was a place of importance long before the Romans built their fort at Clifton. Nennius, as early as the year 620, mentions Caer-Brito as one of twenty-eight famous and ancient cities of Britain. It is first called Bristow by Henry of Huntingdon, in 1148. Camden, with an absence of his usual accuracy, says that Bristol did not rise to importance till towards the declension of the Saxon power, and is not mentioned in English history till the year 1063, when Harold, according to Florence of Worcester, set sail from that port to invade Wales. One thing is certain, that as early as the decline of the Roman power in Britain, when the legions left the great cities of Caerleon and Caerwent to their fate, the Britons poured across the Severn into Bristol, and occupied it, till they were, in their turn, driven back into the Welsh mountains by the stronger-armed Saxons.

The Earls of Gloucester were, in the Saxon times, thancs of Bristol; and foremost among those, noted for power, wealth, and benefactions to the city, stands Bri trick, who founded a Christian church, and, according to a Tewkesbury chronicler quoted by Dugdale, was honoured in the city almost as a deity. Henry the Second was educated here; and, in King John's reign, Bristol, by the usurper's marriage with a daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, became vested in the crown. Bristol became so rich and flourishing in the reign of Henry the Second, that on the principle of always giving an apple to the man who has an orchard, the king gave the city of Dublin, with privileges and free customs, to a Bristol colony.

The first monastery built in Bristol was the work of Hardynge, a rich merchant, who had obtained the royal favour. This Hardynge was no vulgar soul; for, according to the veracious inscription still extant over the monastic gate-house, in College Green, he was the younger son or grandson of a king of Denmark. Others say he married a daughter of a king of Denmark. He bore for arms gules, a chevron argent; and his eldest son, by the Princess Lyvida the Dane, was Robert Fitzhardinge, first lord of Berkeley, by gift of Henry the Second. Robert of Gloucester, the old rhyming chronicler, says of the first Hardynge—

A burgess of Bristow, that Robert Hardynge,
For great treasure and riches so well was with the
king,
That he gave him and his heirs the noble barony,
That so rich is of Berkeley, with all the signory.

The monastery of St. Augustine, which Hardynge built, stood on pleasant, rising ground, and had a view of hills. The ancient refectory is now part of the prebend's house; the abbot's house has now given place to the bishop's; but the old cloisters and chapter-house still remain.

Robert Fitzhardinge, first lord of Berkeley, became canon of the new Augustine monastery, and was, in due time, buried by the prior's stall; and Eva, his wife, who survived him only a month, was laid in the same grave. The abbey took six years building, and its first six canons were all chosen from a monastery at Wigmore.

The good Lord Robert, and Dame Eva his wife, were not forgotten in the Bristol monastery. Twice every day general prayers were said for their souls; a special prayer was repeated for them and all other founders and benefactors at seven every morning, besides daily prayers in the Chapter House. On the anniversary of Lord Robert's death and on its eve there were special services, chanting, and bell-ringing, and, on the day itself, there was great almsgiving—one hundred poor men being cheered and refreshed with a canon's loaf and three herrings each, while two bushels of peas were distributed among the whole. Cakes, bread, and wine were also given to the abbot, prior, sub-prior, almoner, and secular servants, the only difference being that the abbot's cake was worth fourpence, and the prior's and sub-prior's only twopence. Every prisoner in Bristol gaol also received a loaf; every man sharing in the final general dole at the gate of the monastery received forty days' pardon, and half the same dole was given to the poor on the anniversary of the death of Dame Eva.

A descendant of Sir Robert—Thomas, third Lord Berkeley—was accused of conniving in the barbarous murder of Edward the Second at his own castle of Berkeley; but it is certain and proved that the old warrior of Poictiers had no hand in the crime, but lay sick at Berkeley, at the very time that Thomas de Gournay and William de Ogle carried out their savage purpose. Maurice, the father of Thomas, had died shortly before at Wallingford Castle as a prisoner of the king's. Perhaps the murderers had relied too confidently on the anger of Lord Thomas against the

enemy of his house. On the north side of the Elder Lady Chapel is an altar tomb, with the recumbent effigies of Maurice, Lord Berkeley, and either Margaret his mother or Elizabeth his wife.

Not far from this monument of the Fitzhardinges, is one erected to a very different person, Mrs. Elizabeth Draper, the Laura of Storke. She died in 1778, aged thirty-five, and the epitaph records her "genius and benevolence."

In the north aisle rests a well-known bustling man about Town of the last century, William Powell, one of the patentees of Covent Garden, and a bosom friend of George Colman, who wrote for him the following kindly epitaph:

Bristol! to worth and genius ever just,
To thee our Powell's dear remains we trust :
Soft as the streams thy sacred springs impart,
The milk of human kindness warmed his heart ;
That heart, which every tender feeling knew,
The soil where pity, love, and friendship grew.
Oh ! let a faithful friend, with grief sincere,
Inscribe his tomb, and drop the heart-felt tear ;
Here rest his praise, here found his noblest fame,
All else a bubble or an empty name.

In the same aisle sleeps Mary, the beloved wife of the poet Mason; a Yorkshire lady, who was stricken with consumption immediately after her marriage, which she survived only two years. She, like Powell of Covent Garden, seems to have come to Bristol to take the Clifton waters. A friend of Gray, Mason appears, from the greater poet's letters, to have been a good, amiable, careless man, with somewhat of Goldsmith's naïve vanity. When Mason complained to Colman of his adding stage paraphernalia to his severe and unsuccessful play, or rather dramatic poem, of "Elfrida," Colman threatened if Mason made any more fuss to add a chorus of Greek washer-women. Once, when riding into Oxford with a friend at dusk, Mason congratulated his friend that, it being dark, they should pass unnoticed through the town.

"What advantage is that," said his friend, carelessly.

"What advantage!" said Mason, in astonishment. "Do you not remember my 'Isis'?"—a satirical poem, written years ago, against the Oxford Jacobites. Yet this solemn butt of Churchill, Colman, and Lloyd, could write beautiful and tender verses, as the following epitaph upon his wife shows:—

Take, holy earth ! all that my soul holds dear,
Take that best gift, which Heaven so lately gave ;
To Bristol's fount I bore with trembling care
Her faded form ; she bowed to taste the wave

And dy'd. Does youth, does beauty read the line ?
Does sympathetic fear their breasts alarm ?
Speak, dead Maria ! breathe a strain divine ;
Ev'n from the grave thou shalt have power to
charm ;
Bid them be chaste, be innocent like thee ;
Bid them in duty's sphere as meekly move ;
And if so fair, from vanity as free ;
As firm in friendship, and as fond in love :
Tell them, though 'tis an awful thing to die
('Twas ev'n to the), yet the dread path once trod,
Heaven lifts its everlasting portals high,
And bids the pure in heart behold their God.

Near the communion rail is the altar tomb of Abbot Knowles. This abbot rebuilt the cathedral in the reign of Edward the First, and with the help of the Berkeleys, procured a confirmation of all the abbey lands. He lies on his back, with crozier in his hand and mitre on his breast, arms a white chevron and three roses of the first. At the upper end of the north aisle is the skeleton effigy of Bishop Paul Bush, and gaunt and ghastly it is. It lies on a low tomb eighteen inches from the ground, and six Ionic pillars support the flat freestone canopy. This man, whom verger's tradition falsely asserts to have been starved to death by the Roman Catholics, was chaplain to Henry the Eighth; he married, and alienated many of the manors of the bishopric. Henry the Eighth appointed him the first bishop of the newly created see of Bristol, and all went well with him, till Time's wheel went round and brought its revenge. Afraid of Queen Mary, on account of his marriage, he threw up his bishopric during the Marian murders, and stepped into the quiet rectory of Winterbourne, the year his wife died. In his retirement he wrote a treatise on salves and other remedies, and he now lies near his wife's grave. He built the present episcopal throne and the choir stalls. We fear Paul Bush was a trimmer, for a stone in the choir near his austere and penitential tomb is engraved "of your charity pray for the soul of Edith Bush, otherwise Ashley, who deceased 8 October, 1553."

In the south wall in the choir, below the black and white marble steps, lies the effigy of Abbot Newland or Nailheart, with his mitre on his head, and two obsequious angels at his reverend but dusty feet, supporting a shield on which is his rebns, a heart pierced with three nails. This dignitary, usually called "the good abbot," governed the order for thirty-four years. He was a learned man, often employed by Henry the Seventh in foreign embassies. He beautified and enlarged the cathedral, and wrote a history of the

Berkeley family, which is still extant in MS. for any enterprising publisher to speculate on. The next abbot, Elliot, helped to build the stately gate-house of the cathedral; and square bricks with his initials, R. E., are still to be found on the choir floor.

In the south aisle is the altar tomb, now walled up and without effigy, to Maurice Berkeley. At the other side of the vestry door is the tomb and effigy of Maurice, third Lord Berkeley, his arms on the shield worn on his left arm; and at the lower end of the same aisle is the cross-legged effigy of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, who, having offended King Henry the Third, was obliged, when old, to enter himself as a Knight Templar.

The only brass serving as a gravestone in the whole cathedral—according to Barrett, the worthy Bristol surgeon and local historian, on whom that clever young rascal Chatterton palmed so many sham documents—is on the ancient gravestone of Fitzhardinge, the founder of the cathedral. Close under the pulpit is a stone to the memory of a forgotten Bristol worthy, Robert Perry, master, in the reign of Charles the First, of the Bristol Blue-coat Hospital, founded by Queen Elizabeth. In a chapel lying quietly out of the south aisle, like the backwater of a mill-stream, is a sumptuous old grey marble tomb with two kneeling figures, but no brass or escutcheons. This was erected to Sir Richard Newton Craddock, a Justice of the Common Pleas in 1444, and was defaced during the reckless civil wars. On another nameless alabaster tomb, in the same prior's chapel, there are two coats of arms, one with twenty-four quarterings, and another with twelve.

At the lower end of the south aisle, on a pillar, is a black and white slab in memory of a brave but unfortunate man, Jacob Elton, captain of the Anglesca, forty-gun frigate, who was killed by the French in a naval engagement in 1745, his body thrown overboard, and his ship taken.

Bristol being the youngest born of English sees, has not many legends or traditions about its bishops. As to the abbots, the abbey seems to have done, like most abbeys, considerable good and considerable harm, with a tendency, towards the Reformation, to do less good and more harm daily. There were frequent complaints of these Bristol monks, we find, all through the middle ages. In 1278, Godfrey, Bishop of Worcester, in his visitation, found every-

thing, temporarily and spiritually, "Damabiliter prolapsam" ("Cursedly gone back"). He begged the monks not to buzz out of the choir as soon as service was ended, like vagrants and vagabonds doing mere mechanical service, but to devoutly wait, as became holy and settled persons, returning thanks to God. The bishop also required that silence should be better observed, and that monks should not leave the abbey without urgent necessity, and then only in twos, an elder and a younger, and by the abbot's own permission. No brother was to sell his leavings at meals, but to lay them up for alms. He devoted a special curse on all who should sham illness to avoid Divine worship, and on all friars who should meet in the infirmary to drink and surfeit. At meals the monks were expressly forbidden scandal; and the abbot's servants and clerks were forbidden henceforward to feast strangers in private rooms. The abbot's household was also greatly cut down, and he was commanded not to give splendid entertainments out of the house while the monastery lacked; and, lastly, as the accounts were ill-managed, the granary-keeper, the corn-seller, and the porter were summarily discharged.

Yet still the Augustines went on back-sliding. In the year 1320 another Bishop of Worcester, at his visitation, denounced many serious irregularities. The abbot's hounds were to be sent away. There was the almoner, Henry of Gloucester, to dismiss, and an incontinent friar, John of Shaftesbury, to reprove. The sick were not found well provided for; the brethren's money allowance was ill paid; the mass of the Holy Virgin was neglected; a certain periodical forty pence dole was kept back by the sub-prior; and, lastly, a brother too severely punished for pretended apostacy, was absolved of his penance of drinking only water on every Wednesday, and was allowed to drink beer and eat pulse, but was ordered to still abstain from eating fish.

In 1374 things went but little better. The Prior of Worcester, therefore, desired that five of the oldest canons should form a council to direct and check the expenses of the monastery. The best bedding of any dead brother was to be devoted to the use of the infirmary. The cook was to have no secular assistants—secular assistants making much mischief between the abbot and the convent. There were to be three keys to the abbey money-box, each key to be kept by

a different person; and, above all, the bread and beer were to be better in quality, and more plentiful in quantity.

And now for the bishops. Of Cheyne, the second bishop, Camden says he was addicted to Lutheranism, whilst Dr. Goodman declares he was a Papist, and was once suspended for Popery. The next, Bishop Bullingham, flew beyond sea to avoid Queen Mary's executioners. Richard Fletcher, his successor, Sir John Harrington, says, was a greedy rascal, who took the see on the secret and disgraceful condition that he should lease out its estates to the hungry courtiers of Elizabeth, which he did so zealously that he left little to his successors. This Fletcher was the time-server who vexed Mary Queen of Scots on the scaffold, and foolishly urged her to abandon her faith. Elizabeth's displeasure at last fell on him, for a fault she never forgave. He married Lady Burke, a handsome widow, and died at last of the immoderate use of tobacco, after fretting for a time in the shade of Whitehall and on the episcopal throne of London.

John Thornborough, a bishop appointed by James the First from Limerick, unwarmed by his predecessor's disgrace, also married, and also fell into disfavour at court. Robert Skinner, bishop during the civil wars, was a brave and true Royalist, who distinguished himself by being the only bishop who ventured to continue conferring orders, under the very eye of Cromwell. Thomas Westfield, another of the Commonwealth bishops, seems to have actually induced the Puritan Parliament to restore him the profits of the see which had been alienated. The stern committee, in the pass they gave him to go back to Bristol, described him "as a person of great learning and merit." Bishop King says he was born an orator, but so modest and diffident that he never ascended a pulpit without trembling; and on one occasion, when he had to preach before King Charles, he actually fainted. Westfield's successor, Thomas Howell, suffered worse than the rest. The Parliament men stripped the leaden roof off his palace, and turned out his wife, then in childbed, and his ten children, on a wet and stormy day. This exposure to the weather killed his wife, and the gentle and tender-hearted bishop died of a broken heart in less than a fortnight afterwards. He was buried at the entrance of the choir, under a plain stone, with no inscription but the one word—"Experior." The kindly city, in love of the

father's memory, educated the poor bishop's orphan children. John Lake, a bishop of Bristol in the reign of James the Second, was one of the immortal seven who refused to publish in their churches the king's Jesuitical liberty of conscience declaration. Then came one of the brave Cornish Trelawneys, the first man to welcome the Prince of Orange, and rejoice over the expulsion of the Stuarts. Then followed Gilbert Ironside, son of a former bishop of that name. John Robinson, a bishop of Bristol in Queen Anne's reign, was Lord Privy Seal, and first plenipotentiary at the treaty of Utrecht. His arms—"three golden bucks feeding"—are to be seen in the west window of the cathedral, and also a Runic inscription. George Smalridge, his successor, was Lord Almoner to Queen Anne. He repaired the bishop's palace, but is chiefly remarkable for his singular coat of arms, "a cross engrailed or, between four white bustards respecting each other." His successor, Hugh Boulter, was one of the favourite chaplains of George the First, and generally attended the king in his frequent tours to Hanover. His arms were also remarkable—"or, on a chevron, gules, three men's skulls of the field." Thomas Gooch, a later bishop (1734), was afterwards translated to the see of Ely, and died at Ely House, Holborn, in 1754. That excellent writer, Secker, was Bishop of Bristol, 1734-5; and in 1733 there came that great divine, Bishop Butler, "pius, simplex, candidus, liberalis," as his epitaph justly has it. This excellent man and brave defender of Christianity rebuilt the bishop's palace at his own expense, and actually expended more, during the twelve years he was bishop, than he obtained from the see. He made a new parish, and built a church at Kingswood for the colliers, who were, at that time, more than half-savages. He died in 1752, and was buried near Bishop Ironside, at the foot of the bishop's seat, in very good company, with Bishop Howell on his one side and Bishop Bradshaw on the other.

Bishop Combeare, appointed in 1750, was a learned divine; but in 1761, there came to the episcopal throne a true and worthy successor to Butler, and that was Bishop Newton, the writer of the celebrated Dissertations on the Prophecies, and a most amiable and worthy man. This good and honest prelate died without a groan, sinking down in his arm-chair at Bath, as he was taking out his watch to see the time.

Among the deans of Bristol, we need only mention the learned, crotchety, and pugnacious Warburton.

There is a curious story told, by-the-by, about the repairs of the palace by Bishop Butler, in 1744. A parcel of plate, falling through the floor in one of the rooms, led to the discovery of a dungeon, in which were found human bones and pieces of iron, supposed to be instruments of torture. There was a narrow, arched passage leading to this dungeon, and cut through the thickness of the wall.

It was at the bishop's palace that the great mob of savage Bristol rioters of 1832, eager to wreak their hatred of the Church on the innocent old cathedral, were bravely confronted by the old and respected verger, Phillips, who, by his unflinching courage, actually induced them to retire.

Yet, after all, in spite of sundry venerable and beautiful spots, Bristol cathedral is but a fragment reft from various spoilers. Henry the Eighth was, of course, as usual, the great destroyer. Everything that was not too hot or heavy his greedy hands carried off. The west and south sides of the cloister have long since been lopped away; and the lead roofing on the east and north has also flown. This was partly Puritan theft and desecration. The poor cathedral has been twice pillaged, since the great sack by the Defender of the Faith. The chapter-house has still, however, some fine Saxon work, with a good stone roof of low arches. The gate-house, near the deanery, is also excellent early Norman, though, of course, far later than the legendary sermon delivered by St. Augustine, or his disciple, Jordan, on College Green. In the niches over the arch, Abbot Nailheart has placed an effigy of the founder, with a model of the convent in one hand and the foundation charter in the other, and, next him, a statue of Henry the Second, another benefactor of the monastery. On the south side are the statuettes of the Abbots Newland and Elliott, who in their time repaired the church. There was formerly a large oriel window in this gate-house, and a side turret, to hold the staircase that led to the upper chambers. At the west side is a postern which, in the last century, was turned into the dean's coachhouse, and over it is a porter's lodge. Among the escutcheons that stood in this interesting relic are the arms of England, of the Earls of Pembroke, and of the Fitzhardinges. Above the altar, the Virgin and Child are still conspicuous; and, on

the north side, two unknown benefactors to the cathedral moulder on their endless watch. In 1641 the gate-house was sold by the audacious Puritans for eighteen pounds.

How the cathedral became so incomplete, no one can decide. The local tradition is, that the west end of the nave was pulled down to the tower and sold, before Henry the Eighth had determined to make the convent a cathedral and the throne of a bishop's see. But there is a doubt whether the cathedral was ever completed after the commencement to rebuild in 1311. There is now no part existing older than the reign of Edward the First, except portions of the chapter-house and the round, arched gate-house. The debased glass windows in the north and south aisles, tradition says, were the gift of Mistress Nell Gwynne. The letters T. W., twisted into a cypher, on the bishop's throne and elsewhere, do not stand for Wolsey's name, but for that of Thomas Wright, an ambitious receiver-general of the chapter in 1541, during the first episcopate.

JOHN BULL IN THE CHINA SHOP.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

OF all the crockery "crazes" that the present or any other century has produced, the most extraordinary is that affecting the "Henri Deux Ware," once styled "Faience de Diane de Poitiers," but now generally classed as "Faience d'Oiron." The manufacture of this remarkable ware preceded the struggles of Palissy by several years, and is remarkable as having been at once carried to a high degree of perfection, and then unaccountably lost. For a long time considerable mystery existed concerning the Henri Deux ware—with which, it is unnecessary to say, Henry of France had nothing to do whatever. At one period it was referred to Italy, and was supposed to have been brought thence by Catherine de' Medici or her relations, and to have been the work of Benvenuto Cellini, Girolamo della Robbia, and others. It was not till 1862 that M. Fillon commenced those researches which eventually traced the mysterious ware to the untilthen-unheard-of townlet of Oiron, near Thouars in Touraine. This little place became a lordship, because it pleased the Siens de Gouffier to establish themselves and build a chateau there. The lordship consists of a considerable plain, visited in winter by flocks of web-footed birds, whose habit it is to wheel in a circle before

alighting on the ground—hence the name of Oi-rond (goose-round) inscribed in the charter-house of the chateau. Here, about the year 1529, the manufacture of fine pottery was commenced by the direction of Hélène de Hangest, the widow of Artus Gouffier, Sieur de Boisy, and Governor of Francis the First when Duke of Valois. Dame Hélène had succeeded in securing the services of a potter named Charpentier; and it would seem that, aided also by the artistic taste of her librarian, Jehan Bernart, this gifted lady anticipated by a couple of hundred years the employment of fine pipeclay in England. After the death of Madame de Boisy, the manufacture was carried on by her son Charles, until the chateau was harried during the civil wars in 1568. The distinguishing characteristic of Henri Deux ware is, in the first place, the body, which is very light and delicate and of a pure white pipeclay, of so fine a texture that it did not require, like the ordinary Italian faenza, any coating of opaque coloured glass or enamel, but merely a thin transparent varnish. Great care was required in its manufacture. It is supposed, although some good authorities dissent from this theory, that the foundation was first moulded by hand (not turned in a lathe), quite plain and without the least relief, the surface hatched with cross lines, and a thin outer coating or "engobe" of the same clay applied. The ornaments were then engraved in the same manner as the "champ levé" enamels, and coloured pastes introduced into the hollows left by the graver. The surface was now made smooth, and the object baked and varnished. This work then was clearly incrustation rather than painting. The style of decoration is unique—a smooth surface of the finest inlaying resembling the niello or damascening of steel work. Initial letters, interlacings, and arabesques on the smooth surface are enriched with raised ornaments in bold relief, consisting of masks, escutcheons, shells, &c. The immense value of Henry Doux ware is due, not only to the peculiar character of its fabric and its artistic merit, but, in some measure also, to its excessive rarity. Only fifty-four well-authenticated specimens are described by Mr. Chaffers. Of these twenty-eight pieces are in France, twenty-five in England, and one in Russia. Many of these ceramic treasures bear witness to their first owners in the salamander of Francis the First, the

monogram of Henry the Second, and the monogram and arms of Anne de Montmorency.

Up till the middle of the last century, the porcelain made at St. Cloud and Sèvres was of the kind designated *pâte tendre* or soft porcelain, differing much from the hard porcelain of the Chinese, which had long been imitated in Saxony with perfect success. In 1761 the second son of Paul Hanüng, founder of the Frankenthal manufactory, sold the secret of the process to M. Boileau, director of the Sèvres manufactory. Want of Kao-lin, however, prevented the success of the new fabric, until 1765, when, in the Limousin, not only was the Kaolin discovered, but the pure white felspar (petuntse) indispensable in the manufacture of true porcelain. Madame Darnet, the wife of a poor surgeon at St. Yrieix, having remarked in a ravine near the town a white unctuous earth, which she thought might be used as a substitute for soap in washing, showed it with that object to her husband, who carried it to a chemist at Bordeaux, who, having heard of the quest for porcelain earth, forwarded the specimen to the chemist Macquer, who recognised it immediately as Kao-lin. Madame Darnet, like many other benefactors of her race, made nothing by her discovery; and in 1825, old and in utter misery, applied to M. Brongniart, director of the manufactory of Sèvres, for the means of returning on foot to St. Yrieix, when the poor woman was granted a pension.

After this discovery, both hard and soft porcelain continued to be made at Sèvres until 1804. The *pâte tendre* was remarkable for its creamy and pearly softness of colour, the beauty of its painting, and its depth of glaze; and, for some time, the artists experienced great difficulty in managing their colours, so as to obtain the same effect upon a more compact and less absorbent material. Strangely enough, the manufactory of Sèvres, an intensely royal institution, not only escaped ruin under the revolution, but was warmly supported by the Directory, who appointed three commissioners to rule it, until, in 1800, the first consul appointed the celebrated M. Brongniart sole director. Under the management of this great master of the ceramic art were produced the superb presents of Sèvres porcelain, which Napoleon was fond of bestowing on his relatives. On one occasion he sent a vase, worth twelve thousand pounds, to the King of

Etruria. It was found necessary to fix up the vase in the king's grand saloon; and for this purpose twelve workmen were employed. When they had completed the job, one of the chamberlains asked the king what he should give them? "Nothing at all," replied his majesty, "it is a present sent me by the first consul." "Yes, sire; but it is usual to give something to those who bring a present." "That is purchasing and not accepting. However, since it is the custom in France, I must conform to it; and, besides, a king ought to encourage the fine arts. Let them have five shillings a-piece!"

Sèvres porcelain for domestic use had generally a plain ground, painted with flowers either detached or in wreaths; but the pieces intended for state occasions were designed with great care, both as to form and colour.

The hues peculiar to the best period of Sèvres were gros-blen, a dark, heavy Oxford blue; bleu de roi, a little brighter, but still a deep, rich colour; turquoise blue; violet; a beautiful yellow, called jonquille; various greens (vert pomme, or vert jaune, vert pré, or vert Anglais); rouge de fer; and the lovely rose pink, incorrectly called Rose Dubarry in this country. It is known in France as Rose Pompadour. Pink was the favourite colour of Madame de Pompadour, during whose time the finest specimens of rose-grounded porcelain were produced. Between 1757 and 1764, very skilful artists, among whom was the celebrated Boucher, were employed in painting the highest-class porcelain.

Although destitute of the artistic sense of her predecessor, Madame Dubarry was yet very fond of porcelain, and spent large sums on choice pieces to present to her friends. She writes: "I presented her (Madame de Mirepoix) with a complete service of Sèvres porcelain, with a breakfast set in landscape, blue and gold. I moreover gave her two blue porcelain cats, as fine as those on the mantelpiece in my little drawing-room. They had cost me two thousand eight hundred francs." These famous cats formed part of the bribe paid to Madame de Mirepoix for presenting Madame Dubarry at court. They were of old turquoise céladon, with head draperies of ormolu, bearing candelabras of the same, for four lights each, upon their backs. The ears were pierced, and diamonds to the value of one hundred and fifty thousand francs suspended from them.

Various marks have been used from

time to time at the, by turns, Royal, Republican, and Imperial manufactory at Sèvres. From 1753 to 1792, the glorious period of pâte tendre, the mark consisted of two blue interlaced italic L's, containing within them one or two letters of the alphabet which indicate the date. Thus A is the first year, B the second, Q, or the comet, 1769, and Z expresses 1777, the last of the first series. After this date the letters were doubled: thus, AA signifies 1778, and RR closes the series in 1795. During the Republic the mark was made in blue, green, or red, and the practice of dating the ware fell into disuse. From 1793 to about 1798 or 1800 the Republican monogram RF was placed above the word Sèvres; but between 1800 and 1803 the RF was omitted and the word Sèvres employed alone. The Consular period is indicated by M. Nle. (Manufacture Nationale) above the word Sèvres generally stencilled in red. From 1804 to 1809, during the first Imperial period, the mark was simply M. Imp. de Sèvres, also stencilled in red; but from 1809 to 1814 the Imperial Eagle, painted in red, was introduced, around which were the words at full length, "Manufacture Imperiale," and "SÈVRES" in capitals. When the Bourbons returned, the ancient mark of the two interlaced L's was revived and printed in blue. Inside the letters are a fleur-de-lys, the word Sèvres in capitals, and the last two figures of the year AD, for example, twenty-one for 1821. Under Charles the Tenth various marks were used—interlaced C's with crown or fleur-de-lys, sometimes with the words "DECORÉ À SÈVRES" in capitals. At the end of the year 1830, just after the revolution of July, the C's and crowns fade out, and there remains but a fleur-de-lys over the word Sèvres and the numerals 30.

Under Louis Philippe the interlaced triangles with Sèvres and the date in a medallion, were used for three years; but in 1834 the initials of the king, interlaced under a crown with Sèvres and the date in a medallion, were employed. Stern simplicity came in with the Republic of 1848, and Sèvres went back to RF. S 51 in a medallion, a mark improved under the empire first into an Eagle with S on one side, and 52, or whatever the date might be, on the other, and then into the hideous great N topped by an imperial crown and supported by S and the date.

In addition to the marks of the manufactory the artists themselves often signed

their work, but the catalogue of painters on pâte tendre would prove too long for our present purpose.

Long before the hard paste was introduced at Sèvres, it had, thanks to the hair powder discovery previously referred to, been made at Meissen, in Saxony, under the patronage of Augustus the Second, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. So early as 1715, Böttcher succeeded in making a singularly fine and perfect white porcelain. Early attempts to paint upon this white body were very imperfect, and were confined to a blue colour, under the glaze, or imitations of Oriental china. Under Höroldt's direction, in 1720, a higher style of painting, accompanied by gilding, and medallions of Chinese figures and flowers, was introduced, and some very good work was produced. In 1731, Kändler, a sculptor by profession, superintended the modelling, and continued till 1763. During his direction the masterpieces of Dresden china were produced. He introduced those wreaths and bouquets of flowers, in relief, for which Dresden, of the best period, is particularly remarkable; and modelled animals and groups of figures with great success. Exquisitely beautiful paintings were also executed by Lindener. Many of these are copies in miniature of the best pictures of the Flemish School, and others are exquisitely executed birds, flowers, and insects. The Porcelain figures, clock cases, and snuff boxes, made at Dresden, are highly prized, as are also the modelled flowers and butterflies, and the "Lace" figures. The "Honeycomb" and "Mayflower" vases, the first of which was copied from a fine Oriental vase in the Japan Palace at Dresden, were also greatly admired and extensively copied at Chelsea. The first mark used at Dresden appears to have been a monogram of "AR," signifying Augustus Rex. This was used till 1712, when the caduceus came into vogue—lasting till 1729, after which date the well-known crossed swords—the arms of the Elector as Arch Marshal of the empire—were employed as a mark, in blue, under the glaze. On pieces of the time of Augustus III., from 1733 to 1763, the palmy time of Meissen, are found the letters "K.P.M." sometimes alone and sometimes surmounting the crossed swords.

Another famous porcelain is that made at the works at Capo di Monte, founded in 1736 by Charles III., King of Naples. It is claimed as an outcome of native genius, but

was more probably simply introduced from Meissen by Queen Amelia of Saxony, consort of Charles III. Be this as it may, Capo di Monte has a distinctive style of its own, differing widely from either Sèvres or Dresden. Its character is peculiar. Shells and coral, the sea fruit of the Mediterranean, are moulded in high relief, and adorned with finely modelled figures. For thinness and transparency the paste equals Oriental eggshell, and the beautiful forms of the Capo di Monte ware are charming in their infinite variety. This curious porcelain is now very rare, but reproductions in coarser and more opaque paste are scattered broadcast over Europe. The early mark is a very badly and clumsily formed fleur de lys, roughly painted in blue. The second and better period is indicated by a crown over an "n" or "N" in red or blue. In the hard paste period the Capo di Monte ware bears the crown, and a monogram of "RF" for Rex Ferdinandus.

England was far from keeping pace with continental countries in the production of pottery; indeed, a coarse kind of pottery covered with a lead glaze, often of a dark dull green colour, appears to have supplied the wants of our ancestors down to a comparatively recent period. Red, brown, and mottled ware was also made in large quantities, in the district of Staffordshire known as the Potteries, and sold by pedlars all over the country. The manufacture of butter-pots was important enough to induce special legislation, and in 1661 the potters of Burslem were compelled by Act of Parliament to make their pots of such a size as to hold fourteen pounds of butter, and so hard as not to imbibe moisture, by which the butter might appear of greater weight than was actually sold. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the salt glaze was introduced, and quickly superseded that produced by sulphide of lead. The new glaze was said to have been discovered by accident; but, as it had long been in use in Germany, it was more probably imported than invented. In 1688 the two brothers Elers accompanied the Prince of Orange to England, and, having settled in Staffordshire, made a fine red ware by using the soft red iron ore or haematite of Lancashire, and also produced a fine black body—said to have been the precursor of Wedgwood's famous Egyptian ware—from a mixture of clay and ironstone. Great secrecy was preserved in every detail of manufacture. It was said that an idiot was employed to

turn the throwers' wheel, and that it was by feigning idiocy, and thus obtaining employment, that Mr. Astbury learned their secrets and began to make red ware on his own account. Disgusted at competition, the Elers discontinued their works and removed to London.

Astbury next produced a white stone ware, and various improvements were made up to the time of Josiah Wedgwood, who produced the Queen's ware and the famous Egyptian and Jasper wares. The exquisite cameos, vases, and medallions made by Wedgwood are too well known to need any particular description in this place. Most of his work is marked with his name in full, or thus, "Wedgwood and Bentley," sometimes followed by "Etruria."

While the manufacture of pottery was being carried to perfection in Staffordshire, London made great advances in porcelain. A species of transparent earthenware had been discovered as early as 1671 by John Dwight of Oxford, who set up manufactories at Fulham, which remained in operation till the middle of the last century. Specimens of early Fulham ware are scarce, and not unfrequently of doubtful authenticity. About 1730 the celebrated works at Stratford-le-Bow were established, and in 1744 a sample of china clay was brought to this country from America. It was introduced at Bow, and a patent was taken out for producing a porcelain from an "earth, the produce of the Cherokee nation in America, called by the natives 'unaker'." Mixed with other ingredients, this "unaker," a more or less pure kind of Kao-lin, produced the now eagerly sought for "Bow china." The manufactory was called New Canton, and after making much pure white porcelain, turned out the highly-prized "Bee" jugs, so called on account of a bee being embossed or painted either on the handle or under the spout. The peculiar position of the bee exposed him to great risk of being broken off, and a perfect specimen is therefore esteemed a peculiar treasure. Doubt has recently been thrown upon the authenticity of the Bee jugs as Bow china—specimens having been found with the word Chelsca and the triangle mark upon them. Figures as well as tea-sets are said to have been made at Bow, and these in many cases represented living persons: Quin as Falstaff; Garrick as Richard; Frederic, Duke of Cumberland, striding triumphantly over the Pretender; John Wilkes, &c.; but these statuettes in

puro white china are attributed by other authorities to Chelsea. An O impaled by an arrow is supposed on good authority to have been the Bow mark; but so much confusion exists between Bow and Early Chelsea ware, that the subject is over brittle and slippery withhold to dogmatise upon.

The famous Chelsea works are said to have been founded by Francis, first Earl and Marquis of Herford, who brought over workmen from Dresden with some of the Saxon clay, and set them up at Chelsea in the place since called Cheyne Walk. It would appear, however, that the manufactory was in full operation at least as early as 1745, and it is probable that it was originally started in 1730 by the Elers on their retreat from Staffordshire. In the "forty-five" the Chelsea work had undoubtedly attained great perfection, as a company, which, at that time, desired the exclusive privilege of establishing a porcelain manufactory at Vincennes (afterwards that of Sévres) urged the necessity of competing with the "new establishment just formed in England of a manufacture of porcelain, which appears more beautiful than that of Saxony by the nature of its composition, and which would occasion considerable sums going out of the country, unless they succeeded in producing in the kingdom what would have been sought at great cost abroad." The best Chelsea ware was produced between 1750 and 1765, "Butcher Cumberland," being the patron of the establishment. His death and the retirement of Spremont, added to the hostility of other manufacturers, caused the Chelsea works to be broken up. In 1769 the works were purchased by Duesbury, of Derby, who carried on the two manufactures simultaneously until 1784, when Chelsea was finally abandoned, and the workmen and models transferred to Derby.

The early forms of "old Chelsea" are very much after the style of the French porcelain of that period, but the later productions are after the best German models—the vases, dishes, figures, flowers, and branches being considered by learned chinamanies equal in execution to Dresden. A coating of vitreous glaze of unusual thickness covers the Chelsea ware, and is remarkable for its inequalities. In some cases it would seem that a mass of glaze had been applied, and the cup spun around to throw off what was superfluous. To some such method appears referable the presence of the "Chelsea spiral," well-

known to connoisseurs. The colours are very fine and bright. The "bleu de roi," apple green, and turquoise, nearly approach the best specimens of Sévres, and the famous claret colour is a hue peculiar to Chelsea. There is another special quality in Chelsea-ware. It will not, like the pâte tendre of Sévres, bear any fresh exposure to the heat of the furnace without splitting and cracking, so that it cannot be repainted and doctored like its French rival.

In the early days of Chelsea, painting on porcelain seems to have been an unremunerative art. We are told that Francis Paul Ferg, a German, whose prints are in request, left Vienna in 1718, went to Dresden, and passed thence over to England, where he painted porcelain admirably with subjects resembling those of Bergem and Wouvermans; but falling into poverty, was at last found dead at the door of his lodgings, exhausted by cold, want, and misery. Nollekens's father worked for Chelsea to better purpose, and Sir James Thornhill designed to design for the same establishment, while the finest landscapes were by the pencil of Beaumont. Birds and insects, which are represented in great perfection, were generally designed by foreign artists.

Chelsea china has, like Sévres, always been costly. Horace Walpole's pair of cups of "claret ground, enriched with figures in gold," were sold for twenty-five guineas to Mr. Beckford. More recently, at the Angerstein, Bernal, and Cadogan sales, old Chelsea fetched extravagant prices—the vases ranging from one hundred to two hundred and fifty guineas, and plates fetching ten pounds a piece. At the sale of the Marryat collection startling prices were obtained; a butter-boat sold for eighteen pounds ten shillings, a chocolate cup and saucer for fifty guineas, and a coffee-cup and saucer, "bleu de roi, with fruits and birds," for twenty-four pounds ten shillings.

With the exception of the disputed Bow triangle, there is no doubt or confusion about the Chelsea marks. The earliest is an embossed oval, on which is an anchor in relief, without colour. An upright cross, with the anchor, is also an early mark. Subsequently, the anchor alone was used, painted in gold or in red, and later again in red or in purple, according to the quality of the specimen.

The finest specimens are marked with the golden anchor. Three dirty spots, without glazing, are found at the bottom

of each piece, caused by the clumsy tripod on which it was placed in the furnace.

For nearly twenty years preceding the purchase of the Chelsea works and their transfer to Derby, the manufacture of porcelain had been vigorously pursued at the latter place by Mr. Duesbury, who had succeeded in bringing the "gold and blue" to great perfection. Dr. Johnson, who, among other curious fancies, thought that he could improve the manufacture of porcelain, after pestering the Chelsea people with absurd suggestions, which they appear to have endured with extraordinary patience, went down to Derby, and remarked that "the china was beautiful, but it was too dear, for that he could have vessels of silver of the same size as cheap as what was made here of porcelain"—an observation which almost justifies John Stuart Mill's contemptuous estimate of the overrated doctor.

Duesbury, by the purchase of the Chelsea and Bow works, had become by far the greatest manufacturer in the kingdom; and ultimately abandoning the London works altogether, as we have already seen, made porcelain only at Derby, and leased premises (late the Castle Tavern) in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, for the exhibition of his wares. He carried on an exceedingly fashionable and lucrative trade, and the Derby works, under his management and that of his son, were the most successful and best conducted establishment of the kind in the kingdom. Duesbury the younger dying in 1798, the business fell into the hands of Mr. Reeve, who married his widow. In 1815 a Mr. Robert Bloor purchased the business, and departed from the traditions of the Duesburys. It had been their constant plan, in order to keep up the high character of their works, to allow none but perfect goods to leave the premises. When Bloor took the business, he found that the stock of seconds goods had increased to an enormous extent, and, having to pay the purchase-money by instalments, he found the shortest way of doing so was to finish up these goods, take them to different large towns, and there sell them by auction. This policy destroyed the character of the ware, the works rapidly declined, and were closed in 1848, when the workmen mostly emigrated to Worcester.

Derby porcelain is remarkable for its transparency, and is characterised by a beautiful bright blue, usually introduced on the border or edge of the tea-services.

The finished porcelain figures made at this manufactory are not equal to those of Chelsea; but white biscuit groups of pastoral figures were produced, rivalling those of Sévres. The secret of making the Derby Biscuit appears to have been lost; but the modern "Parian" has sprung from it, and was produced by a Derby man, the late Mr. Battam. Among the painters employed were Bowman (q.v. Beaumont) of Chelsea, and then of Derby, Hill, Brewer, and the celebrated but erratic Billingsley. Printing on china was introduced at Derby about 1764, but the process found little favour with the Duesburys, who preferred hand-work in all their goods.

The earliest Derby mark is a simple italic *D*. After the junction with Chelsea, the *D* was crossed by the Chelsea anchor, running into it from left to right. After the first order given by George the Third, the crown Derby mark was adopted. This consisted of a crown above a St. Andrew's Cross, with three dots in each side angle, below which is the capital *D*. This mark was used from 1780 to 1830. Sometimes, but rarely, the cross is omitted, and only the crown and letter used. These marks are usually in red, but occasionally in blue.

Hard porcelain was first made in England by William Cookworthy. Having discovered the china clay and china stone in Cornwall, he, in conjunction with Lord Camelford, established, in 1738, at Coxsidge, Plymouth, works for making porcelain according to his patent. For the decoration of his work Cookworthy engaged a Sévres artist, one Monsieur Sequi; and the celebrated Henry Bone, the enameller, is said to have been an apprentice at Plymouth. Blue and white porcelain was produced in large quantities till 1774, when the patent rights were assigned to Mr. Richard Champion, a merchant of Bristol, and the works were removed thither. Excessively interesting, as the first English make of hard porcelain, specimens of undoubted Plymouth have become extremely rare. When a mark was used it was the alchemic symbol for tin (Jupiter), a roughly drawn number 4 with a curl at the top of the first down-stroke.

After establishing his works at Bristol, Champion succeeded—despite the opposition of Josiah Wedgwood and other Staffordshire makers—in obtaining an extension of Cookworthy's patent; but before long, sold his rights to a company of potters in Staffordshire, where the

manufacture was carried on for a while under his superintendence. Old Bristol porcelain is more curious than beautiful, but is yet highly esteemed by many collectors. The mark is a simple cross in blue or slate-colour.

Concurrently with the general advancement of china manufacture in England, works were established at Worcester by a company, who carried on their operations in a fine old mansion called Warmstry House, once the residence of the Windsor family and the Earls of Plymouth. After a while the company was bought out by Flight and Barr; the two brothers, Robert and Humphrey Chamberlain, commencing business on their own account—a business successfully carried on till 1840, when, after a long period of rivalry, the two establishments coalesced. Under the auspices of Dr. Wall the process of transferring printed engravings to a glazed surface was adopted, and this art was applied to the decoration of early Worcester porcelain. Some of these are the delicate productions of Robert Hancock, whilome employed at the Battersea enamel works, where transfer printing is said to have been introduced. Proceeding from imitations of oriental porcelain, the Worcester works gradually advanced to the production of magnificent cups, dishes, and vases in the richest style of ceramic art. In the early time a curious chequermark was used, an evident imitation of a Japanese mark. Later on, the crescent was adopted; and, finally, the name or monogram of the firm was invariably employed.

On the estate of Charles, Marquis of Rockingham, near Rotherham in Yorkshire, were established the famous Rockingham Works, at which were produced some of the finest specimens of porcelain made in this country. Gilding was profusely employed, and the richest colours were skilfully managed. The works were during the best period in the hands of the Braund family, and are mostly marked with their name, with or without the addition of "Rockingham."

In presenting this slight sketch of the history and marks of the most important ceramic centres of Europe, we have endeavoured less to protect the readers of *ALL THE YEAR ROUND* from imposition, than to indicate the salient features of the great schools. To confirmed chinamaniacs we can teach nothing—they are too far gone for counsel or remonstrance; but to those about to undertake a difficult and brittle

path, it may be well to indicate that crockery, like many other things, requires an education, which can be best obtained by studying—for Majolica, the South Kensington Museum; for Sèvres, the superb collection liberally lent to the branch establishment at Bethnal Green by Sir Richard Wallace; and for a course of English pottery and porcelain, the admirably arranged series at the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, collected by the late Sir Henry de la Beche, Mr. Trenham Reeks, and Mr. F. W. Rudler, whose catalogue is an admirable introduction to the study of ceramics. In the British Museum may be found a splendid series of the pottery of all countries—Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Oriental, Mexican, Peruvian, and European. These collections should be carefully studied by the world-be ceramic critic by day, while his nights should be consumed in poring over the delightful works of Marryat, Chaffers, Drury Fortnum, and Jacqncmart, the latter of whom has been ably done into English by Mrs. Bury Palliser.

THE VOYAGE OF A WATER POET.

JOHN TAYLOR, the Water Poet, had a special aptitude for the concoction of queer titles for his poems and essays. Nothing was too quaint or out of the way for him; and he carried his quaintness into the language of the poems and essays themselves. A little discontented, very satirical and ironical, he had, nevertheless, much soundness of heart about him, and gave praise with right good will where he thought praise was deserved. One of his characteristic productions is a poem called *A Water Poet's Very Merry Wherry Ferry Voyage*; more exactly, *A Very Merrie Wherrie Ferry Voyage: or York for my Money*. There is no question that the voyage took place in one of the closing years of the reign of James the First; and the narrative is really full of instruction on matters relating to topography, seafaring life, and the habits and usages of those days.

The sauciness of his dedication gives a key-note to the whole poem: "As much happiness as may be wished attend the two hopefull Impes of Gentility, Mr. Richard and George Hatton:—

You forward payre, in towardly designes,
To you I send these sows'd salt-water lines;
Accept, reade, laugh, and turn to 't againe,
And still my Muse and I shall yours remaiue.
JOHN TAYLOR."

Then comes the prologue :—

I now intend a voyage here to write
From London unto Yorke ; helpe to indite,
Great Neptune, lend thy ayde to me who past
Through thy tempestuous waves with many a blast ;
And then I'll true describe the Townes and Men
And manners as I went and came agen.

The mode of giving the exact date of the commencement of his expedition is notably minute and elaborate :—

The yeare which I doe call as others doe
Full 1600, adding twenty-two ;
The month of July, that's for ever fam'd
(Because 'twas so by Julius Caesar nam'd),
Jnst when six dayes, and to each daye a night,
The dogged dog-days had began to bite ;
On that day which both blest remembrance bring,
The name of our Apostle and our King ;
On that remarkable good day, Saint James,
I undertooke my voyage downe the Thameſes.

Although he calls his craft a wherry, it is evident that it must have had sailing powers of some sort; still, it was an open boat, without deck or cabin, and propelled chiefly by oars. He tells us that it was four years old; and that he supplied it with sails, anchor, cable, sculls, oars, compass, charts, lauthorn, tinder-box, matches, bread, meat, beer, and wine. In short, his picture was a very cheery one :—

Wel man'd, wel ſhip'd, wel viuctual'd, wel appoynted,
Wel in good health, wel timber'd, and wel joynted.

They pulled down to Gravesend, where they passed the night. It was too prosy for him to say that he started next morning with an ebb-tide; and, therefore, he stated the fact more fancifully, thus :—

Old Neptune had his daughter Thames ſupplide
With ample measure of a flowing tide ;
But Thames ſuppoſed it was but borrowed goods,
And with her Ebbe paid Neptune back his Floods.

They anchored at low water near Leigh, and went past Shoebury, Wakering, Foulness, and Tittingham, towards the Naze, where the wind freshened, and "a ſtiffe Eolus with Neptune went to cufes, with huffes and puffes, and angry counter-buffes; toſt like a cockle upon the mounting maine, up with a whiffe and straightway down again." They arrived about sunset at Harwich, where they passed the night. Taylor appears to have been more impressed with the loquaciousness of his landlady than with anything else in that town :—

There did I finde an Hostesse with a Tongue
As nimble as it had on ginnols hung ;
'Twill never tyre, though continual toyld,
And muſt as yare as if it had been oyld' ;
All's one for that, for ought which I perceive,
It is a fault which all our mothers have,
And is ſo firmly graffed in the ſex
That he's an Asse that ſcenes therat to vex.

Re-embarking next morning, the Water

Poet and his men pulled and sailed past Bardsey Haven, Orford Ness, Aldborough, and Lowestoft to Yarmouth—a tolerably good day's work. Helodged that night with one William Richardson, heard a learned sermon in the church on Sunday, and kept clear of questionable company: "acquaintance in the town I scarce had any, and sought for none, lest I should find too many." He has a good word to say for Yarmouth itself, which he describes as :—

A Towne well fortifieſe,
Well govern'd, with all Nature's wants ſupplide ;
The ſituation in a wholesome ayre,
The buildings (for the moſt part) ſumptuous faire,
The people content and industrious, and
With labour makes the ſea enrich the land.

Starting from Yarmouth on Monday morning, they passed by Caistor Castle, and encountered a ſtiff breeze on nearing the northern part of the Norfolk coast. The nature of an ead wind on ſuch a coast is well told :—

Thus on a lee shore darknesse 'gan to come,
The ſea grew high, the winds 'gan hisſe and hum,
The foaming curly waves the ſhore did beate,
As if the ocean wou'd all Norfolk eat.

With great difficulty they pulled ashore at Cromer, and there an unexpected adventure befel them. Those were days when pirates and rovers took great liberties with seaside towns, in many parts of the world; and although England was not much ſubjeſt to ſuch visitations, the quiet Cromer folk did not know what to make of the ſtrangers. The women and children ran up into the town, crying out that doubtful men had landed :—

Some ſayd that we were Pyrates, ſome ſayd Thieves,
And what the women ſay, the men believeſ.

Down came the conſtables, ſome watching Taylor, ſome his men, ſome the boat. When examined, he told a plain tale, and showed the contents of his trunk. But, no; a foregone conclusion blinded them to clear evidence :—

Had the twelve Apostles ſure been there
My wiſneſſes, I had been ne'er the neere ;
And let me uſe all oathes that I could uſe,
They ſtill were harder of beliefe than Jewes.

Rumour brought many country people to Cromer; and the house where he lodged for the night was beset with ſight-seers, eager to ſee the ſtrange man.—

Had mine Host took pence a piece of those
Who came to gaze on me, I doe ſuppoſe
No Jack-an-Apes, Baboone, or Crocodile
E'er got more Money in ſo ſmall a while.
Besides, the Peſants did this one thing more,
They call'd and draukē four ſhillings to my ſcore ;
And like unmannerd Mongrells, weut their way,
Not ſpending ought, but leaving me to pay.

Meanwhile, a number of rough fellows seriously injured the boat. He expostulated on the absurdity of suspecting five unarmed men, in an open boat, with no weapon of offence or defence, save an old sword ("so rusty with salt-water, that it had need of a quarter's notice to come out") and two tobacco pipes. He anxiously attempted to depart in the morning; but then learned that a messenger had been sent to Norwich during the night, to acquaint the magistrates with the doings of the mysterious strangers. Sir Austin Palgrave and Mr. Robert Kempe went over to Cromer in the morning. Having a fair share of good sense and of gentlemanly feeling, they soon gave credence to the declaration that the leader of the boat party was John Taylor, the Water Poet, whose previous writings were, in some degree, familiar to them. They made the amende honorable, treated Taylor and his men kindly, caused the boat to be repaired, and gave them a store of corn, rice, and sugar. Taylor, though often sarcastic, bore no malice; he gave a parting fling at the scared constables, who

Were born when Wit was out of Towne,
And therefore got but little of their owne,

and expressed a few really kind thoughts for Cromer itself:—

It is an ancient Market Town that stands
Upon a lofty Cliffe of moldering Sands;
The Sea against the Cliffe doth daily beate,
And every Tyde into the land doth este.

The parish church was in peril, and the townsmen were too poor to provide for its safety:—

If the sea shall swallow't, as some feare,
'Tis not ten thousand pounds the like could reare;
No Christian can behold it but with grief,
And with my heart I wish them quicke reliefe.

Pulling away from Cromer, they got to Blakeney, passed one night there, and coasted along by Wells to the Wash, where they encountered the singular inrush of tide called the eage or aigre—very intelligently described by Taylor. They arrived at Boston, in Lincolnshire, on the further side of the Wash, and passed a night there. Next day he was informed that inland water communication existed all the way from Boston to York, by some of the Lincolnshire dykes or cuts, and the rivers Trent, Humber, and Ouse. Willing to take leave of the sea for awhile, he adopted this inland route. He well describes the Forcedyke, an eight-mile straight cut into the Trent, with little in it but mud and reeds; his men waded for

nine hours through this wretched stuff, pulling the boat after them; and they reached the Trent near Gainsborough, "moy'l'd, toy'l'd, myr'd, and tyr'd." Well needing their night's rest at that town, they pushed on again next day down the Trent into the Humber, and landed at Kingston-upon-Hull. Speaking of that busy and flourishing town, which in those days was well fortified, he describes the water-supply, which seems to have been far more complete than that of London in those times:—

Some ten years since, fresh water there was scant,
But with muche cost they have supplied that want,
By a most ex' lent Water Worke that's made,
And to the Towne in Pipes it is coueï'd,
Wrought with great Artificial Engines, and
Perform'd by th' art of the Industrious hand
Of Mr. William Manlthy, Gentleman;
So that each man of note there alwayes can
But turn a Cocke within his House, and still
They have fresh water alwayes at their will.
This have they all unto their great content,
For which they each doe paye a weeklie rent.

A house-to-house supply, paid for by a water rate, is very much like a prime feature in modern civilisation. Nor is this the only point mentioned in regard to the good management of Hull; the sick, the poor, the helpless, the idle were well looked after:—

The Towne's Charity doth much appeare;
They for the Poore have so provided there,
That if a Man shoule walke from Morn till Night,
He shall not see a Beggar, nor a Mite
Nor anything shall be demanded ever,
But every one thus doth his best endeavor
To make the Idle worke, sude to relieve
Those that are old and past, or Sickness grieve;
All poore Men's Children have a Housse most fit
Wherein they Sowe, and Spin, and Card and Knit;
Where all of them have something still to do,
As their Capacities will reach unto;
So that no Idle Person, Old or Young,
Within the Towne doth harbour or belonge.

The vicious and the incorrigibly lazy were not allowed to roam at large:—

They have a Bridewell, and an ex' lent skill
To make some people worke against their wille;
And these they have their lodgng and their meat,
Clean Whips, and everything exceeding neat;
And thus with fayre or foul measures always, they
Give Idle Persons little time to play.

Taylor was very kindly and hospitably treated, and expresses his thanks right heartily:—

Thanks, Mr. Maire, for the Bacen Gammon;
Thanks, Roger Parker, for the small fresh Sammon.
'Twas ex' lent good, and more the truth to tell ye,
Boil'd with a fine Plum Padding in the Belly.

Do our gastronomists and culinary artists know anything of this—a plum pudding boiled inside a salmon? To us it comes as a novelty—especially as the boiling of the one is usually measured by hours, that of the other by minutes.

Taking leave of the good old town of Kingston-upon-Hull, the Water Poet and his men rowed up the Humber, and entered the mouth of the Ouse. When they reached Cawood, they landed, in order to pay their respects to the Archbishop of York, of whom Taylor speaks in terms of deep reverence, as—

That watchful Shepheard, that with care doth keepe
Th' infernall Wolfe from Heaven's supernall sheepe ;
The painfull Preacher, that most free alms-giver,
That though he live long, is too short a liver.

The Water Poet dined at his Grace's table, while, as to his companions, "the Crue i' th' Hall were filled with cheare." He thought it would be a suitable compliment to present his little craft, at the termination of her eventful voyage, to the Mayor of York. "I thought it our duty," he says in a note, "seeing we had come a dangerous voyage, to offer our Boate to the chiefe Magistrate. For why should not my Boat be as good a Monument as Tom Coryat's everlasting, overtramping, land-conquering Shoes?" thought I." This last allusion is to a contemporary of Taylor, as quaint and original as himself, who made long journeys on foot, and preserved his old shoes as a memento of his achievements. The Mayor of York did not strike our hero as a man of much liberality; Taylor offered to him—

In red gilded leather,
A well bound Booke of all my Workes together.

His worship the mayor declined the boat, accepted the book, but presented nothing in exchange. Whereupon the Water Poet sold the boat to Mr. Ex-Sheriff Kayes, mine host of the George inn. He tells us, among other facts a little more accurately treated, that the city of York dates its foundation from a period little less than a thousand years more remote than the birth of Christ.

His voyage from London to York was done; he did not return by the same route, but made a land journey along the great north road—a road which we should now regard as a very queer one, but which was of great note in his days:—

So farewell Yorke, the tenth of August then,
Away came I for London with my meu,
To dinner I to Poufret quickly rode,
Where good hot Vénison staid for my abode;
I thankes the worshipfulle George Shillito,
He fill'd my men and me, and let us goe.

After moralising on the murder of Richard the Second, at Pontefract Castle, he tells us that he went on and on by way of Doncaster, Newark, and Stamford to London, where—

Friends and neighbours all with loving hearts,
Did welcome me with pottles, pintes, and quartes.

Thus ends his remarkable narrative, extending to eight hundred and fifty lines, winding up with an Epilogue:—

Thus have I brought to end a Worke of Paine
I wish it may requite me with some Gaine,
For well I wote, the dangers which I ventured
No full-bag'd man would ever durst have entered ;
But having further shores for to discover
Hereafter, now my pen doth here give over.

The reader will not be slow to admit that there is much curious information, of an out-of-the-way kind, to be picked up from this *Very Merry Wherry Ferry Voyage* of John Taylor the Water Poet.

MARIGOLD.

A ROMANCE IN AN OLD GARDEN.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

WHEN Marigold put her basket on her head the next morning, and took her way towards Ballyspinnen, the world had a new aspect for her. The sunshine filtered down as usual through dingy haze, and shed a wistful glory over the busy town; the sullying smoke from tall chimneys floated upwards, and tarnished the delicate lustre of silvery-golden clouds; and, as usual, the one, strange to see, did not hurt, but rather intensified, the beauty of the other. This morning the lowering smoke looked to Marigold more thoroughly than ever interpenetrated with light, and the glory above the horizon blazed upon her with a more solemn and tender expression. A spiritual ray shone in her own eyes, as they met and received the brightness; for her life had passed into a phase that was perfectly new, and the spirit of fortitude was upon her. Ulick was gone—it might be for ever; the probabilities of life would do much to keep them apart—yet she would suffer and be patient, that it might be well with him among the shadows of that impenetrable distance which shut him out from her sight. She had now no interest in the town whither she directed her steps; no one dwelt there especially loving or beloved. It was a lonely place, with clouds of trouble struggling ever into the light; and towards the benignity of that overhanging light her own chastened thoughts were attracted. She did her work in the town with her usual care and success; her fingers, which seemed made for weaving garlands, and creating beauty by their touch, left glowing tracks of colour behind them as she passed from house to house. A

favourite among the ladies who knew her, if not among the Lizzies of her acquaintance, she drew the sympathies of gentlewomen towards her by the simplicity and refinement of her nature, the picturesqueness of her appearance and calling, no less than by the interest which attached to her history. On this particular morning she had to wait upon the wife of Ulick's employer, a motherly woman, with grown-up daughters of her own, who had known of Marigold's intended marriage, though she had never yet spoken to her on the subject. When this good lady saw the flower-girl's golden head coming in between the cactus flowers at her conservatory door, she felt troubled at heart, having heard from her husband of Ulick's sudden departure from the country.

"I hardly expected to see you to-day," said Mrs. Flaxman, startled into forgetting her ordinary reserve.

"Why?" asked Marigold, with open eyes fixed upon her.

"Why," hesitated the lady, "because you have lost your friend."

Marigold, startled in her turn, blushed, and became pale again. She had never imagined that the great lady had known anything of her engagement, or would be likely to consider her present state of mind.

"I have not lost him," said Marigold, "except for a little while. He will come back again; " she could not bring herself to add, "or I will go to him."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Flaxman. "I am glad to hear that. He gave up his situation very suddenly, and did not say anything about returning. I am sorry that the situation will have to be filled up; if he had spoken of coming back it might have been kept for him. That he was highly thought of in the office, I know; and Mr. Flaxman was vexed and disappointed at losing him. But, of course, if he is coming back—"

The lady looked aside at Marigold, who was steadily arranging her pots with a serene look on her face, which was only a little paler than usual. She pitied the girl from her heart, not believing in the least about Ulick's return. Marigold felt the look and tone, and took the meaning of them away with her as an earnest of many others more difficult to endure, which would certainly try her patience as the time went along. And all that day there was nothing before her thoughts but the idea of the dreary ocean which lay between her and her friend.

"Ulick gone!" cried Peter Lally, drop-

ping his pipe, and smashing it on the gravel walk. "Gone out o' the country without so much as sayin' good-bye to an ould friend! What took him to England, my girl, without you? What took him to England, where he has neither kith nor kin?"

"He knows his own business, Peter Lally, and I know mine," said Marigold; "and mine just at present is to see that he is not wronged."

Peter looked at her pityingly, and shook his head.

"I don't fault you for standin' up for him," he said; "an' Heaven grant it may turn out the way you expect. It's true we never saw anything in the boy that wasn't fair an' square."

"One would think you had seen a great deal in him that was bad and dishonest, to speak of him now with such black, black doubt in your face!" said Marigold, smothering a sob, and holding her head very high. The opinions of the world she could despise, but Peter's distrust cut her to the heart.

Peter pushed back his hat, and rubbed his grisly head.

"Three, four, five years," he counted on his fingers, "I have known every turn of him, an' never seen a crooked one. The temptation of the world is before him, it's true, and it's hard to think what call he had to get up on a sudden, an' run out o' the place he was doin' well in. But still an' witbal the nature's in him, an' you're right to believe in him, an' I'll help you at that. Shake hands on it, little girl. You an' me'll defend him agin the world!"

Marigold grasped his horny hand, and four eyes were very dim for a few minutes afterwards.

After that, the light or bitter words of gossip fell as fast and thick about Marigold's head, as the yellow leaves that drifted down upon her from the fading autumnal trees, while she came and went about Hildebrand Towers. No one passed her in the street, or on the road, without a word about Ulick's bad conduct; every one was surprised to see her bearing it so well. People were glad to find she had so much spirit, but concluded she must always have known that she was not a proper wife for so rising a young man, and that he must leave her to find his place in the world. Others had always held an indifferent opinion of him; though he had fascinated many, they had been too shrewd to be imposed upon, and the girl ought to be thankful for so good an escape. Of

these last was Poll Hackett, with whom Marigold had always been a favourite, and who was wont to relapse, from time to time, into unfavourable opinions of young men as a mass.

"Don't tell me!" she said, while Marigold and Peter and she sat on a felled tree, looking across the autumn flower-beds into the moist purple twilight of embrowned and blackened thickets. "Don't ask me to believe in the behaviour of the likes of him. Haven't I been meetin' with young men ever since I came into the world? First, there was my father; he was a young man, I'm sure, at the time I was born. Then there was my brothers, side by side with me, and sweethearts galore. My own good man was a caution, I can tell you; just such another as Ulick when he married me, an' left me to travel the world for his amusement, God knows where, and may the heavens forgive him! Even after I gave up the world an' took to widow-full ways, haven't I been seein' young men risin' npand poisoning the air around me? No sooner does one set get on to a decent steady sort of age, nor the little boys stretches out, and takes their place as bad as can be."

"What would you do with them, Poll," asked Peter, "if you had your full swing at managin' the world your own way?"

"I don't rightly know," replied Poll; "though many's the time I thought about whether the world couldn't get on without them at all or not. What's the good o' them, anyway, except in war-time, when there's some use in sending them out to keep the enemy from a body's door? They're always in the way in a house, and they're never to be found when they're wanted. If young men was what they ought to be, would this place be without a master, I'd like to know? Sous was born in the family, time out o' mind, an' where are they now, I wonder? If it wasn't that they must be always bein' killed, and gettin' shot to death with guns, or crossin' the seas without navigation, an' bein' drowned—if it wasn't for sich tricks, would you an' me be the lord an' lady of Hildebrand Towers, Peter Lally, I want to ask you?"

Peter rubbed his hands, and smiled knowingly at Marigold, saying—

"She was faultin' them for being alive a bit ago, an' now she's faultin' them for bein' dead. It's a bad graft on a bad stock, Poll Hackett, woman, an' it can't thrive! They be to be here, an' they be to go, as the Lord thinks fit. An' when we have them, we'd better take all the good

we can out o' them, an' make much o'! An' don't you mind her foolish prate," he said to Marigold, as he sent her home. "Give her three days, an' she'll be round, like the weather-cock, an' singin' his praises; but don't stay too long without visitin' her, or she'll pass the turn an' be back at where you left her."

Many days necessarily passed before a letter could be expected from Ulick, and during this time the sympathising glint shot from under Peter's grey eyebrows; and the fireside company of Kate and the baby were Marigold's sole consolations.

Even Kate's fireside was hardly a sanctuary to her. Lizzie was a person not easily daunted by difficulties; and she did not fail to find an excuse for coming back to the cottage to enjoy her triumph over Ulick's departure.

"I suppose you thought you had affronted me for ever," said she to Kate, finding a chair for herself, and making herself comfortable at the fire; "and so you would, only I'm not a person who can bear to be on bad terms with anybody. I'm that forgiving that I sometimes say to myself, 'You haven't an ounce of proper pride in you!' If it wasn't that humility is the best of virtues, I couldn't have any opinion o' myself at all."

"I don't bear spite myself, Lizzie," said Kate; "an' I'm glad enough to see you when you're of an agreeable turn of mind."

"If I hadn't a been just runnin' over with good-nature, I shouldn't ha' been here," said Lizzie. "Give me the baby, Kate, an' I'll nurse him a bit for you!"

"No thank you," said Kate; "he'd give you a deal of trouble, and Marigold's used to him." And she deposited the infant in Marigold's lap; this disposition of her treasure being the only punishment she condescended to inflict upon the unwelcome visitor.

Lizzie, not being a baby-loving woman, did not feel the punishment acutely, though she could appreciate the intention of the chastiser. By sundry little hitching movements, she enhanced her unencumbered enjoyment of the best seat at the fire, and proceeded to business.

"You might a' thought," she said, "that I came to have my boast over you about Ulick; but it's not in me. I never see things turnin' out before my eyes the way I said they would, but I get sorry-like for them that's took in; and a sort of modestness comes over me. You nearly threw me out o' your door, a while ago, for sayin' he was goin' away, an' leavin' them

behind that he ought to took with him; an' many's the one would come an' say to you, 'Ha, good woman, you thought you knew better nor me!' But it's not my way, and I couldn't have the heart to do it. It's what I come for to-night, to see Marigold, and to ask her how she was bearin' her trouble."

Kate reddened and frowned with wrath; but Marigold langhed gaily, tickling the baby's feet, and nodding in its face.

"Baby, baby! do you hear what nonsense she is talking? Ulick is unkind, and Marigold is breaking her heart. Tell her to go away, and look after her own lover, and leave Marigold's business alone!"

Thus was the gauntlet hurled down in earnest to Lizzie, who, it was well known, had never had a lover, her small, spiteful ways not being attractive to the sympathies of man.

"Lover or no lover," said she, "it's better be without sich rubbish, nor be made a fool of by one that goes away an' leaves you. Who bonght eight yards of light grey stuff in Mill-street, the other day, to make a wedding-dress, I'd like to know?"

"Aha! Johnny! do you hear that?" chirruped Marigold. "Would she like to go and search my boxes, to see if that person was Marigold? Sit up, little baby, and ask her about it. Be civil to your visitor, little man of the house!"

"For shamo with your tauntin'!" cried Kate. "No fear but you'd be at your old work before long. Ulick hasn't run away, as the likes o' you would make out, but he's gone awhile to England on business of his own. And Marigold's bound to him as fast as can be!"

"Oh, if they're married——" sneered Lizzie.

"I am no wife," said Marigold; "I will be no man's wife till he's ready to take my hand before the world. When Ulick is ready he'll know where to find me, and, in the meantime, we know our own affairs."

"I hope so," said Lizzie; "but if I was you I'd ha' made him do right by me before he put the sea between us——"

"But you're not me, you see!" cried Marigold, with another merry laugh. "Bah, Lizzie, go home! and tell your companions that Marigold is as happy as a queen, and can afford to make fun of the whole envious flock of you!"

Saying this, the girl sprang up, and began dancing about the kitchen with the baby, making such mirthful noise of singing, and laughing, and chirruping, that Lizzie's angry answering eloquence was

lost. Even Kate did not hear it properly; and though she was quite ready to retort, could not do so with effect because of Marigold's tricks. The crowing baby was danced into her face; his fat hand was thrust into her mouth; she was forced into the play, whether she would or not. Lizzie, having struggled violently and vainly for a hearing, gave way in time to a whirlwind of passion, and, finally, made her exit in a condition of ignominious defeat. In thus defying Lizzie, Marigold knew well that she had also exposed herself to the shafts of all the Lizzie-like people of her acquaintance. But this troubled her little, when, the very next morning, Ulick's first letter was put into her hand.

The letter was full of tenderness; and, though it threw no light on the mysterious cause of the writer's departure, Marigold was perfectly content with it. Her smiles fell on every one that day, and the sun shone out over the lonely grey sea which so haunted her thoughts. Too delicate and proud to speak of her happiness to anyone, she carried the precious paper over her heart; while Kate spread triumphantly the news of its arrival. Even then the Lizzies langhed, and said, "It is easy for a clerk to write letters; it is harder to cross the sea!"

Five letters came to Marigold from Ulick, none of which conveyed any news as to his future plans, or present means of existence. They were dated from London, written evidently in the flush of good spirits, and overflowing with the assurances of love. After this came a sixth, shorter than the others, and as if written in haste; then the watched-for time came round again, when a seventh might be expected. The morning passed, and the evening passed, and the letter did not come. The blossoms fell off Marigold's flowers that day, as her fingers worked amongst them.

A week went by, and still no letter. Marigold smiled at Kate across the fire, and repeated to her Ulick's words—"You must remember that a letter will occasionally miscarry."

"Goodness me!" said Kate. "To be sure they will; and you may as well make up your mind to it."

"Of course, I made up my mind to it from the first," said Marigold; and giving up the missing letter, which seemed to have dropped into that cruel ocean, set herself hopefully to look for its successor. But the letter-time came round again, and brought her nothing more.

Five times Marigold looked vainly for

the longed-for packet, on the accustomed day, before she walked tremblingly into the post-office to enquire for missing letters. Around this bold effort clung her last remaining hope, which was speedily crushed. As she walked home along the oft-travelled road, Ulick's words rang in her ears: "When I cease to write, you may cease to trust." The time had now come, and her heart must break; the wind mourned along the bare brown hedgerows, and the first touch of winter desolated the world; while she moved slowly, as if on a strange journey in a new land, her head erect as ever under the accustomed basket, her dry and burning eyes seeing nothing but that dreadful ocean, which had at last overwhelmed her indeed. Kate did not venture to question her when she returned to the cottage, and passed silently into her own little room. There was that in her face which warned off even sympathy.

After this, her white and altered face was seen less frequently on the road, and in the town. She shrank alike from friends and enemies, and sat alone in her corner, wrapped in an agony of bewildered thought. So the first weeks of winter wore on, until, one evening, Peter Lally arrived from the Towers, and sat down by Kate's fireside, enquiring for Marigold.

"I'm raal uneasy about her," said Peter, lighting his pipe, and speaking low. "It's sich a long, long time since she came near us beyond. Is it true she got no letters this while back?"

"It's true," said Kate. "I'm afraid he's a bad one, after all. Shc's just dyin' afore my eyes; an' sure, what can I do for her?"

"It's the way of the world," said Peter, ruminating sadly. "Little fault they'd make of such conduct in London, I'm thinkin'. The young and light-minded picks up with new ways. They say 'absence makes the heart grow fonder,' but it's my opinion that love's a flower that often dies of transplantation. However, I mustn't say a word, for I promised her to believe in him."

"She won't hear a word against him yet," said Kate; "but it's aisy to see that the sorrows of death are in her heart."

Marigold's door now opened, and she came out of her room. "I thought I heard a friendly voice," she began with an attempt at her old lively manner; but,

catching Peter's glance, eye and tone failed her, her lips quivered, and then settled into its new expression of enduring pain.

"It's about Poll Hacket I came," said the old man, having cleared his throat, and made a great clatter with his chair; "She's ill, poor body, with a terrible bad turn of her rheumatics. She wants someone to look after her, that's the fact, an' she'll have nobody but Marigold, say what you will to her."

Marigold glanced at him quickly, and put her hand into his.

"Thank you Peter," she said, "I will go back with you at once."

"That's the girl that's always ready to make herself useful!" cried Peter, delighted. "But you mustn't be mindin' Poll, whatever ramblin' rubbish she puts off her tongue. The talk's the only comfort she has at present."

"I know what you mean," said Marigold. "Don't be afraid to speak plainly to me. It will be better for me to hear Poll, no matter what she says, than to meet people at all the corners of the streets, and have to answer their questions!"

"You're right!" said Peter. "You're the sort of a woman a man can be honest with. Well, yes, Kate, I'll drink your health in a cup of tea; an' what I was wantin' to express to Marigold, is this: It's not altogether of ourselves poor Poll is ravin' lately—though for a woman that can keep a stone in her sling, an' let fly at you when you don't expect it, I give the degree to Mrs. Hackett—it's chiefly this report that's on her mind, about the master of Hildebrand Towers that's turned up, they say, an' is comin' home at last."

"What?" cried Kate, kindling at once into a blaze of curiosity. "Don't talk sich nonsense! But I beg your pardon, Mr. Lally; you ought to know the best."

"It's nothing but an idle report," said Peter; "but yon poor woman can think of nothin' else. Seems as if she thought she had grown into a sort o' lady of the Towers herself! But you'd better let us be off, Mrs. Kate, or the night will be too late upon us!"

NEXT WEEK WILL BE COMMENCED

A NEW SERIAL STORY,

By the Author of "Aunt Margaret's Trouble,"
"Mabel's Progress," &c.,

ENTITLED,

A CHARMING FELLOW.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.

“THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR”

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
“HOUSEHOLD WORDS”

No. 326. NEW SERIES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF “AUNT MARGARET’S TROUBLE,” “MABEL’S PROGRESS,” &c., &c.

CHAPTER I.

“To be frank with you, Mr. Diamond, I don’t believe Dr. Bodkin understands my son’s genius.”

“I beg your pardon, madam, you said your son’s——?”

“Genius, sir; the bent of his genius. Algy’s is not a mechanical mind.”

Mrs. Errington slightly tossed her head as she uttered the word “mechanical.”

Mr. Diamond said “Oh!” and then sat silent.

The room was very quiet. The autumn day was fading, and the mingling of twilight and firelight, and the stillness of the scene, were conducive to mute meditation. It was a long, low room, with an uneven floor, a whitewashed ceiling crossed by heavy beams, and one large bow window. It was furnished with the spindle-legged chairs and tables in use in the last century. A crimson drapery covered the floor, and in front of the hearth lay a rug, made of scraps of black and coloured cloth, neatly sewn together in a pattern. Over the high wooden mantelpiece hung, on one side, a faded water-colour sketch of a gentleman, with powdered hair; and on the other, an oval miniature of much later date, which represented a fair, florid young lady, with large languid blue eyes, and a red mouth, somewhat too full-lipped. Notwithstanding the years which had elapsed since the miniature was painted, it was still sufficiently like Mrs. Errington, to be recognised for her portrait. There was an old

harpsichord in the room, and a few books on hanging shelves. But the only handsome or costly objects to be seen, were some delicate blue and white china cups and saucers, which glistened from an oaken corner-cupboard; and a large work-box of tortoise-shell, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, lined with amber satin, and fitted with all the implements of needlework, in richly chased silver. The box, like the china cupboard, stood wide open to display its contents, and was evidently a subject of pride to its possessor. It was entirely incongruous with the rest of the furniture, which, although decent and serviceable, was very plain, and rather scanty.

Nevertheless the room looked snug and homelike. The coal-fire burnt with a deep glowing light; a small copper kettle was singing cheerily on the hob; tea-things were laid on a table in front of the fire; and a fitful, moaning wind, that rattled now and then against the antique easement, enhanced the comfort of the scene by its suggestion of forlorn chilliness without.

But however the influences of the time and place might incline Mr. Diamond to silence, they had no such effect on Mrs. Errington.

After a short pause, during which she seemed to be awaiting some remark from her companion, she observed once more, “No; I do not think the doctor understands Algy’s genius. And that is why I was anxious to ask your advice, on this proposition of Mr. Filthorpe’s.”

“But, madam, why should you suppose me likely to understand Algernon better than Dr. Bodkin does?”

“Oh, because—— In the first place, you are younger, nearer Algy’s own age.”

“Ah! There is a wide gap, though,

between his eighteen and my eight-and-twenty—a wider gap than the mere ten years would necessarily make in all cases."

Mrs. Errington glanced at the speaker, and thought, in the maternal pride of her heart, that there was indeed a wide difference between her joyous, handsome Algernon and Matthew Diamond, second master at the Whitford Grammar School; and she thought, too, that the difference was all to her son's advantage. Mr. Diamond was a grave-looking young man, with a spare, strong figure, and a face which, in repose, was neither handsome nor ugly. His clean-shaven chin and upper lip were firmly cut, and he had a pair of keen grey eyes. But such as it was, it was a face which most persons who saw it often, fell into a habit of watching. It raised an indefinite expectation. You were instinctively aware of something latent beneath its habitual expression of seriousness and reserve. What the "something" might be, was variously guessed at according to the temperament of the observer.

"Then there is another reason why I wished to consult you," pursued Mrs. Errington. "I have a great opinion of your judgment, from what Algy tells me. I assure you Algy thinks an immense deal of your talents, Mr. Diamond. You must not think I flatter you."

"No," replied Mr. Diamond, very quietly, "I do not think you flatter me."

"And therefore I have told you the state of the case quite openly. And I would not have you hesitate to give your advice, from any fear of disagreeing with my opinion."

Mr. Diamond leaned his elbow on the table, and his face on his hand, which he held so as to hide his mouth—an habitual posture with him—and looked gravely at Mrs. Errington.

"I trust," continued the lady, "that I am superior to the weakness of requiring blind acquiescence from people."

Mrs. Errington spoke in a mellow, measured voice, and had a soft smiling cast of countenance. Both these were frequently contradicted in a startling manner by the words she uttered: for, in truth, the worthy lady's soul and body were no more like each other, than a peach-stone is like a peach. Her velvety softness was not affected, but it was merely external, and the real woman was nothing less than tender. Sensitivo persons did not fare very well with Mrs.

Errington; who, withal, had the reputation of being an exceedingly good-natured woman.

"If you think my advice worth having ——" said Mr. Diamond.

"I do really. Now pray don't be shy of speaking out!" interrupted the lady, reassuringly.

"I must tell you that I think your cousin's offer is much too good to be refused, and opens a prospect which many young men would envy."

"You advise us to accept it?"

"Yes."

"Why then, Mr. Diamond, I don't believe you understand Algy one bit better than the doctor does!" exclaimed Mrs. Errington, leaning back in her chair, and folding her large white hands together in a resigned manner.

"I warned you, you know, that I might not," answered Mr. Diamond, composedly.

"A prospect which many young men would envy!" Well, perhaps, 'many young men,' yes; I dare say. But for Algy! Do but think of it, Mr. Diamond; to sit all day on a high stool in a musty office! You must own that, for a young fellow of my son's spirit, the idea is not alluring."

"Oh, if the question be merely for Algernon to choose some method of passing his time, which shall be alluring—"

Mrs. Errington drew herself up a little. "No;" said she, "that is certainly not the question, Mr. Diamond. At the same time, before embracing Mr. Filthorpe's offer, I thought it only reasonable to ask myself, 'May we not do better? Can we not do better?'"

"I begin to perceive," thought Matthew Diamond within himself, "that Mrs. Errington's meaning, when she asks 'advice,' is pretty much like that of most of her neighbours. Having already made up her mind how to act, she would like to be told that her decision is the best and wisest conceivable." He said nothing, however, but bowed his head a little, to show that he was giving attention to the lady's discourse.

"We have an alternative, you must know," said Mrs. Errington, turning her eyes languidly on Mr. Diamond, but not moving her head from its comfortable resting-place against the back of her well-cushioned arm-chair. "We are not bound hand and foot to this Bristol merchant. By the way, you spoke of him as my cousin——"

"I beg your pardon; is he not so?"

"No; not mine. My poor husband's," with a glance at the portrait over the mantelpiece. "None of my family ever had the remotest connection with commerce."

"Ha! The good fortune was all on the side of the Erringtons?"

This time Mrs. Errington turned her head, so as to look full at her interlocutor. There met her view the same calm forehead, the same steady eyes, the same sheltering hand gently stroking the upper lip, which she had looked upon a minute before.

"My good sir!" she answered, in a tone of patient explanation, "my own family, the Ancrams, were people of the very first quality in Warwickshire. My grandfather never stirred out without his coach and four!"

"Ah!"

"Oh, yes, Algy's prospects in life ought to be very, very different from what they are. Of course he ought to go to the university; but I cannot afford to send him there. I make no secret of my circumstances. College is out of the question for him, poor boy, unless he entered himself as a what-do-you-call-it? A sort of pauper, a sizar. And I suppose you would hardly advise him to do that!"

"No; I should by no means advise it. I was a sizar myself."

"Really? Ah well, then you know what it is. And I am quite sure it would never suit Algy's spirit."

"I am quite sure it would not."

Mrs. Errington's good opinion of the tutor's judgment, which had been considerably shaken, began to revive.

"I see you know something of his character," said she, smiling. "Well then, the case stands thus: Algy is turned eighteen; he has had the best education I could give him—indeed, my chief motive for settling in this obscure little hole, when I was left a widow, was the fact that Dr. Bodkin, who was an old acquaintance of my husband, was head of the Grammar School here, and I knew I could give my boy the education of a gentleman—up to a certain point—at small expense. He has had this offer from the Bristol man, and he has had another offer of a very different sort from my side of the house."

"Indeed!"

"Oh, yes; perhaps if I had begun by stating that circumstance, you might have modified your advice, eh, Mr. Diamond?" This was said in a tone of mild raillery.

"Why," answered Mr. Diamond, slowly, "I must own that my advice usually does depend somewhat on my knowledge of the circumstances of the case under consideration."

"Now, that's candid—and I love candour, as I told you. The fact is, Lord Seely married an Ancram."

There was a pause. Mrs. Errington looked enquiringly at her companion. "You have heard of Lord Seely?" she said.

"I have seen his name in the newspapers, in the days when I used to read newspapers."

"He is a most distinguished nobleman."

Another pause.

"Well," continued Mrs. Errington,descendingly, "I cannot expect all that to interest you, Mr. Diamond. Perhaps there may be a little family partiality, in my estimate of Lord Seely. However, be that as it may, he married an Ancram. She was of the younger branch, my father's second cousin. When Algy first began to turn his thoughts towards a diplomatic career —"

"Eh?"

"A diplomatic—Oh, didn't you know? Yes; he has had serious thoughts of it for some time."

"Algernon?"

"Certainly! And, in confidence, Mr. Diamond, I think it would suit him admirably. I fancy it is what his genius is best adapted for. Well, when I perceived this bent in him, I made—indirectly—application to Lady Seely, and she returned—also indirectly—a most gracious answer. She should be happy to receive Mr. Algernon Ancram Errington, whenever she was in town."

"Is that all?"

"All?"

"All that you have to tell me, to modify—and so on?"

"That would lead to more, don't you see? Lord Seely has enormous influence, and I don't know anyone better able to push the fortunes of a young man like Algy."

"But has he promised anything definite?"

"He could hardly do that, seeing that, as yet, he knows nothing of my son whatever! My dear Mr. Diamond, when you know as much of the world as I do, you will see that it does not do to rush at things in a hurry. You must give people time. Especially a man like Lord Seely,

who of course cannot be expected to—
to—”

“Do you mean that you seriously contemplate dropping the substance of Filthorpe, for this shadow of Seely?”

“Mr. Diamond! What very extraordinary expressions!”

Mr. Diamond took his hand from his mouth, clasped both hands on his knee, and sat looking into the fire as abstractedly as if there had been no other person within sight or sound of him.

Mrs. Errington, apparently taking it for granted that his attitude was one of profound attention to herself, proceeded flowingly to justify her decision—for it evidently was a decision—to decline the Bristol merchant's offer of employment and a home for her son. Besides Alg's “genius,” there were other objections. Mr. Filthorpe had a vulgar wife and a vulgar daughter. Of course they must be vulgar. That was clear. And who could say that they might not endeavour to entangle Alg in some promise, or engagement, to marry the daughter? Nay, it was very certain that they would make such an endeavour. Possibly—probably—that was old Filthorpe's real object in inviting his young relative to accept a place in his counting-house. Indeed, they might confidently consider that it was so. Of course Alg would be a bait to these people! And as to Lord Seely, Mr. Diamond did not know (how should he? seeing that he had been little more than a twelvemonth in Whitford, and out of that time had scarcely ever had an hour's converse with her) that she, Mrs. Errington, was a person rather apt to hide and diminish, than unduly blazon forth her family glories. And she was, moreover, scrupulous to a fault in the accuracy of all her statements. Nevertheless, she must say that there was, perhaps, no nobleman in England whose patronage would have more weight than his lordship's; and whether or not, the brilliancy of Alg's parts, and the charm of his manners, would be likely to captivate a man of Lord Seely's taste and cultivation. That she left to the sense and candour of any one who knew, and could appreciate her son!

Mr. Diamond uttered an odd, smothered kind of sound.

“Eh?” said Mrs. Errington, mellifluously.

There was no answer.

“Hulloa!” cried a blithe voice, as the

door was suddenly thrown open. “Why, you're all in the dark here!”

“Dear me!” exclaimed Mr. Diamond, jumping to his feet, and then sitting down again, “I believe—I'm afraid I was almost asleep!”

CHAPTER II.

ALGERNON ERRINGTON came gaily into the dim room, bringing with him a gust of fresh, cold air. His first act was to stir the fire, which sent up a flickering blaze. The light played upon the tea-table and the two persons who sat at it; and also, of course, illuminated the new-comer's face and form, which were such as to justify much of his mother's pride in his appearance. He was of middle height, with a singularly elegant figure, and finely shaped hands and feet. His smooth, blooming face was, perhaps, somewhat too girlish-looking, but there was nothing effeminate in his bearing. All his movements were springy and elastic. His blue eyes—less large, but more bright than his mother's—were full of vivacity, and a smile of mischievous merriment played round his mouth.

“Mr. Diamond!” he exclaimed, as soon as he perceived who was the other occupant of the room besides his mother.

“You're late,” said the tutor, pulling from his waistcoat-pocket a large silver watch, and examining the clumsy black figures on its face by the firelight.

“Why,” said Algernon, “I had no idea you were here! I thought my mother had sent word to ask you to put off our reading this evening. You promised to write a note, mother. Didn't you send it?”

It appeared that Mrs. Errington had not sent a note, had not even written one, had forgotten all about it. Her mind was so full of other things! And then when Mr. Diamond appeared, she did not explain at once that Algernon would probably not come home in time for his lesson, because she wanted to have a little conversation with Mr. Diamond. And they began to talk, and the time slipped away: besides, she knew that Mr. Diamond had nothing to do of an evening, so it was not of much consequence, was it?

Algernon winced at this speech, and cast a quick, furtive look at his tutor, who, however, might have been deaf, for any sign he gave of having heard it. He rose from his chair, and, addressing Mrs. Errington, declared with his usual brevity

that, as no work was to be done, he must forthwith wish her "Good evening."

"Now, nonsense!" said Mrs. Errington. "You'll do nothing of the kind! Stay and have a cup of tea with us for once in a way."

"Thank you, no; I never—it is not my habit—"

"Not your habit to be sociable! I know that; and it is a great pity. What would you be doing at home? Only poring over books until you got a headache! A little cheerful society would do you all the good in the world. You were all but dropping asleep just now: and no wonder! I'm sure, after teaching all day in a close school, full of boys buzzing like so many blue-bottles, one would feel as stupid as an owl oneself!"

"Perhaps I am peculiarly susceptible to stupefying influences," said Mr. Diamond, with a rueful shake of the head. And, as he spoke, there played round his mouth the faint flicker of a smile.

"Now put your hat down, and take your seat!" cried Mrs. Errington, authoritatively.

"I am very sorry to seem ungrateful, but—"

"I had asked little Rhoda to come up after tea and keep me company, thinking I should be alone. But you won't mind Rhoda. She knows her place."

Mr. Diamond paused in the act of buttoning his coat across his breast. "You are very kind," he murmured.

"There, sit down, and I will undertake to give you a cup of excellent tea. I hope you know good tea when you get it? There are some people who couldn't tell my fine Pekoe from sloe-leaves. Algy, bring me the kettle."

And Mrs. Errington betook herself to the business of making tea. To her it seemed perfectly natural—almost a matter of course—that Matthew Diamond should stay, since she was kind enough to press it. But Algernon, who knew his tutor better, could not refrain from expressing a little surprise at his yielding.

"Why, mother," said he, as he poured the boiling water into the tea-pot, "you may consider yourself singled out for high distinction. Mr. Diamond has consented at your request to stay, after having said he would go! I don't believe there's another lady in Whitford who has been so honoured."

If Algernon had not been peering through the clouds of steam to ascertain

whether the tea-pot were full or not, he would have perceived an unwonted flush mount in Matthew Diamond's face up to the roots of his hair, and then slowly fade away.

"And how did you find the doctor and all of them?" asked Mrs. Errington of her son, when they were all seated at the tea-table.

"Oh, the doctor's all right. He only came in for a few minutes after morning school."

"What did he say to you, Algy?"

"Oh, I don't know: something about not altogether neglecting my studies now I had left school, whatever path in life I chose. He always says that sort of thing, you know," answered Algernon carelessly.

"And Mrs. Bodkin?"

"Oh, she's all right, too."

"And Minnie?"

"Oh, she's all—no; she was not quite so well as usual, I think. Mrs. Bodkin said she had had a bad attack of pain in the night. But Minnie didn't mention it. She never likes to be condoled with and pitied, you know. So of course I didn't say anything. It's so unpleasant to have to keep noticing people's health!"

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Errington. "What a misfortune for that girl to be a helpless invalid for the rest of her life!"

"Is her disorder incurable?" asked Mr. Diamond.

"Oh, quite, I believe. Spine, you know. An accident. And they say that when a child she was such an active creature."

"Her brain is active enough now," observed Mr. Diamond musingly, with his eyes fixed on the fire. "I don't know a keener, quicker intellect."

"What, Minnie Bodkin?" exclaimed Algernon, pausing in the demolition of a stout pile of sliced bread and butter. "I should think so! She's as clever as a man! I mean," he added, reading and answering his tutor's satirically-raised eyebrows, as rapidly as though he were replying to an articulate observation, "I mean—of course I know she's a deuced deal cleverer than lots of men. But I mean that Minnie Bodkin is clever after a manly fashion. Not a bit missish. By Jove! I wish I knew as much Greek as she does!"

"I do not at all approve of blue-stockings in general," said Mrs. Errington; "but in her case, poor thing, one must make allowances."

"I think she's pretty," announced Algernon, condescendingly.

"She would be if she didn't look so sickly. No complexion," said Mrs. Errington, intently observing her own florid face, unnaturally elongated, in the bowl of a spoon.

"Don't you think her pretty, sir?" asked Algernon, turning to Mr. Diamond.

"A great deal more than pretty."

"You don't go there very often, I think?" said Mrs. Errington interrogatively.

"No, madam."

"Well, now, you really ought. I know you would be welcome. The doctor has more than once told me so. And Mrs. Bodkin is so very affable! I'm sure you need not hesitate about going there."

Algernon jumped up to replenish the tea-pot, with an unnecessary amount of bustle, and began to rattle out a volley of lively nonsense, with the view of diverting his mother's attention from the subject of Mr. Diamond's neglect of the Bodkin family. He dreaded some rejoinder on the part of the tutor which should offend his mother beyond forgiveness. He had had experience of some of Matthew Diamond's blunt speeches, of which Dr. Bodkin himself was supposed to be in some awe. It was clearly no business of Mrs. Errington's where Mr. Diamond chose to bestow his visits; neither could she in any degree be aware what reasons he might have for his conduct. "And the worst of it is, he's quite capable of telling my mother so, if she goes too far," reflected Algernon. So he chatted and laughed, as if from overflowing good spirits, until the peril was past. This young gentleman was so quick and flexible, and had so buoyant a temperament, that he was reputed more careless and thoughtless than was altogether the case. His mind moved rapidly, and he had an instinctive habit of uttering the result of its calculations, in the most impulsive way imaginable. You could not tell, by observing Algernon's manner, whether he were giving you his first thought or his second.

When the meal was over, Mrs. Errington rang to have the table cleared. A little prim servant-maid, in a coarse, clean apron and bib, appeared at the sound of the bell, and began to gather the tea-things together. Algernon sat down at the old harpsichord, and, after playing a few chords, commenced singing softly in a pleasant tenor voice some fragments of sentimental ballads in vogue at that day. (Does the reader ask, "and when was 'that day'?"

He must content himself with the information that it was within a year or two of the year 1830.) Mr. Diamond walked to the window, and holding aside the blind, stood looking out at the dark sky.

All at once, when the servant opened the door to go out, there came up from the lower part of the house the sound of singing; slow, long-drawn, rather tuneless singing of a few voices, male and female.

"Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Errington, "Oh dear me, Sarah, how is this?"

Algernon made a comical face of disgust, and put his hands to his ears.

"It be as Mr. Powell's ha' come back, mum," said Sarah, with much gravity.

"Really! Really!" said Mrs. Errington, in the tone of one protesting against an utterly unjustifiable offence.

"Come back! Where has he been?" asked Algernon, carelessly.

"On 'is rounds, please sir."

"I do wish Mr. Powell would choose some other time for his performances!" cried Mrs. Errington, when the servant had left the room. "Now Thursday—on Thursday, for instance, we are going to a whist party, at the Bodkins', and then he might squall out his psalms, and shout, and rave, without annoying anybody."

"He'd only annoy the neighbours," said Algernon, "and that wouldn't matter!"

He was smiling with a sort of contemptuous amusement, and touching random notes here and there on the harpsichord with one finger.

"There will be no getting Rhoda upstairs to-night," said Mrs. Errington. "Poor little thing! she's in for a whole evening of psalm-singing."

Algernon rose from the instrument with a clouded brow. His face wore the petulant look of a spoiled child, whose will has been unexpectedly crossed.

"Deuce take Mr. Powell, and all Welsh Methodists like him!" said he.

"My dear Algy! No, no; I cannot approve of that, though Mr. Powell is a Dissenter. Besides, such language in my presence is not respectful."

"Beg pardon, ma'am," said Algernon, laughing. And with the laughter, the cloud cleared from his brow. Clouds never rested there long.

"Will you have a game of cribbage with me, Mr. Diamond? This naughty boy will scarcely ever play with me. Or, if you prefer it, dummy whist ——?"

"No whist for me," interposed Algernon,

decisively. "It is such a botheration. And I play so atrociously that it would be cruel to ask Mr. Diamond to sit down with me."

With that he returned to the harpsichord, and began singing softly to himself in snatches.

"Cribbage then?" said Mrs. Errington in her mellow, measured tones.

Mr. Diamond let fall the blind from his hand so roughly, that the wooden roller rattled against the wainscot, and advanced to the table where Mrs. Errington was already setting forth the cards and cribbage-board. He sat down without a word, cut the cards as she directed, shuffled, dealt, and played in a moody sort of silent manner; which, however, did not affect Mrs. Errington's nerves at all.

Meanwhile, there went on beneath Algernon's love-songs, and the few utterances of the players which the game necessitated, a kind of accompanying boudoir of voices from down-stairs. Sometimes one single voice would rise in passionate tones, almost as if in wrath. Then came singing again, which, softened by distance, had a wild, wailing character of ineffable melancholy. Algernon paused in his fitful playing and singing, as though unwilling to be in dissonance with those long-drawn sounds. Mrs. Errington calmly continued to exclaim, "Fifteen six," and "two for his heels," without regard to anything but her game.

When the rubber was at an end, Mr. Diamond rose to take his leave.

He lingered a little in doing so. He lingered in taking up his hat, and in buttoning his coat across his breast.

"Have you not anything warmer to put on?" said Mrs. Errington. "Dear me, it is very wrong to go out of this snug room into the air—and the wind has got np, too!—with no more wrap than you have been sitting in, here by the fire! Algy, lend him your great-coat."

"Thank you, no. Good night," said the tutor, and walked off without further ceremony.

He still lingered, however, in descending the stairs; and yet more in passing the door of a parlour, whence came a murmur of voices. Finally, he let himself out at the street-door, and encountering a bleak gust of wind, set off down the silent street at a round pace.

"What a fool you are, Matthew!" was his mental ejaculation, as he strode along with his head bent down, and his gloveless hands plunged deep into his pockets.

FORMOSA AND THE JAPANESE.

In 1683, the island of Formosa fell under the power of the Pekin government. There is not much to tell about its previous history. According to some Chinese MSS. preserved at Macao, it was not discovered by the Chinese till 1480; though, food as junks are known to be of hugging the coast, we can hardly believe that for ages upon ages they could have failed to find a big island, not much further from the mainland than Brindisi is from the opposite coast of Greece, not so far as Dublin is from Holyhead. Of what the Chinese did there while they had it to themselves, we know little or nothing. They did not teach the natives much; for the poor creatures knew very little indeed when Europeans came among them. No doubt they fished as usual for sea-slugs, and gathered edible birds' nests; and they had found out that the camphor-wood of the island is finer than any in China, and had begun to cut it down pretty largely.

In 1524, or thereabouts, the Portuguese sighted a big island, with high mountains, and with such lovely peeps of wooded glen, and sweet grassy valley, that they called it Formosa, the beautiful. After the Portuguese came the Spanish; and then, in 1624, the Dutch founded a factory on the north coast; built a fort—Fort Zealand (the huge tamarind-tree, which is the only landmark to the wretched harbour of Taiwan-fou, is still called Zealandia); and thought themselves so secure in their position that they started missions to the aborigines, and translated parts of the Bible into Formosan. It is a sad thing for the natives that some European power did not continue to hold the island. Any one of the three who settled there would have been better than the Chinese, who have done nothing for the aborigines but gradually improve them off the face of the earth. If I were tutelary deity of Formosa, and had been given my choice, I should have preferred the Spaniards. Their own country is not a picture of good government; but they seem to have the gift of improving subject races, instead of exterminating them. Not far south of Formosa, in the Philippines, they have done a really good work. The Tagal aborigines are as contented a set as any in the world: the Spaniards have taught them to work and to like work, and have trained their musical capacity till they

have become a nation of concert givers. Indeed, on the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" principle, we must pronounce the Philippines to be a success; and, had the semi-religious settlement which the Spaniards made in Formosa flourished, I see no reason why Formosa should not have become another Luzon. The Formosans are of the same race as the Tagals, black-toothed betel-chewers, not at all akin to the Chinese, nor yet wholly Malay. They are not a bad people; though, of course, it was needful to get up a cry against them to justify the Japanese invasion. Charles Gutzlaff, the missionary, gives them a character which would suit most "natives"—"harmless when not provoked."

That Manchu-Tartar conquest, which gave China its present rulers, drove the Dutch out of Formosa. Beaten on the mainland, a great number of Chinese (twenty-five thousand, say the records) went across to Formosa. Perhaps the Chinese expected that the Tartars would disappear as quickly as they had come; at any rate, they thought Formosa a handy place from which to watch events. So they gave notice to the Dutch—"We want our island, and you must go, if you please." For a while there was room for both; for one Nicholau (an odd name for a Chinaman), a man baptised and brought up at Macao, who had grown to be the richest merchant on Formosa, took the command of the refugees, fitted out a fleet against the Tartars, and swept the coast from Amoy northward. At last he was enticed to Pekin, and his son Koshinga was driven off from the Chinese seaboard, and forced to take refuge on the island. He then plainly told the Dutch that they must decamp; but Governor Coyet did not see it at all. He sent to Batavia, and brought up the Dutch fleet; on the coming of which Koshinga seemed so mild and peaceable that the admiral made up his mind that Coyet had been frightening himself about nothing, and that he and his gus were not at all wanted. So the fleet sailed off, and the Chinese at once began their attack. They carried one fort, and then the town was abandoned to them; but Fort Zealand they could not take. The Dutch had fifteen hundred men, the enemy as many thousands; but, whenever they came on, the only result was that the streets were heaped with Chinese dead, and the fort held out as before. The Chinese attack

had been so sudden that they had taken a great many prisoners—missionaries and others; and now, through them, they tried to force a surrender. One of these men, the story tells, behaved like the Roman Regulus; he had lived for years on the island, and Koshinga trusted a great deal to his influence with the governor, and offered him great rewards if he could bring about a capitulation, threatening him at the same time with fearful punishment if he did not succeed. The missionary went, and strongly advised his countrymen to hold out and to send again to Batavia for help. Noticing the anger of the Chinese envoys who accompanied him, Coyet begged him to stay in the fort. "No, I'll be as good as my word," he said, and went back, and was tortured to death in sight of his countrymen. Instead of sending to Batavia, Coyet seems to have sought help from the Tartars at Pekin. The only narrative I can find of the matter is from a Russian source, and is not very clear. Anyhow, a breach was at last made in the walls of Fort Zealand, and Coyet agreed to evacuate the island.

This was in 1662. Eight years later, our East India Company, which spent a good deal of time and energy in feeling about among these distant places, before it settled in good earnest to the work of which our great Indian Empire is the result, began to have dealings with the king of Taywan, as they called Koshinga (Taiwan being the Chinese name of the island). They got leave to set up a factory, on condition "that we may sell or truck our goods with whom we please, and likewise that all may have the same free trade with us; that upon all occasions we may have access to the king's person, and that he shall right us in all wrongs; that all exports be free, and that whatever the king imports shall pay no custom;" but there is the important addition that all ships which put into port shall give up their guns and ammunition till they sail again. Formosa, on these terms, didn't pay. There was little trade, and the fair-seeming conditions turned out vexatious. In 1681 the Company gave up its factory, and two years after the Mantehus conquered the island, and annexed it to the government of Tokien, of which Amoy is the capital.

From the time the Company left it, the history of Formosa is a blank. The aborigines have mostly been gradually pushed south and east, across the great range of volcanic mountains which cuts the island

in two; of course some of them have been tamed by the Chinese, and a good many of the latter have run wild, burst away from etiquette, and mandarins, and his excellency the deputy at Taiwan-fou, and taken to the mountains. Even Chinamen sometimes get restless. When they do so at home, as a rule they turn pirates; but as Formosa is a poor place for pirates—for two hundred miles at a stretch there is no port of any kind—a lawless Chinaman, in Formosa, takes not to the sea, but, like Robin Hood, to the good green wood; and very good the greenwood is, as soon as you have passed the foggy, marshy plains, rich with volcanic detritus, where some of the finest rice in the world is grown, and whence sugar is largely exported to China. The coast is far less interesting; it is mostly fringed with low sand hills, and at low water the tide runs out a great way, leaving a broad beach, covered with innumerable little lemon-coloured crabs. As regularly as the tide goes out, down come the monkeys (the island swarms with them) and go crab-hunting; but to look on at this becomes wearisome after a time, and, as there is no other kind of fun going, a man's only consolation is that the coast is wonderfully healthy. During the wet season, when it rains every day, as it can only rain in the tropics, up in the hills, there is seldom a drop on the coast. Of course there is a typhoon now and then; the Tropic of Cancer cuts across the lower end of the island, so it is just in the zone for typhoons; and then trees are torn up, houses blown down, and you hear the bamboo canes in the forest grinding against each other, with a roar like that of a hundred organs. In 1782, the whole island was devastated by a fearful hurricane.

Excepting the monkeys, there are very few ferocious nature—none in fact, except the stag, the wild buffalo, and the ubiquitous wild pig. It is the same on the Philippines; whereas on the Chinese mainland there are tigers and such like—a proof, they say, that Formosa was not broken off from China, but possibly once joined to Lñzon, the Bashee and other groups of islets remaining as "survivals" of the junction. If monkeys abound on land (so much so that one of the chief peaks is called Mount Ap) alligators are equally numerous in the water. They swarm so that it is seldom safe to cross a river in a light boat, or on a pony—for the island boasts a few Chinese ponies, imported for

the use of luxurious Europeans or fat mandarins.

Then, the underground wealth matches the beauty of the surface. There are mines of gold and copper; and coal is already largely worked. Petroleum, too, "the fuel of the future," is found here as in most other places; and there are the virgin forests, which will soon get ruined (as they have been nearly all the world over) when civilised man plants himself firmly in the country.

Such is Formosa. Its aborigines, "harmless when not provoked," are fine specimens of humanity. The weaklings die off, and the survivors are wonderfully well shaped, and so strong that, if they escape the chances of savage life, they are out hunting or fighting at three score years and ten, as keenly as if they were barely out of their teens. Everybody goes armed; the ploughman and shepherd have their bows ready, just as the Jews had when they were building their city wall. Besides bows and arrows, they have very broad swords, and a few old Chinese matchlocks, which they never use without a "rest" to take aim from. When provoked they have an ugly trick of waiting for you at a corner, and cutting you down as you pass. Still, missionaries do not despair of them; the old Spanish work still lingers on, and the English and Americans are at it—the former (their enemies say) combining a profitable trade, in East India opium and Manchester goods, with the preaching of the Gospel, much as in Tonga and elsewhere they manage to make a very good penny out of arrow-root.

Unattractive as the natives are, the island is coveted by more than one European power. Three years ago, the Germans offered the Chinese government five million dollars for it. There was no indemnity to pay just then; so China refused. But after the next opium, or treaty-port, or missionary war, the emperor may, perhaps, be compelled to sell. Quite lately Italy has been trying, in a humbler way, to plant a factory; but, hitherto, with little success. Last year, however, Formosa was a great deal in the newspapers; every mail brought news of the expected rupture between China and Japan; and all because a few Japanese fishermen had been massacred by the aborigines, on the south-east of Formosa. Japan conveniently forgot that, not many years ago, it was her custom also to kill those unlucky enough to be ship-

wrecked on her shores; nay, moreover, to kill any Japanese, who, having been cast away on any foreign land, should afterwards get back to his native country. But Japan is now civilised—she has railways, telegraphs, an army dressed up in European clothes, and, above all, a national debt. No wonder she felt aggrieved at the barbarism of the Formosans.

Why they should have become so barbarous all of a sudden is a mystery; for, eight years ago, an American (Legendre, Consul at Amoy) took occasion, from the massacre of the crew of the Rover, to go over to Formosa, "interview" several chiefs—notably the great Tok-e-tok—and make a compact, whereby all shipwrecked folks should be held to ransom, instead of being killed. It was a bold thing to do; and for some time it was successful. A notable instance of this occurred in 1871, when a junk belonging to an English company put in to cut wood. After getting a load, it was caught in a typhoon and swamped, with the loss of seventeen out of a crew of thirty-five. The eighteen survivors were not killed, but shut up in a shed, and word was passed on across the island to Mr. Pickering, the agent at Taiwan-fou. He at once sent two Englishmen southward to enquire into the truth of the matter; and the journey (in great part on foot) of Mr. Hughes and his friend is, in its way, as noteworthy as that of the Forrests across Western Australia. From the natives they met with no hindrance; once only a Boutan (the Boutans are the wildest tribe, in the extreme south-east), probably drunk with bhang or opium, drew his big sword, and began to dance round them, foaming at the mouth, rolling his eyes, and looking in general as if he was going to "run a-muck." But just as they were getting frightened, out rushed the man's wife, tall and comely like most of the Boutan women, wrenched the sword out of her husband's hand, and drove him, with much scolding, into his hut. Next day the poor fellow came and humbly begged pardon, offering a practical illustration of the way in which women's rights are respected in lat. 23° N. long. 121° E. Arrived at Tok-e-tok's village, they found that chief out hunting, but were hospitably received by his wives, who gave them venison cooked in half-a-dozen ways, fresh pork, delicious rice, and the alternative between splendidly pure water and shamsou (sweet-potato spirit). Of course two white men at dinner brought

the whole village to look on; but, though the lattice-work hut, which was Tok-e-tok's palace, was beset with eager eyes, not a soul incommoded them. If any one was pushed in by the press outside, a look from the ladies sufficed to send him out utterly ashamed of himself. On the whole the story reminds us of the old prints of the French king dining in public, with the eager Parisians watching the while; though, probably, the Parisians were more pushing than the Boutans. Even now-a-days we, in England, know something of this crowding to see distinguished personages eat.

Very early next day the chief came back, and at once arranged an open-air conference, which was inaugurated by an old woman stepping into the midst of the assemblage, and chanting an invocation to peace and goodwill. It was arranged that the eighteen should be sent to Taiwan-fou as soon as the ransom, according to tariff, had been paid. The delight of these poor creatures, who thought they were being kept to be eaten, may well be imagined, and Mr. Hughes was anxious to return with all speed and send the money. But Tok-e-Tok insisted on their staying to a great feast; and they, judging (a little harshly, to my thinking) that they were on ticklish ground, and that it only needed two or three glasses of shamsou to turn their kind hosts into furious madmen, thought it best to yield. They were not kept long waiting. A hundred hunters sallied out at once, and returned in a few hours loaded with deer, boars, and small game; these were skinned, and the feast began as quickly as the feasts described in Homer or Virgil. What astonished the white men was that while everybody else had a layer of banana leaves for plates, for them were set plate, knife, fork—all complete. Sheffield and Birmingham and Stoke-upon-Trent had managed to get their goods right into the wildest part of Formosa, as, indeed, they somehow manage to get them everywhere. The feast over, the war-dance began, and then (by way of ballet) a wonderful imitation of a cock-fight; and at last, by moonlight, the whole tribe escorted the two whites to their boundary, and, in their fashion, bade them good speed. In due time the eighteen were safely handed over to Mr. Pickering.

If this is a fair sample of Boutan procedure, it is hard to understand how they could so far have forgotten themselves as to have killed, in 1873, fifty Japanese subjects. I believe there must be some

mistake in the numbers; though Japanese practice and the memories of our own wreckers make ugly stories of that kind credible enough. But the Japanese wanted a war to keep their army in good humour. It is not everybody in Japan who likes the wholesale changes, which have stripped the daimios of their hereditary privileges, forced rich and poor to alter their style of dress, broken up the priesthood—in fact, done more, in six years, than has been done in Europe in as many centuries. Railways and telegraphs and iron-clads and paper-money are all good in their way, though Japanese Tories may well sigh for the good old days when the export of gold was forbidden; but the Samonrai (military dependents of the chiefs) are a large class, suddenly thrown out of the means of life, and deprived of social consideration. They had been restless for some time; and two years ago a revolt broke out in Kinsin, the cry being, "War with Corea; death to the Jo-i (strangers); restoration of feudalism." Only by great efforts were the insurgents, who had burnt a castle and beaten a detachment of the Mikado's troops, crushed, before the revolt had spread over the whole group of islands. Just then the Japanese envoy, who in 1873 managed, along with the European envoys, to get himself presented to the Chinese emperor, returned. He had brought the Formosan outrages very strongly before the Pekin government; but Prince Kung's answer had been: "non possumus—we are powerless, unhappily, in South Formosa." The Japanese were naturally angry; Legendre, who had gone back with them from Pekin to Jeddo, and who in 1871 had been surveying on the Formosan coast, offered maps and charts; and, since the alternative seemed to lie between a foreign war and disaffection at home, the cry was, "If China cannot or will not right us, we must right ourselves."

There was not much danger, except from typhoons; for the fighting men of the eighteen independent Formosan tribes do not number altogether more than two thousand five hundred, and those whom the Japanese despatches characterised as "bad" they only estimated at six hundred. Still there was this risk; the Formosan expedition might lead to a war with China, and in such a war defeat would have been ruinous—would have thrown Japan back some centuries at least, and would have brought into the field Russia or Germany,

who are eagerly watching to force themselves in as allies.

The expedition was, like all such affairs, when undertaken by a trader-ridden country like Japan, ten times as costly as it ought to have been; a whole swarm of white jobbers and traders had something or other to get off their hands, which was, of course, bought at the seller's price. Last May it sailed—three thousand five hundred men, in three war steamers, a gunboat, and an armed sloop, besides a transport full of mechanics, with frames, &c., to build houses for a little colony. Three Bontan villages were soon ablaze; and there was a battle up a valley, in which the Japanese lost twelve killed and wounded. They killed the chief and his son, known by their silver finger-rings, and so terrified the other tribes that they came in to make submission, bringing dried fish and firewood. In July the grand battle took place. The heights were stormed; the Bontans fired their matchlocks under cover of their leaf-thatched huts, but they were beaten out, and what became of the survivors nobody knows. If they did not succeed in gaining the mountains they were probably cut to pieces by the other tribes. And so Japan took full rank as a civilised state by exterminating a tribe of barbarians. It is a little unpleasant to learn that the Japanese cut off and carried away the heads of their dead enemies; but then they have only had, at most, ten years of European culture.

Then followed a great peace-making. The Japanese general distributed flags to all the tribes who had made submission, and gave them champagne, which so touched their hearts, that they burst into tears, cursed the Bontans, and swore eternal friendship to the Mikado.

All this time the Chinese had made no sign; Japanese energy seemed to have paralyzed them; but now that everything was over, the taotai (governor) posted up a proclamation in Taiwan-fou, telling the people that "the Japanese came to punish the murderous Bontans. They have punished them; but, as they seem inclined to prolong their stay, the Chinese Emperor tells me he has sent two high officers to order them to go. The Bontans were to blame; but it was our business to deal with them. Meanwhile, the emperor bids all the tribes to put aside their arms, and go on with their usual work; he will settle matters with Japan." In this way the Chinese avoided a war—by delaying all in-

terference until the Japanese had done everything that they had the slightest excuse for doing. Saigo, the Japanese general, of course, declined to give way to the two commissioners: "we are here; and we shall hold a fort for the protection of our shipwrecked people." "But you mustn't stay," said the Chinese; and at last, after much diplomacy and many fierce messages, Japan caved in for the present, and Formosa is no longer a *casus belli*.

But what has happened is enough to make us thoughtful for the future. A hostile encounter between China and Japan, with their huge armies and growing steam fleets, could not fail to have its effect on India; and India touched, means England alarmed. So even the little-known island of Formosa may at any time be the cause of trouble here in the west.

MARIGOLD.

A ROMANCE IN AN OLD GARDEN. IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Marigold arrived at Hildebrand Towers, she found Poll Hackett sitting in an arm-chair, by her fireside, wrapped up in flannels, and unable to move any member except her tongue. All her thoughts were occupied with ringing the changes upon one idea; whether or not the news could be true, that the master of Hildebrand Towers had been found at last. Sometimes, she was perfectly sure there was not a doubt of the fact, and lamented bitterly the accident of her own state of temporary helplessness.

"To think of me sittin' here like a mummy, or a cripple, for the master to walk in upon, as if I had been takin' my money for nothin' but a shelter to my own poor bones, all these years. Me, that was always on the trot, in an' out, up an' down, expectin' an' expectin', and preparin' to that degree, that I declare my mind's a'most wore out wid the dint of the perpetual preparation. 'Never you leave off bein' ready,' said the ould mistress to me afore she died, and I never did, as Peter Lally can witness to you. All the coals that has been burned to death in them rooms for nothin'! All the chickens that has been fattened, over an' over again, runnin' up to my feet an' askin' to be killed for the master's dinner! An now to think of him waitin' till I'm pinned to my chair like a good-for-nothing. An' comin' walkin' in disgusted because everything's at sixes and sevens!"

"But they're not at sixes and sevens!" Marigold would cry. "The fires are blazing beautifully, all through the upper rooms; there isn't a speck of dust anywhere, for I've just been all round with a duster. I've even got in some scarlet berries off the old garden wall, to mix with the ivy in the big vases, in the drawing-room. There's provision for a good dinner in the larder, and six pairs of sheets aired as dry as can be. I don't know anything about the place that isn't as it should be, except one little hole in the carpet, on the stair that goes up to the attics, and I mean to darn it directly. So make your mind easy, Poll Hackett, and let me give you a good rubbing with this liniment!"

But the next day Poll had a new cause for uneasiness.

"Nonsense, child!" she said to Marigold. "Stop wastin' your trouble all for nothing. There's no more a master comin' here nor you're goin' to Australia, only wicked talk of mischievous people to throw me into a fever, and me with the rheumatism. Go out an' tell Peter Lally not to be makin' a fool of himself, dreamin' over triumphant arches, for I seen them in his eye last night, an' him talkin' to me; and then come back an' settle down here wid your sewin' or somethin'!"

And Marigold, glad to get away awhile, put on her cloak, and went out along the damp gravel paths, by the trim lawns, and ancient gardens, to the ivied corner where stood Peter Lally's dwelling, in the angle of two peach-tree-covered walls. As she went along, two or three of Poll's fretful words rang in her ears, with a perplexing pertinacity. "No more nor you are going to Australia," said a voice in her ear; and answered itself again, "Perhaps you are going to Australia!"

Peter Lally was sitting in his cottage, with his chair drawn to the hearth, and his pipe lying unlighted on the hob beside him. His eyes were fixed absently on a smouldering piece of wood in the grate, and there was a general look about him, which suggested that something unusual had occurred. Peter was in noway a chilly kind of man, and not given to sitting by his fireside in the middle of the day.

"Oh, aye!" said Peter to Marigold. "She's on the turn now. Poll takes a try at every opinion under the sun, an' of coorse she must happen on the right one sometimes. She's not hit on it now, how-

somdever. We must give her another day or two to be round at the truth."

"What is the truth, then, Peter?" said Marigold; "for this was trth with you only yesterday."

"But twenty-four hours has gone by since then, my girl; and there's many a thing knocked down or put on its feet in as many seconds. There's a message come in to me an hour ago, an' it has took the breath out o' me, somehow; so that I cannot do fair by my dixinary words. I'll be able to talk to you this evening, little Marigold. When the lawyer gentleman arrives, I'll have my wits got ready."

"What do you mean, Peter?" said Marigold. "You don't want me to keep puzzling at a riddle until evening?"

"The master's found!" said Peter, lifting his gray head, and gazing at the girl, half in triumph, and half in blind amazement at his own statement. "The lawyer'll be here to-night, to bid us what to do! Go off, now, and talk your women-talk over it; for Peter's too dumbfounded to make head or tail out o' it yet!"

That evening the lawyer from London arrived: a gentleman who had for many years paid occasional visits to the Towers, to collect rents on the estate, and to see that the place was kept in order. He was all the master whom Poll and Peter knew.

This time, however, he came to make arrangements for the arrival of the long-looked-for owner of Hildebrand Towers. Being a person of few words, he had little to say, after all, when he summoned Peter into his presence.

"Your new master is a fine young man," he said, nodding pleasantly at Peter; "one you need not be afraid of. It's a curious story, is his; you will hear it all, no doubt, by-and-by. He might have been here before now, only he has been ill of a fever. He had a good deal of anxiety about making good his claim, and that, very probably, knocked him up. Well, you will remember my instructions as usual. I have to go ten miles further to-night; so must waste no more time."

And away he went, leaving Peter, Poll, and Marigold very little wiser than when he came. One thing only they knew for certain; that, on a particular day, the master of Hildebrand Towers would dine in the old dining-room—at the board whereat his ancestors had eaten and drunk. It was his wish to come quietly and alone into the place, and to make hereafter such changes as might seem to him suitable.

"Rub me well!" cried Poll Hackett to Marigold; "Rub, as you never rubbed in your life before; for I must be about, to receive the new master! Things is comin' out just as I always knew they would, only nobody would believe me. I knew I'd be caught this ways; only I won't, if the Lord gives me life. I'll be up and goin' about, and get my credit for all I've done these years. There'll still be a house-keeper wantin', let him be what he likes; an' I'm not to be thrust out as old rubbish an' another put into my shoes. Now, Marigold, dear," she went on, "I want you to stick to me; and don't let me have to be sending for help into the town for the sake of a gentleman's dinner. There's them would be glad to come out and fill up the kitchen, and curtsey in the hall in white caps and aprons, an' take my credit away from me, and put in for my place. But, if you stick to me now, I'll tide over the time, an' be ready for my work again."

"Don't be uneasy," said Marigold; "we'll have nobody from the town. You'll show me how to cook the dinner, and I know how a table should be arranged. I'll serve him—I'd as soon do one thing as another—and I'll try and make you well enough to have all the curtseying in the hall to yourself."

Marigold, having thus pledged herself, went about making her last effort at being useful to those who had been good to her. She took her way up and down through the old chambers and passages of the house, seeing that everything was well-ordered, placing old-fashioned articles of furniture in their best aspect, brightening and garnishing a little here and there, so that the house might appear well cared for, and Poll Hackett's precious "credit" should not suffer. In the long, faded, antique drawing-room she placed branches of hot-house flowers in the great china vases on the mantelpieces, saying to herself, "it is the last time I shall work among Peter's flowers." In the dim ghostly mirrors she saw her own solitary figure and the glow of the fire, and the blush and freshness of the flowers, making a wonderful patch of life and warmth in the middle of the lack-lustre, moth-tinted room. She remembered the evening when she had dressed like a lady to amuse Poll Hackett, and had danced about here; "a poor, foolish, light-headed thing!" she said now, looking around her. And then she recollects how much happiness was

inclined in the folly of that day—how Ulick had come to meet her among the trees, and how they had talked, and she had believed. With that day had set the glory of the summer of her life!

It was wonderful how all the old reception-rooms warmed up under the bloom of her decorations. This was her last piece of work, and she would do it well, she thought; and went out to Peter Lally for more flowers to weave into it. It was a day of pale gleams and weeping rains, that made the thickets blacker, and bare branches seem more naked as they shivered against the sky. Marigold traversed the wet paths towards the gardens, and, following a wayward impulse, quitted them to cross the long swards and to reach the mossy place enclosed by trees where stood the sun-dial. Here she and Ulick had lingered on that summer evening which seemed so long ago; then the rose-thickets near had been covered with bloom, the blackbirds sang, the air was full of perfume and the sky of golden clouds. She saw again the burnished foliage and deep purple shadows of the trees, she felt a warm light on her face, and a tender touch upon her hand. Now, what a change! Never again would she see the moving shadow chased by the sun over the grey face of the dial; never pluck the roses, nor listen for the blackbird's note; never feel smile of love on brow or tender touch on hand. Beyond these blackened, blighted trees, beyond that rainy horizon, stretched the mighty restless ocean which had already divided her from her happiness, and was now drawing her spirit away with it, as it ebbed moaning to the most distant side of the world. Farther than he had gone she would go; those strong, wandering, restless waves should take her in their arms, either to carry her into eternity, or into some new existence of action yet unshaped and undreamed. In the sighing of the rain, in the raving of the wind through the trees, she heard only its hoarse urgent voice calling her away.

Peter Lally was busy arranging the shelves of his greenhouses when Marigold came to him praying for more flowers.

"I'll give you plenty," he said, "only you must leave me enough to look handsome here myself. The master will expect me to look beautiful; oh, then, if I had only all the flowers round about me that I reared and buried since I've been waiting for him! There, I've smashed a pot! my hands are shakin', and I feel all someway

taken up by the roots. I don't know what's going to happen next, the times is so square. When a thing you've been expectin' for a lifetime comes an' stares you in the face of a sudden, it seems as if it ought to be a sort of finishing off to you some way or another. Howsomdever I'll be here to the fore in the spring, my girl; it'll take more frosts nor one to kill me out; an' I'll have a pretty little lot of plants for you to begin your work with."

"I won't want them, Peter," said Marigold; "I'm going away. I'm going to Australia".

"Australia! You!" cried Peter. "No, no, Marigold; don't be lettin' such thoughts come into your head. You've had hard times upon you; but you're not going to be astray on the world, for the sake o' them that isn't as honest as yourself. I was thinkin' that when the new times is come you'd fall into somethin' nice about the place, an' might work your way up to be a lady, as you've the right to be. As long as Peter's alive you won't want for one to be a father to you; but yon'd be lonesome crossin' the sea, my girl!"

"It's here that I'm lonesome, Peter," said Marigold. "It's only because of the winter-time, and the coldness and barrenness of everything that I can get on with it at all. I couldn't wait here to see another spring coming over the world. The summer-look of everything would take the last drop of blood out of my heart; and I have my life to live, and I'll need all my strength. I've no place here any more; in another world I'll make room for myself. I've done with flowers—I'll never meet another one like you——; but I must go my way, all the same."

She turned her back upon him with a dry sob, picked up her flowers, and went out of the greenhouse.

The day arrived, which was to bring a master to take possession of Hildebrand Towers. The rain had cleared away; a yellow lake had welled up among the grey wastes of the clouds; the old rooks plumed themselves on the ivy, and made mysterious comment upon certain events which the day was to bring forth. Poll Hackett, with the help of liniment and a determined will, was hobbling about in her best attire, and had been practising curtseys all the morning. Snow-white napery, a hundred years old, which had been used to see the light only on occasion of being aired and bleached, now clothed the old mahogany of the dining-room; glass and chiu-

twinkled, and silver shone; flowers bloomed in moss in the centre of the table; the firelight flashed over the astonishment and satisfaction of the assembled company of Hildebrands on the walls, who looked down on the preparations for their long-missing and long-expected descendant. At dusk, Marigold looked out of one of the deep, beetled-browed windows, and saw how, in place of the yellow lake, a fire now seemed kindled in the heavens, against which the trees were outspread, as if for warmth. She listened for wheels, closed the shutters, lighted the candles, and returned to the kitchen, to move the roasting pallets a little further from the fire.

"He's past his hour," said Peter Lally, who sat at the fire in a state of feverish expectation. "He's not one of the punctual sort; that's all we know about him, yet."

"Whisht!" cried Poll. "Didn't you hear a door clappin' up-stairs? I feel as if there was something walkin' about the house. I wish he would come."

Suddenly the door-bell rang out, sharp and clear.

"It's him!" cried Poll, fluttering hysterically.

"God bid him welcome!" said Peter, rising solemnly.

"It's only the back gate bell," said Marigold, quietly. "A beggar, or a messenger. I'll see who it is."

Poll and Peter sank back into their seats.

"She has her wits about her," said Peter, rubbing his forehead in a bewildered way. "It's well there's somebody brisk."

Marigold took a lantern, and disappeared down a long dark passage, and the others were again intent upon listening. All at once an extraordinary cry rang up out of the depths of the darkness into which Marigold had passed; and then there was silence again.

"She's murdered!" shrieked Poll. "I knew there was something quare in the house!"

"Tut, woman!" said Peter, and seizing the poker, he trotted down the passage.

Mrs. Hackett's fears seemed, for a moment, reasonable to Peter, when he saw on before him, at the end of the passage, an open door, the lantern on the ground, the dark figure of a man within the threshold, and Marigold drooping over the arm of the stranger.

"Oh Peter, oh Peter!" cried Ulick's voice, "I have come too suddenly; I have killed her."

"You have treated her badly, at all events, young man!" said Peter, sternly.

Marigold lifted her white face, and looked at Peter. "Bring him in," she said. "He is wet and cold."

"Now, Poll, woman, quit your skirlin'!" said Peter, as the three entered the warm and fragrant kitchen. "My word for it, there's nobody has time to attend to you! It's these cold hands here that wants a little rubbin' now."

"Don't mind me, Peter," said Marigold. "I've got back my breath again. Sorrow did not kill me, and joy will not kill me neither. Here's a hungry man that wants his supper. The fowls will be spoiled; I'll dish them at once!"

"But the master!" cried Peter.

"He ought to have been in time," said Marigold. "That is if he wanted three times more dinner than he could eat."

"You look pale and thin; have you been ill?" said Peter, softening towards Ulick, as he looked in his face.

"I have been very near death; else you should never have had to reproach me," said Ulick. "I have a long story to tell; but there is plenty of time for it."

"The enemies were stronger than you expected, perhaps?" said Marigold.

"Yes, but their power is over," said Ulick. "I told you I should come back if I overcame them."

"Oh, do tell us all about it!" cried Poll.

"Let him rest a little, first," said Marigold, seeing something in Ulick's face which she did not quite understand; and then Ulick held her hand tighter than before, and began to pour out stories of his experience of travel, telling of London shops, and London streets, and of fellow-travellers by ship and by coach. So the time passed; the candles were burning away in the dining-room; the carefully-cooked dinner was spoiled and overlooked. Poll forgot her rheumatism, and Peter his feverish expectation of the descendant of the Hildebrands.

"Good heavens!" cried the old man at last. "We have quite forgotten about the master!"

All four looked startled at the words. Ulick trembled strangely, and gazed anxiously in Marigold's face.

"Ulick can tell us about him, Peter," said Marigold. "Ulick knows something. Do you not?"

"Yes," said Ulick, gravely.

"What? Is he alive? Will he be here soon?"

"He is alive. He is here. I am the master."

The silence of bewildered amazement fell on the three hearers of these strange words. They had not heard aright; they could not take it in; they were stunned.

"Has no one a word for me? Am I to get no welcome?"

"You, Ulick!" stammered Peter Lally.

"I, Ulick, am also Godfrey Hildebrand," said the young man. "I did not know it till that news came which took me away to England; and even then I could not tell whether or not I should be able to prove the truth. It was the interest of others more powerful to ignore my claim, to make me appear an impostor. By degrees I shall be able to tell you how much they have made me suffer; how my silence, my illness, were all the effect of their unscrupulous attempts to put me down. In the meantime, I want a welcome to my home."

Peter Lally got up, trembling, and pulling his grey forelock, looked out of watering eyes in the young man's agitated face. Poll Hackett, having shrieked three times, made desperate attempts to come down out of her chair and perform a curtsey.

"Heaven bless my master!" said Peter. "Excuse me sir, I do not rightly feel it real yet. But Heaven bless my master, that I have lived to see!"

"Thank you, Peter," said the new Hildebrand, shaking his old friend's hand. "Please God, good times are before us all! Marigold, sweet soul, don't cry so. It is strange to see tears from you now, after all you have borne so bravely!"

"Oh, Ulick, I am not fit to be a lady!" whispered Marigold, who was sobbing on his shoulder.

"Are you not?" said Ulick, proudly. "The world shall judge of that by-and-by."

SILVERTOWN.

ON the edge of a marsh, in the dubious region between half fluid land and almost solid water, is the thriving colony of Silvertown. Overhead a brumous sky, underfoot artificial "terra" made "firma" by innumerable piles. Across the river, Woolwich, cheered by the presence of "the military." Near at hand, useful but odiferous gasworks, the gardens ruled by the Napoleon of caterers, a shabby railway station, and a pretty church. Not an old ivy-grown edifice this last, but a brand new, spick and span, smart and trim modern building rejoicing in its youth—proud of

having been born yesterday. Out of a chaos of mud and slime have sprung neat lines of cottages, a grim hostelry yept "The Railway Hotel," huge wharves, and the seven acres of now solid ground which form the cause and explanation of the whole curious development. On these seven acres are closely packed great buildings, lofty chimneys, and frequent steam engines puffing and snorting in their usual self-asserting manner—bred of the conviction that they cannot be done without, and that their presence, repulsive though it be, must be endured for the sake of their power. There are endless contrivances here, for adapting abundant steam power to the use of man. Broad belts and mighty fly-wheels propel the minor engines, watched keenly by the craftsman's eye, or guided by the work-woman's cunning hand. For the productions of Silvertown are various: india-rubber sheeting, waterproof coats, valves and "washers" of vulcanised "rubber," sponge bags, and those curious portable baths which Englishmen carry with them on their travels, to the amazement of less amphibious races; hard india-rubber, "ebonite," as it is called, in buttons, bottles, cups, and funnels; and last, but not least, ocean cables, and the wonderful telegraphic apparatus for working and testing them. To Silvertown come the "rubber" and "percha" in their crude condition, as purchased from the noble savage; and by their literally internal evidence provoke curious ideas as to the guileless nature of untutored man, uncontaminated by civilisation, uncorrupted by arts and sciences. Our noble friend is doubtless a fine fellow in his way, having decided opinions as to the right of women to do all the work, and entertaining loose ideas on the question of food and property, but worthy of all possible admiration until his faculties are sharpened by the excitement of a "deal." In the long run he is no match for the white, who has been everywhere and done everything, not to say everybody; but occasionally the untutored child of nature proves himself up to his work, by cunningly using a stone, or a piece of heavy wood, as the core of an apparently solid block of india-rubber. Mr. Baily has many of these choice specimens of savage ingenuity on his shelves, and points to them as proofs that the untutored are "kittle cattle to shoe."

From its rough form as block or bottle

"rubber," the juice of the caoutchouc tree undergoes many curious mutations before it becomes a merchantable sheet. In a largo building, filled with great iron troughs, and odours far from spicy, many men are at work on the rough rubber, which is first cut into pieces and then partially macerated and washed clean from impurities, emerging at length in the form of long strips of a dirty-white colour, not unlike fragments of unbleached Turkish towelling. It is now ready for the macerating mills, wherein it is worked up with hot water till it assumes the appearance of the chewed india-rubber dear to schoolboys. As the macerator slowly revolves, it squeezes from its capacious jaws a dark-looking viscid mass, only to seize it again and repeat the operation until the material becomes homogeneous, when it is ready for the cylinders. In these it is squeezed, under heavy pressure, through sieves of exceeding fineness, which take up every remaining particle of dirt or grit, and the rubber is now ready to be rolled into thick or thin sheets—or applied to cylinders under which pass miles of silk or cotton cloth, until, after some half dozen applications, a coating of sufficient thickness to make it waterproof has been deposited on the fabric—or to be cast in moulds into valves or buffers. "Washers" and such small deer are cut out of the heavy sheets, which are also employed for making the mats now so much in use. These are produced by a singularly beautiful process applied to sheets of vulcanised caoutchouc. This vulcanising operation is simple enough, consisting merely of the addition of a quantity of sulphur—often combined with colouring matter—to the wet paste of rubber, followed by baking in huge iron ovens filled in with lime. Charged with sulphur the rubber is rolled into long bands, of about half the width of the proposed mats. These bands pass on a travelling bed under a machine furnished with sharp cutters, which inflict stabs at regular distances, and finally cut off the band into lengths. These are next stretched on a frame so as to tear the wounds into almost lozenge-shaped openings, forming a perfect pattern; a process far superior in point of economy to that of punching out the interstices, and thus involving waste of labour and material. Stretched on frames, the mats are now duly baked, and on leaving the oven retain perfectly the form imposed upon them.

To this process of vulcanising, rubber owes much of its adaptability to many uses of modern life. The addition of sulphur, followed by baking in lime, imparts to the material the power of resisting heat, and has extended the area of india-rubber goods to the torrid zone. Carried a step further this process produces ebonite, a material of great hardness and density, of which all kinds of articles, useful and ornamental, may be made: among which may be mentioned the cheap imitations of jet, which have the advantage of being far more durable than the hydro-carbon imitated. An entire district of Silvertown is devoted to the manufacture of waterproof clothing, vulcanised and unvulcanised. Here are stored huge rolls of material coated with rubber, and occasionally, in the case of very fine goods, supplied with an extra layer of fabric concealing the rubber entirely from view. Prettiest among these goods is a light fawn-coloured silk, coated first with rubber, which is then "sandwiched" by the application of checked silk, the result being the material employed for "reversible" coats and cloaks.

In the manufacture of gutta-percha the processes are so similar to those employed for india-rubber, that they hardly merit a separate description. Cleansed, macerated, pressed, and rolled, the "percha" is cut into strips, nearly resembling hides in appearance. The employment, however, of this useful material has been much curtailed by its great increase in price. Only a few years ago there was a cry of "Every Man his own Cobbler," and otherwise sane persons undertook to sole their own boots—an attempt attended with varying success, especially among those who could not be prevented from toasting their toes by the fire. These latter often found the experiment "come off" in a literal and aggravating manner; but the days of amateur boot-soling concluded with the scarcity of "percha," caused by its profuse employment in the manufacture of telegraph cables. At one time it was proposed to apply "percha" to the arts, and it was shown that successful statuettes could be cast from this plastic material; but experience demonstrated that it perished on exposure to the air, and that work cast in it underwent a gradual process of deterioration.

It is now largely used for coating submarine telegraph wires; its greater strength rendering it preferable for this purpose to rubber, which however does well enough

for terrestrial or aerial lines. The growth of a cable, from a simple copper wire to the robust proportions it ultimately acquires, can be perfectly followed at Silvertown. Around a nucleus of slender copper are twisted six strands of similar wire. This work goes on rapidly, and the heart or working part of the cable is continuously turned out; for in the making of cables there is no break—no solution of continuity. As mile after mile of the seven-fold wire is made, fresh lengths of copper are spliced or rather "brazed" on, and the product is reeled off and passed overhead to undergo further treatment before it becomes a complete "core." It may here be remarked that the long ocean telegraph cables have only one core, and that attempts to bind several cores in one cable have been definitely abandoned—at least for long distances. The twisted wire now passes away in one enormous length, to be coated with gutta-percha, and to that end is slowly dragged through a box supplied with that material; the quantity taken up being reduced to an uniform thickness by the size of the aperture from which the core emerges. Cooled down until the percha has thoroughly solidified, the core is again and again dressed with coatings of waterproof, and after the third operation becomes a dark-coloured worm of barely half an inch in diameter, consisting of seven strands of wire, and three substantial coats of gutta-percha. At this stage it is stowed in tanks, exposed to various temperatures, and carefully tested at each—an operation of considerable delicacy, in which those scientific electricians, Mr. Gray and Mr. March Webb, take great interest. Approved as a good sound core, it is now ready to receive the coating intended to preserve it from accidents of tension and abrasion, and from the determined incursions of marine animals such as the teredo. To this end it is swathed in jute, and "payed" either with the silicon compound invented by Mr. Latimer Clark, or with a similar mixture, in which carbon takes the place of silica. The immense buildings devoted to this operation are rope-walks of no common kind. Entering at one end, the simple core, passing through a machine, receives its covering of jute, then, travelling onwards, is "payed" with the material just described; and next, without a break, undergoes one of the prettiest operations in the whole course of its

manufacture. Whirling rapidly round are seven strands of heavy steel wire. Passing through these the prepared core is endowed with armour, heavy, close, and so accurately twisted, that the dreaded teredo may despair of finding a chink in the closely-knit mail. The cable is now a mighty steel-clad serpent, strong enough to encounter the perils of the deep sea, but is deemed worthy of yet more protection, before being consigned to the rocks and waves. Moving ever onward and onward, over the heads of workmen and spectators, our cable-kraken is once more clothed in jute and "payed" with composition, and its glittering armour, now covered by a sable surcoat, is wound off into mighty iron tanks, where it reposes till the ship is ready to carry it to its destination among the lofty hills and dales of the Atlantic basin, or the rugged declivities and gnawing coral reefs of Indian seas. The size of these tanks may be judged from the fact that three hundred miles of cable may be stowed in one of them without half filling it. Huge grommets are they, containing many miles of cable, and much pitchy Stygian fluid, of hideous density and noisome odour.

In its complete form a deep-sea cable is about one inch and a half in diameter, and weighs some five or six tons per knot; but these dimensions are greatly increased in the shore ends, which are strengthened till they are as thick as a man's wrist, and their weight nearly doubled. These extreme precautions are rendered necessary, by the probability of accident at the shore ends from ship's anchors, and also by the strain occasioned by steep inclinations and other peculiarities of a rocky shore.

When the enormous weight and length of an ocean cable are taken into consideration, it at once becomes evident that the work of transferring it from the tank ashore; into the tank aboard the ship charged with laying it, is no common task. It is well managed at Silvertown. One of the vessels belonging to the company—for makers of cables generally contract to lay them, and deliver them in working order to the telegraph companies—is moored in the river at a respectful distance. Aerial tackle is fixed, and the lengthy monster, after being subjected to the most delicate tests, is run overhead and coiled in the tanks—arranged in the ship so as to obviate, as much as possible, any undue strain upon a particular part. On the wharf overlooking

the river are storehouses of the material required in laying cables. Here are iron buoys of all sorts, shapes, and sizes, furnished with neat contrivances for holding up cable ends and letting them go when occasion requires; regiments of barrels, employed for floating the heavy ends ashore in shallow water; and little iron testing-houses, made to take to pieces and pack in chests, with every plate carefully numbered, so that they may be put up anywhere in the shortest possible time. In these tiny huts the scientific officers of a cable-laying expedition house themselves and the delicate instruments used for testing and detecting the position of faults in the cable—serious matters, involving much picking up, cutting out, and splicing. Here also is an arsenal of grappnels for picking up, powerful machinery for under-running, and ample provision for meeting all the accidents that cables are heir to. The good ship *Dacia*, a veteran at cable-laying, is lying off the works; a stout iron screw steamer. At her stern is the simple machinery required for paying out a cable: a process easy enough in smooth, but not so pleasant in rough weather. The bow of the ship is occupied by a light iron staging, and the machinery for picking up a lost or defective cable—no light business at the best. In fair weather, however, the process of picking up and cutting out a fault, already carefully ascertained, is neat and pretty enough. By the agency of powerful clamps the defective portion is hoisted on board and simply laid across the bows of the ship, until, by continuous testing and careful examination, the fatal spot is fixed upon. Made fast on either side, the cable is now subjected to excision, the sound ends are brought together, perfectly brazed, and spliced; and the cable made whole is once more thrown overboard. During the whole process of cable-laying, which proceeds with the greatest regularity, and without those "kinks" which to the uninitiated would seem inevitable, the scientific corps is constantly at work, testing and testing again the continuity of communication with the shore. The instruments employed are of the most extreme delicacy, and at Silvertown a special department is devoted to their manufacture. Far too dainty for rough work, but invaluable for testing from the shore, is the electrometer invented by Sir William Thompson, of electrical fame. This consists of a needle suspended by a

silken thread, and furnished with a small mirror, which flashes its record upon a scale placed opposite to it. A modified form of this beautiful instrument is now almost universally used for the ordinary purposes of ocean telegraphy. It was found that the older system of printing off dots and dashes involved an expenditure of electrical power highly detrimental to the cables—in fact, burning them up with excessive use. It therefore became an important object to secure some method by which the maximum of work might be achieved by the minimum of electric force; and, thanks to the suspended mirror, messages may be sent for thousands of miles with the force derived from three simple cells. Instead of printing off the dots and dashes of the Morse system, the alphabet only is retained, and the dot is indicated by a slight deflection of the mirror to the left, and the dash by a similar movement to the right. Nothing can be easier than to read off a message in this way, and the saving in wear and tear of a long cable is immense. Many more interesting features are to be found at Silvertown—as truly a product of capital applied to industry as Saltaire itself—but a short winter's day is nearly over, a thousand workpeople are forsaking the busy spot, and the visitor must perforce hasten to the train for Fenchurch Street—perhaps the gloomiest and most uncomfortable spot in London on a chilly winter evening.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "*BLACK SHEEP*," "*CASTAWAY*," "*THE YELLOW FLAG*," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER IX. THE LONDON SEASON.

The house in Eaton-place had been taken, and a quarter's rent, according to the Indian colonel's invariable demand, paid in advance; Grace and Mrs. Crutchley had inspected it together, and the latter had made certain suggestions as to fittings and furniture absolutely necessary, which were being carried out. In a couple of days' time the heiress would be installed, and Mr. Heath thought it advisable to drive up to Ebury-street, to give the chaperon his final instructions.

He found her in her pretty rooms, which, no matter what might be the time of year, were always gay with blooming flowers, brightly arranged, with a knack and taste which you looked for in vain elsewhere.

Mrs. Crutchley, in her invariable black silk gown, and lace cap, was nestling in a low arm-chair, by the fire—for the sun had gone down, and the mornings and evenings were still chilly—idly cutting the leaves of a green volume of poetry, with a smart gilt paper knife, while the pink shade on a candle by her side gave her complexion a becoming hue.

"Very comfortable indeed," said Mr. Heath, looking round, as he settled himself into his seat, after a cordial greeting. "I am afraid you will find old Colonel Tulwar's house, in Eaton-place, confoundedly rough and wretched after this little paradise."

"It is not a very inspiriting mansion, I am bound to confess," said Mrs. Crutchley, with a smile, "but by the additions which I have ordered, it will be rendered habitable; and after all, I am not going to pass my life there. By the way, George, that reminds me of a question I was intending to put to you. What will be the probable duration of my engagement?"

"That, my dear Harriet," said Mr. Heath, slowly stroking his chin, "depends entirely upon circumstances. What makes you anxious to know?"

"Nothing very particular," she replied, undisturbed; "I was merely wondering whether I should endeavour to let these rooms, and if so, for how long—that was all."

"I don't think I would take any steps in the matter," said Heath; "you might get for a tenant a man who would want to smoke in them; or a woman up for the season, with her daughters, who would give musical evenings, and ruin your piano, and break your china, and make the whole place unbearable ever after. I don't think I would let the rooms, if I were you, Harriet."

"Very well," said Mrs. Crutchley, with a shrug of her shoulders, "then I won't attempt it; but you have given me no notion as to how long I shall be required."

"That, my dear Harriet, in a great measure depends upon yourself," said Heath, leaning forward, dropping his careless manner and assuming a business tone; "and it is to give you a few hints that I have come here to-day. Now, from the little you have seen of Miss Middleham, what shall you say about her—is she strong-minded, or feeble, obstinate, or easily led?"

"Your question is put with a purpose, George, and not merely to make society talk?" said Mrs. Crutchley, in the same tone. "I thought so! Well, then, my impression is that Miss Middleham is a

young lady with a will of her own, and with plenty of undeveloped firmness to support her in any resolution which she may make."

"My own view entirely," said Heath, nodding his head. "The will of her own she has, because she has been spoiled, and no one has attempted to cross it. As to undeveloped firmness, that might mean obstinacy, might it not, Harriet?"

"Not in my idea," said Mrs. Crutchley, "unless she were unskillfully treated. Properly handled, Miss Middleham could be led anywhere, and to anything."

"Exactly," said Heath, leaning back in his chair, and looking up at the ceiling; "she has what they call a very receptive mind; and if care were taken not to alarm her, might be readily influenced by anyone of superior will. Such as yourself, for instance," he added, looking down at her.

"Yes, such as I," said Mrs. Crutchley, not in the least disconcerted. "I think so."

"You see," pursued Heath, "a girl in her position, heiress to a large fortune, with no father to defend her from the attacks, or even to sift the claims, of those who aspire to her hand, will, naturally, be immensely sought after by men whose sole care for her centres in her money."

"Naturally," said Mrs. Crutchley.

"She, herself, wholly inexperienced, will not be able to comprehend this; her vanity—for most good-looking women are vain—will suggest other reasons for the attention which she receives, but it would be the duty of anyone who has her welfare really at heart, and who had the opportunity of proving it, to point out to her the schemes and machinations of these fortune-hunters, and to prevent her falling into a victim to their snares."

"I see," cried Mrs. Crutchley, complacently; "such designing sharpers should, undoubtedly, be exposed. Still, it would be a pity that the girl, on her first entrance into life, should be led to think that the world is entirely peopled by such characters. Under such circumstances, she would, indeed, have but a blank view of existence."

"You are far too clever a woman, Harriet, to start her with any such erroneous ideas," said Mr. Heath. "Life is wicked enough, no doubt; but, in most cases, there is an admixture of good with the evil."

"As I should propose to point out to Miss Middleham," said Mrs. Crutchley. "There will be plenty of specimens of fortune-hunters to show her; for, when we are once established in Eaton-place, and

the amount of her wealth gets known, I can guarantee her having the choice of half the disengaged titles known to Dobrett, to say nothing of commoners. Granting over her vanity—and she did not strike me as being very vain—it would not take much argument to prove conclusively to her the motives by which these suitors were influenced; and, while she was in a state of disgust and indignation, naturally consequent on such a discovery, one might take the opportunity of delicately alluding, in contradistinction to these wretches, to some who have given the best part of their lives to her service; to whose thoughtful care she really derived the position which she occupied, and whose whole energies were devoted to her. Such a suggestion might be made, I suppose?"

"It would have to be done with extreme delicacy, my dear Harriet," said Mr. Heath, thoughtfully. "To anyone else making such a proposal, I should say, emphatically, 'no'; but I do not mind allowing that I should not in the least object to Miss Middleham being indoctrinated with such an idea. I have every confidence in the discretion and finesse which you would use in laying it before her."

"I understand perfectly," said Mrs. Crutchley, with a smile; "and now I shall certainly not think of attempting to let my rooms."

"Right," said Mr. Heath, nodding his head; "and you will understand further, my dear Harriet, that the amount of remuneration which you will receive, by no means depends upon the length of time during which Miss Middleham is under your supervision."

A few days after this conversation, Grace and Mrs. Crutchley took up their abode at the house in Eaton-place, which, with the additions to its furniture, and a proper staff of servants, presented all the outward appearance of a well-to-do establishment. The excellent taste which characterised Mrs. Crutchley's arrangement of her own rooms had ample space and verge enough for its very effective display, in their new quarters; and, as there was no stint in the money at her disposal, she so decked with ornaments and flowers the original formal and comfortless apartments, that their legitimate owners would have had some difficulty in recognising them. A butler, ordinarily of the strictest propriety of demeanour, but occasionally—as when under the influence of a dinner-party, for example—apt to

appear with a flushed face, a roving eye, a thickness of utterance, and an impossibility of understanding anything that was said to him; a gorgeous footman, who looked splendid in his livery and his powder, but who had the one drawback of being a trifle weak in the knees; a chef, who called himself a Frenchman, but who could not open his mouth without betraying that he came from Alsace; a smart little Parisian chambermaid; a brougham and victoria, with riding-horses, &c., were amongst the items of the establishment provided for the heiress under Mrs. Crutchley's superintendence.

When once their cards were out, there was no difficulty in their making as many acquaintances as might be desired. During the whole time of her married life, Mrs. Crutchley had never deviated from the plan which she proposed to herself, when the notion of linking her fate with that of the Honourable Jim first entered into her mind, and which she adopted as soon as the wedding-ring was upon her finger; namely, to ingratiate herself with everyone, and under no provocation to be induced to give offence. It is a very difficult matter to carry out. To do it in anything like perfection, one must be an adept in the art of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, possessing two changes of countenance and two sets of speech, facile at swallowing the leek, and not above holding the candle when very odd personages require illumination. But there are people who manage it, nevertheless; just as, on the other hand, there are persons who cannot speak without morally treading on your tender foot, or roughly rubbing your slowly healing wound. The late Earl of Waddledot and his hopeful heir were by no means the only persons of the Crutchley family who were influenced by the woman who had fascinated the Honourable Jim. When the news was first promulgated, she was spoken of as "that creature" by several ladies of mature age, connections of the house of Crutchley, who, though their little annuities were secure, and the stranger could do them no harm in any way, yet chose to resent her association with the family as an impertinence. These ladies—for the most part living in cheap country towns, and provincial resorts of faded gentility—had for a long time no opportunity of being brought under the spell, exercised with such infallible effect by their newly-formed

connection. Their first signs of relenting were made on hearing that the head of the house, the venerable Earl of Waddledot, had consented to recognise his daughter-in-law, and to be reconciled to his son. Afterwards, when from time to time one or other of them would come up to town, during the fashionable or religious season, according to the direction in which her taste might lie, she would be received with such warmth of welcome at the pretty suburban house in which Harriet and her husband had established themselves; her views would be so studied, and her opinions so deferred to; above all, there was such an absolute saving of expense—by no means an unimportant feature in the estimate taken of her friends by a lady of mature age and narrow income—in the dinners provided, and the conveyances to opera or Exeter Hall, paid for by the latest addition to the family, that the hardest heart would be softened, and dislike changed into affection. Harriet was “that creature” still, but with a qualifying adjective. “That sweet creature, Mrs. James,” “that charming woman, who conducted herself with such propriety, and who has worked a reformation in our reprobate cousin,” made so favourable an impression on the old ladies, that they forgave her everything—her want of high birth, her good looks, even the allowance of five hundred a year made by Podager on his succession.

After her husband’s death, Mrs. Crutchley had taken good care to continue the excellent terms existing between her and all the members of the family; besides the old maids dotted here and there over the provinces, there were many others of far greater importance with whom she stood well, for the Crutchleys had extended their ramifications in many and prosperous directions since the death of the old earl. After Podager came to the title, he discovered that his lameness was nothing like such a disqualification in the eyes of the ladies as he had been led to imagine; and within a year after his coming into the title he married Miss Brice, daughter of Brice and Co.—there was no Co.—colliery owners and blast furnace proprietors up in the North. Miss Brice, who had fifty thousand pounds for her fortune, was a good, honest girl, of the conventional type, who played a little, sung a little, drew a little, loved her husband with the devotion which, in these days, is looked upon as old-fashioned, and managed to con-

duct herself in the elevated position to which she had been called with great modesty and good sense. But the Brice alliance brought with it a considerable change in the general fortunes of the Crutchley family; scions, and even distant connections of that noble family, were very glad to dine at old Brice’s hospitable table in Portland-place, where they met hard-headed, hard-handed men, who looked uncomfortable in their dress clothes, who spoke in a strange jargon, known apparently to themselves alone, and who knew little, and cared nothing, about what was passing in the West-End world. These were commercial magnates, rulers of the City, directors of leading companies, and wire-pullers in important matters. They, too, had daughters and sons with whom the younger Crutchleys formed alliances, so that at the time when the Honourable Mrs. James entered into her position as companion and chaperon to Miss Middleham, that erst impecunious family numbered among its connections many who, by the happy blending of ancestral honour and financial success, had arrived at a first-rate social status.

To all of these the Honourable Mrs. James was well known, and by all she was highly esteemed. One of her great secrets in the art of ingratiating herself was, that while she frequently found herself able to confer a favour, she made a rule of never asking one. She was always ready to fill up an unexpectedly vacated seat at dinner; to give the advantage of her matronly presence to forlorn girls at opera or ball; to play a rubber at whist when occasion required—and a very good rubber she played, always paying her money when she lost with the greatest equanimity; to forego any little pleasure of her own, for the sake of doing a good turn where she knew it would be properly appreciated; and above all, she made it a point never to incur any pecuniary obligations. People of the Brice class are very much like the rest of the world, only more so; the richer they were, the less willing were they to part with their wealth; and there were few such unpardonable and deadly sins in their eyes, as the attempt to borrow money of them. The Honourable Mrs. James divined this at once, and resolved that no such complaint should ever be made against her. There was, moreover, no reason for her adopting any such course; with the annuity granted to her by her brother-in-law, and the income arising from the investments of her own little

fortune made under Mr. Heath's guidance, she was enabled not merely to live comfortably, but to put by a sum of money yearly, in view of that rainy day which might come upon her, provided Lord Waddledot were to take it into his head to stop her allowance, or any other at present unforeseen calamity were to befall her. It was this desire for making a purse, rather than any actual pressing necessity, that induced Mrs. Crutchley to accept the engagement offered to her by her business friend; while, at the same time, the occupation was one which would give her an opportunity of rallying her friends around her, and, while she availed herself of their assistance, of showing them, as she had never hitherto had the chance of doing, how well she could fill the position of the mistress of a large establishment.

When the family had agreed upon the desirability of her taking the step proposed—and in her wisdom she had duly consulted them before coming to a decision—they one and all agreed that "something must be done for Mrs. James." What that "something" was they were not quite unanimous upon; but it was resolved that they should all call in Eaton-place, and impress the young lady who had been fortunate enough to secure Mrs. James's services with the due sense of the aristocratic connections of her chaperon. So at different times they came, not for the purpose of leaving cards, but determined, if possible, to go in to see the heiress, and surround her with their noble effulgence. Came the Countess of Waddledot, now developed into a portly matron, blonde and handsome, with a singularly sweet smile and winning manner, and her two daughters, Lady Maud and Lady Milliecent; one like her mother—tall, fair, and lymphatic; the other short, dark, and lively, recalling the characteristics of the Crutchleys. Came the Honourable Miss Fanny Limpus and the Honourable Miss Martha Limpus, ancient vestals; one volatile, the other serious; one ordinarily inhabiting Bath, the other Cheltenham; but both now temporarily resident in a combined lodging in South Audley Street, bent upon passing the three months of the London season according to their different lights. Came Lady Quodd and Mrs. Humphington, younger sisters of Lady Waddledot; married respectively to Sir Thomas Quodd, the great railway contractor, and Colonel Humphington, known as "Hairy Humphington," formerly of the

Coldstreams. Came—and such an attention as this had never before been known in the family—the great Mr. Brice himself, chairman of three railways, owner of a county, with collieries, docks, and iron-works immenurable; who could call forth millions of money by a stroke of his pen, and cause thousands of men to tremble at his nod; but who, personally, was a nervous little man, twirling his fluffy white hat incessantly in his hands, and speaking kindly to Grace of her dead uncle, whose friend and colleague in various business matters he had been. Came many others of the female portions of the City contingent—bankeresses and directresses, inhabiting lovely places at Clapham and Roehampton, accustomed to all the luxury that wealth can command; and, certainly not least in his own estimation or that of the family, came Viscount Podager, a handsome, fair-haired lad of nineteen, in the Guards, and a good example of the gilded youth of the period.

From one and all of these mighty personages, Grace received marked kindness and consideration. The regard for the family credit, which made them rally round their relative, would have induced them to be gracious to the young lady placed under her charge, even if Miss Middleham had been plain, poor, and uninteresting; but when they found in the heiress a very pretty girl, of simple, modest manners, some of them were almost effusive in their demonstrations of affection and delight. By some she was estimated to be wanting in style, which was anything but a drawback, inasmuch as it would give them up the opportunity of "forming" her after their own model; but it must be confessed that those holding this idea had not had much experience of dear Mrs. James, who, as the better informed well knew, would not have brooked any interference with her pupil.

So, partly owing to the influence of her chaperon's high-born connections, partly to her own wealth, pretty appearance, and modest manners, the great world lay at Grace's feet, with its denizens eager to welcome her, and to do her honour. Society of all kinds was opened for her inspection at Waddledot House, which, after having been shut up for years, and very nearly let to a club during the impecunious times of the late lord, had, under the blonde and bland countess's auspices, become not merely a most fashionable resort, but on certain stated occasions, a house of call for the

members of one of the great political parties of the country. In those noble halls Grace gazed with silent wonder and awe upon persons whose names had been familiar to her from her childhood; saw a prime minister, in an ill-made coat and an ill-washed cravat, drinking a cup of tea, and scrutinizing a bit of *Sèvres* as though he had no idea beyond porcelain; saw a royal personage pass through the crowd, which respectfully made way for him, showering his smiles and greetings right and left as he moved along; saw world-renowned statesmen, and mighty men of valour; right-reverend fathers, in silk aprons, looking on such vanities with a mild air of protest, and getting obviously anxious as the time drew near midnight—for these reunions were generally held on a Saturday night; saw Eastern potentates blazing in jewels, and famous authors and artists, whose works she knew and loved, and who, for the most part, looked remarkably different to what she had expected.

The receptions at which the plutocracy did the honours, were more formal and less amusing than those over which the aristocracy presided, but were, in their way, equally grand. No royal personage honoured Lady Quodd's garden party, at Wimbledon, but only a few blue-blooded ones—and these principally nobles who had turned their titles to practical use, by lending them out in the City, for a consideration—loitered round the grounds, and admired the glorious breezy common, basking in the westering sunlight; no roundly-turned episcopal legs tripped lightly over the close-shaven sward. Money was represented rather than rank—the combined efforts of a dozen of the guests would have shaken the credit of the Bank of England—intellect put in its appearance in the persons of various strange professors of literature and science; religion was to the fore in divers smug and greasy, albeit shining, lights of non-established churches.

Even the worthy vestals, Miss Martha and Miss Fanny, contributed to the building up of Mrs. James, by giving two or three festive little tea-parties, in their rooms in South Audley-street, and by placing tickets for the Royal Society lectures at Grace's disposal.

Was the heiress, the centre of all these

attentions and attractions, pleased by their novelty, and happy in herself? The first part of the question must be answered in the affirmative, but there are grave doubts as regards the latter. Young, unsophisticated, easily impressed, and grateful for all the kindness shown to her, Grace, in this her first season, might have been supremely happy, but for

The raven which ever croaked by her side,
Kept watch and ward, kept watch and ward.

Mrs. Crutchley had not forgotten the conversation held with Mr. Heath at their last interview at her little rooms in Ebury-street; and though she was grateful for the efforts made by her family, she knew that her interests would be better served by playing the game of one who, as he had frequently proved, had the power of being of material use to her. Under Harriet Crutchley's skilful manipulation, the attentions which Miss Middleham received, the compliments paid her, the interest which she excited, lost all their charm and glamour. To her wealth, and not to herself, were all these attentions paid; on the banker's heiress, not on the ingenuous débutante, was all this devotion lavished. According to the teaching of this deep-scheming woman of the world, the great ladies of society, who received Miss Middleham with more than usual cordiality, and exerted themselves in making their evenings agreeable to her, were merely animated by a desire to secure her for their sons or brothers; the pretty things said to her, apparently so spontaneously, were the result of cool calculation with a defined object; none of the men who paid her court but had beforehand possessed themselves of the contents of her uncle's will, and formed a close valuation of her fortune.

A sad view of life, indeed, to be constantly presented before a young girl's mind. No wonder that Grace Middleham began to look with a jaundiced eye upon what she had at first considered so delightful. No wonder that on the "off nights," when there were no entertainments to go to, she feared to be dull and dispirited under the reaction which might set in. And yet those "off nights" proved to Grace more pleasant than the grandest reception, or the gayest hall; for, thanks to Mrs. Crutchley's management, they were invested with a charm of their own.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

All the Year Round

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"Household Words"

No. 327. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MADEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. ERRINGTON had lodged in Mr. Maxfield's house ever since she first came to Whitford. Jonathan Maxfield, commonly called "Old Max," kept a general shop in that town. The shop was underneath Mrs. Errington's sitting-room, and the great bow window, of which mention has been made, jutted out beyond the shop front, and overhung the street. The house was old, and larger than it appeared from the street, running back some distance. There was a private entrance—a point much insisted upon by Mr. Maxfield's sister-in-law and housekeeper in letting the lodgings to Mrs. Errington—and a long passage divided the shop entirely from the dwelling rooms on the ground floor.

Old Max was reported to be somewhat of a miser (which report he rather encouraged than the reverse, finding that it had its conveniences), and to have amassed a large sum of money for one in his position in life.

"Old Max!" Whitford people would say. "Why old Max could buy up half the town. Old Max might retire tomorrow. Old Max has no need ever to stand behind a counter again."

Old Max, however, continued to stand behind his counter day after day, as he had done for the last thirty or forty years, and would serve a child with a pennyworth of gingerbread, or a rich man's cook with stores of bacon and flour, in an impartially crabbed manner.

He was a grey man: grey from head to

foot. He had grey hair, closely cropped; twinkling grey eyes; and a grey stubble on his shaven chin. He usually wore a suit of coarse grey clothes, with black calico sleeves tied on at the elbow. But even these had an iron-grey hue, from being more or less dusted with flour; as, indeed, were all his garments, and even his face.

When Mrs. Errington first came to live in Whitford, Jonathan Maxfield was a widower for the second time. He had two sons by his first wife; and, by his second, one daughter, whose birth cost her mother's life. The sister of his first wife had kept house for him, ever since his second widowhood. This woman, Betty Grimshaw by name, had been servant in a great family; and at her master's death had received a legacy, which, together with her own savings, had sufficed to purchase a small annuity. She had been able to lay by the greater part of her annuity since she had lived in Whitford, and announced her intention of bequeathing her savings to her nephew James, Maxfield's second son. The elder son had married a farmer's daughter with some money, and turned farmer himself within a few miles of Whitford. Thus the family living at home on the autumn night on which our story opens, consisted of Jonathan Maxfield, Betty Grimshaw his sister-in-law, his son James, and his daughter Rhoda.

The sound of the street-door closing violently behind Mr. Diamond, startled this family party assembled in the parlour, together with Mr. David Powell, Methodist preacher.

They were all seated at a table, on which lay hymn-books and a large bible. Old Maxfield sat nearest to the fire, in his grey suit, just as he appeared in his shop,

except that the black calico sleeves had been removed from his coat. He had a harsh face, a harsh voice, and a harsh manner. So much could be observed by any who exchanged ten words with him.

Next to him, on his left hand, sat his son James, a tall, sickly-looking young man, of six-and-twenty. He had a stoop in the shoulders, a pale face, with high cheek bones, eyes deeply set, light eyebrows, which grew in thick irregular tufts, and hair of a reddish flaxen colour. There was a certain family likeness between him and his aunt, Mrs. Grimshaw, as she was called in Whitford, despite her spinsterhood. She too was tall, bony, and hard-featured; with a face which looked as if it had been painted and varnished, and reminded one, in its colour and texture, of those hollow wooden pears, full of tiny playthings, which used to be—and probably still are—sold at country fairs, and in toy-shops of a humble kind.

The preacher sat next to Betty Grimshaw. He seemed to belong to a different order of beings from the three persons already described.

A striking face this—dark, and full of fire. He had sharply-cut, handsome features, and eyes that seemed to blaze with inward light when he spoke earnestly. His raven-black hair was worn long, and fell straight on to his collar. But although this made his aspect strange, it could not render it either vulgar or ludicrous. The black locks set off his pale dark face, as in a frame of ebony. He was young, and seemed vigorous, though rather with nervous energy than muscular strength.

The last person in the group was Rhoda Maxwell—"little Rhoda," as Mrs. Errington had called her. But the epithet had been used to express rather her social insignificance, than her physical proportions. Rhoda was, in fact, rather tall. She was about nineteen years old, but scarcely looked her age. She had a broad and beautiful brow, on which the rich chestnut hair was smoothly parted; a sensitive mouth, not over-small; and bright hazel eyes, which looked out on the world with an open gaze, that was at once timid and confiding. Her skin was of remarkable delicacy, with a faint flush on the cheeks, which came and went frequently.

And yet Rhoda Maxwell was not much admired among her own compeers. There was something in her face which did not please the taste of the vulgar. And although, if you had asked Whitford

persons "Is not Rhoda Maxwell wonderfully pretty?" most of those so addressed would have answered "Yes, Rhoda is a pretty girl;" yet the assent would probably have been cold and uncertain.

Rhoda, at nineteen years old, had never been known to have a sweetheart. And this fact militated against the popular appreciation of her beauty; for a very cursory observation of the world will suffice to show that on the score of good looks, as on most other subjects, public opinion is apt to find nothing successful but success.

"What a wind there must be, to make the door bang like that!" exclaimed Betty Grimshaw, when the loud sound above recorded reached her ears.

"Who went out?" asked James.

"I suppose it would be that Mr. Diamond, the schoolmaster," replied his aunt.

They both spoke in a subdued voice, and cast furtive glances at Mr. Maxwell, as though fearful of being reprehended for interrupting the evening devotions; but, as they spoke, he closed his hymn-book, and drew his chair away from the table towards the fireside. Upon this signal, Betty Grimshaw rose and hustled out of the room, declaring that she must see about getting the supper; for that that little Sarah could never be trusted to see to the roasted potatoes alone. There was a suspicious alacrity in Betty's departure, suggestive that she experienced some sense of relief at the breaking-up of the devotions. James soon sauntered out of the room after his aunt. Mr. Powell rose.

"Good night," said he, holding out his hand to the old man.

"Nay; won't you stay and eat with us, Brother Powell? The supper will be ready directly."

Mr. Powell shook his head. "You know I never eat supper," he said, smiling.

"Well, well; perhaps you're in the right," responded old Max, very readily.

"And I am not clear," continued the preacher, "but that it would be better for you to leave off the habit."

"Me? Oh, no! I need it for my health's sake."

"But would it not suit your health better, to take your supper early? Say at six o'clock or so; so that you should not go to bed with a full stomach."

"No; it wouldn't," answered the old man, crabbedly.

David Powell stood meditating, with his hand to his chin. "I am not clear about

it," he murmured. But Maxfield either did not hear, or chose to ignore the words.

"Father, may I go upstairs to Mrs. Errington?" asked Rhoda, softly; "I don't want any supper."

The old man grunted out an inarticulate sound, and seemed to hesitate. "Go upstairs to Mrs. Errington?" he said, answering his daughter, but looking sideways at the preacher. "Let's see; you promised, didn't you?"

"Yes; you gave me leave, and I promised before—before we knew that Mr. Powell would come to-night."

Rhoda was gifted with a sweet voice by nature, and she spoke with a purer accent, and expressed herself with greater propriety, than the other members of her family. Mrs. Errington had amused herself with teaching the motherless girl, who had been a lonely, shy, little child when their acquaintance first began. And Rhoda was a quick and apt scholar.

"Well—a promise—I can't have you break your word. Don't you stay late, mind. Not one minute after ten o'clock; do you mind, Rhoda?"

Rhoda, with a bright smile of pleasure on her face, promised to obey, and left the room with a step which it cost her an effort to make as staid as she knew would be approved by her father and Mr. Powell. When she got outside the door, they heard her run along the passage as light and as swift as a greyhound.

Maxfield turned to Mr. Powell, with a little constrained, apologetic air, and began expatiating on Mrs. Errington's fondness for Rhoda; and how kind she had always been to the girl; and how he thought it a duty almost, to let the good, widowed lady have as much of Rhoda's company as she could give her without neglecting duties.

"Betty Grimshaw is a worthy woman," he observed, drily; "but no companion for my Rhoda. Rhoda features her mother, and has her mother's nature very much."

Mr. Powell still stood in the same meditative attitude, with his hand to his chin.

"This Mrs. Errington is unconverted?" he said, without raising his eyes.

"Oh, Rhoda won't take much harm from that!"

"Much harm?" The dark lustrous eyes were unprised now, and fixed searchingly on the old man.

"Well, it won't do her any harm," the latter answered, testily. "I know Rhoda; and I have her welfare at heart, as, I

suppose, you'll believe. I don't know who should have, if it isn't me!"

"Brother Maxfield," said the preacher, earnestly, "are you sure that you have a clear leading in this matter? Have you prayed for one?"

Maxfield shifted in his chair, and made no answer.

"Oh, consider what you do in trusting that tender soul amongst worldlings! I do not say that these are wicked people in a carnal sense; but are they such as can edify or strengthen a young girl like Rhoda, who is still in a seeking state, and has not yet that blessed assurance which we all supplicate for her?"

"I have laid the matter before the Lord," said Maxfield, almost sullenly.

Powell was silent for a minute, standing with his hands forcibly clasped together, as though to control them from vehement action, and when next he spoke, his voice had a tone in it which told of a strong effort of will to keep it in subdued monotony.

"Then, have you thought of it?" said he; "there is the young man Algernon."

"What of Algernon?" cried Maxfield, turning sharply to face the preacher.

"He is fair to look upon, and specious, and has those graces and talents which the world accounts lovely. May there not be a snare here for Rhoda? She who is so alive to all beauty and graciousness in God's world, and in God's creatures—may it not be very perilous for her to be thrown unguardedly into the society of this youth?"

Maxfield looked into the fire instead of at Powell, as he said, "What has been putting this into your head?"

"I have had a call to say it to you, for some time past. Before I went away this summer it was on my mind. I sinned in resisting the call for—for reasons which matter to no one but myself. I sinned in putting any human reasons above my Master's service."

"It may be as you would have done better to resist speaking now," said Maxfield, slowly. "It may be as it was rather a temptation, than a leading from Heaven, made you speak at all."

Powell started back as if he had been struck. The blood rushed into his face, and then, suddenly receding, left him paler than before. But he answered after a moment in a low, sweet voice, and without a trace of anger, "You cannot mistrust me more than I mistrusted myself. But I have wrestled and prayed; and I am

assured that I have spoken this thing with a single heart."

"Well, well, well, it may be as you say," said Maxfield, a shade less harshly than he had spoken before. "But you have neither wife, nor daughter, nor sister, and you cannot understand these matters as well as I do, who am more than double your years, and have had the guidance of this young maid from a baby upward."

"Nay," answered Powell, humbly; "it is not my own wisdom I am uttering! God forbid that I should set up my carnal judgment against a man of your years."

"That's very well said—very rightly said!" exclaimed Maxfield, nodding twice or thrice.

"Aye, but I must speak when my conscience bids me. I dare not resist that admonition for any human respect."

"Why, to be sure! But do you think yours is the only conscience to be listened to? I tell you I follow mine, young man. And you can ask any of our brethren here in Whitford, who have known me for the last thirty or forty year, whether I have gone far astray!"

Powell sighed wearily. "I have released my soul," he said.

"And just hearken," pursued old Maxfield, in a lowered voice, "don't say a word of this sort to Rhoda—nay, don't interrupt me! I've listened to your say, now let me have mine—because you might be putting something into her thoughts that wouldn't have come there of itself. And keep a discreet tongue before Betty and James. 'Least said, soonest mended.' And I'll tell you something more. If—observe I say 'if'—I saw that Rhoda's heart was strongly set upon anything, anything as wasn't wrong in itself, I should be very loath to thwart her."

David Powell turned a startled, attentive face on the old man, who proceeded with a sort of dogged monotony of voice and manner: "Christian charity teaches us there's good folks in all communions of believers. And there's different ranks and different orders in the world; some has one thing, and some has another. Some has fine family and great connections among the rulers of the land. Others has the goods of this world earned by honesty, and diligence, and frugality; and these three bring a blessing. Some is fitted to be gentlefolks by nature, let 'em be born where they will. Others, like my sister-in-law Betty, is born to serve. We are all the Lord's creatures, and we are in his

hand but as clay in the hands of the potter. But there's different kinds of clay, you know. This kind is good for making coarse delf, and that kind is fit for fine porcelain. We'll just keep these words as have passed between you and me, to ourselves, if you please. And now, I think, we may drop the subject."

"May the Lord give you his counsel!" said Powell, in a broken voice.

"Amen! I have had my share of wisdom, and have walked pretty straight for the last half century, thanks be to Him," observed old Max, drily.

"If it were His good pleasure, how gladly would I cease for evermore from speaking to you on this theme! But it matters nothing what I desire or shrink from. I must deliver my Master's message when it is borne in upon me to do so."

And with a solemnly uttered blessing on the household, the preacher departed.

The master of the house sat thinking, alone by his fireside. He began by thinking that he had a little over-encouraged David Powell. Maxfield considered praise from himself to be very encouraging, and calculated to uplift the heart. When Powell had first come among the Whitford Methodists, old Max had taken him by the hand, and had declared him to be the most awakening preacher they had had for many years. He was never tired of vaunting Powell's zeal, and diligence, and eloquence. Backsliders were brought again into the right way, sinners were awakened, believers were refreshed, under his ministry. The fame of Powell's preaching drew many unwonted auditors to the little chapel; and of those who came at first merely from curiosity, many were moved by his words to join the Wesleyan Connection. On all this Jonathan Maxwell looked with great satisfaction. The young man had been truly a burning and a shining light.

But now—might it not be that the preacher's heart had become puffed up with spiritual pride? Was he not unduly exalting himself, when he assumed a tone of censorship towards such a pillar of the community as Jonathan Maxfield? The old man had been for many years accustomed to much deference, alike from preachers and congregation. The exhortations and admonitions which were doubtless needful for his neighbours, were entirely out of place when addressed to himself. His piety and probity were established on a rock. And the Lord had, moreover, seen

fit to gift him with so large a share of the wisdom of the serpent, as had enabled him to hold his own, and to thrive in the midst of worldlings. A dull fire of indignation against David Powell began to smoulder in the old man's heart, as he pondered these things.

Other thoughts, too, more or less disquieting, passed through his brain. He thought of Rhoda's mother—that second wife whom he, a man past middle-life, had married for her fair young face and gentle ways, much to Betty Grimshaw's disgust, and the surprise of most people. He looked back on the long, dusty, dreary road of his life; and, in the whole landscape, the only spot on which the sun seemed to shine was that brief year of his second marriage. Not that he had been, or that he now was, an unhappy man. His life had satisfactions in it of a sober, sombre kind. He did not grow soft or sentimental in reviewing the past. He was accustomed to the chill, grey atmosphere in which he lived. But he had felt warm sunlight once, and remembered it. And he had a notion—inarticulate, indeed, and vague—that Rhoda needed more light and warmth in her life than was necessary for his own existence, or for James's, or Betty Grimshaw's, or, in fact, for most people's. There was no amount of hardness he could not be guilty of to "most people;" and, indeed, he was hard enough to himself; but for Rhoda there was a soft place in his heart.

Nevertheless, there were many hopes, fears, speculations, and reflections connected with Rhoda just now, which had anything but a softening effect on Mr. Maxfield's demeanour; insomuch that Betty and James, coming in presently to supper, found the head of the family in so crabbed a temper, that they were glad to hurry through the meal in silence, and slink off to bed.

THE POOR INVENTOR.

STUDENTS of human nature, and especially of English nature, often express their astonishment at the meagre rewards accorded in this country to superior intelligence—or at least to that kind of intelligence which teaches or amuses, directs or enriches mankind generally, as opposed to the perhaps equally acute, but certainly narrower faculty, which enriches its possessor without directly helping others.

With the exception of the law, the learned professions, as they are styled, are wretchedly remunerated; and even that can hardly be considered a happy career which holds out the hope that industry, learning, perseverance, and confidence will perhaps advance their possessor, at the age of forty-five, to the position of a rising young member of the bar. Clergymen of all denominations receive wretched remuneration; but both lawyers and parsons of the Church of England are cheered by the hope, that one of the great prizes of their profession may one day fall to them; and this remote chance—this dream of wool-sack or lawn sleeves—coupled with social rank, compensates in some measure for the toil of an uphill struggle. Medical men, as a class, notoriously do more work for less money than any other skilled workers; and, like the flattered Fourth Estate, toil early and late, and die poor. Scientific men have, till recently, received but little notice; and it is the sanitary and commercial value of their investigations, rather than their endeavours to advance pure science, that secures them applause—and sometimes a little money—from the public. Artists and literary men, singers and actors, have undoubtedly fared better of late—favoured by a constantly growing market; but inventors have ever been martyrs to oppressions, exactions, and discouragements of every possible kind.

Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since an agitation, familiar to the readers of *HOUSEHOLD WORDS*, was set on foot by the Society of Arts, with the object of reforming the patent laws. In October 1850 appeared an article, from the pen of the Conductor of that Journal, which, probably, had no inconsiderable share in drawing public attention to the iniquitous system then in force. "A Poor Man's Tale of a Patent," depicted the expense and annoyance inflicted on patentees. After innumerable coming and goings, sealings and rescalings, the poor man found that after six weeks' worry his unopposed patent, for England only, had cost him just ninety-six pounds seven shillings and eightpence, and that, if he had taken it out for the United Kingdom, it would have cost between three and four hundred pounds. "Look," said he, "at the Home Secretary, the Attorney-General, the patent office, the engrossing clerk, the Lord Chancellor, the Privy Seal, the clerk of the patents, the Lord Chancellor's purse-bearer, the clerk of the hanaper, the deputy clerk of the hanaper,

the deputy sealer and the deputy chaff-wax. I went through thirty-five stages. I began with the Queen upon the throne. I ended with the deputy chaff-wax. Note.—I should like to see the deputy chaff-wax. Is it a man, or what is it?"

Thanks to the ridicule poured upon the "whole gang of hanapers and chaff-waxes," the eyes of people became open to the truth, "that England had been chaffed and waxed sufficiently." Meanwhile the Society of Arts displayed great energy in promoting the agitation, and at length public opinion was sufficiently aroused to produce the Patent Law Amendment Act of 1852—a considerable improvement on the ancient state of things. The Poor Inventor, however, is, even under the present condition of things, a sufficiently ill-used person.

The inventor, as a rule, is not a rich man; and, if by chance endowed with a small share of worldly goods, is very likely to find himself, like Palissy, reduced to his bedstead for fuel, before he recoups himself any portion of his outlay. At the head of a poor inventor an idea knocks violently, and presently walks in—to the complete disorganisation of the host, who becomes forthwith unmindful of his daily toil, or works only to feed the devouring monster whom he has rashly admitted. His wife, poor woman, finds her husband "much changed of late." Something has "come over him; he is not the same man he used to be." Like Frankenstein, he is haunted by his monster. After his frugal supper, instead of retiring to rest at a reasonable hour, he sits gazing gloomily at the fire, or retires to a remote garret to commune with the monster. The creature behaves with provoking coyness: sometimes consenting to achieve a half success, sufficient to raise the unhappy author of its being to the seventh heaven, and then again for long weary months, and perhaps years, sulks, till the poor inventor is almost reduced to despair. His earnings fall off, or are expended in experiments; his friends shake their heads and mutter, "Ah! poor fellow: was doing well till he took up that confounded crotchet of his. Going to the bad now, and no mistake. Mad as a March hare," and so forth. His wife's relations stir up strife, and persuade that much enduring woman to insist on her rights, and bring the deluded "schemer" to a sense of duty. His affectionate acquaintances want to

know "why he does not mind his own business, and attend to what he understands, instead of worrying himself to death, and ruining his family, over a lot of rubbish that will never come to anything." Cheered by these encouraging comments, he still, if made of stern stuff, perseveres, till the happy day arrives when the monster bows his obstinate head and acknowledges his master, whose more serious troubles are now about to commence.

It frequently happens that the inventor is not what is called a "practical man," or, at any rate, is not engaged in the particular industry to which his contrivance is applicable. This is especially true of those great inventors, with whose names the world has at last become familiar. Newton was not a mathematical instrument maker, but invented the reflecting telescope; Watt followed that trade, and invented the modern steam-engine; Cartwright, of the power-loom, was a clergyman; Arkwright, of water-twist fame, was a barber; Neilson, who first applied the hot blast to iron-smelting, was a manager of gas-works; Wheatstone was engaged in manufacturing musical instruments; Bessemer was in no way connected with steel making; and Sir William Armstrong was a lawyer. In the case of a poor inventor, the first difficulty is to get the invention secured to himself by patent, before he dare to show the engine to anybody, or he will run the risk of seeing the product of his brains appropriated by the first rich, and therefore powerful, man to whom he shows it. Exhibiting his contrivance without legal protection, he would possibly be told that his plan was very good, but that something very like it had been tried and had failed thirty years ago; and he would have the satisfaction of finding the vital part of his scheme employed, before long, without his reaping any part of the profit. His life would be dragged along in constant terror of being over-reached; or, if he sought to manufacture for himself, his property in his invention would be at the mercy of every workman whom he employed. Therefore, he must have a patent, even before carrying out the ultimate experiments, which can alone demonstrate the commercial value of a discovery. His next act is, therefore, to seek out a patent agent, whose care in searching through previous patents of like character is the sole guarantee of his patent proving good for anything when it is granted, and

whose charges will probably amount to some ten pounds.

By the advice of this gentleman, he signs a petition for grant of letters patent, bearing a stamp for five pounds; obtains a certificate of record of notice to proceed, also stamped at a cost of five pounds; pays five pounds for stamp, on the warrant of law officer for letters patent; five pounds more on the sealing of letters patent; and another five pounds for stamp on the specification. He has now paid twenty-five pounds to the Government, and some ten pounds to his agent; has obtained legal protection for three years; can safely show his plans, and can pursue further experiment without immediate molestation. If, at the end of three years, he remain unattacked, he can extend his patent to seven years, on payment of fifty pounds; and, by a further payment of one hundred pounds, can be protected for the full term of fourteen years. Concerning these two latter payments, there is little to be said. If, after three years' experience of the working of any discovery it is found to be commercially valuable, fifty pounds is no great sum to pay for four years' monopoly; and if, at the expiration of seven years, the patent remains neither disputed, superseded, nor worthless, it is clearly worth a hundred pounds to secure it for the on-coming seven years. The great hardship is in the heavy stamps for preliminary steps. Years of toil, thought, and care have revealed to a man what he thinks a genuine, new discovery; and, before he can do anything with it, a grateful nation rewards him with a tax of twenty-five pounds.

Now, a great deal has been said at various times touching the inexpediency of reducing these preliminary expenses; but the old-fashioned argument, that everybody would be rushing in to secure legal protection if he could do it cheaply, and would thus block the ground for more serious inventors, who really intend to do something, is an entirely fallacious one, as few men can judge of the ultimate value of their discoveries. These may be—a large majority of them must be—worth exactly nothing; and it is, on that ground, hard on the inventor that he should part with money, as well as time, in vain; and that his cost in bringing his invention to what he imagines to be perfection, should be largely added to, by imperial exactions, for merely formal proceedings. For the

signing and sealing of letters patent guarantee no security whatever to the patentee. If his patent agent have overlooked a previous patent, covering the same ground—a not entirely impossible contingency—he is liable to have his patent contested in a court of law, and set at naught. Another danger also confronts him. Generations agone, a similar contrivance may have been not patented—not used—but simply described on paper, and published; and this latter circumstance would suffice to invalidate his patent. In addition to these disadvantages, he runs the risk of something newer and better being invented, which will at once put his work commercially out of court.

Admitting that he has scraped together the thirty-five pounds necessary for obtaining three-years' protection, and that his letters patent are securely signed, sealed, and delivered, he has now—if his invention affect any important manufacture—to get it taken up by some large operator, whose interest, except he be a young beginner, only just getting his plant together, must of necessity be opposed to the introduction of new machinery. A manufacturer has sunk in his plant one, two, or three hundred thousand pounds; an iron master, or coal owner, perhaps, half a million. His machinery is the best known up to the time. He can compete fairly with other makers using similar plant, and undersell others less perfectly provided. He is making money, turning over his great capital quickly, and is satisfied with the world as it goes. Does he look on the inventor as a benefactor—as the guide to a new El Dorado? By no manner of means. Our ingenuous friend appears to him rather as a disturbing agent; as a "fellow who can't let things alone—confound him," but must come and upset a thriving trade with innovations, entailing enormous expense in alterations, and endless trouble in getting the workpeople to take kindly to the new-fangled trick he has patented. And yet there may be something in it. If Scrooggs, to whom it is first offered, don't take it up, Moggs—that brute Moggs, who is always underselling the market—will, and cut into Scrooggs's line of business terribly. Here is a pleasant choice! On the one hand, to have to take up this fellow, who had better have never been born, and on the other to let him go with his infernal scheme to Moggs! Scrooggs is sorely exercised,

but at last concludes to let it go, "and chance it;" and the poor inventor has to go all over the same ground again with Moggs, who would fain try it, but money is tight, and the enlightened Moggs, who would have liked the thing well enough, is reluctantly obliged to give it up. There is another chance. Cloggs is in a mess. His mill is mortgaged and threatened with being shut up altogether, if something be not done and done quickly. He determines to "try the last," and adopts the invention, which is beginning to work admirably, just as his creditors close upon him and his mill. It is at once reported that the last straw which broke poor Cloggs's back was "that new 'dodge' he took up; no wonder he went to the bad—enough to ruin anybody."

By this time the poor inventor is reduced to despair. His time has been cut to waste, and his money all spent. The friends, who, perhaps, helped him to small sums at the outset, are completely disgusted with him. Besides, the thing is not a commercial success. It broke Cloggs—the only man who tried it. Who is going to try it now? The stigma of failure is upon it. Pretty enough in theory, it has broken down in practice, and the poor inventor sees no resource but to go back to the work-bench, with a heavy heart, and curse the day when he was invaded by that rare commodity—an idea. But the third year of his patent is about to expire, and unless he can find fifty pounds, his invention becomes the property of the first comer. So once more the poor fellow, bowed now with trouble, and sick with hope deferred, once more, takes the field, and literally "hawks" his property about—only too glad to part with it, or a share of it, on any terms. Oftentimes these will prove hard enough, and for a meagre royalty, or a minute share of profits, the poor inventor will gladly enough relinquish the child of his brain.

The consideration of the natural difficulties which retard the development of an invention, lead to the conclusion that it is completely unnecessary for the nation to lay any first charge or embargo upon it. In this paper all reference to the cost of securing foreign patents has been purposely excluded, as these fall under the administration of other countries than our own. The main point to which it is sought to draw attention, is the inconsistency of taxing a pure brain product, before the author has had a chance of testing its commercial value. One hun-

dred pounds for the monopoly of a successful machine, and in a less degree fifty for an extension from three to seven years, appear small sums when compared with the original twenty-five paid for protection—a tax which comes upon the poor inventor, when he is at the end of his resources. Few financial reasons can be adduced against reducing expense in the initiatory stages of a patent—inasmuch as the exchequer practically makes a large profit out of the patent office. Out of a total of one hundred and forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty-one pounds received for fees or stamps during 1873, ninety-five thousand two hundred and eighty-four pounds went to the treasury—surely an enormous and most unjust tax upon the brains of the people.

Judging from these figures, the present cost of patents might be reduced at least one half, without the slightest fear of making the patent office a charge upon the revenue. The poverty of a large majority of inventors can hardly be too strongly insisted on, as a reason for relieving them of a portion of their present burdens—unfairly diverted into the national cash box. In plain English, a large and clear profit is made out of the poor and needy—not in brains, but in pocket—a class, it should be remembered, to which England owes, to a large extent, her proud supremacy, as the cotton spinner, iron maker, telegraph constructor, and ocean carrier of the world.

This important subject has, unfortunately, been mixed up with a number of side issues. High authorities, such as Lords Derby and Selborne, have recorded their wish for the abolition of the patent law altogether; but their views, and those of more enthusiastic adherents of the same policy, have been so ably contested of late, that they may be said to have passed out of the sphere of discussion.

Strangely enough, the present Lord Chancellor has chosen rather to impose a cumbersome official machinery upon the patent office, than to remit, in the smallest degree, the pecuniary pains and penalties imposed upon the inventor. More than this, the unhappy sufferer is to be worried by examiners and experts. Probably, this paternal care will be worth exactly nothing, for in the United States, where an enormous patent office staff is maintained, the result of this organisation is perpetual and vexatious litigation. All the government examiners in the world cannot grant a

title unassailable by the common law of the country; and it, therefore, appears a curious amendment of patent law, to divert into the pockets of examiners and referees the proceeds of a direct tax on knowledge and ingenuity.

THE BLACK MAN.

WE have often heard and read of the bewildered and amazed condition of the swart-hued natives of some far-distant clime, when in their midst has appeared suddenly—a white man. They were scared at first; then—curiosity overcoming fear—they gradually approached to question him, to touch him and his attire, and to make sure, indeed, that for all his strangeness of aspect, he was yet human as themselves. Now, something very much of this kind must have happened, although no one seems to have been at hand to make note of the fact, when there stepped upon our shores, for the first time—a black man. Who can doubt that there was much crowding round him, that he was greatly stared and gaped at—poked and pinched, too, no doubt, that his reality might be ascertained beyond all dispute. Perhaps he was even mobbed and maltreated, jeered at and insulted by the street boy of the past; for we may assume, as a matter of certainty, that the British street-boy is of remote origin, boasts a most ancient descent, possibly flourished even before streets were for him to flourish in, and that he was present upon this occasion, as assuredly as upon all others. Can you not picture the scene? Is it not one well worthy the regard of some painter—Mr. H. S. Marks let us say—well skilled in the reproduction upon canvas of humour, and character, and costume? That there is some difficulty about the matter must be owned. Doubts exist as to the time when, and the place where, the first black man came amongst us. Nor is it distinctly certain whence he came, or whether his nationality was of Asia or of Africa. In the first case he would comport himself with stately, stealthy impassiveness, doubtless, amid all the turbulence of the English mob of gazers and investigators. But, if an African black, would not his ebony face gleam, his white teeth flash, and his round liquid eyes glisten with mirthfulness, and intense self-satisfaction, and delight, at the general recognition his importance had

obtained? He would be a more popular figure, we may take for granted, than his solemn dark-skinned brother of the east. In the general idea the Nubian or the Ethiopian is the accepted type of the black man. Even Shakespeare's own view of his Moor, Othello, does not distinguish his physical aspect from that of the conventional African negro. Roderigo calls him "thick lips." Brabantio speaks of his "sooty bosom." Iago implies his intense blackness, by demanding what delight Desdemona can have in "looking on the devil?" Othello himself says, "Haply, for I am black." So also, in the dreadful tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron, the Moor, is referred to as "the coal-black Moor;" says himself, "Aaron will have his soul black like his face;" and demands, "is black so base a hue?" The black of Shakespeare's time was, it is plain, of African blackness, without approach to olive or tawny tints—an unmitigated "nigger."

Some fifty years ago there was something of a quarrel between Sir Walter Scott and the antiquaries, touching this very question, of the first appearance of the black man in England. The early pages of *Ivanhoe* narrate how Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is followed by two attendants, Hamet and Abdulla by name, whose dark visages, white turbans, and the Oriental form of their garments, showed them to be natives of some distant eastern country. They are described as wearing silver collars round their throats, and bracelets upon their swarthy arms and legs, "of which the former were naked from the elbow, and the latter from mid-leg to ankle." Their dresses were of embroidered silk, and they were armed with crooked sabres and Turkish daggers of costly workmanship. Moreover, they carried, at their saddle-bows, bundles of darts or javelins, four feet in length, with sharp steel heads, "a weapon much in use among Saracens, and of which the memory is yet preserved in the martial exercise called El Jerrid, still practised in the eastern countries." Now, these early black footmen were objected to as being totally "out of costume and propriety." Sir Walter, in reply—while urging that the author of a "modern antique romance" was not obliged to confine himself to the introduction of those manners only, which could be proved to have absolutely existed in the times he is depicting, so that he restrain himself to such as are plausible

and natural, and contain no obvious anachronism—yet maintained that negroes must have been known in England in the dark ages. And, in proof of this he mentions “an instance in old romance,” and relates, on the authority of the dissertation prefixed to Ritson’s Ancient Metrical Romances, how John of Rampayne, an excellent juggler and minstrel, undertook to effect the escape of Audulf de Bruce, by presenting himself in disguise at the court of the king where he was confined. For this purpose, he stained his hair and (like Mr. Crummles’s “first tragedy man,” when he played Othello) his whole body entirely as black as jet, so that nothing was white but his teeth; and succeeded in imposing himself on the king as an Ethiopian minstrel, and so effected by stratagem the escape of the prisoner.

Whether or not we are to regard this John of Rampayne, in the disguise of an Ethiopian minstrel, as the progenitor or prototype of the popular Ethiopian Serenader of modern days, is a question we need not now pause to consider. Sir Walter fairly proved that he had, at any rate, some warrant for the introduction of his Hamet and Abdulla into the romance of Ivanhoe; and that need did not exist for his following the example of Mat Lewis, who, when his sable guards in the Castle Spectre were objected to as anachronistic, boldly averred that he had made the characters in question black solely to obtain a striking effect of contrast; and that could he have derived a similar advantage from making his heroine blue, blue she should have been. It does seem probable, however, that the black man, either of East Indian or West Indian origin, was not a very familiar figure in England until the seventeenth century. In a paper upon advertisements, republished from the Quarterly Review, Dr. Wynter quotes a notification from the Mercurius Politicus, of August 11th, 1659, as affording the earliest evidence furnished by the newspapers of the employment of negro serving-boys in England. From the terms of the advertisement it has been conjectured that the missing lad’s hair was “polled,” or cropped, after the Puritanical fashion of the time: “A negro-boy, about nine years of age, in a grey searge suit, his hair cut close to his head, was lost on Tuesday last, August 9th, at night, in St. Nicholas Lane, London. If anyone can give notice of him to Mr. Thomas Barker, at the Sugar Loaf, in that Lane, they shall be well rewarded for their pains.” It has been concluded

that these early negroes were imported from the Portuguese colonial territories, as our own dealing in “blacks,” as an article of commerce, dates only from 1680. But the taste for negro servants increased, until it became quite a passion, among the nobility and “quality” of England; and then ensued quite a population of black-a-moors in the metropolis. When, in 1662, Lord Sandwich brought over, from Portugal, Catherine of Braganza, to be the queen of Charles the Second, he carried in the same ship, by way of present to the young ladies of his family, “a little Turke and a negroe,” as Mr. Pepys describes them. They were clearly something of novelties in England. The Diary runs: “(30th May, 1662.) Upon a suddaine motion, I took my wife, and Sarah, and Will by water, with some victuals with us, as low as Gravesend, intending to have gone in the Hope to the Royal James, to have seen the ship and Mr. Shepley; but, meeting Mr. Shepley in a hoy, bringing up my lord’s things, she and I went on board, and sailed up with them, as far as half-way tree. Very glad to see Mr. Shepley. Here we saw a little Turke and a negroe, which are intended for pages to the two young ladies [Montagu].” Some seven years later, Mr. Pepys himself is found occasionally employing a negress in his household as cookmaid: “(5th April, 1669.) For a cookmaid we have, ever since Bridget went, used a black-a-moor of Mr. Batelier’s, Doll, who dresses our meat mighty well, and we mightily pleased with her.”

The convenient term “black-a-moor”—which may be a corruption of “black as a Moor”—comprehended alike the dark-skinned of both Africa and Asia. The fashion of engaging negro attendants was probably due to the Venetian Republic; the commerce of whose merchants with all parts of the globe naturally led to the importation of black-a-moors. Moorish pages are happily introduced into various paintings by Titian and other of the greatest masters, who were quick to perceive the picturesqueness of the black man, and the enhanced brilliancy of colour obtained by contrast with his ebon face. English artists followed the mode, and the negro became a highly-esteemed model, lending important aid to many a canvas. Here are specimens of “Hue and Cry” advertisements, relating to absconding black-a-moors, contained in the London Gazette of 1685, 1688, and 1694:—

"Run away from his master, Captain St. Lo, the 21st inst., Obdelah Jalias Abraham, a Moor, swarthy complexion, short frizzled hair, a gold ring in his ear, in a black coat and blew breeches. He took with him a blew Turkish watch-gown, a Turkish suit of clothing that he used to wear about town, and several other things. Whoever brings him to Mr. Lozel's house in Green-street shall have one guinea for his charges."

"A black boy, an Indian, about thirteen years old, ran away the 8th inst. from Putney, with a collar about his neck with his inscription: 'The Lady Bromfield's black, in Lincoln's Inn Fields.' Whoever brings him to Sir Edward Bromfield's, at Putney, shall have a guinea reward."

"Run away, a Tannymoor [tawny-moor?], with short bushy hair, very well shaped, in a grey livery lined with yellow, about seventeen or eighteen years of age, with a silver collar about his neck, with these directions: 'Captain George Hastings's boy, Brigadier in the King's Horse Guards.' Whoever brings him to the Sugar Loaf in the Pall Mall shall have forty shillings reward."

It will be observed that the reward offered for the arrest of these runaway black-a-moors is not more than is now often given upon the recovery of a lost dog, and that there is something canine in that wearing of the inscribed collar by Lady Bromfield's black, and Captain Hastings's "Tannymoor." But the blacks at this time were the merest chattels; how freely and shamelessly they were bought and sold may be gathered from this advertisement in the Tatler of 1709: "A black boy, twelve years of age, fit to wait on a gentleman, to be disposed of at Denis's Coffee House in Finch Lane, near the Exchange;" and from this in the Daily Journal, 1728: "To be sold, a negro boy, aged eleven years. Inquire of the Virginia Coffee House in Threadneedle Street, behind the Royal Exchange." The metal collar was a badge of servitude of very ancient date. It was worn, let us note, by "Wamba, the son of Witless," and by "Gurth, the son of Beowulph," the born thralls of Cedric of Rotherwood, not less than by Sir Brian's attendants, Hamet and Abdulla. Dryden, in his prologue written on the reproduction of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Prophetess* in 1690, makes allusion to the custom of employing negro servants with collars of silver or copper, and proposes jestingly that the English fight-

ing under William the Third in Ireland should

Each bring his love a Bogland captive home;
Such proper pages will long trains become;
With copper collars and with brawny backs,
Quito to put down the fashion of our blacks.

This prologue, however, gave great offence, owing to the numerous political allusions it contained, and was suppressed after the first night. One of the characters in Cibber's comedy of the Double Gallant speaks of Lord Outside's "frightful black-a-moor coachman, with his flat nose, and great silver collar;" and in the Tatler, No. 245, for November 2nd, 1710, Steele writes: "As I am a patron of persons who have no other friend to apply to, I cannot suppress the following complaint: 'Sir—I am a black-moor boy, and have, by my lady's order, been christened by the chaplain. The good man has gone further with me, and told me a great deal of good news; as that I am as good as my lady herself, as I am a Christian, and many other things; but, for all this, the parrot who came over with me from our country is as much esteemed by her as I am. Besides this, the shock dog has a collar that cost almost as much as mine. I desire also to know whether, now I am a Christian, I am obliged to dress like a Turk and wear a turbant. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant, POMPEY.'"

Why such sounding classical names should have been bestowed upon these poor negro lads it is hard to say, unless the practice arose from a cruel inclination to mock at them by contrasting their grand appellations with their abject fortunates. But at an early date they came to be called Cæsars and Scipios, Pompeys and Catos, and the custom continued even to the present century. The fashion of attiring them fancifully after an Eastern manner was less lasting. It was the duty of the little negro boy, in the service of the lady of quality in the last century, to attend his mistress's person and tea-table, to carry her train as she moved to and fro, to take charge of her fan and smelling-salts, to feed her parrots, and to comb her lap-dogs. Hogarth, in the fourth scene of his *Marriage à la Mode*, has portrayed a turbanned black-a-moor grinning over a basketful of antiquities and curiosities. In a scene of one of the "Progresses," there appears another negro boy, also wearing a turban, jewelled and plumed, and conveying to his mistress's tea-table her teakettle. It is this attendant Quin had in mind, doubtless, when, upon the entrance

of Garrick in the character of Othello, the old actor and critic said wickedly to his companion, Dr. John Hoadley: "Here is Desdemona's little black boy, Pompey; but why does he not bring in the tea-kettle and lamp?"

Of Dr. Johnson's negro servant, Francis Barber, there is frequent mention in Boswell. It is probable, however, that if he wore a livery at all, Barber was dressed after a very homely fashion, and that his duties were light enough, for, as Sir John Hawkins says truly enough, Diogenes himself never wanted a servant less than Johnson seemed to do. "The great bushy wig which, throughout his life, he affected to wear, by that closeness of texture which it had contracted and been suffered to retain, was ever nearly as impenetrable by a comb as a quickset hedge; and little of the dust that had once settled on his outer garments was ever known to have been disturbed by the brush." But the success of the Rambler, the sums he was receiving for the Adventurer, and the fruits of his other literary labours, "had now exalted him to such a state of comparative affluence, as, in his judgment, made a man-servant necessary." It is more likely, however, that Johnson received Francis Barber into his house, out of charity and keen sympathy with an oppressed race. Johnson had always been a zealous opponent of slavery in every form—Boswell being of opinion "with all deference," that, in such wise, he discovered "a zeal without discretion;" and that the attempts then being made "to abolish so very necessary and important a branch of commercial interest" as the traffic in negroes, were "wild and dangerous." Johnson had even shocked a company of some very grave men at Oxford by proposing as a toast, "Here's to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies;" while in his pamphlet of "Taxation no Tyranny," he had demanded, his prejudices against our West Indian and American settlers being extreme, "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" It is plain, however, that he regarded Francis Barber as his property, if not exactly as his slave, albeit the law had not yet decided that, setting foot in this country, the slave was a slave no longer, when he wrote to one of the higher functionaries of the Admiralty: "I had a negro boy, named Francis Barber, given me by a friend whom I much respect, and treated by me for some years with great tender-

ness." This letter was written in 1759. "Being disgusted in the house, he ran away to sea, and was in the summer on board the ship stationed at Yarmouth to protect the fishery. It would be a great pleasure and some convenience to me if the Lords of the Admiralty would be pleased to discharge him, which, as he is no seaman, may be done with little injury to the king's service. You were pleased, sir, to order his discharge in the spring, at the request of Mr. Wilkes; but I left London about that time, and received no advantage from your favour. I, therefore, presume to entreat that you will repeat your order, and inform me how to co-operate with it, so that it may be made effective. I shall take the liberty of waiting at the Admiralty next Tuesday for your answer. I hope my request is not such as it is necessary to refuse. And what it is not necessary to refuse I doubt not but your humanity may dispose you to grant, even to one that can make no higher pretensions to your favour than, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, SAM JOHNSON."

Barber, who had in truth absconded for a while, was duly released from the navy, and returned to domestic service; he remained with the doctor until his death in 1784, benefiting considerably under his will. Altogether the connection between master and man was early and enduring. Johnson had placed his negro boy at a school in Northampton, and always manifested the warmest interest in his studies and advancement generally. In 1770 he wrote to Barber, who, at that date, could not have been much less than forty years of age:—"I am very well satisfied with your progress, if you really perform the exercises which you are set. Let me know what English books you read for your entertainment. You can never be wise unless you love reading. Do not imagine that I shall forget or forsake you; for if, when I examine you, I find that you have not lost your time, you shall want no encouragement from yours affectionately, SAM JOHNSON."

The negro footman is now rarely seen; and indeed it would appear that there has been a considerable departure of the "black man" from among us. He fills no longer the place he once occupied in our English domestic life. Can it be that when it was firmly established, not so very long since, that the negro was "a man and a brother," he forthwith ceased to be a friend? Caricatures, a generation

or so old, abound in representations of the black man. And from the caricaturists, very much is to be learned touching a nation's manners and customs, ways and fashions, and other interesting matters too trivial for record at the hands of dignified history. The negro coachman, a very portly person, with powder over his curly pate; the negro footman, in a brilliant livery, stately of port and stalwart of body, if somewhat unshapely as to his nether limbs; in how many illustrations of social life do not these wortong appear? Then there is a splendid race of wearing an embroidered Oriental dritting member of the band of the Grenadiers, had Coldstream Guards, who plays the hour bals, gesticulating vivaciously—partlyleep, orchestral necessity, perhaps, but partly it must be, owing to excessive enjoyment of his situation—with his fellow performer of similar complexion and costume, who plays an instrument that has vanished with its sage professor; a brazen structure, tree-shaped, with bells depending from its branches. Other negroes there are who sell songs, sweep crossings, knit nightcaps and stockings, and manufacture garden-nets—stout negroes, indeed, of all kinds, including those "blacks" of Asiatic origin who traded in East Indian ware chiefly in paper packets containing scented powder of aromatic, and even of medicinal savour. These last, perhaps, disappeared about the time of the great mutiny of their compatriots; but the others have gone too—or very nearly so. A negro crossing-sweeper or two may remain; and occasionally there is to be encountered a black bishop—a most impressive personage. For other blacks we have only those whose complexion is obviously artificial—who are rather lamp-blacks than real blacks. Ethiopian serenaders they call themselves; singing, to the accompaniment of obstreperous instruments, now ultra-sentimental ditties, and now songs that affect a nonsensical jocosity. Of these blacks we have certainly enough, perhaps even more than enough.

In the Gumbo of Thackeray's Virginians, and the Cesar Gum of Jerrold's St. Giles and St. James, we have pleasant reproductions of the negro servant of the past, by artists well-skilled in portraying life. These domestic "blacks" pertain to a departed epoch, when the creole of the West Indian merchant shared with the nabob the privilege of representing boundless wealth, in the fiction of the time not

senator, and his property would doubtless be divided between his two daughters: one of whom, with her mother, was then at some watering-place on the Atlantic coast. The general was not in error, at any rate, in deeming that I should consider the narrowness of my own means, as a barrier between so handsomely-endowed a young lady as was Rhoda, and my own poor pretensions. I felt that in lingering at the Yampah, and in courting Miss Pell's society, I was but as the silly moth that flutters round the candle—yet I did linger. And it so fell out that, on the occasion of an expedition to the shores of a newly discovered lake, or rather tarn, among the mountains, I found myself, as usual, Rhoda's cavalier. We two were the only equestrians out of a party of some fifteen of the inmates of the hotel. There was no lack of saddle-horses (sure-footed Indian ponies) at the Yampah; but the Americans usually prefer driving to riding, and the remainder of the company were accommodated, as best might be, in cars, stoutly built so as to endure the jolts of the rugged road, in many places a fierce track. We had eaten our sylvan dinner on the banks of the tarn, blue as a monstrous turquoise in a rocky setting, and having admired half-a-dozen picturesque views which met the eye at every angle of the route, made up our minds that it was time to return. It was late in the afternoon, and some eight or nine brought us between so much the blacker, and, therefore, the better it looked. A negro might wear a dress made of the flamingo's feathers—he would set them off, as they would him.

Charles Lamb, we may note, numbered the negro among the objects with which he sympathised imperfectly; and it must be allowed that prejudice has dealt severely altogether with the black man. "Mislike me not for my complexion, the shadowed livery of the burnished sun," entreats Shakespeare's Prince of Morocco; but he was misliked, nevertheless. "In the negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity," says Elia. "I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces—or, rather, masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls, these 'images of God cut in ebony.' But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them—because they are black."

"That's the Sierra de Anahnac, that is ;" said the doctor, as his eyes followed the indication of my uplifted forefinger ; " pretty to look at, with its crests of virgin snow, and the dark green girdle of the clinging pines, but where, in every canyon and road-pass, it's uncommonly easy to lose your scalp. The red men are so much on the prowl yonder for a sketcher feel much at his ease, that is, if he cares to keep the hair on his head. The Green mountains, eastward, are as safe from ches as Broadway is. And as for the ties to the north, I'd trust a child to one from here to the Buckeye Spring, or as Indians are concerned. Not a red face to be seen, but those of some basket-weaving, harmless savages, not sit more dangerous than your gipsies at home in the old country."

The lovely little Yampah Hotel, with its garden-pavilions, its numerous outbuildings, fenced fields, and promising orchards, its horse-corral, cattle-corral, and extensive accommodation for swine, stood on what in Switzerland would be called an "alp," or green upland pasture, screened by friendly pine-groves, and nestling among the gigantic summits of the Rocky Mountains, not very remote from the lofty valley town as Middle Park. Dr. Briggs was a ranchero as well as a landlord ; and his farm brought him in more hard dollars than did the inn itself, the latter being one of those mountain sanatoria, whither invalids resort to pass the sultry American summer in a bracing atmosphere. There were, indeed, many inducements, apart from the healthy character of the place, to sojourn there for a time. The sportsman might be tempted by streams and creeks abounding in trout and salmon, by hills and glens where the elk, the wild sheep, and the American antelope were still to be found ; while the naturalist or the painter could scarcely fail to find attractions of a less adventurous sort. Nor was the pleasure of a temporary residence in this lofty spot alloyed by any of those drawbacks, in the shape of hardships and privations, which so provokingly spoil many a sunny holiday. The Yampah Ranch was a very land of Goshen, literally overflowing with milk and honey, where mountain mutton and wild strawberries, cream and venison, maize-fed poultry, and strange fruits gathered in some swampy hollow far below, contributed to supply the human denizens of that oasis in the wilderness. There were ruffed grouse to

"MIGHT brag the world, colonel, mightn't it? Guess even Switzerland can't afford to crow over a prospect like this. I'm as free from spread-eagleism, in a common way, as any man in Nebraska Territory ; but when I find a bit of fresh natural loveliness like this, I don't mind owning that I am proud to be an American citizen. Tain't only in Pennsylvania axes and Ohio oil-wells that we whip you Europeans, Mr. Warburton." And as Dr. Eli Briggs, the shrewd, quaint, kindly landlord of the Yampah Hotel, concluded his speech, he stretched out his sinewy brown hand towards the landscape which he had just eulogised, and broke out into one of those dry little laughs of self-concentrated enjoyment, which seem to be peculiar to those born on the western side of the Atlantic.

"I quite agree with you on that point, doctor ;" I made answer, smiling ; " a finer landscape than this, especially where the serrated mountain-peaks trend away south, it is difficult to imagine."

be shot by whosoever cared to carry a gun into the woodland ; and fish that had not as yet learned the wiles of man, and could be ensnared by the humblest angler, and with the rudest of tackle. Our accommodation within doors was faultless, so far as comfort was concerned, and the climate enabled us to pass a great deal of our time under the canopy of heaven.

My own presence at the Yampah Hotel is easily explained. A young English barrister, not overburdened with legal business, I had chosen to spend the Long Vacation in the unwonted indulgence of an American ramble ; and, after visiting the chief cities of the United States, had been advised by an intelligent neighbour at a St. Louis table d'hôte to take a peep at what he called "life in the clouds." "There are bigger establishments in the course of the Rocky Chain," said my informant, "but none prettier ; and, what is perhaps an object to a young man like yourself, none at which there is a greater likelihood of finding agreeable society than the Yampah. Old Eli Briggs, the doctor, is a character. Show him my card, and I'm sure he will make things pleasant for you."

In social, as in other respects, I found that the praise which had been bestowed upon this aerial hostelry was fairly well deserved ; but there was one member of the company who soon became, as I felt to my cost, dearer to me than all the world beside. This was a very beautiful American girl, who, with her father, General Pell, was staying for a while at the Yampah. People are much thrown together in the joyous, careless life of the mountains, and it was often my lot to act as escort to the general's lovely daughter during some of those excursions which were habitual to the frequenters of the Ranch. Rhoda was, as I have said, a rare beauty, even in that country, where feminine charms—short-lived, alas !—are so often to be met with ; while I soon learned to prize at its true value the innate nobility of her nature. I have often wondered that the general, who was a very proud, taciturn man, should have permitted the growth of an intimacy between Rhoda and myself. But it is probable that the idea, that I could be presumptuous enough to aspire to his daughter's hand, never suggested itself to him. Rhoda was a rich heiress ; her father being reported as one of the wealthiest citizens of the state for which he was a

senator, and his property would doubtless be divided between his two daughters : one of whom, with her mother, was then at some watering-place on the Atlantic coast. The general was not in error, at any rate, in deeming that I should consider the narrowness of my own means, as a barrier between so handsomely-endowed a young lady as was Rhoda, and my own poor pretensions. I felt that in lingering at the Yampah, and in courting Miss Pell's society, I was but as the silly moth that flutters round the candle—yet I did linger. And it so fell out that, on the occasion of an expedition to the shores of a newly discovered lake, or rather tarn, among the mountains, I found myself, as usual, Rhoda's cavalier. We two were the only equestrians out of a party of some fifteen of the inmates of the hotel. There was no lack of saddle-horses (sure-footed Indian ponies) at the Yampah ; but the Americans usually prefer driving to riding, and the remainder of the company were accommodated, as best might be, in cars, stoutly built so as to endure the jolts of the rugged road, in many places a mere track. We had eaten our sylvan dinner on the banks of the tarn, blue as a monstrous turquoise in a rocky setting, and having admired half-a-dozen picturesque views which met the eye at every angle of the route, made up our minds that it was time to return. It was late in the afternoon, and some eight or nine miles intervened between us and the Ranch. The beauty of the summer day was now somewhat dimmed, as a hazy white veil crept slowly across the sky ; and the wind, seldom still at such a height, began to mean fitfully among the dwarf oaks and stunted pines that grew near the pool.

"We had better make our way home-wards," said some one, more weather-wise than the rest. "It is pleasanter by far to stand in a snug verandah, or at a window, to watch the fine effects of a mountain storm, than to be caught in one when away from shelter. And a slide, such as sometimes occurs among these ravines, might put an awkward conclusion to our day's enjoyment."

"What is a slide ?" I asked, laughing, as I helped Miss Pell to remount her horse. "We in England have none but schoolboy associations of winter frolics with the name."

"You'll find, Mr. Harland," said the gaunt Vermonter, who had been the first to speak, "that our slides in the moun-

tainous tracks are anything else than frolicsome; that is, if you have the ill-luck to happen in for one. They're bad enough where I was raised. Here, in the Rockies, a few tons of loose stone tumbling on your head is a caution to Crockett. These crags don't send down overly much snow; but an avalanche of hornblende, and mica, and gneiss, I guess, is no trifle to have on one's head. We'd best be moving."

And move we did: the cars, driven by Western lads in homespun suits and caps of racoon skin, going first along the rough road, overshadowed by tall bluffs and overhanging precipices; while Rhoda and I rode slowly on as the rearguard of the party. Nothing would have been easier than for us, mounted on our wiry mustangs, than to outstrip the necessarily slow pace of the carriages; yet we loitered and lingered, as it is the privilege of lovers to do. Lovers, however, or, at least, avowed ones, we were not; for not a word that indicated a personal interest, warmer and closer than that of mere friendship, had ever been exchanged between us.

The wind freshened as we slowly pursued the tardy march of the rest of the caravan. Gradually, the moan became a shriek, the shriek swelled into the deep diapason of a roar; dust came driving, as on the wings of a miniature simoom, from glen and gully; the sky darkened, and the air grew perceptibly colder. Yet we paced but slowly onwards, although, in the snorting and uneasiness of our chafing steeds—hardy, half-tamed denizens of the deserts—we ought, doubtless, to have read the signs of the coming danger. But we were too much wrapped up in one another, too intent on that engrossing conversation—so trite to read, so full of meaning to the talkers themselves, which only love can inspire—that half-an-hour must have elapsed before the chill of the atmosphere, the increasing gloom, and the violence of the gale, made me remember that the "Bloody Canyon" was no place in which to linger, with the tempest at hand. The spot was one of grimly-picturesque character, being, in fact, one of those deep ravines which are a peculiar feature of the giant scenery of the "Backbone of America." A thousand feet above us, to right and left, rose the frowning precipices that walled in the narrow road; around, were thorny shrubs, heaps of crumbling shale, and monstrous boulders lying in the beds of dried-up torrents. A

more desolate, savage nook of earth could scarcely be found than this, which took its name from the fact, that there some emigrant wagon-train had been surprised by a roving band of Arapahoes and Kiowas, and had perished miserably beneath the knife and tomahawk of the savage.

"You are cold, Miss Pell," I said, as I saw Rhoda shiver in the keen air. "Perhaps we had better ride on, and overtake—" I was interrupted here by the sudden crash with which a shower of rubbish, stones, sand, and dried twigs came rattling down from the crag above, causing our horses to start and rear. The wind, icy cold, and blowing with a force for which my European reminiscences could find no parallel, rendered it difficult to keep our saddles; while the mustangs, fretting and trembling, were evidently quite alive to the fact that there was danger abroad. Then down came another blinding cloud of dust and pebbles; and then, rebounding from rock to rock, a jagged fragment of white stone dropped from a beetling crag, and dashed itself to splinters on the hard pathway. It was no easy task to preserve a mastery over the terrified mustangs; while, though Rhoda made no complaint, I could see, by her pale cheek and quivering lip, that she was seriously alarmed.

"I think," said I, looking about me, "that if we could but find a sheltered place, our best course would be to take sanctuary until the storm should have spent its fury. Yonder is, it seems to me, the very haven we require."

The place which I had descried was a cavern, the mouth of which, fringed with sassafras bushes, yawned invitingly at a very short distance of us. By this time the obscurity had increased; and the howling wind rushed along the canyon with a force that threatened to sweep away all that withstood it. More and more stones, too, fell from the cliffs; and, without further delay, I sprang to the ground and assisted Rhoda to dismount.

A tough birch tree grew near, and to this I busied myself in making fast the bridles of our mustangs; when, suddenly, an exclamation from Rhoda caused me to turn my head.

"Look, look!" the girl exclaimed, in breathless terror, as she stood, with her dilated eyes uplifted towards where a huge dark object seemed to be poised between us and the filmy sky.

A rock! as I saw, at a glance, slowly, but surely, slipping from its bed of earth, and

ready to overwhelm us. There was not a moment to be lost. Rhoda, cowering in mortal fear, could no more fly from the approaching peril, than if her feet had been rooted to the ground. It was not a time for ceremony; so, without a word, I caught up the girl in my arms, and hurried with her into the low-browed entrance of the cavern, scrambling, as best I might, over the boulders and rubbish that obstructed the passage. Before I could reach it, however, the block of stone, which must have weighed many tons, came thundering down the cliff, raising a cloud of dust and dried leaves as it alighted and buried itself in the soil, on the very spot, so far as I could judge, where we had lately stood. The alarmed horses broke away from their bridles, and galloped, riderless, homewards, stones of all sizes falling thickly around their desperate course.

"We shall have to regain the hotel, I am afraid, on foot," said I cheerfully, as I placed Rhoda within the archway of the cave. "These storms are, no doubt, short-lived, as well as sudden, and——"

The hopeful words died away on my lips as a deafening roar, louder, deeper, nearer, than any thunder that I had ever listened to, filled the air, and was succeeded by a crash and a shock that made the solid earth quiver.

"This must be the slide! Heaven help us now; for, see, the little light we have is waning fast," whispered Rhoda, as she pointed to the cavern-mouth, back from which we had both of us instinctively shrunk as the hideous sound assailed our ears. Too true! The entrance to the cave was blocked up by the fallen mass of ruin, and we were plunged into darkness. When, however, my eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, I descried a cranny, nearly on a level with the top of the archway, through which there came a feeble glimmer of light and a small supply of air. Our lives had been, for the second time, snatched as if by miracle from the jaws of death.

Stunned by the roar of the landslip, and bewildered by the suddenness of the catastrophe, we scarcely at first realised that, although unharmed, we were still in a position full of peril. We had escaped being crushed to death; but should a second slide succeed the first, piling up still higher the stony barricade that shut us in, we should inevitably die of suffocation; unless, indeed, as seemed unlikely, the cave had some other opening to the outer air. I instantly resolved to

ascertain whether such an adit, by which we might possibly find the means of egress, existed; and, bidding Rhoda be of good cheer, since the worst was over, I made the circuit of the place of our confinement, cautiously groping my way around the rocky walls of the darkling grotto. My exploring only served to show me that our chance of regaining our liberty was poor indeed. The cave, although apparently a high one, was small, and gradually narrowed to a mere nook, which I could not enter save on hands and knees. No fresh fall of stones, however, occurred; and presently the howl of the wind was drowned by the deep stern voice of the thunder that rolled overhead, while through the narrow aperture I could catch glimpses of the fast succeeding flashes of the lightning. There were other sounds, too, as of rain and hail lashing the rocky walls of our prison, and that the storm which had been brewing had at last burst upon the country seemed clear enough. I did my best to reassure Miss Pell, feigning a confidence which I was far from feeling, and speaking of our release from durance as a mere question of minutes or hours. But Rhoda, her first terror having passed away, was by far too sensible to entertain any rose-coloured illusions as to our present position.

"No, Mr. Warburton, no," she said, in her sweet low voice, as I stood beside the heap of dried moss and withered leaves on which she was seated. "Your generous wish to calm my fears cannot make our situation other than it is. We are shut in here, it may be, to die."

I strove hard to take a sanguine view of our prospects. We should certainly be missed after the return of the party to the hotel. Already, perhaps, an expedition had been organised to seek us out. We should soon be among our friends. Miss Pell, as I could dimly see in the twilight of the cave, smiled sadly, and shook her head in dissent to my cheerful predictions.

"I am an American girl, you remember," she said gently, "and have heard of such accidents as this before now. It is no novelty for a traveller to perish in this desolate mountain region. Who would conjecture that we are imprisoned here? The probability was rather that we should have been crushed by one of the many piles of fallen stone that the storm-wind has hurled over the precipice, or perhaps been washed away to drown by the torrents that by this time have converted every ravine into a river. There is, I fear, little hope."

And as hours passed away without any sign of rescue, I began to believe that Rhoda was in the right, and that our plight was indeed a desperate one. The faint glimmer of light that filtered through the cranny above our heads gradually died away as night came on, and it grew dark and chill, so that Rhoda shivered perceptibly in the keen highland air. I wrapped around her the blue poncho, of spongy Mexican wool, which I had fortunately brought with me, and tried again to speak words of comfort, but they died away upon my lips.

More time went by, dragging its slow course; and there we remained, cut off from the world, and as utterly powerless to effect our own release as if we had been at the bottom of the deepest silver mine of the Cordilleras. Miss Pell seemed to sleep, and I was careful not to disturb her slumber; though once or twice, as my hand in the darkness accidentally touched the slimy back of some crawling reptile, I could scarcely repress an exclamation of disgust. At last the summer night was spent, and the faint grey light of dawn came peeping through the cranny overhead; but it brought with it no fresh well-spring of hope. Hope, with us two forlorn ones, was very nearly dead.

Instinctively, as the sun rose, my fair companion and myself drew nearer to one another, seating ourselves upon the rocky bench, on which I had strewed moss and withered leaves to provide better accommodation for Rhoda than the bare stone afforded. For some time we spoke but little, till at last, with a sob, Rhoda exclaimed, "Poor papa! he will feel it very much indeed, for I was the favourite. My poor mother, too, and little Emmie! Well, well! I must not disturb you, Mr. Warburton, with my selfish griefs. Very likely there are those in England whose hearts will bleed for you, if what I fear should come to pass."

"Not so," I answered, sadly; "my parents died long since, and I have no relatives near or dear enough to mourn for me. My place in the world will easily be filled up. But you, Miss Pell—Rhoda—so loved, so begirt by friends, with such fair prospects before you—it cannot, must not be, that you should be snatched away thus early by the cruel hand of death. We shall yet be saved."

But as time went on, without any sign that we were unforgotten by the denizens of that outer world from which we were so pitilessly severed, my heart sank within

me, and I began to resign the feeble hopes which I had hitherto cherished. We spoke but little. It was evident, however, that the long fast and vigil in the sharp mountain air had begun to exhaust Rhoda's strength. She shivered at intervals, and her hand, when I chanced to touch it, was very cold. I took the delicate fingers between mine, and chafed them to bring back their warmth, and then, for a while, we were silent. More hours elapsed, and our fate seemed irrevocably sealed. Then Miss Pell uttered some simple words of self-reproach, taking unmerited blame to herself for my great danger, incurred, as it had been, through my attendance on her, as we returned from the excursion to the new-found tarn. Somehow, in combating this self-injustice, I found that my feelings, long suppressed, could no longer be denied expression, and in broken but vehement words I told Rhoda how I loved her, how I worshipped the very ground on which her dear feet trod, how her image, sleeping or waking, haunted me. I told her, too, that nothing but the imminence of deadly peril, the all but hopelessness of our position, had emboldened me to speak my mind upon a subject on which I had resolved for ever to be mute. Well did I know that the nameless young English barrister, with scanty means and no influential relations, had not the right to aspire to a wealthy transatlantic heiress like the general's daughter. It had been my intention to bury the secret of my passion in my own breast, and very shortly to quit the Yampah, where, indeed, I had already lingered too long for my own peace of mind. It was only the desolate condition, with death so near, in which we found ourselves, which had emboldened me to speak as I had done.

"It was no great secret after all," said Rhoda, smiling through her tears, as she looked up into my face while I bent over her. "I did not know that you loved me, but I divined it. Can you tell why? Only for one reason—only because I loved you!"

Years have elapsed since the day when those welcome accents, the sweetest music that I had ever listened to, reached my wondering ear, yet how vividly can I recall the delicious surprise, the breathless joy, the half incredulity, with which I hearkened to this avowal. And then Rhoda sobbed, hiding her face with her hands, between the dainty fingers of which the tears were slowly trickling; and I strove to console her, so that she looked on me and smiled

in the old radiant way, and nestled close to me, as, with a lover's pertinacity, I pressed her again and again to repeat the assurance that my love was returned. And for a few brief blissful moments we were happy, and forgot the terrible seclusion, the living grave, to which we were doomed. Then reflection and remembrance came back, all too soon, and I kissed Rhoda's pale cheek, wet with tears, and we sat down together on the moss-strewn slab, linked hand in hand, to wait for death.

Ha! what was that? The booming sound caused by the fall of a rock from the precipice above, or the sudden discharge of a cannon close at hand? The latter, surely, to judge by the hollow echoes, as they rolled reverberating from glen to glen. And then came a deep hurrah of human voices, and the crash of falling stones, and the clink of shovel and pickaxe. We were not forgotten, then. Our living tomb was about to be burst open by strong hands; and already men were toiling to cut a road through the intervening barrier that blocked us in. Another explosion succeeded; so close, this time, that the platform of the cave rocked beneath our feet, and many a loosened stone fell dangerously near us; and then there was a hoarse cheer of triumph, and the splintered rocks and shale, that had walled up the entrance to the grotto, fell to right and left before the sturdy strokes of spade and mattock; and in rushed the friendly besiegers, dust-basted and worn with toil, while I, bearing in my arms the precious burthen of Rhoda's senseless form (for she had fainted, through exhaustion and the revulsion of feelings natural on our sudden rescue) staggered forth into the outer air. A crowd had assembled there, and greeted me with an uproarious shout of hearty welcome. There were men on horseback and men on foot; ladies, also, among whom I recognised the well-known faces of our companions from the Yampah Hotel.

Conspicuous was the gaunt form of our host, Dr. Eli Briggs, who clapped me vigorously on the shoulder, exclaiming, with an accent of genuine delight, "Give you joy, Britisher! I'm gladder to see you, safe and sound, Mr. Warburton—you and the young lady, here—than if I'd prospected a fifty-rod claim of twenty-carat gold quartz on my own ranch yonder. Lucky, warn't it, that this gang of miners come down this way when they did, drove from the high-level gulches by want of water for the cradles. We'd have been

short-handed, else, let alone their diamond drill and blasting powder, which—"

But I think that I, in turn, fairly worn out, must have fainted at this point; for the next thing I remember was, that some Good Samaritan was putting a flask of Bourbon whisky to my lips as they lifted me into the rough-and-ready mountain car, in which, pillowled on buffalo robes and wrapped in shawls, Rhoda had been already placed.

" You must remember, father," said the dear girl, when we were pleading with General Pell for that consent to our union which the proud and wealthy senator was at first reluctant to grant; " remember, that but for Edward—for Mr. Warburton—Emmie would have been the only child left to you. He saved my life, and—"

It matters little to pursue the course of the feminine arguments, utterly wrong in logic, very likely, but fraught with an intuitive perception of facts which presently triumphed over the general's prejudices. He wrung my hand, and told me that, of all the young fellows without dollars whom he had ever known, it cost him the least amount of self-reproach to hail me as his son-in-law. And I am happy to say that, the general's verdict being confirmed by Mrs. Pell, I have for years been Rhoda's happy husband; that my chambers in Pump Court are occupied by another counsel learned in the law; that my laundress and wig-maker know me no more; and that I have prospered quite sufficiently as a thriving merchant in America; so blessed in the affection of an excellent wife that, with her, even poverty would have lost its sting.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER X. MRS. CRUTCHLEY FULFILS
HER MISSION.

To the man whose organs of philoprogenitiveness are largely developed, and to the general lover of his species, the enclosure of the Regent's Park is a pretty sight on a fine summer's day. Hundreds of small children, untamed by School Board influence, disport themselves upon its green sward, making the air ring with rippling laughter and ear-piercing shrieks; the smooth sheet of ornamental water is covered with swiftly shooting canoes, or larger boats, in which young men "row

the ribboned-fair ; " further afield cricket is being played, and further still, as far removed from the rest as possible, young couples are walking up and down, so engrossed with each other, as to be impervious alike to the envy or the ridicule which they may occasion.

Amongst these groups, one fine June evening, Mr. Heath found himself leisurely strolling, surveying them with a bland compassion, which from time to time expressed itself in his curling lips and uplifted eyebrows. That people might be married under stress of circumstances he knew from experience ; that when a man could obtain property and position by taking himself a wife, it was his interest to do so, he was ready to allow ; but that two young people of opposite sexes, such as he saw before him, obviously of straitened means, should, under the influence of a personal attachment, be induced to commit matrimony, and thus further impair their resources, and bring upon their devoted heads an accumulation of hitherto unknown miseries, was a problem the solution of which was beyond his ken. Now and again a shadow of disappointment would cross his face when, arriving at the northern end of the gravel walk which he was patrolling, he looked up and down the boundary road, and saw no trace of the person he was expecting ; and when, in response to a touch upon his shoulder, he turned round and found himself in the presence of Mrs. Crutchley, his greeting was harder and more formal than usual.

" You are late, Harriet," he said. " I used to think you were the only woman who knew the meaning of business and the value of time ; but you seem to have forgotten both. You must not let your fashionable friends induce you to give up your most important characteristic."

Mrs. Crutchley was not one whit upset by this exhibition of annoyance. " You must not be angry, George," she said, quietly. " You know that though I manage to make most things go as I please, I am not entirely my own mistress, and I had some difficulty in inducing our young friend to dispense with my attendance on her afternoon drive ; besides, from Eaton-square to these remote regions is a long drive ; and as I did not choose the footman, who gave the address to my cabman, to know whither I was bound, I had to come by a somewhat circuitous route."

When there was no necessity for anger, Mr. Heath was easily mollified. " I chose

these 'regions,' as you call them," he said, with a smile, " because they are remote, and there is little chance of our conversation being interrupted. I am obliged to come to your house so often that it is best I should not visit there when there is no absolute occasion, and a secret conference held there between you and me might have aroused some suspicion. We could have met in Kensington-gardens, but there we should probably have been seen by some of your friends, while the fools who are philandering here," looking round upon them with great contempt, " cannot possibly know anything of either of us."

" They seem very happy, George," said Mrs. Crutchley, after a moment's pause, in which her thoughts had flashed back to the time when she was Harriet Staunton, and had a tenderness for the rector ; " I am not sure that one ought not to envy them."

" If, when you are listening to Patti to-night, or, eating plovers' eggs in Belgrave-square, you will fancy these wretches sleeping in garrets or under counters after a meal of cheese and onions, you will have no doubt at all on the matter," said Heath. " This sounds well for the pursuit in which you are engaged. You are pleading the cause of honest virtue so well that you are actually becoming inoculated with its sentiments ; and this brings me to the reason of our meeting. How does the cause of honest virtue prosper ? "

" Almost as well as you, its excellent representative, could wish," said Mrs. Crutchley. " The watch that I have kept day and night over our young friend has been wearisome, but, from one point of view, decidedly advantageous."

" When we talked over this matter at your rooms in Ebnry-street, we came to the conclusion that though Miss Middleham had a will of her own, she would be found tractable if properly handled. Has the result proved that we were right ? "

" Tolerably right," said Mrs. Crutchley ; " her will was stronger than I had imagined ; but so was the rest of her character ; and the extra sensitiveness, which I did not think she possessed, has been my best aid in making progress with her."

" You have worked in the manner we determined on ? " asked Heath.

" Exactly," said Mrs. Crutchley. " Never was there anyone more innocent and enthusiastic—never anyone whose illusions have been more completely dispelled."

"I don't mix much in the fashionable world, as you know," said Heath, "and I have had but little opportunity of speaking to you; but from what I hear, the girl has been a success."

"An undoubted success," said Mrs. Crutchley; "admitted even by those whose interest it is to deny it. This has been the result partly of my management, but principally of her own good looks and charm of manner. She is ladylike naturally, you see, George, and thereby stands out in striking contrast against the girls of the present day, who, for the most part, are slangy or artificial."

"The knowledge that she was an heiress has not stood in her way, I imagine," said Heath. "Some men in the City were saying yesterday that Lord Accrington had proposed for her, and been rejected. Is that so?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Crutchley, "that is quite true. He was number four, to say nothing of those who have not yet been able to screw their courage to the sticking place, or are waiting for an opportunity of declaring themselves."

"Four, eh?" said Heath, smiling grimly. "Your aristocratic fish are hungry, and bite freely, Harriet. There is no false modesty about them—coronet and title, ancient ancestry, blue blood, and all the rest of it, going, going, gone!"

"Only the present generation, George," said Mrs. Crutchley. "Lord Accrington's father was the proudest man that ever lived, and would have starved—did almost starve down at the family place in Lancashire, where he lived from year's end to year's end, without seeing a soul—sooner than repair his fortune by a mésalliance in a second marriage."

"It is certain then that he transmitted none of the family pride to his son," said Heath, "who is always cadging about the City, hanging on to anyone with the reputation of having a good thing in hand, scraping acquaintance with capitalists, acting as director of any newly-started company, no matter how unlikely to succeed, provided he gets his qualification shares gratis, and his attendance fees paid with tolerable regularity. You knew all this about him, I suppose?"

"I had heard something of it," said Mrs. Crutchley, "and understanding at once the object of his assiduous attention, had little difficulty in warning Grace against him."

"Then the viscount's coronet was not

sufficient bait?" said Heath. "Your hold upon unsophisticated innocence must have been strong, Harriet."

"Better coronets than Lord Accrington's might have been had for the asking," said Mrs. Crutchley, placidly; "coronets with strawberry leaves in place of gilt ball. But I will do the girl justice, and say that it has not been entirely my teaching which has kept her firm in her purpose, and working in the way in which we should desire. Once convinced that she was marked down as the prey of fortune-hunters, her natural pride soon came to her aid, and, banishing hertimidity, made her regard every polite action as an insult, and each utterer of a pleasant speech as a covert foe."

"In such a society as she has lived with she must have had a pleasant time, then!" muttered Heath.

"It was almost affecting to see her under the process. Hardened and callous as she may become, full of that worldly knowledge of which we are so proud, and which so effectually sears and blights the early shoots of freshness and sentiment in our souls, she will be happier even so than if in her girlish folly she had been permitted to marry a titled scamp, who would have wrecked her fortune, and broken her heart."

"You speak warmly, Harriet," said Heath, surveying her with curiosity. "What do you think now would be Miss Middleham's future fate, suppose she were to make the marriage towards which she is being so skilfully urged?"

"Not half so bad as you might imagine, George," said Mrs. Crutchley, earnestly. "You are a hard man, accustomed to fight for yourself from your birth, and, on that account, keeping a sharp look-out on the main chance; so long as you are thus striving, it would be, I know, impossible for anyone to come between you and the object of your existence—the acquisition of wealth and position—but I firmly believe that if that object were once attained, as it would be in your marriage to a rich girl, you would give up all your excitement and irritability, and desire nothing better than to settle down, and be known for the future as a clever, though lazy, member of Parliament, whose wife and whose dinners were alike irreproachable."

"Certainly, Harriet, you have prognosticated for me a future very different to any I have ever anticipated," said Heath, with,

what was most unusual to him, a real hearty laugh. "But tell me what, so far as Miss Middleham is concerned, are my chances of enjoying this almost pastoral bliss; for, of course, when parliament was not in session, I should, according to your notion, be resident on my land—

'A lord of fat prize oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pines,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none.'

Good heavens, what a prospect!"

"Depend upon it, you would enjoy such a haven, after all the storms and struggles of business," said Mrs. Crutchley; "and as for your chances of reaching it through Miss Middleham, they are, I think, pretty good."

"You said that Lord Accrington made number four, on the rejected list. Is it fair to ask who were the others?"

"I do not see any great harm in telling you," said Mrs. Crutchley. "The first was, of course, an Irishman and a captain. His name was Macmanus, though I don't suppose you ever heard of him, as he lives in Ireland, and only visits London periodically, when he brings over the horses, which he breeds, for sale."

"Then he hadn't much opportunity of pressing his suit?" said Heath, with a smile.

"Much opportunity?" repeated Mrs. Crutchley. "He dined here one night, brought by Lord Podager, who had met him at the last Punchestown races, called the next day, and actually took advantage of my being called out of the room to propose to Grace."

"That was sharp practice," said Heath.

"It was the best thing that could have happened for our purpose," said Mrs. Crutchley. "Of course, the man got an answer such as even he could not mistake; but the poor girl was horribly outraged and indignant, and far more readily disposed to believe in my views of the hollowness and deceit of the world and its inhabitants, than she had been when I first strove to inculcate them."

"And the other two?"

"The other two followed speedily. The first was Lord Orme—a sedate, middle-aged man, who, I believe, after his tepid fashion, was really in love with Grace, and was not acted on by pecuniary considerations; and Charley Skirrow, whom you may possibly have heard of as Sir Charles Skirrow, a young scampgrace, who has lost every sixpence he ever possessed on the turf."

"And Miss Middleham would have nothing to say to either of them?"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Crutchley; "she refused them both, point blank. In each instance she thought herself insulted, though such was not her feeling in another case, which had the same result."

"Ah, ha! that makes a fifth," said Heath; "you only mentioned four before."

"And I ought to have said nothing about this," said Mrs. Crutchley, "for it can be scarcely considered a proposal in earnest, though the proposer was desperately ent up, and took his refusal very much to heart."

"Who was it, Harriet?" asked Heath.

"My nephew, Lord Podager," said Mrs. Crutchley; "you know he is but a boy, only nineteen, but he is very good-looking, with pleasant ways and manners. He was kind to Grace, and devoted himself to her when she first came out, and I have every reason to believe that she was inclined to be fond of him; but when she talked to me about it, I pointed out to her the folly of an alliance with a man younger than herself, and gave a side hint that it would be a bad return for all Lady Waddledot's kindness, though I am sure there is nothing that my sister-in-law would have liked better. And so when poor Podager asked her to marry him, she told him not to be a silly boy, and that they would always be good friends, and after he was gone, went up to her room and cried bitterly."

"Do you think that she had really a tenderness for this young lord?" asked Heath, after a pause, and with more apparent interest than he had hitherto shown.

"Not in the least," replied Mrs. Crutchley, confidently. "But she had been so disgusted with the coarse brutality of the first man, with the calm business-like proceeding of Lord Orme, and with the unmistakable intention of Charley Skirrow, that Podager's gentle pleading, and frank honest manner, undoubtedly touched her. Grace Middleham has, however, as you remarked when we first broached the subject, plenty of common sense; she never once regarded my poor young nephew's wild words as a deliberate proposal, and when she had given vent to her overstrained feelings, and as they say, 'had her cry out,' she never thought of him any more, save in that friendly spirit, in which, as she had told him, she should always regard him."

"There would seem then, to be no

danger from any one near at hand," said Heath. "I suppose we may take it for granted that none of those long-haired romantic students at Bonn made any impression on her?"

"That question is easily answered," said Mrs. Crutchley; "if they had, that natural obstinacy—or firmness—of her's, would have asserted itself, when you proposed her coming to London for the season; and I should never have had the chance of undertaking the very responsible position which you have assigned to me."

"And which you fill with such perfect credit to yourself, and satisfaction to all," said Heath, gallantly. "By the way, I suggested that you should look after her letters. She keeps up a correspondence with the Sturm household, I suppose?"

"She writes, now and again, but not frequently, to Madame Sturm. But scarcely a week passes without her sending a long letter to a Mrs. Waller."

"Waller!" repeated Heath. "Who is she? I don't know the name!"

"I made a casual enquiry on that point as soon as I noticed the regularity of the correspondence," said Mrs. Crutchley, "and Grace told me frankly that this Mrs. Waller is a young woman, a kind of half-housekeeper, half-companion, to Madame Sturm, who, as you learned from the professor, and from her own complaints, is an invalid, or what is worse, a hypochondriac."

"That is, then, where our young friend finds an outlet for her feelings," said Heath, with a grim smile. "I'll warrant the letters which Mrs. Waller receives are filled with violent denunciations or compressed cynicism, such as must make that doubtless worthy woman feel very uncomfortable. There is no reason to discourage the Waller correspondence. And so," he added, drawing himself up, and speaking as though more at ease. "You think those shoals and quicksands which beset us at the outset of our voyage have been avoided, and that our course may now be looked on as tolerably clear?"

"I do," said Mrs. Crutchley, earnestly. "I am certain that the measures taken have had the desired effect, and have been successful, even sooner than we could have anticipated. Fortune has favoured us in more ways than one; in sending a set of suitors, who were all calculated exactly to bear out the necessity for the caution which I had impressed upon Grace, and, than whom there could have been no stronger contrasts to the ideal

upon whom I have always dwelt; and in—in—"

"Don't hesitate," said Heath. "Say what is in your mind!"

"Well, then, frankly, in fitting you so admirably for the part you have undertaken. Oh, I always knew you to be a man of resource, but I had no idea that you were so Protean as you have proved yourself," said Mrs. Crutchley.

Her companion affected no recognition of the compliment, save so much as a nod might imply. For a few moments he walked by her side without speaking; then he suddenly stopped, and said—"Is it ripe yet? I am unaccustomed to play a waiting game, and confess that it bores me, even when the stake is of such magnitude. That halcyon period of M.P.-ship, and cattle breeding, about which you spoke so enthusiastically, Harriet, has not come upon me yet, I fear, and I hate inaction and suspense."

"You must wait a little longer," said Mrs. Crutchley, quietly. "Your own intuition will tell you when and how to speak. But, remember, all the ground that has been gained may be lost in a moment by a false move, a premature avowal. The girl, clear-headed and strong-minded though she may be, is still a girl, timid by nature, and now with all her suspicions aroused. Once let her be really frightened, or worse still, give her an inkling that she has been made a fool or a tool of, and your chance is gone for ever."

"You may trust me," Heath replied. "I have worked too long and too patiently to run any hazard, now, when success seems almost within reach. Besides," he added, with a light laugh, "putting myself aside, I swear I have so much admiration for the manner in which you have carried out your part of the programme, that I would not risk spoiling it for the sake of a little personal inconvenience. Now, go home. Harriet, take this envelope with you, and be careful of it. It is not my habit to pay on account, but you have done your work splendidly, and when the prize is gained, there will be still something to come to you. To-morrow night is one of your blanks, is it not? Then you may expect me about nine!"

He pressed a letter into her hand, lifted his hat, and turning on his heel, sauntered slowly down the path; while Mrs. Crutchley made her way in the opposite direction.

The reason why the "off nights," when there were no ball invitations, or she felt herself too fatigued or otherwise unwilling

to go out, were prized by Grace Middleham, was that they were almost always spent in Mr. Heath's society. At first the bank manager pleaded the necessity of conferring with the heiress, and the impossibility, in the multiplicity of his engagements, of finding any other time; but gradually he dispensed with this pretext, and he came regularly on every evening when he knew that Grace and Mrs. Crutchley were to be found at home, and alone. It was not for want of invitation that he did not frequently attend the entertainments in Eaton-place, or escort the ladies to the opera or other public amusements; but these invitations he invariably declined, excusing himself on the ground that his hard work enjoined on him the necessity of keeping early hours. This wholesome sanitary rule was, however, entirely ignored by him when he had Grace to himself, for Mrs. Crutchley counted as nothing—taking the opportunity, as she always did, of making up for the long weary hours which she was compelled to pass deprived of her natural rest, by sleeping soundly in her easy chair as soon as her tea-dispensing duties were at an end. And while she slept, the girl—over whom she was supposed to be keeping watch—sat entranced, listening to such language as she had never heard before, and drinking it in with greedy ears. It was not "lovemaking" in the ordinary acceptance of the term: never once did Heath declare his hope of winning her, who in her secret soul must have allowed herself only too willing to be won. He was her servant, her slave, the minister to her wishes. Hitherto, before seeing her—for he did not reckon, and scarcely ever alluded to, their accidental meeting at the school—he had passed the first portion of his life in promoting her welfare, and he only hoped to be permitted to devote the remainder of his days to the same service. And Grace listened; contrasting, with what result may be easily guessed, the persons with whom her time was ordinarily spent, their insensate frivolity, their meaningless attempts at humour, their coarse and reckless manners, and their slangy equivocal conversation, with the constant kindness, the unobtrusive devotion, the deep old-friend-like interest, all pervaded by thorough respect—that greatest compliment payable to a woman in the pre-

sent day—which marked this man's every thought and deed and word. Every note in the gamut of human feeling was at his command, and was sounded by him with the greatest delicacy. It must be impossible, Grace thought, to doubt the real nature of a passion, the very existence of which was so rigorously suppressed. The men who had sought her hand for their own base purposes had loudly proclaimed their love; but he, whose every action tended to her good, who might be said almost to have a claim upon her for benefits conferred, he remained silent; and all that she had to go by, all that her heart fed upon in the watches of the night, when all his words were eagerly passed in review before her, were certain expressions, half avowed, half betrayed, yet all tending to her pride and happiness. The game had been played boldly, yet with delicate dexterity; and it was scarcely to be wondered at that a young girl—ignorant of life, with no companion but a greedy, interested stranger, her position obscure, her wealth making her an object of calculated attention to every one—should turn to the one being whose kindness seemed to have no trace of self, more especially when that one being was a handsome and fascinating man, whom duty alone seemed to hold off from declaring his affection for her?

The London season was beginning to wane, and Anne was hoping to hear news of Grace's speedy return. Grace's communications had been less lengthly recently, and the interval between the receipt of each had been longer, greatly to the Frau Professorin's annoyance, for the old lady loved to hear chatty details of all the gay doings in town.

"Come, you've got a long one at last, Waller!" said Madame Sturm one morning, as the servant handed Anne a thick packet in the well-known hand.

There was plenty of chat, but little interest, save in the concluding paragraph, which ran thus:—

"And now, my dearest Anne, I have kept my great surprise till the last, and find I have left myself but little room to write it. I am engaged, Anne; and to some one you know—to my dear uncle's faithful friend, and our Hampstead acquaintance, Mr. Heath!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 328. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IV.

MENTION has been made of a whist-party at Dr. Bodkin's, to which Mrs. Errington announced her intention of going. It took place on the Thursday after that evening on which Mrs. Errington was first introduced to the reader: that is to say, on the second night following.

Whist-parties were almost the only social entertainment ever given amongst the genteel persons in Whitford. The Rev. Cyrus Bodkin, D.D., liked his rubber; so did Robert Smith, Esq., M.R.C.S., and Mr. Dockett, the attorney, and Miss Chubb, and one or two more cronies, who were frequently seen at the doctor's green card-tables.

The Bodkins lived in a gloomy stone house adjoining the grammar-school, of which, indeed, it formed part. The house was approached by a gravelled courtyard, surrounded by high stone walls. The garden at the back ran sloping down to a broad green meadow, which in turn was bounded by the little river Whit, all overhung with willows, and covered by a floating mass of broad water-lily leaves, just opposite the doctor's garden gate.

In the full summer time, the view from the back of the house was pretty and pastoral enough. But in autumn and winter the meadow was a swamp, whose vivid green looked poisonous—as indeed it was, exhalingague and rheumatism from its splashy surface—and a white brooding mist trailed itself, morning and evening, along the sluggish Whit, like a fallen

cloud, condemned by some angry prince of the air to crawl serpent-like on earth, instead of soaring and sailing in the empyrean.

Such fancies never came into Doctor Bodkin's head, however, nor into his wife's either—good, anxious, unselfish, sad, little woman! Into his daughter Minnie's brain all sorts of wild, fantastic notions would intrude as she lay on her sofa, looking out upon the garden, and the river, and the meadow, and the gnarled old willows, and the flying scud in the sky; but she very seldom spoke of her fancies to any one. She spoke of other matters, though, freely enough. She had many visitors, who came and sat around her couch, or beside the lounging-chair, on which, on her good days, she reclined. She was better acquainted with the news of Whitford than most of the people who could use their limbs to go abroad and see what was passing. She was interested in the progress of the boys at the grammar-school, and knew the names, and a good deal about the characters, of every one of them. She would chat, and laugh, and joke by the hour with the frequenters of her father's house; but of herself—of her own thoughts, feelings, and fancies—Minnie Bodkin said no word to them. Nor did she, in truth, ever speak much on that subject all her life. And there were days—black days in the calendar of her poor anxious little mother—when Minnie would remain shut into her room, refusing to see or speak with anyone, and suffering much pain of body, with a proud stoicism which rejected sympathy like a wall of granite.

There is no suggestion of granite about her now, however, as she lies, propped up by crimson cushions, on a sofa in her father's drawing-room. The room is bright

and warm, despite the white kraken of mist that is coiled around the outer walls of the house. Wax-lights shine in tall, old-fashioned silver candlesticks on the mantelpiece, and on the centre-table, and on a pianoforte, beside which stands a canterbury full of music-books. A great fire blazes in the grate, and makes its immediate neighbourhood too hot for the comfort of most people. But Minnie is apt to be chilly, and loves the heat. Some delicate ferns and hothouse plants adorn a stand between the windows. They are rather a rare luxury in Whitford; but Minnie loves flowers, and always has some choice ones about her. A still rarer luxury hangs on the wall opposite to her sofa, in the shape of a very fine copy—on a reduced scale—of Raphael's *Madonna di San Sisto*. Minnie had fallen in love with a print from that famous picture long ago, and the copy was procured for her at considerable pains and expense. The furniture of the room is of crimson and dark oak. Minnie delights in rich colours and picturesque combinations. In a word, there is not an inch of the apartment, from floor to ceiling, in the arrangement of which Minnie's tastes have not been consulted, and in which traces of Minnie's influence are not plainly to be seen by those who know that household.

Minnie has a face, which, if you saw it represented in time-darkened oil colours, and framed on the walls of a picture-gallery, you would pronounce strikingly beautiful. Such faces are sometimes seen in flesh and blood, and, strange to say, do by no means excite the same enthusiasm in ordinary beholders, who, for the most part, like the picturesque in a picture and nowhere else; and who, to paraphrase what was said of Voltaire's intellect, admire chiefly those women who have, more than other young ladies, the prettiness which all young ladies have.

Minnie's face is pale and rather sallow. Her skin is not transparent, but fine in texture, like fine vellum, and it seldom changes its hue from emotion. When it does, it grows dark-red or deadly-white. Pleasing blushes or pallors are never seen on it. She has dark, thick hair, worn short, and brushed away from a high, smooth, rounded forehead, in which shine a pair of bright brown eyes, under finely-arched eyebrows. But the beauty of the face lies in the perfection of its outlines: brow, cheeks, and chin are alike delicately moulded; her mouth—although the lips

are too pale—is almost faultless, as are the white, small teeth she shows when she smiles. There is an indefinable air of sickness and suffering over this beautiful face, and dark traces beneath the eyes, and a pathetic, weary look in them sometimes; but, when she speaks or smiles, you forget all that.

There are people in this world whose intellects remind one of lamps too scantily supplied with oil. The little feeble flame in them burns and flickers, certainly, but it is but a dull sort of dead light after all. Now Minnie Bodkin's spirit-lamp, if the phrase may be permitted, illuminated everything it shone upon, and there were some persons who found it a great deal too dazzling to be pleasant.

It is not at all too bright at this moment for Algernon Errington, who, seated close beside her couch, is giving her, *sotto voce*, a humorous imitation of the psalm-singing in old Max's parlour; and describing, with great relish, his mother's cool suggestion that the family prayers should be put off until she should be absent at a whist-party.

"Poor dear mother," says Algernon, smiling, "she can't forget that she is an Ancram; and sometimes comes out with one of her grande dame speeches, as if she were addressing my grandfather's Warwickshire tenantry forty years ago!" At which simple, candid words Minnie shoots out a queer, keen glance at the young fellow from under her eyelids.

"And the Methodist preacher—what is he like?" she asks. "Whitford is, or was, a little inclined to go crazed about him. I don't know whether the enthusiasm is burning itself out, as such fires of straw will do, but a few weeks ago I heard that the little Wesleyan chapel was crowded to overflowing whenever he preached; and that once or twice, when he addressed the people out of doors on Whit Meadow, there was such a multitude as never was seen there before. I was quite curious to see the man who could so move our sluggish Whitfordians."

Algernon had taken up a sheet of note-paper and a pen from Minnie's letter-writing table, whilst she was speaking. "Look here," he says, "here's the preacher!" And he holds out the paper on which he has drawn, with a few rapid strokes, a caricature of David Powell.

Minnie looks at it with raised eyebrows.

"Oh," says she, "is he like that? I am disappointed. This is the common, con-

ventional, long-haired Methodist, that one sees in every comic print."

And in truth Algernon's portrait is not a good likeness, even for a caricature. He had drawn a lank, hook-nosed man, with long, black hair, expressed by two blots of ink falling on either side of his face.

"He wears his hair just like that!" says Algy, contemplating his own work with a good deal of satisfaction.

The card playing has not yet begun. Mrs. Bodkin, small, thin, with a questioning, sharp, little nose, and a chin which narrows off too suddenly, and an odd resemblance altogether to a little melancholy fox, is presiding at a tea-table. Besides tea and coffee, it is furnished with substantial cakes of many various kinds. Whitford people, for the most part, dine early, so that they are ready for solid food again by about eight o'clock; and, will probably, sustain nature once more with sandwiches and mulled wine before they sleep.

It is not a large party. There is Mrs. Errington, majestic in a dyed silk, and a real lace cap, the latter a relic of the "better days" she is fond of reverting to; Miss Chubb, a stout spinster, with a languishing fat face as round as a full moon, and little rings of hair gummed down all over her forehead, and half-way down her plump cheeks; Mr. Smith, the surgeon, black-eyed, red-faced, and smiling; the Rev. Peter Warlock, curate of St. Chad's, a serious, ghoul-like young man, who rends great bits out of his muffin with his teeth, in a way to make you shudder if you happen to be nervous or fanciful; Mr. Dockett, the attorney, and his wife, each dressed in black, each with a huge double chin and smothered voice, and altogether comically like one another.

On the hearth-rug, with his back to the fire, and his coffee-cap in his hand, stands Dr. Bodkin. He is short and thick. He has an air of command. He looks at the world in general as if it were liable to an "imposition" of ever so many hundred lines of Latin poetry, and as if he were ready to enforce the penalty at brief notice. He is not a hard man at heart, but nature has made him conceited, and habit has made him a tyrant. The boys kotoo to him in the school, and his wife bends submissively to his will at home. There is only one person in the world who habitually opposes and sets aside his assumption of infallibility, and that person—his daughter Minnie—he loves and

fears. He tramples on most other people, in the firm persuasion that it is for their good. He is bald, large-faced, with a long upper lip, which he shoots out into a funnel shape when he talks. He is an honest man in his calling, has a fair share of routine learning, and imparts it laboriously to the boys under his tuition.

Presently the people seem to slacken in eating and drinking. "Another cup of tea, Mrs. Errington? Won't you try any of that pound cake, Mr. Warlock?" (N.B. He has eaten three muffins unassisted; but they do not prosper with him. He has a hungry glare.) "Mrs. Dockett? No?" Mrs. Bodkin looks round, and lifts her meek, foxy little nose interrogatively at each member of the circle. No one will eat or drink more. The doctor prepares to make up the tables.

The card-tables are always set out in an inner drawing-room, adjoining that in which our friends are taking tea. Dr. Bodkin hates to hear any noise when he is at his rubber, so there are thick curtains before the door of communication between the two rooms; and the door is shut, and the curtains drawn, whenever Minnie desires to have music on whist evenings.

The sound of the piano penetrates to the card-players, nevertheless. But Mrs. Bodkin declares that she can never hear a note, when she is in the little drawing-room, with the door shut, and the curtains drawn. And although the doctor wears a frown on his bald forehead, and is more than ordinarily severe on his partner whenever the piano begins to sound during a game, yet he never takes any step to have the instrument silenced.

The players file off in the wake of the host. There is a quartet at the doctor's table. At another, Mrs. Dockett, Mrs. Warlock, and Mr. Smith play dummy. Algernon Errington hates cards, and—naturally—doesn't play. The Rev. Peter Warlock also hates cards, but is wanted to make up the rubber, and—naturally—plays. Mrs. Bodkin hovers between the two rooms, and Minnie and Algernon are left almost tête-à-tête.

"And so you really, really think of going to London?" says Minnie gravely.

"To seek my fortune!" answers Algernon, with a smile. "Turn a-gain, Erring-ton—I don't know why that shouldn't be rung out on Bow Bells. You see my name has the same number of syllables as Whit-ting-ton! I declare that is a good omen!"

"Whittington made himself useful to the cook, and took care of his kitten. I wonder what you will do, Algry, to deserve fortune?"

"Do you think fortune favours the deserving? They paint her as a woman!" cries Master Algernon, with a saucy grimace.

"Algry, I like you. We are old chums. Have you considered this step? Have you any reasonable prospect of making your way, if you refuse the Bristol man's proposition?"

Minnie seldom speaks so earnestly as she is speaking now; still seldomer volunteers any inquiry into other people's affairs. Algernon is sensible of the distinction and flattered by it. He forthwith proceeds to lay his hopes and plans before her; that is to say, he talks a great deal with astonishing candour and fluency, and says wonderfully little. His mother is so anxious; these Seelys are her people. It would vex the dear old lady so terribly, if he were to prefer the Bristol side of the house! Though, perhaps, that would be, selfishly speaking, the right policy.

"Ah, I see!" exclaims Minnie, sinking back among her cushions when he has done speaking.

By-and-by, one or two more guests drop in: young Pawkins, of Pudcombe Hall, some six miles from Whitford; Lieutenant-Colonel Whistler, on half-pay, with his two nieces, Rose and Violet McDougall; and with them Alethea Dockett, who is still a day-boarder at a girl's school in Whitford, and has been spending the afternoon with the Misses McDougall. The latter young ladies never play *whist*. Little Ally Dockett sometimes takes a hand, if need be, and acquits herself not discreditably; but sixteen rushes in where two-and-thirty fears to tread. Rose and Violet are on the doubtful border-land of life, and keep up a brisk skirmishing warfare with their enemy, Time. They would not give that wily old traitor the triumph of putting themselves at a *whist-table* for—*for anything short of a bona fide offer of marriage with a good settlement.*

All those guests Minnie receives very graciously, with a sort of royal condescension. She is quite unconscious that the Misses McDougall (of whose intelligence she has, truth to say, a disdainful estimate) are alive to the fact that she thinks them fools, and that they take a good deal of credit to themselves for bearing with her airs, poor thing! But then she is so afflicted!

"Oh, Minnie, what's that? Do let me see! Is it one of your caricatures, you wicked thing?" cries Rose, darting on the portrait of David Powell.

"It's better drawn than Minnie can do," says Violet, with an air of having evidence wrung from her on oath.

"It may be that, and yet not very good," answers Minnie carelessly. "Mr. Errington has been trying to give me an idea of some one I've never seen, and probably never shall see."

"It's the Methodist preacher, by Jove!" says young Pawkins with his glass in his eye. "I heard him and saw him last summer on Whit Meadow."

Colonel Whistler, after holding the paper out at the utmost stretch of his arm, solemnly puts on a pair of gold spectacles and examines it.

"Monstrous good!" he pronounces. "Very well, Errington! That's just the cut of that kind of fellow."

"Have you seen him, colonel?" asks Minnie.

"No—no; I can't say I have seen him. Don't like these irregular practitioners, Miss Minnie. But I know the sort of fellow. That's just the cut of 'em!"

"I wish I could draw, Miss Bodkin," says a voice behind Minnie at the head of the sofa; "I would show you a better likeness of the man than that!"

Minnie puts her thin white hand over her shoulder to the new-comer, whom she cannot see. "Mr. Diamond!" she exclaims very softly.

"How can you tell?"

"I know your voice."

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

A WANDERING JEW.

READERS of historical romances are apt to form a curiously incorrect idea of the degree of civil and religious liberty enjoyed by the Jews during the Middle Ages. Young—very young—readers, feel the eye grow dim, and a coca-nut rise in the throat, at the recital of the woes of Rebecca; and more ancient persons, who have paid sixty per cent. in their time, have been occasionally heard to confess that Isaac of York was hardly dealt with. Evidence, mostly of a doubtful character, has been brought forward to show that early experiments in dentistry were chiefly practised at the expense of the Hebrew; and much unnecessary sentiment has been expended upon a nation

compelled to wear distinctive apparel, and to herd together in certain quarters of great cities. Singular tales are told of spasmodic acts of oppression wreaked on the Caucasian, when his Christian master found no other immediate outlet for his native brutality. It is said that a pleasant custom prevailed at Easter tide, when the oppressors—banded together—accused the Jews of stealing and crucifying a Christian child. The accusation, unsupported by proof, was deemed a sufficient warrant for a general tumult, followed by the plunder and massacre of the Hebrew population. Looked upon calmly, these outrages simply represent the revolt of the physically strong and financially weak, against those whose riches were in inverse proportion to their powers of resistance. Mail-clad barons got into debt, with an alacrity almost equalled by their descendants, and when they found themselves “dipped” beyond recovery, got up a revolution against the Jews, and demolished the debt and the creditor together. It was the old story of the division of the world into two classes—borrowers and lenders. In the Middle Ages, the borrowers, if slim in purse, were strong of hand—and in many cases got the better of the lenders, who in modern days have had an ample revenge. The children of the wrathful and the strong have paid dearly for the eccentricities of their ancestors; and the broad lands acquired by the sword, have, in many cases, been captured by the ink-horn.

Whatever may have been the “disabilities” suffered by the Jews in England, under the reign of Henry the Second, their friends in the Iberian Peninsula were not very hardly dealt with, according to the narrative of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela. This worthy Israelite was the son of Jonah, “of blessed memory,” of Tudela, in the kingdom of Navarre, and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land—impelled thereto probably by commercial views—in the year of grace, 1160. Rabbi Benjamin is said to have been “a man of wisdom and understanding, and of much information,” whose words were found, after strict enquiry, to be true and correct.

This eminent Hebrew set out on his travels from the city of Saragossa, descended the Ebro to Tortosa, thence to Tarragona and Barcelona. Through Arles and Marseilles went Rabbi Benjamin, and then took ship for Genoa, where he found every house provided with a tower, and also made his first acquaintance with the

war galleys of the time, which brought home “much plunder and booty.” By Pisa—then a place of great extent, “containing about ten thousand fortified houses, and a brave people ruled by senators chosen by themselves”—the rabbi made his way through Lucca to Rome, “the metropolis of all Christendom.” His account of the condition of the Romish Jews in 1160 is somewhat startling. “Two hundred Jews live there, who are very much respected, and pay tribute to no one. Some of them are officers in the service of Pope Alexander” (the third of that name). R. Jechiel, one of the chief among the Jews “is one of the pope’s officers, a handsome, prudent, and wise man, who frequents the pope’s palace, being the steward of his household and minister of his private property.” This evidence, that a pope who occupied the chair of St. Peter for twenty-two years employed Jews in positions of high trust, is exceedingly valuable, like most of the narrative of the rabbi when drawn from actual observation; but so soon as the worthy man undertakes to write history, he falls into the common errors of mediæval chroniclers. We are told that in Rome are to be found “eighty halls of the eighty eminent kings who were all called imperator, from King Tarquin to King Pepin, the father of Charles, who first conquered Spain and wrested it from the Mohammedans. In the outskirts of Rome is the palace of Titus, who was rejected by three hundred senators, in consequence of his having wasted three years in the conquest of Jerusalem, which, according to their will, he ought to have accomplished in two years. There is likewise the hall of the palace of King Vespasians, a very large and strong building; also the hall of King Galba, containing three hundred and sixty windows, equal in number to the days of the year. The circumference of this palace is nearly three miles. A battle was fought here in times of yore, and in the palace fell more than an hundred thousand, whose bones are hung up there even to the present day. The king caused a representation of the battle to be drawn, army against army, the men, the horses, and all the accoutrements sculptured in marble. You there find also a cava underground, containing the king and his queen upon their thrones, surrounded by about one hundred nobles of their court, all embalmed by physicians, and in good preservation until this day.” By

way of Capua our rabbi made his way to Puzzuolo, where he was told the old story of a submerged city; found hot springs, producing the "oil called petroleum;" and also picked up this astounding piece of information: "From this place a man may travel fifteen miles by a causeway under the mountains, constructed by King Remulus, the founder of Rome, who feared David, king of Israel, and Jeab, his general."

Pursuing a roundabout route, our voyager reached Thessalonica—full of the Caucasian—and ultimately "fetched" Constantinople, the metropolis of the whole Grecian empire, and the residence of the Emperor King Mannel Comnenus. At this period the Greek Empire was on the wane. Between the Mohammedans on the one hand and the Latin Christians on the other, the unwarlike Byzantines had a hard time of it. Grave historians have more than hinted that the Greek emperors, while ostensibly assisting the Western Christians in holding their ground against the Crescent, maintained a secret alliance with the Moslem, who were less detestable as infidels than the Crusaders as schismatics. Playing off the Crusaders against the Mussulm foe, Manuel Comnenus contrived to outwit both, and to maintain the dignity and splendour of his empire, and especially of his capital. Rabbi Benjamin was evidently much impressed by the splendour of Constantinople, then, by far, the greatest city of the Christian world. Eighteen miles in circumference, this great emporium of the eastern and western world was pervaded by a great "stir and bustle" occasioned by the "conflux of many merchants." "At Constantinople," says the rabbi, "is the place of worship called St. Sophia, the metropolitan seat of the Pope of the Greeks, at variance with the Pope of Rome." Our rabbi, who, throughout his narratives, exhibits few traces of irritation against either Christian or Mussulman, vastly admired the "place of worship called St. Sophia. It contains as many altars as there are days of the year, and possesses innumerable riches. All the other places of worship in the whole world do not equal St. Sophia in wealth. It is ornamented with pillars of gold and silver, and with innumerable lamps of the same precious materials." This splendour delighted Benjamin, who is pleased also to express his approval of the Hippodrome and its uses. "Every year the birthday of Jesus the Nazarene is celebrated there with public rejoicings. On these occasions

you may see there representatives of all the nations who inhabit the different parts of the world, with surprising feats of jugglery. Lions, bears, leopards, and wild asses, as well as birds, which have been trained to fight each other, are also exhibited." In the Saga of Sigurd the splendour of the Byzantine games is extolled in similar terms. The Viking visited Constantinople in 1111, and was made very welcome by the Emperor Alexis, who "sent men to ask him whether he would rather accept from the emperor six skifpound (a ton) of gold, or have the emperor give games in his honour." The Northman, who had had a successful voyage, did not want for money, and preferred the games. At these the emperor and empress were present, and the players who contended for victory were divided into kingsmen and queensmen, a tradition of the more ancient "blues and greens." Dramatic representations also took place, doubtless of mythological subjects, as the Northmen seemed to fancy themselves among their own deities, and pleasantly accepted Jupiter as Thor.

The wealth of the city, which was not sacked by the Latins till more than forty years after the visit of Rabbi Benjamin, must, according to his account, have been enormous. In the new palace, called Blachernes, the pillars and walls were covered with pure gold; the throne was of gold ornamented with precious stones. "Over it hangs a golden crown, suspended on a chain of the same material, the length of which exactly admits the emperor to sit under it. This crown is ornamented with precious stones of inestimable value. Such is the lustre of these diamonds that, even without any other light, they illumine the room in which they are kept." When compared with drawings of the period, this account is seen to be very exact. The imperial throne resembled a canopy or baldacchino supported on four gold columns, studded with gems of immense size. This magnificence does not seem to have been confined to the court. All ranks and conditions of men fared sumptuously. "The Greeks who inhabit the country are extremely rich, and possess great wealth in gold and precious stones. They dress in garments of silk, ornamented with gold and other valuable materials. They ride upon horses, and in their appearance are like unto princes. The country is rich, producing all sort of delicacies, as well as abundance of bread, meat, and wine."

They are well skilled in the Greek sciences, and live comfortably, ‘every man under his vine and his fig-tree.’” Now comes the weak point of all this prosperity and splendour. “The Greeks hire soldiers of all nations, whom they call barbarians, for the purpose of carrying on their wars with the Sultan of the Thogarmim, who are called Turks. They have no martial spirit themselves, and, like unto women, are unfit for martial enterprises.”

It is among the wealthy and effeminate Greeks that the Jewish traveller finds his brethren for the first time undergoing a species of persecution. In his account of Rome, he not only omits all mention of a Ghetto, but represents the Hebrews as enjoying power and consideration; and in his notice of other Jewish colonies he says nothing of civil disabilities. At Constantinople, however, he finds the Jews forbidden to dwell in the city, and “obliged to reside beyond the one arm of the sea, where they are shut in by the channel of Sophia on one side, and they can reach the city by water only when they want to visit it for purposes of trade.” Compelled to live together in one spot—Pera—the Jews, who had a schism of their own, built a wall to divide the Rabbinites, or orthodox, from the Caraites, who rejected the authority of Rabbinic explanations. They appear to have enjoyed great material prosperity, and were either manufacturers of silk cloth or merchants; but their existence was not one of unalloyed delight. “No Jew is allowed to ride upon a horse, except R. Solomon Hamritsri, who is the king’s physician, by whose influence the Jews enjoy many advantages even in their state of oppression, which is very severely felt by them; and the hatred against them is increased by the practice of the tanners, who pour out their filthy water in the streets, and even before the very doors of the Jews, who, being thus defiled, become objects of contempt to the Greeks. Their yoke is severely felt by the Jews, both good and bad; for they are exposed to be beaten in the streets, and must submit to all sorts of bad treatment.” After calling at Cyprus, not yet under the sway of the house of Lusignan, the rabbi visited Antioch, and made his way to Jerusalem. The state of that city, after half a century of Christian rule, under half a century of Christian rule, under the successors of Godfrey de Bouillon, was curious and exceptional. Excited by holy fervour, the victorious soldiers of the first Crusade had slaughtered thou-

sands of the unfortunate Jews, whom they found in Palestine, and driven many more to take shelter under the comparatively tolerant crescent. The Jerusalem of 1163 is described without the slightest enthusiasm, or sentiment of any kind, as “a small city, strongly fortified, with three walls. It contains a numerous population, composed of Armenians, Greeks, Georgians, Franks, and indeed, of people of all tongues. The dyeing house is rented by the year, and the exclusive privilege of dyeing is purchased from the king, by the Jews of Jerusalem, two hundred of whom dwell in one corner of the city, under the tower of David.” The military knights mustered strongly, four hundred Templars being always present in the city, generally under vows to remain for a fixed period. “The large place of worship, called Sepulchre, is visited by all pilgrims,” but the rabbi was more interested in the stables of King Solomon, the sepulchre of King Uzziah, and “the salt pillar into which Lot’s wife was metamorphosed; and although the sheep continually lick it, the pillar grows again, and retains its original state. Mount Sion is also near Jerusalem, upon the acclivity of which stands no building, except a place of worship of the Nazarenes.” The traveller further sees those three Jewish cemeteries, where, formerly, the dead were buried; some of the sepulchres had stones with inscriptions upon them, “but the Christians destroy these monuments, and use the stones in building their houses.” Without the slightest expression of indignation, our traveller passes from what a Jew would naturally regard as an unpardonable affront, to repeat, in the words of the Rabbi Abraham, the recent but wonderful Christian legend of the tomb of David, frequently alluded to by mediæval travellers. “Fifteen years ago one of the walls of the place of worship, on Mount Sion, fell down, and the patriarch commanded the priest to repair it. He ordered stones to be taken from the original wall of Sion for that purpose, and twenty workmen were hired, at stated wages, who broke stones from the very foundation of the walls of Sion. Two of these labourers, who were intimate friends, upon a certain day treated one another, and repaired to their work after their friendly meal. The overseer accused them of dilatoriness, but they answered that they would still perform their day’s work, and would employ therupon the time

while their fellow labourers were at meals. They then continued to break out the stones, until happening to meet with one which formed the mouth of a cavern, they agreed to enter it, in search of treasure, and they went on until they reached a large hall, supported by pillars of marble, encrusted with gold and silver, and before which stood a table, with a golden sceptre and crown. This was the tomb of David, king of Israel, to the left of which they saw that of Solomon, in a similar state, and so of all the kings of Juda, who were buried there. They further saw chests locked up, the contents of which nobody knew, and were on the point of entering the hall, when a blast of wind like a storm issued forth from the mouth of the cavern, so strong that it threw them down—almost lifeless—on the ground. There they lay until evening, when another wind rushed forth, from which they heard the voice of a man calling aloud, ‘Get up, and go forth from this place.’ The men ran out, full of fear, and went to the patriarch, to report what had happened to them. This ecclesiastic summoned into his presence the Rabbi Abraham el Constantini, aforesaid, a pious ascetic, one of the mourners of the downfall of Jerusalem, and caused the two labourers to repeat what they had previously reported. Rabbi Abraham, thereupon informed the patriarch that they had discovered the sepulchres of the house of David, and of the King of Juda. The following morning the labourers were sent for again, but they were found stretched on their bed, and still full of fear; they declared that they would not go again to the cave, as it was not God’s will to discover it to anyone. The patriarch ordered the place to be walled up, so as to hide it effectually from every one, unto the present day.”

Not one word of comment, of assent, or dissent concerning this singular story is uttered by the Spanish Jew. It is the old story, “it was told me,” a formula almost always adopted by travellers when they decline to endorse any wonderful story. It is a curious narrative, and if anything can be imagined more remarkable than a Christian patriarch taking a rabbi into council, it is that no further investigation should have been made, but the whole story allowed to rest on the unsupported testimony of two labourers who had enjoyed “a friendly meal” together.

The rabbi appears to have visited

Damascus—then the frontier town of Noureddin, Sultan of the Turks—where he found a magnificent Mohammedan mosque, “said to be” the palace of Ben-Hadad; devoted to the flames by the prophet Jeremiah, “I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-Hadad;” and by Amos, “I will send a fire into the house of Hazaël, which shall devour the palaces of Ben-Hadad.” One wall of this palace remained, and, says the Rabbi, “it is framed of glass by enchantment. This wall contains as many openings as there are days in the solar year, and the sun in gradual succession throws its light into the openings, which are divided into twelve degrees, equal to the number of the hours of the day, so that by this contrivance everybody may know what time it is.”

Whatever substratum of truth may exist in this story, it would seem that Damascus was a very large city inclosed with a wall and surrounded by a beautiful country, “which, in a circuit of fifteen miles, presents the richest gardens, and orchards in such numbers and beauty as to be without equal upon earth.” The reason for this extraordinary fertility is soon made evident. Damascus was well supplied with water, and the supply was admirably managed for the twelfth century; “water is carried by means of pipes into the houses of the principal inhabitants as well as into the streets and markets.” Mosul—where seven thousand Jews were harboured by the Mohammedans—is next described as a city on the banks of the Tigris, joined by a bridge to Nineveh—then utterly in ruins, covered by numerous inhabited villages and small towns. The next great city mentioned is Baghdad, the metropolis of the Khalifs, not yet abolished by the Mogul, and enjoying the same “dignity over the Mohammedans,” saith the rabbi, rather spitefully, “as the pope enjoys over the Christians.”

Here the Jews enjoyed great prosperity. Many of the officers of the great Abassid were of that nation, and he himself understood “all languages;” was well versed in the Mosaic law, and read and wrote the Hebrew tongue. The khalif was not easily approached, and, when infested by crowds of pilgrims, who begged to see the light of his countenance, permitted a deputy to bless them, and a corner of his garment to be hung out of the window, to be eagerly kissed by the faithful. Judging from Benjamin’s nar-

rative, the khalif was an admirable ruler, who provided buildings and hostleries—on the other side of the Euphrates—for the sick poor who resorted thither, in order to be cured. There were no less than sixty medical warehouses or dispensaries, all well provided, from the khalif's stores, with spices and other medicaments; and every patient, who claimed assistance, was fed at the khalif's expense until his cure was completed. Saracen ideas of sanitary measures did not stop at dispensaries and isolation of the sick, but extended to those "insane persons who are met with, particularly during the hot season, every one of whom is secured by iron chains until his reason returns, when he is allowed to return to his home. For this purpose they are regularly examined once a month by officers appointed by the khalif for that purpose, and, when they are found to be possessed of reason, they are immediately liberated." An iron chain is, doubtless, a rude restorative of reason, but the "visiting justices" must be acknowledged as an early and happy thought of the Abasside khalifs.

Baghdad contained, moreover, a great college for the study of the Mosaic law; and the head of this institution enjoyed great dignity as a lineal descendant of David—a fact proved by "his pedigree," saith Rabbi Benjamin, this time with unquestioning faith. This great man enjoyed an immense revenue; was an excellent scholar, and gave a dinner party every day; so that there is little wonder at his great popularity. All this part of the world swarmed with Jews: five thousand in Ras-el-Ain, and some twenty thousand around the site of Babylon—a place of pilgrimage to them. In the twelfth century, the evidence concerning the city of Semiramis was curious. It "was said" that the streets still extended for thirty miles, and that the ruins of the temple of Nebuchadnezzar were still to be seen; but "people are afraid to venture among them on account of the serpents and scorpions with which they are infested." At Kufa, the burial-place of King Jechoniah, we hear of seventy thousand, and in Telmas of one hundred thousand, and, in the province of which Thanijem was the metropolis, of forty cities, two hundred villages, and one hundred small towns, inhabited by three hundred thousand Jews; who appear to have been both prosperous and powerful; to have had rulers of their own; and to have been, as of old, a "terror to

their neighbours." They "were said" to be the descendants of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, led away captives by Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, and who then repaired into mountainous retreats, erected cities, and fortified them.

Some ten years before the visit of Rabbi Benjamin, the Jews inhabiting this region had raised a mighty turmoil under a famous pretender, one David El-Roy. This man, born in the city of Amaria, had studied in Bagdad under the chief Hebrew—the prince of the captivity—Chisdai, and under Eli, president of the college of Geon Jacob. He became an excellent scholar, well versed in the Mosaic law, in the decisions of the rabbins, and in the Talmud; understanding also the profane sciences, the language and writings of the Mohammedans, and the lore of magicians and enchanters. This David—patriot, fanatic, or impostor, it is impossible to tell which—determined to rise in rebellion against the king of Persia, to unite and collect the Jews who lived in the mountains of Chapton, and to conquer Jerusalem.

"He gave signs," saith Rabbi Benjamin, "by false miracles," declared himself invested with a divine mission, and was by many accepted as the Messiah. Summoned to the presence of the king of Persia, David went without fear, and, on being interrogated, declared himself to be "the king of the Jews." He was at once committed to prison, but three days after presented himself before the king in council, having escaped from prison without human aid. The king said, "Who has brought thee hither, or who has set thee at liberty?" To which David answered, "My own wisdom and subtlety; for verily I fear neither thee nor thy servants." The king commanded that he should be seized, but his servants answered and said, "We see him not, and know him to be here only by the sound of his voice." The king was much astonished at the craft of David, who then said, "I now go my own way;" and went, followed by the king, his nobles, and servants, to the banks of the river, where he took his shawl, spread it upon the water, and crossed therewith. At that moment he became visible. All the servants of the king saw him cross the river on his shawl, and confessed him to be the greatest magician upon earth. The same day he travelled to Amaria (ten days' journey), and told the astonished Jews all that had happened to him. So

far, his career was successful; but the king of Persia and the khalif of Baghdad now dealt severely with the Jews, and the former threatened to put all the Jews in his kingdom to death, unless the proceedings of David El-Roy were arrested. Hereat he was commanded by his pastors and masters to discontinue the course he had adopted, on pain of excommunication; but the undaunted David pursued his career until a certain prince, named Sin-el-Din sent for the father-in-law of the new prophet, and offered him ten thousand florins if he would secretly kill him. The unholy bargain was concluded, and David El-Roy was slain on his bed while he slept. The leader of this strange insurrection being thus disposed of, a present of one hundred talents of gold appeased the wrath of the Persian monarch, and the "land was tranquillised." Such is this Benjamin's version of the "wondrous Tale of Alroy."

These mountain Jews in their fortified cities appear to have been ticklish subjects for the Persian kings to deal with, and kept up a sort of alliance with the Caphar Tarac, or infidel Turks—the Ghuzes, who sprang from the northern bank of the Oxus. These unbelievers sorely harried the Persian frontier, and were assisted by their Jewish allies on a notable occasion. The Caphar Tarac had invaded Persia, had taken the city of Rai, which they smote with the edge of the sword, when the Persian king raised a large army and went forth to give them battle. After a narrow escape from losing his entire army in the desert, the king reached the mountains where the Jews dwelt. There his scouts reported a large fortified city, and, after some delay, and many threats, the king was admitted, and, with his army, hospitably treated. In the meantime, however, the Jews secretly advised their allies to command the passes of the mountains, so that when the Persians went out to fight they were utterly defeated and the Sultan was made prisoner.

Whether the rabbi ever went to India is doubtful. He relates the story of the drops of rain swallowed by the pearl-oysters, and the subsequent development of these raindrops into pearls, and gives an account of the fire worshippers and their curious mode of sepulture. He also speaks of the travellers to China who take bullocks' hides with them, and "whenever a storm arises and throws them into the sea of Niphka, sew themselves up in the hides, taking

care to have a knife in their hand, and being secured against the sea water, throw themselves into the ocean, where they are soon perceived by a large eagle, called a griffin"—Sinbad's roc, no doubt—"which takes them for cattle, darts down, seizes them in his gripe and carries them upon dry land to consume his prey. The man, however, now kills the bird with his knife, cuts his way out and tries to reach an inhabited country. Many people have been saved by this stratagem."

After seeing Mount Sinai, and the Red Sea, the rabbi took shipping at Damietta, visited Palermo, and travelled thence by Rome, Lucca, and Mount Maurienne, over the passes into Germany—a country "full of hills and mountains." He rejoices greatly over the cities of Germany, the prosperity of the Jews therein, and the scholarship displayed by them. Thence he appears to have worked eastward into Russia, as far as Kiev, and to have returned across Germany again, and by Paris to the Peninsula, after an absence of about thirteen years. The worthy rabbi is overmuch taken up with his own people, but his reiterated statements leave no doubt that in his day, the Jews fared well enough, if they did not fall in the track of the Crusaders, when they shared the fate of everybody else, except monks, and were either plundered, or murdered, or both. One extraordinary merit in his narrative is his remarkable freedom from superstition, and the calm and scholar-like way in which he recounts marvellous stories, without, in the slightest degree, either affirming or impugning their veracity.

A NIGHT'S RIDE IN FAIRYLAND.

ALL night the great elms shook for fear
And writhed as if in pain,
Between the pauses of my sleep
I heard the gusty rain ;
Quite sick of this world, and unmanned,
I rode away to Fairyland.

All night the bellowing of the storm
The crazy chimney rocked and shook ;
Till weary of this sound of woe,
Weary of pen, and ink, and book,
I bridle snatched with careless hand,
And rode an hour through Fairyland.

I heard, still as I flew along,
The old oak's branches shake and shake.
Yet weary of this stubborn heart,
That throbs and throbs but will not break,
I sought for Oberon and his band,
And rode long leagues through Fairyland.

I found the court ; in love and dance
I wiled away the summer hours :
Lances I broke, and quaffed the cup,
Where fell a rain of crimson flowers.

They all obeyed my proud command,
Those little folks of Fairyland.
I won the Fairy crown at last,
And built a castle tall and proud;
The roof was sunshiae, and the walls
Were formed of rainbow and of cloud;
I bade the goblins own my sway—
A shout—I woke, and it was day.

THE NARRATIVE OF AN UNEVENTFUL VOYAGE.

THE St. George steamship, ten feet in the beam, and forty feet from stem to stern, with a pair of paddle-wheels a size too large for it, and a thin chimney painted in black and red bands, plies between Conway and Treffriw. She makes, once a day, an insignificant little trip on the Conway river, hurrying up on the bosom of the tide, and back again as fast as she can dip the blades of her overgrown paddles, as though she were afraid of a premature ebb. Farther than Treffriw, even she cannot poke her smoky-nose up the beautiful valley; and for this small favour she is a time-and-tide server of the most pronounced type, to the endless vexation of would-be passengers. You arrange a nice little excursion, with trains and everything to match; rain intervenes to upset the plan; and the next day the St. George sails an hour later, to suit the tide; and in that interval you are cast upon the streets of Conway. This at least was the fate of Mens, Corpus, and myself, three indolent tourists—neither artists, nor antiquarians, nor botanists, nor pedestrians, nor of such as go about “seeing places,” nor afflicted with a passion for ferns, or churches, or mountains, nor even health-seekers—but merely lazy units enjoying lazy weeks in Wales.

A filip in the early morning gives a tono of one sort or another to the whole day. To-day the necessary stimulus was supplied by Corpus, who, having experienced a shock of mild delight in the main street of Conway, felt and exhaled its sereno influence throughout the day. Corpus's delight was due to an exquisite appreciation of retributive justice.

Harmless and incapable of revenge himself, he felt a keen enjoyment in the vengeance of fate. Not many days before, he and Mens, waiting for the train at Conway, and idling in an hungry mood through its streets and by-ways, came upon an eating establishment—“The Original Conway Refreshment Room. Proprietor, Mr. William Williams.” In the window was a bowl of mushrooms,

flanked by two mutton chops, with a few buns occupying commanding positions on jam-pots in the back-ground. Imposing itself obtrusively on the pavement was the bill of fare, announcing that chops, steaks, tea, and coffee were always ready, and that there was an ordinary at one o'clock—hot roast joint and vegetables, one shilling. Thrusting himself even more obtrusively into the street, and eyeing Mens and Corpus with a meaning smile, stood Mr. William Williams. With a glib tongue he extolled his viands, his low prices, his wife's cookery, above all his hot roast joint. Hunger blinded the better judgment, and opened the eyes and ears. There was time, before the train left, to partake of Mr. William Williams's ordinary. There was also time to repent.

The staircase leading to that upper room was narrow and sticky. Greasy bodies had rubbed against the wall on one side; greasy hands had handled the bannisters on the other; spots of grease made the steps slippery. The narrow passage which ended in that upper room was dark, and the walls were stained. The room itself was lit with a dismal sheen from black horsehair. Horsehair covered the seats and the backs of the chairs; horsehair draped the sofa from head to foot; the two armchairs were horsehair boxes, on legs, with the lids propped up, and the fronts knocked out. The blind was half drawn down; the window was fast closed, and fly-blown. Neither Mens to Corpus, nor Corpus to Mens, would confess irresolution; but courage and hunger were fast ebbing away, and the house was pervaded with a smell of roast mutton. In five minutes a ring of the bell brought up a servant girl, and the cloth, not a clean one, was unfolded, and stroked down on the table. Then followed, in slow succession, knives, forks, and glasses; and Mens smiled faintly, and heaved the last sigh of an expiring appetite. The door closed again, and all signs of the approaching ordinary died away. Presently, with a silent turn of the little brass handle, entered, like mutes, two females in black—mother and daughter—faded, both of them, and very pale, but the daughter the paler and ghastlier of the two. These subsided into two deep hollows in the sofa, raising a horsehair billow between them, and produced, one her work, and the other a discoloured volume of a neutral tint. Their entrance

disturbed the air-currents, and the room was alive with strange and undefined odours. Presently the door opened, the smell of mutton again prevailed, and the dingy maid laid plates for four. Mens turned to Corpus with a smile, cheerful to the last. Corpus, careless whether he was audible or inaudible, blurted out—"I can't dine with those women;" and threaded passage and staircase into the street. Mens, following with more deliberation, met "dinner" on the staircase, and Mrs. William Williams at the foot, storming at her departing guests. From a safe distance, two men that day pronounced a curse on "The Original Conway Refreshment Room."

This happened a few days ago; now, once more in the main street of Conway, Corpus hugged himself with visible delight. Mens, less demonstrative, drank in the scene with quiet enjoyment. The shutters of "The Original Conway Refreshment Room" were closed; the premises were "to let;" Mr. William Williams had betaken himself, his wife, his shilling ordinary, and his whole redolent surroundings elsewhere. "But what," asked Corpus, "can have become of the ghoulish females?" We left this monument of the justice of fate for the deck of the St. George.

The St. George is moored, or tied with a bit of cord, to a mud bank below the castle, with the tide rising up in brown swirls around her. On the beach are women measuring mussels by basketfuls, and stowing them away in sacks: the beach itself is composed chiefly of brickbats and mussel-shells. A mud bank close at hand is well stirred into slime by the tide, not inodorous; on the left is a timber-yard; in front, the railway, skirting the castle-wall.

But who are these, so withered, and so anything but wild in their attire? To Corpus's immense glee they are the ghoulish females, paler than ever, and seated very close to the side of the boat. The mother wears a pair of netted gloves; the daughter's are of black kid, worn white at the finger tips, and in need of extensive repairs. Altogether, mother and daughter have a seedy aspect; perhaps they have been someway involved in the fate of Mr. William Williams. From time to time they afford Corpus much ill-suppressed amusement, and even Mens chuckles at intervals in his quiet way.

The skipper has come on board in his shirt-sleeves; argal, though the clouds

are low, we shall have a fine day. A man of blackish hue succeeds in hiding himself up to his middle among the machinery, and pokes about there out of sight, as if he were killing a rat. In this place of comparative concealment he combines the offices of engineer and stoker. A third man, whose prevailing tint is brown, and who is more genuinely dirty than the engineer, we call "the crew." The whistle fails to bring any more passengers on board, the tide is flowing strongly, and "the crew," bringing his brown body to bear on the boat-hook, pushes off. The mussel-packers on the beach stand up and stretch themselves, a few railway hands lounge over the embankment-wall, whilst the overhanging castle-tower makes a final threat of tumbling on to them. There comes a farewell whiff of mud and shell-fish, and we puff away up the river.

Including the funereal women and our three selves, we passengers number thirty-two. "The crew" having satisfied himself on this point, and imparted the information to the skipper, retreats into lee of a paddle-box, and falls asleep with his head in a bucket of ashes. As we advance the mountains grow up one behind the other, range beyond range; the banks approach us; we are leaving the open water for the intricacies of the narrow channel.

Meanwhile the skipper becomes conversational, to the extent of naming a few mountains wrongly, and telling a variety of obvious untruths with Welsh indifference, but from our comfortable seats on the paddle-boxes we forget to be angry with him, in our enjoyment of one of the most worshipful valleys in Wales. On the left a wooded hill-side; on the right a higher and gentler slope, pieced out into fields, and flecked with cottages; rising above all on the right, and in front, mountains that we recognised afar off—old friends seen from Bettws and Nant Gwynant. Close at hand low meadows, ending abruptly in little clay cliffs three feet high, visibly eaten away by the current, and topped with overhanging and treacherous turf. Little black cattle grazing in these meadows, sheep, and leisurely horses of a rough, ill-fed breed. Around them and amongst them, and bearing down on to them in distant flocks, and flapping over their heads, and skimming along the ground, and running jerkily from tuft to tuft, are the peewits; dull, restless little bodies on the ground, glorifying the air with their white fans

when on the wing. Several cormorants, in their brown summer plumage, stop fishing as we approach, and follow us overhead. Gulls, peering downwards with their clever faces, recognise, so Corpus thinks, the funereal women as old friends; and when "the crew" awakes, and lowers overboard his bucket of cinders, and brings it up again full of dirty water for the stoker-engineer, they settle down astern, and we lose sight of them as we turn into the next reach. Passing a little marsh-isolated landing-stage, communicating with the hillside by a rusty tramway, the bank is fringed for a mile or more with flags and bulrushes. The fussy little wave from our exaggerated paddle-wheels ruffles the equanimity of these; they are taken vastly by surprise, and bow themselves more hastily than gracefully. But before we are many yards ahead they recover their dignity, and wave slow and measured salutes. A heron, who has been dozing among them, lowers his high shoulders, flaps his wings, and trails his long pair of legs over a hedge and out of sight.

"The crew" has not been long awake when he is called to take the wheel, and elbows through the passengers, treading on their toes. The skipper produces from an unsuspected cavity in his shirt a bundle of dirty tickets, and goes round for his fares. We notice that the elder of the funereal women is in difficulties for change, and at last has to make it up with a postage stamp. The skipper resumes the wheel, and presently turns the St. George's bow directly towards the feet of two men standing on the clay bank, with a portmanteau, guns, and fishing-rods. Every moment we expect to go end on into the bank; but the boat answers her helm smartly, whisks round within a few feet of the bank, and presents her stern to the two men, who throw their luggage in before them, and jump on board. Presently, by a similar manœuvre, we land an old farmer, in silk knee-breeches, blue hose, and shoes. He has chosen to be disembarked on swampy ground, half a mile from road or habitation, and before we are out of sight he is over his shoes in mud and water.

Some passengers are attempting to extract from the skipper the names of the waterfalls. He is probably telling them wrong; and, even if he is right, it would be impossible for them to reproduce the inarticulate noises he makes. Near one of

the waterfalls is a sulphur spring, and close by a sulphur-ore mine; and whilst we, wondering vaguely what sulphur-ore is like, and which was discovered first, the mine or the spring, and whether the spring will fail when the mine fails, and who in the name of fortune is the better for drinking rotten-egg water, despair of enlightenment on any of these points, the St. George has quietly sidled up to the miniature quay at Treffriw.

Here we disembark; and Corpus, urged thereto by divers twinges of conscience, offers his hand to the funereal women, who are both of them entangled, as to the legs, in long black dresses. The middle-aged daughter extends a very large hand, and places it on Corpus's arm, but the elderly mother declines, possibly remembering Corpus's behaviour at Mr. William Williams's ordinary.

The St. George, we had been told, lies three quarters of an hour at Treffriw quay, and then scuttles down on the tide without a minute to spare. Mens, Corpus, and I betake ourselves to a wood overlooking the quay, to smoke our cigars. But first I get the three quarters of an hour confirmed from the skipper's lips, and at the water side I find the women in black lingering where we had left them, and asking feeble questions of a stolid native. As I turn away, the elder of the two, impelled by the younger, places herself in my path. I make an effort to escape, and the younger woman says, "Now, mamma; ask him."

Upon that, the elder, with a faint smile, and a movement inside her loosely hanging clothes between a bow and a crooked curtsey, says: "If you please, sir, we were wanting to know if that gentleman was Mr. Corpus." Oh, horror! and I can think of nothing to say but the truth.

"Ye-es, the name of one of those gentlemen is Corpus."

"The stout one, I presume."

"Ye-es," I reply, "the stout one."

"Is he going back by the steamer this afternoon?"

Here again I can think of nothing but the truth, and answer "Yes."

Mens and Corpus are eyeing the encounter from a safe distance; and, the road being clear in their direction, I bow, and make my escape.

Corpus is dumbfounded at the news I bring. Visions of a sumuous taken out by Mr. William Williams on account of an untasted ordinary, with the ghoulish females in the witness-box, float into his

ken; only to be succeeded by the still more frightful fancy of a tender passion inspired in the breast of the daughter, whom he had helped from the boat on to the quay. He is young, and life is before him, but he feels that he will be haunted by those beings in decayed mourning. Mens and I cannot help him in his distress: we smoke on in silence, and are inclined to be amused.

To dissipate his humours I recommend to Corpus's notice the sherry-flask; and, disentombing it from his pocket, Corpus discovers with it a letter, found that morning at the Penmaenmawr post-office, and stowed away for after reading.

He takes a pull at the flask, and begins reading. What is it, in that innocent sheet of note-paper, that makes him work his face in an agony? The edges of it are fair and white, unstained by the fatal colour. Can it be that long-forgotten tailor's bill, which Corpus fondly hoped had been sent in to somebody else? Can it be a summons home on important business—that holiday cut-throat? No, it is something worse; a communication crossed and recrossed by the maternal pen, concerning that elderly aunt of Corpus's with her single elderly daughter, to whom, by a series of testamentary eccentricities, has come all the family money. "I am told," the letter runs, "that they always dress in black, and live very quietly. They were lately lodging at Mr. William Williams's, High Street, Conway; but are now at Mr. Jones Apjones's in the same street. I heard from your Aunt Frummetty this morning; she thinks she has seen you, has recognized you by your photograph, and hopes you will call. Do, my dear George," pleads Mrs. Corpus, "make them out. They are leaving Wales in a few days, and perhaps you could persuade them to come to us for a week, and could bring them home with you. It would be a good opportunity of making their acquaintance; we have been separated too long." Corpus reads, and we listen, and the St. George begins an angry whistle below us.

"My boy," says Mens, taking up the letter from the grass, where Corpus had thrown it, "here is another postscript. 'It is thirty years since I saw your Aunt Frummetty; she was then a very fine young woman. Perhaps her daughter takes after her.'"

Corpus groans, and smokes viciously.

The St. George continues whistling;

only five minutes remain of its five-and-forty.

Mens and I consult apart, and then Mens speaks: "Corpus, my boy, if they go by the boat, we will walk."

Corpus clasps us each by the hand; and now the whistle stops, and an impatient little bell, rung by the skipper himself, fills idle Treffriw with a sense of its importance. From our seat we can watch the passengers and cargo going on board. A gamekeeper, with a couple of spaniels in leash; a market woman; two or three quarrymen; a couple of coops of fowls, given into special charge of "the crew," and assigned a warm place on the boiler; a party of tourists, who cover a seat with shawls, and open their maps. Nothing in black is visible, neither up the road towards Llanrwst, nor down the road, as far as we can see it, towards Conway. Time's up. The bell ceases. "Cast off," cries the skipper; while Treffriw crowds the quay with its hands in its pockets. "The crew" makes ready with his boat-hook; but, instead of pushing off, he has for a moment to hold on. We come dashing through the underwood with a "whoop," and jump on board.

Now that we are fairly under weigh, how bright and cheerful everything seems. The sun did not touch us in the wood: here it is pouring its full strength on the boat, on the stream, on the broad valley.

We have not half so many passengers as on the up voyage, and the tide runs faster. There never was a merrier craft than the St. George, with its chimney striped as gaily as a wasp. We don't at all object to the brown fleece of smoke trailing away astern, which the sky is perpetually combing off. If the spirits of the air want to spin a yarn up the Bettws Valley, they are welcome to the St. George's funnel as a distaff.

Corpus is in the best spirits of us all.

A trouble, not of clouds, or sweeping rain,
Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
Engendered,

has blown over him and passed away. He dare not yet ask the skipper about the two ladies in black, for fear that worthy should notice their absence, and put back. But he leans against the paddle-box, and sings:—

A maiden who dwelt in the forest of Arcady,
Where the sun is gold, and the moonlight silvery.

"Ease her!" cries the skipper, and the stoker-engineer bestirs himself and moves a lever or two.

"What are we stopping for?"

We are not stopping; we are making a sharp turn into a side channel, running out of the main stream, as it seems, into a primeval forest of bulrushes. The bulrushes look as if they will brush our paddle-boxes on each side.

"Where are you going?" asks Corpus of the skipper.

"Take up two ladies at the sulphur springs."

"Two ladies in black?"

"Aye, aye," says the skipper, lending a hand to "the crew," who has put the helm hard a-port.

Poor Corpus! We eye him narrowly. He steps to where he can get an uninterrupted view across the steamer's bow.

We can just see over the level top of the bulrush forest, and far away across it is the semblance of a jetty just under the hill. Towards this the channel we have entered appears to be winding. On the jetty, side by side, stand two black figures. We are nearly half a mile off, but there is no mistaking them.

"Captain, I will give you five shillings to keep your old course," whispers Corpus, touching the skipper's arm.

A few bulrushes jump up from under the paddle-box, and sweep their wet heads sternwards along the bulwarks. "Hard a-head, a few strokes," says the skipper.

"I will give you ten shillings," says Corpus.

The skipper looks Corpus in the face, and for a moment lets go the wheel.

"A sovereign to keep your course," and Corpus presses the coin into the man's palm.

"Hard astern," cries the skipper, and we slowly work our passage backwards, between the now doubly agitated bulrushes. The St. George's nose is soon pointing down stream again. On the jetty across the rushes the black figures execute a sort of shadow-dance, a quadrille of forlorn ghosts, forgotten by the old ferryman. As we pass on there is a sad sound as if the shades had their obols ready, and were abusing Charon bitterly. But the skipper's back is in the direction of these black portents; he smokes one of Corpus's cigars, and calls all the mountains by their wrong names.

As we edge alongside the mud bank at Conway, and the plank is run out for us to walk ashore, the Irish Mail comes booming through Stephenson's Bridge, and thundering under the Castle walls.

The train in which we are to follow, does not start for half an hour.

"We have just time to call on dear Aunt Frummety," remarks Corpus, and we trudge off, past the deserted abode of Mr. William Williams, and the blank shutters of the Original Conway Refreshment Room, in search of Mr. Jones Apjones's residence. Mr. Jones Apjones is in the same line of business as the late Mr. William Williams, if he has not taken over that individual's plant and stock in trade. Mr. Apjones owns the Conway Castle Refreshment Rooms. He, too, provides a frugal ordinary at one o'clock, though by this time in the afternoon there is nothing left of it, but a faint odour of cooking, and a tepid shoulder of mutton agape in its own gravy.

"Mrs. and Miss Frummety at home?" asks Corpus.

"Indeed, sir, they're away in the steamer to Treffriw. But they'll be back every minute, and I'm just gone about taking their dinners in."

Mrs. Corpus heard in due time that the Frummets were unfortunately out when George called, and that George was coming home at once, by way of Barmouth and South Wales.

DIABOLICAL ANIMALS.

DIABOLICAL dogs, about which we have said our say in these pages,* are always of ebon hue, and no witch was ever yet known to harbour a grey, sandy, or tabby cat; the feline familiars of the broomstick riders being ever black as Erebus, and big enough to put the prize-winner at a Sydenham show out of conceit with himself. But when witches or wizards avail themselves of their power of self-transformation—and according to popular notions they are compelled to do so four times a year—they don a bestial guise of innocent white. A lane in Bridgewater obtained an unpleasant notoriety, by reason of a strange white rabbit taking a constitutional therein every evening, vanishing beyond human ken, whenever dogs or men interfered with its eventide run. One evening, the mysterious creature was detected taking a siesta in a cabbage garden, having only one way of exit—a narrow passage between two cottages. A guard was placed in the entry, while a

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 10, p. 111.

party of would-be witch-catchers, ventured among the cabbages. A bold fellow seized the rabbit, and bore it in triumph towards his waiting friends. He, or rather a favourite pig of his, had suffered from the machinations of a white witch, and thinking of this, he gave the struggling captive a kick, and, hey presto! it slipped through his hands, and never was seen again by mortal eyes; but the white witch kept her bed for three days afterwards—disabled of course by the pigowner's kick.

Bolingbroke castle was in olden time the abiding-place of a witch-hare. In one of the Harleian manuscripts we read:—"One thing is not to be passed by, affirmed as a certain truth by many of the inhabitants of the town, upon their own knowledge, which is, that the castle is haunted by a certain spirit, in the likeness of a hare, which at the meeting of the auditors doth usually run between their legs, and sometimes overthrows them, and so passes away. They have pursued it down into the castle-yard, and seen it look in at a grate into a low cellar, and have followed it thither with a light, when, notwithstanding that they did most narrowly observe it, and that there was no other passage out but by the door or window, the room being all above framed of stones within, not having the least chink or crevice, yet they could never find it. And at other times it hath been seen to run in at the iron grates below, unto other of the grottoes, as there be many of them, and they have watched the place, and sent for hounds, and put in after it, but after a while they have come crying out."

The Bolingbroke hare was more fortunate, or more cunning, than a large one that, not many years ago, much exercised the dwellers in a certain Cornish village, by out-running the swiftest dogs, and receiving many a bit of cold lead with sublime indifference. Puss, however, was, one unlucky day, discovered by a party of sportsmen, determined to bring her down if there was any virtue in powder, shot, and perseverance. She led them a pretty dance for some miles, although apparently hit again and again, keeping on her way untired. At last someone suggested the trial of a silver charge. A few coins were converted into slugs, and sent after the game. She faltered, then suddenly disappeared round the brow of a hill. After a long search her pursuers came to a shelving rock, under which, panting and exhausted, lay—not the hare—but one old

Molly, long suspected of unrighteous doings; and from that hour the dame walked with a limp.

Witches would seem to be able to change their sex as well as their form. The author of *Et Cetera* tells us of a grey jack hare, which, after being slightly scratched by a greyhound in a run, gave the dog the go-by, and took refuge in a cottage garden. As the coursing party were about to follow it, the old woman living there appeared at her door with her left arm bleeding, as if from a recent cut, and one of the men cried, "There, master, there's the very place Sweep's teeth caught hold on her, and are ye going to say she aint a witch any more?" The coincidence was awkward for the unbelieving gentleman, it must be owned, and not over pleasant for the old lady.

Witch-hare hunting may be diverting sport, but the after-consequences are apt to prove less enjoyable. In 1773, a party of young fellows, after a hard day's hunting near the village of Langattock, in Breconshire, were about to return home, when a hare started up just by them, to which the hounds gave chase, and the men, perforce, followed suit. A severe run ended in the hare disappearing through the window of a public-house in Langattock—a place very infamous for witches—kept by Richard the tailor, a man suspected of resorting to the company of the fairies. Although they felt satisfied the tailor had beguiled them in the form of a hare, so that they might be obliged to put up at his inn for the night, the tired-out sportsmen resolved to stay there. While they were making merry in the night, a Mr. Jones insisted, despite the remonstrance of the rest, in going outside the door for a few minutes. His minutes grew to hours, and his friends, suspecting foul play, threatened to burn down the place, whereupon the landlord and his wife retired to bed! Next morning, "not early," the lost Jones came back, looking as if he had been drawn through thorns and briars, and in a general state of disorder. He had, he averred, been travelling in rough, unknown ways from the time he left them until the morning, when he found himself at Twyn Gwnllin, twenty good miles from Langattock. Soon afterwards, while helping a man to reload his horse, he became suddenly insensible, and, upon coming to, discovered he was lying a few yards from the inn. The relator of this story, a

serions-minded Welshman, not likely, knowingly, to tell tarradiddles, was own brother to the unlucky Jones, of whom he says, simply enough—"After this, he became sober and penitent, especially after the death of my father and mother."

Cornish quays are haunted by white hares, that only become visible to the fisherman's eyes when a storm is brewing. But for their consideration for the lives of humankind, we should take them to be akin to the "letices" of Normandy—agile little creatures, of a dazzling whiteness, that are popularly held to be the souls of unbaptised children. The Pont-Angot, near Dives, is the favourite Sabbath rendezvous of these uncanny animals, where they meet "all the cats of the old witches, all the dogs of the thieving shepherds, and all the owls of the cursed nuns far and near," to do homage to a "dame blanche," enthroned on the narrow plank of the bridge. Woe to any wayfarer who attempts to pass over it without first obtaining permission on his bended knee, for the indignant queen of the unholy throng incontinently takes the unhappy man by the neck and pitches him to her fiendish subjects, all too eager to worry him to death.

Some five miles from Burnley, in Lancashire, may be seen a few stones marking the site of Bernshaw Tower, once upon a time the home of a fair dame, the Lady Sybil, who, not content with being young, beautiful, and rich, bartered her soul to become a veritable Lancashire witch. Among the many lovers who sighed and sued in vain for the wilful beauty, was Lord William, of Hopton Tower. In his desperation he sought the aid of Mother Helston, a renowned dealer in the black art. She directed him to hunt near Eagle's Crag on the coming eve of All Hallows. He did so; and started a milk-white doe, which led him and his hounds for hours, until coming round again to the crag, a strange hound, which Lord William recognised as the witch's familiar, joined in the chase, and, quickly gaining on the doe, caught her by the throat and held her till Lord William rode np, to throw an enchanted silken leash around the captive's neck, and take her in triumph to his tower. In the dead of night an earthquake shook that stronghold to its foundations, at the same time shaking the Lady Sybil out of her doeship into her own proper shape; and, a few days after the transformation, she became the wife of the man who had hunted her down. For

awhile, all went well with the newly-wedded pair, but the lady was destined to justify the poet's writing—

The wife that was a cat may keep the house;
But, faith, I would not trust her with a mouse!

Before she had been a wife a twelve-month, Lady Sybil longed to return to the nocturnal diversions of her maidenhood, and soon gratified the longing. One morning the frisky matron was found half dead in her bed. Her anxious lord had not to wait long for an explanation of the mysterious attack: for his serving-man, Robin, walked in with a lady's hand bearing on one of the fingers his mistress's signet ring. Watching in the open the previous night, the too officious Robin had caught sight of a beautiful white cat frolicking about in a manner unbecoming a mouser of decent habits, and, trying to capture her, only succeeded in cutting off a paw with his whittle, the said paw changing at cock-crow into the hand he presented to his master. By some magical surgery the severed member was reunitied to the lady's wrist; but she died soon afterwards of the misadventure or of mortification, and was buried near the Eagle's Crag. The priests called in to ensure Lady Sybil making a happy end assured her husband they had cancelled her bond with the Evil One; but, for all that, anyone, having eyes to see, has only to take a midnight walk by the crag upon All Hallow Eve, to behold a ghostly hunter and a ghostly hound treading hard upon the heels of a shadowy milk-white doe.

Fuen-Via-Cœcil, commonly called Fingall, had good reason to be shy of white harts, and small blame to him, if he let such kittlo cattle run free, when dear-bought experience had made him wise. Hunting one day upon Mount Callow, Fingall and a large field went in hot pursuit of a snow-white hart with horns and hoofs shining like gold. Horse after horse, hound after hound gave in, until Fingall and his peerless Bran were alone in the hunt. Just as the sun was going down, the hart reached the top of a tall cliff, and dashed over it into the lake beneath, followed by the brave Bran. Upon touching the water the hart changed into a lovely lady, who, riding the waves, waited for the poor hound to rise, when she pushed his head under again; then, having done the dog to death, she baulked his horrified master of vengeance by disappearing beneath the waters, and leaving him lamenting. The famous Border

prophet-poet, Thomas of Ercildoune, would not have been so tricked into sacrificing the pride of his kennel. His seven years' apprenticeship to the Fairy Queen had taught him to distinguish the game of earth from that of Elfdand. So, when his little foot-page woke him up with the news that a hart and a hind, as white as snow, were scaring the good people of Learmont by parading its one street by the light of the moon, the rhymner, aware his earthly race was run, rose from his bed and went forth to seek his summoners; and after bidding a sad farewell to Ercildoune's grey towers, followed the elvish deer across Leader's silver tide—

Some said to hill, and some to glen,
Their wondrous course had been;
But ne'er in haunts of living men,
Again was Thomas seen.

It is pleasant to know that the woods about Rheinhardtsbrunn, in Thuringia, yet hold within their leafy precincts a representative of the fairy cervine race, in the shape of a splendid white stag with antlers of pure gold. Such a prize would long since have fallen a victim to man's cupidity, but the most potent of stalkers could never hope to bring down a beast visible only to a night-wandering child, perfectly pure and innocent. When it happens to come across such a model youngster, the stag marshals the way to a wall of rock, which it attacks with its horns until they fall from its head; and the wall opens, disclosing a succession of treasure chambers full of jewels and gold dust, to which the lucky child can help itself at its will. Having fulfilled its mission, the stag disappears, not to be seen again until it has grown a new pair of horns, when the performance is repeated for the benefit of another little innocent.

It was with no such honourable intentions, that pranksome Puck was wont to take the likeness of a filly foal or a ragged colt. That imp of mischief was only bent upon misleading belated mortals far out of their proper way, to land them in a quagmire. A mild practical joker was he, however, compared to his Irish cousin, the Pooka, whose nightly habit was to transform himself into a sturdy, shaggy pony and lie down in a dark road, and there wait until some wayfarer unconsciously bestrode him, when, starting up, he careered across country, bumping his terrified rider against walls, jolting him over stony ways, rushing him through thorniest hedges, splashing through rivers,

until chanticleer proclaimed the dawn; a signal for the ill-conditioned beast to cast his terrified burden into a bog or a prickly bush, and melt into thin air. Gervase of Tilbury's hero, Osbert, would seem to have caught a Pooka of a superior breed in the prize he won in fair fight upon Wendebury Plain. Hearing that an elfin warrior kept the plain against all comers, the brave baron sallied out one moonlight night, encountered the fairy knight, and, unhorsing him in the first course, rode off with his foe's charger, regardless of a wound in the thigh inflicted by the discomfited elf. Osbert went to bed, thinking the addition to his stud well bought with a bootful of blood; but upon rising next morning found he had nought but his wound to show for his pains, his new war-horse having vanished at cock-crow.

Possibly the mortified Osbert owed his loss to his ignorance of the art of managing demon horses, a branch of stable lore in which the famous Scottish wizard, Michael Scott, was particularly proficient. That wise gentleman's countrymen showed their proverbial shrewdness, in electing to send him to France, to obtain satisfaction for sundry piratical acts committed by French subjects. No one else could have done their business so thoroughly, so quickly, and so cheaply; for Michael's manner of travelling, and of negotiating, were equally imitable. Immediately upon receiving his instructions, the wizard-knight withdrew to his study, and summoned a fiend, in the shape of a gigantic black horse; then mounting him instanter, took his way to France through the air. While they were crossing the sea, the horse suddenly spoke, inquiring what it was that old women muttered at bed-time? Instead of replying, "the Pater-Noster," and thereby giving his inquisitive steed power to throw him over, Scott sternly cried, "What is that to thee, Diabolus? Mount and fly!" and so, without further parley, Diabolus carried him to Paris in no time. Never having known a respectable ambassador to come in such a questionable shape, without a single servant, the French king received the Scottish envoy with little courtesy, and would have sent him about his business at once, if Sir Michael had not asked him not to speak before he had seen his horse, then standing outside the palace gates, stamp thrice. The wondering monarch acquiesced. The sable beast stamped

once, and every bell in Paris rang, and every steeple shook. At the second stamp three of the palace towers fell crashing to the ground. Not caring to have his capital about his ears, before Diabolus put his foot down for the third time, the king proclaimed his willingness to grant whatever the Scoteman had come to ask. Of the two, we would rather have owned the wondrous brazen steed, sent to King Cambusean, as a birthday gift, by the ruler of Araby and Ind. He at least was not given to asking awkward questions at inconvenient times, and was under reasonable control; while capable of carrying his master any distance in twenty-four hours, if he "trilled a pin" in his ear, and told him where he wished to go; and his journey done, would vanish at a word, to come again at command.

Such flyers as Cambusean's Automaton, and Michael's Diabolus, could not have been handicapped even by the Admiral himself, so as to bring them to a level with the ordinary run of satanic steeds, although the latter were quite equal to giving a Derby winner any amount of weight, and losing him. They are all made to one pattern. Whether carrying the phantom of a Highland chief round the old mansion, to announce a coming vacancy in the family circle; bearing an unhappy Leonore to her horrible church-yard bridal bed; or being urged by a ghostly huntsman in the wake of a spectral pack, the demon horse is always one of coal-black hue, with lightning-flashing eyes, and nostrils snorting fire, and sure-footed enough to gallop "where mortal horsemen ne'er dare ride." Mortal horsemen might be found sufficiently daring, if the chance offered, to back these wild coursers of the night, and put them through their paces; but it would puzzle the deftest whip of the Four-in-Hand Club to emulate the grandsire of Queen Bess by tooling a headless team, while carrying his own head under his arm, and spouting flame from his mouth. Certainly Sir Thomas Boleyn has had plenty of practice, having done the journey over the twelve bridges once a year for the last three centuries, and ought to be perfect master of his horses by the time he has completed his prescribed term of a thousand years. The feat, however, is hardly so extraordinary as that performed by a West Norfolk squire, who drives his coach and headless four through the bricked-up gateway of the mansion that once called him master, as surely as

the anniversary of his death comes round. Whether impelled thereto by a feeling of spite for his successors, or merely from a desire to maintain the ancient right of way, nobody seems to know.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "*BLACK SHEEP*," "*CASTAWAY*," "*THE YELLOW FLAG*," &c. &c.

BOOK II. CHAPTER XI. IN THE BANK PARLOUR.

FINE times these for Mr. Heath—rich, rare, prosperous times—all his wishes seemed to be met half way, and everything he touched appeared to turn to gold. There is a French proverb to the effect that those who are lucky at play are unlucky in love; but whether it was that Mr. Heath was thoroughly British, or for whatever other reason, the saying had no bearing upon him. Not that he ever gambled, however, save that gambling and doing business in the City are now convertible terms; and in both his speculations in love and in the City, Mr. Heath had been extraordinarily fortunate.

That was what was said about his love speculation in the West-end, only stronger words were employed when it became rumoured—and it was strange how soon the report got abroad—that Miss Middleham, old Middleham's heiress, don't you know (banker fellow that was killed down in the City), girl that Jim Crutchley's widow dragons and lives with: the catch of the season, and all that kind of thing—was engaged, and everybody wanted to know to whom. They said, "To who?" but when you are looked after by Burke and Debrett, you need not trouble about Linley Murray. All sorts of people were suggested by the men who had proposed and been rejected, and who, with the impossibility of reticence with which some men are afflicted, had been the round of their acquaintance, and, swearing each one individually to secrecy, had taken the whole of society into confidence. They must have plucked up a spirit and gone in again, their respective backers thought. Captain Macmanus happened to be in town again, when the news got wind, having arrived from Ballytattersal with half-a-dozen very promising little Galloways, which, duly hogged and doeked, might be converted into polo-ponies, and bring in sufficient to carry their vendor on to the hunting season. The blue-faced majors, and other cheery veterans of

the Hibernian cohorts, pluckily fighting through existence with the highest spirits compatible with the smallest means, heard of the rumour of Miss Middleham's engagement from wealthier friends, members of the Rag or the Junior; and a delighted whisper ran round St. Alban's-place, and the neighbouring quarter, that Mac had taken heart of grace to cast his line again, and had landed his fish. The friends of Lord Orme, if less demonstrative, were certainly not less hopeful; and one of them venturing to congratulate that ordinarily calm and polished nobleman, in the middle of a rubber at the Portland, caused him to lose the odd trick and the game. As for Sir Charles Skirrow, his friends, who called themselves his "pals," went, as they expressed it, "all over the place like the pattern of the carpet," declaring that it must be he who had succeeded in "pulling off" the prize; and magnums of "fizz" were emptied in the classically simple coffee-room of Rummer's, in Conduit-street, over which speeches were delivered abounding in the expression of that gratitude which is said to be a recognition of favours to come.

When it was discovered who was really the man, there was a good deal of astonishment, and not a little dismay. Most of the people ranking amongst Miss Middleham's intimate acquaintances, with whom her time had been chiefly passed, had never met Mr. Heath, who eschewed "society," and had never even heard of him. "Who was this fellow?" they asked each other with vacuous grins. Nobody knew anything about him; he didn't belong to this or that club; he was never seen in society; they supposed he must be some cad, don't you know, who had fetched the girl somehow; but they could not understand how he had got over Mrs. Crutchley. There were others, however, to whom Heath was tolerably well known; men of the West-End who had taken their names and titles into the City, pawning them for early allotment of shares to be speedily quoted at a premium, and lending them in exchange for directors' fees. Men of all ages these, younger brothers of dukes, with whiskers scarcely fledged; members sitting in Parliament for Radical constituencies, so uncompromising in their defiance of corruption at St. Stephen's, so amenable to pecuniary influence on the cast side of Temple Bar; grizzled military and naval veterans, whose K.C.B.ships, or other titles and honours, had been won either at the

point of the sword or in dangerous explorations among African savages or Arctic snows, and who, as ignorant as school-boys of all practical and valuable knowledge, suffered themselves to be cajoled by needy adventurers and mixed up with disreputable affairs. All these men knew Mr. Heath, and most of them respected him, for his business shrewdness and capacity were indubitable; and he was always ready to do a kind action and to give words of warning or advice, provided that, in so doing, he would not be a loser, and that the recipient of the favour was a person whose good-will was worth cultivation. They knew how high his reputation stood amongst the best men in the City, and how it was openly conceded that the great success which Middleham's Bank then enjoyed, and the profits which it returned to the heiress, were due, not so much to its long-established respectability, as to the skilful manner in which it had been worked under Mr. Heath's management, and to the increase in the business which the new class of customers introduced by him had occasioned. The fact of any relationship, however slight, existing between herself and the manager of the bank, had been studiously concealed by Mrs. Crutchley; and if those who knew how faithfully the heiress had been served by Mr. Heath, felt astonishment at the reward which she was about to bestow upon him, the sentiment merely arose from the fact that their experience of such gratitude had been limited.

It was that very distaste for society which prevented his recognition amongst the dandies forming Miss Middleham's court, that chiefly contributed to give Mr. Heath the high position which he held among his fellow bankers, and merchants, and men of business. He was always "at it," they said, always attending to his work; and, whereas the late Mr. Middleham, although of high repute for business habits and qualifications, was accustomed to shirk work—occasionally staying down for a day or two at Loddenford, pottering amongst his gardeners, or lying out in his punt on the river, under the shade of the overhanging trees, and enjoying his Horace—his successor knew no holiday; and every day, save when business, from time to time, called him abroad for a short spell, was to be found in the bank parlour, bright, clear-headed, and accessible to all who required to see him. He was never absent from the bank, and seemed to concentrate

all his faculties on it. A score of schemes and ventures were brought before him every week. Some of them he dismissed at once. In regard to others, he threw out suggestions which were generally eagerly seized by their promoters; while, in a very few instances, he went deeply into calculations and statistics, and, in a very short time, became the ruling spirit of the affair. Not less powerful because all unknown; his name was never seen on any board of direction, though he had been repeatedly urged to give it, on the representation that its presence there would ensure success and stability to the concern, however much he might be interested in it; nor would he publicly avow a connection, however remote, with anything save Middleham's bank. That he was influential in this or that company, and that the wire-pulling in some of the largest financial undertakings in the City was really done by him was freely whispered about; but no proof was ever to be obtained, and Mr. Heath was never to be found in brokers' offices, at shareholders' meetings, or anywhere, indeed, save in the bank parlour.

There had been a good deal of change throughout the whole of Middleham's since Mr. Heath, in his position of manager, had been authorised by the trustees to do as he pleased in all things. In the first place, the lives of the customers were infinitely more safe; for butter-firkins and egg-crates no longer swung in mid-air over their devoted heads—the provision-merchant, who lived next door, having died; and Mr. Heath had acquired the lease of the premises, with the view to the installation of a less objectionable neighbour. The old-fashioned air of quaintness, which pervaded the entire establishment, had disappeared, and if Hugh Middleham could have returned to life, he would scarcely have recognised the scene of his many years' labour. The old notched ink-spotted counter had been removed, and replaced by one radiant with polished mahogany; the paying and receiving clerks, who from the waist upwards had been always exposed to view, now were provided with handsome ground-glass fixed screens, behind which they could retire from the public gaze. The appointments throughout were novel and modern, and over the bullet head of Rumbold, the porter, hung the sword of Damocles, in the shape of dismissal, unless the offices were kept scrupulously clean. The new class of customers introduced by Mr.

Heath, consisting chiefly of monied relatives of the West-end aristocrats, who in their City struggles sought his assistance and advice, would have been alarmed at the general dinginess which had prevailed for so many years; and the old customers had sense enough to see that fresh paint and cleaned windows did not interfere with the solidity of the bank, or the correct keeping of their accounts.

The staff of the bank remained pretty much as it had been in Mr. Middleham's time, save that Mr. Frodsham had been superannuated on a small pension, his place being filled, not by anyone selected from the general body of clerks, but by a gentleman, brought in from a joint-stock bank, a man of great sternness and attachment to discipline, under whose rule the lives of Mr. Smowle and his colleagues were far less comfortable than they had been. The surreptitious sandwich and sherry consumption had been done away with, the period of absence allowed for the mid-day meal had been considerably abridged, and those who were laggards in attendance, not merely received a remarkably sharp reprimand from Mr. Towser, the new head-clerk, but were subjected to a system of pecuniary fine, neatly graduated in proportion to the time they were behind-hand.

"That makes seventeen and six out of this quarter's screw, my smiling Smowle," said Mr. Bentle one morning, as his friend sneaked into his seat. "If you go on at this rate, you will have about eighteenpence to receive at midsnmmmer, unless your services are dispensed with before."

"I can't help it," said Mr. Smowle, doggedly. "I was late last night at Cremorne; got introduced to Wilkinsoni Il Diavolo, the fellow who comes head first down the slack rope with fireworks in his heels, don't you know, and stood him some supper afterwards. Very pleasant party he is, too; full of talk and chaff; but I didn't get home till three o'clock, and that old fool, my laudlady, forgot to call me this morning."

"You didn't give that as the excuse to Towser, I suppose?" observed Mr. Bentle.

"Not quite," replied Mr. Smowle, with a grin. "I told him I had a bad pain in my epigastrium. I don't know what that is, but it sounded a good long word; and when he shook his head at that, I mentioned that that wood pavement was up again in Oxford Street, and that the omnibuses had to come round by the back

slums. But he would not stand it, sir. He muttered something about frivolous excuse, and docked me three-and-six, before you could say knife."

"The chief was asking for you about ten minutes ago," said Mr. Bentle; "he wanted a copy of Laforet's account. No, you can't go in now," he continued, as Mr. Smowle was about to rise from his seat; "he has got some one with him, and there is another fellow waiting to see him."

"What, that seedy-looking customer?" said Mr. Smowle, looking round in the direction in which his friend had jerked his head. "If I were Rummy, I should keep a sharp look-out, lest he should bolt with the poker, or put some of the coals in his pocket."

"Don't you know who it is?" asked Mr. Bentle.

"Not I," said Smowle; "he looks like a barber's clerk in the long vacation."

"That, sir," said Mr. Bentle, "is a representative of the palladium of our liberties, one of the members of the press-gang, and a distinguished professor of black-mail. He edits a little rag called the Weekly War-Whoop; and the other day he called on my cousin, Dick Trotter, who is the actuary of the Friendly Grasp Insurance Office. 'I was pleased to see so satisfactory a meeting of your shareholders last week, Mr. Trotter,' he said; 'and I have written a little article on it which you might like to look over,' and he handed Dick a proof sheet. 'Very complimentary, indeed,' said Dick, looking at and returning it. 'You would probably like to have a full pageadvertisement in our next number?' said this fellow; 'and to take a couple of thousand of the issue containing the report?' 'We could not do anything of the sort,' said Dick, who is very straightforward. 'Oh, indeed,' said the editor. 'Thinking there might perhaps be some difficulty in the case, I have prepared another article which you might like to see,' and from his pocket he took another proof sheet, containing a most frightful blackguarding of the Friendly Grasp and all connected with it."

"Nice man," said Mr. Smowle. "What did the actuary do?"

"Ordered him out of the office, and told him to go sharp, if he didn't want to be kicked," said Mr. Bentle.

"That is, apparently, just what Heath has done now," said Mr. Smowle, looking round; and, to judge from the expression of his face, Rummy seems to find it very difficult to execute. "There's the chief,"

he added, as Mr. Heath appeared for a moment at the door of his private room, and beckoned Mr. Towser to him; "how savage he looks! That confounded penny-a-liner has put him out, and we shall have to suffer all day in consequence."

That Mr. Heath was vexed no one who knew him, however casually, would have had a difficulty in judging. It was one of his characteristics to allow no trace of mental emotion to disturb his handsome, cold, clear-cut features, to be found in his grave and impassive demeanour; but now, when Mr. Towser had left the room, and the door had closed after him, the bank manager commenced walking up and down, with a scowling brow and writhing lips, and hands which, clasped behind him, were knotted together and plucking at each other in a spasm of unrest. The appearance of the room, as well as the office, had been modernised within the last few months, and but little of the furniture appertaining to it in Mr. Middleham's days now remained; and that which had taken its place was costly and elegant. Pendant from the side of the fireplace were three or four ornamental gutta-percha tubes, with ivory mouth-pieces, communicating with various rooms of the building. Applying his lips to one of these, Mr. Heath desired that Mr. Hollebone might be sent to him; then, taking his seat at the handsome mahogany desk in the middle of the room, he leant back in his chair, crossed his arms, let his chin rest upon his breast, and fell into a reverie.

He was aroused by a tap at the door, and the simultaneous entrance of a little, common-place looking man, having the appearance of an inferior clerk or superior mechanic, dressed in a well-worn suit of rusty black; such a man as is to be met by the score in the great thoroughfares after work, and who would be passed by unnoticed by the majority of the wayfarers. He closed the door softly behind him, and, advancing to the desk, stood waiting for orders.

"Oh, you are here, Hollebone," said the manager, looking up. "When did you arrive?"

"Late last evening, sir."

It was only when Mr. Hollebone spoke that you noticed the quickness of his glance and the sharp intelligence of his face.

"And you saw the man of whom you went in search?"

"I did, so recently as yesterday morning."

"Then you must have crossed from Ostend, Hollebone," said Heath, looking up.

"That is perfectly true, sir," said Hollebone, almost betrayed into an expression of astonishment. "You seem to be as well posted up as I am in the matter."

"Not at all," said Mr. Heath. "I simply know that fact, and that by accident. Now, let me hear the details of your trip."

"I went to Brussels," said Mr. Hollebone, pulling out a memorandum-book, to which he made frequent reference during his conversation, "to the Hotel de Flandre, as you told me. There I took up my quarters, and began making inquiries. The captain was not staying in the house then, though the concierge knew him well enough, and had seen him quite recently—not more than a month ago—when he was on his way to some pigeon-matches at Baden-Baden. He stopped at the Flandre a day or two then, and seemed in good spirits, and pretty flush of money; but the concierge thought he must have come to grief in Baden, for most of the pigeon-shooters were back, and there was no trace of the captain. I got acquainted with two or three Englishmen at a tavern in the town; and, from one of them, I heard that the captain had been hard hit, betting at the pigeon-matches, and had sent to Brussels, to some friends of his, to borrow some money towards helping him home. He turned up while I was there—not at the Flandre though—but at a fifth-rate little tavern in the town, where the English grooms go to get steaks and beer. He was very shabby, and horribly down on his luck; and there was no difficulty for me to get an introduction to him. It was only a question of paying for what he drank."

"Has he taken to drink?" asked Heath, quickly.

"He has; very kindly, I should say," said Mr. Hellebone. "But when, following your instructions, I tried to find out who were the friends he lived amongst, and generally what company he kept, he seemed to turn suspicious, and I could get nothing out of him. He was going to Ostend, he said, for he liked to be as near to England as possible, and I thought I might as well go along with him. We were there three or four days together, and used to walk up and down the Digue. The sea-air seemed to do him good, and he picked up a little; when, two days ago, as I was sitting at the Pavillon, up came the captain in a most excited state. He had seen some news, he said, in an English paper—he

wouldn't tell me what, or the name of the paper—which had made a man of him. There was an income ready to his hand, he said, and he should never want money again. This news, whether it was worth anything or not, seemed completely to upset him. He took to drinking heavily again; and as there was nothing more to be got out of him, and I thought you might be anxious to know where he was, I left him and came back."

"You did quite right, Hollebone," said Heath, after a moment's reflection. "You are perfectly sure you know nothing of the news which worked this change in our friend?"

"Not the least in the world, sir," replied Hollebone. "I have been looking through the papers of about that date since I came back, but could find nothing that could have interested the captain; and I begin to think that, whatever it was, he didn't hear of it through the papers at all, and merely endeavoured to stall me off with the story."

"I know more than you then, my good friend, with all your cleverness," muttered Heath to himself, when he was once more alone; "and that old scoundrel, drunkard though he be, has retained sufficient sense to keep his own counsel, and only to use his threats where he thinks they may be effective. This is the first time he has dared to threaten explicitly. In vague hints he has been prodigal enough, but he has never previously stated so plainly what he means."

As he spoke he unlocked one of the drawers of the desk at which he was sitting, and taking from it a letter, written in a shaky hand, on foreign paper, spread it out before him, and fell for its reperusal. It ran as follows:—

"47, Rue St. Sébastien, Ostend.

"MY DEAR HEATH,—The strict business relations to which you have insisted on limiting our intercourse can scarcely, you will perhaps think, admit of my addressing you some words of hearty congratulation on the news contained in a paragraph of an English weekly newspaper, which has just come under my notice. I shall hope, however, a little further on, to prove to you that I am not transgressing the regulation which you thought it necessary to lay down; and in the meantime, I beg that you will believe that I have heard, with sincere pleasure, of your approaching marriage to a lady, who, according to report, is not merely beautiful, but very wealthy. I always knew that your distin-

gnished qualifications would eventually lead you to riches and fame, though I am bound to confess that the result has been accomplished rather sooner than I anticipated.

"These, you will say, my dear Heath, are but the polite mannders of an old fool, and I therefore hasten to show you how these remarks bear upon the great topic of business, which is alone to be the "subject between us. I have, hitherto, from a sense of delicacy, refrained from commenting upon the total inadequacy of the allowance which you are pleased to make me; for, though I had heard from time to time, from friends in London, of the improvement of your position, and the consequent increase in your income, I knew that you had only bettered yourself at the cost of a vast amount of labour and anxiety, and I felt that what you had gained yourself ought to be spent upon yourself. Under the impending circumstances to which I have just alluded, however, the case assumes a different aspect; you will have large revenues coming in with delightful regularity without any exertion of your own; you will have the opportunity, should you desire to avail yourself of it, of retiring from work at a comparatively early age, and enjoying the remainder of your life in ease and opulence. Taking these facts into consideration, and having regard to others to which I need not more particularly allude, I feel certain you will have no hesitation in complying with the request which I am about to make you—that my paltry allowance may be doubled; and I am sure you would feel it as a reflection upon yourself, that a man with whom you are connected by certain ties of kinship, should be prohibited from making a proper appearance in the world, for want of the necessary funds. There will be no necessity for me to enlarge upon this point, as it is one which will commend itself as much to your good sense as your generosity. I may mention that in the event of your compliance I shall not think of coming to England, but shall continue my wanderings on the continent, or I might possibly visit the western hemisphere.

"I address to you, as usual, at the bank. I suppose nothing has ever been heard of the desperado by whom the worthy old gentleman who once presided over its destinies was murdered. Truth, they say, lives at the bottom of a well—or pond!

How seldom she rises to the surface! Believe me, my dear Heath, sincerely yours,

"EDWARD STUDLEY."

When the bank manager returned this letter to the drawer his face was blanched, and his lips trembled visibly. "There is no doubting what this scoundrel means. There are threats enough in those last two paragraphs—occult to most, but perfectly legible to me—to show his knowledge of the importance of the cards he holds, and his determination to play them unless his demands are complied with. Double the allowance he now has! He would be cheaply bought off at that; but then there is the impossibility of binding down a shuffling villain like this, and, so soon as his ready money was exhausted, he would be writing for more. There is the danger of his chattering, too! According to Hollebone's account he has taken to drink, and when a man of his kind falls into that condition he loses all power of reticence, and there is no knowing what might not leak out in his babbling. He must be temporised with, at all events until I see whether I shall remain here, or whether I myself might not take a somewhat prolonged trip to what this fool calls the western hemisphere. The bank might be safely left in charge of Towser, and Grace would be only too delighted to—What is it?" he asked, suddenly, as a clerk appeared at the door.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the young man, "but Rumbold is out for the moment, and there is a lady in the office wishing to see you."

"Asking for me by name?" asked Mr. Heath.

"Yes, sir, wishing particularly to speak to you," said the clerk.

"Show her in," said Heath. "This must be a freak of Grace's," he muttered to himself. "Hitherto, I have never been able to persuade her to come down to the bank, and now she has conceived the thought of taking me unawares."

The door of the room opened and a lady entered, whose figure Heath saw at once was not that of Grace, but of whose face he could tell nothing, as she was closely veiled. With his most courteous air the bank manager rose from his chair, and had commenced his sentence with "May I ask?" when the lady silently raised her veil.

Then Mr. Heath fell back into his seat, gasping out the one word "Anne!"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 329. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MAEBEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER V.

THE little group round Minnie's sofa dispersed as Mr. Diamond came forward. He was barely known by sight to most of them, and merely bowed gravely and shyly, without speaking.

"Who's that?" asked Colonel Whistler, in a loud whisper, of his eldest niece. "Eh? oh! ah! second master—yes, yes, yes; to be sure!" And the gallant gentleman walked off to the card-room, and joined the party at Mrs. Dockett's table, where there was a vacant place. It must be owned that the colonel's appearance was by no means rapturously hailed there. He was a notoriously bad player. Fate, however, allotted him as a partner to Mr. Warlock. Mrs. Dockett and Mr. Smith exchanged glances of satisfaction, and the gloom on Mr. Warlock's brow perceptibly deepened as the colonel, polite, smiling, and eager for the fray, took his seat opposite to that clerical victim.

"Algry, give Mr. Diamond your chair," said Miss Bodkin. It was in this imperious manner that she occasionally addressed her young friend. In her eyes he was still a school-boy. And then she was four years his senior, and had been a young woman grown when he was still playing marbles and munching toffy.

Algry by no means considered himself a school-boy, but he had excellent tact and temper. He rose directly, shook hands with his tutor, and then, standing opposite to Minnie, put his knuckles to his forehead, after the fashion in vogue amongst

rustic children by way of salute, and said meekly, "Yes'm, please'm."

Minnie laughed. "You don't mind, do you, Algernon?" she said, looking up at him.

"Not at all, Miss Bodkin. You have mercly cast another blight over my young existence. I am growing to look like the reverend Peter, in consequence of your ill-usage. Don't you perceive a ghastly hue upon my brow? No? Ah, well, you would if you had any feeling. Here, let me put this cushion better for you. Will that do?"

"Capitally, thanks. And, look here, Algry; I can't bear any music to-night, so will you get mamma to set the McDougalls down to a round game? And play yourself, there's a good boy!"

"Oh, Minnie, you ought to have been Mrs. Nero. There never was such a tyrant. Well, Pawkins and I must make ourselves agreeable, I suppose. For England, home, and beauty—here goes!" And Algernon speedily had the two Miss McDougalls, and Mr. Pawkins, and Alethea Dockett engaged in a game of vingt-et-un—played in a very infantine manner by the first-named ladies, and with a good deal of business-like gravity by little Alethea, who liked to win.

Mr. Diamond looked at the group with his hand over his mouth after his habit.

"Isn't he a nice fellow?" asked Minnie, watching Mr. Diamond's face curiously.

"Errington?"

"Of course!"

"Very."

"But now, tell me—do sit down here; I want to talk to you. You come so seldom. I wonder why you came to-night?"

"I chanced to meet Mrs. Bodkin in the street, and she asked me so pressingly—she is so good!"

Minnie's face wore a pained look. "It is a pity mamma should have teased you," she said, in a low voice.

Matthew Diamond took no notice of the words. Perhaps he did not hear them. "I am not fit to go to evening parties," he continued. "The very wax-lights dazzle me. I feel like a bat or an owl."

"Too wise for your company, that means!"

"How can you say so? No: I assure you I was compared to an owl the other evening by a lady, and I felt the justice of the comparison."

"By a lady! What lady?"

Mr. Diamond smiled a little amused smile at the authoritative tone of the question. Minnie did not see it. She was leaning her elbow on a cushion, and had her face turned towards Mr. Diamond; but her eyes, which usually looked out, open and unabashed, were half veiled by their lids.

"The lady was Mrs. Errington," answered the tutor, after a moment's pause.

"She called you an owl? That eagle? Well, she has this aquiline quality; I believe she could stare the sun himself out of countenance!"

"You were asking me to tell you——" said Mr. Diamond.

"To tell me——? Oh, yes; about the Methodist preacher. That caricature is not like him, you say?"

"Not at all. It is a vulgar conception of the man."

"And the man is not vulgar? I am glad of that! Tell me about him."

Matthew Diamond had heard the preacher more than once. The first time had been by chance on Whit Meadow. The other times were in the crowded, close Wesleyan chapel, into which he had penetrated at the cost of a good deal of personal inconvenience, so greatly had Powell's eloquence impressed him.

"The man is like a flame of fire," he said. "It is wonderful! He must be like Garrick, according to the descriptions I have heard. And, then, this fellow is so handsome—wild and oriental-looking. I always long to clap a turban on his head, and a great flowing robe over his shoulders."

Minnie listened eagerly, with parted lips, to all that Diamond would tell her of the preacher.

"That is for his manner," she said, at length. "Now, as to the matter?"

Mr. Diamond paused. "The man is an

enthusiast, you know," he answered, gravely.

"But as to his doctrine? Give me some idea of the kind of thing he says."

"Not now."

"Yes; now. This moment!"

"Excuse me; I cannot enter into the subject now."

Minnie raises her brown eyes to his steel-grey ones, and then drops her own quickly.

"Will you ever?" she asks, meekly.

"Perhaps. I don't know."

Miss Bodkin is not accustomed to be answered with such unceremonious curtness; but, perhaps on account of its novelty, Mr. Diamond's blunt disregard of her requests (in that house Minnie's requests have the weight of commands) does not ruffle her. She bears it with the most perfect sweetness, and proceeds to discourse of other things.

"Don't you think it a pity," she says, "that Algernon Errington should have refused his cousin's offer?"

"A great pity—for him."

"Ah! you think Mr. Filthorpe of Bristol is not to be condoled with on the occasion?"

Mr. Diamond's firmly closed lips remain immovable.

Minnie looks at him wistfully, and then says suddenly, "Do you know I like Algry very much! There is something so bright and winning and gay about him! I have known him so long—ever since he came here as a small child in a frock. And papa knew his father, Dr. Errington. He was a very clever man, a brilliant talker, and greatly sought after in society. Algry inherits all that. And he has—what they say his father had not—a temper that is almost perfect, thoroughly sound and sweet. I wish you liked him."

"Who tells you that I do not like him? You are mistaken in fancying so. I think Errington one of the most winning fellows I ever knew in my life."

"Y-yes; but you don't think so well of him as I do."

"Perhaps that is hardly to be expected! And pardon me, Miss Bodkin, but you don't know——"

"I know nothing about your thoughts on the subject!" interrupts Minnie quickly, and with a bright, mischievous glance. "Forgive my interrupting you; but when I am to have a cold shower-bath, I like to pull the string myself. Now it's over."

"You think me a terrible bear," says

Diamond, looking down on her beautiful, animated face.

"Ah! take care. If I know nothing about your thoughts, how do you pretend to guess mine? Besides, I am not so zoological in my choice of epithets as your friend, Mrs. Errington. Papa nearly quarrelled with that lady on the subject of Algy's going away. But, you know, it is not all Mrs. Errington's fault. Algy chooses to try his fortune under the auspices of Lord Seely—I can see that plainly enough. And what Algy chooses his mother chooses. He has been terribly spoiled."

"It is a great misfortune——"

"To be spoiled?"

"For him to have lost his father when he was a child. Otherwise he might not have been so pampered: though fathers spoil their children sometimes!"

"Mine spoils me, I think. But then there is an excuse, after all, for spoiling me."

"My dear Miss Bodkin, you cannot suppose that I had any such meaning."

"You? Oh, no! You are honest: you never speak in inuendoes. But it is true, you know. My father and mother have spoiled me. Poor father and mother! I am but a miserable, frail little craft for them to have ventured so much love and devotion in!"

It was not in mortal man—not even in mortal man whose heart was filled with a passion for another woman—to refrain from a tender glance and a soft tone, in answer to Minnie's pathetic little plaint. Her beauty and her intellect might be resisted: her helplessness, and acknowledgment of peculiar affliction, could not be.

"Ah!" said Matthew Diamond; "who would not embark all their freight of affection in such a venture as the hope that you would love them again? I think your parents are paid."

It has been said that Mr. Diamond's calm, grave face raised an indefinite expectation in the beholder. When he said those words to Minnie Bodkin, you would have thought, if you had been watching him, that you had found the key of the puzzle, and that an ineffable tenderness was the secret that lay hid beneath that grave mask. The stern mouth smiled, the stern eyes beamed, the straight brows were lifted in a compassionate curve. Minnie had never seen his face with that look on it, and the change in it gave her a curious pang, half of pain, half of pleasure. Strong conflicting feelings battled in her. She was strung to a high pitch

of excitement; and her eyes brightened, and her pulse beat quicker—all for a look, a smile, a beam of the eye from this staid, quiet schoolmaster! What do we know of the thought in our neighbour's brain? of the thrill that makes his heart flutter? We do not care for this air-bubble. How can he? It is yonder beautiful transparent ball, all radiant with prismatic colours, that we expend our breath upon. Up it goes—up, up, up—look! No; our stupid neighbour is watching his own airy sphere, which is not nearly so beautiful; and which, we know, will burst presently!

The game of *vingt-et-un* comes to an end. Almost at the same moment the whist-players break up, and come trooping into the drawing-room; trooping and talking rather noisily, to say the truth, as though to indemnify themselves for the silence which Doctor Bodkin insists upon during the classic game. Mrs. Bodkin bustles up to her daughter; hopes she is not tired; thinks she looks a little fagged; wonders why she did not have any music, as she generally likes Rose McDougall's Scotch ballads; supposes Mr. Diamond preferred not to play, as she sees he has been sitting out, and trusts he has not been bored.

But of all the people present, Mrs. Bodkin alone guesses that Minnie has enjoyed her evening, and why. And, with her mother's and woman's instinct, she knows that Minnie's pleasure would have been spoiled by guessing that it had been guessed. For the rest, this small anxious-faced woman cares but little. She would tear your feelings to mince-meat to feed the fancies of her daughter, as ruthlessly as any maternal vixen would slay a chicken for her cubs; although, for herself, no hare is milder or more timid.

The Miss McDougalls are in good spirits. They have won, and they have had the two young men all to themselves, for Ally Dockett in short frocks doesn't count. Also Minnie Bodkin has kept aloof. That bright lamp of hers is not favourable to such twinkling little rush-lights as Rose and Violet are able to display. But this evening they have not been quenched by a superior luminary, and are quite radiant and cheerful. Dr. Bodkin, too, is contented in his lofty manner; for there has been no music, and he has enjoyed his rubber in peace. Colonel Whistler has lost, but the stakes are always modest at Dr. Bodkin's table, and he doesn't mind it. Over the feelings of

the Rev. Peter Warlock it will, perhaps, be best to draw a veil. The reverend gentleman stalks in, and sits down in a corner, whence he can stare at Minnie unobserved. It is the only comfort he enjoys throughout the evening. And for this he thinks it worth while to submit to the peine forte et dure of playing whist, with Colonel Whistler for his partner.

Mrs. Errington sails towards Minnie's sofa, and suddenly stops short, and opens her eyes very wide.

Mr. Diamond, who is the object of her gaze, rises and bows. "Good evening, madam," he says, unable to repress a smile at her manifest astonishment on beholding him there.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Diamond? Dear me! I little expected to see you this evening. Dear Minnie, how are you now? Well, this is a surprise!"

Then, as Mr. Diamond moves away, Mrs. Errington takes his chair beside Minnie, and says to her confidentially— "Now, I hope, Minnie, you won't owe me a grudge for it; but I must confess that if it hadn't been for me, you wouldn't have had that gentleman to entertain this evening."

"What on earth do you mean?" cries Minnie, with scant ceremony, and flashes an impatient glance at the lady's soft, smiling, self-satisfied visage.

"My dear, I advised him to come here a little oftener. I think he felt diffident, you know, and all that. Poor man, he is rather dull, although Algy is always crying up his talents. But it really is kind to bring him forward a little. I asked him to tea the other night. You see he must feel it a good deal when people are affable, and so on, for"—here her voice sank to a whisper—"he told me himself that he had been a sizar."

With all which benevolent remarks, Miss Bodkin is, of course, highly delighted. She does not forget them either; for after the negus has been drunk, and the sandwiches eaten, and the company has departed, she says to her father, "Papa, was Mr. Diamond a sizar?"

"I don't know, child. Very likely. None the worse for that, if he were."

"The worse! No!" returns Minnie, with a superb smile.

"Who says he was?"

"Mrs. Errington."

"Pooh! Ten to one it isn't true then. She has her good points, poor woman, but the Anerams are all liars; every one of

them! Greatest liars in all the Midland Counties. It runs in the family, like gout."

"It does not seem likely, certainly, that Mr. Diamond should have confided the circumstance to Mrs. Errington," observed Minnie, thoughtfully.

"Confided! No; I never knew a man less likely to confide anything to anybody."

"However, after all, it is a thing which all the world might know, isn't it, papa?"

Dr. Bodkin was not interested in the question. He gave a great loud yawn, and declared it was time for Minnie to go to bed.

"It doesn't follow that I'm sleepy because you yawn, papa!" she said sanctily.

"You are tired though, puss! I see it in your face. Go to bed. Mrs. Bodkin, get Minnie off to rest."

He bent to kiss his daughter, and bid her good night.

"Say 'God bless' me, papa," she whispered, drawing his head down and kissing his forehead.

"Don't I always say it? God bless you, my darling!"

There were tears in Minnie's eyes as she turned her head away among her cushions. But nobody saw them. She talked to the maid who undressed her, about Mr. Powell, the Methodist preacher, and asked her if she had heard him, and what the folks said about him in the town.

"No, Miss Minnie. I've never heard him. And I know master wouldn't think it right for any of us to be going to a dissenting chapel. But I do think as there's some good to be got there, miss. For my brother Richard—he that lives groom at Pendcombe Hall—he went and got—got 'conversion,' I think they call it, at Mr. Powell's. And since then he's never touched a drop of liquor, nor a bad word never comes out of his mouth. And he says he's quite happy and comfortable in his mind, miss."

"Is he? How I envy him!"

ODD MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

BEARING carefully in mind the privilege of Parliament, I am yet tempted by recent events to evoke from the shadows of the past the ghosts of those quaint and singular, if, often, brave and accomplished men, who have, from time to time, contributed, by their peculiarities, to the astonishment or amusement of the House of Commons, and of the nation at large. Many figures, which

loom large and godlike through the mist of history, reveal a host of very human oddities when looked at through the spectacles kindly transmitted to us by their contemporaries. The great Pitt, in his latter days, wears a curiously histrionic aspect; Pitt the Second, "renowned for ruining Great Britain gratis," appears as "the boy;" Lord Bath as the thoughtless politician who allowed himself to be "kicked up into the Lords;" and the courtly Chesterfield as a rash youth indulging in a stump oration. At one period the deliberations of the Commons were pervaded by the fumes of tobacco, at another they were illumined by the inspiration of wine. In the days of Lord North, honourable members went down to the House in court suits, orders and ribands—blue and red—to-day a seedy overcoat and a shocking bad hat may veil the majestic proportions of a cabinet minister.

Fortunately for the country, a large majority of the House has, at all times, been composed of those whom I may not irreverently call the Great Inarticulates.

Single-speech Hamilton waited for a whole year before he delivered that famous oration which has immortalised him; but he was not possessed of the patience of Hare, the friend of Fox. The latter famous speaker, when congratulated on the effect of a splendid speech, would say, quietly, "Wait till you hear Hare"—who had been his old schoolfellow at Eton, and whose brilliant rhetoric was expected to throw even Fox into the shade; but Hare never started from his "form." Another Etonian celebrity, Bobus Smith, made an effort, but halted, stammered, and broke down badly—hopelessly mute for the future. The immortal Gibbon was at first not disinclined to become a talking member, and wrote, "If my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events I shall try to expose myself. 'Semper ego auditor tantum, nunquamne reponam;'" but this ardour soon cooled down. In plain language, the historian of the Decline and Fall allowed himself to be crowded out by the Noisy Emptinesses. "There was an inundation of speakers—young speakers in every sense of the word—that neither Lord George Germaine nor myself could find room for a single word." Later on he despaired. "As yet I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs

I have sometimes had a wish to speak; but, though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded to expose myself in the manner, and remained in my seat, safe but inglorious; upon the whole, though, I still believe I shall try. I doubt whether nature—not that in some instances I am ungrateful—has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into Parliament much too late to exert them." At the period referred to Gibbon was thirty-seven, and soon after gave up all hope of speaking in the House. "Isaac Hawkins Browne," said Dr. Johnson, "one of the first wits in this country, got into Parliament, and never opened his mouth." "For my own part," saith Boswell, with his usual practical dulness, "I think it is more disgraceful never to try to speak than to try and fail, as it is more disgraceful not to fight than to fight and be beaten."

The vice of the present day is certainly neither shyness nor brevity. On subjects of comparatively slight importance parliamentary orators dilate at unreasonable length. There is a good rule against this insufferable prolixity: "If any one speak too long and speak within the matter, he may not be cut off; but if he be long and out of the matter, then may the Speaker gently admonish him of the shortness of the time or the business of the House, and pray him to make as short as he may." But, unhappily, this rule has fallen into desuetude, and the House has now no practical remedy but a count-out, and the defensive laws against reading a written speech or speaking in a sitting posture. The necessity of the practice of counting out is shown in several remarkable instances. On one occasion an unmerciful orator, haranguing to empty benches, whispered to a friend, "I am speaking to posterity." "If you go on at this rate," replied the friend, "you will see your audience before you." It is recorded of Hartley, the most prosaic and "everlasting" of speakers, that Mr. Jkinson left the House as he rose to speak, rode to Wimbledon, dined, rode back, and found the unconscionable talker still prosing on to a select and patient few. On another occasion, when he had all but cleared the House, and wished some clause in the Riot Act to be read, "You have read it already," exclaimed Burke; "the mob is dispersed." Curiously enough, Burke was himself so outrageous an offender in this direction that he was nicknamed "the

dinner-bell"—so promptly were honourable members affected by the fine rich brogue in which he poured out his eloquent periods and multitudinous, if sometimes rather mixed, metaphors.

At the present date, when men are content to remain at school till they are nearly a quarter of a century old, it is curious to find that previously to the Act passed shortly after the Revolution, the House was inundated by members whose excessive youth gave great umbrage to the surly Puritans. By this statute, the election of all members not of full age is rendered null and void. The Convention must have been of mature age, eight years having elapsed since the last of Charles the Second's Parliaments, as none were convened but those who had sat in the Parliaments of that and the preceding reign. Thus was carried out, on the final expulsion of the Stuarts, a measure earnestly desired by the first of that line, who cautioned Parliament of the ill effect of the House being supplied with "young and inexperienced men, that are not ripe and mature for so grave a council." This counsel was repeated by Charles, but there is little doubt that both father and son were actuated—not by a hatred of youth and inexperience—but by a kingly horror of that freedom, not to say license of speech, in which the younger members were prone to indulge. In the tenth year of King James, there was an account taken of forty gentlemen, not above twenty years of age, and some not exceeding sixteen, which moved Recorder Martin to deliver himself as follows: "It was the ancient custom for old men to make laws for young men; but now the case is altered, and children are elected into the great council of the nation, who come to invade and invert nature, and to enact laws to govern their fathers." At a later date, Prynne and other Puritan elders of the sonrest type observed that "Parliament was not a place to enter whelps in." In spite of these growls, many young men sat during the Commonwealth, one of whom stood up and "told a story of Cain and Abel, and made a speech, nobody knew to what purpose;" but the honour of youth was well maintained by Lord Falkland, whose admission, in 1658, was violently opposed by some, on the ground that he had not "sown his wild oats." He replied, promptly, "If I have not, I may sow them in this House, where there are plenty of geese to pick

them np." Other young men triumphantly vindicated the truth that whatever may be the case with wisdom, oratory flourishes better in the green tree than in the dry. Waller, not only an admirable poet, but a brilliant speaker, drew thunders of applause from the house before he was seventeen; and the first Lord Shaftesbury swayed his audience with irresistible power at the age of nineteen. In some cases, no doubt, honourable members were very young. James Herbert sat in the Pensioners' Parliament at the age of fifteen; and Lord Torrington is said to have been but fourteen when he took part in a debate. These extreme cases probably helped to bring about the 7th of William III.; but for a long while after the Act was passed, members were admitted who were certainly under age. The famous Lord Chesterfield, then Lord Stanhope, was undoubtedly elected when he was not of full age, and certainly gave slight promise of his future career in the oration which he had studied for a month beforehand. Attacking the Oxford ministry, he declared that "he never wished to spill the blood of any of his countrymen, *much less the blood of any nobleman*, but that he was persuaded the safety of his country required that examples should be made of those who had betrayed it in so infamous a manner." This violent onslaught was met in the most strategic manner by the opposite party, of whom the Duke of Ormond was the personage mainly pointed at. As soon as Stanhope had done speaking, he was called aside, complimented, and told that he was under age, but that there was no disposition to expose him, unless he attempted to vote. Lord Stanhope, who knew that he had exposed himself to a penalty of five hundred pounds, made no reply but a low bow, quitted the House directly, and went to Paris.

Similar indulgence is said to have been shown to Fox, who was smuggled into the House at nineteen. St. John, Pulteney, Windham, Charles Townshend, the two Pitts, Sheridan, Grey, Canning, Brougham, Peel, and Stanley, all trod the arena of debate in the flush of manhood. Lawyers excepted, Burke is the only instance of an orator of the first rank who did not gain a seat till thirty-six. It is true that Mr. Bright nearly approached that age, being thirty-three when he was returned for Durham; but his training during the Anti-Corn-Law

agitation had already developed his extraordinary oratorical power.

The duty of keeping orators, young and old, within the proper bounds of good behaviour, has not infrequently proved a difficult task. One of the tremendous bolts launched by the Speaker against an unruly member is the threat that he will name him. Arthur Onslow used to fulminate in the deepest baritone, "Order, sir; I will name you presently; order, order; I will name you." On one occasion an inquisitive rebel, using the privilege of a very young member, asked him what would actually be the consequence, if the Speaker should name him. The Speaker, after a grave pause, replied in a spirit of solemn fun, "The Lord in Heaven only knows." Mr. Fuller, the member for Southampton found out to his cost what was the consequence of being "named." Entering the House in a very "after dinner" state, this humorous gentleman, in a stage whisper, compared the Speaker in his wig to an owl in an ivy-bush. Some say that he called upon him for a song. The unhappy Fuller was at once "named," and handed over to the sergeant. The next day the Speaker, Charles Abbott, administered a severe and dignified rebuke to the culprit.

Few more eccentric members ever sat in the House of Commons than that Mr. Asgill, who, in 1707, underwent the doom of expulsion. This Asgill was a lawyer of sharp practice and unenviable notoriety, and was patronised in early life by Dr. Barebones, a famous projector of the period, who built the New Square of Lincoln's Inn. In Barebones's will Asgill was nominated his executor and residuary legatee, upon express condition that he would pay none of the testator's debts. The excellent executor proved thoroughly equal to the trust reposed in him. Summoning the creditors together in Lincoln's Inn Hall, he there, with proper gravity, read aloud to them the will, concluding, "You have heard, gentlemen, the deceased's testament; I will religiously fulfil the wishes of the dead." In those days of imprisonment for debt and easy arrest, his power might have proved unequal to his honest inclination, had not all difficulties been provided for. Dr. Barebones had secured the borough of Bramber by purchasing the whole street; and as Asgill became the owner of the town on his death, he had canvassed, with success, the votes of the electors, and thus secured a sanctuary

which no sheriff's officer would dare to violate. Asgill sat and voted for several sessions; and when the commissioners repaired to Ireland, in 1699, to resume the grants of forfeited estates, he went over to practice as a conveyancer, and made an ample fortune. Now, however, he committed the prime error of his life. He wrote a book. This luckless volume was entitled a "Treatise on the Possibility of avoiding Death," wherin he advanced a theory that Christians might be, as he styles it, "translated" into eternal life without undergoing the preliminary penalty of death. This performance soon got him into trouble. Having bought a life estate of three thousand pounds a year for a small consideration, he had gained a seat in the Irish House of Commons, but was expelled at the end of four days, on account of his book. "If his work were from above," he said, "it would kindle like a firebrand, and set the whole world in arms against death. If men and women will read the study of a seven years' recluse, they will find it not the most unpleasant hour that ever they spent in their lives. For this I know, that nothing is more pleasant to us than news, and what I have said was never said by man before." Turned out of the Irish Parliament, he returned to England, and sat for Bramber without objection. In an interval of Parliament, in 1707, being taken in execution at the suit of a creditor, he was committed to the Fleet. When the House met, he petitioned for his discharge, and was delivered by the sergeant with his mace. But between his apprehension and discharge, the renown of his unlucky book had reached London, and complaint was made of it to the House. Asgill, who was an admirable writer, defended himself vigorously, but was, nevertheless, expelled, and was just lucky enough to escape by stratagem from the officers who lay in wait at the very door of the House.

For the remaining thirty years of his life he was hunted from one prison to another, and ultimately died at the age of eighty, after writing many pamphlets in such idiomatic English as to induce Coleridge to pronounce him and Defoe the two best writers of our language.

Not long after the expulsion of Asgill from the House, a far better fellow and immeasurably superior writer underwent the same fate. The author of the *Conscious Lovers* and the *Tatler*, the uxorious husband of his "dearest

Prue," was, for no personal demerit, but simply by the force of party hatred, removed from the House of Commons. Sir Richard Steele was a provoking opponent in politics. His keen sense of ridicule and his satirical power exasperated Swift and other leading Tories. On his return as member for Stockbridge—a result mainly due to his papers in the *Guardian*—he produced the "Crisis," and a motion was immediately made to expel him "for having maliciously insinuated that the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover was in danger under Her Majesty's administration." From the first day of the new Parliament it had been evident that his political opponents would spare no effort to crush him. Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift, the party of reaction, were for the time being in the majority, and poor Steele was received with a hiss of scorn on his first appearance in the House. In fact, the ability and covert sarcasm of Steele's attacks had roused the rage of the Tories to the highest pitch. A passage like the following was certainly calculated to irritate the Jacobite cabal:—"Those noisy men," wrote Steele, "who embarrass the nation in every question with calling out 'the Church,' are but like the weathervane and clappers of the steeple; the sober and laborious and peaceable churchmen are its real support and pillars. I wish that his electoral highness of Hanover would be so grateful as to signify to all the world the perfect good understanding he has with the Court of England, in as plain terms as Her Majesty was pleased to declare she had with that house on her part."

At the moment of the attack on Steele the Tories had it all their own way; but, nevertheless, his friends rallied to his support with all the strength they could muster. Robert Walpole and General Stanhope took their place on either side of him as he waited at the bar, and Addison officiated as prompter. Steele spoke for nearly three hours with such temper, eloquence, and unconcern, as gave entire satisfaction to his friends, who fought hard for him. Walpole showed himself equal to the occasion, and the speech of Lord Finch created a sensation. This young nobleman, afterwards a famous speaker, owed gratitude to Steele for having repelled in the *Guardian* a libel on his sister, and rose to defend her defender. In this, his maiden speech, the young orator was overcome by bashfulness; and,

after stammering through a few sentences, sat down, crying out, "It is strange I cannot speak for this man, though I could readily fight for him." Hereat, such volleys of cheers rang through the House that the young lord took heart, rose again, and made the first of a long series of telling and able speeches. But nothing could save Steele, who was expelled by a majority of nearly a hundred in a house of four hundred members.

This "most agreeable rake that ever trod the round of indulgence"—a rake among scholars and a scholar among rakes—was not doomed to any long period of exclusion. The death of Queen Anne scattered the Tory majority, consigned Oxford to the Tower, and drove Bolingbroke into exile. Steele was returned to Parliament for Boroughbridge, by the interest of the Duke of Newcastle, and achieved some success as a speaker, at a period when the House was singularly barren of oratorical genius. He described the House as consisting very much of silent people, oppressed by the choice of a great deal to say, and of eloquent people, ignorant that what they said was nothing to the purpose. Shortly after Steele's return to the House, the whole country was convulsed by the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. It would seem that, during this trying period, he exhibited energy tempered by unusual moderation. A panic had seized upon the House, and several members came to signal grief. Great vindictiveness was displayed towards them. Sir George Caswall, a wealthy banker, who had assisted the Government with vast sums of money at three per cent. interest, at a time when they could not obtain a loan elsewhere, found the classical plea, that he had served the republic well, no defence for putting his hand into John Bull's breeches' pocket. He was expelled the House, sent to the Tower, and ordered to refund a quarter of a million. Lord Sunderland was implicated, and was obliged to resign his seat in the cabinet. Charles Stanhope, whose fraudulent transfer of stock it had been sought to conceal, by the lame device of changing the name from Stanhope to Stangape, just escaped expulsion by a majority of three. Craggs saw only one way to escape unutterable ignominy, and did about the best thing he could under the circumstances—he died. Aislabie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, imprudently lived to experience the full weight of

insular vengeance. Contrary to his oath of office, he had speculated in the funds of the company, burnt the account-books, and made, it was said, two hundred and fifty-two thousand pounds. He was expelled without a division; his path to the Tower was illuminated by bonfires, and not a vestige of property was left to him excepting only the estate he could be proved to have possessed in October, 1718. These instances, and the still more curious case of Sir Robert Sutton, in 1730, show that the responsibility of directors was considered a much graver matter then than it is in the present day. Poor Sir Robert Sutton, who represented the county of Nottingham, was a worthy gentleman, of unimpeachable personal honour, but was unfortunate enough to become one of the directors of the Charitable Corporation—a company, the principle of whose proceedings, said Fielding, "was a method invented by some very wise men, by which the rich might be charitable to the poor, and be still money in pocket by it." The innocent baronet had been imposed upon by the artful representations of promoters, and duped by the silly vanity of seeing his name among a list of titled and honourable directors. Being naturally indolent, he paid little attention to the affairs of the company, and smarted severely for his folly: as he not only lost twenty thousand pounds, but, together with Sir Archibald Grant and Serjeant Bond, was dismissed the House for participating in the affairs of the company. Mr. W. C. Townsend, in his excellent "*Memoirs of the House of Commons*," says that the last-mentioned of these charitable directors was hitched into rhyme for having exclaimed, impatiently, when the sufferings of the poor had been urged against some change that he meditated, "D—n the poor!"

Than the lowest deep of infamy,
A lower depth was found.

One of the heroes of Pope's famous line
on the odd distribution of riches—

To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil—
was also doomed to be kicked out of the House. Mr. Ward, who had purchased the borough of Weymouth, was in 1727 prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham for forgery; and on his conviction was expelled the House, after being required to attend in his place. He absconded, but was afterwards taken, and stood in the pillory like no common villain, being attended by footmen in livery as if in a

chair of state. This very black sheep was endowed with a fleece worth two hundred thousand pounds, acquired by every kind of villainy. When the estate of Sir John Blount had, by Act of Parliament, been confiscated to the property of the South Sea Company, Mr. Ward joined with the knight in a conveyance to secrete fifty thousand pounds. This was set aside as fraudulent; but he nevertheless made a like attempt when his own real estate had been forfeited in consequence of his conviction for felony; but the Court of Chancery annulled the conveyances to brother and son which he strove to set up. Rather than discover his personality, he remained in Newgate, and whiled away the time by poisoning dogs and cats, and watching their agonies.

POISON-BERRIES.

THERE is an old, old story of Miss Edgeworth, or of some such forgotten instructress of youth, concerning truant children who took an unauthorised walk in the woods, and there met with temptation in the shape of certain glistening, bright-coloured berries, forbidden dainties according to nursery law. How they ate the berries; how they scratched their fingers and tore their clothes upon the thorns; how they left their shoes in the mire; lost their way; and came home weary, wet, crestfallen, and very ill, followed as an inevitable sequence. Equally logical was the conclusion that an eighteenth century doctor, and an eighteenth century whipping, remedied the moral and physical mishaps of these youthful rebels; and the facile deduction was that, under pain of physic and the birch, good little children should confine themselves to the secure paths of domestic discipline.

Poison-berries, of one sort or another, exist in endless profusion throughout this world of ours: Protean in their marvellous powers of self-transformation, Puck-like in the apparent malignity with which, in unguarded moments, they obtrude themselves upon our notice. For a few—born, for the most part, in the purple of royalty, but collaterally railed off from the direct path to the throne—such poisonous fruits take form as jewelled crowns, sparkling sceptres, and all the suggestive paraphernalia of a monarch. It is only in very recent times that sultans have grown too mild to invest obnoxious brothers with

the order of the silken bowstring, or that Christian kings have ceased to regard their nearest and dearest as greedy plotters, intent on snatching away the diadem from the brows that wore it. Coronets have exercised a wider-spread, but, at the same time, a much less potent form of fascination; and the same may be said of stars of knighthood, of crosses and medals, of the gold key of a court chamberlain, of the velvet baton of a marshal, and of many another variety of those glittering gewgaws which Mephistopheles gives to Faust wherewith to awake the dawning vanity of Marguerite.

Sometimes such berries take the enticing shape of a rich man's caprice, the ungratified desire for something—a trifle, very likely, which is not in the market. It is, not seldom, out of pure wantonness, that Ahab craves for Naboth's little patch of vineyard to add to his own stately demesne. Idleness, ease, and the habit of finding deference everywhere, cause such a wish, once formed, to grow to portentous proportions, like Jonah's gourd. It is well when the land-hunger of some mighty magnate only leads him to press a fancy price upon the petty owner of the few poor coveted acres, that the Marquis of Carabas pines to include within his seigneurial ring-fence. The old chroniclers give us a pithy illustration now and then of the manner in which the Carabas of some centuries since was wont to rectify his frontiers. Three cold-blooded conspiracies, culminating in two treacherous assassinations and a judicial murder of unblushing effrontery, went to the score of a single Scottish earl in the process of winning the estate of one small priory. It would take a library-full of law reports to catalogue the fashion in which many a princely property was rounded off to its present fair dimensions.

Publicity, an improved police, and the gradual abolition of class-privilege, have combined to render impossible the old high-handed fashions of wrong-doing. We are very far, as yet, from a millennium of peace and goodwill; but, at least, there is an end of riding rough-shod over the lowly and the weak. The old oppressor of the widow and the fatherless—he of whom the Hebrew prophet and psalmist spoke so often—no longer arrives with shining spears and trampling horsemen, to drive off the little flock, and break down the modest landmark, and despoil the household gear, of his unwarlike victims. He

wears black broadcloth now, a broad-brimmed hat and ecclesiastical necktie, and, but for his bunch of gold seals and drab gaiters, might be mistaken for a dean. If one of the companies of which he is chairman does occasionally collapse, the trusting relicts and spinsters whom his spotless repute has led to place their little all in his sleek hands, are never quite sure whether or no they have been swindled out of the money that they miss so sorely.

The desire to be rich is so natural that some suspicion of insincerity is apt to attach itself to the moralist who, out of the pulpit, carps at it. But wealth may be bought too dear in the world's great mart, where the price paid for a new purchase is not always commensurate with its value. The woman who has bartered away her hand for money does not invariably enjoy the good things with which a mercenary match has endowed her. Somehow, the stalled ox, with its sance of conjugal indifference at best, palls on the jaded palate. The high-stepping carriage-horses in their silver-plated harness cannot trot fast enough to leave care behind. The rare exotics in the costly conservatory scarcely fill the void in a heart, whose owner has deliberately chosen that it should be starved and stinted in the matter of human emotions; and sometimes prudent Mrs. Croesus is weak enough to envy her former friend, who married, as the phrase is, for love, and was thereupon very properly put under the ban of Belgravia.

Poison-berries, for many energetic natures, take the form of rank, or power, or renown, sometimes singly longed for, sometimes inseparably linked in thought with the riches that to most of us seem the fitting meed of success. The dazzling goal may be reached too late. The waters of the well, sand-begirt, for which the wayfarer has thirsted with such fierce intensity of eagerness as he plodded over leagues of scorching desert, may mock the parched lip with their exceeding bitterness. It has often been computed that any healthy man, of average intellect, might grow moderately rich after a quarter of a century's exclusive devotion to money making; but very few are they who have the stubborn courage to be deaf and blind to all earthly or heavenly considerations but one, for five-and-twenty years. Nor does it by any means follow that the something more than competence, once attained, brings with it a large amount of gratification. It is easier to raise, than to exorcise, the

familiar demon that points to swelling money-bags. As the worn-out war-horse never forgets the trumpet calls of the old regiment, so does the veteran cash-hunter continue, when the need for exertion has ceased to exist, to weary out his latter span of days in adding to the useless heap.

The mind should not be too full of one object, be it what it may. Such an engrossing topic is almost sure, by imperceptible degrees, to put forth hurtful qualities, and ultimately develope into a poison-berry. A passion for notoriety of any sort has a terrible reactive power over him who hugs it to his bosom. The boundary-line which separates the far-seeing statesman, the silver-tongued orator, the lucid preacher, from blatant charlatanism is perilously thin, and easily crossed. The merest trifle will make a speech, a sermon, a pamphlet, doubly effective—but at the cost of wilful dishonesty, of a slight transgression of the immutable canons of truth. To win—honestly, if possible, but at any rate to win—is a maxim that has in all ages brought in its substantial rewards, but with the flavour of the honey sadly marred by gall. The bright prize is grasped, only to be found not worth the getting.

All property—and titles, and high degree, and personal fame, are as much property as consols or real estate can be—becomes a poison-berry when it turns into the master, instead of the slave, of him who nominally owns it. This is a truth which, nineteen hundred years ago, just before the Christian era, a Roman patrician, named Nennius, had leisure in his barbarian exile to realise. Poor Nennius had preferred banishment and confiscation to the surrender of the matchless opal, worth eighty thousand pounds of our money, that he wore in his thumb-ring, and which Mark Antony wished to transfer to the queenly brow of gem-loving Cleopatra. The unhappy senator had his opal ring, as he shivered in the chilly blast that waved the birch-trees of the Danube, in exchange for Rome and its feasts and its forum, for the marbles of his pillaged villa on the noble Neapolitan bay, for the fertile estate within sight of the towers and mounds of the huge brick-built mistress of the earth, which Augustus had not as yet transmuted into marble. But the glorious jewel, thus worn, was a poison-berry at the best.

The last instance of an absolute slavery to wealth, in a material form, which has

been seen in our own time, was displayed, not long ago, by a Serene Highness, now deceased. This poor Transparency was cursed by the accredited possession of between three and four million pounds' worth of diamonds, and he suffered all the penalties, short of the last, which accrue to the reputed keeper of so much crystallised carbon. It would be more correct to say that the diamonds possessed him than be the fatal diamonds. The monstrous iron safes, triply secured with ingenious locks, were in his bedroom when he slept, brooding, like so many hideous idols, till the worshipper should awake to do them homage. For their sake the dressing-room was an armoury; the bed-room a fortress, impregnable to mere burglars; the stair a drawbridge that fell away at night; the valets half guards, half suspected thieves, who might at any moment make away with the princely booty; as, indeed, some of the younger and rasher at times tried to do. But, though he feared for his life, though he trembled for his wealth, though his existence was embittered by their presence, H.R.H. clung to his diamonds until the very last.

Of such berries the upas-tree of military glory bears a plenteous crop. The most sluggish pulse is apt to quicken, the dullest eye to brighten, as with flaunting flags and measured tramp, with blare of trumpet and beat of drum, the marching troops go by. The grim and bloody trade of war has in all ages had need of gorgeous trappings and a fair outside, to make men forget to what all this pageant of waving plumes and bright colours, of gay uniforms and gleaming steel, really leads. Tho very horse that prances in time to the stirring clangour of the music, moving proudly, as if vain of the embroidered housings and jingling bridle, shall one day lie moaning on the midnight turf of a battle-field, maimed by cannon-shot, and feebly striving, with stiffening limbs and ebbing veins, to rise. The most hopeful aspirant for martial laurels would be staggered, could he but see set before him the statistics of the many blanks and tho few prizes in that tremendous war-lottery, in which so much is staked for such a poor return. The successful soldier, who has won his way to the top of the ladder, and finds the padded breast of his tunic all too narrow for the stars and crosses that dangle and glitter there, is indirectly the cause of a quick and violent death to thousands of ardent lads, whose hearts

throbbed high as first they donned the warrior's garb, only to swell the casualties in some obscure skirmish or nameless sortie.

That the gambler's passion is a poison-berry few will care to dispute. There is, however, some divergence of opinion as to the classes to be reckoned under that generic name. Of the gentleman who is on affable terms with the croupiers and bankers at Monaco, he who pricks up his ears, when first, on entering the great play-palace for the séance of the day, he hears the melody of tinkling gold and rattling silver, little need be said. He is a gamester confessed, a man whose waking thoughts are busy with fantastic calculations of chances, and who still hearkens in his dreams to the clatter of the rake as it sweeps the green cloth clear of piled up coin and rustling bank notes. As little doubt exists of the mental condition of the youth with a golden horseshoe in his cravat and a morocco-bound betting-book protruding from his pocket—he whose literature consists of sporting newspapers, and whose principal correspondents are turf-agents, and who never gets his bemuddled brain quite clear from the Grand National or the Cesarcwitch.

There are very many persons by far too respectable to toss their Napoleons on the black and red at M. Blane's pleasant Pandemonium, and who neither know nor care which racehorse is at the head of the betting at Tattersall's, yet who are as arrant gamblers as the most hackneyed votary of roulette can be. It is possible to play for a run on Eries, or to "plunge" in Turkish Sixes or Spanish Deferred. Time bargains on the Royal Exchange may make or mar a fortune, at least as easily as can be effected by the cards or the dice. A shaky finance company can bring its backers to grief as readily as an over-rated Derby favourite can do, and, indeed, the gambling in public securities, if more decorous, is, beyond a doubt, the more ruinous variety of the vice.

Very deserving of pity are certain classes of sufferers by the poison-berries that twinkle temptingly on the branches of a tree, which is labelled "high interest." These honest investors have not a particle of the gambling spirit, and merely seek to impart a welcome elasticity to a narrow income. Prices rise, and the country clergyman, and the retired Indian officer, and the widow, and the spinster, grow more and more discontented with the

frugal three per cent. which the Old Lady of Threadneedle-street doles out to them, in Britannia's name. They begin to hanker after Japanese Nines, and Khedive Loans, and Imperial Ottomans. Transatlantic railways tempt them; the flaming prospectus of some company for supplying gas or water to earthquake-ridden municipalities in South America makes their innocent mouths water for the gains which seem ready to drop, like a ripe plum, into any outspread hands that care to receive them. How can these worthy people, who seek as a permanent investment what shrewder practitioners buy only to sell, know of the nice question as to whether, by the aid of native usurers, the next half-yearly coupon will be paid in full. As little do they dream how busy is the Vizier, or the Dewan, or the Captain of the Bastinado, in squeezing and wringing enough small coin out of the taxpaying peasantry, so that the state machine may work smoothly until the next foreign loan be launched. The interest is the one thing they look to, and they are blind to the gaunt spectre of national or commercial bankruptcy that hovers in the background.

Poison-berries, of one kind and another, are so numerous, that even to catalogue them would require a volume of goodly size. A seat in Parliament, the honour, such as it is, of M.P.-ship, has exercised a mischievous fascination over many a man who is proof against coarser temptations to do wrong. There is something unwholesome to the moral fibre, in the constant study of how near to the legal wind it is possible to sail without being unseated on petition. It is not good for the conscience of a candidate, to be for ever engaged in delicate casuistry as to the precise borderland between nursing a borough, and venturing into the forbidden paths of treating or intimidation. To bribe would, of course, be monstrous, but to ask no questions as to a thumping sum left in the hands of the experienced Parliamentary agent, who drills the phalanx of Blue or Yellow voters, is only to show a gentlemanly confidence in a professional adviser. As with the rival candidates, their committees, caucuses, and canvassers, so it is with the more corruptible sort of electors, to whom a vote would appear a worthless privilege, but for its intimate connection with beer unpaid for, eleemosynary cabs, half-crowns to compensate for time lost at the ballot-booth, and not seldom unacknowledged sovereigns, slyly

administered by the more prudent successors of the Man in the Moon. And, then, after a period of impunity, halting Justice overtakes the peccant borough, and one particular poison-berry is extirpated by the pruning knife of disfranchisement.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

GLoucester.

ACCORDING to Holinshed, who is always honest, as far as his lights go, Arviragus, the youngest son of Shakespeare's Cymbeline, having borne himself right manfully against Claudius and the Romans, eventually married Genissa, the daughter of the Roman general, and acknowledged himself a vassal of the Imperial City. The town where this marriage, that brought peace to Britain, was celebrated, was Claudocastrum, now called Gloucester. Arviragus died about A.D. 73, and was buried at his capital. The first wife of this puissant chieftain is said to have been the famous Boadicea, whom he divorced, to marry Genissa, and so secure the Roman favour.

How far the Bards noted history correctly is uncertain; but it is quite proved that monkish chroniclers, like Jeffrey of Monmouth, merely perverted earlier works, written by ecclesiastics who had perverted in their turn. That a British chieftain, of the name of Arviragus, once really lived, is provable from Juvenal, inasmuch as that Latin poet, in the fourth satire of his first book, flatters Domitian with the hope of subduing him. It is also proved that when Aulus Plautius, a general of Claudius, defeated Caractacus, he overthrew the fierce Dobuni of Gloucestershire; and Ostorius planted a garrison there, at a place called Glerum, which, according to Richard of Cirencester, was built where Gloucester now stands: the British name of the place being "Caer-Glowo" (fair city). In the opinion of that learned antiquary, Mr. Fosbrooke, Kingsholm was the old agricultural British city, and Gloucester a Roman fort, built to repress the Silures, and one of a line of military stations planted along the rivers Avon and Severn, to bar out the fiery Welsh.

In this city, according to Saxon tradition, King Edmund, being suspected of a leaning towards the Danes, was assassinated by Edric, who had made by witchcraft an image of an archer which, being touched by the king, discharged an arrow and transfixes him. At Gloucester, Edward the Confessor met all his thanes,

soon after the Feast of the Virgin Mary, to consult them how best to drive out the restless Welsh, who had, as usual, invaded Herefordshire. The head of that wild Welsh robber, Rees, brother of King Griffin, of South Wales, was brought here to the Confessor at the Vigil of the Epiphany, where, on two occasions, the Confessor had despatched Harold with armies to punish King Griffin. According to Doomsday Survey, this ancient city gave the saintly Confessor thirty-six pounds in money; twelve gallons of honey; thirty-six ducres of iron, each of ten bars; and one hundred iron rods, drawn out for ship-nails. It paid over, however, to the Conqueror, a tighter-handed man, sixty pounds.

It was at Gloucester that Eustace, father of two future kings of Jerusalem—Godfrey and Baldwin—came to visit his brother-in-law, the Confessor. On his return to Canterbury he got into a fearful scrape. One of his retinue, forcing his way into his lodging, was killed by the angry Saxon. The proud earl, firing up at this, came and slew the obnoxious lodging-house keeper and eighteen other base and contumacious Saxon churls. The Canterbury people, disliking these extreme measures, clapped on their armour, set at once upon the French earl, and slew twenty of his men out of hand, driving the earl back to Gloucester, with only one or two servants, much to the saintly king's rage.

William the Conqueror, says Archdeacon Furney, generally held his Christmases at Gloucester, where the foreign ambassadors were dazzled by flocks of archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, thanes, and knights in golden and very splendid robes. The king always wore his crown, to astonish the ambassadors and the honest Gloucestershire people; kept an uncommonly good table, as the chroniclers unctuously tell us, and was at no time "more courteous, gentle, and kind: his bounty being only equalled by his (stolen) riches." Mr. Lysons presumes that Galielmus Victor held his parliament in the chapterhouse of the abbey, now the library of the cathedral, where, in 1076, the powerful Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated, at a synod, Peter, Bishop of Lichfield, and deposed the Saxon Abbot of Croyland.

Gloucester was twice burnt in the twelfth century; and, in the reign of Stephen, was an eye-witness of several extraordinary historical scenes. To Glou-

ester rode Robert, Earl of Gloucester, on the arrival of his sister, the Empress Maud. Hot and swift he dashed through the enemy's country, with only twelve lances and twelve mounted archers at his back, to drive out King Stephen's garrison and levy an army. To Gloucester, wounded Stephen was brought, to see Maud; and thither Maud herself, in one of her hair-breadth escapes, was carried, in a horse litter, as a corpse.

Henry the Second and his son, at the feast of Peter and Paul, held a great council here with Rees ap Griffin, and other petty kings of Wales, who, with the Earl of Gloucester, swore to keep back the incursions of the Welsh. William the Legate and Protector of England held a synod here in the absence of Richard Cœur de Lion. In the reign of John, and while that black-hearted usurper was at Gloucester, Gualo, the Papal Legate, excommunicated Lewis the French Prince and all the barons who had demanded the charter. There, says Holinshed, the Earl of Pembroke had the young king, Henry the Third, crowned, he being, as the earl justly remarked, "a young child, pure and innocent of those his father's doings." Upon which the barons, with one consent, says the quaint historian, after some prudent silence and conference, "proclaimed the young gentleman king of England."

The history of Gloucester cathedral is so entirely interwoven with that of the city, that it is impossible altogether to disentangle them. All the kings and barons who came to Gloucester laid offerings on the cathedral altar, and no event that happened at the gates or on the walls of Gloucester but was whispered about at the monks' refectory, or in the long pacings in the cathedral cloister.

Henry the Third seems always to have regarded with affection the place of his coronation. After his unsuccessful Welsh expedition he often resided in this town. He held a melancholy Christmas here in 1234, when the Earl Marshal was spreading rebellion through the land. To Gloucester he repeatedly summoned his rebellious barons, who refused to assist him in subjugating Wales, at the invitation of Llewellyn. By-and-by Edward the First held a Parliament at Gloucester in the long workhouse of the abbey, and summoned all persons to show by what authority they held their lands. The laws which were then enacted

went ever after by the name of the Statutes of Gloucester.

Weak and unfortunate Edward the Second was frequently at Gloucester during his troubles, and hung in this city the Sheriff of Hereford and several traitorous barons, little conscious that his own dismal end was coming so soon. Edward's Queen, Isabella, "the she-wolf of France," came straight to Gloucester on her way to hunt down the Despensers, the evil favourites of the king, and here the northern and Welsh barons converged, to swell her army. Edward the Third, always generous and kingly, granted Gloucester a seven days' fair, beginning on the Eve of the Baptism, and Richard the Second confirmed the permission. The latter king also held a Parliament here in 1378, to be well out of the reach of the stormy Londoners.

Henry the Fourth also held a Parliament at Gloucester, which sat for forty-four days, according to Pryne, but Holinshed says it was soon removed to London. Henry the Sixth also held Parliament at Gloucester, and the townspeople complained to him that the Welsh of the Marches often seized the barges and floats of their merchants in the Severn, and compelled them to hire Welsh "scows" at exorbitant rates.

The Earl of March (afterwards Edward the Fourth), was lying at Gloucester when the overwhelming news came of the loss at Wakefield, and the beheading of his father. The Welsh, however, cheered him up, and urged him on to Shrewsbury to levy a new Yorkist army. Just before the battle of Tewkesbury, Queen Margaret attempted to surprise Gloucester, which was a Yorkist city, but the king sent Richard Beauchamp to put the town on its gnard, and thus the Lancastrians on their arrival were baffled.

To Gloucester, too, came that evil man, cankered in mind and deformed in body, to tempt the Duke of Buckingham to help murder his nephews. When the Duke revolted he led his army of unwilling Welshmen through the Forest of Dean, intending to have forded the Severn at Gloucester, but a ten days' flood thwarted him, and he lost his head soon after.

Soon after Bosworth, Henry the Seventh rode from Worcester to Gloucester, and was received by the mayor and all the aldermen in scarlet gowns, and by the friars of all the parish churches. At the cathedral door the abbot and the

monks welcomed the victorious king, the mitred abbot sang the high mass, the Bishop of Worcester preached, showing the people the Pope's Bull sanctioning Henry. Years after the town of Gloucester contributed eighty-eight pounds towards making unlucky Prince Arthur (Henry's eldest son) a knight.

That magnificent tyrant, Henry the Eighth, visited Gloucester on one occasion. During the civil wars Waller and Maurice held Gloucester bravely against the Cavaliers, and afterwards helped to capture Hereford for the Parliament. In due time, when the Royalist reaction came, Gloucester flashed up as loyal as other towns. The mayor, on a scaffold at the north end of the wheat market, stood with the king's colours waving over his head, with six fair Gloucestershire gentlewomen holding garlands, to hear one of the sheriffs proclaim King Charles, after which a regiment of foot and three troops of horse fired their guns, sounded their trumpets, and beat their drums, while three conduits ran with wine, and the foolish fickle people cheered till they grew red in the face.

When sulky James the Second came to Gloucester he snubbed Bishop Frampton and the clergy who came to welcome him, and, without listening to his speech, said ingratiatingly, "My lord, it will be better for you to withdraw and your clergy," and so rode on, appointing Father Warner to say grace at dinner, upon which the bishop withdrew. The king then attended the Roman service in an impromptu chapel over the sheriff's court, and is said to have touched for the Evil at the deanery where he lodged. He subsequently visited the cathedral with an eye to alterations, which his premature departure to France prevented his carrying out.

In 1788, when good, dull, old George the Third, snuffy Charlotte, and the four blowsy princesses visited Bishop Halifax and George Selwyn at Matson, after seeing the great pin manufactory—pins were first manufactured at Gloucester in the reign of James the First—the infirmary, and the county goal then building, they attended divine service at the cathedral. The king, with the usual tact and memory of kings, seemed to know the names and family of every clergyman presented to him by the bishop or dean. In 1807 the Prince of Wales accepted the freedom of the city, dined jovially with the obsequious corporation, and affected an interest in the

grand cathedral, under whose angust roof even baser princes had walked. In 1816 the Iron Duke came to see the same standard lion of the city, received the freedom of the city "in a superb oak box lined with gold," and dined with the mayor and aldermen. The Duke shook hands with the hearty crowd and with difficulty persuaded them not to take the horses out of his carriage. The duke's toast after dinner was "Blucher," though it had not yet been proved by Berlin historians that the Prussians really won Waterloo.

But now to the more personal history of the cathedral, as detached altogether from that of the town. The abbey of St. Peter is supposed to have originated in a nunnery founded by Wulpher, King of Mercia, on a spot already sanctified by some early Briton church or chapel. During the wars of the Heptarchy the place was again deserted, but Rernulph, King of the Mercians, restored the sacred building, and filled it with secular canons. This Rernulph finally fell under the sword of Egbert.

The Golden Legend relates a curious story of these secular canons of Gloucester. They and the canons of Worcester contended for the body of Kenelm, a Saxon saint, a Prince of Mercia, who had been murdered by his sister, Quendred, and at whose tomb profitable miracles were being wrought. The dispute grew hot and the weather was hotter. At last a wise man proposed that the men of the two shires should go to sleep at the same time, and whichever God should first awake should take the body and go their way. Now the Abbot of Winchcombe and the Gloucestershire men, who, perhaps, slept with one eye open, singularly enough awoke first, and quietly levanted with the very profitable body of St. Kenelm. King Canute compelled the secular canons to adopt the Benedictine rules. The Compendiary Memorial, compiled since the Restoration, tells us that these monks so exasperated the governor and townspeople of Gloucester, that Wulphlin le Rose, the governor, at last drove them away, and slew seven of them between Churcham and Gloucester.

A fire having destroyed the abbey in 1058, it was rebuilt nearer the city by Aldred, Bishop of Worcester. Wulstan, a monk of the city, appointed abbot by Aldred, died during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and, being brought home, was buried by the angry monks under a yew tree in

the centre of the cloisters, as a waster of the convent's goods. It was in this church that during a sermon on the words "Blessed are the peacemakers," a bishop of Worcester is said to have three times cast a devil out of one of his auditors, who had refused to pardon his enemy the murder of his brother. Abbot Serlo increased his monks to the number of one hundred, and brought from Thornbury the relics of St. Arild, a virgin who had been martyred there in the Pagan times.

In the abbacy of William Goodman, during mass, and while the deacon was reading the Gospel, lightning set fire to the steeple, and the whole monastery was destroyed, all but a few books and three robes. In the Abbacy of Hameline, as Roger, Bishop of Worcester, was celebrating mass at the high altar, the great tower of the church suddenly fell, but the bishop remained unmoved at his devotions, and, by a special monastic miracle, no one was hurt, the tower, luckily, being at the west end of the church, and the altar at the east. In the abbacy of Henry Blunt, King John demanded so many waggons with eight horses from the abbey, that all the church chalices had to be sold.

Abbot Foliot, on whom a satire in rhyming Latin was written, impropriated a church to supply the convent with French wine and wastel bread. John de Gamages, "that most noble man," as the annals of Worcester call him, "both for eleganee of manners and splendour of wit," was so prudent an abbot that he increased the convent sheep to ten thousand, each worth three shillings, or more than three bushels of wheat; "a man of excellent religion," writes the chronicler; "and on the Sunday on which is sung Misericordia Domini, in the morning passed to the Lord, and the Dominical letter was B. He had been a monk in the same church sixty-two years, and was buried on Wednesday with great honour near the gate of the cloister. Whose face appeared so joyful and red as if no infirmity had touched him, and whom succeeded Lord John Choky (or Tokey), sub-prior of the same place."

This was that noble and independent man who ventured, in the very teeth of that hell kite Isabella, and her paramour, Roger Mortimer, to receive and bury in Gloucester cathedral the murdered King Edward the Second. The poor mutilated body had remained unburied from October,

1327, to January, 1328, and St. Augustine at Bristol, St. Mary Kingswood, and St. Aldholm of Malmesbury had refused it a grave. Considering that Lord Berkeley received five pounds, or the pay of six hundred men daily, for warding the body, equal to twenty pounds a day in modern money, there is no wonder there was no eagerness for the funeral of the despised monarch. The abbot, covering his chariot with canvas dyed black and blazoned with the abbey arms, and providing himself with a silver vase, at an outlay of thirty-seven pounds eight shillings, hastened to Berkeley Castle and brought thence the embalmed body and the royal heart (not worth much, by-the-bye, alive or dead), and they were received by a procession of the whole city, and the whole convent, solemnly attired, and buried near the high altar. That miracles to reimburse this outlay were soon reported at the tomb, was no more than could have been expected, and the monkish showmen quickly placed a full and uncoloured statement of them at the shrine, which soon drew the timid and the credulous from all parts of England.

The next abbot was John Wygmore, a great builder and embroiderer; and he gave the abbey a rich cope, to be worn at Pentecost. He built the dormitory and the choir, at the entrance of which his body was found, on new paving the nave, in 1787: the serge robe turned to dust on being touched, but the leather boots were sound, and the silver crozier was entire. In the abbacy of Adam de Staunton, Edward the Third, Queen Philippa, the Black Prince, and many other nobles, visited the shrine of the murdered king, and made offerings—ships of gold, a ruby, and a golden cross, with a piece of the real cross enclosed within it. The royal family were asked to give a hundred pounds, instead of the golden ships. The monastic property was, at this time, valued at four thousand eight hundred and thirty pounds.

Thomas Horton, the next abbot, who had been sacristan to the abbey, gave plate to the refectory, &c.; four silver basins for the high altar (two large for the abbot, and two small for the celebrating priest); two silver candlesticks and a gold chalice for the altar.

In the next abbacy, the convent had sunk to one hundred and seventy marks a year, for fifty-four monks and two hundred servants—less than the wages of me-

chanies. In the abbacy of Walter Fron-
cester—a laborious man, who spent half his
patient life writing a chronicle of the
abbey, which was eventually lent and,
naturally, lost—the abbot procured from
the pope the mitre and other episcopal
privileges, besides a most agreeable dis-
pensation for the convent, for eating meat
during the severe fast between Septua-
gesima and Quadragesima Sundays. He
was buried in a quiet chapel near the
choir, but the brasses have long ago been
ruthlessly torn from his tomb. At his
anniversary, which was kept in two Glou-
cester churches, cloth gowns were given
to the poor. Of Hugh de Merton, the
next abbot, we have only this record—
“Died, 1420.” Well, perhaps worse men
than poor old Abbot Merton have had
longer biographies.

John Morwent, the next abbot, rebuilt
the west front of the cathedral, and built a
porch for the grand old building, so soon
to be plundered and defiled.

His successor, Reginald Boulars, went
as ambassador to Rome, the convent
allowing him there four hundred pounds
a year, which, says the learned Fosbrooke,
according to Bishop Fleetwood’s scale of
priests, was the value of eight thousand
bushels of wheat. Pretty pocket-money
for our truant pastor, whom Richard
the Third threw into prison! His motto
was, “Memento, memento.” The mottoes
of the last three abbots of Gloucester, says
delicious old Fuller, were prophetical (at
least, as men have expounded them; for
Abbot Lebrnck’s was, “Fiat voluntas
Domini;” and Abbot Malverne’s (the
last abbot), “Mersos sncita” (Raise up
those which are absorbed in guiltiness).
The last prophecy being fulfilled when
Henry the Eighth, after robbing the abbey,
raised it to a bishopric.

Thomas Lebroke, the abbot who suc-
ceeded Boulars, who was made Bishop of
Hereford, built a new tower to the cathe-
dral, and paved the choir with bricks, on
which his name and arms still appear.
Tally, a monk of the house, was his
architect.

William Malverne, alias Parker, the last
abbot, seems to have been born somewhat
too late, and to have been an exemplary
man. His rules to reform the abbey were
severe, and point to many flagrant abuses
in the unnatural and, latterly, mis-
chievous monastic system. He forbade the
brethren, after retiring to the dormitory,
to come down again to drink and gossip.

No monk, without license from the sub-
prior, was to introduce women into the
infirmary, or to indulge there in immoderate
drinking. No monk was to sell his
food unless he had a license. As the
dole-giving also produced brawling and
blasphemy, he appointed thirteen regular
almshousemen (Peter’s men), who were to wear
black scapularies and the arms of the
monastery on their right shoulders, and they
were fined for non-attendance at
prime, mass, dirige, evensong, compline,
or procession. Last of all, the outrageous
martinet forbade the monks all hawking and
hunting.

Too late, worthy Abbot Malverne, though
thou wert zealous for the Lord and active
in thy generation, thou didst beautify
King Edward’s Gate, build the vestry in
the north transept, and thy burial chapel
northward of the choir. The Red Man
Wolsey is at thy gates. The cardinal’s
sharp-nosed men in black tottle up figures,
and find that the revenue of Gloucester
Abbey is ten thousand two hundred and
twenty-eight pounds. Malverne, alias
Parker, however, was stiff, and never sur-
rendered the abbey, though the prior did.
He lies still in splendour, in his own
chapel, mitred, and in pontificalibus. The
two outer escutcheons on his stately tomb
bear the emblems of the Passion and four
hands, surrounding a heart; in the centre
(strange contrast) is a buck tripping, near
three bugles.

The Bishops of Gloucester, though they
are the younger brothers, as it were, of
the English church, have yet not been
altogether obscure men. The second
bishop was that good man, John Hooper,
the martyr, who, it is supposed, was in
youth a Cistercian monk. He was
ernestly burnt in three successive fires of
green wood. “Such ashes are the seed
of the church,” said Latimer. Of good
Bishop Frampton, a great traveller, a story
is told that does him credit. He was kind
and generous enough to visit the brutal
Judge Jeffreys when he lay in the Tower:
he found the brute on a low chair, with a
small pot of water by his side; he had
“a long beard,” and was weeping by him-
self. “My lord,” said the worthy bishop,
“if you weep for the hardships you suffer,
weep no more, for it is unworthy either a
man or a Christian; but, if you weep for
your past life, weep on, and spare not, for
then these tears of yours are more pre-
cious than diamonds.” “My lord,” said
Jeffreys, with a worthier spirit than usual,

"all the disgraces I have suffered I can now bear, and, by God's grace, will submit to, since I see so much of God's goodness in sending you to me—you, who I never deserved anything from, come when others, who had their all from these hands, desert me. I thank you for your fatherly advice, and desire your prayers, that I may be able to follow it, for God's spirit is moving in you; to which, I beg you would add the friendship of another such, when I trust to receive the sacrament," which, says the writer, he and his wife and children did soon after from the good bishop's hand; and, in a few days, he died tranquilly and in peace with all. Frampton alone, of all the bishops, had the courage to beg the Prince of Orange to take care of their banished king; to which the prince replied, sourly, "I will take care of the Chnrch;" and the bishop soon after fell out of his see. When a bishop was one day praising Queen Mary's piety and charity, Frampton cried out, "Did she ever send a farthing to her father when he begged?" "I can assure you," said the servile sycophant: "her gracious majesty never speaks of her dear absent father but with tears in her eyes." "Tut, man," said ex-Gloucester; "did you never read of the classical creature that sheds tears when it devours?"

Foster, the next bishop, attacked Bunyan in a work entitled, "Dirt wiped out, or a discovery of the gross ignorance and unchristian spirit of one John Bunyan, lay preacher of Bedford."

And now we come to the most remarkable of the Gloucester bishops—the Herculean Warburton, that master of critics and scarifier of little authors. The notes of his "Divine Legation," says a witty commentator on the man, are "the slaughter-houses of his antagonists." Like Marlborough and Swift, the old age of this great and ruthless controversialist ended in insanity.

But a truce to bishops, for the whole legendary history of Gloucester cathedral centres itself round the tomb of Edward the Second, the murdered king. Now we do not murder kings every day. Great architects and great antiquaries have pronounced the tomb of this weak, ill-starred man to be one of the finest sepulchral monuments in Great Britain, both for elegance and ingenuity of form and ingenuity of design. Its special beauty is, that it is built for the cathedral, and blends

with it in every part. In a word (or, at least, two or three), it is a chef d'œuvre of English fourteenth-century work, and is, perhaps, one of our finest and most perfect relics of mediæval art. It is built in three stories, the solemn figure of the king resting on the lower one, and the other two consisting of pierced pinnacles. The face was probably modelled after death, for the expression is one of pain; the attitude is full of repose and dignity. Centuries have passed, and yet Time has wrought little injury upon this kingly monument. This record of Edward the Third's love for his unhappy father is still almost perfect. All that has gone are the jewels in the circlet round the forehead, the bottom of the sceptre, the cross on the globe which the king holds in his left hand, and the rays of the crown. There Edward lies, still, as on that September night when Maltavers and Gournay stole from the castle room, scared and pale, and the castle still rang with the murdered man's shrieks. Dallaway attributes this monument to the sculptor of that of John of Eltham, at Westminster Abbey, which is of precisely the same date. The canopy resembles that over the glorious Scaliger tomb at Verona and the monuments of Charles the Fifth of France, and Jane de Bourbon, at St. Denis. Rysbrach used to stand silent by this tomb, which, Buckler says, is only equalled in design and execution by the Percy monument at Beverley. The white stags on the tomb are family badges of Edward, borne afterwards, and even still more disgraced, by Richard the Second. They gave rise to a vulgar Gloucestershire tradition, that the murdered king was conveyed to his cathedral grave in a chariot drawn by white stags.

Another scarcely less interesting tomb is that of the wretched Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy. This most unhappy prince, put to death by his savage brother, Rufus, was originally buried in the centre of the choir, opposite the high altar, with a stone over him, marked with a cross, and an effigy of Irish oak. The coronal is composed of pearls, strawberry leaves, and fleur-de-lis alternately. There is no helmet or crest. The surtont is Norman, and so are the chain mail tunic and the wheel spurs. The buff breeches are an invention. The sword belt, hilt, and girdle are Anglo-Saxon. This interesting figure was broken to pieces by the Puritan troopers, but repaired after the Restoration by Sir Humphrey Tracy of Stanway. The coats

of arms, which are a jumble of fleurs-de-lis, spread eagles, lions rampant, and flying birds, seem to have been painted, says Mr. Fosbrooke, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, and they form a mixture of the arms of France and England.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER I. BEATEN.

HALF paralysed with horror and amazement, Heath remained for a few minutes motionless, his eyes fixed on the figure of his unwelcome visitor, his parted lips rigid and parched. The apparition of a ghost from the other world could not more completely have astonished him; indeed, at first, he had an idea that the pale and determined face on which he gazed so intently, with its sad bloodless lips, its dark eyes flashing a scornful defiance, was either more or less than mortal. He had never doubted that Anne was dead. When he first met Studley, on the captain's return from his futile search after his daughter in Paris, and learned from him of the manner of Anne's disappearance at Boulogne, Heath made up his mind that she had committed suicide by jumping from the pier; her mental power, which he remembered having noticed on one or two occasions as terribly strong, must have been weakened by the horrible scene of which she had been a witness, and the severe illness which she had subsequently undergone; and, to avoid any further misery and degradation, she had put an end to herself. The captain had not thought it worth his while to disturb this theory, more especially as he himself believed in the fact of his daughter's death. That she had not drowned herself from the Boulogne pier he knew, as he had duly received her letter written to him from Paris; but in that letter she had spoken of the burden of life being too heavy for her to bear any longer, alone and friendless as she was, and of her having taken measures for finding a place among the nameless dead. The captain had long since got rid of the uncomfortable feeling which the first perusal of these words caused him, and when a chance recollection of his daughter passed across his muddled brain, he thought of her and spoke of her to Heath as one no longer living.

She was there, though, upright, stern, and pitiless. As Heath looked at her, the whole scene enacted on that fatal Sunday at Loddonford rose before his mind. Again he saw Anne Studley looking in at the window upon the deed of blood; again he heard the long low wail which she had uttered, before falling senseless on the ground. That accursed vision had not troubled him for months, but it was full upon him now, and there was the avenger, alive and standing before him.

It was some time before he could speak; when he did, his voice was thick and husky, and he scarcely seemed to have his lips at his command.

"What—what has brought you here?" he said.

In strong contrast to his hearse utterance were the clear and ringing tones in which Anne replied. "There is but one motive in the world that could have prompted my coming," she said, with her eyes firmly fixed upon him. "I have a friend who is my one tie to life; to save her from you I have come hither. You are incredulous, I know, as to the existence of such feelings as love and friendship, but you will be able to estimate the strength and truth of my love for this friend, by the fact that it has induced me to look upon your face again."

Heath had recovered himself a little—a very little—by this time. He knew that the figure before him was not that of a ghost, though it is doubtful whether any visitant from the tomb could have inspired in him greater dread. His usual keen perception, too, was somewhat blunted by his terror and amazement; he did not at first appreciate the stern resolution hidden under Anne's quiet manner, and it was in a bullying tone that he said, "Now that you have plucked up sufficient courage, or overcome your maidenly reserve, or whatever it may be, and looked upon my face again, perhaps you will tell me what you wish me to do."

"I have heard," said Anne, in the same calm, clear voice, "that you are about to be married to Miss Grace Middleham. Such a match would, doubtless, be very advantageous for you in every point of view, for Miss Middleham has beauty and great wealth; but much as you may be interested in her, my love for her transcends anything you can ever feel, and in the exercise of that love I have come to tell you that you must renounce her."

He was steadier now, much steadier,

and looked somewhat like his old self, as he said, with a hard scornful smile, "It is very good of you to come to the point with so much frankness. I must take exception to your estimate of the feelings I may entertain towards Miss Middleham; but as regards my interest in her you speak quite correctly. Also as regards my intention to marry her, and—my determination to carry that intention into effect."

The smile had faded away ere he came to these last words, which he spoke very deliberately, and with his eyes fixed on his companion.

"Have you counted the cost of such a proceeding, George Heath?" said Anne, dropping into a chair, leaning her arm on the desk, and confronting him. "I have been quiet for so many months that you thought me dead—as indeed I was dead to the world and all in it save one; while you, relieved of my presence, have been progressing in the world's favour, so that even now, when you find me before you, you seem unable to realise the position which we hold towards each other. It can be made plain in a very few words," she added, bending forward. "If you do not consent to give up your pretensions to Grace Middleham, I will reveal all I know. I will denounce you as a murderer!"

His face grew pale again, but the scornful smile soon returned to his lips. "Your education at Hampstead, where I first had the pleasure of seeing you," he said, "evidently did not include a study of the law, or you would have known in such cases a wife's evidence cannot be received against her husband; and I have the honour and the pleasure of claiming you as my wife."

He looked hard at her to see the effect of this home-thrust, and was surprised to find how quietly she received it.

"So be it," she said, leaning back in her chair. "If that be the case, my point is gained. If you admit me to be your wife, Grace is free, for I conclude that you do not openly propose to commit bigamy."

Heath felt that she had scored a point, and her manner irritated him almost as much as her words. "Suppose I were to defy you," he said, "and to declare that you were not my wife?"

"In that case," replied Anne, "you would throw away the shield which you have just raised for your protection. I

should tender my evidence, and it would be received."

Her coolness provoked him beyond endurance. "Curse you!" he said, bringing his hand heavily down upon the table; "you may do your worst. I will throw over the whole question of wife or no wife: I will say you are a crazy jade whom no one knows; and when you accuse me of having made away with Walter Danby—and you will be asked for evidence, which you will find remarkably difficult to supply—what trace has ever been found of the body? There is no proof that he ever came to that infernal place. A man's life is not sworn away so easily as you imagine."

"That a man's life can be taken away easily enough, I have had horrible proof," said Anne, shuddering. "Walter Danby's body is hidden somewhere at Loddonford, and you know it!"

She looked fixedly at him as she spoke; but he had regained his usual self-possession by this time, and did not betray the smallest sign of surprise.

"I know nothing of the kind," he said; adding, with an ironical bow, "To me your assertion is, of course, sufficient; but, in a court of justice, you would have to make it good."

For a moment, Anne was a little disconcerted by the perfect coolness of Heath's demeanour.

"I have, fortunately, a choice of charges to prefer against you," she said, after a pause. "Suppose I were to accuse you of the great robbery committed in this very bank! Remember, I saw the gold and the jewels!"

"May I ask you where you saw them?" said Heath, bending forward. "I will refresh your memory; in your father's house at Loddonford."

"That is true," said Anne; "but that would not hinder me from speaking. I know not whether my father is alive or dead; but, compared to Grace Middleham, he is nothing to me. To see that her future is not wrecked is my determination; and, to save her, I will tell all I know. Yes, all! concealing nothing, sparing none!"

As she emphasised this sentence, with outstretched fore-finger, Heath recoiled in amazement before her. This girl, whom he had rated so cheaply, had the best of him then. He was astounded at her audacity, more astounded at the firmness with which she held to the course

she had indicated. With rage and mortification at his heart, he acknowledged to himself that the edifice which he had built up with so much trouble, during several months, had crumbled into dust at this woman's touch. He was beaten on every point. The mere revelation of his previous marriage would ruin him with Grace. He was beaten; and he must own it, making the best bargain possible with the winner of the game. He rose from his chair, strode to the fireplace, and stood there with his hands plunged into his pockets.

After a short, internal struggle, during which he had recovered the mastery over himself, he said, in his usual tone—

"A man of sense gives up fighting when he sees no further chance of success. You insist that I should give up this intended marriage with Miss Middleham, and you threaten me with certain consequences, if I refuse. Those threats are too strong for me, and I therefore submit; but, at the same time, I give you this warning—that if you reveal more than is absolutely necessary for the prevention of the marriage, you will bring absolute ruin upon your father, who is now a hopelessly-degraded drunkard and pauper, and condemn him either to prison with me, or to starvation without me. You would not care about either of these alternatives, I suppose, although you have acknowledged that your filial feelings are not very strong?"

"My filial feelings are what my father made them," said Anne, quietly; "but there is no need, I imagine, that we should discuss them here. My object will be met by your renouncing Miss Middleham, by your telling her that you are not free to fulfil the marriage contract into which you have entered, and by your relinquishing all claims upon her hand."

"I agree to that," he said. "I have already confessed that you are too strong for me, and that I can make no further fight."

"I shall want you to write a letter to that effect," said Anne; "that I may take with me."

"A letter?" he repeated. "Why can I not tell Miss Middleham when I see her?"

"Because it is not my intention that you should see her for a long time, if ever again. You must write a letter in the sense which I have pointed out, which I can give to her."

He shrugged his shoulders, saying, "As

you will," and returning to the desk, sat down, and at once commenced to write. Anne, who at the same moment pushed away her chair, noticed that his hand was firm, and his writing, as usual, scrupulously neat and steady. "I suppose that will do?" he said, handing her the letter when he had finished it. "I have told her that it is impossible for me to fulfil the engagement, without saying why, and I have left any further explanation for you to make, consistent, of course, with the terms of our bargain."

"The letter will do perfectly well," said Anne, placing it in her pocket, "and the terms of the bargain shall be duly kept. And now," rising from her chair, "our interview is at an end."

"Not just yet," said Heath; "give me a few minutes more, if you please. You have had your own way entirely, and now I have a few words to say."

"Say on," she remarked, with a gesture of impatience.

"I want to know," he said, looking up at her with something like admiration, as she stood there, drawn to her full height, cold, proud, and stately, "I want to know what you are going to do with yourself now?"

"Why can you possibly desire to know?" she asked, in surprise. "What possible right have you to ask?"

"I desire to know," he said, lazily, still regarding her with that strange look, "because I have conceived a very great interest in you; because I am amazed in discovering you to be as you are. Our previous acquaintance was so slight, that I had neither time nor opportunity to learn to appreciate your real character, or the strength of mind which distinguishes you from most of your sex; and I dare to ask—that was, I think, the other way in which you put the question—by virtue of my rights as your husband."

"Are you going to urge that plea?" she asked, with supreme contempt.

"I think I am," Heath replied. "With your talent and courage—you see I speak very frankly—you might be useful to me in many ways, and I do not see why I should permit you to enjoy that freedom of action of which you have just deprived me."

"You uttered a very neat axiom just now," said Anne, "about giving up when you saw no further chance of success; but you have apparently not learned that it is as bad, if not worse, to threaten penalties

without the power of inflicting them. I will apply to you the phrase which you used to me at the beginning of this interview—I defy you to do what you threaten. I warn you that if you attempt to see Miss Middleham, I will at once take steps for denouncing you to justice; and as to your claim on my wifely obedience, I tell you plainly, that when I have gone out of that door you shall never hear of me again, unless it should concern her welfare—the welfare of the only human being I love—that I should once more interpose in her affairs."

She turned on her heels as she spoke, and without looking at him again, passed out of the office, and mingling with the crowd of customers at the bank counter, was lost to his view.

The next instant Mr. Heath seized the speaking pipe, and summoned Hollebone to his presence. "Quicke as you can," he said, when the little man once more stood before him. "A lady, rather tall, dressed in black, with a double veil, noticeable for its thickness, over her face, has just left this office. She has scarcely yet gained the street; follow her, and let me know where she goes."

"And I thought that girl a fool," said Heath, when he was alone again, "and eagerly agreed to her father taking her off after the marriage, and was delighted at the idea of her death. What idiotic short-sightedness! Properly trained, she would have been worth anything—a powerful ally, instead of, as now, a determined enemy. One would have to have lived down her horror at all she had seen, but that would not have been difficult; women far more sensitive than I should judge her to be, have given up all such nonsense when their friends have been interested, and their passions roused. What a chance that wretched Studley threw away! In his case there would have been none of that horror to fight against; and with such a trump card as that in his hand he might have held his own against all comers, instead of being the wandering drunken mendicant that he is. It is a great comfort, however," he muttered, settling himself at the desk, "that I have hitherto been enabled to induce Studley to confine his wanderings to the Continent. I had quite enough on my hands before, and now I have to frame a plausible excuse for withdrawing from this marriage, on which, as everyone knew, my heart was set. There was no other

way, however, that I could see, to avoid instant exposure; and if Anne Studley only gives me a little time before she produces that letter, though I shall have missed the heiress, I may yet be able to hold my ground here, and in two or three other more important quarters. Now to business again," he said, ringing the bell. Then to the porter who appeared, "Send Mr. Towser to me."

The faculty which had been so valuable to him all his life—of being able to lay aside for the time any matter, of whatever gravity or importance, which might be troubling him—remained with him still, and in a few minutes he was so immersed in going over calculations and statistics with his chief clerk, as to be temporarily oblivious of Anne Studley's existence.

Meanwhile, Anne, whose nerves, notwithstanding her apparent outward calmness of demeanour, had been stretched to the utmost point of tension during the interview in the bank parlour, felt the almost inevitable reaction immediately on reaching the street, and was glad to hail a passing cab; once seated in which her fortitude gave way, and she burst into a flood of tears. She had been victorious, though—she had that great consolation for all she had undergone; she had achieved what she had undertaken—the object of her mission was accomplished; and she was then on her way to Grace's house, in possession of the letter which would bring about Grace's release from her certain degradation and ruin. It was no part, however, of Anne Studley's plan that Grace should be too soon made acquainted with the nature of the imminent peril with which she had been threatened, or the means which had been adopted for her deliverance. A patient and deep-searching student of character, Anne, during the year of their residence in the professor's house, had noted the change in her friend's temperament. Not that Grace Middleham was less affectionate to the companion of her school-days, for nothing could exceed the warmth and the regard which she took every opportunity of evincing; but, as her character became more formed, she had lost that habit of depending for everything upon Anne's aid and counsel, had become considerably self-reliant, and not a little self-willed. These qualities, Anne rightly judged, would have increased, rather than lessened, since Grace had been fully recognised as the heiress of her uncle's fortune, and had been made an

object of general adulation; and it was therefore possible that, in the first moments of indignation at hearing what Anne had done, she would refuse to believe anything against her lover, and would insist on his returning to her. That Grace Middleham had entirely succumbed to Heath's influence and fascinations Anne knew too well, and that her anger against those who interfered between them would be proportionate to her passion for him she fully believed. It was above all things, therefore, desirable that Grace should be approached quietly, and, if possible, persuaded to return to Germany with Anne before the revelation was made; in order that, being at a distance, she would be deprived of the chance of taking, in the first outburst of her wrath, any positive steps of which she might be induced, in her calmer judgment, to disapprove and wish to revoke.

On arrival at the house in Eaton-place, Anne, who, during the drive, had managed to regain her composure, again felt the effects of the hard trial which her nerves had undergone in the earlier portion of the day. But she recovered herself sufficiently to impress the tall footman, who answered her ring, and to whom she gave the name of Mrs. Waller, with the sense of her dignity, and, consequently, to make him show her into the dining-room and announce her promptly, instead of leaving her in the hall to take her chance of the time at which the message, that "A young puissant was waiting," might arrive upstairs. Grace happened to be alone when the announcement was made; and as it was a long time since she had heard Anne's pseudonym, and her mind had been so much occupied with other things, she at first failed to understand who wished to see her; but, the truth coming to her after a moment's reflection, she rushed past the astonished footman, hurried down the stairs, and, the next moment, had seized Anne in her arms and covered her with kisses.

"My sweet Anne," she said, "you are the very last person I should have thought of seeing here. Fancy your making your appearance in London after all your protestations that nothing earthly should induce you to come, and your refusal of the invitation which I sent you regularly for the first few weeks after my arrival!"

"I should not be here now, dear," said Anne, returning her friend's caresses, "if

the occasion were not a most important one."

"I know what it is," said Grace, suddenly drawing back. "You have received my letter, announcing my engagement with George—with Mr. Heath, I mean; and you have come to have a talk with me about it—a serious talk, I dare say, too—"

"I have come on a serious matter, but not that," said Anne, quietly; "and, unfortunately, I am the bearer of ill news. It will, doubtless, be distasteful to you, in the midst of all your triumphs and successes, to hear of pain and sickness; but the fact is, that Madame Sturm is very ill—much worse than I have hitherto let you know."

"Poor dear Frau Professorin!" said Grace. "How very sad; I am quite sorry for her."

"She talks constantly of you," said Anne, on whom Grace's society-tone jarred unpleasantly, "and frequently expresses her most earnest wish to see you."

"How unfortunate that her illness should have happened just at this time, when I am away," said Grace.

"Latterly, she has been so urgent in the expression of this wish, that I have not known what to say to her; and, finally, I could refuse her prayers no longer, but set off, in the hope that I might persuade you to return with me to Germany."

"My dear Anne," said Grace, "that would be perfectly impossible."

"Would it?" said Anne. "I fail to see that. You are your own mistress, are you not—you are dependent on no one's will or wish?"

"No; of course, I am mistress of my own actions. There is no one whom I am absolutely obliged to consult," said Grace; "but, still, people would think it so odd, my going away at a moment's notice."

"What people?" asked Anne.

"Well, Mrs. Crutchley, for instance," replied Grace.

"Would it matter to you what Mrs. Crutchley thought?" asked Anne. "She is, is she not, a very temporary acquisition—hired, like your house, horses, servants, &c., for the season, and then to be got rid of and never seen again? This old woman dying over there speaks of you as the only blood-relation now left to her; and implores you to come to her, that she may look upon your face before she dies."

"I am the nearest relation left to her, I

know," said Grace, softening; "and if I thought that I could do her any good——"

"Nothing can do her any good, Grace," said Anne; "but it would be a satisfaction to her to take farewell of you; and to you, after she is gone, to know that you made her last hours happy at a very small sacrifice to yourself."

"You are quite right, dear," said Grace, after a little pause. "It is my duty to go, and I will do it; she was kind to me, poor old lady, in her odd way, and I will not appear ungrateful. I need only stop a few days, and I am sure George will not object when he knows the reason of my absence."

"You will come then with me by the mail-train, to-night," said Anne. "You will have no occasion to take a maid. I am Mrs. Waller, you know, and can do everything you want."

"To-night is rather sudden, Anne, is it not?" said Grace. "I should like to have seen Mr. Heath."

"Every hour is of consequence," said Anne, firmly. "Your aunt only lingers on from day to day, and you would not easily forgive yourself if you arrived too late."

"Very well," said Grace, "I will go with you to-night."

But when this arrangement was communicated to Mrs. Crutchley, that worthy lady was highly exasperated, and did her utmost to prevent its being carried out. Though the season was considerably on the wane, there were balls to be gone to and engagements to be fulfilled. It was impossible that Miss Middleham should give up society, and tear herself away from her friends, for such a very inadequate reason as the illness of an old aunt; and when these various reasons had been successfully combated, Mrs. Crutchley fell back upon what was really the mainspring of all her motives. She perfectly recognised in the Mrs. Waller, whose sudden and unexpected arrival had had such influence over Miss Middleham's movements, the mysterious correspondent to whom Grace had addressed such frequent and such lengthy epistles; she thought there was something particularly suspicious, though what, she was not able to discover in these circumstances; and, beaten on every point, she urged most strongly that Grace should

not leave London without seeing Mr. Heath. Of course, Grace was anxious for any opportunity of seeing her lover, and as Anne made no objection, messengers were despatched in search of Mr. Heath, both at the bank and at his private chambers, and letters were written requesting him to come to Eaton-place at once. But Mrs. Crutchley was given to understand that in no case would Miss Middleham's departure be postponed, and orders were given that the necessary packing should be proceeded with.

Time passes on, and the large footman announces that both the messengers have returned from unsuccessful searches. Mr. Heath was not to be found at the bank or at his chambers, and at neither place was it known whether he had gone; but the letters had been left for him, and Mrs. Crutchley, looking at her watch, declares that there is yet an hour before Grace starts, and opines that by that time he will arrive. The hour wanes, and Grace, after many caresses from Mrs. Crutchley (who is loud in her lamentations at the non-engagement of a courier), takes her seat by Mrs. Waller in the brougham, and is whirled away to Charing-cross, where the tall footman takes their tickets, looks at their luggage, and bestows on them a final benediction by lifting his hat as the train glides out of the station.

Mr. Heath, too, has witnessed their departure from behind the shelter of some luggage barrows, piled on end; and his feelings towards one of the travellers, at least, are of anything but a benedictory nature. "You have succeeded, curse you!" he mutters to himself, as he moves out of the station. "You are carrying her away from me, and in a day or two you will tell her—— I beg your pardon!"

The man against whom he has stumbled is shabbily dressed, with a slouch hat, and clothes of foreign cut, covered with worn and shining braid. He starts at the sound of Heath's voice, and steps aside that he may get him more fully in the gaslight; then approaches him again, so closely, that Heath feels his hot thick breath upon his face, as he asks him in jeering tones, "Who is it you would like to murder next?"

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

All the Year Round

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"Household Words"

No. 330. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VI.

It is exceedingly disagreeable to find that a scheme you have set your heart on, or a prospect which smiles before you, is displeasing to the persons who surround you. It gives a cold shock to the glow of anticipation.

Algernon did not perhaps care to sympathise very keenly with other folks' pleasure, but he certainly desired that they should be pleased with what pleased him, which is not quite the same thing.

His mother informed him—perhaps with a dash of the Ancram colouring; although we have seen how unjustly the worthy lady was suspected of falsehood by Dr. Bodkin on a late occasion—that Mr. Diamond disapproved of his refusing Mr. Filthorpe's offer, and of his resolve to go to London. Dr. Bodkin, Algernon knew, did not approve it; neither did Minnie, although she had never said so in words. How unpleasantly chilly people were, to be sure!

Mrs. Errington did not like Mr. Diamond. She mistrusted him. His silence and gravity, his odd sarcastic smiles, and taciturn politeness, made her uneasy. Despite the patronising way in which she had spoken of him to Minnie Bodkin, in her heart she thought the young man to be horribly presuming.

"I'm sure he doesn't appreciate you at all, Algy," she declared, winding up a list of Mr. Diamond's defects and misdemeanours with this culminating accusation.

Algy had a shrewd notion that Mr.

Diamond's appreciation of himself was likely to be a just one, and he was a little vexed and discomfited, that his tutor had given him no word of praise behind his back. Mrs. Errington saw that she had made an impression, and began to heighten and embellish her statements accordingly. "But, my dear boy," said she, "how can we expect him to recognise talents like yours—gentlemanly talents, so to speak? The man himself is a mere plodder. Why, he was a sizar at college!"

Algy felt himself to be a very generous fellow for continuing to "stand up for old Diamond," as he phrased it.

"Well, ma'am, plenty of great men have been poor scholars. Dean Swift was a sizar."

"And Dean Swift died in a madhouse! So you see, Algy!"

Mrs. Errington plumed herself a good deal upon this retort, and returned to the attack upon Mr. Diamond with fresh vigour; being one of those persons whose mode of warfare is elephantine, and who, never content with merely killing their enemy, must ponderously stamp and mash every semblance of humanity out of him.

Algernon did not like all this. His vanity was—at least during this period of his life—a great deal more vulnerable than his mother's. And she, although she doated on him, would say unpleasant things, indignantly repeat mortifying remarks which had been made, and in a hundred ways unconsciously wound the sensitive love of approbation which was one of Algernon's tenderest (not to say weakest) points.

It was all very disagreeable. But it was not the worst he had to look forward to. There was one person who would be so cast down, so despairing, at the news

of his going away, that—that—it would be quite painful for a fellow to witness such grief. And yet it could not be expected—it could never have been expected—that he should stay in Whitford all his life! He must point that out to Rhoda.

Poor Rhoda!

For ten years, that is to say for more than half her life, Algernon Errington had been an idol, a hero, to her. From the first day when, peeping from behind the parlour door, she had beheld the strangers enter—Mrs. Errington, majestic, in a huge hat and plume, such as young readers may have seen in obsolete fashion books (the mode was so absurd fifty years ago, and had none of that simple elegance which distinguishes your costume, my dear young lady), and Algy, a lovely fair child, in a black velvet suit and falling collar—from that moment the boy had been a radiant apparition in her imagination. How small, and poor, and shabby she felt, as she peeped out of the parlour at that beautiful, blooming mother and son! Not poor and shabby in a milliner's sense of the word, but literally of no account, or beauty, or value, in the world, little shy motherless thing! She had an intense delight in beauty, this Whitford grocer's daughter. And all her little life the craving for beauty in her had been starved: not wilfully, but because the very conception of such food as would wholesomely have fed it, was wanting in the people with whom she lived.

That was a great day when she first, by chance, attracted Mrs. Errington's notice. She was too timid and too simple to scheme for that end, as many children would have done, although she tremblingly desired it. What a surprisingly splendid sight was the tortoise-shell work-box, full of amber satin and silver! What a delightful revelation the sound of the old harpsichord, touched by Mrs. Errington's plump white fingers! What a perennial source of wonder and admiration were that lady's accomplishments, and condescension, and kind soft voice!

As to Algernon, there never was such a clever and brilliant little boy. At eight years old he could sing little songs to his mother's accompaniment, in the sweetest piping voice. He could recite little verses. He even drew quite so that you could tell—or Rhoda could—his trees, houses, and men from one another.

In all the stories his mother told about the greatness of her family, and in all the

descriptions she gave of her ancestral home in Warwickshire, Rhoda's imagination put in the boy as the central figure of the piece. She could see him in the great hall hung round with armour; although she knew that he had never been in the family mansion in his life; in the grand drawing - room, with its purple carpet, and gilt furniture; above all, in the long portrait gallery, of which Rhoda was never tired of hearing. Heaven knows how she, innocently, and Mrs. Errington, exercising her hereditary talent, embellished and transformed the old brick house in its deer park, or what enchanted landscapes the child at all events conjured up, among the gentle slopes and tufted woods of Warwickshire!

Even the period of hobbledehoydom, fatal to beauty, to grace, almost to civilised humanity in most school-boys, Algernon passed through triumphantly. He had a great sense of humour, and fastidious pampered habits of mind and body, which enabled him to look down with more or less disdain—a good-humoured disdain, always, Algy was never bitter—upon the obstreperous youth at the Whitford Grammar School.

One fight he had. He was forced into it by circumstances, against his will. Not that he was a coward, but he had a greater, and more candidly expressed regard for the ease and comfort of his body, than his schoolfellows conceived to be compatible with pluck. However, our young friend, if less stoical, was a great deal cleverer than the majority of his peers; and perceiving that the moment had arrived when he must either fight or lose caste altogether, he frankly accepted the former alternative. He fought a boy bigger and heavier than himself, got beaten (not severely, but fairly well beaten) and bore his defeat—in the dialect of his compeers, “took his licking”—admirably. He was quite as popular afterwards, as if he had thrashed his adversary, who was a loutish boy, the cock of the school, as to strength. Had he bruised his way to the perilous glory of being cock of the school himself, it would have behoved him to maintain it against all comers; which is an anxious and harassing position. Algy had not vanquished the victor, but he had “taken his licking like a trump,” and, on the whole, may be said to have achieved his reputation, at the smallest cost possible under the circumstances.

His mother and Rhoda almost shrieked

at beholding his bruised cheek, and bleeding lip, when he came home one half-holiday, from the field of battle. Algy laughed as well as his swollen features would let him, and calmed their feminine apprehensions. Nor would he accept his fond parent's enthusiastic praise of his heroism, mingled with denunciations of "that murderous young ruffian, Master Mannit."

"Pooh, ma'am," said the hero, "it's all brutal and low enough. We bumped and thumped each other as awkwardly as possible. I fought because I was obliged. And I didn't like it, and I shan't fight again if I can help it. It is so stupid!"

The young fellow's great charm was to be unaffected. Even his fine-gentlemanism sat quite easily on him, and was displayed with the frankest good humour. Some one reproached him once with being more nice than wise. "We can't all be wise, but we needn't be nasty!" returned Algy, with quaint gravity. His temper was, as Minnie Bodkin had said, nearly perfect. He had a singular knack of disarming anger or hostility. You could not laugh Algernon out of any course he had set his heart upon—a rare kind of strength at his age—but it was ten to one he would laugh you into agreeing with him. Every one of his little gifts and accomplishments was worth twice as much in him, as it would have been in clumsier hands.

If you had a heartache, I do not think that you would have found Algy's companionship altogether soothing. Sorrow is apt to feel the very sunshine cruelly bright and cheerful. But if you were merry and wanted society: or bored, and wanted amusement: or dull and wanted exhilarating, no better companion could be desired.

He was genial with his equals, affable to his inferiors, modest towards his superiors—and had not a grain of veneration in his whole composition.

At seventeen years old Algernon left the Grammar School. But he continued to "read" with Mr. Diamond for nearly a twelvemonth. "My son is studying the classics with Mr. Diamond," Mrs. Errington would say; "I can't send my boy to the University, where all his forefathers distinguished themselves. But he has had the education of a gentleman."

It was a very desultory kind of reading at the best, and it was interrupted by the long Midsummer holidays, during which Mr. Diamond went away from Whitford,

no one knew exactly whither. And during these same holidays, Mrs. Errington, who said she required change of air, had taken lodgings in a little quiet Welsh village, and obtained Mr. Maxfield's permission to have Rhoda with her.

That was a time of joy for the girl. It did not at all detract from Rhoda's happiness, that she was required to wait hand and foot on Mrs. Errington; to bring her her breakfast in bed; to trim her caps, to mend her stockings; to iron out scraps of fine lace and muslin; to walk with her when she was minded to stroll into the village; to order the dinner; to make the pudding—a culinary operation too delicate for the fingers of the rustic with whom they lodged—to listen to her patroness when it pleased her to talk; and to play interminable games of cribbage with her when she was tired of talking. All these things were a labour of love to Rhoda. And Mrs. Errington was kind to the girl in her own way.

And above all, was not Algy there? Those were happy days in the Welsh village. On the long delicious summer afternoons, when Mrs. Errington was asleep after dinner, Rhoda would sit out of doors with her sewing; on a bench under the parlour window, so as to be within call of her patroness; and Algy would lounge beside her with a book; or make short excursions to get her wild flowers, which he would toss into her lap, laughing at her ecstasy of gratitude. "Oh, Algy!" she would cry, "Oh, how good you are! How lovely they are!" The words written down are not eloquent, but Rhoda's looks and tones made them so.

"They are not half so lovely," Algy would answer, "as properly educated garden flowers; nor so sweet either. But I know you like that sort of herbage."

Rhoda never forgot those days. How should she forget them?—since it was at this period that Algernon first discovered that he was in love with her. Perhaps he might never have made the discovery if they had all stayed at Whitford. There he saw her, as he had seen her since her childhood, surrounded by coarse common people, and living their life, more or less. It is not every one who can be expected to recognise your diamond, if you set it in lead. Rhoda was always sweet, always gentle, always pretty, but she formed part and parcel of old Max's establishment. When the boy and girl were quite small, she used to help him with his lessons (her one

year's seniority made a greater difference between them then, than it did later) and had always been used to do him sisterly service in a hundred ways. And all this was by no means favourable to the young gentleman's falling in love with her.

But at Llanryddan, Rhoda appeared under quite a different aspect. She looked prettier than ever before, Algernon thought. And perhaps she really was so; for there is no such cosmetic for the complexion as happiness. Apart from her vulgar relations, and treated as a lady by the few strangers with whom they came in contact, it was surprising to find how good her manners were, and how much natural grace she possessed. Mrs. Errington had taught her what may be termed the technicalities of polite behaviour. From her own heart and native sensibility she had learned the essentials. The people in the village turned their heads to admire her, as she walked modestly along. Who could help admiring her? Algernon decided that there was not one among the young ladies of Whitford who could compare with Rhoda. "She is ten times as pretty as those raw-boned McDongalls, and twenty times as well bred as Alethea Dockett, and ever so much cleverer than Miss Pawkins," he reflected. Minnie Bodkin never came into his head in the list of damsels with whom Rhoda could be compared. Minnie occupied a place apart, quite removed from any idea of love-making.

Dear Little Rhoda! How fond she was of him!

Altogether Rhoda appeared in a new light, and the new light became her mightily. Yes; Algy was certainly in love with her, he acknowledged to himself. There was no scene, no declaration. It all came to pass very gradually. In Rhoda the sense of this love stole on as subtly as the dawn. Before she had begun to watch the glowing streaks of rose-colour, it was daylight! And then how warm and golden it grew in her little world! How the birds chirped and fluttered, and the flowers breathed sweet breath, and a thousand diamond drops stood on the humblest blades of grass!

If she had been nine years old, instead of nearly nineteen, she could scarcely have given less heed to the worldly aspects of the situation.

Algernon perhaps more consciously set aside considerations of the future. He

was but a boy, however; and he always had a great gift of enjoying the present moment, and sending Janus-headed Care, that looks forward and backward, to the deuce. As yet there was no Lord Seely on his horizon; no London society; no diplomatic career. The latter indeed was but an Ancramism of his mother's, when she spoke of it to Mr. Diamond, and Algy at that time had never entertained the idea of it.

So these two young persons sat side by side, on the bench outside the Welsh cottage, and were as happy as the midsummer days were long.

But long as the midsummer days were, they passed. Then came the time for going back to Whitford. The day before their return home Rhoda received a shock of pain—the first, but not the last, which she ever felt from this love of hers—at these words, said carelessly, but in a low voice, by Algy, as he lounged at her side, watching the sunset:

"Rhoda, darling, you must not say a word to any one about—about you and me, you know."

Not say a word! What had she to say? And to whom? "No, Algy," she answered, in a faint little voice, and began to meditate. The idea had been presented to her for the first time that it was her duty, or Algy's duty, to drag their secret from its home in Fairyland, and subject it to the eyes and tongues of mortals. But being once there, the idea stayed in her mind and would not be banished. Her father—Mrs. Errington—what would they say, if they knew that—that she had dared to love Algy? The future began to look terribly hard to her. The glittering mist which had hidden it was drawn away like a gauze curtain. How could she not have seen it all before? Would any one believe for evermore that she had been such a child, such a fool, so selfishly absorbed in her pleasant day-dreams, as not to calculate the cost of it for one moment until now?

"Oh, Algy!" the poor child broke out, lifting a pale face and startled eyes to his; "if we could only go on for ever as we are! If it would be always summer, and we two could stay in this village, and never go back, or see any of the people again—except father," she added hastily. And a pang of remorse smote her as her conscience told her that the father who loved her so well, and was so good to her, whatever he might be to others, was not

at all necessary to the happiness of her existence henceforward.

"Don't let's be miserable now, at all events," returned Algernon cheerfully. "Look at that purple bar of cloud on the gold! I wonder if I could paint that. I wish I had my colour-box here. The pencil sketches are so dreary after all that colour."

Rhoda had no doubt that Algernon could paint "that," or anything else he applied his brush to. After a while she said, with her heart beating violently, and the colour coming and going in her cheeks, "Don't you think it would be wrong, deceitful—to—if we—not to tell—" Poor Rhoda could not frame her sentence, and was obliged to leave it unfinished.

"Deceitful! Am I generally deceitful, Rhoda? Oh, I say, don't cry; there's a pet! Don't, my darling! I can't bear to see you sorry. But, look here, Rhoda, dear; I'm so young yet, that it wouldn't do to talk about being in love, or anything of that sort. Though I know I shall never change, they would declare I didn't know my own mind, and would make a joke of it"—this shot told with Rhoda, who shrank from ridicule, as a sensitive plant shrinks from the north wind—"and bother my—our lives out. Can't you see old Grimgriffin's great front teeth grinning at us?"

It was in these terms that Algry was wont to allude to that respectable spinster, Miss Elizabeth Grimshaw.

Rhoda knew that Algry wished and expected her to smile, when he said that. And she tried to please him; but the smile would not come. Her lip quivered, and tears began to gather in her eyes again. She would have sobbed outright if she had tried to speak. The more she thought, the sadder and more frightened she grew. Ridicule was painful, but that was not the worst. Her father! Mrs. Errington! She lay awake half the night, terrifying herself with imaginations of their wrath.

Algry found an opportunity the next morning to whisper to her a few words. "Don't look so melancholy, Rhoda. They'll wonder at Whitford what's the matter if you go back with such a wan face. And as to what you said about deceit, why we shan't pretend not to love each other! Look here, we must have patience! I shall always love you, darling, and I'm sure to get my own way with my mother in the long run: I always do."

So then there would be obstacles to

contend with on Mrs. Errington's part, and Algry acknowledged that there would. Of course she had known before that it must be so. But Algry had declared that he would always love her; that was the one comforting thought to which she clung. Rhoda had grown from a child to a woman since yesterday. Algry was only older by four-and-twenty hours.

After their return to Whitford came Mr. Filthorpe's letter. Then his mother's application to Lady Seely, brought about by an old acquaintance of Mrs. Errington, who lived in London, and kept up an intermittent correspondence with her. Both these events were talked over in Rhoda's presence. Indeed, the girl filled the part towards Mrs. Errington, that the confidant enacts towards the prima donna in an Italian opera. Mrs. Errington was always singing scenes to her, which, so far as Rhoda's share in them went, might just as well have been uttered in the shape of a soliloquy. But the lady was used to her confidant, and liked to have her near, to take her hand in the impressive passages, and to walk up the stage with her during the symphony.

So Rhoda heard Algernon's prospects canvassed. In her heart she longed that he should accept Mr. Filthorpe's offer. It would keep him nearer to her in every sense. She had few opportunities of talking with him alone now—far fewer than at dear Llanryddan; but she was able to say a few words to him privately one afternoon (the very afternoon of Dr. Bodkin's whist-party), and she timidly hinted that if Algry went to Bristol, instead of to London amongst all those great folks, she would not feel that she had lost him so completely.

"My dear child!" exclaimed Algry, whose outlook on life had a good deal changed during the last three months. "How can you talk so? Fancy me on Filthorpe's office stool!"

"London is such a long way off, Algry," murmured the girl plaintively. "And then, amongst all those grand people, lords and ladies, you—you may grow different."

"Upon my word, my dear Rhoda, your appreciation of me is highly flattering! For my part it seems to me more likely that I should grow 'different' in the society of Bristol tradesmen than amongst my own kith and kin—people like myself and my parents in education and manners. I am a gentleman, Rhoda. Lord Seely is not more."

Rhoda shrank back abashed before this magnificent young gentleman. Such a flourish was very unusual in Algernon. But the Ancram strain in him had been asserting itself lately. He was sorry when he saw the poor girl's hurt look and downcast eyes, from which the big tears were silently falling one by one. He took her in his arms, and kissed her pale cheeks, and brought a blush on to them, and an April smile to her lips; and called her his own dear pretty Rhoda, whom he could never, never forget.

"Perhaps it would be best to forget me, Algy," she faltered. And although his loving words, and flatteries, and caresses, were inexpressibly sweet to her, the pain remained at her heart.

She never again ventured to say a word to him about his plans. She would listen, meekly and admiringly, to his vivid pictures of all the fine things he was to do in the future: pictures in which her figure appeared—like the donor of a great altarpiece, full of splendid saints and golden-crowned angels—kneeling in one corner. And she would sit in silent anguish whilst Mrs. Errington expatiated on her son's prospects; wherein, of late, a "great alliance" played a large part. But she could not rouse herself to elation or enthusiasm. This mattered little to Mrs. Errington, who only required her confidant to stand tolerably still with her back to the audience. But it worried Algernon to see Rhoda's sad, downcast face, irresponsible to any of his bright anticipations. It must be owned that the young fellow's position was not entirely pleasant. Yet his admirable temper and spirits scarcely flagged. He was never cross, except, now and then, just a very little to his mother. And if no one else in the world less deserved his ill-humour, at least no one else in the world was so absolutely certain to forgive him for it!

CRITICISM EXTRAORDINARY.

SYDNEY SMITH proposed, as an entertaining change in human affairs, that everything should be decided by minorities, as they were almost always in the right. If it were possible to act upon the wit's suggestion, and apply it retrospectively to literature, there would be some rare gaps in the ranks of standard authors. Very few of the time-honoured lords of literature would escape degradation, if critics who

abhor anything that is popular; carping scribblers, "like gnats in a summer's evening, which are never very troublesome but in the finest and most glorious season;" poets who cannot accept any verses save their own as poetry; and disappointed writers, soul sick with envy of successful competitors, were allowed to over-ride the verdict of the many, and disown all who failed to satisfy their crotchety notions. Let us recall some of the pretty things minorities have, from time to time, had to say about the favourites of the majorities, and what would be the fate of many of our brightest literary stars if Sydney Smith's idea could be worked out.

Among our classical friends we should have to condemn Homer, for stealing all that is good in the Iliad and Odyssey from some unknown predecessors; Aeschylus for his inability to make his verse run smoothly; Aristotle for his profound ignorance; Xenophon for turning history into romance; and Thucydides for not knowing how to properly marshal his facts. Livy and Herodotus must go for their want of truthfulness; Virgil for his want of invention, Plautus for his coarseness; Cicero for his cold artificiality and tediousness; and Pliny for presuming to pass himself off for something better than a paltry fabulist.

There would be a terrible thinning of England's sons of song. That *Paradise Lost* which has nothing meritorious about it save its length, although some people are pleased to call it a poem, would in itself suffice to drag Milton from his high estate, even if he were not responsible for an inelegantly splendid masque, a parcel of sonnets, of which only two are not absolutely bad, sundry lesser pieces whose peculiarity is not excellence, and the vulgar *Lycidas*, in which there is no nature for there is no truth, no art for there is nothing new, but something akin to impiety, clothed in harsh diction, unpleasing numbers, and uncertain rhymes. John Dryden must pay the penalty as the author of *The Hind and the Panther*, the worst poem of the age; and Pope, all tune and no meaning, has no claim for merciful consideration on account of his unintelligible essays, his barbarous rhapsody upon *Windsor Forest*, or the pert, insipid heap of commonplaces he dignified with the title *An Essay on Criticism*. The fact that he obtained admittance into literary society because

his person was as ridiculous as his writings, should not save the flimsy poems, wanting alike in genius, dignity, fancy and fire, of Oliver Goldsmith; or excuse the preserving of that incoherent picce of stuff, without plot or incident, known as *She Stoops to Conquer*—as much out of place in a literary collection as the works of Cowper, a good man but no poet; or of Crabbe, who wrote the very converse of poetry. The vicious style and vulgar sentimentality of Thomson calls for his exclusion from good company, along with the poet who passed that judgment upon *The Seasons*, and who, in his own long, weak, lame luebrations, wavering so prettily between pathos and silliness,

Both by precept and example shows,
That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose;

besides having achieved the writing of the very worst poem ever printed in a quarto volume, *The White Doe of Rylstone*, the sad outcome of poetical intoxication, produced by extreme self-admiration. Despite his nobility, to which Byron, great in so little a way, owed his awaking one morning and finding himself famous, he must be put out in the cold; with the gratuitously nouscousical Keats, given to setting forth the most incongruous ideas in the most uncouth language; with Shelley, who, setting grammar and common-sense equally at defiance, warred against reason, taste, and virtue in drivelling prose run mad—all brilliance, confusion, and vacuity; and with Scott, one of the poets who are no poets, who obtained a spurious fame by writing imitations of black-letter ballads, and literary pantomimes in the worst dialects of the English language, making one believe helmets were always pasteboard and horses always hobby.

Unkindest cut of all, under the minority dispensation, we should be compelled to part company with Shakespeare. There can be no doubt about that; for, we are assured, he was sadly deficient in judgment, lacked inventive power, and was utterly out of his element in tragedy; that he could only rave without reason, rule, or coherency; and, when at his best, but produce mere farces, without salt or savour, wherein there is not so much meaning as in the neighing of a horse or the growling of a dog. He cannot be spared on the plea, raised by modern admirers, that somebody else constructed his plays for him, and furnished the

matter, the thread, the collective knowledge, and much of the large, cool, reasonable philosophy with which they abound; whilst sweet Will only found the melody, the phrase-making, the vibratory words, and all the passionate things that hang about and are suggested by them. It may be true, as the gentleman says, that he does not greatly derogate from Shakespeare, by despoiling him of the beggarly elements of his plots and his material philosophies; but we do not know that it is true, because we do not, in the least, understand what he means; that, spite of this despouling, “we must still class him among the men who crown an epoch, and burn for ever with an eternal glory, because that in their day their ear was true to find, and their hearts were true to utter; while no other could, or, being able, dared sum up in song its canticle of canticles!”

Supposing the old monarchs of rhyme to be deposed, who are to be their successors? Well, it is easier to upset than to set up. We have no means of ascertaining the views of the minority, and, unfortunately, the bards sublime, whose songs are caviare to the multitude, have not the faculty of making their names echo through the corridors of time, and consequently become lost to memory altogether. Still we may make a few suggestions. Milton’s place might be occupied by Blackmore, admired by Locke for his penetrating judgment and flights of fancy, unless it belongs of right to the inimitable Phillips, “the Milton of his age,” of whose Splendid Shilling, Cider, and Blenheim, it was prophesied that they would last as long as valour, generosity, and the language they were written in. Dryden might make way for the handsome sloven, Captain Rag, otherwise Edmund Neale, but better known as Edmund Smith, who “touched upon” nearly every sort of poetry, and of whom it has been written: “His contrivances were adroit and majestic; his images lively and adequate; his sentiments charming; his expressions natural and bold; his numbers various and sounding; and that enamelled mixture of classical wit, which, without redundancy and affectation, sparkled through his writings, and were no less pertinent and agreeable.” For Pope we should have the Earl of Dorset, declared by Dryden to be as great in satire as Shakespeare was in tragedy; and for Cowper, Christopher Pitt, clerk, “very eminent for his talents in poetry.” Byron

himself points out his successor, Mr. Wright, sometime consul-general for the Seven Islands, who was inspired by no common muse, "to hail the land of gods and god-like men;" and surely he who sang "The Aboriginal Britons," and, with his genuine poetic fires made modern Britons praise their sires, might fairly oust Walter Scott. Colchester's Quaker poet might be eligible for Wordsworth's place, but for his modesty; the chief of the Lakers could never have written himself down thus:—

Davenant was born upon the third of March,
Waller was born upon the third of March,
Otway was born upon the third of March,
And I was born upon the third of March;
But this affords no proof I am a poet—
Thousands of blockheads, in the lapse of time,
Were also born upon the third of March.
Milton was born in sixteen hundred and eight,
And I was born in eighteen hundred and eight;
But what a mighty interval divides us,
Besides the simple interval of time!

And as for Shakespeare, we are sure of having the minority with us, in dethroning him in faveur of the Poet of Humanity, Walt Whitman, who claims to have a forte for loafing, and singing "Man's physiology from top to toe."

It is comforting to be assured by the unimpeachable Clarissa Richardson, that Tristram Shandy may be read with safety, since that execrable work is too gross to be inflaming; but it is not so pleasant to learn that Thackeray "settled, like a meat-fly, on whatever one had got for dinner, and made one sick of it;" that Miss Edgeworth made morality an impertinence; that it has only been with fear and trembling that any good novelist has ventured to shew the slightest bias in favour of the Ten Commandments; while Charlotte Brontë inculcates a heathenish doctrine of religion, and, moreover, betrays great coarseness of taste and a total ignorance of the manners of society. Mr. Disraeli's novels owe their success, we have been told, to possessing the most frivolous qualities of that sort of writing, and a kind of diablerie making up for the want of talent; and the works of the author of David Copperfield are so extremely difficult to read in their present shape, another prophet of the minority has informed us, that they require translating into classical English, as the language of the lower orders ought never to appear in print.

When Thomson's one-eyed friend acknowledged the receipt of a copy of Winter, with a condemnatory couplet,

the irate giver retaliated in a savage quatrain. The poet did not like being criticised in rhyme; and, we dare say, the author of The Angel in the House would have preferred having his poem "slated" in plain prose, rather than parodied, as a cruel critic chose to do, after this fashion: The gentle reader, we apprise, That this new Angel in the House Contains a tale not very wise, About a parson and a sponge. The author, gentle as a lamb, Has managed his rhymes to fit; He haply fancies he has writ Another "In Memoriam." How his intended gathered flowers, And took her tea, and after sung, Is told in style somewhat like ours, For delectation of the young. But, reader, lest you say we quiz The poet's record of his she, Some little pictures you shall see, Not in our language, but in his:—

While thus I grieved and kissed her glove,
My man brought in her note to say
Papa had bid her send his love,
And hop'd I'd dine with them next day;
They had learned and practised Purcell's glee,
To sing it hy to-morrow night:
The postscript was—her sisters and she,
Inclosed some violets blue and white.

* * * * *

Restless and sick of long exile,
From those sweet friends I rode, to see
The church repairs, and, after awhile,
Waylaying the Dean, was asked to tea.
They introduced the Cousin Fred
I'd heard of, Honor's favourite; grave,
Dark, handsome, bluff, but gently bred,
And with an air of the salt wave.

Fear not this saline Cousin Fred, He gives no tragic mischief birth; There are no tears for you to shed, Unless they may be tears of mirth. From ball to bed, from field to farm, The tale flows nicely purring on; With much conceit there is no harm, In the love-legend here begun. The rest will come some other day, If public sympathy allows; And this is all we have to say About the Angel in the House.

Literary journals would certainly be more entertaining if rhymed reviews were the rule; but critics would require a nicer ear than the reviewer who, wishing to give an example of the Laureat's "measured or lyric blank verse," quoted Tristam's song—

Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend the brier!
A star in Heaven, a star within the mere!
Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,
And one was far apart, and one was near;
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the grass,
And one was water, and one star was fire,
And one will ever shine, and one will pass!
Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the mero.

Yet more necessary to the critic than a good ear for rhyme, is a good memory.

"Burns," wrote one, not long ago, "in language which offends the artificially delicate modern ear, avows that he does not mind nakedness if he has an abundant supply of good ale." The assertion might be safely challenged, and Bishop Stillingfleet cited to refute it. A defender of Bunyan's originality, indignant at the revival of the exploded libel that the Pilgrim's Progress was adapted from the mediæval French, complained, "Since Pope set the example of robbing authors of their just dues, by declaring Garth did not write his own Dispensary, there has been a growing tendency to deny everybody the credit of everything." It is hard that Bunyan cannot be justified without traducing Pope, who actually cries out against the injustice he is charged with perpetrating, drawing the portrait of an abandoned critic, he says :

All books he reads, and all he reads avails,
From Dryden's Fables down to D'Urfey's Tales;
With him most authors steal their works, or buy,
Garth did not write his own Dispensary.

Commenting upon an advocate for the incorporation of Holmfirth winding up his argument with some verses with the refrain, "Clear the way!" a newspaper writer said, "I do not quite know why an ardent desire to get a small town incorporated should not be allowed to incite a man to express his thoughts in poetry. I hope the town will be incorporated, and that this writer may be the first mayor. He may then rival his French prototype, who, to welcome his king, inscribed on a triumphal arch, 'Vive le Roi, Ma Femme et moi!' " The hit was sadly misdirected under the idea that the Holmfirthian was his own poet, whereas he had pressed Dr. Mackay into his service for the occasion.

In the Taming of the Shrew, Biondello announces "Petruchio is coming, in a new hat and an old jerkin; a pair of old breeches thrice turned; a pair of boots that have been candle-easces, one buckled, another laced; an old rusty sword ta'en out of the town armoury, with a broken hilt and chapeless; with two broken points." Upon this Johnson observes "How a sword should have two broken points I cannot tell!" The doctor was aware of but one meaning attached to the word "points," but he never dreamed of hiding his ignorance by tampering with his author's text, after the manner of some modern editors. A more ludicrous misreading still was that of the correspondent

of Notes and Queries, who, quoting from James the First's sonnet on the Armada—

They forward came in monstrous array,
Both sea and land beset us everywhere;
Bragges threatened us a ruinous decay—

asked "Who is Bragges who threatened England with ruinous decay?" Some critics, however, have done worse than blunder over a word. Chatterton's Rowley and Ireland's Vortigern had plenty of believers and defenders among the critical bigwigs of their day. Sundry learned men, taking More's Utopia seriously, proposed to send missionaries to Christianize the interesting inhabitants of the newly-discovered island. Meinhold's Amber Witch was pronounced upon internal evidence to be a genuine history, until the writer claimed it as his own invention. Gilbert Wakefield, after profound cogitation and an exemplary analysis, discovers Pope's Song by a Person of Quality to be a collection of unconnected lines, disgraceful to the poet; and, in our own time, the author of Firmilian had the gratification of seeing his poem welcomed as the worthy effort of a new disciple of the spasmodic school he intended to ridicule. Too matter of fact in another sense was Dr. Moseley, who declared Colman's Inkle and Yarico would never do, because the finale ran—

Come let us dance and sing,
While all Barbadoes' bells shall ring!

whereas there was only one bell to be found in the whole island! In the same spirit a reviewer took a novelist to task for giving a little town two churches, when it was well known it could only boast of one. There was more sense in the Scotch weaver's complaint that he had not time to read Chalmers's Sermons: "You see, sir, I had to sit with the book in the tac hand and the dictionar' in the ither; and the warst o' it was, I couldna find his long-nebbed words in the dictionar." Dr. Guthrie probably was not so much astonished by his weaver friend, as Wallack the actor by the Frenchman to whom he had read the first scene of Macbeth: "You said, Monsieur Vallake, dat Shakespere is de poet of nature and common-sense! Here is his play open—Macbess—yes. Well, here is tree old—old—vat you call veetch, vid de broom and no closo on at all—upon de blasted heath—good! Von veetch say to do oder veetch, 'Ven shall ve tree meet agen?' De oder veetch she say, 'In tondare,' do oder she say, 'In

lightning,' and she say to dem herself agen: 'In rain!' Now dis is not nature, dis is not common-sense. Oh, no! De tree old veetch shall nevare go out to meet npon the blasted heath with no close on, in tondare, lightning, and in rain. Ah, no! It is not common-sense, dey stay at home, aha!"

If we desired to make a collection of comical criticisms, we should go to the American newspapers for choice specimens. A St. Francisco journalist, announcing the arrival of a certain painter in that city, says, "He possesses merit, as an artist, but it is hard to tell whether it lies in landscape or marine painting. You never can tell his cows from his ships, except when they have their tails exalted; then the absence of spars betrays their character. Even then you may mistake them for schooners scudding under bare poles." Of Bierstadt, we are told that his study of nature lies all outside, and has nothing whatever to do with the spirituality of all the matchless archimage of form and colour, which she displays upon the mighty theatres of her creative power. A once-great singer is compared to an aged nightingale with a cold, who has retained the perfection of his method, while his voice, like the memory of a buried joy, may be uninjured, but hardly admits of description. A popular prima donna is thus gently handled by an unimpassionate gentleman—"She is little, she is fat, and she is not young, but she puts on those nippy, rosebud airs, and jumps and teeters about, and is so blessed playful—the young, sweet thing—that the near-sighted critics take off their spectacles, lest in her gambols she break them." But, for a good setting down, commend us to the following notice of a performance of Hamlet, at Lafayette, Indiana:—"Hamlet must have been a remarkable man not to have gone mad in the midst of such good characters as his aimless mother, the insipid discordant Ophelia, and the noisily-empty Laertes, as they were presented on this stage. We confess to a secret satisfaction at the poisoning of the queen, who, on ronging her cheeks, got a double dose at the end of her nose; and we experienced a malicious joy in the unskilful stabbing of Laertes, who deserved death for his unaccented lamentations over a horse-fiddle sister, whose departure should have been to him a source of joy. The grave-digger did well, not only in his professional work,

but in effectually burying the ill-dressed Ophelia. We never attended a funeral with more pleasure."

It is, however, in panegyric that the American critic especially shines. Of Salvini's Othello one said, "It was the awakening fury of the Hyrcanian tiger disturbed at his feast of blood, or the distended tempest of a tropic land, laying all waste before it." Of a pianoforte player we read, "Rubinstein is on the isthmus that divides the Orient and the Occident. Their spray dashes over into each other, but they do not sing. There is an evident conflict and struggle in his nature and his music. He roars like a lion and is soft as a sucking dove, by turns. He springs like a panther, and, with his grace and pressure, upon the keys; but his hands are claws in velvet—they smite like a hammer, they caress like a mother!" This must surely have come from the hand that likened a lady-singer's "Amen" to the crowning faggot of a pyramid of fire. Mdlle. Il Murska ought to have been in the seventh heaven of delight when her vocalization was compared to an elaborate work of the jeweller, sparkling with priceless gems, adorned with every elegant and rare device, with fret-work, and crystal flowers, and twining tendrils of fine-spun gold, and glistening dew-drops of diamonds, and every conceivable beauty that the more practised artists could lay upon it. Mdlle. Nilsson could not complain of non-appreciation, likened, as she was, to the Venus de' Medici, coming like a gust of bright sunshine, her notes falling on the tendrils of her listener's hearts like the bubbling music of distant waterfalls on a bed of roses; while her singing of "Home, sweet Home," made the critic feel as if he were building a castle of alabaster and gold, surrounding it with rainbows, shutting it in with gates of pearl and moonshine, and embowering it with roses. This is pretty well, but surpassed, we think, by the following tribute to Madame Rudersdorff, culled from a New York journal:—"To tell you how she sang would be impossible; but if one may compare an object of sight to an object of sound, we should say—her voice is like a rocket, which, from the first, bursts npon the sight with a magnificence that claims undivided attention, and in an instant carries your attention from earth to heaven; where it bursts into ten thousand orbs of glory that scintillate each a separate gem upon the blue empyrean; and burn, each

with a varied hue of beauty that at once distracts and commands attention; until they burst with a fleecy trail of stars that floats down the vaulted sky softly and slowly, until the earth seems overarched by a lacework of fire, that drops earthward as it falls, growing thinner, finer; till, like the last expiring breath of a sigh, it is lost in the evening air." If that is not fine writing we should like to know where it is to be found. At any rate, it makes clear to us the hitherto dark saying of Mr. Boncailleur—"Music hath made idiots of us all. It is the aesthetic stimulant of the day, and we are all in a condition of harmonic delirium tremens."

GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

GIVE me the helm, child. Why, the steel is dimmed, And on the breast-plate, gauntlet, cuisse, and all; Our gallants now are grown so dainty-limbed, They let the armour rust upon the wall. See, how the dust upon the feather lies; Out on the carpet knights! Nay, never pont, Go, bid them do their devoir for thine eyes, The old mail sickens for one rousing boat. There, pat thy little finger in the cleft, Through which the life-blood poured like summer rain, When 'mid the best of Astley's riders left, I lay and groaned on Edgehill's fatal plain; Aye, if old Gilbert there, at break of morn, Had not come back to seek me 'mid the dead, No saucy wench had in these halls been born, To try my casque upon her golden head. Those covenaunting knaves struck hard and deep. See, here a sword right through the plating shore: That dint a lance-head made on Nasoby steep. When our wild charge their bravest backward bore. But this jagged hole! fiercest and follest stroke, Of all I gave, or took, in days of old, I had it when our line at Marston broke; Sit here, child, thou shalt hear the story told. When the gay sun on black Long Marston rose, Thy mother was a bride of seventeen. Thou'rt like her, girl; like hers thy soft cheek glows, But thy blue eyes are scarce so blue, I ween! And as we ministered in the castle court, She came to me as she was wont to come, And whispered, masking fear in wistful sport, "My father, bring my Harry safely home." Poor Harry, frank and joyous out he rode, Waving the flag she wrought him in the van, And as ranks closed, and war's fierce glover glowed, He bore him like a gallant gentleman; And Ouse ran redly through each willow'd bank, Ere the dark day was done, and all was lost, And with the sun the hopes of Stuart sank, And, snow-like, melted all the northern host. Fast to the sheltering walls of loyal York, Flew proud Newcastle, all his projects o'er; And keen Prince Rupert, whose hot morning's work, Had wrecked the royal barque in sight of shore. What did it boot to linger there to die, 'Neath rebel lance, or rebel axe and cord? Better to wait beneath a happier sky, Till God saw His unointed line restored. Yet ere I turned old Warrior for the flight, (It irks me yet, girl, though 'tis past so long) I heard our Harry's shout ring through the fight, I saw his crest struck backward 'mid the throng,

I saw the bright head down amid the spears, I saw the Roundhead's arm was up to strike, And dashing in, amid our comrade's cheers, I flung myself between him and the pike. Our brave lads rallied round us. Masterless, Full many a steed of Fairfax ran, I trow, We tore our bloody way amid the press, And I had Harry on my saddle bow. And not till many a league of heather lay Behind our thundering hoofs, I reeled and fell, But as I sank, I heard old Gilbert say, "See, as the boy breathes yet," and all was well. Poor Harry! Aye, he died at rod Dunbar, And, like a blighted flower, she followed fast; And thou, safe in thy convent walls afar, Wert left to cheer thy grandsire's heart at last. But thy sweet mother, ever out that day, At gloaming creeping to my side would come, And bid me tell her of the desperate fray, When her old father brought her Harry home.

ODD MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

LET US now hail a jovial ghost—one who has known men and prisons, but a gay shade withal. A squinting Alcibiades bedecked with scarlet and gold, in ruffles and cravat of choice Mechlin. His figure in china once adorned countless mantelpieces; his health was drunk by the enthusiastic electors of Middlesex out of punchbowls, within whose depths lurked the magic words "Wilkes and Liberty." This quaint old shadow is that of a great ex-peltee, a gloriously odd member of Parliament, Jack Wilkes—whilom editor of the North Briton, Monk of Medmenham, Lord Mayor of London, the liver of a life of jokes and gaols, of reckless extravagance and utter insolvency, bravest of wits, and most kaleidoscopic of men. Gay days spent at Leyden, in the springtime of youth, did not produce any more distaste to matrimony in Wilkes himself, than did his outrageous squint on the part of the fair. At Great George Street, Westminster, now abandoned to men of curves and gradients, he once held high wassail, and succeeded atlast in frightening his wife away from his table; but there was yet method in the madness of the wild son of a distiller. Collecting around him a hopeful band of boon companions (mostly hailing from Aylesbury or the neighbourhood)—such as Thomas Potter, son of the Archbishop of Canterbury; Sir Francis Dashwood, afterwards Lord lo Despenser; the Earl of Sandwich, Sir Francis Blako Delaval, Sir William Stanhope, Sir Thomas Stapleton, Paul Whithead, ho! genus omne—he led a free and easy life, apparently without any particular object. But when a general election occurred in 1754, his roystcrers were bound to sup-

port his attempt to get into Parliament for Berwick. Here the Delaval interest was supposed to be strong enough to return him. All his relations dissuaded him from the attempt; but, having a wholesome contempt for family counsels, he stood for Berwick, and was utterly defeated, at the cost of three or four thousand pounds. This behaviour encouraged his wife to separate herself from him. His dissipated life she could and did condone, but the waste of the family property was not to be passively borne.

After signing the deed of separation, Wilkes, being now a free man, spent his life in the fashion supposed to become a gentleman of wit and pleasure upon Town. He frequented the Dilettanti Club, the Beefsteak Club, and, above all, Medmenham Abbey. Sneering at the Aylesbury set, with whom he consorted, he yet determined to make use of them upon occasion. This soon arrived. Potter, the member for Aylesbury, was appointed in June, 1757, one of the vice-treasurers of Ireland; and, having vacated his seat, made a private agreement with Wilkes, that if he could obtain a seat for any other place, he should endeavour to secure Wilkes' election for Aylesbury. In pursuance of this unholy compact, Potter was chosen for Oakhampton, and Wilkes came in for Aylesbury, at a cost of seven thousand pounds—a large proportion of which, doubtless, found its way into Potter's pocket. Again making use of his friends, Wilkes brought himself into friendly relation with Earl Temple, by raising a regiment of militia, at the head of which was Sir Francis Dashwood. Shortly after getting into the house, he started the famous "North Briton," in opposition to the "Briton," conducted by Smollett on behalf of Lord Bute. In this sensational journal, Wilkes made furions onslaught on Lord Bute and Scotchmen generally; quoted Dr. Johnson one day, and sneered at him the next; laughed at Hogarth himself for representing the ugly side of nature; and brought forward Churchill, whom he justly described as a manly genins. At this period he was very popular, and was successful in retaining his hold upon society for several years. The fascination of his manner was so extraordinarily great, that he secured at last the admiration of those whom he had most bitterly assailed. "Mr. Wilkes," said Lord Mansfield, "was the pleasantest companion, the politest gentleman, and

the greatest scholar I ever knew." "His name," said Dr. Johnson—whom he had reviled for accepting a pension, after having defined it as "pay given to a state hireling, for treason to his country"—"has been sounded from pole to pole as the phoenix of convivial felicity;" and added, very characteristically, "Jack has a great variety of talk, Jack is a scholar, and Jack has the manners of a gentleman." The moral doctor, it is true, had one feeling in common with the gay reprobate—witness his letter to Mrs. Thrale. "I have been breaking jokes with Jack Wilkes upon the Scotch. Such, madam, are the vicissitudes of things." A greater man than Johnson, the "ingenious" Edward Gibbon himself, was shocked at the blasphemy and indecency of Wilkes's conversation, but was subdued to this conclusion: "I scarcely ever met with a better companion; he has inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge."

Agreeable as a friend, Wilkes was a terrible enemy. In 1763, he put the climax to his attacks on Lord Bute by publishing an edition of Ben Jonson's Fall of Mortimer, for the sole purpose of prefixing to it a sarcastic dedication to his lordship, wherein it was intimated that George the Third was held in no less subjection by Bute and the Princess Dowager of Wales, than Edward the Second had been by Queen Isabella and her minion Roger Mortimer. Lord Bute shortly afterwards resigned; and Wilkes next distinguished himself by publishing a garbled version of the king's speech before it was delivered, and by making a virulent attack upon it. This freak was proclaimed by the law officers of the Crown "an infamous and seditious libel;" a warrant was issued to apprehend and bring before the Secretary of State, the authors, printers, and publishers of Number 45 of the North Briton, and to seize their papers. After forty-eight persons had been arrested on a general warrant, Wilkes refused to obey it, and told the messenger he would kill him if he endeavoured to enforce it. Nevertheless, he was compelled to surrender to numbers, was committed to the Tower, and deprived of his militia rank. Wilkes was discharged from the Tower on a question of privilege of Parliament, and immediately attacked the Secretaries of State. Actions for damages for illegal arrest were brought and tried before Lord Camden and a jury. Wilkes recovered damages. His action

was followed by the other persons arrested, and many costly suits were thrown upon the crown.

Nevertheless, Parliament ordered Number 45 to be burnt, as a libel; and, in the meanwhile, Wilkes got through several duels with success, but found his debts too much for him. Returning to England after a sojourn in Paris—after protracted litigation, public riots, and illuminations—he was sentenced to fine and imprisonment, and was, moreover, expelled from the House of Commons, on the motion of Lord Barrington, by two hundred and nineteen votes against one hundred and thirty-six. Wilkes, however, was unconquered. He lived sumptuously, in the King's Bench, on the wine, poultry, game, fruit, and hard cash, sent him from every part of England—nay, even from Charleston, South Carolina. On the expulsion of Wilkes, a new writ was issued for the election of a member for the county of Middlesex. On the 14th February, a meeting of freeholders was held on the subject, and the result of their deliberations was that he was re-elected on the 16th. But the House of Commons declared the election void, and added that "Mr. Wilkes was, and is, incapable of being elected into the present Parliament." After considerable controversy, it was decided that an expelled member is incapable of being elected again to the same Parliament which expelled him. But the freeholders of Middlesex thought that Parliament had exceeded its powers, and persisted in re-electing Wilkes, once more, on the 16th of March. On the following day this election was also declared null and void. Another writ was issued, and Colonel Henry Lawes Luttrell was brought forward to oppose Wilkes, who, on the 13th April, was returned by the sheriffs as having eleven hundred and forty-three votes, to Colonel Luttrell's two hundred and ninety-six, but the House of Commons, following the Comyns-Tufnell precedent, in the Maldon case, ordered the return to be amended, by inserting Colonel Luttrell's name in the place of that of Wilkes. On the expiration of his term of imprisonment, Wilkes was more popular than ever. He was magnificently entertained at the Mansion House; presented with a silver cup, elected sheriff, alderman, and, at last, Lord Mayor, and triumphantly re-entered Parliament as member for Middlesex. In 1787, although beginning to feel the infirmities of age, the great

Tribune displayed all his ancient fire in the defence of the great Pro-consul. Warren Hastings's accusers had been thundering out diatribes, in which Hastings was compared to Verres; but Wilkes significantly remarked that "the House ought to recollect that, when the governor of Sicily was accused before the Roman Senate, scarcely an inhabitant of the island could be found who did not exhibit complaints against him. In the instance before us, though the prosecution, or, rather, the persecution of Mr. Hastings has been already nearly three years in progress, yet not a single charge or imputation upon his conduct has been transmitted from India." "When we consider," resumed he, "that, while the empire was mouldering away elsewhere"—America had been lost—"Mr. Hastings, by his exertions, preserved, unimpaired, our possessions in the East, I am covered with astonishment that a faction in this assembly should have been able to carry on the proceeding to the present point." This manly declaration brought down upon Wilkes a curious M.P., the eccentric Courtenay, who, after a few sneers at Lord Hood, went on to say: "The worthy alderman (Wilkes) possesses more sense than to feel anger when I mean him a compliment, as I do when I assert that his country owes him great obligations for having, at one period of his life, diffused a spirit of liberty throughout the general mass of the people unexampled, except, indeed, in the times of Jack Cade and Wat Tyler. The honourable magistrate has defended Mr. Hastings's treatment of the Begums, by asserting that those princesses were engaged in rebellion. Surely he must have looked at the question obliquely, or he never could have formed so erroneous an idea. Two old women in rebellion against the governor! Impossible. Nor would the worthy alderman have made an *Essay on Woman* in the same manner that Mr. Hastings did." This odd flight of eloquence teaches us, of modern times, to wonder but little at the violence of Wilkes. It is of no use replying with a tap of a lady's fan when people attack you with a flail.

Next turns up an unsavoury ghost, topped by an ancient scratch wig picked up in a gutter—that oddest of all odd members of Parliament, John Elwes, miser and gambler. His father, Mr. Meggot, a member of the bourgeoisie located in Southwark, left him a large fortune; but the

influence of his mother, who, though a very rich widow, is said to have starved herself to death, instilled into his mind those saving principles by which he was afterwards distinguished. It appears clear that the miserly spirit came from his mother's family, for it was carried to great lengths by his uncle, Sir Harvey Elwes, of Stoke in Suffolk, on visiting whom the young man invariably dressed for the part of the saving nephew. This generalship completely won the heart of the uncle, who loved to sit with his nephew before a miserable fire, with one glass of wine between them, while they inveighed against the extravagance of the times. As soon as night came on they went to bed, because they thus saved the expense of candlelight. One of Sir Harvey Elwes's biographers says that he never fell in love, for he made it the cardinal rule of his life never to give anything—not even his affections. Young Meggot, who was at this time a daring rider, a considerable gourmand, and a tremendous gambler, was known to all the fashionable circles of the metropolis, and frequented those clubs where play was deepest and longest; but his skilful management of his uncle was at length rewarded by a legacy of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds and the name of Elwes. His avarice was full of quaint peculiarities. He would sit up all night at play, risking thousands with the most fashionable and profligate men of the time, and, about four in the morning, would walk in the cold or rain to Smithfield to meet his own cattle, and would squabble energetically with a carcase butcher for a shilling. In 1774, Mr. Elwes was nominated for Berkshire by Lord Craven; but only consented to stand for that county, on the condition that he was to be brought in for nothing. All he actually did was to dine at the ordinary at Abingdon, so that he obtained a seat in Parliament for eighteen pence. Chosen for Berkshire in three successive Parliaments, he sat altogether about twelve years as a thoroughly independent member. Dying in 1789, at the age of seventy-seven, this queer member left a fortune of half-a-million sterling, besides entailed estates.

Also possessing a taste for gambling, but otherwise utterly unlike Elwes, was the celebrated "M.P. Gully."

The ingenious Thomas Raikes, writing under the date of December 15th, 1832, liberates his soul in this fashion: "One

of the effects of the Reform Bill is, that the bone-grubber, W. Cobbett, is returned for Oldham, while, on the other hand, the notorious Mr. H. Hunt has been turned out of his seat at Preston. The new borough of Brighton, under the very nose of the Court, has returned two most decided Radicals, Wigney and Faithfull, who talk openly of reducing the allowance made to the king and queen. The famous pugilist and bettor at Newmarket, Gully, has been returned for Pontefract. In short, the new Parliament will produce a curious medley."

John Gully, like Neate, and other famous boxers, was a Bristol boy, and one of the finest specimens of humanity to be found in England. At that time prize-fighting was as much a national institution as horse-racing itself, while cricket and rowing were almost unborn. Gully was a singularly fortunate man in either ring. Defeated, after a tremendous encounter with the celebrated Game Chicken, he subsequently became champion of England, after beating Gregson in two great battles. Understanding both figures and horses, he soon left the P. R. for the betting ring, and, as a "bettor, round" with those tremendous gamblers, Old Q., Lord Foley, Lord Abingdon, Colonel Mellish, Charles Fox, and William Pitt, no doubt made a handsome percentage out of his book. Having gradually acquired sufficient capital, he owned a small string of horses of his own, and, having given Lord Jersey four thousand pounds for Mameluke, winner of the Derby of 1827, at the subsequent Ascot meeting, in three bets alone lost twenty-one thousand pounds on him in the St. Leger. This famous, but unlucky, horse, brought back his owner some of his money the following year; but this severe experience was only the prelude to the victories of Margrave in the Leger, Mendicant in the Oaks, the Hermit in the "Gninea," and of Pyrrhus the First and Andover in the Derby.

In the agitation which preceded the passing of the first Reform Bill. Mr. Gully, who then resided at Aekworth, near Pontefract, took an active part, and, being accused of having spoken too strongly on the dictation practised by Lord Mexborough on the electors of Pontefract—wherein he was wide of the mark—he consented to stand in opposition to him for the borough, and was triumphantly returned for the first Reformed Parliament, and also sat in the second one.

But the late hours of St. Stephen's were ill suited to a man accustomed to the fresh air of the heath, and the sunlit bustle of the ring side. The health of the famous athlete, who had "polished off" the gigantic Gregson on the memorable occasion when the championship was fought for in silk stockings, was found unequal to the wear and tear of Parliament; and, although his constituents gave him a *carte blanche* about his attendance, he felt constrained to forsake an assembly wherein he had acquired the respect and good-will of all with whom he came in contact.

The "bone-grubber" alluded to by Mr. Raikes, was the country lad who, after running away from home, becoming a lawyer's clerk, serving in the ranks, rising to be sergeant-major, and visiting Canada and the United States, settled in Pennsylvania as a publisher, and soon became a political writer of some power under the name of "Peter Porcupine." Having made America too hot for him, Cobbett set sail for England, shaking the dust from his feet on what he then stigmatised as "that infamous land, where judges become felons, and felons judges;" and, returning to England, became editor of the "Porcupine." Cobbett had a mania for pitching into men and institutions; and possessing real common-sense, and a happy knack of giving his opponents ridiculous nicknames, became a power in the land. Again visiting America, he, in a fit of enthusiasm, brought Tom Paine's bones back with him—an action by which he suffered much in public opinion. Burning to get into Parliament, he made unsuccessful attempts at Coventry and Preston; and, at last, having regained his popularity, during his trial for publishing a seditious article in the Register, was returned to Parliament for Oldham. The ploughboy, the private of the Fifty-fourth, after a variety of vicissitudes had become a member of the British Legislature. "Nor for this," wrote Lord Dalling and Bulwer, "had he bowed his knee to any minister, nor served any party, nor administered with ambitions interest to any popular feeling. His pen had been made to serve as a double-edged sword, which smote alike Whig and Tory, Pitt and Fox, Castlereagh and Tierney, Canning and Brongham, Wellington and Grey, even Hunt and Waithman. He had sneered at education, at philosophy, and at negro emancipation. He had assailed alike

Catholicism and Protestantism; he had respected few feelings that Englishmen respect. He had been a butcher; he had been a bankrupt, of a trade which excluded him from the jury box, and in a list which proclaimed him publicly to be insolvent." Yet, alone and unaided, he had at last cut his way into the great council of the country, at an age exceeding that allotted to man—a respectable-looking, red-faced gentleman, in a dust-coloured coat, and drab breeches with gaiters. Tall, and strongly built, with a round and ruddy countenance, and a peculiarly cynical mouth, he entered the House of Commons an old man of seventy, and immediately took his place as one of the best debaters in it—a feat unparalleled in the annals of the House.

Many more odd members have taken part in the assembly at St. Stephens. There are ribald persons, who would not hesitate to pronounce the behaviour of the present premier as savouring somewhat of oddity in his "young and curly" days of velvet "continuations," when he uttered the famous prophecy—"The day will come when you shall hear me!" Out of the minds of middle-aged men has not yet died the memory of Colonel Sibthorpe, who never tired of denouncing the Great Exhibition of 1851 and of expressing his utter "want of confidence in the ministry." An honourable member has been heard to declare his willingness to "die on the floor of the House;" and the Sergeant-at-arms has, on more than one occasion, been called upon to exercise his functions; but in bidding farewell to odd members I cannot do better than make my final bow to the drab spectre of that thorough representative of insular oddity—sturdy old Cobbett—quaint, passionate, sensible, and obstinate—an odd Member of Parliament, but a man and an Englishman every inch of him.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER II. LOOKING BACK.

IF Mr. Heath had had his way, it is probable that he would have answered the question put to him by the shabby man, as to whom "he should like to murder next?" in a very practical manner, by then and there disposing of his inter-

rogator. If, while denying himself this pleasure, he had desired to indulge in the rare chance of speaking the truth, the words which would have started unbidden to his lips would have been, "That sh devil, your daughter!"

For the shabby man in the foreign-cut coat covered with worn and shining braid, and the slouch hat—the man with the tottering gait, and the thick hot breath, who stood swaying about uneasily in his bulbous boots—was all that remained of Ned Studley: the man who "looked like a duke, don't you know," and than whom, at one time, neither Long's nor Limmer's ever turned out a more perfect type of the ex-military swell. There was a leer in his bloodshot eyes, and a half-fatuos, half-insolent smile on his blotched and bloated face, that drove Heath nearly wild with rage; and it was all that he could do to bring the power of self-interest to his control, and to prevent himself from seizing the mouthing idiot by the throat, and shaking him soundly. An instant's reflection, however, made him appreciate the enormous price which he would have to pay for the luxury. The old man then standing before him, weak and wretched, with a craving for drink, which, without his aid, he was unable to supply—a pauper, homeless and friendless—was easily managed and disposed of; but if he once were made aware of the fact of his daughter's existence, of her bold self-reliance, and of the way in which she had exerted her power, he would doubtless still have sufficient natural cunning left to see how his hold over Heath had been strengthened, and to avail himself of the knowledge. Plainly, therefore, it was Mr. Heath's business to temporise with his disreputable father-in-law, and render him as amiable as possible.

"Is it you?" he said, with that affectation of frankness and bonhomie which had often stood him in good stead; "I declare I did not know you at first, your foreign appearance quite deceived me."

But the captain was very far from being moved by these blandishments. "My appearance is something more than foreign," he said, with a downward glance at his shabby clothes; "and, in the same way that there are none so deaf as those that won't hear, there are, I reckon, none so difficult to convince of our existence as those who wish us dead. That is about your sentiment towards me, Mr. Heath; and that is why I ask you who you would

like to murder next, with the perfect knowledge of what you would say if you spoke the truth."

Heath's face darkened for a moment, but the cloud was quickly gone. "It is scarcely advisable, is it," he said, "to use such ugly words, even if you have reason to complain of me, and I do not think you have? But we will talk that subject out at length. I was going to write to you in reply to your letter from Ostend, but your presence here simplifies the matter, and we can arrange it much better in conversation. Have you dined?"

"I had some infernal corned beef and bottled stout on board the Ostend boat, at three o'clock, if you call that dining," said the captain, "but I have touched nothing since—at least nothing solid, I mean."

"Then let us get some dinner and have our talk at the same time," said Heath. "No, not in there," he continued, as his companion made a move towards the station restaurant; "we should find that too noisy, too crowded, and too British altogether. I know a place where we can be more at our ease, and where the cuisine and cellar are both irreproachable."

He offered his arm to his companion as he spoke, and, pulling his hat far over his eyes, to avoid the chance recognition of any passing acquaintance, led him out of the station and across to Leicester-square, plunging into a labyrinth of streets, where the houses, from their external appearance, would seem to have been transplanted from some foreign city. Entering one of them, in which, from the obsequious bows bestowed upon him by the portly, bald-headed landlord, and the brisk French waiter, he seemed to be well known and highly respected, Mr. Heath made his way to a small private room on the first floor, not much larger than a warm bath, but prettily furnished and tastefully decorated, and there issued his orders for the repast; which, he said, might be commenced at once, while the soup and fish were in preparation, with a few hors d'oeuvres in the shape of prawns and radishes, and a bottle of Sauterne.

A deep draught of the rich, mellow wine, for the glass from which he drank was bell-shaped and thin, sent the colour mantling again through Captain Studley's bloated face, and brought the light into his bleared and rheumy eyes. "That's good tipple, glorious tipple," he said, smacking his lips as he replaced his empty

glass upon the table. "If I could drink that always, I should be a man again. I am not the man I was, sir, when we used to do business together. Age has clutched me in his claw, as I recollect hearing one of them say at one of the penny readings; and I am left alone in the world, at a time when I ought to have my friends and family about me."

As he concluded these maunding remarks he shook his head solemnly, and pushed his glass across the table.

"You must not give way in this fashion, Studley," said Heath, filling the glass and returning it to his companion with a pleasant smile. "You know the saying, 'There is life in the old dog yet?'"

"Yes," said the captain, after sipping his wine, "that's all deneed fine about the old dog, but the quantity of life in him entirely depends upon the state in which he is kept. Let him have the run of the kitchen, stretched before the fire and fed with the scraps which fall from the master's table—the master's table," said the captain, repeating the words as with a dull reminiscence of something that he had heard before, "and he will go on all right; but if he is left out to sleep in an old barrel, and only gets dirty bones and such like—well, he will have a very bad time of it. And that's my case, Heath; I am rather in the old-barrel-and-dirty-bone line, I am thinking, and I don't see why I should stand it, sir; and, what's more, I don't intend to."

"Here is the soup," said Heath; "we will go into that question by-and-by, when we have got rid of the waiter. Don't put any pepper into it, my good fellow," he continued, lifting up his hand in horror; "the cook would faint if he saw you experimenting with his bonne femme after that fashion."

"My palate wants a little exciting, it isn't so keen as it was, and that's the fact," said the captain. "I have often heard about the doctors who tell the poor people to supply themselves with good port wine; but I never appreciated the point of the joke until lately. I ought to live well, I know, and I can't—that's about the truth of it."

"I don't see that you have much to complain of, Studley," said Heath, without any anger in his tone; "the allowance which I have hitherto been able to make you is certainly not large, but it ought to be enough to keep you going; and if you keep up your old skill at play—"

"But I don't, sir," said the captain, interrupting him; "both skill and luck seem to be gone. They have introduced some new games, too, that I do not manage to get hold of as I did of old; and even when there seems to be a decided run of luck, I find myself funkings in backing the card or the colour. Besides, I am too old, and too ill, to be carrying on this sort of game any longer. I don't want to be dependent on the clearness of my head or the steadiness of my hand any more. I want enough to keep me in comfort on the Continent—I have lost all taste for London—with my half bottle of wine for my breakfast, my bottle at dinner, and some hot grog at night. What I get now won't do that, and that's why I wrote to you. You got my letter?"

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Heath, through his teeth; "I got your letter."

"I thought I would come over myself for the answer, as you were not too quick about it," said the captain. They were half through the dinner by this time; and the empty bottle of Sauterne had been replaced by one of Beaune, which was nearly in the same state as its predecessor. "What have you to say to my proposition?"

"I do not clearly recollect what it is in detail," said Heath, with a smile; "but I suppose it may be generally taken as asking for more money. I do not wholly object to that, but my notion is you are arguing on false premisses. You seem to take me for a wealthy man?"

"I only echo the general opinion," said Studley; "and there cannot be much doubt about it, I shold think. The manager of Middleham's bank, besides getting a pretty heavy screw of his own, must be in the way of getting certain information which cannot fail to turn into money."

"It is precisely by declining to avail myself of any of the information of which you speak, and rigorously confining myself to my duties at the bank, that I have been able to hold my position, and to secure what is, undoubtedly, a very good salary," said Heath.

"Well, but the young lady," muttered the captain, whose voice was gradually becoming indistinct, "the heiress that you are going to marry? Hold on a minute, I have got it here—I am not one to speak without book." He fumbled in his breast-pocket, and after much trouble, from the recesses of a greasy note-case, produced

a newspaper cutting; then with much difficulty in adjusting a pair of glasses on his nose he read—

"Forthcoming marriage.—We are enabled to state that a marriage has been arranged between Miss Middleham, the heiress whose debut this season has created so great a sensation, and Mr. George Heath, a gentleman who for some years has managed the well-known banking establishment from which the young lady's fortune is derived."

"What do you say to that?"

"Say, my good friend?" said Heath. "I say that the story is a lie, from beginning to end; that the statement has not the smallest foundation in fact; that some penny-a-lining donkey has learned through the butler, or the kitchenmaid, or some other source from which these creatures get their information, that I have been in the habit of seeing a good deal of Miss Middleham—which is quite true, having to consult her constantly on matters of business—and has started this idiotic story."

"What! do you mean to say that it is not true that you are going to marry Miss Middleham?" asked the captain, hazily.

"No more than that you are going to marry her, my good fellow," said Heath; "and I suppose that is scarcely likely. Do you know what brought me to the Charing-cross station just now? To see Miss Middleham off to Germany: not to escort her there, or take leave of her as a friend or as a lover, as they wish to make out, though, if I had been her lover, and her affianced lover, I should scarcely have allowed her to go alone. Simply as a matter of business, to see her and her—and her maid, off by the mail train. There is not a word of truth in the report, I tell you."

"There does not seem to be," said the captain, shaking his bemuddled head. Then, after a few moments' consideration, he looked up at his companion with a stolid glare, and said, "Anyhow, that is the future, with which we have nothing to do, sir. My business is with the past, concerning which I shall have certain things to say, which would be found highly interesting in a court of justice."

Heath started, but, on looking up, he discovered that the captain's head had fallen on his breast, and that he was already in a semi-somnolent state.

"Very little wine has an effect upon him now," muttered Heath to himself; "and I

suspect it is only when he is in this crazy, muddled state, that he utters threats or thoughts of vengeance. Nevertheless, it will be advisable to get him abroad and keep him there, where his ravings are not so likely to be understood or taken hold of. What a miserable degraded wretch he has become! If his daughter cared but little for him, any filial feeling she might have would probably vanish entirely if she saw him now. Or perhaps the other way," he continued: "merely to find him in such a state of misery and disgrace might soften her heart towards him—women are so perverse, there is no knowing what they may or may not do." He sat there, occupied with his own thoughts for some little time, with his eyes fixed upon the slumbering figure of his companion, listening to the stertorous breathing, and eying with scorn the fits of nodding which passed over him, and the contorted postures into which he fell. When the waiter had brought the bill, and received payment, Heath thought it time to rouse the captain from his slumbers—prodding him with his stick, as he might have done to a dog, and telling him sharply to get up and be off. The captain awoke, very much refreshed by the slight nap which he had taken. He had apparently some little difficulty in making out where he was; but recollection, when it came to him, was very full and vivid. "I have had forty winks," he said, yawning and shaking himself, "but they have done me good. A very pleasant dinner, and a very agreeable conversation; so agreeable that I think we omitted to settle anything about the business which we proposed to discuss—the question of increasing my allowance."

"It shall be increased," said Heath, shortly; "to what extent I cannot say just now. It is a heavy tax upon me; but I wish you to live in comfort and on the Continent, understand—anywhere out of England. Go back to Ostend, and I will communicate with you at your old lodging. Meantime, here is some money to go on with." He took a ten-pound note from his case, and handed it to the old man. As the captain clutched it in his moist palm, and listened to the delicious crisp sound, once so familiar to him, he was nearly relapsing into his maunding state; but he pulled himself together sufficiently to wish his benefactor "Good night," and with a feeble attempt at dignity he tottered off down the street.

Even after the retreating figure had fairly passed out of sight, Heath remained standing on the same spot, debating within himself what to do. He had had a hard day of it, and was both physically and mentally weary, and craved for rest; but he knew himself too well to believe that sleep would come to him at once. What he had gone through was of too exciting a character to be easily laid aside, and he doubted whether it would not be better for him to go to the quiet and decorous club to which he belonged, and sit deeper into the night in conversation with some of the acquaintances he was sure to find there, rather than give himself up to thought in his solitary chambers. Finally, however, he came to the resolution that it had to be faced and fought through, and that he had to take immediate decision in regard to his own future—the aspect of which had been so completely altered by the circumstances which had happened during the day just passed. So he turned his face to the north-west, and strode forth in the direction of his home.

In selecting his home, Mr. Heath had exercised his usual excellent judgment. With his income he might have lived where he liked; in chambers in the Albany, or a bachelor residence in Mayfair. There were plenty of City men, whose position was nothing like equal to his, who drove away in their broughams, at the conclusion of business hours, and, until they returned again to the hive, were as gay and as useless as any of the drones of West-End society; but Mr. Heath had no purpose to gain by any such exhibition of luxury and ease; he knew, on the contrary, that the less display he made the more highly he would be thought of by those whose good-will it was desirable for him to cultivate, and his own inclination led him to select more modest quarters. He had accordingly taken up his residence in a big rambling block of houses, formerly an Inn of Chancery, but long since unconnected with the law, and let out in chambers to anyone who could give the steward satisfactory references as to his respectability and his rent-paying powers. In the house in which Mr. Heath occupied one portion of the first floor, a queer colony was located. There, at the top of the last steep flight of stairs, was the story occupied by Mr. Crosshatch, the engraver, where the patient man and his assistants sat hour after hour working away under the shaded

lights. There the Nova Zembla Consols Tin Mining Company had its office, the destinies of which were presided over by an old man in a mangy sealskin waistcoat, who looked as if he knew nothing of tin in any shape, and a boy, whose sole occupation appeared to be to write his name on the ink-stained desk, and to smear it out again with his elbow. There, Messrs. Minchin and Minus, solicitors of the highest respectability, carried on their business; and thence Mr. Plantagenet Bouvier, army agent and diamond merchant, otherwise Ezra Moss, bankrupt baked-potato salesman, issued his polite circulars to noblemen and gentlemen, offering at once to advance them any sums of money simply on their note of hand.

The rooms on the first floor, into which Mr. Heath let himself by his latch-key, as seen by the light of the lamp burning on the table, were large and commodious, plainly furnished, with a due regard to comfort, but without any attempt at luxury, save, perhaps, in the well-filled book-cases, and in the excellence of the proof prints hanging on the walls. He took some letters from a rack fixed on one side of the mantelpiece, and examined their addresses under the lamp, but they were apparently of no interest, for he put them aside unopened, and throwing himself into an easy chair, was at once immersed in a reverie. Not a reverie of a pleasant kind either, if one could judge from his knitted brow, and the manner in which he gnawed his nether lip. With unequalled nerve aiding him in the carrying out of the most desperate crime, without a trace of conscience, this man was yet superstitious, and a frightful feeling of an impending Nemesis was on him now. The occurrences of the day had been too much for him, he had lost his usual power of command over his thoughts, and could turn them into none other than unpleasant channels—the recollection of the defeat he had sustained, the unsatisfactoriness of things in general, the extraordinary intrusion into his life of the woman who had played so conspicuous a part in a certain portion of it, and whom he believed to be dead—the superstitious feeling was strong on him at that moment, and he could not bear up against it. All that had happened that day seemed to come to him in the light of an omen. Was it so, was his career really winding up? He sprang from the chair under the spur of

that idea, and commenced pacing the room with hasty strides. The fancied security in which he had lived, and which had enabled him to carry his head so high, and set at defiance whatever might come, was vanished, gone into air! What safety from detection had he now, would he ever have again? Who could answer for the circumstances which might induce a woman, whose hatred and vengeance were all the more terrible because of her clearness of brain and strength of mind, to reveal all she knew. All was changed now, all his plans for the future had crumbled away. He smiled bitterly to himself as he thought of the career which Mrs. Crutchley had sketched out for him, as the lazy member of Parliament, with dinners and wife alike irreproachable. No, that pleasant vista was closed for ever; but there was no reason why one almost equally pleasant should not open in its stead. Not in England though, there the game was played out; but he was very well off, he had plenty of money, even though the coup of marrying the heiress on which he had calculated with such certainty had failed—and on the Continent he might enjoy himself in a manner, and with a freedom which he had never yet known; his life had been one of toil and trouble hitherto, and he might now enjoy it. Not quite yet, though. He had engagements on hand—one in particular—a financial scheme which would take some months to secure, but which, if it turned out as he expected, would have the effect of doubling his fortune.

Yes, with such resources as he would then possess he could indulge himself to the top of his bent; there would be no need either of the dissimulation which he had practised throughout his career, of the dread so long laboured under lest the discovery should be made, that the faultless and decorous bank clerk, so pure and so respectable, had his weaknesses and his passions like other men, and indulged in them as freely as the rest, if with more watchfulness and secrecy.

A curse on the thoughts, they would still run in the same groove! The robbery

of the bank, so long cogitated over, so cleverly planned, so nearly executed with success, had it not been for the old man's awaking; the figure of the old man wildly fighting for life, and the awful bush that followed when he succumbed! A horrible mistake that matter altogether! The booty secured had been large indeed, but on the acquisition of it had resulted the unintentional murder, and the commencement of the compact between himself and Studley which had placed him in his present dangerous position. A combination of horrors was upon him, from out of which kept looming up, from time to time, distinctly visible, a woman's face—bright, fascinating, and bewitching—with laughing eyes and a sunny smile; and that reminiscence was the worst of all. He must get rid of it at any cost. Not there, the closeness of the room oppressed him; he would go out into the air and walk it off.

Into the teeming thoroughfare, teeming still, but with a very different population from that thronging it during the day. The Miranda Music Hall, bowing itself under the strong arm of the law, was closing its doors, turning off its gas, and turning out the customers, who would willingly have remained there for three or four hours more. Out they came, streaming into the street, a motley crew. Boy clerks, with wizened old faces and youthful figures; dissolute vagabonds, knights of the pavement and heroes of the kennel; and women—among whom, Great Heavens! Heath saw the face which had risen so often before his mental vision that night. The same face, but oh, how different! The light had died out of the eyes, and the smile had gone from off the lips. The woman was worn, weary-looking, and glaringly dressed. He moved aside in horror; and though her gown touched him as she stepped into a Hansom-cab, which an attendant sprite had hailed for her, she saw him not.

There was no more walking for Mr. Heath that night. He hurried straight home, and put himself to sleep with a strong narcotic.

THE OPAL RING.

THE EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CONTAINING THE AMOUNT OF TWO ORDINARY NUMBERS.

CHRISTMAS, 1874.

PRICE
4d.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE WEAVING OF THE SPELL	1
THE FIRST ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK. LA VAFRA	13
THE SECOND ENTRY. THE SECRET OF ALI THE NUBIAN	19
THE THIRD ENTRY. BEATRICE	27
THE FOURTH ENTRY. PRINCE MICHAEL'S GIFT	31
THE FIFTH ENTRY. THE RING RETURNED	41
THE BREAKING OF THE SPELL	47

THE OPAL RING.

THE WEAVING OF THE SPELL. CHAPTER I.

"LOCK ho ! Lock, lock, lock!"

"Ah, here he is, punctual to his regular time," said old Dan Bradley, the lock-keeper at Streamside, as he threw down the spade with which he had been working in a little slip of kitchen-garden formed out of the peninsula, with the flowing river on one side of it, and the peaceful backwater on the other, "the regularest customer as I have had this summer; and the best for the matter of that, always bidding me keep the change out of the sixpence, and never grumbling even when he has to wait for a string of barges to get out of the lock, or one of them screaming steamers that is ruining the place. He must have been here nigh upon three months now, for I recollect the first time I saw him was when I was nailing the new net over the cherry tree to keep them audacious birds off, and now the leaves is beginning to fall like rain."

"Lock, lock, lock!"

"Right you are. Good day, Mr. Haddon," said the old man, taking off his weather-beaten straw hat, and wiping the moisture from his brow, after the exertion of straining at the ponderous gate. "How do you find yourself this afternoon, sir?"

These words were addressed to a tall, strongly-built, broad-chested young fellow, dressed in a blue cap, a striped Jersey, flannel trousers turned up at the ends,

and white canvas shoes; a young fellow whose light blue eyes and short curling fair beard were set off by the deep red bronze with which his handsome face, well turned neck, and shapely muscular hands were covered.

As he sat at his ease in his long light sculling-gig, he looked the embodiment of health, strength, and good humour. "I am all right, Dan," he said, with a cheery laugh, "making the most of my time, you see, for I'm going back to town to-morrow. To town, and to work," he added, with a sigh. "We will make it half-a-crown to-day, old man, as it's the last time; and give us a grip of your hand to say good-bye."

"Good-bye, Mr. Haddon," said Dan, stretching out his fist, knotted and gnarled as a bit of hickory, after carefully rubbing it on his trowsers. "You will be coming down next year I suppose; but not alone, if all what people says is true."

"What do people say, Dan?" asked the sculler, looking rather sheepish.

"Oh, not much sir; folks will talk, you know, sir," said Dan; "only if what is said is correct," he added, with a grin, "you'll have to bring rather more of a family boat up from Searle's next year. That gig ain't made to carry a sitter, especially when that sitter's a lady."

"Get out, you rascal," said George Haddon, his face beaming with pleasure, "get out, and let me out of the lock, for I am five minutes behind time already."

"The party as is waiting for you won't have gone away I reckon, though you be a little late," muttered the old man to himself, waving his hat in adieu to the sculler, already some distance down stream; "leastways, if she be, women must have changed a good deal since my time."

Meanwhile the rower pursued his vigorous way, with flashes of light glancing from his dipping oars, over the broad water, flushed with the reflection of the declining sun, under the shadow of arching trees, among little islands covered with nodding flags and rushes, past little gardens of lilies sleeping on the bosom of the stream and swaying with its current, until leaving the general highway, he turned his boat into a quiet backwater, ran her aground at the foot of a gently sloping meadow, and having made her fast to a projecting stump, leaped lightly ashore. Away in the distance, some half mile over the undulating land was to be seen an old manor house, with its imposing stone façade, its gleaming windows, its smokeless chimneys, its indescribable air of solitary stateliness and grandeur. George Haddon looked at it, as he pulled his boating jacket over his shoulders, and shook his fist at it as he muttered, "You are dull enough to look at now, but I wonder what you will be when she's gone. The one sign of life and light that you have had in you for years past is going to leave you—do you know that, you old wretch? And yet I ought not to growl at you, for if it hadn't been for you I should never have known my darling; never have known the happiness which I have enjoyed during the last six weeks. What can have become of her—she has never missed an appointment before, and surely she cannot be prevented on this our last chance of meeting." He turned suddenly as his ear caught the sound of footsteps in the evergreen walk which encircled the meadow, and rushed off, with both hands extended, exclaiming, "Darling."

"Darling," was about nineteen, with dark brown hair lying between her shoulders in a broad twisted queue, with dark hazel eyes, impudently provoking nose, a very kissable rosebud mouth, and sound wholesome teeth. "Darling" was of middle height, becomingly dressed in blue flannel, with a white flannel sailor's collar and cuffs, a hat knowingly turned up on one side and lined with blue, very trim about the boots and gauntlets, and

altogether very charming. "Darling's" name was Marian Dudley, but her intimates called her Minnie; and, somehow, she looked more like it.

"Don't say I'm late, George," she commenced, holding up her finger in depreciation of an expected attack. "Mrs. Bostwick absolutely refused to take her nap, and I thought I should never get here."

"You are here now, darling," said George, placing her arm in his, and taking her hand as they strolled up the walk, "and so there is no more to be said."

"Yes, but I can only wait five minutes," said Minnie, "at the most. It would have been awful, you know, if I hadn't been able to meet you this last time, when we have to say good-bye, and so I said that I must go to the vicarage, but that I would be back directly."

"This is better than the vicarage, pet," said George, bending over her and looking down into her eyes.

"Yes, I know it is," said Minnie; "but it would be horribly awkward if anyone were to go there and find I hadn't been. I would not mind it's coming out tomorrow after I have gone away, for Mrs. Bostwick does not correspond with uncle James, and she will have forgotten all about it by the next time I come here."

"The next time you come here you will have me to act as your chaperon," said George; "have you forgotten that, Minnie?"

"No, indeed, I have not forgotten," she said. "I think of nothing else. I have been thinking of it all night, George, and I have decided it would be far best for you to write to uncle James."

"I would sooner see him," said George; "there is nothing like facing a man when you have anything important to say to him."

"Yes, that's all very well," said Minnie; "but uncle James is so very peculiar. To me he is all kindness; if I were his own child he could not be more affectionate, but his manner with other people is very odd and abrupt; and as you are equally high-spirited, I think it far better that in the first place you should write to him."

"Very well," said George, "I will do so. The most important letter I shall have ever written in my life will not be a very long one. I shall merely tell him that I love you, and that I have your permission to ask his sanction to our marriage."

"That is all," said Minnie, with a little move, "quite a slight affair, isn't it?"

"And I am not to see you until I get his answer?" said George, not heeding her.

"Most certainly not," said Minnie. Then seeing he looked a little hurt, she pressed his arm and added, "Dearest George, I dare not attempt it. It's easy enough to deceive poor old Mrs. Bostwick, here, who thinks we never meet except when I am duly chaperoned by her, but it would be a very difficult matter with uncle James; besides, to tell the truth, I would not attempt to deceive him. I owe all I have in the world to him, and he is so very kind and generous, that I could not be such a wicked little wretch."

"All right," said George, with a sigh. "I will not ask you again. You go up tomorrow morning?"

"Yes," said Minnie, "by the express. Mrs. Gordon, the vicar's wife, goes with me, and uncle James meets me at Paddington."

"I thought I might have a chance of travelling with you," said poor George, "but the vicar's wife knocks that idea on the head. Oh, Minnie, darling, how shall I exist without seeing you?"

"In hope, dearest," she replied, in a more serious tone than she had hitherto used, "in the hope that this our first parting may be our last; for when uncle James knows that my happiness is at stake—I shall not hide from him the feeling I have for you—he will do anything to ensure it. Hark, there is the dressing bell, and I have only two minutes to stay. See, George," she said, lifting her collar, "I am wearing the locket you gave me yesterday. I have put it on to a chain which I have had for years, and I will never leave it off while I live. And now I have something for you in exchange. I saw it once in a dressing-case of my uncle's, and admired it so that he gave it to me. Now I give it to you, and you must promise me always to wear it in remembrance of me."

As she spoke she took from her pocket a ring and slipped it on to his little finger. It was a large and brilliant opal, oval shaped, and set in fine diamonds.

"It is wonderfully handsome," said George, examining it.

"So I thought," said Minnie, "but my uncle evidently did not attach much value to it, though it seemed to possess some kind of fascination over him too. He looked

at it long and lingeringly, and seemed at first reluctant to part with it."

"It shall never quit my finger," said George, "unless you claim it again when you are my wife."

"Now I must go," said Minnie, "I must indeed. Good-bye, George, dearest; you know how much I love you, and how anxiously I shall await uncle James's reply to your letter. We have nothing, I think, to fear, for even had he any prejudice against you, I think I have sufficient influence to overcome it."

For one instant he wound his arm round her and pressed his lips to hers; the next she was flying towards the house, while he stood gazing after her, silent and motionless.

When George Haddon stepped into his boat again the sun had sunk and the sky was of a dull leaden hue, a chill wind too was blowing, lashing the river into wavelets, and sighing drearily amidst the willows and alders on the bank. George's heart was heavy within him; but there was a stiff stream to pull against; the exercise did him good, and when he reached his rooms at the riverside inn his spirits were calmer and more hopeful, even though, to his fancy, the opal ring seemed to flash forth gleams of somewhat baleful light.

CHAPTER II.

THE friends of Mr. James Leagrance, who were invited to dine with him three or four times during the year, at his residence in Harley-street, were in the habit of remarking that the house was well-suited to the man. Their acquaintance with the house was confined to the dining-room, a large and gloomy apartment painted salmon colour, and furnished with dark mahogany chairs with faded leather seats, a very uncompromising and not-to-be-sat-upon sofa, wheeled at right angles to the fireplace, and a huge mahogany sideboard, under which stood a receptacle for wine, also in mahogany, and exactly resembling in shape an ancient sarcophagus. On their arrival, the guests passed the few minutes previous to the announcement of dinner in the drawing-room, which was a still more weird and ghastly apartment. There spindly-legged chairs in chocolate chintz covers were dotted at exact intervals all round the walls, a cold, shiny, rosewood table stood in the middle of the room, having for its sole covering four well-bound, antiquated, and unreadable books, a model of the Leaning

Tower of Pisa under a glass shade, and an enamelled paper weight, and there a bronze Ariadne sitting on a panther on the top of the black marble clock in the middle of the mantelpiece kept eternal watch over the Parian vases, with nothing in them, on either side of her. When they got home, such of the guests as were blessed with wives, prosperous proctors, rubicund solicitors, and elderly barristers with snug sinecures, would slyly compliment their spouses by compassionating their recent host's celibate state. "Such a pity Leagrave never married," they would say, "most forlorn-looking place his, no sign of a woman's touch about it."

And yet if those worthy gentlemen had been let into the secret, which they were never likely to be, for Minnie had obtained from her uncle an assurance that she should never be called upon to play hostess on these occasions, or to make the acquaintance of "his old foggy friends," they would have found within the four walls of the Harley-street house an apartment which would have put their preconceived notions to the rout. That green-baize double door on the staircase, which such of the old boys as noticed it on their downward passage to dinner, believed to be the entrance to a smoking-room, wondering they were never asked there to finish the evening with a cigar, really led to a large passage, at the end of which was Minnie's boudoir, her own room, which none save the privileged were allowed to enter. Such a little room! In rose-coloured silk and walnut-wood, with étagères and what-nots, velvet brackets, and all the frivolity of upholstery in every possible and important place, with a small grand piano, at which Minnie used to warble, and a rosewood Davenport, with a paper stand always full of note-paper and envelopes radiant with cipher and monogram worked in every kind of expensive way, at which Minnie used to write. At the end of the room a little conservatory, full of sweet-smelling plants, where a little fountain played and little gold fish swam, and the gas jets were cunningly hidden behind swinging baskets or stained-glass shades.

This room was the outward presentation of the sole, supreme, and absolutely unspoiled satisfaction of Mr. James Leagrave's life. He was a prosperous man, and he took a certain pride in his prosperity, but he was not a happy man. A casual observer, who should give himself the trouble to study Mr. James Leagrave's

countenance, and to listen to his remarks when any subject removed from the range of mere business discussion was under consideration, would have had no difficulty in pronouncing him to be a moody man of unsociable disposition—not inconsistent with a kind heart, for of such he was indisputably possessed—and the last person in the world to be suspected of a "weakness" in the line of the affections. The existence of Mr. Leagrave's niece was, of course, known to such of his associates as had any claim to be regarded as intimates as well, but little more than that fact was known about Minnie Dudley. That the penniless child of the dead sister of this cold and gloomy man lived in his house in an atmosphere of luxury which any scion of aristocracy would have been content to breathe, and hold in his heart a place which only an unusually beloved child is supposed to claim, would have filled with amazement all the "old fogies" against whom Minnie protested so effectually.

Her position did not give rise to much reflection on the part of Minnie Dudley. She had always been used to it. She had no memories of childhood apart from her uncle's loving care; she had no standard of contrast, and her heart turned to the cold, stern man, who was never cold or stern to her, "free as bird on branch." No sense of obligation had ever burdened it, no hard lesson of the difference between her fate and that of other children, orphans like herself, had ever chilled it. She had been carefully educated, according to her uncle's notions of a woman's fitting education, under his own superintendence, to an extent which would have completed the astonishment of his friends, if it had come to their knowledge; but of "the world"—in the sense of its harsh dealing and interested calculation—she had been taught nothing. That when time should bring her a dearer interest—a closer tie in life—it could produce any chill, any lessening of that which bound her to her uncle, was an idea which never crossed Minnie's mind.

We find Minnie in the room which had so much meaning for James Leagrave, one morning, three days after her return to London, in a deep reverie, with her head bent, and her hands idly clasped before her. She was thinking of George, wondering whether she were really worthy of that deep love in which she knew he held her, taking herself to task for the

slighty way in which she had often treated him, and inwardly promising amendment when she should be married. As she was in her day-dream, she felt a light touch upon her shoulder, and looking up, saw her uncle standing by her side.

A tall, spare man, over fifty years of age, a man who must have been handsome before time or trial had stamped the crow's-feet round his eyes, and the deep indentations in his cheeks; and who, with his curling iron-grey hair, his clean-cut features and his erect figure, was still noticeable and distinguished looking.

"Uncle," she cried, "how you startled me! I was in a day-dream and never heard your footstep, else I should have reused myself to receive you in my territory with proper honour."

She had risen from her seat, and was about to make him a mock reverence, but she caught the expression of his face, and stopped suddenly.

"What is the matter?" she said. "You surely are not vexed at my folly?"

"No, child, not the least in the world," said Mr. Leagrade quietly. "As you say, I seldom venture into your territory, and should not do so now, were there not a matter of great importance on which I have to speak to you. Sit you down again, child, while I take this chair, and we will discuss the subject."

Minnie's gaiety had vanished, her heart sunk within her, and her face grew deadly pale; she had an instinctive knowledge of what her uncle was going to say, and trembled at the result.

"I have received a letter," said Mr. Leagrade, fixing his earnest eyes upon his niece, "from Mr. ——," he seemed to have difficulty in forcing out the name, "from Mr. George Haddon, a gentleman who tells me that he recently made your acquaintance while you were staying at Streamside with Mrs. Bostwick. That is so?"

Minnie bowed her head in acquiescence.

"He proceeds to say that he has fallen in love with you, that you are aware of his feelings, and that you have referred him to me for a reply to his formal proposal for your hand. That is also true?"

This time Minnie found voice enough to say "Perfectly true" in reply to the question.

"Marian," said James Leagrade, bending forward and speaking in a deep, thrill-

ing tone, "I would rather see you dead than the wife of that man."

"Uncle!" cried Minnie, shrinking back, "what can you know of George? What can —?"

"If you have any love for me," said James Leagrade, interrupting her, "in return for the love which I have showered upon you; if you have any gratitude for your rescue from what would have been a life of poverty and drudgery, and for the position which I have given you; if you have any desire that my future should not be more solitary, more care-worn, and more embittered than is my present existence, I conjure you, if any feeling for this young man has taken root in your bosom, to pluck it up and cast it away."

Minnie buried her face between her hands and was silent.

"For the first time, during all the long years in which you have lived under my roof," he continued, with deep tenderness in his tone, "I speak strongly to you, and I insist upon your obedience. What my reasons are for being thus exacting you need not ask, for you will never know. It must suffice you to believe that they must be strong indeed when they impel me to speak thus to one whom I so dearly love. Minnie, the attachment between us two is no common kinsmanly affection; you have been accustomed to look upon me as a father, and I could not have loved a daughter more devotedly and unreservedly; but, understand me plainly, with such horror and loathing do I look upon this proposed alliance, so convinced am I of the ill-fortune which it would bring upon us all, that if you set yourself up in opposition to me, and refuse to cancel any pledges you may have given to this young man, in one instant I will renounce the affection which has been the growth of years, and cast you off for ever."

"Uncle," said Minnie, turning her tear-blurred face towards him, and extending her hand, "may I not speak?"

"Nothing that you could say can affect my determination," said James Leagrade, impetuously. "One would think that there need not be much hesitation in deciding between the claims of one person who has nourished and cherished you since your childhood, and of another whom you have known but for a few weeks. But there is no time for hesitation. You must give up this man,

or you must give up me. I declare solemnly that, merely taking your own future into consideration, I would rather you were dead than you should bear his name!"

There was silence for a few moments; then Minnie said, in a broken voice, "What would you wish me to do?"

"I would have you examine your own heart, before you decide," said James Leagrave. "I would bid you let your memory wander back over the years which have passed since I brought you to this house, a little child, and try to recall whether I have ever done anything which was not dictated by the deepest and purest affection for you. What I have done must be the guarantee for what I am doing now. It is not, it never will be possible, except, perhaps, when I am on my death-bed, to give you the reasons for this arbitrary, and, as it may appear to you, tyrannical behaviour."

"What would you wish me to do?" repeated the girl, sobbing convulsively.

"Oh, Minnie," continued James Leagrave, apparently not heeding her, but speaking in a more tender and more pleading tone than he had yet adopted, "is the sacrifice which I ask you to make so very great? You have known this man for a few weeks, for two months at most; and you have been the light of my life, the one ray of joy in this dark and solitary house, for seventeen years. I no longer command, I implore you to give him up. Can you hesitate between us?"

"I will do your bidding," said Minnie, raising her head. Her tears had stopped, and there was a stern expression in her face.

"Even so," said James Leagrave, coldly. "So that you are saved from future destruction, my end is accomplished. I will write a formal reply to this gentleman, but it must be supplemented by a letter from you. In cases like this," he added, in a low tone, "an answer is not considered conclusive unless under the hand of the principal."

"I will write whatever you dictate," said the girl, with a gesture of despair.

"Not so," said her uncle. "Use your own sense, and your own words; exonerate yourself, and lay all the blame on me. I only make one stipulation, that is, that you should give him no hope, and leave him in no doubt; there must be no attempt at a reversal of the decision. It has been reserved for—Mr. George Haddon to impart into our lives the one painful sub-

ject which has ever arisen between us; his name, and his aspirations, must never again be mentioned."

CHAPTER III.

THE red-faced morning sun which, on the day after the interview between Minnie Dudley and her uncle, looked down through the brooding November fog upon the tall gaunt house which stands at the corner of Wastepaper Buildings in the Temple, saw some odd sights, and found several of the denizens of that nest of legal luminaries very differently situated from what was supposed to be their normal position. In the ground floor, for instance, it found that great orator, Mr. Sergeant Scrunch, who is believed by his eloquence to bend Parliamentary Committees to his will, but who was then sitting mute and tongue-tied opposite to his indignant wife, who had followed him down to chambers for the purpose of obtaining a cheque for the domestic expenditure, and who was pouring forth a very flood of objurgation on the subject of her husband's meanness, against which the unfortunate Sergeant could make no head. On the first floor it discovered Mr. Bullenden, Q.C., mixing a seidlitz powder, and endeavouring to master the contents of a French note, written in a very shaky scrawl on pink paper, while his ante-room was filled with attorneys, who were assured by the clerk that the great man was engaged in consultation on a most important matter. In the second floor, Mr. Netherton Whiffle, that rising junior, was deep in colloquy with an unshaved individual in a smeary fustian suit, and a battered white hat with a black band, the topic of interest being the price to be paid for the restoration of Mrs. Netherton Whiffle's favourite dog, which had been "found" by some of the unshaved man's friends, and which was then tied up in a back kitchen of an empty house at Wapping. But, strangest sight of all that the red-faced sun looked upon that morning was in the top story of the same house, where abode Mr. George Haddon, a young man of fortune, who had been called to the Bar, but who never had, or wished to have, any practice, and who, from his happy disposition and general easy-going temperament, was known among his friends as "The Smiler."

Scarcely an appropriate appellation, though, for the young man under present circumstances. His shirt is open at the throat; he unbuttoned it a few

moments ago, when he thought he should have choked; his hair, usually so neatly arranged, has been pushed from off his forehead, and stands erect in a rough and tangled, but not unpicturesque, mass; his hands are thrust deep into the pockets of his dressing-gown; his slippered feet are tattooing on the floor; his eyes glare; his teeth are tightly set, while before him on the table lies a letter, to makoroom for which the untasted breakfast has been pushed aside.

"Incredible!" he mutters. "If the words were not there in black and white, and in her handwriting, which I know so well, I never would have believed it: 'Never to meet again,' 'eternal farewell,' 'duty and obedience to him to whom she owes everything in life.' The old jargon of the novelist, which has done duty a hundred thousand times, and which is not yet considered worn out. Why did she lead me into a fool's paradise by false hopes and simulated preference. She might have amused herself with me when there was no one better for her to try her hand upon, but it was too cruel to deceive me to this extent, when, a month ago, a word would have saved my making such a fool of myself.

"Can it be of her own free will that she has done this, or has she given in to the desires of her uncle, that uncle of whose kindness and regard for her she was always speaking? Puppet to her uncle's threat, and servile to a savage tongue. That's what it is! She could never have been so false, she, my Minnie, my own darling, whose little hand lay in mine not three days since, as she looked up into my eyes, and told me she would wear the locket I had given her as long as she lived! Here's her ring, too, which has never left my finger since she put it on! It's too horrible—it seems impossible to believe! and yet here's the letter, written in a confoundedly unmistakeable clear hand: 'unable to accept your flattering proposal for Miss Dudley's hand, and am authorised by her to decline any further communication.' Flattering proposal! I only wish—What a fool I am!" he cried, as he threw himself into a chair, and the tears welled into his eyes. "I had no notion how I loved that girl until now, when I feel that I do not care what becomes of me, that life is impossible without her. I can't stay here. I should go mad! I'll go back to the river, to the places where we used to meet, and—What shall I do! what shall I do!"

He leaned his head on the table, and covered his face with his hands. When he looked up again there were traces of tears in his eyes, and his cheeks were very white.

"I cannot stand it," he muttered. "I cannot go on here with my usual life, knowing that she was within a mile of me, without making an attempt to see her, and thus lowering myself in her eyes. She is desperately proud, and if she has pledged her word to this man she will keep it: nothing would induce her to break it, and she would only think badly of me for endeavouring to make her. The mere thought that she was there, with a crowd of fellows round her, no doubt, would drive me mad. I must go away, far away, America or somewhere, until I have forgotten her, or at least until I can bear to think of her very differently from what I do now! Yes," he said, after a few minutes' reflection, "that's the only chance! Get right away somewhere, where I shall have nothing to put me in mind of her; not even the ring, for I must send that back, of course." He raised his hand to his lips as he spoke, and kissed the opal ring fervently. "Not yet, though, I'll wear it to the last, and post it to her just before I step on board the steamer at Liverpool. I ought to be horribly savage, I know, but I'm only stumped and smashed, for I loved her with all my soul, and I love her still."

He had rung the bell, and his servant stood at the door.

"Get me a hansom, Wilson," said George; "and while I'm away just look through my clothes, and see what I shall want for the next six weeks. I start for America on Saturday, and I shall take you with me."

"Yes, sir," said the man, who was too well trained to exhibit the slightest sign of surprise.

"Now to tell the madre about it," said George to himself when the servant had left the room; "and that's perhaps the hardest bit of the whole affair. She will never understand that her son could be refused by anyone, especially by a girl with nothing particular in her birth and position; and she will look upon me with anything but admiration in the first place for having fallen in love at all, and in the second for giving up so quietly. Dear old madre! she has more spirit in her even now, at her age, than I have, and she will be furious at the whole affair. Hansom

here, Wilson. All right. Now for a pleasant scene in Portland Place!"

George Haddon, on arriving at his destination, was shown at once into the drawing-room, in a corner of which, near the window, he found his mother seated, engaged in knitting. A tall, stately old lady, Mrs. Haddon, with the regular features which she had transmitted to her son, who in that respect greatly resembled her; her iron-grey hair dressed high above her forehead in stiff curls, each curl being kept in its place by a small comb. She wore a dark plum-coloured silk gown, with a large white lace cape crossed over her shoulders, and plenty of delicate falling lace round her small and still plump white hands. As she stood erect, and looked keenly and somewhat defiantly out of her bright black eyes, the lustre of which Time had been unable to quench, it was impossible to avoid feeling that she was not an ordinary commonplace member of society, but a woman with a story, one who had suffered and been strong, and who even now seemed dowered with the "scorn of scorn, the hate of hate," if such feelings had been aroused in her.

Not by any means a demonstrative old lady, she put her hand on her son's shoulder as he bent over her, and touched his cheek with her lips.

"Twice in one week!" she said, with eyebrows uplifted in astonishment. "I am honoured indeed! It was only two days since you came to tell me of your return."

"And now I am here on a very different errand," said George, putting a chair close to her side. "I am going away again at once."

"Not back to the river, I should hope," said Mrs. Haddon. "Those places are unhealthy at the fall of the leaf, with mists and other horrible things. Brighton would be much better."

"I am going further than Brighton, mother; I am going to America," said George.

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Haddon, with perfect composure. "Someone—oh, Charles Fanchope—was here yesterday, to tell me he is going to America. So many young men go there now-a-days. I suppose it is an amusing place."

"I hope I shall find it so," said George, moodily, for he was somewhat surprised at the calm manner in which his mother had received the intelligence of his intended departure; "I am going in search of distraction."

"What a restless being you are, George!" said Mrs. Haddon, laying her knitting in her lap, and contemplating her son. "No sooner in London than you want to start again! I suppose that river place, though, was dreadfully monotonous, and that you require a little excitement after it."

"In that river place, as you call it," said George, "I was happier than I ever was in my life; as happy," he added, after a pause, "as I am miserable now!"

Mrs. Haddon, who had resumed her knitting, again laid it aside. "As you are miserable now," she repeated, folding her hands and bending forward. "You have something to say to me, George. Your visit this morning has a purpose. Why do you not tell me what it is?"

"Mother!" said George Haddon, "you have guessed rightly. I came to say goodbye to you, for I am going to America; but I came also to tell you—there is no one else in the world to whom I could tell it—the reason of my going."

"Speak, George!" said Mrs. Haddon. "We do not see much of each other now, it is not likely that we should; I am an old woman and you a young man, but we are mother and son still; and if you are in trouble, as I judge, it is natural that you should come to me before anyone else. What is it, George?"

"The old story, mother—love!"

Mrs. Haddon's eyes flashed under her knitted brows, and she shrugged her shoulders impatiently. "Ay!" she muttered, "it is time for that, I suppose! The only wonder is that it has not come before! Well, George—you have been in love?"

"Have been, and am!" said George, "with the prettiest, the most ——"

"Spare me, please!" said Mrs. Haddon, holding up her hand, "recollect I am an old woman, and spare me! I am perfectly willing to take all the lady's charms for granted. Did you meet her at this river place?"

"Yes," said George, considerably abashed. "She was staying with some friends in the neighbourhood. Her name is Dudley, Minnie Dudley, and—and I fell in love with her."

"Did you tell her so, or at all events take care to let her see it?" asked his mother.

"I told her, and a week before I left I asked her to marry me."

"Practical, but somewhat injudicious after so short an acquaintance," said Mrs. Haddon, with a hard smile. "What did

Miss—I presume she is Miss—Dudley say?"

"She accepted me conditionally. She told me that she was an orphan, brought up by, and wholly dependent on an uncle, who loved her as if she had been his own child."

"Not generally a characteristic of uncles," said the old lady, "well?"

"Minnie would do nothing without her uncle's knowledge — nothing, I mean, definite. I offered to go and see him, but she thought it better that I should write, saying that though he was kindness itself to her, yet he was an odd man, somewhat of a cynic so far as I could make out, and as I had a temper of my own—or at least she said I had—it would be advisable that we should not meet."

"Miss Dudley seems to have common sense, at all events," said the old lady. "Did you write?"

"I did, and this morning received a reply. The uncle is unable to accept my flattering proposal, and on behalf of his niece begs leave to decline any further communication."

"But does he give no reason?" said Mrs. Haddon. "Are you too poor for these people—not sufficiently well-bred? Does the man object to your having courted his niece without his knowledge? He must say something—what is it?"

"He says nothing beyond what I have told you, mother. I left the letter at chambers, but I have repeated to you the very words."

"And is it this rebuff which has decided you upon leaving England, George; which has rendered you miserable, and turned the current of your life? This, and nothing else?"

"This, and nothing else," said George. "Mother, I can't tell you how I love that girl! I've been knocking about London for the last five or six years, with as many temptations, and having as many flirtations as most fellows, I suppose, but I never cared for anyone before."

"I don't think there is any occasion to take the matter au grand sérieux, George," said Mrs. Haddon, in a graver and more kindly tone. "I am an old woman of the world, and though my experience is small, having had no daughters, yet I was young myself once, and in love. Depend upon it there is some mistake in this matter! You are young, good-looking—I may say so, though you are my son—and a gentleman. You have plenty of means to

maintain Miss Dudley in a position quite equal, I should think, to any which she has ever enjoyed. This man has never seen you, and fancies, likely enough, that you are some idle, worthless young fellow, trying to entangle his niece into a promise of marriage. He must be shown his mistake. You must call upon him, let him learn who you are, and I'll engage that after a time he will modify his tone, and be only too glad to have a Haddon as a suitor for his niece!"

"Do you think so, mother?" said George, with a ray of hope lighting up his handsome features. "If you could only make me believe that!"

"I do think so, my boy!" said the old lady, laying her hand affectionately on her son's. "I am sure of it! Why, if only—Good God! what's that?" she suddenly cried, in a shrill tone, pointing with her finger to the opal ring. "Where did that come from?"

Her eyes were starting from her head, her outstretched finger trembled with emotion, and her breathing was hard and quick.

"What?" cried George, looking up at her in astonishment; "the ring? Oh! Minnie—Miss Dudley—gave me that when I parted from her."

"Where did she get it? Do you know? Tell me, quickly!" said Mrs. Haddon, still quivering with excitement.

"Certainly; from her uncle, who had had it a long time."

"His name—what is his name?" cried Mrs. Haddon.

"Leagrave—Leagrave! Good heavens, mother, what is the matter?" cried George, springing up, as the old lady, with a cry, fell backward in her chair.

With a great effort Mrs. Haddon recovered herself.

"It is nothing," she said, after a moment's pause, "nothing to be alarmed at! Let me look at that ring again, George!"

He held out his hand, and she examined the ring carefully, but without touching it.

"Take your hand away," she cried, with a shudder. "George, you know me to be a tolerably clear-headed, common-sense woman! At least you have known me as such hitherto; what will you think now when I tell you that all that I said to you just now, I revoke! Forget your life of the past three months, pluck the remembrance of Miss Dudley from your heart! It will be best, for she will never be anything to you!"

"Never be anything to me—Minnie?—nothing to me? Why, mother, what has caused you to change your opinion in this extraordinary manner?"

"Don't ask me for my reasons, it is impossible that I can give them! Let it suffice for you to know that they are all-powerful! You will never marry Minnie Dudley, George; never, at least, while James Leagrade is alive to prevent you!"

"What makes you think that, mother?" asked George. "Do you know this Leagrade? have you ever seen him?"

"I can tell you nothing," said Mrs. Haddon. "I will tell you nothing, except that you must give up this girl! George!" she added, with a sudden softening of her voice, "you are my son, and I love you dearly, as dearly as any mother who makes far greater show of affection, and seeing your heart was set on this marriage, I was prepared to help you to the utmost. But I cannot do it now, and if I could it would be of no avail."

"What then, mother, do you counsel me to do?" said George, upon whom the despondency of the morning was fast settling down again.

"Go abroad as you proposed to do when you first came here this morning," said his mother. "Go abroad, to America, anywhere; only stay long enough until you have completely cured yourself of this passion. And, before you go, return this ring to Miss Dudley; or, if you have still a feeling for her and wish her well, take it with you and throw it overboard as soon as you are in deep water. But in no case keep it, if you wish for happiness again. Now, leave me, please! Come and see me again before you go. I have more to say to you, but now I am tired and overcome. Ring the bell as you pass, and tell them to send my maid to me."

She put her arm round him, and kissed him affectionately; then leaned back in her chair, and before he had left the room was lost in reverie.

When George Haddon found himself back in his rooms at the Temple, he threw himself on to the sofa, and began to pass in review all that had transpired at his mother's house.

"I can't understand it," he muttered after a time. "There is never much to be made out of the madre, who is always remarkably self-contained, and she surprised me very much by her burst of affection, and her declaration that I should get the better of this objection, and be

received by Leagrade as a proper suitor for his niece. She was so earnest about it that she almost persuaded me into the belief. Consequently the shock was greater when, apparently without the slightest motive, she turned round and

— Now what the deuce can it have been which upset her in that way? At sight of the ring she turned deadly white, and I thought was going off into a faint. What a strange thing, now, that the madre should have been affected in that way! I've heard of the superstition that opals are unlucky stones, but I should have thought that with her strength of mind she would have been the last person in the world to have believed in such nonsense. And yet there must be something more in it than that, after all. Why did she ask me for the name of Minnie's uncle? and why, when I told her, was she so painfully distressed? From that moment she abandoned the counsel which she had previously given me, and declared that all attempts to reverse Mr. Leagrade's decision must be futile. What can she have known of Mr. Leagrade, to make her speak so positively about him? Why did she so peremptorily refuse to give me any explanation about it? It is a most mysterious business altogether," said George Haddon, rubbing his eyes; "and I am now more determined than ever to get away and do my best to forget all about it."

At that moment the servant entered the room.

"What is it, Wilson?" asked George, looking up. "Have you begun your packing?"

"Yes, sir," said Wilson; "just doing it now, sir. Boy come for the Times, if you please, sir."

"There it is," said George, pointing to the paper. "No! let him leave it. I want to see which of the Cunard line sails on Saturday. I hope it may be the Cuba," he muttered, after the man had left the room; "I know some of her officers, and they might help to rouse me out of this horribly desponding state."

He took up the paper, and throwing himself back in his chair, began glancing over it in search of the information he required. While thus engaged, the following advertisement caught his eye:—

"CLAIRVOYANCE AND MESMERISM.—Professor Longueville may be consulted at his residence, 44, Adelberg Terrace, Coburg Square, by appointment only."

"Longueville!" said George; "that's the man who cured Tom Holdsworth's sister of epileptic fits, the man about whom Jennison was speaking the other day; who, while in a trance at this Adelberg Terrace, exactly described Jennison's house at Brighton which he had never seen, the situation of the doors and windows, the peculiarities of the family portraits, and the position of a figure of a dancing Bacchante on the chimney-piece! By Jove! the professor is the very man to help me in my present difficulty! If he is really as gifted as they say, he may be able, by his somnambulism or his mesmerism, or whatever they call it, to tell me the story of the opal ring, to reveal why the madre was so powerfully affected by it, and what it all means. At all events, it's worth trying. I'll send Wilson off with a note, asking for an appointment at once."

In a couple of hours Wilson returned with the reply. Professor Longueville would be happy to see Mr. Haddon at seven o'clock that evening.

CHAPTER IV.

"THIS doesn't look very mysterious!" said George Haddon, as he glanced round the room at Adelberg Terrace, into which he had been shown, punctual to his appointment. "Portraits, thin-faced old Frenchman, décorés, of course; ditto of a handsome old French lady, hair dressed à la Marie Autoinette, and rather like the madre. Bust of Mazzini on the mantelpiece—hallo, Professor, is that your line of politics!—and plaster caricature-statuettes of Roger the tenor, and Rachel, by Dinton. Books, La Harpe, Dr. Elliotson on Mesmerism, and the Zoist! Nothing very wonderful in all this. I wonder whether the professor is an enthusiast or a do? Must be one or the other, or probably might be a little of both. That's no business of mine. If he could tell Jennison all that about a house which he had never seen, there is no reason why he should not be able to help me in my little affair."

His soliloquy was interrupted by the entrance of a middle-aged man, with a bald head, a thin worn face, and remarkable eyes. Large thoughtful brown eyes, like those sometimes seen in a stag; no brilliancy in them, no sparkle or lustre, but an expression which, while soft and almost sad, was very intense.

"Mr. Haddon?" said he enquiringly, speaking with a very slight foreign accent,

and glancing the while at George's note, which he held in his hand. "I am Professor Longueville, but—but surely it was not you who proposed to consult me. There is no trace of illness about you," he added looking at George's stalwart proportions.

"None, thank Heaven," said George with a smile, "and yet that is my letter in your hand. I have heard of your fame, professor, and I want to see some proofs of it."

"You are evidently not aware, sir," said the professor, stiffly, "that I give consultations for health alone. If you have any other purpose in coming here, I cannot receive you." He moved towards the door.

"Don't misunderstand me," said George, with more earnestness than he had hitherto displayed. "There are mental as well as bodily complaints, and from all I have heard you may be able to give me much relief. I am a friend of Mr. Holdsworth and Mr. Jennison, who have both spoken of you to me."

"Those gentlemen are worthy friends of mine, certainly," said the professor, "but you must be good enough to be more explicit before I go for a consultation."

"I'll speak out frankly, then!" said George. "The fact is, M. Longueville, I am in love. The young lady loves me in return, but her guardian refuses to hear of our marriage, and I am nearly out of my mind about it."

"I pity you very much, sir," said the professor, grimly, "but it is no part of my profession to make love-philtres, or potions to soften the hearts of guardians."

"No! no! but hear me out! I have a fancy—Heaven only knows whether there is any sense in it—that these misfortunes have come about through this opal ring which the young lady gave me; at all events that it has played some important part in former events, which now exercise a baleful influence on my hoped-for marriage."

"The ring is handsome," said the professor, looking at it, "but the stone is unlucky. In the days of Pliny the elder—"

"Yes," interrupted George, "never mind about Pliny the elder, please; what I want to know is this—Can I, through mesmerism, or anything of that kind, learn the story of this ring, to whom it has belonged, what it has gone through, and so on?"

"Undoubtedly!" said the professor. "A somnambulist, while entranced, and put on rapport with the jewel, would see

all that had ever happened to it since its origin, and could tell its history in detail."

"The deuce he could!" cried George. "Why that is exactly what I want. If you can manage to get that for me, I'll give you—"

"We will not go into that part of the question, if you please," interrupted the professor, holding up his hand. "As I have already told you, I only give consultations in the matter of health. But, as you are a friend of two friends of mine, and as you obviously are in earnest in your enquiries, I will see what can be done."

"It's awfully good of you, I'm sure," said George. "You don't know what an immense thing it would be to find out what is the matter, because then some kind of explanation might be made, don't you know, and the thing put right?"

"If you will wait here a minute, I will come for you when I am ready," said the professor, as he left the room.

"Going to prepare the hanky-panky, I suppose," said George, when he was left alone. "What an ass I am to have come here on such an errand! I don't know anything about clairvoyance, but I suppose there will be all the tomfoolery of the darkened room, and the raps from the spirits of Julius Caesar and other distinguished defuncts. I had better have gone straight to old Leagrade and had it out with him, instead of wasting my time here, I imagine."

"Will you walk this way, Mr. Haddon?" said the professor at the door. George followed him into a handsome drawing-room, lit with gas and well furnished. A young lady, of delicate lymphatic appearance, with blue eyes and fine hair, was seated at the piano. She rose as George entered, and the professor introduced her as Miss Cornthwaite, "with whose assistance I hope to give you the information you require, Mr. Haddon," he added.

George bowed, and thanked Miss Cornthwaite in anticipation, wondering within himself what on earth she had to do with it.

He had not to remain long in doubt. "I have promised to endeavour to help you in this matter," said the professor, addressing him, "but before commencing the operation, I will say a few explanatory words. The principle which I am going to invoke for your aid is called animal magnetism. By his will and by the power of that faculty by which he moves and breathes, a man can often exercise upon

his fellow-creatures a certain indescribable influence. This is mesmerism or animal magnetism. To establish a connexion between the operator and the patient, there must emanate from him who mesmerises to him mesmerised a something which, for want of a better name, is called the magnetic fluid. This is merely a figurative expression; we know it is not a solid and therefore call it a fluid, but very little indeed is known about it. In order that the mesmeriser may control his patient, it is necessary that there should exist between them a feeling of sympathy both moral and physical. How the physical sympathy is established, you will shortly see. As to the moral bond, it is formed between two persons by the ideas or wishes which occupy them mutually at the time. The first condition necessary for mesmerising is a strong will, the second that the mesmerist should have perfect confidence in his own powers. The third is benevolence, or the anxious desire to do good. I have the two first, I know; your earnestness, Mr. Haddon, inspires me with the hope that I have the third. All the necessary conditions being thus fulfilled, we will proceed with the operation."

As he finished speaking, the professor, after motioning his visitor to the sofa, placed an arm-chair in the middle of the room, with immediately facing it a somewhat higher stool. To the former he conducted Miss Cornthwaite, on the latter he seated himself, having first obtained from George the opal ring, and placed it on the fourth finger of Miss Cornthwaite's right hand. Then he took Miss Cornthwaite's hands within his own, and held them there, palm to palm, for a few moments, while his eyes gazed steadily into her's. The professor's next proceeding was to withdraw his hands, throw them out, and allow them to rest for about the space of a minute upon the shoulders of his patient, and afterwards draw them slowly down Miss Cornthwaite's arms, with a certain light pressure, from the shoulders to the tips of the fingers.

Under this influence a change came over the patient. Her face contracted, there was an evident twitching of the hands, and her arms hung lifelessly by her side.

When the professor noticed these symptoms, he placed his hands above the patient's head, kept them there for about half-a-minute, and then drew them slowly

down, at the distance of an inch or two, opposite the face, until they reached the waist, where he leant for a moment with the points of his fingers, then continued the movement slowly along the body to the feet. These "passes" were repeated many times, and George noticed that at the close of each movement the professor took care to shake his fingers. At last he concluded his operation by allowing his hands to meet, and making, at the distance of three or four inches, a few transversal passes before Miss Cornthwaite's face. By this time her eyeballs were upturned, as happens to one about to sleep, and the professor, closely examining her, pronounced her to be in a mesmeric trance.

"Now, Mr. Haddon," he said, "I am about to question her. Do you pay attention to all she says?"

George pulled a note-book with which he had provided himself from his pocket, and took his seat close by Miss Cornthwaite's chair.

"You have a ring on your finger," said the professor, addressing himself to his patient. "Can you tell its history?"

"I can," was the reply, delivered in a low but clear voice.

"Let us hear it from the very first," said the professor.

THE FIRST ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK.

You must be patient; for, although I can perceive some Things, I see them only as in a glass, and darkly. They are shadows coming out of a mist, and gaining every moment form and substance; but when they seem close to me, and I would grasp them, lo! they fade away into dim clouds again. It is as though the curtain of a playhouse had fallen while I reeked not of it; but there are actors behind that veil, and the murmur of many voices is incessant. So; now the mist clears away, and I can See. Shapes of living men are before me, palpable and tangible; and the murmur of voices rises to a roar.

The Traktir of the Three Emperors at Nishni-Novgored. During how many years in days gone by have not the daughters of Egypt sung the song, and danced the dance, and touched the Balalaika, and told fortunes to fools, and, with their bright black eyes, wheedled greater fools still to their de-

struction at the Great Fair? The Traktir of the Three Emperors at Nishni-Novgorod! There they are, all three: superbly daubed on the sign-board outside by an artist from Kasan. Here and there accuracy of design and propriety of light and shade may have failed him; but he has atoned for all shortcomings by plenty of bright blues and scarlets, and plenty of gold leaf, or what passes for gold. Tsar Peter Veliké; Tsar Alexandri-Paulowich; Tsar Nicolas-Alexandrovich. Yes; here are the Three Emperors, complete. The artist from Kasan was a devotional painter, much patronised by the clergy. He has given each Imperial Majesty a gilt nimbus, beautifully diapered, encircling his head; and the epaulettes of the Tsar Nicolas are so prodigious that they look well nigh like wings of bullion. In the great inner room of the Traktir, there hangs another picture, more resplendent in colour, and richer in gold-leaf, or what passes for it. It is in a gaudy frame, and in front of it is suspended, by three chains, a small brazen lamp, the flame in which is never extinguished. Nearly all the men who enter the room uncover their heads so soon as they cross the threshold; and, when they pass before this image, they reverently bow, and sign themselves. It is a Panagia, and is from the great religious factory at Kiev, where thousands of similar Panagiæ are painted and gilt every year. But there are customers of the Traktir of the Three Emperors who neither uncover, nor bow, nor cross themselves in honour of the painting. They stare at it, sometimes with a look of blank surprise, sometimes with an expression of amused interest, oftener with a glance of contempt and disgust. For what significance can the Panagia present to the worshippers of Brahma and Vishnu, to the followers of Mahomet and Moses, of Buddha and Confucius, to the disciples of Luther and Calvin? And they are all here.

Men of almost every physical type and in almost every variety of garb in the world we call civilised, and in most parts of that world which in our conceit we term uncivilised, are here gathered together. They are eating, drinking, smoking, playing at draughts and backgammon, laughing, singing even; but above all things they are buying and selling. This is the Temple of Mammon; and in good sooth, the shrine is exceeding dirty, and the sanctuary reeks with the evillest of odours. Things of sweet perfume are being sold elsewhere

at the Fair of Nishni—myrrh and frankincense, and benzoin; attar from Damascus and spices from Java; aromatically smelling caravan tea; trinkets of sandal-wood; scents, and soaps, and essences from the Paris Palais-royal; trunks and harness, and boots and slippers from the Gostinnoi-Dvor of Moscow and Petersburg, redolent of the perfume of the birch-bark with which the leather has been tanned. But in this House of Mammon only jewels are being sold—things inodorous in themselves, but which become unpleasant when golden imperials are wrapped up in dirty rags or greasy sheep-skin pouches, and when diamonds are revealed from the depths of a blue cotton pocket-handkerchief long secreted in the mangy fur cap of a trader from Amsterdam.

Not a woman is to be seen amidst this crowd. Not until evening are the daughters of Egypt allowed to enter, to dance and sing and tell lies about the future. The hours of the day are given up to business among the men-folks; business, however, carried on with an immense accompaniment of cabbage-soup and sturgeon eating, of cigar and pipe smoking, and notably of drinking. There is tea by the cauldron full—tea drunk hot and drunk cold, tea that looks black and is bitter and nauseous, tea that is golden-hued, and is sweet and fragrant. Still you can obtain stronger beverages at the Traktir of the Three Emperors. Its customers come from all parts of the world; and they may call for the claret and champagne of France, the beer and Rhine wine of Germany, the Xeres and Montilla of Spain, the schnapps of Holland, the brantwein and vodka of the North; and they shall still be served. See; there is a man in a tall hat and European clothes who has just called for a bottle of Duhlin stout, and he pays two roubles for it, cheerfully. Men are not sparing of their small moneys at the Fair of Nishni. Troops of waiter-boys ran about the great room of the Traktir, attending to the incessant and conflicting orders of the guests. They are strapping young lads, with fresh, rosy faces, and curly brown hair. They are clad in clean white shirts, embroidered with blue and red at the cuffs and collars, worn over their baggy knickerbockers, and boots reaching to the knee, and girt round the waist with silken sashes of bright tints. These waiter-boys are so many walking tables of foreign exchanges. They know to a kopeck how much a sovereign, a

Napoleon, an Isabellino, a doubleloon, a mohur, a Frederic d'Or, a gold eagle may be worth in Russian money; and they know quite as accurately how many kopecks they may cheat a strange customer out of when they give him change. There is not a very great deal of cheating going on; for nearly everybody who frequents the Traktir of the Three Emperors is as sharp as the sharpest razor of Sheffield, and keener than the keenest rapier that ever professed to have been manufactured at Toledo, but was really made at Birmingham. The dealers, too, keep the watchfullest of eyes on the precious wares they are purchasing or vending; and to guard against the intrusion of suspicious strangers, I see sitting at a table close to the door, two gaunt, grizzled-moustached men, in dirty grey coats, buttoned up to the chin, and with round flat caps with bands that were once of silver lace round them. They sit smoking continually, and playing some mysterious game, with an indescribably greasy pack of cards. From time to time the waiter boys bring them drink, tobacco, sausages, cabbage soup, bread and cheese, and what not. Every four hours the couple are relieved by two other men, their very images for gauntness, dirtiness, and capacity for the inhalation of tobacco-smoke and the reception of liquor. These are policemen, but their services are very seldom wanted. Here everybody can take care of himself, and takes it very carefully.

I know the man with the tall hat and the European garb—a travelling suit of grey tweed, such as you might buy on Ludgate Hill—who has just paid two roubles for the bottled beer. He is Mr. Louis Vanderplig, of the great firm of Vanderplig, Brothers, of Amsterdam, dealers in precious stones. Out of the tall hat and the grey tweed travelling suit he is seldom seen. His luggage consists of a small black shagreen dressing bag. In his breast pocket, perhaps, there may be peacefully slumbering a six-barrelled revolver; but that is no present concern of ours. The black dressing bag holds millions: millions worth of diamonds and other of the rarest gems: millions in bank notes and bills of exchange. Vanderplig Brothers do business with all the courts of Europe. Mr. Louis Vanderplig is as well known at Tsarski-Celo as at Schönbrunn, at Laeken as at Marlborough House, at Charlottenburg as at Stamboul. He has rung the area bell at every palace

in Christendom, and has the entrée of all the backstairs. If you ask him if he ever does business at the Vatican, he shakes his head, and tells you that the folks there are rather too wide-awake customers for him. But he goes to Brazil sometimes, and looks in at Washington and New York on his way home. Mr. Louis Vanderplug has had, in his time—he is a hard-set, well preserved man of fifty—somewhat of a surfeit of precious stones; and, in his rare moments of unbending, has been heard cynically to question whether the Regent, the Lazareff, and the Koh-i-noor, all put together, are worth much more than a glass drop from a chandelier with a bit of foil paper neatly stuck at the back.

This present summer Mr. Louis Vanderplug has come all the way from Amsterdam—he paid visits to half a score of Crowned Heads on his way—to the Fair of Nishni-Novgorod to buy—what? Opal. There is plenty of opal in the western markets, but it is not of the kind he wants; and that kind he knows that he can only obtain from Li-Chang.

"No can do," says Li-Chang to Mr. Vanderplug; "no piecey opal general want belongey my pigeon," which, being interpreted, means that Li-Chang professes not to be able to supply the dealer with the article he requires.

"Piecey fire opal go up topside galow, savey," continues Li-Chang; "he muchey moro big price than come pay last time. Ho go up chop-chop muchey more price next pigeon, savey." By this Li-Chang means that "fire" or iridescent and flashing opal has considerably advanced in price since last fair time, and that another and larger increase in rates may be expected before the ensuing year. Mr. Vanderplng knows that Li-Chang is telling falsehoods. He does not in the slightest degree object to his lying: it being part and parcel of the Celestial way of doing business. So he looks very keenly at his friend from the Flowery Land, who has the usnal tea-tray face, with the little black currant eyes and the eternal simper, and who is swathed in a long caftan of dubious hue, and trimmed with catskin; and says,

"Very well. You no my pigeon, I no your pigeon. No piecey opal me, no piecey diamond yon. And I know you want diamonds, you leering rascal," Mr. Vanderplng continues mentally, and in Low Dutch.

"No can catcheo piccey fire opal,"

Li-Chang continues to murmur. "Provinco mandarin catchee all fire opal belongeo Li-Chang. Catchee all him syce dollar, make Li-Chang eat bamboo. Muscov mandarin catchee more dollar. Make Li-Chang eat stick. Dam thief both pigeon, savey?"

"Muchee bobbery lies, my friend," continues Mr. Vanderplng coolly. "Muchey talkeo no my pigeon." And he empties his glass of Dublin stout as though determined to put an end to an unbusiness-like conversation, and begins to draw on one glove. Mr. Vanderplng always wears gloves—dog-skin; eight-and-a-half.

"Ingliz general worse than Mellican," grumbles Li-Chang. Why he calls his interlocutor a general, unless he considers it to be a convertible sum for a gentleman, is uncertain. "Mellican man give big booteckick on Li-Chang's shin-leggee. Ingliz much worse. Dutcher worse pigeon than all, topside galow, savey?"

"Bring out your pigeon," Mr. Vanderplng repeats in his steady voice. "Muchey fire opal bny's muchey diamond; both muchey syce dollar pay. All right."

With much more murmuring and sighing and wriggling, over all of which, however, the twinkling of the black-currant like eyes and the eternal simper are predominant, Li-Chang produces from the folds of his caftan, which is not unlike tho wonderful dressing robes from which conjurors produce bowls of gold fish and grand pianofortes—I know all their tricks, and they are but shallow rogues at bottom—a kind of leatherne satchel, the original colour of which may have been crimson, but which has been dimmed by time and use to the hue of a bullock's liver. This satchel is secured by a broad strap passing round it. Li-Chang undoes the buckle; and he then unrolls the budget, which opens like a 'trousse,' or case of surgical instruments, and, when laid flat, nearly covers the little table at which they are sitting.

"All opal, these, Li-Chang can catchey," says the Chinaman. "Now choose chop-chop what likey belongey bny. Then show Li-Chang much piecey diamond pay muchey dollar." He pushes the case towards the dealer from Amsterdam.

Mr. Vanderplng bends over the case spread out before him, and begins to examine, one after another, the pieces of opal, some cut and unset, others wholly uncut which are nestling in so many little leatherne pockets. All this while Li-Chang

continues to simper, and to watch his customer with those little twinkling black eyes of his.

"Hum," muses Mr. Vanderplug to himself, not in pigeon English, you may be sure, but in very grammatical Dutch, "there does not seem to be anything here beyond the vagabond's ordinary stock-in-trade. He certainly has the finest opal in the world, but he's hard to draw—hard to draw. So; what have we here; ah, silica with at least fifteen per cent. of water, and no oxide of iron. Silica and no alkaline earths; I can tell that by feeling. A good play of greens and reds in this 'noble' opal, but no real fire. A nice conchooidal fracture here. A Hungarian girasol: I've seen better from Cornwall. Milky opalescent; not worth a guilder. Bucharian eacholong; not much better than chalcedony. Menilite; I'd just as soon have a petrified sheep's kidney. Tabasheer; you've got that out of the joints of your own bamboos, Li-Chang. Hyalite and Fiorite, and Miller's Glass; you might as well sell me gun arabic." He looks up suddenly at Li-Chang. "No, my pigeon, this," he says, sternly, "good, Hog Lane, Kwantung. No good pigeon, Nishni. Fire opal, you rascal."

"So helpee me chin-chin Joss catchey Heaven," awnsers the Chinaman humbly, and throwing his hand flat on the table so that his long finger-nails clack on the hard leather "no belongey Li-Chang more fire opal. General, see Hungary girasol pigeon, good fire, but not much goody enough for big dollar price. So help him great grandmother's grave, Li-Chang no lie."

It is observable that when Li-Chang takes one of his ancestor's tombs to witness, he is generally telling the truth: when he swears by his great grandmother's grave he is to be believed, implicitly.

"Very well," observes Mr. Vanderplng, pushing back the jewel case, and drawing on his other glove. "I suppose I must say good-bye, Li-Chang, till next year?"

The Chinaman's eyes twinkle more brightly than ever. He rises in evident agitation, and draws from the vest of his robe a little leathern bag.

"Stoppee," he says, with somewhat of a quivering voice, "one more piecey opal here. Great devil opal. Come Mellicax-Mexican mountain—one great devil mountain all opal. Hydrophane, quick, fetchey glass water, come bring."

He produces from the bag a piece of opaque stone, which, lightly immersed in water, assumes all the colours of the rainbow.

Mr. Vanderplug shakes his head. "No my pigeon," he says.

"Then THIS," Li-Chang goes on, his voice assuming in his excitement a sharp treble pitch, "this more precious fire, more precious hydrophane—this opal found Desert of Gobi. Maskey piecy muchee price than Three Emperors, with their pigeon crown. Look General, look chop-chop."

But what Mr. Vanderplug is looking at, as he stoops over something held in the Chinaman's trembling hand, I cannot see, for a thick mist rises, and in the haze the Traktir of the Three Emperors at Nishni-Novgorod and its multitude of drinking and smoking and chattering guests altogether disappear. The cries of "Tchelovek"—waiter—cease; yet still behind the veil do I hear voices. There is the clear, calm, hard voice of a man talking French as only Russians can talk it:—faultlessly but without emphasis and without melody. There is the voice of a woman conversing in the same tongue, and in rich, soft, mellow tones, but with some dialectical difficulty, however, as though the speaker had but recently acquired the language of France.

"Upon my word, Vafra," says the voice of the man, "you are too exigent. This is the third time this morning that you have asked to look at my jewels. Well, you must be indulged in this, I suppose, as in everything else. There's the key of the malachite casket."

"I love the jewels only for your sake, my Serge," the female voice replies. "Give me the key, that I may seem to see in the glittering gems the sparkle of your eyes. All my diamonds should be yours—are they not yours already?—if you would only try to see the lustre of my eyes in them. But you don't love me, Serge, as you used to do."

"Spoilt child," interposes the voice of the man. "Spoilt child, that would cry for the moon, and expect to find somebody's eyes there. Take the key and be happy."

Slowly and gently the veil before mine eyes melts away, and I behold This:—

A superbly decorated and furnished apartment, which presents in appearance a whimsical mixture of the smoking-room and library of a bachelor, and the boudoir of a woman of fashion. The ceiling is adorned with fluted blue satin, the rays

converging to a centre formed by the golden effigy of a double-headed eagle with outstretched wings. The walls are also hung with blue satin, and the skirting boards are of ebony inlaid with ivory and gold. There is a harp in one corner, a cabinet pianoforte in another. The lower half of one of the windows is blocked up by an aviary full of singing birds; but over the mantel there is a huge trophy of bright burnished weapons—fowling-pieces, matchlocks, bows and arrows, yataghans, Damascens scimitars, daggers and pistols. On the opposite wall is a trophy as large and as sumptuous of chiboucks and narghilés, the amber mouthpieces of some of them encrusted with gems; together with fantastically carved meerschaum pipes and cigar-tubes. There is an abundance of mirrors, and there are many pictures; but of these last the majority are of a frivolous, not to say sensuous kind: "Pets of the Bullet," "Lights of the Harem," "Nymphs of the Sea-side," "Windy days on the Boulevards," and so forth. There is a large aquatint engraving, glaringly coloured, of "Newmarket Cracks" and "Derby Winners." There is a splendidly framed picture in oil of a tall and handsome officer in the full uniform of the Russian Chevalier Guards—cuirass, white tunic, spreading epaulettes, jack boots, silver helmet, and all. Next to this is a head in pastel of a most beautiful woman—young, dark almost to swarthiness, with lustrous black hair, and still more lustrous eyes. She is clad in a half-oriental costume. I know the originals of these portraits perfectly well. They are sitting now, in the sumptuous room, toying, and talking nonsense. The room is one of fifty as sumptuous in a palace on the Great Movskaiia, St. Petersburg. The man—he is out of uniform for the nonce, and is wrapped in an embroidered dressing-gown of Persian make—is Prince Serge Vacilikoff, of the Russian Chevalier Guards aforesaid. The woman, about whose limbs floats a ganzy white peignoir, is La Vafra, a Neapolitan of rare beauty, a ballet dancer at the Grand Opera House at St. Petersburg, and who has been living, these twenty months past, under the 'protection' of Prince Serge Vacilikoff. I know him very well. He began life just five years ago with an income of a hundred thousand roubles a year, the revenue of his estates in the government of Tamboff, in which there are not less than fifteen hundred 'souls' or peasants, with cotton factories, pottery works,

dyeing works, saw-mills, and all kinds of means and appliances to add to his revenues. He has led the life of most of the young Russian nobles of his epoch. Drill, debt, dissipation, Dominique's, Chemin de fer and baccarat, champagne drinking—only varied by an occasional trip to Paris, to Florence, to Hombourg, or Baden, or Monaco—these have sufficed to mortgage Prince Serge Vacilikoff's estates to their full value, to plunge him over head and ears in debt, to undermine his constitution, and to harden his heart to the consistence of the nether millstone. He is an accomplished gentleman. He can speak half-a-dozen languages with perfect ease and purity. He can draw and paint and model, play the pianoforte, and do tambour embroidery, beautifully. He is an excellent cavalry officer, and has more than once earned the applause of the Tsar, for his dashing behaviour on the parade ground. Moreover, he is as consummate a scoundrel as you might wish to meet with out of Siberia. His word is as good as his bond; and both are worthless. He is as ready to cheat at cards as to fight a duel with any one who accuses him of cheating; and the infernal ingenuity which he brings to bear on the task of seducing a woman is only surpassed by the alacrity with which he abandons her, when he has grown weary of her society. Of La Vafra, what more need be said, but that she is an Italian, and a ballerina, perfectly illiterate, passionately affectionate, and demoniacally vindictive when her jealousy is aroused.

She does not know that nearly all the jewels in the malachite casket, the contents of which she has been so anxious to explore this morning, are paste, and that the real gems have been long since pawned, to the Armenian usurers of the Apraxin-Dvor. She does not know that her own diamonds—the gifts of I know not how many princes and grandes—have long since gone the way of Vacilikoff's own valuables; and that almost the only precious thing in the casket is a wonderful piece of iridescent Opal, bought for him, so her lover tells her, from a Chinese merchant, by a dealer from Amsterdam, at the fair of Nishni-Novgorod. But there is something else of which she is in quest in this casket. It must be there, she thinks. When the key is given her, she opens the box, and takes out and looks at the sparkling lying contents—all but the iridescent Opal, wistfully. She cannot

find the thing for which she is craving. By-and-by Serge is called out of the room to receive a visitor, one of the Tsar's aides-de-camps, who is waiting for him in the grand saloon. Now do I see La Vafra on her knees, holding the malachite casket between her two hands; holding it, quite empty, upside down; shaking it, and putting it to her ear; then throwing it to the ground, and pressing every inch of its innermost surface.

"At last!" she cries, with a spasm of rage, fear, despair, in her voice. Her finger has touched a hidden spring in the casket. There flies open at its base a little secret trap; and from it she draws, with tremulous hands, a tiny gold locket, which she opens, and, with tigress's eyes, glances at the miniature within of a woman with fair hair and blue eyes.

"It is the Countess Katrina Boudinoff," she murmurs, sinking to the ground, and the tears raining down her face. "It is the accursed Lady of Honour to the court who sits in the first box to the left on the grand tier, and eyes me scornfully through her glass every time I dance. It is the Countess Katrina, and he is false to me."

Just then Prince Serge Vaciloff, placidly whiffing at his cigarette, strolls back into the room. He sees what has been done, and his handsome face turns straightway to that of a white devil.

"Little traitor—little viper!" his highness remarks. "So you have been prying and spying have you? Take that and that." And it is a fact that all Prince, all captain in the Chevalier Guards, all accomplished gentleman as he is, the savage Tartar seizes a riding-switch that lies on the table, and strikes his mistress sharply, raising purple bars on her white shoulders. She utters a shriek of pain and terror; and then, lo! mine eysc are obscured by a mist; and of the room and those within it I can see nothing more. And, behold, the mist is in hue a dull red, as well it may be—well it may be.

What is it I discern for an instant through the crimson haze? Is it the iridescence of that Opal in the malachite casket? Is it the gleam of a Dagger, snatched from the trophy over the mantel by the hand of an infuriated woman, and buried, with lightning rapidity, in the heart of a bad, false, cruel man?

Such would seem to be the dreadful truth, for the mist has cleared away again; and I see the Vafra standing up, her gauzy white peignoir all dabbled in

blood, and her arms tightly held by two police soldiers. A group of lacqueys are huddled in a corner of the room. They dare not approach the corpse of their master; and indeed it would be against the law for them to touch it until Authority had made its first report; and authority, in the shape of a police major, is duly engaged at the task of preliminary investigation, in which the investigator is materially aided by a pint bottle of champagne which has just been brought in on a silver salver by a pallid and trembling maître d'hôtel.

"He struck me with the whip," says La Vafra, calmly; "and I was angry and stabbed him. I meant to kill him. Yet he might have lashed me as in his cruel moments he was wont to lash his bounds, and I would not have murmured. But he was false to me. I loved him, and so I killed him. My Serge! My Serge!" she breaks out, with a piercing shriek; and with a sudden effort of spasmodic power she wrenches her arms from the grasp of the police agents, and flings herself on the body of the dead man.

"This will never do," observes the police-major. "Handcuffs, Sergeant Glazovitch. Leg-straps, Polizei Nechoff. She is one of those subjects who kick. So; now then, gently. Stand at ease—attention—march. My droschky is below, and we will take this impulsive lady before the examining judge. The climate of Siberia will have, I am afraid, a somewhat deleterious effect on her complexion. March!"

The police agents lead La Vafra away; but the major lingers behind a little, to set a gnard over the corpse, and to finish the champagne: and, perhaps, for some other trifling private motive.

"A remarkably handsome woman," he remarks, looking about him with a thoughtfully inquisitive mien. "She has rid the world of a most eminent scoundrel. I don't think his highness stood very well at court; so she may hope for extenuating circumstances, and get off scot free after all. I wonder," continues the thoughtful police major, "if there are any pretty little rouble notes about. He was deeply in debt, but he must have had a good deal of pocket-money. Jewels! ah, but jewels are dangerous! How that opal shines! Let us look for the pretty little rouble notes."

But the Opal shines no more, and a great black shadow falls over all.

THE SECOND ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK.

AGAIN the question was asked: "Do you see this jewel?"

Again the answer came: "I see it."

"Follow it, from the point of time, and from the place wherein you saw it last, and relate its history. Are you following it. Speak!"

"I am following it."

The look of painful searching was more marked than on the first occasion; she knitted her brow, and made uncertain gestures with her hands. But the brow grew smooth again; the hands clasped themselves in her lap; peacefulness spread itself over the colourless face and the closed eyelids. She sighed deeply and began to speak, in a low, meditative tone.

"The jewel rests. I do not see the man who chose it from among its fellows, to send it forth in gorgeous company of diamonds, full of light, but none of them with a fell red flame at their heart, that it might do its appointed task among men. For a long time the jewel rests in the darkness of a golden casket, and the flame is dull."

"Pass over the time of its rest," said the mesmerist, "and see it when it is in the light again."

After a short pause she spoke.

I am in the kingdom of Morning; in the east. The rose-cloud touches the horizon of sand, and dashes the glorious blue with long level streaks; the air sparkles; it has the desert fragrance in it, the scent which fills men's nostrils with life, and their hearts with yearning for the silence, and the vastness, and the freedom which lie yonder. The golden sunlight—not as yet fierce in its might, but gracious in its splendour like a prince not yet a monarch and crowned with noon—glints upon the waters of a great river. It is the Nile. Many boats, of all shapes and sizes, are afloat upon its yellow waves; above their decks are stretched awnings of gay colours, and from every tint the sun extracts a tribute of brightness. The vessels cluster thickly alongside an island coast; a green island in the sacred river, with long reaches of garden wall, and behind them, and also on the shore, even to the river's edge, groves of the giant palm-trees of Roudah rise in their stately and immemorial age.

Among the crowding craft is a large

dabýah of the old form, and with the old picturesqe rigging. The oblique mast and deep orange and brown sails (furled now), are reflected in the amber-tinted water, as is the lotus in white, and green, and gold, which adorns her prow; and has a legend round it, in English and in Arabic, which tells that the boat is called "The Lady of the Nile."

There is a stir upon the broad deck; dusky figures are moving about, in preparation for a presence yet unseen. A wide canopy of Moorish silk—brown, and yellow, and scarlet, with tassels and cords of gold—marks out a space upon the deck. A tall Nubian, clad in snow-white muslin, and wearing a white and gold kufieh turbanwise upon his head, is arranging a pile of gorgeous cushions and a breakfast equipage of antique design in silver. A basket full of ripe figs laid on palm leaves lies on the mat. A tame gazelle, its slender neck encircled with a collar of carved amber beads, looks on with shy playfulness, then starts away to nibble at the spreading leaves of a huge Nile water-lily unfolding its white beauties in a tank cunningly sunk into the deck-planks, where one of its sister lilies died yestereve; where it shall die, torn, like her, from their parent, Nile, to-night. The crew are busy at the other end, only her Nubian and her gazelle greet the lady for whom these preparations are made, when she comes on deck, and stands, for all that she is well used to it, entranced in the beauty of the scene.

I see her, this beautiful woman, who looks like the lady and queen of the Nile herself. She raises one hand, and, shading her eyes with it, looks out from under the rose-tipped fingers, at the golden water and the crowding craft, with the sun of Egypt shining on them and the wind from the desert passing over them, awaking soft musical vibrations from the multitude of unseen instruments which thrill to it. Her robe is cream white, with a border of needlework, in the true imperial purple, of Greek design; it falls round her tall, fine figure in graceful folds, bound by a broad belt of needlework. Her head is covered with a square kerchief of the same soft stuff, the finest India can produce, which is fastened back behind the ear on either side by scarabei. These are of great price, being amulets, held in esteem by one of the Pharaohs, from whose tomb among "the kings and councillors of the earth," the first searchers of the secrets of the Pyramids took the carven gems.

The head-tire of the Sphinx yonder, where the outlines of the Three Giants loom upon the far horizon, has some such folds and expression as this lady's. Her face is clear-cut, commanding, and yet winning, with a mouth like a flower, or a shell, for freshness and delicacy, and eyes of the hue of the blue lotus. Her hair, folded and coiled under the bordered kerchief on her head, is black and heavy, and there is no more colour in her cheeks than on the smooth bell of a magnolia. As she stands, shading her eyes with her hand, I see that on the third finger a jewel set in a ring is flashing. The jewel has green and golden gleams in it beneath its translucent surface, and a red flame at its heart. It is the Opal.

The gazelle goes up to the side of its mistress, and she drops the hand with the ring on it caressingly upon its neck, as she advances to the canopied space. She has hardly seated herself upon the cushions before a man comes on deck; but he walks away to the stern of the boat, and passes some time in talking with a man whom he calls Mustafa, before he joins the lady. When he does so, the Nubian brings him coffee, and sets a curious, cumbrous pipe, but very precious, with a betasselled flexible tube, and a water-bowl of amber by his side on the deck. He is an Englishman, about thirty, with the English kind of distinction in his face and figure; and he is in love with the beautiful woman into whose eyes there comes a brighter light as he draws near, if ever I saw, in waking life or in trance vision, a man in love.

"I have been speaking to Mustafa about our excursion to Gizeh, and I have told him to find out whether the place is tolerably free from Europeans just now," says the gentleman. "You have not changed your mind, have you, Ianthe?"

"About camping in the sands, and drawing the Pyramids from every point of view?" says the lady, "certainly not. You must think me very capricious, Hugh, to ask me that, when we settled it only last night."

"No, no, not capricious, dearest—but you look so beautiful, and so dreamily happy, and this is all so exquisitely lovely—I thought you might not care to leave the boat to-day. That's all."

When Ianthe speaks, it is not with an accent like his; her words are fluent, and her phrases are correct, but she is not English. Perhaps she is Greek, like her name. I cannot tell; no part of her

history unconnected with the opal which she wears may reveal itself to me. I see the two, and I hear this:

"Do I look well, this morning, really? I wonder at that, for I have had bad dreams."

"Forget them, or tell them to me, and I will interpret them for you by the rule of contraries. We are in the land, in the very birthplace of dreams, and of their interpretation."

He takes the hand with the opal ring on it in his, and looks seriously into her face, which is touched with gloom.

"It is you and not I who should play interpreter. You look like the sphinx, before she was roughly handled by time and barbarians; with your Egyptian head-dress, and that dream-expression. 'Still gazing on with calm eternal eyes.' The line might have been written for you, my Ianthe."

"I am superstitious about dreams"—she passes over what he has said unnoticed—"they always haunt me. My dreams of last night were indistinct, I cannot tell them to you. They were of being hunted down, stealthily; and the worst was that in my dream I knew there was a way of escape; if I could only throw away something that I was wearing, I should save myself, but I could not remember what it was."

"Edgar Poe comes to my aid, dearest, in this very simple case. We were reading the Arabian Nights' yesterday, and you remarked upon the true tragic meaning hidden under the oriental style at once so bare and so ornate, which lurks in the story of Cassim Baba, and 'Open, Sesame;' upon the smallness of the effort, and its tremendous meaning, and the real horror of the man's situation. Here is, in every sense, the word of the enigma."

"Perhaps so. No more of my dreams. What a crowd of boats! and what a number of them are making for the shore!"

The man called Mustafa, a cunning, wizened, brown personage, approaches, and claims the gentleman's attention. Meanwhile, Ianthe observes the growing animation of the scene—the song of the Nile boatman is heard as boat after boat shoots past the motionless dabéyah—and she watches the long strings of camels and asses winding their way to the landing-place on the right bank of the river. She raises a field-glass to her eyes, and again I mark the many-tinted gleam of the opal and its heart of flame. She

observes it too, as she lays the glass down, and is idly turning the ring about in the light when her husband approaches her.

"Our invaluable rascal of a dragoman—what a scoundrel and treasure that Mustafa is!—wants, no doubt for some reason of his own, to persuade us to put off our expedition to the Pyramids, until after the great festival which comes off at Cairo next week. It seems that once a year the Viceroy sends a carpet, which these people call a '*kisweh*,' to the great Mosque at Mecca, in honour of the Prophet, and that the departure of the Embassy, conveying the precious gift, with the train of pilgrims, is a curious spectacle. What do you say? It's only a little change of programme, Cairo first, instead of the Pyramids."

"I should like it very much."

Again he leaves her, again he returns.

"I have come to terms with Mustafa. You don't forget that our letters must be written to-day? What a nuisance they are! But I must not complain; they are the sole interruption to our comfort. What a successful notion that was of mine, Ianthe, that we should pass our honeymoon on the Nile!"

"Honeymoon! I don't like that one English word—that one English idea—it measures out happiness, it cuts up love into 'portions,' like a *déjeuner à la carte*, of different flavours. Besides, it's absurd. We have been married two months; our honeymoon is over. Is there any change?"

"None." He looks at her, meaning what he says. "None. Ours is a honeymoon that will last for ever."

His glance falls on the opal ring.

"Ah! you have unpacked your jewel-case at length, and deign to wear my gift, although it is not antique, and must clash with your notions of the poetic harmony of jewels. Scarabei of the Pharaohs' time, and goldsmiths' work from the Rue de la Paix—how can you reconcile them to your artistic conscience?"

"Easily enough. I forget the setting of my ring, and think only of the opal. How beautiful it is, and how mysterious! The living light in it and in the diamonds have burned there long before the Pharaohs' days. They say an opal—" She stops, confusedly.

"What do they say? That it is 'unlucky'?"

"Some folly of that kind. I don't believe it; I am not superstitious about such things."

"Of course not; and I did not give it to you until after our marriage, remember, if ever you feel inclined to become superstitious. It is to betrothed lovers that the opal is of evil portent."

"Where did you buy this ring, Sir Hugh?"

"I did not buy it. I should have told you the story of that ring, my darling, when I gave it you, only that I was bound to wait awhile. The conditions are fulfilled, and I will tell it to you now."

He places himself on the deck at her feet, leaning on his right elbow, draws her arm round his neck, holding her fingers, which hang over his shoulder, in his left hand, and speaks with his frank face upturned to hers.

"Five years ago, long before I had ever seen you, I met, in Paris, a Neapolitan lady. She was a beautiful woman still, though no longer young, of a fierce, passionate nature, uneducated, imperious, and with the air of one who had suffered from some bitter oppression in the past, and could live only in wild and incessant excitement in the present. The name I knew her by I need not repeat; I am sure it was not her own. I met her in society which I did not often frequent, and which I should have done better to have avoided altogether; but there was not a guardian angel in my life then, Ianthe. I have never seen in man or woman such a rage for gambling as that which possessed this woman. I have known her to lose and win and lose again, within a few hours, a sum which even a Russian would hold to be a fortune. Her wealth seemed to be as inexhaustible as her extravagance and her caprices. Her furs, her laces, and her jewels were the envy of—well, of the demi-monde, at least, and, I daresay, of the greater ladies. She was not vain; her passions were too eager and too large for the smaller vices; and the homage which men paid to her exceeding, but repellent, beauty by their admiration, and women by their detraction, wearied her. I never heard the boldest, the most mendacious, of the men who surrounded her, boast of having received the slightest encouragement in a love suit from her; and I once heard her speak of love with shuddering abhorrence, in which I am convinced that she was sincere. This was on the first occasion of my meeting her, at a noisy supper after a '*première*' of one of Sardou's plays. The play was of the fierce order, and it

pleased her. She declared it was so natural—the perfidy, the hatred, and the revenge in it! But the love! That, except as the source of the others, was contemptible, unworthy of the attention and the patience of rational creatures."

"What a horrible mind! How she must have shocked you!"

Sir Hugh smiles.

"Not so much as you think, my white lily. I had heard this sort of thing talked before, and I have heard it talked since, though not with the fire and the fervency of her speech—without attaching much importance to it. I met her again; she interested though she did not please me. People talked about her, and set absurd stories afloat respecting the origin of her wealth: one of them had it that she was a political spy. I watched her reckless gambling with amazement. Ianthe, the strange, impetuous woman—whose beauty had never turned my head for an instant, whose character, if character such impulses and excesses could be called, was eminently antipathetic to me—fell violently in love with me. She did, indeed—giving her own theories the strongest possible contradiction in her own person. You blush, Ianthe, and you frown. You blush for her; but you need not frown at me. I was not left long in ignorance of her feelings, and I had the hardest task to perform, which can be set a gentleman—to reject a woman's love."

"How did she bear it?"

"In a manner which amazed me. I expected a whirlwind of reproach and fury, but she was calm and dignified. She asked me only one question: Did I love another? I told her—no. We met once again, at her request, and she then gave me the opal ring. 'You will not refuse me this one parting prayer,' she said, 'for you and I shall meet no more. Keep this jewel safely until you love some fair woman, pure, and loving, and noble, and have made her your wife. Give her the ring as a bridal gift, but until your happiness is secure—until the newness of love has grown into such firm trust that you can tell your wife the story of my mistake without a misgiving do not tell her that story. Let her wear the jewel always, it will be a trophy the more for her, an additional tribute to the charms which shall have won the prize I tried for in vain. Premise me this, Sir Hugh Trevor,' she added. I promised. She rose, said quietly as she

placed the ring in my hands, 'Keep your word, with your English honour, and I shall have nothing more to desire,' and instantly left the room. I never saw her since."

Lady Trevor's face is very grave, as she asks him:—

"Do you think her goodwill was sincere? It seems a wild and romantic kind of generosity."

"All her impulses were wild and romantic; but while they lasted, they were sincere. The time she anticipated has come; our happiness is secure, and now I have told you the story. Henceforth you'll always wear the ring, Ianthe, will you not? She was right, you know—it is a trophy the more."

She smiles, not quite naturally, and rises, says she must go below to write her letters; and so leaves him. I see her enter the long low cabin, where a female attendant awaits her; and her first action is to take the opal ring from her finger, and place it in a jewel box; I follow the opal to its dark resting-place, and then I see no more.

* * * * *

A many-coloured crowd is thronging into an open space in Cairo. It pours through the ancient gateways, it comes from the plains beyond, it surges around the walls of a citadel, whose gate, of the quaint picturesqure architecture of Egypt, is richly hung with gorgeous draperies which are grouped under a golden crescent; and flanked by the standard of the Prophet. The open space affords a long vista of mosques and palm patches, and one huge building throws a gigantic shadow over the immense square, where soldiers are drawn up on guard. Strong excitement prevails among the multitude, which is formed of men of many nations in all varieties of costume, from the most gorgeous habiliments of the east, to the plain dress of travelling Englishmen, with white scarfs twisted round their straw hats, which look out of place beside the turbans and the tarbouches. The crowd consists mostly of men on foot, but there are also throngs of women—in the invariable blue Egyptian robe, with strings of jewels and coins hanging about them—and they are wild with excitement and waiting. Long trains of handsome Cairene asses, caparisoned in many colours, and mostly ridden by foreigners, push through the surging multitude. Wild harsh music accompanies and accentuates the ceaseless tumult of

human voices, the braying of asses, and the guttural grunting of the lumbering, bedecked camels, plodding their heavy way among the masses. A roar of guns comes from the citadel, and a man's voice says in English—

"The procession has started from the Gate of Victory."

It is Sir Hugh Trevor who speaks, to Ianthe. They have taken up a position in the great square, in front of the citadel, and are surrounded by a strong escort. Mustafa is there; and the Nubian, in his snowy garments, with a golden girdle, holds one of the crimson tassels which depends from the head gear of the fine dromedary—an animal of pure race and great price—on which Ianthe is seated. The cumbrous saddle is covered with a rich crimson cloth; over which the folds of a white and gold burnoos fall; the golden lines glitter in the sun. Ianthe's face is almost hidden beneath the hood of her burnoos, drawn forward over the dusky plaits of her hair, but there is a flush of interest and excitement on her cheek, and her deep blue eyes scan the crowd eagerly. As she sits upon the dromedary in all security, her hands lie crossed in her lap, and now I know why I see her again. She wears the opal ring. Close to the footboard stands Sir Hugh, a little in advance of the foremost line of spectators, for the dromedary is placed sideways, and his rider faces the gate of the citadel. The great procession will defile close to them.

It comes. A long line of soldiery, of all arms, infantry, cavalry, and artillery—wonderfully barbaric even with their discipline upon them—pass, amid the cries of the multitude and the salutes of the guns, preceding the Viceroy's carriages, magnificent in feathers and gilding. A moment more and the vast multitude burst into howls of ecstasy as two wretched madmen rush by, executing bideous gambols. The crowd is restrained by a squadron of gorgeously attired horsemen, mounted on fiery, yet docile, Arab steeds, for presently there is a desperate rush of fanatics to throw themselves under the feet of the white dromedary, draped in cloth of gold, which now advances, bearing under an enormous canopy of green silk, glittering with jewels and gold, the Sacred Carpet. The dazzling, barbaric spectacle passes, with its escort of half naked musicians, performing deafening noises, and mounted on beautiful dromedaries,

painted in henna, and draped in coloured stuffs. Amid a tremendous clang of trumpets, clash of cymbals, and roll of drums, the white dromedary halts in the middle of the square, and the procession of the pilgrims, headed by their hideous Santon, commences. Ianthe turns pale and shrinks as the horrible fanatic is openly adored by the frantic multitude, and the women kiss and fondle his dromedary—an infinitely nobler creature than he. Her relief is evident when the religious orgy is over, and the long train of rich pilgrims, with laden camels, and every provision for the comfort of the journey, defiles before her. There is but little talk between her and Sir Hugh as he stands in the same place beside her, through the long hours; they are absorbed in seeing, and hardly notice that some members of their own escort have thrown themselves into the crowd of fanatics and rapturously worshipped the hideous wretch who heads the pilgrim train. When the poor pilgrims—some wearing the green turban which tells that they have performed the terrible task already, have seen Mecca and the Kaaba—come plodding by, on the first march of that journey on foot which must mean death to so many, tears glitter in her eyes, her voice trembles as she speaks to Sir Hugh. She points with one outstretched hand to an aged man with bent shoulders and feet that falter already; and on that hand the opal flashes in the burning sun, well-nigh intolerable now.

"Oh, Hugh, look at him; look at his fixed, abstracted gaze. He is mad, and so old and poor! He will drop down in the sand and die!"

"Probably," says Sir Hugh; "but he will die happy!"

The crowd has pressed around them with an equal pressure all this time, and has had little attention to spare for the compact party in the first line. With an exception: one man watches Ianthe with unwavering intentness, not to be distracted by anything, after the sacred dromedary with its sacred burden has passed by. The man is of the lowest class; he wears the common blue garments of the ass-drivers and the water-carriers, and his neck and breast are bare. In his sullen face there is not the fanatic glare I see on countless faces around, but there is something frightful in the avidity of the gaze he fixes on Ianthe. It follows her every movement; when she points with

the ringed hand, his eyes pursue the gesture. When the procession has passed by, when the vast multitude begins to disperse, and Ianthe's dromedary, with its escort, are put in motion, this man follows the party unobserved. I learn, by the conversation between Sir Hugh Trevor and the dragoman, that they are not going on board the *dabéyah* at once, that they are going to remain at Cairo until their "caravan" has been organised, and that Mustafa is immediately to devote himself to the hiring of asses and drivers. The Nubian and Mustafa only are to accompany Sir Hugh and Lady Trevor to the Pyramids, the rest of their retinue are to remain with the boat. Ianthe and her husband enter the hotel, where Europeans of many nations congregate, and then I see no more, for Ianthe goes to the bath, and the ring is laid aside.

* * * * *

Again it is morning in the east. But I see no yellow river, and no crowding craft. A vast unequal plain stretches away to the horizon, a plain of sand and stones, with tracts and spots of roseate colour diversifying its grey dulness; a plain on which sand-heaps accumulate, shift, and change, telling everywhere of ruin and of burial; a plain with but one green glimpse throughout the wide expanse of its sandy desolation. It is formed by a great sycamore which stands alone in the sand, and three tall palms ranged in the rear of it. A camp is formed beneath and around the spreading branches of the beneficent desert trees. One large tent, two smaller ones, and a group of animals, one of them Ianthe's dromedary, occupy the blessed shade. All the customary features of a camp are there in their imitable picturesqueness, and, at the entrance of the large tent stands Ianthe. The camels, the asses, and the drivers are all feeding after their various kind and fashion. The activity of the day has not begun.

Beyond the little camp lie several sand-hills, and beyond them rises the colossal head in the sand, the ancient Sphinx, the sleepless advanced guard of the three great Pyramids of Gizeh. Ianthe can see its calm face, from where she stands, though at a considerable distance; the face "with a smile of beatitude, just dashed with irony." Presently a man, one of the ass drivers from among the group under the trees, comes round the tent, and addresses her in an obsequious

manner. She answers him carelessly, and he retires to speak with Mustafa. Sir Hugh Trevor comes out of the tent and joins Ianthe.

"To the left, below that little patch of stones, I will have the tent pitched to-day," she says; "I have completed the profile of the Sphinx on the desert side, perfectly. How delicious it is here, Hugh."

"It certainly is, but I am getting tired of it. It is all very well if one is going into the desert in earnest, but I begin to want to get back to the 'Lady.'"

"Then we will return to-morrow. I only ask for this one day. My portfolio is full; and I, too, long for the boat and the river again, and the moving panorama. You might tell them to saddle the donkeys now."

"When you are installed, I shall take Mustafa and the guns, and try for some birds. The Arabs have been telling me about a brackish pool, where there are some, a few miles from here. I shall get back, I daresay, before you're tired."

In a short time all is ready for the start. A handsome Cairene ass is laden with the light canvas tent, the easel, the folding-stool, and the implements which form Ianthe's equipment, and a second is saddled for her own use. Sir Hugh carefully places her in her saddle, and she takes the bridle in her hand. She wears a plain white dress, and a brown Arab burnoos, the hood drawn over her face. As she lifts the bridle I see the opal ring on her left hand, and I take note of the intent gaze which the man, who is ready to attend her, fixes, not upon her, but upon the jewel. He is the same man who followed her after the festival of the departure of the Holy Carpet; the same sullen, slinking, debased looking man. He has contrived to get himself hired by Sir Hugh Trevor's dragoman, and is apparently a selected attendant upon Ianthe. I understand why, when I see the large, sleek, well-cared-for beasts, which are his especial charge. Sir Hugh mounts a third ass, and the little cortége starts for the appointed spot, with Yusuf, the ass-driver, and Ali, the Nubian, in attendance. They halt at the back of a sand-hill, near the Sphinx, which shuts out the camp from sight, leaving only the tops of the trees to be discerned; and is only a few hundreds of yards away from the great Pyramid. The little tent is quickly set up, the easel prepared, and Ianthe ready to set to work upon the drawing which is to

complete her collection. On the way Sir Hugh and Ianthe have talked, as lovers talk, of the eternal recollections which they shall carry away from Gizeh; and, somewhat sadly, as the theme suggests, of the desolation and the oblivion of countless multitudes of the human race, to be read in the scene around them. The faces of the two are solemn, when, after he has seen her, as he said, "installed," Sir Hugh takes leave of Ianthe. The eternal face of the Sphinx, reared above the shifting ocean of sand, seems to awe them. Absolute silence is around them. Yusuf and his donkeys are moving slowly away, towards the other side of the sand-hill, where they will rest in a scooped-out hollow, and Ali has withdrawn to the back of the tent, where he lies, face downwards, on his folded arms, perfectly content.

"When the shifting of the desert face becomes irksome, it rests one to look at the stillness of the Sphinx," says Sir Hugh, as he and Ianthe stand in front of the mighty watcher, hand-in-hand.

"Yes; what a multitude of dead it guards, with all their secrets."

"The ancient face has never seemed to me so mysterious and so beautiful."

Sir Hugh kisses Ianthe, and they part. Sir Hugh takes one of the donkeys and rides away alone, leaving Yusuf peacefully slumbering between the other two, with a few dates and a leathern bottle filled with water for his sustenance during the sultry day.

Ianthe has been at work two hours, and the stillness around is all unbroken. No caravan is within sight; the Pyramids, so often the scene of a vulgar-enough bustle, are as solitary as their ancient dead. Ali has strolled a little way from the tent, but not beyond his mistress' sight, or the range of her voice. Yusuf, the ass driver, hidden from the observation of both by the shoulder of the sand-hill, is engaged in a strange employment. He is apparently deepening the floor of the scooped-out hollow where his asses lie, with their noses to the sand. He has wrenched a shovel-shaped iron stirrup off one of the saddles, and is digging in the sand with it with frantic haste, flinging the shovelfuls behind him so that they form a little hillock which soon hides his spare bending frame. At length, his work is done, and he pauses to contemplate it. I hear him speak:—

"Deep enough, and wide enough. And now, to find him, the good Ali, the faithful Ali; no fear of his coming to see what I was

doing; he would not stir so far from her side. 'With Ali she could never be afraid.' It is a big price for the jewel, but it must be paid, and the first proof I shall have of the luck it will bring me will be the safety and success of this deed. My father was a wise man, and he told me there could come no luck to him who did not possess a jewel of the kind sacred to the month of his birth. I was born in the month of the opal, and all my life I have had no luck because I never could buy or lay hold of an opal. When the jewel flashed on this woman's hand, even as she turned with her insolent Christian disgust from the holy Santon, favorite of Allah, the Prophet sent me the inspiration. I knew it should be mine; I knew that my luck had come. The opal will bring it; I have waited for it for many years. Next year I shall make the hajj, and win the highest paradise. It would have been vain to have started without my luck."

Yusuf speaks dreamily, wagging his head from side to side; and in his sullen, wizened face there is a half-crazy look, as of one who is part fool, part fanatic, but completely a base and unscrupulous ruffian. He feels in his girdle for a moment, gives a silent nod of satisfaction, glides round the shoulder of the sand-hill which hides Ianthe's tent from him, and steals to the back of the tent. There he lays himself flat on the ground, and wriggling up to the canvas rim like a serpent, he gently lifts the edge of it, and peeps in. Ianthe is seated before her easel, absorbed in her painting. The counterfeit presentment of the Ancient Watcher in the desert is growing under her hand; her head is bent forward in a pause of contemplation of her work. Her left hand, holding her palette, hangs by her side, and on it glitters the opal ring. There is a fiendish beauty in the jewel, in its streaks of vivid green, of faint violet and yellow, and in the tongue of flame that leaps up in the heart of it. The glance of the grovelling hidden spy passes beyond the figure of Ianthe, through the doorway of the tent, in search of Ali. The faithful Nubian does not lie, as Yusuf expects, in the doorway; he is at some distance from the tent, and, to see him, Ianthe would have to rise and hold back the curtains. Yusuf, having satisfied himself on all points of his enquiry, softly drops the canvas rim, and glides away from the tent as noiselessly as he approached it. He nears Ali, by a wide circuit, and comes up with the Nubian as he lies in his favourite

attitude, face downwards; his head and neck sheltered by the thick folds of his snowy turban, and the hilt of his yataghan showing at his side, where it protrudes from his girdle. For all his lazy attitude, the Nubian is not sleeping; he starts to his feet as Yusuf approaches, and utters a gruff kind of recognition.

"The day wears," says Yusuf. "Thinkest thou we shall soon return to the camp? One of my beasts is sick. I think it has eaten of some poisonous weed. It is ill luck, for it is the handsomest and the strongest of them, even the ass which the lady rides. Thou art somewhat of a leech: wilt thou come and look at the poor beast?"

Ali scans the surrounding plain. There is not a human being near. He can discern some indistinct forms in the neighbourhood of the second pyramid, but they are too far off to suggest the reasonable idea of possible harm to his mistress. The inconvenience of a sick beast of burthen may be considerable; he will go and look at the animal, though it involve his losing sight of the tent for a few minutes. So he signifies an ungracious assent, and the two men strike across the sand plain away from the tent, and turn the shoulder of the sand-hill. They exchange but few words until they are close upon the asses, whose bridles are tied together. Then Ali says,

"Which is the beast that aileth? I see nothing amiss with either of them."

"It is that one," Yusuf answers, drawing near to Ali, and stretching out his hand as though to indicate the animal, so that it is on a line with Ali's shoulder. There is a keen-edged dagger in the hand, and in an instant it is plunged into Ali's back, below the shoulder-blade, piercing the heart from behind, with an aim so fell and true, that Ali drops down upon his face upon the sand, stone dead, with no more utterance than a deep sob, half groan, half cry. Quick as thought the murderer snatches the turban from the dead man's head, and drags the limp body over the few yards of sand between the spot where he stands and the hole which is to be its grave. In those few seconds the white garments of the corpse are soaked in blood, and as Yusuf drags it past the animals, they struggle up, snorting and terrified. He pushes the body into the hole, and thinly covers it with sand, all with frantic haste and a vehement trembling of his frame, caused, not by remorse or fear,

but by fierce frantic excitement. When this is done he snatches up the dead man's turban, and stands for a moment, drawing the ends of the strong white cloth evenly together. Now he grasps the centre with both hands, and makes a quick turn outwards with them. "I have not forgotten it," he mutters, as he turns them in again, making the knuckles of each meet; and once more goes in the direction of Ianthe's tent.

The sun is high and fierce now; his rays strike the distant Pyramids, and the crouching Sphinx, and the many-coloured sands, with a burning, shimmering light, and the air is full of vibrating radiance. Ianthe has left her seat in front of her easel, and is in the act of pouring water from a gourd into a silver cup which hangs by a silver chain from her girdle, when the darkening of the doorway of the tent causes her to turn half round. She has not time to recognise Yusuf, or to utter a sound, before he springs upon her with a bound like a tiger's, and bears her irresistibly to the earth. As she falls violently, face downwards, the turban of her faithful servant does its deadly work in the hands of her murderer. He slips the thick folds round her neck, twists his hands behind her head, and chokes her with a dexterous rapidity worthy of a Thug.

Then Yusuf, leaving the twisted cloth as it is, pulls the corpse, without so much as a glance at the face, so beautiful a few seconds before, into a sitting position, and propping it up between the bench and the easel, strips it of its few ornaments. They consist of the silver cup and chain, a locket with a miniature likeness of Sir Hugh—on which the pious Mussulman spits, notwithstanding his fierce haste—and the opal ring.

"My luck, my luck," he murmurs, "at last," as he lifts the heavy, swollen, purple hand, distorted in the death pang, and tries to pull the ring off the crooked finger. What a splendid jewel it is that flashes within the circle of diamonds, with its green and violet gleams, and the red flame at its heart, with all the good fortune of a lifetime for Yusuf imprisoned in it too! But the purple flesh swells up above and below it, and the ring will not come off. So Yusuf hacks at the finger with his knife, and when he has severed it from the hand, thrusts it, with the weapon, into his pouch; and, after one cautious look round from the door-

way of the tent, steals out exultant. All is still; the dim figures in the distance come no nearer, and, save for the little group under the shadow of the sand-hill, there is not a sign of life in the plains of Gizeh.

I follow the man in whose possession is the ring. He returns to the shelter where the asses are, where Ali's sand-grave is, and muttering fiercely with a horrible satisfaction all the time, he again scrapes away the sand for about the space of a foot above the breast of the corpse, and casts into the hole the severed finger of his second victim, the locket, and the silver cup and chain. He will keep no meaner gems than the one object of his desire, to risk detection through them: not for these has he thus dared. No, they shall lie in the desert with Ali the Nubian, who will be the accused one, whose turban will be found, the instrument of the crime, and who will be sought for vainly far and wide, while Yusuf goes unsuspected under the charm of his "luck." He piles the sand high upon the Nubian's grave; he replaces the stirrup on its leather, and fastens the leather to the gaily bedight saddle on which Ianthe rode that morning. When he has carefully inspected his coarse blue garments, and satisfied himself that they are free from any trace of blood, he has one more task to do. He carefully rips, with lean dexterous fingers, the lining of the pad strapped on the back of the ass which carried the tent and its furniture. It is of rude structure, stuffed with tow and raw cotton. In its recesses he hides the opal ring, after a long and rapturous gaze upon its mysterious lustre. Then he sews up the lining of the pad with a thin leather thong, and straps it on the back of the docile beast, which rubs its fine black muzzle fondly against its master's arm; and, obedient to his word of command, lies down in the sand on the far side of its companion. Besides his turban, Yusuf has robbed the Nubian's body of one object only. It is a little pouch of plaited straw, containing two squares of a greenish paste; an opiate drug which Ali was much given to use, but rarely shared with any of his comrades. "When they find her," muttered Yusuf, as he empties the contents of the bag into his hand, and flings the little pouch out on the plain as far as his arm can direct it, "they will come this way, and they will find me in the third heaven, thanks to Ali's rare hachich. By the prophet, they will praise

the cunning and the wisdom of Ali, who sent Yusuf thither, while he had such business to do." He stretches himself in the sand, his feet within a couple of yards of his victim's grave, his shoulders supported by the side of the ass, his head resting upon the pad, just above its hidden wealth, the opal, with its gleams of green and violet, and the red flame at its heart. Then he swallows the drug.

I see no more.

The secret of Ali the Nubian is in the keeping of the Sphinx.

THE THIRD ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK.

"CAN you see?"

"I can see."

She touched her eyes lightly with her finger-tips, as though they pained her, and the mesmerist observed her anxiously.

"Does it hurt or weary you to see?"

"Yes; I am tired."

"Can you follow the fortunes of the opal otherwise than by sight?"

"I can read anything that has been written concerning it."

"Has anything been written? I touch your eyes with the ring, and bid you search."

He held the ring pressed upon her eyes for several minutes while she kept silence. At length she removed his hand and spoke:—

There is a castle in the north of England, in a country of hills and streams, which stands far from any great neighbours, with only a village near. In that castle lives a lady, quite alone. She has white hair, and a proud, sorrowful face—not deeply marked by years as yet, but full of care. She rarely goes out except when on errands of friendly kindness among the villagers, and she has little communication with the outer world. A silent grandeur pervades the castle; an indefinable air of waiting is perceptible in the lady's face, and in her gentle, lingering ways, and even perceptible also in the manners and the talk of the servants. These are quiet times, but there shall be great doings when Mr. Drelin-court comes home. Many stalls stand empty in the stables now, but they shall be occupied by tidy bits of horseflesh, when Mr. Drelin-court comes home. The great drawing-room—a noble apartment,

with mirrors and chandeliers which were the talk of the country when the last bride (that pale, white-haired lady with the waiting looks) was brought home, is covered up with brown holland, and yellow canvas-muslin, and never entered save by the housemaids. It shall shine gloriously and be filled with a gorgeous company when Mr. Drelincourt comes home! He has been away for a long time, and nobody knows why—nobody, that is, except his mother, who, if there be a secret in the matter, keeps it.

There is a portrait of Mr. Drelincourt in the library; it is fitted into the panelling of the wall above the writing-table which his mother uses. She passes the greater part of her time in that spacious, somewhat solemn room, where the shadows gather in the evening about walls lined with books in many languages, and which represent a large proportion of all literature. Mr. Drelincourt is a handsome man, if his portrait tell the truth—a brave, bright young Englishman, of upright, stalwart frame, and a face which unites frankness and gallantry of expression to beauty of feature. Bright, fearless, happy eyes, dark blue in colour, look out from the canvas from beneath a broad forehead, crowned with dark, thick, short curls; and the smile on the lips and in the eyes is the smile of a man who is true, and tender, and bold. A son for any mother in the world to be proud of is Mr. Drelincourt, if his portrait tell truth.

In the spaciousness of the library, a circle of dusk surrounds the centre of light formed by the wide hearth with its blazing logs, the old marble mantelpiece whereon tall wax-lights burn, the table with its shaded reading-lamps, and the great velvet chair in which the lonely lady of the castle is half hidden. It is Christmas-tide, and there is stir out of doors; but the customary silence of Lynne Castle is untroubled by the seasonable liveliness. The merriment and good cheer which are permitted to the undiminished retinue of servants, with so little to do, come not nigh their mistress. She is passing her Christmas Eve with her son's portrait and her son's letters from the foreign lands whither he has resorted, for all her company. For what? On the writing-table there lies a miniature, open; it is the likeness of a young girl. She has a fair face, with golden hair closely braided in a classic fashion, deep brown eyes, and a complexion of a warm tint, such as seldom goes

with the fairness of Northern women, but is a beauty proper to the South. A bundle of letters lies beside the miniature, and on Mrs. Drelincourt's lap is a manuscript which she has been reading this Christmas Eve. She has concluded its perusal now, and lies back in her chair, with her eyes raised to the portrait of her son; in her face there is hope—on her mutely moving lips there are prayers.

The speaker paused, and sighed deeply. The mesmerist besought my silence by an expressive glance. After some minutes he again spoke:

“Can you read that manuscript?”

“Yes.”

“Do so, then.”

She read:—

I obey you, my dear mother; I record for you the story of my love. I make that clear to you which has hitherto been vague, because I could not yet bear to look into its depths of misery myself. Time, and such submission as I could bring my rebellious heart to, have availed; I can tell you all now; I can even contemplate returning to the old scenes, though never to the old light-heartedness with which I once moved amid them. It is fitting that you should know all before we meet; and so I write the story of my stay in Venice.

It links itself by a strong association with my sojourn in the East; for it was at Alexandria that I met Paolo D'Oria, of whom you have already heard. He was on his way home, after a visit to the Holy Land, and we met at the house of the Italian Consul. He had pleasant manners, the brightness and courtesy of his nation, and tastes which harmonised with mine. We struck up something more than acquaintance on our first meeting, we agreed to visit the bazaar in company on the following day, for a common purpose—to buy souvenirs for friends at home. In the course of our proceedings we found our way to the jewellers' quarter, and there we passed some time, looking at many beautiful things which we could not buy; and I discovered that my companion was learned in gems. In a dark, mean little shop, where the merchant might have been the original of any of the people in the Arabian Nights, we saw some good turquoises and several fine strings of amber. D'Oria and I had selected some specimens of each when the jewel merchant directed our attention to an opal ring of

extreme beauty. The jewel filled Paolo D'Oria with admiration; he declared it to be the finest of its size that he had ever seen, and a dead bargain at the price asked for it. The setting, in diamonds, was European—French, D'Oria said; and we wondered how the ring had found its way to the shop in Alexandria, where there was no other article of European workmanship. My dragoman enquired of the jewel merchant, and was told that there was a strange-enough story attached to the ring. In the preceding year, when the pilgrims were returning from Mecca, one among the poorest of them (a man named Yusuf) who fell sick by the wayside not far from Cairo, and was tended by a brother pilgrim, who lingered with him when he could go no farther, and gave him, of his scanty provision, food and water. The hadji died, having just before he expired, revealed to his friend that he was the possessor of unsuspected wealth. It consisted of an opal ring, which the wretched man had secreted on his person while its price would have made him rich, and though privation and hardship were the causes of his mortal illness. The hadji had neither wife nor child; a solitary dying creature, save for his friend, to whom he answered when he asked him why he had not sold the jewel, that he could not—he was born in the month of the opal, and it was his "luck." But he bade his friend take it when he should be dead, and do with it as he pleased. The man sold the ring to our jewel merchant. The story interested Paolo d'Oria.

"October is the month of the opal," he said. "My sister Beatrice was born in October; she ought to wear the jewel of her natal month. I will buy the ring."

But when he came to bargain with the jewel merchant, he found that the price set upon the ring was too high.

"I am not rich enough," he said, with an easy, frank smile. "Beatrice must go without her amulet, or wear a humbler one." Then seeing, in his quick, Italian way, that I wished to buy the ring, but was restrained by a doubt of the good taste of doing so, he said, "Pray buy it, Mr. Drelincourt; don't let us both lose it. It is really a splendid specimen, and the story of it is worth remembering for its illustration of the folly and fanaticism of these people of the East."

I bought the opal ring, and he chose some

less costly gifts for his mother and his sister. We saw a good deal of each other during the remainder of my stay; and when I left by the P. and O. steamer for Malta, D'Oria and I parted with an understanding that when my roving commission should take me to Venice, I would let him know of my arrival. You know all about the intervening six months. I pass on to the time when I redeemed my promise; I pass on to the time which has set its mark upon my life.

It was not until I had been more than a week in Venice that I left my card, with the address of my hotel upon it, at the Palazzo D'Oria. The wonderful dream-like enchantment of the City of the Sea, its "insupportable glory," and the "unsubstantial magic" of it, took such possession of me, that I could not have endured companionship. I felt I must be alone until "the new sensation, new memory, and new mind," which are the gifts of Venice to those who come to her with eyes to see and soul to feel her beauty, had become a less strange and overwhelming experience. When at length I saw Paolo, I found him even a pleasanter companion than before, for he, unlike most of his fellows, was versed in the history of Venice, proud of her ancient renown, and enamoured of her deathless beauty. After a whole day passed together, we went in the evening to the Palazzo D'Oria, where I was received by the marchese (his father) and the marchesa (his mother) with much distinction as Paolo's friend. These excellent people regarded their son's tastes with no little wonder, and without any sympathy; but they were proud of him. That night, the vision of the Queen of the Adriatic faded from my brain, the spell of Venus was loosened from my heart, superseded by a fairer visior, by a more potent spell. Look upon the picture which will reach you with this, and you will see a faint presentment indeed of Beatrice D'Oria, but something like the girl's face that beamed upon me in the old Venetian palace. The eyes and the mouth are like, but where is the light of the eyes, where is the sweet flashing smile dispersing the pensiveness of the mouth into the sweetest gaiety? I need not describe her further—indeed, I could not, though I can never forget the soft graciousness, the noble modesty of her manner to her brother's friend, her girlish interest in our talk of our travels, and her arch detection of us when we told her "travellers' tales."

Late in the evening the marchesa received a few visitors, among them a gentleman of middle-age, who reminded me, in complexion, in expression, in all but costume, of one of Titian's portraits. Il Conte Alberto dei Cerutti was, I learned, a Milanese of ancient family and good fortune—for an Italian. No doubt he had been eminently handsome in his youth, but cold, crafty lines about his brow and his mouth which must have been there even then, and in his black eyes there was a sleepy fierceness peculiarly repulsive to me. He mingled easily with the general company, and, though I observed that he was on terms of intimacy with the marchese and marchesa, I never saw him approach Beatrice after his first formal greeting, nor did he, while I remained in the saloon, join in the conversation which Paolo and I carried on with her. I remember little that passed, nor does it matter. The Carnival was drawing near, and both Paolo and Beatrice were full of its anticipated delights. It was to be a very good Carnival, the nobility intended to join in all its enjoyments, and the ancient fame of the Venetian fancy balls was to be revived by great entertainments to be given by official personages, and by many of the leaders of private society, Venetian and foreign. I should have cards for the balls, Paolo said; and he and I must plan our costumes together. I thought his beautiful sister looked pleased when he said this; I thought the animation of her manner increased. There was special mention of a ball to be given by a Polish princess, who owned one of the finest of the old palaces, and lived in a style of great magnificence at Venice for a portion of each year.

"I shall wear my turquoises and my amber beads at Princess Levinsky's," said Beatrice. (She and her brother spoke French with me.) "They will go well with my Remaic costume, and I have never worn them yet."

"You remember the things she is speaking of," said Paolo, "and about the famous opal. Have you the ring?"

"I have it here; but I have never worn it. It is too showy for a man's ring."

"What is it, an opal? The most beautiful of all jewels!" said Beatrice. Then we told her the story of our purchases at Alexandria, and she declared that I must positively wear the ring, in some fashion, in my Carnival costume. I had fallen in love with Beatrice D'Oria before

I took leave of her that night. She realised my ideal of beauty and of charm.

I pass over the ensuing days. They were full of intoxicating pleasure to me—pleasure in the beautiful city, in the strange water-streets, in the gorgeous sunsets, in the wondrous atmosphere of poetry and romance, in the companionship of Paolo D'Oria (who was as good as his word about providing for my Carnival diversions), but, above all, in the love which grew daily, and to which I gave myself up utterly. I knew nothing of Italian social life, I never looked below the surface; I only knew that with the sanction of her parents and her brother, I passed several hours of every day in the society of Beatrice D'Oria; and that, though I was not a moment alone with her, I was not prevented, either overtly or covertly, from talking with her in a language which neither her parents nor their guests understood. With one exception—Count Alberto dei Cerutti, spoke French; but he disliked the exercise of that accomplishment, Paolo told me, and avoided it. To me he rarely spoke at all, though we met every evening. But Count Alberto did not share the general propensity of his countrymen for late hours, and when Paolo and I arrived at the Palazzo d'Oria, we frequently found his gondola in waiting, and met the count himself coming down the wide marble steps overhung by the balcony where Beatrice loved to sit late into the night. On these occasions the count and Paolo would exchange a familiar greeting, but with me Count Alberto never went beyond a grave and formal bow.

One Sunday morning, a week before the beginning of the Carnival, I was enjoying the spectacle of which I never wearied—the piazza of St. Mark, and the picturesque groups who traversed it and entered the wonderful church which neither pen nor pencil has ever portrayed, or ever can portray. The people came and went through the ever-open doorways, and as I watched them I caught sight of Beatrice D'Oria, who was leaving the church, attended only by a woman servant. I advanced and saluted her; and in the quick flush which suffused her beautiful face I read more than the embarrassment of a sudden meeting under unusual circumstances. I was not so ignorant of Italian manners as to venture on detaining her long, but the few minutes of our incoherent talk were priceless. Beatrice loved me; might I not hope that her parents would look favourably on

my snit? I would make it known to them after the formallest fashion of their own manners when I should have learned from Paolo what that fashion was; as soon as possible after I should have received from her the farther assurance which I must contrive to procure.

For the first time since my arrival at Venico, I did not see Paolo that day. We missed each other by a series of accidents. When I arrived in the evening at the Palazzo D'Oria, my gondola was detained while one just ahead discharged its load at the marble steps. Two persons landed from it: Paolo and Count Alberto. I had never seen them together before, and I experienced an unaccountable sensation of discomfort at the sight. It was not simply fear, or suspicion, or foreboding; but a mingling of the three. They ascended the steps, and entered the vestibule. I followed quickly, and reached the saloon a few moments later than they. The marchesa, Paolo, and the count were its sole occupants; and all three were visibly discomposed by my entrance. The marchesa received me coldly, the count made me his usual grave and formal bow, and Paolo, after an expression of surprise and regret at the clever manner in which we had contrived to miss each other all day—I easily discerned that the surprise was affected, and the regret unreal—glanced uneasily at the count, and said no more. The Count Alberto came to my aid. He asked the question I did not dare to ask; he enquired for Beatrice.

"She is indisposed, and keeps her room," was the answer; and, as she made it, the marchesa in her turn glanced uneasily at the count. Then came another pause, happily broken by the arrival of the customary visitors. After a few moments of very painful indecision, I resolved upon my course of action. I mingled with the other people, aired my bad Italian in a brief dialogue with the marchesa, observing Paolo all the time, and when he left the room—again, to my surprise and annoyance, with the count—I followed them, and overtaking them on the steps, told Paolo I wished to speak with him.

"To-night?" asked Paolo.

"To-night. Now, and here, if you are not going away with the count. If you are—later—anywhere you please."

Again Paolo cast an uneasy glance at the count, who stood aside with an ostentatious air of politely suffering an interruption, but the tone of Paolo's voice as he answered me was kind and cordial.

"I shall be back in five minutes. Wait for me in the balcony."

They passed on; I re-entered the saloon, unobserved, and went into the balcony. A shawl of striped crimson and black hung over its stone front, where Beatrice was wont to rest her fair arms, while she watched the lights glimmering in the canal, and the flitting of the silent gondolas.

Within the promised time Paolo joined me. I leaned upon the balcony, out of hearing of the people in the saloon, and came to the point with him at once.

"You are avoiding me," I said; "something has come between us. You are too true a gentleman to deny it, or equivocate in word or deed. Is the reason because you have discovered that I love your sister?"

"I have discovered that," he answered, not angrily, or offensively, but sadly; "or rather, I have been told it."

"By Cerutti?"

"Oh, my poor fellow!" Paolo went on in the impulsive way which was natural to him, and laid his hand on my shoulder, "you Englishmen are so much in earnest; you take things so much to heart! Beatrice has been betrothed to Cerutti these three years, and they are to be married after Easter!"

* * * * *

Paolo came with me to my hotel; he stayed with me until the night was far spent; he was kind, compassionate, reasonable, and inexorable. He admitted at once that he as well as Count Alberto was aware that I had won the heart of the beautiful, innocent girl, who had never had a glimpse of a possible love in her life before, but had been the unresisting victim of a bargain whose terms she did not understand. She had come to know them now, and she might wish—did wish, no doubt—to break the bargain; that, however, could not be. The family honour was pledged to the maintenance of the contract, and it must be maintained. He excused me for urging the possibility of my own suit being entertained, in consideration of my ignorance of Italian social customs and family government; but he would not enter upon the question of the probable feelings of Beatrice, or consider for a moment the fact, that, as an affair of interest, I had more to offer than the count. He listened courteously while I explained to him every point of my position; but he returned inexorably to his

own. The contract must be fulfilled, and while I remained at Venice I could not be permitted to see his sister. There was no violence or unkindness in all this, only a calm matter-of-fact granting of all the circumstances, while proceeding as if they did not exist. This quiet, resolute cruelty, might well have deprived me of all hope, considering that I had no promise, no assurance from Beatrice herself, and that she was an Italian girl, under the tyranny of such social customs as these; but it did not so drive me. To set against despair I had the remembrance of Beatrice's beautiful face as I had seen it that morning, and I had the evidence of the count's jealousy. The two conquered. I knew in my inmost soul that she loved me, and that she was doomed to the misery and the shame of a loveless marriage. To know this, was to take the resolution which I formed.

Paolo and I parted that night with mutual cordiality, and I fully believe he did not regard the matter as one which need make any difference between him and me. We should meet as usual during my stay in Venice, though he said frankly it would be better I should not present myself at the Palazzo D'Oria: such a course would only lead to Beatrice's being kept in a kind of gentle imprisonment until my departure. I allowed him to believe that I accepted my fate, and would obey his injunctions;—but when I left the palazzo that night, with a glove which I found on the floor of the balcony, and which I knew to be Beatrice's, hidden in my breast—I vowed, if resolution and dexterity could accomplish such a task, that his sister should be saved from her cruel, treacherous Italian suitor, and made as happy as love and care could make her in my English home.

You will be prepared to learn that I met Beatrice on the following morning; that I waited for her, near the great church, with a grave apprehension that this time her mother might be with her. It proved to be unfounded; Beatrice was alone. She looked pale, ill, and frightened. This was no time for hesitation. I spoke to her as she was leaving the church; I walked by her side across the piazza. Fate favoured us. No one whom she knew was there, and I was made doubly certain of two things: that she loved me, and that she abhorred Count Alberto; but I learned also that she regarded her marriage with him as inevit-

able. She protested that for us there could be no hope. I tried to re-assure her, but I had no time for argument or protestation. I could only arrange with Beatrice that she should send her attendant to meet me at a certain shop at a certain hour, when I would meet her, and give her a letter for her mistress. We parted, and I went to my hotel to write the letter.

I need not tell you what I wrote; in what colours I painted the English home to which I would take her if she would trust herself to me; the future happiness and consideration which would win her parents' pardon and ensure their contentment. I told her that if she would consent I should at once leave Venice for the purpose of making all the necessary arrangements for our marriage at Genoa;—it would not be safe, and I would not return until the day before that which we should fix for our flight. The maid was punctual to her appointment, my letter reached Beatrice's hands safely, and her reply was in mine the same night. I pass over her fears, her hesitation, her natural reluctance to violate all the traditions of her race and country, even to abandon a home which she acknowledged to be most unhappy. Briefly, she consented; and I purchased the assistance of her attendant and her consent to accompany Beatrice in our flight. In two days I was ready to leave Venice; during those two days I saw nothing of Paolo, whose cold indifference to his sister's wretchedness shocked me, apart from my own feelings. My final instructions to Beatrice were as follows:—I would return to Venice on the day fixed for the masked ball at Princess Levinsky's, at which Beatrice, her mother, and Paolo were to be present. After they had started for the ball, Francesca was to leave the Palazzo D'Oria unobserved, in a gondola which I would have in waiting, and follow the concourse which would be speeding to the palazzo of the Polish princess. Arrived at the landing-place, Francesca would remain in the gondola until I should bring her mistress to her; which accomplished, we were to row for the spot where the boat from my yacht (at present lying in harbour at Genoa) would await us.

On board the yacht Beatrice should find every necessary for her toilet, and provision for her comfort. I would see her safely on board, be put ashore again in the yacht's boat, and leave Venice before the morning, travelling by vetturino. I knew

that Beatrice had no fear of the sea ; I was certain of the fidelity of the captain and the crew of my yacht, and I resolved to shield the girl, who was risking so much for me, from reproach as far as it should be possible. We should not meet again until a few hours before she was to become my wife. Pursuit of her would be impossible—she would be in safety on the high seas—and even in case of accident or delay in our meeting, my skipper would have the fullest instructions. There remained the plan for our meeting at the ball, and for the actual departure. All the ladies would wear the invariable black dominoes, and these would be deposited in the vestiario adjoining the grand saloon ; so much I had contrived to learn of the topography of the palazzo of the princess. When the gaiety of the ball was at its height and Paolo at a distance from his sister, she was to draw near to the door opening upon the great corridor, and pleading a torn dress as an excuse for leaving him, to her partner in the dance, pass through into the vestiario, put on the first domino which came to her hand, and go out at the other end. There she would find me, in mask and domino, and in a few minutes she would be by my side in the gondola. One precaution remained to be taken : I must provide her with a safe means of communicating with me at the last hour, lest anything should have interfered to thwart our projects, or necessitate delay. I arranged with her that I would go to the ball earlier than the Marchesa D'Oria ever presented herself on such occasions—so that Paolo should not by any ill chance hear my name announced—and standing behind one of the pillars at the entrance of the saloon, I would watch for the arrival of the marchesa and her daughter. If all was not right, Beatrice, who knew what my costume was to be, was to drop her glove, weighted with the opal ring—I sent it to her with my letter—to ensure its falling to the ground, and I should then withdraw, and await tidings from her—through Francesca's agency—on the following morning at the Piazza of St. Mark.

If, on the contrary, all was right and our project was secure, Beatrice was to wear the jewel hidden in her bosom, and to touch it with her fan as she passed me.

Even now I could not endure to dwell upon the feelings with which I lived through the time after I received the

assent of Beatrice to my plan. I went to Genoa, made all the proposed arrangements personally and by letter, and found myself again at Venice, the yacht in readiness, and my presence unsuspected by Paolo, on the appointed day. The Carnival was at its height, and with the evening the Queen of the Adriatic put on all her splendour. The city blazed with light and colour, the air was full of song ; laughter, and radiance. The Grand Canal presented a scene of magical beauty and of incessant motion. I had kept out of sight all day : I dared not risk discovery by trying to get a sight of Beatrice, though I did not doubt she had been displayed by her mother and the count wherever fashion demanded. Paolo would have had his own amusements, as I knew, on hand, but Count Alberto might have discovered me. He was not going to the ball ; I had heard him say so, and had laid all my plans accordingly.

The night came, and I went to the palazzo of the Polish princess. I wore the conventional dress and cloak of a mediæval student, with a flat cap and a flaxen wig—the most widely different costume from that which I had arranged with Paolo in the days of the friendship which love had destroyed, which I could contrive—and, even without my mask, I do not think, my dear mother, you would have known me. I was among the earliest arrivals. The scene grew rapidly brilliant ; but I hardly noted it, and took up my position at once with sensations which I cannot describe. At last, at last, I heard the Marchesa D'Oria announced. She entered the ball-room, accompanied by Paolo and by Beatrice, whose face was perfectly colourless, but nevertheless more beautiful than I had ever seen it. My heart beat heavily as they passed me, the black-and-silver-brocaded skirt of Beatrice's Romaic dress touching me. Though the entertainment was called a masked ball, it was an understood thing that every one entered the ball-room unmasked ; so that the disguise, when resumed, was not real, but only a test of memory. Beatrice's mask of black velvet and lace dangled from her right arm. Her hands were gloved, and she carried a black-and-silver fan. Only my eyes could have detected that she saw me, as the fan touched her bosom for a moment, and was then dropped by its riband at her side, as she mingled with the crowd. I watched her and the others for some time ; until I saw that the marchesa was surrounded by

gossips, Beatrice by admirers, and that Paolo was intent upon the business I knew of. I ascertained that the gondola, under my orders, was lying by the marble stairs, one of a flotilla; the signal-scarf was tied on the arm of the gondolier. Then I took my domino from among the number in the vestiario—deserted by the attendants—put on my mask, and, passing through the outer door, found the corridor empty. Hearing, as if in a dream, the jubilant strains of music from the ball-room, I waited at the closed door. My watch was secure and uninterrupted. It had endured perhaps half-an-hour when I heard a step within; the door opened, and a figure shrouded in a domino appeared. The folds of the domino were held across the breast by a hand I knew, and on it glittered the opal ring!

"My own Beatrice! my true love!" There was no time for speech. She faltered out something as I bade her hide the ring once more in her bosom, lest Paolo would recognise it should ill luck send him in our way; and we went swiftly along the corridor to a second door which gave admittance to the vestibule. It was half full of people—guests arriving, guests departing, and servants; but no one heeded us. We went on, steadily and slowly now, a stately dame and lawful cavalier, down the marble stairs to the landing-place, where the gondolas lay. One was in the act of shooting away; mine was the second in place.

"Is it there? Are we safe?"

"We are perfectly safe, my dearest."

In another moment I had handed her into the boat, and stepped into the gloomy carriage-like receptacle, in one corner of which a cloaked figure was seated. The gondola moved; it was being pushed off. Beatrice clutched me by the arm, and whispered hoarsely:

"That is not Francesca."

"Not Francesca!" I exclaimed, and caught hold of the cloak. The figure rose with a cry like that of a wild beast:—

"No, it is I! I bribed Francesca higher."

Count Alberto dei Cerutti flung himself upon me, dagger in hand. There was a moment's violent struggle, in which I almost dashed him off; I saw one of Beatrice's arms between me and my assassin, I felt the other clasp my neck from behind; while he held me round the body with the deadly grip of hate, I felt the boat strike something, and lurch. I

lost my footing; the lifted dagger fell, and buried itself in the breast of Beatrice.

* * * * *

Now you know the whole truth, my dear mother. Do you wonder that it has banished me from England and from every familiar association for two years; and that it has been impossible for me to put it in writing until now; when I have lived it out, and lived it down? Keep this story safely, with my lost love's picture—Paolo gave it to me, when he pardoned and learned to pity me—until I come home.

STEPHEN DRELINCOURT.

"Until I come home." Stephen Drelincourt's story has been in his mother's possession two months, but no other communication from him has reached her during that time. As she lays it by with the miniature of Beatrice this Christmas Eve, and prepares to retire to rest, she sighs deeply, a sigh of weariness of spirit. "Am I ever to see him again?" she murmurs; "is my waiting never to end? The only son of his mother and she a widow. He has lived it out, he says, and lived it down. I cannot live out and live down his absence."

She is crossing the spacious room, when a loud ringing at the entrance door and a vehement barking of dogs arrest her steps. The sounds mingle with the midnight chimes, and the outburst of the joy-bells which welcome Christmas morn. She goes hastily into the hall, and is caught in her son's arms.

"It is Christmas in earnest, now," is the general sentiment at the castle "since Mr. Drelincourt has come home."

THE FOURTH ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK.

I.

PARIS. In wintry weather. Not slush and damp; not chill, yellow fog; nor dreary, driving rain; but high, vaulted, steel-blue sky; hard, crisp earth; slanting sunlight, merely touching, not melting, the frost crystals which gem the leafless trees, stud the scrolled balconies, and shine everywhere. Paris, in its winter splendour, with brilliant equipages rolling along its great thoroughfares, conveying women wrapped in velvet of price and furs almost priceless; women with eyes and cheeks all the brighter for the shrewdly biting cold. Paris, with its poor, to whom that same

shroud bite, catching tender flesh through thin garments, is deadly; and the breath of the frost-demon is more cruel than the pangs of the hunger-wolf.

Through the throng on the long, long boulevards, whose idlers are pressing to the shop-windows to admire and appraise the last novelties in étrennes (for it is the final fortnight of the year, and the obligations of the *jour de l'an* are jogging memories and opening purse-clasps); where the carriages are setting down and taking up purchasers, and the flâneur has, notwithstanding the cold, quite a busy time of it; I follow a woman. She is making her way to the Place Pigalle, and she pushes on, undistracted by the objects which claim the attention of the crowd, with steady persistency. She is a young woman, plainly dressed, but with a touch of the Parisian in the neatness and perfect fit of every article of her attire; she is not handsome, but has an attractive face, mild, intelligent, and purposeful. She carries a light shiny black box in her hand; and, as I follow her, I see that she halts only once in her long walk, it is to buy a bunch of Parma violets, at a shop where they are fresh, but not cheap by any means.

The young woman reaches her destination. It is an old house, with a deep entry, in the Place Pigalle. It is not in good repair, nor are the court, the conciergerie, or the staircase very clean, and their defects come out strongly in the winter sun. The young woman ascends the stairs, until she reaches the fourth landing, which is narrow and bare, but lighted by a large window, through which one sees the busy street below dwarfed by height. She opens a door on the landing, which admits her to a narrow passage, leading to a small apartment, consisting of two rooms and a tiny kitchen. The furniture is poor, but not squalid, and in the little domain cleanliness reigns supreme. The young woman goes on through the first room, salon and salle-à-manger in one, into the second, which bears an air of much greater comfort, and has a tenant. A carefully-husbanded wood fire is burning in the open grate, a screen stands before the bed, and a couch, well provided with soft pillows and warm covering, is drawn close to the fire. On the couch lies a woman, the perfect stillness of whose limbs, the pinched paleness of whose face, and the patient weariness of whose faded eyes, tell a story of lingering and hopeless illness. Perhaps only an artist's eye could

now discern that she had once been beautiful, for only the lines of the face, only the correctness of form and delicacy of feature remain. The deep blue of the largo eyes has faded, and for their brightness there is heaviness; for the rose-tints which once bloomed on the cheeks and the lips there is an evenly-spread pallor, and for the masses of golden hair, some thin folds lie smooth beneath the border of a snowy muslin cap. She lies back upon her pillows, quite still, her hands folded over the edge of a warm quilted couvre-pied, and her shoulders covered with a fine but faded Cashmere shawl, a real Indian fabric, once, no doubt, the realisation of its owner's pet ambition. She is looking at the light coming through the windowpanes, as sick people, whose sickness is unto death, love to look at it, when the young woman comes in, with the freshness of the wintry air on her, the flush of exercise on her cheek, and healthful brightness in her eyes. With a quick glance she sees that all is right, and smiles at the sick woman on the couch, who smiles at her in return, and stretches out a hand to take the violets.

"I knew you would bring me violets," she says, "but how quickly you have come back. It is a long way, if I can remember rightly, to the Rue des Saints Pères."

"It is a very long way, but the dry cold is pleasant, and I liked the walk. And then, Madame de Croye praised the wreaths so much, it was quite encouraging; she has promised me many orders; and given me one. It is for a bunch of water-lilies, and she wants them for the *jour de l'an*."

"Short notice, Stephanie, with all you have to do beside."

"Oh, no," returned the younger woman cheerfully, "there's plenty of time for all."

She has taken off her bonnet and cloak, put them away, and arranged a little table at the foot of the invalid's couch; and she now seats herself before it, and turns out the contents of the shiny black box, which consist of some of the materials used in the making of artificial flowers. Bright-coloured muslin, crape, silk, and feathers; spirals of wire, tinted paper—she inspects them, counts up their price, selects the articles she requires for immediate use, and, after she has eaten a sparing meal in the adjoining room and served to the invalid some delicate food, she sets to work as if she had not done anything

fatiguing previously, with a smiling face and fingers whose rapid dexterity the sick woman watches with sad, loving eyes.

While she works, Stephanie also talks. She has wonders to tell her companion about the boulevards and the shops, the carriages and the toilettes, though she never paused for a moment to look at them for her own delectation; and it is noticeable that she is especially communicative respecting the theatres. She has looked at all the "affiches" on her route, and actually purchased the day's Entr'acte. When the sun sets, and she has to light the lamp, and to leave the invalid by herself while she attends to her business in the kitchen department, she puts the Entr'acte into her hands, and the invalid studies attentively that apparently most uninteresting topic to a person in her position, the list of all the spectacles at which Paris may divert itself on that evening. It interests her, however; and when the evening closes in, bringing no change to her, or to the steady industry of her companion, she talks of plays which she has seen in her time, and tells Stephanie anecdotes of singers and dancers and actors, who are mere names to the listener. And yet the "time" she alludes to as if it were very old indeed, is not in reality far past, for Giulietta Silva is not thirty-five years old. It is just eight o'clock when the bell is rung on the landing, and Stephanie says,

"There is Pierre? May he come in here? You are not too tired?" Receiving an affirmative assurance, she lays down the tiny blade with which she has been crimping the leaf of a carnation, and leaves the room. She does not return immediately; there is a pleasant sound of cheerful voices in the little saloon, for ten minutes or so. When she comes back, she is accompanied by a slight, dark young man, whom the invalid welcomes as her brave Pierre.

The brave Pierre has gentle manners, and a low voice, and he has hardly taken his seat on the other side of Stephanie's table before he begins to roll up little spirals of green paper, and to divide small bits of feather into smaller bits, trimming them with sharp shears, slender enough for a fairy's work-box, mechanically assisting Stephanie, as a matter of course, but with fingers curiously deft and delicate of touch for a man's.

"Don't you think you have tried your eyes enough for to-day, Pierre?" says

Stephanie, as he sets to work seriously. "There is more doing than usual at your fabrique, you say, and you get your full share of it. Why not rest to-night?"

"Because I am not tired," replies Pierre, "and I suppose I am not tired because I have had my spirits raised to-day. Madame," he addresses the invalid, but goes on with his dexterous fingering of Stephanie's flower petals the while, "I have had my spirits raised. By whom? you ask. By Gustave Leblond, our foreman, I reply. And when you ask me how, I tell you, without vanity, by his praises of my designs for ladies' ornaments in jewels, and my workmanship. I have gained many of the ideas by watching Stephanie at her work, and studying with her the living models she works from, the flower-children of the gardens and the fields; and I have put them into designs which our foreman finds original. He finds also that I do my work well; my eye is true, and my hand is neat and steady, and so Gustave Leblond tells me to-day that he is going into the jeweller's business on his own account, and that he will take me as his foreman, if I will agree to work for no one but him, and to give him my designs as a speciality."

Pierre Giroux is then a working jeweller, and the deft dexterity of his fingers comes by practice as well as by nature.

"This is indeed good news," says Madame Silva; "and I rejoice to hear it. What do you say to it, Stephanie?"

"I say that it is good news, but—" she smiles with an arch sweetness which makes her face charming, "I say it does not mean all that Pierre would have it signify."

"Hear her now! I appeal to you, madame, if she is not proud! When I told her a little of this just now, and asked her if she did not think we could be married soon, and have a snug little home to begin with, instead of the long, long waiting that seemed before us only yesterday, she gave herself airs, and asked whether I supposed she was going to marry a day before she should have saved her dôt of three thousand francs, because fortune had come my way. It is all her pride, and what does it mean? I would say nothing if there were my parents to be regarded, who might think little of her because of her dôt; but I am alone in the world, still more alone than she is, for she has you, and there is no one to talk or to interfere. So her pride is all for me, to

my address, who only want her love. Don't you think it is a shame, madame; and that I am ill-used?"

"Very ill-used indeed, Pierre, and I promise you I shall bring Stephanie to reason. When does this M. Leblond talk of commencing business on his own account?"

"Early in the New Year, madame."

"Indeed. And you and Stephanie have been affianced—let me see—how long?"

"A year to-day."

There is a pause. Madamo Silva turns her head upon her pillow, away from the light, and closes her eyes. The conversation is thenceforth confined to the betrothed lovers, and it lasts until ten o'clock, when Pierro Giroux takes his leave. Madame Silva is weaker and wearier than usual that night, and when, with all conceivable care and attention, she has been transferred from her couch to her bed—the only transition her life ever knows—and Stephanie's monotonous day's work has come to an end, they are both silent.

"To-morrow is our good doctor's day," says the invalid, as Stephanie stoops to kiss her on the forehead; "after his visit we will talk of this good news."

A sofa-bed in the salon is Stephanie's own resting-place. It is so placed that she is within reach of the invalid's low tones, and the intervening door stands open. Long after the girl is sound asleep, Madamo Silva's eyes remain unclosed, watching the wood ashes as they drop, and shoulder, and die. Not pain, but thoughts, hold her eyes waking to-night.

II.

It is the close of the year; the vigil of the great Parisian festival, the Jour do l'An. In the little apartment au quatrième of the old house in the Place Pigalle are the three friends. But a change has passed over their aspect and their relations. Madamo Silva has acted on her conviction that Pierre is very ill-used by Stephanie with such effect that Stephanie has repented of her pride and her stubbornness, and has consented to marry Pierro out of hand, and to put off the completion of the dît. The quiet wedding is to take place on the morrow, and the newly-married couple are to take possession of a little home of their own, no farther removed from Madamo Silva than the other side of the landing, after an excursion to Asnières of two days' duration. Stephanie will not desert her post for a

longer time, and has been brought to consent only by the admirable conduct of a young person recommended by Doctor Leroux himself, and by whom she proposes to replace herself for the nonce. The young person has been dismissed, and Stephanie and Pierre sit beside Madamo Silva's bed. Doctor Leroux has visited her several times within the last fortnight. Her one transition is made no more, and Madamo Silva knows well that this Jour de l'An is the last which she shall see. But she keeps her knowledge to herself, and questions Stephanie gaily about the little preparations for the wedding, which she cannot witness. Spread out on the disused couch is Stephanie's wedding gown and bonnet, and everything is ready. Madamo Silva has told Pierre that she wishes to speak with him to-night, and there is a little air of solemnity about the three. Madamo Silva lies high up on a pile of pillows, her right hand slipped under one of them, and addresses herself to Pierre.

"I am going to tell you a story, my brave Pierre—a story which Stephanie has never heard. It is my own. You will soon know why I tell it to you now, and have said nothing of it hitherto. The first thing I can remember of my childhood is the wonder and delight of seeing a lighted stage, and actors on it. My father had some employment, I don't know what, in the Fenice, at Venice, where I was born, and my mother was a kind of head housemaid, and attended to the dressing-rooms. All my recollections are of the seamy side of theatrical life; I ran about the place like a dog or a cat, when I was little, and nobody minded 'Giulietta,' not even my father or my mother, of whom I have no dearer memory than I have of many of the Signori and Signore who used to make mellifluous love to one another on the stage, and quarrel and back-bite one another plentifully behind the scenes, thereby causing me profound astonishment until I was of an age to discriminate, in the broad sense, between the real and the fictitious scenes in the midst of which I lived.

"While I was still a young child my mother died, and then I must have been shockingly neglected, for I remember being hungry, and cold, and very lonely, and wandering away by myself along the terraces by the canal, and making friends with the boatmen. Next to seeing the stage lighted, and peeping at the

performances, I loved a row in a gondola, and I often had one; for I had picked up a playfellow, one Renzo Silva, a boy somewhat older than myself, whose father owned three handsome gondolas. I dwell on this seeming trifle, it held the germ of all my fate in it. When I was ten years old some one found out that I could dance, and my father, who had married a woman who ill-treated both him and me, determined that I should be a stage-dancer. I was delighted with the idea, and though I suffered horribly during the training, I was not displeased with the reality. I really did dance well, with great spirit; and as I always danced to a story in my mind, I suppose there was something original and characteristic in my performance. It was well for me that I did like it, for I never had any rest, and I never reaped any reward. I performed second and third-rate parts in the now old-fashioned ballets en action in vogue at that time, much before any of my comrades were out of the crowd of the corps de ballet, and my stepmother got all the money that I earned. I must have been sixteen when my father died, and at that age great things were prophesied of me. I was quite at my stepmother's mercy, and she was most unmerciful, so that after a year I began to contemplate the escaping from her by any means as an object to be attained, if possible. Some one also had found out that I could sing, and I had, nothing loth, cultivated that talent too, so that when Renzo and I exchanged sentiments respecting the comparative hardships of our lot—he was a gondolier now, on one of his father's boats, and a very handsome, fine fellow, no better treated at home than I was—it was not unnatural that we should think we might improve our circumstances by joining our fortunes. We loved each other more faithfully and worthily than might have been supposed possible, considering our respective manner of life, and there was some real romance in our folly, when we made up our minds to run away together, and to seek our fortunes in France. We settled the details of our plan in all but one momentous particular—where the money was to come from, to pay for our journey, and to support us afterwards, until we should get engagements in Paris; for that was what we were bent on doing, Renzo entertaining no doubt that he too could dance and sing, and act too, for that matter? We

had to face this important question, and it was decided that on a certain night I was to refuse to appear on the stage unless my stepmother agreed to hand over a portion of my salary to me, and that this course should be pursued until a sum sufficient for our purposes had been accumulated. We parted, and I proceeded to carry out my promise. The result was that my stepmother beat me with a broomstick, and threatened to turn me into the street, but neither the beating nor the threat shook my purpose. It was Carnival time, and the general merriment enraged and embittered me the more. An hour before the time when I should have carried out my purpose, and thrown the stage into confusion, a message from Renzo reached me, through one of the hangers-on at the theatre; it was merely this—'Dance to-night, and come down to the Piazza early to-morrow.' I did dance that night; I did go down to the Piazza di San Marco the next morning, and there was Renzo, who told me I need not trouble myself about money—he had more than enough. No efforts of mine could extract from him the origin of this unexpected wealth; he would do no more than assure me that he had not taken money which belonged to his father or to any other person. I was easily satisfied, and we made our escape the next day.

"We travelled to Paris, and began to seek for employment, which I was long in finding. I suffered a great deal in the process, in many ways, which I do not wish to recall. At length I got an engagement at one of the minor theatres, and I made an instantaneous success. My husband (we were legally married in Paris) got no employment, and after a time ceased to look for any. I loved him, I revelled in my success, I was happy in our disorderly life. But there was a sort of spell on Renzo. He idled, he sulked, he smoked, he drank, he gambled. At length my illusion cleared away, and I knew him for what he was. His mysterious money soon melted, and he never earned a shilling. We had been married four years, I had just signed an engagement at a theatre of a rauk far beyond my expectations, and a vista of something like wealth was opening before me, when Renzo was brought home one night, senseless and mortally hurt. He had thrown away his life in the quarrel of a worthless woman, in a tavern brawl.

He did not know me when he came out of the swoon, and he never spoke coherently during the twenty-four hours he lived. His wandering utterances were all of Venice, his father's gondolas, and a certain Count Alberto. I remembered the count well, and the girl he stabbed, in the Carnival time, just before Renzo and I went away from Venice, and how the people howled at him when he was taken away to prison after his life sentence. I found out, through Renzo's raving, what was the source whence the money he never would account for had come to him. It was the price he received from a Jew dealer in precious stones, for a rich jewel which he found in a gondola belonging to his father. He talked wildly of seeing the jewel shine, when the boat put in to the landing-place, and the people were crowding round, and how he had picked it up quickly, 'out of the blood,' he said, but that, of course, was only raving. He died with his head upon my arm, and the name of another woman upon his lips, and I forgave him for that and for all.

"The manager gave me a week, and then I entered upon my new engagement. It meant a new life. A very different audience applauded me now, very different temptations beset me. My salary was good, and I spent it all. I touched no other money. My life was full enough of pleasure, but there was no guilt in it. I pass over a year, and I come to one evening which has a double importance in my memory. When I arrived at the theatre, I found confusion and dismay prevailing; an accident had occurred among the machinery, and one of the carpenters had been killed. The man was honest, industrious, and esteemed, a widower, with one child, a little girl of eight. A subscription for the child was proposed, but I volunteered to take charge of her future. The child was Stephanie. Poor child! it was not for long that she had an efficient protector; it was not long until our rôles were reversed. That was one event of the evening. But there was a second. In the course of the performance a slight interruption, which the audience were inclined to resent, was caused by some men who came in late. I looked at them, and saw that one of the number was looking at me intently, and I was afterwards conscious that he never desisted from the watch he kept on me while I was on the stage. Some one near me told me his name—never mind

what it was, I will call him Prince Michael. The next night he came again, the third again—no need to dwell on that part of the story. He made my acquaintance and paid me the easy insolent court which a man of his class deems fitting to a woman of mine. I put it aside lightly, the man had no charm for me. He was piqued, his temper was roused, and he either felt or affected a grand passion. I laughed at the tragedy as I had laughed at the farce; and then he offered me marriage. Had I loved him, I should have been too wise to take him at his word, but I had come to hate him as I never hated any human being. I had a superstitious dread of him, the old fears of my childhood returned to me, I felt that the man was a jettatore, and that the Evil-eye might any day be cast on me. At length this weakness took such hold of me that it injured my health, and began to tell on my nerves. His ceaseless pursuit became a torture, and I determined, when my engagement should terminate, to leave Paris, and hide myself somewhere. The sight of Prince Michael became an omen of sinister augury to me, and he knew it. The cruelty of making me dread him, of forcing me to feel that he was keeping a constant watch on me, pleased his cruel nature, in which what he called love was always akin to hate.

"Within a week of the close of my engagement, I suddenly missed him. The morning brought no letter or message; the afternoon no visit; I found no bouquet in my dressing-room at the theatre, and the prince's place in the salle was vacant. I wondered for a day or two, then I began to breathe freely. After all, his melodramatic threats had meant nothing, and he had retreated from the ignoble contest in which a woman had beaten him. I received the ironical compliments which were paid me on the disappearance of the prince with genuine good-humour, and laughed at myself for my notions about the Evil-eye.

"A week had elapsed, and the last night of the season had arrived. I had neither seen nor heard anything of Prince Michael. When I went to the theatre, a letter, a bouquet, and a small packet were handed to me. The letter contained only a few lines: "Good-bye, Giulietta. You were right, and nothing is eternal—not even my despair. I have got over it, according to your amiable prediction; and as I am as tired of Paris as you are of me, I am

off. But I always part friends with a woman, and I like to be remembered otherwise than as a boro and a tyrant. Wear the ring I send you, if not for my sake, for its own. The Jew who sold it to me at Venice swore the opal was a jewel richer than all its tribe, and I do not think he foresaw himself very widely."

"The ring was a splendid one indeed. The centre was an opal as large as a filbert, with gleams of red, and green, and yellow, and violet in it, set in diamonds. I put it on my finger and admired it with genuine pleasure. My spirits were at their highest, the prince had gone away, and I might wear the ring without blame or fear. I shewed it to some of the others in the green-room, and they praised its beauty; all but one. A southern girl said: "Opal is unlucky, if you were not born in October. It's all right if you were; if not, it's a porte malheur." I was on the stage a minute later, with her words in my ears. Was I born in October? I could not tell; my birthdays had made no mark in my childhood. Back with a rush came my superstitious dread; while I was singing the words of my rôle, my eyes sought for the prince in the accustomed place; but vainly. He was not there. The piece was a Féerie, in immense vogue, and the leading part was mine. In the second act I had to stand on the brow of a rock, overhanging a river, and summon the water-sprites to slow music, singing the incantation while I swayed myself about with the rhythmical motion of Oriental dancing. The scene was always enthusiastically applauded, and had never presented the slightest difficulty to me before. Nor did it now. I ascended the slope easily, was greeted as usual, raised my arms so as to extend them over the flood, made one step forward, and fell headlong down.

"Since that night I have been a helpless invalid. At first the injury was believed to be mortal, but that sentence was commuted to the imprisonment for life which my adopted child has cheered. Every one was good to me. I had a considerable sum in my possession when the accident occurred, and my friends subscribed enough to add to it so as to buy for me a small annuity. I was not patient or submissive for a long, long time. It was very hard to bear, especially when people began to forget me, and solitude set in. I kept Stephanie at school for a few years, but I could not afford more; my small income had no elasticity, and no supplement. She came home to me; she

learned a mode of earning money which need not separate her from me. You know the rest, Pierre; you, who have won her. It has not been an unhappy life; no life can be unhappy which counts such love as mine for Stephanie, and hers for me, as its best treasure.

"Now, I am going to explain why I tell you this story on the eve of your marriage-day. It is because I have never parted with the opal ring, the porte-malheur which fulfilled its weird to me. What has been the fate of the man who meant the gift of it to bring me misfortune—for he believed in all the superstitions of his nation—I know not. I have kept the ring, with the intention of reversing the spell, if such there be in it, in our case at least."

Madame Silva draws her hand from beneath the pillow, and stretches it towards Pierre. A jewel glitters in the open palm.

"I have never worn the ring, and Stephanie has never seen it; I knew she would have had me sell it, when it has sometimes been hard to get the comforts by which she would have had my lot always alleviated. I have witnessed her untiring industry, her undeviating thrift, and, looking on at her life, have learned what there may be in a woman. I have seen the true love come into that life, and learned from it what it was that never had any existence in mine. You can appraise this jewel, Pierre, you can tell its value, and that sum is Stephanie's dôt. Hush, my children, I will hear no objection. This has been my purpose throughout. I only lay this condition on you, Pierre, that you never put that ring on Stephanie's finger for even one moment. Take it away, out of my sight to-night, and sell it as soon as possible."

"I think I know someone who will buy it, at its full value," says Pierre, when, after he and Stephanie have striven to thank her, the invalid dismisses them to their brief parting for the few hours which remain before their marriage. "Leblond has brought a clientèle from the old place; and there's an Englishman among them, who ordered one of my posy breast-knots lately. It was for his fiancée, he said, and if it pleased him he would purchase some other things. I will send Leblond to him with the ring to-morrow morning."

"Pray de, Pierre. So we shall be rid of the omen, if indeed therer be one, on our wedding-day."

THE FIFTH ENTRY IN GEORGE HADDON'S NOTE-BOOK.

I SEE before me a broad expanse of turf, green and fresh, and beautifully kept. It is bordered on either side by trees: some of enormous girth, with huge limbs and wide-spreading branches; others apparently newly planted, fenced round to protect them from being hurt by the children, whose shrill laughter I hear from time to time as they carry on their play in the bright cheerful morning sun. At one end of the turf wall I see an old cumbrous red-brick house, standing in a stiff and formal garden, which I recognise at once as Kensington Palace. Up to this time no human being has been within sight, but now I see two figures emerging from the trees, and walking at a slow pace towards the palace. A man and a woman, both young, tall, and good-looking, dressed in a strange odd fashion: she with a high waist and a huge bonnet, he with the velvet collar of his coat standing up round his ears, his broadly cut trousers hiding most of his foot, and tightly strapped, the fashion of thirty years ago. They are walking side by side, and very close together: the woman's white ungloved hand, on which I see glistening the opal ring, lying on the man's arm. Hush! the young man speaks:

"No, darling!" I hear him say. "No! I dare say you, who are full of a girl's romance, will think me but practical and prosaic when I tell you that I am bound to confess one of the greatest sources of happiness to me is that the course of our true love has run so smoothly. If I had been differently situated, I might have gloried in encountering trouble for the sake of winning you; and loving you with my whole heart and soul as I do, I have no doubt I should have managed to surmount them. But, looking at my present position, with all the weight and responsibility of my father's business on my back, having to be all day long in Lincoln's Inn, and nearly all night long reading up cases, with these few minutes with you in the early morning as my sole recreation, I am thankful indeed that my suit is favoured by your father, and that there are no obstacles in its way. You follow me, Margaret?"

"Yes, James!" she replies; "I follow you, and I am sure you are right. It was merely a little girlish waywardness which prompted me to say what I did just now.

Your work is so hard that it would be dreadful indeed to think of your being harassed with complications about me."

"Recollect," he says, laying his hand lightly on hers, "that such complications have already existed! I have not forgotten, if you have, the tortures which I suffered when Mr. Frederick Haddon—"

"What!" cried George, springing up, "what name was that?"

"Silence!" said the professor, motioning him, with a commanding gesture, to his seat. "You will awake her, and the thread of continuity will be lost. Go on!" he added, turning to the patient.

"When Mr. Frederick Haddon was pleased to pester you with his insolent addresses?"

"James!" says the girl, looking up honestly into his face, "Don't recur to that dreadful time! It is all gone and past, thank Heaven! Mr. Haddon has long since given up his pursuit of me, and his family, who I thought were at one time inclined to be vexed with all of us on my account, must have forgiven my refusal of him, for my brother Mark, as you know, was taken into their bank, and speaks highly of the kindness shown to him."

"I know it," mutters the young man, and looked upon it as a sop at the time. However, as six months have elapsed since Mark took possession of his ledger and stool, and that precious Frederick Haddon has not tried to renew his acquaintance with you, I suppose my lawyer's caution made me suspicious without a cause. You wear the ring still, Margaret, I see?"

"Still, James! I hope to wear it to my dying day," she says, raising it to her lips.

"Wear it on your wedding-day, my darling," says he, looking at her with eyes full of love and admiration. "Only another two months to wait, pet. Before the leaves are brown the long vacation will be here, and I shall take my bride to my old Devonshire home. Nine o'clock! There never were minutes melted away so fast as these. Walk with me to the gate, Margaret, and let my last glimpse of you comfort me among the deed-boxes and tape-tied papers."

I see the girl again. She is walking up an old-fashioned suburban square. At the door of one of the houses she stops and knocks. She lives there apparently, for when the door is opened she is passing

through into the hall, when she notices the scared look of the servant. "What is the matter, Hannah?" she asks.

"I don't know, miss, I'm sure, what it is, but something dreadful has occurred! About an hour ago a messenger from the office brought a letter for mistress, and she opened it when I was in the room; and all of a sudden she went as pale as a ghost, her knees trembled under her, and she would have fallen, but I pushed a chair forward just in time. Then she burst out crying, and cried for more than an hour; and now she has locked herself in her room, and I can hear her from time to time sobbing as though her heart would break!"

"Did my mother say anything as to the cause of this trouble, Hannah?" asks Margaret, hurriedly divesting herself of her bonnet.

"No, miss, she didn't say anything; but when she had her first crying fit she dropped the letter on the floor, and in picking it up I just glanced at it permissively, and I saw Master Mark's name."

"My brother?"

"Yes, miss, and I think Master Mark must have been taken ill, for while the mistress was sobbing, I heard her say to herself several times, 'My poor misguided boy! my wretched, wretched boy!'"

"I will go to my mother at once! My father has not yet come home?"

"No, miss. The letter was from the master, as I've said, but he wasn't at the office, for I asked the messenger, who said he had fetched a hackney-coach for the master, and had told the man to drive to Haddon's bank."

As these words ring in her ears, Margaret turns very pale, and hurries up the stairs. Her mother must have heard and recognised her footstep, for the door is open, and in an instant the two women are in each other's arms.

"What is this I hear from Hannah, mother? It is true, for I see the traces of tears on your cheeks, and you tremble so that you can scarcely stand. Something dreadful has happened. What is it? Tell me, I implore you!"

"I cannot tell you, Margaret," says the old lady, whose tears burst out afresh. "Your father will break it to you when he comes."

"It is something about Mark! Is he ill? Is—is he dead?"

"No! he is not dead!" cried the mother, whose voice is almost inarticulate with

sobbing; "I almost wish he were! I almost wish he were!"

"Mother! mother! what are you saying? Think of Mark, our handsome, splendid Mark!"

"I do think of him, Margaret! I think of the pride I have had in him, of the way in which I have worshipped him since his birth, and I wonder whether this is not a punishment upon me for having made an idol of a human creature, and preferred him to his Creator."

"There is my father's knock," says the girl, starting at the sound. "Dry your eyes, mother, and do not let him find you in this state. It is too late. He is here!"

The room door opens, and a small man, with delicate features and snow-white hair and whiskers, enters. He has a wearied look, his shoulders are rounded, and his step slow and laboured. He bends over his wife and kisses her on the forehead. Then he takes his daughter's hands in his, and gazes long and earnestly into her eyes. As he does so his own become suffused, he turns hastily away, and throws himself into a chair.

"You have been to the bank, Edward?" asks the wife, timidly.

"I have," he replies, in a husky voice. "I have just come from there."

"What news is there? have you seen Mr. Haddon? Is there any hope?"

"There is hope—if hope it can be called," he replies, in the same voice, with his eyes fixed on the floor. "On one condition."

"Oh, thank God!" cries his wife, with clasped hands. "There is no condition we would not fulfil to save our son."

"The safety of the person you allude to, but whom I will never again acknowledge as my son," says the old man, looking up with a fierce light in his blue eyes, "does not depend on you, Jane, nor on me; but upon her!" and his trembling hand is outstretched towards his daughter.

"Upon her!" repeats the mother, looking aghast. Then, sinking her voice to a whisper, adds, "She knows nothing of it, Graham, nothing of what has happened. You bade me be silent, and I have told her nothing!"

"She must hear it now," says the old man, in a broken voice, "and it is best that it should come from me. The honour of the family is given into her hands to do with as she likes—it could not be more safely bestowed. Margaret, my child!" turning to her, and laying his hand lightly

on her head ; "a blow has fallen on us all which we shall never recover from, which will haunt us in our secret hours and be ever present with us, driving us to distraction with the fear of its discovery—but from the public shame of which you can absolve us, if you will."

"Do you doubt my will, if I have the power, father?" cries the girl, half indignantly. "Do you doubt that if by any sacrifice of mine, you and my mother could be spared an instant of uneasiness, I would not go through with it? You have but to name what I have to do—and it is done!"

"You speak bravely, Margaret, but you do not know the extent of the sacrifice you are called upon to make. Would to God that the power of rectification had rested with me alone, but that was not to be. Listen, Margaret! This morning, on my arrival at the office, I received a letter stating that a forgery, by which Messrs. Haddon's bank had been considerable losers, had, late last night, been traced to your brother Mark."

"Good heavens! a forgery! to Mark!"

"The proofs were such as not to admit of the slightest doubt! But the letter was marked 'Confidential,' and in it I was requested to call this morning at the bank and see Mr. Haddon."

"Was Mark arrested—in custody, I mean?"

"No; up to this time he is unaware that his crime has been discovered. I went to the bank, and saw Mr. Haddon. To me personally he was very kind, and spoke in the most feeling manner of his sorrow for the effects of the blow on your mother and on you. But as regards Mark, he spoke with the strongest determination. He had been well treated, he said, and had deliberately betrayed his trust. If the partners were to forgive him, or even to condone his offence, they would themselves be compromising a felony, and acting discreditably towards the whole commercial world. It was a hard case for the family, but the law must take its course."

"Oh, father! the shame, the misery, the overwhelming degradation! After all our strivings, we shall never hold up our heads again!"

"Do you imagine that I do not feel it acutely, Margaret? I implored Mr. Haddon to give me time, and I would repay all the defalcations, though to do so would take the savings of my life, and leave you and your mother destitute,

should illness or death overtake me. He would not hear of it. 'Let the young man's crime fall upon himself,' he said; 'it is not fitting that the innocent should suffer for the guilty, that those two ladies should be impoverished for the sake of a criminal who well deserves all that is in store for him!' Then I pointed out Mark's position at home, how you and his mother worshipped him beyond anything on earth, and I sued for mercy for your sakes."

"That was right, father! What did Mr. Haddon say to that?"

"He was silent for a few moments. Then he said, 'You mention your daughter, Mr. Spencer; is her attachment to her brother very great?'"

"So great," I replied, "that I think the news I have to bring her is likely enough to cause her death." He hesitated again, then said, "We are both of us men of business rather than of sentiment, Mr. Spencer, but we each of us have a tender spot about us; and however much you may cherish your daughter, you cannot be fonder of her than I am of my son. I love that boy Frederick as the apple of my eye, and my whole existence is bound up in him. For weeks past he has been visibly ailing; he has lost all interest in those pleasures and pastimes in which young men usually take delight, and sits apart, moping and dejected. The doctors have seen him, and can find no cause for the change, can assign no reason for the dejection. But a parent's eyes are keener than a physician's, Mr. Spencer; and the diagnosis which I have made of Frederick's malady is clear and correct. He loves your daughter, Spencer—loves her still; and her rejection of him is costing him his life."

"Father!" cries Margaret, with a sudden intuition, springing forward and casting herself on her knees at her father's feet; "father, spare me! oh, spare me!"

"Listen, Margaret," says Mr. Spencer, raising her tenderly in his arms. "Hear all before you speak. I will detain you but a little longer. After speaking further of his son's affection for you, and of the effect which, blighted and misapplied as he knew it to be, it was having on his health, Mr. Haddon said, 'Now, Spencer, I will give you one chance, and you shall save your own son in saving mine. Let Miss Spencer consent to marry Frederick, and not merely shall Mark's crime never

be made known, but I will see that a place is found for him in the house of our correspondent at Sydney. If you refuse, the law must take its course.'

He looks at her, expectant of some reply, but she answers nothing. Hangs there, mute and immobile, round his neck. Only the tears stealing down his coat testify that she is alive.

"I did the best for you, my child," he says, looking down upon her, and his own eyes filling as he speaks. "I told him that you had refused Frederick Haddon by your own free will, without any pressure being put on you either by your mother or myself, and that I feared you could never love him. He said he did not ask that you should love, but that you should marry his son. 'I am old enough to know,' he said, 'that the supposed love which burned so brightly was soonest to dim, and that the esteem which grew up between a husband and wife was more reliable, and served its purpose better.' He told me all that, my dear!"

"Father!" murmurs Margaret, hiding her head on his shoulder—"James!"

"James!" repeats the old gentleman, doubtfully—"oh yes, of course! James Leagrade! yes, I mentioned him and said I thought there was some sort of engagement between you!"

"Some sort of engagement, father?"

"I thought it better to put it in that way, my dear. Mr. Haddon was very firm upon that point. He would not listen to any thing of the sort; he said, 'If Miss Spencer refuses her consent, the law must take its course.' That was the utmost I could get him to say. Margaret, I told you our rescue from infamy lay in your hands. You can now calculate whether you are disposed to pay the price at which it is fixed."

She says nothing, but sits with her head pillowed on her father's knees, her long hair, which has become loosened, hanging round her hidden face. Mrs. Spencer, who has been silently weeping the while, leaves her chair and takes up her position near her daughter, fondly stroking the girl's head, and looking enquiringly at her husband, from whom, however, she receives no intelligible sign. At length, Margaret raises her head, not high enough, indeed, for him to distinguish her face, and says, in a low dull voice, "I cannot—I will not do it!"

"It is for you to decide, my dear," says Mr. Spencer, shrugging his shoulders,

"and to weigh well the extent of the sacrifice."

"Do not imagine for an instant that that weighs with me! Such poor sacrifice of my life as I could make, I would make willingly, to save Mark from degradation, to save a pang to you and mother. But think of him, father! think of James, whose whole life is bound up in mine, who has toiled so long and so hard, with my love as his sole sustaining aid, my hand as his sole hope of reward! You know his devotion to me; but you don't know, no one can ever know, except myself, his manly honour, his bright steadfastness of purpose, the labour he has undertaken, the privations he has undergone, with this one beacon in view, ever cheering him on to the accomplishment of his task. Am I, by one act, to steep such a man in trouble to the lips, to plunge him into darkness, to leave him in the miry ways of life without any hope of extrication, to bring a curse upon his honest well-spent youth, and hold myself up, a thoughtless, feckless girl, who, for mere flirtation's sake, made myself the blight and bane of his existence. No! not for ten thousand brothers would I do it!"

Her head is erect now, her face aglow with honest pride in her lover, and determination that his cause shall not suffer. Hush! the mother speaks now.

"You say you are not pleading for yourself, Margaret!" she says, in a weak and broken voice; "and neither your father nor I have any difficulty in believing that, for a better or more selfless girl never breathed. You are pleading for James Leagrade, your betrothed, a young man whom to know is to honour and respect. But you are just and honourable, Margaret, as well as good and selfless, and you will follow faithfully the contrast which I am going to show you. Suppose you do what is asked of you? You take away the taint from off your own and only brother's life, that life which has just commenced and promised so fairly, and enable him to make a fresh start in that world where without your aid, he must never again hope to find a friend in an honest man or woman. To such poor remainder of life as may be left to your father and myself—for at our age, deprived of both our children, and crushed and humbled in spirit, our tenure is not likely to be long—you give peace, such peace as is to be found here below. You refuse to do this, and to-morrow sees your brother a felon,

the dweller in a gaol, branded with the prison curse, a leper, a pariah, an outcast from all that is decent and honourable till his latest day; sees the good name for which your father has toiled for forty years swept away at once, leaves us heart-broken and alone, the object of scorn, or, still worse, of pity, to drag out our few remaining days in obloquy and neglect. And now for James Leagrade. I have not forgotten him. You marry him, we will say. Do you think that marriage will be a happy one? Oh, he will be to you all that a husband should be. I do not doubt that for an instant, he is far too honourable a man to act otherwise. But do you think you will be happy? Do you not imagine that from time to time there will come across you a vision of your brother in his misery and degradation, surrounded by the herd of villains to whose companionship he is henceforth relegated, and that your heart will tell you that but for you he might have had the chance of condoning his guilt, and re-establishing his position? When your father or I sink beneath the burden of our disgrace, as sink we speedily must, will not the thought strike you that we might have been kept alive, and our last days need not have been thus embittered but for you? James Leagrade loves you well, you say, and I do not doubt it; he need love you well, indeed, to be able to close his ears against the whispers and his mind against the knowledge that he, so upright and so just, has a brother-in-law who is a convicted felon, and whose reflected dishonour tarnishes his own fair fame."

Margaret's head moves under the caressing hand. "Mother!" she murmurs, but her voice fails her, and again she is silent.

"Now, my child," continues Mrs. Spencer in firmer tones, for her strength increases with courage and with hope; "now, my child, let us look at the other side. Suppose you consent to do as you are asked, and to save your brother. You break your word to James Leagrade. You find some pretext—for he must never know the truth—for releasing yourself from the contract. You cut him adrift. You think his great loving heart will break, that his life will be blighted, that he will never again know human happiness. Oh, Margaret, believe me, an old woman, speaking out of the plenitude of her experience. Men's hearts, the best and

kindest of them, do not break for love, my child. That it will be a blow to him, a stab which may leave a visible scar for years, I do not pretend to deny. But your rejection of his love will not be to him what your acceptance of it would be to us. He is young and we are old; and there is no shame accruing to him. The mocking laughter of the world at his failure would have no influence on such a man as James, and the very consciousness that he was in the right, and had been hardly done by, would help to heal the wound. I can say no more, Margaret. I have placed the matter before you according to my light. It is for you to decide upon it."

No sound for a few moments, then the girl moves, writhing as though in great anguish, her face hidden on her father's knees. "Oh, if I could only die myself!" she says, and the father is about to speak, but Mrs. Spencer raises her hand and moves her head quietly as who should say, "Let her make her plaint, poor child! let her sorrow have full vent! she is more likely to yield if this be done!"

And she does yield. Slowly and sadly she raises her face, flushed and tear-blurred, pushes aside the tangled masses of her hair, and looks half-vacantly round her. Then she shivers, and covers her eyes with her trembling hands. The contact reminds her evidently of the presence of the opal ring, for she slides it gently from her finger, and covers it with passionate kisses. "Go back to my darling who gave you to me," she murmurs, proudly regarding it; "go back to him, and if there be any power in you, as I have heard, tell him, what he must never hear from me, that never since we first met have I loved him as I love him now, never has my heart yearned for sympathy and communion with his as it does at this instant, and that, come to me what may, I in my secret heart shall cherish him, a thing apart from all else, to be worshipped and to be mourned!" She breaks down afresh with this, writhing on the floor, her head resting on her breast, her whole frame convulsed with sobbing and the ring in her lap between her rigid hands.

Mr. Spencer is the first to speak. "You have done bravely, Margaret," he commences, laying his hand upon her head, but the girl shrinks beneath his touch, and her mother motions him to retire.

"You have saved what is more to me

than Mark's life, his honour, Margaret," she says.

"And lost my own!" interrupts her daughter. "Mother, I have decided according to your wish; what now remains to do, let it be done quickly, for God's sake, and then take me away, far away from every one; let me have some weeks in calm and rest with you alone, or I shall go mad!" There is a fierce light in her eyes, and an air of desperation about her, quite foreign to her gentle nature.

"You must write a letter, Margaret—I—I promised Mr. Haddon that should be done to-day," says Mr. Spencer reluctantly.

"What?" cries Margaret, "I write to Frederick Haddon to invite him to his conquest? I——"

"No, no! I will do that. Mr. Haddon will hear from me; I will go to him this afternoon. But I must tell him you have written to—to the other—to James Lea-grave."

One short sharp shudder passes through her, then with a mighty effort she recovers herself, rising to her feet, and throwing her hair back over her shoulders. "I will do it at once," she says.

There is a table in the corner of the room with writing materials on it. At this she seats herself, pulls the paper to her, and writes rapidly, never pausing to think, though the pen trails sometimes, and once a tear falls, which she quickly wipes away. These are the words I see :

"I return you the ring, and with it the troth which you plighted when you placed it on my finger. I claim mine from you, but if you do not surrender it, as is possible, it will not matter, as I shall never see you again. I have done you an inexpiable wrong, which I cannot soften or explain away. You will learn to hate me, and I pray that you may do so quickly. But lest you may ascribe this letter to the effects of jealousy or pique, or some transient passion, about which you could reason with me and overcome, I think it best to tell you, not merely that all between us is at an end for ever, but that I am shortly to be married to Mr. Frederick Haddon.

MARGARET SPENCER."

As she ceases writing she takes the ring, presses it once more fondly to her lips, then enwraps it in the letter, which she seals and directs to "James Lea-grave, Esq." She is calm now, and her hand trembles no more, though her face is deadly white, and she can scarcely speak for lack of moisture in her mouth. But

as she hands the packet to Mr. Spencer, she says, "Your bidding is done, father! Mark is rescued, and I am sacrificed. That is what was wanted, I believe."

After a pause, during which nothing was heard but the restless scratching of George Haddon's pen, the professor took the opportunity of renewing his passes; and Miss Cornthwaite, the tension of whose limbs had decreased, and whose voice had gradually grown weaker, proceeded :—

I follow the messenger bearing the letter in which the ring is enclosed until he stops at the door of a large old-fashioned house, in a dull street in Soho. There a slipshod slatternly servant-maid takes it from him, and carries it up the broad staircase, to a room on the second floor, where she deposits it on the table. A dark room with heavy oaken furniture, large presses filled with big books in leather bindings, a worn Turkey carpet, a small camp-bed, and the table littered with papers. Only one thing significant of youth among all the surroundings, a pencil drawing of Margaret Spencer, in a gold frame, hanging over the mantelpiece.

As the dusk closes in, the door opens, and a man appears on the threshold. The same man who was with the girl in Kensington-gardens, in the early morning. His step as he enters the room is slow, his face pale, his whole aspect tired and worn. He advances towards the table, and when he sees the letter lying there, and recognises the handwriting, his eyes brighten and he smiles in delight. He takes it in his hand and, feeling the enclosure, starts at first but smiles again. It is a present from her, he thinks. He goes out to get a light, and returns with it, the letter still in his hand. He seats himself at the table and breaks the seal. The opal ring falls out; it is enveloped in paper, and he does not at first realise what it is. When he does he turns pale again, and his lips and hands tremble. He opens the letter, and, holding it to the candle, reads it quickly through. Then the paper flutters from his hand to the ground, and with a groan he throws his arms on the table, and hides his head between them.

When he looks up five minutes afterwards, his lips are set, and the rest of his features tolerably composed. "So," he mutters, "that hope perishes with the rest.

It has taken me many years and much labour to fill my cup, and now, just when I was about to raise it to my lips, it is dashed down! There is a fatality in it all, and it was meant, I suppose, that mine should be a celibate and a lonely life, and that what might have been my heart shall be dried up within me. But," he cries with a sudden access of wrath, "Curses be upon those who have reduced me to this! My curse upon you, Margaret Spencer, for your vanity, your waywardness, your wretched worship of wealth, which has led you to mate with a rich man whom you cannot love, and to stab me, who so fondly cherished you, to the heart! My curse upon you and yours to the last generation! May you know the pangs which I have suffered, the misery which is upon me now!"

As he speaks he opens a leather dispatch box standing on the table, and throwing the ring into it, locks it from my sight.

Miss Cornthwaite's voice was very low and indistinct, so much so that George had had difficulty, notwithstanding, or, perhaps, owing to his extreme excitement, in catching what she said. The professor was attentive to this, and as she ceased speaking, he rose hastily.

"I must stop the séance," he said, crossing to George, "she must be roused, it would be dangerous to keep her entranced any longer. I am sorry, for your sake, Mr. Haddon, though I almost hope you may have heard enough."

"Enough!" cried George, putting his note-book into his pocket; "enough, I firmly believe, to ensure my future happiness! How shall I ever thank you for your kindness?"

"By going off at once—a patient generally objects to being aroused in the presence of strangers—and by letting me know whether your 'evening with a clairvoyante' has really effected the good you anticipate!"

"You may depend on my doing so!" said George, shaking the professor's hand, as he emerged into the street. "And now for Portland Place. It is not yet eleven o'clock, and I want to see the madro before I sleep to-night!"

THE BREAKING OF THE SPELL.

In a handsomely-furnished room of one of the best hotels at Brighton, on a brilliant November morning, when all the gay world

is riding, driving, or promenading in the King's Road, while the music of the band on the pier comes wafted in through the open window, a man is sitting alone in an arm-chair, drawn before the fire. James Leagrade, for it is he, hears not the band, nor does he take any notice of the pedestrian and equestrian crowd filing perpetually past his window. Occasionally he glances at a pile of manuscript on a table by his side, then he carries his eyes back to the fire, glaring at the cavernous depths of the glowing coals, as though in them he could trace those scenes of his bygone life, the memory of which the perusal of the manuscript sheets had just aroused within him.

"And so," he says to himself, slowly shaking his head the while, "during the whole of my life I have been labouring under one gigantic error, and for thirty years have done one of the only two women I ever cared for the grossest injustice! When Margaret sold herself to save her brother she never loved me better, and her last act was to kiss the opal ring before sending it back to me! Ah, if I had only had then the clairvoyante's power: if I could only have seen her do that, what consolation it would have brought to my lonely life! I should have been lonely all the same, but I should have known the difficulty to which she had yielded, and I should have pitied instead of cursing her! I wonder now, I have sometimes wondered in the past, that I did not make a desperate attempt then to discover whether the action which went so near to breaking my heart, the action which chilled it to the core, was her own doing. Had I but silenced pride, put down anger, and thought of her as I knew her to be, rather than taken her own word for her own baseness, Margaret might still have been mine! And yet what could I have done? Money, if I had even possessed it at the time, would have failed to buy off Haddon. Strange that the son of a man who was capable of making such a bargain, of accepting such a sacrifice, should be a fine fellow, as Minnie's lover evidently is, so steady, and brave, and constant—"

"A gentleman to see you, sir," interrupted a waiter, handing a card.

"Show him in," said Mr. Leagrade, glancing at it. "Now for such amends as I can make. I expected you, Mr. Haddon," he continued, advancing to meet our friend George, "and am very glad to see you.

Sit you down, Mr. Haddon; I am a man of business, and accustomed to come straight to the point. I have read the papers which you sent to me, and which, as I understand, contain the history you took down from the lips of a clairvoyante. So far as I can judge, that history is exactly correct; to the portion of it which relates to my own days I can swear, even after such a lapse of time, and I am, therefore, bound to believe the rest. While reading them I have been profoundly affected, and, I am not ashamed to add, moved to many tears, and I have grown from their perusal a wiser, and, I hope, a better man. Blindness has fallen from my eyes, and the only woman whom in my long life I ever regarded with a lover's worship—your mother, Mr. Haddon—stands again in my idea as she did thirty years ago, an angel!"

Mr. Leagrave paused here, and made a great gulp at something in his throat. Then he said,

"However, I shall have time and opportunity, I hope, to explain that to her! You sent me those papers with an object; to induce me to withdraw my opposition to your marriage with my niece. So far as I am concerned that object is attained; as for Minnie you will

find her in the next room, and you can learn her answer from her own lips."

Two hours afterwards, George and Minnie were standing at the head of the pier. The band had gone, and all the fashionable frequenters had retired to luncheon. Here and there some children were playing about, but the lovers were completely isolated.

George was the first to speak. "Minnie, darling," said he, "I brought you here for a purpose."

"Did you, George?" said she, looking up at him intently. Her face was provokingly near to his, and not even the children were looking.

"I did not mean that," he said, after it was over, "but this. You shall go with me to Hancock's when we go back to town, and choose your own engaged ring, but you shall never wear the opal again. It has worked enough misery in its time, and was very nearly bringing us to grief. I will take care that it never has another chance."

As he spoke he took the opal ring from his pocket, and flung it from his extended hand. One flash of lurid light it emitted as it fell, then sank beneath the waves, to remain there till the end of time.

END OF THE CHRISTMAS NUMBER FOR 1874

72°

416

The right of Translating any portion of THE OPAL RING is reserved by the Authors.





