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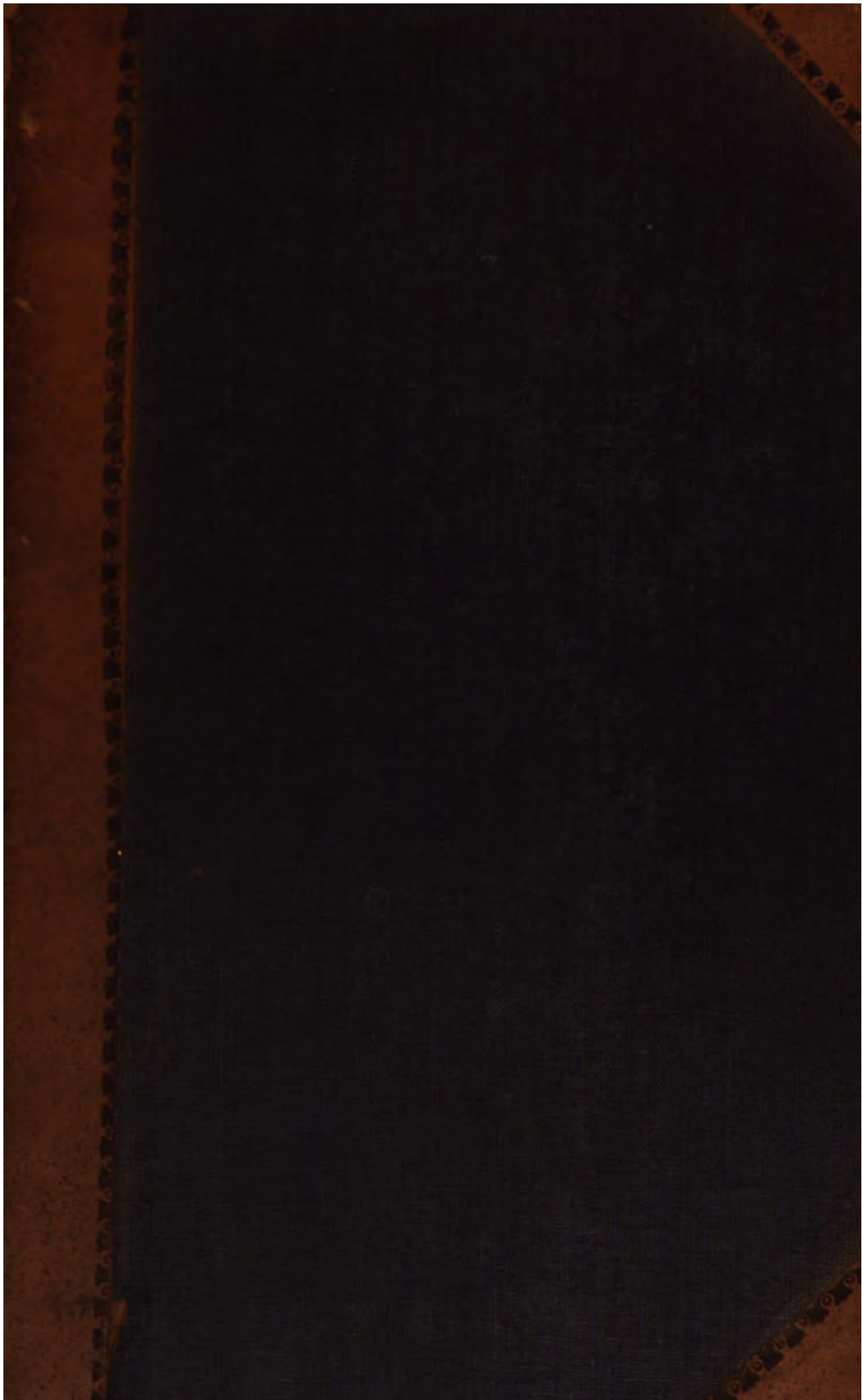
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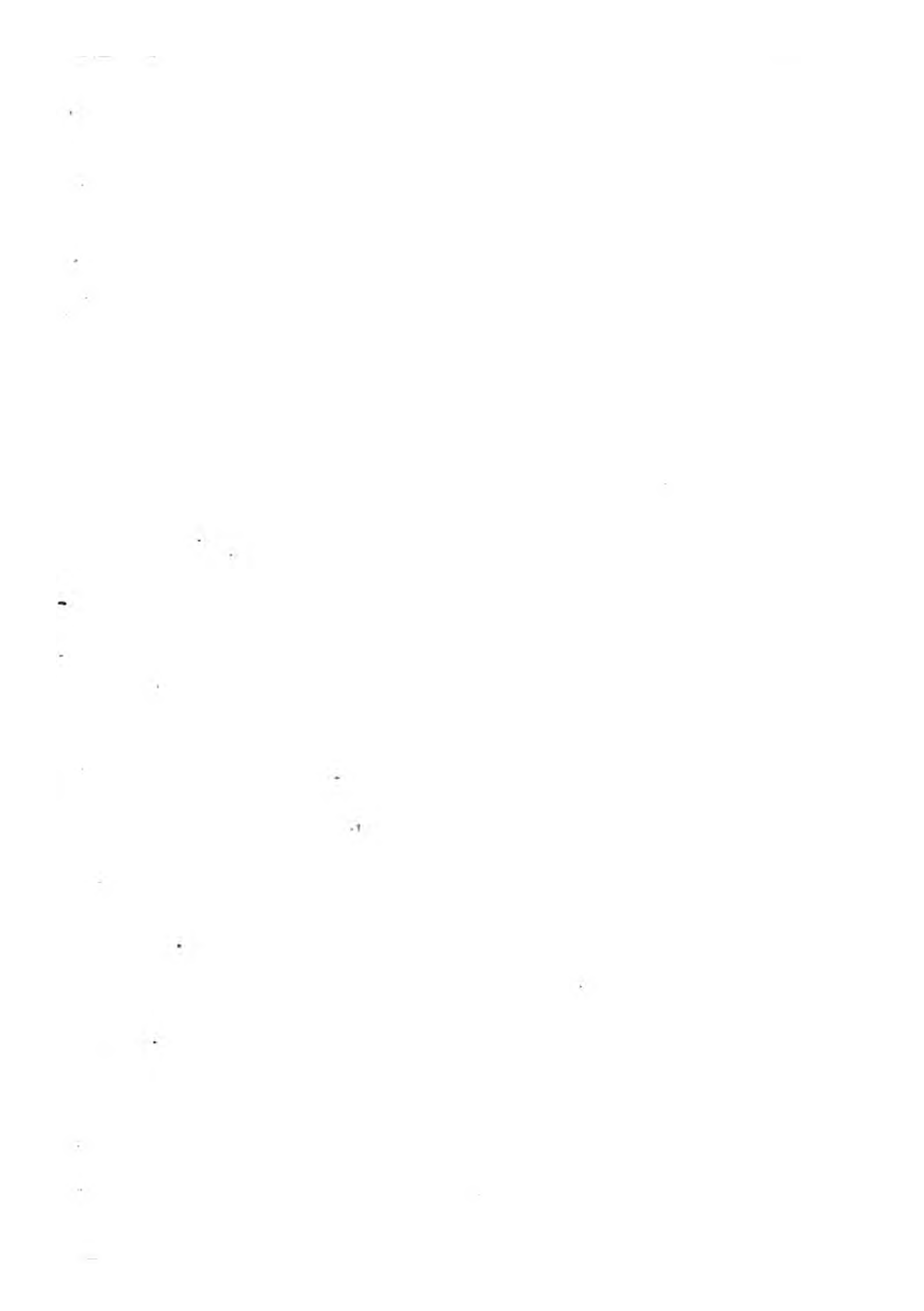
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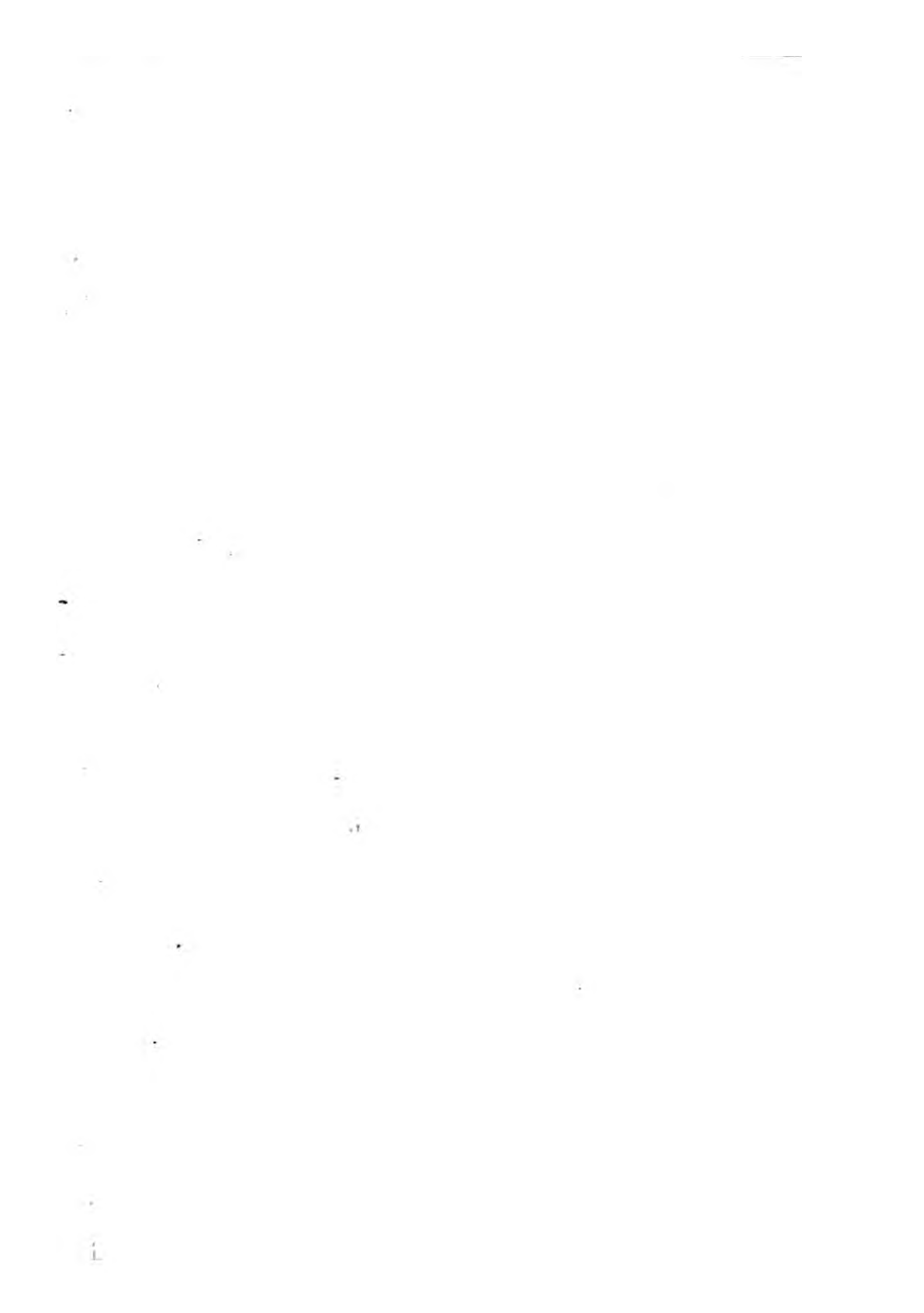
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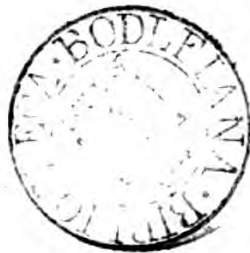




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A LIFE'S MYSTERY

BY CLINTON HOPE.

CHAPTER XXX.

INQUIRING AFTER THE PAST.

Mrs. and Miss Lyttleton complaining of fatigue on returning from their drive, Lady Christabel recommended them to go to bed early; and when, in accordance with her advice, they were about to retire, Liliás offered the services of her maid to Mrs. Lyttleton.

"Thank you, Lady Welgrave," her sister-in-law answered for her; "but, if you have no objection, I would rather Adams wait upon me, and Mary keep her own attendant: she is not fond of changes."

"As you please," was the polite rejoinder; but it cost Liliás something to make it, there being a cruel meaning in Hinda's tone. Then, turning to Emma, whom she had summoned, she continued, "Go with Miss Lyttleton to her chamber, and do not come to me till she has no farther occasion for you; I am in no hurry."

The good-nights exchanged, and the room left vacant, Liliás subsided by degrees into engrossing thought.

Emma, in obedience to her lady, accompanied her temporary mistress to her apartment, felicitating herself upon the opportunity of acquiring some clue to the bond existing between Hinda and her mistress. Whatever other mysteries the maid hoped to arrive at, there were no mysteries of the toilet to be let into; so that Miss Lyttleton had nothing to fear from the glances, keen as her own, that followed every movement; no rouge was to be washed off,

leaving a parchment-coloured skin beneath ; and no single plaits or curls to be removed from the head, till the dawning of another day. The scanty locks, and clear olive of this lady's complexion, were not disguised by artifice ; she would have scorned deceit in minor things, and was one of the very few women who, after the age of thirty-five, willingly acknowledge the number of winters they have passed through. She had attained her forty-seventh year, and evinced no desire to hide the fact : " Why should she ? " she would disdainfully inquire ; and no one dared to answer this delicate question, though there are probably many ladies who could coin a reason without difficulty—a reason cogent enough to satisfy themselves, though whether it would have convinced Hinda is quite another affair.

There was in Miss Lyttleton's disposition a singular compound of meanness and nobility ; she would not tell a lie, at least, she never enlisted falsehood, either to excite curiosity, or keep alive scandal ; nevertheless she would, without compunction, call to her aid equivocation, that guilty, but much indulged, sister of untruth. Also, to gratify the inordinate desire for knowledge, she made no scruple of questioning servants. She had, as Lady Welgrave rightly conjectured, a strong wish to converse privately with Emma Adams, and having been hitherto unable to indulge this inclination, she was all the more pleased when the opportunity occurred.

She was all condescension and affability ; beginning very carefully by asking only after trivial matters. " How long had the Abbey been built ? was it in the time of the late Lord Welgrave, or earlier ? and what was its general history ? Were there no ghost stories connected with it ? she never heard of a mansion of any pretensions without them ; " with other remarks of similar import. After much of this, and the like uninteresting gossip, Hinda Lyttleton insensibly glided into a tone more familiar, and inquired into the girl's own concerns : " How long had she been with Lady Welgrave ? did she like her situation ? " &c.

These queries Emma answered laconically ; she was on her guard, and not to be deluded into a belief of Miss Lyttleton's sudden interest in her.

" So you have been in the family of Lady Welgrave more than four years," observed her questioner with assumed indifference, " and in her ladyship's exclusive employ for more than two. The place she comes from is a dull old place, I have heard, quite inferior to this, and contains, I should fancy, no better society than a few villages can afford."

" Indeed, madam, you are mistaken ; for the families about Sedgley are very good," returned Emma—for her warmly.

"Oh! then your mistress, before her marriage, visited with these good families, I suppose," Hinda said, rather superciliously, and concluded with a yawn; for she was getting tired of all this talk, which, as far as she could see, led to nothing.

"Miss Bellamy never visited long anywhere, except at her aunt's, that I can remember," was Emma's rejoinder.

"Her aunt?" Hinda repeated, with renewed animation; "I thought your mistress had no near relations, except her father. Where does this lady you speak of reside?"

"She is on the Continent now."

"But before she left England," Hinda eagerly interrogated, "where did she live?"

"In London."

The answer seemed like an electric shock to Miss Lyttleton; she staggered towards a seat for support, and was some time before she recovered herself enough to put the question, "Did she always reside in London—this aunt—before going to the Continent?"

"Always."

The uncommunicative manner of Emma made the task of further inquiry a difficult one; but Hinda would not be daunted in her research. She looked deeply absorbed, for she neglected to use her artificial smile, and was staring earnestly into the girl's face, as she said, emphatically—

"Ever since you can remember, before Miss Bellamy married, her aunt resided in London, and she was in the habit of visiting there?"

The maid gave her a look of unfeigned astonishment, "I never said so, ma'am," she exclaimed. "Miss Lilius visited her aunt but once, and that was last summer; Mrs. Ashton had been abroad till then."

The countenance of her hearer fell, and she could with difficulty ejaculate, "Are you sure—quite sure—that it was *last* summer?"

The girl replied with a positive "Quite sure, ma'am."

A long silence succeeded; Miss Lyttleton was evidently labouring under some great disappointment, and Emma watched her from the corners of her eyes mistrustfully.

"What can she mean by putting these questions? What can she have to do with my lady's history? Ah!" she inwardly exclaimed, "the portrait in the ring! I am getting nearer the truth: when will the whole be in my possession?"

As Emma was still busy weaving a connected tale from the fragments of discovery, Hinda again spoke; her voice was more than commonly sharp, and her brow even heavier clouded than was its wont.

"Do you know," she said, "if some writing in an album upon a table in the boudoir is in Lady Welgrave's hand? At the bottom are the initials, L. G. B."

"They must be my lady's," responded the maid: "Lilias Gertrude Bellamy."

"Enough, I am satisfied," Hinda muttered to herself; then aloud, "Your mistress writes beautifully; I do not know when I have seen so free, and, withal, so delicate a style; you can never have seen a hand like hers."

Emma fancied she detected mischief here, so did not reply, and Miss Lyttleton, appearing now to have learned all the information she thought it would be safe at present to try for, shortly dismissed her.

The girl immediately repaired, upon leaving Hinda, to the apartment of her mistress, and detailed to her what had passed.

Lilias was not at all disconcerted to hear of the inquiries made by Hinda, in reference to her former life. She had anticipated her curiosity; but this did not preclude a dawning apprehension of danger, when Emma related the very anxious manner in which Hinda had asked concerning the writing in the album.

"What motive can she have in seeking to know whether or not the writing is mine?" thought Lilias; "she can never have seen any of my penmanship, with which to compare it."

Yet as she reasoned thus, a sudden fear came upon her; her cheeks blanched, and her hands were palsied with terror.

"I see it all," she murmured faintly, "possibly too late, the first link is formed, and it will require all my diligence and presence of mind to prevent another being added to the fatal chain of evidence which identifies me with the woman she is in search of.—Emma," cried Lilias, greatly agitated, "say nothing of this to anyone, and now leave me—I want to be alone."

And alone in her dressing-room Lilias remained half the night, thinking and sorrowing.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE VISIT OF AN OLD FRIEND.

THE day was bright and warm succeeding that restless night, and however great Lady Welgrave's alarm might have been during the hours of darkness, her terrors were somewhat abated as the gladdening sun poured into her room, flooding each costly article of furniture it contained with the glory of its golden beams, and resting upon her face, disclosed at once its perfection and misery.

Hinda and Mary Lyttleton were not unmindful of the contrast the genial weather of to-day afforded to the gloom of yesterday, and were in admirable spirits; the former forgetting at rare intervals to be sarcastic, even when a tempting opportunity offered itself for the exercise of her ironical powers; while her sister-in-law, ever ready to be pleased in her quiet way, smiled pleasantly at each circumstance or word at all likely to produce lively emotions, and for Lady Christabel, she might have stood as a personification of cheerfulness.

Lord Welgrave, who now declared himself perfectly well, and prepared for rebellion against his doctor's orders, proposed, during the all-important discussion of what they should do for the day's amusement, that they should lunch in the park, where every convenience of shelter and seats was to be found in a sequestered nook, near which flowed a rapid stream, adding to the picturesqueness of the spot.

"There is nothing I should like better," broke out Lady Welgrave, when she had ascertained the sentiments of the rest upon the subject. "It will be truly delightful."

And as she spoke her face glowed with an enthusiasm her love of rural pleasures never failed to call up in her mind, and after this expression of gratification, which was received by her lover-husband as a personal compliment, nothing except the impromptu pic-nic was spoken of.

"But what shall we do to amuse ourselves," asked he, "when we grow tired of chasing butterflies, or staining our lips with blackberries, after the fashion of the babes in the wood?"

"I opine that you will not find blackberries yet, Henry," observed Lady Christabel, with a laugh; "and without them we shall pass the time very agreeably till five o'clock, I have no doubt; but if you need farther occupation than walking, we can read; let each of us choose a book, and the servants shall carry them to the place with the provisions."

"Yes, that will do nicely, I think," put in Mary; "although I agree with Lady Christabel, in anticipating no lack of amusement in that lovely park."

Just as Mrs. Lyttleton had concluded the sentence, and the party were about separating to dress for their excursion, a servant entered with a card for Lady Welgrave, who, upon looking at the name engraved upon it, exhibited both pleasurable and painful surprise. Hinda's eye was upon her, and caught the fleeting expression, with a resolution of finding out its cause.

The momentary embarrassment passed, Lilius bade the servant show the visitor up-stairs; then, turning toward the group, she said, "An esteemed friend of my father's, Dr. Darby."

And so indeed it was the kind-hearted doctor, who, with his frank smile and portly figure, now entered the room.

The greeting was warm between my lady and her old confidant, and then she introduced him to her husband, Lady Christabel, and guests, who reseated themselves, and began a conversation in which the doctor performed a no mean share.

Lilias had inquired concerning her father, whom she was gratified to hear was quite well, and more disposed to mingle in society than formerly; she next asked after the welfare of her acquaintances, excluding the Arnolds, not because she had no interest in them, but rather that she feared to trust herself with the mention of their names. The doctor, however, had no scruple concerning any of their mutual friends, and duly enumerated Owen's parents, though not till Lilias had come to the conclusion that she was destined to remain uninformed respecting the welfare of her former lover, whom she had never heard of since parting with him.

"Owen distinguished himself at the opening of the campaign," the doctor said, "and has since, by his recklessness of danger, caused his name to be especially noticed in the despatches. He is a noble and handsome fellow," panegyricised he, "and should be without a care in the world; but I certainly fear that, young as he is, he has known disappointment, which makes him so careless of his life. He wrote to me once, poor boy, in a very doleful strain; that is more than three months back now, and I have not received so much as a line from him since, nor have his parent's applications at the War Office met with success, and sometimes I cannot help thinking he has paid the penalty of his bravery."

The worthy physician concluded his meagre account with a deep sigh, which found its echo in Lilias's heart. How much she suffered, as she sat, to all appearance calmly listening to the conversation that followed, after the chill of pity had subsided from the party! Her blood seemed congealed in her veins, for an inward voice cried, "You are the cause of his death." The agitation of her feelings must have overpowered her, had not the doctor, slightly surmising the state of the case, made some remark, with the design of diverting her mind from the painful topic. She saw his kindly intention, and strove to exert herself to converse, but she was unequal to the task, and after several futile beginnings, broke down altogether. The friendly doctor, perceiving how vain it was to expect answers from her, commenced talking with apparent animation to screen her apathy, his eye fixed the while pityingly upon her face.

"You are doubtless surprised to see me here," he observed, "but in truth I could no longer delay offering in person my con-

gratulations to you on your marriage, and repeating my regret at being absent on the occasion."

Dr. Darby pausing, Liliast's lips mechanically formed the query, "Were you not there, then?"

The effort to say this recalled her to herself, and she added, hastily—"Oh! I had forgotten; you were away, too, when I last visited Sedgley." And immediately making some excuse, the meaning of which her companion could not catch, she started up and hurried from the room, never pausing in her rapid walk until she reached her own apartment, where, throwing herself upon the bed, the pent-up breast discharged itself in an agony of tears.

"Owen, dear Owen, I have killed you!" she screamed, hysterically; "your blood will be upon my head! Blood, blood! shall I ever rid myself of its stain? Oh, my God! it is too horrible that he should die through me!"

Here her sorrow took a narrower channel. "Have I not enough to bear, but this grief must be mine? Where can I turn for sympathy? In whom can I confide my griefs? To my father, or my husband? No, no; I dare not. Sarah is absent, and Emma—"

She shivered as she mentioned her attendant's name, and a hard expression of dislike took the place, for an instant, of her poignant misery.

"But what do I here?" she cried with passionate energy, when she had lain motionless for some time. "Is this the way I perform my wifely vows? Be still, rebel heart, nor own one thought disloyal to your true lord." She rose as she said this, walked firmly to the toilet, arranged her disordered hair, shook out the creases of her dress, and otherwise removed the signs of her agitation; then she unfastened the door she had locked upon her entrance, and rung for Emma to dress her for the walk.

Half-an-hour after, Lady Welgrave, attired in a becoming outdoor dress, might be seen chatting gaily with her husband and visitors, and dispensing around her the sweetest of smiles.

"I feared you were unwell," his lordship whispered lovingly in her ear; "you looked so pale, and left our company so abruptly."

"No, I am perfectly well; but I didn't like to interrupt your discussion with Mrs. Lyttleton, though I knew it was quite time to start. I left merely for the purpose of preparing." And with this explanation, Liliast satisfied her questioner, who was himself too truthful to entertain the faintest doubt of her sincerity.

When the small party reached the park, they divided. Lord Welgrave, Lady Christabel, Miss Lyttleton, and Mary sauntering off to obtain a better view of the Abbey at a distant part of the park, and Liliast was left to the companionship of her old friend, Dr. Darby.

A LIFE'S MYSTERY

The pair walked on in silence for some time, each seemingly too busied with thought to speak. It was the doctor who eventually broke the pause, by congratulating once again his fair companion upon her marriage, never heeding, in his warm wishes for her wellbeing, the utter wretchedness her paling face proclaimed. As no reply was given, he turned to look at her more particularly, and on perceiving her rising perturbation, said, earnestly—"Are you, then, unhappy? surely this cannot be the case." Still Lilius was silent, and fancying he had arrived at the cause of her embarrassment, he quickly resumed, "Ah! I see how it is: you do not like to hurt your husband's feelings by telling him, but you want to be entirely mistress of your own house. There is nothing causes so much dissension between married people as the interference of relations."

The marchioness laughed, despite her sadness.

"Lady Christabel is the best and dearest of aunts to me, as well as to Henry; it would never occur to me to be jealous of her gentle sway. She is going home soon, and I don't know what I shall do without her, for she relieves me of every care, and is always so cheerful and considerate."

"O—h!" ejaculated the physician, prolonging the interjection, and looking puzzled. "If it is not Lady Christabel, what is it?"

Even yet she seemed half afraid to answer, but taking counsel with herself, she said—

"You have ever been a faithful friend to me, and why should I not trust you? You have guessed rightly—I am wretched, supremely so."

There was such a depth of feeling in her tones, and her countenance so well corroborated her words, that her auditor dared not impose upon himself the idea that her speech exaggerated her pain.

"Lilius," he said, impressively, "I have all along suspected this union was not one of affection; but why, if you do not care for your husband (which your confession implies a doubt of) did you wed him?"

"I hardly know now. At the time, I was influenced by the idea that, in marrying a man of such exalted station, my safety would be secure. You know," said Lady Welgrave, and a bright blush flitted over her lovely features, "that I had occasion for fear."

Dr. Darby seemed plunged in thought of so serious a nature that he paused in his walk. "But," said he, at length, reflectively; "you have no cause for grief on that score now; and if your husband be kind to you, I cannot understand the reason of your distress, and he appears to love you."

"Too much, far too much," his companion cried, excitedly, her

cheeks crimsoning; "it is his fondness that maddens me; if he were indifferent I should not then suffer so keenly; but his trust and love are alike unlimited—would to Heaven that I had never known him, or that I were all he imagines me to be!"

Lilias's demeanour was wild in the extreme as she gave vent to her repinings; and, with a cry of suffering, she leant, exhausted, against a tree. "Why should you talk thus?" Dr. Darby asked, amazed at the vehemence of her speech; "you blame yourself too harshly."

"No, no, no!" sobbed she, passionately; "you do not know all, or you would not say so. Doctor," she exclaimed, presently, the traces of her violent emotion gradually subsiding; "have you ever felt what it is to want a friend? I mean such a one as you would not be afraid to confide anything to, and whom you could be assured would not only religiously regard your secrets, but sympathise completely with your cares?"

Lilias looked up at the doctor's face with an anxious expression, eager to catch at his answer, which was not very soon in coming; he was deliberating,

"I do not know if I quite understand you," he at length returned. "There are few people in the world who are to be trusted implicitly; but of one thing I am assured, which is, that no one can make a confidant such as you speak of in one of their own sex."

"You are right," rejoined Lady Welgrave, thoughtfully, "A woman never can wholly trust a woman, and I suppose it is so with men. I esteem Lady Christabel highly, yet upon no account could I disclose to her my troubles. Then my nurse, though I both love and can trust her, seeing her inspires me with no hope or fortitude; if anything I become more depressed after, whereas with you——"

She hesitated, and the venerable physician, with a paternal smile, finished the sentence for her. "With me, you would say, it is different, and you feel supported by my superior strength. Since this is so, why not confide your cares to your natural protector? You acknowledge that your husband loves you fondly, and I am sure will pardon your concealment and pity your misfortunes. Who so fit to sympathise with you as he?"

Lilias bounded from his side in dismay at the proposition, and had he needed farther assurance of the uselessness of his advice, it was exhibited in her face. Pale as it had been before, it became positively blanched, and her eyes seemed starting from their sockets, as, speaking very quickly, she answered—

"You know not what you advise. It would kill him did I ever dare to reveal it. He thinks me the truest and purest of beings,

and shall I disclose to him that, instead of the loving and innocent woman he believes me, he is united to——”

At this juncture the marchioness's voice failed her, and on recovering herself, instead of resuming, she accepted the doctor's support that she might walk about a little, in order to regain her composure. It was some lengthened period before the conversation was renewed, for each was painfully perplexed how to commence. The doctor, though anxious to inquire farther into the subject of Liliás's unhappiness, was withheld, from motives of delicacy. And she, solicitous to retain the good opinion of her old friend, feared to say too much. She reflected that it would be better not to try an explanation of her heedless language, lest she should entangle herself irretrievably; so, when again she spoke, it was upon quite a different topic, yet one equally destructive to her complacency—her rejected and ill-used lover. She, however, gained no more information concerning him than the doctor's brief account had previously given her.

From talking of Owen Arnold, her thoughts were involuntarily conducted to the haunts in which she had been associated with him; the noisy waters, the sheltered walk of sycamores, and the flower-strewn *parterres*—all appeared before her mind's eye. The oak-panelled rooms of the Hall, with their magnificent cornices, and their antique furniture, seemed present to her, as she walked up and down beneath the grand old chestnut trees in her husband's park.

Her own rooms at Sedgley, rich with every modern luxury, were not forgotten in her mental inventory, and as quickly as thought could carry her through the various scenes enacted in the venerable old pile was she transported from one to another of her girlhood's reminiscences. Some things she remembered with a smile, but how many more recollections caused a shudder! One scene particularly was impressed upon her memory with a terrible force; she seemed to view it all as in a picture, and a fearful picture it was—that of a young girl, lying upon a bed, pale and motionless, with dilated and glazed eyes raised with the fixed look of death to heaven. Liliás fancied she saw the small cup, fragrant with the fatal potion, standing on a chair by the bedside, and the cold, pure light of the moon beaming in upon the spectacle, as calmly as if nought but innocence and happiness rested upon the down couch. The remembrance was too bitter for her; for mingled with it was a profound regret that she had been disturbed upon that night, when a few more moments would have for ever freed her soul from the burden of mortality.

Dr. Darby had been some time watching the face of Lady Welgrave; he plainly saw that she was still much moved, and

zealously endeavoured to divert her mind. To Liliás the present was absorbed in the past, and the faint murmur of the doctor's tones appeared but the echo of her father's voice, when he dictated the vow she had been compelled to make over the sacred volume, once the property of her buried mother. And as her shifting fancy brought up another scene, the gloom cast over her path by the far-spreading boughs was to her the semblance of the dismal shadow that surrounded her on the evening of her farewell with Owen; while the sighing of the wind still further favoured her after-delusion that she was walking by the fish-pond in her father's grounds upon that same memorable evening, and that she yet heard the low, splashing sound of the waves upon the sea-shore.

Thus was Lady Welgrave engrossed in the melancholy past when a hand was placed upon her shoulder, and turning quickly round she beheld Hinda Lyttleton a few yards in advance of the others. Lord Welgrave looked almost angrily upon Miss Lyttleton when he saw the panic her unlooked-for presence had given his wife, and hastened to Liliás's side with an expression of deepest devotion depicted in his striking face.

"I am positively jealous of your friendship for the doctor," said he, laughingly; adding, in a different tone, as by a glance he drew Liliás's attention to some new-comers, "We happily met Mrs. Lewis and her brother walking towards the Abbey, and they have promised to share our gipsy repast in the grove. Ah! here comes Phillips to say that it is laid out." And, with this, the little party made for the place mentioned.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

LILIAS had not exaggerated in stating to Dr. Darby that she was supremely wretched: no words could adequately paint the bitterness of her isolation. It signified not that she was loved so fervently by her husband, that the heart of Lady Christabel warmed towards her as a mother's, and that she was professedly idolised by her maid; the sickening sense of loneliness—an insatiable craving for succour and sympathy—was always with her; sometimes in its acutest form when it was necessary for her to wreath her face with smiles, and shape her words into those of compliment and cheerfulness.

Great had been her yearning, sometimes, to throw herself at her father's feet, and reveal all her history to him; but the dreadful nature of it held back the confession, constraining her to hide her torture by artificial gaiety; and now such trials were of more frequent occurrence—harder, if possible, to bear.

When upon her was lavished the whole tenderness of her husband's noble soul, could she do other—knowing how unworthy she was of his regard—than long to cast off the mask, and, however it might humble her, relinquish the position in his esteem she occupied so wrongly. How was it possible, with this consciousness of her guilty dissimulation, that she could avoid shrinking from his endearments, and kindling with shame at his praises ?

Truly the situation of the envied marchioness was not a desirable one ; and could the dissatisfied, covetous throng, who thought with such tumultuous rivalry of her fascinations, and the state and luxury in which she lived, have known how insufficient these gifts were to render her happy, it might have taught them a useful lesson. Could they have been aware—as the owner of this grandeur and power knew but too well—that the dower of beauty they so sighed to equal had been fatal to her peace—that the spell, which her varying pensiveness and mirth threw over those by whom she was surrounded, was but the thin veil concealing a breaking heart from vulgar sight—that the trappings of pomp they wished for might at any moment be snatched from her—and, lastly, that the ardent love of her husband was but as a thorn in her side ;—I repeat, could the grudging multitude have been told all this, they might have gone away from the hearing better and wiser, or (such is human infatuation) incredulous and wondering ; for one of the most difficult tasks we learn—word by word and letter by letter—is that of contentment with our own lot, and a just appreciation of the fate of our fellows.

The counsel of Dr. Darby, that Liliast should make a confidant of her husband—though it, as has been seen, produced at the time a result wholly opposed to the one intended—yet dwelt in her memory, so that she ventured to contemplate acting upon it ; but anon would return the terrible idea that by such a revelation she would inevitably bring down misery upon him ; and this she felt would be a sad recompense for his assiduous devotion. As she recalled his continual asseverations of affection, and the endless tokens by which their sincerity was proved, she acknowledged to herself that she had little harsh judgment to fear from him. But then, was it possible that, with her confession, a sudden revolution would not be effected in his sentiments ? “ Alas ! ” answered her heart, “ it must follow that they would change.” So, casting aside the pleasing hope which had temporarily buoyed her up, she formed anew the resolution of continuing in her previous course, endeavouring, by all means in her power, to keep from Lord Welgrave a suspicion of her hidden anxieties.

“ He may,” she mused, “ go to the grave ripe in years and happiness, ignorant of the disguise which shields my sin and sorrow

from his view. Many men and women have left this world peacefully, without dreaming of the mystery or evil that clings around the partners of their homes, and why may not he? I have been so long secure, that nothing surely can come to light now to wreck his contentment, if I can only master my own terrors."

These and the like reflections occupied Liliass's mind during the pic-nic lunch, even while, with mechanical smiles, she conversed with, and waited upon, her guests; for the servants had been dismissed to afford the merry group, for once, the pleasure of supplying their own wants. It was unfortunate that, after the generality of pic-nics, there was not found a deficiency of forks and glasses, or an absence of salt or pepper; such omission contributing to the sport, rather than taking from it. It was cause for unanimous rejoicing, however, that the rain—generally a punctual attendant upon out-door recreations—did not show any intention of coming, and as they looked up to the cloudless sky, they each delivered it as their opinion that living in houses was altogether a mistaken system, and that gipsies must be the happiest people in the world.

"The mention of gipsies," cried Liliass, "puts me in mind that the affair is imperfect without one, and for want of a better fortune-teller, will you put up with me? Dr. Darby, you have a red handkerchief, that will do exceedingly well for a head-dress, while Mrs. Lyttleton's cloak will complete a perfect gipsy costume."

"Really, Liliass," laughed her husband, "you are as peremptory with your stand and deliver as the dreaded knights of the road. Our purses will follow our clothes, I suppose."

"No, I covet not your gold," returned Liliass, busy in adjusting the crimson silk handkerchief, turban-wise, above her raven tresses; and having completed it to her taste, she walked to Mrs. Lewis with a jaunty air, asking, with captivating sauciness, if she would have her hand crossed.

Great was the hilarity excited by Liliass's perfect, yet somehow refined, imitation of gipsy twang and audacity; but no answering smile was seen upon her face, now marked by a look of profound earnestness as it was bent upon the palm she examined, or raised to the bright heavens above, and again made irresistible by its persuasion or flattery. Only when she was called upon to invent a destiny for her husband, having extemporised a string of adventures, tragical and ludicrous for the rest, did her seriousness borrow from feeling instead of art.

"The veil that hides your fate," commenced she, more in her own character than her borrowed one, "is impenetrable to my sight, but I would warn you to beware of disappointment."

"What!" exclaimed the marquis, "do you hold out no prospect of happiness as a recompense for the sorrows you so vaguely foretel?"

"Your happiness," said Liliás, with a solemnity that checked laughter, "lies in the present. Seize it ere it escapes, and seek not to unravel the dark secrets of futurity."

"Beautiful sibyl!" was the murmured answer, so gently low that she alone could catch the words, "you are my happiness and my hope. Let me but retain your love, and I defy misfortune."

Her prophetic duties accomplished, the gipsy speedily metamorphosed herself again into the marchioness, when a long conversation ensued concerning the characteristics of the wandering tribe, interspersed with numberless recollections and traditionary anecdotes illustrative of the same. When this topic was worn out, Mrs. Lewis started an admirable one for the occasion,—a well, long famous for its attributed cures of incurable ailments, situated in one of the miniature valleys of the park. Some—to follow the legends detailed by the surrounding poor—had been cured of gout by drinking from its springs, others of consumption and fevers.

"But no one boasts," observed Lady Christabel, "that it can cure the heart-ache. 'Where,' I cry with Byron, 'are Lethe's fabled streams?' in what sacred spot shall we find the waters of forgetfulness?" and despairingly Liliás's heart echoed, "Where! oh! where?"

"Who would wish to forget? Love and hate would alike lose their gusto were memory banished."

It was Hinda Lyttleton who thus spoke, and to Liliás her words implied more than to the others. All day had Hinda been wanting to gain the ear of the Marquis of Welgrave, and, leaning upon his arm, it was easy for her so to retard his steps that their lively companions were soon out of sight. As she walked on still more slowly, she bent her eyes upon the ground in profound meditation, which his lordship perceiving, bantered her about.

She looked up with an air of embarrassment, saying gravely, "You would not wish me to make you acquainted with my reflections."

"And why not? If it is anything concerning myself, however severe, you may tell me without being apprehensive of me taking refuge in dignified *hauteur* or plebeian sulks. Did I sin so egregiously in giving the dog wine at lunch? I will not tempt him to intemperance again."

He spoke jestingly, and a smile was upon his lips that faded away instantly at Hinda's answer, delivered with well-feigned reluctance—

"My thoughts were not of you, but of Lady Welgrave."

There was that in her manner which excited her companion's curiosity, not to say anxiety, and impatiently beating his foot upon the sward, he rejoined, "I may, in that case, inquire farther."

Hinda looked stealthily at him, immeasurably delighted at the interest she had called forth.

"I have before intimated," she said, "that the subject of my sad reverie would be unpleasing for you to learn, and I repeat it, pray do not press me."

"I really cannot understand in what manner my wife can be associated with any melancholy ideas. She is no object for sympathy."

"Not if her heart is breaking?" was the quick, but impressive response.

"There must be some misunderstanding on my part," cried Lord Welgrave. "Did I hear you aright? Do you mean to declare Lilius heart-broken?"

"I do, my lord—nor without reason; but again I beg of you not to force me to explain. Forget, rather, that I have said anything to arouse uneasiness; for, after all, it may be unnecessary."

This was uttered with a perfect assumption of sincerity, and Hinda's countenance harmonised admirably with the depression of her voice. Lord Welgrave did not, however, trouble himself to look at her, being too much engrossed in thinking of what appeared involuntarily to have escaped her.

Lilius heart-broken! Impossible! the woman must be mad to dream of such a thing; still, he would hear her out, and accordingly earnestly desired her to proceed.

There was an affected tremor in her accents, but an unquenchable malice betrayed itself in her eyes, as she complied with the request.

"Remember, Lord Welgrave," said she, "that if you find my tale distressing, you forced upon me the relation of it, and, moreover, I would not say what I am about to do, did I not trust it may be the means of saving yourself and Lady Welgrave from mutual misconception. Do you remember, when Dr. Darby's card was presented to the marchioness that she trembled and turned pale?"

"I do—what of it?" inquired her auditor, impatiently.

"Much," Hinda rejoined calmly, nowise disconcerted by the extreme delicacy of the task she had undertaken. "The doctor has been a friend from her youth, and from him, living as he has done at Sedgley, she naturally expected to hear news of her friends. Did you observe how many she inquired after, yet without interest, never even hearing the accounts she had requested? Did you see how her lips moved two or three times, as if to form a question, and then desisted? and, when the doctor mentioned the young soldier, Mr. Arnold, how her eye brightened, and her cheek glowed, while

her whole frame seemed to quiver with agitation? Then, when the doctor spoke of his fate being uncertain, and the fear he himself entertained of his decease, did my lady's excessive emotion escape you? Marked you how her features became pallid as snow, and that she leaned back upon her seat, almost senseless with the violence of her agitation? Did the feint of the doctor to cover her silence blind you to her distress? and the excuse (which I overheard her make to you), that she wished to hasten our walk, deceive you as to the real cause of her leaving the room with such abruptness? She went to mourn over this young soldier, as her appearance upon her return plainly testified, despite her gay sallies, beaming smiles, and sportive manner; and she yet mourns for him. Her laugh may sound light, and her voice cheerful, but she is miserable; her thoughts are entirely engrossed by the memory of her lover, whom she was anxious to speak of with their mutual friend, when once the ice was broken."

Hinda Lyttleton's accents became less under control as she finished, and a malignant grin settled itself upon her face. She saw the arrow had sped home, that the husband of the woman she detested was imbibing the subtle poison of jealousy, without suspicion of her vengeful motives.

Lord Welgrave listened like one in a dream, and, as a dreamer might speak, so he answered her. He had been so stricken with combined amazement and horror at the unaccountable and alarming revelations Miss Lyttleton had made, that his senses, during the whole time, seemed to be enchained by a magic spell. He had lost the power of utterance, and could do nothing but listen in silent dismay to the flow of words that dropped from Hinda's calumniating tongue; and when, at length, with a vigorous effort he shook off the torpor which had entranced him, and made a reply to Hinda's long speech, his voice was weak, and broken by sorrow.

He had remarked, with a vague misgiving, much that Miss Lyttleton had brought before his notice; and now that she added her suspicions to his own, of his wife's interest in this young man, whom Hinda affirmed to have been her lover, what was left for him to believe? Nothing less than that she had deceived him, and that her heart had been in the possession of another at the time she gave him to conclude that he of all the world was dearest to her?

A death-like chill seized him, and his brain was distracted by a thousand conflicting and tormenting reflections. He would not, however, give heed to his sufferings, which seemed to call out for immediate satisfaction; but, addressing his guest, desired she would inform him in what manner she obtained the knowledge that Mr. Arnold had been Lady Welgrave's suitor.

“I learned it from the unsuspecting doctor,” she returned, composedly; “I was rather suspicious of my lady’s great perturbation, and thought I would arrive at the truth of my surmises from her friend; so I asked him if Mr. Arnold had been Miss Bellamy’s lover; he replied, Yes, but that she had rejected him.”

The unhappy nobleman looked as if he had been transported from Hades to Heaven.

“How simple I was to doubt her for a moment!” he murmured, inaudibly. “You perceive,” addressing himself to Hinda Lyttleton, triumphantly, “as she had rejected him, your surmise of her regret must be incorrect; she would, of course, be very sorry to hear of his probable death, but her having refused his love *proves* she did not care for him.”

“Not always,” rejoined Miss Lyttleton, eagerly; “some women are capricious, and do not know their own minds; others are vain, and will not encourage a suitor at his first proposal, hoping for a second asking, which may not come, thus leaving them the victims of continual repinings. Others, again, are ambitious, and however their affections may be entangled with a humble admirer, they will give him up, for the sake of a noble prize, which often, when it is too late, they may repent having done, discovering that their passion but increases with time and absence.”

This putting of the matter frenzied Lord Welgrave with anger. That Liliast either should be a slave to caprice, or vanity, or, still worse, ambition—that paused not, in its pursuit, at perjury and heartless cruelty—was quite impossible; at least, so he, in the first heat of indignation against himself and Miss Lyttleton, felt assured. But, succeeding this agreeable conviction, came the unpleasant recollection of the morning on which he had wooed his bride; how strangely excited was she, and at the same time how cold her behaviour to him! Then, upon her wedding-day, did she not appear more like a martyr going to the stake than a loving woman to the protection of her chosen husband?

Their married life, too, had been marked by no absolute fondness on her part. Ah! how bitterly he remembered now the alacrity with which she had, during the first few weeks of their union, escaped his society, when it lay in her power; and how reluctantly, when escape was impossible, had she suffered his fond attentions! She had never addressed him by his Christian name, from the hour of her acceptance of him; and although he had previously put this down to girlish timidity and reserve, he now believed it to be only a farther proof of her indifference.

He had been married scarcely six months, and to have his dream of felicity so soon destroyed was indeed terrible. God

knows, he was fearfully alive to the deceit his wife had used towards him, and to the weary, loveless life that lay before him.

What to him were the artful assurances of Hinda Lyttleton, that, Liliás's lover being most likely dead, there was every probability of him winning her affections? He thought she had given him her first trustful, gushing love, and instead of this, to hear that she had married him solely for position, was horrible.

He could not as yet tell how to act, and was resolved only on one point, which was to come to an early explanation with his wife, and demand from her own mouth the truth or injustice of his suspicions. No longer he felt any enjoyment in the beauty of nature, neither could he exert himself to converse; all he could think of was, his own misery and Liliás's perfidy; and every wish of his heart was centered in the one desire, that his wife might be able to refute what was alleged against her.

How heartily he longed for night to arrive, when, being alone with Liliás, he could acquaint her with the accusations of Hinda, and give her an opportunity, should she be innocent, of disproving them! It seemed almost an age to him, in his anxious state of mind, before the hour of their return to the Abbey arrived, and longer still, from the commencement of dinner until the time of retiring.

He had been very taciturn the whole evening, and the reflection of his moodiness was to be seen in the countenance of Lady Welgrave, who was not without her conjectures that her husband's gloominess of aspect was attributable in some manner to his long discourse with Hinda in the park. Liliás particularly desired to avoid an explanation, although she suffered agonies while in a state of uncertainty as to the origin of her husband's evident discomposure; and when Dr. Darby with the ladies had each retired to their respective chambers, she would have followed their example, but Lord Welgrave called her back, in a tone so peremptory and unusually severe that she could not refuse to return.

"Stay, Liliás," said he, looking at her with a mixture of sternness and compassion; "I have a communication to make, and questions to ask, that may occupy a considerable time."

She complied; her worst fears were realised, and she inwardly shook with terror, though her features were perfectly calm, and showed no change, save a compression of the ruby lips, and a slight contraction of the fair forehead.

Her husband remained standing with bent brows and nervous mien; occasionally darting searching glances at her. He was seeking for words with which to express his grievance, and was many minutes without speaking.

“Was the young officer, of whom Dr. Darby spoke this morning, a suitor of yours, Liliast?” he said at length, in a constrained voice.

This was truly an unexpected question, and brought the eloquent blood to my lady’s pale cheeks. She struggled to appear collected, and replied, with tolerable composure, “He was, but I refused the offer of his hand nearly two years since.”

“Will you favour me with your reasons for so doing?” Lord Welgrave spoke with studied coldness, never removing his gaze from his wife’s face; but as it took a good deal to embarrass her when prepared, she returned his scrutiny with an undaunted look.

“I know not how to answer you,” replied she, with affected surprise. “What is generally the cause of a lover’s rejection?”

“Want of reciprocal feeling is the common reason, but not the only one,” said he, quoting Miss Lyttleton’s sentiments, “that occasions a woman to say ‘No’ to her admirer’s suit: sometimes, when she is aspiring, she will sacrifice both her lover’s and her own happiness upon the altar of ambition.”

“I do not comprehend you—why do you speak so strangely?”

His lordship frowned impatiently. “I should have thought,” he said, with the slightest touch of irony, “that you would have been under no difficulty in understanding my meaning; I will, however, speak more plainly. Was your rejection of Mr. Arnold caused by want of affection, or by a desire to elevate yourself in rank? Did you, or do you now, love him?”

Liliast was perfectly staggered by this query; and the uncompromising look that accompanied it rendered her wholly unable to answer with calmness. To avow the truth was out of the question, and she dared not utterly deny the charge. Impulsively she took the middle course, and casting herself at her husband’s feet, begged to know in what she had offended him, and why he asked her so strange a question.

Lord Welgrave was moved; her supplicating posture affected him greatly, yet he was far from being persuaded of her guiltlessness.

“Liliast,” he said, sadly, “I know all—so it is useless for you to prevaricate: you gave yourself to me, while your heart belonged to another, and your affections are even now with him. I do not blame you that you cannot love me, only that you have deluded me with the fancy that you returned my devotion; one thing you can assure me, that will afford me some consolation,—tell me you did not know the state of your feelings when you accepted me, and that, although you did not love me, you did not regret this Arnold.”

No answer followed this appeal, Liliast was too stricken with shame and grief to speak.

"Lilias, do you hear what I say?" cried her husband with angry energy. Still no reply, and Lord Welgrave, with a gesture of supreme misery, went to the door, and passed over its threshold.

"Henry!" Lady Welgrave called after him, entreatingly.

He turned back. The touching manner in which she had pronounced his name recalled all his tenderness, and a thrill of joy passed over him.

"What is it, Lilias?" he said, gently; "can you tell me that my fears for your sincerity are groundless?"

"Yes," was the murmured response, uttered in an accent so low that it was barely audible.

Her husband, however, heard the word—it was enough. He required to hear no more, but raising her from her degraded posture, clasped her in his embrace.

"Give me again this delightful assurance, my darling!" he exclaimed, when his rapture had somewhat abated, "Tell me that all my suspicions are shameful and groundless."

"I have told you already," returned Lilias, "that Owen Arnold proposed for my hand, and that I refused him; but this is not quite all. Despite my rejection, he appeared still to imagine that I should ultimately marry him; for his devotion was of such a description that knows no abatement, and acknowledges no defeat. Continually he repeated his professions, which, instead of making me angry, as I suppose they should have done, prepossessed me in his favour, and as a consequence of his constancy and strong attachment, I began to fancy I liked him—mind, I do not say *love*. So in a foolish hour I acceded to a request of his,—a very ridiculous one, I own,—that if, after a certain period, I met with no one I could like better, I would wed him. You know the result—I met you."

A vivid blush mantled brow and cheek, as Lilias well nigh inarticulately breathed the last words. The blush was brought up by the consciousness of the falsehood she implied, but her confiding partner conceived that it was the ensign of love, not shame. Filled with this pleasing idea, he warmly implored her pardon for the cruelty he had been guilty of towards her, which his wife sealed with a kiss.

"And now, dearest," her husband observed, and a shadow passed over the sunshine of his happiness at the remembrance, "will you allow me to put one more question: What was the cause of your evident distress this morning when you heard that this young man was perhaps dead, if it were not regret for him?"

"Really," laughed Lilias, perfectly restored to serenity by the success which had attended her artifice, "you are too exacting.

I have not felt well for some little time past—nay, do not look so alarmed, I am not ill. I suffer no pain, only depression of spirits occasionally, and at other times a nervous excitability. At these periods the most trivial surprise is sufficient to make me feel giddy and faint. The agreeable circumstance of the dear old doctor's visit put me quite in a fever; and in this frame of mind, can you wonder that I was much shocked to hear of the obscurity that overhangs Mr. Arnold's fate? Independently of my personal esteem, I feel interested in him on account of his parents, who make almost an idol of him. If, Henry, you mean to put a momentous construction upon every variation of my countenance, you will bring forward something against me every moment, for I am conscious that I pale and flush at each unexpected sound or sight. I dare say I made an idiot of myself this morning, but I could not help it. If a stranger came suddenly into the room now, I should possibly faint in your arms."

Lady Welgrave paused, looking at her husband's half-averted face, as if she would tear his thoughts from his soul for her perusal.

"I am so very sorry," she resumed, presently, gazing into his eyes with a look of such apparent candour that it would have been completely impossible to doubt her truthfulness,—“I am so very sorry that you should have made yourself uneasy about such a stupid affair. What could put it into your head? and why did you not unburthen your mind before?"

"I did not lay the same stress upon your singular behaviour at first as I did subsequently, when I learned that you were intimately acquainted with the family of the Arnolds, and that the son had aspired to your favour."

"And from whom did you gather so minute an account of my affairs?" Liliast interrogated, sharply.

"From Miss Lyttleton," returned he, with a slight reluctance; "but she was unconscious of wrong in what she said, I am sure. She has the greatest respect for you."

If Lady Welgrave nourished a disbelief in Hinda's friendliness, she reserved to herself this troublesome incredulity, and answered as though she quite acquiesced in her husband's opinion.

Soon this scene, threatening to be so stormy, ended in all amity. Not that Lord Welgrave was quite satisfied—he tried to think he was, and told himself repeatedly he ought to be—with the explanation his wife had vouchsafed; but notwithstanding this, he was incapable of rooting out the doubts which were only *lulled* in his breast.

Having once entertained suspicions injurious to the veracity of a person beloved, nothing that afterwards transpires can totally eradicate them. Sweet words may charm away the pain for a season,

but nothing upon earth can wholly efface the rankling memory of them; and the man or woman who has once been a prey to feelings of jealousy will ever, more or less, be upon the alert for circumstances that may substantiate their fears.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MELBOURNE LITTLETON.

IT was early the succeeding morning when Lady Welgrave tripped from her dressing-room, and down the broad staircase, to the library. She was clad in a graceful robe of flowing muslin, whose delicate violet hue enhanced the faint bloom upon her cheek, and the soft brilliancy of her dark eyes. Her hair was arranged in curls that fell about her face luxuriantly, imparting to its expression a piquancy wholly irresistible; and altogether she looked as bright an incarnation of beauty and happiness as could be found in a search over the five continents.

Dr. Darby had long since risen, and was now engaged in reading a favourite work; he did not hear Lilius's light step upon the thick carpet, and was ignorant of her presence till she stood by his side. He then took her hand in his, pressing it fondly, while he answered her lively greeting with a look of admiration and affection.

"My dear Lady Welgrave," exclaimed he, half jokingly, and half in earnest, "forgive me for saying what alone one, perhaps, has a right to tell you: but you look superlatively bewitching this morning."

"Fie, doctor! don't abuse the privileges I have accorded you by using flattery," returned her ladyship, playfully.

"Flattery!—there can be none as applied to you, since you merit every possible praise," rejoined Dr. Darby. "For pity's sake, turn away your charms, unless you would have me worship you as a divinity."

Lilius laughed. "To prevent anything so terrible as your becoming an idolater," she said, "I will consent to whatever you wish. What shall I do?"

"Shade your face with a hat, envelope that angel form in a cloak, and come with me into the garden; we can have an hour's stroll before anybody is about."

With pleasure, eager as that of childhood, Lilius acceded; and it would have been a difficult matter to fancy anyone freer from care than she upon that early autumn morning, as she chatted and laughed with her old friend.

They entirely discarded from their talk affairs of moment, and only discussed those likely to afford pleasure. At length, having finished a long dissertation upon the latest novel, they diverged into subjects more connected with every-day life: formed plans for future amusement, and canvassed freely their mutual acquaintances; criticising their endowments, both personal and intellectual, with all the unreserve of confidential friends.

"Your guest—Miss Lyttleton—appears to be quite a character," the doctor remarked; "her countenance bespeaks a nature at once cruel and suspicious."

His companion's look betokened surprise. "You are very discerning," she said; "I believe her to be what you describe; at least, if I may judge from her conversation and manners."

"Do you know if she is related to the late member for Lilmouth?" the doctor asked his young friend.

"He was her brother," Lilius returned, carelessly.

"And the gentle creature, whom that tigress, Miss Lyttleton, governs so completely, is his widow, then."

"Yes!" with a start. "Did you know him, too?"

"I cannot fairly lay claim to his acquaintance, having been in his company but twice," answered the doctor. "He was a most agreeable man, though, by all accounts, no saint; still, everybody, no matter what their prejudices, took to him at first sight; as for the ladies, they absolutely worshipped him. He was strikingly handsome; but the secret of his success with the fair sex lay scarcely so much in his good looks as in the fascinations of his manner, and the melodious flow of his conversation. Have you ever seen him?"

Lilius did not reply; nor had she occasion to do so, for the voluble doctor resumed quickly—

"But it is quite unnecessary for me to ask: he flourished before your time. It was said his wife was very unhappy, and that he neglected her shamefully; for, you know, private concerns will be talked of, however great the reserve maintained by the parties themselves. Long before I thought of ever seeing Mrs. Lyttleton, I learned to sympathise with her sorrows. How he could be indifferent to her I cannot conceive, such a pretty creature as she is. There is no accounting for the taste of some people; and while his amiable, refined wife was languishing for his affection, he probably had bestowed it, such as it was, upon some one infinitely inferior."

A subdued sobbing sound interrupted the doctor. It escaped involuntarily the lips of his hearer, who had withdrawn her arm from his, and now stood with her back to him.

Dr. Darby turned, full of solicitude, towards her.

"I beg your pardon," he began, when a glimpse of her features stayed his apologies, and he ejaculated, "Good heavens! Liliás, what is the matter?"

Thus adjured, she made an effort to speak, but could not, and bowing her face, gave way to a torrent of passionate weeping.

Her friend did not essay to comfort her, being utterly in the dark with regard to the cause of this sudden outbreak. He did what was better, silently supported her till he came to a seat, and waited till her tears should cease to flow.

Bitterly and wildly did she sob, and all the more poignant was her anguish that it followed a temporary fit of cheerfulness. When at last she gained the mastery over herself, Dr. Darby questioned her as to the origin of her unaccountable distress. "I cannot tell you—I cannot tell you," she moaned, wringing her hands piteously.

"But it must have reference to what I was speaking of," her friend pursued. "What could it be that I said concerning a stranger which could so deeply affect you?"

The doctor made this inquiry, in a tone intended to convince himself that Liliás's mysterious agitation, whatever its root, had not sprung from his remarks; and yet, notwithstanding, he was impelled to revert to the strange incident very frequently during that day, in the hope of discovering a right conclusion concerning the emotion evinced by his hostess.

From much reflection, and comparing of what he knew connected with Lady Welgrave's history above what was known to her ordinary friends, he came to the conclusion—which, though at first appearing incredible, ended in presenting itself as the only probable one,—that Liliás had been in some inexplicable manner connected with the deceased husband of Mrs. Lyttleton.

But did even this supposition explain fully the extremity of her sorrow at the irreverent mention of his name? Only partially; friendship alone could not feel so keenly. Much more than the doctor was acquainted with, or could even surmise, was to be learned before he became the possessor of her life's mystery.

* * * * *

The noble master of the Abbey being fully recovered, and the weather just such as one desires for the beautiful, but melancholy season, autumn, four times the period originally planned for Miss Lyttleton's and her sister-in-law's visit glided by most agreeably and imperceptibly. They then, with many thanks for the kindness they had received, would have bid their host farewell, but he would not hear of them leaving.

"If you are happy here, why not prolong your stay?" said

Lord Welgrave to them, upon one occasion when they expressed an intention to return home. "We are in the midst of the shooting season, and though no great sportsman, I sufficiently delight in the pleasures of a country life to have invited some gentlemen to participate in the enjoyment; and as they will bring with them their wives, daughters, or sisters, there will be no lack of society for you."

Thus pressed by their host, whose entreaties were seconded with apparent cordiality by Lady Welgrave, the ladies could make but a faint resistance; indeed, it was only the younger who demurred after the renewal of the invitation. Mary expressed herself delighted with the Abbey, and everything connected therewith, still she said she would prefer going back to Cambridgeshire; and on being urged to give her reasons, she reluctantly explained, that she had adopted a child, whom she was very partial to, and having been nearly three months absent from him, she felt that her duty was very ill performed.

"If that is all your objection, pray send immediately for the child," Lady Welgrave forced herself to say, although by no means anxious to prolong her association with Hinda, for whom her animosity grew daily stronger. "I am very fond of children—" this was not too truthful an assertion—"why did you not inform us of this before?"

"Thank you, Lady Welgrave, but he is so young, and may be troublesome. Because I knew you would propose him coming here, I would not mention the reason of my anxiety to return to Redlands. I really cannot suffer you to be burdened with him."

"Indeed, my dear Mrs. Lyttleton, I shall have no nay," cried Lord Welgrave; "the boy must be sent for to-morrow, and you must stay here at least till the departure of our expected visitors."

Mrs. Lyttleton submitted to the arrangement without farther opposition; a letter was despatched the same evening, with instructions to bring the child to Kent, and an agreement entered into, that the fair widow and her sister-in-law should remain inmates of the Abbey for some time longer. Dr. Darby had declared, upon the third day of his visit, that his holiday had expired, and no inducement held forth could make him alter his decision of immediately going back to Sedgley. He said he must return to attend his patients.

"But why will you not retire from practice? you, who could so easily do so, to prefer being at the call of anybody who, from want of something to do, shams illness!" said Liliass, impatiently. "I am really surprised at you. Your love for your profession is nothing short of infatuation."

"Well, my dear, perhaps it is," good-humouredly returned the

doctor, "for certainly my patients are as necessary to me as I am to them; if I were to discontinue dosing them, I should myself become ill. No, I cannot live idly; or rather, I mean I cannot live so hard as fashionable people do; my work is a pleasure to me, and their pleasure would be an insufferable bore."

So the lively doctor left the Abbey for Sedgley, laden with messages of love for Sir Shenton, and compliments for half the county of Sussex. As Lady Welgrave gave him her hand at parting, he took the opportunity of whispering—"Beware of Miss Lytton!"

"Why?" inquired Lilius, hastily.

"I have no time to tell you, and even had I, it would be superfluous: you can surely comprehend the meaning of my warning."

"Yes," murmured the marchioness, hesitatingly; "but how have you learned that she hates me, and would do anything to effect my ruin? Has she made a confidant of you?"

"No—she is too careful for that," was his rejoinder; "she seeks to obtain information—it is not her custom to impart it."

At this moment Lord Welgrave came up, and Lilius saw the carriage drive off without being able to obtain a word from her friend explanatory of his caution. The wonderful insight he seemed to possess concerning her history, and even her thoughts, bewildered and terrified her almost as much as though she believed him to be master of more than human penetration.

The morning upon which the fresh visitors were to arrive broke with unusual brilliancy, and a flutter of pleased expectation pervaded the minds of all. Mary Lytton was glad at the thought of seeing her young *protégé* and Lilius, from the hope that, notwithstanding the excuse Ada Hartop had sent in answer to her invitation, she might yet come under the escort of her affianced, and in her impatient uncertainty she went repeatedly to the window overlooking the road.

"My dear Lilius," said Lady Christabel, "it is perfectly pitiable to see you so restless. The time will seem all the longer if you are unemployed."

"But what am I to do?" asked she, dolefully. "I can't read or paint with my thoughts continually carried away."

"Oh! I do not advise any occupation that will obstruct thought, rather one that will allay its feverishness. Have you no wool-work of your own—mine is finished—or crochet, or embroidery? In the days of my girlhood it was counted a disgrace to be idle."

"And so it is now, by some people," replied Lilius, lightly. "Miss Majendie used to bore me terribly with lessons pertaining to every species of fancy work, until papa told her he did not wish my time to be employed in the manufacture of articles that are

never wanted, and that any hired work-girl could do as well. Nothing, to my mind, is so ridiculous a waste of time as that taken up in this way."

"I allow," returned Lady Christabel, mildly, "that there is far too much attention given to tasks purely mechanical, though, upon certain occasions, I think it no ill bestowal of time to sew. It fills up a gap in home conversation, and wiles away a spare half hour; but I had no intention of commencing a discussion, so, my love, give me that box of knitting-pins; there is a new and very pretty pattern in this book."

"If I only knew it would be useful, I would not make the least objection;" and as Liliias spoke, she selected a pair of pins and a reel of cotton. "The greatest piece of work I ever completed was a ruff for Lion; perhaps this lace will edge a bib for him."

"If you will give it to me," interposed Mary Lyttleton, "I will make a pinafore to put it on for my little pet."

This promise sufficed to reconcile Lady Welgrave to the task, and she forthwith opened the knitting-book.

"I can remember the plain stitch," said she, after poring over the bewildering page for a minute; "but can any of you tell me what all this means? 'First line, knit one, turn over three times, purl one, drop one, knit two together.' Oh! Lady Christabel, do help me, or I shall never be able to do it. Let me read it again, 'Knit one,' yes, I have done that; 'turn over three times:' is that the stitches?—'drop one,'—what? it can't be the pins?"

Lady Christabel burst out laughing, in which Mary heartily joined.

"Liliias, you must be making these blunders purposely," exclaimed the former, when she could speak: "it is the cotton you are to turn over."

"Oh!" said her ladyship, with an enlightened look; but when she came to apply the lesson, she was at a loss which pin to twist it round, and, amidst the merriment of all, threw them both upon the table.

"It's of no use; I can't learn these sort of things, and would much rather you sent me out to garden;" but 'ere she could add another word, a servant announced Lady Drury and Miss Drury.

A shade of vexation ruffled Liliias's brow for a second, but she smothered all token of it as she met the glances of her visitors, advancing with a courtesy so studied and formal that Caroline winced, and instead of embracing "my particular friend, the Marchioness of Welgrave," hesitatingly took the hand held out to her.

"We were going," said the mamma, "to Drury Lodge."—"Why can't she say home?" growled Hinda Lyttleton, *sotto voce*—

“but Caroline would not think of passing so near to the Abbey without calling to see how you were. The attachment my daughter possesses for Lady Welgrave,” she continued, with a smile that was meant for all, “would be marvellous, had we not continual instances of the power she wields over every heart.”

“It is very good of you to say so,” Lady Christabel interposed, for Liliass’s bow struck her as rather cold for such a compliment, “but it is not transgressing the truth,” placing her hand tenderly upon her arm, while Hinda smiled to herself grimly. She never took part in a conversation save for her own pleasure or profit, and having listened and watched long enough to excite her indignation of such frivolity and hypocrisy, as she phrased it, she rose majestically, and looking her scorn, went out of the room into the garden to walk herself calm.

After little better than twenty minutes’ stay, Lady Drury, smiling to the last, withdrew, followed by Caroline, who was hardly able to say good-bye.

“Mamma, it is infamous!” cried she, directly she was outside the house, and almost forgetting her lisp in her rage. “There are a score of people invited. I told you they are coming for a fortnight or more, and not to ask us to stay! I never shall get over it, I am sure; for I told Miss Twadler I was going to spend a few weeks here, and she will see that my name is not amongst the rest.”

“I must say, it is exceedingly unhandsome behaviour on Lady Welgrave’s part; still you should not have spoken to her so curtly. A marchioness is not to be made friends with every day. Had your poor papa been a baronet, it would be less important for you to cultivate the acquaintance; but a knight, you know, hardly ranks with the squire. If he were alive now, with his odious reminiscences of the manufactory and his low tastes, we should never, with all our money, have procured admission into good society, and though we have advanced considerably, it is advisable, as I said before, for us to keep terms with Lady Welgrave, who will be one of the leaders of fashion when she appears in London next season.

“I know you are right,” answered Caroline, rather sulkily, “and I intended to be civil, only her manner seemed to say, It is no use your trying. But, la! there is Miss Lyttleton walking by herself on the lawn. What a dragon she looks! I wonder if she, like Lady Christabel, thinks Liliass an angel—a pretty angel, indeed! I should be glad to let everybody know what she really is. It would be a good thing now to tell this Miss Lyttleton, would it not, ’ma? and she will, of course, repeat it to all the people who are coming. Oh! do let us go and speak to her; you can easily bring it in, and I will walk on.”

By the time the last word was spoken, Lady Drury, by a pressure of her daughter's hand, had signified her consent to the amiable petition. They came up to Hinda, who would have passed them in silence, had not Lady Drury, with a would-be seraphic air, placed herself before her, commencing a frantic eulogy upon the Abbey and its grounds.

Miss Lyttleton listened with about as much interest as a statue would have manifested; but Lady Drury was not to be frowned down, and having exhausted her architectural resources, rushed into praises of Lady Welgrave, which was the signal for Caroline to run on before, for the ostensible purpose of chasing a butterfly. Artless Caroline!

"Nothing," said Lady Drury, in a tone of the utmost confidence, "could exceed the affection my darling Carrie has for years possessed for Lady Welgrave: they were at school together, you may be aware."

"No," snapped Miss Lyttleton, "she had never heard of it."

"Really, I am astonished, their attachment being so strong for each other; but with the Marchioness it is associated with an unpleasant recollection, which accounts for her not mentioning my daughter. There was no disagreement between them, you will understand, but—a—perhaps I ought not to have mentioned it, a rumour—a very scandalous rumour, connected——"

"With Lady Welgrave?" cried Hinda, roused to attention and staring hard at the speaker.

"Well, no; I—I hardly know how to explain it rightly—I was going to say connected with her leaving school."

The train once fired, the mine quickly exploded. By a skilful distortion of those facts which went to prove Liliás's innocence, and a heightening gloss cast upon the injurious surmises, it was made manifest to Hinda's mind that she was a false, intriguing woman.

"Let me but follow upon this track," she thought, "and my coveted triumph will be speedy. Her blinded husband must learn to hate her, on discovering how she has deceived him."

When satisfied Lady Drury could tell her no more, Hinda sought to cut short her disgustingly hollow professions of faith in Lady Welgrave's perfect propriety of conduct, but all in vain.

"Would I, do you think, Miss Lyttleton," inquired she in a manner intended to be utterly conclusive—"would I, do you think, allow my pure-minded Caroline to own as a friend one whose reputation I believe tainted? A censorious world may blame me for my confidence," resumed this high-souled matron, with Lucretian dignity; "but I shall ever maintain that, despite

the unexplained mode of her departure from Blackheath, her ladyship is blameless."

Perfectly well aware was Lady Drury that this elaborate daubing did nothing towards patching up the hole in poor Liliás's fame, and would have been just as placidly assured of Hinda's acceptance of her story if she had, with corresponding earnestness, vowed an unalterable discredit in everything against Lady Welgrave. But such a proceeding was contrary to Hinda's nature, and she bluntly declared herself not sufficiently acquainted with the marchioness either to confirm the accusation or deny the possibility of its justness.

When, more scornful and gloomy in aspect than usual, Hinda went back to the drawing-room, she found Liliás at the piano, playing one of Haydn's swelling anthems for her own especial amusement, Lady Christabel and Mary having gone to the station, to meet the latter's adopted child.

"None of the visitors arrived yet, I see," observed Hinda, regardless of interrupting Liliás's performance.

"No," was all the offended musician vouchsafed to answer, and played on, unheeding the opening of the door, and Mrs. Lyttleton's entering footsteps. When, however, the piece was concluded, she rose from the music-stool, and advanced to the centre of the room, where Mary and her little companion were standing.

What was there in the sight of that innocent child that made Lady Welgrave recoil with fright, pressing her hand to her heart to still its violent beatings? Why did her eyes start so wildly, and her fair skin assume an alabaster whiteness, as she met the look of those baby eyes?

The answer seemed clear to Hinda, judging from the demoniacal expression of joy, which, for an instant, rested on her dark features.

Mary saw nothing of Liliás's changed exterior, or her sister-in-law's fleeting look of exultation; she was wholly engaged in caressing the child.

"This, Lady Welgrave, is my dear little boy. Is he not pretty?"

It was with almost maternal fondness that Mrs. Lyttleton put the question to Liliás, whose answer was so little expressive of admiration, that his protectress drew the boy more closely than before to her side.

The child might be about two years of age, but he was beyond it in intelligence. His eyes, of a bright blue, inclining to violet, were large and liquid, and his features, separately beautiful, formed collectively a countenance of most winning sweetness. The well-

formed head was covered with small rings of hair, of a rich brown hue, brightening into gold in the sunshine. Could one of those pretty curls have been taken from the head of this child, and put in place of the lock my lady treasured in the secret drawer of her escritoire, she could never have discovered the difference, so alike were they in texture and shade; aye, and even in the manner of the curl.

Mary talked to, and Hinda of, the child, Liliás looking on and listening, as if all the functions of her mind were absorbed in those of sight and hearing.

"Mary never can refrain from troubling herself with other people's concerns," said Miss Lyttleton to her hostess; "and having no family of her own, she must needs insert an advertisement in the 'Times,' to the effect that she wanted to adopt a child."

"How long is that since?" her auditor asked, breathlessly.

"More than a year ago; you advertised in July, I think, did you not, Mary?"

Mary was quite incapable of helping her sister-in-law in her calculations; it might have been Christmas, for aught she knew.

"Yes, it was in July," resumed Hinda, authoritatively; "the twentieth—I remember the circumstances connected with it very well."

"How were his parents induced to part with him?" questioned Liliás, and it was with apparent effort she put this query.

Miss Lyttleton lost no time in replying, moving her chair nearer to Lady Welgrave's, and earnestly watching her countenance while she spoke.

"The child has no parents, or at least none who will acknowledge him," was her answer. "A woman, who confessed herself as being only the deputy of its mother, brought him to us; and as it was a healthy little thing, Mary instantly determined to adopt it upon the woman's terms, which were, that we should receive it without making any inquiries as to its parentage. She gave the child's name as Melbourne,—you will say an odd one,—and as it had no other, Mary had him christened Melbourne Lyttleton."

Liliás's curiosity appeared now to be perfectly satisfied, she asked no farther questions; but reseating herself at the piano, played some of the liveliest airs she knew, till it was time to dress for dinner.

THROUGH GLENELG

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THREE WEEKS IN SKYE," "ACROSS ROSS-SHIRE," &c.

ABOUT nine o'clock on a fine morning in July, the stout and trim sea-going packet, the "Clansman," steamed into the Bay of Glenelg, and, signalling the ferry-boat, landed us safely at the little pier. It was not without regret that we thus bade "good-bye" to the "Clansman;" for, apart from the comfort which we had experienced on board, she formed the last link in the chain of attachments which had been forging itself round our hearts in the island of our recent sojourn—

"Sweet Skye of bays and dells."

It was no wonder, then, that we lingered on the pebbly beach till the creamy yeast of waves, churned by the paddle-wheels, had become a broad band of smooth, unrippled water, and the "Clansman" itself, with its red, comfortable-looking funnel, had skimmed away towards Isle Ornsay on its passage south.

My friend and I were the only arrivals, and we came in for a full share of the open-mouthed curiosity which travellers in those remote parts usually meet with from the idlers lounging about; and not idlers alone, but busy workmen take a peep at the passers-by: the shoemaker leaves the half of his thread unresined, the top-sawyer whistles to his fellow beneath, women and children crowd to the doors, and even the village dominie—albeit,

"A man severe he is, and stern to view"—

shows his head at the window in a momentary spasm of curiosity. Considering that, on the average, there cannot be more than a couple of tourists landing at Glenelg every second day, this curiosity is not to be wondered at, either there or elsewhere. Indeed, I for one rather like to see the honest faces of the villagers filling doors and windows as one passes along; it shows that there is a healthy heart beating behind each of their breasts, or, as the dominie might say, a heart which can exclaim, in the words of Terence, "*Humani nihil a me alienum puto*:" "I take an interest in everything human."

We did not concern ourselves much about all this staring; in fact, we were staring ourselves—not at the villagers, I grant, but at the beauty of their charming hamlet, the Kirkton of Glenelg, towards which we were bending our steps. Villages, I think, are always most charming when seen under the soft "glamour" of the morning sun; and certainly Glenelg seemed so to us at that moment. The pebbly beach, against which a hundred tiny ripples

were breaking, in a lace-like fringe of foam; the sunny sea, lit up with a thousand smiles; the rich planting of woods that skirt the bay, contrasted with the barren, treeless hills on the opposite shore of Kyle-Rhea; the gray smoke trailing lazily from the chimney-tops, and, hardly able to bear its own weight, clinging for support to the adjacent tree-tops, on which it rested lovingly;—formed a sweet, land-locked picture, on which our eyes rested with quiet satisfaction.

But we had had no breakfast yet, the “Clansman’s” bell having just rung as we stepped over the side; so the “keen demands of appetite” soon quickened our steps, and we sought the welcome door of the Kirkton Inn, at which the landlord stood looking down the road, a pleasant smile on his red yet kindly face. And now, thou tyrannous stomach, what should we do to appease thee? We had given this important member of the body corporate nothing since supper-time the night before, save a cracknel and a glass of sherry, and, like the stomach in Menenius’ fable, he was beginning to exclaim:

“Remember, it is I
That sends strength through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart—to the seat o’ the brain;
The strongest nerves, and small inferior veins,
From me receive the natural competency
Whereby they live.”

Some ethereal beings there are among the reading public who object entirely to everything eatable in tourists’ journals. On looking over Talfourd’s “Vacation Rambles,” the other day, I found a pencilled note on every page in which the writer chances to mention “breakfast” or “dinner,” such as—“What an uproar about eating and drinking!” “Dinner!—always dinner!” “The author is manifestly an Englishman, from his making so great a god of his belly!” But, in my opinion, a book of travels would be dry indeed without the customary meals; indeed, I am frank enough to confess that, though not an Englishman, I am partial to the literature of eating and drinking, when it is not overdone. I have yet a pleasant recollection of the keen relish with which, when a boy, I used to linger over such passages as that in Sir Walter Scott’s “Bride of Lammermoor,” in which honest Caleb Balderston did the purveying at “Wolf’s Hope,” and, entering Gibbie Girder’s kitchen, pocketed, first, some black and white puddings, and made off, next, with the brace of wild-fowl sputtering on the spit. Thackeray, in his “Miscellanies,” acknowledges to the same weakness, and confesses that, in his youth, he could say all the savoury passages in the “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments” by heart. But, joking laid aside, the ordinary reader, in general, loves to eat with his guide; breakfasting where he break-

fasts, and dining where he dines; so I will consult, in my own case, the tastes of the many, and let the dyspeptic seek food elsewhere.

Our breakfast, then, at the Kirkton Inn of Glenelg was a delicious one—coffee, ham and eggs, and salmon, served up, as a penny-a-liner would say, in *recherché* style—everything being neat and clean, the table covered with

“A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook
By which it had been bleached.”

The apartments, too, were clean and comfortable, the whole place wearing the snug attractive air which a traveller loves to behold. How different all this from the hostelry of 1773, at which the two most distinguished tourists that ever passed through Glenelg halted on their passage to Skye—Dr. Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, of Auchinleck. In Boswell's “Journal” we meet with the following passage:—“We came on to the inn at Glenelg. There was no provender for our horses, so they were sent to grass with a man to watch them. A maid showed us upstairs into a room damp and dirty, with bare walls, a variety of bad smells, a coarse, black, greasy fir table, and forms of the same kind; and out of a wretched bed started a fellow from his sleep, like Edgar in King Lear, ‘Poor Tom's a cold.’ The inn was furnished with not a single article that we could either eat or drink; but Mr. Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod, in Glenelg, sent us a bottle of rum and some sugar, with a polite message, to acquaint us that he was very sorry that he did not hear of us till we had passed his house, otherwise he should have insisted on our sleeping there that night. Our bad accommodation here made me uneasy, and almost fretful. Dr. Johnson was calm: I said he was so from vanity. Johnson: ‘No, sir; it is from philosophy.’ It pleased me to see that the ‘Rambler’ could practise so well his own lessons. I sent for fresh hay, with which we made beds for ourselves, each in a room equally miserable. Dr. Johnson lay down, buttoned up in his great coat. I had my sheets spread on the hay, and my clothes and great-coat laid over me, by way of blankets.”

Johnson, in describing the same scene to Mrs. Thrale, says:—“I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great-coat. Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen, *like a gentleman*.” And in his own “Tour” the doctor writes:—“We were told that at Glenelg we should come to a house of lime, and slate, and glass, an image of magnificence, that raised our expectations. When we did come, the negative catalogue of provisions was very copious; no meat, no milk, no bread, no eggs, no wine. Whiskey we might have (though the doctor loved good eating, he detested whiskey), and I believe they caught a fowl at

last and killed it. Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up on our entrance a man black as a Cyclops from the forge." As Boswell remarks, it is amusing to observe the different images which this unlucky sleeper presented to Dr. Johnson and himself.

After doing ample justice to the viands, and paying our bill, which was singularly moderate, some eighteenpence each, we started on foot through Glenmore, the great glen of Glenelg, one of the finest of Highland straths, which, by the way, gave title to the Right Honourable Baron Glenelg, a nobleman lately deceased, who, eminent no less for his literary taste than for his talents as a statesman, rose from being plain Mr. Charles Grant to fill some of the chief offices of State, having been at sundry times President of the Board of Trade, Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary for the Colonies.

Our way lay through the Kirkton of Glenelg, a picturesque little place, the chief street in which can boast of slated houses and well-stocked shops, most of which have "General Merchant" stuck over the door, a common practice of Highland shopkeepers. In search of artistic effect, too, the local sign-painter often displays the name in such a way that you rub your eyes on beholding such a sign-board as "General H. Mac Intyre, Merchant," and begin to moralise on the vicissitudes of life, till you draw nearer hand. These general merchants deal in everything, from a needle to an anchor, from laces to herring-nets, and from Morrison's Pills to Thorley's Food for Cattle. We looked in at one of those places, and had a chat with the merchant himself,—my friend, with that warm-hearted humanity which distinguishes him, being desirous to inquire after the welfare of a young shopkeeper, who, twelve years before, had done him some trifling service, on a former visit to the place.

"Och! Seumas (Gaelic for James) will be gone to Australia," was the reply. "It will be but a poor living merchants will have in Glenelg."

The speaker himself gave no personal evidence of poverty, being a stout, fat, rosy-faced man, and his shop certainly the reverse of being empty. Poverty is a common complaint in the Highlands, but I have known it to be dunned into one's ear, in season and out of season, by men who had hundreds by them in a quiet corner. Emigration, however, seems to have been pretty extensive from this parish, a fact testified to by the various Glenelgs to be found in the far west, whose populations much exceed that of the parent place. Thus we have Glenelg, a large river of Australia Felix, rising in the Victoria Range; and Glenelg, a county of Western Australia, bounded by Melbourne County on the West, and by Victoria County on the South.

On leaving the village, the first noteworthy object that meets the eye is a pile of gray buildings, a short distance to the left. These are the remains of Bernera Barracks, which were established by the Hanoverian Government, shortly after the Rebellion of 1715, as a bridge in this, one of the chief mouths of the Highlands. The barracks consisted of two parallel houses, capable of accommodating two companies of soldiers. In Boswell's time, the complement seems to have diminished considerably. He says:— "As we passed the barracks at Bernera, I looked at them wistfully, as soldiers have always everything in the best order; but there was only a serjeant and a few men there." The term "Bernera" is Celtic, and may mean "scalloppy headland," from *bearn-rutha*,—*ra*, when contracted,—or "the fortress in the mouth of the glen," from *bearn*, "mouth," or "gap," and *rath*, "fortress." Going on about half-a-mile further, and looking back from the entrance to Glenmore, we were again much charmed with the picturesque appearance of the Kirkton, which, from the abundance of woods close by, is quite unlike a Highland village. Accustomed, as we were, to the bare, treeless scenery of Skye, the Glenelg woods proved positively refreshing to us, the proximity of the bare, bleak, background of Bienn na Caillich, adding to the enjoyment. The fulness and richness of the woods in the neighbourhood form indeed one of the chief elements in the beauty of the Kirkton of Glenelg. The chief roads to it are lined with trees, every field and park are dotted with ornamental clumps, and the rising ground is covered with plantings of fir, which give a rich warm look to the whole. The large orchard, near the opening of the glen, with its fine beech hedge, and its parallel lines of graceful silver firs, is a pleasing object in the scene. To Mr. Bruce, a former proprietor in Glenelg, who with admirable taste laid out considerable tracts in the neighbourhood with larch, pine, and spruce, the place is chiefly indebted for its woodlands.

The tourist who has never seen a Celtic *Dune* or *Burgh* might, instead of going on at once through Glenmore, do well to turn aside for a day into Glenbeg, the little glen of Glenelg. We had seen quite enough of those Dunes in Skye, and were not sufficiently imbued with the spirit of Jonathan Oldbuck to ferret out everything in the shape of antiquities. Those Glenbeg Dunes, however, are said to be very interesting, being reported to be the most entire in the Southern Highlands. Much to the grief of antiquarians, the modern Goths of Glenelg have, very discreetly for themselves, made free use of the stones for building purposes, as their cousins-german in the North of England have done with the great Roman wall. To the reader who does not know what a *Dune* is, it may be sufficient to say briefly, that the larger one

in Glenbeg is, like all others of its kind, a circular building, unroofed, 30 feet in height, the interior diameter being the same, and the outer 57 feet. The walls, which are double, are 10 feet thick, and have tiers of galleries between them, to which there was no entrance from the outside, save by a single door, very near the ground, which could easily have been blocked up by a large stone let fall from the gallery. The precise use of these *Burghs* is not known. The term *Pictish Tower*, often applied to them, contains the most probable inference on this point; viz., that they were strongholds or places of retreat, round which the ordinary dwellings were clustered, and to which, in times of danger, the inhabitants repaired. Some antiquaries consider them to be the work of the Danes, but they are in all likelihood Celtic. Worsaae, in his "Danes and Northmen," inclines to the latter view, and states his belief that the Norwegians, finding the strongholds ready to their hands, took frequent advantage of them as places of defence. Wilson, in his "Archæology of Scotland," is of the same opinion, and conjectures them to belong, most probably, to the period preceding the conquest of the Western and Northern Islands by Harold Harfager, in the ninth century, and as erected for purposes of refuge on occasion of the frequent descents of the fierce Northmen. The same writer observes: "These remarkable buildings can hardly be viewed with too great an interest by the Scottish archæologist. They are the earliest native architectural remains which we possess, the cromlechs and stone circles being at best only rudimentary and symbolic, or representative forms of architecture."

There is a tradition in Glenelg that these Glenbeg Dunes were built by two giants, brothers, who gave their respective names to the two narrow straits, Kyle *Rhea* and Kyle *Akin*, that divide the island of Skye from the mainland. Those giants are reported to have been so big that one stood in the mountain quarry, some miles off, and handed the stones to his brother, who built away at his leisure below. In corroboration of their exceeding strength, a huge rock, 50 tons weight, is pointed out as one of the missiles which one brother hurled at the other, for the grievous offence of stealing his fire when he was abroad, hunting the deer. The place where these heroes were buried was long shown in a little plain near Kyle-Rhea, and was considered so sacred that no native could be found bold enough to disturb a stone of the sepulchre. A party of gentlemen belonging to the neighbourhood at length plucked up sufficient courage, and selecting a cloudless day, proceeded to the task of excavation. Before they were half-finished, a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning drove them away: not, however, before they had found two sarcophagi, formed

of long flags, containing the remains of human skeletons, embedded in the finest sand. These skeletons was of very large stature, for when one of the jaw-bones was applied to that of a big, fat man, standing by, it was found to be about twice his fit. The ploughshare has now effaced the resting-place of those gigantic Titans of Glenelg.

About a mile beyond the Kirkton, we passed the Manse, which stands to the right, its large garden skirting the road. From among the apple-trees and gooseberry-bushes we heard the merry voices of children, playing at "hide-and-seeK." The building is pretty large and handsome, and forms an interesting item in the scenery. The incumbent may congratulate himself on his good fortune in that his lines have indeed fallen on pleasant places. The glebe is one of the largest in Scotland, 360 acres in extent; so that the minister of Glenelg is no ordinary clergyman; he is a landed proprietor as well, on a pretty extensive scale. The extraordinary size of the glebe is accounted for by the fact of a former proprietor, Macleod, selling a strip of land, including the old glebe, to the Hanoverian Government, for the purpose of erecting Bernera Barracks; and to compensate the minister, ground to the extent of 360 acres was granted to him in lieu of what he had lost. The small estate thus handed over to the church in perpetuity has since increased in value to an extent never dreamt of when the grant was made.

And yet, when was mortal man ever found to be content? The Rev. Alexander Beith, minister of the parish in 1836, had a grievous "thorn in the flesh" to vex him, in the fact that a great many of his parishioners were Roman Catholics, of whom, when writing an account of his cure, he complains that "though the Gospel be preached within their reach, they will not hear; it is a virtue, in their esteem, so to act; and if at any time they be enticed to give their bodily presence, they come so panoplied in ignorance and prejudice, that of them it may be literally said, 'they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, and will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.'" The same writer, when speaking of the improvement of the Parliamentary road to Glenelg and the only other source of communication, "the hebdomadal visits of a steamboat," adds with a *naïveté* truly refreshing, especially when we reflect that he was doubtless the best educated and most intelligent man in the parish:—"By these means we have learned that there is a world beyond Glenelg! The Chinese-like self-preference which once existed, accompanied by a contempt of those who, less fortunate than we, had been ordained to draw breath first in some other district, is passing away and giving place to a more enlightened—a more rational and Christian feeling."

The aforesaid "thorn in the flesh" rankles to the present day, there being a great many Catholics in the parish, chiefly in Knoydart, one of the southern districts. As Knoydart, however, is *crodh-ait-aird*, "the country of cattle," we may infer that it is the Bœotian character of the people, and not the want of missionary effort, that is fatal to conversion there.

Leaving the Manse, with its quiet, suggestive calm, we pushed forward, and found with regret that the glen becomes barer as it opens up, the sweet plantings of wood being entirely confined to the lower end. The road, too, lay before us in all its steep, unflinching tedium, dragging its slow length up the hill-side till it was lost over the distant ridge, six miles off. Before we had gone a couple of miles further, a feeling of languor came over us, our limbs not having been sufficiently refreshed by the brief four hours' sleep which we had had in the steamer, after our twenty-five miles' walk of the previous day; and, besides, we had been walking about for three or four hours on deck, so we sat down close by a farmhouse, and listening to the pleasant sounds from within,—human voices, and the cries of poultry and lambs,—soon dosed over into a half-dream, suggested by the quiet repose of the sweet village which we had left and the barren road before us; and, like the Lotus-eaters after their toilsome voyage, we felt inclined to cry out—

"Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing road (wave)?
. There is no joy but calm.
We will return no more."

This sense of languor soon wore off, and we set off at a steady pace up the hill, being soon rewarded for our labour in the ever-broadening prospect that opened out before us, the glen lying at our feet, like the trough of a great sea, its sides quite destitute of trees, but covered with that rich green pasture which constitutes its chief wealth. The broad sweeping expanse of pastoral ground thus exposed to view was to me a wondrous sight; and its dread solitariness, broken only by the distant bark of a dog, or the bleating of sheep, was extremely imposing. I would not willingly have missed that walk through Glenelg for a great deal; and so fascinating was the sight that we lingered every quarter of a mile to look round again at the mingled sweetness and sublimity. The day was somewhat cloudy, and the sombre shadows on the hills heightened the grandeur of the scene. The extreme appropriateness of the name, Glenelg, also struck us forcibly at this point. Derived from *gleann* and *sheilg*, and therefore meaning "valley of hunting," or from *gleann* and *elid*, "valley of the roe," the name describes with equal truth the regular and extensive sweep of the mountains, and the rich verdure and ferny covert by which they are

distinguished. To see such a glen under the lashing of a thunder-storm or a hurricane must be a grand sight indeed ; while in winter, when the whole basin is covered with snow, the view must be equally magnificent. Rain, I am informed, falls here in great quantity, and storms are frequent, the great brooding clouds, which come up from the Atlantic, dispensing their watery treasures without stint, as they come in contact with the mountains. The usual prognostic of a hurricane is the low and sullen flight of the sea-birds, which retreat through the valley into the interior, as if from the advance of a resistless foe.

It is positively astonishing that Dr. Johnson says not a word about the grandeur of Glenelg. But "purblind Sam," as a Highland clergyman called him, had no eye for scenery ; indeed, he confesses to have preferred the view from his window in Fleet Street to everything else he had seen. Besides, when passing through Glenelg, he was too much taken up with himself, how to keep his seat in the saddle, to have much leisure for the glorious prospect before him. In Boswell's Journal we find the following passage :—"Going down the hill on the other side was no easy task. As Dr. Johnson was a great weight, the two guides agreed that he should ride the horses alternately—Hay's were the two best, and the doctor would not ride but upon one or other of them, a black or a brown. But, as Hay complained much after ascending the Rattachan, the doctor was prevailed upon to mount one of Vass's grays. As he rode upon it down hill, it did not go well, and he grumbled. I walked on a little before, but was excessively entertained with the method taken to keep him in good humour. Hay led the horse's head, talking to Dr. Johnson as much as he could ; and (having heard him, in the forenoon, express a pastoral pleasure on seeing the goats browsing), just when the doctor was uttering his displeasure, the fellow cried, with a very Highland accent, 'See, such pretty goats!' Then he whistled *whu!* and made them jump. Little did he conceive what Dr. Johnson was. There now was a common, ignorant Highland clown, imagining that he could divert, as one does a child, Dr. Samuel Johnson ! The ludicrousness, absurdity, and extraordinary contrast between what the fellow fancied and the reality was truly comic."

The last three miles of the ascent are the steepest, and when we reached the top, nine miles from the landing-place at the Kirkton, we were fain to sit down among the long reedy grass to rest ourselves. We were now at the western summit of what has been called the "stupendous pass" of Mam Rattachan, and the retrospect was truly magnificent. The whole valley of Glenelg lay at our feet in broad, indescribable expansiveness, a solitary shieling here and there being the only habitable place

within sight. Through the opening at the lower end peeped a small dark-blue reach of the sea, and in the dim background were the gloomy hills of Skye, the weird-looking tops of the Cuchullins in the extreme distance claiming kindred with the cloudland above. An indescribable glory rested on the heavens. A broad, fleecy band stretched itself over the horizon, and, above it, there was a curtain, half-drawn up, disclosing a deep leaden blue. This was our last glimpse of "the winged island," or, as some people render it, "the island of fog," attributing to the name a Scandinavian, and not a Celtic origin.

A carriage and pair passed us at this spot, on its way down Glenelg, containing the first human beings we had seen for half-a-dozen miles, the driver keeping a tight bridle hand, and moving very slowly, for, though the road is excellent, it is very steep, and has only a low parapet of turf to keep one between life and death. This highway between Fort Augustus and the island of Skye was constructed in the beginning of the present century by the Parliamentary Commissioners appointed for the improvement of roads and bridges in the Highlands. The previous roads, opened up shortly after the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745, were much narrower, but still so much an improvement on the old Highland bridle-paths, that their institution gave rise to the amusing distich, inscribed by a local poet on a finger-post—

"If you'd seen but those roads before they were made,
You'd hold up your hands, and bless General Wade."

The ridge called Mam Rattachan is here about a quarter of a mile broad. The name is peculiar, being, in Gaelic, *mam-rad-acain*—"the hill of the road of sighs,"—a name given, no doubt, many hundred years ago, by the poor Highlanders, who had to toil over the pass with heavy burdens on their backs. It is certainly the steepest highway that I have ever seen. The boundary-line between Inverness and Ross-shire runs along the summit of Mam Rattachan, after crossing which the traveller sets foot in the latter county.

On reaching the eastern end, there burst upon our view a sight inexpressibly grand, and certainly second to none—with the exception of the Cuchullin Hills—which it has been my good fortune to behold in the Scottish Highlands. It was so sudden, too—so unexpected—that had we been running blindfold for dear life, and our sight suddenly restored to us on the brink of a fathomless precipice, just in time to draw back and live, we could not have looked upon the scene before us with more breathless interest.

As we are now fairly "Through Glenelg," however, I must reserve this description for a future paper. JAMES LEITCH.

A GLIMPSE OF THE EAST

It would be difficult to realise a much greater change in so short a time, than by crossing direct from Gibraltar to Tangier—from an English garrison, to a thoroughly Oriental town. For though it may with truth be said that Gibraltar harbours a somewhat hybrid population, “The Rock” is essentially anglicised. In some places that might be named, where armies of occupation have been stationed, the presence of a foreign soldiery has failed to make any impression on the existence of native customs, and language and the alien legions have ever appeared in the light of interlopers. It is far otherwise at Gibraltar. There the British element has become predominant, and any rather than the garrison appear the interlopers. The laws, the arrangements, civil and military, the prevailing language, are all English. The Union Jack which waves over the impregnable fortifications of the key to the Mediterranean is not a mere symbol of England’s possession, but of England’s ascendancy from the highest to the lowest. Yet how strange a medley of creeds and nationalities is gathered together beneath the folds of that flag! Here a stately Moor from the opposite coast of Barbary, vying in stature and limb with the finest of our guardsmen; there a Spaniard, striking contrast to the Mussulman’s towering form, with a sallow, half-fed look, which seems to justify the remark one of our soldiers made to me, “Why, sir, we say these Spaniards can live on the smell of an oil-rag!” A few steps farther, and the *prononcé* physiognomy of Israel marks a Hebrew, of the Hebrews, side by side with whom is a “rock-scorpion” mongrel in tongue no less than in breed. And now, erect and commanding, passes a group of English artillerymen, with their fair Saxon complexions, and well-built figures, and that air of calm self-assertion which marks a race accustomed to rule, but not to tyrannise.

As a Briton approaches “The Rock” from the seaboard, he cannot but feel a thrill of inward pride, as he gazes on that huge mass of limestone, majestically rising, as it were, out of the waters of the blue Mediterranean. There it stands in all its naked ruggedness, a perpetual monument of British pluck and endurance. Those small dark spots in the sides of the cliff, that long line of white wall along the water’s edge, are suggestive of a fortress, but what meets the eye is as nothing to those latent powers of self-defence which the place possesses, and which none but those initiated into the secrets of the prison-house are permitted to know. And yet there are theorizers among us who would yield up one of the proudest jewels in the English crown, won by English daring, and

kept by English hardihood, on which so much of our resources has been spent—the key of the Mediterranean, so important to a great maritime nation,—because, forsooth; the holding is offensive to a second-rate power, which has never shown us any marked goodwill, in spite of the blood and treasure we have lavished on her!

But it is needless to dally long over Gibraltar. The military arrangements are above praise, and of the town the less said the better. It is a kind of cross between a second-rate place in Spain, and a dirty English seaport.

The “Cathedral”—*proh pudor!*—what a building!—yea, even for a “colonial!”

Get clear as soon as you can of this Peninsular Wapping, and walk out to the Alameda or to Europa Point. Climb the heights, and enjoy the glorious outlook. “O’er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,” or, as the light of day is waning, stand on the lime-wall, and cast your eyes across, and say if for richness of colour, brilliancy of light, and depth of shade, you ever saw the tints of evening surpassed. The sun is half-way down over the mountains opposite, leaving a long golden line along the horizon, and bringing out in full relief the dark ridges of the Spanish sierras, and flecking with its glowing rays the crests of the wavelets which just ruffle the almost black intervening waters of the Bay of Algeciras. On no account, if you can help it, miss the trip to Tangier. The transition, as we said before, from an English garrison to a perfectly Eastern town, is so sudden, and so complete, that it is difficult to believe it real. There is no regular line of steamers to and fro, but as the beef for the garrison generally comes from Africa, there is a frequent, if irregular, communication between the two continents. The *trajet* ought to take two or three hours, but the day the writer crossed there was a head-wind, so that four hours had elapsed before Tangier was reached.

Gibraltar, with its sister-fortress of Ceuta—the ancient columns of Hercules—now separated from each other by a narrow strait, but both, no doubt, originally on one continent, long remained in sight, until at length, as we steered our course in a more westerly direction, “The Rock” was lost to view, and the coast of Barbary and the Atlas range rose up before us in all the savageness of their beauty. A little more, and Tangier itself could be descried, with its whitewashed houses, piled one above another up the hill-side, with here and there a mosque-tower to break the glaring monotony. As Tangier possesses no pier or landing-place of any kind, travellers are constrained to reach the shore in small open boats, a number of which crowd round the vessel the moment she is brought to. Having heard at starting what the disembarkation was like, I had reduced my “viaticum” to the smallest possible limits, my

A GLIMPSE OF THE EAST

baggage consisting of only two packages, which I could easily carry in one hand, if necessary. Almost before the paddles had ceased to move, a lot of the small craft just mentioned were bumping against the sides of the vessel, each doing its best to swamp the others, in its eager efforts to be the first at the gangway. The scramble was accompanied by a discordant din of voices—imprecations in Arabic, interspersed with half-intelligible scraps of English, such as “Meeses Aston.” “Me, me.” “Take you to Meeses Aston.” “I take you,” &c. Mrs. Aston keeps the hotel at Tangier. At the risk of finding myself with my legs in one boat, my arms in another, the rest of my body in a third, and my baggage in a fourth, I quit the steamboat, and to my great relief find myself presently, *impedimenta* and all, safe in a single skiff, which a couple of sturdy natives are rowing towards the shore, with all their might and main. But this is only the commencement of the proceedings. The tug of war is yet to come. When within a hundred yards of the beach, the shallowness of the water makes it necessary to leave the boat, and to effect a landing on men’s shoulders. Immediately a tussle ensues between some half-dozen bare-legged Berbers, as to who is to secure the stranger. The scrimmage on leaving the steamer is re-enacted with ten-fold vigour. One seizes a leg, another an arm, a third the “baggage,” to which I hold on for dear life. A tall, stalwart fellow, who looks as if he could thrash the rest, seems my best chance. I jump on to his shoulders, winding my arms round his neck tight enough to endanger strangulation, and stick to him as closely as mortality does to a gentleman of colour, as the Yankee proverb goes. But all is not over yet. The other ruffians are not to be choked off so easily. No sooner am I on the fellow’s back than they try one and all to pull me off again, and by fair means or foul to make me their prize. My man, however, is well on his legs, and does not belie the opinion I had formed of his strength. He swerves not an inch, but deposits me and my belongings safe and dry above the water-line. The moment my feet are on *terra firma* old Mohammed, the Moorish guide, who is waiting on the beach for travellers, takes me under his charge, with an air of oriental *sang-froid*. He settles what I ought to pay the male harpies who have landed me, and who are now jabbering away as fast as their tongues can wag, and demanding ten times as much as their due.

What a change from Europe in a few short hours! Bernouses, bare legs, tarbooshes, and turbans meet your eyes everywhere. We first of all go into the Custom-house, a small open shed, where three or four Moors, wrapped in white bernouses, are sitting cross-legged, lazily smoking their long pipes. They receive us with the *nil-admirari* politeness of the East. The examination is only

nominal. My travelling-bag having been just opened *pro forma*, my guide and I ascend the steep ill-paved street which leads from the strand into the town. What a strange scene it is!

Moors, with their sharply chiselled features and dark complexions, which the white turbans and bernouses set off so well, pass and repass. Moorish women, enshrouded from head to foot in their long white garments, many of them with their "pickaninnies" on their backs, take a stolen glance of curiosity at the stranger. After leaving my chattels at Mrs. Aston's hotel, and ordering dinner, old Mohammed takes me off at once to see as much of the place as possible before sundown, for the steamer is to return to "Gib" in good time next morning. First of all I had to "pay my footing," at one of the numerous bazaars where are exhibited for sale wares, purporting to be of native manufacture, but are in too many cases importations from Paris. Then we pass up the principal street, with its rows of little shops like rabbit-hutches. In these small cribs, not more than eight or ten feet square, with their rough wooden verandahs, sit the vendors, cross-legged, lazily waiting for customers. Most of these places of business are provision stores. The bread, which is made of the Kous-cosou, is sold in large, round, flat cakes, and, though good in colour, seems doughy in consistency. The butter bears a strong resemblance to soft soap and treacle mixed together. Passing through the market, we next turn into a caravansary; at the gate sit three Moors, the one in the centre the handsomest fellow I recollect ever to have seen. Tall and slender in figure, his features chiselled with that exquisite sharpness and regularity which so frequently accompany high breeding, of a complexion dark but not swarthy, his manner and mien reserved and full of the calm self-possession which almost invariably distinguishes men of Eastern nationality, he looked indeed "a chief among ten thousand."

In the courtyard is a confused mass of people and merchandise,—camels, laden and unladen; black slaves busying themselves in preparations for a journey inland, or dozing beneath the arcades; Bedouins, half-clothed, savage-looking vagabonds, carrying in their countenances their reputed Ishmaelitic descent, "their hands against every man, and every man's hand against them," form the principal groups at the gate of the town, which in the East is still, as of old, the place of public resort (Psalm lxi. 12, "They that sit in the gate speak against me"), a motley throng are gossiping, smoking, and coffee-drinking. This was only one out of many incidents, during my very short stay, which recalled to my mind passages of Scripture, *e.g.*, Here was a shepherd with his staff and scrip, dividing the sheep from the goats; there a

woman drawing water from a deep well outside the walls (John iv. 2, "Thou hast nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep"), while the Bedouin Arabs, already mentioned, seem to verify their reputed descent from the son of the bondwoman. The lower part of the town is occupied by a mixed population, in which the Jewish element preponderates; but the upper part is exclusively Moorish. Here is the stronghold, called the Alcazaba, where the captain of the town resides. Mohammed took me into the apartment where the functionary was seated in the company of some of his fellow-officials, one and all indulging in the *dolce farniente* of the East. I was introduced, made my salaam, and retired. A number of guards were lounging about the square in front of the Alcazaba. The military are only distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants by a high-peaked "Fez," of red cloth, in shape like a shower-bath cap. They carry guns of native manufacture, with curiously wrought stocks, barrels five or six feet long, and flint and steel locks. Many of them are fine men and skilful in the use of such weapons as they have. Had they been better armed and better disciplined, the result of the late war between Spain and Morocco might have been less favourable to the former power.

The outlook from the heights above the town, where the public gardens and the houses of the Swedish and Danish consuls are situated, embracing, as it does, the town and environs as well as a wide prospect over the blue waters of the Mediterranean, is charming in the extreme; and the soft yet glowing light of an autumnal afternoon enhanced the loveliness of a scene at all times beautiful. As we stood on the heights, admiring the delightful combination of earth, sea, and sky before us, a Moorish horseman rode past on his Barbary steed. He guessed from my expression, I presume, that I was admiring his horse, for he immediately put the animal into a gallop over the expanse of springy turf which stretched away for some distance. It was a pretty sight to watch him riding *à bride abattue*, and leaning forward almost on to the neck of his horse, according to the Eastern manner, his white bernous floating behind him like a light summer cloud. It was Friday, the Moorish Sabbath, and it is the custom on that day for the Moslem women to repair to the cemetery outside the walls of the town, to mourn over their deceased relatives and friends. Most of the graves are marked only by a line of small stones set round the spot, and by a little bit of wood placed upright in the ground, or an evergreen; but some few have more of a monumental character, consisting of a low square vault with an arched roof, the whole glaringly white. It was getting towards the dusk of the evening when we strolled out towards the burial-ground, and there was something almost spectral in the sight

of the women completely muffled in their long, white garments, fitting noiselessly past us in the twilight. It did not require a person of a peculiarly strong imagination to feel a vague sense of awe as these ghostlike forms, enshrouded in their white, trailing garments, glided by. You might have fancied that the sheeted dead had been permitted to leave for awhile their dark charnel-houses and to revisit their former abodes, so strangely did the scene border on the supernatural. A similar feeling, though in a less degree, took hold of one's mind in passing the mosques, which were, of course, all open to-day, for prayer. Night had fallen; the streets were quite dark; only the interiors of the mosques were dimly lighted. Standing at the door of any of these one saw the prostrate crowd of worshippers within. Each one, as he concluded his devotions, glided noiselessly forth into the night, while others kept flocking in, as noiselessly donning or doffing their slippers at the entrance to the sacred precincts. The clatter of the shoes upon the doorstep was the only thing to make one conscious of the reality of the scene, so mysterious, so dreamlike did it all appear.

After a capital plain dinner, which was served in the English style, and did credit to Mrs. Aston's *cuisine*, I again sallied forth with old Mohammed, who had invited me to take tea at his house. Taking my hand, he guided me through the narrow, dark, ill-paved streets: and well was it that he had hold of me, or I must have come to grief. Not to mention the roughness of the road itself, and such minor stumbling-blocks as bullocks' bones and heaps of refuse, cast forth promiscuously into the street, they have an odd custom in Tangier of tethering their donkeys at nighttime outside the doors of their houses, and the unwary stranger thus runs the risk of receiving a back kick or two from one of these patient, but occasionally recalcitrating animals. Mohammed's house was a clean and comfortable abode enough. The door was opened by a black slave, called Fatima, who, on our arrival, was engaged in grinding corn at a hand-mill, again bringing up Scripture to one's mind—"Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matt. xxiv. 41). After crossing an open court, round which ran galleries, where the sleeping apartments were situated, we passed into a small inner room, where carpets and matting were spread for us to sit on. Presently, my host's *cara sposa* entered, and I was introduced in due form. She was an elderly personage, of a good-tempered, but certainly not a fair countenance. Her dress was so singular, that it was not altogether easy, at the first glance, to distinguish her sex. It consisted of a short linen tunic, with an enormously broad belt round the waist, and drapery over the

head. The good lady greeted me most hospitably, her husband acting as interpreter of her Arabic salutation. Fatima then placed on a table in front of us a small brass tray, on which were three China tea-cups, and a plate of (Moorish) bread-and-butter. The tea (though, I dare say, good enough in itself) was sweetened to so mawkish a degree that it was impossible to discover what its real flavour was. It was like syrup. The eatables were nice and palatable enough. How strange it felt to be sitting there cross-legged in a Moorish house, on another continent, a black slave in attendance, everybody and everything Eastern around you, when, not a dozen hours before, all was *à l'Anglaise!* The old Mussulman then saw me safe back to my hotel, and wished me "Good-night," promising to call me in good time next morning, in order that we might take a ride into the country before the steamboat left. Accordingly, by half-past six, we were wending our way through the streets (which were all astir at this hour) towards the gate of the town, where we found beasts ready saddled for us. After the preliminary of a small cup of coffee—thick and gritty, as it always is made in the East—and some little biscuits, like gingerbread nuts, we set off, old Mohammed mounted on a donkey, myself on a sorry pony of a similar description to the quadrupeds you hire for the ascent of Vesuvius. Just outside the town-gate were suspended, on cross-sticks, the carcasses of a number of fresh-killed oxen, for the consumption of the garrison at Gibraltar. These, and a Frenchman who suffered terribly from sea-sickness, were my sole *compagnons de voyage* back to "The Rock."

Once clear of the town and its immediate outskirts, we did not exactly "put spurs to our horses"—for the all-sufficient reason that we had none to put—but we dug our heels well into the flanks of the beasts, Mohammed ever and anon dropping back to apply arguments *à posteriori* to my Rosinante. The roads along which we passed were of a very woolly nature, ankle deep in sand, with here and there traces of a sort of rough stone causeway, so utterly out of repair as to say very little for the Tangierine Board of Works. The hedges on either side were composed principally of aloes, reeds, and prickly pear. As we jolted along, we met many of the peasantry on their way to the town—the men in their white or striped bernouses, the women muffled, as usual, in their blanket-like garments, with the addition of a straw-hat of enormous dimensions, which added much to the quaintness of their appearance. It is the custom to exchange salutations with every one you meet—another relic of scriptural times—"Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: We bless you in the name of the Lord" (Psalm cxxix. 8); "Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no man by the way" (Luke x. 4).

The country through which we were passing could not be called mountainous, much less an uninteresting flat. Consisting of soft grassy slopes, with here and there a village perched on some more exalted eminence, the gentle undulations and verdure of the landscape were very pleasing to the eye. The houses, or rather huts, of which these villages (by courtesy so called) are composed, are built of mud bricks, piles of which we came across during our ride. As we approached one of these villages, about a dozen dogs flew out at us, barking and yelping in so fierce a manner as seemed to portend mischief. It is, however, only a little way they have. The curs are not so bloodthirsty as they seem, and their noise is rather a warning of the approach of strangers than very ominous to the safety of the strangers themselves. These watch-dogs are very sharp, and much used in these parts. Even a troop of guards we found seated on one of the hill-sides was attended by several of them. From the crests of some of the low hills across which we rode some very beautiful views of Tangier were obtained. Perhaps the best is from a height near the ruins of the Roman bridge, some two or three miles from the town. We returned along the sea-shore. On regaining the hotel, breakfast was ready, and, thanks to the two hours' ride, an appetite was not wanting to do full justice to the savoury dish of kous-cosou, which, with some good tea made in the English fashion, formed the repast. As soon as the pangs of hunger were satiated, my old guide trotted me off again. It was the Jewish Sabbath, and the Hebrew population was consequently *en grande tenue*. Mohammed took me into some of their houses. Many of these were whitewashed, the floors being painted red, or covered with *azulejos*, and in all cases were scrupulously clean, but a few were elegantly furnished in European style. In the *patios*, or small open courts into which the rooms open, arbours of evergreens were erected, it being just then the Feast of Tabernacles. The dresses of the women belonging to the wealthier classes are often very costly. I was especially struck with the *toilette* of the wife of a rich merchant. The dress consisted of dark blue brocade, trimmed with gold lace; a gold sash round the waist; a silk handkerchief drawn tightly over the head, and a magnificent set of emerald and diamond ornaments—stomacher, necklace, ear-rings, and bandeau *en suite*. Many of the women are very handsome. It is the custom for them to blacken the eyebrows and eyelashes with henna, to colour the nails, and to use arsenic to the complexion. The women of the poorer classes wear a dark stuff garment, made loose like a dressing-gown, at one corner of the skirt of which is a triangular piece of some brighter colour, and over the head a gauze kerchief. Most of the men wear the gaberdine, a sash round the waist, short white

linen trousers, and thick shoes of black leather, totally different from the light-coloured, sloppy *babouches* in which the Moors ensconce their feet; and on their heads a little dark cap. Some of the youths wear a short jacket, and a kind of knickerbocker, but the gaberdine is the more common dress. The girls adorn themselves with necklaces and very large ear-rings, and enclose their back hair in one end of the handkerchief with which the Jewish women in Tangier almost invariably cover their heads.

When a Jewish woman marries, she cuts off all her own hair and wears a wig! It is also customary for a Jewish bride to shut her eyes some time before the ceremony of marriage, and not to open them until the religious rites are over, and she can look upon her husband as his wedded wife. The practice is a singular one. Yet, perhaps, Tangier is not the only place where young ladies are in the habit of plunging blindfold into the holy estate! The interiors of the synagogues presented few features of peculiar novelty. The women sat in a gallery above, the men occupied the body of the building. One thing, however, was apparent, and that was the admixture of secular with religious matters. One fellow kept continually calling out between the responses, in a voice considerably above the audible, "*Quarenta reales!*" evidently referring to some bargain on hand.

There is no love lost between the Jews and the Moors. The former are so large and so wealthy a portion of the community that they have to be tolerated, but the amount of affection with which they are regarded by their Mahometan compatriots is infinitesimal. They are hated with a less rancorous hatred than are the Spaniards, but that is all, and during the recent war between Morocco and the Peninsula, so great was the suspicion entertained towards the Hebrew population, that the whole lot was peremptorily ousted. On the whitewashed walls of the Jews' houses abutting on the street will be frequently observed, scrawled in black, a design so roughly drawn as to make it difficult for a stranger to conjecture what it is intended to represent. Five lines varying somewhat in length branch out from a point, and might, perhaps, by a stretch of the imagination, be mistaken for a tree. The cabalistic figure is, however, meant for an open hand, one of the Eastern symbols for warning off the effects of the evil eye. The hand key-horn, and sometimes the shell, are used for this purpose. Those who have visited Granada will recollect that the two first appear upon the Torre de Justicia of the Alhambra. In conclusion, let me say a few words about the Moorish school we visited. It was a sight at once curious and interesting. In one corner of a small room sat the teacher cross-legged, with the hood of his white *bernous* over his head, and a stick in his hand. This staff of office, however,

was not intended to inflict raps upon his pupils, but only upon the floor, by way of keeping their attention alive. The little urchins who formed his class squatted in a row before him, holding in their hands wooden boards, on which large Arabic characters were inscribed, swaying their heads and bodies to and fro incessantly, and jabbering away in chorus as fast as they could give tongue.

It was now getting close upon the time when the steamer was to start, so with adieux and *douceurs* to old Mahommed, I went on board. After a roughish passage, for we were unfortunate enough to have a head-wind in returning as well as in going, our good ship anchored in Algeciras Bay. The "Britannia," an English screw, had hoisted her "blue peter," and was on the point of starting for Cadiz. I lost no time in picking up the heavy luggage I had left at the Club House Hotel, and in getting on board before gunfire. All about me now was English—the captain, the crew, the vessel, the arrangements—everybody and everything from stem to stern. My flying visit to the East seemed more like a dream than ever!

V.

LIFE IN A NORTH-GERMAN CHATEAU

BY THE COUNTESS VON LAUENBRÜCK

CHAPTER XI.

It was a matter of great marvel to me how Fritz managed to pick up all the choicest slang in vogue amongst "Young England;" and, anxious to set my mind at rest on this point, I stated my surprise to Hilda in the course of an afternoon talk which took place between us in the cosy retirement of her boudoir. She laughed, as she often did at my notes and queries, and then gave me the desired information.

"You must know that Uncle Karl and Fritz are both, in their way, Anglo-maniacs of the first water," she said. "Karl confines himself, on the whole, to a not inexcusable weakness for neat collars, well-cut continuations, insanely thick shoes, astounding waterproofs, and miraculous umbrellas; but Fritz's ambition soars much higher; he is not happy unless he knows the last slang, the latest comic song, and all the popular 'chaff' of the day. He pretends to be immensely interested in cricket (though I believe it to be as great a mystery to him as it is to me). He reads a horrible paper about dogs and horses, and boxing, and boat races, counterfeits enjoyment of all the jokes in *Punch*, and declares that fox-hunting is the *summum bonum* of human felicity."

"But where did he pick up all these tastes?"

"I believe they are partly inherited. Doubtless, some grandfather or grand-uncle in the Monro family was a fanatic *pour le sport*, and you know family peculiarities *do* make the most wonderful summersaults, leaping over two or three generations at a time, to alight on some innocent creature, who succumbs to the inevitable, and becomes eccentric under their baneful influence!"

"Yet you do not tell me who has 'planted and watered' the mysterious seeds of which you speak. Countess Irene is guiltless of this husbandry; she is essentially refined, and, in her day, the type, so fatally common now, of 'fast' young ladies, with 'horsey' attributes, 'sporting' talk, and unlimited stable knowledge, was fortunately unknown."

"True, O queen! But since young men, even in these days of advanced civilisation, do not learn such things from their mammas, that detail is unimportant, and does not bear upon the case. Fancy the mother of the Gracchi coaching up her sons in *Bell's Life*, and noting down her engagements for the Derby in a neat little betting-book, with a gold pencil-case studded with turquoise!"

We both laughed; and were still laughing when Fritz popped his head in; and asking "what was up," calmly laid himself down in an arm-chair, whistling a barbaric air the while (one of his latest importations from the Seven Dials), and surveying his boots with an air of placid satisfaction, delightful to behold, whilst he continued to listen to our cachinations with unimpeached gravity.

"You might tell a fellah what you're cackling at," he said, as our merriment began to subside; "it's hard lines, under the (apparently cheerful) circumstances, to be kept in the dark."

It was difficult distinctly to define what we were laughing at, without becoming personally offensive, but Hilda, with noble boldness, tersely stated the fact by saying, with a sort of hilarious sob, "At you——"

"O, come now——"

"Well, not at you exactly, but something very like it. Mabel was just inquiring where you picked up the odious language you talk to such perfection, and I was broaching some theories about the 'inheritance of evil,' when you came in and saluted us very appropriately in your usual classic style."

"Oh, I've regularly gone in for that sort of thing, you know," said Fritz, looking at me for an instant, whilst he twisted his neck round in the "dog-collar" of the period. "When my governor sent me over here from Russia, I was preciously disgusted at not going straight off on end to Britain, the land of the free (I'd had enough of the other thing in the country of my adoption, you know); but he'd got some dodge or another about a fellah being educated to fill the station of life to which fate had called him, and so I was sent to Heidelberg, where my disgust was mitigated by finding a lot of English fellows, awfully jolly, who taught me all I could be taught at such a distance from the centre of civilisation, and promised to keep up communications with me from time to time that I might not mildew out of all knowledge in this remote part of the globe. For they knew my ultimate fate," added Fritz, gloomily.

"I wonder you did not prefer mixing with your own country-people."

"My own grandmother! Besides, all the German fellows worth anything shared my enlightened tastes, and knocked under to the English in everything except in some 'bosh' about their 'Vaterland.' For my own part, being a native of Russia, I had no small prejudices on the subject, and the more the English fellows chaffed them, the better I was pleased."

"Did you stay at Heidelberg until your father and mother finally came to Germany?"

“No, I went to Bonn. Meantime Methusaleh popped off the hooks; and there was no end of a scrimmage before all the family archives could be got in order, that I might be acknowledged (by right of succession), the hope of the Katzekospffs.”

This was Fritz's emblematical way of describing a lawsuit.

“Are your brothers bitten with the same mania?”

“If you mean whether they share my enlightened tastes—certainly not.”

“Max is Austrian to the back-bone,” said Hilda.

This conveyed no precise idea to me, but rather than appear ignorant, I remained silent.

“And Count Hugo?”

“From all I can make out, Hugo must be a dear fellow—is'nt he, Fritz?”

“Well, they are both duffers,” said that gentleman, rising from his recumbent position, whilst he pulled down his wristbands, and looking at his studs, walked towards the window.

“What does that mean?” asked Hilda, innocently.

“Oh, you know. Max is the sort of fellow who only cares for parading in his swell uniform, and making love to all the milliners' girls he comes across.”

“I thought he was such a capital rider?”

“Oh, well, that's another thing; a man can sit his horse very well, and go through all sorts of military manœuvres, and yet not have a notion of riding across country.”

“Now, Fritz; people don't foxhunt in that break-neck fashion here.”

“I never said they did, my dear; more's the sell!”

“Well, but Count Hugo is a capital shot,” I ventured to observe, anxious to draw the critical brother out.

“He would'nt shoot a blackbird for a partridge,” said Fritz, “and he knows a hare when he sees it; but, for all that, he's a duffer.”

Not seeing much prospect of a more lucid explanation of this obscure term, I proposed that we should go out for a stroll, as we had promised Count Lauenbrück to meet him at the cross roads, at half-past six. Hilda went to fetch her hat and gloves. As she passed me, I noticed that she was pale, and said so, asking her at the same time whether she would not rather stay at home; but she smiled, declaring it was my fancy, and that she was quite well.

After she had gone, Fritz fidgetted about uneasily on his chair for a few minutes, then turning round on me abruptly, “I say,” he said, “do you ever have rows?”

“Have rows?”

“Yes; you and Cuthbert, I mean; all married people do, you know.”

"But why do you ask me?"

"Well, I think it would be such a first-rate thing for me and Hilda," he said: "they tell me it's no end of a dodge for clearing up matrimonial differences, and that sort of thing."

"But you have no matrimonial differences."

"No, we haven't."

"Well, then, there's nothing to clear up——"

"Ah, but that's just it," he said; and as he said it there was a false note in his voice.

"Why do you want to quarrel?" I said.

"I don't want to quarrel!"

"Well, what *do* you want?"

"Look here, Mabel," he said, coming nearer to me, and speaking very quickly; "there's something wrong with Hilda: don't interrupt me: I know her larkey ways, and how she'll double just when you think you've got her safe and sound; she's game to the last; she'll never say die; but she can't put me off the scent, and I'm getting tired of being dodged in this way. I dare say you think I'm a great brute," he went on, speaking indistinctly in his great haste to get all said before his wife came back; "I daresay I am a brute, too, at times; but I'd do anything for her—I don't know the thing I wouldn't stand for her sake; but I can't bear the way she goes on—it's killing me."

"I do not see that she does anything."

"Yes, she does, though you won't see it. Why can't she give tongue, and let me know the worst?" he said, half-crying as he blurted out his distress in the curious phraseology to which he had trained his tongue.

"But I really do not think there is anything."

"Don't tell me that, Mabel; you women are ten times sharper than we men are—you must have seen it."

"I see that she is delicate."

"Well, you will see also that I am right; only promise me this, that if you can find out what's selling her up in this way you'll do it, and give the poor girl all the comfort you can." There was real feeling in his tone as he said this, and turned away towards the window again. "I am of no good to her," he said, as he looked out into the courtyard, "women understand the comforting dodge better than brutes like we do; not but what I'd give my heart to save her any annoyance, for all that," he murmured.

I could not quickly recover my equanimity: Hilda coming in with the dogs made such bustle and confusion, however, as to distract everyone's attention from anything else. Away we went, through the scented limes avenues, past the little chapel, round the foot of the hill, where the great sails of the windmill were buzzing

round, across the quiet churchyard, with its green graves and many crosses, on through a dark pine-wood, till we came to where four roads met. Here we sat down to rest on a heap of stones, enjoying the aromatic odours of the pines and wild thyme, and sweet-scented herbs.

"I hear the wheels of his chariot," said Hilda, suddenly rising, and her delicate ears had not misled her; the "chariot," which was a long "hunting waggon," or sort of *char à bancs*, came in sight at the same moment, gently crushing the fine friable sand of the road as it came. By Count Lauenbrück's side sat a gentleman of very remarkable appearance. As the carriage drew up they both alighted, and I found myself being introduced to Count Harald von Hohenstein. I do not think I have ever seen a man of so noble a presence; his tall, powerful figure was so well proportioned that it lost none of its elegance by its appearance of great strength, and, as he drew off his gloves to shake hands with Hilda, I saw that the same strength and the same elegance were expressed in the five fingers which clasped her little white digits. Let me try to describe the face, which, looking down at her fair, young, rosy, innocent one, with the most perfect benevolence, and the most entire friendliness, was yet so noble in outline, so proudly perfect in all its pure lines and power of expression. It was oval, and the thoughtful, benevolent forehead somewhat bald, though the short dark hair, slightly grey, curled thickly at the temples; a finely formed aquiline nose, short upper lip, closely shaven cheeks and chin, the latter somewhat square, but of perfect proportions, gave power and pride to a face whose haughtiness was redeemed by the confidence-inspiring, loving expression of the two clear violet-grey eyes, which seemed to look alive without fear, and without reproach, on all the world. His voice, harmonious and metallic, was yet soft and flexible; he looked to me like a man in whom beauty and pride had striven hard against love and simplicity, and in whom love and simplicity had conquered. We all walked homewards together. I envied Hilda her unconstrained freedom of chatter; Count Harald looked down upon her as we look on a pretty prattling child, ready to protect or soothe it, should aught arise to check its harmless glee.

When we came in to supper that evening, I saw that Count Hohenstein was dressed in black; a dark blue ribbon crossed his waistcoat, and on his breast there was a star. I longed to know the history of this distinguished man, in whom all rare qualities of mind and body seemed to be united, and in whom were so miraculously combined strength and gentleness, beauty and grace, pride and patience, simplicity and distinction. Count Lauenbrück told me all his friend's tragic story, as we sat at breakfast beneath the

lime-trees next morning. "It was a most terrible thing," he said, in conclusion; "there are wounds which never heal; and there is a self-reproach which has all the persistency of pride; and such, I think, are his. Kings have decorated him with their own hands, and summoned him (as subjects are rarely summoned) to their thrones in the hour of need; but danger over, Hohenstein has withdrawn from the perilous glare which beats against a throne, and has devoted himself to the duties of the present, and the memories of the past, again."

Here Count Hohenstein came down the marble steps into the garden, and joined us at our simple breakfast-table.

I will not tell the tale which Count Lauenbrück told me, for it might meet those eyes over which I would bring no cloud of pain, no shade of sorrow, if they should chance to lighten on these pages; rather let me say here that all I ever saw of that courteous gentleman, all I ever heard of him, but tended to raise him higher in the esteem which I instinctively conceived for him during the first few minutes of our intercourse. He had gone through the fire and been purified; he had eaten of the bitter fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, but it had not turned to ashes in his mouth; he had suffered temptation and had not succumbed; he had endured retribution, and had not murmured; he had passed through much suffering to wisdom; through many trials to victory; through grievous sorrows, to that eminence whence we see the everlasting mountains of perfection; he had learnt what it was, resolutely and calmly, "to suffer and be strong."

All through those summer days his presence was like sunshine to us all. It was pleasant to see him pacing the avenues, arm-in-arm with Count Lauenbrück; it was pleasanter still to see him listening to all Countess Irene's mother's hopes and fears; with patient kindness discussing the extent of Max's debts, and of Hugo's delicacy; but, perhaps, pleasantest of all, to watch him with Hilda; they formed such a charming contrast; her bright playfulness, and his kindly benevolence; his strength, and her delicacy; his grand beauty, and her gracefulness. I was glad to see her so gay again, and I could not help telling her so. She looked at me for a moment, as though surprised: "I wish I were fifty times gayer than I am," she said; "I know no greater pleasure than to make Count Harald smile: there have been times in his life when smiles were impossible, and laughter unknown."

"I like to see her going in for something jolly," said Fritz, confidentially to me, shortly afterwards, as Count Harald led her to the piano, and she began to trill forth some simple little Tyrolese song, full of Alpine roses and "jodelu."

Count Karl's absences about this time became very frequent; he

would remain away for a week at a time, and when he returned appeared restless and anxious: at least, he appeared so when he thought himself unobserved, but the moment he fancied that anyone was remarking his low spirits, he would wake up into his usual gay good humour, and continue cheerful so long as he remained with us. He frequently went on long solitary expeditions, with either his gun or his fishing-rod, and would return so weary that after supper his brother usually recommended his going to bed. "There's something wrong about Karl," he would say then; but Karl kept what was wrong pretty dark, and confided in no one, going his own solitary way, and biding his time.

One evening we gave him a rendezvous at a small fishing hamlet, about three miles from Lauenbrück, but belonging to the estate. Fritz, Hilda, Count Hohenstein, and myself, formed the party. We drove to a spot where, two hills folding over one another, the valley became too narrow for the carriage to proceed. A cottage stood near the road, and on the low bushes fishing-nets were hanging out to dry. Two fierce dogs came forth from their kennels and bayed at us open-mouthed. Presently a woman holding a baby in her arms appeared. Hilda asked our nearest way to the sea-shore; in some jaw-cracking dialect the woman replied, pointing out a narrow path which wound round the side of the lower hill: the men-servants were busy getting out our hampers; Fritz volunteered to act as pioneer, and we, following our leader, set out in search of the sands. Presently we came on more cottages and more nets; more women and babies; and then we found ourselves on the top of the cliff to the left, overlooking the sea. By an abrupt descent we reached the shore, and found ourselves in a little bay, closed in on the right by an abrupt promontory of rock, but widening out on the left-hand side, giving us in the extreme distance a view of the headland of Breeko, standing out, dark and forest-crowned, into the blue Baltic. Not a man was to be seen; not a human soul far or near. Before us lay the sea, like a sheet of molten gold; on the rocks were perched long rows of sea-gulls; close to the water's edge lay the remains of an old fishing-boat, half full of water: all was still. But now Hilda, whose hair seemed to catch a ruddier tint of gold, and whose cheek wore a rosier hue, in the evening sunshine, called us to her, and bidding one of the servants make her a fire, she proceeded to unpack the hampers and begin her preparations for tea. A large, isolated rock, worn smooth by the action of the water, served for a table; and on this she spread her dainties in a tempting manner, we, her slaves, obeying her behest with implicit obedience. In a few minutes Count Hohenstein was cutting bread-and-butter like the most exemplary Lotte. I was shaving thin slices of wonderful sausage into miraculous morsels.

Fritz, disturbed in the enjoyment of his cigar, was bringing wet seaweed and damp morsels of wood to the impromptu hearth, and all was going on to our satisfaction, when an unearthly whoop or yell, coming, we knew not whence, and going no one knew whither, smote upon our astonished ears. I looked up: just above us a young goatherd sat on the edge of the cliff, the sun shining on his fair head and picturesque rags, his horned flock browsing around him, whilst he whistled slowly and clearly a plaintive little air. The noise seemed in nowise to have disturbed his equanimity, for his tune was approaching towards conclusion, and there was no pause in its melody.

"What was that?" exclaimed Hilda, dropping the kettle.

"Where did it come from?"

"Stop that confounded whistling, and come down here, you young rascal!" shouted Fritz to the young musician on the hill.

"Shall I do as well?" asked a voice from the background, that is, from the sea, for there was very little ground behind the spot where we were standing, with our faces uplifted towards the browsing goats.

Count Karl's charming face looked round the rocky promontory on the immediate right: he had water-proof boots on ("water-proof in all its forms is that man's weakness," Hilda had said to me, one day, but in the present emergency it proved to be his strength.") "Shall I do as well?" he repeated.

"Oh, Karl; what *was* that noise? you must have heard it too!"

"Was it so very terrible?"

"It was simply appalling."

"Well, my dear, those were the dulcet tones of fishermen husbands warning their expectant spouses of their speedy approach. We have just landed, behind this rocky screen," he added, coming up to us as he spoke, his boots all glistening in the sunshine, and the clear sea-breeze glowing in his handsome face. "I am so hungry," he said, and incontinently fell to devouring Count Hohenstein's bread and butter, and my sausage-shavings, in a way which verified his words.

Presently, when tea was over and the men had carried the hampers off to the carriage, and the little goatherd had been down to demolish the remains of the feast, and had been called a lazy little beggar by Fritz, and then inconsistently recompensed by the same gentleman with sundry silver coins; when the sun had gone down, leaving an orange glory behind the purple beech woods, and flecks of purple and gold upon the quiet waters; when the voices of the children in the fishing hamlet, and the barking of the dogs, was hushed; when the crescent moon and one single star came out

upon the glorious arch above us, relieving the monotony of space; when the evening breeze had died away, and all around was still, a hushed silence having also fallen upon us, then Hilda rose, and going to Count Karl, touched him lightly on the shoulder. Light though her touch was, he started; he had been sitting somewhat apart from our group, his face seawards; his handsome chin resting on his hands, his elbows on his knees; when Hilda touched him, he looked up almost fiercely. "What is it?" he asked.

"Oh, Karl, do sing us something!"

"What shall I sing?"

"Whatever you like."

"Or whatever I can, which is another thing."

"We shall be satisfied with anything you may choose: it is just the time and place for a song."

"Well, I will try: shall I sing *Am Meer*?"

"Oh, do!"

Schubert's wonderful composition of Heine's impassioned words presently sounded on the evening air, waking up the sleeping echoes amongst the rocks, and startling the sea-birds as they roosted on their stony perches. Count Karl's voice was full of feeling, and the song he had chosen was peculiarly adapted to time and place. As he first told us that the sea glimmered in the distances, and the evening mists were rising, and the sea mews flying to and fro, it almost seemed as though he were relating to us a simple truth in melodious words; but as he spoke of Her eyes so liquid and full of love, and the tears which fell from them on to her white hand, to be eagerly swallowed by him, his voice grew full of passion, and his face seemed to glow in the fading light: yet, when he came to the last verse, telling of his weary longings, of his wasting and consuming, there was an angry metallic tone, striking one painfully as the accent of pain, and his face was dark and almost disfigured by emotion as he uttered the concluding words, "that ill-starred woman has poisoned me with the tears from her glorious eyes!" There was a pause when the song was finished. We all felt that Count Karl had sung it but too well. He was the first to break silence, "*C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour!*" he laughed and whistled the old French song as he rose from his seat.

"Thanks!" said Hilda. "Schuber and Heine are mighty in combination; that is a wild, weird song: notwithstanding its wonderful melody, I scarcely know whether I like it; it is so fierce, and yet so sad."

"The style of thing to make a sentimental fellow most particularly uncomfortable," added Fritz; "for my part, I don't care about swell music; give me a cheerful tune, with words to match."

Count Hohenstein had not spoken; perhaps his life, too, had been poisoned by the tears from a beautiful woman's eyes; perhaps he was only thinking of Count Karl's remarkable rendering of the song; perhaps of Heine's and Schubert's genius; perhaps of the melancholy end of both these gifted men.

"I think we must be on the move," said Hilda, and we all rose at her command. I looked back once as we reached the summit of the cliff. The scene is present to my mind at this moment in its every detail. My feet never trod the same ground again, and probably never will; but the glorious sunset, the purple woods, the broken boat, the ragged goatherd, the shining waters, the crescent moon, and the one pale star,—they are all there; and, as though bodily before me, I see Hilda's sweet, innocent face; Count Harald's calm, benevolent one; Graf Karl's impassioned, darkling countenance; and the end of Fritz's cigar as it flies into the air, and then falls into the water, riding like a brown leaf on the silent waves. I see it all—but, alas! there are faces which I can never see in this world again; there are eyes whose kindly light may no more shine into mine; there are hands for ever "vanished," and voices for ever "still," though in memory they sing once again the song of "Auld Lang Syne," making sweet melody in the air.

As we drove home an anxious feeling, a sort of dim, undefined apprehension fell upon me, making me long for Cuthbert's presence. I wanted some one to speak to. The weird, wild song, Hilda's uncertain manner, Fritz's uncouth confidences, perplexed and disquieted me. There were things I could not write about; my husband would think me a foolish, romantic little woman: he must know the people—must see them, and hear them, after what fashion they lived, and moved, and had their being—to understand my meaning. No one spoke much going home; the gentlemen smoked. On the hall-table lay the letters; Count Karl's exclamation as he read his caused us all to look up. He was deathly pale. "I must go to X—— at once," he said. "Can I have a carriage, Fritz?"

"Of course; but I hope there's nothing wrong? Can I go with you?"

"No, no; it's on a matter of private business. I must go off at once. I have lost two hours by this cursed expedition!"

No one noticed his violence of expression.

"Will you let *me* go with you?" asked Count Hohenstein.

For a moment, Graf Karl appeared undecided; then, as though taking a sudden resolution, he said, hastily, "If you will—that is, I should be much obliged if you would."

In a few minutes they were ready. I was glad to go to my

room, to read my letter from Cutlbert in peace, and to find in it promises of coming to fetch me as soon as he could possibly get away from London.

It may seem strange to my readers that such an English tone should have prevailed in the Lauenbrück family; but it must be remembered that the Countess Irene was an Englishwoman, and that her husband had been much in England; also, that having spent so few years of their life in Germany, and so many in Russia (which country they had never yet learnt to regard as "home"), they had preserved many of the manners and customs which the fair young English bride had brought from her island home to the land of her adoption. It must be remembered that Russians (and also Germans) are excellent linguists, and that, from their earliest childhood, the young Russian and German aristocrat trains his tongue to foreign languages by disputing with his English "nurse" or his French "*bonne*," or in conversing on more reasonable terms with his German tutor.

Thus, French, which is the language chiefly used in Russia, where it is employed in all official documents and communications, was almost more familiar to them than that which *ought* to have been Count Lauenbrück's native tongue; whilst he and his wife, in their own more immediate family circle, had, from the beginning of their married life, always spoken English, and taught their children to do likewise.

CHAPTER XII.

"To-NIGHT is Fraülein Eckstein's *Polter-abend*," said Hilda, walking into the dining-hall the next morning, literally buried in flowers. On each arm she carried a large basketful of bright blossoms, and had also pinned up her pretty apron in order to bring as much of her spoils in with her as was practicable. Countess Irene, who was sitting in one of the deep window-seats, rose, and going up to Hilda, kissed her flushed cheek. "You overtire yourself, dear child," she said, taking one of the baskets from her, and emptying its contents on to the table.

"Come and admire my treasures, Mabel," said Hilda, returning her mother-in-law's kiss, and looking across to me.

"Let me admire you first as Flora; I should like to call Herr Braun to sketch you as you are now standing; your lap full of roses, and your cheeks with somewhat less of the lily than usual."

"Pray leave Herr Braun in peace. I saw him with our cousin, Von Lutzow, playing at whist in the avenue pavilion, as I came by."

"I have an idea, Hilda," said the countess, smiling, "and I have you to thank for it. What do you say to our sending

Förster's Franz to the Polterabend to-night, in the character of Bacchus? You know I meant to give the wine for the entertainment, and he would make a charming infant wine-god."

All this was as obscure Greek or enigmatical Hebrew to me. I knew that "Förster's Franz" was a little rosy, blue-eyed, strong-limbed, dare-devil monkey, of four years old; but beyond this I knew nothing. The "idea" which her mother-in-law had propounded found favour in Hilda's eyes, and an eager discussion followed, to which I listened in silence. It was partly carried on in German—for, in their eagerness, they both forgot my presence—and though I was beginning to understand tolerably, yet so animated a conversation was beyond me.

"Seated on baby's perambulator," said Hilda, at last—"quite charming!" I looked up, hearing designs on "baby's perambulator," and Hilda, catching my eye, added, hastily, "Oh! I beg your pardon, Mabel; but you are so kind, I know you will lend it us!"

"Willingly; but for what purpose?"

"For Fräulein Eckstein's Polterabend."

"But who is Fräulein Eckstein, and what is a Polterabend?"

"Ah! I must explain. Fräulein Eckstein is a very pretty young girl, who is engaged to be married to Mr. Secretary Fuch; and a 'Polterabend' is an institution peculiar to Germany, I believe, and is almost more important than the wedding-day itself. On the eve of the marriage-day, the bride's house is thrown open to all her friends; and those who are desirous of taking their gifts in person generally choose this opportunity for doing so. It is the custom to go in character, each person choosing some appropriate fancy costume. It is also the fashion to repeat some verses, either borrowed or original, appropriate to the occasion, or to the gifts offered. Another strange part of the evening's entertainment consists in smashing the largest possible quantity of China in front of the bride's house—all her acquaintances reserving their cracked or broken plates, cups, dishes, jugs, and saucers for the occasion. After this, there is dancing till an early hour of the morning. Compared with all these lively diversions, I think we may allow the wedding-day is a tame affair."

"Poor Fräulein Eckstein!" said Countess Irene. "I think she is making a sad mistake; but I believe her sister's terrible example has frightened her, and that she marries to secure her mother a comfortable home."

"Who is she; and who is her sister?"

"They are the children of a former pastor of Lauenbrück; their mother, a very beautiful, but very silly woman, sent her

elder daughter to school at Hamburg. Meanwhile the father died; in some way the girl had formed bad acquaintances; she grew up to be very beautiful, and I believe as witty and wild as she is lovely. She is now the first actress of comedy at X——. Her sister, a simple, modest girl, was engaged to be married to a young shopkeeper, who emigrated to America, promising to send for her as soon as he had the means: last year she heard that he was married; and shortly afterwards the news was confirmed by a friend of Secretary Fuch's, who, coming from the town where her faithless lover had established himself, brought with him confirmation of the dreadful news. From that moment the poor girl never spoke of him again, and shortly afterwards, when the Secretary proposed to her, to the utter astonishment of everyone, she accepted him."

"Fancy," said Hilda, "having to hear the tauntings of such a Quasimodo, about her worthless sister and faithless lover!"

"Hush!" exclaimed the countess, but she was too late; "I have come, Gnädige Gräfin," said the little humpbacked monster, "to beg your gracious presence at my bride's 'Polterabend' to-night! My constant devotion to the house of Lauenbrück, in all its branches, is well known, and I therefore hope that Countess Hilda will also favour us with her presence."

Hilda made no answer: she bent over her roses with cheeks more pink than the flowers, whilst Countess Irene replied for her. There was a malicious gleam in the Secretary's eye, which told me that he had heard her incautious observation, and intended, at his leisure, to mark and inwardly digest it; but for the moment he was all suavity and smiles. Having signified her intention of being present, Countess Irene rose, and bowed; the Secretary, feeling that he was dismissed, withdrew.

"Oh, why are you so incautious, Hilda?" exclaimed her mother-in-law; "when will you learn prudence?"

"Never, I hope," was the somewhat defiant reply.

"But you would not willingly hurt another's feelings?"

"He has no feelings. If he had, I should be delighted to hurt them." Then seeing her mother-in-law look grave, she added, "What can he do to me: and even if he could do anything, what should I care?"

Alas! poor Hilda.

The evening came, and with it came "Förster's Franz," as infant Bacchus. Vine-crowned and grape surrounded, he sat on "baby's perambulator," like a veritable little wine god, bottles of champagne piled up beneath his feet, beneath the seat of his carriage, and in his lap, buried in huge bunches of luscious grapes, and decorated with curling tendrils. In his hand he held a

beautiful pitcher of antique form, Count Lauenbrück's present to the bride; and his bright blue eyes twinkled roguishly beneath his graceful crown, whilst his rosy cheeks seemed to have borrowed somewhat of their glow from the juice of the grapes. A veritable little Bacchus! His arms and legs were bare; a little white tunic, bordered with purple and gold, and confined at the waist by a girdle of vine-leaves, completed his classic costume. Hilda was in ecstasies. We all walked down to Frau Eckstein's house, at the entrance of the village. Above the doorway hung wreaths of oak-leaves, with mottoes and flags prettily interspersed. We were met at the door by our hostess; a tall thin woman, with the remains of great beauty. In the farthest room we found the bride, surrounded by her young friends, her gnome-like little bridegroom in the background. She was a pretty, modest girl, but looked sad. On our entrance she rose and curtsied, blushing deeply. Countess Irene said a few kind words to her and kissed her cheek. Then the presents were offered in due form, and I had time to look about me and wonder. There were several Swiss girls; a Tyrolese sennerin; a Neapolitan woman; a Mary Queen of Scots (a favourite costume in all countries); a nun or two; and several young girls dressed in the peasant costume of the country. My eye wandered over these to be arrested by a fantastic figure, dressed in such variety of colour, and, as it seemed to me, in such incongruous garments, that I was puzzled indeed to guess what character the wearer intended to personate. I was on the point of asking Hilda, when, with a sudden and somewhat weird agility, the figure sprang forth from the corner in which it had been standing, skipped across the room to the spot where the young betrothed and Countess Irene stood, and then, to my surprise, I saw that the face belonging to the somewhat angular figure was that of a woman of sixty; she commenced a long oration, sprinkling flowers on the floor before the bride-elect as she spoke, and gesticulating in a manner most ludicrous to behold. When this was done, she once more skipped off, and returned with a gorgeous sofa-cushion and rug, all covered with lilies and roses, which she presented in a sprightly manner to the bride elect.

"Good heavens!" said Hilda, shaking with laughter, "Fräulein Graupenhardt!"

"Well, this beats cock-fighting!" was Fritz's astonished comment.

On hearing her name, I recognised an elderly spinster who resided in some remote part of the Schloss devoted to the wives and daughters of pensioned family retainers. Fräulein Graupenhardt's father had once been *major domo*, and, as I now found, she was aunt to the pretty girl before her.

"What does she mean?" I asked, utterly confounded at what I beheld.

"Ah, you did not understand her. She represents Schiller's 'Mädchen aus der Fremde' or Spring," said Hilda; "and those were Schiller's verses that she was repeating. Can absurdity go farther?"

"It's a plucky sort of thing to do," remarked Fritz, reflectively.

"Poor little Fräulein Eckstein!" said Hilda. "How she blushed and trembled; and how she will have to suffer for this, when tomorrow's ceremony shall have made her Mrs. Fuchs!"

"Why?"

"Why?—why, because of its own preposterous absurdity; because of the ridicule attached to it; because it will be said that this theatrical blood runs in the family, with pleasing allusions to the poor sister at X—because——"

"Come, my dear, let us be going," said Countess Irene, here interrupting Hilda's burst of eloquence; "Karl and Count Hohenstein will have returned, and be waiting for us." So saying, she moved towards the door, adding a few kind words of farewell to the mother and daughter. Fräulein Graupenhardt's travestie of Schiller's charming little poem seemed an apt illustration of mortals rushing in where angels fear to tread. Many a young, pretty girl would hesitate to attempt the impersonation of the poet's charming picture of Spring; yet this old lady, already beyond the Autumn of life, had taken upon herself to represent all vernal beauties and delights with a boldness which is the special attribute of genius or—utter obtuseness.

"Its no end plucky," said Fritz several times, on our way home.

Hilda was indignant at the poor woman's vanity, and want of common sense. Countess Irene smiled her own peculiar calm and yet amused smile, "The follies of youth are a text for moralists," she said; "the follies of old age are too painful to bear much comment."

Count Hohenstein and his companion had not yet arrived. We sat down to supper, for Fritz thought that they would very likely remain for the theatre in X——, and drive home later; "Its Karl's weak point," he said; "and as the nights are moonlight, they will have a pleasant drive home."

"Is the poor little Eckstein's sister still acting at X——?" asked Hilda.

"Of course she is: why all the fellows are madly in love with her, and they say even the Grand Duke himself never goes to the theatre when she does not act."

"The scandal of these small towns is really unbearable," interrupted his mother, angrily.

"You who have lived in deserts, should not be so hard on small towns, my dear," remarked her husband, smiling.

"Well, the plains of Russia are certainly not an agreeable part of the world; but one is at least not scandalised in the atrocious manner that seems quite an accepted institution here."

"But the Grand Duke *may* be smitten with her," said Fritz, "and no blame to him either."

"Still, it would be scandal."

"Is this Eckstein so very pretty?" asked Hilda, looking up.

"Pretty? No!"

"Well, handsome, then?"

"I should rather think she was," answered Fritz, with emphasis,—"rather."

"What style of person?"

"I really don't know: she's one of the handsomest creatures going, and as jolly as she's good-looking."

"My dear boy, why do you talk that singular language?" said his father.

"Upon my word, sir, I'm not aware of any singularity."

"Use is second nature; but I think you might correct yourself."

"I think not, sir," answered Fritz, deferentially.

"Well, my dear, then you must correct him," said her father-in-law, turning to Hilda.

"The task is beyond my ambition;" but her manner said, "The whole thing is utterly indifferent to me," as plainly as manner could say anything.

I felt sorry for Fritz, seeing that he, too, had noticed her tone: but in a moment he recovered himself, "Its a long time since I was at X——," he said; "I think I'll drive over there in my trap, and put up for a day or two at the Hotel: I should like to see the Eckstein again—they say she's killing in her new part: will you come, Hilda?"

"No, thank you," she answered, listlessly; "though the Eckstein be never so killing, I daresay I should not die the death."

"Oh, very well," he said; "then I'll wait for Max and Hugo: it will be something to do when they come."

That evening we all stood on the *perron*, looking out towards the drawbridge; the avenue dark in the background; the fountain plashing and twinkling in the moonshine; the air soft and balmy. A carriage came at full speed from the village, we heard its wheels coming nearer and nearer. "The Doctor has been suddenly fetched to some one who is dangerously ill," said Count Lauenbrück: but he uttered an exclamation of surprise, as it turned over the drawbridge. "They cannot have remained for the theatre,"

he said, and as he spoke, the carriage drew up at the foot of the steps where we were standing. Only Count Hohenstein was in it, besides his servant and the man who drove. He got out, and then turned to lift something out of the carriage. Something! Bearing between them Count Karl's apparently lifeless body, they came slowly up the steps. Was it the moonlight that made his face so deathly pale? or was it, indeed, the pallor of death? The curly locks were matted together; the features pinched and fixed; on his linen were purple stains terrible to behold.

"Good God!" said his brother, "What is this?"

No one else spoke.

Count Hohenstein called to Fritz: "Take my place," he said, in a low voice; "the library will be best. Then he turned to the countess. "I wish I could have prepared you for this, but I could not: I did not think you would meet us on the very threshold, but I had no choice: it was his last wish, and my last promise to him: he wanted to be taken to Lauenbrück at once—in *any* case—" he added.

"But he is not——?"

"Dead? No, I hope not: but it is very serious—very," added Count Lauenbrück, as though afraid we, his hearers, might hope too much.

The countess was deathly pale, "My poor husband!" was all she said, and left the hall.

Count Hohenstein stood for a moment irresolute; then he added, "The surgeon from X—— will soon be here: he had one or two patients to see; but he promised to follow us immediately; meanwhile we have Dr. Marx." He paused again; then taking Hilda's hand: "I hope this shock will leave no bad effect on you, my dear!"

"Thanks," she said, sadly, "nothing ever has any bad effect on me;" then suddenly breaking down, she cried out, "Oh, Count Hohenstein, how did all this happen? This hateful duelling! What was it about? Why did you permit it?"

"My dear," he said, sadly, "it was unavoidable. I did all I could towards an amicable arrangement; but since that could not be effected, Karl had no alternative left to him but to fight."

"What about?"

"It was an affair of honour which could only be settled in this way," as he spoke, Count Hohenstein left the room. We heard another carriage drive up. It was the surgeon from X——.

"An affair of honour!" cried Hilda, passionately—"an affair of honour!"

"What can it all mean?" I asked, speaking rather to myself than to her.

“What it means? It means that we women are not to ask or to know anything more about it,” she said, “it means some unworthy gambling transaction; it means some vile aspersion of character; it means some insult such as no true gentleman gives, and such as no true gentleman receives; it means some senseless quarrel about a woman with no heart, and no principle, and no honour, but with a beautiful face and a wily tongue. These are the ‘honourable’ things for which gentlemen fight,” she added, bitterly; “and for some one of these things Karl has had a bullet sent through his heart, perhaps because he, knowing really what honour means, preferred to be insulted and murdered, rather than himself become a murderer.”

For my part, I was so stupified by all that I heard and saw that I attempted no answer to Hilda’s words. My ideas of duelling seemed scattered to the four winds of heaven.

“Come upstairs,” I said to the pale little figure before me, whose great eyes were flashing so brightly, and whose manner was so startling and wild; “come upstairs, and thank God upon your knees to-night that it is not Fritz who has been thus brought home.”

She looked at me for a moment, and the tension of her face relaxed. She put her hand in mine, and we silently crossed the hall. The library-door at that moment opened, and Fritz came out with a basin in his hand: I shuddered at the colour of its contents. “My poor girl,” he said, coming up to Hilda, and setting the basin down, as he spoke, upon a chair, “my poor girl, this has terrified you,” as he spoke he put his arms out, as though to take her to his heart and kiss her; but she started from his embrace. “Oh, Fritz,” she said, “look at your hands!” There were ugly stains upon them. He looked hurt. “It’s not my fault,” he said, and turned to go away. Then for a moment he stood silent. I looked at Hilda. “He will not die: he will recover, dearest,” her husband whispered, coming up to her again, but this time not putting out his hands, or offering to embrace her. At that moment, I loved Fritz with all my heart.

Hilda looked at him for a second, kindly, and yet sadly. “Thank you, Fritz; you are a good fellow,” she said; “but your hands frightened me.”

“Of course; I’m such a thoughtless brute!” he said, “women always faint at the sight of blood.; Good-night, Mabel; good-night, Hilda; I must be going back to that poor devil again.” We went silently up the stairs, and across the great “Ahnensaal,” where all the ancestral Lauenbrücks looked gaunt and grim in the moonlight, and where great patches of argent light lay upon the oaken floor.

Turning round at the door of her room, Hilda silently kissed me. Then I went away through the grim galleries and ghostly corridors, like one in a dream.

Yet had not Count Hohenstein said, "It was unavoidable; Karl had no alternative left." And surely he must know!

A CONTRAST

WITHOUT, keen blows the wintry wind,
And fast the flickering snow-flakes fall ;
Within, the winter fire burns bright,
And throws quaint shadows on the wall.

Without, a beggar maiden stands
With pallid face, and streaming hair ;
With misery in her lustrous eyes,
God help her ! she is young and fair.

Within, a lady musing stands,
With happy dreams her thoughts are rife ;
Thinking, perchance, of him who in
Another day shall call her wife.

Without, faint moans the beggar girl,
" Ah me, his love is turned to hate ;"
Within the maid with happy eyes,
" He loves but me—ah, blissful fate !"

Alas ! what secrets dread and dire,
Within our world securely hide ;
Without, his cast-off paramour—
Within, his dearly loved bride.

W. E. A. A.

BALLADS AND SONGS OF YORKSHIRE

They talk of dales and hills in Wales,
 As the loveliest in our isle;
 But the Yorkshire fells and rocky dells,
 Where the bright sun beams on the sparkling streams,
 Are all forgot the while.

You may roam for hours 'mid sweet spring flowers,
 With a gurgling "beck" beneath;
 While the rustling breeze just parts the trees,
 And reveals the sweep of the wild woods deep,
 Shut in the darkling heath.

THE correctness of this glowing description of Yorkshire scenery will not be doubted by any of those who have wandered by the side of one of its murmuring becks, through verdant mead and woodland dell, or who have stood in one of its romantic ravines, and watched the beetling crags rise up in rugged majesty towards the blue heavens. Nor is it short of famous men or historic memories. From St. Hilda to William Wilberforce, is a long step, and the intervening space in the Yorkshire glory-roll, is filled with the names of Alcuin, whose learning shed a lustre over the barbaric splendour of the court of Charles the Great; John de Sacro-bosco, a mediæval worthy by all the world forgot; King Henry Beauclerc, that pattern of learned monarchs; Gower, the friend of Geoffrey Chaucer, Richard of Hampole, who lashed so vigorously the vices of his times, Gascoigne; that worthy judge, who remains immortal evermore in the consecrated pages of William Shakspeare;* pious Coverdale; quaint Roger Ascham, that learned advocate of archery, whom we may style with Fuller, an honest man, and a good shooter; Geo. Sandys, whose translation of Ovid was probably the first English book written in America; the infamous Car, the favourite of the British Solomon; Fairfax, the colleague of Cromwell; Andrew Marvell, whose unflinching honesty has almost passed into a proverb; Bentley, the great critic; Congreve, wit and dramatist, whose foolish pride was so finely reproved by Voltaire; Smeaton, the builder of Eddystone lighthouse; and Flaxman, the sculptor; with many more, whose names we need not repeat. Yorkshire, too, has been the scene of some famous battles: here was fought the battle of Neville's Cross, the "White battle," where so many priests were slain, and the fatal fight of Marston-moor.

Indeed, this county links together in a fashion the present and the past. There, in the solemn summer gloamings:—

The splendour falls on castle walls,
 And snowy summits old in story;

* Henry IV. part 2.

The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory."

There we may look upon the mouldering relics of feudalism, and live over again the dead past with all its sufferings, follies, and heroisms.

"This is the courtyard—damp and drear!
The men-at-arms were mustered here;
Here would the fretted war-horse bound,
Starting to hear the trumpet sound;
And captains then, of warlike fame,
Clanked and glittered as they came.
Forgotten names! forgotten wars!
Forgotten gallantry and scars!
How is your little busy day,
Perished, and crushed, and swept away!"*

But quickly will something recal us to the busy modern life, and remind us that:—

"The good knights are dust,
And their swords are rust;"

And that the baron gallantly hieing forth to convert the Paynim at the point of the sword, or to sack the castle of some neighbour, has been replaced by the manufacturer and the merchant, whose mission, if it lacks that theatric glitter which dazzles boyish eyes, has yet aspects as high and noble as the most chivalrous of crusades.

We may reasonably expect, then, that Yorkshire will not be short of ballad lore, dealing, alike, with daily life and with the deeds of hoary eld. Nor will this expectation be disappointed on a perusal of the "Ballads and Songs of Yorkshire," edited by Dr. C. J. Davison Ingledew, who has performed his very difficult task with great care, taste, and skill.

Some of these ballads carry us at once right to the heart of the middle ages, with its feelings of chivalry often degenerating into brutal slaughter. A curious example of this is that strange narrative of an English vendetta, the History of Sir John Eland.

The peasantry of most counties have some special worthy on whom they concentrate their reverence—some bright particular star before whom all lesser luminaries hide their diminished light. Thus the moment you place foot in Yorkshire, if you wish to be *en regle*, you must cultivate a devout feeling for bold Robin Hood.

Some years since, whilst wandering through a romantic valley in the West Riding, the writer ascended a high hill on whose summit stood the remains of a huge druidical altar; this fragment of a bygone age excited in the denizens no vision of the sanguinary ceremonial of a "creed outworn," no white-robed priest offering up

* Hon. Mrs. Norton: "Lady of La Garaye."

to the god of battles a human sacrifice was presented to their mind's eye ; and still, like all mysterious objects, this memento of antiquity was the subject of imaginative speculations had : become associated with the popular idol, and was known as "Robin Hood's punch-bowl." From Saddleworth to Scarborough bay, the county is full of legends of this redoubtable freebooter, and Dr. Ingledew has done well, we think, to exhibit some specimens of the famous cycle of ballads relating to this hero of the greenwood.

We have no intention of discussing in detail these favourites of boyhood, but there is one passage where the stout archer, cruelly done to death by woman's treachery, is giving his last orders to Little John, which has always appeared to us to be full of natural dignity and beauty. Little John desires to revenge his master's death by burning Kirkley's Nunnery, to which the dying forester replies :—

"I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at my end shall it be ;
But give me my bent bow in my hand
And a broad arrow I'll let flee,
And where this arrow is taken up
There shall my grave digg'd be.

Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet ;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet ;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head ;
That they may say, when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood."

The Stage Yorkshireman, that wonderful compound of simplicity and cunning, who used to delight the playgoers when Emery was in his prime, is fully represented in this collection. The Yorkshireman has long been credited, justly or unjustly, with many of the characteristics which in America are attributed to the conventional Yankee, notably an amount of "smartness," which sometimes degenerates into a quality deserving of another and harsher name. Throughout the north of England there was long current a proverb which averred that a Yorkshireman would "bite" dead or alive, and certainly the following ballad goes far to justify this belief :—

"Bane ta Clapham town end lived an oud Yorkshire tike,
Who i' dealing i' horseflesh had ne'er met his like,
'Twor his pride that i'aw the hard bargains he'd hit
He'd bit a girt monny, but nivver bin bit.

This oud Tommy Towers (bi that name he wor knaan)
Hed an oud carrion tit that wor sheer skin an' baan ;
Ta hev killed him for t'curs wad hev bin quite as well,
But twor Tommy's opinion he'd dee on himsel' !

Well yan Abey Muggins, a neighborin' cheat
Thowt ta diddle oud 'Tommy wad be a girt treat;
He'd a horse, too, 'twor war than oud 'Tommy's ye see,
For t'neet afore that he'd thowt proper to dee!

Thinks Abey, t'oud codger 'll nivver smoak trick
I'll swop wi him my poor deead horse for his wick,
An if Tommy I nobbut can happen ta trap
'Twill be a fine feather i' Aberram cap.

Soa ta Tommy he goas, an th' question he pops:
'Betwin thy horse and mine, prithe, Tommy, what swops,
What wilt gie me to boot? for mine's t' better horse still,'
'Nout,' says Tommy, 'I'll swop ivven hands, an ye will?'

Abey preached a long time about summat ta boot,
Insistin' that his war the liveliest brute;
But Tommy stuck fast where he first had begun,
Till Abey shook hands an said, 'Well, Tommy, done.'

'O, Tommy,' said Abey, 'I'ze sorry for thee,
I thout thoud a hadden mair white i' thy 'ee,
Good luck's wi' thy bargain, for my horse is deead,
'Hey,' says Tommy, 'soa is mine, an its fleead!'

Soa Tommy got t' better of t' bargain a vast,
An come off wi' a Yorkshireman's triumph at last;
For thof 'twixt deead horses there's not mich ta choose,
Yet Tommy war t' richer by t' hide an' four shoes.'

Much more pleasant is it to see this ready wit and command of resources, applied in a manner that enlists our sympathies, as in the Crafty Ploughboy.

Amongst the older ballads is one that first appeared in one of poor Carey's musical operas, which gives a far more favourable picture of Yorkshire characteristics than we commonly meet in these productions:

"AN HONEST YORKSHIREMAN.

"Ah, iz i' truth, a country youth
Neean us 'd teea Lunnon fashions;
Yet vartue guides an still presides
Ower all mah steps an' passions.
Neea courtly leear, bud all sincere,
Neea bribe shall 'ivver blind me,
If thoo can like a Yorkshire tike,
A roague thoo'll nivver finnd me.

Thof envy's tung, seea slimlee hung
Wad lee aboot oor county,
Neea men o' t' earth booaast greter wurth
Or mare extend ther boounty.
Our northern breeze wi uz agrees
An does for work weel fit uz;
I' public cares an luv affairs
Wi' honour we acquit uz.

Sea gret a moind is ne'er confiant,
Tiv ony shire or nation;
They geean meast praise wua well displays
A learned iddicasion.

While rancour rolls, i' lahtle souls
By shallo views dissarning,
They're nobbut wise, 'at owlus prize
Gud manners, sense, and learnin'."

One of the most curious ballads in this collection, is that which relates the legend of Bretton Hall. Bretton Hall, the seat of the Wentworth Blacketts, was erected in 1720, when the old family mansion and chapel adjoining it were pulled down. According to the ballad just mentioned, Sir William Wentworth Blackett possessed—

"A roving breast,
His lady and his home he left behind,
Says he the end of this wide world I'll find,
The earth's extensive, but you may depend on't,
Before e'er I return, I'll find the end on't."

And so he goes roaming through the world for twenty-one years. Then perhaps he thought—

"Good lack! the world is round;
The end is nowhere, so it can't be found;
And, as I'm weary of this wild goose chase,
At home again e'er long, I'll show my face.

Meanwhile his loving wife, not having the constancy of Penelope, has listened to a gallant suitor, and Sir William hears of her intended marriage as he nears home. He presents himself at his own hall door, in the disguise of a beggar soliciting alms, and forces himself into the dining-room where the marriage feast is being held. His conduct appears so strange that the company make up their minds to expel him.

"'The deuce is in the beggarman,' they cried,
'He either means to beg, or steal the bride.'
'No, no,' says he; 'I claim her as my own,'
He smiled, and then he did himself make known.

The bride did her first bridegroom recognise,
With joy transported to his arms she flies;
Sir William freely did forgive his wife,
They liv'd together till the end of life."

The author of this ballad appears to be afraid that his strange story would be received by some individuals with doubt and incredulity, and he therefore concludes his performance with this incontrovertible testimony to the historical accuracy of his narrative:

"But, sirs, the boots in which Sir William went
Are kept in memory of that event;
The very hat he wore preserved has been
At Bretton Hall, where they may yet be seen."

In December, 1866, the Rev. Dr. Hoare contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine* a very interesting paper on the ancient Cheshire manor of Stayley, which lies, between Mottram and the now large and flourishing town of Staleybridge. One of the oldest monuments in Stayley is an old cross, familiarly known as Roe

Cross ; and in Mottram Church is a mutilated sepulchral monument which is commonly called "Roe and his Wife." "Connected with these relics," says Dr. Hoare, "is the following tradition :—

"Sir Ralph (de Stayley) accompanied Richard I to the Crusades, where he was taken prisoner, and held captive for many years. At length he was allowed to return to his native land. Travelling in disguise, he arrived near his home, where he met an old servant, accompanied by a dog which had been a favourite with his master." The dog recognises Sir Ralph, who learns that his lady is about to be married the next day. He hurries forward, and requests to see her ladyship, but this is denied ; he then begs a cup of metheglin, and after drinking it, he puts a ring into the vessel, and sends the maid with it to her mistress. Lady Stayley is convinced of the identity of her long-lost husband, and "the intended bridegroom, who had in those lawless days used threats to obtain her hand for the sake of her estate, had to disappear."

Roe-cross was erected where Sir Ralph met his old servant, and further to perpetuate the event, the knight and his lady, in their monument, are represented sleeping with a dog at their feet.

Another version of this curious tradition, we find in no less a book than the famous "Decameron" of Bocaccio (Tenth Day, Novel IX.). It varies considerably from the two preceding, as will be seen by the following abstract :—

Immediately before the commencement of the Crusades, Saladin, and two of his nobles, disguised as merchants, travelled through some portions of Europe, and having accidentally met with Messer Torello d'Istria, were entertained by him with an hospitality alike generous and magnificent. Torello afterwards joins the Crusades, and desires his wife to remain single for a year, a month, and a day ; he is taken prisoner by the Saracens, and becomes falconer to Saladin, by whom he is at length recognised and honoured in a manner worthy of his former conduct. He sends a letter for his relations at Pavia, but it never arrives, as the vessel to which it was entrusted suffers shipwreck. Torello learns this fact only three days before the expiration of the term he had enjoined upon his wife. Saladin, however, assures him, that he shall be in Pavia at the appointed time, and he is conveyed by art-magic through the air, whilst sleeping on a magnificent bed, whose splendours are detailed with all the minuteness of an upholsterer's advertisement, and deposited in the church of San Pietro, greatly to the astonishment of the holy fathers. The abbot, who is Torello's uncle, is at length convinced of his nephew's identity, and tells him that his wife is being forced against her wish into a second marriage. Torello, accompanies his uncle to the marriage-feast, and having drank a portion of a cup of wine, he drops into it a ring ;

and under pretence of it being customary in his own country, he sends the half emptied wine-cup for the bride to drink. As soon as she sees the ring, she recognises her husband, who is at once restored to his former position.

We have given these different narratives in some detail, in order to show their points alike of similiarity and of contrast.

The ballad in which the legend of Bretton Hall is conserved appears to us to be comparatively modern, certainly not older than the last century, although, of course, the tradition may be much more antique. It would be interesting to learn whether there is any historical foundation for these traditions, and if there is not, it would be no less curious to know by what process this novel of Bocaccio's became localised in these two out-of-the-way English villages.

Dr. Ingledew has shown much industry in collecting these ballads, though doubtless these are some which have eluded his researches. For instance, his volume does not include Heywood's "Breefe Balet, touching the Traytorous Takyng of Scarborough Castell," in 1557, which is reprinted in Parks' Harleian Miscellany, vol. 10, page 257.

Our space is nearly exhausted; we have no room left to discuss the characteristics of the more modern songs. One of these, by Benjamin Preston, which we quote in full, sounds like the wail of agony wrung from a strong man in deepest despair:—

"Aw'm a weyver, ya knaw, an awf deead
So aw du all at ivir aw can,
Ta put away aot o' my heead
The thowts an the aims of a man!
Eight shillin' a wick's whot aw arn,
When aw've varry gooid wark an' full time
An aw think it a sorry consarn
For a hearty young chap in his prime!

But ar maister says things is as well
As they hae bin, ur ivir can be,
An aw happen sud think soa mysel'
If he'd nobbud swop places wi' me.
But he's welcome to all he can get,
Aw begrudge him o' noan o' his brass,
An aw'm nowt bud a madlin ta fret
Ur ta dream o' yond bewtiful lass.

Aw nivir can call her my wife,
My love aw sal nivir mak knawn,
Yit the sorra that darkens her life,
Throws a shadda across o' my awn.
An awm suar when hur heart is at ceas,
Theer is sunshine an' singin' i' mine,
An misfortunes may come as they pleas,
Bud they nivir can mak ma repine.

That Chartist wur nowt bud a sloap,
Aw wur foold be his speeches an' rhymes.
His promises wattered my hoap,
An aw leng'd fur his sunshiny times;

But aw feel at my dearist desire
 Is withrin', within ma away,
 Like an ivy stem trailin' it mire,
 An deein for want of a stay.

When aw laid i' my bed day an' neet,
 An wur geen up by t' doctur for deead—
 God bless her—shoo'd come wi' a leet,
 An a basin o' gruel an' breead ;
 An aw once thowt aw'd aht wi' it all,
 But so kindly shoo chatted an' smiled,
 Aw wur fain ta turn ovvur ta t' wall
 An ta bluther an' sob like a child !

An aw said as aw thowt of her een,
 Each breeter fur't tear at wur in't ;
 It's a sin to be nivir furgeen,
 Ta yoke her ta famine an stint ;
 So aw'll een travel forrud thru life,
 Like a man thru a desert unknawn,
 Aw mun ne'er hev a home an' a wife
 Bud my sorra's will all be my awn !

Soa aw trudge on aloan as aw owt,
 An whativir my troubles may be,
 They'll be sweetened my lass, wi' the thowt
 That aw've nivir browt trouble ta thee ;
 Yit a burd hes its young uns tu guard,
 A wild beast a mate in his den ;
 An aw cannot but think at its hard—
 Nay, deng it, awm roarin again !"

After reading this, we are tempted to ask, Is there not something radically evil about a system resulting in wrongs like these, which recal the poet's denunciation :—

"Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth,
 Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth."

W. E. A. A.

"OUT OF CHARITY"

CHAPTER XX.

CONFUSION—AND CONCLUSION.

It was bright morning, too bright indeed for the after promise of the day. The sun had not yet appeared. The moon, high in the heaven, was visible still, though rapidly paling away. The morning-star was blazing its last, every other star having already gone out. The hedges, brown, yellow, and crimson, with fading leaves, and ripe berries, stretched in long double lines up and down the Somersetshire roads. Along one of those roads there walked one who had scanty regard for the peculiar beauties of that hour. She had remained in her own room for some time after the fatal and crushing discovery which had thus unexpectedly come upon her. Deverington Hall could now, indeed, be no longer a home to her. Not even as the lowest servant could she continue there, or, indeed, enter any other respectable house. And Murphy; he had promised that, sharing the peril, she should also share the profit; and he had observed his promise, by darting from her side with as much as he could secure of the profit, and leaving her to face the whole of the peril! Indeed, he had coolly calculated from the first, that such peril should be hers only; for he had retained in his exclusive possession that paper which would enable him, after all wrong-doing whatsoever, to make his peace with the Campion family. So now, with this miserable woman, the hopes that had failed her in the one direction found no compensation, no consolation, in the other.

Now, should she remain where she was, and struggle to face it out, or should she run away? Overtaken as she had been, to brazen through the affair was not a very hopeful project. Mr. Campion would not very readily disbelieve his own eyes and ears. And the lantern, carried by the lodgekeeper, must have cast its light upon herself, when just assisting Mr. Murphy M'Quantigan to place the second hamper upon his back. That gentleman was at least as largely gifted with impudence as she was; and he had had nothing for it, but to turn, and run away. Deverington Hall was truly a fatal place to Mr. M'Quantigan. Twice within its precincts had that brazen audacity, seldom or never at fault before, been put to flight when most thoroughly needed. No wonder that Miss Varnish despaired of putting any gloss upon the very awkward attitude in which Mr. Campion had found her. Should she, therefore, make her escape? Very likely no resistance would be

opposed to her; at all events, not if she were prompt about it. When she was turning away, dumb-founded and half-stupefied, from the presence of the two brothers, she had heard the elder of them say to the younger, that a strange affair of absorbing interest had hindered him from coming the day before; but that, acting on the possible chance of the funeral having been adjourned, he had travelled down by the night-train. There was evidently matter a-foot in the Champion family which would make even the loss of its choicest plate a thing of secondary moment; and when that latter affair came in question, it was to the fugitive M'Quantigan, and not to the captive Emma, that they must direct their first attention. What thereafter was to become of her, she did not know—she could not conjecture; only it did appear that the further away from Deverington the better it was likely to be for her. She would not be destitute all at once. She had plenty of money, secure about her, for any present necessity. She would go while a choice remained to her.

She softly opened her door, as gently went along the passage, and so towards the narrow staircase, of which mention has been made already. She was compelled to pass near the drawing-room door. It was open at its widest, and a housemaid was there, sweeping away the feathers which had got there, everybody knows how. The servant stared very hard at the retreating criminal, but made no attempt at detaining her. Nor, indeed, when that same servant reported, a moment later, that she had seen Miss Varnish go out into the garden, was any pursuit set on foot or suggested. The plunder which M'Quantigan had left behind him was now in safe and faithful custody. Mr. Gerald Champion had very excellent reasons for wishing that the links between Deverington and Miss Varnish should be broken as quietly as possible. Mr. Herbert's heart and soul were taken up with matters far more affecting and absorbing. So a contemptuous forbearance was, with little or no hesitation, accorded the fugitive woman; and protected by this negative shelter, she walked on her miserable way to Bridgewater. She went along the high road. The broken down, or common, by which Mrs. Ferrier had been prevented from travelling, [might prove rather muddy and wet. She was coming very near to Bridgewater, and was descending a somewhat steep hill, when the sound of wheels behind her arrested her quick and terrified attention. Turning at once round, she saw a fly driving slowly down the hill; of a more rapid pace the nature of the ground there would not admit. When the fly came up abreast with her, which she presently allowed it to do, she saw it held one passenger, and that Mr. Murphy M'Quantigan was he. It was so. But a person with fewer reasons for remembering him might have possibly left him

unrecognised. He had found occasion, this man of rapid and ready expedient, to rid himself of the beard which had grown during his week at Deverington. He had also procured a new wide-awake, and gloves. She could see inside what she rightly guessed was the hamper, wrapped in a covering of canvas. To think how lightly he appeared to trip over all the dangers which were pitfalls of destruction for her ; this tortured and enraged her, as nothing else had done that horrible morning,

“ Murphy ! Mr. M‘Quantigan ! No ; I will speak to you ! You cruel, cowardly, bad man ! Don’t expect me to consider you, who have never considered me. Whatever may become of me——”

“ Hush, now !—do hush, my good creature ! I’ll speak to you all soon enough, if you choose, but not for a third person to hear us. Come ! I’ll get out, and walk down the hill with you.”

The driver had stopped at Miss Varnish’s invitation, and the Irishman got out, and joined her at the side of the road ; and they two—most assuredly *not* agreed—walked, nevertheless, together.

“ Mr. M‘Quantigan, your behaviour is base beyond all believing !”

“ Then you shouldn’t believe it, my dear. What better could I have done ? I fancy that fellow who came upon us was the elder Mr. Champion—was he not ?”

“ Yes, he was. You may talk about it as coolly as you please, but it has ruined me. I am running away, heaven knows where ; and you—you’ll take care of yourself, I know.”

“ I hope I shall, indeed, my dear ; I humbly endeavour to do so. But it’s just your fault that I could not take better care of myself this morning than I did.”

“ *My* fault ? Well ! It shouldn’t surprise me, I’m aware. There’s nothing too false or too shameful for you to say !”

“ And I mean to say, over again, madam, that it was your fault entirely. We had all but done the thing. Five minutes more—ten, at the most—would have allowed us a good start, with all that our industry had gained us. And twice or thrice that time did you go on dawdling, the early part of the night, pretending th you couldn’t make up your mind to the thing. Just see how different it would have been if you had followed my advice at once !”

“ Well, Murphy, but how have you managed to get here in this manner ?”

“ Why, the very moment I saw that the game was up at the house, I went off to the dog-cart in the stable-yard, got out the hamper that I had put there already, and took it on my shoulders to Chelford. I walked with it all the way. There I got to a decent inn, made myself comfortable, got hold of a piece of canvas to wrap the hamper in ; and bought—early as it was—one or two

little articles for myself. I was tired enough with walking, so I took a fly, as you see."

"But you're not going to wait for the next train to London?"

"I rather think I shall be off by the next train of all, go wherever it may, my dear. And now we're at the bottom of the hill, I'll get in again, and wish you good-bye."

"Murphy! Murphy! can you have the heart to leave me in this dreadful condition? At least allow me to get in with you, that I may have a chance of escaping. Murphy, there was a time when my company was not so unwelcome to you."

"I doubt, Miss Varnish, I haven't any room. You'll very soon walk it. I suppose you've saved pretty considerably?"

"God help me!—no. What I have will be gone in a very few months. It's not so much as fifty pounds."

"Not fifty pounds! Ah, then, I'm sorry to say there is no room for you here; and so we must say good morning at once."

And opening the chaise-door, he took his seat therein, shut the door again, and told the driver to proceed. In that very instant, the woman, who (at least from him) deserved better treatment, formed a passionate resolution what she should do. Time and thought must enable her to master the details of her sudden scheme. The present necessity was to follow him so closely to the station, that she might secure a seat in the very train which carried himself.

The fly that he had hired at Chelford had a board at the back, on which, without any great discomfort, it was possible to sit. Reckless of everything save her main purpose, Miss Varnish placed herself thereon as the fly was driving away. She remained unmolested during the rest of the journey. No uncharitable tell-tale called out "Whip behind!" or in any graver way called attention to the supernumerary passenger. As the vehicle slackened its pace in turning into the station-yard (the town did not lie in their course), Miss Varnish got again upon her feet, and contrived to watch M'Quantigan pass through the booking-office on to the platform beyond. She quickly ascertained that the train shortly to start was going in the direction of Bath: to Bath it was therefore probable that the excellent Murphy would proceed. But she took a way of ascertaining this more surely. "First class to Bath," she said to the clerk at the ticket-stand. The clerk handed the ticket, and named the sum required. She affected surprise at it: "So much as that! I thought I heard you tell that gentleman only five-and-sixpence?"

"It was *second* class the gentleman took, ma'am."

And, satisfied that the gentleman was really bound for Bath, the lady, with no more demur, laid down the full fare demanded of

her. She strove to keep out of sight of M'Quantigan, until, in separate carriages, they should start upon the same journey. Even if he should detect her presence, he might possibly be too supercilious to imagine that it boded any mischief to him. As far as she was ever aware, she managed to conceal herself from him until they were both in the train and on their way. And, to all appearance, the like good fortune attended her when, at Bath, they both alighted at the station there. She saw him engage a cab, heard him order it to be driven to the “Ostrich Head” inn, and, at the mention of that house, it occurred to her that, at some recent period, and in some peculiar association, she had heard its name before. She stood for a minute or two considering how it came to be familiar to her. When the recollection occurred, it gave her great encouragement, for it promised no trivial assistance to the project already forming in her mind. Ere quitting the station, she ascertained at what hour the return train started for Bridgewater. Its time was exactly at eleven, and now it was half-past eight; two hours and a half were therefore permitted her to mature and execute the scheme of getting the one good card out of Mr. Quantigan's hands into her own. The Irishman had doubtless betaken himself to the “Ostrich Head” with a view of remaining the day, if not the next night there. Almost his first act would surely be to take a bed, and enter on the actual enjoyment of it. He had had a sleepless night and a wearisome walk; moreover, for a full week past, his relations with bed had been of a very imperfect and desultory character indeed. It might be rather rash to leave traces behind him at the station, but he might fancy that he had fairly cut them off in his early morning flight from Deverington. And Miss Varnish knew that, more than once in his life, her *quondam* friend had, in devotion to the comforts of the present, allowed his greater interests to lapse; so she felt very certain that the “Ostrich Head” would shelter him long beyond the time at which she purposed waiting on him there. It took her not long to reach it on foot. It was for his precious hamper, and not for himself, that M'Quantigan's cab had been needed.

Miss Varnish took special note of the situation and entrance of the inn, and, for the present, turned away from it. She quickly found another and a humbler hostel. Stepping in there, she took a hasty but substantial breakfast. You will not wonder that she greatly required it. There was no real reason for hurrying. Indeed, she *must* defer her attack until her enemy was likely to be as helpless as she could hope to find him. And, while securing her departure by the proper train, the less time that intervened between her execution of the task and her quitting Bath, the better and the safer for her; for, of course the less would be the chance of

the good Murphy's detecting and pursuing her. Having breakfasted, she went about making one or two purchases. They were as various as a number so small could very well be. What they were, they shall declare for themselves in the using.

Just at ten o'clock, the rain, too faithfully heralded by the transient brightness of the morning, began to fall steadily down. The stately amphitheatre, which rises above Old Bath, and which Czar Alexander named "the drawing-room of Europe," was now bedimmed and beshrouded, like a drawing-room put into mourning. At this very time, and along a back street near the "Ostrich Head," there walked a woman, carrying in her hands something entirely covered over with paper. By a back entrance, she glided unquestioned into the inn. Nothing could indeed be more respectable than the dress (entirely black) which was upon her. And we are wont to feel that questioning the good intentions of one who comes arrayed in black is something of a sacrilege,—suspicion intruding upon ground which ought to be sacred to sympathy. In a suitably dark passage, our Emma whipped her bonnet off her head, and crushed it under her dress, tossed off, at the same time, the paper that shrouded what she was carrying; and stood revealed in a most responsible-looking cap, and with a glass of whiskey on a small tray in her hand. She went her way, thus accredited, to the front portion of the "Ostrich Head." She had little fear that the landlady would detect the false colours she carried. For the name of that inn had reminded her how, about three weeks before, she had read, in the "Bridgewater Beacon," of the recent marriage of Mr. Featherwelsh, the landlord. The announcement had impressed itself on her mind by its unreasonable length and pomposity. Therefore, the landlady was a stranger at present, and not too well acquainted with the appearance of those who served her. But were this a false calculation, the inn was a rather dark place. The day was dark also, and the chances of her detection far from considerable. Dodging about from door to door, she then walked up to the bar window. Inside it was a pretty young woman in lilac silk, whom the volunteer housemaid rightly took to be the new Mrs. Featherwelsh.

There are occasions, on which audacity is the most genuine caution, and Miss Varnish took her present position to be one of them. Up to the newly-made mistress she walked with the tray in her hand.

"If you please ma'am, would you tell me where I shall find the gentleman as ordered this whiskey, ma'am? He's a tall gentleman, and speaks something like an Irish gentleman, I think, ma'am."

Mrs. Featherwelsh put the inquiry to somebody in the rear,

and succeeded in getting the information, to be duly imparted to Miss Emma.

“ That gentleman has gone to bed, I understand ; he said he had only just arrived in England after a long voyage, and was rather ill.”

Miss Varnish recognised her once friend, now enemy—telling falsehoods, even before they were needed. But she must urge on her design.

“ But please, ma’am, he said he should want it just at ten o’clock ; and I really think, ma’am, he talked as if he’d be very much put out if it was not taken to him,”—a characteristic of Mr. Murphy, which Miss Varnish knew she might safely insert at any time.

The landlady inquired again, and informed her servant that she might take it up to the gentleman in Number 15, on the second floor. So, tray in hand, upstairs Miss Emma went. She made a feint of knocking at the door, lest anyone should be observing her, and then put her hand to the handle of it. It was not locked, and she softly opened it, and entered in. He was sleeping heavily, as she knew he was likely to be doing. Tucked up underneath his pillow was a coat. Thus it was instantly and certainly revealed to her where the coveted treasure was to be found. She set the waiter down ; and then, from her bosom, drew out a little glass bottle. Its contents, for the colour of them, might have claimed identity with the whiskey in the tumbler. But it was only chloroform. Nobody will greatly wonder how the idea of employing this agency entered into Miss Varnish’s head. It must be skilfully and dexterously used ; for to fail was certain disgrace, and possible death. She must not awake him, for there was no limiting the injury, which, in his sudden desperation and fury, he might do her. She had heard enough of the practice on such occasions to guide her (as she thought) in administering chloroform.

At first, she held her handkerchief saturated with the liquid, at a little distance from his nostrils. He gave a gasp, and a start, as if he were on the point of awaking. Now was the fearful juncture. She called up the thought of her forlorn and desperate position, to give her courage in the dangerous crisis. “ Let him kill me,” she thought. “ My life is not so fraught with hope, that I should cling to it very fondly.” He did not awake ; and she ventured to hold the handkerchief nearer—still nearer. It really seemed as though his natural sleep were changing into that mysterious loss of sense which of late has been so mercifully placed within our attaining. She wetted the handkerchief again, and boldly applied it close to his face. She saw him sinking off into something which was at once like sleep, and not like sleep. A little more, and she felt

certain that now the process was fully accomplished. She ran a pin into his shoulder, by way of experiment. He neither started nor gave any other sign. "It would be a pleasure to hurt him," thought she, "but the proof is complete; my grand difficulty is safely over."

With that, she dragged from under the pillow the coat which had attracted her eye;—looked into its breast-pocket, drew thence a folded paper addressed to "Gerald Campion, Esq., to be read by him after my death;"—which paper she also saw was written in the deceased Mrs. Campion's handwriting. Of this she promptly took possession. And now—for she was perfectly aware that the effects of the anæsthetic were very transient,—the sooner she was out of the room and away, the safer and the better for her. As she turned to the door of the room, she noticed the canvas-wrapped hamper lying close to a large old wardrobe, which had the key in its lock. This suggested a supplementary performance to her. In half a minute, she had popped the heavy hamper inside, locked the wardrobe door, and placed the key side by side with the packet in her bosom. Then she opened the door, and quitted the room; perceiving, as she did so, that M'Quantigan yet lay motionless and undisturbed. She greatly wondered what the immediate consequence of his recovery from the chloroform would be. Would he awake altogether; or would the heavy natural slumber in which she had found him, resume its superseded influence? On this great physical question all her future prospects might hang.

With a few hours' start, she might present herself at Deverington Hall, with a double title to the forgiveness and forbearance of the Campion family. If the Orangeman had time to overtake her (for he would guess in what direction she would be gone), he might mar her triumph, if he could not compass one of his own. No fear of consequences, she very well knew, would deter him from the most violent and brutal vengeance, did she come within reach of him again.

She got herself out of the "Ostrich Head" without any suspicion or questioning, and then she retreated to the house, at which she had left her few belongings. In very good time, and wearing a thick black veil, she presented herself at the station, and took her seat in a carriage at the first opportunity. Glad indeed she was to feel herself again in motion. She was out of Bath, and safe. Safe? Yet, when Murphy awoke, and guessed who had robbed him, and whither she had fled, perhaps he would telegraph to have her detained at Bridgewater. No, never could she think herself safe until (it was a strange idea, after all that had happened), until she reached the shelter of Deverington Hall.

The day was soaking wet now. She looked, with a sort of troubled awe, on those never-ending wires, now dripping with the rain. She thought of the message, fraught with her utter destruction, which might be speeding its invisible way along them, as she looked.

At one time she considered that Mr. M'Quantigan was much too deeply compromised before the law himself, to think of calling it in thus upon his own behalf. Then, again, she thought of his passionate, audacious character; and how readily he might impose his own statement on the people at his inn, and on the police.

It was a slow train; and every stoppage made her tremble, as every new start gave her a fresh courage. Before the way was nearly ended, it occurred to her that she might make her position a little surer by mastering the contents of that strange and important paper she now carried with her. She therefore took it out, and read it as she travelled on. Deeply occupied as she was with vital concerns of her own, the matter of it interested her; and, presuming that it will have its interest for others, we will transcribe it in this very place.

At the head of its first page was written:—

“I entreat my too kind husband to read what I am going to write, to the very end, before acting upon it, or shewing it to any other person.”

Then the main narrative began:—

“*Deverington Hall, 14th May, 1854.*”

“My dear Gerald:—When this meets your eye, you will be fully made aware of what is daily troubling and consuming me. You will come to know how profitless and vain have been all your affectionate efforts to relieve or assuage the disorder that has settled upon me;—how profitless they were *sure* to be;—since no care, no cure, can minister to a guilty and torturing conscience.

“Such a conscience, my dear Gerald, it has been my miserable doom to carry about with me for some time, and must be my wretched fate to bear within me as long as I live. I *cannot* confess my sin with my lips. I am warned that my life may be ended in the stroke of a moment. And I truly believe, did I set myself the task of acknowledging the wrong in your presence, the breath would quit my body before I could deliver myself of the words. So be merciful and considerate, although my confession, backward as it may be, will only furnish an additional proof of my shameful weakness and selfishness.

“You well remember, Gerald, our visit, shortly after our marriage in 1837, to your father in this house. My poor mother had whispered to me that, though you were the younger son, it was probable that your father's partiality would put you in the place of the elder. Do not, I implore you, consider me baser than I am. I did not marry you for money. Though

I do acknowledge that my poor mother's foolish words ran greatly in my mind, and the sight of this beautiful home, which (were they really fulfilled) would be ours,—this urged me to desire that it might even happen so.

"I hardly think I was ever capable of wishing to benefit by a deliberate injustice. But I did not allow to myself, that your father would be unjust in so devising his estate. He might have very good reasons for disinheriting your brother. He was kind and cordial towards me; and I settled in my own mind, that, if he passed over your brother in your favour, we might credit him for acting with good cause, and might acquiesce in such fortune, without any qualms of conscience.

"The presence of Mrs. Herbert Campion at that time, did not lessen these thoughts. We were not fond of one another. I fancied her haughty and distant. I can now very well believe, that, as a wife living absent from her husband, she found it needful to be very watchful and cautious in her behaviour, and that I unjustly mistook her laudable reserve for pride.

"That she might never put me in the wrong, I was careful, on every occasion, to recollect that, as the elder brother's wife, she had a right to every precedence. When our little Emily was born, while my sister-in-law continued childless,—I confess I exulted over her greatly. Whatever your father might decide, to our branch the property would ultimately come. My bitter disappointment, when a child was born at last to your brother, can hardly have escaped you at the time. When your father died, his intentions toward you—as I had allowed myself to reckon on them—were not carried out, after all. Into Deverington Hall, inasmuch as Herbert's wife was now the mistress of it, I could no more enter with any pleasure; and I was absurd enough to consider myself ejected from a rightful home. You recollect, as well as I do, going down to Brighton in the March, and awaiting your brother's return from Constantinople. You also remember the dreadful agitation in which he appeared, and the astounding and horrible tidings which had awaited him in London, and the nature of which he presently explained to us. You know he told us that the testimony of twenty thousand people would not have weighed with him against one word of straightforward denial on the part of his wife; but that—most dreadful to tell—she had met his agonised inquiry with words which betokened rather a confession than a refutation. You, at the time, knew not what to believe. I—and bitter have been the consequences to me—I at once accepted the story as entirely and undoubtedly true. Gerald, let me write at once what I shall show you more fully by-and-bye. *I now know my injured sister-in-law to be innocent.* At that time, I truly thought that I saw very much to corroborate the shocking discovery. Adela had long continued childless. She may have had some idea that her prospects, as to your father's estate, might be secured if she became a mother. She might fear the decline of her husband's affection. Then I gave her credit for being bitterly envious of myself, to whom a child had really been given. I recalled to mind the sudden manner in which the event had been announced to us; and the secrecy in which it was my

sister-in-law's pleasure to live, and for which, as I now understand, her motives were excellent. She was in a delicate and difficult position. Moreover, little Teresa's apparent age was greatly over that assigned to her. The only thing which much perplexes me now is, that Adela should have been thus cowed and humiliated before a charge of which I am now assured she was never guilty. But let me not doubt but that all might be fully explained—so much having been already made clear to me. I must not deny that the discovery which distracted Herbert was no unwelcome one to me. Now I had an entire right to exalt myself over my sister-in-law; and Deverington was, in a great degree, more likely some day to be ours. But it was an embarrassing reflection that we should not do enough, in assuring ourselves of the matter. We must satisfy the law besides. Your father's estate had been left in tail, and your brother's child stood before you. She would continue to stand before us, unless the evidence of her spurious birth should amount to real substantial proof. Your brother, disturbed as he was, announced that, before he could think of acting on the story, he must have a more distinct confession from his wife. The woman who claimed to be the true mother, was (he said) a poor, feeble, hysterical woman, who, by her own account of herself, was an easy prey to delusions; but from Adela it was no promising task to obtain any fuller acknowledgment. She had been terribly affected by your brother's first words to her, and had been light-headed ever since. The physician then called in considered that the attack would prove but a temporary one. He recommended quiet, and darkened rooms. I was in a perfect agony of suspense and jealousy. As I hope—for I do even dare to hope—that my sin may find forgiveness hereafter—I then felt certain that Adela was guilty. But I believed that, when she recovered, she would choose to unsay what, when taken unawares, she had hastily said; and would persist in denial, and obtain credence from her husband; and so our rights would give way to the wrong-doing of a wicked deceiver. This was atrocious injustice; and no weapon which could defeat it ought to be considered unfair.

“You may recollect that it was but a very few days after Herbert's arrival, when you, and himself, and Dr. Delune came into the drawing-room (darkened as it was) where you had left Adela lying, and seemingly somewhat calmer. While you were away, she had grown rather restless; and the nurse who watched her had removed her to bed. I myself had taken her place on the sofa. I very well knew that your purpose in coming in, was to ascertain, on the doctor's report, how far Mrs. Herbert's reason had recovered itself. Now, I had just been fancying that she would very likely, to shield herself from present responsibility, affect an insanity which was more than real; and, all in one evil moment, I thought how, if such were her purpose, I might destroy all credit in it beforehand. When Dr. Delune, supposing me to be Mrs. Herbert, put a question to me, by way of testing my sanity, I put on her voice and her tones (you are aware I had a decided gift for such imitations), and gave him such a reply as betokened a complete recovery. At that moment, I meditated no more extensive deception. But then the doctor went his way, and

your brother, in your presence, demanded of me (as his wife) a full acknowledgment, or a full denial—Gerald! I need not write out my guilt in any plainer words. You know already, now, the frank acknowledgement that settled the question—was uttered by *me*; and you now need no telling, that, whereas you saw Mrs. Herbert's signature to a written confession afterwards, what she *really* wrote was an entreaty that she might see her husband, and converse with him alone. But with all that, I only thought that, with guile, I was protecting you, and our daughter, and myself, against a most infamous injustice. I write as a dying woman,—indeed, I shall be dead already before you read this,—and I beseech you to believe that such only were my thoughts. All passed as you know; and Deverington Hall became almost our property, and altogether our home. And I—at least in part—succeeded in persuading myself that I had only acted in self-defence. But a dreadful time of remorse was in waiting for me. And I must tell you the manner of its coming.

"Little Teresa bore no striking resemblance to either of her parents; and that was, to me, a negative assurance that she was indeed an intruder amongst us. One evening, not two years ago, I was turning over that large portfolio of prints at our friend Mrs. Topping's, when I came to a portrait, which might have been Teresa's own. On my asking whose it really was, Mrs. Topping told me that it was a picture of Miss Julia Somerby, taken when she was a girl. Both she and I were aware that Julia Somerby was Mrs. Herbert's sister. I was thunderstruck. The memory of that fearful moment will never leave me, except with my life. The memory! It is as present with me now, and ever will be, as at the very time. Whatever proofs presented themselves on the other side, that marvellous likeness outweighed them all. I had not defeated wrong. I had committed most foul wrong. Need I explain any further? Need I say why I shrink, not only from the world, but from my very dearest friends?—from you, whose affection would change into loathing, if you knew in what injustice I had involved you—from Emily, on whom my sin, once known, will cast a disgrace, and whom I must see indulging in hopes which may prove deceitful ones. Of your kindred, whom I have most directly wronged, I dare not speak or think. It were too presuming in me, so deeply guilty myself, to point at another a finger of suspicion. But I do feel impelled to set down, that I am made uncomfortable (over and above my secret sorrow,) by the presence of Miss Varnish. I feel she is one who would rejoice to get hold of this matter, and turn it to her own advantage. Gerald! I have forfeited every right to counsel you, or so much as hint a dying request. But I do implore you, be not too ready to trust this woman. Teach our daughter to abhor deceitful dealing, by my example. Gerald! you have rated me far above my deserts in life—be as forbearing as you can, when you think of me after death.

"Your unhappy wife,

"ELIZA CAMPION."

Miss Varnish did not read this "confession" word for word, but

she skimmed the cream of it; and took in the opinion of herself. By this time, the train that carried her was nearing Bridgewater. She folded up the paper, and replaced it in her bosom. Then, bethinking herself of another thing, she took from her pocket the bottle of chloroform she had used, and threw it out of the window. The train stopped. Now what would happen? Would the policeman walk up and express an irresistible desire for her company? Not any such thing. She was left to herself; and she rapidly engaged a fly to take her over to Deverington. And, much happier than in the morning, yet feeling still insecure from Mr. M'Quantigan's pursuit, Miss Varnish resought the house from which, not seven hours before, she had run away as from death.

We may anticipate her experience of the next hour, by saying that no visitation from Mr. Murphy disturbed her at that time, or indeed, at any future time of her life. Not many minutes after her successful raid in his bedroom, the Orangeman awoke to a partial consciousness of being somewhat sick and queer. But, though the chloroform had spent its numbing power, his fatigue was hardly diminished at all; and he was not stirred to wonder or inquire what had befallen him. Nothing more common with him than to have a sensation of headachy sickness pervading his hours of slumber. He was soon as soundly asleep as before, and it was afternoon, and the sun was going down, ere he seriously thought of getting up. Of course, he did discover, by-and-bye, that both his paper and his plunder were gone; and his distracted anger carried him only into a fresh misfortune.

Out of his room he came—it is terrible to tell—and presented himself, in a shockingly undeveloped state of attire, before young Mrs. Featherwelsh, assailing her with language which could have been but faintly justified, if flung at the actual robber.

Mrs. Featherwelsh, as we said, was a wife, and something more than a wife. She was a bride. And her bridegroom, the landlord, was as furious as his semi-celestial position demanded he should be. The Ostrich Head was the scene of as decided a row as ever graced a house of entertainment. Mr. Murphy was very nearly being kicked into the street, without the option of retiring and amending his toilet. When a lull in the tempest occurred, it was discovered that a stranger falsely assuming to be a servant of the establishment, had really appeared there; and that the tale of robbery was therefore, probably, no fictitious one. But Mrs. Featherwelsh, obliged to admit so much, could also testify that, strange as the intruding woman might be to that house, she was not unacquainted with Mr. M'Quantigan. She had described his manner and appearance in a way which argued knowledge of him; and all were convinced that, if the Irish gentleman had been

robbed, it was under circumstances which were much more disgraceful than pitiable. Besides, in his first frantic exclamations, he let fall a few words which did not agree with his former statement, that he had landed in England only the previous day. Chiefest of all, the policeman, who was summoned to the inn, could draw no positive statement from him about the articles he complained of losing; for the almost certain ruin in which he would involve himself, if he described the contents of that hamper, flashed before him, crazy as he was.

Everybody was convinced that he was at least as much sinning, as sinned against; moreover, that he was a dangerous, murderous scoundrel, of whose presence the Ostrich Head could not be too speedily delivered; and Mr. M'Quantigan might count himself happy in being permitted to go out in full possession of his clothes, and his liberty. The same policeman saw him safe out of the house; and with the scanty remnant of money that belonged to him, he betook himself to London that very evening. There fresh discouragements awaited him. His Orange employers were greatly offended with him. For a month and more, he had neglected the work he had accepted at their hands, and had been dawdling in (they knew not what diversion) at Leamington. Confiding in the permanent good luck which Mrs. Ferrier's favour would bring him, he had turned up his nose at his late employers; and they were not at once to be conciliated.

From Mrs. Ferrier he could now expect no more. Mrs. Roberts was protected against him, by the dangerous knowledge in possession of her brother-in-law; and, for a while, Mr. M'Quantigan was in a very abject condition indeed. He tried some genteel begging. He was too tall for a shipwrecked sailor; but, as a wounded soldier from the Crimea, he lived on the public for a considerable time. But the tide turned. Inferior imitators brought reproach and question on his claims; and the trick would work no longer. Then he took to going, Sunday by Sunday, to various churches in London; choosing a seat with marked humility; weeping profusely at the sermon, and staying behind to implore a word with the preacher. This answered well for a time; but he once came under the eye of a preacher whom he had solicited before at another place, and the caution against him flew about from church to church. Beadles, pew-openers, &c., were warned to spy out and discourage him. And the eighteen-pence, which was to start him on a new and honest course each time, was not any longer available.

This fountain of benevolence was also dried up in its turn. But better days came back to him. He made his peace with the promoters and proprietors of the "Protestant Guard." And he was

taken into favour, as one whom none could rival in fearless and vehement denunciation of religious error. After seeking rest in vain for so long, he has found his way into the old habitation,—I must not say with any spirits yet more wicked than himself. You may hear him at meetings in which people, at once worthier and sillier than himself, find an unaccountable source of satisfaction; or you may behold him, any Sunday, glaring with unutterable anger, at the ceremonial of some ritualistic church. It is a pity that any, whether in sympathy or opposition, should elevate him into importance.

But important, after a fashion, he really is; and in prosperity he may be said to exist; nor need we suppose that it will ever fail him. Alas! Is the child yet born who shall behold the day when profit can be no longer made out of religious bigotry, religious error, and religious hatred? But the course of our friends—the friends of this history—was never again crossed or impelled by the presence or influence of Mr. Murphy M'Quantigan. And so he vanishes out of our narrative for ever and for evermore.

Miss Varnish must detain us yet a little longer. She stopped the fly at the gate in the wood. She felt she must enter as secretly as possible, or she might not be permitted to enter at all. She found the way open before her into the grounds, and she stepped into the Italian garden, mentioned so often before. The rain was long since over, and the clouds were breaking all over the sky. Mr. Gerald Champion was pacing slowly up and down that garden, alone. He looked very grave and sad; nor did his countenance brighten when he saw her suddenly appear before him. She burst forth with an appeal, which had been calculated beforehand, but which was by no means utterly insincere.

“Mr. Champion! I entreat, I implore of you to listen to me. I know I have behaved basely—infamously—detestably. I have been under the power of a most atrocious villain; but I come here now to make amends—full amends.”

“Miss—Miss Varnish, I will not say how exceedingly painful this affair has been to me. I'm sure I shall—hem—listen with pleasure to any explanation tending—tending to—set the matter in a better light.”

“Oh, sir—dear, kind sir, I've no excuse to offer that can at all avail me. But what atonement can be made I am come to make. Here is the key of a cupboard—a cupboard in an inn at Bath, in which—at least, I confidently believe so—you will find what was taken away from the house this morning. And—and there's something besides. This paper was stolen out of poor Mrs. Champion's desk after she died.” And Miss Varnish put it into Mr. Gerald's hands. It needed only such acquaintance

as a minute could ensure, to teach him that it merited all his attention. Then, putting it away for the moment, he turned to person who had brought it.

"I—I, of course, am gratified—truly gratified, Miss Varnish, to see that—hem—better feelings have asserted themselves over temptations which have—which have proved somewhat alarmingly powerful. And I would not withhold——"

Miss Varnish brightened up at these last words.

"I would not withhold my sincerest hopes, that the future spent in a somewhat distant scene, may—may furnish a happy contrast with the deplorable events of the recent past; and to that good resolution I would commend you. It cannot be your wish that I should detain you."

"I have forfeited all claims to your consideration, Mr. Champion, I am but too well aware; yet, I know you have a kind and generous heart. May I—may I hope that you will not stand in the way of my gaining a living elsewhere?"

"I would not injure you, on any account, Miss Varnish. If you mean to ask for a recommendation—why, you see, I would not pain you more than I can avoid, but——"

"But do consider, sir. I have made the promptest amends in my power. It was not without difficulty, not without danger—dreadful, deadly danger, that I rescued your property from that atrocious villain's hands; and, remember, that I might have kept it."

"Yes, Miss Varnish; I have no desire to undervalue the amends you have made, nor the—ha—hum—recovered sense of duty, which induced you to make it. Well, suppose you were to go—let us say—to London, and let me communicate with you?" For Mr. Gerald was very fidgetty indeed to get the lady out of his presence,—a feeling for which his premature admiration, recently very strong in him, accounts in the fullest manner.

Miss Varnish had taken this open and confiding way, instead of hinting at what she could do, and bargaining for terms—because she was really for the time, quite sick of doing wrong, and because her horrid deceit had met with such a shameful failure. Just as kings enjoy playing at obscurity from time to time, so this unfortunate woman at that hour craved the luxury of doing an honest and open action. But she was no more heartily honest than such a king is really desirous of abandoning his throne for a shop or a plough; and I fear the paper, whose contents Miss Varnish had skimmed, gave her one joy which was not commendable. She gathered from it that her ex-pupil, Emily, whom she had never liked, and who never liked her, would be no longer heiress to Deverington Hall; and she felt a spiteful joy to think of it.

Mr. Gerald shortly asked her, if she had money for present necessities. Her affirmative answer did not appear to displease him; and, after a few more words, they parted—parted for ever. They were severed asunder as surely and irrevocably as they had, at one time contemplated the being united together. Death alone should then have parted them. Only in the world after death, can they be brought together again.

Miss Varnish walked away towards the carriage she had left at the gate, and was driven in it, not to Bridgewater, but to a small station somewhere beyond.

“And with much less of self-denial,” she mused within herself, as she was borne on her way; “with one half of the care, pains, and contrivance I have gone through, I might have been quitting this house with the affectionate regrets of everyone in it; and with everything done to smooth my future course, which a wealthy and well-descended family can do—which, in England, is a very great deal.”

Her ultimate fortunes may be rapidly told. Somehow or other she did contrive to gain a situation, a few months later, in an English family residing in Algeria. The steamer in which she took her journey thither was wrecked on the African shore, and those who had known her in England read her name amongst the names of those who perished. This was her end.

Mr. Gerald Campion read, through and through, the confession of his unhappy wife. Whence it had been stolen, he could not tell. Indeed, he had not been aware that any such paper had been written. Not a momentary doubt of its being authentic ever crossed his mind. Her handwriting, and the minute narration of circumstances known to himself, were assurances not to be gainsaid. A little while ago, the imminent loss of Deverington and its estates would have had a large share in the grief and shame with which he read the miserable story. But his feelings were strangely modified now. The embarrassment of being known to have contemplated making a very unworthy woman his wife;—the fear lest his own daughter, Emily, presuming on her heirship to an entailed estate, should outrage all prudence in marrying,—these thoughts made Deverington Hall and its belongings, things very much less precious to him than they had been. It will be recollected, that when Lady Dalby, at Dieppe, had suggested that Mrs. Herbert Campion might possibly be no longer living, her brother-in-law had resented the idea with a somewhat startling vehemence. The thought was often in his mind—“What if my brother, released by death from all ties to the wife who has deceived him, should enter on another marriage, and become the actual father of an heir to Deverington?” Very uncomfortable had this thought been. But his urgent appeal

to Madame Durange, not to mention his having travelled with her, was only dictated by his fear lest his daughter's forbidden lover should gain a knowledge of her retreat. He did not feel so certain but that the sudden journey of Madame to England might have been just a device of Miss Emily's. He had painful reasons for thinking that his daughter had grown somewhat artful and deceitful. When his eyes were open to the real nature of Miss Varnish, he felt (as we must do) much more allowance for the wrong-doing of one put under her influence; and he thought he could behold, with nearly as much pleasure as pain, the resumption of Deverington by his brother,—now gifted with an heir of his own.

Had he felt very differently, it is due to him to say, that he would never have thought for one moment of concealing the discovery. He placed the paper before his brother Herbert the very instant he had himself read it through. How agitating it proved to the elder brother, we should be wasting words in seeking to describe. But we may now explain that Mr. Champion's behaviour to his daughter, though actuated by a complete and frightful mistake, was in no way so harsh or heartless as it may have appeared. Fully believing her to be Mrs. Roberts's daughter, he had prepared, in strict justice, to give the child into her hands. She had a right to it. His wife's terrible prostration, at his first allusion to the story, had destroyed his hope, his lively hope, that the tale was a horrid calumny; her subsequent aberration of mind, partial and transitory as it was, had interfered to prevent an explanation; and Eliza's wicked fraud, wrought, indeed, with no worse purpose than to prevent a wrong, had most fatally sealed the perpetration of a wrong.

Mr. Champion had seen, early in April, 1842, Mr. Ferrier's advertisement of the little girl, lost and found near Euston Square. The place, and the detailed appearance of the child assured him that she was none other than the one whom he had so long considered as his own. Nor did the desertion of her mother appear so very strange a thing to him. He had noted the weak, wayward, nerveless character of poor Mrs. Roberts. Nobody, with much less discernment than his, could be five minutes in her company and not perceive it. It was not unlikely that, one day devoured with anxiety to recover her lost child, she would the next day be murmuring that she had taken such a burthen upon herself. In truth, Mrs. Roberts had imagined Mr. Champion to be privy to his wife's device, and had never intended that matters should be so summarily reversed. As it fell out, we know that she was guiltless of thrusting the child upon the world; but Mr. Champion most naturally thought her guilty. She disliked the burden; she had no stable affection for the girl; and she had thrown her off in the

quickest and surest manner. When Mr. Campion saw into what excellent hands the child had fallen, he thought he could do no better than leave her where he found her. It was a dreadful idea, that he could not claim her for his own; but at least he felt no more bound by any duty to betray the sad history. He trusted Mr. Ferrier; but, even then, he did not withdraw all watch over Eva. He heard, through making secret inquiries, that she was growing up in good health, with an excellent education; and (after her patron was dead), in the protection of a satisfactory home; and then he heard that she was likely to be married to Mr. Ferrier's nephew and heir. Assuredly, the very best service he could do her was to be silent upon her origin altogether—and she was his daughter all the while!

After some consultation with his brother, he quitted Deverington Hall for London that very evening; the Wednesday evening, you know; and it was the 22nd of October, 1856. He found Mr. Dykhart awaiting him there. Mr. Ballow's professional duties had recalled him to Minchley. Mr. Campion told the Vicar of Croxton how wonderful and important a confirmation of the strange story had awaited him at Deverington Hall, and what a narrow escape they had had of losing it, without ever knowing that they possessed it. His brother Gerald, much more than disinterested in the belief, admitted that his wife's confession was neither a forgery nor a falsehood, and was ready to acknowledge his niece, as heir to Deverington, in place of himself. And on the very next day (Friday), and at no late hour, they went down into Cambridgeshire, and halted at the station which lay nearest to Marlby. And now we may reckon ourselves to have done with the sorrows and mischiefs of which mutual treachery—mutual weakness—may have been the guilty or unhappy causes. Let us put them away, and refresh ourselves with a foretaste of that happier time, to which we shall shortly consign our friends for ever.

Come to Leamington, and to the house of our friend, Mrs. Ferrier; for now, I hope, she is our friend again.

It is early evening, and Saturday, the twenty-fifth of October. Mrs. Ferrier is at her worsted-work, thinking, moreover, that ere the chrysanthemums bloom again in her garden, it will have become time to use her needle in behalf of a certain baby. For Richard is there, and Eva is beside Mrs. Ferrier; and that lady is finding out new perfections in Eva, hour by hour, and wondering more and more, however she could have thought so differently. She says—and you would never convince her that she was mistaken—that had Richard's bride been akin to all the rogues in London, she would have been but little less acceptable than as she is now. Richard was never informed how horribly near his mother had been

to the sleeping partnership in a plotted murder. He may be just aware that Eva's enemies, getting hold of Mrs. Ferrier's strong prejudice, wickedly tried to bend it into an instrument in their hands. But that is all he knows; nor will he ever know more.

Mrs. Ferrier was quickly satisfied that Eva's forgiveness was hearty and complete.

"When she has children of her own," thought her future mother-in-law, "she will understand much of what I felt. God, indeed, forbid that she should copy me in that! but she will understand it; and then, even if not now, she will cease to think hardly of me."

Mrs. Ballow was there. Mrs. Ferrier could not rest until she had sought and found a reconciliation in that quarter too. She was sorry not to have Mr. Ballow also; but Minchley wanted him. Sickness would not cease in Buckinghamshire, just because a lady in Warwickshire had turned over a new leaf. So the party in that drawing-room numbered only four. Although a very happy party, they were all a little grave; but it was rather with excess of joy, than with any foreboding of sorrow. That morning had brought the news that a most important confirmation of Eva's claims had suddenly and most strangely offered itself. Any day, any hour might bring Eva into the presence of one or both of her long-lost parents.

Mrs. Ballow, sitting there, thought of her old romantic visions of the carriage-and-four which would one day come to fetch Eva to a princely home of her own. And, after all, she had not been quite wrong. That event—which had looked, indeed, very much like a mere novel-reader's fancy—was coming truly now. Every friend of Eva was eagerly looking for it.

Hark! wheels before the door! A stop—a ring—and then the opening of the door, and voices. Susan comes into the room. Susan has kept up with the sentiments of her mistress, and can see no fault in Miss March, as before she could see no good.

"Please, ma'am, a lady and a gentleman want to see Miss March."

The lady and gentleman are in the hall, and are to be conducted into the dining-room. Miss March will meet them there. It was an overpowering moment; but Eva nerved herself for it, and, in a minute more, went out to meet and greet those who had summoned her. They were her father and her mother. After many years of sorrow and separation their deliverance had now come, and they were joined together by God, as in a holier wedlock than before.

The friends whom Eva has left in the drawing-room are well aware by whom she has been summoned. Mrs. Ballow recollects her early prophecy of such a *denouement* as this, and knows that "the carriage-and-four" has verily come.

It is the carriage-and-four, and not the carriage-and-four. Mr. and Mrs. Campion have come, in a hired and very unassuming conveyance, from the station; but the ending is none the less a real one; and when our heroine returns to the drawing-room, she is, by the full acknowledgment of her father, no longer Eva March, but Teresa Campion. Mrs. Ballow, as she always said she should, feels “horribly jealous” of the parents who have thrust her a step backward in Teresa’s heart. But then she bethinks herself that a full revenge will be hers: the real and true parents will pretty soon find out that they are not quite the first favourites. Were it possible for Teresa to have been claimed by twenty thousand papas and mammas, that Richard would have cut them out entirely and altogether.

Eva—she will not be offended if we continue to call her so—Eva soon satisfied Mrs. Ballow that the dearest of new friends would never make her insensible to the old friends of her childhood and youth. Thrice, within little more than three months, has it befallen her to change one name for another; and she has certainly not done with such changes yet. She is Miss Campion now—but that name is but a transitionary one; and, if Richard had his way, she would not bear it even so long as she bore the pseudonym of Roberts.

Mrs. Ferrier was gratified by retaining Mr. and Mrs. Campion to supper. The party were really all too happy to be cheerful. Mrs. Ferrier looked back to that other party, given by herself in July, at which Mrs. Ballow and Eva had also been guests. What a revolution circumstances—some sad, some joyful—had brought about in her feelings since then! And Richard’s mother could only bow in thanksgiving to the Ordainer who had overruled her blind resistance, and out of so much evil appointed so much good.

Mr. and Mrs. Campion remained at Leamington but a few days. There was much to do, as well as much to enjoy. There were explanations due to friends—for instance, to the Leyburns of Bestworth. There must be no misunderstanding left which it was at all possible to remove. Nothing must be undone which could enable Mrs. Campion, with security and ease, to resume her place in her family and in society. The Leyburns did their part; and a week was passed by our heroine and her parents at Bestworth Rectory. All were aware that no unworthy persons would ever be admitted into that most comfortable house. And a service was done to Adela, which more genial, trustful people, could never have rendered her; but she would much rather have spent the week at Croxton.

The Marlby Home soon found a new and efficient mistress, and its beneficent career goes on widening still. With one painful

remembrance upon him, Mr. Dykart is very happy; for the Campion family are much indebted to him for the dispersion of that fearful and fatal mystery which overhung and blighted them so long.

The younger branch of that family must receive a little further notice from us here. Gerald resigned himself to the loss of Deverington Hall. We need scarcely say that he was not abandoned to anything resembling poverty; and the upright, honourable course pursued by him in late events, won him not only a more cordial esteem from his brother Herbert, but also a general popularity long coveted by him in vain. So, if he had a fall, he fell as soft as applause and gratitude could enable him to do.

Nor did the fall bring any diminution of happiness to his daughter Emily. Her forbidden lover sowed his wild oats, and (as Emily was no longer a great heiress), won her papa's gradual and cautious approval. Mr. Larking had a moderate estate still left him. Emily would have her mother's fortune; and, in course of time, Lady Dalby would doubtless, leave her something. That, indeed, really came to pass about four years ago.

Our heroine could not endure to think that her cousin Emily might feel herself unjustly deposed; and, at her very earnest desire, Herbert Campion added greatly to the fortune which his niece would bring to her husband. And Emily, certain that as heiress to Deverington Hall, she would never—never have been permitted to marry Rupert,—Emily thinks to this hour, that all has happened for the best; and would not envy her cousin for the world. There was a grand Christmas kept at Deverington that year. In the height of its happiness, Miss Campion received a letter, bordered with deep black; and with the Carnarvon postmark on it. Mr. Dowlas's acquired wealth—really the temptation to say so is too great—his wealth was doubly blest to him: it gained him the loss of his wife. A prolonged series of champagne suppers brought on a fever, of which poor Mrs. Dowlas died. Her widowed husband's letter, while stating the fact of his bereavement, said nothing about its cause. Eva wrote back as sincere a condolence as truth permitted her to frame. A pleasanter duty was imposed upon her about a year after that.

Winifred Williams, the faithful and long-enduring servant at Llynbwllyn, gave warning to Mr. Dowlas, as soon as her mistress was buried. Now, her master would have no difficulty at all in gaining or retaining a successor to herself; and she thought she was getting too old for service, and would prefer keeping a small shop. At Mr. Dowlas's urgent desire, she withdrew her warning for just one month longer. By-and-bye, after three or four repetitions of this process, Mrs. Winifred one day affirmed her notice to

quit in a manner which announced the decision to be final; and then Mr. Dowlas put the question, whether it were not as well that they should be man and wife; and Winifred was not too obstinate to say, that if Mr. Dowlas were sure he was in earnest, she should not so much mind. And so married they were. And neither they, nor Mr. Dowlas's four children, have ever repented of the same.

Those children all turned out tolerably well—very well, indeed, considering the disadvantages of their former years. Poor Mrs. Roberts is living still;—calmer and happier, her brother-in-law declares of her, than at the former time. She is but fifty years old now; and a happy, serene old age—a bright autumn succeeding a dreary summer—is very likely in store for this long-afflicted woman.

Mr. Dowlas lives at Llynbwllyn no longer. He has a better living, very near to Tremallyoc. Our heroine has more than once visited the latter place. Tremallyoc House is now, you know, the property of her cousins, the Leyburns. She could never bear to visit Llynbwllyn; but there is, at all times, a cordial feeling between herself and the Dowlas family—once falsely received by her as her kindred.

Let me see! Is there anybody else, whose destiny ought to be written down, before we dismiss them for ever? I scarcely know of any. The Ballows continue to prosper, as they deserve. Mrs. Check rejoices in her young friend's due exaltation, and calls everybody to witness the fulfilment of her own predictions—predictions which were never made. But the good woman has no idea of saying anything but the truth. And so, we may come to the final fact of all.

It will be remembered that the six months' delay insisted upon by Eva, would have terminated on the 7th January, 1857. That time of waiting, as things had declared themselves, was robbed of all significance now. Nevertheless, by a rather curious coincidence, the 7th of January was the day on which it was ultimately decided that Richard and Eva should be joined together. They were united at Deverington Church. Mr. Dykhart, assisted by Leyburn, did all the Church required. Although it was January, the sun shone liberally on the bride, and not through any frosty sky, but through a soft, kind air, such as April itself does not always bring.

They were married; and now what more is there left for us to say? That they were very happy? Very happy they were; very happy they are. Very happy, we are permitted to hope, they will always continue to be. Happy, with no such impossible happiness as forms the vain vision of some to whom the world is utterly unknown. They know—our two friends know—that for trouble, for

sorrow, even, they must from time to time, be prepared. But this we may safely say of them, that the troubles which, as told in our story, have been given them to bear, have served to fortify them against any common sorrow, which may, from time to time, rise up to vex their spirits. Certainly, there is little cause for supposing that the trials to come will approach in painfulness the trials which have gone; and, having surmounted and survived so much, they will not readily give way to any distressful forebodings. And, in joy or in sorrow, nothing possible to man will ever, in heart or spirit, pluck them asunder one from another. They are no more two, but one. And alone, whatever betide them in life, they never can truly be. The love, which rose into being one April Sunday at Minchley will abide unbroken for ever; not to perish out of existence—even when the common doom overtakes them, and the days of their years be themselves like a tale that is told.

OUR COAL

AMONGST those things with which daily use has familiarised us, but about which very little is really known, even by the majority of the educated, may surely be placed our coal.

The general public have a vague idea that this mineral, so invaluable to us, is somehow formed from trees and other vegetable matter, but possess no clear and definite information respecting its history and production; subjects full of interest and well worthy of attention. It is a curious fact that, although coal has existed for untold ages, and has been known for many centuries, it has only in comparatively modern times been used to any great extent. The Chinese and Japanese seem to have been very early acquainted with, but not to have properly appreciated, this source of almost boundless power. The Egyptians, Hindoos, and other ancient oriental nations used wood charcoal for their metallurgical operations; and even the Greeks and the Romans, although they were aware of its existence, employed it but little. Theophrastus, writing B.C. 240, says, "Those fossile substances that are called coals, and are broken for use, are earthy; they kindle, however, and burn like wood coals. These are found in Liguria, where there is also amber, and in Elis on the way to Olympia over the mountains. These are used by the smiths." The minerals here mentioned, however, were probably, judging from their association with amber, not true coals, but a more recent formation, called lignite. In our own country, coal seems to have been dug in small quantity where it cropped out by the Romans. The first mention of it, however, is in the Saxon records of the ninth century. In 1259, Henry the Third granted the privilege of digging coal to certain persons in Newcastle; and seven years afterwards, we find that it had become an article of export. In the early part of the fourteenth century, so extensive was its use in London, that parliament complained to the king of the noxious vapours polluting the atmosphere. In consequence of this, proclamation was made against its further employment, lest "the health of the knights of the shire should suffer during their residence in the metropolis," a curious illustration of the great consideration in which knights of the shire were held as compared with the citizens. Blythe, writing in 1649, says, "It was not many years since the famous city of London petitioned the parliament of England against two nuisances or offensive commodities likely to come into great use and esteem,—and that was Newcastle coals, in regard to the stench, &c.; and hops, in regard that they would spoil the taste of drink, and endanger the people." Here the "famous city of London," how-

ever short-sighted this conduct may seem to us, only offered all the opposition in its power to the introduction of useful novelties, a proceeding but too often repeated amongst us at the present day. *Now*, our fear is that we may soon have no coal to use ; and, as to our beer, that it is sometimes flavoured with strichnine, quassia, or other bitters than the universally approved hops.

In Paris, coal, which, however, was brought from Newcastle, was used in 1520 ; while we read that in Scotland it was dug before the end of the twelfth century, and that a tenth part of what was raised was paid to the monks of Holyrood.

Although this fuel was, notwithstanding the existence of many prejudices against its employment, used to a considerable extent, for smiths' work and for domestic purposes, in England during the seventeenth century, yet it was not till 1713 that the great heat derived from its combustion was applied to the manufacture of iron, for which it is now so indispensable to us. From small beginnings, the consumption of coal has grown year by year, till it has reached a truly enormous amount. The whole of this is obtained from deposits formed millions of years before the appearance of man upon the earth ; and, in consequence, it is only by examining the coal itself, and the strata immediately above and below it, that we can obtain any information as to its geological history, which, however, has thus been pretty clearly made out.

Coal, indeed, is nothing but mineralised vegetable matter, mixed more or less with earthy and other impurities at the time of its deposition. Plant-tissue consists of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, and coal is composed of these same elements in different relative quantities. In the process of decay, some of the carbon in the vegetable material is given off, in combination with a greater proportion of oxygen, as carbonic acid ; and at a later stage, in combination with hydrogen, as light carburetted hydrogen, which is the gas chiefly instrumental in causing the dreadful colliery explosions we hear of. Besides this, more hydrogen and oxygen are eliminated in the shape of water, which is formed of these two gases. The result of all this is, that the decaying vegetation becomes proportionately richer in carbon ; and the longer the decomposition goes on, the more is this the case, till, in anthracite and graphite—forms of coal found in very old strata—scarcely anything but carbon is present. Peat-bogs, which in many countries cover very large areas, furnish us with illustrations of this change in progress. On the top, moss is growing ; a little lower down it is in the first stage of decay ; and as we dig deeper and deeper, the decomposition is found to have gone further and further, till, at the bottom, black, solid peat is found. If the bog is stirred with a stick, bubbles of gas will escape, consisting chiefly

of carbonic acid, which, however, is mixed to some degree with light carburetted hydrogen. Vegetable tissue consists of from forty-eight to fifty-four per cent. of carbon—peat of from fifty-six to sixty-six per cent. Thus we see that a marked change in the relative quantities of the ingredients has taken place: the gaseous elements have been eliminated in larger proportion than the carbon. Now this is the first step that has taken place in the formation of all coal, whether in the case of moss, or ferns, or trees, or any other form of vegetable matter. The next stage is reached by lignite, which is found in most tertiary strata, and which has been so named from the fact that it often still resembles to a great degree the wood that entered into its formation. Here the conversion has gone further than in the case of peat, the vegetable matter having been buried for ages under the superincumbent strata, and having lost a larger quantity of its less fixed constituents, especially of its oxygen. Lignites, which are found in many parts of the world in extensive beds, vary much; for, whilst some show distinctly to the eye their vegetable structure, others cannot, by mere inspection, be distinguished from true coal. The useful application, however, of all the different varieties is very limited, when compared with that of the older mineral. In the first place, they will not keep, but must be burned soon after they are dug, or they will “weather,” as it is called, and crumble away. Then—although, like air-dried wood, lignites may be quite dry to the touch—they contain so much water that, when they are ignited, a considerable amount of the heat evolved is taken up to convert this into steam, and expel it. In addition to these disadvantages, it should also be borne in mind that the heat given out by coals is, in a direct ratio to the amount of carbon they contain, which, in lignite, is relatively small, being from fifty-six to seventy per cent. only. The older the strata in which it is found—as far back, at least, as the carboniferous series—the better, as a rule, is the coal. The longer the time that the vegetable matter has had for decay, the richer does it become in carbon, especially if the covering strata are porous enough to allow of some gaseous evolution. Peat is richer, in this respect, than unchanged vegetable matter; lignite than peat; ordinary coal than lignite; and anthracite than ordinary coal. Next to lignite, in regard to the amount of decomposition that has taken place in it, is the South Staffordshire and most of the Midland Counties’ coal. This is a beautiful variety, of velvet-black colour, lustrous, and easily ignited, when it burns with a cheerful flame and heat, and leaves but a few light ashes. In it there is more carbon, relatively to its other constituents, than in lignite, though less than is contained in the still more valuable coal from the Tyne.

The Newcastle coal, too, has a property not possessed by that found in the Midland Counties, viz., it will when heated swell up and form into a mass,—“cake,” as it is called. Thus all the fine coal or slack, of which an immense quantity is necessarily produced in working the mines, may be converted into good coke, utilised, and so a very large saving be effected. With a still further decay of the vegetable mass, structureless anthracite, containing often as much as 94 per cent. of carbon is formed. This variety is difficult to light, but when lighted, burns with little or no smell or smoke, and gives a great heat. Anthracite has, however, the disadvantage of decrepitating when it is burned, and the number of small particles thus given off, interfere much with its use in furnaces, as they seriously impede the necessary draught. Graphite, resulting probably often from the action of the internal heat of the globe, long continued, upon anthracite, is almost pure carbon, and occurs in the very earliest strata.

Another variety not among those hitherto enumerated, is that called “cannel” or “parrot” coal—“cannel” as a corruption of the word “candle,” because a piece when lighted will burn on like a candle,—“parrot,” because in burning it crackles or chatters. The mode of formation of cannel coal, which occurs both in separate seams, and also interstratified with other kinds, is not well understood. It is extensively worked near Wigan, and is higher in price than any other coal, as it is by far the best for gas-making. Between the different sorts of coal named, there are infinitely numerous gradations, anthracite and plumbago representing one extreme, and lignite the other. It is said that as many as seventy varieties are brought into the London market alone, to which names, indicative of their application, have been given, as “furnace coal,” “household coal,” “gas coal,” and the like. It seems now almost incredible that but a few years ago it was doubted whether coal was a vegetable product at all, the evidence of fossil ferns and other plants not being understood. Nothing seems clearer now to all geologists and scientific men, and the question was once and for ever put beyond the pale of incredulity, when it was found that if very thin slices of coal were examined under the microscope, the cellular and vascular structure of the plants composing it could still be plainly seen. Coal, moreover, or a substance exceedingly like it, has been produced artificially. M. Baroulier, at St. Etienne, placed in moist clay, sawdust of different kinds, and long maintained strong pressure upon it at a temperature of from 200° to 300° centigrade. This was so managed, that whilst gases were not absolutely prevented from escaping, considerable obstacles were placed in the way of their so doing. The resulting products resembled in many respects, varying with the alterations in the

conditions of the experiment, brilliant and sparkling, or dull, culmy coal.

Twenty or thirty years ago, the doctrine prevailed that true coal was formed only during the carboniferous era, or that space of time which intervened between the deposit of the Old Red and the New Red Sandstone. Good beds of coal, however, have been found in the secondary, and even in the tertiary strata. Lyell especially mentions the coal found in a secondary formation near Richmond, in Virginia, and states that it is not distinguishable from the best Newcastle varieties by the eye, by chemical analysis, or by its qualities. This is the more remarkable, as the plants composing it are entirely different from those forming the earlier deposits of coal. Professor Ansted found good beds of true coal in the tertiary layers at Zsil, in Transsylvania.

The largest and most regular deposits of this precious mineral were nevertheless formed during the carboniferous era, and the reason of this seems to have been the existence, at that time, of peculiar conditions that favoured the growth of vegetation in a rankness and luxuriance unexampled before or since. All the world over there seems to have been one uniform climate, if we may judge from the similarity everywhere of the flora, which, with the exception of some pines, was of a comparatively low order, and differed materially from that now existing. Calamites, huge plants something like mare's tails of the present day, with fluted stem and whorled leaves, but from 40 to 45 feet high, and sigillariæ trees of still larger dimensions, having the appearance of gigantic arborescent ferns, but without any modern representatives, filled the swampy forests. Lofty pines and lepedodendra, club-mosses fifty feet in height, and from four to five feet in diameter, thronged on the drier and the more elevated grounds. Besides these, other trees that can be assigned to no known order everywhere abounded, whilst around and beneath all, a densely matted undergrowth of endless varieties of ferns, mosses, reeds, and sedges, covered the marshy land in the wildest profusion.

To cause this great exuberance of plant growth there was a genial, though probably not a tropical climate, the surface of the earth was warmer than now, from the influence of the internal heat, the air was full of moisture, rain was abundant and frequent, and the present proportion of carbonic acid in the atmosphere was in all likelihood exceeded, to supply carbon for this wonderful vegetation. The landscape of the period must have shown immense rivers, liable to periodical overflow; numerous large estuaries and sea-reaches; inland seas and lakes of great extent; low-lying continents, and islands covered with dense dark-green forests, whilst here and there craters ejecting smoke, ashes, or

molten lava, studded the scene, and earthquakes, numerous and violent, rent the strata. All this we can trace, as confidently from the records left in the coal measures, as though we had lived at the time, which, however, would have been impossible, from the absence of proper food, even supposing that carbonic acid did not exist in too great quantity in the air to allow of human life. The land seems to have been almost tenantless, as far as animals are concerned. The silence of the primeval forest was only broken by the rumbling of the volcano, the roar of the river, the rushing of the wind, the crash of falling trees, with, perhaps, the occasional croak of some batrachian-like inhabitant of the swamp, the buzzing of a few insects, and the chirp of the cricket or the grasshopper. No birds floated in the air or awoke the echoes with their cheerful song, and no mammal wandered in the trackless thickets. On the other hand, the seas teemed with life, large sauroid fishes, bivalves, crustaceans, encrinites and coral animalcules, swarming in countless numbers.

Ever and anon the land and the water changed places, and gigantic forests were engulfed, or swept away by the rush of waters to be deposited elsewhere, covered by sediment, and converted into coal. These and such-like conditions were just those required to cause the large formation of coal at this epoch. The warm, moist, equable temperature, made the plants grow with prodigious luxuriance, the land which, on the whole, gradually subsided, not only caused the huge forests with their matted undergrowths to be swallowed up, but also altered the course of the rivers, by which large masses of vegetation were borne down to the inland lakes, to the estuaries and into the wide ocean itself, where they were deposited by the waters, either in a mass with previously engulfed forests, or in separate layers. The great rivers too, in their ordinary channel, like the Mississippi, the Nile, and others of the present day, formed deltas at their mouths, and to these brought down layer after layer of forest growth and vegetable drift; over all, earthy matter was deposited by the waters, and the forest, and the swamp growths, and the vegetable drift, stored up millions of years before the creation of man, were in the course of ages, by the elimination of much of their gaseous constituents, converted into coal for his use in these latter days. When the land rose again from the water the same process of growth and submersion was repeated, and thus seam after seam of coal was formed in regular layers. Seams of this mineral were also formed in estuaries and deltas by the periodical overflow of rivers, bringing large masses of vegetation which were then covered up by deposit. As may be supposed, coal, the material of which has grown in situ, is the purest and the best, though all varieties are more or less mixed

with earthy and other impurities. In whatever manner, however, the vegetation arrived at the locality in which it became mineralised, it was at length covered by sediment, and the same changes went on for ages that we now see progressing in a peat-bog, the decomposition being occasionally hastened by gaseous action.

After the carboniferous era, the subterranean forces burst forth with violence, and broke and twisted about the strata, almost all over the world. To this we are perhaps indebted for our coal, which was thus in many places brought to the surface, made to crop out, as it is called, or it would only have been discovered by digging through masses of superincumbent earth

Upon consideration of the different circumstances attending the formation of coal, it is easy to account for the many varieties. The kind of vegetation, the degree in which it was mixed with earthy matter, the time it was allowed to macerate before being finally covered up, the nature of the strata above and below, whether more or less retentive; the presence or absence of igneous action, all must have been conditions very much influencing the quality of the coal formed.

A million of years, at least, would seem to have been occupied in the deposition of the carboniferous series alone, to say nothing of the time that has since elapsed in the formation of the secondary, tertiary, and post-tertiary series. To give some idea of the enormous time required for the growth of timber for coal, where the latter is formed from plants growing on the spot, as is the case sometimes with seam over seam, Professor Phillips tells us that, "assuming, with Liebig, that plants, deriving their carbonaceous element from the air, fix annually in their substance 1 lb. English for 24·4 square feet of surface of ground; and further, that all this was preserved in a peaty deposit, growing up from them and under them; it would require 170 years to gather one inch of anthracite coal, and the enormous period of 122·400 years to accumulate sixty feet of the same." We should not forget, too, the very pulpy nature of carboniferous plants, in which carbon, the chief ingredient of coal, existed in relatively very small proportion. Even to produce black peat, the first stage in the process, a very long period is required. In the peat bogs of Denmark, which are from ten to forty feet deep, Sir C. Lyell tells us that the lowest layer, two or three feet thick, consists of peat moss, then come Scotch firs mixed with the moss, and above these, oaks, with birch, aspen, and hazel. In the woods of Denmark of the present day—and this was also the case in the time of the Romans—beech are the predominant trees. Scotch firs are quite extinct, and oaks are comparatively rare.

This peat, then, for its formation, has required a time during which have flourished three separate series of forest growths, the pine, the oak, and the beech, the last of these having commenced, probably, at least 2,000 years ago. Yet, geologically speaking, this peat is but a deposit of yesterday. It will thus be seen that, although processes similar to those by which coal was formed are still going on, practically, all of this valuable mineral was formed an infinite number of years back in the world's history, and that, consequently, our supply is strictly limited.

And it is the more thorough appreciation of this fact that has of late sent a thrill of alarm throughout the country. Our consumption is rapidly increasing. In 1854, 64,661,400 tons of coal were raised in the United Kingdom, whereas in 1865, 94,631,515 tons were yielded by our collieries. To this latter amount, at least sixteen millions of tons may be added for waste in working, which would bring up the quantity raised in 1865 to more than 110,000,000 tons. This amount is so vast, that it can hardly be realised, except by mathematicians, unless put in some other form. A recent writer, then, has calculated that with 100,000,000 tons of coal, a wall might be built all round the globe, three feet wide and seven feet high. Now, whether we hold, with Mr. Hull, that our coal deposits will last 1,000 years, or with Sir W. Armstrong, about two centuries, or with the still more recent authority, M. Jevons, that our whole available stock of good coal will be exhausted in two or three generations, there is every reason to fear that with our coal the greatness of England as a manufacturing nation will pass away for ever.

We are using our precious fuel at a reckless rate, wasting it in working, wasting it in burning, wasting it in a hundred ways, as though there were no possibility of the failure of our supply. Unfortunately for posterity, the danger of the exhaustion of our mines does not seem to us sufficiently imminent to stir us up to make those efforts to economise our coal which we might otherwise do with considerable effect.

Space, however, will not permit me to discuss in this article the measures that might be taken for this purpose. It will only allow me to express, in conclusion, the earnest hope that the evil day may be deferred longer than we think, and that when it does arrive, it will come upon us more lightly than we have any good reason to expect.

HENRY B. SPENCER, M.D.

A HOLIDAY SKETCH

WHETHER our employment be entirely of a mental or physical character, rest and change are essential to our well-being. As our digestive functions would rebel at and suffer from a continued course of similar food, so does the human mind and constitution feel the effects of persistent work of one nature. All employment alike exhausts and enervates, although there are degrees in its effect. Perhaps the maximum evil is attained by an association of monotony and confinement—an absence of interest and of fresh air.

It cannot, therefore, be a surprising matter that the sun, to my mind, shone brighter than ever on the morning I started from home for the railway-station, instead of my office. How one grudges every minute that passes, for the first few days of liberty and enjoyment! and how anxiously one counts the days, and endeavours to arrange as much amusement as possible in the shortest space of time! Railways are an immense advantage to holiday folks, although for my own part I found as much novelty and excitement in the journey as in my holiday; and would, if my own feelings were consulted, lengthen the former at the expense of the latter. A railway journey suits me exactly, there is so much variety and yet so little exertion; there is a self-satisfaction in viewing as much as possible in the shortest time; in having a *multum-in-parvo* panorama, flavoured with just sufficient risk and probability of danger to produce slight excitement, and a gratifying sensation at its termination in safety. All this I obtained by taking a seat in the express train leaving the Waterloo station for Portsmouth. My original intention being, as you may imagine, to ruralise in the Isle of Wight, I hastened from the station to the docks, and it was on that very day that I met my old friend Hamilton, arm-in-arm with a rubicund and jovial-looking companion. "Hallo, old fellow!" shouts he, "whatever brings you here, and why this hurry?" "Two months leave," said I, "and a desire to economise that time will answer both questions." "We can help you to do the latter, and to properly enjoy the former," said the jolly, sailor-like companion. "My yacht is ready for sea—we want a third chum; will you be the man?" The idea instantly rushed across my mind—Why, here is a way of continuing my journey that exactly follows out my pet scheme; see as much as you can in a short time, without exertion, and with a little danger. "Of course I will, if you'll have me," replied I, and in half an hour I was comfortably nestled on board the yacht "Anemone," and gliding smoothly we knew not where. That is one of the chief

pleasures of yachting—never to know exactly where any one day will find you. Uncertainty is a species of enjoyment, and to a man who always knows what will be expected from him on the morrow, and who has been nearly destroyed by monotony, it is supremely grand. What spoils an appetite so much as to be told what a dinner is to consist of? and it is, and has been all my life a paradox to me, what cooks eat, and how they can eat it.

Away we went, our sails well filled out, and the clear and sparkling spray dashed away from our bow, glistening in the sunshine like jewels of rare value. It's a glorious feeling, that of mastery over the elements; and with wind and water subservient to our will, we felt how high in the scale of nature human beings were undoubtedly intended to rank. But, after all, "it is not in mortals to command success," and the thunder-clouds that were gathering around the horizon, the falling mercury in the barometer at the foot of the saloon-companion, and the dubious expression of the skipper on deck, were collective evidence that if we went out to sea, the elements, that were at times willing slaves, might become powerful enemies.

"We'll have to wait till the morning, my boy," said our host; "so we may as well get into a sheltered nook, and dine at our ease." All was so novel and amusing to me that I cared not for the delay, and we soon came to an anchor within a short distance of a projecting spot. What more jolly? A clean and beautiful promenade, fresh breezes, jovial companions, every comfort at hand, entire freedom, and a comfortable bed to look forward to. The day passed quickly and almost unnoticed—we had so much to look at. In the midst of a conversation, my eye fell on one of the strangest-looking objects you can imagine.

"Ma conscience! Hamilton, what can that extraordinary thing be? Do you see it? It's like a tortoise carrying some enlarged chimney-pots, or a new specimen of a pre-Adamite curiosity."

"Ha! ha! my landsman," replied both my friends in one breath; its only the American ironclad; but the name which the Yankees have christened it, might lead anyone to imagine that language had failed, and that it was now necessary to manufacture, from the original alphabet, new appellations."

"Oh! I don't know that," continued Hamilton; "the name is easily understood, when we consider how often the Americans associate their works by name with existing points of interest,—rivers and favourite districts in their own country. The "Miautonamah is only another example—"

"Here, stop that dissertation on nomenclature! we shall just have time to row over and board her, if they will permit us, and if you have never seen an ironclad, now's your time exactly."

Bravo! thought I, here's luck, and in a few minutes we found ourselves beside the curious-looking craft. Notwithstanding the notice prominently displayed that there was "no admittance," we trusted to the talismanic influence of the flag that was flying from our boat's stern, and politely addressed the American officer we saw promenading the deck, which just corresponded, in its height from the water, with the gunwale of our gig.

"Pray step up!" said he; "you see we have crossed the ocean, and no mistake, and I calculate we may reckon on being the first of our class of vessels that have done that same thing. They sent a lot more of the old sort, to attend on us, but we don't require them, and their pertinacity makes them just too much company."

"Careful to salute 'the stars and stripes,' and recognising the seat of government on board a man of war—the quarter deck, we made a favourable impression on our host, and soon entered into a most agreeable conversation. Making every excuse for national bombast and custom, and allowing for that exaggeration, which, under the circumstances, was quite pardonable, we were told as follows: "That's the deck, consisting of three-and-a-half feet of wood, and seven inches of iron; nice and clean, ain't it? Well, when we are at sea, yer know, all those openings are battened down, and the protection railing round the side is removed, and stowed away. Then, I guess, the sea has a clear sweep over her, and no mistake. This is one of our turrets, and nothing that has yet got existence can touch her. She consists—she does—of eleven plates of iron, each plate an inch thick; and now just observe, the plates are not welded, but merely rivetted together."

"But," said one of us, "we thought that was objectionable, as the heads of the bolts were driven off by the concussion, and became perfect shot in their effect inside the turret."

"Ah! that was so with our work at first, and is so now with yours; but we've gone ahead, and no bolts can move in this craft. Each turret contains two of our recent guns, and with a charge of 50lbs of powder, I can roll one of those cricket balls, weighing only 460lbs, along the surface of decently smooth water for 5,000 yards. Yes, I can! The turrets revolve by steam machinery, and, if we don't wish to change our direction, that port stop can be swung in the front of our port by two men, directly we've sent our "pill" on its errand of discovery."

"And how often can you fire these immense pieces?" suggested Hamilton.

"Wall, now, we have four of these small toys, and we are just able to load one every four minutes—that, you can easily perceive, gives us a shot a minute; and as the loading goes on inside the turret, with the only aperture closed by the port stop, our enemies

don't know which hole we mean to pop out of next. Then, as to noise, we have got the means of deadening that also, so that when you're inside, you only hear a sort of hail-storm, are perfectly comfortable, and as cool as Wenham-Lake ice."

"But how is that managed?" said I.

"By the means of six air-pumps in the centre of the vessel; they are worked by steam; and although we can go all over the craft unobserved, we are supplied with breath from the outside."

"But you have some smaller turrets, I see, up above these."

"Oh! those are the pilot-houses—and the vessel can be steered from either of them. They are just as secure as the turrets themselves, and are made of iron of similar thickness."

"But all this wood-work would be destroyed if you were in action," remarked I.

"I rather guess it *would*," jocularly replied our Yankee friend; "it's only for present ornament, and no use otherwise—they are quite welcome to it, that they are. You see the for'rard pilot-house don't revolve, so that the man in that may always know what he's about, and that is the only place where the chaps can get a certain drive at us. I've been in action myself in the other iron-clad; we've had as many as 500 shot strike us, and I never felt so perfectly happy as when on board her."

"But was no damage done, or no one injured?"

"Pooh! what damage can they do with popguns?" roared out our bombastic companion. "They fired at us as long as they could, the only damage was a dent about two and a half inches deep, and that was no account. One of our officers was in the for'rard pilot-house, squinting at the rebels, when they popped a shot clean over the aperture, and *blew a grain or two of powder into his eye*—that was the only injury I ever heard account of. Don't go that way, we've got a tight road, but a safe one, down the hatchway by the pilot-house, which we always use during service, because, you know, we don't show a hair of our head at that time."

Away we went, therefore, after our guide, and descending ladders at uncomfortable angles to us landmen, we soon found ourselves below. The arrangements were complete, and if any human being can become accustomed to a life in a mine, or a journey in a diving-bell, why, they would soon become naturalised on board an iron-clad. For my own part, I recalled my sixpenny experiences in the Polytechnic Institution, and my boyish courage when I descended into the water-tank there; and I felt a sensation of relief at my ascent up the companion, and reappearance on the deck of the uncouth monster that represents our present, and doubtless our future system of naval warfare. Amidst our numerous expressions of gratitude and admiration at the polite

attention and familiar manner of the American officers, and the very open and candid way in which they had acted, and afforded us so much interesting information, my ear was attracted by one of our party asking,—

“Did you know Captain ——, who commanded an iron-clad in your late war?”

“I guess I knew him slightly, stranger,” responded our transatlantic friend. “He was the most darned coward we met—could never stand after one or two shots, and he was a rebel. Yes, he was!”

“Come on, Tom,” shouted I, “that’s enough of your acquaintances;” and in a few moments we were again on board our own yacht, and once more under that glorious and truly independent flag—the Union Jack—where we could enjoy our feelings of wonder at the alteration that had taken place in the armament of the present day, admire the energy and go-ahead character of our neighbouring cousins, but at the same time congratulate ourselves that we were Englishmen, and under English rule and direction.

The next morning saw us on our way out to sea. At the break of day were the skipper and crew of the yacht about, and active in getting us under weigh, and when I arose, nothing was to be seen of our former night’s companion; on all sides was the glorious ocean, gleaming with golden shades, and carousing in its own fashion and magnificence. With a stout breeze, well filled sails, and apparent confident feeling, did the tight little vessel cut through the waves that playfully rolled across her course; and as she thrust them on one side, and tossed them over and over, they seemed to recover themselves, and laughingly followed in her wake, vainly endeavouring to catch their tormentor, and early morning visitors.

Fresh air is health in a compact form. It is more important than food, and so alters the constitution of mankind, that many evils are averted, and conditions that would be highly pernicious are robbed of most of their malignancy. How well does a labourer seem to relish and make good use of his crust of bread and his piece of hard cheese! and how little have those who freely breathe the atmosphere, and seek to get it pure, to consult their digestion, or to regulate their ordinary diet! Curiously may we observe, however, that both sensible and cultivated people are careless, if not ignorant, on these points, and that our present system of education does not, in most instances, tend to enlighten its pupils on these all-important principles.

The fears that were entertained as to the weather were not unfounded, and, although the severity of the storm had been

escaped, its effect was plainly seen, and the high swell of the sea, with the repeated and peculiar gusts of wind, were left as reminders of the power of the elements, and warnings to adventurous mariners. The whole of that day was one of hilarious excitement, so entirely different to any other sensation I had felt; my spirits were loosened and ran wild in the free and unfettered liberty I was enjoying. Towards evening we had hoped to have reached Jersey, and anxiously observed every speck on the horizon, believing that we were powerful enough to do as we pleased.

The well-known three light-houses that point out the Casket Rocks near Alderney, soon proved that we had over calculated our capabilities, and that the little boat, although willing, was matched against a wind and tide of too much power. The navigation around the island of Alderney is too treacherous to permit of any trifling, and as we could not manage to round the point that was necessary to continue our journey with safety, we quietly succumbed to our position, and made for the harbour of Alderney, which we reached ere the last shades of evening closed around us.

The want of any direct communication to or from this small but far from insignificant island, renders it almost an unknown spot to Englishmen. It was, however, one of the pet schemes of the late Prince Consort to strongly fortify it, and to make it an important military station. He certainly endeavoured to carry out his design, and his name is attached to all the buildings of importance as a consequence. The proximity of the coast of France, and more especially of the fortress of Cherbourg, which is only eighteen miles from the harbour, places Alderney as an important position in the event of a war; and doubtless, if the full intentions of Prince Albert had been realised, a very commodious and effectual harbour would have resulted.

The breakwater which has been erected is over a mile in length, and effectually shelters the island from the northerly and westerly gales; but although the sum of £1,200,000 has been expended, it is now found that a very boisterous and heavy sea rushes in from the east during any stormy season, which is exceedingly dangerous, and quite unavoidable without a farther outlay of an equal sum, in erecting a similar protection for that side of the harbour. Fortunately, but little difficulty was felt in finding material for this enormous work, granite constituting a large proportion of the geological construction of the island; and if the island is to be rendered of any service to us as a nation, it will only be by providing a safe anchorage for our fleet; for under the present system of warfare, any of the forts or protections that exist will soon succumb to the advanced power and character of the weapons of attack now in use.

Fourteen forts exist on the small dot of land in the English channel, and many of them are of large size, and fortified with heavy guns in great numbers. If we are to continue our iron-clads and "Monitor" style of vessels, all the guns surmounting our national defences will prove but "show goods," for no effects can be expected from attacks on such defences as those now presented to them.

The idea of the Government was an extensive one in reference to Alderney. Barrack accommodation for an entire regiment of the line, and a goodly number of artillery, has been provided; and although, at the present, but a detachment and a single battery ornament the island, it could be garrisoned with an ample force in a very short time.

There is one more form of protection which was nearly overlooked, and that is, a Militia Artillery, under good management, and far from ineffective in their work. The organisation of the Alderney Militia took place in 1777, and in 1781 was in a good condition, being well supported by the wealthier inhabitants, and favourably received by the poorer classes.

Before the governor bethought himself of this rational method of self-protection, the defence of the important island was confided to women. On this subject there are many curious facts published: the women were accustomed to watch vigilantly, in towers situated over the island. Tar barrels heaped over with fern were ready for instant ignition if danger was near, and the more muscular and powerful of the Alderney inhabitants, aroused to the sense of their responsibilities, would then have assembled to protect their hearths and homes.

The dress, we are told, of the Alderney women, was peculiar, "consisting of a scarlet cloth petticoat and jacket, a large ruff round their necks, fastened under their chins by a black ribbon or gold hook, and round linen cap, stiffened so much as to be taken off and put on like a man's hat."

During my short stay in the island, I was not so fortunate as to behold one of these attentive aborigines; and whether civilisation has ever affected this remote spot of earth or not, certain it is that nothing in any way *outré*, or unusual, struck our senses. As soon as we cast anchor in the harbour, we received a polite invitation from the officers of the detachment to visit them in their quarters—"Fort Albert"—and accepted it with pleasure, as it gave us an opportunity of viewing the principal fort in the island. We soon found ourselves at home, and that our presence was peculiarly welcome. Residence in Alderney, especially during the winter months, must be excessively like banishment, or the life of prisoners of war. As Napoleon the First must have mused and

meditated when landed at St. Helena, so can I imagine the officers of any detachment cogitating over their wine in the bomb-proof buildings of Fort Albert.

What vitality and elasticity are contained in an Englishman's spiritual constitution! The songs, choruses, loud laughter, and thoroughly Britannic joviality, that broke forth whilst we were being entertained, conclusively proved that the natural hilarity and large heart so characteristic of the army of our country, was not quenched, but merely smouldering, ready for ignition and energetic combustion at the merest touch of the fusee of friendship.

The next morning found our tight little craft under weigh, and as we rounded the head of the breakwater, responding to the signals visible from the battlements of Fort Albert, we collectively breathed a reluctant "Good-bye," which, with the knowledge of returning to work, monotony, and confinement, threw a shade for the time over my "holiday."

P.

PIPES AND TOBACCO

IN these days, when oaths are kept as carefully out of a lady's hearing as grey hairs are from her sight—alas! much more carefully than vice of another description, and which our ancestors forty or fifty years ago, winebibbers and blasphemers though they might be, would have blushed to speak of even to their sons,—in these days, I say, it is rather difficult to imagine the state of society, when one of a gentleman's qualifications was a string of oaths which would put a Billingsgate fishwoman to shame, and it was in those days that the anecdote from which I have borrowed my title took place.

An uncle of my father's (a gentleman fully accomplished as the times went, competent to drink and swear, ride and attend cock-fights, with the greatest nobleman in the land), happened to be one of three passengers inside the night mail from Edinburgh *viâ* Newcastle to London. He had taken his place from the first-mentioned city, though he did not intend to occupy it until the "Highflyer" stopped to change horses at a small country town named Wooler. Having greeted the coachman, admired the team, and fortified himself with a stiff tumbler of brandy and water, he proceeded to arrange himself in his corner, and had just placed his legs comfortably on the seat opposite, when the two passengers who had travelled all the way from Edinburgh, and had been refreshing the inner man in the dining-room of the "Tankerville Arms," appeared.

"Friend, thou hast taken my place," said one of them, smiling blandly, and pointing to my uncle's legs, which were removed with a proper compliment of expletives. The stranger, still smiling, took possession, the second followed, and off went the eager team.

My uncle knew every acre of ground for the next twenty or thirty miles, and coming of an agricultural family, he made no attempt to conceal his approval or disapproval of the system pursued by the different men whose farms lay along the turnpike. Of course, each exclamation began, continued, and ended with the usual string of oaths,—at last he was induced to relate an event, which, though of no moment in this history, had caused considerable excitement in the neighbourhood. When he had finished, his opposite neighbour, whom we have already mentioned, remarked—

"Friend, I can tell thee a better story than thine, and one thou will do well to remember and remark.—A neighbour of mine—pipes and tobacco!—was,—pipes and tobacco!—yes, he was—pipes and tobacco!—going out. Oh!—pipes and tobacco!—to walk, when—pipes and tobacco!—who on this—pipes and tobacco!—earth, should he meet but the—pipes and

tobacco!—parson, walking along with his—pipes and tobacco!—face as long as to-day and to-morrow. My friend started, yes sir!—pipes and tobacco!—he started, and, said he—pipes and tobacco!!”—My uncle had gradually stared harder and harder, sometimes in his speaker’s face, made him think there was a good story, but if it went on in this way, what could he make of it; so out of all patience he shouted:—

“D—n it, sir! what the devil’s the good of saying, ‘pipes and tobacco?’”

“Even so, friend,” said the quaker, smiling; “thou perceivest it to be a foolish, useless expression, marring the interest of my tale, and yet it is harmless. Pipes and tobacco offend not the Spirit of God; but thou, friend, didst condemn thy soul and my eyes to hell twenty times in the space of five short minutes. Thy expressions not only marred the interest of thy discourse, but made me tremble lest the Maker thou blasphemest shouldst call thee to fulfil thy chosen fate.”

It is from this story, told me by my dear mother, that I have chosen my title; and having effected that most difficult of all things in writing an article, namely a beginning, I shall go on to say what I intended about “Pipes and Tobacco.”

When tobacco was first introduced into Europe, is a subject upon which there appears to be considerable doubt. One thing, however, is certain,—nobody smoked before the 15th century in that portion of the globe. In that eventful era, the mighty continent of America was discovered, and amongst other wonders related by Columbus and his companions touching the inhabitants of this new world was, that they “carried firebrands about with them, and puffed smoke from their mouths and noses.” Oviedo, the historian, calls it very pernicious, and states that it brought on insensibility, going on to say that they inhaled it through the nostrils by means of a forked tube or cane, the shape of the letter Y. Be this as it may, Columbus, on his return, stated that the inhabitants of Paraguay opposed his men landing, by charging them with their mouths full of a herb called tobacco, the juice of which they squirted into the Spaniards’ faces, aiming always at their eyes.

Francisco Lobez de Gomara, Chaplain to the expedition which, under Cortez, conquered Mexico, speaks of smoking as the usual amusement of the people; and another writer, of the same date, in narrating his personal adventures in America, says, “There are some bushes, not very large, like reeds, that produce a leaf in shape like that of the walnut, though rather larger, which (where it is used) is held in great esteem by the natives, and very much prized by the slaves whom the Spaniards have bought from Ethiopia. When these leaves are in season they pick them, tie

them up in bundles, and suspend them near their fireplace till they are very dry: and when they wish to use them, they take a leaf of their grain (maize), and putting one of the others into it, roll them tight together; then set them on fire at one end, and putting the other end to the mouth, they draw their breath up through it; wherefore the smoke goes into the mouth, the throat, the head, and they retain it as long as they can; for they find pleasure in it; and so much do they fill themselves with the cruel smoke, that they lose their reason, and remain the greater part of the day or night stupefied."

Harcot, in writing his account of the voyage on which he accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh, says the natives of Virginia looked upon tobacco as the especial gift of their gods, using it as incense when they made sacrifices. The North-American Indians have a tradition of somewhat similar tendency; namely, that in ages gone by a goddess descended from the heavens, and on being hospitably treated by the chiefs promised they should be amply rewarded, and that upon the very spot where she stood they would, thirteen moons hence, find certain things that cheer them through all ages. At the appointed time they returned, and found maize, kidney-beans, and tobacco.

They have, since then, made use of the pipe both as a daily comfort and sacred sign of peace. The same habit extends among the natives of the west coast, and in most of the Pacific Islands. When old graves have been opened, pipes of every shape and material (many hitherto unknown) come to light, and puzzle mankind by their quaint devices. Some of these are so formed that, being fitted to the top, a vessel containing tobacco, a dozen or more tubes could be inserted, and thus a party of friends smoke the social pipe together. This description, though now unknown, seems to have, at a remote period, been very common, and are made of a peculiarly hard and close-grained clay.

No diminution in the prevailing habit has taken place among the few that remain of the aborigines of America. The pipe still holds its wonted place at feast or gathering, and the sacred pipe of peace is still the most inviolable pledge they make use of: it is under the protection of their gods, and is carefully preserved until occasion makes its sanction necessary. Catlin, in his delightful account of North America, relates many new and interesting anecdotes and incidents connected with the calumet, as the pipe of peace is named, and describes it as surmounted with "war-eagles' quills, and never allowed to be used on any other occasion than that of peace-making, when the chief brings it into treaty, and unfolding the many bandages which are carefully kept around it, has it ready to be mutually smoked by the chiefs, after the terms of the

treaty are agreed upon, as the means of solemnising it, which is done by passing the sacred stem to each chief, who draws one breath of smoke only through it, thereby passing the most inviolable pledge they can give for keeping the peace." He says further:—

"There is no custom more uniformly in common use amongst the poor Indians than that of smoking, nor more highly valued. His pipe is his constant companion through life; his messenger of peace; he pledges his friends through its stem and its bowl; and when its care-drowning fumes cease to flow, it takes a place with him in his solitary grave, with his tomahawk and war-club, companions to his long-fancied mild and beautiful hunting-grounds."

The Chinese claim the privilege of being the first nation who made use of this all-prevailing habit, and, strange to say, many of the old pipes dug up in America are so carved as to bear a strong resemblance to the Mongolian cast of feature. But for this, little attention would have been paid to the Chinaman's assertion, as every one who knows anything of them or their literature, must be conversant with the fact that whatever is good or excellent they claim as their own, and it is well-nigh impossible to get one to allow that there is anything new under the sun.

Tobacco was not the name the plant was first made known by, but that of *nicotiana*, from the name of the Lord of Villemain, who presented Catherine de Medici with several plants, calling it, in compliment to her majesty, *Herbe Médicée*. The name soon gave place to his own, which is kept up in that of nicotine, the scientific designation of the oil extracted from the tobacco; finally, the name given by the Spaniards, and brought by them from America, superseded all others, and is now used all over the world, each nation, though varying the orthography, adhering to the same sound.

It was to its medicinal qualities that its first popularity in our realm is due; all bowed to a decree of science, and tobacco began to be estimated as the sovereign cure for almost every complaint known. Doctors lectured, old women gossiped, and Europe consumed fabulous quantities of *herba santa*, most of which was cultivated in France and England.

Poets of that date vie with each other in singing the praise of tobacco, and the stage teemed with witty discussions, always resulting in the triumph of the weed. So rapid was its progress in favour, that, in a curious old book, published in 1614, called "The Honestie of this Age," we find recorded:—"There is not so base a groome that comes into an alehouse to call for his pot, but he must have his pipe of tobacco."

Year after year served to increase the habit, until it grew to

such an excess as to be considered a general evil, and a crusade against all growers, users, or sellers of the pernicious leaf was commenced. Pope Urban the Eighth, issued an edict of excommunication against every one who made use of it in churches. James the First—King Jamie—wrote his famous Counterblast, and not content with that, farther wrote in “A Collection of Witty Apothegms,” that “Tobacco was a lively image and pattern of hell, for that it had, by allusion, in it all the parts and vices of the world whereby hell may be gained, to wit: First, *it has a smoke*, so are all the vanities of this world: secondly, *it delighteth them who take it*, so do the pleasures of the world delight the men of the world: thirdly, *it maketh men drunken and light in the head*, so do the vanities of the world, men are drunken therewith: fourthly, *he that taketh tobacco saith he cannot leave it, it doth bewitch him*, even so the pleasures of the world make men loath to leave them: and farther, besides all this, *it is like hell* in the very substance of it, for it is a stinking, loathsome thing, *and so is hell.*”

Thus wrote the King—the gentleman who, according to the clever author of the “Ingoldsby Legends:”

“In quilted doublet and great trunk breeches,
Held in abhorrence, tobacco and witches.”

Not satisfied with writing against the obnoxious weed, the King put a heavy tax upon it, which Charles the First found very useful in replenishing the exchequer. Nor did Nol Cromwell himself object to it, but rather agreeing with King James, that the plant injured the soil, he sent his soldiers to beat and tread down all the tobacco-fields they could find; yet in spite of their pretended zeal and the Protector’s good example, the soldiery smoked at their great general’s funeral, which Evelyn records as “The joyfullest funeral he ever saw, for there were none that cried but dogs which the soldiers hooted away, drinking and taking tobacco in the streets as they went.” Yet still there was no doubt that a strict Puritan held it in abhorrence, and it was truly said or sung, he

“Abhorres a satin suit and velvet cloak,
And says tobacco is the devil’s smoke.”

When Charles II. ascended the throne he confirmed the laws for the suppression of its culture, extending the prohibition to Ireland; and it is historically asserted, that among other edicts pronounced at the University of Cambridge was one against smoking. Yet, in despite of the royal disapproval, the habit continued to be general. Authors, and particularly poets, asserted that it brightened their imagination, and under its exhilarating influence, their verse, whether in praise of beauty, valour, or wealth, flowed more freely, and with a more even cadence, while,

at the same time, it had the power to awaken the soul, and excite the imagination. East, west, north, and south, tobacco held undisputed sway, until at last royalty itself accorded its sanction.

Now, in the nineteenth century, a boy is scarcely out of the nursery, when you catch him with a pipe in his mouth, or picking up the ends of Tom's cigars; and shortly enough, having gone through the usual probationary term of sickness incidental to acquiring the habit, he blinks his watery eyes and struts along, trying to remember all his cousin—who was in the Guards—said, and thinking in his poor, innocent heart, what a jolly thing it must be to be grown up, and have a horse, besides being able to smoke without feeling queer. Ah! he little knows what a change a few years will work, and how often that same chattering, chaffing cousin, wishes he was a boy again.

What a desperate sensation that same smoking sickness is! Talk of sea-sickness, it is nothing to the other; and having once experienced it, I have wondered ever since at the pluck and determination of our English boys in conquering this enemy to smoking. If they worked half as hard, and with a quarter as good will, at any one branch of their studies, what clever sons we should have! How mothers dread the first cigar, and look upon the cutty pipe as the stretch of depravity!

“*Anything* after that, my dear!” says grandmamma, after relating the fact that your firstborn had been seen in the very act of displaying a well-coloured cutty to an envious companion from next door. Of course, you can say nothing, except, indeed, you wish to bring down a thunderbolt upon your own head.

I am no smoker myself, and never was, yet I can, and do, understand that it may be a solace and luxury to thousands, whether overworked or underworked; both need comfort at times, and, of the two, I verily believe the last are most to be pitied. An overworked man may growl a little, and look with some sort of envy upon his idle *confrères*, but he has small cause; for could he take one glance behind the curtain, he would return with gladness to the weariness of head or hand, rather than the terrible self-debasing weariness of heart and feeling.

Our greatest as well as wisest men have acknowledged the soothing companionship of a pipe. As for poets, have not Byron, Moore, Scott, Campbell, and, in our own days, Tennyson, sung its praises? Dr. Parr, the great authority on pills and longevity, smoked, it is written, as many as twenty pipes in one evening, and yet nobody can deny that his state of nerves and health bore up to the last. Sir Isaac Newton smoked and worked until his death at an old age; and our own great novelist and satirist says,

in his "Fitzboodle Papers :"—"What is smoking that it should be considered a crime? I believe in my heart the women are jealous of it as a rival. The fact is, the cigar is a rival to the ladies, and their conqueror, too. Do you suppose you will conquer? Look over the wide world and see; your adversary has overcome it."

SPRING FLOWERS

THE primrose blossoms in the glade,
 The daisy on the lea,
 The violet hides its modest head,
 Fairest amid the three.
 Let others sing the flushed June's praise,
 Circled with rosy ring,
 But these demand most simple lays—
 These first sweet flowers of spring.

In childhood's happy, laughing hours,
 I sported 'mid their bloom,
 And watched the welcome, sunny showers,
 Increase their glad perfume.
 E'en now, although those moments seem
 A distant murmuring,
 They're angels bright in my life's dream—
 These first sweet flowers of spring.

And when my spirit, swallow-like,
 Flies o'er the sea of death—
 When friendly grasp and foeman's strike
 Cease with my ceasing breath;
 When no more fierce Ambition's slave,
 When freed from Love's sharp sting,
 Oh, may they wave above my grave—
 These first sweet flowers of spring.

THE LUCKY MEMBRANE

Who would not have good fortune, immunity from the dangers of the sea, freedom from the perils of the land, and, in fact, invulnerability against all the accidental ills to which mankind is subject? Everyone surely. And yet the means for obtaining all these benefits are obliged to be advertised in newspapers, before customers can be obtained for them. And the price, too, is so ridiculously low for such valuable specifics, that we wonder all the world does not outbid itself in an endeavour to secure the precious safeguards.

The lucky charms which have power to work so much good, by averting so much evil, are named cauls, and are membranes that cover the heads of some children at their births. This membrane, scientifically called the amnion and the neutha, has had from the earliest times the reputation of being powerful to avert misfortune from its possessor; and to come into the world with a caul on the head is considered to be a most lucky circumstance. Great virtues are supposed to attend upon the possession of such a membrane; for instance, and in particular, safety from shipwreck and drownings, and similar hap-hazard calamities by water. Thus it happens that mariners most frequently endeavour to obtain children's cauls.

Ælius Lampridius, a Latin historian of the fourth century, in his history of the Emperor Antoninus Diadumenianus gives an instance of the great good fortune attending one born with this natural coif. Majolus attributes to the Roman lawyers the belief that the possession of a child's caul would make them eloquent and triumphant in their suits and pleadings. The superstition was very prevalent in the primitive ages of the Church; and Saint Chrysostom inveighs against it in several of his homilies. He is most severe against one Prætus, a clergyman, who, like many of his cloth, being desirous of having good fortune, bought a caul of a midwife. Perhaps if he had had a call of another description, he might not have required the aid of such factitious means. This membrane was sold for medical and magical uses. The superstitious belief in its virtue obtains in the east; and there are several names for the article in the Arabic language. Credulity on this subject is equally prevalent in France, where having a caul is accounted a guarantee of good fortune. The French proverbially say of a lucky man, *Il est né coiffé*; and another of their expressions, *Etre né coiffé*, signifies that the person to whom it is applied is extremely fortunate. The old Scotch name for the caul was, silly or sely how, meaning the holy or fortunate, cap, or hood.

Levinus Lemnius says, if the caul be of a blackish colour it is an omen of ill-fortune to the child who is born with it, but if it be of a reddish hue it betokens everything good. In the *Athenian Oracle* we are told, "Some would persuade us that such as are born with cauls about their heads are not subject to the miseries and calamities of humanity as other persons; are to expect all good fortune, even so far as to become invulnerable, provided they be always careful to carry it about them. Nay, if it should by chance be lost or surreptitiously taken away, the benefit of it would be transferred to the party that found it." Face says to Dapper in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*, "Yo' were born with a cawl o' your head." Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," written in 1621, speaks "Of a silly, jealous fellow, that, seeing his child new-born, included in a kell (meaning a caul), thought sure a Franciscan, that used to come to his house, was the father of it (it was so like the friar's cowl), and thereupon threatened the friar to kill him."

The will of Sir John Offley, knight, of Madeley Manor, Staffordshire, which was proved at Doctors' Commons on May 20th, 1658, contains the following singular bequest of a family caul, which was carefully preserved in a casket of enamelled gold, and left as a heirloom by the testator:—

"Item, I will and devise one jewel done all in gold enammelled, wherein there is a caul that covered my face and shoulders when I first came into the world, the use thereof to my loving daughter, the Lady Elizabeth Jenny, so long as she shall live; and after her decease, the use likewise thereof to her son, Offley Jenny, during his natural life; and after his decease to my own right heirs male for ever; and so from heir to heir, to be left so long as it shall please God of his goodness to continue any heir male of my name, desiring the same jewel be not concealed nor sold by any of them."

Grose says that a person possessed of a caul may know the state of the health of the individual who was born with it; for if he be alive and well it is firm and crisp, but if he be dead or sick it is relaxed and flaccid.

It is not an uncommon thing to see children's cauls advertised in the newspapers for sale. Brand gives examples of such advertisements. In 1779 this magic membrane, this film of power, this fairy godmother's precious gift, was offered for sale for twenty guineas; in 1813 for twelve pounds; in 1835 for ten guineas; and lately we saw one offered for five pounds; and another for thirty shillings. Good fortune is certainly going begging, when we find it tendered in a portable form for the small sum of one sovereign and a half. But then this thirty shillings'

specific was announced to be "not quite perfect," hence probably its very low price. Perhaps the semi-happy, half-safe purchaser of it, deceived by a penny-wise economy, may some day find himself like Achilles—invulnerable in every part except his heel.

MEDITATION

BRIGHT stars are twinkling in the summer heaven,
As if they swayed to the soft cloud-born wind ;
And from the copsewood, dark and undefined,
Comes the sweet music of a song—uneven,
Swelling and sinking with the warbling throat.
On such a night how pleasant 'tis to float
About clear waters, in a dreamy mind,
Musing upon old loves and absent faces !
Leave to the vintager his ruddy leaven,
From trailing vines, the bleating of white flocks,
And lowing kine, to glad the farmer's ears.
I care not for the clashing of sharp shears,
Nor love the wine-press. I would haunt grey rocks,
And hear the waves in unfrequented places.

H.



A LIFE'S MYSTERY

BY CLINTON HOPE.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OPEN WARFARE.

THE anticipated guests duly arrived, with the exception of Ada Hartop; and from the hour of their appearance, nothing but sporting was talked off, as the ladies, joining in the enthusiasm expressed by the gentlemen, felt no greater pleasure, for the time being, than that of discussing the chances of the chase.

Lilias alone seemed careless of the sport; and having lost her kind friend, Lady Christabel, who had left to pay a promised visit elsewhere, she made a companion of little Melbourne. She was not generally fond of children, but this one she would caress with startling vehemence of affection, always, however, in secret. The child, too, seemed instinctively to cling to her, showering his soft kisses upon her with infantile joy. Children are allowed to be great physiognomists, and perhaps it was the devoted attachment Lilias's every glance betrayed for him that filled Melbourne's innocent soul with a fondness for her exceeding the love he gave his kind guardian.

Poor Mary looked on with well-nigh a jealous pang, when the boy, sliding from her lap, would run with childish glee to my lady, testifying his delight at being with her in every conceivable manner. Possibly it was compassion for Mrs. Lyttleton that made Lilias check Melbourne's advances as much as was in her power while in the young widow's presence; or it might be, that, as she was so unaccustomed to children, she possessed that species of diffidence, not uncommon with some young women with regard to a display of attachment towards an infant. However this might be, she used, as I have said, every means she could summon to

wean the child from her in company, amply making up for her apparent neglect to the little fellow when alone with him, by an additional warmth of love.

Nothing of this was lost upon the watchful Hinda, and often (when Lady Welgrave had stolen with the boy into a secluded part of the garden, or to her own room, there to pet him unrestrainedly, and sometimes to weep over him as he slept in her arms,) the eyes of her foe were fixed upon her with ferocious satisfaction, and it was with difficulty that she could restrain her hidden malice so far as to avoid breaking in upon my lady's privacy.

Mrs. Lyttleton had one day accounted somewhat singularly for the overweening interest she manifested for the child, by explaining that her regard for him was occasioned, not only by the common claims of childhood (helplessness and innocence), but by a resemblance she fancied he bore to her husband. She averred that Melbourne's eyes and hair were the exact counterpart of Norman's, and that in features he was much like him, though his expression was different. The sister-in-law disagreed with her, and affirmed that if the child were like any one she knew, it was Lady Welgrave. Liliás laughed at such a fanciful idea, and had no wish to encourage it; but Miss Lyttleton would not so soon part with her conceit, and appealed to the assembled company for their opinion, each member of which differed, some asserting that the likeness was marked, and others that it was undiscernible. Lord Welgrave sided with Mrs. Lyttleton, and declared the boy to be strikingly like her husband; and soon the argument was relinquished for one of greater magnitude, at least from the lips, if not from the heart. Three there were of that company who thought much of the matter, unimportant as it may appear; namely, Lady Welgrave, Hinda, and Mary Lyttleton.

The marchioness was standing one afternoon in the half embrace of her husband, plucking absently at the leaves of a dahlia; he engaged the while in watching her fair, thoughtful face, and wondering, with a lover-like wonderment, if so beautiful a creature as Providence had consigned to his care could be met with on the broad earth.

"I was thinking," said Liliás, abruptly, raising her eyes to his, "that now there are so many people in the house, it would be a nice time to invite my good old nurse; she is dotingly fond of children, and would gladly take charge of Mrs. Lyttleton's young *protégé*, and besides this, I should like to see her very much, she is so sincerely attached to me."

"Then, by all means, ask her to come," answered her husband; "I shall be very happy to prove how grateful I am to her for the strong love she has always shown you, for, however generous you

may have been to her, money can never recompense for affection, and it is right you should pay some attention to her."

"Nothing can repay Sarah for her devotion to me," returned Lilius, earnestly, "except it be a knowledge that I prize her almost as a mother.

Here was another pause; and Lilius, having picked to pieces the remaining portion of the flower, left him to write her invitation to Sarah King.

Lilius was seated the following evening in the garden,—for the weather was still warm,—when her maid came up to her in great haste.

"Mrs. King has arrived, my lady," said the girl. "Shall I ask her to join you here, or will you see her in your own room?"

Her mistress rose quickly, her cheeks flushed with pleasure at this announcement.

"Oh! conduct her here, Emma," was the answer.

Lady Welgrave had been reclining upon a rustic-seat, a short distance from a summer-house, and now advanced to meet her humble friend, who, guided by the maid, quickly emerged from a labyrinth of trees upon the open lawn.

Emma's face was turned from them, she was going back to the Abbey; and as no one was present to witness their meeting, and scoff at her affection for that homely-looking woman, Lilius's welcome was as warm as her heart prompted. She directly led her nurse to the vacant seat before the arbour, and bade her place herself upon it by her side.

Lady Welgrave had not invited her attached servant without a purpose; she desired to make more minute inquiries than she had hitherto done, relative to the business Sarah had transacted for her the July twelve months preceding. When they had discussed this matter, and Lilius had learned all she wished to know, she became thoughtful.

"I was convinced of this," she said slowly to Sarah King, "before your recital. Of course the alteration, so long a time has affected, would have prevented me recognising him from what he was then; but the likeness to his father has grown so strong, that mistake would be almost impossible, and then the coincidence of the date and name. Yes, I was quite sure of it; and yet I could not rest till I had seen you. And now, my dear nurse, that my suspicions are confirmed, and no doubt is left to me concerning his identity, you must return to-night, for you know it would be ruin for you to be seen here."

Tears dimmed Sarah's eyes, and grief choked her words, as she tried to answer. She had been so happy at the thought of being with her mistress, that to know she must part from her

immediately, was most afflicting to her tender heart; but she knew the necessity there was for her instant departure, and did not complain, though she could not help inquiring if she could not be concealed in some safe part of the Abbey.

Lady Welgrave answered positively that it was out of the question. "You must," said she, "start in less than half-an-hour; a cab will conduct you to Summertown, a distance of about five miles from Welgrave, where you can take lodgings for a few weeks, and I will contrive to see you as often as I can with safety during your stay."

"But what excuse will you make to Lord Welgrave for my not coming. Do you think it was wise to tell him that you had invited me?"

"Yes, my good Sarah, it was the best, if not the only, means I had of securing an interview with you here; and until my visitors leave, which will not be till Saturday, I could not conveniently see you elsewhere. Had I invited you privately, and my having done so been discovered, it would have been most perilous to my secret; whereas, my husband being aware that I expect you, no tattling of the servants will occasion him to feel any suspicion. I intend informing him of your visit when you are gone, and giving the illness of a relation as an excuse for the briefness of your stay, which relation I shall say you are going to wait upon. This will be quite satisfactory to him, and also to Miss Lyttleton, whom I deemed it prudent to acquaint of your coming. It may be the means of allaying her curiosity with regard to you, for she is greatly addicted to mistrust. Ah, my kind nurse, if you only knew what difficulty it is for me to appear careless in her presence, when I am conscious she is ever on the alert for a word or look she can store against me, you would indeed pity me. Merciful heaven! how severely I am tried by that hateful woman! But away with such thoughts! Sarah, it is time for you to go, I will lead you to a postern on the right side of the park wall, which opens on the highway; it may be dangerous for you to pass through the Abbey a second time.

As Lady Welgrave uttered the last sentence, she rose.

"And am I not to have one glance at the sweet babe?" eagerly cried the nurse, who saw her mistress's movement with sorrow.

"No, not now," hurriedly replied Lilius—"there is not time; you shall see him though, for I have no doubt I can arrange so as to give you this gratification; but it would be madness to venture it to-day."

Sarah King sighed heavily; nevertheless, she submitted without murmuring, and accompanying her lady, was soon lost amongst the thickness of the park trees.

With slow and cautious tread, a figure emerged from the concealment of the arbour, and stood upon the spot so recently occupied by Liliás and her nurse.

Twilight was gathering rapidly around, and the overhanging willows, that grew near where the figure stood, hid it partially from view; but the light was still sufficient to declare it that of a woman, and that woman my lady's inveterate enemy—Hinda Lyttleton. Her face, which was convulsed with passion, yet displayed a look of more consummate triumph than it had ever before worn. She clasped her hands ecstatically, and laughed aloud for very joy.

"The bird is caught in its own snare," she cried, "and cannot possibly fly from me. My surmises pointed to all this before, but I had then nothing to act upon. Thanks to herself, I can now confront her with accusations which even she, with all her audacity, must fail to deny. My toil is made shorter than I expected, and my victory will be more complete. So, her fondness for the child is motherly instinct; I thought as much from the first. He is like her, and her husband shall be brought to acknowledge it."

When my lady returned from escorting her nurse, she found, to her infinite astonishment, Miss Lyttleton walking slowly backwards and forwards upon the smooth grass-plot, as though waiting for some one. She would have avoided her, could she have done so without being herself observed; but as this was not easy, she accosted her with a bright smile; and, when invited to take a stroll, submitted to the infliction with a tolerable grace. With Liliás's arm locked tightly within hers, Hinda felt there was no chance of escape, and almost beyond credibility indulged her cruel promptings. How she dilated upon the plans of vengeance stored up against the woman of whom she was in search, becoming nearly wild with delight when she saw the anguish that racked her hearer's mind, and how much it was augmented by her futile struggles to overcome it.

"I have seen," she hissed in the marchioness's ear, "some writing that corresponds exactly with that of the letter my brother slipped from his pocket a few days before his death, and as it may interest you to know, I will tell you where."

Liliás felt ready to swoon; she had unaccountably forgotten the existence of the document named. She understood now why Miss Lyttleton had so attentively studied her autograph upon that quiet morning in the library. In a well-assumed tone of listlessness, she expressed a wish to know where Hinda had remarked any writing similar.

"In your album, Lady Welgrave! The writing is yours—signed with your initials!"

“And do you mean to infer, from so simple a circumstance, that I and your brother’s secret correspondent are the same?”

Lilias asked this in an accent of virtuous indignation, which, however, Hinda only scoffed at.

“I do!” was her stern reply, as she clutched savagely at her companion’s arm, till the impress of her fingers was left upon the delicate skin. “I affirm that you and the mistress of my dead brother are one—that the child of Mary’s adoption is the offspring of your shame!”

The marchioness drew herself up proudly; defiance beamed in her black eyes, and wreathed her lip with irony. Her face was ghastly pale, but its expression denoted nothing of defeat; she now seemed, in truth, stronger to battle against the enemy’s designs than in the beginning.

“Can you *prove* this?” she demanded, in a sepulchral voice; “if not, I warn you to desist from threats which must recoil upon yourself.”

“You speak boldly,” was Hinda’s sarcastic retort; “but you may not find yourself prepared for the coming trial. If I cannot completely, as yet, prove your identity, I will do so, and much more. I will prove, if I wander the earth for evidence, that you *murdered* Norman to save your infamy from detection, as, later than this, you discarded your child for the same purpose!”

Lilias barely heard the last word of this crushing speech; the horror of the accusation overpowered her strength, which had been sorely tried lately, and with a despairing shriek she fell from Hinda’s grasp to the ground, devoid of motion and of sense.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE REVELATIONS OF DELIRIUM.

WHEN the unfortunate Marchioness of Welgrave recovered her consciousness, she found herself extended upon the cold earth, which was fast becoming damp with the night dew. A faint light was thrown upon the scene by the rising moon, which was partially obscured by a passing cloud, imparting a spectral-like solemnity to the gloomy picture.

Her heartless accuser had left her; how long she knew not; it might have been only a few moments, or it might have been an hour since she had lain senseless;—probably the latter, for she felt stiff and cold. Mechanically she groped her way to the house, and sought a back flight of stairs, used only by the domestics, to gain her apartments. At first she was fearful of entering them, and stayed shivering upon the threshold of the boudoir. Suppose her husband was there in search of her, what would he think of her

white, despairing face and disordered mien? It was some time before she summoned courage to turn the latch of the door, and push it a little way open, then, taking a survey of the room through the aperture, she found to her relief that it was vacant.

With faltering step and dizzy brain, she took refuge in this sanctuary, carefully fastening the lock behind her. Her first movement was to take a draught of water, in which she poured a few drops of sal volatile. This refreshed her wonderfully, and in some degree relieved her failing powers of thought. She felt too weak, too thoroughly stricken with terror, for excitement or tears; a chill, as of death, had seized upon her heart, as she heard the awful charge made against her by the implacable Hinda; and this coldness, this insensibility, seemed almost to increase each moment. She thought of her feelings on that dread night, long ago, when she had attempted to destroy herself, and perceived, with a satisfaction of desperation, the likeness her present sensations bore to them. "To die now," she exclaimed, "would indeed be happiness; it would be tearing her vengeance from her grasp, in the hour she most glories in her dominion over me. O God!" she cried, sinking upon her knees, in an agony of supplication—"O God of pity and forgiveness! hear my prayer, and take me from the hateful burden of existence!"

A resistless tremor came over her, even as she besought the king of terrors for her release. It looked as if the Almighty, compassionating her wretched condition, had responded to that wild plaint. A mist gathered over her sight, her understanding became confused, her hands fell heavily by her sides, and with a groan, she dropped prostrate on the floor. In this manner did her maid find her twenty minutes later, when she came to say that she was being inquired for in the drawing-room. Emma supposed Lady Welgrave was still with her nurse, and thought, perhaps, she would be unwilling to leave her: how unprepared was she, therefore, for the spectacle which greeted her! At first sight she feared Lilius was dead, and, indeed, the imperceptible pulsation of her heart gave colour to the dread idea.

With difficulty the girl carried the unconscious form to the bed, disencumbering it, as it lay, of the damp and soiled garments which clung around it like a shroud. Afterwards, she silently left the room to despatch a message for the marquis, to the effect that her mistress was slightly indisposed, and on returning, lighted the lamp and placed herself so that she could watch her all but inanimate lady, who, when she ultimately recovered consciousness, tossed upon her pillow as if it had been strewn with thorns, moaning the while in a heart-breaking manner. Emma kept steadily to her post, until she heard Lord Welgrave's step in the adjoining

room, when she made her departure by a door leading into the boudoir; carefully avoiding to make any sound, lest she might be recalled to explain the cause of her lady's illness. She had purposely turned the lamp from Liliás, not only that its glare might not annoy her, but chiefly that her husband might not read in her face the anguish of her soul. Emma was full of fears, lest in the torturing visions of the night Lady Welgrave might make some revelation which would be destructive to her, and also Emma's self, who in her care for her generous mistress was apt to magnify the consideration of her personal advantage. Having spent a night of uneasy sleep, Liliás awoke with parched lips, and burning head and hands; which disagreeable symptoms were not long in manifesting themselves as the forerunners of fever.

"I do not wish to alarm you, Henry," she said, with a sweet, patient smile, "but I feel I shall not get up for some time. I am so glad dear Lady Christabel is away, and on no account must you hint at my being unwell, or it would bring her back directly. I would not, for the world, occasion her distress."

The marquis readily agreed to his wife's wish, for he knew how greatly it would grieve his aunt to hear of anything amiss concerning "her Liliás," as she delighted to call her. "But you must have medical advice," he said, with sad seriousness; and to this she gave an assent, though in her heart she was indifferent to the turn her illness might take.

The physician's verdict on Lady Welgrave's case, though clothed in terms of hopefulness, served to increase, rather than allay, her husband's fears, and to avoid agitating her by an exhibition of them, he quitted the room.

"You think I may die," Liliás said, composedly, when alone with the doctor. She had not at first considered herself in peril, but was led to infer it from the manner in which he received her answers to his professional questions.

"Your ladyship is exceedingly alarmed at a cold," he returned, in a tone the least bit mocking. "It is very possible to subdue the fever before it proceeds farther."

Lady Welgrave eyed him attentively, but there was no fear in her face, nor faltering in her voice, as she said, "I understand you perfectly; although you say it is possible for me to recover shortly, you anticipate a far different result."

The physician did not like to answer, though he saw that with her firm enduring spirit, it would be greater cruelty to raise false hopes than to admit the truth, for he believed her danger to be imminent.

By-and-bye, Liliás observed, rather hesitatingly, "Doctor, you will not let my husband enter the room should your expectations be

realised, nor any one except yourself and my maid ; promise me this, I beg of you. I do not fear for Emma, only for my husband."

"There is no danger of infection," the doctor exclaimed, amazedly ; " you need not alarm yourself for any one."

"I know it," rejoined Liliias, quickly, " since it is fever of the brain, and as I may be delirious, I am desirous of sparing Lord Welgrave the distress of hearing my ravings."

"But, my lady, I cannot keep him from attending upon you ; like a fond husband, he will think his place is by your side, and nothing I can say will prevent him watching over you."

Lady Welgrave was again silent, and the doctor was about departing, when she recalled him.

"Will you oblige me," said she, speaking with nervous haste, " by promising to prohibit the entrance of any one into my room during the time of delirium, if I tell you the cause ?"

"If my authority were sufficient, I would willingly use it, without seeking to know your reasons ; but I must again remind you of the great difficulty of restraining impatience that desires to succour a beloved friend."

My lady interrupted him rather imperiously.

"You underrate your power, doctor : if you will say that Lord Welgrave's presence, or anyone's but my maid's, will be likely to injure me, Henry will submit to your injunctions, however much he may desire to see me ; and as my reason for this request is imperative, you will, I am persuaded, do as I require of you. Lord Welgrave is jealous," she began, the bright colour deepening on her cheek.

The doctor opened his eyes widely, but did not speak nor manifest any other token of surprise ; perhaps, he thought his lordship's jealousy not so very wonderful, considering the universal admiration his wife's beauty excited.

"Lord Welgrave is jealous," Liliias repeated ; " and that you may know he has no cause for being so, I must tell you that I have lately heard of the supposed death of a gentleman who was my suitor before I knew Lord Welgrave. I had not seen this gentleman for some time previous to my marriage, but upon hearing of his presumed death, I naturally exhibited some emotion, which unhappily excited suspicion in the mind of my husband, and he even accused me of feeling too acutely on Mr. Arnold's account. Now, doctor, this occurrence being very recent, and having engaged much of my thoughts, on account of the distressing misunderstanding it produced, I fear the name of Mr. Arnold may frequently occur to my lips ; for you must know that what has been the prevailing idea a few days previous to fever, is oftenest the topic

that engages the unsound mind. It is my fear that the repetition of this name may reproduce my husband's fanciful uneasiness, which induces me to ask you that, during the moments of my unconsciousness, I may be entirely exempt from interruption."

Lady Welgrave ceased, exhausted by the labour of speaking, and doubtful of the propriety of her communication. The physician did not reply immediately. He was thinking, as the worldly wise are apt to do in such cases, that the Marquis of Welgrave's jealousy was possibly not quite so groundless as my lady would have him imagine. This, however, made no difference to him; and after the first feelings of astonishment and pleasure at being admitted into Lady Welgrave's confidence were over, he willingly gave the required promise; expressing, with polite sarcasm, his amazement that his lordship should entertain emotions of jealousy for a shadow, when he had so much greater cause to be distrustful concerning the attentions every gentleman, who had the honour of her acquaintance, must be desirous of paying her.

Lilias almost sickened to observe the instantaneous change that transformed the grave professional man into the flatterer; and in spite of the necessity, which had compelled her to adopt this measure for exiling her husband from her apartment, she regretted the admission she had made. Even in this trivial incident she still farther learned the miseries and indignities attendant upon concealment. In accordance with his promise to Lady Welgrave, the physician, before leaving the Abbey, sought an interview with her husband, in which he urged upon him most strenuously the absolute necessity there was for perfect quiet to be preserved in the sick chamber.

His hearer was long before he could be brought to comply with the injunction of not seeing his wife, and as she had foreseen, to nothing but the fear of over exciting her was his acquiescence attributable. The illness of Lilias was in itself an almost insupportable grief to him, and being prohibited to approach her, aggravated his distress a hundredfold.

Rapidly did the fever progress, so that by noon Lady Welgrave was delirious. The doctor paid a second visit about two o'clock, and found Emma vainly trying to soothe her mistress. She raved incoherently of Hinda's threat, her husband's suspicions, and her own wretchedness; never pausing save to take breath between the various paroxysms of her anguish, excited by a thousand different causes.

The physician gazed sadly upon the animated and matchless face, listening the while to mingled confessions, which, had Lilias been in her right mind, she would have given worlds for him to forget.

It was during this fearful period that Emma learned, bit by bit,

the treasured and direful secrets of her lady's history, and though to a stranger her ravings might have passed as nothing more than the meaningless fancies of a maniac, to her, who already knew so much, the comprehension of them was not difficult. Sometimes, trembling with terror at the disclosures Liliias made in her delirium, Emma would rush from the room to avoid hearing more—indeed, so great was her horror that, notwithstanding the powerful desire she had previously entertained to become the possessor of all that was mysterious in my lady's life, she would willingly have stayed the utterance of those revelations.

The fourth day from Lady Welgrave's seizure, her husband telegraphed to Sir Shenton Bellamy, begging his immediate presence at the Abbey. The delirium had by degrees subsided, but Liliias's life was yet despaired of, and agonising as must be the meeting, between a loving parent and a child upon the verge of dissolution, his lordship felt that it would be more bearable to the baronet than the constant thought that his daughter had died without seeing him.

He met his father-in-law at the entrance of the antichamber, replying only to his look of frantic entreaty by a reassuring grasp of the hand. They were too much affected for speech, and the doctor's prohibition being removed for the time, they entered together the chamber occupied by Liliias.

Truly awful was the change in that face, lately so radiant with health and beauty, and now bearing no impress but that of suffering and decay. The lustreless eyes were sunken, the cheeks hollow, and the pale lips dry and parched. Liliias extended her hand feebly to her father, who, notwithstanding this appearance of welcome, she scarcely recognised; her mind was again beginning to wander, and before her grief-stricken father and husband left her, she was once more revelling in the fantastic babble of temporary madness.

Immediately the ravings commenced, the baronet and his son-in-law retired, as they had been instructed by the doctor to do, in case of a relapse. Sir Shenton's passive submission to this edict was produced only by a determination of being with his child at a more available opportunity. Anxiously he watched for the means of eluding the vigilance of Emma, whom no persuasions could soften into an agreement with his wishes. She was invulnerable to every kind of attack, and firmly declared her intention of adhering to the doctor's orders, by keeping all access to Liliias's room secure.

At length, after a long time spent in manœuvring, Sir Shenton succeeded in gaining an entrance to the boudoir, where he concealed himself behind a screen, from which hiding-place there was little difficulty in discovering when Emma had left Liliias's room

for an hour's repose. Then was the time for him to glide softly from his place of concealment into the chamber, whose walls re-echoed the wild talk of his daughter. She had awoke from the short rest following her previous exhaustion, and was now, with fiery orbs, flushed cheeks, and dramatic action, imploring the pity of an imaginary foe. She paused for an instant at sight of her father, and then taking up the train of entangled thought which had before engrossed her disordered brain, cried, plaintively:

"Oh! keep her off; she will kill me when she learns everything. She will follow me till she has taken my life, for she is merciless."

"No, love; no one shall harm you," her father interposed, soothingly.

"Who are you?" Lilius inquired, suddenly. Then, without giving him time to answer, continued, "I know you have come to tell me Owen is dead, that my cruelty made him die," adding, after a moment's pause, with a passionate vehemence that drove the colour from her listener's face, "Come back, Owen! come back! and say you do not hate me; for I love you—I love you!" Then, without stopping in her speech, though her expression changed to one of fondness, while she rocked her body backwards and forwards, and folded her arms over her breast, as if guarding a something inexpressibly dear, she murmured, tenderly, "They say that you are like mammy, darling, but you are not—no, no, you are like—like——"

Here a shudder convulsed her frame, and when the tortured father again heard her voice, its tone was of angered sadness.

"No, I cannot believe it," she exclaimed, tears rolling down her cheeks—"he would not deceive me so; it is impossible. But if it were true," she screamed, frantically, all traces of weakness instantly overcome by her wrath, "I would murder him—yes, I would murder him, and then he could delude no more. Ha! ha!" she laughed, spasmodically, "it will be a good thing to be revenged upon him, and her, too—a glorious thing! How dare she love him when he is mine!"

She concluded her sentence with a moan, which was caught up by her suffering parent, to whom she turned round sharply, asking why he was sorrowful.

"Because you do not know me, Lilius; I am your father."

As he spoke he seized her emaciated hand, and kissed it rapturously, for he rightly deemed her question a sign of returning reason; but the momentary light was darkened as soon as he perceived it—his words had plunged her anew into chaotic wanderings.

She looked inquiringly at him, with soulless and fever-lit eyes, earnestly articulating, "I saw him—my father; he did not know I was so near, Sarah, did he? How much I wanted to go to him!"

but I could not, you know, because of my promise. He will grieve for me, and perhaps think me dead. When shall I be able to see him—to-morrow, nurse?—do you think it will be to-morrow?"

It was with difficulty the baronet could reply to her question, which he saw she expected him to do, for her ravings tortured him most acutely. He could not but fancy she alluded to the sad time of her absence from home; and her confession of being near to, and even seeing him, affected him deeply, and added new stimulus to his dormant wish of sifting the mystery of her disappearance to the bottom. He had never, in spite of his efforts, been able perfectly to credit the account Lilius had given as to the manner those months had been passed. Numberless circumstances had served to shake his confidence in her veracity, and now, more than all, her rambling talk, from which, commingled and wild though it was, he acquired the knowledge of two things that immeasurably surprised and distressed him: firstly, that Lilius dwelt with affection upon the memory of Owen Arnold, whom she had always given him to believe she cared nothing for; and, secondly, that her place of retreat, when she so suddenly left Blackheath, and which had been kept so sacred, was no other than the dwelling of Sarah King. Why this concealment he could not even guess, but he naturally concluded it to be a cover to more important secrets.

During the time the astounded baronet argued these material points, from the broken and mangled sentences that fell from my lady's lips, more of the past memories were being brought up by her imagination as present realities. One moment she seemed engaged in plans of revenge, and the next bewailing, with every manifestation of contrition, the deed which the previous instant she had gloried in contemplating.

Of all the names that charmed her unconscious tongue, none fascinated her so much as that of Miss Lyttleton's, whom she would alternately defy and supplicate. Her husband claimed only a moiety of her thoughts, and those were anything but tender ones. She bewailed, in anticipation, the unhappiness she foresaw approaching him; she prayed for his clemency, and rebelled against his authority; but no word of endearment did she address to him. Her love seemed chiefly centred in a child, whom she fancied was nestled in her embrace; her tenderness was divided between it and the man whose joy she had wrecked with her own. The name of Owen was oft and lovingly repeated by her; while, strange to say, her father appeared almost forgotten; when she did allude to him, however, it was with infinite love, though always dashed with self-reproach. All this, with acute pain, Sir Shenton perceived; and having vainly tried to calm his excitement sufficiently to permit him remaining with his daughter, he was compelled to retire,

filled with fears and suspicions, which made him but little removed in condition of mind from his miserable child.

What he had heard was truly enough to distract him, when accompanied by the despairing manner that pervaded all Liliás's ravings, and connected with the half-quieted doubts her melancholy and strangeness of conduct had long since produced in him. He might repeat to himself over and over again the argument he had at first applied as an antidote to his distress,—that no reliance can be attached to the disclosures of frenzy, since even the contents of a book, read long before, and not since thought of, will be apt to be reproduced upon the clouded mind of a person afflicted with brain fever; still he was not satisfied, and could in no way stifle his dread that a terrible secret lay beneath the pure, calm surface of Liliás's life.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MISS LYTTLETON'S GROUNDS OF SUSPICION.

A FORTNIGHT dragged its weary course along before the fever had exhausted itself, and Liliás became perfectly sensible. The crisis had been fraught with intense anxiety, and her suffering relatives deemed her awakening to life little short of miraculous. Memory is slow to return after a serious illness, and most fortunate it was for Liliás that she had forgotten for a time the circumstance which had brought on her dangerous malady. The first token she exhibited of fully returned consciousness was to inquire, in a painfully enfeebled voice, where she was.

"In your own room, safely restored, dearest, from your peril, to the love of myself and your father," her husband replied, fervently pressing the thin white hand that lay outside the coverlet, while tears of deep thankfulness filled his eyes.

"Is my father here, then?" asked Liliás, while a faint wan smile lit up her features. The baronet, casting aside the curtain which had shielded him from her gaze, came forward at this question, and answered it by fondly kissing her brow.

Both Lord Welgrave and Sir Shenton had been watching, with the physician, the result of the long sleep, which they had dreaded might end in eternal repose. Into the vigil of the last few days the hopes and fears of a whole lifetime had been crowded. Had Liliás died, with her would have been destroyed her husband's sole joy in the present, and, beyond this, the delighted anticipations he had formed of welcoming the advent of an heir to his ancient name and noble patrimony: while her father's remaining span of life would have been harassed by continual suspicions of her truthfulness, in addition to the grief of being left childless in his declining years.

She lived, however, and with her revived, the proud fond yearnings of her husband for a child who should bear the honours of his race, and the confiding tenderness of her father, whose doubts of her integrity faded almost away in the happiness he experienced in witnessing her restoration to existence. How sweet to them was the melody of her voice, broken and weak though it was! They could have waited there for hours, to catch but a few words from her beloved lips; and had not the doctor firmly resisted their entreaties to remain, alleging, as a final argument, that their presence was injurious to the welfare of his patient, no consideration would have induced them to leave.

When perfect stillness once more reigned in the sick chamber, Lilius again slept; and this time her breathing was easy and regular, and her brain unburdened with distracting thoughts; so that when her eyes reopened, her faculties were clearer and her frame more refreshed. The maid was sitting near her and, as Lilius was about to speak, placed her finger on her lip in token of silence. Recollection had returned to her now with full force, and, notwithstanding the indulgence of her reflections was likely to renew the abated fever, she reviewed, in the first hour of restored reason, the whole circumstances attending her conversation with Hinda in the garden the night prior to her illness, weighing carefully the value of Miss Lyttleton's threat.

"If she should be mad enough to put her menace into execution, and publish her suspicions against me," thought she, "what proofs has she to support them? A resemblance between the writing of that letter (which she confesses to be without date or name) and mine? How can she prove, to the satisfaction of other than her own disordered brain, that I was ever connected with her brother? putting entirely aside her grave charge, that I am the mother of her sister's adopted child, which has, if possible, a still less reasonable foundation; namely, the fancied likeness he bears to me, a likeness which three persons out of four would disagree upon. I am ashamed of myself for having been thus overcome; her boasting is so preposterously vain: but the accusation was very terrible, and so totally unlooked for. My relentless persecutor told me, that I had been her brother's mistress," Lilius resumed, taking up the chain of thought, broken for an instant by the sound of her maid's voice in the adjoining room. "How dare she thus insult me, when I am as pure of such a taint as her saintlike sister-in-law! And yet, why should I feel surprise that she views all she associates with me in the worst light; can she, under the circumstances, do otherwise? O God! whose laws I have so long defied, I see Thy hand in this; it is just that I should be accused of those things of

which I am innocent, in punishment of the sins that lie so heavily upon my soul. It is too late for repentance; the very angels would mock me for thinking to make my peace with Heaven now. What, then, is left for me, an outcast from God's mercy, but to continue in the line I have trodden so long, even though it leads, as I know it must, to eternal destruction. Oh! why, since the gates of paradise are for ever closed against me, do I so yearn at times to cast aside this hated mask, and, confessing all my misery and guilt, hide myself from the world, and devote the remainder of my days to acts of atonement and charity. Is it possible that, lost as I am, the peace such visions as these inspire can whisper of Divine compassion? Dare I entertain the sweet, sweet hope, that my contrition would be acceptable?"

Could Lilius have pursued the salutary reflections her self-interrogations gave rise to, they might have led her to the resolution of seeking with steadfastness the pardon her heart panted for; but the world had too great a hold upon her, and quickly snatched her from the contemplation of higher subjects. Thoughts connected with her own immediate position crowded thick upon her, sweeping every other idea from remembrance. Many things were to be considered and decided upon; she must send to her nurse to bid her return to her home, and likewise form projects, as far as she was able, to prevent a repetition of Miss Lyttleton's suspicions being given to her husband or father. They loved her so fondly, that she believed it would almost kill them to be obliged to think evil of her, and what but evil could they think, in the face of an accusation which would be made with such plausibility?

It is here necessary to go back a little, in order to explain the reasons which influenced Hinda in forming the terrible conclusions she had arrived at with respect to the Marchioness of Welgrave. The vow she had made upon the day of her brother's funeral, was never for a moment lost sight of; she lived solely in the hope of securing revenge upon the woman whose sway over him she believed had resulted in his death. Nothing could root out from her mind the desire to meet with the hated unknown, and seldom, if ever, did she utterly despair of success, though the time passed slowly by without giving her the faintest encouragement for the prosecution of what she considered to be her duty.

At length she was brought into the presence of Lady Welgrave, whose violent emotion, produced from whatever source, had neither more nor less effect than that of convincing the bereaved sister that the woman, whose connection with her brother had been so fatal to him, stood before her in the form of the fascinating and admired hostess of that regal entertainment. Acting upon this surmise, which she was contented to take as a certainty, being ever ready

to leap to a conclusion, and all the more eagerly, because it was mysterious and improbable, she related to Lady Welgrave the circumstances of Norman's sudden death, in a manner so full of import and solemnity, that the effect produced by her narrative upon the sensitive Liliás was in reality nowise extraordinary. But so thought not Hinda; to her the fainting-fit of her hostess was conclusive evidence of her guilt, and from that hour she believed, without chance of conviction to the contrary, that Liliás was the writer of the letter which at first excited her curiosity when she saw it in the hands of her brother. In making use of the word murderess on that occasion, she had done so in a restricted sense; not meaning to imply that Liliás was the perpetrator of Norman's death, and from her great agitation alone grew the awful deduction that she was his actual destroyer.

Hinda, reflecting afterwards upon the incident, reasoned with herself thus: she listened calmly to the account of his death, and even to the idea, which must be new to her, that he committed suicide, but upon the mention of the word murderess, she is terrified out of her composure and swoons. This was a much wilder supposition than her first, but possessed of the conviction that Lady Welgrave had been her brother's correspondent, the rest followed easily. To her mind it was made clear that no other person would have an interest in her brother's death, while Liliás had the important one of her secret at stake.

During the time Miss Lyttleton was whirling in a chaos of contending theories, vague doubts, and obstinate beliefs, not knowing precisely where to bound her convictions and her uncertainties; made eager, restless and miserable beneath the weight of her fears, Lady Drury's very circumstantial account of the mysterious flight from Clardon House, brought an additional burthen of weary imaginings. Before this time, the most marked change in Norman's manner had been observable, but then in those two months was contained the dates of his death and burial.

The farther notion that Melbourne was Liliás's child, had been arrived at by a yet more circuitous mode of self-persuasion. The circumstance of a respectable woman bringing, in answer to her sister's advertisement, a babe whose dress and appearance betokened him of superior origin, was in itself enough to create a fund of speculation in so fertile a brain as Miss Lyttleton's; and when the child's nurse confessed herself to be only a deputy for the mother, who she said was a lady, and stipulated, before confiding him to their care, that no inquiries should be instituted respecting his birth, her excited fancy instantly pictured some great personage—a duchess she thought, possibly—concealing beneath smiles, a heart stung by remorse for her lost virtue, and torn with regret for

the infant, whom dread of detection would not permit her the melancholy pleasure of protecting.

With this fancy still in full vigour, she was living on terms of hourly association with Lady Welgrave, whose expression, on certain occasions, Melbourne assuredly wore, while in feature he strangely resembled his adopted mother's handsome, but fickle husband; and though for a time the trifling likeness existing between Mary's *protégé* and the marchioness called up no mental remark, it was sufficient in the end to occasion a total revolution in the little romance Hinda had previously woven concerning the interesting waif's parentage.

She treated the surmise that Liliás was Melbourne's mother in the manner she had before done the more direful one of the murder, as an unmistakeable truth, and it was with secret joy she waited for the appearance of the child. "By comparing them together," she thought, "I can make more certain, and besides no woman is so completely divested of natural feeling, however steeped in guilt, as not to yearn towards her offspring. By her manner to him I shall farther judge of the correctness of my impression." For Hinda did not apprehend Liliás would find any difficulty in recognising Melbourne, if the case stood as she supposed.

Possibly no other woman in the world would have troubled herself to note down the hundred trivial incidents with which Miss Lyttleton's memory was stored, and by whose aid she subtly strung together a chain of evidence so calumniating. Her natural bias for mistrust had ever caused her to be a close observer, and when there was a great object, real or imaginary, in view, the latent energies of her understanding were roused to the utmost. Nothing that occurred escaped her watchful vision. She pondered over every word that dropped from Liliás's tongue; marked, with the keen perception of hate, every change in her expression, and even the different modulations of her voice.

Armed with these suspicions, which she magnified into proofs, and the more stern knowledge, gleaned from the marchioness's conversation with Sarah King in the arbour—the overhearing of which, it must, in justice to her be stated, was purely accidental—she had availed herself of the earliest opportunity of assailing Liliás with the tissue of charges so laboriously woven. How fully her malice was sated, by the insurmountable terror displayed by her unwilling auditor, it would be revolting minutely to describe. Too little habituated to the exercise of heavenly pity, it was not to be expected that her heart should know any softening, at the last moment, towards the hapless being she had singled out to be a target for her abuse and menace.

In loneliness and darkness she had left her senseless victim,

feeling only diabolical satisfaction ; nor was it with a less ruthless pleasure she listened to the melancholy details of Liliás's illness. Only when the thought obtruded itself that death might deprive her of her marked prey, did her cruel exultation decline ; then, indeed, she trembled, hoping, with as wild an anxiety, for the invalid's recovery, as did the Marquis of Welgrave and Sir Shenton Billamy themselves.

Numberless times had she tried to gain admission to the sick chamber, and always without success. Selfish as Emma was, she could not easily be bribed to injure anyone, particularly her mistress. Hinda gave her a handsome present, thinking thus to subdue her firmness, but without making the girl unfaithful to her trust ; and had the value of it been fifty times as great, she would have remained invulnerable. There was a dormant nobility in her sordid nature that would not permit the betrayal of a person who confided in her, and though she scrupled at no act of deceit to become the holder of her mistress's secrets, this caused her to be all the more conscientious in guarding them from another. It is said every one has his price, and so, perhaps, had she, though one too dear to pay ; had she been promised a situation as waiting-woman to a princess, or an appointment equally exalted, her fidelity to Liliás might have been found wanting, when weighed in the balance with such an interest, but in the absence of such an inducement to treachery, she remained incorruptible to the duty she owed Lady Welgrave.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A SORROWFUL JOURNEY.

THE third day after the one in which the crisis of Lady Welgrave's illness had terminated so favourably, her husband was permitted to hold a more detailed conversation with her than the extreme feebleness of her frame had hitherto allowed. He sat close to the bedside, his fine face illumined with happiness, and his eyes, filled with tenderness, never removed themselves from her countenance, which was resuming, faster than might have been expected from the severe nature of the fever, the roundness and bloom of former times.

As yet Liliás had not had sufficient strength to inquire concerning their visitors, whom she now learned had departed the day following her illness.

"The Lyttletons are still here, are they not?" my lady asked, languidly.

"No, my darling," returned her husband ; "they left with the rest."

An expression of relief was visible for an instant in Liliás's features at this information; for a time, at least, her persecutions would be stayed, she thought, but following this reflection, came the one that the child, whom she had learned to be so fond of, was gone too, and this gave her more pain than even the knowledge of Hinda's absence had given her pleasure. Her disappointment was too poignant to be concealed, and she lamented aloud that she had not been able to see the boy before he was taken away.

"He is assuredly a sweet little fellow, and I am not surprised at your fondness for him," his lordship remarked. "His love of you is scarcely short of adoration, he could do nothing but inquire after you, refusing to be consoled by any of the means usually employed to pacify children; fruit and cakes elicited only his contempt, as also did drives, walks, and pictures; all seemed vanity and vexation of spirit without 'Lady Wellbrave,' as he calls you."

Liliás listened to this account with delight, chequered by grief, begging from her husband a particular detail of Melbourne's health and doings, with an interest rarely felt except by a mother.

Lord Welgrave remarked this with a tinge of displeasure, for, generous though he was, this excess of devotion on the part of my lady for the little outcast, produced in him a sense of wrong. All men who really love, display this selfishness, and fancy that every tender thought given to another is a slight to themselves. They cannot help it; true affection is ever exacting, especially in the stronger sex.

The spirit of contradiction caused him, who had an instant previously spoken in accents of praise of the little Melbourne, now to disparage him; and the greater the devotion exhibited by Liliás for the child, the stronger grew her husband's repugnance to him, till at length he came to the unjust conclusion, that my lady was a victim to infatuation in seeing aught to love in the boy, and that he was a much injured man in consequence.

The interest manifested by Lady Welgrave for the child of Mrs. Lyttleton's adoption, though an insignificant matter, occasioned considerable irritation in the mind of her husband. He harboured no idea, such as Hinda had expressed. He believed the child to be the unhappy offspring of some intrigue, common enough in this world of wickedness to occasion no surprise to one who, by the necessity of living in it, must be acquainted with its infamy. It was this suspicion that chiefly caused his disapprobation of the growing attachment of his wife for the child. His constant intercourse with Liliás had not (as familiarity is generally thought to do) shorn her of any one of the angelic attributes he considered her possessed of; so free from taint of guile was she, that

he thought it a crime for her even to approach anything connected with it.

He would have kept her, if he could, apart from every trouble; shielded her by his love and strength from the shadow of sorrow or contamination; and yet she must show more tenderness for a child (whose very existence had been unknown to her till within the last two months, and who was doubtless the fruit of sin), than she had ever displayed to him, her husband, during the whole course of their wedded life.

It was improper and unjust. With this thought he left his wife, who, in her sorrow that Melbourne should have been removed without her having seen him once more, was quite unconscious that Lord Welgrave's manner was not as kind as usual. The love, with its concomitant of jealousy, was all on his side; the indifference, with its happy blindness, upon hers.

Directly Lord Welgrave had departed, Liliias, touching a bell within reach of her hand, summoned her maid, who, with the exception of looking a little paler than her wont, gave no sign of the fatigue she had endured during the last fortnight. Her movements, which were still more noiseless than was natural to her, indicated the facility with which she acquired the art of nursing, which art, the strength of her energies in times of emergency, and her subdued manners and speech, eminently fitted her for.

"Emma, I shall want you to go to Summertown to-morrow. Can you make arrangements for starting early in the morning, and without the knowledge of anyone?" Liliias inquired.

Emma took a few moments to consider, and then answered in the affirmative.

"Very well," my lady resumed, reflectively; "what I want you to do for me is, to make inquiries in the village where Mrs. King has taken apartments within the last three weeks; and when you have obtained this information, go to the place where she is, and bid her come to the Abbey immediately, if the sick relative can spare her. Be sure you say this. You can also tell her of my illness; and add, that being now convalescent, and the house empty of visitors, I should much like for her to come. Can you remember?"

The maid having assured her mistress that she would not forget her instructions, was about to retire, when Liliias said,—

"You have been a very good girl, Emma, and must rest for a time, or your constitution may be injured. Be sure I shall not overlook my obligations to you."

Sarah King, whose blind devotion to her mistress insured implicit obedience to her every desire, had repaired, as she had

been bidden, to Summertown—a dirty, straggling, little village, whose accommodation for travellers was confined to one mean inn, grandly denominated an hotel, and here it was, for want of better quarters, that Sarah was forced to take up her abode.

It being quite an exceptional case for anyone to require a lodging at the “hotel” for more than one night, rooms in plenty were submitted to King’s inspection, whose particularity in things pertaining to cleanliness and comfort, was greatly outraged by the untidiness and dirtiness predominant in all the arrangements of this shabby establishment. Despite the anxiety the silence of her lady excited in her, she could not be dead to the petty but trying annoyances arising from the utter want of punctuality and order, which, although in every housewife is most productive of discomfort, is to be regretted in none so much as in the landlady of an inn. That the woman—whose dexterity of movement and skill in the culinary art, smiling face, and general activity and cheerfulness, can render everything she comes in contact with so agreeable—should be content to become a dawdling, neglectful creature; that the buxom, bouncing landlady should degenerate into a lackadaisical would-be fine lady, or indolent gossip, is truly deplorable; not simply because she destroys the preconceived notion of what the mistress of a tavern should be, but her indifference has a fatal influence over the beds and meals of her customers.

Poor Sarah, after trying scolding and coaxing without avail, was, in the extremity of her despair, compelled to have recourse to her own labour to procure her a dinner fit to eat, or a bed soft enough to lie upon. It was a perfect martyrdom to her, this stay at the family hotel of Summertown, but she endured the trial with a patience truly stoical, abstaining from every temptation to write to Lilies, or remove from her uncomfortable lodgings, till she should receive commands from her mistress. Being thus awkwardly situated, it may easily be conjectured, how thankfully she received her mistress’s trusty messenger, upon the morning pre-arranged for Emma’s visit to her. The girl’s memory did not fail her, and she repeated her errand nearly in the words it had been given her, joining her own account of Lady Welgrave’s illness. Before she departed, it was agreed that Sarah should go that evening to the Abbey, the indisposition of the fabulous relation being no longer any impediment to her being there, after Mrs. Lytton and Hinda were gone. Meanwhile, Emma was to return directly to Welgrave, to receive a formal permission for a holiday from Lilies, who was resolved to send her to the sea-side, even against the girl’s wish, in order that the bad effects of watching might be removed.

Upon the same morning Lilies commissioned her maid to visit Sarah, and order her presence at the Abbey, Sir Shenton Bellamy

had come to the resolution of departing immediately for Blackheath, with the intention of strictly cross-examining King as to the extent of the knowledge she was possessed of concerning her mistress's secrets. This plan he formed on the day he had listened to the disclosures made by his daughter in the period of her delirium, and only waited to put it into execution, till she should be pronounced out of danger.

The pain of mind he had suffered, since the hearing of those partial revelations, was incalculable. He had always trusted Lilius so fully, that her sin of concealment was the more aggravated. Could he have looked back to scenes of hardship or indifference on his part towards her, his blame of her conduct would have been materially lessened; he could not, however, reproach himself with having directed one unkind thought against her; but could the same be said of his unlimited indulgence? Sadly and regretfully he perceived, now it was too late, that he had allowed her to be mistress of her own actions too soon, before she could even discern the difference between right and wrong. He had never inculcated principles of truthfulness in her, relying solely upon the innate candour and nobility of her character to guide her safely through the quicksands of temptation.

What if her over-confiding, impulsive nature, had led her to form a connection unworthy of her, and which she had been afraid to own; could this be the key to some of her wild talk? It might account for much, as yet incomprehensible, but not all. How plainly recurred to him now the strange agitation and alarm of Sarah King, when he visited her respecting Lilius's flight. Her very words, with the passionate accent of grief in which they were uttered, were reproduced in his mind; words unheeded then, but most important now. "Why did she ask so imploringly for his belief, that she would do nothing she thought was not for Lilius's happiness, if she had not been a confederate in what would be displeasing to him?" This question the baronet asked himself again and again, with an increase of foreboding at each repetition. It was impossible for him to exist in his present state of suspense, though to interrogate his daughter was what he shrunk from doing with the strongest repugnance. His suspicions, having for their structure only the ravings of fever, might be—nay, he hoped even against his convictions that they were—delusive, and in that case, what cruelty would he not be guilty of towards his still enfeebled child, in catechising her with respect to them?

Thus it was that Sir Shenton came to the conclusion of seeing and questioning Sarah King, from whom, in gratitude to himself, he expected an honest statement of all she was acquainted with appertaining to Lilius. He failed to count, in his calculations,

upon the great effect the love of the nurse for the child she had reared would have upon the extent of her admissions and reservations.

The baronet made no allusion to the kind of business he said he wished to transact in London, to his son-in-law, to whom alone he confided his intention of repairing to the City; and as he expressed his determination of returning by the last train at night, no curiosity was felt by his lordship as to the nature of it. Liliast's inquiry for Sir Shenton, her husband answered by saying that he had gone out for the day, so she made no further interrogatory; her thoughts were centred upon things of greater import than the manner of amusement her father might hit upon, as best to wile away a day in the country. She was thinking how to regulate her behaviour towards Emma Adams, whom she beheld with heightened fear, knowing not how much or how little of her fatal secret the girl might have discovered during her aberration of mind.

The line of road through which the impatient baronet travelled was both pleasant to the eye, and soothing in its peaceful aspect to the mind. The verdant spots around the clustering villages and grand old towns bore the refreshing look of repose that, even in November, contrasts agreeably with the remembrance of summer's heat and turmoil. The young ivy, fresh and beautifully green, that twined itself about and within the crevices of the rough stone of castles and cathedrals, churches and cottages, in the route, was alone a sight to make one feel a renovated gladness, so invigorating to the sense is the sight of anything possessing the appearance of unfading vitality. We can weep over a rose, for closely associated with our admiration of its loveliness, are thoughts of decay, but who ever became sentimental over an evergreen? Poetry belongs exclusively to objects and images of melancholy, while hope and endurance seem to entwine themselves around things not visibly subject to death.

Sir Shenton's only companion of the compartment, a pensive-looking lady between thirty and thirty-five, who had been deep in the perusal of an overwrought love story for more than half the journey, was at length induced to turn from the romantic volume to the contemplation of the swiftly passing scenes, and appeared to have learned, ere the train reached the terminus, that the study of nature is more interesting than tales of maudlin sentimentality.

Rose cottage, now, as on the two former distressing occasions of Sir Shenton's visits to the abode of his daughter's nurse, looked a model of neatness and order. Everything in the interior and exterior witnessed most forcibly to the care and taste of its possessor. No unsightly weeds encumbered Sarah's little domain; all was precision and nicety. The very magpie, that chattered

saucily at passers by from his stand in the parlour window, seemed to add his testimony to the regularity and cheerfulness that presided over the dwelling. The small servant left in guard of the castle, answered Sir Shenton's knock, and his inquiry for her mistress, by informing him of Sarah's journey into Kent for the purpose of visiting Lady Welgrave.

"How long is it since she started?" he inquired, annoyed and surprised by her intelligence.

The girl said she could not exactly tell, but it seemed a great while; and the baronet, perceiving how forlorn was the hope of eliciting a satisfactory reply from her by the ordinary means, after two or three ineffectual attempts to quicken her memory, put his hand into his pocket, with the intention of bestowing upon her, not a gratuity, but a perspective reward for what he trusted to draw from the depths of her simplicity or stupidity. Seeing this movement of Sir Shenton's, the girl commenced a very novel and abstruse calculation, compounded, as far as she could remember, of the bills of fare for every day's dinner since Sarah had left, and an arithmetical account of the number of times she had been out on Sunday mornings. At length the deduction she drew, from this singular system of working the first rules of figures, was, "that missis had been gone three weeks last Monday," and as it was now Wednesday, the amused baronet, with a less amount of calculation than the minute handmaiden had found it necessary to use, arrived at the conclusion that Sarah had departed for the Abbey the same day his daughter's illness had commenced. And more than this he learned, for having paid liberally for the meagre information already obtained, the servant's tongue became loosened, and with a trifling encouragement she was led to speak of many circumstances, in connection with Liliass's stay at the cottage, which threw some light upon the dense obscurity overhanging many of her actions. No pleasant task was this for Sir Shenton, to glean through secret sources knowledge which, at the same time that it augmented his uneasiness for his child, necessarily lessened his confidence in her.

Fainter and fainter grew the whisper of hope in his heart, as he listened to the replies his own eager questionings elicited from his informant. Why had he not been content to let his daughter's secrets lie in oblivion? Why did he dive into the memories of the past, when by so doing nothing but misery could be the reward of his labours? Why did he voluntarily seek for disclosures which must tend to make him hate the sight of Liliass, by reason of the secrecy she had maintained towards him? It was a fatality. He was powerless to resist the impulse that bade him face the evils of knowledge.

Contentment being banished from his breast, and the perfect trust he had so long held in his daughter being now departed, a feverish restlessness and craving for action supervened. He longed to ascertain the truth of his suspicions, or to annihilate them for ever by proofs of their groundlessness. The latter he feared he could not do, and therefore upon the former course was he bent. Slowly and sadly he left behind him the park, which forms so beautiful a feature in that part, where beauty in other shapes is a rarity, and proceeded, when arrived at London Bridge, to book himself for Welgrave, where he was resolved, if he could not see Sarah King, to request the information he sought from his daughter.

He was thinking, as he sat alone in the carriage, upon the discoveries he had made that day, and of the number of slight occurrences which served to substantiate their correctness. But he soon got weary of torturing his brain in search of matters so painful, and wandered unconsciously back to the flowery days of his short married life. He remembered, with a mingled sense of joy and pain, his wedding-day, and even a happier day than this—the one in which he brought his bride to England. It was early in summer; balmy and fragrant zephyrs wafted to them as they drove up to the Hall; all nature seemed to smile upon them. How well he recollected every circumstance of that blissful time! the blush of love and pleasure that visited his young wife's cheek as he welcomed her to her home; the hilarity of the servants and villagers. All this he thought of, and far more, which with unutterable delight he would dwell upon only to find the bitter *now* more bitter.

The morning on which Lilius had been born, how plainly it came back to him! The smile of the mother appeared present to his gaze, and the wail of the babe fresh sounding in his ears. Where now was that mother and that child—the pair in whom had been concentrated all his hopes? The one was sleeping beneath the sod, in Sedgley churchyard, and the other——

“Alas! alas! Lily,” thought her father, “it would perhaps have been well for both of us if you had died, and been buried with your mother.”

When the baronet arrived at the Abbey, though the evening was far advanced, he determined that he would not sleep until he had a farther knowledge of the hitherto impenetrable mystery that hung about his daughter. Upon inquiry, he heard that Sarah King had arrived during his absence, and having removed from the drawing-room to an apartment where he was safe from interruption, he ordered a servant to bid her come to him. The room was nearly dark, but he could discern, as he explained to the nurse

that he desired to put a few questions to her, that the pale hue of her face became still paler.

"Take a seat, Sarah," said her master, kindly; and Sarah immediately sank upon the nearest one offering itself, with that eagerness with which one is apt to welcome support when labouring under fear or excitement.

"Do you remember, King," the baronet continued, earnestly, "when I came to inquire of you, nearly two years and a half ago, if you knew anything concerning the place of your mistress's concealment, you solemnly disowned all acquaintance with her actions?"

"I do, your honour, and I am sure——"

"Stay," interrupted Sir Shenton, enunciating with a stern emphasis; "think of what you are saying. I repeat that you then declared yourself unacquainted with my daughter's whereabouts, and at the time I believed you; but I have now reason to think you deceived me, and that while I was scouring London to find her, she was sheltered in your house. If this be so, I adjure you to answer my question truthfully, not only as you hope for the forgiveness of Heaven for your falsehood, but by your love for Liliias, whom you will succour more by revealing all to me than by using any farther secrecy. Was she with you, or were you really ignorant of her retreat?"

Sir Shenton spoke deliberately, meanwhile watching the effect of his words as well as the feeble light permitted; it was by no means startling. An exclamation, which might have for its interpretation either surprise, indignation, or grief, escaped the nurse, as her questioner expressed his disbelief in her statement with respect to his daughter's absence.

"Why should your honour," returned Sarah, adopting a tone of corresponding gravity to that used by Sir Shenton, "suspect me of telling you a lie now, when you have so long believed in me? For what cause should I have said Miss Liliias was not in my house if she had been?"

The question was plausible, but not satisfactory, as the baronet told her, adding, mournfully, "You might have had many reasons for hiding from me the fact of your mistress's presence in your abode. If she had been led into an act of imprudence, which she feared would meet with my disapproval, my daughter would, I know, have applied to you for aid, and what better could you afford, you might think, than to keep from me the place of her seclusion till my anger should be expended, and my sorrow for her loss incline me to greater leniency? That you should have done this at her entreaty, I am not surprised, seeing you would do nothing you thought was not for her good (I am quoting your own

language, you perceive); but that now, when I implore and command you to tell me the truth, you should take refuge in evasions, is past my comprehension."

Although Sarah coloured deeply at the allusion to her own excited address upon the memorable day of Liliás's flight, she was not otherwise moved; true or untrue, she persisted in her former professions of ignorance; and nothing could force her to acknowledge she knew more of my lady's concerns than it was fitting a good servant should be acquainted with.

Sir Shenton might perhaps have gleaned something more from her, had he repeated to her the communications her own servant had made to him that day; but he desired to reserve all mention of this for a future period; and disappointed at his want of success, he terminated the unprofitable interview.

As the baronet was leaving the breakfast-room, in which his conversation with Sarah had been held, he saw his son-in-law cross the hall, who asked if he had any objection to walk with him in the grounds.

"Not the least," was Sir Shenton's reply, though a heightened uneasiness filled his breast as he marked the sad earnestness with which the request was made.

"He, too, has his suspicions," was his reflections, "and comes to me for their confirmation or refutation."

There was a visible embarrassment in his lordship's manner, and when he essayed to speak, he failed more than once; at length mustering up his resolution, he related at full length the discourse which had passed between himself and Miss Lyttleton, respecting Owen Arnold, and his subsequent explanation upon the subject with Liliás.

When he had concluded the recital, he added, "You may wonder why, after a denial on your daughter's part of any attachment to this young man, I should mention the affair to you. I certainly should not have done so, had I not accidentally heard, during my wife's ravings, what is not merely calculated to make me suspect her truth, but what is corroborative proof that she has wofully deceived me, and still loves her rejected suitor." The manly voice was stifled with emotion as it articulated the last sentence, and it was some moments before Lord Welgrave was sufficiently restored to composure to ask Sir Shenton's advice.

Terrible was the struggle, in the heart of the baronet, between honour and paternal love. To act by his son-in-law as he would do by another man placed in similar circumstances, would be to acknowledge what he had heard, and counsel him to request an explanation from Lady Welgrave; but he could not forget, in his fondness for justice, what he owed his child; she might be

innocent of the imputations against her ; and even if she were guilty, was it for him, her father, to be the first to brand her with falsehood and shame ? If, in truth, she had so falsified herself to the generous-hearted man whose name she bore, as to wed him when her affection was devoted to another, she was worthy of every condemnation, but not from him, not from the author of her being, the husband of her sainted mother.

“My dear Welgrave,” Sir Shenton forced himself to say, “consider, before you judge, the absurdity of placing reliance upon the incoherences of delirium, when, too, they are made in positive contradiction to the solemn assurance of Liliast,—that she never regarded Owen Arnold other than as a friend ; her word should surely be enough for you.”

A desponding sigh was Lord Welgrave's only response, and soon, without farther remark, they returned to the house, each being internally convinced that he was the dupe of her ladyship's deceptions, and the more resolved to unravel them.

THROUGH GLENSHIEL

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THREE WEEKS IN SKYE," "ACROSS ROSS-SHIRE," &c.

THE view which we had from the western summit of Mam Rattachan was indeed a wondrous sight. In the valley below lay Loch Duich (the dark goch or loch of St. Duthus), acknowledged to be the finest salt water loch in the Scottish Highlands, the brown sails of a wherry here and there on its surface, and on its shores dark woods and pleasant residences, chief among them is Inverinet, belonging to Alexander Mathieson, Esq., of Ardress. Behind this, were hills on hills, stern, jagged, desolate hills, down whose sides the waterfalls gleamed like threads of silver, but so far distant that they seemed as motionless as icicles on a cottage-roof. Of the hundred peaks that, like the waves of the sea, thus shouldered themselves up for our observation, the chief were Sgor Owran (the gray cliff), Sgor na Carnich (cliff of the cairn), and Ben Attow (the swelling mountain), all of gneiss composition, and approaching 4000 feet in height. From their summits a very extensive prospect is to be had, the Trafalgar monument at Forres being distinguishable on a clear day. Round Sgor Owran, again, the tradition clings that a piper of the olden time reached its highest point, playing his pipes for a wager all the way, but, alas! only to drop down dead on the summit.

One of the chief features of this view from Mam Rattachan, was the mingled sweetness and barren grandeur of the scene. Civilisation below and desolation above! It was a sight indeed to make one hold his breath in awe. The man who can display levity in the presence of such a wondrous exhibition of the Creator's power can never be liberalised by travel. It was enough to make even an infidel pause and reflect whether, after all, his belief was not worthless vanity. In going through the Highlands, the traveller must be often struck by the reflection that a Lowlander has not nearly so many religious influences around him as a Highlander. The low flat plain with its lazy rivers and blooming grainfields, rich as they may be in corn and wine, present no features that excite adoration; but the everlasting hills, the wild glens and the roaring waterfalls, are ever suggestive, ever ready to impress the beholder with his own nothingness, and of the glory of Him "who weigheth the earth in a balance, and taketh up the hills as a very little thing."

Where were the eyes of both Johnson and Boswell as they ascended Mam Rattachan? To be sure, they were going the reverse way, but the road zig-zags so much, that their eyes must

often have rested upon it; in the sense conveyed by the words of the parable: "eyes had they, but they could not see." Boswell's only entry is:—"We rode on well till we came to the high mountain called the Rattachan, by which time both Dr. Johnson and the horses were a good deal fatigued. It is a terrible steep to climb, notwithstanding the road is formed slanting along it; however, we made it out. On the top of it we met Captain Macleod, of Balmeanach, (a Dutch officer who had come from Skye), riding *with his sword slung across him*. He asked, 'Is this Mr. Boswell?' which was a proof that we were expected." Johnson also writes:—"Came in the evening to Rattachan, a high hill on which a road is cut, but so steep and narrow that it is very difficult. Upon one of the precipices my horse, weary with the steepness of the rise, staggered a little. This was the only moment of my journey in which I thought myself endangered."

"Farewell, Mam Rattachan!" burst from our hearts as, with much regret, we began to descend the steep zig-zag road which, "like a wounded snake, drags its slow length" down the hill. The sloping ground towards the loch is so sheer, that it required little imagination on our part to fancy that we could, by a bold venturesome leap, spring from a height of 1000 feet into the loch. I trembled at the bare thought of a carriage coming quickly down, and, missing a turn, going headlong into the depths below. It is customary, however, for drivers to lead their horses at this point.

The distance to Shiel Inn from the summit of this pass does not exceed three miles, and as it is all down-hill, we accomplished the task in a brief time. A savage-looking deer-hound followed us all the way from the top, where he had parted company with the four-wheel carriage aforesaid. The ever-shifting views of Loch Duich which lay constantly on our left, were charming; and to assure the reader that I am not single in my praise of this sublime and yet lovely loch, I will now quote a few lines from the author of "Two months in the Highlands," who writes:—

"The time, I think, is not far distant when Loch Duich will be frequented by many tourists who will linger lovingly on its shores: now these are nearly in a state of nature. Mr. Mathieson's house, at the upper end of the lake, is the only habitation of importance. I saw more birds on Loch Duich, than in any other part of Scotland. Every creek was occupied by cormorants and gulls, fishing with apparently good success, while razor-bills and guillemots were disporting themselves in the middle of the loch. The scenery increases in grandeur as you approach the upper end. This is bounded by majestic mountains, whose heads were bathed in roseate hues, while their breasts were steeped in purple gloom."

Loch Duich is very deep, I believe, at the upper end, 80 to 100

fathoms, and is subject to heavy squalls; the water in the stormy season being often torn up in spoon-drift, and whirled to a great height in the air, the loch on such occasions presenting the appearance of "an immense boiling and smoking cauldron." Its western, or Mam Rattachan side, is called Letterfearn (the alder side) while the opposite side, that of Kintail, is called Letterchoil (the wooded side). The Kintail side is clothed with pasture of remarkable greenness, the ground rising with a gentle slope from the water, and agreeably diversified with bold headlands, precipitous ravines, and rocky eminences, interspersed with cultivated fields, and clumps of natural wood. The mansion house of Inverinet, before mentioned, is beautifully embosomed amid woods and arable fields. The name is as pretty as its situation, being a contraction of *Inbhar-ion-aite*, "the outlet of the charming spot." The name of the district, too, is very expressive, being in Gaelic *Cearm-an-t'saile*, "the head of the saltwater loch."

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we reached the inn of Shielhouse, in the comfortable parlour of which I was glad to lie down on the sofa, where in a few moments I fell fast asleep, leaving the duty of ordering dinner and its accompaniments to my friend, who found the task much like that described by the author of "A Painter's Camp in the Highlands" in the following amusing terms:—"When you ask the landlord of a Highland inn for a dinner any time out of the regular tourist season, he always seems astonished at so extraordinary a proposition—his senses do not readily receive it; a painful vacuity spreads itself over his otherwise intelligent countenance. When at last the idea comes home to him that the traveller really desires so exceptional a meal, a melancholy sadness and embarrassment settle there; and you hear faint, inarticulate murmurs on his lips, which invariably end in an ignominious and precipitate flight, whose poor pretext is to see what the house contains. If you persecute the man no more, he will certainly not reappear, being only too delighted to be rid of your importunities at so easy a cost of invention; but if, on the contrary, you pursue him into his own fastnesses, he puts a bold front on the matter, stands his ground like a stag at bay, and tells you that there is 'mutton ham, and pork ham, and eggs, and—and—cheese—and—and—' At last the traveller loses all patience, and if a man of experience and wisdom says he won't have any dinner, but only some tea, with ham and eggs to it, which is, in fact, the one meal the house contains, on this announcement the visage of the host shines with sudden satisfaction and relief, and the simple repast is prepared with alacrity." In supplement to these remarks of Mr. Philip Gilbert Hamerton, I may mention that I know a constant traveller in the Highlands,

who, from having tea-dinners forced upon him so frequently, came eventually to like them, and now relishes no other meal so well, even when at home.

I awoke from my brief nap just as the landlord's son brought in the tea-things; but on seeing the "King of fish" smoking on the tray, I felt inclined to cry out "Salmon again!" In fact, salmon, however delicious and nutritious it may be as an article of diet, becomes, like everything else, somewhat nauseous when you can get nothing else to eat. How would a London apprentice smack his lips, if he knew that in a poor Scottish village, not fifteen years ago, the apprentices to a common baker would turn up their noses at salmon, and that it is no uncommon thing to find a special clause in the indentures of Scottish apprentices of that day, that they shall not be obliged to eat salmon for dinner more than twice or thrice a week! Times are changed, however, and I daresay it would delight the hearts of Scottish apprentices now, to have the aforesaid restriction converted into a privilege, for except in plentiful seasons, few taste the savoury food from year to year, so dear has it become from the greater demand and facility of transmission to good markets.

Notwithstanding the drawback of the tea-dinner, however, we found the accommodation at Shiel Inn to be good. There are other inducements too, besides the love of scenery, to make tourists take up their quarters here. There is excellent fishing in the neighbourhood, the Shiel river running quite close to the Inn. The one-arched bridge spans a pool which, in the words of the author of "Two Months in the Highlands," "if an angler you will linger to look at, for a more fishy piece of water I never saw. I strongly advise you, should you visit Glenshiel, to make the landlord provide you with the white trout of this stream."

In Dr. Johnson's time there was no inn at Shielhouse at all. "At Auknasheals," he says, "a woman brought out some pints of milk, and the villagers gathered about us with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner. When done, we divided the loaf among them, and pieces of twisted tobacco. We gave her half-a-crown, and I hope got some credit by our behaviour, for the company said, if our interpreters did not flatter me, that they had not seen such a day since the old laird of Macleod passed through the country." Boswell also writes:—"We soon afterwards came to Auchnasheal, a kind of rural village, a number of cottages being built together, as we saw all along in the Highlands. We sat down on a green turf-seat at the end of a house; they brought us out two wooden dishes of milk, which we tasted. One of them was frothed like a syllabub. I saw a woman preparing it with such a stick as is used for chocolate, and in the same manner. We

had a considerable circle about us, men, women, and children, all Macraas, Lord Seaforth's people. {Not one of them could speak English. I observed to Dr. Johnson, it was much the same as being with a tribe of Indians. Johnson: 'Yes, sir, but not so terrifying.' I gave all who chose it snuff and tobacco. Governor Trapaud had made us buy a quantity at Fort Augustus, and put them up in small parcels. I also gave each person a piece of wheat bread, which they had never tasted before. I then gave a penny a-piece to each child. I told Dr. Johnson of this: upon which he called to Joseph and our guides for change for a shilling, and declared that he would distribute it among the children. Upon this being announced in Erse, there was a great stir: not only did some children come running down from neighbouring huts, but I observed one black-haired man, who had been with us all along, had gone off, and returned, bringing a very young child. My fellow-traveller then ordered the children to be drawn up in a row, and he dealt about his copper, and made them and their parents all happy. There was much diversity in the faces of the circle around us; some were as black and wild in their appearance as any American savages whatever. One woman was as comely almost as the figure of Sappho, as we see it painted. We asked the old woman, the mistress of the house where we had the milk, what we should pay. She said what we pleased. One of our guides asked her, in Erse, if a shilling was enough. She said, 'Yes.' But some of the men bade her ask more. This vexed me: because it showed a desire to impose upon strangers, as they knew that even a shilling was high payment. The woman, however, honestly persisted in her first price, so I gave her half-a-crown. Thus we had one good scene of life uncommon to us. The people were very much pleased, gave us many blessings, and said they had not had such a day since the old laird of Macleod's time."

In the eyes of those simple mountaineers, Dr. Johnson, no doubt, cut quite as uncouth a figure as they did in his, for, in the words of Boswell, "his person was large, robust, I may say approaching to the gigantic, and grown unwieldy from corpulency. His countenance was naturally of the cast of an ancient statue, but somewhat disfigured by the scars of that evil which, it was formerly imagined, the royal touch could cure. He was now in his sixty-fourth year, and was become a little dull of hearing. His head, and sometimes also his body, shook with a kind of motion, like the effect of a palsy; he appeared to be frequently disturbed by cramps, or convulsive extractions, of the nature of that distemper called St. Vitus's dance. He wore a full suit of plain, brown clothes, with twisted hair-buttons of the same colour, a large, bushy, greyish wig, a plain shirt, black worsted stockings, and

silver buckles. Upon this tour, when journeying, he wore boots, and a very wide, brown, cloth great-coat, with pockets which might have almost held the two volumes of his folio dictionary; and he carried in his hand a large English oak stick."

Such was the appearance of the famous *Rambler*, in his tour through Scotland, towards which and its inhabitants, he conceived such a dislike, that it cropped out even in the commonest circumstances, as for example, his famous definition of *Oats*, "a kind of grain, on which they feed *horses* in England, and *men* in Scotland." Had the Glenshiel men known of this prejudice at the time, they would likely have tarred and feathered him on the spot.

The tea-dinner which we had at Shiel Inn, was most refreshing, and when the meal was over, we rested our wearied limbs for another half-hour on the rustic seat in front of the windows, during which time the only signs of local society that we observed, were a pretty young lady, cantering past on horseback (about whom my bachelor friend had the curiosity to make inquiry), and a young, contemplative man, in broad cloth, and white necktie, whose slow gait and abstracted look, seemed to denote that he was busy excogitating matter for his next Sunday's sermon, for he was evidently a clergyman. The valley of Glenshiel is at this point pretty narrow, though not nearly so much so as higher up. The hills on both sides rise almost immediately from the inn, and impart a disagreeable sense of oppression. On casting my eye more than once at the hill behind, and noting the many boulders that dotted its surface, I felt that I should not have been surprised to see one of them pay the inn an evening visit, and crush it as a bear would a bandbox, by way of friendly embrace. Such an occurrence is not unusual in the Highlands, chiefly in winter, when the lever-power of the frost raises the boulders from their position, and, when a thaw succeeds, lets them slip out of its fingers down the hill side, when they seek the level plain as relentlessly as the stone of Sisyphus, crushing everything before them.

It was to me a source of much regret that my friend's time was too limited to permit us to visit the celebrated Fall of Glomach (the deep pool), the highest and finest waterfall in the Highlands, situated about seven miles from the Inn of Shielhouse, in a remote and uninhabited valley, whither it is advisable, I believe, for the tourist to take a guide. This remarkable cascade is thus described by the Rev. James Morrison, formerly minister of Kintail;—a sketch which may entice the tourist who is not pressed for time, to turn aside and behold it for himself:—

"The height is 350 feet. About fifty feet from the bottom, the water meets with a slight interruption from a shelving projection. This adds to, rather than detracts from, the peculiar interest

and grandeur of the scene, as it gives an increased volume of spray. When there is a body of water, the fall is unbroken, terrific, and sublime. The best view is obtained from a solitary tree, about one hundred feet down the ravine, to the south-west of the Fall, in a situation the most favourable for getting a complete view of the whole scene, for a narrow neck of rock covered with long heath, stretches forward toward the water, enabling the visitor to occupy a station in the very centre of the tremendous objects by which he is surrounded. There is no path, and much caution is needed. On looking round, the tourist finds the range of his vision fearfully limited by objects vast and immense, concentrated in fearful magnificence before him, and in almost alarming proximity. He is apt, therefore, to consider his situation more dangerous than it is. From the tree, the scene is extremely grand. The water appears to issue from an oblong fissure in the rock, from whence with a fearful rush it dashes its way chiefly in one great column to the pool below, from which, at this station, no outlet can be perceived. The immediate neighbourhood of the Fall is amazingly wild and barren, in which respect it differs essentially from its neighbour at Foyers. Here and there may be seen a tuft of grass, or perhaps of breckans, or a mountain saxifrage, clinging to great naked sheets of perpendicular rocks, and adding, if possible, to the general grandeur of the scene."

Tired as we were, we left Shielhouse about six o'clock on the same evening, to do another stage of eleven and three-quarter miles, a course which I had reason to feel grateful for afterwards, as we saw Glenshiel to the best advantage, under the sombre robing of twilight. And certainly this glen is second to none in the Scottish Highlands, except Glencoe, presenting, as it does, in the short distance of nine miles, a terrible array of grim, frowning, precipitous hills, which seem to sit in cruel-hearted conclave, studying at every turn how to crush the devoted traveller to death. The lower part of the glen is the tamest, and presents, for three or four miles, a green band of cultivated land, varying from a quarter to half a mile in breadth, with the river Shiel running down the middle, on whose banks a few dingy huts, the thatching of which is black with age, occur at long intervals. A short distance above Shielhouse the valley is so level that the river loses itself in a small lake, called Loch Shiel, the surface of which is half covered with green sedge. About a mile and a half from the inn there is a curious cavern, close by the roadside, into which the visitor has to creep on all fours, though, when he is once in, the roof rises to the height of eight or nine feet, and the cavern becomes broad enough to admit of the advance of two persons abreast. This cave was probably connected with some ancient Dune or Burgh, for the floor is paved,

the sides lined with flags, and the roof formed of long slabs, resting upon strong cross stone rafters.

The green band of meadow land, through which the river Shiel wimples on towards Loch Duich, forms a fine contrast to the rugged hills which, half-way up, are clad with purple heather; and as to their body and shoulders, brown and bare as stone; their sides, too, being dreadfully gashed with gloomy corries, down which the water falls in pale, white streams, which, by a tourist of a practical turn of mind, might be compared to long wax candles. The chain of hills to the left is called Ben More (the great mountain), while that to the right rejoices in the harsh appellation of *Maol-cean-dearg*, which means in English the *Red-headed Mass*. About five miles up the glen, where the green band becomes narrower at every step, we sat down for a few minutes by the murmuring Shiel, while the wind rippled the long fields of fern, and the dying sunset was putting its last touches of gold to the hill-sides, feeling in our fatigue the pleasant truth of the lines:—

“ How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes, ever to seem
Falling asleep in a quiet dream ! ”

But the fatigue soon wore off in the strange feeling which crept into our hearts when, on approaching Shiel Bridge, the hills began to close more frowningly around us. Whatever feeling of discomfort we had had at Shiel Inn was trebled here, for, though high, steep, and fantastically shaped at Shielhouse, the mountains were doubly so at this point, and so broad, massive, and terrible in their aspect, that they reminded us forcibly of the words of Revelation concerning the last Judgment, “ when every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places, and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and cry to the mountains and rocks, ‘ Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne.’ ”

Like Christian, in the “ Pilgrim’s Progress,” who, on perceiving the hill-side hung so much over the way, was afraid to venture further, lest the hill should fall on his head, we stood still for some moments in silent awe, impressed with a sense of our own nothingness, and the glory of Him before whom the mountains tremble. Such a sight does a Lowlander good, and hundreds have felt the benefit of it in presence of the same Glenshiel hills. In our case the feeling was perhaps heightened by the fact that “ twilight grey ” was beginning to clothe everything in “ sober livery,” and the restless mist to creep about the hill-sides in ghost-like volumes. Historical association, too, lent an additional solemnity, for the

place is rendered sacred by the graves of the slain who fell in the Battle of Glenshiel, the site of which is at the narrowest part of the glen, where the road crosses over to the right bank of the Shiel, and where a few poor-looking huts are situated. This battle, which is the most interesting historical event connected with the glen, took place in June, 1719, and was fought in the cause of the Stuarts. The expedition had been set on foot by Cardinal Alberoni, on the outbreak of a war between England and Spain, a great armament having been prepared at Cadiz for the invasion of Britain. Soon after the ships set sail, however, under the command of the Duke of Ormond, a fearful storm arose, which drove back the greater part of them, and only three frigates, with three or four companies of Spaniards on board, reached the shores of Scotland, and landed in Kintail. They had with them the Earl of Seaforth, chief of this district, who had been attainted for the part he had taken in the rebellion of 1715; and through his means, the Macraes, Mackenzies, and others were incited to join. On the news of the rising, General Wightman, the commander of the royal forces in the north, marched from Inverness, and met the insurgents, who were going eastward, in the pass of Shiel. The Highlanders awaited his coming, having posted themselves on the north bank of the river, on a steep eminence overlooking the pass, and round the base of which the royal forces would have to defile. The Spaniards occupied a similar position on the south bank, while a small party, at the head of which was the celebrated Rob Roy, was stationed about a quarter of a mile to the eastward, behind a hillock, with the view of surprising and surrounding the enemy. Thus advantageously posted, the insurgents should have won the day, but the superior discipline of the king's troops, and the cowardice of the Spaniards, proved too much for the brave Highlanders, who, after repelling three several attempts to dislodge them from their position, were at last forced to give way, though only when their chief had been dangerously wounded, and the heather, which had been set on fire by the hand-grenades of the enemy, was burning around them. The Spaniards laid down their arms without firing a shot, while Rob Roy, who had, with more zeal than judgment, attacked the rear of the enemy's column before they had become engaged in front, was driven back without accomplishing his purpose of placing the royal forces between two fires. The green mounds which cover the graves of the slain, among whom was the Dutch colonel, Wightman, and the ruins of a small breastwork, which the Highlanders had constructed on the crest of a hill to cover their position, still mark the scene of the conflict.

The fidelity of the Glenshiel people to the banished Earl of Seaforth was most remarkable. With that love for the chieftain

which distinguished the Highlanders of those days, they not only refused allegiance to the government, but resisted all the attempts of the commissioners on the forfeited estates to collect the rents. A Mr. Ross, of Fearne, had been appointed to this duty, and regardless of the intimation which he received of the determination of the people to resist his attempts, he proceeded to the west, accompanied by his son, and some attendants. When the news of his coming reached the glen, six men, armed with muskets, were stationed in the pass by which the factor was expected. Aware that his life was in danger, Mr. Ross exchanged horses with his son, and with a selfishness truly unpaternal, directed the young man to ride forward some distance in advance. The lad obeyed, and no sooner had he come within range of the Highlander's muskets, than two or three bullets pierced his heart, and he fell back, dead. At the dreadful sight, the factor and his followers turned their horses, and fled. Many subsequent attempts were made to levy the rents; but, though supported by the presence of a military force, they proved equally unsuccessful. While the people thus resisted the royal authority, they displayed a single-hearted faithfulness to the absent earl, which showed that their motives had not been selfish. They voluntarily paid the disputed rents to the earl's factor, Mr. Murchison, of Ochtertyre, great-grandfather of the present Sir Roderick Murchison, and that gentleman regularly carried or sent them to France, where the exiled chief resided for many years till the forfeited estates were restored.

LIFE IN A NORTH-GERMAN CHATEAU

BY THE COUNTESS VON LAUENBRÜCK

CHAPTER XIII.

THE days passed very quietly after the events detailed in the last chapter. There was much coming and going of physicians: Countess Irene scarcely left her brother-in-law's bed-side; her husband was silent and sad, Count Hohenstein impenetrable. Once Hilda tried to get a little information out of him respecting the cause of the duel, but he gently, yet decidedly, made her feel that her inquiries were not only useless, but painful and distasteful to him. After that she tried no more, and by common consent the subject was not referred to. Count Karl was inquired after as though casually indisposed, and, the first anxiety over, all went its usual daily round, with the exception that fewer visits were paid, though as many friends were received at the Schloss as usual. A gleam of animation shone upon us, however, shortly, in the rather unexpected arrival of Max and Hugo. They had contrived to come home together. I was not surprised at their mother's pride in them, when I beheld the two handsome youths who sprang up the steps to meet us, and who kissed father, mother, and brother alike, with the frankest glee. They had all the traditional dash and air of Austrian soldiers; that inexplicable something, that indefinable *je ne sais quasi* of good breeding and distinction, which so unfaillingly carries its own prestige with it, and the absence of which is sometimes so painfully felt, and so much more acutely regretted than the want of moral qualities and high principles. According to the rule of the army to which they belonged, they both wore their uniforms; Count Max was resplendent in green and gold and scarlet; Hugo equally magnificent in white, turned up with red. The elder brother had a clever, thoughtful face, but more full of lines than his age warranted. Hugo was made to be a mother's darling; the idol and pet of every woman with whom he came in contact. He had Countess Irene's own beautiful features, and pure brilliant complexion; but his great blue eyes were more laughing than hers could ever have been, and there was a brighter touch of gold in his curly chestnut locks.

"This is your cousin Mabel," said their father, taking my hand, and drawing me a little forward.

"Delighted to see you, my dear cousin," said Max, and

stooping down he kissed my hand with an amount of unexpected gallantry that was quite embarrassing.

"And this is my scapegrace of a Hugo," said the proud father, taking the beautiful youth by the elbow.

"Charmed, my dear cousin, to have the honour of being presented to you," and Hugo saluted me on each cheek as though we had played together in the same nursery, and were really the cousins we called each other.

His father laughed, Hugo was a privileged being. I saw that at once, and remained passive accordingly. The influence of his bright sunny nature made itself immediately and universally felt; and his gaiety was so natural, his truthfulness and kindness so spontaneous and entire, that no one ever attempted to criticise or reprove him. One would as soon have questioned the propriety of a bird's singing, as have thought of stopping Hugo in his gay talk and happy laughter.

"Where is Hilda?" asked her mother-in-law. She had not known of her brother's arrival, and Fritz had gone off to seek his pretty young wife. At the same moment she came in, fresh, fair, and rosy; she ran towards Hugo instinctively, as though, like the child she was, the brightness of his whole appearance pleased her. She put up her pretty face to kiss him, not waiting for any introduction. "You are Hugo," she said: "I knew you directly I came into the room." Then turning to Max, she put out her hand more shyly, and suffered her cheek to be kissed. "I am so glad you are come!" she added, as though fearful that she had neglected him. But the polished young soldier took his kiss, and the implied apology, with the grave air that distinguished all his sayings and doings; and then, the conversation becoming general, I escaped to my own room.

I had carried on an active correspondence with my husband all this time, but yet I began to weary for his presence. Letters *ought* to supply the place of personal intercourse, and are meant to do so; but they do not. There were such numberless things which I found it impossible to write; which Cuthbert would not have even remotely understood if I had written; yet which, if he had been with me, he would have seen in a moment, and understood in a second. But he had now written to say, as soon as the vacation commenced, he would come to fetch me, staying a week or two at Lauenbrück before we returned together to the delights of smoky London: to housekeeping and servants, to tiresome trades-people, refractory cooks, and badly-dressed dinners. Sometimes, when this dark side of the matrimonial state rose spectre-like before me, I could almost have wished my present *dolce-far-niente* existence to endure for ever. Yet such feelings were but

momentary, and often, in spite of the extreme friendliness of my hosts, I felt isolated and depressed. The arrival of some connexions of the family at the neighbouring bathing village formed an agreeable diversion. Frau von Rehfalsh, and her two daughters, came from one of the German provinces of Russia (either from Liefland or Courland, I forget now which). They had been spending the summer at Baden and Wiesbaden, and their toilettes were as irreproachable as the acknowledged genius of Frankfort milliners could turn out. Fine tall figures, fashionable clothes, and fresh complexions, made the young ladies appear handsomer than they really were. They spoke French perfectly well; were lively and agreeable, talking German with a peculiar hopping sort of accent that struck even my uninitiated ear. They would begin in a very high tone, each syllable seeming to be clipped of its fair proportions, whilst they hopped quickly from word to word, as a bird hops from stone to stone. Max and Hugo flirted to their heart's content with the two young ladies: many youthful reminiscences were *réchauffés*, and peals of laughter would arise, which often provoked and baffled me, since the glib tongues of the two voluble girls made even the simplest phrase unintelligible from their lips.

My surprise was great, one day at dinner, to see the elder, Lilly, take her splendid cameo brooch out, and use the gold pin as a toothpick.

Max, who sat next to me, shivered. "Is such a thing possible?" he asked, in aggrieved tones, when Fritz was telling the story to Hilda, who had not been well enough to come down to dinner.

"It's a good thing Karl didn't see it," observed his eldest nephew, pathetically; "upon my word it would have done for him altogether in his present weak state."

Hilda laughed. "I daresay he would have survived it," she said, "though it's the fashion in your family to speak of Karl as though he were Dresden china, and we, poor inferior mortals, but potter's clay!"

"I don't know about being potter's clay," said Max, gravely; "but the vision of that cameo will be present for many a day to my distressed imagination."

"After all," Hilda said, "it was no great crime; since at every *table d'hôte* toothpicks were provided for the good of society in general, and many ladies might be seen using them." But the young men, who appeared to have inherited some English fastidiousness with their mother's fair skin and regular features, would admit of no excuse.

"It's enough to cure any fellow who is spoony on a girl, to

see her acting in such an unprincipled manner," observed Fritz, looking at his brother.

Max very gravely remarked, "that excuses *might* be made for them, which in other cases would be inadmissible, since, though their parents were rich, and of great family, the Fraüleins von Rahfeldt had never been away from home, and scarcely off their father's acres, until they had taken this summer's journey to Frankfort and the two Badens; that they had acquired a certain superficial polish, the illusion being completed by their unexceptionable toilettes."

"Don't look so down in the mouth, old fellow!" said Fritz, at the end of his brother's apology. "I confess it is the sort of thing I should myself object to; but she's young, and, taken in time, the worst vices can be cured."

"I have no ambition to cure the defects of which you speak, as though they were the ills to which (horse) flesh is heir," said Max calmly. But his flirtation no longer flourished as it had done before the cameo episode. Max never admired that which had made itself ridiculous or blameable in the sight of others. Hugo therefore came out in double force, and was *choyé* by the two young ladies accordingly.

About this time a pic-nic to Breeko was organised. The weather was still lovely, with the days shortening visibly. Several officers from the garrison of W—— came over to Lauenbrück. One, a married man, with a pretty delicate young wife, remained on a week's visit. I became very intimate with the naive little Fraü von Strelitz. She was only nineteen, but her great boy of two years old gave her a quaint little matronly manner that was infinitely comic. We became confidential over our domestics, and eloquent over our babies, till the rest of the party began to look upon us as two insipid twaddling little fools.

On the day of the Breeko expedition I elected, however, to leave my offspring at home. A good example brings inestimable benefits with it. Frau von Strelitz, seeing my Spartan-like heroism, rose to the emergency, and was induced to set off on the journey without her infant, though it may be presumed that her maternal feelings were wound up to tragic pitch.

Arrived at Breeko, all went merry as a marriage-bell. We found a number of country neighbours there, and this agreeable coincidence raised the general spirits to a holiday joy. Hilda was grand, flitting from pillar to post in a white *piqué* dress, trimmed with lilac, and a bewitching hat, bound with the same coloured velvet. Count Hohenstein, and a Captain von Zulau (a remarkably handsome man, and adjutant to His Royal Highness the Grand Duke of X—), followed her like her shadow, and obeyed her with

the unceasing submission of slaves. The captain's flaxen moustaches were twisted into long, ferocious-looking points, and *cirés à ravir*, but I feared to behold the wax melt out of them like some beautiful vision before the rising sun, when Hilda sent him down upon his knees in the midst of the burning midday glare, to unpack a hamper, whose depths appeared fathomless, and whose straw inexhaustible. Since it was necessary she should have two shadows, I was glad that Count Hohenstein was one of them, for I fear, in his absence, the gallant captain's devotion would not have remained in its shadowy state, but have assumed a palpable and demonstrative form, embarrassing to the fair object of his adoration. But Hilda ordered and counter-ordered, sent messages, and exacted general activity from her slaves, which in no wise savoured of embarrassment, and which seemed highly to delight her simple, good-natured husband, who stood by, looking at her with eyes full of undisguised, honest admiration, not in the least jealous, but enjoying her triumphs with an amused contentment touching to behold.

"Doesn't she look stunning in that jolly little tile?" he said to me, as I passed the tree against which he was leaning, surveying the hamper scene from a distance. I, of course, agreed that she did look "stunning," and that the "tile" was infinitely "jolly," and would have moved on but for Fritz continuing the conversation with fresh notes of admiration for his fair young spouse.

"She's too bad on that poor devil of a Zulau," he said, compassionately; "upon my word, it's worse than parade in the dog-days. I must go and help him," and Fritz went off to help his prostrate rival, on whose forehead great beads began to stand, in spite of the frequent wavings and applications of a highly-scented cambric pocket-handkerchief. Little Frau von Strelitz, who was the object of a sentimental adoration to the major of her husband's regiment (such as is by no means uncommon in Germany), appeared quite to have forgotten the maternal pang which had rent her soul in parting with her infant son, and was sitting on a mossy bank in a pink bonnet, listening most amiably to, and smiling most sweetly on, the major's tender nothings, which he pronounced in a husky whisper, and with as much effect as a good deal of regulation stock, and regimental buckram, would allow. The major was a stout man, whose face was apt to get red when he was girt up in the clothes which proclaimed him ready to do battle for his sovereign and his country; and under these circumstances it is difficult for a man and a major to play *Hamlet* or *Don Juan* effectively. Captain von Strelitz had gone off with some of the younger men of his regiment; and the two *Fräuleins* von Rehfeldt formed the centre of attraction to all the young

bachelors who had not joined other partners; Max and Hugo were of their satellites, whilst their mamma looked on with glistening eyes, enjoying her daughter's success. Herr von Lützow, the elderly cousin of whom some mention has already been made, the little artist, and myself, formed a sober trio, and walked off to see an old tower-house which stood at the other side of the Breeko woods, and which was approached by a gloomy beech avenue. Knocking, we gained admittance, and wandered through the silent rooms, all sad and uninhabited, with that mysterious out-of-the-world look that deserted houses always have. There were numberless old family portraits in the darkened rooms, and in one a work-table stood open, and some coloured silks lay tangled on it, catching the glints of sunlight as they straggled through the half-closed shutter. Most of the pictures were covered with dust; a mouldy smell pervaded the house, which seemed strangely silent and cold, after the chequered shade of the green woods from which we had come, all fresh with the breezes from the fair Baltic, all alive with merry voices and youthful laughter. Herr Brann looked at the pictures from an artistic point of view; regretted the dust, and the want of varnish; admired the prospect from the windows; skipped from room to room, totally unimpressed by the surrounding gloom, chirping as he skipped, with loquacious vivacity. Herr von Lützow, at all times a grave and silent man, and now doubly grave and doubly silent, wandered on in grim angularity, making no reply to Herr Brann's amenities, and troubling himself in no wise to add to my enjoyment. As we went out we were met by the Rehfeldt party coming in. Augusta, the younger of the two sisters, paused in the midst of a burst of somewhat hoydenish laughter, "Why didn't you wait for us?" she asked. "Have you seen the ghost? but I suppose she doesn't walk by day, and your lugubrious looks might scare the most amiable spectre away." This compliment, which fell happily on ears that were not sensitive, passed by unheeded; but some one in the bevy said "Hush!" and then, with a little more jostling and bustle than was absolutely necessary, the party disappeared into the house. We moved slowly on. So there was a ghost! I had longed to hear the history of some of those fair faces adorning the walls, but Herr Brann knew no more than myself; the old house-keeper had put us into the first room, and given us the keys of all the others, speaking words of instruction and explanation, in a jargon excruciating to the ear. Herr von Lützow was too unsympathetic for me to venture any intrusion on his taciturnity. Thus we walked back in silence to the spot whence we had started. Hilda had accomplished her preparations; her military adorer was seated on a mossy boulder-stone opposite to the object of his

affections, and was being rewarded for his energy and submission by the sweetest smiles, and the most captivating of small talk. On one side of Hilda sat the faithful Fritz; on the other side, the scarcely less faithful Graf Hohenstein. Looking at her thus, in her pretty gaiety, in her innocent unconscious vanity, in her fresh youthfulness and natural vivacity, I could not but wonder at the moments of gloom and petulance, the passing shades of caprice, with which Hilda was at times troubled. She seemed so calculated to enjoy life, so eminently fitted to please, and to be pleased, that her momentary fits of bitterness or recklessness, transient though they might be, struck one with a double sense of pain. The shock was the greater for being so unexpected, and the discord all the more distressing, breaking in upon so sweet a harmony. As she saw us approaching, she rose, and coming towards me linked her arm into mine. "How serious you look!" she said, addressing us all three, but fixing her eyes on Herr von Lützow. No responding gleam shone in his. "Your cousin is probably fatigued," he said, and then he sat down and proceeded to light a cigar with characteristic imperturbability.

"I always call him the knight of the rueful countenance," said Hilda, in an undertone. "Did you ever see such a 'Melancholy Jacques?'"

"Great bore, pic-nic!" said Fritz, who was, nevertheless, enjoying himself immensely; "sell all round;—dead failures,—eh, Lützow?"

But that warrior, who understood no word of perfidious Albion's barbarous tongue, and whose philosophy had certainly never dreamt, in its boldest flights, of mastering such a vocabulary as Fritz's, only pulled his moustache a little harder, and hearing his own name, smiled and nodded.

"Do talk German, Fritz," said his wife; "you are already unpopular enough on account of your Anglomania, and, on an occasion of this kind conversation ought to be general."

"Well! I talk English for Mabel's benefit."

"Mabel will forego the advantage, for once in a way," she answered, a mischievous glance darting from her bright eyes; and then, seeing Frau von Strelitz and her plethoric Corydon advancing from a bowery glade, she moved forward to welcome them, with sylvan hospitality. She must have said something far from indifferent to that pretty little woman, for her face suddenly became as pink as her bonnet; and the major, buckling his sword-belt two inches tighter, coughed in a deprecating manner, but drew himself up with an air of satisfaction.

"Naughty creature!" said the young matron, tapping Hilda on the hand; and then, turning to me, she added, with great

affability, "You have been seeing ze views; ze nature here is quite charming; more lovely zan coarse." I agreed that the scenery was not of a bold description, and might with justice be called pretty rather than wild, after which Frau von Strelitz relapsed into German, seasoned somewhat richly, it is true, with French, which language she also spoke ingenuously, and with a strong Teutonic accent.

By degrees the whole party assembled, and after a little preliminary scuffling, a good deal of loud talking, and a liberal allowance of giggling and apologies, we sat down to Hilda's banquet. Toasts were proposed, healths drunk, and glasses clashed together with great spirit, until the ladies at length retired to a green and bowery drawing-room at a little distance, from whence the view of the sea was at once soothing and refreshing. Before the gentlemen joined us again, there was more than one noisy roar of applause; more than one outburst of hilarious gaiety. "What was that last uproar about?" Hilda asked of her husband as he came and sat down near her, on their return from the *débris* of the repast.

"Oh! it was only a toast that those fellows of the —th proposed."

"What was it?"

"I never kiss and tell."

"Nonsense! tell me what it was?"

But Fritz remained obdurate. Count Hohenstein came up at the moment, and on Hilda's appealing to him, he said all the young men were running out of their senses, and that they had been drinking the health of "Fräulein Eckstein, the beautiful prima donna, at X—."

"Why did you not tell me that?" asked Hilda, turning somewhat sharply on Fritz.

Poor Fritz! he had no presence of mind, and he had thought he was acting wisely in abstaining from the mention of that syren's name, where Count Hohenstein's older experience had divined that it would be still greater wisdom to mention it. Fritz had his motives, and they were honest, though mistaken ones. His intentions were good—but then we all know what place is "paved with good intentions." Coffee, and its usual concomitant of scandal; a stroll upon the beach; a row upon the golden waters; a pleasant tea, with social chat; and then, the sun having gone down, and the moon having risen, the servants packed the hampers, the horses were put to, and all mounting into our separate places, we began the slow homeward drive, through the dark stems of the forest trees, past the haunted houses, beneath the gloomy avenue, and so on across the hamlet of Breeko, past the hospitable farmers' houses,

where we had had tea some Sundays before, and so out into the open plain. I sat by Hilda's side; opposite to us Count Hohenstein; by his side the garrulous little artist. Fitz drove. I heard a murmur of "tones," and "colouring," "feeling," "neutral tints," "chiar' oscuro," and "varnish;" of "middle distances," and the musical school of "Raulbach and Comelius;" of "Lessing, and Dusseldorf, and Weimar;"—but this art-jargon fell on uninitiated ears, and I amused myself by watching the majestic movements of Count Hohenstein's grand head, as he bowed acquiescence and approval, or slightly shook it in courteous dissent. Hilda seemed glad to be quiet, after all the chat and laughter of the day; but before we reached home, she told me the story of the haunted tower-house, and of the open-work table with the tangled woof of brilliant colours lying across its dust-covered drawers.

Count Lauenbrück had had an only sister: beautiful as the morning; accomplished, *spirituelle*, elegant, and amiable. At sixteen she married Prince G—m, Ambassador to the Court of B—, for His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias. No sooner was the lovely "Helène" lancée in the *grand monde* of M—, than all that *monde*, and all the literary and artistic world besides, went mad about her; the king at the head of the army; then K— painted a portrait of her for the royal collection; then Heine wrote passionate love-songs on her beautiful eyes, and on his own eternal misery; then Schubert, and the great composer W—, set those songs to lovely immortal music; then Schwanthaler took her head as a model for his most successful works; then R— immortalised her in his "Helen of Troy;" then C— made her the centre figure of that grand historical picture which, as it afterwards turned out, was destined to create an epoch in the history of German art.

Beloved and beautiful, adored by numbers for her goodness of heart and sweetness of disposition, the lovely young ambassadress seemed to float in emotionless calm on the waves of this sea of flattery and adulation. Her husband—more than twice her age—accompanied her everywhere; and by his unvarying devotion, shielded her from the tainted breath of that envy, hatred, and malice which such beauty as hers, and so much adoration as was paid to it, were almost sure to excite. His manner was that of a tender father; hers, that of a gentle, affectionate daughter. But there came a day when all this was to end. There came a day when the fair cheek grew pale, and the bright eyes dim. There was a bustle and confusion in the Hotel G—, indicating some great change; and after a few days, the ambassador and his fair young wife had had their last audience of the genial, art-loving

monarch, in whose classic capital they had spent so many happy days, and were travelling, as fast as post-horses could carry them, towards the melancholy northern land, which must henceforth be the country of the fair young wife's adoption. Prince G—— was recalled to fill an important place in the councils of the Czar : all his friends congratulated him on the post he was destined to fill, near the person of his Imperial Majesty ; and Prince G——, as became an accomplished statesman, an experienced diplomatist, and a faithful servant, received the congratulations with a smile, and bowed his silent acknowledgments. But at times his eye would wander to his beautiful wife, who responded to the congratulations with tears instead of smiles, and over whom an ashen shadow had flung a grey mantle of melancholy, expression of deep regret. The *mauvaises langues* of M—— saw more in this passionate, and yet almost speechless grief, than the girl's husband saw. But if he were blind, they said, let others respect that blindness, and also keep silence. Thus spoke the envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness of the small-minded and malignant ; but Prince G—— was followed also by the sincerest regrets of all those nearer and dearer friends who had had the privilege of knowing her.

Russia is not an attractive country for general tourists ; people who have lived there long enough seem glad to escape into more genial regions ; Russians themselves flee their own *morne* and *triste* country in a way unknown to other European peoples. In the old days of which I write, when the Czar Nicholas exercised an absolute despotism over all his faithful servants (such as has happily given place to a wiser and milder, a more large-hearted, and more liberal rules), a passport, with its yearly leave of absence, was more a personal favour than a purchasable right—such “ permits ” were renewed with great difficulty and proportionate expense. For Prince G——, however, these details were of no consequence, for he had been recalled to fill a post of confidence, and henceforth Europe became a map and a memory to him. Now and then a diplomatic acquaintance would fall in upon the imperial grandeur of St. Petersburg ; now and then an old friend would turn up in the midst of Moscow's barbaric splendours : but these passing glimpses of old times, these fleeting moments of friendly intercourse, were full of pain and regret ; and after such, the young princess would invariably become more melancholy, more silent and overcome than ever. She seemed to have fallen a prey to that *mal du pays* which is incurable in a distant land ; so tenacious, so prostrating, and even so fatal in its results, that the sufferer endures agonies of grief and longing, of yearning and regret, incomprehensible to those who have never experienced, or

at least, seen it, in all its daily and hourly phases of consuming fever.

More than once her husband proposed that she should return to Germany for a time—try some watering-place—consult some experienced physician as to the insidious malady that was preying on her life; but she thanked him, smiled, shook her head, and sighed. “Her brother, Count Lauenbrück, was himself in Russia, but in a remote part of the empire; she had no near relations in Germany; her old friends had forgotten her,” she said; “her place had been filled up. To whom, then, should she go? No; she would remain with her husband;—she should soon be better. About this time Herr von Lutzow went to be private secretary to Prince G——. It was, perhaps, well that no curious eyes intruded upon the sacred interior of this silent existence—this gilded captivity—this splendid exile. Herr von Lützow’s eyes were not “curious”—on the contrary, they were discreet ones;—but they were eyes; and as the property of eyes, in their normal state, is to see, so his eyes saw, but betrayed nothing of what was revealed to them.

So a year or two passed, and then the cry of an infant resounded in those darkened chambers, impervious to sound and air, where the young mother lay. A star had arisen on her gloomy horizon in magic splendour—a star of hope, where all had seemed so hopeless! New life beamed in the beautiful eyes—new smiles played round the lovely mouth; there was no more talk of passports and travelling. “Home” ever, where her little son was. Did she not hold the whole world—*her* whole world in her arms? And, by degrees, sister voices and sister-laughter came, to make the little firstborn’s gambols gay with their companionship; and Count Lauenbrück, coming to St. Petersburg with his lovely English wife, found his sister the star of the Imperial Court. Popular, gay, and contented, she was the centre once more of an admiring circle, the life and soul of the society in which she moved. They parted—she promising her brother to pay him a visit at Schloss Lauenbrück, whither he was going to take possession in a few weeks’ time.

Then, once more, an infant’s wail was heard in those sumptuous chambers; but the little life went out in darkness, and the mother lay tossing restlessly on her couch of pain, uttering wild longings and agonised regrets, such as blanched her husband’s cheek, whilst he bathed her burning temples.

Had there, then, been truth in those burning whispers which had reached his ears, though they refused to give credence to what they heard? Had the slanderers and busy mockers been right? Had a shadow fallen on his life, which he, in his great-hearted

blindness, had elected to ignore, or were these the ravings of a diseased imagination? Yet why the constant recurrence of that one old name—that name which had been “familiar as a household word” in the old brilliant days of M——?

Anyhow, Prince G—— was true to himself; he turned the attendants out of the room, and shut himself up in a horrible solitude, to hear the same name, during every hour of the day and night, pronounced in every varied shade of deep emotion. There he sat alone—utterly alone; for what he had thought his had never, of reality, belonged to him. The past was one great lie—the future a blank; and yet the high-souled gentleman never for an instant thought of proclaiming his grief, or endangering his wife’s reputation by angry laments. But when those terrible days of delirium were passed, Prince G—— came out of his wife’s chamber an altered man. Not for many weeks did he betray the burthen which was oppressing his soul. What then passed between husband and wife no one ever knew; but the cloud was for ever gone—the most perfect harmony reigned between them. He must have conquered his wife’s heart by his noble unselfishness—by his care for her honour and reputation, even in the moment of supreme agony; and he was rewarded by hearing the plain, unvarnished truth from her own pure lips, of how a girlish inclination had been flattered into a false and momentary life by the attentions of the handsome young Karl von M——, who had offered up incense on her shrine, and had followed her with anonymous poems and anonymous bouquets, until she had desired that none such should be accepted. She told him how this silly, sentimental fancy had gained upon her, and then she told him how deep her love, how undying her gratitude for his noble confidence and unselfish delicacy.

The following summer “Helène,” with her three children, left for Lauenbrück. Her brother had arranged the old dower house of Breeko for her reception; her husband was to follow her to Germany in the autumn. But the evening before they expected to land, a terrible cry went through the ship of “*Fire!*” Springing from her bed, the terrified mother sought her darlings, and hurrying them, with their frightened attendants, on deck, she offered endless largesse to who should save them. But on a burning ship no one thinks of money. Life and death are the only two realities at such a moment; so the little Russian princes had no better chance than the peasants and boors who were on board with them. It was not a case for favour. Those born in the purple cannot always die in the purple. They must die as other men do, though they have lived sumptuously, and fared well, clothed in the purple and fine linen of the world’s estimation. Nevertheless the

children were saved. The frantic mother saw the boatful bearing towards the shore, and she would not endanger it by her additional weight. She stood and saw them go, and uttered a thanksgiving to heaven. The "*grande dame*,"—standing bare-footed on the already burning deck, with spars and red-hot cinders flying about her; her one white garment protecting her from the night air, her long tresses falling about her like a mantle,—had suddenly risen into a heroine. Some German sailors, who, in the selfish instinct of self-preservation, had detached a small boat from the vessel, and were hurriedly rowing landwards, paused for a moment, as they saw the grand white figure, with clasped hands, illumined by the lurid glare of the doomed ship, paused, hesitated, and then simultaneously turned their boat, and rowed back to rescue the unfortunate lady.

When she awoke from that terrible dream, she was lying in the old dower-house at Breeko, her darlings about her, her hand clasped in her brother's, the beautiful Irene by her side, shining down upon her like the same lustrous angel. Surely this was heaven!

The fire had been seen by the peasants on the Lauenbrück estate, and Count Lauenbrück hastening to Trauennüde, found there his terrified orphans and nieces, with their more terrified attendants. A rumour of a beautiful lady, who had been brought ashore at a fishing-hamlet some miles distant, led him to the spot where his sister lay. In her stupor, she was unconscious of all that passed, and only woke again after some weeks of alternate delirium and insensibility. Her husband followed her to Breeko. He resigned his offices, and hastened to his wife. Herr v. Lützow accompanied him; but the lovely flower was not destined to recover. In despair, Prince G—— carried her by gentle stages to Italy—where a few months later she died. Died just as perfect happiness seemed hers; all doubts at an end; all longings satisfied, all desires fulfilled. Just as life became beautiful, death's pale and envious face peered across the happy threshold, and the light went out in darkness—in darkness, at least, for the bereaved husband, for the motherless little ones. Such was Hilda's tale, told in hushed tones, as we drove home by the light of the moon.

So the work-table and the tangled skein had their story, and the house its ghost. Thinking of this, I remembered Augusta von Rehfeldt's hoydenish giggles with a thrill of horror, and of the pain of the light way in which all these noisy, happy young people had "rushed in" upon sacred ground, "where angels" might have "feared to tread." Then I remembered a "Hush!" which some one had uttered at the mention of the "ghost," and it seemed to me that it had been Hugo's voice that had uttered it. I no longer

wondered at Herr v. Lützow's severe, contracted face; at his silence and gravity. His faithfulness, his deep attachment to the beautiful princess and her husband, had endeared him to Count Lauenbrück, and detained him for many months at a time, his esteemed and honoured guest.

A ghost! Yes, surely: the ghost of other days; the ghost of a past happiness; pale phantom of regret. But, "did the people really believe the house to be haunted?" I asked.

"The village people did," Hilda said. When the nights were wild and stormy, they believed that "the beautiful lady of Breeko" walked along the cliffs, singing dirges for those who were lost at sea.

"But you do not believe in such folly?"

"Why not? Wiser folks than I do so. Not that I am prepared to say I believe, or disbelieve."

"Have you no ghost at Lauenbrück?"

"*Mais certainement!* you have surely heard of Countess Christine, and her headless horses; "Herme Gräfin" as the people call her. But we have done with her now; people do say, "she whispered, glancing around to see if she were overheard," people do say that the "Beautiful Lady" walks at Lauenbrück when misfortune is impending to the family; she was seen before her namesake 'Nelly,' died!"

We were at home. Count and Countess Lauenbrück were waiting to receive us; the Fräuleins von Rehfeldt, and little Frau von Strelitz began ecstatic exclamations of delight as soon as their feet reached *terra firma*; Count Hohenstein inquired after Graf Karl; Captain von Zulau assisted Hilda to alight; Fritz was eloquent in praises of his wife's arrangements; Max and Hugo and the younger men, proposed a quiet cigar in the grand avenue. All seemed satisfied and tired, and we were glad to go to bed, after a light supper of wines and fruit in the avenue pavilion.

CHAPTER XIV.

"WHICH, though I says it, mum, I demeans myself in a-telling of you."

Such was nurse's energetic peroration. What she had been doing, Heaven only knows, but certain it is that she had thrown the kitchens of Lauenbrück into a state of revolution, or semi-revolt, at least. After the custom of her kind, she had from time to time made aggressive remarks on the ways of foreign servants, loudly proclaiming her English superiority, and, equally loudly, *affiché*-ing her contempt for all that had no claim to be qualified by *that* distinctive adjective. So far, so good. The Germans, espe-

cially those of the middle and lower classes, are ponderously eloquent and wearisomely discursive about some myth of their imagination, which they call "*Vaterland*," and no doubt the retainers of Lauenbrück knew how to vindicate their claims to consideration; but it appeared that, during our absence at the pic-nic, the "Mamselles" and "Johann" the chasseur, had coalesced, and a determined resistance was planned to nurse's aggressive demonstration. *L'union fait la force*, and when, at the servants' dinner, she began to promulgate doctrines obnoxious to her fellow-men, with one accord they protested against her aggravation, and declared their resolution to combine against her, unless she adopted a more amiable tone; upon which she became doggedly insolent, and declared her readiness to fight any number of "foreigners" single-handed. "Mamselle," interfering with conscious authority, endeavoured in vain to soothe the exasperated belligerents. Nurse calmly told her that she was no better than the rest; upon which Johann, in his official capacity, began also to assert his dignity, adducing his post of confidence about his master.

"You a butler—you a footman?" she exclaimed, in tones of most galling contempt. "That's the way the footman dress in my country," saying which she calmly seized a dredger-full of flour, and emptied the contents on his devoted head. The powder flew about in all directions; the Babel of tongues waxed fast and furious, and order fled dismayed. All this I heard, and heard with dismay and displeasure, the morning after our Breeko expedition. Nurse had loudly proclaimed her indifference to the consequences, and had aired her contempt in the most impertinent manner, as I afterwards found, walking up and down the avenue where Countess Lauenbrück (who had been informed of the skirmish) was sitting, talking to baby, and looking about her with perfect unconcern.

"You may leave the room—I shall speak to the countess," was my only comment.

"As you please, mum."

The consequence of my conference was that nurse had notice to quit. After the kindness with which I had been received, I could not allow her to upset the whole domestic economy of the household.

"Which I this blessed day am glad to do (to leave, namely); and, but for having of my box to pack, would also act upon."

"Very well, nurse, I do not wish for any further observations."

But in my secret soul I dreaded the woman's departure, thinking what might not my innocent lamb's fate be in the arms of a strange woman.

"Nurse is not altogether wrong in her strictures," I thought

to myself, "but I wish she would have the common sense to keep them to herself, but, of course, now she can't stay."

She made her preparations with great scorn and much sniffing, partaking of her meals in the retirement of her own apartments, and apostrophising baby, in my hearing, in loud and gloomy tones as to the future, which was looming terribly, and imminent before him. He stared at her, complacently sucking the toe of his red morocco shoe with contemplative philosophy.

"Why do you not keep her?" Countess Lauenbrück had said to me, on the eve of her departure. But I knew better. I had suffered enough from her tyranny and insolence already; and to ask her to stay would have flattered her vanity so inordinately that the bear idea was a shock to my nervous system. Fritz said it would be "no end of a thing" to keep her; then she might have a "regular set to" once or twice a-week, "a jolly good mill," he called it; and meeting her in the garden, he told her that "he heard she had knocked mamselle into the middle of next week, and that the under-footman was not to be found." He further added that he wouldn't mind putting the gloves on with her himself, £25 a-side, but that he was rather out of training. To my surprise, nurse smiled grimly on his facetious observations. "He is an affable young gentleman—*he* is," she observed to me, before retiring to rest; "its a pity but what he could have been born an Englishman; its so much good blood wasted." Being angry with her, I declined entering upon the question of races, and notified to her that she could withdraw. Great, however, was my astonishment the following morning, when the carriage that was to convey her to the station came round, to see all the enemy's forces drawn up in array before the kitchen-door, each house and kitchen-maid armed with a gorgeous bouquet of farewell. Presently, nurse, having scornfully hugged the child, and having clambered into position, a rush of the quasi-belligerents took place, and even the hostile Johann gallantly sped the parting guest with floral tribute. Shades of great Samuel! what hadst thou said? Thou, who so lovedst a good hater, as loudly to proclaim thy contempt for a weak one! That the Germans are "good lovers," I will not here venture a doubt, but that they are "good haters" I cannot for a moment admit.

"Its all very well," said Mrs. Benson, shaking her head at them; "but less flowers and a little more respect for what's superior to you, says I. Bookays is all very well; but one aint a-going away every day, and when ones gone, they're more trouble than good." I have no doubt she threw them all away before half-an-hour was over, for she was a woman of practical parts, and had an innate horror of the useless and ornamental.

I do not think Mrs. Benson much calculated to "adorn a tale;" but that she "points a moral" is incontestable, and the moral is this: "Never take a woman of her class into foreign domestic life. Its sure to prove a dead failure. Even at hotels the English domestic finds so much fault, is so hard to please, and so infinitely more difficult to satisfy than his master, that he manages to poison half one's enjoyment, but one consoles oneself by thinking it is only for a time, and what he exacts, he pays for (or his master does—in-initely more convenient and satisfactory arrangement for *Jeames*). The case is, however, very different when one is staying with friends, for then even the balm of money cannot be offered as a salve for rudeness and preposterous exactions.

"I am going on a shopping expedition to W——," said Countess Lauenbrück a few mornings after Mrs. Benson's floral exodus." Will you go with me, Hilda and Mabel? I ask you last, my dear," she added, turning to me, "because it was one of those good 'second thoughts,' which have been proverbially immortalised as 'best.'"

"If you think baby—"

"Is as happy as a prince with Elspeth, who will obey all your instructions, *au pied de la lettre*. *Du reste*, we shall be home again by seven or eight o'clock, so that the separation will not be for long."

I agreed to accompany them; and coming into the hall, found Fritz was going to X——, and that Count Hohenstein would drive us as far as W——, at which place he would transfer himself to Fritz's tender mercies for conveyance to X——, whither his duties were calling loudly for him. Before he left, he had a long interview with Count Karl. That gentleman began to creep about again; but he was a shadow of his former self; his beard had grown during his illness; all his hyacinthine locks had been shaved off; his bright blue eyes, though they were still blue, were no longer bright; he wore his arm in a sling; and as Fritz observed, was generally "all to pieces." Yet I am not sure but that he was still handsomer in his languid state than he had ever been in his days of vivacity. The Rehfeldt girls seemed to think so. Poor Max and Hugo hid their diminished heads in wide-awakes of an eccentric fashion, and went out on desultory shooting expeditions amongst the stubble-fields. But now they donned their bravery again, and never went on a pleasure trip to X——. "When shall you all be back?" Hilda had asked, as we bid them Goodbye in one of the narrow streets of W——. "Its hard lines expecting a fellow to say when he'll be back, if he's going out on a lark," Fritz had remonstrated; then there had been a little talk of to-morrow," and something about "the Eckstein" and probable delays consequent on theatrical arrangements, &c.; and so they at length departed, leaving but very indefinite promises behind them. To

Count Harald we also said Goodbye. The next time I saw him was at the distribution of prizes in the International Exhibition of 1862. He walked close behind Lord Palmerston amongst a number of other distinguished statesmen, who, like himself, were the representatives of their various sovereigns on that occasion. The hair at his temple was a trifle grayer; the shadow round his eagle eyes somewhat deeper; but his bearing was as proud and noble as ever, and his smile, as his hand touched mine, had all the cheery light of those other days, when we had walked and talked in the Lauenbrück avenues, and had fed the tame carp and tench in the marble basin.

We were driving up the hilly street of W——, not inappropriately called "high" all of us a little sobered and saddened by the "farewells" we had spoken, when suddenly a human being, clad in an original manner, stood before us, waving a huge umbrella in token of recognition, and appealing to our coachman (whom she called "Vester, Kutscher") to stop, in tones of stentorian pathos. Our vehicle stopped accordingly, and a most animated meeting took place; the lady with the umbrella, and a capacious bag, formerly called a reticule, from which the legs of a slaughtered fowl protruded, turned out to be the wife of the major-commandant of the town, and a person of some consideration, not only in merit of her husband's position, but also as being of ancient family, connected with all that was old and noble in the country round. A quarter-of-an-hour's energetic talk ensued, and when she left us, kissing the tips of her cotton-glove fingers vehemently to the Countess and Hilda, as she retreated backwards into a shop, charging with the brass ferule of her umbrella into an old gentleman's waistcoat (for she had tucked that instrument under her arm in a masculine fashion, and was quite unconscious of what was taking place in the rear). I found we were engaged to an afternoon coffee-party at four o'clock. Hilda seemed so profoundly depressed at the prospect, that I scarcely liked to inquire into the details of that mystic meal. I understood that it was to consist of "coffee" and a "party;" but beyond this I knew nothing.

From one shop to another, searching often hopelessly, but with a perseverance marvellous to behold, went the Countess and Hilda. To match anything seemed beyond the limits of possibility. It was market-day, and the place was full of peasants and labourers; farmers with their fat wives and substantial daughters were chaffering for goods, which they appeared desirous of getting for nothing. There was not the slightest activity on the part of the shopkeepers; not a ray of eagerness to dispose of their wares; they offered nothing for inspection; they did not try to tempt the ladies by a tasteful gathering up of ribbons and muslins. If they were asked for anything, they would disappear into the hidden

recesses of their stores in a leisurely manner, and, after a quarter-of-an-hour's absence, would come back, saying they could not find the articles required. No apology for their slow movements, for the waste of time; no offers of procuring the thing wanted, were tendered, nor did they seem to be expected. There was not an idea of enterprise, of alertness, of a desire to oblige. I looked with wonder at the Countess and Hilda, and—learnt a lesson of patience. If, as would sometimes, by some merciful chance, happen, the article required was forthcoming, it would be wrapped in a rough, coarse material, called "sugar-paper;" and so be delivered over the counter into the aristocratic hand stretched forth to receive it. String was evidently unknown, and no offers of sending such purchases home ever appeared to occur to the shopkeeper, who remained placidly behind his counter, suffering the ladies to get themselves out of his dark and narrow abode as best they might. Of "all the ills that (rural) flesh is heir to," in such a country, I was inclined, at the end of our day's expedition, to call the "shopping ill" the worst. The dozens of small parcels all burst open before we got out of the town, and our journey was occupied in diving down into the depths of the carriage, rescuing cottons and tapes, braids, trimmings, writing-paper, buttons, wine-glasses, and medicine bottles from utter destruction.

"Mecklenburgh is the China of Germany," Count Harald had said one day, speaking of the general slowness and unwillingness shown to adopt anything new; and now I more fully understood what that phrase had really meant. Everything new and strange must be bad: everything old and inconvenient must, by reason of its very age and inconvenience, be good.

"Try this exquisite tea, ma'am," said a shopkeeper to me in later days, "it is first-rate—eight shillings a pound."

I unwarily took it, and was nearly poisoned by the leaves of some bitter shrub, strongly flavoured with vanilla.

"The fact is," Count Lauenbrück said to me, "we all send to Hamburgh for everything; the small shopkeepers will not risk their capital on things which they perhaps may not sell, and they therefore have an accumulation of old rubbish in their shops, which they dispose of to the small farmers and peasants, who would think it high treason to procure anything elsewhere, since their fathers' fathers before them had fetched what they wanted from A or Z. What can be bought in the smaller towns I have begged my wife to buy there, for these people have every right to look to us to encourage trade; but colonial wares—in fact, all that is intended for domestic consumption—we are obliged to have sent from Hamburgh."

After this, reflecting on the matter, I came to the conclusion

that the profits of these shopkeepers must be infinitesimally small, chiefly derived from their economy in the matter of paper and string. Innovations are looked upon with holy horror; to be "new" is to be "bad." "Progress" is another word for "blasphemy:" "invention" is a modern monster to her flesh, like the dragon of old, all the more dangerous because no St. George is at hand to knock the poisonous beast on the head.

At three o'clock we were sitting over our fruit, in the shady old-fashioned room of D.'s hotel. At four we found ourselves in the Frau Majorin von Zeidlitz's drawing-room, the coffee function at its highest.

"When are the gentlemen coming?" I whispered to Hilda, after half an hour's session.

"The what?"

"The gentlemen."

"What gentlemen?"

"Why those who are invited to the party."

"We are all vestals here," she said, laughing. You would not like to have some poor wretch's eyes put out for venturing to intrude upon our mysteries? A gentleman at a coffee-party is an anomaly; it is an unknown thing; it would be against all rules of decency and decorum to hint at such a possibility."

"But why? Men go to dinners and to balls, to picnics and flower-shows, and archery meetings. Why should they not also go to coffee parties?"

"Why?—because custom forbids such a thing."

"How absurd!"

"You are a bold creature to broach such opinions; fortunately, the High Priestess does not understand the treason you are talking."

Half angry at being put in the wrong, I expressed it as my belief that the ladies only made a virtue of necessity—that the men did not come because they would not, and not because the severity of their womenkind had excluded them. That might be, Hilda said, and then added that, in that case, she devoutly wished she were a man.

It has been said that "an Englishman loves a lord." Now, that there is a covert sneer in this phrase, I think no one can deny, though wherein the sneer lies, I am not prepared to point out. But an Englishman only "loves a lord," when his lordship is "a lord—lordly." A *poor* lord is a very pitiful thing indeed in British eyes;—an utterly contemptible object. It is not the lord in the abstract, *per se*, that the Englishman loves—it is the lordliness; it is the house in Grosvenor Square, and the castle in the country; it is the hunter in his lordship's stables, and the hunting-box in the

season ; it is the powdered flunkeys and the coachman with that wonderful obsolete wig, and white silk collars ; it is the yacht and the racer, and the crowd of servants ;—without these things a lord is nothing—is worse than nothing. He is what Lord Palmerston once said of dirt :—“ the right thing in the wrong place.” He is noble—but it is his duty to be rich as well as noble ; and, therefore, not being rich, he is out of place amongst the wealthy, and ought, of very decency, to hide his poor head in hembled obscurity.

But if an Englishman loves a lord, I think I may venture to assert, without much fear of contradiction, that a German has a still deeper, a yet more entire consideration for his count ; a yet blinder and more intense belief in his baron. To him it matters but little, whether the Grafs live grandly, or the baron be bare of acres. Riches are good, and riches and an old name still better ; but if you cannot have both, rejoice in what you have, and choose the “ blood ” rather than the “ money.” Such would be the German’s theory, short of the possibility of combination. There is a class in England which speaks of the “ bloated aristocracy,” but an aristocracy which was not (to borrow their euphonious phrase) “ bloated,” would be exceedingly distasteful to them. It is that very quality which give the upper ten thousand value in the eyes of the mob. Young Germany is loud against the pretensions of the aristocracy, and great on the question of “ *les droits bourgeois* ;” but, who gets the best seat at the *table d’hôte* ? who has the softest bed, the best wine, the choicest dishes, though they pay the same price for these advantages—the count or the *commis-voyageur* ?—the baron, or the *bourgeois* ?—aye ! though their modest portions, as younger sons, but just pay for their wine and cigars,—though they have even *never* paid their tailor’s bills since they first donned those garments, with which he, in his confiding admiration, supplies them. Thus, the German devotion to the widely-spreading branches of the aristocracy (for the younger sons of younger sons, all bear the title their forefathers bore) has something touching in it. It is an ideal devotion ; it has the odour of feudalism about it, the traditions of other times ; and, loudly though young Germany may rave, and eloquent though the levellers may be, the aroma of nobility cannot so soon be blown, by plebeian breath, to the winds of heaven. The mania for titles in Germany is something astounding. By titles, I do not mean such as are conferred by lucky accident of birth ; but such as those not born in the purple are eager, with an almost irrational eagerness, to substitute for their patronymics.

Thus, amongst the guests of the Frau Majorin von Zeidlitz, I continually heard ladies addressed by the uncouth appellation of “ Frau Rätin,” “ Frau Geheimrätin,” “ Frau Professorin,”

“Frau reitende - Förestorin,” or “Mrs. Counsellor,” “Mrs. secret-Counsellor,” “Mrs. Professress,” “Mrs. Riding-forest-ress,” (her husband probably had some appointment in the Grand Duke of X——’s woods and forests), and so on. Their names might simply have been Brown, Jones, or Robinson, but those plebeian sounds would never, not even in long years of acquaintanceship, have reached my ears. The shades of etiquette to be observed in the placing of these strangely-titled ladies, were of fine gradation, Hilda told me. The sofa was occupied by the lady of the house, and the countess, as her most distinguished guest: we had our places near them, and as both Countess Lauenbrück’s and Hilda’s dress, manners, and looks, were the object of general criticism, or I should rather say, admiration, I caught a little of the reflected glory of my relatives, which my short name of Mrs. Bede, unadorned by any pompous title, would scarcely have otherwise entitled me to. I was not the rose, *mais, pour le moment, du moins, je vivais auprès d’elle!*

“No, your dress is too charming!” said a gushing young lady, who I found was the newly married spouse of a lieutenant. (They called her Frau Lieutenantin—ye gods! what a name!) Hilda smiled a quiet smile at the military lady’s ecstasy. Her dress was certainly clean and suitable for a shopping expedition, but I do not know that anything more could be said about it.

“And the hat!” said an elderly maid; who, with interminable yards of crochet hanging from her arm, approached to offer her tribute of admiration, holding on to her crochet-work like “grim death” all the while,—“certainly English!”

Hilda, smiling good-naturedly, said it *was* an English hat, and that she was glad they liked it.

“A present from Count Fritz,” said the Frau-reitende-Forestorin; “just like his heavenly taste.”

“No, my cousin. Mrs. Bede brought it for me.”

“How well Countess Lauenbrück is looking!” remarked another lady, who had hitherto been silent, owing to the arduous justice she had been employed in rendering to the coffee, cakes, and ices. “I declare younger than ever!”

“Many thanks for your gracious kindness, dear Frau Gräfin!” our kind hostess was saying, as Countess Lauenbrück was preparing to take leave. And a chorus of gratitude arose.

“Adieu, Gräfin Hilda! you are looking charmingly; commend me to the Herr Graf.” And a murmur of admiration reechoed and confirmed the observation. “Pray, soon favour us again with your company; I always take coffee at four; when you come into town therefore remember to call; I am always enchanted to see you.” And a murmur of italicised delight rose up to heaven.

Thus, enveloped in a cloud of incense, we departed; and the fumes ascending to our brain, kept us silent, for it was some time before any one spoke.

"After all, flattery is not always delightful," I said to myself, but then I had on this occasion come in for so very little of it, and was therefore scarcely a fair judge.

"Those are very good people," said Countess Irene, after a quarter of an hour's silence.

And then I felt ashamed of myself.

"Very: but I wish they were "impossible" rejoined Hilda. Then, in my heart of hearts, I thought of Dr. Johnson, and the celebrated violinist—and agreed with her.

There was another quarter of an hour's pause, chiefly occupied in diving after stray parcels, and twisting up refractory paper. Then Hilda, looking at her mother-in-law, said, "What was that story about the Eckstein?" "To tell the truth, I scarcely know: I dislike beyond all things the small-minded scandals of country-towns, and I always fear by listening, lest I should seem to give credence to them. It is not pleasant to hear anecdotes, which if they be true, must lower those whom we are bound to respect; and if they are not true, do not possess that one redeeming virtue, and are therefore malignant inventions."

"But what was that, that the Frau Geheimrätthin said about Fritz?"

"More folly: her son, she said, had met Fritz on his way to X——, and he had told him they were going to see the Eckstein in *L'averse d'Eau*; upon which young B—— said she did not act to-night, and Fritz replied that he should remain in X—— till Christmas, if she did not act before then."

"But I heard my name."

"She only said you were a very indulgent wife, and shewed great confidence in your husband, to let him go on such expeditions."

"Impertinent woman!"

"More want of taste than impertinence."

"It's all the same thing."

"Scarcely; she did not mean to offend."

"Such observations *are* offensive, however."

"Granted. But you must make excuses. Living from day to day in a very narrow circle, one's own vision becomes limited, and one's conversation restricted to certain local subjects, which, to those moving in a different centre, are neither interesting nor palatable; but what will Mabel think of us? Accepting hospitality, and then criticising our hosts?"

"I daresay they are similarly engaged," laughed Hilda.

"But that does not render it less reprehensible on our part."

"Perhaps not—in theory."

"I will not agree with you."

"Well—I pity all people who are condemned to small-town-talk."

"Pity them as much as you like—perhaps you will end by loving them. Just now you were more inclined to blame!"

"Well, you are right. People can only act according to their lights, I suppose."

"Come! that is justice," said Countess Lauenbrück, smiling: "their lights cannot be great, you know; the gas is put out at nine o'clock, when every one is supposed to be asleep, and even the droshkys go to bed at eight, when the Grand Duke is not in residence, and there is consequently no theatre."

This picture of primitive simplicity so amused us, that we simultaneously laughed, and agreed that people living in so patriarchal a manner must not be judged by common rules. Small towns have their petty interests and petty gossips: large towns their grand scandals, magnificent failures and successes; both, probably, their advantages, though it may not be given to all to recognise them.

"But men go to dinners and balls, to archery-meetings and flower-shows," I had said to Hilda. "True, but not such men as are to be found in W——." I had occasion to observe this on future occasions when I was obliged to go to a ball in the assembly rooms of W——. The men were there: but beyond doing their duty in the most exemplary manner in the way of dancing, they did no other duty, though let it be hoped that they found some pleasure in herding together in a remote corner of the ball-room, after having planted their partners on a bench by the side of their lawful *chaperones*. The savage does not associate on terms of equality with the females: and barbarous nations always treat their women with profound contempt. The higher the state of cultivation, the more elevated is woman's position. And in all nations there is one class which has one code of manners, one mode of speech, one tone of mind, though there may be slight variations, just indicating that there *is* a difference. But sitting in that military ball-room of W——, in which the sexes were as nearly divided as in a Puseyite church, I pitied those pretty young girls, abandoned in so matter-of-course a manner, the instant they ceased to spin round the room like tee-totums. Truly, thought I to myself, "we wear our rue with a difference."

JACQUES CALLOT

IN the quiet old town of Nancy, with its antique homes and venerable churches, they show the passing traveller the tomb of Charles the Bold, "Burgundy's pride, and the terror of France," who fell in battle outside its walls. There they preserve the hero's helmet, and point to his epitaph, which may well serve "to point a moral or adorn a tale."

"He despised the combined forces of kings—he was never better pleased than when he was engaged in battle. How vain is all trust in human things! He who was so often victorious, lies conquered here at last."

*"Bella Ducum Regumque et Cæsaris omnia spernens,
Totus in effuso sanguine lætus erat.
Discite terrenis quid sit confidere rebus,
Hic toties Victor denique victus adest."*

There, too, they exhibit the last resting places of the Dukes of Lorraine, that little country long since erased from the map of Europe; and in the midst of these memorials of departed grandeur, stands the tomb wherein lie the last remains of Jacques Callot. Surmounting the tomb, and resting against a marble pyramid, is the portrait of the artist painted by Michael Lasné, who knew and loved him in his life. Beneath this is a motto, setting forth in good dog-Latin that "his name and art will never die," for while there are any who can appreciate purity of drawing and picturesque composition, the productions of his versatile pencil will never lose their high position in the estimation of the lover of art.

And, moreover, this burial-place of Callot's is not without its own significance. Fitting that in the midst of the royal house of Lorraine should rest the body of the man whose genius glorified his country, who was the friend of Duke Charles and the heroic Princess Phalsbourg, and who bearded and braved, not only the victorious Louis XIII., but the more terrible anger of the eagle-eyed Richelieu himself. Surely the life of this man, who died honoured by his sovereign and his country, the friend of Rubens, La Suer, and half the famous artists of his day, who dared to paint the miseries of war in all their hideous reality, in an age when military glory was pre-eminently the leading principle, and who died loved and lamented, surely this man's life should be one worthy of study.

The family of Callot is not altogether unknown to the wanderer in historic byways: thus Jean le Leigeris, Duke of Burgundy, had a Callot for his secretary; and Claude Callot was ennobled by Charles III. of Lorraine, for his bravery and loyalty, and married

a niece of the famous Maid of Orleans. Claude's son became the first king-at-arms to the court of Lorraine, and espoused Renè Brunehault; and to them, one in a family of eleven, was born, in the year 1593, a son, to whom they gave the name of Jacques; and although the fact has not, that I am aware of, been recorded, yet I think there can be no hesitation in saying that he was the finest child the doctor had seen for some time; that all the old ladies pronounced him a fine little fellow, and all the young ones declared he was a duck; that his brothers all wondered if they had looked as red and uncomfortable when they made their *debut*; that his mother made up her mind at once that her youngest born would be a great man; and that no one, in the round and slightly indistinct features of the little stranger, could see any glimmering whatever of the melancholy, but genius-lighted visage, which afterwards marked Jacques Callot.

Of course, as Callot grew up, he began to manifest his love for art in the usual orthodox manner; Giotto neglected his sheep for his drawing, and Gainsborough put landscape sketches into his copy-book; Rembrandt drew portraits on the sacks in his father's mill; and so one need not be astonished to learn that little Jacques is using his pencil, in season and out of season, particularly out of season in the precise eyes of Messer Jean Callot his father. He, worthy man, considers the art of painting merely an useful adjunct to the noble science of heraldry. If the boy would only confine himself to the emblazoning of azure, and vert, and sang, in the proper quarters of the various shields where they should be, all would be well; but, alas! the young rogue has found out an azure in the sky, and a vert beneath his feet, and a sang in the glowing west when the sun goes down—fonder of drawing picturesque little peasants, than of investigating the pedigree of the proudest Lorraine, alive or dead. The poor king-at-arms has had a project in that wise head of his, ever since he first saw Jacques lying in his mother's arms, a helpless bundle of humanity. His other sons have taken themselves to various callings; this one shall succeed him in his office, and live and die in the service of Lorraine, like he and his father before him. But even kings-at-arms are liable to be thwarted in their dearest wishes, and Jean, with anger and vexation, confesses to himself that this son of his, who is probably even now sketching some eccentric vagabond, or copying and enjoying the grotesque carvings on some quaint gargoyle, is not a very likely person to perform the high and important functions of herald at arms to his highness of Lorraine, with satisfaction either to himself or his princely employer. Meanwhile Jacques is wandering all over Nancy, inspecting its bastions decked with carvings and sculpture—alas! he lived to see them razed, and their

site sown with salt,—or gazing at the tomb of the hero, Charles, and conjuring up, by the aid of his vivid imagination, the deadly fight in which he fell,—wandering, too, occasionally into the palace of his father's master, and looking with dreamy interest in the portrait-gallery at the long line of nobodies, with here and there a face with something of soul in it (a very *malapropos* expression too, by the way).

More at home would young Callot feel, we may imagine, among the humbler inhabitants of his native place, the vagabonds, if you will, who had had tough fighting with Dame Fortune, and philosophy enough to make merry at the scars inflicted by her hand. Old men there would be, who could “shoulder their crutch and show how fields were won,” famous fields as that of Metz or Renti, or the eight days' siege of Calais, when the English were driven from a stronghold they had held two hundred years. Young men, indeed, comparatively could tell of the wars of the League, of the siege of Rouen, the battle of Druex, when Condé was taken prisoner, and St. Andre slain, Orleans, St. Denis, Montcointre, Rochelle, Coutras, Ivry, Argues, and all the glories of Henry the Great, who solemnly renounced the errors of the Protestant church on the 23rd of July, in the self-same year wherein our hero was born.

Meanwhile, Jacques is getting as dissatisfied as his father at the state of things. Renée Brunehault's family had produced painters, and probably her stories of their lives had inflamed the imagination of her son with those brilliant dreams of Italy, the fatherland of art, of which his mind was full,—Italy, the home of painting, of Raffaele and Michael Angelo, of Fillipo Lippi and Andrea del Sarto; Rome, where all the treasures of ancient art were stored,—oh, that he could get to Italy, and become a humble guest at this feast of the immortals! Heraldry, with its eccentric zoology and inharmonious colouring, becomes more and more distasteful to the young genius who hopes to astonish all the world with the glories of his art.

To Italy he resolves to go at all costs, and, with a heavy heart and a light purse, he leaves the paternal domicile, and sets forth upon his journey after fame and fortune, often as perilous and as unsuccessful an enterprise as the search of the San Graal. The world was all before him where to choose, but one object alone animated him, to see the fair land of Italy, and become a famous painter; and ere he had proceeded far, his grief at parting from home and fatherland was absorbed in the anticipation of the career he had painted for himself in all the glowing colours of the spring time's fancy. It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone,” but it is equally certain man cannot subsist entirely without that article, and poor Jacques's light purse is getting lighter every day;

but what then? when the youthful blood bounds quickly along our veins, we are not given to despair; while there is life there is hope. Moreover, this golden land of hope is getting nearer every day. But the daily bread! Hunger is the most powerful subjugator of all enthusiasm,—political, religious, and, indeed, of every sort whatever, and is also a quick destroyer of all social pride, and distinctions of caste. Therefore we need not be surprised to hear that Callot joined himself to one of those bands of merry vagrants who then wandered all over Europe, the Bohemians of France, the Gitanos of Spain, the Zingari of Italy, the gipsies of our own land; that mysterious race whose origin has defied the most industrious investigation. In later life, Callot appears to have had this portion of his career often in his mind, and in one of his wonderful etchings he has pourtrayed a scene, probably that of his first introduction to his vagabond friends. The band are halting at the outskirts of a village, and are taking possession of an empty hay-loft, on the roof of which a cat is pursuing a bird, totally unconscious of the proximity of a dog, who exhibits vicious intentions on pussy's tail, the dog itself being unaware of an avenging stick poised in mid air. Some pigs, previous inhabitants of the loft, are causing dire disasters among the crowd; in the centre the high life of gipsydom is grouped, surveying the operations with a truly aristocratic air. In the front, some stragglers have just come up, and a handsome blade is assisting a demoiselle to descend from her horse, with a gallantry worthy of Louis Bien-Ameé: and near these sits Jacques Callot with silken doublet and feathered hat, making pictorial notes of the queer folk surrounding him, and by his side, surveying his work with admiring wonder, is a charming gipsy girl, whose flowing hair and arch looks might have tempted good St. Anthony himself.

In another of his works, "The Gypsies on the March," we have a further reminiscence of this period of his life,—gipsy men, fierce and swaggering; gipsy children, precociously imitating their sires; gipsy women, with an air of tender gracefulness about them, redeeming their squalid rags and gewgaw finery. Questionable company hast thou fallen into, Jacques! What would father Jean say could he behold thee a recognised member of this society of outcasts, without law or religion?—people to whom the sixth commandment is an obsolete act, whose hand is against everyone, and having everyone's hand against them? See what comes of disobedience, my son! Such, perhaps, in his dreams, are the words which young Callot hears addressed to him by the worthy king-at-arms. But Rascaldom and Bohemianism are not without redeeming traits in young eyes, particularly eyes as fond of the grotesque and the eccentric as those of that respectable herald's own son.

At all events, we are travelling towards the wished-for haven, nay, are even now in Florence; and young Callot, with his thoughtful face and eager eyes, is drinking in the beauties spread around. Something in his face must have expressed vividly the workings of the mind within; for one day we find, while thus employed, he attracted the notice of an officer of the Duke of Florence, who was greatly interested in the youngster's looks; and having questioned him, and learned his history, he determined to befriend him, and with that view, placed him with his friend the artist Contagallina. Concerning Contagallina, nothing is to be learned. O'Brien, Pilkington, De Piles, l'Abecedario Pittorica, Lanzi, Vasari, all are silent respecting his merits, if he had any. Let him rest, good man, with his pictures beside him, in the tomb of all the Capulets; a mere meaningless name, devoid of form and passion, as completely forgotten, poor soul! as ever was any mortal wight, who carefully signed his name with a flourish, and dreamed of eclipsing the fame of the grand old masters. This, however, concerns us but little, for whatever the merits or defects of Cantagallina, he does not seem to have exerted any appreciable influence on the mind of his pupil, who soon appears to have found out that he had somewhat mistaken his vocation. For art, indeed, he had as passionate an admiration as ever; but the best means of giving expression to his own ideas he found was the etching needle rather than the palette; for colour, and the academical style of composition, he does not appear to have valued much, and those points in his estimation, entirely subservient to the claims of form and expression, would probably be the most important in the eyes of his master. From whatever cause, however, he determined to proceed to Rome, and study the art of engraving. The friend who had rescued him from the hands of the Gitanos, probably thought his *protégé* must have the true vagabond taste for change; but like the laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not, he who was once his friend was his friend for ever; and so our young enthusiast, with some of the nonsense knocked out of him, let us hope, did not lack means for prosecuting his journey to the Eternal City. And so, with the good wishes of his protector, he sets forward, and the towers of St. Angelo are gleaming before him, and he is musing perchance of Raffaello, and Cellini, and Giotto, and of the paradise of Art at whose gates he stands. Who has not indulged in some day-dream akin to this painter's vision? and, alas! who has not experienced some rude awakening from its glories? Not so rude, let us hope, as that of our hero; for at the threshold of the city of seven hills, he was accosted by a party of merchants, who knew well both him and his father, the worthy king-at-arms to the court of Lorraine. So Jacques is ignominiously made prisoner, and is placed among

other consignments until he can conveniently be made over to his proper owners. What reception he met with at Nancy must be left to imagination, but the probable lectures on vagabond tastes, and the superiority of the science of heraldry to all other professions, cannot have sunk very deeply into his mind; for we find him again surreptitiously setting out, and making his way to Italy among sharpers, bullies, mountebanks, pilgrims, and other eccentric specimens of humanity. Ill fortune again attended him; for at Turin he met with a most respectable brother of his, who had no taste for running from home, nor any sympathy with those who had. All in vain are young Callot's tears and entreaties—he must return to the paternal home.

But Jean, poor man, now thoroughly awakened from his day-dream of making his youngest son his successor in the high and honourable post of king-at-arms, and finding—ah, woeful discovery! that there were minds to whom lions *couchant* or *regardant*, sable, vert, or sang, had no attraction, made a virtue of necessity, and our hero was speedily on his way to Rome in the suite of the embassy to the pontifical court from our liege lord of Lorraine. As he was, after all his escapades, only fifteen years old, there was yet plenty of time for study. Arrived at Rome, he entered the studio of Thomassin, a wealthy and clever engraver. Here he seems to have made rapid progress; but he speedily confined himself to the etching needle, the graver being too slow a method of embodying the creations of his quick imagination. He also discovered a peculiar varnish, which would allow him to keep plates by him in an unfinished state.

Surely these were the happiest days of Callot's life; for now his genius had found its true mode of expression, and he could revel in the quaint humour so dear to his mind. "It is said that one day, when drawing with his young companions, he produced a head much larger than usual, greatly out of proportion; but, instead of being annoyed by the sarcastic remarks of his rivals, he joined in the fun, and filled the rest of the picture with charming little pigmies pointing in derision at the mal-formed giant." Here also he is said to have fallen in love with the Signora Thomassin, the beautiful young wife of his aged master, but into the details of this circumstance I shall not enter, simply because I believe it to be utterly untrue; a mere creation of the loose imagination of a bookmaking Frenchman. Authentic memorials of it I nowhere find, but abundant evidence to show that Jacques was with prodigious industry embellishing the works of his respected master with touches of grotesque fancy and ethereal humour, entirely foreign to the nature of that somewhat commonplace individual. Here Callot commenced the "Cour des Miracles," a work which

is to art even more than Dickens's famous description of Jacob's Island is to literature. His restless disposition, however, had not yet quitted him, and so, after a brief sojourn at Rome, he wandered on to Florence. At the gates of that city a stolid sentinel opposed his further progress. Genius might wander where it pleased, but if it came without the pass word, the only business of sentinels was to stay its onward career.

Enraged at opposition, he demanded to be taken before the Grand Duke Cosmo II., a potentate fond in every way of art and artists, who installed him in the palace, where he worked away with a ceaseless industry in the pursuit of his vocation. His industry was, indeed, amazing, as will be understood when we learn that, although he died in his forty-second year, his engravings alone amount to sixteen hundred pieces, the majority of them crowded with figures delineated in the minutest style.

In Cosmo, our artist found a worthy patron, who delighted to honour the noble genius whom chance had thrown in his way. Ennobled and decorated with the gold medal of the Duchy, the sole and absorbing sentiment of Callot was devotion to his profession, a passion which he carried to an excess that ruined his health, and made him, in the prime of life, the very ghost of the dashing lad, the companion of the Bohemian girls in their merry frolics.

Ten years had flown away at Florence, ten years of hardest working, and Callot begins to think more and more of the quaint old house at quiet Nancy, of Dame Reneè, and his father the herald. Callot returned to his native place, where his family and his fellow-townsmen were not a little proud of their relative and friend, the great painter who had come to end his days among them. Not yet, however—his part in the drama of life was not quite played out. Concerning his marriage, which happened about this period, there is little to be learnt. "Here," says a biographer, "he became enamoured of, and espoused, a lady of beauty and good repute." Whether it was a match resulting from affection may perhaps be doubted. Let us be charitable, and hope that the married pair enjoyed as much felicity as usually falls to the lot of mortals in the holy state of matrimony. Ere long he is summoned to Paris. Louis the Just is setting out on his expedition against Rochelle, and wants an artist to celebrate his triumph. So Callot accompanies him on his conquering career, and paints the humour, pathos, and glory of that famous siege, and returns to Paris to complete his work; there acquiring the friendship of Rubens the great, of Philip de Champagne, and the slightly pompous La Suer, and other famous men and women of the time. Not long, however, did he remain in the gay city, the shadows of night were already closing around his life, and he

returned to Nancy. Evil days were in store for the native land he loved so well. Of no moment now are the causes which moved Louis the Just to covet the dominions of Lorraine. Nancy, however, was not so easily conquered as Rochelle; it was as strongly fortified as any city in Europe, and its inhabitants were bold, and loyal, and it was reduced at last by a most infamous breach of chivalry and good faith. The Duke of Lorraine is induced to trust himself into the French camp, for the purpose of arranging the terms of peace. Once there, by the instigation of Richelieu he is made prisoner, and an order forced from him for the opening of the gates of Nancy. The Princess Phalsbourg calls a council, and vows to defend the capital to the last. Callot also is like a raging lion; but the governor insists on paying obedience to his sovereign's mandate. All is lost, and Jacques, in anger and despair, shuts himself up, that he may not behold the humiliation of his fatherland. Of his patriotism he has yet to give a signal proof. Louis victorious, desires his triumph to be immortalised by the painter's art. Who should paint the siege of Nancy so well as he who painted the taking of Rochelle? "Why does not Callot attend my levées—has he forgotten my former patronage?" wonders the most Christian king; and friends retail to Callot the monarch's saying, and endeavour to persuade him to worship the rising sun. In vain; presently comes an order from Duke Charles; and Callot, who had treated with contempt the wishes of the King of France, at once obeys the commands of his lawful prince. Fancy the scene! Louis surrounded by his principalities and powers, Richelieu's cruel face, the captive duke, Claude de Ruet, and all the train of obsequious courtiers. The most Christian king is truly delighted to see M. Callot; already he has engraved the taking of the Isle of Ré and La Rochelle—now he must celebrate the siege of Nancy. To the horror unutterable of incense-offering lackeys, the artist declines. Richelieu, ever impatient at being thwarted, cries out, "Remember, there are means of forcing you!" The insulted artist drew himself up, and replied, "I am a Lorraine, and would sooner cut my hand off!" Here is a fine hubbub!—shall a beggarly painter, if he do wear a sword by his side and a golden medal on his breast, be allowed to beard the King of France and his prime minister? Forbid it, lackeydom! So swords flash out, and soldiers advance to seize the insolent, and the nobles of Lorraine prepare to defend their countryman. But Louis, if not always noble himself, could at least appreciate true nobility, and quieted the turmoil by saying, "Callot, your answer does you honour!" adding with a half sigh, as he looked upon his own courtiers, "The Duke of Lorraine is happy to possess such subjects."

Callot died in harness ; no one more firmly believed than he in the divinity of labour. Work^s is the true philosopher's stone, turning the merest dross into gold. Wondrous are the results achieved by sheer industry. Work also, alas ! is potent alike for good and evil ; but our artist's inspirations all sprang from noble sources, and in his incessant labours he found a sweet reward. He died on the 25th of March, 1635, in the prime of life, full of fame, loved, honoured, and respected by all who knew him. A nobler death who would desire ?

A few words on Callot as an artist. I have been reading some recondite art-treatises lately, wherein I find many learned disquisitions on side-lights, neutral tints, composition, and what not ; but such discourses appear to me unsatisfactory art-criticisms.

"The merest fool, the dullest clod,
May turn a verse by labour wrought ;
'Tis only he, inspired by God,
Can plant within that verse a thought."

So in art, the merest colour-mixing machine may, by rule and line, produce a something satisfactory to such critics, and by them be accepted as a picture ; but it is only those who have stolen a coal of the Promethean fire, who have seen the light "that never shone on sea or shore," can paint a real one. Unless it have some living idea in it, something of reproof, or hope, or exhortation, it fulfils not the mission of art. Of these lessons the works of Callot are full—they form a magnificent sermon, not only on the follies of his own day, but on the miseries, vices, and weaknesses of all generations of mankind. Pity it is that he should have viewed the darker side of humanity, to the exclusion of the tenderness and solemnity of beautiful Mother Nature. The starry heavens, the glory of the waters, the song of birds, the music of the trees with the summer wind rustling through their leaves ; traces of a love for these you seek in vain among his works. In vain for him did the fair sun tinge all creation with glorious beauty ; in vain for him the magnificence of the queen of night, the voice of song-birds fell unheeded on his ear, and his eye rested with no feelings of delight on the ever-changing woodlands. But that which he did see was of awful moment, and filled his soul to the exclusion of all other objects.

A group of sordid, half-starved beggars, cowering over their miserable camp-fire, a wretched culprit expiring amid the dread agonies of the wheel, a valiant, swaggering soldier, strutting about, unconscious or careless of the to-morrow, and that awful to-morrow itself—the smoke, the fire, the blind animal rage of the battle-field, the proud war-horse, whose neck was clothed with thunder, who sniffed the battle from afar, lying dead beside its mangled rider ;

here a dying wretch, raising himself to watch the varying fortunes of the day,—in short, all the glory, wickedness, pathos, and humour of a battle-field,—these, and kindred subjects, you find treated with matchless force and skill, in the works of Jacques Callot. Criticism is out of place; his works are like Hogarth's, readable; and the truest and the only true criticism I can give, is to say, read them, study them as you would the wisest words of a great and good man. Had mankind but studied them in the deep and reverent spirit they deserve, the world had been far less woeful and wicked than it is at this moment. Like all other great men, he may have to wait centuries ere his teachings attain their full fruition, but—

“ When the war-drums throb no longer, and the battle-flag is furled,
In the parliament of Man, the republic of the world ;”

when the herald angel's prophecy of peace is fulfilled, and the evangel of love is proclaimed, then will men know how to properly estimate, and truly love, the life and labours of Jacques Callot.

W. E. A. A.

MADAGASCAR REVISITED*

MADAGASCAR has, for a considerable time, been rather the object of a sentiment than of a precise intelligence. Yet it is one of the largest islands of the world, being in extreme length nine hundred miles, and four hundred miles in extreme breadth. Its geographical position, situated, as it is, on the track of the ships which pass to and fro between India and the Cape of Good Hope, adds to the naturally great importance and interest of the country. Marco Polo visited the island, and afterwards wrote an account of it, under the name of Magaster. It was first visited by the English in 1644. The description of Madagascar, as given by Peter Heylyn, in the eighth edition (1639) of his "ΜΙΚΡΟΚΟΣΜΟΣ; a Little Description of the Great World," is of sufficient variety and interest to be placed before the reader in the fore front of the more modern information for which we are indebted to Mr. Ellis.

"Madagascar," says the delectable Peter, "called also the Island of S. Laurence, aboundeth with all manner of fruites, as also beastes, wilde and tame. The inhabitants are of a duskie colour, curled haire, and idolators. Their chiefe towne is *Madagascar*. This Island is in length 1200, in compasse 4000 miles, and situate under the southerne tropicke. It was discovered by the *Portugals*, ann. 1506. The people are treacherous and unhospitable; they used not to trade with others, neither suffered they others to trade with them: and though the *Portugals* have obtained a little traffick with them, yet they are not permitted, to come on land. The soyle yeeldeth cloves, ginger, and silver. It is enriched with safe harbours, faire rivers, and plenty of fruit and cattle: a country too good for so base a people. For besides their two good qualities, above-mentioned, they are ignorant of prayer and festivals: they have no distinctions of moneths or yeares, neither have they any proper names for the dayes of the weeke. The onely thing laudable in them is the restraining themselves to one wife."

The population of Madagascar is estimated at about five millions; who are referred to several distinct tribes. (1) The *Hovas*, who inhabit the province of *Ankova*, and who in many important respects have the pre-eminence, possessing the sovereignty over the greater number of the provinces. The central position of the island is near the country of the *Hovas*. (2) The *Sakalavas*, who have a con-

* Madagascar Revisited: describing the Events of a New Reign and the Revolution which followed; setting forth also the Persecutions endured by the Christians, and their Heroic Sufferings, with Notices of the Present State and Prospects of the People. By Rev. WILLIAM ELLIS: Author of "Polynesian Researches;" "Three Visits to Madagascar;" &c. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.

siderable reputation for courage and generosity. In physical development these people are the finest race in Madagascar. (3) The *Betsiles*, or the Invincibles. (4) The *Betanimena*, and (5) The *Betsimesarakli*."

"The characteristics of these tribes, as they were depicted before the Christian religion had in any measure modified their manifestation, were such as to make the seemingly ill-natured account of them just quoted from Peter Heylyn, a faithful and probable one in the 17th century. In 1820, Mr. Hastie, a gentleman sent by his Excellency, Governor Farquhar, from the Mauritius, to negotiate with King Radama for the abolition of the slave-trade, visited the island. Mr. Hastie gives the following unflattering description of the Malagasy:—"Their passions are never violently excited, and they are not quick in avenging injuries, but cherish for a long time the desire of revenge for the most trifling insults; while they rejoice or exult in the distress of others. In obedience to their rulers, they are influenced by fear; and when gathered in large numbers, have been seen to look upon distress and death with perfect indifference, or, if any feeling was manifest, it has been that of pleasure.

"The public executions exhibit most painfully, not only the absence of all the finer sensibilities of our nature, but the worse than brutalised state of the public mind. The unhappy victims of the treacherous ordeal of poisoned water, when declared guilty, are savagely dragged away, their bodies mutilated in the most horrid manner, or they are hurled down a fearful precipice in the presence of multitudes of spectators, who look on without the least emotion of pity, while the children, who mingle in the crowd, amuse themselves by throwing stones at the lifeless bodies, which the dogs are rending to pieces."

Many of the evil traits in the character of the people of Madagascar have yielded to the finer influences of Christianity; their good has been developed, and their wickedness has been restrained. We proceed to depict in epitome, from Mr. Ellis and other authors, the national portrait, as it appeared unrelieved by the light of Christianity and education.

Duplicity was—and so far as the heathen majority of the people are concerned, we may say, *is*—esteemed a virtue in Madagascar. Adepts in their language assure us that the native vocabulary is richer in expressing various modes of deception than in any other vice. Fraud is common among the people, and infant cleverness is measured by the quickness exhibited in the multiform processes of cheating. Lying is so common amongst all classes, that it is accounted as one of the fine arts—one of the accomplishments and amenities of life. It is a part of the national creed of the Hovas, that a Malagasy, when speaking on political matters to a foreigner,

is bound to state what is exactly the opposite of truth. To be detected in telling the truth is to incur punishment; and one objection brought against Christianity was, that it taught the people to scruple at telling lies. Swearing and abuse are accomplishments which are cultivated and fostered by social encouragement. In familiar conversation and in commercial transactions, an oath is uttered with almost every sentence. Lest the habit of abuse should fall into disuetude and incapacity, the people often form themselves into two parties for the express purpose of practising vituperation. The party which succeeds in overwhelming its antagonists with the keenest and most abusive language is awarded the palm, and is eagerly applauded by the delighted listeners to the wordy fray.

The resources of a diabolical genius are called into requisition for the most cruel means of inflicting capital punishment. Amongst other methods of accomplishing the death of offenders may be mentioned those of spearing through the loins, followed by decapitation; suffocation by holding down the head of the culprit in a soft mud; crucifixion; and the roasting to death by a slow fire. Instances have been even known of the conjoining of these two last punishments. But ingenuity is not yet at fault for variety. Another method of execution is that of tying the victim with moist thongs to a post, then rubbing his body with tallow or grease, placing faggots round him, and burning him to ashes. When two or more were to be burnt, irons were fixed upon their hands and feet, and they were then laid side by side upon elevated ground, in order that the wind might facilitate the burning of the faggots by which they were surrounded. This was the ordinary punishment for military offenders. Flogging to death was also sometimes adopted; and at other times, as in the case of persons convicted of the practise of sorcery, the criminals were thrown headlong from a precipitous rock.

In making inquisition into the guilt or innocence of persons accused of crime, trial by ordeal was extensively resorted to. These ordeals were of various kinds. A red-hot iron might be passed over the tongue; or the supposed criminal might be made to plunge his naked arm into a large earthen pot filled with boiling water, and to pick therefrom a pebble which had been placed at the bottom. To be able to go through these ordeals without injury was a token of innocence; but to suffer the natural consequences of such operations was a certain sign of guilt. But by far the most common trial by ordeal was that of the *Tangena*, or drinking the poison draught. Taken in small quantities, the liquor, which was prepared from a nut, the fruit of the tangin-tree, acts as an emetic. When the draught is prepared, a portion of it is given to two fowls, in order to test its virtue. If one should die, and the other lives, everything is considered to be *en regle*; and the administration

to the accused proceeds. But if both fowls die, or both survive, the draught is considered to fail of its just proportions, and must be amended in order to accommodate the even demands of justice. The supposed signs of guilt or innocence are strongly marked, and infallible; and a person who is really criminal, if he escape the direct action of the Tangena, suffers death at the hands of the executioner. Any person may accuse another, and administer the ordeal. The accuser receives one dollar and a half from the accused, if the latter recovers; and should he die, his relatives are bound to pay the twenty-fourth part of all his property not bequeathed before his accusation.

So firmly is the belief in the efficacy of the Tangena settled in the minds of the people, that many persons, uneasy under the burden of an indefinite suspicion, demand it in order to set themselves right in the estimation of their neighbours. Mr. Ellis mentions one such case of a very remarkable kind. A whole family of children were accused of neglecting their father in sickness, and thereby causing his death. In order to do away with so intolerable an imputation, they demanded the ordeal of the Tangena. It lay, as we have just said, with the accuser to prepare and administer the draught. He took care that it should be sufficiently strong, and the whole family perished in consequence; whilst the accuser was made rich by the distribution of their property. So prevalent is this scourge-like practice, that it is calculated that one-tenth of the population have taken the Tangena at some time or other in the course of their lives. The ordeal proves fatal to about one person in five; so that it appears that one-fiftieth part of the population is carried off by this instrument of destruction. About three thousand persons are thus annually lost to the country.

The gods of the Malagasy religion are numerous, and the power of witchcraft over the minds of the people is considerable. Divination is cultivated and professed. There are no regular priests, nor are there, properly speaking, any altars or temples; but the idol-keepers are numerous, and their office is hereditary and of great repute. It is the influence of these men that has done so much to retard the spread and the privileges of Christianity. A native, quoted by Mr. Ellis, gives the following account of the idols:—"The idols are called gods, prayed to, praised, thanked, highly regarded, honoured, and lifted up. They are said to be that which causes to live and causes to die, and are supposed to see the future, the past, and the present, and to be able to cast down the thunderbolt, to pour down the hail, to remove diseases, and inflict curses, and to assemble the snake tribe against all who calumniate them. It is said, also, that their calumniators are strangled by them. They are called means of life, and are kept in boxes."

In addition to the national divinities, the people of Madagascar worship household gods, which are generally mere blocks of wood, without any pretension to the human shape. The form of the household gods, indeed, is dictated pretty much by the caprice or taste of the person requiring such articles, and they are made to order to suit the convenience of purchasers, and furnished by the idol-keepers. "There is generally," says Mr. Ellis, speaking of the various objects of reverence or worship, "a wide, open space in the centre of every village of any size; and in the space, in front of every house, there were several pieces of wood, about eight or nine feet high, cut smooth, and square at the base, but spreading into two or three branches at about five feet from the ground, and gradually tapering to a point. These, I was told, were objects of worship—in fact, the idols of the village. They seem to have been shaped and smoothed with care, but were now in a state of decay. In the same place was a large basaltic stone of a prismatic form, standing five feet out of the ground, and near it a smooth, round stone of the same substance, and about the size of a man's head. My informant told me that prayers, at certain times, were offered to the tall stone, and blood sprinkled and fat burned upon the other."

The modern history of Madagascar is the history of Christianity in that island. It is not yet fifty years since the first mission was commenced, and already its progress and fortunes have been modified by the various policy of four successive rulers. The Malagasy Church has been fostered and persecuted; but whether encouraged or oppressed, it has always been vigorous and spreading, if not with an open, then with a hidden and deeper life. No country of modern times can point to greater simplicity of faith and devotion on the part of its Christian converts; and no country can boast of having in these latter days given so many recruits to "the noble army of martyrs."

In 1818, Radama I. encouraged the establishment of a mission among his subjects; and Christianity and education were favoured during the whole of his reign. Upon his death, however, which took place in 1828, Queen Ranavalona, by the assassination of the prince whom Radama had nominated to the succession, was raised to the supreme authority. Gradually relaxing the enactments which favoured the spread of Christianity, and instituting others which were pointed at its extinction, this "bloody Mary" of Malagasy history imbrued her hands in the blood of thousands of her Christian subjects. It was during the night of her disastrous reign that Mr. Ellis was twice commissioned to visit her kingdom, in order to encourage secretly the hopes and the constancy of the suffering followers of the Gospel. Many of our readers will be familiar with the names of the more prominent martyrs of this epoch; we prefer,

rather than extract from Mr. Ellis the doleful accounts of many instances of cruelty and heroism, to give from his pages an autobiographic sketch of the history of an intelligent and inquiring native, by name Rainitsontsoraka, who, on Mr. Ellis's visit to the island in 1856, had been a frequent visitor at his house, for purposes of Christian intercourse and scientific information:—

“ Besides meeting with Rainitsontsoraka on these occasions at my house in the daytime, he was frequently among the little band who gathered in my inner room in the concealment of night, and I could not but notice that he was treated with much affection and esteem by his fellow Christians. I left with him and his companion all the medicine I had, and at his own earnest request, I left also a medical book—Thomas's Practice of Physic.

“ The subjoined reminiscences of Christian life in Madagascar for the space of nearly forty years, which I have translated almost verbatim, is evidently genuine, and is to me extremely valuable, as showing the class of men among whom Christianity has very largely prevailed. They are for the most part intelligent, reflecting, ingenious, enterprising men. Their skill and cleverness has often made the government anxious to spare them in times of severe persecution. This record is valuable, also, as showing the spirit and the manner in which suffering for Christ has been endured.

“ The account was addressed to David Johns Andrianado, a Malagasy evangelist, employed by the London Missionary Society among his countrymen at Mauritius, and by him it was forwarded to me. It is dated Antananarivo (about 21st of May, 1857).*

“ ‘ These are the circumstances of us (two) brothers in the country of Madagascar, in the work and service to which we have been appointed, and the portion or lot we have borne in the affliction (persecution) here.

“ ‘ While we were children, we were left fatherless, and had to work at making spades to obtain our food and clothing. In the year 1834, we were cultivators of the soil (non-military) with Ravelonarivo, and we became dekans (a sort of attendants or dependants, but not slaves) of Rainimaharo, one of the ministers of Ranavalo, in 1836. This was the first work we did for the noble or chief, to tell to the queen we, the two brothers, thought that we would make a foreign violin; complete it in the country; and we made one. And when it was done, we showed it to Rainimaharo, and he told the queen; and there was a law that (such a thing) was not to be made in the kingdom. And when the queen saw that the violin had been

* It is difficult to reduce Malagasy to English time with precision, as the Malagasy year consists of twelve months of twenty-eight days each, twenty-eight additional days being divided among the twelve, and the calendar being adjusted every year; so that the festival of the new year occurs at the time of the new moon.

completed, she collected the officers, all above the eleventh honour, to tell them that a violin made in their houses had been given to her; and she fined the servants that had made it. Each had to pay the queen three dollars and a half (about fourteen shillings). And the knowledge how to make them was counted part of our service;* and whatever work was required of us by the queen, by the officers or their friends, or for the kingdom, we did, and sent our work to them. And we collected tools, and we two brothers determined in our hearts to do with the utmost of our ability and diligence whatever service or work might come to us, and we prayed to God that such work might be accomplished by us.

“In the year 1839, in the tenth month, Alakarabo, the queen commenced building a house, and ordered Raniharo, commander-in-chief (father of the late and present holder of that office), to send the people to fetch branches of trees from the forest; and because there were not sufficient, to fetch in (branches) of the trees planted in the gardens, and hedges, or fences, to make a high pile (or stack) to raise up the head of the corner timbers from the first to the last. And on the Tuesday, after one week, when we were raising the post at the north-east corner, we fastened the crane, and had raised the timber about two feet above the ground, but the branches of the trees, tied up in bundles, were pressed down, and the faggots did not bear it up,* and the crane and the lever did not act, and the handle

† This part of the narrative illustrates the theory, and the application of the theory, of the Malagasy government—that the sovereign is the absolute owner of everything in the country. Thus the persons, property, time, labour, acquirements, and skill, of every one belongs to the sovereign, is to be employed as the sovereign wills, and for his benefit; so that whatever a man is, and has, is government property, and its use *fanompoana*, or government service. Every invention is government property, and subjects the inventor to a fine if made contrary to law, and he would not be allowed to use it for his own benefit without the government permission. Thus all skilled labourers,—smiths, carpenters, masons, even writers and others, are government servants, and can only engage in their kind of work for themselves or others when the government has nothing of the kind for them to do, and allows them to do it. In this instance, the queen was not averse to music, nor displeased that a violin had been made; but because there was a law that none should be made, perhaps to secure the use of violins to the palace, the makers were first fined for doing so, and then ordered to make them for the officers and members of the royal family, as part of their service to the government. The royal prerogative was sometimes exercised with a degree of caprice that was most strange and cruel. On one occasion the silversmiths were ordered to make a silver vase after an European pattern. When finished, the queen not being pleased with it, ordered them to make another, and the workmen, profiting by experience, produced a better vase, but, instead of being rewarded, they were punished, because they had not made the first so well as she now saw they could have done.

* It was the great palace, standing in the centre and highest part of the capital, and visible twenty miles on every side, that the queen now began to build. It would justly be considered a noble and wonderful building in any country. As I shall have occasion to speak of it more at length hereafter, it may be sufficient to remark, that the customs of their ancestors require the Hovas to commence the building of a house by fixing, with many ceremonies, the post at the north-east corner. The corner pillars of this palace are round, and their height from the surface of the ground to the wall-plate or spring of the verandah, is fifty-four feet; the diameter at the base is above three feet; but they are cased. Whether the pillar is in one spar, or joined, I do not know, but it could be no small weight which they were attempting to raise.

slipped or broke, and of those that raised it up, eight men were wounded and two were killed.

“And when the queen and the officers saw the dead, they were (*very hevitra*) lost their thought or senses, on account of the weight of the timber. Then we, by the favour of God, saw or perceived an idea by which to accomplish this work of the queen. First I made a model or pattern in wood of a crane, with teeth to it, like the pointed iron teeth of a saw, to hold it well, so that the lever should not slip, or give way. And at four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, I exhibited the model to Rainimiharo, and he showed it to the queen. And when she saw that what was raised could not slip back, because of the teeth of the crane to hold it, the queen told the officers to give iron to the smiths to make it. Fifty old worn-out spades, and a hundred lumps of new iron, were sent to them at Amparibe, the place of the government smitheries. And when it was finished, the whole people (were summoned) to set the pillar up—the farmers, and all the non-military class, and the soldiers. The relations of the sovereign were the overseers of the work.

“These are the numbers of the troops that were brought for the work:—8,000 from Avaradrano, division north of Antananarivo; 6,000 from Isisaony, south of Antananarivo; 2,500 from Imaravatana, west of Antananarivo; 2,500 from Ambodirano, south-west of Antananarivo; 7,000 from Vonezongo, west and north beyond Marovatana; 8,000 from Vakinankaratra, south-west beyond Isisaony, eighty or ninety miles from the capital.

“And the non-military inhabitants of the six divisions of Imerina, with all the members of the royal family, came to take part in this work. It was the Tuesday when this pillar was raised, for it took one week to set it up. When this pillar was fixed upright, the people were then all dismissed.

“The smiths then worked a whole month in making two cranes, and when they were done, all the people were called together again to raise the remaining three corner pillars, and the upright timbers all round. The three-corner pillars were raised in one day with two cranes. And when the queen saw that the people had hastened the work, and that the four corners were fixed, she dismissed them to their homes, excepting the smiths and the carpenters, and by these five or six side timbers or divisions were sometimes raised in one day. On the twenty-fifth of the month Alohotsy, the sides, and the rooms above, as well as the partitions, were finished, and then the four sides were united. And the people that were occupied on the remaining parts continued their work until it was finished.

“And in the year 1839, Rainiharo bargained for a pump or engine to put out fire (a fire engine), with M. Laborde, for the queen. M. Laborde wanted a thousand dollars for it, but Rainiharo

would not give more than five hundred dollars, and the owner of the engine would not take that; then he (Rainiharo) fetched us two brothers to look (peep at) or examine the fire-engine, and when he had looked at it he said, "Can you make one like that? for if you can do that, you will promote the good of the kingdom; and if you cannot do it, no blame shall attach to you." Then we asked him to give us smiths and carpenters, and he gave us six smiths and four carpenters: We then prepared tools and materials, and made it; and in 1840, when the engine was finished, we took it to the queen. She examined it at Anteza, near Andohalo, with delight, saying that the finishing of it had been progress made in the kingdom.

"In 1845 there was examination made into our state and proceedings, as Christians, and then came persecution. The beginning of that persecution was thus. There was a gathering of Christians at Ramanankoraisinas (home), and his slave saw it, and told his father and mother, and great intimidation was used by the officers to ascertain who were present, and the names of all who entered were written down and told to the queen. Then Ramanandray Andriamanantena, my brother Rainimanga and myself, and Andriantsanelo, with Andrihamiaja, were arrested by Tsitialangia,* and they bound us, and an attendant had charge of each one of us. At that time eight Christians were subjected to the ordeal of the tangena, but one only, viz., Andriamahandry, died.

"And in the year 1849, on the ninth day of the month, which was Sunday, the sentence on us six men was pronounced. Our wives and children were to be valued and sold.† Our property, even to the needles, was taken: nothing was left. And when it was thus with us two brothers, Rakotond Radama (the young Radama) said (to Rainiharo), 'It is enough. Let them be mine, for you have had some already.' But Rainiharo said, 'I redeem the children. Let them be with me.' And there was a dispute between them that day; and when the appraisement was made, it was decided that we two brothers should belong to my former master, and the rest of us to other high officers. They fetched the money at which we had been valued from Prince Rakotond Radama and Prince Ramonja to pay our masters, in order that we might be transferred to them; and then a law was made that we should

* Literally, *the hater of lies*. This is a large silver spear, the shaft and head being both of silver. It is carried by the officer of justice, or rather of the judges sent to arrest any persons accused of crimes; and to offer any resistance to the parties bearing the spear would be regarded as a defiance of supreme and even divine authority. The officer, on arriving at a house, sometimes fixes the spear in the doorway, and no one would dare to enter or leave till it was removed.

† When the Christians were sentenced to slavery, they were generally divided among the high officers of government.

never be redeemed, and our masters by law possessed us,* and we were not transferred to any other. Through the blessing of God that was secured.

“Six months later in the same year, persecution arose again, and the Christians were seized by the bearer of the *hater of lies*. Those that were surprised in the house were bound, and all the people quaked and trembled with fear. Those that concealed themselves were saved, the rest escaped, but were ordered to accuse themselves. There was a spy, a brother of Rainiharo, called Rafiringagoay, who saw into the house where they were assembled, and told the names of all that he knew, sixty-four, and many accused themselves. Because of the weakness of the flesh they did that, and we eight brethren, who had been now twice enslaved, were loaded with many fetters and imprisoned. But after two years our confinement ceased, and we brothers went home.

“After this, false reports about the Christians were brought to the queen again, and those who had been bound together with us in prison were loaded with additional chains, and four were sent to Tsifalahy, a place among the Sacalavas, but we four brethren were kept in chains.

“On account of the numerous ways or kinds of occupation in the land of the queen, I considered, and I asked God what I should do that I might learn to dispense medicines, and I translated a book about administering medicine, which Dr. Tavel left for those whom the queen sent to learn at Ambodinandohalo. It was in 1852 that I was learning about medicine. When, by the help of God, I was able, I bought some medicine, and took it to heal those that were sick. By the blessing of God, many of the sick who came were healed, and also many of the poor, who had nothing to pay, to whom I took the medicine in pity. Many were thankful for the medicine of the Europeans, and from my desire, and through the blessing of God, I had strength to visit the sick, such as I found every day, and those I met at noon in the streets of Antananarivo.

“The severity (against the Christians) was relaxed in 1855, and on the ninth of the month Adaoro of that year, at the ceremony of the circumcision, the heavy chains were taken off us two brothers,† and we were able to visit many more who were sick. When Mr. Ellis came in the next year, he brought medicine, and gave some to Ratsimihara and me, and we two agreed to use the medicine; and when there was more than ordinarily strong disease

* The prince and Ramonja having paid for them, they were legally their slaves, and that was the best protection they could have, for both these princes were friends to the Christians.

† Criminals are not always confined in prison, but are often allowed to go out, sometimes to beg, sometimes to work with their chains on, returning at appointed hours to the prison to sleep.

which I did not understand, I looked in the books of medicine which Mr. Ellis left with us, and five hundred and thirty-six people among the Christians were healed, and the number of the others (who were healed) we sent to you. And when, by the blessing of God, that medicine was increased, great was the joy of the Prince Rakotond Radama, on account of the healing of the people, and he gave me some little boys, slaves, to assist me in that work of compassion.

“ ‘This is the state of the work of the Lord with me, which I make known unto you, beloved brother ; and all the friends here visit you. May you live, and have happiness ! saith Rainitsontsokara and his brother.’ ”

The ferocious Ranavalona died in 1861 ; and in the latter part of that year, Mr. Ellis, at the invitation of her successor, King Radama II., and by appointment of the London Missionary Society, paid the visit to Madagascar which he has only recently terminated, and which he has particularised in the volume before us.

Radama II. was a king of amiable character, and although not a Christian himself, manifested an impulsive and fitful desire to be so, and encouraged the spread of Christianity, and its attendant advantages of trade and education, amongst his people. His character had the radical vice of weakness and inconsistency. His temperament was joyous and buoyant ; and his purposes, not his humanity and clemency, were somewhat fickle. He fell a victim to assassination in the year 1864, in consequence of a law which he had expressed his determination to proclaim, which would legalise the duello as an appeal for the settlement of quarrels, not only between individuals, but even between villages and communities. Mr. Ellis gives an account of the murder of Radama :—

“ Force had been appealed to, in the first instance, to resist a most dangerous law, which, however, had never been really issued or proclaimed ; and even that was ascribed, as, indeed, were all the errors of the king, to the evil counsels and malign influence of the menamaso. But however distinctly this removal of the obnoxious counsellors might have been deemed sufficient at the commencement of the movement, viewed from the different positions which the parties relatively occupied now, it did not appear so.

“ Some short time after sunset, on the same eventful day, two high officers from amongst the nobles went to the king, within the precincts of the palace, and desired an interview. His majesty sent word that it was too late, and that he would see them in the morning. About midnight they repeated their visit and their request, when the king sent word that he was in bed, and could not see them until the morning. Soon after cockcrow in the morning, the 12th of May, 1863, these two officers went, as it was reported, with a

number of soldiers and four or five other men, to the house in which the king had passed the night, where one of them, a carpenter, forced an entrance, and they then proceeded to take the king.

"The queen, who was in the room, endeavoured to protect Radama by placing herself between him and the intruders, earnestly imploring them to depose him if they wished to do so, but not to take his life. All parties who were at all likely to know, whether Radama's enemies or friends, and how much soever in other respects their accounts might differ, concurred in testifying to the great and unremitted endeavours of the queen to protect the person and save the life of the king, until at length she was forcibly removed. When they then proceeded to seize the king, he is reported to have said, 'Do not injure me; my person is sacred. God will call you to account.' To which those who were about to take him replied, 'We do not know that; but we know that you have injured the kingdom.' I also heard that when they seized him, before the mantle was cast over his head, and the girdle passed around his neck, he exclaimed, 'I have never shed blood!' No answer was returned, and the herculean arms purposely engaged for the deed tightened the twisted band, which stifled for ever all utterance; and, after a few struggles, a lifeless corpse was all that remained of the humane young ruler, whose accession to the throne had been hailed as the light of morning by the different races of his own country—to whom the sovereigns of England and France had despatched letters of congratulation and presents, and had sent their representatives to his recent coronation. So perished, within the precincts of his own palace, and chiefly by those who had been instrumental in placing him on the throne, the second Radama, King of Madagascar.

"At an early hour that same morning, I was sitting alone in a room in Dr. Davidson's house, when an officer who was a frequent visitor entered and sat down; and when, after I had inquired about the state of the capital, and the fate of the menamaso, I said, 'And where is Radama?' He bent his head forward, and in a suppressed voice said, 'Radama is dead!' We both remained for some time silent. I then said, 'When?' He replied, 'This morning; but it is not known yet.' I made no answer, and shortly after, he left the house, I found the other missionaries had received the same intelligence.

"To what a mournful close had many anxious hours of thought and effort now been brought, and what a world of bright and pleasing hopes in my own mind had been destroyed for ever by that brief sentence—'Radama is dead!' How differently to myself personally did many of the aspects of Madagascar appear, from what they had done on my arrival, less than twelve months before. Not that I doubted for one moment that the divinely appointed mis-

sionary work in which we were engaged would still advance; but on account of the different circumstances under which it would have to be carried on, I could not help feeling that the future was fraught with causes for deep anxiety.

“The body of the king remained in the house in which he had been put to death, until night, when, about eleven o’clock, it was carried forth in darkness and silence, along that same broad road over which, attended by representatives of the sovereigns of civilised Europe, and surrounded by gazing and exultant thousands, under the clear and brilliant light of noon, he had passed to receive the homage and the fealty of the nation, on assuming the crown of Madagascar. Now the melancholy procession pursued its way silently, and, as it were, clandestinely, to the royal village of Ilafy, about six miles to the north of the capital, where the body was interred within the court of the government house, and a small thatched building was erected over the tomb.”

From a somewhat lengthy and analytic character of Radama, we extract a few paragraphs:—

“Benevolence and kindheartedness distinguished Radama through life, and presented one of the most striking contrasts that could be imagined between the mother and her son. The benevolence and kindness of the prince appeared innate, and was exercised irrespective of colour, rank, or nation. A number of French sailors who had cut down a flagstaff at Fort Dauphin, in the south, were seized, and sent for trial to the capital. As they approached Antananarivo, the prince and some of his attendants met them, shoeless, and with bleeding feet, slowly travelling to the city. Taking off his own shoes, he gave them to one of the sore-footed sailors, and sent one of his attendants to fetch shoes for the others. These men were foreigners, belonging to a nation not thought at that time to be very friendly to the Hovas, and they were also prisoners, coming to be tried for offences against Malagasy law; but notwithstanding this, as soon as the prince saw they were sufferers he hastened to give them relief.

“Radama’s sense of the sacredness of human life, and his unconquerable aversion to its destruction, were the most remarkable traits in his character, and I have often thought that if not originated, they were matured and confirmed by the shock and revulsion of feeling produced by the waste of life, and the spectacles of bloodshed, which must have been made familiar to him during his mother’s reign. I believe it was his firm purpose that no human life should be taken by his authority, and that his reign, whatever might be its duration, should be designated by succeeding generations as ‘the bloodless reign.’ At least, so he once said to me.

“Radama’s fondness for company, and his pleasure in society,

rendered him an easier victim to intemperance than he might otherwise have been ; and owing to some peculiarity of constitution, he was affected by a quantity of wine so small as not to produce the slightest difference with his companions. But if the accounts of his drinking habits before the time of my arrival were true, there was certainly an encouraging change for the better in this respect for many months before his death.

“ From the time when Radama ascended the throne and proclaimed religious freedom to all classes in the country, he allowed no interference with the idols, their keepers, or their worshippers ; but he had long before this ridiculed the pretensions of the priests, and openly tested the power of the idols. Their priests or guardians had boasted of the power of the Ramahavaly, one of the chief national idols, as being itself indestructible and irresistible. The prince employed some men to go and set fire to the house in which this idol was kept, as a means of satisfying his own mind. The men at length accomplished their object, and when the flames of the burning idol’s house blazed up through the darkness of the night, the prince, standing outside the palace, called his companions to gaze at the startling, and to him important, conflagration. He never afterwards believed the idols to be in any respect different from the materials of which they were composed in their ordinary and natural state. The pretended communications from the spirits of his ancestors was the only form of superstition by which his mind was ever afterwards affected.

“ The king abolished the ordeal by tangena, or poison, and never employed or encouraged divination. He only listened to the pretended supernatural communications of the idol-keepers during the prevalence of the sickness, when they professed to bring messages from his ancestors, and thus appealed to a weak and credulous part of his character. This first excited my fears that his reason had lost its balance, and that his mind was seriously disordered.

“ The strange and unaccountable proposal to issue a proclamation which would encourage the indiscriminate shedding of blood, and would, apparently, legalise murder, was so entirely opposed to that abhorrence of the taking of human life, under any circumstances, which had until the last few weeks been the most decided feature of Radama’s character throughout the whole of his life, that to me it seemed to admit of no other explanation than that his mind at the time was not sane. This natural, and hitherto consistent, aversion to bloodshed, appeared towards the last to be obliterated by superstitious influence, but to be revived in the last moments of his consciousness.

“ I have never said that Radama was an able ruler, or a man of large views, for these he was not ; but a more humane ruler never

wore a crown. He never assented to the secret destruction of an enemy, nor signed the death warrant of a criminal; and amidst all agitation and intimidation of a successful revolt against himself he risked his throne and his life rather than consent to the death of his friends; and the catastrophe which followed was probably in a large measure owing to his persistent endeavours to save them. Even those who strangled him are said to have made no answer to his last appeal for mercy to himself, when, before the twisted girdle round his throat deprived him of utterance, he is reported to have exclaimed—'I have never shed blood!' In those solemn moments, when the pomp and pageantry, the greatness and the power of royalty are vanishing for ever from those whom they have heretofore surrounded, and the realities connected with them alone remain, also for ever; when the throne has been vacated, and the mouth of the grave apparently entered, how seldom have royal lips closed with the utterance of Radama—'I have never shed blood!'

The proposal to issue the obnoxious and fatal law was the immediate occasion of the revolution: its causes were of deeper and earlier origin. To remove the menamaso, as the king's agents and confidential advisers were called, to replace the power and patronage of the government in the hands of the party in the state which originally held it, to re-enact in part the laws which had been abrogated, to increase if possible the army, to retain the advantages of commerce with foreign countries, but restore the former system of internal government as far as possible, with the toleration of Christianity, and the permission of education, were probably the chief objects sought by the change which had taken place. Whether the substituting of other men for the menamaso, and allowing the king to retain a nominal sovereignty, while the new ministers should actually govern the country; or whether the course which things actually took was intended from the first, cannot perhaps now be ascertained. The authors of the king's death would have stood higher in the opinion of other nations had they allowed him to live, even though deprived of real power; but the peace of the country might not have been secure so long as he remained alive amongst the people.

"The opening of the country to the industry, enterprise, and skill of foreigners, the entering into treaties of friendship and commerce with England and France, and the establishment of perfect religious liberty and equality for natives and foreigners, placed the relations of Madagascar with other countries on a better foundation than had ever before existed. The forbidding of all persecution on account of religion in the country, and the granting of sites for the memorial churches, the abolition of the tangena, and the punishment of death; the diminishing the attendance

required of the soldiers, and reducing the amount of unrequited service demanded by the government; the introduction of the payment of wages for work done by the natives, together with the substitution of friendship and confidence amongst the different tribes, instead of distrust and hostility; thus seeking by justice, generosity, and peaceable measures, to bind the different races to their rulers, and to each other, rather than to hold them in subjection by force;—these are among the benefits of Radama's brief reign, which will perhaps be remembered with advantage to his country, when his failings, his errors, and his vices shall have been forgotten."

It was feared that the beneficent action of the missionaries would be arrested by the death of Radama; but this, providentially, was not the case; and under the somewhat less favourable rule of his widow and successor, the missionaries of the London and the Church Missionary Societies, and of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, are still actively representing the affectionate interest of British Christians in the spreading and the strengthening of the infant, yet tried and approved, church of Madagascar. And, on the whole, in spite of the influence of the idol-keepers in the councils of the sovereign, the prospects of Christianity, as at least a *protected* religion, are of an encouraging character.

Mr. Ellis concludes his final chapter on the state and prospects of the people of Madagascar, with the expression of a well-founded hope in the conditions of their future. After having stated the fact of the gradual forming of a "public opinion" in the island, and cheerfully noting that the abolition of the tangena, effected by Radama II., is still the law of his successor, our author proceeds:—

"How darkening to the mind, and destructive to all humane feeling, the native superstitions were which underlaid and pervaded the public and individual life of the nation, may be inferred from the opinions and feelings still cherished in reference to the tangena as above described. The heathenism of Madagascar is antagonistic to all that is foreign, and consequently incapable of enlightenment from commerce. It has opposed all ideas excepting such as germinated within its own obscure and confined circle of thought—a dreary region of night which admitted of no dawn. Education is co-extensive with Christianity, but is excluded from heathenism: to be able to read is regarded as a mark of sincerity in the Christian, but of incipient apostacy in the heathen.

"This idolatry existed at the time of my arrival unaltered in itself, but unable any longer to persecute, its high prestige was lowered, its power was a thing of the past, and it stood alone in its own weakness, unable to inspire reverence or trust. In reference to idolatry, I witnessed a great change. It had been again obtruded upon public

notice, its symbols carried forth to places of public resort, and its servants encouraged and patronised in high places. Restored in some respects outwardly to its high position, it had been admitted to the palace, and publicly honoured by the sovereign. But even that change I did not, and do not deem unfavourable to the highest interests of this infant nation, so long as heathenism can only repeat voices heard from the spirit world, and is not allowed to enforce its claims by the secular arm, and can employ no other force than its own influence over the minds of its votaries. It appeared to me better for both Christian and heathen that heathenism should have perfect freedom of action, and continue to be recognised as the religious system of a portion of the people, so long as it was able to maintain its hold on their minds, than that it should have been suppressed by royal edict, or even discontinued by public kabary.

“The Christianity of Madagascar will be of a higher order, and a sounder quality, from its adherents having to win their way, and hold every inch they gain in contact, or even in conflict with all the objections which idolatry can urge against its claims, than if it had been received in obedience to a sovereign’s word, or established by government orders. I never desired for the Malagasy Church conversions that did not spring from convictions, nor professions of Christianity that were not based on experience of its truth. Among a people circumstanced as the Malagasy are, where all have equal liberty and protection, I do not fear any injury which heathenism can inflict on Christianity so long as no other means are employed than the zeal and devotedness which its own principles inspire and sustain in the hearts of its votaries.

“This opinion is justified by the state of things in Madagascar at the present time, where, notwithstanding the public recognition and encouragement which heathenism receives, there is no reason to believe that its adherents have increased, or that it has gained any firmer hold on the attachment and confidence of the people than before the revolution. To me it appears rather that the restlessness of the votaries of the idols, the spasmodic attempts which they make ever and anon to attract notice, and the rumours of projects in favour of heathenism, are indications of a consciousness on the part of its adherents that its power is departing, and that it has no influence over those who constitute the hope of the country. The manifest intelligence, character, and energy of the Christians, as well as the teachings of the Gospel, are drawing into union with them the youth of the middle and upper classes, at least in the central and ruling province. Christianity is doing this by the knowledge it conveys, the convictions which it lodges in the understanding, and the truth and directness with which it speaks to the conscience and the inner life. There is also a neutral party in Madagascar, men on whose

minds heathenism has lost its hold, but who have not accepted Christianity. These, as well as many of the heathen, admit that Christians are better members of society and more trustworthy than the heathen; hence so many of the former are selected in spite of their creed, but in virtue of their character, to fill important offices of trust.

“It is doubtless trying to the Christians to be confronted by heathenism at every turn, to meet and mingle with it in every walk of life, as well as to have to maintain a ceaseless strife against the evil of their own hearts; but I believe that the Christianity of Madagascar will be more intelligent, pure, and strong, better developed, and more prolific in all that is good and true, by having to test, and try, in contact with idolatry, the strength of its principles, and the vitality of its faith, than it would have been had there been what is called a national conversion, and a general acceptance of Christianity.

“The missionaries feel that on the issue of this conflict the future of Madagascar depends. Hence their aim to make the grand lineaments of Christianity as presented in the Holy Scriptures, the one chief subject of their teaching, employing education, with all other auxiliaries in furtherance of this, and allowing nothing to diminish or weaken the influence of this teaching on the minds of the people. The present is perhaps the most critical period that has ever occurred in the existence of this people; and grateful as the missionaries feel for the liberty and privileges which the present government affords, they cannot forget that changes are not unknown in Madagascar. Though Christians are now included in the families of all the members of the government, but few of those in whose hands the ruling power actually rests are Christians; and even in relation to the population of the capital, but especially to that of the provinces, the Christians are only a small minority, and could not physically maintain their position should persecution again arise.

“Should Christianity still extend, and ultimately bring under its influence the leading classes in the country, the Malagasy race may yet be preserved, and obtain a name and a place among the nations; but should the religion of the Bible be again proscribed, and driven to the caverns, or the desert, and the Malagasy become subject to the influences of evil, which, in their present condition, would then be brought upon them; and should ignorance, and vice, and the folly and weakness which are their natural fruits prevail, the people will gradually, and surely melt away, and their final subjection and extinction will become only a question of time. My own opinion is that nothing, humanly speaking, but the moral energy and vital stamina of Christianity can, in their present contact with more advanced races, preserve them from destruction. The Supreme Ruler appears, by sending His Gospel among them, to be giving

them another trial, a fresh opportunity of entering upon that course of intelligence, activity, and virtue, which is the path of natural life to communities, as the way of holiness, love, and faith is the path of spiritual life to individuals. To point out that blessed way, to induce them to enter it, to lead them along step by step in it, until they become strong in that faith which, working by love, purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and saves the soul, is the great aim of all rightly directed missionary effort.

“But while seeking, and with God’s blessing accomplishing this, the Gospel which the missionary teaches enhances the enjoyment of every earthly blessing, and saves for the present life, as well as for that which is to come.

“No one who has felt the least interest in the deeply affecting changes among the Malagasy, which are attempted to be set forth in these pages, can feel unconcerned about the prospects of that interesting people. No event in their past existence has been so remarkable as the recent progress of Christianity amongst them. The number of its adherents at the time of my arrival has been already stated. They amounted to about 7,000 in the capital, and the villages, with 400 communicants. The latest statistics show their total number to be about 18,000, with 4374 communicants, more than half of whom are connected with the churches in the capital. These numbers represent the Christians united in seventy-nine churches, within a radius of about twenty miles from the capital, and they are under the spiritual care of seven English missionaries, and ninety-five native pastors and teachers.

“Thus it appears that in four years the number of Christians has been more than doubled, and that the proportion of communicants has increased more than tenfold. Only a small proportion of those united to the Christians in the capital are either aged or very young persons. Most of them are verging towards manhood or middle age. These remarkable and gratifying results are some of the answers to the many fervent prayers that have been offered for the people, the fruits of Christian philanthropy, and constitute the best foundations of hope for Madagascar.

“Besides the efforts above specified, others have been put forth; and although we have yet only twenty schools in Madagascar, this department of our work is about to be ably reinforced. Additional books in the native language have been prepared, and printed at the mission press, whence we expect a supply for the increasing demands which extended education will create; and already ten thousand copies of the New Testament, and a generous supply of Malagasy Bibles, together with separate portions of the Scriptures, from the British and Foreign Bible Society, have proved an incalculable benefit to the Christians in that country.

“Such are some of the means by which this interesting people have, with God’s blessing, attained their present position, and it is on the vigorous and persevering use of these and other instrumentalities employed without interruption on their behalf, that we build our hopes of their preservation, and their happiness in this life and in that which is to come.

“A distinguished French envoy is now at the capital, negotiating a treaty on behalf of France. The Malagasy government are reported to be willing to enter into the same arrangements with France as they have done with England; and it is to be hoped that these will be approved, and the country remain at rest.”

A FORTNIGHT IN SICILY

THE sulphur question, caused by the late King Bomba stopping the supplies to the English market, had just been settled, and the embargo taken off the Neapolitan vessels in Malta harbour, when I obtained a fortnight's leave, for change of air, having been a great sufferer from an intermittent fever contracted whilst serving in Canada. I determined to spend my fortnight in Sicily, so with dog, and gun, proceeded to Syracuse, in the spononara called "Idue Gemelli." A fair race of eight hours (the captain and crew having invoked the aid of Sancta Maria), brought us safe into the splendid harbour of Syracuse, large enough to contain all the fleets in the world, and nearly landlocked on every side.

After a little bother with the Custom-house officers about my gun, ammunition, et cætera; a "*buono mano*" soon settled the difficulty, and I proceeded to the principal hotel in the place, having passed the fountain of Arethusa, and its bare-legged women beating out the washed clothes. On my way to the hotel I lost my spaniel, and as it was a favourite dog, which I had borrowed from an old naval officer in Malta, I was chagrined at the loss, and immediately called in aid the "town crier," a most important personage, and dressed somewhat like our parish beadle. I had explained how, when, and where, I had lost the dog, who was named "Lucy." In a few minutes his stentorian voice was proclaiming in the street of modern Syracuse, "*Perduta una carne Inglese chia mate Lucia.*"* The name struck the religious and superstitious Sicilians with horror, and the idea seemed to them dreadful, calling an animal by the name of a patron and holy "Lucia," who preside over one of their principal cities.

Syracuse is a dull and dirty town, full of vagabond boys, looking out for tourists, with bags of ancient coin to sell to the strangers, and most of which coins are manufactured at Birmingham; so after a few days duck and snipe-shooting on the banks of the river Anapus, where the papyrus still flourishes, I shifted my quarters to the pretty little village of Belvidere, about four miles from Syracuse. I took up my residence in the rectory—the padre was a jolly old man, verging on seventy years, his canonicals were rather snuffy and worn, and one would naturally ask of him "What gave you that jolly red nose." I did not ask the question, but was kindly welcomed in, and his niece, an uncommon pretty girl, quenched my thirst with a large tumbler of delicious home-made wine. Rosina was about sixteen, dark gipsy eyes, and hair

* Lost an English dog called "Lucia" (i.e. Lucy).

like the raven—a Spanish cast of countenance, and somewhat *embonpoint*, she was lively and good-tempered, constantly humming the national air, and song of Sicily, “*Te voglio ben assaje ma tu, non pienza de me.*”*

Morals are in a very lax state in Sicily—at least, they were so a few years ago, and ladies and gentlemen do very much as they please.

Marriages take place at a very early age in Sicily, thirteen being a very common age—in fact, at the age of twenty-five, a woman in Sicily has lost her good looks, and becomes often ponderous, coarse, and unwieldy. My time was passed very pleasantly at the old padre's house, who was very fond of telling me that, many years before, several officers of an English regiment were quartered in the rectory. I started off every morning in pursuit of snipe, hares, or any other game that I came across; and in the evenings the rectory was thrown open to the village; to welcome the English stranger, everybody, old and young, flocked in. The shoemaker was the village musician, and he generally took his place near the venerable padre, and dancing and singing was carried on till midnight. Of course I paid the fiddler, and the cost of these entertainments was a mere trifle. The parson's wine was excellent—it enlivened, but did not stupefy or inebriate. This wine was the most delicious in the village of Belvidere, but a journey of a few hours spoiled it completely. I tried the experiment, and had some sent over to Malta: although only a distance of sixty miles, it was not drinkable when it arrived. His reverence was always in a great fright, fearing that I should either be drowned in the lagoons, or carried off by the brigands; and on one occasion, when I had tired out the guide, and sent him home with wonderful tales of my agility, the good old padre thought that murder had been committed; and well do I remember, on my return that evening, the joy of the old man when he saw me returning, bringing back a brace of hares. Speaking of sporting, I know no better place for wild-duck and snipe-shooting than the marshes of Lentini, about forty miles distant from Syracuse; but it is rather dangerous work—one is liable to get intermittent fever from wandering about in these localities, more particularly at certain seasons of the year.

An officer of the Customs frequently came to my evening dances at Belvidere, being smitten with the charms of the lovely Rosina, and a very jolly and humorous fellow he was, in his way. He was a Maltese by birth, and I had some faint recollection of him in former years, as having been mixed up in an unfortunate affair which resulted in the death of an old doctor, a wealthy and

* I am always thinking of you, but you never think of me.

eccentric Italian, who was found murdered at Sliema, in Malta. My friend was very melancholy at times; and one night, after dancing and flirting with the lovely Rosina, he called me on one side, and, in a most mysterious manner, told me he wanted to divulge a secret which had been preying on his mind for years. Being a Protestant, I advised him to go to his father confessor, who would easily take the burthen off his mind, and give him *plenaria indulgenza*. He replied, "I would sooner make a clean breast of it to you. But if," he continued, "I tell you this secret, you must faithfully promise you will never divulge or make it known in Malta, or my life would be sacrificed." I declined to hear this mysterious secret, but he pressed me so hard, assuring me that it was nothing that could in any way compromise me, that I allowed him to proceed; for I must confess that I felt a deal of woman's curiosity to find out what this wonderful secret, this mysterious affair, could be. "You remember," he commenced, "your old friend, Dottore B——, who was found drowned in the water at Sliema; well, I will tell you all about it. By-the-bye," he said, "do you remember if the watch and purse were found upon him, as I left Malta that night, and to this moment have never dared to inquire." I assured him that not only his watch and purse were found, but his gold spectacles were also discovered, which made the affair much more mysterious, for people could not imagine why he was murdered. "Ah, povero dottore! it was all through that pretty girl, you must remember, who lived in Strada Fordi, named Quincetta. Myself, the doctor, and your friend, Luigi M——, who is now at Bengaza, near Tripoli, were dining together, and the conversation turned upon Quincetta. I knew the doctor and Quincetta had been on very intimate terms, for she was as frail as she was beautiful; and the discussion soon assumed an angry form, and the doctor swore vengeance against me if I ever spoke of Quincetta to him again. Poor Luigi, who had been a quiet spectator of the angry discussion, requested the conversation might be dropped. The doctor became furious, and declared he would have my life, or have it taken, should I ever dare to say one word again to his beloved girl. I could stand this no longer, and, in a moment of passion, seized a heavy plate, and dashed it at the doctor's head. It struck him on the temple. He fell off his chair, exclaiming, 'Oh! Dio,' and fell on the floor, lifeless. I turned, and found Luigi M—— had fainted away. What to do in those moments I did not know; had a pistol been at hand, my life would have been forfeited also.

"I dashed some cold water over Luigi, who soon recovered himself sufficiently to request me to bolt the door. We gazed at each other for some minutes in silence. For Heaven's sake, I said, keep

quiet; the only thing to be done is to wait until it is dark; and when the coast is clear, we can then take the body and throw it into the water. A small, dark spot on the left temple marked where the plate had struck; but there was nothing else left to indicate that he had been murdered. After sitting in solitude until darkness came, about ten o'clock we covered the body over with a dark bed-curtain, carried it quietly down stairs, and dropped the body in the water opposite the house. I started off to Sicily that evening, and Luigi next morning was on his way to Bengaza. I have never made this story known to anyone except you, and you have promised me faithfully that you will not, at all events for ten years, ever disclose what I have told you. Although Luigi had nothing to do with the murder, he wrote to me some time since from Bengaza, and told him, since that sad event his life had been one continual misery. Since I have told you the story my mind seems relieved. Hardly a night ever passes unless the doctor stands at one side of the bed, and Quincetta on the other."

Such was my friend's history of the murder. After this we were more often together; in fact, my friend followed me everywhere, and was always at my side, willing to do anything in the world he could for me. I had gained his confidence; I was his father confessor. I remember the doctor perfectly well; his body was found floating in the harbour some days after the murder, and no one ever knew how the murder was committed. Quincetta was taken up on suspicion, but released. After a week at the old padre's I returned to Syracuse, where I was hospitably entertained by the Count de P——, who had been married nearly a year. As he and his friend were going for a week's shooting to Lentini, he left me in charge of his house, or rather, in charge of the young and pretty "Contessa," which pleased and flattered me not a little; but there was a tacit understanding that I was to leave before the Count's return, on a day named. This may appear strange to English ideas, but in Sicily they have a different way of doing things. In Sicily it is a very rare and uncommon thing to see man and wife together, the lady generally having her *chere amie*, and the husband his *amorosa*.

During my stay in Syracuse, there was the great festival of St. Sebastien, when all Syracuse and the neighbouring country is on the *qui vive*, and every little child supposed to be afflicted is brought in by the parents to implore the intercession of the good Saint, and bring votive offerings, which do a great deal in affecting a cure. Mass is first performed in the Cathedral, and the image, decorated with flowers and surrounded by seats for the afflicted children, is carried on men's shoulders round the streets of Syracuse, the priest following in full canonicals, and near the image walks the doctor, who occasionally examines the children to see if the saint

has interceded on their behalf. To enter fully into all the detail of the ceremony would not suit the public eye ; and should any of my readers happen to be in Syracuse on the feast of St. Sabastien, they will, in all probability, be as much surprised and horrified as I was.

One priest was exceedingly angry with me for laughing at the buffoonery, and he assured me there was an English gentleman, a few years before, in Syracuse, who was as great a sceptic as myself, but his child was sick, he put faith in the miraculous powers of the Saint, and was cured immediately.

The Sicilians, with the exception of the Maltese, are perhaps the most bigoted and most superstitious of any people in the Roman Catholic Church. To see these poor wretches during Lent, dragging chains, fastened to their legs, on all-fours, toiling through the streets, is indeed a pitiful sight. I have often seen the ankles of these unfortunate and deluded people quite worn to the bone ; but enough of these dreadful scenes. A steamer had just arrived from Palermo, bearing a goodly cargo of sight-seers. The ancient money-venders were on the alert, and a general rush made to the Ear of Dionysius. I bid the fair Contessa adieu, and repaired to the Locanda again, to pack up my traps, and return to Malta. Some of the more sedate passengers came to the hotel, and I was glad that I had filled the larder with game, as it came in very opportune ; and as there were some distinguished men amongst the passengers, I told the landlord to make use of the game. The steamer was to start early that evening ; although my stay in Syracuse was so very short, I had picked up numerous acquaintances and friends, particularly amongst the fair sex, who look upon the "Inglese" with an immense amount of respect. I always found in Sicily the word "Inglese" was a sufficient passport. The steamer had fired a gun, and she was awaiting my arrival, much to the annoyance of the passengers, who were afraid they would not be in time for the opera in Malta. After a great many "adieux" and sundry salutations, I hurried, with my Maltese friend, to the drawbridge ; here we found the old porter, who had the keys, drunk, and fast asleep. We aroused the old vagabond from his drunken dreams, and demanded egress. Not without a *buono mano* would the old fellow open the gate, and let down the bridge. I was determined not to be done, or yield to the old porter's demand ; so I went back to see the general, and report my case. I found his excellency had retired to bed, and it was worth the officer's life to disturb him. Here I was thwarted again ; so my friend having procured a rope, we proceeded again to the gate, and found the old man as hard and fast asleep as ever. In a few minutes we had both scaled the walls of Syracuse (not a difficult thing), and were soon on board the steamer,

where I was pretty well rated by the passengers for having detained them so long. I once more bade adieu to my Maltese friend and to Sicily, where, at different periods of my life, I had spent many happy hours, particularly at Palermo, at the Benedictine Monastery, its beautiful gardens and the jolly inmates, the sons of the nobility of Sicily. Some years before, when a scampish midddy, my leave was stopped, and I was not allowed to go on shore at Catania. Some jolly Benedictines, who came on board to see our ship, heard of my dilemma; they immediately went on shore, and hunted the old admiral up, until he good-naturedly sent an order that I might go on shore. I have thus given a small sketch of a Fortnight in Sicily, and should any of my readers visit Syracuse, and the old padre be still alive, I am sure, if English, they will find a hearty welcome. But I suppose the old man has long gone to his grave, and the eyes of Rosina, the pretty niece, are not so bright as in days of yore. The fortnight had completely set me on my legs again, and I was doomed to the

"Joys of la Valette,
Sirocco, heat, and sweat,"

through a long, burning summer, which often made me think of Belvidere and the pretty countessa.

H. C.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

DURING eleven years of varied life in California, I witnessed and participated in some strange scenes and adventures. Not the least singular of these, perhaps, was a case of mistaken identity.

In the early part of the year 1851, the shop of Charles Jansen, a wholesale cloth-dealer in San Francisco, was robbed under the following circumstances. About six o'clock in the evening, all the clerks were out at dinner, and Jansen was the only person in the shop. Two men entered together, and rushing upon Jansen, one of them felled him with a heavy bar of iron; the other opened the desk in which the merchant kept his money, and, seizing its contents, consisting of several bags of coin and "dust," both the robbers escaped. Jansen was left bleeding and senseless on the floor, and in this condition was found by his clerks on their return. Jansen was removed to his lodgings, and lay all night in a state of stupor. By morning, however, he had sufficiently rallied to give a detailed and perfectly connected account of the assault and robbery, and even described with a great degree of particularity the appearance of the perpetrators. Upon the strength of this description, two men, supposed to be the guilty parties, were arrested on the following day, just as they were stepping on a steamboat bound up the Sacramento.

The occurrence created a great excitement in San Francisco. Robberies and murders were at that time not unfrequent, and it was known that an organised gang, composed in part of escaped Australian convicts, was burrowed among the sand-hills of the neighbourhood, and most of the nightly burglaries and outrages were attributed to its members. This gang was under the leadership of one James Stuart, a desperate scoundrel, whose name was a terror throughout the entire state. Many crimes had been fixed upon him, and among others, the murder of the sheriff of Yuba county. By his great skill and *finesse*, however, Stuart had always succeeded in eluding the search, both of the regularly constituted police, and the detectives of the Vigilance Committees.

The description given by Jansen of the man who struck him down was immediately recognised by the police authorities as an accurate portrait of James Stuart. Every effort was used to find him, and at four o'clock the following afternoon, the police were satisfied that they had in custody the redoubtable Jim Stuart, and his companion Jo Wildred, the undoubted perpetrators of the assault and robbery in Jansen's shop.

I was, at that time, the local reporter of the leading morning journal of San Francisco, and as such enjoyed every facility for following, through its different stages to its most unexpected termina-

tion, this remarkable case. Greater than ever was the excitement when the journals announced that Stuart and his companion were in custody. People began to gather at an early hour upon the "plaza," and the citizens rather freely expressed the opinion that if the authorities did not act with unusual promptitude in this case, they would save the authorities the trouble, and do for Stuart and Wildred themselves.

At eleven o'clock on the morning after their arrest, I was informed that the preliminary examination of the men would take place that afternoon before a magistrate. Jansen had become worse, and it was feared that he would die. It was therefore important that the men should be confronted with him, and his testimony taken as speedily as possible. This was done soon after noon. The men were privately conveyed to Jansen's apartment, and in the presence of the magistrate and his clerk, Jansen's medical attendant, and myself. Jansen's evidence was given, with the warning from his physician that he might be upon the verge of the grave. When the men were introduced, Jansen looked carefully at both of them, thoroughly scanning their features. He then unhesitatingly said that he recognised the smaller (known now as Jim Stuart) as the man who felled him with the bar of iron—of this he could not have the slightest doubt. Regarding the other, he was not so positive, yet he firmly believed him to be the accomplice. From Jansen's room, with Jansen's testimony, the men were taken before the examining magistrate, whose office was on the "plaza," in what was called the "adobe building."

The "plaza" was filled with an excited populace, and it was evident that trouble was brewing. The prejudice against all persons who had come from Australia was very strong, and all the emigrants were classed under the general title of "Sydney ducks." They were regarded with great suspicion, and many had—indeed, among them some very respectable people—been warned away, and obliged to leave the state.

When the men were brought before the magistrate, they gave their names as Thomas Berdue and Joseph Wildred. Berdue, who was named in the charge as "Stuart, *alias* Berdue," was about forty years of age, of medium height, with a peculiar sharp face, piercing black eyes, and a heavy bushy beard. He stated that he had been in the mines; had only arrived in San Francisco a few days before, in company with Wildred, who had been his "chum" in the mining camp. That he had come down to meet his wife and infant child, who had just arrived from Australia. That he knew nothing of the robbery of Jansen's shop, and that he had never been known by the name of Stuart. Five or six witnesses were called who swore positively, however, to his being Stuart; and upon his stating that there were several persons in San Francisco

who knew him for Berdue, a half hour's grace was given him, in which to have them summoned. An officer was despatched for them, but returned with the information that not one of them could be found. It afterwards appeared that, fearing that they too might meet with a long rope and a short shrift, in case they appeared in behalf of a man whom the public had already tried and condemned, they had all left the city.

Before the examination was completed, the throng around the office became so great and so clamorous, that the magistrate, evidently fearing that his prisoners would be violently rescued, thought it best for their own safety to place them in gaol as quickly as possible. Without then giving his decision and committing them, he and his officers succeeded in conveying them by the back door into a carriage which was some distance on the road to the gaol, before the surrounding throng was aware of its departure.

The gaol and court-house were, at that time, in a large wooden building, originally erected for a hotel, at the corner of Montgomery and Pacific streets, a distance of about an eighth of a mile from the "plaza." Before the carriage containing Berdue and Wildred reached there, a dense mass of men blocked up the principal streets leading to it. By the time the men arrived, the dark room, in which the recorder was then sitting, was thronged. The men, however, were safely brought in, it being necessary that they should come formally before the recorder before being committed to gaol. They were surrounded by a strong body of police, and Jansen's testimony was read aloud by the recorder's clerk. Upon hearing this, the mob became furious. Cries of "Hang them!—hang them!" rang through the room, and were echoed by thousands of voices outside. It was a fearful moment for Berdue and Wildred, who, pale as shadows, clung to the police for safety. It is probable that they would have been immediately seized, and, if not first torn in pieces by the mob, hung upon one of the beams of the court-house corridor, had it not been for a fortunate circumstance which saved their lives. It was a Saturday afternoon, and in the room adjoining the one in which the recorder sat, once a week on that day a volunteer military company met for drill. At this very hour, indeed, its members were practising the manual of arms. The cries of "Hang them!" became louder and more general, and a rush was made upon the space enclosed by a railing, which separated the court from the spectators, and the frail barrier broke down. At this moment the recorder threw open the door communicating with the drill room, and in an instant fifty men, with fixed bayonets, rushed upon the crowd, driving it before them like sheep. The court-room was soon cleared, and the prisoners, shaking like aspen leaves, were quickly hustled, for safety, into the cells below.

The American blood, which, up to the time of the present civil war, boiled at nothing so quickly as the sight of a bayonet, was running through the veins of the populace at fever heat—"military interference" had now been added to the grievances under which it was suffering. All that afternoon and evening, thousands of people remained about the court-house, shouting for the prisoners, demanding that they should be brought out, and instantly executed. Harangues were made, in which the story of the robbery was told over and over again, the tardy and uncertain course of justice complained of, and the probable escape of the prisoners, if left to be tried by the constituted authorities, predicted. The imaginations of the mob were excited by glowing pictures of San Francisco in flames, while murder, robbery, and rapine, were being committed by the gangs of "Sydney ducks" which infested the city. The invariable conclusion of all these speeches was, that the prisoners should be immediately rescued and hung. In the gaol now, however, were the fifty volunteers, with bayonets and loaded muskets, and not one of the loud-mouthed orators seemed inclined to lead his hearers to an assault which, although it might be successful, might also cost him his life. Towards night, wiser counsels prevailed, and although some persons lingered about the gaol till morning, no demonstration of a hostile character was made upon it.

During the night, a compromise was effected between a self-constituted committee of citizens and the judicial authorities. It was agreed that, on the following day, the prisoners should be surrendered to the citizens, not to be directly executed, but to be tried before a Lynch court. The rumour of this arrangement spread through the town at an early hour, and by noon nearly all the male adult portion of the population was gathered around the court-house. All were quiet and orderly, however, and patiently awaited whatever was to come. A little before two o'clock, a young and well-known lawyer addressed the people, informing them of the decision which had been made, and submitting to them a number of names of proposed members of the court. These were unanimously approved, and the court, consisting of one lawyer and two merchants, who were to act as judges, and twelve jurymen, was organised and in session in a few minutes. A wholesale produce dealer, who afterward became prominent as the President of the Vigilance Committee of 1856, was appointed prosecuting attorney, and an old and conscientious lawyer was chosen to defend the prisoner.

It was on a Sunday afternoon, about three o'clock, when Berdue and Wildred, looking more dead than alive, were brought into the court-room. The prosecuting attorney opened his case in a few calm words, and the evidence was proceeded with. Jansen, notwithstanding his weak and suffering condition, was brought down

and gave his testimony clearly, distinctly, and with evident conviction of its truth. As to the man, Berdue, he again swore positively, while as to Wildred, he expressed but slight doubt. A circumstance had, however, come to light while Wildred was in gaol which told heavily against him. Upon the right sleeve of his coat, near the elbow, was found a dried clot of what looked very like, and was assumed to be, blood; and upon a piece of goods in Jansen's shop was found a corresponding blood mark. A clerk testified that this package was on the counter near the door, and in just such a position, at just such a height, that Wildred, in escaping, might have left the mark upon it, as he brushed it with his elbow. A number of witnesses testified again to the identity of Wildred's companion with Jim Stuart. One man swore to having lived three months in a mining camp with Stuart, and unhesitatingly declared, upon his oath, that Stuart was then before him. No witnesses were found for the defence, and no evidence given.

At seven o'clock in the evening the prosecuting attorney made his appeal to the jury, demanding the conviction of the prisoners, and he was followed by their counsel. This latter had, during the afternoon, been in conversation with Berdue and Wildred, and was evidently convinced of their innocence, and satisfied that in the case of Berdue, there was a mistake as to identity—that he was not Jim Stuart. His plea was one for mercy—for time to investigate more thoroughly the whole matter—for an opportunity to be given to these men, when the passions of the populace should have subsided, to produce—as he assured them they could produce—ample evidence of their innocence. The old man grew eloquent, and evidently was affecting the jury and the crowd, who had waited patiently in the room during the entire proceedings. As he closed, a round of applause greeted his effort. The jury, under a charge from the presiding judge, retired to an adjoining room; and during the two hours between ten o'clock and midnight, Berdue and Wildred remaining in the court-room, surrounded by a citizen guard chosen for the occasion, anxiously awaited the verdict of life or death. Near midnight quite a dramatic scene occurred. A woman, young, and by no means ill-looking, and bearing in her arms an infant child, forced her way into the court-room, as she had forced it through the dense mob surrounding it. Her baby, and her woman's weakness, her only pass, got through that assemblage of rough men. She was Berdue's wife, and upon seeing him, she threw her babe in his arms, and fell exhausted at his feet, where she lay speechless and sobbing, till removed to another room.

At a little after midnight, the jury, by a messenger, informed the court that it was impossible for them to agree. A ray of hope shot across the faces of the prisoners as this message was given, but

it was changed to a look of dread and horror when the report having reached the outside throng, it was received with a general shout of "Hang them!—hang them!" In order to allay the excitement, the presiding judge requested the prosecuting attorney to address the crowd. This he did, and reminded them that as they had placed this matter in the hands of a citizen court, they were in honour bound to abide that court's decision; and his personal popularity, rather than his arguments, had the effect to lower the temperature of their passions, and when he returned into the court-room, all was quiet. It was now one o'clock, and the jury sent in another communication to the effect that they could not agree. The court consulted together in silence, and then ordering the citizen guard to convey the prisoners back to their cells, the jury was called in and discharged. The court then adjourned to meet at the call of the president.

The crowd, wearied with excitement, rapidly retired, but several hundred persons remained all night about the court-house. The mayor of the city, an exceedingly popular man, addressed these, and recommended them to retire. He assured them that justice should be done—that the prisoners should have a speedy trial by the regular judicial authorities, and recommended them to leave the matter in their hands. The morning journals contained paragraphs to the same effect, and on Monday, although knots of stragglers remained about the court-house, there was little excitement; and it was generally understood and agreed upon that, as the grand jury was then in session, the prisoners should be immediately taken before that body. "If," was the argument used, "if the judicial authorities fail to punish them, then we will take and execute them without judge or jury."

The grand jury, in the course of the day, found a "true bill," and three weeks afterwards the men were arraigned before the criminal court. The same evidence given upon the Lynch trial was reproduced here, and Jansen, now rapidly recovering, appeared in person, and confirmed his former testimony. Additional witnesses were introduced to prove the identity of Berdue with Stuart, and Wildred's coat was passed over to a professed chemist, who reported the clot upon the elbow to be blood. The trial lasted but a few hours, and resulted in the conviction of both the men for the crime charged in the indictment, and both were sentenced to the extreme penalty of the law—fourteen years' confinement in the penitentiary of the state.

Wildred was immediately conveyed there; but for Berdue a requisition was in waiting, demanding him for trial as Jim Stuart, the murderer of the sheriff of Yuba. The night of his conviction he was taken to Marysville, where the grand jury had already found a

bill against him. In a few days he was tried as Jim Stuart—sworn to for Jim Stuart by at least a dozen witnesses, convicted as Jim Stuart, and as Jim Stuart sentenced to be hanged in about three weeks from the time of his conviction.

Meanwhile the San Franciscan Committee of Vigilance had become a permanent organisation, and its Argus eyes discovered much crime and many criminals. One evening, about a week previous to the day set for the execution of Berdue, some of the detectives of the Committee were out upon a scout among the sand-hills which then stretched between San Francisco and the Mission de Dooses. Suddenly and accidentally they came upon a man lying upon the ground, and sleeping, partially covered with branches of the "scrub oak," which grew in profusion in that vicinity. What was their surprise, upon holding a lantern to his face, at recognising him as Jim Stuart, the man, as they supposed, who had just been sentenced to be hanged at Marysville. He was taken to the committee-rooms, and an agent immediately despatched up the river. He was even more surprised, upon reaching Marysville, to learn that Jim Stuart, *alias* Berdue, was still there, safe in custody, and was to be duly hanged on the following Friday. He had an interview with the condemned man, and returned to San Francisco, convinced that he held the key to all this mystery, and that Berdue was innocent. Ere his return, however, the whole mystery was explained. Stuart—the real Stuart—in the hands of the San Franciscan Committee, had made a full confession. He acknowledged the murder of the sheriff of Yuba, acknowledged the robbery of Jansen's shop, and acquitted Wildred of any participation or connection with him. The governor of the state, happening to be in San Francisco at the time, after an interview with Stuart, immediately forwarded a full pardon to Berdue. It arrived two days before the one set for the execution, and immediately on receiving it he took the boat for San Francisco.

The real Jim Stuart was hanged by the Vigilance Committee on the day which had been fixed for the execution of the man to whom his name and crime had been attributed, and Berdue was present at his execution. The hanging took place upon California Street Wharf, and the gallows was a derrick erected there for hoisting merchandise in and out of vessels. At a given signal, in the presence of four or five thousand people, the wretched man was "run up" and strangled. After hanging half-an-hour, the body was cut down, and dropped from the derrick into a boat. The committee's surgeon, the coroner, and myself, were the only persons beside the oarsmen permitted to enter it. We rowed over to an engine-house near by, where we deposited the body, and where the coroner, with an eye to his fee, proposed holding an inquest. Upon our arrival,

two more surgeons were admitted, and a superficial medical examination of the body made. The neck was not broken, and upon lancing a vein the blood flowed freely. The physicians all agreed, that with a good galvanic battery, they could have restored life to the inanimate body of the murderer and robber.

I am fond of dramatic situations, and I suggested that we should send for Berdue. In half an hour he arrived. He stood quietly for several minutes by the table on which Stuart was lying, and gazed upon his fixed features. It was like a living man looking at his own corpse. I never, before or since, saw such a resemblance between two men. Stuart was, perhaps, a trifle the stouter, but having seen either one, I should have unhesitatingly sworn at any future time to the other as that one.

Next day the coroner summoned six "good men and true," and held his inquest, and the "intelligent jury" returned for their verdict that Stuart "died of strangulation at the hand of some person or persons unknown;" and the coroner received thirty dollars from the county for the registration of the verdict, and, in the fulness of his heart, "treated" the jury to biscuit and beer. A purse was raised for Berdue and Wildred, who had also been pardoned, and neither of them being willing to risk the possibility of another such misadventure, both returned to Australia.

Was it mere chance which led the steps of the detectives to Jim Stuart's burrow among the sand-hills? Was not the life of an innocent man, even one so poor and humble as Berdue, worth more than that of "many sparrows?" and are we not assured that the Guide and Orderer of all things suffers not one of those to fall to the ground without His notice?

BALLADS AND SONGS OF CHESHIRE

“CHESHIRE, chief of men,” says the old proverb, and the natives of the County Palatine have “always demeaned themselves right valiantly in their undertakings.” But although the Vale Royal of England can boast of many famous sons, it has been singularly unproductive of poetic genius. Cheshire numbers amongst her children Lord Chancellor Egerton, Sir Randal Crew, whose opposition to the illegal proceedings of Charles I. in the matter of taxation, was the cause of his dismissal from his office of Lord Chief Justice; Sir Hugh Calvely, that model of a gallant knight, who would “feed as much as two, and fight as much as ten men,” and who was one of the combatants in that strange duel between thirty English and thirty Breton knights, the memory of which is still preserved in the songs of the Breton peasantry; Captain John Smith, of New England fame; John Speed, the laborious chronicler; Sir Richard Sutton, one of the founders of Brazenose College; Sir Henry Middleton, the navigator; Ralph Higden, the chronicler; the antiquarian, Randal Holmes; Sir John Vanbrugh, the dramatist; John Bradshaw, President of that High Court of Justice which condemned Charles Stuart, King of England, to death; pious Bishop Wilson; the late Lord Combermere; Francis, Duke of Bridgewater; and many more illustrious men,—but amongst them all, there are but Whitney, Birkenhead, Broome, Parnell, and Heber, who have attained any eminence as singers. This is perhaps the more strange, as Cheshire was for centuries the minstrel’s paradise. Lord Randal being beleaguered by the Welsh in the castle of Rothlent, in Flintshire, despatched a letter to Roger Lacy, constable of Chester, for immediate succour. This request reached Lacy during the anniversary of the Midsummer fair, and in default of a more efficient army, he collected the players, fiddlers, minstrels, and all the other vagabonds whom he could impress into his service; and at the head of this tag-rag multitude (rivalling in its display that ragged regiment which once marched through Coventry), the constable proceeded to the relief of his lord. Llewellyn, alarmed at the appearance of this motley rout, raised the siege in hot haste, and in reward for this timely service, the minstrels enjoyed peculiar privileges in this county, which were respected for a long period after this event. The act of Elizabeth, which declares all itinerant minstrels to be vagabonds, makes a special exception in favour of those under the jurisdiction of the Lord of Dutton. It was not, then, unreasonable that the editor of this collection should have expected to find Cheshire especially rich in minstrelsy. Not a relic

of them appears to have been preserved from destruction. The editor complains of the small materials at his disposal: "If I have been disappointed in not having met any minstrel relics, I have been equally so in the paucity of our legends; but Cheshire, generally speaking, is a flat country, and the ideal flourishes most amongst mountains and streams; and few, even of your many castles and sites of castles, have any extant traditionary lore attached to them."

In spite of his disclaimer Major Leigh's labours have resulted in a volume of much interest to those who love quaint rhymes and strange legends of the olden times; and no inconsiderable amount of this interest is due to the skill with which the editor has versified many of the floating traditions of the county palatine. One of the most beautiful and romantic of our old English ballads, is that of which Sir Bryan Leigh is the hero, we mean the "Spanish Lady's Love," of which we quote the opening verses:

"Will you hear a Spanish ladye,
How she wooed an English man.
Garments gay and rich as may be,
Decked with jewels she had on.
Of a comely countenance and grace was she,
And by birth and parentage of high degree.

As his prisoner there he kept her;
In his hand her life did lie.
Cupid's bands did tie them faster
By the liking of an eye.

In his courteous company was all her joy.
To favour him in anything she was not coy.

But at last there came commandment
For to set the ladies free,
With their jewels still adorned;
None to do them injury.

Then said the lady mild, 'Still woe is me,
Oh, let me still sustain this kind captivity.'"

The publication of these local anthologies will, no doubt, bring to light many parallelisms in the folk-lore of the various countries. Thus, the legends of Merton Sands, here narrated by the Rev. J. Sedgwick, is nearly identical with a Cornish legend which will be familiar to the many admirers of the writings of R. S. Hawker:

"The monks were asleep, and the moon it shone clear,
When the Devil came flying o'er fair Delamere,
And fat friar Francis in dreams did assail
With pasties of venison and flagons of ale.
Oh, friar, of ale thou shalt wassail thy fill
If I may be witness to this thy last will:
And all the fat bucks in broad Cheshire are thine,
If here on this parchment thy name thou wilt sign.

¶¶¶¶.

"I gibe and bequeath all the goods that I have
To those who shall carry my corpse to the grave:
And when he has done what I gibe him to do,
My soul to the undersigned witness may go."

The papers were settled—'And now,' quoth the friar,
 From you, father of evil, three things I require.
 The first, good buck venison till appetite fail;
 The second, unlimited hogsheads of ale.'
 'All right,' quoth the devil; 'but now let me hear
 What's the third thing you want beside venison and beer.'
 'Why this,' said the friar, 'that on yonder saads
 Of Merton you twine me a dozen haybands.'

And whilst in fair Cheshire stout yeomen are found,
 On these Merton Sands they shall fallow the ground,
 Where never a blade of green grass must remain,
 Lest the devil come back to Vale Royal again."

So, also, the legend that Over Church was once seized by his infernal majesty, who would coolly have flown away with it, had not his felonious intentions been defeated by the prayers of the monks and the timely pealing of the bells in Vale Royal Abbey, which caused him to deposit, with all possible speed in its present position, some roods from its (traditional) original position, bears considerable resemblance to a Yorkshire legend, and may be traced, we think, in the household stories of the German fatherland.

Another example is the "Iron Gates," of which two versions appear in this collection. It is identical, in many points, with the legend of Thomas of Ercildoun. Scott says of this tradition:—"This legend, with several variations, is found in many parts of Scotland and England. The scene is sometimes laid in some favourite glen of the Highlands, sometimes in the deep coal mines of Northumberland and Cumberland, which run so far beneath the ocean." It is also found in Reginald Scott's book on Witchcraft, written in the 16th century. It would be vain to ask the origin of the tradition. It also bears some slight resemblance to the legend of Wayland Smith, which is probably of Greek origin.

Some remnant of the antique Maying customs of England yet remain in the Vale Royal, and the lads and lasses yet go round the villages with their songs in honour of the beautiful May, the glory of the present springtime, when Nature recovering from her long winter trance, bestrews the earth with sweet-scented flowers. We reproduce one of these songs, not devoid of natural grace and beauty, and bearing with it the perfume of the sweet pale May flowers:

"We're come for to bring good news in the spring—
 Good news, if you wish for to hear;
 Kind Heaven can tell how all things go well,
 We're in hopes of a plentiful year.

The cold frost and snow, you very well know,
 Hath pinched your cattle full sore;
 Oh! we'd have you beware, in the spring of the year,
 And provide for cold winter once more.

The lark he doth rise higher up to the skies,
 Until he doth quite disappear;
 Then he hovers his wings, and delightfully sings,
 Most pleasant and charming to hear.

Here's the little primrose, how sweetly it grows
 On ev'ry green bank of the field ;
 And the lily so fair, to which none can compare,
 To the little primrose it must yield.

The mountains, you know, have been covered with snow,
 But now they're so fresh and so gay ;
 Take a leaf from the tree, and you plainly will see
 Where lies the true spirit of May.

Your lands shall be tilled, and your barns shall be filled,
 Our Lord God so dearly provides ;
 The meadows are spread with a mantle of green,
 And bordered with flowers besides.

The time draweth near that we must begone,
 For we have but a short time to stay ;
 To dance, and to sing, and to welcome the spring,
 And to welcome the sweet month of May."

Once the best known of all the old Cheshire songs was that of the Miller of the Dee ; though since Dr. Mackay has so beautifully adapted the time and title of this song to the wants and feelings of our own days, his beautiful ballad has almost driven the real Simon Pure out of the field ; and the following version will probably be new to many with whom the "miller hale and bold" is a household word. Sometimes, through garblings and misquotations, the sturdy independence of this son of the soil is mistaken for narrow selfishness.

"There was a jolly miller once
 Lived on the river Dee ;
 He worked and sang from morn till night—
 No lark more blithe than he.
 And this the burden of his song
 For ever used to be,
 'I care for nobody, not I,
 If nobody cares for me.'

The reason why he was so blithe,
 He thus did once unfold—
 'The bread I eat my hands have earned—
 I covet no man's gold ;
 I do not fear next quarter-day—
 In debt to none I be.
 I care for nobody,' etc.

'A coin or two I've in my purse,
 To help a needy friend ;
 A little I can give the poor,
 And still have some to spend.
 Though I may fail, yet I rejoice
 Another's good hap to see.
 I care for nobody,' etc.

So let us his example take,
 And be from malice free ;
 Let every one his neighbour serve,
 As served he'd like to be.
 And merrily push the can about,
 And drink and sing with glee,
 'If nobody cares a doit for us,
 Why not a doit care we.'"

Our article would not be complete without some notice of the famous Cheshire prophet, whose hieroglyphic predictions are still implicitly believed in by the major portion of the natives of the country. To hint a doubt as to the authenticity or value of these mysterious oracles, is sufficient to render you an object of wonder to a genuine Cestrian. Whether such an individual as Nixon ever lived at all is somewhat problematical, and to what epoch he belonged is equally doubtful; but, if ever he did exist in the flesh, he was a poor, half-witted creature, to whose nonsense a credulous age attached a value wholly disproportionate to their real worth. Certainly we are not likely to estimate very highly such specimens of prophetic lore as this:—

“In a forest stand oaks three,
Beside a headless cross,
A well of blood shall run and ree,
Its cover shall be brass;
Which shall never appear
Till horses' feet have trod it bare,
Who wins it will declare,
The eagle shall so fight that day,
That ne'er a friend's from him away.
A hound without delay shall run the chace far and near,
The dark dragon shall die in fight,
A lofty head the bear shall rear,
The wide wolf so shall light
The bridled steed against his enemies will fiercely fight.”

The ancient family of the Legh's have many legends connected with their history, which have been embodied in some charming ballads by Dr. Leigh, of Manchester, but they are unfortunately too long to be extracted here.

“The Synagogue Well,” by James Crossley, F.S.A., is remarkable for its poetic diction and chaste fancy:

“The Roman in his toilsome march,
Disdainful viewed this humble spot,
And thought not of Egeria's fount
And Numa's grot.
No altar crowned the margin green,
No dedication marked the stone,
The warrior quaffed the living stream
And hastened on.
Then was upreared the Norman keep,
Where from the vale the uplands swell,
But unobserved, in crystal jets
The waters fell.
In conquering Edward's reign of pride,
Gay streamed his flag from Frodsham's tower,
And saw no step approach the wild
And sylvan bower.
Till once, when Mersey's silvery tides,
Were reddening with the beams of morn,
There stood beside the fountain clear
A man forlorn.

And as his weary limbs he laid
 In its cool waters, you might trace
 That he was of the wandering tribe
 Of Israel's race.

With pious care, to guard the spring,
 A masonry compact he made,
 And all around its glistening verge
 Fresh flowers he laid.

'God of my fathers!' he exclaimed,
 'Beheld of old in Horeb's mount,
 Who gav'st my sires Bethesda's pool
 And Silva's fount.

Whose welcome streams, as erst of yore,
 To Judah's pilgrims never fail,
 Though exiled far from Jordan's banks,
 And Kedron's vale.

Grant that when yonder frowning walls,
 With tower and keep, are crushed and gone,
 The stones the Hebrew raised may last,
 And from his well the strengthening spring
 May still flow on!"

Perhaps we cannot better illustrate the diversified contents of this volume than by concluding our paper with a ballad apparently written during the great civil wars, and which gives a vivid portraiture of that chivalrous loyalty for which Cheshire—the seed-plot of gentility—has always been remarkable:

OLD MYNSHULL OF ERDESWICK.

[A Royalist song, found amongst the family papers in an old oak chest at Erdeswick Hall, one of the seats of the Mynshull family.]

"Arise! and away for the king and ye land!
 Farewell to ye couch and ye pillow,
 With spear in its rest, and with rein in hand,
 Let us rush on ye foe like a billow!

Call the hind from ye plough, and ye herd from the fold,
 Bid ye wassiles to take a long pull;
 Then ride for Old Erdeswick, whose banner's unrolled,
 For the cause of King Charles and Mynshull.

Ride, ride with red spur—there is death in delay,
 'Tis a race for dear life with ye devil;
 For if Cromwell prevail, and ye King now gives way,
 Our land must in slavery revel.

There was death in each stroke, while old Mynshull thus spoke,
 And Roundheads fell off in a cluster;
 Such havoc he made, that his trusty old blade
 Told a tale next day at the muster.

At Edgehill he fought, and at Worcester he fell,
 But vain were the visions he cherished;
 For the brave Cheshire heart that our king loved so well,
 In the grave of ye Mynshull's lies perished.

May his sons prove as true to their church and their king,
 And act like their sire with decision,
 And firmness, whenever the foe's on the wing;
 For from heaven they get their commissioa."

CLEOPATRA

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY DR. A. H. DICK.

PART I.

IT has long been an admitted principle of criticism in the philosophy of history, that the characters of the actors in history must be judged according to the ideas and morality of their own times. More recently another critical rule has been proclaimed,* and begins to gain ground,—that whenever we find a character so delineated as to be worse or better than accords with the acknowledged principles of human nature, the excess on either side is to be considered as a proof of historic falsehood. Historical criticism has thus been gradually discarding the portraits of faultless monsters on the one hand, and of immoral and unnatural miscreants on the other, from the galleries of the actual past, into the regions of poetry and fiction; where the recorded facts are such as cannot be doubted, and yet seem monstrous, it would have us look upon them as extreme cases of the action of principles common to all mankind. The story of Cleopatra affords such an extreme case to the philosophic historian. What we know of her has come to us only from writers of the nation that hated and feared her. We have from them at best but the picture of the splendid courtesan. The picture equally, perhaps more true, which might have been drawn of her, as the sovereign struggling to maintain intact the throne and kingdom of her fathers—as the defender of her country from Roman conquest and annexation—as the patriot, giving up life and worldly fame for that object,—was one which they could not draw. The combination of ideas necessary for such a picture was one which a Roman,—believing that all other countries were made only to be plundered by Roman proconsuls, or to furnish tribute that Roman citizens might live untaxed—could not even understand. Dion Cassius and Plutarch are the two chief authorities for her life. Dion has a Quilp-like pleasure in painting every human action, as done from the worst motives. Plutarch can see nothing good out of Greece and Rome, and always takes that view of things which will make a story tell best. Ancient history has but few love-stories; for neither Plutarch, nor any other ancient writer, seems to have dreamt of the intense human interest that may be called forth by a tale of love. Shakspeare first saw the part that love played in the life of Cleopatra, and, taking account of it, has come nearer to what seems to be the truth respecting

* Comte: "Philosophie Positive."

her than professed historians have come. Her history, while it shocks our modern notions of morality, attracts us by its splendour, and by the world-wide importance of the events connected with it. Its scene is the cradle of human civilisation. There, grouped around her, are the claimants for the throne of the world. There, under the shadow of the Pyramids, with the waters of the Nile gliding past, Pompey, Cæsar, Antony, Augustus, close or begin their career of fame.

Egypt's long course of greatness had brought the interest of the chief nations of the world to centre on her shores. The Pharaohs had long since disappeared before the conquering sword of Cambyses, and after centuries of Persian rule the land had succumbed to the Greeks, under Alexander. At Alexander's death, and the partition of his empire among his generals, Egypt fell to Ptolemy, perhaps the wisest and the best of them. The son of one Lagos, a common Macedonian soldier, his good sense repudiated the flattery which sought to make him an illegitimate son of Philip of Macedon. The people of Rhodes, grateful for timely relief, gave him the name of Ptolemy Soter, or the Saviour; but he rejoiced most in being called Ptolemy Lagos. He finished the building of Alexandria, begun by the Macedonian hero, and contrived that Alexander should be buried there, in one of its most splendid temples. He left the Copts, or ancient Egyptians, free to follow their old absurd worship of animals, and to preserve their habits of caste; and governed the country as a Macedonian king by means of Macedonian garrisons. Alexandria, under him, became the next city to Rome in splendour and extent. Settlers from all lands were encouraged; especially Jews, the great traders of the ancient world. He founded the celebrated Academy of Alexandria: its library was unequalled in the number and variety of books, its museum was the lounge or study, and its revenues the support of the learned. Under Ptolemy's successors the city grew, the library increased, and learning became fat. The Copts remained submissive; and a mixed band of Jews, Macedonians, and other European adventurers, formed a populace for Alexandria, which ruled at its unsettled will the dreamy animal-worshippers of the Nile basin. The country was without political institutions. As the Copts lay, without acknowledged rights, at the mercy of their Macedonian conquerors, so these conquerors lay at the mercy of their kings. Every now and then they had recourse to the grand cure for the tyranny of absolute monarchs, rebellion. If a prime minister displeased them, they tore him in pieces: even critics they served in the same way—or roasted alive, a freedom which perhaps some authors would relish even now. Occasionally they varied these political or literary recreations by driving their kings into

exile, or whimsically setting up a younger brother in the place of an older. But withal, so much more favourable is freedom unrestrained than despotism unrestrained to human advancement, that the trade of the country grew, the wealth of its kings increased, and their power seemed to have no limit but the patience of the Macedonian oligarchy of Alexandrian citizens; for the sleepy Copts yielded their tribute in silence, content to preserve unhurt their God-bulls, and bury undisturbed their cat and crocodile mummies.

As wealth and luxury increased, the kings of the Lagidean family adopted the customs of Eastern despots, and among them that of intermarrying within their own families—"a barbarous device for unity of possible claimants to the succession."* In Egyptian history, sister and queen became almost synonymous terms descriptive of the royal consort, and are used together in proclamations and on coins. Notwithstanding the endurance of this custom for centuries, one king sometimes in succession marrying two of his own sisters, we find, contrary to what we should expect on ordinary physiological theory, no lack of energy in the generations so bred. Instead, we find an altogether terrible activity and skill in planning and intriguing—in conducting invasions of, or repelling invasions from Syria—in crushing Coptic insurrections, or legislating for Alexandrian commerce; and, in the midst of it all, a constant and persevering encouragement of science and literature, such as no other royal family that history can name has ever shown.

But neither precautions of intermarriage, nor any other precautions, could save Egypt and Egypt's royal family from the fate which had befallen all the other nations and royal families of the known Western world. Rome was advancing to universal dominion, and, in the year 57 before Christ, of all between the Euphrates and the Atlantic, from the Rhine mouth to Mount Atlas and the Red Sea, there remained only Egypt as yet unannexed. The greedy eyes of Roman senators had, however, long been directed to that land. More than a century before the date just mentioned, they had begun to interfere in Egyptian affairs—at first under the pretence of promoting peace between rivals for the crown of the Lagides, then by occasional embassies, and at last by giving military aid to Ptolemy Alexander against his two nephews, the sons of Ptolemy Lathyrus. Alexander purchased that aid from Sylla, the Roman dictator, by promising to leave his kingdom to the Roman Senate when he died. He kept his promise, but the Senate dared not, at the time, accept the legacy. The mighty Republic

* Merivale: "The Romans under the Empire."

was tottering to its fall. The senators feared to trust any of their generals with a commission to seize Egypt, lest the wealth thus put into his hands should be turned against themselves. Cicero opposed his most powerful oratory to the seizure;* not daring, however, to mention the real ground of objection, but skilfully arguing that it would raise agrarian disputes between the Senate and the Roman people—it would involve Rome in endless wars—and, more than all, it was unjust, since Alexander had no right to dispossess by will the true heir, Ptolemy Auletes, the elder of the two sons of Lathyrus.

Ptolemy Auletes, or Ptolemy the Piper, Cleopatra's father, was therefore allowed to keep his throne. That is, he held it on Roman sufferance, by dint of bribing Roman senators, with money got from Roman money-lenders, especially the Roman knight, Rabirius Postumus. The Piper's brother was also allowed, on similar conditions, to govern the kingdom of Cyprus, then an appanage, or younger brother's share, of the Egyptian kingdom. Auletes governed so as to acquire the hatred and contempt of his subjects. By-and-by a change was brought about in Roman policy by the tribuneship of the demagogue Clodius. Cicero was sent into exile. Cyprus was annexed as a Roman province. Its king poisoned himself, and the Alexandrians, indignant, urged the Piper to defend his brother's rights. He dared not. The turbulent and irritated citizens then drove him from his throne, and proclaimed his two eldest daughters joint Queens of Egypt. Cleopatra was about ten years old when her sisters were thus elevated. The eldest sister, Cleopatra Tryphæna, soon died. The remaining Queen, Berenice, married her cousin, one of the Syrian Seleucidæ. The young Syrian began his reign as king-consort by seizing the golden sarcophagus in which Alexander the Great was laid. The Alexandrians and their queen strangled him for his impiety and avarice, Berenice finding another husband in Archelaus, son of Mithridates, king of Pontus.

In the meantime the dethroned Piper had gone to Rome. He spent his time there pleading with the Roman Senate to restore him by force of arms, borrowing immense sums from Rabirius, and bribing senators and generals. But the Senate hesitated to decree his restoration, pretending to fear an ancient prophecy; really not daring to put such a source of wealth into the hands of any of the already too-powerful imperators. Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus each desired the commission, but each was also resolved that neither of the others should have it. At last, after about three years' delay, the Piper, by an enormous bribe, borrowed from Rabirius, induced

* Cicero in Rullum.

Gabinius, the Roman proconsul of Syria, to lead an army into Egypt without, and even contrary to, the orders of the Senate. The undisciplined and unruly Alexandrians were easily defeated by the veteran troops of Gabinius, under his lieutenant Marc Antony, then a young and rising soldier of the Republic. Archelaus and Berenice were speedily put to death, and the Piper was once more king. Gabinius and Rabirius were both prosecuted at Rome for their share in the restoration of the Piper, and their degradation of the Roman name by service under a foreign king. Cicero had by this time returned. His advocacy of the cause of Rabirius secured an acquittal*—but even Cicero's oratory, backed by wholesale bribery, failed to save Gabinius from banishment.

The Piper kept his place as king about four years after his restoration, upheld by Roman soldiers whom Gabinius had left in his pay. When he died, B.C. 51, Cleopatra, his eldest surviving daughter, was seventeen. She had a younger brother named Ptolemy, and a sister still younger, Arsinoë. To the two first the Piper left his crown, commending them to the care of the Roman Senate. The brother and sister were to marry, so said the judicious father's will, and the Roman people were adjured by all the gods to see it executed. The Senate accepted the fatherly commission, and appointed Pompey guardian to the youthful king and queen.

Thus, exactly half a century before our era, the affianced bride of her brother, young, beautiful, and accomplished, with all that the philosophers and literati of Alexandria could instil into the heiress of their munificent patrons, Cleopatra found herself called to rule. It would be difficult to imagine a harder task for a woman of her tender years. We have but to look to recent events in Jamaica, to judge how hard it is to restrain a race of conquering colonists dwelling among a servile but discontented population. Nor had the Greeks, who lorded it over the Copts in Egypt, the motives for moderation which the modern English planter has. In Jamaica, family honour, and the fear of the home government, act as checks. But there was no distant home government to check the Alexandrian settlers, much less any sense of family honour. Their numbers were kept up, not by births among themselves, but by a continual influx of strangers. Alexandria was the asylum of the world. Runaway slaves and ruined debtors poured in continually from Rome; with these came robbers from Syria, and pirates from Cilicia, as well as broken-down masters of rhetoric from Athens; forming a trading, brawling, stealing, studying, seething mass of city population, such as no other city has ever paralleled. The army, gathered out of such a population, was one which had served

* Cicero pro Rabirio Postumo.

the queen's forefathers, as the spirits in story-books serve the magicians that raise them, at one time obeying their most extravagant behests, at another rending them to pieces. And over all this heterogeneous mass of citizens, soldiers, and Coptic peasants, hovered all-grasping Rome, ready to swoop down upon the distracted kingdom as soon as her own intestine quarrels left her free to do so safely.

All this Cleopatra could not but see. She shrank not from the task that lay before her. The daughter of the Ptolemies resolved that the throne of her fathers—the last of the thrones of Alexander—should be maintained. Her early life had been such as to call forth every element of decision of character. Of the debauchery and tyranny of her father during her infancy she could remember only little; but she had seen, in later years, his palace broken into by enraged citizens, and himself driven from the throne, to haunt the doors of Roman senators. She had seen her sisters raised to power, and again, the murder of her brother-in-law;—finally, the return of her father at the head of the legions of Gabinius, the streets of Alexandria strewn with corpses, and the execution of her sister, Berenice. Marc Antony, as he brought back the vindictive piper king, may have noticed, crouching in a corner of the palace, expecting every instant to share her sister's fate, the beautiful girl of thirteen, who was afterwards to influence so much his own life and the history of the world.

She began her reign determined that the Romans should find in her government no excuse to interfere in the affairs of Egypt. Two of the soldiers left by Gabinius had slain in a brawl the two sons of Bibulus, the new proconsul of Asia. Cleopatra at once sent the murderers to the father. But her first difficulties as queen did not come from Rome. The senators had trouble enough of their own upon their hands. The government of the mighty Republic was now the disputed prey of her two mightiest imperators: and the very year after Cleopatra's accession, the armies of Cæsar and Pompey were facing each other on the plains of Pharsalia. The first danger which assailed the throne of the young queen arose nearer home. Ptolemy, her brother and husband, being a minor, was under the influence of an eunuch tutor, named Pothinus. The Egyptian royal army was commanded by an old favourite of her father, named Achillas. This pair of dignitaries conspired to get the kingdom wholly into their own hands. Ptolemy, but fourteen and a weakling, was a serviceable tool; but Cleopatra, with her shrewd wit and proud spirit, must be put out of the way. To effect this, a populace ever ready for insurrection was stirred into riot against a female government. The Piper's will was set aside, Ptolemy declared sole king, and Cleopatra compelled to flee. The spirit

which the intriguers feared, shewed itself in this extremity. She at once raised an army in Syria, led it back to Egypt, and faced the Egyptian army under her weak brother and his two counsellors, near Pelusium, on the north-eastern border of the country.

A strange event arrested the civil strife for a moment. Pompey, beaten at Pharsalia, fled before his rival; and, hoping that the gratitude of the Piper's children might yet aid in restoring the affairs of the piper's patron, he sought Egypt. His small flotilla stood off the shore, in the sight of both armies. He sent off a boat with a message to the young king. The two ministers, with a colleague, Theodotus the sophist, held a consultation. To admit Pompey would offend Cæsar; to reject him was to incur his displeasure should he ever again rise to power. To pretend to receive him and to kill him, (so reasoned Theodotus) would please Cæsar, and prevent future harm from Pompey. "The dead don't bite," said he. The proverbial argument was adopted. The broken-hearted Roman general trusted himself eagerly to the miserable cobbles in which Achilles and one or two Egyptian Romans went out to bring him on shore. Cornelia, Pompey's wife, and his friends who remained in the vessel, watched anxiously his progress to the landing-place. A sudden crowding round him as he stepped on shore,—the gleaming of a sword above his head—a short scuffle—and finally the moving off of the crowd, leaving a headless trunk among the shingle, told the watchers that Rome had now but one master. Pompey was no more. But there was no time for mourning or indignation. The galleys of the treacherous king and his ministers were making out to intercept them. The widowed Cornelia and her friends fled, without attempting to recover the body. Out at sea, while tacking towards the land, they may possibly have observed, against the night sky, the red glare of the funeral pyre, kindled by an old servant of Pompey, with the timbers of a fishing wreck; but they could not know its meaning.

So dread an interruption made the armies of Cleopatra and Pothinus suspend their mutual strife to see what next. The next was the arrival of Cæsar himself, pursuing Pompey in hot haste. He landed at Alexandria, with but a small force, having left orders for his army to follow. Theodotus presented to him Pompey's head. One hopes that his look of abhorrence and the tears which he shed were sincere.* The murderers were confounded and alarmed. Still more so were they, when Cæsar, pressed by want of money, demanded immediate payment of a sum which the Piper had promised him for his interest in Rome, and entered Alexandria in Consular state. The Alexandrian mob, ever easily roused, felt

* "Cæsar post tertium diem insecutus, quum ei Theodotus caput Pompeii et anulum obtulisset, et offensus est, et illa crimavit."—*Livy*, Epitome 112.

the insult to their nation's independence. The chagrined ministers were not slow to strengthen the irritation. A riot ensued; some of Cæsar's soldiers were killed, and the victor of Pharsalia was fain to shut himself up in the royal palace of Alexandria. But he maintained all his Roman haughtiness and self-possession, and summoned the rival claimants of the throne of Egypt before him, in the name of the Roman Senate, their guardian.

From their respective camps at Pelusium these claimants watched with mingled hope and fear the strange turn of affairs, by which their own comparatively petty strife had become merged in that for the mastery of Rome. When the summons of Cæsar came, Ptolemy at once went to him. Meanwhile Cleopatra was left to consider. The danger, which from her earliest days she had seen coming upon Egypt and the royal house of Ptolemy was now at hand. A Roman general was in her father's palace; her foolish brother in his hands, a prisoner and hostage. The tool of designing wretches, who still headed his army, he had driven her from her throne and native land. Should she join her army with his, to free him and drive the invader out? To what purpose? Only to be herself again driven off by Pothinus and Achillas. What did it matter, if the house of Ptolemy were ruined, whether its spoil fell to the Romans or to intriguing eunuchs? And was not her brother even now with Cæsar, endeavouring to get the Roman to declare him sole king despite their father's will; to earn a kingdom for himself at the expense of one half of Egypt to Rome, the other half to be squandered on his ministers? Was there no way in which Egypt might be saved both from Roman and from self spoliation? Was it utterly impossible to induce Cæsar to declare herself sole queen, unencumbered by the partnership of the silly tool of Pothinus and Achilles? She doubtless knew that the fame of her beauty had been carried to Rome by grave ambassadors, as well as by the rough soldiers of Gabinius. It was no mere whispering of vanity that told her she was accomplished as no other young woman of twenty then was. Had she not frequently witnessed the astonishment of Trogloditan, Ethiopian, Hebrew, Arab, Syrian, Median, and Parthian ambassadors, as she gave them audience without the aid of an interpreter?* The poets who wrote shortly after her death often compared her to Helen in beauty and accomplishments, as well as in the fatal consequences of her beauty.† Is it likely that the poet courtiers of splendid and licentious Alexandria failed to make the comparison while her own ears could drink in the compliments,

* Plutarch; Marc Antony.

† Quantum impulit Argos,
Iliacasque domos, facie Spartana nocenti,
Hesperios auxit tantum Cleopatra furores.

LUCAN: Pharsalia, x. 60.

her own smiles reward them? Why should she not seek to make this beauty the instrument of her country's redemption, of preservation for the throne of her fathers? This Cæsar,—the world already rang with the stories of his gallantry and amours. He was the acknowledged darling of Roman matrons; husbands hated him, lovers feared him; his very soldiers sang scandalous songs about him to his face.* What were all the arts and graces of the rude patriciennes of Rome compared with hers? If Cæsar were susceptible to the charms of the coarse Servilias, the insipid Pompeias, the haughty Clodias, would he be less susceptible to hers? Was not beauty the legitimate instrument of defence for women? Anacreon's "song divine," in the language of her fathers' land, had long since taught that nature gave beauty to women instead of all shields, instead of all spears; and that she who has beauty can vanquish both steel and fire.† What the sword of Hannibal had failed to do—what the fire of Pyrrhus—what the skill of Mithridates—what the bravery of Perseus,—that she, by her beauty, would try to do. She would roll back the tide of Roman conquest. Historical justice renders it necessary to be borne in mind that this woman was reared where chastity was set at nought, incest an every-day instrument of political usage; and that the events now spoken of took place forty-eight years before the coming of Christ, in a land where religion bore its most degraded form of animal worship; and where, among the Macedonian inhabitants, the once glorious intellectual morality of Greece had at last dwindled into mere imbecility and word-splitting. Trusting, then, not in a God she had never heard of, not in a morality whose foundations were denied or ignored by her teachers, but in her beauty and her skill, Cleopatra determined to make a venture for her throne and patrimony.

She would go to Cæsar, and win him to her cause. But how? Achilles and Pothinus well knew that any reconciliation between her and her brother would be the signal for their disgrace and fall. Their guards beset every path to prevent her from communicating either with Cæsar or Ptolemy. For Cleopatra to leave her army, openly enter Alexandria, and seek admission to the palace, would be to go to certain death at the hands of an Alexandrian mob. In the dusk of an Egyptian summer eve, along with one friend, Apollodorus of Sicily, she entered a small boat. They rowed unnoticed to the palace entrance. Near the landing-place Apollodorus and the boatman rolled her up in a carpet; and Apollodorus, lifting the precious bundle in his arms, carried her,

* Napoleon; *Vie de Cæsar*, vol. I. p. 263.

† Anacreon; Ode II.

unsuspected, inside the gates. The stratagem and its contriver alike charmed Cæsar. She pleaded not in vain for her rights. Lucan is perhaps not far from the truth, when he makes her say that it is to save the throne of the Ptolemies she pleads; and that she would give willingly her own rights up, were her brother installed as really king, and the upstarts who governed in his name deposed.

" Nil ipsa paterni
Juris inire peto : culpâ tantoque pudore,
Solve domum : remove funesta satellitis arma
Et regem regnare jube."*

He is, perhaps, still less wrong when he says that her words would have fallen in vain upon the Roman general's ear, had they not been aided by her beauty.

" Nequidquam duras tentasset Cæsaris aures ;
Vultus adest precibus, faciesque incesta perorat."†

But if the favours of beauty, and the romance of aiding that beauty in distress, induced Cæsar to adopt her cause, not the less did policy prescribe the same line of conduct. Shut up in Alexandria, with only a small army, awaiting reinforcements, it was necessary for him to play off the one competitor against the other—Cleopatra against Ptolemy, and both against Pothinus and Achillas. The army which the latter headed in the name of Ptolemy, was 20,000 strong, composed for the most part of renegade Romans, or old soldiers of Gabinius, who had by this time learnt to share all the passions of the Alexandrian populace. Roused by their leaders, that populace made head against the foreign invader. The situation of Cæsar in Alexandria, was now much like that of Cortes, long afterwards, in Mexico. Fanatic priests inveighed against the desecrators of their gods and temples. At the instigation of Pothinus and Achillas, both Cleopatra and Ptolemy, who had given themselves up to the Romans, were deposed, and Arsinoë proclaimed queen by the mob. Cæsar found himself compelled to negotiate. He proposed that Ptolemy and Cleopatra should reign jointly in Egypt, and that Arsinoë should receive the province of Cyprus. The two Egyptian ministers saw that their power was at an end if this were carried out. They pretended to negotiate; a fight, doubtless provoked by their own measures, broke off the negotiations. It broke out too early for Pothinus, who happened to be in the palace at the time. Cæsar seized him at once; sent troops to occupy the isle of Pharos, and the causeway which connected it with the city, thus gaining complete command of the harbour of Alexandria—and, at the same time he set fire to the Egyptian royal fleet in the harbour, securing thus a free entrance for his reinforcements when they should arrive.

* Lucan: Pharsalia x. 96.

† Ibid. 104.

Half of the far-famed Alexandrian library was burnt in the melee. Cæsar next fortified that part of the palace which opened on the Pharos causeway, and withdrew into it with his army and his two royal prisoners. The Egyptians, on their part, barricaded the streets around the palace, and completely blockaded it. But the arrival of a small fleet with provisions put Cæsar and his garrison above immediate want. The Alexandrians then cut the connection of the Nile waters with the cellar-cisterns of the palace, and sent in sea water instead. Cæsar found fresh water for his soldiers, by ordering them to dig on the sands of the beach. Pothinus, detected intriguing with the besiegers, was put to death at once; and, at the same time, Achilles was poisoned by the new queen, Arsinoë. She had become sick of his making her a mere instrument of his own power, as he had before made her brother Ptolemy. She selected another minister, Ganymede by name, and pressed the blockade, hoping yet to get into her hands the Roman general, as well as her elder brother and sister. At last the fickle Alexandrians became tired of Arsinoë and her Ganymede, and offered to obey Ptolemy as the ally of Cæsar. Cæsar sent the young king out to them. Whatever pretences he had made while leaving the palace, as soon as he was clear of it, Ptolemy headed the Alexandrians, and pressed the blockade harder than ever. Cæsar then sailed out with his small provision ships, and attacked the vessels of Ptolemy, which were hovering about the mouth of the harbour. The Romans were driven back, and Cæsar had to swim for his life. At length, some detachments of the army of Pharsalia appeared off Pelusium. In concert with these, Cæsar attacked Ptolemy and the Alexandrians, and completely routed them. Ptolemy was slain or drowned in the Nile mud, and Arsinoë taken prisoner.

Thus one by one Cleopatra's competitors for the government of Egypt were cut off. Could she but acquire sufficient influence over Cæsar to prevent the annexation of the country as a Roman province, her own rule was now secure. The busy general sought in her arms release from the cares which his hardihood and ambition were hourly heaping on him.* On neither side can the romance of love be permitted to colour their connexion. The daring candidate for the throne of the world had other thoughts than those of love. The thoughts of the wily princess were bent on securing her father's kingdom from home competition and foreign conquest. The one means of doing this was Cæsar's favour. She could not delude herself into the belief that Cæsar loved her. He, ever calculating, hardly even made such a pretence. In the intervals

* "Sanguine Thessalicæ cladis perfusus adulter
Admisit Venerem curis et miscuit armis."

of fight, he spent more time among Egyptian philosophers than in dalliance with her. He was more anxious to gain the favourable opinion of the Egyptian people by a pretended interest in their antiquities, their Nile and its source, and their religion, than to find time for her society.* But she sought not his love—she sought his interest. For this she exercised all her skill to please; this must secure her place upon the throne. Of old, the Alexandrians had always refused to be governed by a woman alone. Different attempts at female government in the Lagide family had proved miserable failures. If she should succeed, it must be by Roman help; and this success she hoped to obtain without yielding any part of Egypt to Rome. She knew too well that the annexation of Egypt was what Rome wanted. She would, if she could, get Roman help, yet not pay Roman tribute.

From his victory at Pelusium, Cæsar returned in triumph to Alexandria, levelled the barricades, and proclaimed, to the now trembling multitudes, Cleopatra as their queen. But in deference to their prejudice against a sole female rule, a younger brother, then almost an infant, another Ptolemy, was named joint ruler, and husband to the Queen. Arsinoë, the usurper, was sent to Rome, to grace Cæsar's triumph there. Cleopatra and her charms had saved Egypt. Livy, to hide the fact, asserts that Cæsar did not now declare Egypt a Roman province, because he feared that whatever proconsul he might appoint would be likely to cause a new outbreak among the unruly Alexandrians.† But there was no more danger of this in Egypt than in any other of the provinces which Rome had recently annexed. It was the arts of the woman which prevented the annexation, and saved for a time her country's independence. Instead of all spears, instead of all shields, beauty had won, where bravery would have been useless against the victor of Pharsalia.

After this Cæsar spent about a year in Egypt, by which time Cleopatra had borne him a son, named Cæsarion. Some of the Asiatic provinces, in the hope of regaining their freedom, had broken out into rebellion. The son of Mithridates had tried to assert the independence of Pontus. Cæsar marched against him, crushed him in a single battle, and then, though six months had elapsed since he last wrote to Rome, he forwarded his famous and pompous piece of laconism, "Veni, vidi, vici!" That letter told a tale. The master of the world—he who had become its master by his pliancy to all parties, began to feel that he could dispense with

* See Lucan's description of his discussions with the Egyptian priests in Pharsalia, x. 181 et seq.

† Livy: Epitome, cxxii.

management. Heretofore he had stooped and courted partizans on every side; now that he had risen above them all, he might indulge in the luxury of command. A change had come over him, the change which makes the natural difference between the man whose fortunes are as yet doubtful, and him who has risen so that he can rise no higher. It has been asserted that a year of commerce with Cleopatra had spoiled him.* He, whose freedom from display had so long charmed the world, was now intoxicated with the cup of the Egyptian Circe. But Cæsar's was not the character to be so changed; it was the circumstances of the man that had changed. He had been compelled to bend before turbulent tribunes—now he could give away crowns. Cleopatra had, indeed, for her own purposes, displayed before him the wealth of the Ptolemies, paling the splendour of the Capitol and Circus Maximus; but Cæsar had dreamt of the times when he should indulge in more than oriental power and magnificence long years before he saw the Sorceress of the Nile.

And yet, when back to Rome with plaudits ever ringing in his ears, and honours previously unheard of heaped upon his head, her influence abode by him. His ambition was too strong, indeed, for love to grow up beside it; yet his pride, as well as his love of pleasure, could receive gratification from parading beside him the loveliest of women, queen of the richest free nation, as the partner of his honours and his pleasures. Cleopatra was sent for to Rome. The realisation of her wildest dreams seemed now at hand. She had thought but to gain her country's independence by her beauty and her sacrifice of womanly honour; might she not now become partner of the throne of the world? For freedom and independence she had become Cæsar's mistress; she would now gain the half of universal empire by becoming his wife. Doubtless such dreams floated before her on her journey to the capital of the world.

But could Cæsar marry her? Would he dare? Marriage, a holy thing in the eyes of all wise men and civilised nations, was holy enough in Rome in a way. But its holiness lay not in its being a special and sacred union between man and woman as such; it was only vested with any kind of sacredness when it took place between Roman and Roman. It was chiefly binding as a civil rite—a contract arranged for by sacred Roman law, and therefore a thing in which strangers could have no share. In early Roman times, the woman in marriage was treated as a thing, a property, conveyed by the rite absolutely into the power of her husband, who had over her the power of life and death. She was in the household no better than the sister of her own children. But by the aid of Prætorian legislation, the slavery of the wife had gradually been abolished;

* Merivale: "The Romans under the Empire," III. 333, Ed., 1865.

the remedy, freedom of divorce became, however, as bad as the disease, and by the time the Republic fell, was showing itself in the shameless and dissolute lives of the freeborn Roman ladies.

This state of things Cleopatra could not but know; and she might justifiably think that Cæsar, who had brought about so many innovations, would probably also attempt to make a change in the Roman customs as to marriage with foreigners. Clearly the Roman people had lost all very strict notions about marriage, even when confined to those of their own nation; but it by no means followed that they should therefore be ready to give up their old notions about it as regards foreigners. The loosest of the old crusaders never considered the marriage of a brother knight with a fair Jewess or Saracen lady as anything but a degrading connexion; and the West Indian planters of to-day, men accustomed to lives not unlicentious, almost scout the Englishman who marries a negress or mulatto. Still Cleopatra knew that Cæsar was far above all such national prejudices. She knew that he had admitted whole nations of strangers to the rights of Roman citizenship, and might hope that, in her person, he would seek another opportunity of trampling on the haughty bigotry and senseless pride of his fellow-countrymen. But the state of opinion in Rome favoured no such step. The people who, shortly before, had looked on applaudingly when Cato lent his wife Marcia to Hortensius, and took her back after Hortensius died—the people who, shortly afterwards, beheld without remark Augustus put away his wife Scribonia, in order to carry off from Tiberius Claudius Nero his wife, at the moment in an unfit state,—this people would have considered itself outraged had Cæsar seriously proposed to marry the Egyptian Cleopatra. He dared not give her the name of wife.* The evidence that he ever thought of doing so is uncertain. It is tolerably certain, however, that Cleopatra thought of sharing the empire with him under one name or another. Her dreams were not now of merely securing Egypt—she would extend her empire beyond what any of her ancestors had ever held. She might at least hope that he would acknowledge Cæsarion, since he had no other son—perhaps leave to him the mighty empire he had won, and thus Rome fall to Egypt and the Lagides, not Egypt to Rome.

Cæsarion, her son, and her youthful husband-brother accompanied her to Rome. She was well received by the Emperor. She dwelt in his palace in the gardens stretching down to the Tiber, which Cæsar afterwards bequeathed as a public possession to the Roman people,

* Virgil speaks of her as the *wife* of Antony; but it is when he enumerates her among the monsters on the shield of Æneas, and with a cry of horror,—

“Sequitur, nefas! Ægyptia conjux.”

ÆN. viii. 638.

—where the palace of the Pamphili now stands. Her statue was erected in the temple of Venus. Calpurnia, Cæsar's lawful wife, bore quietly the favours heaped upon her rival. Men said that a new law was about to be proposed, by which the Emperor might be enabled to marry more wives than one, and should not be required to marry Roman ladies. She held open court in the Capital of the world. All who sought place or favour from Cæsar attended her levees. The moralist and orator, Cicero, was there, fawning before her face, and abusing her afterwards in his letters to his friends. He sought her presence, under the pretence of begging for certain manuscripts, which the queen of the capital of literature, Alexandria, readily promised to procure for him. At the very time, he writes to his friend Atticus, complaining bitterly of her pride, and assuring him that anything he had to do with her was only in the interests of science, and not at all degrading to his self-respect. He had heard, he says in another letter, that she was again in an interesting state. He hoped she would miscarry, as it would have been well had she miscarried when Cæsarion was born. All this scorn of Cicero, and of many others, the Queen of Egypt saw well enough, and repaid scorn with scorn, looking not to favour with the Romans, but to her personal influence with the Dictator for the accomplishment of her purposes.

Thus she stayed till suddenly the murder of Cæsar fell like a thunderbolt upon her. Then came those terrible days of confusion—of republican hopes dashed down by Antony's promptitude—of strife and slaughter in the streets of Rome—of Cæsar's burial and the reading of his will. What could the foreign queen do but shrink from the public eye, and wait with patience to see what that will had done for her or for her child?

Alas, nothing! The Dictator had had no thought of the cruel treachery by which he fell. Even some of his murderers were on the list of those to whom he made liberal bequests. His gardens, as we have said, and a sum of 75 drachmas per man, were left to the Roman people; his other immense possessions were divided among the grandsons of his sisters, the bulk of them being given to Octavius, the grandson of his younger and favourite sister. For Cleopatra and her child, he perhaps thought that time enough lay before him to provide. She was thus alone, with her hopes all blasted, in a city of foes. The senators who so recently had crowded round her, were all too busy now, with their excited hopes and fears, to mind her. And well for her that in these terrible days she was forgotten! It left her time for flight. Crushed and fearful, she left the city secretly, and made the best of her way back to Alexandria. Picture, who can, her thoughts on that dreary homeward voyage!



A LIFE'S MYSTERY

BY CLINTON HOPE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE RENEWAL OF FEAR.

THE while Liliás was tossing in the slow tortures of fever, attended unremittedly by the assiduous physician and attentive Emma, her inveterate and remorseless foe, Miss Lyttleton, in the quiet of a village, was collecting reinforcements of stray coincidences, likely, in her estimation, to criminate Liliás with respect to an improper association with the deceased Norman Lyttleton. She had persuaded Mary—which was an affair of no difficulty—to consent to the renting a suite of rooms not very distant from Welgrave, exacting at the same time with a concurrence in this arrangement that she would hold no communication with any of their acquaintances at Welgrave till her permission was accorded. In this out-of-the-way place, apart from all society or recreation, this relentless woman set about the task of supplying the deficiency in her proofs for identifying Liliás with the writer of the letter addressed to her brother.

Evidence is certainly, in most cases, made up of very trifling materials, yet it generally takes a greater number of incidents than Hinda was capable of collecting to sustain a trial for murder; and, notwithstanding her sanguine temperament, she was sometimes overwhelmed with despondency as she reflected upon the utter insufficiency of the testimony she might be able to produce in support of her awful charge against Lady Welgrave, who would necessarily obtain the sympathy of all the judges and jurymen in England, on account of her youth, her beauty, and the elevated sphere she occupied.

When first the suspicion of Liliás's guilt had entered the mind

of Hinda, she resolved to hunt out my lady's nurse, and force her by threats, if she could not induce her by promises, to reveal all she knew of her mistress's secret; but it was not long before she abandoned this design, waiting until she should, by closer observation, discover something which might implicate King in the crimes which she attributed to Liliás.

Lord Welgrave had earnestly invited both Mrs. and Miss Lyttleton to renew their visit when his wife was recovered, and Hinda now determined upon paying a visit to the Abbey, though without any intention of prolonging her stay beyond a few hours; for she knew, by means of the local papers, that Lady Welgrave was now convalescent.

It was a month after the evening upon which Hinda's accusation to Liliás had been made. Sir Shenton Bellamy and Sarah King had each departed to their respective homes, and a smart, rosy-cheeked damsel filled the place of Emma Adams, until she should return from her sea-side visit. The beauty of autumn was quenched in the desolation of coming winter. Shrieking, wailing blasts, echoed through the trees, and moaned in the ivy that twined itself about the Abbey; faded yellow and brown leaves rustled over the paths, swept along by the angry wind; leaden-hued clouds obscured the sun almost the whole of the day, and, taken on the whole, nothing more melancholy and cheerless could be well imagined than the prospect about Welgrave upon the day its mistress first left her boudoir, after her illness, to take her accustomed seat in the snug breakfast-room. No song of birds greeted her upon her return to health, no gladness of nature enhanced the pleasure the invalid would otherwise have experienced in the renewal of her strength. Her husband's smile and the blazing fire alone afforded a relief to the dreary picture of decay without and loneliness within. A chill smote upon Liliás's heart as she looked upon the destruction wrought by November's pitiless storms. Not six weeks ago all was blooming and fair, and now everything she beheld was bleak and barren, a fitting emblem of her own state. Less than three years back her life had been sinless and happy, now it was both guilty and remorseful.

Liliás gazed for many minutes through the window, sometimes looking at the bare trees, and at others peering between the dark mass of branches, with eyes whose fixed expression betokened that her thoughts had wandered far away into the regions of memory. Becoming, at length, tired of this gloomy occupation, she came back to the seat she had previously used, and began considering what she should do with herself upon this cold, dark day. Presently she seemed to have decided; for, going to a table upon which her desk lay—the desk with the secret drawers—she opened it, and

taking a letter from a packet, began to read. Her husband had been watching her with fond attention, longing to perform some little office for her, by which he might farther testify his delight at seeing her well again. He approached her as she was reading, and inquired if she were sure she was strong enough to write.

"Quite," was the surprised answer, as she placed the letter upon the table. "I intend writing to Ada; it is so long since I have been able to correspond with my dear girl, that it will, I know, be a pleasure to her to hear from me."

"Certainly, love," responded her husband; "only be careful you do not exert yourself too much. Remember, your recovery is so recent."

Lilias smiled. "There is no fear of that," she said, gaily—"that is, of any exertion of mine proving fatal. I am formed, I believe, of indestructible matter, and superior to decay; if this had not been the case, I should certainly not have been here now. remember," she continued, facing her husband, and speaking more seriously, "at least a dozen perils, which, had they happened to any one else, must have ended in death. Three distinct times I have been passing the fire, when my dress has caught and enveloped me in flames; but each time my good genius has sent some one to my rescue, and I have escaped with no greater injury than a singed curl. The effect of these accidents has been to give me a dread of the stove which generally lasted a whole week. Another time I fell into a lake, over which papa and I were being rowed; twice I have fallen from a very high swing in the playground at Blackheath; and—but I will not enumerate any more of the dangers I have passed through, lest you think me ambitious of rivalling the famous knights of chivalry, whose hairbreadth escapes should cast all others into the shade. I only tell you these things, Henry," she added, after a pause, "to convince you that an invisible charm hangs over my life, and that nothing can affect it."

Lord Welgrave listened shudderingly as Lilias proceeded in her playful recital; and when she closed it with the avowal of such a conviction, he regarded her with a puzzled air, for what she had said seemed to him but the lingering remnant of delirium. No wandering or vacuity was visible there—intellect with beauty sat supreme upon her countenance. Lilias saw his eager glance, nor did she take long to divine its meaning; and a mellow and prolonged laugh, such as the soft rippling of a stream, answered his fears.

"Do you think I am labouring under a delusion?" she asked, when her merriment had exhausted itself; "do you positively think that I believe in genii, either good or evil?"

"I really did not know what to think," his lordship returned, his look of perplexity not entirely gone; "you seemed so much in earnest."

My lady did not further reply, having no wish to pursue this trifling theme; but selecting a sheet from the many-tinted papers that filled her escritoire, in lieu of the crumpled letters of old, she commenced the task of writing to her friend. Her letter was rather a long one, and as Lord Welgrave was unwilling to absent himself from the side of his beautiful wife, he stood by her as her pen glided over the sheet, thoughtlessly taking the articles from her desk, and replacing them almost without looking at them. All the writing implements had passed through his hand separately—the gold pens, with their jewelled holders—the seals, bearing his and her father's crests, with other things too numerous to describe, without a thought being given by the abstracted nobleman to their uses.

He came at last upon something which had power to recall his attention, and fix it immovably. This was the serpent ring, which, with an evident regard to secrecy, had been placed between some papers. But for the undercurrent of suspicion that lay beneath his desire to trust implicitly to his wife's sincerity, he might have put down the ring with the thought that it was her father's; but a something unexplainable suggested to him in an instant that it was a gift, a token. What of?—friendship merely, or love? If of the latter, by what right did she treasure it still? Was it a memento of affection from him who had once been her friend, brother, and suitor? Had it belonged to Owen Arnold?

Lord Welgrave felt his face burn; and his heart filled with anger at the bare supposition. It might be. He could learn almost for a certainty, by questioning her.

“Who gave you this, Liliast?” he asked, trying to speak carelessly, and holding the ring towards her.

The bent head was raised at the sound of his voice, and the gaze which had been fixed upon the sheet of paper before her rested now on the glittering eyes of the serpent ring. She had not understood the inquiry put to her, and, with the pen still between her fingers, elevated her eyes for the purpose of giving her undivided attention to her husband. They fell, as I have said, upon the ring, and immediately the healthy tint faded from her face, and the smile from her lip. The golden snake appeared to possess the powers of fascination attributed to the living one, at least for her. She seemed perfectly unable for a few moments to look away from the shining emeralds and parted fangs of this miniature representative of the enemy of our race.

At length, removing her attention from the jewel, she fixed it upon her husband's face. Its expression was grave, even to sternness, and in a constrained manner, he repeated his former inquiry. This restored to her mind the necessity of composure, and she

answered without any variation from her usual accent: "No one gave it me: I bought it."

"In that case, which at once destroys any association, either of a pleasurable or painful nature, why that look of alarm when it first met your sight?"

"I can scarcely explain it to myself, and cannot hope to do so satisfactorily to you," said Lilius, musingly; "but, unaccountable as it is, I feel a shudder each time I see it."

Lord Welgrave hereupon expressed himself penitent for having obtruded it upon her, and endeavoured to fancy that the explanation of the strange effect produced by the sight of the ring was nothing extraordinary; but notwithstanding this, another subject of tormenting surmise was given him by the incident, for

"Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmation strong
As proofs of Holy Writ."

As the marquis uneasily pondered, he slipped the ring upon his finger, perfectly unconscious the while of the action, and was only roused to a knowledge of outer objects by his wife's request to touch the bell, when she had finished her letter.

The footman appeared and disappeared, only in a few moments to return with—Miss Lyttleton's card.

"Not at home," was Lilius's hasty instruction; but her husband, turning towards her, observed,

"I will deliver an excuse for your not receiving her," following the servant out of the room as he concluded.

Being thus left alone, Lady Welgrave went back to her seat at the desk, and began to arrange its contents, prior to locking it, which she was always careful to do. Suddenly she recollected that she had not seen her husband replace the ring, and concluded that he still had it upon his hand.

"Merciful God!" she exclaimed, as she made this discovery, "I am lost!" and, saying this, she clasped her hands in an agony of despair; her face was rigid with terror, and her eyes wild with excitement. "He must learn all now," she thought; "nothing can prevent him knowing my secret. Why have I planned and lied so long, to have my safety at length destroyed by an accident?" Wildly she paced the apartment as she said this, pausing sometimes to listen, and sometimes before an open window, to allow the chilly breeze to fan her brow, for she felt suffocated. Half-an-hour she walked thus, her ear strained to catch each faint sound as it found its way into the library; she could then no longer bear the suspense that filled her soul, and, ringing violently, inquired of the servant who answered her call, "if Miss Lyttleton had left."

"Yes, my lady; she and my lord went out together, about ten minutes since," was the answer.

"On foot?" Liliias interrogated, eagerly.

The response was in the affirmative, and then Lady Welgrave dismissed the footman.

As the door closed upon him, she threw herself at full length upon a sofa, burying her face in her hands, and waited, as patiently as her anxiety would permit, to hear the consequence of her husband's interview with Miss Lyttleton.

Lord Welgrave proceeded to meet Hinda with a return of his usual cheerfulness. He knew she was a clever woman, who could, when she pleased, make herself tolerably agreeable; and as she always pleased to do this in his presence, he experienced a very friendly feeling for her, despite (or, perhaps, a great deal because of) the suspicions she had been the means of exciting in him, which, at the same time they inflicted severe pain, gave him to imagine her a sincere and reliable friend. The usual inquiries concerning the healths of their mutual friends had been put and answered, and Hinda was about to make some remark upon the inclemency of the weather, for want of a better topic, when Lord Welgrave, by a movement of his hand, displayed to her view the ring he had found in his wife's escritoire.

Hinda half rose from her chair as she caught sight of it, and a visible change was manifested in her face and voice, as she eagerly exclaimed, "Excuse me, my lord, but will you allow me to look at that ring?" pointing, as she spoke, to the one he put upon his finger so short a time previously.

His lordship looked up surprisedly, and, drawing the ring from his hand, presented it to her without uttering a word. Miss Lyttleton almost snatched it from his grasp, so anxious was she to examine it. Without the least hesitation, she pressed the secret spring, and revealed the miniature of the scornful beauty.

"My God! it is the same!" she cried, her features becoming livid with intense excitement, and her hands actually shaking with the excess of agitation she was enduring.

Lord Welgrave gazed at her with alarm, asking, with nearly as little composure as she had used in speaking, if she knew anything concerning it.

"It was my brother's," she replied, hoarse with suppressed rage and triumph; "it was my brother's."

Lord Welgrave staggered to his chair with amazement. "Impossible!" cried he, hurriedly; "I have taken it but a moment back from my wife's desk."

A demoniacal laugh followed this announcement. Lord Welgrave gave his visitor a stern look of inquiry; her face instantly resumed

its former expression of cruel exultation, as she said in low, distinct tones, that penetrated to her hearer's very heart: "That you found this ring, my lord, in your wife's possession is yet a further proof that it belonged to my dead brother, if, indeed, proof were needed by me, who know it so well."

Her auditor was completely bewildered, and could scarcely believe that he had heard aright. Hinda would have said more, but he interrupted her with a desire that she would explain her meaning.

The opportunity for degrading the woman she hated was here open to her, and was one which few women in her position could let pass. But Hinda was no common character, and was as much above the weaknesses of her sex as she was wanting in the feminine attributes of truthfulness and affection. She had resolved to hint at none of her suspicions to Lord Welgrave till she should be prepared to substantiate fully the truth of her assertions, and it was only for a second that she wavered in this determination; thinking that to give her reasons for suspicion to the husband would be sufficient to rouse him to action, either from the motive of redeeming from all injurious surmise the name of a beloved wife, or from the idea of being able to punish a suspected one.

"No," she mentally argued, "I will not divulge it yet—the time is not ripe; probably he is still too fond of her, too much fascinated with her devilish arts, to do other than indignantly deny the imputations brought against her, without even investigating them. I must wait a little time longer; surely when I have been able to bear the delay of two years, I can patiently put up with the further delay of a few weeks."

"Lord Welgrave," she said aloud, with marked emphasis, "I was about to give you the history of this ring, and confide to you my reasons for the importance I attach to it, not as a bauble, but as a piece of evidence against a wicked and heartless woman. I have, however, come to the conclusion that it is better I should not tell you at present, since it would seem incredible, when unsupported by additional proofs. I ask you at present to content yourself with knowing that your patience will not require to be exercised beyond a month or two. During this time I propose to work, in order to bring about that woman's condemnation; in which case you will know all my surmises, and even more than I have yet to unravel. But should I, on the other hand, be unsuccessful, and fate withhold from me the means of avenging a brother's wrong, you shall still hear, if you wish, the relation of my fears, and decide as to the justice of my accusations. One thing more I have to say: may I retain this ring, at least for a season? till I can either establish the truth of my conjectures, or be convinced beyond a doubt of the falseness of my premises."

"If it will be productive of such important results," returned his lordship, who was not a little perplexed how to answer her, "and as it really belonged to your brother, you may certainly keep it, as I know Lilius will have no desire to retain it after hearing this. But I am bewildered by all you have said: what wrong of your brother's suffering calls for redress? and to whom do your injurious fancies point?"

He stepped back a pace or two as he asked this, proudly and defiantly; for he could not bear that his visitor should see the anguish of his soul. There was a corroding fear in his heart, and a wild commingling of ideas in his brain, which had reference to his wife, and her alarm when she beheld the ring in his hands. He waited breathlessly for Hinda's answer, trying the while most manfully to think it was indifferent to him; yet had Miss Lyttleton replied by giving the name of Lilius, he would hardly have known surprise. A vague, but not the less harrassing fear haunted him (as he stood listening for Hinda's reply) that the answer would correspond with his unacknowledged fears. The first words of Miss Lyttleton had been so strange, "That this ring was found in your wife's possession is a farther proof that it belonged to my brother." What did she mean by this? Alas! she had forbidden him to inquire, and for months this doubt must remain unsolved, unless,— unless he questioned his wife, which he felt he could not do; it would be so cruel, so ungenerous, to call her to account upon so bare a surmise: he must bear the weight of his misgivings in silence.

He had just arrived at this conclusion when he remembered that his last question was still unanswered, and moving round, so as to fully face his visitor, he repeated it.

"I cannot tell you—at least, not yet; but I warn you to distrust where you have most confided."

"Good heavens! Miss Lyttleton," ejaculated Lord Welgrave, his face becoming white with fear; "explain to me, I beseech you, the meaning of all this mystery! Why—oh! why do you thus torture me?"

Hinda appeared a little alarmed by the excitement she had called forth, and answered, soothingly—

"You distress yourself needlessly, my lord; I beg you will dismiss the topic from your mind, and as our painful conversation has been already too far prolonged, I think it well for me to depart. Good morning, Lord Welgrave!" she concluded, moving past him to the door.

"Excuse me, Miss Lyttleton; but I cannot say farewell while my mind is in so distressing a state of uncertainty with regard to the expressions you have made use of. Permit me to offer you my arm, and I will walk with you to the lodge, when I hope you will enlighten me upon the subject of our trying discourse."

"As you please," acquiesced Hinda, determined, at the same time she indulged his wish, not to be drawn from the resolve of withholding her convictions from him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

INCREASED ALARMS.

LORD WELGRAVE walked with Miss Lyttleton in silence, the wind pelting them with the dead leaves that were flying in all directions. Hinda would not speak farther concerning the strange hints she had thrown out respecting the ring, and his lordship was not disposed for the discussion of any other subject; so, with mutual consent, they parted, Miss Lyttleton to enter the hired vehicle in which she had been conveyed to the Abbey, and Lord Welgrave to return to the library.

His wife was still lying upon the sofa; and as her face was hidden, and she did not stir at his approach, he concluded she slept. Unwilling to disturb her, he silently took down a book from one of the shelves, and seating himself near the fire, commenced, not reading, but thinking. He had, it is true, opened the first page, and read a few lines, but their meaning did not penetrate to his mind, by reason of the confusion it had been thrown into by the events of the last hour; so resting the volume upon his knee, he gave himself up to reflection.

Was Lilius's quietness really produced by "tired nature's sweet restorer?" No; her silence was the result of despair; she felt all was lost, and it was to gain a short respite that she feigned sleep. She had no thought that Hinda's prudence would step in between the opportunity and the desire to wrong her, and conceived that the repetition of that horrid charge made against her by Hinda had been given to her husband during her interview with him. How greatly surprised was she when, an hour later, she deemed it prudent to rise, to find that, although her husband's face was clouded and pale, he made no allusion either to the visitor or to the ring, which, with additional dread, she perceived he did not now wear! Despite the torments she was suffering, she was determined to follow Lord Welgrave's example of reserve; and the remainder of the day was spent in musing, unrelieved by any conversation on either side, since the occasional utterance of a few disjointed sentences cannot be termed such. Her ladyship found beside her breakfast-cup, next morning, a note, addressed in a bold, masculine hand, which, however, claimed, by an indiscrutable peculiarity (which invariably marks the writing of a woman's from a man's), to be that of a lady's. It was unknown to her; nevertheless, she trembled with

apprehension as she tore open the envelope. The note was as laconic as, from its writer's character, might be expected, and contained but these words:—"Miss Lyttleton will do herself the pleasure of calling upon Lady Welgrave to-day, and urgently requests the favour of a private interview."

Lilias crushed the note in her hand, and thrusting it into her pocket, turned with a trifling remark to his lordship, who was rather suspiciously eyeing her movements.

Verily my lady was an accomplished actress, and might well be ashamed of herself when so weak as to display her feelings. She foresaw the storm that was approaching, the inevitable lightning-blast that must annihilate her; yet she must appear happy and careless, and she played well and skilfully the part fate had assigned her. The sword of Damocles was nothing to the danger which hung over her, *that* had the strength of a horse-hair, by which to hang, whereas, the sword that threatened Lilias was suspended by a cobweb, a something but just removed from nothing.

True to her word, Hinda paid a visit to the Abbey during the morning, though a mizzling rain was falling, and the cold was most penetrating. She brought Mary with her, but not Melbourne, who she knew Lilias loved, and would be pleased to see. No; she would not bring him.

Lady Welgrave was too much in dread of Hinda to attempt a refusal of her command for a private interview—for nothing short of command had Hinda's note conveyed. Accordingly, under the pretence of exhibiting some new description of jewellery, (arrived that day from London), she retired with Hinda to her boudoir, leaving Mary engaged in conversation with Lord Welgrave.

Arrived at her own apartments, with a motion of her hand Lilias invited Miss Lyttleton to be seated, and then placed herself upon a chair in the most sombre part of the room, which, notwithstanding its elegance and beauty, looked dismal enough upon this day of universal dulness.

Hinda opened the conversation by remarking, that she had not seen her ladyship for a long time.

"No," replied Lilias, with a smile, which but ill accorded with the internal agonies she was suffering from, "it is indeed a long time since I had that——"

Pleasure she would have said, but Hinda stopped her with a gesture of disdain.

"You feel no pleasure in seeing me," she exclaimed, bluntly, "and why so express yourself? It may be well for you to play the hypocrite with others, but with me your trouble is thrown away; we mutually hate each other in private, whatever we may say in public to the contrary, so there is no necessity, when we are alone,

for the use of pretty speeches. I remarked that I had not seen you lately, not because I wish to infer that I regretted the circumstance, but simply to bring to your recollection the time of our last meeting. Do you remember it?"

Had Liliás chosen the words of Hamlet, when asked a similar question by the ghost, there would have been nothing exaggerated in the reply; for her the event of that night was written in words of flame, never, never more to be effaced as long as life lasted. She did not answer the imperious question, save by a bend of the head, but continued gazing straight into the lurid coals burning in the grate.

Hinda seemed not to heed my lady's nod, but added, fiercely—

"Do you remember that I accused you of the crimes of murder and child-desertion? crimes punishable by law, not to speak of the flagrant one you committed to society, by living as a wife with a married man.

"I do remember the string of charges," Liliás replied, rising from her seat, and confronting her accuser with compressed rage; "but you appear not to remember, from your farther pressing them, that they were founded only upon imagination and malignity. You have not the shadow of a proof in support of your assertion; then, why should you hate and persecute me thus? I defy you, though, to harm me."

Words cannot describe the fury depicted in Miss Lyttleton's countenance as Liliás thus addressed her; for a moment it was too great to permit of its expression in language.

"Your courage will be of little use to you," she said at last, literally foaming with passion; "you should first examine your position before challenging me. I tell you I will never rest till my brother's death is avenged by the forfeiture of your life; my pursuit must lead till death—your death or my own."

A shudder seized her hearer as she listened to this terrible speech, and moving towards the fire—which she stirred violently, making a brilliant red light dance up the chimney and illumine the room—she carefully watched the face of her foe. As Liliás stood upon the hearth, the ruddy glow imparting a false bloom to the sickly hue of her face, and making her eyes gleam strangely, Hinda proceeded, steadfastly marking, as she did so, the effect of her communication.

"You have said I have no proof of your guilt, Lady Welgrave, but you deceive yourself most miserably; I have already in my possession the knowledge which would utterly blast your reputation, if not deprive you of existence. I was sitting in the arbour on the evening your nurse visited you, and overheard the whole of your conversation with her."

Hinda spoke with cruel emphasis, and with a thorough know-

ledge of the pain she inflicted. The effect upon Liliás was magical. She felt, as the words sank into her mind, that her day was indeed past; that the position she had perjured herself to win, and unceasingly planned to keep, was near being wrenched from her. Already she beheld the wreck of her long-cherished hopes and ambitious designs. She even heard in imagination the execrations of the throng now fawning at her feet; and, worse than all—worse a thousand times than the loss of name and wealth—she fancied she saw the misery of her father and husband at her fall, and felt the weight of their curse upon her head. An icy grasp seemed upon her, crushing out her very life. She could not speak or scream; could make no sound or movement to break the awful spell, but, cold and despairing, stood staring in mute agony at the un pitying Hinda. The hour of judgment had at last come, and she quailed before her accuser's withering glance, who, the more completely to overpower her with the conviction of the hopelessness of her situation, drew forth the ring from her pocket, and holding it towards the paralysed Liliás, bade her tell her how she became possessed of it.

"But why," added she, supreme contempt curling her thin lip, and sparkling in her eyes; "but why do I ask you, when I know your answer will be another falsehood, in addition to the accumulation of deceits already committed by you? This ring has been a heirloom in our family for more than two centuries; I know it is the same; the miniature it contains is mine. How agreeable it must be for you to know that you have cherished so fondly the portrait of the woman who will be the means of destroying you! Did Norman inform you that the likeness hidden in the snake's head was that of his sister?"

All Liliás's terror had flown, and in its stead there now raged within her a fierce and unnatural excitement. She was no longer the helpless woman, prostrated as though by an unconquerable fear.

"Woman, cease to torture me, or you may find me dangerous!" she retorted, with flaming eyes and choking voice. "I knew not that the ring contained a miniature, and therefore could not imagine it to be yours. I bought it; possibly it may have belonged to your brother; if so, I am not accountable for it, knowing nothing of him."

The danger in which she stood had produced a determined calmness of manner, and my lady delivered herself with a precision and collectedness perfectly wonderful under the circumstances.

Miss Lyttleton was for a moment staggered in the belief of her guilt, and really began to fancy Liliás might be correct in her statement as to the manner in which the ring had come into her hands. But a thought of what she had overheard in the summer-

house quickly dispelled this idea, and fiercely turning upon Lady Welgrave, she cried: "You shall not escape me so; I will go to the ends of the earth so that I may make your sins recoil upon yourself! My life has but one aim; my desires point but to one object, that of proving you to be the murderess of my brother, and before Heaven, I swear it shall not be unaccomplished. Succeed as you may in your efforts of refutation now, you cannot do so; your pride shall be laid in the dust, and, haughty as you are, you shall sue for my mercy."

"You are unwise to boast," her ladyship returned sarcastically; "it is ridiculous of you to fancy that anyone more sane than yourself would listen to your unfounded charges against me. And even supposing you could persuade anyone to credit your assertions, do not fancy I would humble myself to ask for your pity. Pity from one woman to another, in a case of real or imagined wrong, is impossible; I should expect mercy rather from a wild and famished lioness than from you! No! no!—you will never witness my abasement. I would scorn to ask your compassion, if it were the means of saving my life a thousand times; and in answer to your threat, I here vow that you shall never triumph over me; either I would kill you or myself, when you felt all but sure of your prey." When Lilius had thus spoken, she walked back to her former place by the window, where the drapery partially shaded her from Miss Lyttleton's savage vision. Her bosom heaved tumultuously, and her face bore the expression of a person who has decided upon the adoption of some dreadful alternative. "Do your worst; I am prepared for you," was what the compressed lips and flashing eyes said as plainly as her spoken words.

Hinda understood the defiance exhibited by Lilius's glance, and replied by a look of equal hate.

"The die is cast, and your hopes of escape are delusive," she hissed warningly in my lady's ear, as she swept past her to the door. "I am upon the right track, and *cannot* fail."

With this final expression of malice, Hinda repaired to the drawing-room, though not immediately. She could not compose her features at will, as Lady Welgrave had taught herself to do. At length, when she had sufficiently calmed her agitation, as to be able to join Lord Welgrave and her sister-in-law, she was much amazed at finding Lilius talking to them with an easy assumption of gaiety. Shortly the sisters took their leave, and Lord Welgrave having an appointment to keep, rode off soon after, leaving the ill-fated Lilius to the much-coveted luxury of solitude.

The fire had burnt low in the drawing-room, so she returned to her boudoir, where, in a state of excitement difficult to describe, she passed two never-to-be-forgotten hours.

She was convinced that Hinda Lyttleton would be as good as her word, and not rest while safety and honour remained to the woman she imagined had wronged her. Nothing could check her indomitable energy of will; this man-woman would have travelled to the antipodes, with the certainty of undergoing in her journey all the miseries of cold and heat, hunger and disease, could she be permitted to return to England with the means of destroying the lovely being she detested so violently.

The fever of revenge had parched up the well-springs of charity in her heart, never gentle enough to make her character even ordinarily merciful; nothing but the gratification of her demon passions could satisfy her cravings, and this her victim knew. Lilius read but too plainly the settled purpose of her enemy's soul, and believed that at the moment her life might be ebbing away, Hinda would smile with fiendish triumph upon her agony. This reflection was enough to excite a similarity of hardness in the mind of the persecuted Lilius, and although she shook with terror at the suggestions of the tempter, she could not banish them from her mind.

"If," she thought, "I could induce her to walk with me upon the balcony, I might never more have cause to fear; a slight touch, such as a child might give, and then she would be dead at my feet below; no one could suspect me, and I should then be free. She would kill me, who had never injured her, if she had the power: why, then, should I feel any compunction, in ridding myself of a foe so persevering and vindictive? Suspicious as is her nature, her cunning may for once sleep. It is my only hope for escape, and it must be done."

With this murderous design seething through her brain, and convulsing her frame with horror, Lady Welgrave began the task of dressing, being by no means desirous of her maid's presence in the then perturbed state of her feelings.

"It must be done," she continued to repeat to herself, during the various operations of the toilette, and each time the sentence passed her lips it was uttered with a deadlier resolution.

Her's was not one of those vacillating dispositions which are never decided upon anything, but form first one plan and then another, reverting to each with equal partiality or dread. No, having adopted a resolve, she kept to it, and would have done so if her soul had been the forfeit. The life of Hinda Lyttleton was the price of her security, and if it were not sacrificed, it would not be through any puling fear on the part of Lilius. If her foe lived to be the victor, it would be through a special interference of Providence, for assuredly the spirit Hinda had roused into enmity against her was not less strong than her own, and would not shrink more in

the prosecution of an action she deemed imperative. It was a battle to the death between them, and the odds were fearfully against the elder antagonist. The dormant fire of her southern blood was roused in Lady Welgrave, and she determined, with a determination as unflinching as Hinda's, never to succumb—never to allow her enemy cause for exultation.

The soft pliability of manner, which was produced by indolence and want of opposition, more than by natural gentleness and docility, was now changed. The placid and beautiful tigress, that had used her paws so daintily as to appear innocent of claws, was awakened from her rest by persecution thus constant, and now, with fervent but patient wrath, waited for the opportunity to spring upon her tormentor and crush her.

My lady was standing before the cheval glass, arranging her hair, without, however, caring how she did it; her thoughts were busy with the manner in which she should bring about a visit to the balcony without exciting suspicion respecting the awful deed she meditated. She had no fear as to the fatal result of her scheme, could she but secure the opportunity for its accomplishment, neither did she doubt that Miss Lytton would shortly revisit the Abbey; her only uneasiness was produced by the idea that Hinda's natural want of trust would prevent her confiding herself to her sole companionship.

Suddenly, while these thoughts filled her mind, Lilia caught sight of her reflection in the mirror, which caused her to fall back with amazement. And well she might be startled, for a picture of greater horror could not be conceived than her beautiful features, distorted by wicked passions, and all the more horrible because of their wondrous perfection. She looked just then as supremely cruel as she was handsome—the incarnation of evil and beauty. Very different was she from some of the vile women who have played their wretched yet grand parts in the great drama of life. She had sympathies both noble and kind, affections pure and strong, but they were now rendered abortive by the one engrossing wish to save herself from the restless vigilance and detestation of Miss Lytton. In the atmosphere of hate, no gentle thoughts or holy instincts can bloom, as, beneath the blaze of a tropical sun, flowers will fade and die, which, in less arid climes, delight the beholder with their freshness and fragrance.

CHAPTER XL.

IN QUEST OF INFORMATION.

As Miss Lyttleton and her sister-in-law drove slowly along the seemingly interminable highway leading to their temporary abode, Hinda turned over in her mind the wisdom of acquainting Mary with her suspicions, or of maintaining a longer silence upon the subject, leaving all explanations till the fulfilment of her revenge.

It has been seen throughout that Hinda Lyttleton's character was essentially secretive, and that she was generally contemptuous of the advice and opinions of others; but, despite this, she was so cautious in any pursuit of an important nature, that she would sometimes stifle her pride, and submit to ask the aid or counsel of those she thought most meanly of, in the hope of gaining a suggestion which might prove useful to her. She all but despised her brother's widow; yet in this difficulty, which she could confide to none but her, she thought she might gain help by consulting her; for, arrogant as was her nature, she justly conceived that even from the weakest intellect a valuable idea may occasionally be gleaned; so, after a very short preparation, she introduced the topic of her surmises and convictions. The undemonstrative bearing of Mrs. Lyttleton was of great service to her, as by means of her placid temper alone did she gain any notion of Hinda's arrangements for the future. Had she been subject to fainting-fits or hysterics, she would have frightened Miss Lyttleton from communicating to her those things which most concerned her.

When Hinda commenced the painful subject of Norman's death, reviewing narrowly every trifling incident bearing upon her belief that it was the work of poison, Mary, with her hands folded patiently upon her lap, and her mild eyes raised to the speaker's face in wrapt earnestness, sat drinking in the harsh sound of her sister's voice. Hinda told of the first awakening of her suspicions upon the occasion of meeting with Lillas, and then proceeded to recal every word which had passed between them upon the evening they had taken up their abode at the Abbey; but still the quiet intentness of Mary's face remained unchanged, and it was only when she heard the construction put upon Lillas's terror by her sister-in-law that an exclamation of horror escaped her.

Hinda paid no heed to this interruption, but went on to relate the similarity she had detected between Lady Welgrave's writing and that of the letter so long and carefully kept, in the hope of it leading to the discovery of her brother's correspondent. She unhesitatingly informed Mary of the accusations she had made

against Lady Welgrave in the Abbey grounds; the information derived from Lady Drury; the conversation she had overheard between Liliás and her nurse; and the many occasions upon which she had remarked the great love my lady bore for Melbourne, which served to increase her convictions of her being the child's mother; together with numberless other circumstances touching upon her belief in Lady Welgrave's connection with Norman. She told even down to the conversation of that morning, without pause or reserve; to all which Mary listened with a rapidly gathering alarm and grief. To think that her husband should have been murdered, and that Liliás, whom she thought so well of, should have proved so very, very wicked, was a great shock to her. But she showed surprisingly little emotion considering the solemnity of the events discussed, only asking, in calm, even accents, at the conclusion of Hinda's recital, what she proposed doing.

"I can scarcely tell at present," Miss Lyttleton replied, gloomily. "The path is so dark before me, I must first think what is best, and then I will tell you."

"Thank you, Hinda; I am obliged for your confidence," returned Mary, and then relapsed into silence.

"But can you not advise me what to do?" questioned Hinda, rather impatiently; "what course do you think it would be best for me to adopt?"

Mary sighed heavily, but hesitated not in giving her reply. "I know," she replied, "you will say that justice to the dead commands me not to remain idle; but yet I feel that I dare not stir in the matter. I cannot be glad, with you, that these things have happened; would to God we had never seen her, and that this fearful truth had never come to our knowledge!"

"But," interposed her sister with angry violence; "not only is it due to Norman's memory that she should be unmasked, but also in honour to her victims, amongst whom her generous husband numbers so conspicuously, it is right this pursuit be carried on. Where, too, would be the value of goodness if she be suffered to escape unpunished?"

"I cannot reason as you do," Mary replied, sadly; "but tremble at the thought of being a participator in the persecution of anyone. Oh, Heaven!" she concluded, tears clustering into her eyes and blinding her for a moment to surrounding objects, "that this trial had been spared me!"

"Do not be a coward!" Hinda ejaculated, contemptuously. "It befits you truly to weep for the just punishment of the woman who robbed you of your husband's affection, and, not content with this, deprived him of life. You should rather exult in having the privilege of avenging his death."

Mary shuddered violently, and turned from Hinda as though with detestation.

"It is impossible for me," she said, "to believe that it is right to entertain feelings of revenge. Norman is past all suffering now, and why continue a pursuit so inhuman? Lady Welgrave may not, after all, be guilty; and, should she be, the poignancy of her remorse will be sufficient punishment for her sin. You must let it rest. Consider the feelings of her friends. Hinda, for their sakes and mine, relinquish your designs of vengeance."

The look of scorn her hearer favoured her with was no encouragement to proceed, but Mary would not be silenced, and in a more authoritative accent than she had ever been known to speak in before, she said—

"As the wife of Norman my opinion is worthy of respect, and I repeat that I dare not sanction you to proceed. I forbid you to act for me in this matter."

Mrs. Lyttleton's tone was so firm, so uncompromising, that Hinda stared with astonishment. For Mary to express herself in so decisive a manner was a new thing; and, for a moment, her auditor felt almost abashed. But only for a moment. Contemptuous and haughty was Hinda's mien as she rejoined—

"Being Norman's sister, I have as good a right to act as you to remain passive; and for you to forbid me is sheer folly. Consider if I am likely to give up the sole object of my life, when, too, it is so near attainment, on account of your false notions of mercy?"

Not much consideration was necessary; Mary could recollect no occasion when Hinda had sacrificed her own feelings and inclinations for any person or thing, except perhaps for her brother, and it was exceedingly difficult to imagine a case in which her compliance could be gained in contradiction to her desires. Mrs. Lyttleton perceived, with infinite regret, that it would be useless to press farther for Hinda's leniency, being convinced that if the proofs of Lilius's guilt were procurable, Miss Lyttleton would find them, and by their means, surely work her destruction. Secretly, Mary prayed that her sister's efforts might be unsuccessful; for she deemed it rather a sacrifice to the memory of the dead, than a tribute of love, to follow up a defenceless woman to destruction, let her be ever so guilty. To her, the words of God, "Vengeance is mine—I will repay," were sufficient to quell the spark of hatred, which had, despite herself, arisen against my lady, when she had been compelled to think of her as a rival. But a short struggle was needed for her to obtain the mastery over the first whispers of this fatal passion, and in her gentle breast remained no feeling towards Lilius but compassion—compassion that the proud Lilius would have scorned, loathed herself, for being the object of.

Following this conversation, two days of harassing indecision slowly passed away, but upon the third, having at last resolved what to do, Hinda wrote to Lord Welgrave, awaiting his answer in a perfect fever of suspense. If she inflicted unspeakable tortures upon Lady Welgrave in the prosecution of her plan of revenge, she brought down almost equal misery upon her own head. Never, since her brother's death, had she known peace, but from the day she met my lady her pain of mind had been aggravated nearly beyond bearing.

The same two days that were spent so wretchedly by Hinda were periods nothing short of martyrdom to Lady Welgrave; she had planned upon her enemy's coming, and awaited but the signal of her approach to complete her hellish designs. The continual thought of the accusation she lay under, and the momentary peril which overhung her happiness, and even her life, caused her to be utterly regardless to all other considerations but the concealment of her secrets. In place of every sentiment of pity or honour, was the unalterable determination to destroy her foe; but Hinda did not come, and her horrible purpose remained unaccomplished.

"Perhaps," was her reflection, "while I am idle here, she is amassing proofs which may work my destruction."

Actuated by this idea, she felt maddened to the commission of almost any deed, however deadly.

The third day came, but brought with it no visitor to the Abbey, at least not the one Lilius so longed, yet dreaded to see, and, perceiving that she must fail in her scheme, by reason of Hinda's absence, she resolved to delay no longer, but go to the house, where she learned Miss Lyttleton and Mary were staying, thinking she should at least discover something of the former's plans, if indeed no opening could be effected by her ingenuity for defeating her opponent's intentions altogether. She went downstairs from her dressing-room, where she had formed this resolution, direct to her husband's study. Her exterior was serene and fair, but within dwelt a chaos of evil; a smile played upon her lips, but murder lurked in her heart.

"I am going, dear," she said, cheerfully, addressing Lord Welgrave, "to see Mrs. and Miss Lyttleton; I shall be back by luncheon; it is only now half-past ten o'clock."

Lord Welgrave had been reading a letter when his wife entered the room, which seemed, from his look, to have given him pain. He put his paper aside at the sound of Lilius's voice, but the care upon his brow was not so easily cast away, and it was with a complete absence of his general careless happiness that he replied to her. His thoughts were still evidently intent upon the contents of the note.

Her ladyship made no observation concerning his moodiness, but removing her eyes from her husband's face to the letter which lay open upon the table, she saw what materially increased her anxiety. Characters similar to those traced upon the paper had been seen by her only once before, but there was no mistaking them to be other than those of Miss Lyttleton. Her breath became short with agitation, and involuntarily she moved nearer the table, her fingers quivering to grasp the note, and her brain on fire with eagerness to know its contents. A moment's thought, however, sufficed to show her the folly of her first impulse, which had been to seize and read it, since such a proceeding was calculated to undo the effects of all her acting.

To see Miss Lyttleton's letter she was determined, but that could only be done by stratagem; so, after a little time, spent apparently in trying to button her glove, but really in thought, she raised her bent head, and suddenly exclaimed—

“How very teasing! Henry, I must really make you serve me instead of my maid. Please fasten this,” holding out to him her tiny gloved hand.

In order to obey his lady's behest, it was necessary for his lordship to rise from his place by the table, and Lilius, standing with her back to it, secured the letter with the disengaged hand, which she secreted in her muff; afterwards she drew her husband, by a gentle effort, to the window, to look at a faint gleam of sunshine that just then broke out amidst the murky clouds. By this little artifice she hoped to withdraw his attention from the letter, and prevent him missing it till after she had left, thus affording her the leisure to peruse it. Her aim succeeded perfectly, for Lord Welgrave, with earnest gaze and far-away thoughts, stood looking through the window many minutes after his wife had left him, and been borne partly on her way to the sisters' present residence. He was thinking, not of the letter, nor yet of Lilius, but of bygone times—the days of his boyhood, thronging memories of which appeared before him, all their freshness and beauty faded away. How well he recollected—aye, as though it had been but a week back—when he had dreamed, as youth will ever dream, despite the philosophy of age and experience, that to love was all he could desire on earth; and now he loved fondly, enthusiastically, but yet he was unhappy—wretchedly unhappy; not because he could not gain the lady of his affections, which, in his youthful days of poetising, had occurred to his imagination as being the awful calamity that might possibly fall to his share; not because tyranny or caprice stood in the way of his idolatry, for he was married to his deity—the idol of his hopes was bound to him in the chains of wedlock, and with her free consent. Why, then, could he never rest? why did an inward

voice ever warn him to mistrust the semblance of happiness that surrounded him? His wife was fair and young, and loved him—at least, loved none better. His wealth was greater, far greater, than he could ever need; his name dated as far back as the conquest; court was paid him by high and low—still he was miserable. Youth, honour, and riches could not yield him delight; a canker lay at his heart, devouring his peace, and even his life: this canker was distrust—distrust of the one he loved dearest—his wife. Her eye might rest upon him with fondness, and her lips breathe loving sounds, but this gave him no joy, for he believed the fount of her endearments to be poisoned—the well-spring of her heart, he thought, was full of deceit; and while he fancied this, could he know rest?

Yet he would ask for no explanation; pride partly withheld him—the pride, unmanly as it is, which steels many a noble and otherwise manly breast to harshness and mystery, when without it oftentimes they might meet with consolation. Then, too, perhaps Lord Welgrave would hardly have been able to say what were the causes of his doubts, had Lilius called for an explanation of them; so, silently he nurtured his grief, increasing and strengthening it every day, if not from actual proof of his wife's falsehood, by constantly brooding over his fancied wrongs.

From thoughts of his once anticipated bliss and present infelicity, his mind reverted to the letter, and returning to the table he found that it was gone. His first impression was that he had put it into his coat-pocket; he felt there, and also looked carefully over the scattered papers lying about, hoping to find it amongst them; failing, however, in this, he remembered that Lilius had been standing near the table where he thought he had laid it, so he came to the conclusion that she had taken it with her. This idea worked most unfavourably for her in his mind, and made him think for a moment the most dreadful things of her; and even when he became conscious of his weakness in laying so much stress upon a matter so unimportant, he could not feel satisfied.

“It must have been a mere accident,” was easy enough to say, but not so easy to think; and, strive as he might to banish the fast-growing suspicions against his wife, they defied him, and, fiend-like, grinned maliciously at his efforts to put them down. Love (still strong in its youth) pleaded strongly for her acquittal; but suspicion, keen-eyed and poison-fanged, bade him beware and give no heed to appearances, but search diligently for the clue to the mystery which, foul or sinless, plainly shrouded my lady's actions.

CHAPTER XLI.

LILIAS AND MARY.

LADY WELGRAVE had no time to read the letter she had abstracted before entering the carriage, but not longer than it took to pass through the entrance-gate into the road did she wait. Then with tremulous eagerness, she smoothed out the crumpled sheet, and made herself mistress of what was written therein. The note was very short, and read as follows:—

“DEAR LORD WELGRAVE.—Will you kindly oblige me with the address of Lady Welgrave’s nurse? I cannot explain my reason at present for this request, which may appear strange to you; but I promise that I will not long keep you in ignorance of it. If you will send the address by the bearer, you will greatly enhance the obligation.

“Yours sincerely,

“HINDA LYTTLETON.”

Lilias sat quietly, when she had finished Hinda’s letter, with it still clasped tightly in her hand; her head was bent forward in profound thought, and her eyes cast pensively upon the satin cushion upon which her dainty feet rested. To her the request of Miss Lytton was no puzzle, neither was it much of a surprise. She had prepared herself for any movement on the part of her persecutor, and this least of all was calculated to excite her wonderment.

“She will gain no information there,” murmured Lilias, “if, indeed, she ever arrives. Let me see what is the date of her letter.” She looked; it bore none; and quickly resuming her reverie, she added, “Most likely she wrote it only this morning. If so, Henry can scarcely have had time to answer it; at any rate, it is almost impossible for her to have set off, and I may yet be in time to prevent this journey. Drive faster!” she called out to the coachman; and the man immediately allowing the spirited horses more rein, they began galloping at a pace quick enough even for Lilias’s impatience, and one which would have terrified any other woman nearly to death.

There was no difficulty in finding the cottage at which Miss Lytton and her sister-in-law had established their dwelling. It stood in the centre of a large flower-garden, and was nearly covered with honeysuckle and sweetbriar, which in summer imparted a pleasing air of rusticity, though now the blackened tendrils clinging to the walls gave anything but beauty to its general appearance. Upon inquiring for Mrs. Lytton, Lilias was shown into a gaudily-furnished apartment upon the ground-floor, which

commanded, by means of a bay window, a view of the greater part of the garden, and a portion of the dingy narrow thoroughfare over which Lady Welgrave had driven.

Lilias had not the smallest desire to see Mrs. Lyttleton. Hinda was the only person in her thoughts, but she deemed it more politic to ask for Mary rather than Miss Lyttleton, lest the circumstances of having wished only to see the latter might tell against her in the event of anything terrible happening. How blind is wickedness in its very cunning; for seldom, if ever, does a murder leave no trace of its doer!

Mary was sitting near the window, with Melbourne upon her knee, whom she had been talking to for the last half-hour, not in the least knowing what she was saying, or what was passing without.

"The Marchioness of Welgrave, ma'am," announced the servant-maid, with a sense of elevation as her tongue dwelt on the title; and Mary removed her vacant gaze from the faded chrysanthemums in the prim flower-beds to the features of her unexpected visitor.

A change passed over the widow's face as she recognised Lilias; solemn and reflective it had been before, but now, for a brief moment, it was flushed with anger as well as surprise. She was but a woman, and the instinctive hate a woman must feel for a real or fancied rival awoke in her heart as she looked up from her sad thoughts, to see before her the bewitching countenance of her ladyship, bearing a smile of expectant triumph. For a second Mary detested her on account of her happy exterior, and being of a nature more truthful than cautious, she might have expressed the bitterness which just then rankled in her heart, but for an accident, which, at the same time it aggravated her sufferings, prevented their utterance.

Melbourne, who loved his foster parent with a fondness unexampled in one so young, had apparently learned to forget the lovely Lilias, his infantile affection for whom had awakened such jealousy in Mrs. Lyttleton's breast. He now never alluded to the friend he had at first so much regretted, and thus his guardian flattered herself that he was wholly oblivious of her. But in this belief she greatly erred; child as he was, his affections were both lasting and ardent.

No sooner did the little fellow catch sight of my lady, than, with a shrill cry of delight, he dragged himself down from Mary's lap, and ran towards her with every symptom of ecstasy. A faint blush tinged Lilias's brow, as, with an impulse too strong for resistance, she snatched up the child and smothered him with kisses, which he as rapidly returned. It would have been difficult to say which was most delighted at meeting; certainly, for a few moments, their mutual joy could know no increase. Lilias had from the first

greatly attached herself to Melbourne, and now that she felt so desolate she appreciated all the more the child's innocent devotion.

"There, there!" her ladyship cried at last, with a glad laugh; "you will strangle me with your embraces, Melbourne; I must put you down."

But she showed no intention of acting upon her threat; and, indeed, he clung so closely to her that it would have required absolute force to disengage herself from his arms; and, straining the sweet child to her heart, she showered fresh kisses upon him. Mary Lyttleton gazed upon this picture earnestly, and a grief which overpowered all other feelings caused her eyes to fill with tears.

"If what Hinda asserts be true," she inwardly exclaimed, "why should I love this babe so much? What can it be to me that he resembles Norman so closely, if he has *her* blood too in his veins?"

As Mary's reflections thus shaped themselves, Lady Welgrave had drawn nearer to her, and extending her hand, with a smile, said gaily—

"This child of yours, my dear Mrs. Lyttleton, is such a monopolist, that I fear I shall not be able to make much use of my visit. How are you? and why do you not come to see me? I had hoped you would return and make a stay of a few weeks. The Abbey must be pleasanter than this dreary out-of-the-way place. Why do you continue here?"

"I like it," was the cold rejoinder. And here then was a pause, in which, as Mary had not taken her proffered hand, Lilius laid it on Melbourne's head, with the remark that it was quite winterly that morning.

"Yes, it is cold," was the laconic rejoinder.

Another pause, yet more uncomfortable than before, which Lady Welgrave was again compelled to break; this time she made an inquiry after Miss Lyttleton.

"Hinda started not half-an-hour ago for Blackheath," Mary replied, looking searchingly at her visitor.

A galvanic shock could not have sent a greater thrill through Lilius than this announcement, for, notwithstanding the schooling she had given herself, when the dread truth came it found her quite unprepared. Hope will not permit us sincerely to expect trouble and calamity, in whatever shape it comes it is always a surprise. Lilius, however, made no sign of alarm, and returning Mary's gaze with a look of ordinary wonder, said carelessly, "It is bad weather for her; but perhaps she is going upon business, and then, of course, she must be superior to petty annoyances."

"She has gone upon business, and of an exceedingly grave nature," was the answer, given in very measured and significant

tones, and the speaker looked out of the window as she concluded, without making any farther attempt at conversation, while her visitor covered the difficulty of silence by talking to the child.

Presently Lady Welgrave observed, half rising from her seat, "I came here with the intention of taking you and your sister back with me. Perhaps this wish is unreasonable; but will you come to-morrow?"

"I cannot, Lady Welgrave, ever enter your house again," Mary answered, with a sad, constrained voice; "much less to-morrow."

Lady Welgrave winced at the frigidity of Mrs. Lyttleton's manner, and had upon her lips to inquire why she had formed this resolve; but a little reflection prohibited her giving way to this impulse, and showed her that the question was not a safe one, so satisfied herself with saying she was very sorry, as she had always taken a great pleasure in her society, or words to that effect; adding, as she once more proffered her hand, "since you will give me no promise, and my time is but wasted in striving to make you take pity upon me, I had better bid you good-bye."

Mary returned her farewell coldly, taking no more notice than she had done previously of the hand my lady held out for her clasp.

Seeing this, Liliás felt moved more than she had thought possible, and exclaimed impetuously, "Will you not shake hands with me?"

Mary's face looked for an instant as if her reply would not be a gentle one, but when she beheld the real feeling which was exhibited in Liliás's countenance, her reserve thawed, and, her suspicions having vanished for the time, she not only gave her hand, but with a sentiment of repentance, kissed Liliás's cheek.

This was not the first time the salute, which should be sacred to love and friendship, had passed between them, but it was the first time either had felt it to be more than a customary mark, not of esteem, but acquaintanceship, and both being of a generous disposition, a revolution, most favourable to the other, took place in their hearts, and made each, for the time being, revoke her previously-formed opinions. Liliás felt she had done Mary an injustice in thinking her devoid of feeling, and, moreover, was sure within her own mind, that whatever might have occasioned her singular distancy of behaviour, she neither knew nor suspected anything calculated to be detrimental to her; and Mrs. Lyttleton, while she thought of the affectionate return her caress had met with, found it difficult to give credit to the tales of evil Hinda had imputed to Lady Welgrave.

A more amiable understanding being thus engendered on both sides, Mary begged Liliás to remain a little longer; at least, while she went to seek for a book she had brought with her from the Abbey; and Lady Welgrave, by no means eager to shorten the

pleasure she experienced at being once more in company with her little favourite, made no objection, but returned to her place by the fire.

Directly Mary had left the room, Liliás lifted Melbourne in her arms, listening to the sweet prattle of his infant tongue with truly maternal delight. The child, who was always very free with her, commenced playing with her chain, and the costly trinkets attached to it, uttering the while eager expressions of admiration. "Would you like to wear it round your neck, Melbourne?" Liliás asked; "if you should, I will give it to you."

For a moment the boy looked as though he did not comprehend her meaning, but when the light of understanding dawned upon him, his fond kiss of gratitude showed plainly his appreciation, both of her kindness and the beauty of the present. Liliás accordingly drew the chain from her own slender neck, and placed it round the child's, saying, as she did so—

"Will you always keep this for my sake, and never cease to love me?"

She spoke very earnestly, apparently forgetful of her listener's tender age; but Melbourne's loving, intelligent eyes, answered her as well as language could have done, and she strained him tenderly to her heart, fondly kissing his broad white forehead and sunny tresses.

"My own darling," she murmured in his ear, "do not part with it, and when you look at it remember your heartbroken——" She could add no more, but hid her face on the child's shoulder, and wept.

"Why do you cry, mamma?" the boy asked, plaintively, while the pearly drops glistened on his dimpled cheeks, in sympathy with the sorrow which was beyond his comprehension; "have I been naughty? Please, don't cry, and I will be so good!"

Liliás raised her tearful face as the child spoke, and a thrill of joy passed over her frame as she heard him call her "mamma." That *she*, steeped in care and sin as she was, should have such a holy name given to her by one so spotless and lovely, had something inexpressibly sweet in it; that baby's love seemed to purify her heart, and incline it to heavenly thoughts. Never more than at that moment had her young soul longed to break the fetters of guilt and concealment, and return to the lost path of rectitude. Never had her deceits looked more hateful to her, and abhorrent in God's sight, than when she heard those pure lips call her "mamma."

"If I could have you always with me," she soliloquised, mournfully, "I might yet be saved from plunging into farther sin; but this is impossible, and it is madness in me to dream of such happiness; the barrier of guilt separates me from all such as you, and I must rest content in loving you at a distance."

The child was gazing at her wonderingly while she thus thought, and reiterated his petition that she would not cry.

"Then I will not, my dear," she answered, gently, "if it grieves you. It is not because you have been naughty that I cry; you are always good. But why," she added, with an effort to stifle a sob, "why do you call me 'mamma?'"

"Because I love you," was the boy's earnest reply, as he nestled closer to her.

"If that is the reason, always call me so," said Lilius—"will you, Melbourne?"

Just then, and before the little fellow had time to answer, Mary came back; and Melbourne, turning to her, held up the chain in joyous glee. "This is mine!" he cried—"the lady gave it to me, and she says I may call her mamma."

Mrs. Lyttleton's face paled slightly, and without bestowing a look at the child, she said to Lilius, "Surely, my lady, you cannot have given the boy anything so valuable as that?"

"I have, indeed," was the reply; "you do not, I hope, object?"

Mary looked as if about to say that she did, but, checking her words, lest they should give pain to her hearer, she murmured something about him losing it.

"I should be sorry for him to do that," said her ladyship; "not on account of its worth, but because I have a fancy that he should have something of mine to remind him of me years hence, when, perhaps—" here her voice faltered, and she paused for a moment to recover herself—"when, perhaps, he may be far away from the friends of his childhood. Will you not promise to take care of it for him, and also, should his young memory fail, to recall this day to his mind?"

Again my lady paused, and as Mary made no answer she continued, thoughtfully: "I have taken such a fancy to the child, and his fondness for me is at present so strong, that I should be greatly grieved for him entirely to forget me."

Her auditor looked at her half compassionately, half wrathfully.

"I will promise to preserve the chain for him," was her answer; "but it is beyond my power to promise that he will continue to love or even to think of you. Human nature is very fickle, and you cannot expect a child to be more constant than man or woman."

"No, constancy is, I suppose, too much to expect in anyone," Lilius replied, her dulcet tones dashed with bitterness; "and I must be satisfied with the common fate, to be unthought of when no longer present to the sight." Then she added, in quite different accents, in speaking to the child: "What will you give me? Have you nothing that I can keep?"

The boy raised his face to Lady Welgrave to kiss her. She

smiled, pressing, however, her lips to his as she said, "But a kiss will not last, Melbourne! Have you nothing else to give me?"

Melbourne's countenance instantly became thoughtful; then, with an exclamation of triumph, he ran out of the room, to return in a moment with a rocking-horse almost too large for him to drag along.

"Here, have this!" he cried eagerly; "have my pretty horse!"

Though little inclined to merriment, a peal of laughter burst from Liliás's lips at the sight, but she instantly repressed her mirth lest she should check his delight.

"No, my dear; I cannot do that. I should not know where to put it. Can you not give me something smaller?"

Away the child scampered again, though looking rather rueful at Liliás's want of appreciation, and quickly returned holding in his outstretched hand a book of coloured prints, which Lady Welgrave accepted without any hesitation, thereby conferring unspeakable gratification upon the infantile donor, who was with difficulty prevented from heaping upon the object of his love the whole treasures of his nursery.

Notwithstanding the impatience Liliás had previously exhibited to shorten her stay, now that Mary's cordiality had returned she manifested not the least desire to depart; but, with Melbourne by her side, continued to talk for more than an hour. Mrs. Lytton's fleeting dislike being overpowered, partly by Liliás's fascinations and partly by her determination to think well of her visitor till it was proved that she was undeserving of regard, she took her part in the friendly dialogue with more than common animation. By mutual consent they excluded all private topics, and confined their observations to matters purely general.

"I have often thought of inquiring," said Mary, after a pause renewing the conversation, "the reason of so modern a building as Welgrave Abbey bearing such an antiquated title. Why was the name of Abbey given to it? Can you tell me?"

"It was built upon the site of an old abbey," returned Liliás, "and thus derives its cognomen; the park-wall to the right enclosed the old abbey grounds; and a portion of the cloisters, Henry informs me, remained as recently as ten or twelve years back, when they were destroyed by fire. He regretted the circumstance very much, as also do I, for nothing affords me greater pleasure than wandering through ancient buildings, and giving myself up to the delights of association and fancy beneath the decayed walls of either castle or convent, monastery or cathedral. It is sweet beyond compare to call up pictures of the long-buried dead, and mingle as it were our aspirations and sorrows with theirs."

"I am so glad you think in this manner," rejoined Mary, a

sympathetic fervour visible in her tones, and an almost childish earnestness depicted in her fair face; "it is more agreeable to me than I can say, to speak with any one who can enter into my love of antiquity. I must confess that I felt quite disappointed with the Abbey, and would have preferred seeing dark low rooms instead of spacious modern apartments, since the latter were far from what I anticipated finding, and the former what I secretly hoped to see. I cannot but acknowledge that gas and French windows are much more convenient than tapers and iron-barred casements; though what one gains in comfort one loses in sentiment; so that I really think the olden and the present times are nearly even, despite the great difference in opinion and talk, on the one hand, of the good old times, and, on the other, of the spread of civilisation. When I wish to travel, I am rejoiced that I live in the nineteenth century; but when, on the contrary, I wish to enjoy a little real romance, my spirit pines after the bygone ages, with their deeds of valour and daring."

LILIAS.—Yes, assuredly railway-carriages are much more convenient to travel by than lumbering stage-coaches, or the still more disagreeable panniers of earlier date; but, then, where in these days are the knights who broke shield and lance in honour of their lady-loves? Alas! only in fiction is courage and constancy like theirs to be found; unflinching excellence and unending affection will be sought after here in vain. And to the same prolific spring must we go for examples of spotless virtue or unmitigated wickedness. Who, except in novels, is wholly without blemish, and who completely bereft of humanising feelings? It is a great error, I think, in authors, to go to such violent extremes.

MARY.—Nevertheless, it is a fault very easy to fall into; human nature, in every clime and age, is much the same, and exhibits no very marked contrasts, save to the eye which has deeply studied the workings of the heart. Thus arises the sameness of character in some works, and more especially is the want of individuality to be discerned in the heroes and heroines, who by reason of being clothed always in the same garb—that of perfection—are rendered perfectly irrecongnisable from one another. Happily, however, an era has commenced, in which the custom of making the hero and heroine immaculate is not so strictly adhered to. I abhor a Roderick Random, and sicken at the unvarying sweetness of the Orlandos and Theodores of the past age; but at the same time I cannot say that I by any means admire the unbending stiffness and obtrusive goodness of some of the heroes who have lately come into fashion. Without being represented as absolutely faultless, who does not delight in the companionship of Dickens's best characters? and is the villany of his bad ones less revolting, because

we can trace in them a spark of dormant good? But perhaps it is unfair to mention the author of "Pickwick" thus particularly, in an age so rich in mighty spirits. What do you think of D'Israeli?

"As an author, of course, you mean," said Liliás, archly. "One frequently hears of shameful ignorance, but I verily believe that in woman the smallest knowledge of politics is considered shameful; so I must not say what I think about him in his most prominent character. His 'Young Duke' is exceedingly smart, and 'Venetio' all but perfect. Do you like ——?" naming a new and favourite work. "It is clever, but somewhat lacking the element of excitement."

MARY.—I don't much care for the so-called sensation novels. If the characters are ably portrayed and sustained, I can readily dispense with intricacy of plot.

LILIAS.—But one wants something removed from every-day experience; however, we must not quarrel about ——, it has, I acknowledge, many excellencies. What book shall I send you from the Abbey? A fresh packet came in this morning with a new work of Thackeray's.

MARY.—Thackeray's! Oh, send me his! That is, when you have read it.

LILIAS.—I venture to prophesy you will not find it equal to "Vanity Fair." It would perhaps be too much to expect, though there are manifold instances of his inimitable style in his recent works. But, forsaking him for a less modern author, have you read "Romance and Reality?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Lytton, "and cried over poor Emily's sad fate. Who could paint deathless, hopeless love like L. E. L.? There was a magic in her pen, that turned all she touched to poetry."

"Not all," dissented Liliás, with a smile, "there is a strong vein of satire in the work, but that only imparts additional life to it. I entirely enter into your enthusiastic admiration for its gifted writer, viewing her in the double character of poet and novelist, and join my poor regrets to the nation's, that death should have removed her while in the summer of life and the zenith of renown. Seldom does so bright a star shed its lustre upon us, and all the more was her loss felt on account of the tragedy woven with it."

The marchioness was silent for a few moments when she had thus spoken, and then introduced a new topic, which led to a long and animated conversation. Suddenly she paused once more, and as though awakened from a dream, exclaimed—

"But I must leave you now, having prolonged my stay farther than I proposed. The time has passed so agreeably, I could not note its progress."

A grateful smile from Mrs. Lyttleton answered her. Her fleeting jealousy and mistrust once overcome, she was delighted with Liliias, and really sorry to part from her, for, notwithstanding the apparent contrast the two presented, there were points of marvellous congeniality between them, and sometimes, as the timid Mary listened to the opinions uttered with such freedom by Liliias, she was surprised to find how perfectly many of them accorded with her own. In short, she experienced, in the society of the fascinating young marchioness, that special pleasure which is excited by hearing expression given to our own sentiments in words which we have not at command; words vigorous and unshackled, conveying, besides the translation of our individual ideas, newer and bolder ones. Once more Lady Welgrave bade Mary farewell, and with many a lingering caress bestowed upon Melbourne, who hung about her in pitiful distress, she left and took her seat in the carriage. Her mind had been so exclusively occupied, that for the time she had been utterly oblivious to the perils and anxieties which surrounded her; and it was only when she found herself alone, that the old feelings of alarm returned to her with full force. As the carriage drove off she looked back, and saw Melbourne's little face pressed against the window-pane, and his great blue eyes strained after her. She waved her handkerchief to him, and a wail of anguish burst from her as she asked herself, when she should behold that beloved face again?

THE CID

THE conquest of Spain by the Moors early had an influence both upon the language and literature of the country, and while the rest of Europe was almost destitute of literature of any kind, Moorish Spain became the most distinguished seat of learning. The vivid and playful imagination of the people who produced the "Arabian Nights" could not but have an effect upon the more solid and chivalrous romance of Spanish writers; and the Spanish language received considerable accessions from the Arabic, though these are not visible in the common tongue of the people; yet it was not till the thirteenth century that Castilian or Spanish poetry became assimilated in spirit and in form with the Arabic. The troubadours of aftertimes, chiefly those of Arragon and Catalonia, were the chief means, however, of raising the language into the position of one having a literature worthy of being preserved; and in the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Castilian became the language of fashion, which still further increased its importance—the Arragonese courtiers who had followed Ferdinand being led to abandon their mother-tongue, and learn that of their adopted country; and since the sixteenth century the Castilian has alone been the language of Spanish literature. Chivalric romance has ever been a favourite kind of literary effort in Spain, and there is scarcely an event or legend of early national importance which has not been versified in some way or other by the writers of that country, to adapt an accredited fact into the form of a song for the guitar being deemed not inconsistent with the dignity of history. One spirit and character is uniformly preserved in them, however,—they always breathe the purest patriotism, strong love for civil liberty, great respect for all that is noble in sentiment and generous in feeling, and are also simple in narration and natural in style and diction.

Having spoken thus briefly in regard to Castilian language and its romance, let us now turn to what has ever been considered the gem—the Great Poem—of Castilian literature, "The Cid." While a certain date or a particular author cannot be given to it, the best authorities agree in assigning the middle of the twelfth century as the birth-time of the epic, being thus about fifty years after the death of the principal personage of the poem. We have said "epic," but certainly it has only a very shadowy claim to this title, for its poetry is anything but of a high order, not even possessing a versification which would enable it to hold a place with the poetry of the Moorish Arabs, or with that of the troubadours. Its author or authors—for we have the opinion that there were more than one engaged in its writing, in contradistinction to others, who

hold that but one hand has been the mainspring of the whole—was, or were careless, grammatically and poetically, and had no scruple in regard to making verses to suit the subject in any number of lines. The versified history of the Cid, however, is not the only account of that hero, for there is another version in prose, and Spanish literature possesses many romances founded upon various episodes of the Cid's eventful career. His name stands in the forefront of the early or rather legendary history of his country—much in the same way as Wallace of Scotland, Tell of Switzerland, and Hofer of Tyrol—and songs and legends of the Cid are innumerable; and so much has the love and respect of the people been gathered to him, that even yet an oath in his name is considered the strongest averment a Spaniard can make. But with all this faith in his name, many writers have doubted his existence; but recent inquiries into authentic Arabic sources have proved sufficiently that there is as much of reality as of romance in the history of the great national hero of Spain.

Cid Campëador, or Roderic Ruy Diaz, was born, it is thought, in the year 1026, and was a scion of one of the proudest of Castilian families. In his after-career the Moors gave him the title of *Es-Said* (lord or prince), which the Spaniards corrupted into *The Cid*; the latter also called him *El Campëador*, the Champion. Of his early years nothing particular can be gathered, his name first appearing, about 1064, in the records of the reign of Ferdinand of Leon. Under Ferdinand's son, Sancho II., he commanded the royal forces, and in the war between Sancho II. and his brother Alphonso VI. of Leon, it was a questionable stratagem of the Cid's that gained the victory of Santada to Sancho. When Sancho II. was assassinated, a younger brother succeeded him, but the all-powerful Cid, who apparently had some doubts of him, required that the new king, Alphonso or Alonzo IV., should take an oath that he was in no way implicated in his brother's murder, and this the Cid insisted Alphonso should do before the nobles of Castile should honour him as their lord and sovereign. In doing this the Cid was actuated no less by love than by the inherent chivalrous spirit of the true Spaniard, for he had been dearly attached to the late king in the bonds of friendship and love. For this compulsory vindication of himself Alphonso never forgave the Cid, and though he had art and cunning enough to conceal his enmity while the hero's services were necessary to him, yet the first opportunity was seized of banishing the Cid from the land he loved and had served so well.

At this point of the Cid's history the poem begins, and the hate of the ungrateful king, and the prowess of the faithful Cid, affords a fine opportunity for the display of patriotic feeling on the part of

the Spanish poet. The Cid having fallen under the displeasure of the king, prepares to leave the country, but not alone, for sixty faithful knights have agreed to follow his fortunes. His wife and children are detained in a convent, not being allowed to accompany him, while all his goods and chattels are confiscated. The people of Burgos crowd around him as he leaves their city, and lament his departure, but the king has forbidden any one to shelter or show him favour; the Cid, however, cannot leave without bidding his wife and children farewell, and he therefore proceeds to the convent, where he parts with his wife Ximena.

“Towards his wife the hero turns, and asks a last embrace;
 She bends to kiss his hand, and down her mournful face
 Her tears fled hurryingly: she knew not what to do.
 He looked upon his girls, and in this sad adieu
 Commended them to God above;
 To God, and to his wife—the woman of his love.
 ‘And now we part—God knows when we shall meet, if ever!’
 How many tears were shed; oh such a scene was never!
 Even like a nail that’s torn from the living flesh they part.
 My Cid with all his host now pricks his steed to start;
 And bows his head, and turns to those he leaves behind.
 Then Alvar Fanez speaks, reproves his wavering mind:
 ‘Is then your valour, Cid, forlorn?
 Was it for this that you of such high race were born?
 Forward!—now forward, Cid! here tarry thou no more,
 For that shall turn to joy which sorrow was before:
 He who gave us souls to feel shall give us counsel sure.’

The Moorish provinces are the destination of the Cid, but the confiscation of all his property by the king has so impoverished him that he cannot find means to carry on the war against them. Resorting to a somewhat questionable *ruse*, he procures sufficient money from a Jew, with whom he leaves in pledge a heavy chest, said to be filled with jewels and plate,—the chest not being allowed to be opened till a stated period, if not redeemed by that time. The funds thus procured enable the Cid to prosecute his campaign against the Moors, and after taking and sacking one of their strongholds, he is able to return and redeem his pledge with the Jew, bringing away with him the still unopened chest, which was only filled with sand. After several other attacks upon the Moors at different places, the Cid has so much wealth gathered, that he sends an embassy to Alphonso, with a present of thirty Moorish horses, as an earnest of his loyalty to the king still, though he was yet a banished man.

The next adventure of the Cid of interest is his encounter with Raymond, Count of Barcelona, who was in league with the Moors. The count is thoroughly beaten, and taken prisoner; refusing all sustenance at being thus overcome, the count resolves to starve himself to death. The Cid, however, prevails upon him to forego this resolution, and restores him and his sons to liberty; the Cid

only retaining, in memory of his victory, the sword of the count. The Castilian hero now proceeds farther south, and successively takes several cities from the Moors, and at last besieges Valencia, the palace of the Moorish kings. The siege lasts six months, when the city yields to the all-powerful champion, who takes up his abode here, and sends for his wife and daughters to join him.

All these victories, however, have not been gained without an effort being made by the Moors for the retrieval of their fading fortunes and glories. The Emperor of Morocco sends over an army of 50,000 men; but again the Cid is victorious, for he utterly routs this vast army, and obtains an immense spoil, of which, again, a portion is sent to the King of Castile. At this part of the history there occurs a passage which was a favourite one with Sir Walter Scott, who used to recite it with great spirit, placing his walking-stick in rest like a lance, and suiting the action to the word. The passage is as follows:—

“ The gates were then thrown open, and forth at once they rushed,
The outposts of the Moorish hosts back to the camp were pushed;
The camp was all in tumult, and there was such a thunder
Of cymbals and of drums, as if earth would cleave in sunder.
There you might see the Moors, arming themselves in haste,
And the two main battles how they were forming fast;
Horsemen and footmen mixed, a countless troupe and vast.
The Moors are moving forward, the battle soon must join,
‘ My men stand here in order, ranged upon a line,
Let not a man move from his rank, before I give the sign.’

Pero Bermuez heard the word, but he could not refrain,
He held the banner in his hand, he gave his horse the rein;
‘ You see yon foremost squadron there, the thickest of the foes,
Noble Cid, God be your aid, for there your banner goes!
Let him that serves and honours it, show the duty that he owes.’
Earnestly the Cid called out, ‘ For Heaven’s sake, be still!’
Bermuez cried, ‘ I cannot hold,’ so eager was his will.
He spurred his horse, and drove him on, amid the Moorish rout:
They strove to win the banner, and compassed him about.
Had not his armour been so true, he had lost either life or limb;
The Cid called out again, ‘ For Heaven’s sake, succour him!’

Their shields before their breasts, forth at once they go,
Their lances in the rest, levelled fair and low;
Their banners and their crests waving in a row,
Their heads all stooping down towards the saddle-bow.
The Cid was in the midst, his shout was heard afar,
‘ I am Rui Diaz, the champion of Bivar;
Strike amongst them, gentlemen, for sweet mercies’ sake!’
There where Bermuez fought amidst the foe they brake
Three hundred bannered knights, it was a gallant show;
Three hundred Moors they killed, a man at every blow;
When they wheeled and turned, as many more lay slain,
You might see them raise their lances, and level them again.
There you might see the breastplates, how they were cleft in twain,
And many a Moorish shield lie scattered on the plain;
The pennons that were white, marked with a crimson stain,
The horses running wild whose riders had been slain.”

Alphonso now becomes desirous of restoring the Spanish

champion to his favour, and arranges that Elvira and Sol, the two daughters of the Cid, shall marry the two sons of the Count of Carrion. At the marriage festivities, a lion kept by the Cid breaks loose, and finds its way to the banquet-hall. Here the two sons-in-law betray the most abject fear, running to hide themselves behind the women, while the Cid takes the animal by the chain, and leads him back to his den; but the company express their contempt of the two sons of the Count of Carrion, being secretly impressed with the idea that the loosening of the lion was a mere device of the Cid to try the courage of his daughters' husbands.

A reinforcement to the Moorish army arrives about this time, and the Cid has again to take the field. In the battle which ensued, the Cid showed his prowess by slaying the Moorish king with his own hand, and gains as a trophy his sword, worth a thousand marks of gold. The Spanish soldiers have in this battle again had a proof of the pusillanimous spirit of the sons of Carrion, for they have been hiding themselves from the brunt of the battle. They now desire to return to Castile, and they are allowed to take their wives with them; but cowardly and mean-spirited, and having only married the daughters of the Cid for their wealth, they conspire to murder them by the way. The treacherous plot is carried out so far in a pleasant orchard near Corpés, where the night had been spent. The attendants having been sent forward with their baggage, the two young men commence by telling their wives that they mean now to be avenged for the Cid's trick in letting loose the lion. Stripping their wives of part of their clothes, they beat them with the reins of their horses, till the ladies fall bleeding and senseless to the ground, where they are left for dead. But a faithful servant, who saw the young men travelling alone, went back, and found Elvira and Sol weltering in blood. Restoring them in some degree, he takes them to a safe retreat, where they remain till their father arrives for them.

The Cid now appeals to Alphonso for a cortes to judge his quarrel, and the king consents, for he feels that he himself has been insulted by the dastardly conduct of the ladies' husbands. These latter are encouraged, however, by the enemies of the Cid, and are promised help. When the cortes assembled, the king opened the proceedings by praising the Cid, and acknowledging how much he was indebted to the Champion of Bivar for all he had done, and also openly expressed his anger at the insult which had been given to the hero of Spain.

After much angry dispute and argument in the assembly of nobles, the king decides that the cause shall be decided by personal combat, and states that he himself will preside at the lists. Three weeks were given for preparation, and at the end of that time all

the disputants meet on the Plains of Carrion, where the barriers have been erected. The three champions of the Cid were Bermuez, Antolinez, and Munio Gustioz; while those of the Carrion party were Feran, Diego, and Assur Gonzalez. The whole arrangements being completed, the heralds are withdrawn, and the combatants find themselves face to face:—

“ Here stood the warriors of the Cid, that noble champion ;
 Opposite on the other side the Lords of Carrion.
 Each thinks now of himself, and of himself alone.
 They sieze their shields—those shields their valiant bosoms cover ;
 They bend their lances down with their pennons flying over ;
 They look upon their steeds and their harness in their pride,
 And their spurs have entered deep their fiery horses' side ;
 And the earth beneath them trembles, trembles at their feet ;
 Each, each must stand alone for his honour to provide ;
 For three 'gainst three in close encounter now they meet.
 Bermuez, the first challenger, first in combat closed ;
 He met Feran Gonzalez, face to face opposed ;
 They rush together with such rage that all men count them dead,
 They strike each other on the shield without all fear or dread.
 Feran Gonzalez with his lance pierced the shield outright,
 It passed Bermuez on the left side—in his flesh it did not bite.
 The spear was snapped in twain—Bermuez sat upright ;
 He neither flinched nor swerved, like a true and steadfast knight.
 A good stroke he received, but a better he has given ;
 He struck the shield upon the boss, in sunder it is riven ;
 Onward into Feran's breast the lance's point is driven,
 Full upon his breastplate—nothing would avail ;
 Two breastplates Fernando wore and a coat of mail ;
 The two are riven in sunder, the third stood him in stead,
 The mail sunk in his breast, the mail and the spear-head ;
 The blood burst from his mouth, that all men thought him dead ;
 The blow has broken his girdle and his saddle-girth,
 It has taken o'er his horse's back, and borne him to the earth.
 The people think him dead, as he lies on the sand.
 Bermuez left his lance, and took his sword in hand ;
 Feran Gonzalez knew the blade which he had worn of old ;
 Before the blow came down, he yielded, and cried ' Hold !'
 Antolinez and Diego encountered man for man ;
 Their spears were shivered with the shock, so eagerly they ran ;
 Antolinez drew forth the blade which Diego once had worn,
 Eagerly he aimed the blow for the vengeance he had sworn—
 Right through Diego's helm the blade its edge had borne ;
 The crest and helm are lopped away, the coif and hair are shorn ;
 He stood astounded with the stroke, trembling and forlorn ;
 He waved his sword above his head, he made a piteous cry,
 ' Oh ! save me, save me from that blade, Almighty Lord on high !'
 Antolinez came fiercely on to reach the fatal stroke ;
 Diego's courser reared upright, and through the barrier broke.
 Antolinez has won the day, although his blow was missed ;
 He has driven Diego from the field, and stands within the list.
 I must tell you of Munio Gustioz—two combats now are done—
 How he fought with Assur Gonzalez you shall hear anon.
 Assur Gonzalez, a fierce and hardy knight,
 He rode at Munio Gustioz with all his force and might ;
 He struck the shield, and pierced it through, but still the point came wide—
 It passed by Munio Gustioz between his arm and side.
 Sternly, like a practised knight, Munio met him there ;
 His lance he levelled steadfastly, and through the shield him bare ;

He bore the point into his breast—a little beside the heart ;
 It took him through the body, but in no mortal part :
 The shaft stood out behind his back a good cloth yard and more,
 The pennon and the point were dripping down with gore.
 Munio still clenched his spear—as he passed he forced it round ;
 He wrenched him from the saddle, and cast him to the ground ;
 His horse sprung forward with the spur, he plucked the spear away ;
 He wheeled, and came again, to pierce him where he lay.
 Then cried Gonzalo Assurez, ‘ For God’s sake, spare my son !’
 The other two have yielded—the field is fought and won.”

The heralds now proclaim that the Cid is victorious ; and he then returned to Valencia, where he remained for several years. ¶The chronicle concludes with the information that the Spanish hero died on the Day of Pentecost, without stating the manner of his death ; but it is believed that he died of grief, in 1099, when he heard that his comrade and friend, Alvar Fanez, had been defeated by the Moors, and that an army sent by the Cid to his assistance had also been vanquished. The Cid’s widow kept possession of Valencia till 1102, when she was obliged to capitulate, and take refuge in Castile. The two daughters, Elvira and Sol, were married both into noble houses, through whom the kings of Spain and other royal families proudly claimed kindred with the Cid.

There are numerous other metrical romances of different events in the life of the Cid—scarcely, in fact, an incident in his career is known but which has formed the subject of a ballad or song of some description. On his return from exile, he enters a church, and this is enough for one ; his marriage with Ximena gives scope for another ; his attire on that occasion serves for a third ; and by these means the story of the Cid has come to take a position midway between history and fable. We conclude with a specimen of one of these ballads, which is entitled :—

THE RETURN OF THE CID.

Now the Cid returning glorious
 From Valencia’s battle-field,
 Bends his way towards St. Mary’s,
 For his mercies thanks to yield.

Hark ! the trumpets loudly sounding,
 Tell that he is on his way ;
 Hark ! above their warlike music
 His charger’s joyful neigh.

Forth the monks and abbots issue
 To receive him at the gate ;
 Lift their voice in loud thanksgiving,
 And the Cid congratulate.

From his horse the Cid alighting,
 Takes into his hands the banner,
 Stands without the sacred portal,
 Vents his feelings in this manner :

“Sad I left thee, holy temple,
Banished by the king's commands;
But another home was given me
By my sword in Moorish lands.

“This the secret of his anger—
That I swore him by his God,
Ere I pledged him my allegiance,
That he shed not Sancho's blood.

“Jealous for my sovereign's honour,
I his interests thought to serve;
But none holds the laws more sacred,
Never from them did I swerve.

“Oh, Castilians, ever jealous!
Has my sword been your defence?
Spread your fame—enlarged your borders:
And was this my recompence?

“Now I bring another kingdom,
Frontiers taken from the Moors;
All my own—to you I give them;
Though you drove me far from yours.

“I could give these lands to others,
But the deed be far from me;
Roderick of Bivar I am,
Castilian—as he ought to be!”

W. T. D.

STRAY LEAVES FROM AN INDIAN NOTE-BOOK

BY AN ARMY MEDICAL OFFICER

No. 1.—THE JOURNEY OUT.—OVERLAND ROUTE.

AT half-past ten o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 12th of April, 1862, the good ship "Ellora," belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, steamed out of Southampton Docks, and bore with it, on the list of passengers for India, the author of these sketches.

It was, perhaps, one of the pattern summer-days of our climate, and with scarcely a ripple on the water, a cloudless sky overhead, and a novel scene before me, I bore the parting with old England, and the natural regret at leaving all behind me, much better than I anticipated.

If any of my readers have thus started anew in the busy world, and have, at the very outset of their voyage, found themselves in the midst of an entirely strange assembly, and have directed their steps towards a country new in its features, fresh in its characters, and foreign in its inhabitants, they can realise my feelings at the moment the words "Let go!" was uttered, and the first revolution of the engine broke the connexion between the vessel and the land of their birth and life-long associations. I would not moralise or dwell on these matters, wishing, as I do, merely to place on record a simple and truthful narration of facts and incidents, and not to embellish them by deductions or inferences that could come with greater force from other pens. I cannot, however, forbear recalling that time and its coincident determinations, and pointing out the peculiar advantage such a situation affords for forming new resolutions, and, perchance, life-long purposes. Perhaps no such period for good or evil ever occurs twice in a man's life, and much of his after character and position depends on the thoughts and resolves he may be then led to adopt. The arrangements and comforts of a P. and O. steamer cannot need any attention being directed to them: they are acknowledged by all who have had occasion to need them, and there is no denying the fact that this company stands second to none in these matters. Of course, on every occasion, in a mixed assembly, some may be found who, from a conceived want of respect to a temporarily assumed importance, can find reasons of complaint, which, if the party had not created them, would never have had existence. Our company was not an exception to the rule; there was the usual allowance of military passengers—the General returning from leave, the Captain voluntarily

seeking foreign service, because of his married condition and consequent responsibilities; the professional man, who suffered from similar inconveniences; or who felt that he could command more attention abroad than his talents would ever procure in a country of advancement and competition; the Lieutenant who had lived "too well," and who had fully exemplified the old maxim, "There's nothing like pace to kill;" and the self-opinionated, unbroken Ensign, joining for the first time the school that will rapidly remove preconceived ideas, and show that position in the social scale should not depend merely on blood and distinguished relations, but on individual merit, talents, and ability. The background was filled in by the customary crowd of civilians on a voyage of speculation or necessity—the ladies rejoining their husbands, or anxiously expecting to meet with one; and the ever-present, always-noisy, mischievous, and troublesome offshoots of matrimonial existence. Did a P. and O. steamer ever go to sea without children on board? Did those children *never* cry at unusually early hours in the morning, nearly all night, or during the dinner-hour in the saloon? Were they always prevented from tearing the leaves out of your favourite book, accidentally left on your own chair; or quarrelling amongst themselves, and playfully endeavouring to destroy each other's eyesight and general facial development? If so, the millennium has certainly arrived, and Dr. Cumming's prophecies are as useless as they are absurd. It had not, however, made its existence known on board the "Ellora."

But enough of generalisations. Following out what I consider to be a valuable rule when travelling, I made acquaintance first with the officers of the ship, then with my fellow "dormitant" and cabin companion. I found that three had been told off to the one cabin—the Indian general, a captain, and myself. Inexperienced as I was then in military personages, I fully pictured to my mind a general as yellow, old, fussy, and highly inconvenient, requiring everything and affording nothing in the way of sociability or attention. Far from pleasant feelings arose at the sight of a huge tin case marked, "Major-General —," which was carefully placed in the very centre of my berth—at least, the one numbered in correspondence with my ticket. Move that case? Not for worlds; for whilst I was looking at it, a sharp cough behind me made me tremble with fear. This was only the steward, however; and eagerly did I seize the opportunity to inquire if my imaginary torment could not be got rid of.

"There are lots of cabins, sir," said he; "the General could have one to himself, and if you would speak to the purser, he'd do it, never fear."

Not a moment was to be lost; away to the purser, with a tale

of some important personage being on board, who was, evidently by mistake, trebled up with me, and the matter was settled. Permission being granted, the tin case was removed from my sight into No. 52, and again I breathed freely. But how to tell the General he had been transferred was a difficulty I had not remembered. It must be done; and so to work at once. My surprise was, however, more excessive than my former fear, when I was told that the General was that fine, white-haired, benevolent-looking man, with a perpetual smile, a cheery word, and a friendly look for everyone. Full of anecdote, easy in his manners, and a thorough gentleman, he had been the centre of attraction since he came on board—very different indeed to my preconceived notions of military superiority and position. Watching an opportunity, I disclosed the plan I had carried out.

“My dear boy,” smilingly he remarked, “I’m very much obliged to you. I should have been a great nuisance to you, and the arrangement is just what I like.”

“I don’t think I ever saw such a nice old man,” thought I; and, as it turned out, I never did, for he was kindness itself, took a fancy to me, and in consequence we became firm friends.

The hospitality and genial spirit that characterised the old Indian officer has latterly found but few representatives, whether from the alteration in the service, or in the officers, I can’t say. The open house and general welcome is not now to be met with; stiffness, formality, and need of introduction have more or less taken their places. But there are still some specimens, rich in value, that mark out the former glory of the East India Company, that carry out the principles that were engrafted into their natures when they joined so many years ago, and, like the old general that went out with me on my first voyage to India, felt it a pleasure to befriend and advise a young man, without that austerity and rigour associated with military life. It is not long before every passenger shakes down, and the first dinner on board (which on this occasion was so far in advance of the generality that every passenger appears, the sea being like a lake) introduces every one to everybody, arranges places, starts friendships, and even forms cliques of more or less importance.

Thus the time sped on, and, with a lovely sunset tingeing the landscape in front with colours that would have alarmed the most ardent pre-Raphaelite, we passed the Isle of Wight, and, gradually losing sight of all that is connected with home and fatherland, recognised our independence on the broad ocean as the shades of evening closed around us, and separated us into groups, distinguished by dim outline amidst the surrounding objects.

Perhaps at no time is the companionship and soothing influence

of a pipe so fully recognised as on board ship, and the smokers have, as it were, an interest in common. Regularly do they assemble in mid-ships for conversation, but more certainly for discussing tobacco in its quality and effects. How pleasantly that hour is passed! how good-tempered each one becomes! What more proof is needed that a luxury so universal and harmless does not require that stringent control, and those anathemas some sections of society delight to bestow upon it?

But, for this gaiety and high spirits there is an antidote. I could not describe it—the entire loss of nervous and muscular power, the feeling of prostration and careless indifference to external things—the thorough selfish consideration of sea-sickness. Those who, like myself, suffer, will fully realise the meaning of the word, and to the reader who never felt the cold perspiration, the inward sinking, the indescribable giddy, nauseating *tedium vitæ*, it is in vain to paint or picture it. This powerful foe conquered many of us, and the noble vessel went on her way, heedless of our ineffectual antagonism, and unmindful of our sufferings.

Cape Finisterre, the Rock of Lisbon, Capes St. Vincent and Trafalgar, associated with so much of interest to an Englishman (that is not sea-sick) were passed with but a cursory glance and an unavoidable envy at their steady and cheerful appearance; and the porpoises that were playing about the bow of the ship, hunting, as it were, in couples the waves that rolled away on each side of us as we parted the salt sea, and hastened on our journey, were looked upon more as taunting nuisances than congratulating fellow-travellers. Travellers by sea resemble the ancient representatives of the eel tribe; they are supposed to get used to disagreeables, and but little sympathy is wasted on them. Perhaps it is better so, after all, for nothing tends to increase the depression felt by sea-sick people so much as an excessive attention. Determination and forced activity will often remove the uncomfortable sensation, and although the cruelty of dragging an unfortunate out of bed, and forcing him on deck, may be very evident, in my case I can vouch for the efficacy of the remedy, and cordially support such treatment in other cases.

Four days after leaving Southampton we came in sight of Gibraltar, and that same evening anchored in the bay, having just arrived in time to avoid a severe gale that arose in the Mediterranean, and was sweeping round the rock into the Bay of Biscay.

The Rock of Gibraltar, with its rising terraces of fortifications, is a striking picture, and as the muzzles of the guns are here and there seen peeping out of the rock, or almost entirely concealed by earthworks, it presents a very formidable face to an enemy. The

highest point of the rock is 1439 feet above the sea, and the barracks are strong casemates, which, although fitted to withstand an attack, are not the best form of habitation for soldiers who are so precious and expensive as our English army has proved to be. The supply of water also is defective; and should there at any time be a siege of this important place, the greatest damage to our troops would undoubtedly be inflicted by an interference with the small aqueduct that exists; the storage of water in the garrison itself being, on my visit, only sufficient for three months.

The gale blew so terrifically that, after a consultation with the senior officers, it was determined to remain until the following morning, and during this brief respite from the tossing and tumbling necessary to a rough sea, we enjoyed ourselves by numerous games and amusements. Single-stick and boxing-gloves afforded the fore-castle an opportunity of becoming a centre of attraction to the younger passengers, and many a plucky tourney was decided. Sailors, although so good-natured, are not by any means deficient of certain antipathies, and I doubt not but that some old grudges were wiped out by a round with the gloves, or a cut or two with the stick, during the few hours of excitement on that evening.

There is a game, specially given for the use of the saloon passengers of the P. and O. Company's steamers, which is, I fancy, a part of the necessary furniture, and would as soon be forgotten as the very anchor at the bows. This game is called "Bull," and is in play and character very much like quoits in a parlour, or more exactly resembling the schoolboy "nicker." It is played by throwing leaden pieces, covered with leather, on to a board placed on the deck, and marked with certain squares of different value. An exact number must be obtained for game, and some of the squares carry a penalty instead of a reward. Loud are the peals of laughter that ring out as some one deposits his leaden projectile on the doomed spot, and has to deduct certain numbers from those he or she has hardly scraped together. I have never seen this game anywhere but on board ship. It may possibly form a part of the stock in trade of Cremer junior, the doll-surgeon in Regent Street; but if so, sufficient prominence has not been given to it, for a more sociable and entertaining trial of skill, with so little expenditure of material, is rarely met.

The next morning found but little of the gale abated, but, with the natural courage and daring of an Englishman, the skipper determined to venture out. Lying alongside of our vessel was a French man-of-war, and the astonishment of the officers and crew, expressed on their countenances, at our rashness in thus braving the elements, was only exceeded by their delight and boisterous mirth at our want of success, when, after two hours' fierce battling with

wind and waves outside the harbour, without advancing a few yards, the noble vessel returned into the sheltered bay, and saved herself and her machinery from serious damage by this judgment and discretion of her commander. "Try, try, try again," is, however, a great principle, and so, in the evening, we started once more, and after some really forcible reminders that we were a mere plaything on the ocean, and only permitted to exist because of our insignificance, we reached Malta on the 22nd of April. The storm had abated on our passage, and the islands of Galeta and Pantalaria, which is the Italian penal settlement, were passed quite closely, and afforded us interesting subjects for observation and after-dinner converse. The small birds that were found fluttering round the vessel told, not only that land was near, but also pointed out that the gale had passed over this locality, and had driven these poor little victims of its violence away from their homes and resting-places. We caught one, more fatigued than the rest, on the awning. It presented all the appearance of a quail, and seemed quite satisfied to remain on board and partake of the crumbs that were thrown to it.

Just at this time I noticed the remarkable blue appearance that is so well known in the sea-water of the Mediterranean. A more magnificent cerulean tint I have rarely witnessed, and the suggestion that this arises from a reflection of the sky is worthy of credence, if the similarity in shade and hue between these two natural objects is of any value. The sky and sea were exactly alike.

Unprepared for the report of a gun in the middle of the night, I confess to being temporarily alarmed as we fired near the island of Malta; and the peculiar hiss of the rocket that was sent up to inform the authorities on shore of our approach and need of a pilot, added to my discomfiture. A few hours after, however, saw me, unmindful of all past adventures, astonishing the waiters at Dunsford's Hotel by an appetite for breakfast that was perfectly surprising. A cheaper meal I could not have had, and a more enjoyable one I have never had.

The first visit whilst on shore was necessarily to the Cathedral of St. John. Service was going on, and the magnificent anthems, chants, and intonations continued whilst our party were permitted to promenade the various chapels and aisles surrounding the principal part of the church. A cursory glance at the tombs underneath excited in my mind a strong desire for a lengthened opportunity of inspection, and the peculiar and exceedingly beautiful pavement of the various knights' insignia, with the stained-glass windows and handsomely-decorated roof, formed a *tout ensemble* that must be seen to be appreciated. Time did not permit any

delay, and a rapid glance having been taken, we traversed the city, nearly blinded by the dust and peculiar glare that the universal white stone gives to every building and solitary pebble, towards the monastery of the St. Franciscan Friars. We were conducted through the catacombs, and beheld the numbers of dried bodies of the former inhabitants resting in their niches—some fallen to pieces, and merely represented by their skulls and larger bones, arranged against the wall, whilst others were in more or less preservation, and the very recent ones looking as if they were yet in being. As the bodies crumble into dust literally, the bones are collected and preserved, and the chink appropriated to another inhabitant. Wooden crosses support the helpless body, and the hands are usually arranged in an attitude of devotion. There is nothing objectionable or repulsive in this curious assembly of the dead, and the entire absence of any effluvia or offensive matter is peculiarly striking.

The monk who acted as our guide seemed altogether unmindful of the solemnity of the scene. He spoke of his own future grave without any hesitation, and seemed to recognise the right he possessed to one of the numerous crevices in those walls with pleasure and pride. One thing, however, struck me. The world and its associations still had some hold over him, for the eagerness with which he seized the proffered gratuity, and eyed its amount, conclusively proved that even to that anchorite some delights still existed which were not religious and self-denying. Such is human nature, and such it was intended to be. The sin does not consist in gratifying what is natural, but in permitting it to assume proportions that are unwarrantable, and that influence other and higher feelings prejudicially.

Further, my visit to these "baked friars" proved how far in advance, sanitarily, these men were to the general European population. More injury than is generally supposed results from our present practice of burying the dead. And with such powerful examples before us, we must, I fancy, sooner or later imitate our Hindoo friends, and Maltese Cenobites, and sink an artificial and unreasonable prejudice, for a healthy, satisfactory, and rational proceeding.

After purchases of curiosities, lace, lava, gloves, &c., we re-embarked, and again steamed on our way. The weather was now transcendently beautiful, and as we neared Alexandria it became warmer and warmer, as if to break gradually to us the excessive heat that we subsequently encountered in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

Tunis was visible the morning after we left Malta, and then land disappeared until our arrival on the coast of Egypt, and the

well-known windmills on the glaring white cliffs proclaimed the site of the ancient city of Alexandria.

The arrangement by which the railway comes down to the head of the harbour, and thus directly transfers both baggage and passengers from the steamer to the train, prevented any visit into the town of Alexandria. A special train, accompanied by an interpreter and one or two officers of the service of the Pasha, rapidly whirled us away from the dirty, overcrowded, and unsanitary place, into the country of swamps and bull-rushes. An incident occurred at our start that was nearly proving ludicrous in the extreme. The purser and surgeon of the ship had come on shore, and thinking that more time would elapse, than did, between our arrival and the start of the train, had quietly seated themselves in our carriage for conversation. Without warning, away sped the train, and as the steamer was expected to sail for Southampton the next morning, but a poor chance was left for the presence of these two officers on board. Amidst a scene of great excitement, and, I must confess, much laughter at their predicament, handkerchiefs were waved, shouts loudly given, and even an umbrella used as a signal. This unusual appearance attracted the attention of the driver after a time, and the train was stopped about seven miles on its journey, much to the satisfaction of the prisoners, but to the disgust of the rest of us, who knew our companions to be right good fellows, and looked upon the affair as a capital joke.

Rapidly passing mud villages, with the characteristic small door, hole in the roof, and barking cur on the top, we came into the more cultivated line of country on the banks of the Nile. Strings of camels, and herds of buffalo, wended their way in all directions. Women, who seemed to do most of the work, stopped on their homeward journey to gaze at such a curious sight as a train, and men and children were roused out of an almost universal lethargy, disturbing myriads of flies that had settled on their faces and heads, and gave a passing glance to what they considered a superhuman invention, endowed with, perchance, satanic power, and not ordinary mechanical and scientific principles.

The arrangements at the various stations on this line of railway are very poor and inconvenient, and the time that is occupied in performing this journey is much too long. Refreshments were supplied half way, at a place called "Kaffer Zyat," by the Pasha; these were very miserable, and almost uneatable. This has now been altered, and each passenger provides himself with whatever he can procure, subject to enormous extortion and gross incivility.

We reached Cairo at midnight, having taken nearly nine hours to perform the journey from Alexandria; and amidst a perfect Babel of voices, crowds of the most unsavory, dirty, and disagreeable

people, pushing, shouting, and yet doing no work, we managed, in a glaring torchlight, to reach a conveyance that was to carry us to Shepherd's Hotel, there to await the arrival of the Marseilles passengers, who were behind time. "Buckshish! Buckshish!" resounded on each side of the caravan (called an omnibus), as we slowly threaded our way out of the station-yard, and the most hideous deformities, dirty and diseased objects, were prominently thrust before our eyes, as an excitement to charity, which in Egypt must be unbounded, if a tithe of the applicants are to be satisfied. The city of Cairo and its belongings have so often been described, under every variety of circumstance, that it would be useless and unprofitable to recapitulate. The usual fight amongst the donkey boys in front of the hotel steps, and jeopardy of your life if you attempt to select an animal for yourself, with the wonderful alacrity with which an English name is at once picked up and appropriated as an inducement to employment, is too well known to need mention, by any who have been in Egypt. "Try Tom Sayers." "Good fight John Heenan, sir." "This donkey for you, sir—Queen Victoria very strong, sir." "All English love this donkey, sir," and so on go the cries, until you are bewildered. Having selected, or imagined you have done so,—for they are like conjurors with a pack of cards—ten chances to one, you have had the very one you didn't want forced on you,—you essay to mount. Woe betide the unwary and inexperienced traveller. The stirrups are attached to a running cord, which is passed through a hole in the saddle, and which, therefore, acts exactly like a pair of scales, weighing one of your legs against the other. The donkey swerves, hesitates, or turns round; naturally you throw some more weight on the other side, and up goes your unfortunate knee into your mouth, whilst the opposite foot runs straight out, and almost certainly overbalances you, and gracefully assists in rolling you completely over on the road-side. The donkey is not unfamiliar with this spectacle, and quietly waits to be remounted, merely to witness a repetition of the ludicrous performance, or to have an exhibition on his own account by tripping up, and quietly reclining on his side, in the centre of a freshly watered, and, consequently, slippery and muddy street.

With great difficulty you get back to the hotel, and, with a customary quarrel about the amount of money you give, or agreed to give, you retire inside, but merely to meet with a worse annoyance in the shape of the flies that, night and day, surround and worry you.

There can be no doubt, I fancy, about the plague of flies being sent to annoy the Egyptians; the matter for speculation is, whether that plague has ever been removed. "Use is second nature," says the proverb, and this is proved to be true by witnessing how indif-

ferent the people about Cairo are to the presence of these fearful nuisances. They seemed to enjoy their food all the more because of the mixture of flies and soup, the tasty bluebottle in the gravy, or the interesting mosquito in the cup of coffee. They sleep more soundly with their face resembling a plum cake, and seem to work with greater spirit if the corners of both eyes are completely black and moving with crowds of their daily and nightly companions. I shall certainly never forget my introduction to the Egyptian fly, more pertinacious, annoying, and insufferably aggravating than any English specimen I have ever seen.

We did the proper thing, and went to see the pyramids, the Mosque of Omar, and Mussulman's Leap. We positively entrusted ourselves to the tender mercies of an Ethiopian shampooer in the Turkish bath, and suffered dislocations of every joint successively, and then, with his knee in the small of our back, and his two hands forcibly twisting our neck round, till the crack given suggested Calcraft and his peculiar talent, we fell back exhausted with English remonstrances wasted on the hot air of the chamber, and succumbed to a feeling of prostration, which, however, was speedily followed by one of self-congratulation that we were whole and uninjured. I have frequently taken Turkish baths, and suffered myself to be shampooed, but never was such a searching trial made of my strength of ligaments and suppleness of joints.

Next day we had to continue our journey, having been joined by the aristocratic portion of our future fellow-passengers. "The Marseilles passengers" and "the Southampton mob" form two distinct sets of characters on each outward-bound P. and O. steamer from Suez, and but seldom get mixed to any extent before the completion of the journey. One couple that were classed in the former division were even entirely different and separate from their own set, and, with a miniature pack of cards, evidently of foreign origin, played cribbage together regularly and perseveringly. I never saw any other amusement entered into by them.

The journey to Suez was not marked by any particular occurrence. Through miles and miles of sand, without a single variation in the scenery, excepting, perhaps, a string of camels, slowly wending their heated and solitary way, or a vulture hovering in the distance, doubtless watching a dying animal with keen appetite and expectant voracity, we reached an *oasis*, where two or three trees, withered and scorched in look, and a solitary white building pointing out a small spring of lukewarm water, has been taken advantage of as a railway station. On again into a vast extent of sand, only relieved by the appearance of a "mirage," which completely deceived even the oldest traveller amongst us, and led him to assure us that we were nearly at our journey's end, "for there's

the sea," we got safely to Suez, covered with dust, hot and weary, thankful for our arrival, and wondering how the old trip by caravan, camel, and boat must have exhausted and inconvenienced our ancestral friends, while a passing thought to the wanderings of the Children of Israel filled my mind with astonishment at the amount of trouble and suffering they must necessarily have endured.

The heat in the Red Sea was to my mind terrific, although I have since found that man can bear much higher temperature without inconvenience. I couldn't sleep, eat, or read. Nothing but a perfectly passive existence could be endured, and the various points of interest—Mounts Sinai and Horeb, which were plainly visible, the lighthouse specially erected on an island at the top of the Red Sea, by the P. and O. Company, and the towns of Mocha and Jeddo, were merely casually glanced at, and listlessly spoken about. Every one at least looked uncomfortable, and the "prickly heat" that tormented one more than the other was the only distinction in the apparent amount of misery each had to endure.

Troubles never come alone, so my especial antipathy—cockroaches—swarmed in the cabins, beds, and every crevice around you below deck. It is not a pleasant thing to go into the kitchen without a light, and feel one or two of the small English "black-beetles" endeavouring to ascend your leg, or introduce themselves into your shoes; but—horror of horror is it!—to have to get into a berth that you have seen promenaded by troupes of enormous insects, and to be forcibly deprived of light by an external authority blowing it out, just as you fancy you discern the "captain" beetle leading his force out for the night. Lie down, and fancies multiply, until tired nature yields at last, and amidst dreams of Brobdignagian *Coleoptera*, snatches of unrefreshing sleep are obtained.

Short, however, is the repose, for an uncommonly strong pull at your hair, or an uneasy feeling about your finger nails, tells you too plainly that one of the midnight visitors has commenced his evening nibbles. Positively, one night I imagined my fellow companion was playing a practical joke, and constantly awakening me by tugging at my hair. Enraged, and out of patience, I rose up, and flinging a slipper into the lower berth on to the head of my unfortunate and maligned friend, who was sound asleep, I discovered the disturber to be an enormous cockroach, measuring nearly *three inches* in length, that hurriedly scuttled off the pillow, and secreted itself in a crevice of the ship's side. Great are the tortures of those who, priding themselves on their personal appearance, with fixature and pomade, present that glossy and attractive head of hair. Cockroaches on board ship are as fond of grease and nice perfumes as any young swell could be on shore. The moral is evident. Oil your hair as little as possible when on board ship in tropical climates.

A few days after this nocturnal adventure, the weather became cooler, and the phosphorescence of the water all through the night was beautiful in the extreme. Shoals of porpoises, and flying fish, disturbed in their peaceful gambols, leaped out of the sea, and bounded about in all directions. It was about midday, or, in nautical language, "eight bells," when the whole ship was startled by the loud and continued ringing of the *fire-bell*. Great was the consternation amongst the passengers, but regular and orderly in the extreme were the movements of the officers and men of the ship. The hose was unrolled and attached to the engine on deck, which would send the water in volumes all around, when required. Each boat was loosened from the davits, and partly lowered, with provisions, water, and a certain crew told off. Signals were prepared, and an armed party paraded for the protection of the stores, and cargo. The *mail* was duly considered, and assigned to its proper boat, whilst the ladies assembled in the saloon, and were comforted by the always obliging surgeon and most attentive purser.

Just, however, as anxiety was reaching its maximum, and alarm began to be visible on the faces of the uninitiated, the captain came below, and informed the company that *should ever* the ship unfortunately take fire, each man and woman knew their place, each officer and man his duty, and as there would be room for all, no disorder could possibly be necessary. Under the present circumstances, the *practice* being so satisfactorily performed, everything could be restored to its original condition, and he should be happy to drink the health of the ship and its inhabitants, congratulating every one that there was no reason for literally carrying out the order, "prepare to leave the ship." Although this very useful manœuvre was for a moment startling, it aroused a perfect feeling of confidence afterwards, and fully proved how well disciplined and taught the crews were in every particular.

We passed the island of Perim, which is garrisoned by a native regiment from Aden. We watched the flag waving from the lighthouse, and returned signals with the solitary European who has to endure that banishment for a month or even more at a time, and in the evening we anchored in the harbour of Aden, and surveyed the wondrous volcanic rocks that formed the background of the picture, whilst the sandy shore and white buildings stood out in ghastly relief against them. Here, too, I witnessed the Arab in his native boat—a hollowed tree. In many instances, naked, with hair dyed, and savage look, he paddles his "catamarang" about, often filled with water, and endeavours to obtain a livelihood by fishing and marauding; and here, too, I saw the most wonderful swimming and diving I have ever witnessed. Groups of urchins of all ages seem to live the whole day long in the water; a natural

element to them, they dive and remain under the surface for many minutes. The quarter-master or boatswain of the vessel received from me two sixpenny pieces, and throwing one over the side of the ship, he challenged a small boy to dive, secure the coin, and come up the other side of the vessel to obtain the remaining reward. Away went the urchin, apparently about ten years of age. Gone out of sight for some three minutes, the boatswain *naïvely* remarked, "If he don't come up ag'in, it won't matter, for I wants a glass of grog." But no such luck for our thirsty friend; the youngster appeared, sixpence in hand, having passed under the steamer, and claimed the reward.

Leaving Aden, we soon lost sight of all land, and quietly steamed our way across to Bombay without any matter occurring of interest. During these few days we started a game which I am not aware is generally known; and as it afforded us great fun, it may be worth while introducing it to a larger extent of public notice.

A bucket is brought and placed on the deck, and two persons, willing to contend in friendly fight, are blindfolded, and each armed with a pocket-handkerchief. To kneel down at opposite sides of the bucket is the next duty of the combatants; and taking a firm hold of the bucket with one hand, the fight commences. It is as follows:—One of the combatants shouts out the name of his adversary, who in return strikes with his handkerchief at the spot from whence he believes the voice proceeded. Great and ludicrous are the mistakes that are made, and laughable exhibitions result. Each blow received counts to the striker, but as it is rarely he delivers his handkerchief in the proper spot, it is a long matter. As the spectators, who, of course, can see the ridiculous figure both present, urge their partisans on, so does the fun wax fast and furious, and the energies of the man only tend to add to his absurd position.

And now, having reached Bombay, on the 9th of May, and formed a more intimate acquaintance with the mosquito and flying fox, with the scorpion and centipede, with the cobra, tiger, bear, and wild boar, I can look back on the voyage and its trifling inconveniences with pleasure, and can confidently say that for enjoyment, comfort, interesting and various sights, and rapidity of locomotion, here are few things that equal an Overland Journey to India.

J. J. P.

THROUGH GLEN-CLUANY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THREE WEEKS IN SKYE," "ACROSS ROSS-SHIRE, &C.

IF Mr. Boswell failed to notice the grandeur of the view which is to be had from the summit of Mam Rattachan, he certainly cannot be charged with the same blindness in his ride through Glenshiel, of which he writes in the following terms:—

"We passed through Glenshiel, with prodigious mountains on each side. We saw where the battle was fought in the year 1719. Dr. Johnson owned he was now in a scene of as wild nature as he could see; but he corrected me sometimes in my inaccurate observations. 'There,' said I, 'is a mountain like a cone.' Johnson: 'No, sir, it would be called so in a book; and when a man comes to look at it, he sees it is not so. It is, indeed, pointed at the top, but one side of it is larger than the other.' Another mountain I called immense. Johnson: 'No, it is no more than a considerable protuberance.'"

As Sir Walter Scott remarks, the *Rambler's* observation about this mountain was extremely hypercritical. The hill is, indeed, not a cone, but is as like a sugar-loaf as may be, and is a very noteworthy object in the landscape. The Doctor's criticism on this occasion certainly inclines one to believe in the truth of a remark made by Lord Pembroke "that Johnson's sayings would not have appeared so extraordinary had it not been for his *bow-wow way*."

Just above the Pass of Glenshiel there are several nice little breaks in the river, the water every now and again tumbling in snow-white foam over its rocky bed. On the hill-side, too, close to the road, which now follows the right bank of the stream, we noticed one or two pretty specimens of *water-sculpture*; the singular phenomenon being presented at one place of the water running down in parallel grooves. On this species of sculpture, the author of "A Painter's Camp in the Highlands" observes:—

"It is really astonishing that the exquisite beauty of water-sculpture should have been so little felt by the most celebrated men. Turner only cared for it occasionally, and never enough to paint it in full and perfect detail. Of all our living landscape painters, there is only one who seems really to enjoy the kind of sculpture which such a stream as the Urchay can accomplish in innumerable years. Mr. Pettitt paints it beautifully."

About a couple of miles beyond the pass, the scene is quite as grand as that which I have already described near the Bridge of Shiel. Indeed, some travellers may prefer the latter, as there are

more mountains to be seen at a glance, and the sense of oppression is not nearly so painful. At this point the traveller seems to have fallen into a perfect ambushade of hills, which now close around him in dreadful array, the cone-shaped one, particularised by Boswell, standing out as prominently as it did in 1773, or has done any time these last six thousand years. One can fancy it to have stood in the eddy of two glacial currents, which ground and grated it down to its present conical shape, long before "the earth brought forth grass, or the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind."

The tourist who makes up his mind to visit Glenshiel will not, I assure him, return disappointed. On the contrary, he will find it a formidable rival to Glencoe, presenting, as it does, an inimitable specimen of close, deep, and oppressive mountain scenery. In this opinion I am borne out by the author of "Two Months in the Highlands," who says that "the guide-books have not rendered justice to Glenshiel."

In the gloomiest part of the defile the twilight began to grow dimmer, and the scene to appear lonely in the extreme. With the many stories of witches and ghosts floating about in our memories, the result of a lengthened stay in the land of legend, each of us felt that, had he been without company, the journey would certainly have been lonesome. So far as I can remember, we had not met or seen a single human being since leaving Shielhouse, save, perhaps, a shaggy head or two looking out from the door of a hut. All on a sudden, my friend turned round, and, in a serious tone, confided to me the horrifying fact that, fifteen years before, he had dreamt, and the dream now recurred to him in vivid force, that when passing through this very glen, with a companion, as he was now, and that, too, "between the gloamin' and the mirk," he *had been set upon and murdered*. For a moment my blood ran cold at the recital, and, with bated breath, I looked anxiously round upon every clump of furze, and listened nervously to every sound, the slightest sigh of the breeze, the splash of water rising and falling with the night-wind, the cry of an animal or a bird far up on the hill, being heard with unusual distinctness, and honoured with a significance which they did not possess. Turning my eyes from the heather to my friend's face, however, I detected a twitch of humour lurking in the corner of his mouth, clear evidence of that love of practical joking which he now and again displays. I kept my own counsel, and exclaimed, "Five minutes more will prove your dream true or false," as I observed two tall figures rise over the ridge of distant road, and descend the hill with hasty steps. Whether he became alarmed or not, I have never yet learnt, but no further words were spoken till the figures drew near, and proved

to be two stalwart highlanders, whose social status we could not exactly guess in the darkness. In reply to my friend's tremulous greeting in Gaelic, that "open, sesame!" to the hearts and homes of the Celt, they stared at us dubiously, and crying out "Oidhche bhriagh," in anything but murdering tones, stalked quietly past. The hearty laugh which burst from me immediately after turned the tables completely.

After this adventure, which, though of imagination only, was none the less amusing, we continued our walk at the same rapid pace; and in virtue of our rapidity, soon overtook a loaded cart, which had left Shielhouse about an hour before us. A drop of usquebaugh (a word which, by the way, is pure Gaelic, being "insge-beatha," the "water of life,") soon made the driver, an elderly, thin-visaged Highlander, quite talkative and obliging, so much so that he made us welcome to stow away our great-coats and couriers in the cart, an offer which, with due consideration for the fragrance of the cargo, which happened to be fresh West-coast herrings, we thankfully accepted. The man had travelled that road, he informed us, for a dozen years, carrying fish between Loch Alsh and Beauly, summer and winter, foul and fair weather alike; and, therefore, was a fit person to testify to the appropriateness of the name of the glen which we have just left, Glenshiel, meaning the *rainy valley*, and Loch Shiel, *the rainy loch*. In winter, the fall of rain is very great.

About eight miles from Shielhouse, and four from Cluany Inn, the watershed is reached, the waters now beginning to run east instead of west, as they do in Glenshiel. At this point, the glen begins to expand, and passes under the name which gives title to this paper. It was about eleven o'clock, and quite dark, before we reached Cluany Inn, or, as it is sometimes called, Rhiabuie Inn. Foot-sore and weary, we knocked at the door, but our hearts sank when the dead silence of a deserted house seemed to mock us, and no cheering light from any of the windows gave promise of refreshment and rest. After some delay, however, and a knocking that might have awakened one, at least, of the seven sleepers, we heard the glad sound of footsteps, crackling the sand beneath them in the inner passage, followed by the withdrawal of a heavy bolt from the door. The landlord himself, in shirt sleeves and sleepy aspect, confronted us, and informed us, though not so cordially as we should have liked, that there was room within. On being shown into the parlour, one of us unfortunately trod on the tail of a coolie, which had been lying snug in the land of dreams. The howl that it set up was pitiful, but the only sympathy it met with was a lusty kick from its lord and master, which, considering that it came from an old and trusted friend, it no doubt considered "the unkindest kick

of all," as it ran yelping into the passage, with the aggrieved member between its legs.

With due regard to the inmates, we ordered nothing for supper that required any preparation. A frugal meal of oat-cake and milk, the latter delicious as ordinary cream, proved a suitable prelude to sleep, which, like that of our first parents in the Garden of Eden,

"Was airy-light, from pure digestion bred."

And the deliciousness of that night's repose it is beyond the power of words to describe. Though the apartment was dingy, uncarpeted, and comfortless, and the beds hard and uneasy, we enjoyed a dead, dreamless sleep, the duration of which seemed to us as short as the garden-meeting seemed to Romeo and Juliet,

"Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be
Ere one can say, 'it lightens.'"

And we had earned this sweet reward deservedly; for we had walked fifty miles in thirty hours, with only five hours' rest between—a feat of pedestrianism, which, however paltry it may appear to members of an Alpine club, was an extraordinary one, for me at least, whose manner of life is sedentary, and who never exceeded fifteen miles a day in a holiday tour before. Next morning I felt as if my limbs had been glued to the mattress, and as if some highland witch had poured "the juice of poppy and mandragora" on my eyelids. My friend, who was up with the lark, tried the effect of moral caution on me first, but all in vain; when proceeding from less to great, he found a sprinkling of cold water efficacious. Though a frequent victim to this harsh mode of arousing, I can recommend it for rapidity and thoroughness. The operator stands a good chance of having a pillow shied at his head for his friendly pains, but good-humour usually succeeds the first brief explosion of wrath.

To our chagrin, the hills were covered with mist, and rain was falling, not heavily, indeed, but in that soft insidious soaking form which is known over the world as a "Scotch mist." With the prospect of a wet day before us, I would gladly have gone back to bed again, but inexorable Time would not permit of such indulgence. Descending to the parlour, we found breakfast waiting,—not so choice a meal by any means as we had had at the Kirkton of Glenelg, there being only some boiled eggs, and a scraggy joint of mutton, rather lean and mouldy, which had evidently been the stock-dish for a succession of previous tourists. Altogether, we were not quite satisfied with our entertainment at this house, there being a prevalent air of discomfort, which was to us cold and cheerless. To be charitable, however, there is, perhaps,

no inducement for culinary enterprise at Cluany. The visits of travellers must, even in the best of the season, be few and far between; and few, if any, will stay beyond a night. It is seldom, also, that different parties of travellers agree as to the amenity of a particular inn. While on a visit, during the past summer, to Roslin Castle and Hawthornden, I fell in with two tourists, who had just been to Skye by the Glenshiel route; and on comparing notes, I found that they had been impressed rather favourably than otherwise with this Cluany inn. On going into detail, however, I learnt that the chief cause of commendation lay in the fact of their having been allowed whiskey at discretion, at an unprecedentedly low charge. Like ourselves, these two pedestrians had arrived late in the evening, when the landlord had set down a bottle of Glenlivet, of which they had partaken pretty freely, and been charged "next to nothing" in the bill.

Knowing that the maxim of a Highland landlord is, "to make hay while the sun shines," we kept up during breakfast a running fire of negotiation with our host for the hire of his "one-horse shay." As the day seemed likely to be wet, and we calculated that we could save twenty-four hours by catching the steamer at Invermorrison, by twelve o'clock, we had, after some deliberation, decided on hiring as the better course. After some pressing, we came to terms at twenty shillings, the distance being twenty-five miles, the driver's fee being left to discretion; and certainly the sum was excellent remuneration for the service rendered, and the sorry accommodation provided for us, seeing that the "machine" that was turned out for our conveyance might have been used at the battle of Glenshiel, for aught we knew, or at least for flight immediately after, being a decayed, rumbling, almost springless vehicle, which tried our tempers sorely before we had done with it.

Just as we were about to start, the rain ceased, and the mist began to clear off the hills, and with it the slight gloom that had settled on our spirits, for it is painful to miss the grandeur and beauty of surrounding objects when one is out for the sole purpose of enjoying both.

Just in front of Cluany Inn there is an opening in the hills which, our landlord informed us, leads into Glen-Affric by a bridle path of between four and five miles in length; so that the pedestrian has here the choice of two routes—nay, of three, for a little beyond the inn there is a high road to Invergarry, or Loch Oich, twenty-two miles distant. This latter road may be preferred by tourists going south by the Caledonian Canal. The scenery in Glen-Cluany is very bare and barren, and decidedly tame, when contrasted with that of Glenshiel; and we did not regret the course we had adopted, accidental as it was. Indeed, the tourist who

wishes to make the most of his time would do well to follow our example, and drive to Torgoil, at any rate, a distance of eight miles and a half. The landscape, however, is not without its own peculiar features of interest. It is wild and desolate in the extreme—a bare, treeless waste, sacred to the red-deer and the roebuck, there being no human abode to be seen for miles. This forest of Cluany, which is one of the last deer-preserves in Scotland, is indeed worthy of the poetic wrath of Duncan Bau MacIntyre, the Glenarchy bard, who, singing of the woeful effect of clearances, says of the Highlands in general, since deer-stalking became the rage—

“ The strath and shieling,
In which were found a warm hospitality,
Contain only crumbling ruins,
Instead of social dwelling-houses.”

Allan MacDougall also, the blind bard of Glengarry, corroborates the evidence of his contemporary Duncan, and cries—

“ A curse has come upon Albin ;
The country has been converted into a desert :
The Gael has no home under the sun.”

The bleakness of the country around Loch Cluany, apart from any such associations, induced in our minds that feeling of sadness which most travellers confess to in traversing the lonely glens of the Highlands, and which is so finely expressed by the author of “ A Painter’s Camp in the Highlands : ” — “ All Highland landscapes are ineffably tender and sad—exquisitely, beautifully sad, but sad always, utterly, hopelessly ; the barren loneliness of the hills ; the wildness of the western coast, league after league of black rock, crowned with grey fragments of ruined towers fronting for ever the fury of the Atlantic ; the miserable treeless isles of the Hebrides ; the lonely lakes, on whose black waters no sail is ever seen ; the wild, stormy, inhospitable climate, rotting the hay year after year, and trampling down the poor man’s tiny field of corn till it looks as if a squadron of cavalry had ridden over it ; the wretchedness of the villages and of the lonely shepherds’ huts, —all sad.” The author of “ Rasselas,” too, remarks with equal truth : — “ An eye accustomed to flowery pastures and waving harvests is astonished and repelled by this wide extent of hopeless sterility. The appearance is that of matter dismissed by Nature from her care and disinherited of her favours.”

This glen, however, is not without strips of cultivated land here and there, chiefly along the banks of the river Cluany, which flows past the inn, and, after a course of five miles, falls into the loch of the same name, in which, by the way, there is abundance of salmon. The term *Cluany*, meaning *green pastures* or *winding*

meadows, is finely descriptive of those low grounds. Cluany, indeed, is a very pretty word every way, being a syncope of *cladh*, a fertile spot, and name, green. The name *Rhiabuié*, again, is from the Gaelic *Reidh-buidhe*, meaning *yellow meadows*. How simple those harsh and repulsive-looking Celtic words become when one is initiated into a few of the mysteries of the Gaelic tongue! To the tourist who meditates spending a few summers in the Scottish Highlands, I should certainly proffer the unpalatable advice, Study Gaelic nomenclature a few weeks before starting, not, indeed, as you would study French before visiting Paris, for the study of Celtic, so as to be able to speak it, would be a serious task; but that you may be able to translate with intelligence the chief topographical names. Max Muller himself admits that to the philologist the acquisition of any language as a vehicle of thought in speaking or writing is burdensome and unnecessary. A knowledge of the chief roots alone is needed. The acquisition of a dozen roots will give a key to the meanings of hundreds of the harshest gutturals, and impart a new pleasure to one's journey; for assuredly if the chemist can look with a different eye on the material world around him, and the astronomer read the universe in a tongue unknown to the mass of his fellow-men, as truly (to compare small things with great) will the traveller who passes through the Highlands with but a smattering of Gaelic derive much more profit and pleasure from his journey than the thousands who are continually complaining of Gaelic as a language "which no fellow on earth can possibly understand." As long as sunshine rests on the hill-tops, or lingers in the valleys, so long will those original Gaelic appellations cling to the chief features of the landscape; and when one has the pass-word to their meaning, it gives life and breath to names which would otherwise seem harsh and forbidding.

Our driver could talk little or no English, and being "a young man from Boleskine," could give us little or no information about the district. It was amusing, however, to listen to his Gaelic exhortations to the pony:

"Ach! now, but you'll much rather prefer the hill to the road, any day."

Like a sensible animal, however, he was more alive to the moral suasion of the whip than to any of the encouraging phrases which were addressed to him. The drive along the side of Loch Cluany was, I must say, rather dreary. The loch is six miles long, and is narrow and winding. There were some pretty vistas here and there; and the sight of the mist trailing up the hill-sides, like the smoke of musketry, was very fine. The country upon the whole is, at this stage of the journey, so bleak that it should, on no

account, be walked over, if the traveller can afford to hire. The tourist who drives "his own pair" may relieve the monotony by a little geologising. A beautiful white porphyritic granite, containing large crystals of felspar, occupies a large tract of country around Loch Cluany and the head of Glen-Morrison. The rills, as we passed along, seemed to be all flowing with milk.

J. L.

LIFE IN A NORTH-GERMAN CHATEAU

BY THE COUNTESS VON LAUENBRÜCK

CHAPTER XV.

MAX and Hugo came home, but Fritz put in no appearance. Captain von Zulau drove them over in his "jagd-wagen," glad, as it seemed to me, of any excuse that brought him to Lauenbrück. There was much theatrical talk, and a good deal of "chaffing," amongst the young men, about the bewitching "Eckstein." "Will Fritz be home to-night?" Hilda had asked, and then Max had said it was uncertain, as he had some business to settle, which might detain him. Fritz and business seemed an impossible combination. Graf Karl looked up once or twice during the theatrical talk; every one knew that "le théâtre" was his hobby; but he offered no observations, in fact seemed too languid to do anything but listen. "She is charming," Hugo said, with considerable emphasis, "thoroughly and completely charming; do you not agree with me?" Then his uncle had faintly nodded, and laughing a ghastly laugh, had said, "She is charming—as all the world knows; but she is not for you, *mon cher*, therefore do not flutter round the luminary which will burn your wings if you go too near!"

That afternoon, sitting with Hilda in her boudoir, my eyes fell upon the picture of a very handsome man, hanging immediately beneath the portrait of her husband.

"Who is that, Hilda?"

"Which?" but her eyes, following the direction of mine, rendered the question superfluous.

"I mean whose portrait is that hanging beneath your husband's?"

"Graf Stralenheim's."

"And who is he?"

"Graf Stralenheim."

"Yes—but what relation is he? an uncle, or a cousin, or what?"

"None of these. He is simply an Austrian officer."

"But surely some relative, or at least a very dear friend."

"He is no relation—as to being a very dear friend, I do not know that he is *even* a friend."

"Then he cannot be very dear. Forgive what appears like

impertinent curiosity, but his handsome face, as well as his close proximity to Fritz in your picture-gallery, must plead my excuse."

"You do not need any."

"I have offended you by jumping to conclusions; forgive me if I have seemed indiscreet."

"Indiscreet? No! Do you not know, Mabel, that there are times when it is the greatest relief to talk? Do you not know how hateful, how mean, how deceitful, an imposed silence can appear?—a silence imposed by circumstances; a reticence which is slow martyrdom! a discretion that is torture! Do you know what it is to be utterly dumb, because you feel the burning thoughts surging to and fro in your brain, because your heart is on fire, and that you know to let the floodgates of speech loose over the scorching thoughts would be to overflow everything around with desolation? Do you know what it is," she continued, springing from her seat, "to lie awake and call yourself a liar? To think with what words of contempt you would pitilessly be stoned, if the world knew you as you are, and not as the fair deceitful sham which you seem to be? To hear malignity in every word of praise, and hidden reproaches in the commendation of those around you? To feel the stings of conscience *hourly, daily*, at all times, and in all places? But no! you do not, you cannot know these things," she said, standing still before me for a moment; "how should you know them? you cannot! you do not!"

"Hilda, I entreat you to be silent! Forgive me; I did not mean to make you speak thus."

"No; but I have spoken, and I *will* speak. Who is that? A very dear friend? Very dear, perhaps, but scarcely a friend. What he *is*, I know not; what he *was*, I will tell you."

"No! pray do not! Remember Fritz."

"Remember Fritz! Do you think I have ever forgotten him?—do you think I ever forget him? No! See where I have hung Graf Stralenheim's picture!—do you need to tell me that I should 'Remember Fritz?' Poor Fritz!" she added, with a pity that was more akin to contempt than it was to love; "poor Fritz! He thinks Stralenheim his best friend. And why have I hung his picture there?" she said—"why? To remind me of what I am—to tell me of my duty; to show me how beautiful, and how dangerously deceitful perfidy may be. He was my standard. I measured perfection with him, and found it wanting in the balance. I compared all that was grand, and noble, and elevated, to him, and he rose above comparison. I loved him—I not only loved him, but I revered in him all that humanity has that is beautiful and good. And—I did not marry him! I have married Fritz instead—poor Fritz!" She was walking up and down the room

as she spoke, the words seeming to come unconsciously, and with a vehemence that was most painful. "And why did I marry Fritz? Why? Because he was the very opposite of all that I had admired and loved;—because, in his simple, uncouth manner, I thought to find the truth which I had failed to find elsewhere; because in his simplicity and earnestness I fancied I discovered all the loyalty and devotion that had been but the vain phantoms of my imagination——"

"But, Hilda, dearest, forgive me; this surely cannot matter now?"

"Not matter!—but it does matter; it will always, always matter. Is it no matter that I cannot make that poor boy happy—that I live in a false world—a world of the past? Is it no matter that my father and mother-in-law love me, and I do not love their son? Even nature seems hard upon me—I am denied the pleasure which other young and happier wives have, in nursing an innocent little being, which seems to bring them back some portion of their own innocence again. And, Mabel, I have made Fritz wretched past redemption. He would not understand these sort of heroics," she said, casting herself into a chair, whilst a harsh laugh broke from her lips. "He would think I was ill—would send for the doctor, and be affectionate, and talk slang! But that was not what I meant to say. What I wanted to tell you was this. I have driven him away from me—I have sent him out of his father's house—out of his own home; and the consequences must be upon my own head: the evil-doing is mine, and the retribution will fall upon me."

"Hilda, this is folly! Fritz is coming home to-night, or to-morrow at latest."

"Ah!—is he? When he comes, I shall not ask him where he has been—I will not hear it. It is my own condemnation. How have I repaid his faith and patience? And yet, were it all to come over again, I would act in the same way. The sin of perjury shall not be added to my burthen. I will not counterfeit what I can never really feel."

"I cannot understand you, Hilda. You tell me Graf Stralenheim was unworthy of your love. I know that Fritz is honest, and brave, and true—and that he loves you; how then can you feel in this way?"

"Mabel, hear me. I thought Graf Stralenheim loved me: but it came to my ears that he had seen my affection, and had boasted of it publicly amongst his fellow officers, after a ball, at which he had asked me for a flower from my bouquet. I gave him the flower, and he said he should call the next day. I went home supremely happy. He loved me. But the next day, and the next passed, and he never came. Then this cowardly

boast came to my ears. It was not many weeks after this that I accepted Fritz. But I told him about Stralenheim—that is, I said there had been some attachment; of course, he never imagined it had been on my side alone; prudence (for he would have called Stralenheim out if I had told him of the boast), and pride also kept me silent. Up to the time of my marriage I met Graf Stralenheim repeatedly; he was, perhaps, piqued at my engagement, for he studiously avoided me. About a week before the day fixed for the wedding, I met him at a large party. He asked me to dance, and then he also asked me why I had avoided him of late—what he had done to incur my displeasure. I said it was for him to seek *me* out—not me him. ‘But what had he done?’ I said, if his conscience acquitted him, I would also do so. Then he in the most plausible way protested his innocence, and spoke of feelings too deep for expression, which I had eternally wounded. And then—I turned upon him; I repeated his own words of vain boasting; I told him I knew all. He denied the charge, with every expression that could give weight to his words—but it was too late.’

“And Fritz?”

“Fritz, thinking I had refused him, spoke of him compassionately as a ‘poor devil,’ and was magnanimous to his discomfited rival.”

“Surely you might have told him the truth.”

“There are some truths which are hard to tell. Do you think Fritz would have been pleased if I had gone to him, wearing the willow, and said, ‘I have been slighted, jilted, lightly spoken of by that other man whom you call ‘a poor devil.’ He has left you what he would not take; I am the rejected one, not he. Would you anywhere find a woman who could do such a thing, Mabel? No! She would be either more or less than a woman.”

“But, in other words——”

“No! there are no other words; either the whole truth—or silence. I have not heroism enough for such truths as that, therefore I have only the alternative of silence.”

What could I say? No words that seemed suitable to the occasion occurred to me; I was too much surprised, too much shocked, to have any consolation ready to offer. Advice would be out of time and place, that was clear. But at length I said involuntarily, “But, Hilda, how Fritz loves you!”

She was quiet now; very quiet. “Yes, *has* loved me,” she answered; “but there is a term to all things; even to *his* patience.” She added in a low tone—“Do not injure him, even in thought, by supposing he could ever do otherwise. I do not injure him. The fault lies at my door, the sin on my head.”

It was useless to speak. After half-an-hour’s silence, Hilda

rose, "I have lost another friend," she said proudly; "you no longer love me; to-morrow you will not like, the day after to-morrow you will even detest me. Meanwhile Graf Stralenheim will be here in a week, and Fritz is detained in X—— by the irresistible attractions of the Eckstein."

"Hilda! dearest Hilda!" I cried; but she was gone, and I heard her turn the key in the lock of her bedroom-door.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Grand Duke was at Lauenbrück, and Graf Stralenheim was also there, and Cuthbert had come. The two Fräuleins von Rehfeldt had departed, but their places had been more than supplied by a very beautiful young girl, who, with her mother, had arrived on the very day of the Rehfeldt's departure. Fräulein von Wolfram was one of the loveliest creatures I have ever beheld; not even her golden hair, forget-me-not eyes, and dazzling complexion; not even her short, round face, small mouth, and *naïve* manner, could have justified the epithet of "doll-faced" and "insipid," which I heard Graf Stralenheim relentlessly apply to her, in criticising her charms to Hilda. Her pretty, engaging, childlike manners, made her appear much younger than she really was; for, though past twenty, she did not look more than sixteen. The bloom of first youth, and the purity of fresh innocence, was upon her, and she seemed like a beautiful spring flower just opening to the sun, kissed by the pearly dews of morning, breathed upon by the gentle vernal zephyrs.

The Grand Duchess, who was in bad health, had left X——, and had gone to winter at Nice; Helmine von Wolfram, Hilda told me, was one of her ladies of honour, but was now *en retraite*, because the Duchess travelled *incognito*, and with a small suite of elderly women, and one or two of the more staid cavaliers of the household. In fact, Helmine had never been on duty; for shortly after her appointment, the Grand Duchess had become ill, and had dispensed with the services of her younger *dames d'honneur*. Thus the Grand Duke had a bachelor establishment at X——; and the *mauvaises langues* of that charming little residence whispered that the absence of the Grand Duchess did not weigh all too heavily on him. However, he had now come to Lauenbrück for the "*chasses*," and all was activity and preparation. He came very simply and unostentatiously, accompanied by his master of the forests, an adjutant, a chasseur, and a valet. A suite of rooms in the left wing of the chateau was put at his disposal; and on the evening of his arrival a large dinner-party took place, to which all the neighbouring landowners and nobility were invited. We all assembled

in the drawing-room about six o'clock; at half-past the Duke entered the room, accompanied by a gentleman of his suite. He conversed with the Countess and Hilda, and then, after a few words with those who were standing near him, he led the way to the dining-hall with Countess Irene. I had plenty of time to observe him. There was nothing specially "grand" or "ducal" in his appearance. He wore a red uniform, had a bald head, ruddy complexion, and flaxen moustache, which he continually twisted when speaking, and which stood out in long tawny flames on each side of his face. His adjutant, Major von P——, was an ill-looking man; tall and dark, with an ominous scowl in his fierce black eyes, and a countenance so disfigured by scars that he was very terrible to look at. When he smiled, which he frequently did (as though, having so forbidding a countenance, it behoved him specially often to do so), I saw that his teeth were sharp and pointed, like those of a wolf, and also that the expression of his eyes did not correspond with that of his mouth.

"What a terrible man!" I had said to Fritz, during dinner.

"He is called the lady-killer."

"You do not mean that people can be found to admire him?"

"Beyond everything. He is a modern Cæsar—comes, sees, and conquers."

"Nonsense! By the way, where is Graf Karl?"

At the mention of his uncle's name Fritz glanced uneasily up and down the table.

"Hush!" he said, hastily—"that is, I beg your pardon, Mabel; but Karl is ill, and the less said about him the better. Now, you think Karl a handsome man," he added, in a low tone, after a pause; "but I assure you he has no chance of success *auprès des dames* where von P—— is."

"Now you are carrying the joke too far!"

"What I know, I know," said Fritz, oracularly; and then, looking across the table to where Hilda sat, radiant in smiles and beauty, "that poor devil of a Stralenheim was madly in love with her," he said, nodding towards his wife; "but she refused him. I am sure I don't know why she accepted me; for he's no end of a swell, and all the girls in B—— were mad about him. Do you know, Mabel," he went on, after a short pause, "I have sometimes thought Hilda has not been pleased at my going to X—— so much of late, and yet I'm no companion for her when I'm at home; I bore her awfully at times."

"Then why do you go to X—— so often?"

"She never asked me to stay at home," he answered, gloomily.

"But what do you go there for?"

"On business."

"Some people make a business of pleasure."

"I don't know what you mean by that," he said; "of course, if she had said she wanted me to stay here, I should have stayed. But as she has never said so, I may as well do a good turn to a poor devil who's even worse off than I am."

Who the "poor devil" was, I did not choose to inquire, nor could I in any way surmise. Fritz called all his acquaintances "poor devils" indiscriminately at times, according to the mood he was in; so that I had got used to hear the stigma of poverty and fiendishness laid upon his friends without paying much attention to it.

Frau von Wolfram, who was a *grande dame* of the old school, ceremonious, handsome, perfectly polished, dignified, and yet amiable withal, sat next to Count Lauenbrück, and from time to time glanced towards the place which her lovely daughter occupied by the side of the Duke's adjutant, smiling, and listening to his conversation with great apparent interest. The nursery tale of "Beauty and the Beast" occurred to me, though I was afraid no such good luck was in store for us as befel the lovely lady in the fairy story. I had no hopes that after dinner the scowling aide-de-camp would be transformed into a beautiful and amiable prince, all gentleness and suavity. I should have said that Frau von Wolfram looked with "uneasiness" at her child, but that uneasiness was not in her *manière d'être*. That she looked at her, however, frequently, but never with a smile, seemed to me sufficiently significant.

When the ladies had left the dinner-table, and the men, including his Royal Highness, had gone to the smoking-room, there to enjoy their *café noir* and a fragrant cigar, then I had time for a cozy chat with Hilda in one of the window-seats. Since the day of her stormy confession, she had been shy and cold towards me; but to-night she was her old self again, all radiance and smiles. "How strange and how agreeable it is, dearest Mabel," she said, "that we have so many charming Englishwomen amongst our acquaintance! I must presently introduce you to that fair lady in black; she is the daughter of your English ambassador, Mr. Strafford, and that tall, rather severe-looking lady in blue is Baroness B——, the daughter of one of your great English bankers. She is charming, and has three lovely daughters, who used to be called 'the three graces of X——.' But they are married now, and all that X—— has to show of beauty is concentrated in the sylph-like person of the lovely Helmine. Baron B—— is famous for his stud. His racing stables are models, and there is some tradition of a ride he once rode for a wager, which reminds one of

Diek Turpin's gallop to York. Fritz can tell you all about it; he looks on Baron B—— like an oracle, and listens with glistening eyes to his sporting and racing anecdotes. Frau von B—— has a model dairy, with ninety-nine cows in her pretty cowsheds, which number is always kept up; and she has also a rose-garden which is like a dream of eastern gorgeousness. Fritz likes going there beyond everything: they are so kind and hospitable."

Thus spoke Hilda, in unconstrained tones of enjoyment and light-heartedness. It was pleasant to hear her speaking of Fritz; she evidently did not avoid the mention of his name. "Who knows! perhaps she is beginning to love him," I thought.

The Duke liked his rubber every evening (he pronounced it "robber,") so whist was the order of the day or night. A few of the younger men went off to billiards. Graf Stralenheim, Fräulin von Wolfram, Hilda, and the scowling *aide* also prepared to play at cards. All young German ladies are, more or less, up to the mysteries of coloured paste-board; indeed, at evening parties, endless round games and interminable rubbers form a chief feature of the entertainment. I was glad to have a little chat with Cuthbert, who seemed weary and in low spirits, and out of his element among all these people who had grown to be so familiar to me. He answered all my questions, but suddenly interrupted me by saying, "Surely the Grand Duke is very like my cousin Karl?" "As like as two yellow beards can make them," I had answered, laughing, and then went on with what I was saying. So Bertie had come back from Central Africa, unskinned by the savages, and with a museum full of curiosities, and a new barbaric language at his fingers' ends. And uncle Halford was very ill—very ill indeed—Cuthbert had said, when I had expressed my disbelief in his existence altogether: so ill that he had sent for Bertie, and told him he wished to make his will, for he knew that he was dying, but that he, Bertie, was not to expect anything in it, as he was a thoughtless fellow, spending his money in folly, and making himself generally ridiculous by associating on intimate terms with African savages. In reply to this, Bertie had said that he was very much obliged for his uncle's candour, and that he had no desire to inherit his money, having sufficient to live upon of his own. Then there had been some contemptuous mention of Cuthbert and his beggarly marriage; but on ascertaining that a little Cuthbert was in existence, uncle Halford had said he might perhaps leave him a trifle, since the child had never ridiculed or contradicted him, as Bertie and Cuthbert had done. This Bertie had politely disclaimed, and then the will had been made; but no one knew anything of its contents, "and I dare say he has left the poor little beggar nothing, after all," Cuthbert had dolefully added, as he concluded his tale.

"But surely you don't care for that? You never expected anything for yourself."

"Never—for myself—but for the boy it would have been an advantage."

"But, Cuthbert, you are young and strong, and you tell me you have more to do than you can well accomplish."

"Yes, that is true; I have been working very hard since you left, darling, and want some rest."

The party broke up early, as the sportsmen were to be off betimes in the morning. They breakfasted in the library; Count Karl was still too ill to be of the party, but an hour or two after they had all left, Cuthbert and I, coming round the sunny side of the stable wall, found the handsome invalid creeping up and down in the warmth. "The Grand Duke!" muttered Cuthbert, hastily, and prepared to salute him.

"*Pas encore, mon cher!*" laughed Karl.

"I beg a thousand pardons, I mistook you for his Serenity," said Cuthbert, with a slight air of embarrassment and annoyance inconceivable to me.

"*Mais du tout; j'en suis très flatté.*"

"How stupid of me! but its that yellow beard, Karl!"

Now, Karl was as beautiful as a god; and, I have no doubt, was fully aware of the fact; and the Grand Duke was not by any means beautiful, neither had he anything godlike in his appearance; so that beyond being mistaken for so grand a personage, there was nothing to flatter Karl in the resemblance: but he was a good-natured fellow, friendly to all men, and chivalrous to all women. Cuthbert called him "cousin Karl" with the greatest simplicity, at the handsome Graf's own request, though not the wildest torturing of pedigree could have produced the remotest claim to cousinship. That Cuthbert was provokingly absent, I, of course, knew, but I felt almost annoyed with him on this occasion for mistaking one person for another, where the only point of resemblance lay in a tawny moustache. However, Karl smiled on his error: why should I frown?

"You were not well enough to dine with us last night," was the next observation.

A slight flush acrossed the pale cheek, and then came the answer:

"No, I am not presentable at present. It would be a breach of the laws of hospitality to produce anything that could unpleasantly affect one's guests, therefore I kept in the background. Besides, Serene Highnesses are not like other men; they have so many unpleasantnesses to bear in private as well as public life, of which no man (except, perhaps, their valet) knows, that we think it our duty to do all we can to put everything that is not agreeable away."

As Count Karl was eminently agreeable, this would have sounded very much like angling for a compliment, but that there was a slightly bitter tone in his voice, which was not altogether new to me. The second day of the "*chasses*" was devoted to badger-hunting. A number of bandy-legged little dogs were called together, and the whole party clambering into their "*jagd-wagen*," set off for the scene of action. On the third evening we were to have some private theatricals, Hilda told me. The pieces had already been played by the same actors at Schloss Hohenstein in the spring; so that a rehearsal or two was all that would be required. The previous evening had partly been devoted to this, and of all the lovely actresses that ever trod the stage, Helmine von Wolfram appeared to me the most enchanting. "She's nothing to the Eckstein," Fritz had remarked, in answer to my commendations. Then Hilda, who happened to pass at the moment, cast a significant look at me, but said nothing. The first piece was to be two acts from "*Faust*." The cast could scarcely have been better,—Helmine, the golden-haired, as Margaret; Count Stralenheim as Faust; Major von P—— as Mephisto. The subordinate parts were filled by Hugo, as the student; Von Zulau, and a married sister of his. The second piece was a charming little French play, called "*La Joie fait Peur*," and in this Hilda had the chief part, and surprised us all by the grace and vivacity with which she played. "I should like ever to see you so," Graf Stralenheim had whispered to her, after the rehearsal. She looked up at him, frankly pleased but her eyes fell again in a second, and scarlet roses sat upon her cheeks and brow. It had been arranged that on the third day the ladies should also see something of the "*chasse*." It was to be a grand "*Treib-jagd*," Fritz told me; and then went on to say that the keepers, and rangers, with a number of boys, would form a semicircular force, and so, in an unbroken chain, pass through the wood, hallooing and striking pieces of metal together, from a distance of fifteen miles; that the sportsmen would then be distributed round an open space or clearing in the wood, and that when the game, roused by the beaters, came flying before the enemy, then shots would be discharged, and as much of the game slaughtered as was possible. We were desired to dress ourselves in dark dresses, and it was especially impressed upon us that we must keep unconditional silence. Hilda, posted behind her husband, stood against a great beech tree. I was nearly opposite to her, under the protection of Captain von Zulau (for Cuthbert had refused to go with us, saying he had letters to write). The Grand Duke had, of course, the place of honour; near him stood his master of the forests; on the other side Count Lauenbrück; the younger men in the background. Pre-

sently a dim sound arose : no one moved hand or foot ; they scarcely seemed to breathe, but a look of intelligence passed between Count Lauenbrück and his chasseur : then every one got their guns into position, and the hallooing became every second more distinct, till suddenly, with a mighty rush, a whole army of game—hares, deer, roes, and foxes—passed over the greensward. There was a popping and smoke, and the whole thing for the present was over. Captain Zulau had shot a splendid fox at my very feet, with the skin of which he afterwards presented me, as a souvenir of our “chasse” together in the Lauenbrück woods. The gleam of a white petticoat, or handkerchief, or stocking, would have startled the game, and sent them flying in another direction, spoiling the whole day’s sport. But Hilda and I agreed we had seen enough of it ; so we got ourselves driven to a log-hut in the forest, where luncheon was to be prepared, whilst the gentlemen went off in another direction, to meet fresh game drawn by other beaters.

The log-hut at which luncheon was prepared contained a rough stone table and wooden benches. Here old Count Christian Ludovic had lived for six months when the cholera first visited Europe. He had been at Hamburg, and hearing terrible rumours of some unknown pestilence, he had fled home, causing this log-hut to be erected in the centre of the Leonoren-Wald ; a faithful servant brought him his daily bread, but had to announce his coming by blowing on a horn. Then he would lay his offerings on the grass bordering the open place in the centre of the wood, and the old mad Graf would parley with him from a distance, through the window, asking who was dead, and who dying, and expressing a fear that bordered on childishness, of the nearer approach of his old retainer. The wood was called Leonoren-Wald, Hilda told me, because the beautiful Leonore von Lauenbrück, in straying through its sylvan glades, had met a young painter, who, wandering, with his knapsack on his back, across the country, had here stopped to take a sketch of some pretty view towards the sea. Her “sweet eyes” made a speedy impression on the young artist, and her “low replies” completed all that those lustrous orbs had begun. And so she had come day by day across his path, like some beautiful vision, until all his artist heart was won, and he yearned to tell her of his worship, but dared not. He knew, as well as she did, the immeasurable distance between them—the traditions of caste. But there came a day when the sun was brighter, and the heavens bluer, and the breeze fresher than on other days—when the Countess Leonore’s replies were lower, and her eyes sweeter than their wont ; and then the young artist soul broke its bonds, and the tale of love was told. Proudly the beautiful Leonore drew back. “You forget,” she said, “all that

separates you from me; you have forgotten yourself strangely; but after to-day we meet no more." "Yes, I had forgotten," he answered, sadly; "it is true, I am only a poor painter, whilst your blood is of pure and ancient descent; yet even a poor man has a heart that feels, and, methinks, Countess Leonore, you might have spurned mine less cruelly. I have forgotten myself, but you will remember me," he said; and then he lifted his hat, and left her. Those words rung in her ear—"I have forgotten myself, but you will remember me." She had never thought him so noble, so dignified, or so graceful, as at that moment when he had made his adieux. But he was gone, and thinking could not bring him back again. So the fair Leonore wandered back to Lauenbrück; and the autumn came, and the winter—the long, dreary, desolate winter—passed; but the landscape-painter remained away. Then, when the buds were tender on the trees, and when April showers fell like tears of joy, then Leonore's cheek grew pale, and she ceased to look up the long avenues, as though expecting some one; she would wander through the rooms, but as summer came on she even ceased to do that, and would pass whole days by the sun-dial grass-plot, whence she could look across the country to the woods. Now, as she one day so sat, just a year after she had spoken those haughty, cruel words to the young painter, he stood again before her. His cheeks were brown with travel, but as he removed the hat from his head, the chesnut curls fell as of yore over his brow, and he bent respectfully. She rose to greet him, stretching forth her hand as though to an equal, but he did not notice the movement. Then she asked him whence he came, and he told her from Italy—from the land of art and song; and she sadly thought how her dreary winter had passed, and then she sighed.

"It seems that you are not so strong as you were, most gracious lady?"

She murmured something about the winter—about the long cold, and the loneliness.

Then ceremoniously saluting her, the young artist took his leave, and as he went gaily down the linden avenue, she heard him whistling an Italian barcarolle, "I have forgotten myself—but you will remember me." The words seemed written in words of fire on her brain. "Ah, that he would so forget himself again," she thought, "or that I could forget him!" But she could not forget him; and she grew whiter and whiter every day; and no one troubled her with questions; but the rough old Graf went aside, and wept bitter, angry tears at what was coming to his lovely child, and then he called his men and went out shooting and hunting. And the autumn came. One beautiful day Leonore saw preparations on a grand scale for the reception of guests; but

she knew they were for her father's old hunting friends, so she asked nothing and went her way to her room. And amongst the guests after dinner none was gayer than the young Graf von Adlershorst. "Have you not a fair daughter, Sir Host?" he asked; "the fame of her beauty has reached my ears, even in distant lands." Then the old man's face grew dark and angry, for he never let his daughter's name be spoken thus. She had ever been a pure and tender maiden, and now she would soon be a pure angel. So he spoke certain words to the wild young nobleman to that effect. Then he of Adlershorst arose, and pushing his chair near to the old man's, spoke long and eagerly in his ear.

That night, as Leonore sat lonely in her room, the heavy door was pushed aside. "I bring you an old friend," cried her father; "Graf Arthur von Adlershorst!" And she looked up and saw the poor landscape-painter, the despised artist, standing before her, in all the wealth of his strength and rank and beauty. All grew dark before her eyes, and confusion, shame, remorse, and love, robbed her of utterance.

"And what did he do? did he throw the glove in her face, like the knight in Schiller's ballad?"

"No! he took her to his breast, and told her that she was faultless; that her one failing was for ever cured. So they married, as the princes and princesses do in the fairy tales, and were happy ever afterwards."

By such relations as these Hilda passed the time until the arrival of the shooting party with a mass of slaughtered game in their bags, that spoke of good sport. Then came an unceremonious luncheon in the log hut; and when that repast was finished we drove to the cliffs of Breeko, in order to see the devastation that should be presently made amongst the foxes. Perched in mid air, with our feet resting on a projecting ledge of rock, Hilda and I sat patiently waiting for what should follow. In truth it was a strange sight. The foxes, driven from the Breeko woods, fled to the beach, along which they sped at a marvellous rate, seeking their holes in the cliffs; but in this they were doomed to disappointment. A pretty sharp popping ensued, and, at the close of the day's sport I heard that the Grand Duke had killed no less than eight to his own gun. Ye red-coated gentlemen of England, hear it, and remain speechless, for words can give no faint expression to your outraged feelings! For my part I thought the whole thing very stupid and very cruel; and when I saw the crimson track left by poor Reynard, as he glided swiftly along, to die, I felt equally sorry for him as though he had been a timid hare, or an inoffensive rabbit. The eyes of a beautiful little roe that fell near me, I shall never forget. I felt sickened and dis-

gusted, and wondered how I should find words to express appropriate gratitude for the exceptional favour that had been done us, in bringing us on this expedition. Boys and men are innately cruel, but the whole extent of that proverbial cruelty never came so home to me as at that moment. Then I saw how every woman must be out of place in such scenes as these; revolting to every feminine instinct and prejudice.

It may be a very fine thing to risk breaking your own neck, and plunging your family into deep affliction, for the sake of killing a poor little fox; it may be very exhilarating to gallop across country in company with dozens of other red-coated men, and masculine women; it may be very exciting to go needlessly down breakneck places, and even to sacrifice occasionally the gallant beast that carries you; it may be charming to talk over the excitements and perils of the day, with a fair being in one of Poole's habits, and a hat beyond criticism. All these things may be very delightful, and, I suppose, are so; but it requires a peculiarly constituted mind to appreciate such delights—a very peculiarly constituted feminine one, I should say. And then, if you meet with some serious accident, or even death, of what consolation can it be to your weeping widow and fatherless children to say he died, doing his duty, in the pursuit—of a fox! Or suppose it is the fox that dies, and the man carries home the brush (only, I believe, brushes are not so carried), the result seems to me ridiculously inadequate to the risk, for it still remains only a fox. Far be it from me to depreciate English "pluck." It seemed to me a very cowardly thing to shoot those German foxes as I saw them shot. But impartial reflection showed me how much more cowardly a thing it is for a whole pack of hounds, and several packs of men and women, to be let loose, hallowing and bellowing as though some savage foe were in view, after a poor little quadruped with a bushy tail; which unhappy little beast they pursue relentlessly to the death, and then plume themselves as though on the achievement of some great victory! My friends in pink will mildly put me down, and having done so, will proceed to say that it is less cowardly to run after a fox on horseback than to shoot him standing on your own legs; because, in putting yourself first outside a quadruped you run a certain risk. But your being killed does not save poor Reynard's life; besides which a fox is a fox, and a man is a man; so that in the one case the sacrifice of life is immeasurably too great, and on the other hand it is childishly too small.

It is very sad to read the daily chronicles of noble human lives sacrificed in the pursuit of great and noble ends for the benefit of mankind and of posterity. No one can think of the arctic regions

without a shudder, remembering what is buried there beneath the snow. Central Africa, and the sources of the Nile, have had their victims; and as long as time is, there will be a noble army of martyrs always ready to go forth on their philanthropic and scientific march. But to me there is no more sad, senseless death than that of a fox-hunter on the field (not of his fame or his glory, nor in the pursuit of science and knowledge, but) in the chase of a little animal of the lowest order of creation, with a pointed nose and a bushy tail.

THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS

CHAPTER I.

EDWARD THORNTON was the only son of Squire Thornton, of Thornton Castle, in the County of Devonshire. At an early age he had been placed under the care of an experienced "army tutor," and the utmost endeavours had been made to instil into his mind the desirability of the military profession, and the advantage of his adopting it as his career in life. But human nature is proverbially perverse, and rebellious against the edicts of parental authority; and the very means which had been adopted with a view to guiding his choice, brought with them their own failure. So much was said to him upon the subject, and so persistently were the peculiar advantages of a soldier's life pressed upon young Thornton, that he conceived the most invincible repugnance to the idea; and long before he had imbibed any taste or predilection in other directions, he had formed a steady resolution to avoid that special calling which had been so eagerly recommended to his choice.

When the Squire first discovered this antipathy of his son, he strove to overcome the objections to his long-conceived plans: but on further examination he found that Edward was, from some cause, too strongly prejudiced in the matter; he therefore, like a wise and sensible man, abandoned his idea, and allowed his son to adopt his own course, and name the profession which he should wish to follow. On this point not the least hesitation was manifested, and young Thornton made his election for the bar.

The plan of action was immediately shifted: and measures were taken to advance his knowledge of the law. In due course of time he went to Eton, then to Cambridge, where he obtained high honours: and he was at the present time engaged in his profession, with every prospect of achieving early reputation and great success.

So far, indeed, did he carry out the expectation that had been formed of him, and with such energy did he throw himself into his work, that his father most truly rejoiced that he had listened to the entreaties of his son, and had allowed him to follow the profession of the law. But he was not destined to witness the realisation of the hopes which he had formed for the representative of his house, for he died from an accident which he received in the hunting field, just as the path of fame seemed opening to Edward.

Shortly after the death of his father, young Thornton became acquainted with the Gayfords: and, from sundry little circum-

stances, the acquaintance ripened into friendship, and the friendship into something closer still. Thomas Gayford was a rich merchant, who, although far beyond the necessity of toiling for his livelihood, still clung to his office in the City. He had two daughters: the eldest, Alice, was fair, gentle, and retiring; the second, Mary, was dark, wayward, and imperious. It was the former of these who subdued the heart of Edward Thornton, and drew closer the ties between the young barrister and the merchant's family. After some time spent in following in the train of her many suitors, during which hope and despair alternately filled his mind, he at length declared the deep love and admiration which he felt, and prayed that she would seal his happiness for life. To his suit Alice Gayford lent a not unwilling ear, and, with the full approbation of her parents, she consented to receive him as her affianced lover.

Matters had stood thus for nearly a year, and every one was looking forward to the time when Edward and Alice should be united in marriage, when events occurred which clouded the horizon, and made a terrible breach between the lovers.

It was a bright afternoon in the month of May. Edward Thornton was seated alone in his chambers in the Temple. He was not at work—he was not reading; but he sat in a chair before the empty grate, puffing vigorously at a cigar, now and then casting anxious glances at the door, while the thoughts which seemed so thoroughly to occupy his mind could not have been of any pleasant nature, from the pained expression that rested on his countenance.

As the clock struck three he rose from his seat, and paced uneasily up and down the room. After some apparent hesitation, he was about to leave the apartment, when he heard a knock at the door, and a fellow-student entered.

"Ah! Felton," exclaimed Thornton, "I began to think you were not coming; I was just going after you."

"My dear fellow, you are rather hard upon me; it is only a few minutes after the time."

"Yes, but I was becoming impatient. I have received the letter which I expected."

"And what news does it bring?"

"There, too, my expectations are fulfilled. My hopes are dashed to the ground: my worst fears are realised. Felton, I am in a most difficult position. And I cannot quite see how I shall carry this affair to a satisfactory termination. May I count on you?"

"That you may, indeed, to any extent. First, though, let me ask you if you have no scruples as to the matter in which you are engaged?"

"It is too late, Felton, to discuss it on abstract principles.

Things have gone too far for that. It is too late to examine the philosophy of the question. I am now committed. I cannot draw back; nothing on earth can now induce me to do so. Moreover, I am content to go on."

"Content!" exclaimed the other; "surely that is not the frame of mind in which to enter upon so important a course of action. There should be some higher feeling."

Edward Thornton stamped his foot impatiently on the ground, and puffed with an additional degree of vigour at his cigar.

"It has come to this, Felton; the only consideration which can weigh with me now is that girl's happiness. Whatever sacrifices must be made, whatever risks incurred, I am ready for them."

"Edward, have you well weighed everything? Have you thought that you may compromise yourself with Alice Gayford?"

Thornton turned deadly pale, but answered in a calm and resolute tone—

"I have considered that also. Alice Gayford would not judge me harshly. But let us lay aside this philosophical view of the case, and look only at facts."

"As you will."

"To-night is evidently the most favourable opportunity for us, but there is nevertheless an obstacle to surmount. I have promised to go to the opera with the Gayfords: and I know that they will be offended if I send an excuse. I fancy Mr. Gayford has been growing suspicious of late that there is something going on which I shrink from mentioning before them; and should I be absent to-night it will naturally strengthen his suspicion."

Edward Thornton remained silent for some minutes. It seemed as if he were sorely perplexed in mind. His dark eyes were bent sternly, almost fiercely, on the ground. He flung away the end of his cigar. His arms were folded across his chest; and the sharp contraction of the mouth betokened but too plainly the energy of the man, and the difficulties of forming a decision on the question before him.

Suddenly his features relaxed for a moment, and a smile—though a somewhat bitter one—settled on his lips. He fixed his eyes on Felton, and said quickly—

"I will chance everything. I will write to the Gayfords, excusing myself for this evening; I will also write to the other place; my decision is made. And, Felton, if you do not object, I will get you to go down to the opera-house, and explain to them that it was absolutely necessary that I should attend to this business. You will smooth the thing over for me as much as you can."

"With the greatest pleasure," answered Felton. A sinister

smile crossed his face as he spoke, but his companion failed to notice it.

The time which must necessarily elapse before Edward Thornton could commence any action in the affair hung heavily upon his hands. At length, however, the hours, which seemed to drag so wearily along, passed away. He wrote his letters, and having with some difficulty procured a messenger, despatched them to their destination. In the course of the evening Henry Felton returned from his visit to the opera-house. There was a flush of excitement on his face, as he re-entered the chambers in the Temple.

"I have seen them," he said, in an excited tone. "Mr. Gayford was there. I explained everything satisfactorily to them."

"And did they seem offended?"

"No! Alice appeared a little disappointed, but I told her she would find a letter from you at the house in Claremont-terrace, and her face soon brightened up again."

The cloud immediately cleared from Edward's brow, when he received this favourable report from his friend.

"God bless her!" he murmured; and then he said in a louder tone. "You have done a great deal for me, Henry Felton; I shall never forget it. Upon my word, your assistance through the whole business has been of the utmost service to me. I don't know how I should have got on without you."

"Hold, Edward," said the other; "you know I would do anything for the sake of Alice alone."

"Yes! but you would have helped me the same in default of that motive. I know you would."

"I would."

Thornton grasped his hand warmly, as if at a loss for words to give adequate expression to his feelings; and as their eyes met, a strange and inexplicable smile lighted up the flushed face of Henry Felton.

* * * * *

Half-an-hour later two men were pacing with quick steps up and down the avenue leading to Walnut-tree-walk, at Brompton. From time to time they paused as if they heard a footfall in the distance; but again continued their fitful promenade on the discovery of their mistake. Anxiety and agitation were visibly depicted on their countenances, as they impatiently awaited the arrival of the person whom they expected. When their patience seemed well-nigh exhausted a faint step was heard in the distance. They both stopped; and, from the eager look of expectation on the faces of the two watchers, might be inferred the importance of the mission upon which they sought their lonely rendezvous. At this instant the moon shone out from behind a cloud which had hitherto

obscured it, and the figure of a female was plainly discernible in the distance.

The taller of the two men, who was closely muffled in a long cloak, and whose cap was pulled tightly over his eyes, eagerly advanced.

“Have you met with much difficulty?” he asked.

The girl, who was likewise closely muffled, and in a great measure disguised, answered in words that were meant to re-assure her questioner; but the words themselves were barely distinguishable, and their tone was all that conveyed their meaning. They proceeded quickly up the avenue; at the end of which they found a carriage with post-horses awaiting them. The girl, looking gently up into the face of her companion, whispered—

“I feel as if my strength were almost deserting me; as if I should falter, even at the last moment.”

“No! let me entreat you to bear up a little longer; try—for my sake. We shall soon be safe—beyond all chance of pursuit. Trust in me; I will never fail you.”

She pressed his arm in token of gratitude, and answered, “I will trust,” and then she added with a sigh, “What will they say, what will they think of me at home?”

“Hush!” answered her companion; “there are some feelings of the heart which it is impossible to crush. There are some emotions which no sternness on the part of a parent can ever still. There are some occasions when every other consideration must be laid aside, and the love of two kindred hearts ensured at all risks and hazards—in defiance of the ideas and prejudices of those who cannot appreciate the sanctity of a youthful and generous love.”

As they were in the act of entering the carriage, the friend of the dark, tall man touched him on the shoulder.

“Keep your face well muffled; good-bye, my boy!” They then leaped in, drew down the blinds, and the horses dashed rapidly off.

“The die is cast,” he whispered to the girl by his side, who was trembling with agitation.

The one who was left behind walked away with a quick and lively step.

CHAPTER II.

“It is very strange,” said Mrs. Gayford, as she was seated in a box at the opera with her husband and eldest daughter; “very strange that Mary should have taken this whim into her head I do not understand it.” And she looked at her husband, as if expecting him to throw some light upon the matter.

THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTERS

He, however, seemed unable to give any explanation of his daughter's conduct; in fact, he was somewhat indignant at the contempt which she had displayed for his authority.

"I cannot account at all for Mary's caprice," he answered; "I must say her conduct very much distressed me. I do not like to see young people setting up their own opinion and will in obstinate opposition to the advice of those whom they ought too gladly to obey. Moreover, Mary has been looking forward to coming with us this evening; and has talked so much about it, which makes the affair still more inexplicable."

"It seems as if we were destined to meet with unaccountable disappointments. Edward Thornton has not come. It is a rare—very rare thing for him to be late; but I have never yet known him to break an appointment, without a single word of explanation. Something very urgent must have caused his absence."

"Yes!" broke in Alice, promptly. "I will answer for Edward; I am sure he would not have disappointed us if he could possibly have avoided it. I daresay we shall see him in the course of the evening."

"Perhaps," said her mother, half smiling, probably wishing to give a more cheerful turn to the conversation, "Mary knew he was not coming, and so did not care to come with us. You know, she is very fond of Edward."

Alice likewise smiled, as she answered in the negative; but her face flushed, and it was evident that she felt more uneasiness concerning the absence of her lover than she would have liked to confess.

"We must make every allowance for Mary," she said; "she has of late been much troubled in mind. I am sure she is fretting about some secret grievance. With respect to Edward, I have heard him say lately that he has had a great deal of business to attend to."

"What is the nature of it?" asked Mrs. Gayford, not noticing her excitement.

"It is in some way connected with Mr. Felton, but I know nothing further."

"Felton!" said Mr. Gayford, suddenly; "is not that he in the opposite box?"

All looked immediately in the direction indicated. A man, somewhat above the middle stature, with fair hair, handsome features, and a slight moustache, was standing nearly opposite to them. He did not at first betray the least sign of recognition, but, finding that the Gayfords persistently kept their eyes fixed upon him, he affected suddenly to become aware of their notice, and soon after joined them in their box.

When the ordinary salutations had been exchanged, Mr. Gayford turned somewhat abruptly to him, and said :

“ We expected Edward Thornton. Have you seen anything of him to-day ! ”

“ I saw him this afternoon. ”

“ He is not here with you ? ”

“ Oh ! no. ”

“ Do you know where he is ? ”

He paused for some minutes before replying, as if wishing to avoid the question ; he then fixed his eyes furtively on Alice Gayford, and said :

“ I almost fancied he would be here to-night, though he did not seem very decided about coming. I think there was some other appointment which he wished to keep, though I don't exactly know the nature of it. ”

There was something in his manner and in his tones which made an unpleasant impression upon his hearers, and sent a cold chill to the heart of Alice. She exchanged significant glances with her mother, though she said nothing by which her agitation might be betrayed.

“ I am sure, ” said Felton, “ I should not have thrown away a chance of spending so pleasant an evening. ”

Alice shivered as she listened, and saw his eyes fixed upon her, but she made no further sign.

“ It is strange, ” muttered Mr. Gayford ; “ I hope nothing has gone wrong. I do not quite like this. What can it mean ? ”

Shortly afterwards Henry Felton bade them good night, and left them. Nothing was said concerning the affair during their return home, but Alice Gayford seemed despondent and troubled, as if the inexplicable absence of her lover had caused her deep uneasiness. What the nature of her anxiety was she scarcely could have explained ; but, whether a presentiment of coming misfortune harassed her, or the disappointment which she had experienced depressed her spirits, she already indulged in heavy forebodings and gloomy anticipations, on that which, to an unprejudiced observer, would have appeared a trivial occurrence. Henry Felton, too, who was one of her rejected suitors, seemed rather to exult in the failure of Edward Thornton to escort her to the opera ; and that circumstance rendered her more liable to take a dark view of things.

On their arrival at Claremont Terrace, at Brompton, they found a letter awaiting Alice. Recognising Edward's handwriting, she eagerly snatched it up, and opened it. It contained the following :—

“ I shall not go to the opera to-night ; I shall make an excuse to get off

the engagement. I will be with you at ten o'clock : do not fail to be in readiness. For Heaven's sake, let us put an end to this fearful state of things.

"Yours ever,

"EDWARD THORNTON."

As Alice read these words, her face became ashy pale ; and, but for the support of her father, she would have fallen heavily to the ground. Her fear and mortification were intense. She saw at once that she had got a letter which was intended for some one else. And the contents of this letter told her that her lover—he, to whom she had surrendered her heart in true and fervent affection—had slightly spoken of getting off the engagement. She bit her lips almost till the blood came ; and wildly handed the letter to Mr. Gayford.

The effect upon him, too, was sharp and decisive. He at once placed the same interpretation on the matter ; and a curse almost rose to his lips, as he thought on the outrage that had been put upon his daughter. She meanwhile hung upon his arm, moaning and wailing bitterly. Her spirit utterly broke down before this fearful blow ; and with deep anguish in her tones, she cried—

"My father ! my father ! what does it mean ? Can it be—can it be, that Edward treats me thus ?"

"Hush ! my darling," he answered ; "pray, try to calm yourself, or you will make yourself thoroughly ill."

And then she burst into a flood of tears, as she thought on the bitterness of her position. For whom was this letter meant, for whom was she cast aside, for whom had he so interested himself, and resolved to "end this state of things ?" For whom ? It was a hard question which she put to herself. She could not answer it. There seemed but one answer possible : and that answer, in spite of her grief and anger, she indignantly spurned aside. She could not believe Edward false—on so slight a ground too. There must be some mistake ; doubtless he would come himself and explain it all. Both her father and mother thought it prudent to say as little as possible on the subject. It was impossible for them to pronounce an opinion before further investigation ; though they had a strong suspicion that something very wrong had happened.

Alice quietly retired to her room : she preferred to brood in solitude over the events of the evening ; and her mother thought that under the circumstances it would be better that she should go to bed. But she had scarcely been out of the room five minutes when she returned, with a wild and flurried look upon her face.

"Mamma!" she cried, sobbing as she spoke: "where—where is Mary?"

"Mary!" repeated Mrs. Gayford, in surprise; "I suppose she is in bed, my dear."

"No! she is not in bed—she is not in her room. I cannot find her anywhere. I thought she must have come down to you."

"I have not seen her since we came in."

"Then," said Alice, quickly, "she is not in the house; she cannot be."

"Nonsense, my dear!" said Mrs. Gayford, who thought that her daughter was so excited by the letter she had received, as scarcely to know what she said; "she must be in bed."

"Mamma, she is not indeed; come and see for yourself."

The three left the room together, and went upstairs to Mary's bedroom. But Alice had been perfectly correct in her statement; her sister was not there, nor indeed, could she be found anywhere. Mrs. Gayford now began to grow as alarmed and excited as her daughter, Mr. Gayford alone preserving even the outward appearance of calmness. Without giving utterance to his thoughts, he requested his wife to remain quiet, and then rang the bell. He immediately questioned the servant as to whether his youngest daughter had gone out while they were at the opera, putting the question in a commonplace sort of way, as if it were a matter of very trifling importance. By this means he prevented the servant from becoming too flurried to answer, and he at once elicited from her the fact that Mary Gayford had left the house at about half-past nine, without saying a word to any one as to her intention. Having gained this information, he turned to his daughter, and endeavoured to persuade her to retire to rest.

"No, I cannot—I could not rest; I could not sleep," she answered, petulantly. "It will be useless to attempt it." Then, after a short pause, she said, in a strange tone of voice, "Mamma, where is Mary, and where is Edward? Where have they gone? Why have they left me here alone? It is very unkind of them. But they will be back to-morrow—say they will?"

And then she burst into a fit of violent hysterics, laughing and crying almost in one breath, and uttering the most heartrending and piercing screams, to be followed only by a harsh and unnatural peal of laughter. The same idea had flashed across her mind which had already occurred to both her parents. There must be some connection between her sister's disappearance and her lover's absence and extraordinary letter. Without analysing the question, she had at once yielded to the shock caused by the bare contemplation of so painful a circumstance; and, from the exhaustion conse-

quent upon her excited state, she at length fell into a deep and heavy slumber.

Mr. and Mrs. Gayford sat with her for some time, fearful lest she should awake suddenly, and relapse into her former hysterical state. But Alice slept through the weary hours of watching passed by the anxious father and mother; and for a time lost the consciousness of the heavy trouble which had fallen upon her. They meanwhile kept their painful vigil through the night, hoping almost against hope for the return of their daughter, who had so mysteriously disappeared, and dreading lest Alice should awake only to find them still waiting in vain.

But the darkness cleared gradually away; the small hours of the morning came; the sun struggled with its radiance through the mist, and lighted up the sky; but Mary Gayford did not return.

CHAPTER III.

THE events that had taken place on this night in the merry month of May had been so unexpected, so distressing, so utterly overwhelming, that the grief and sorrow consequent upon them defied any artificial attempt at consolation. At first there had been much disappointment, and even uneasiness, at the non-appearance of Edward Thornton; and Alice, especially, had been inclined to make more of it than seemed to be warranted by the circumstances of the case. She had felt vexed and annoyed that her lover should have absented himself on the very evening on which she had anticipated so much pleasure.

But now this feeling was entirely lost sight of; it had dwindled into utter insignificance compared with the alarming discovery which had been made. How indeed could the mere absence of Thornton have been much considered, if he had not been in some way connected with this disappearance of the youngest daughter of the Gayfords. What had become of her? Whither had she gone, what had been her motive for this sudden flight? Had it been voluntary, or had she been driven to it by the representations, and by the persuasion of others?

Much as they had thought of the wayward and unruly disposition of Mary; much as they had blamed her tendency to insubordination, and her contempt for the parental authority, they had never even for a moment contemplated the present contingency as being in the least degree probable. Consequently they were the more completely bewildered and confused, knowing not which way to turn, or how to act, in the trying emergency that presented itself.

Alice, who was sleeping on the couch, awoke early in th

morning, and immediately sprang up and threw her arms around her father's neck.

"Have you heard anything?"

"Alas! no, my child."

She resumed her place; and, so thoroughly worn out did she appear, that she speedily fell asleep in spite of her terrible anxiety of mind. But her rest was by no means undisturbed; frequently she would start up, and talk incoherently to some imaginary person, generally finishing by a low moan of anguish, as she fell backwards on the couch; and then for a few moments she seemed really to rest, but her outcries were bitter and oft-repeated; and carried an additional degree of bitterness to the hearts of those who sat by her side.

As soon as the day had fairly set in, Mr. Gayford went out, in the hope of learning some tidings; nor did he return till night-fall. But the day of suspense, agony, and toil, did not bring its accompanying recompense. No clue whatever was obtained to the fugitive; and they were doomed to spend another night in doubt, anxiety, and fear.

Mr. Gayford asked whether Edward Thornton had called during his absence; and, on receiving an answer in the negative, he displayed evident signs of the bitter conviction that was forcing itself upon his mind. He had called twice at his rooms without any success, and had failed altogether to obtain any satisfactory information respecting him. He could not think then that the two events which had occurred were merely the results of a casual coincidence. There must be something deeper in them. He saw clearly that Thornton's failure to join them at the opera was the result of a pre-concerted scheme; and he feared—though he scarcely dared to confess it—that the abduction of Mary was the main feature in his plans. It was impossible for any one dispassionately to disconnect the two occurrences. Thornton's absence from London too, and his letter, which might very easily have been intended for Mary, most materially strengthened his suspicions, and intensified his alarm.

On the third day he went to the police-office, and had an interview with the detective whom he had employed upon the case. As soon as Mr. Gayford entered, he started eagerly forward, and said —

"I have a clue, sir."

"And so have I," was the answer, given in a deep, stern voice.

"First, allow me to state, sir, that your daughter was so thoroughly disguised, that we have had much difficulty in recognising her."

"So I imagined would be the case."

"I think, too—in fact, I am confident, that in a short time we shall be in a position to speak much more fully on the subject."

"Good. But just let me tell you, that simultaneously with my daughter's disappearance, another strange event has occurred. A barrister, with a good practice, and with a great press of business on his hands, has suddenly, and without giving any intimation to his solicitor, left London."

"Indeed!" said the officer, musingly; "that is a fact which was beyond my experience, but which, I have no doubt, will accord with those which I shall now lay before you, and will lend us material aid in elucidating the mystery, and effecting the speedy restoration of your daughter to your care."

"Moreover a letter, of a very equivocal nature, reached my house on the identical night. It was directed to my eldest daughter, but I imagine there was some mistake; see it, and judge for yourself."

The detective officer quickly scanned the contents of the note.

"Suspicious!" he muttered. "This letter is extremely important. It was doubtless intended for your younger daughter, or, perhaps, a letter was written to each, and in the hurry of the moment, Mr. Thornton put them into the wrong envelopes."

Mr. Gayford was bitterly stung by the cool air of nonchalance with which the officer discussed the possibility of this monstrous piece of perfidy.

"You said you had something to tell me," he remarked.

"I have, sir."

"Proceed."

"Miss Gayford left her home on the evening of the 14th instant."

"Yes,"

"At about half-past nine."

"That was about the time."

"She was seen and identified by two persons, whom I have questioned most minutely."

"And with what result?"

"I learned from them, that after much wandering, either to mislead any one who might be observing her, or from absolute ignorance of the path, which she ought to have followed, she arrived at Walnut-Tree Walk at about ten minutes to ten."

"Yes!"

"There she was met by two gentlemen, one of whom, after a short conversation, conducted her to a carriage, which was in waiting for them, and in which they speedily drove off."

"Can you describe to me either of the gentlemen who were at the rendezvous that evening?"

"Both."

"Ah ' pray do so."

"One was fair, handsome, and a little above the medium stature: he wore a very slight moustache."

"And the other?"

"He was very closely muffled, so that my informant could not get a good view of him. But he was taller than the other, with black whiskers, but no moustache."

Up to this moment, Mr. Gayford had preserved, at least, a calm exterior, but here his presence of mind quite deserted him, and traces of fierce anger were visible in his countenance.

The terrible suspicion that had tormented him was converted into a sure conviction. There could no longer be any doubt in his mind that Edward Thornton had been guilty of the most shameless treachery. In the violence of his excitement he started from his seat, pressed his hand to his brow, and exclaimed, in tones of most indescribable anguish—

"My God! this is terrible!—terrible! My very worst fears are realised! my darkest suspicions verified!"

The detective officer listened to these despairing outcries with the external calmness of demeanour peculiar to his calling; and having waited till he considered his visitor in a fit state to resume business, he said, in most placid tone of voice—

"Do you recognise these gentlemen?"

"Yes. I recognise them from your description, as well as if I had seen them with my own eyes."

"Shall I ask you for their names? I have strong ideas on the subject, especially after reading that letter."

The other scarcely noticed the latter part of the sentence. "At present," he said, "I will withhold them; to-morrow I will call again and apprise you further as to my wishes. Meanwhile, whither have the fugitives gone?"

"By last account, they were at Southampton."

"Very good; I will call again to-morrow."

After leaving the police-office, Mr. Gayford went straight to Henry Felton's chambers in the Temple. He was in, and though there was considerable embarrassment in his manner, he nevertheless professed much pleasure in welcoming his visitor.

"I have come, Henry Felton," said the latter, "to speak to you on a subject which has been a source of much trouble and pain to me, and upon which I require information, though I am leaving no means untried to clear up the mystery, and have already a pretty good clue. I need scarcely tell you, that I allude to the disappearance of my youngest daughter."

"Yes!" was the answer, given in a tone, the significance of which it would have been somewhat difficult to determine.

“And,” continued Mr. Gayford, “I have come to you that you may throw some light upon the subject for me.”

“Indeed I shall be most happy to assist you, to any extent in my power.”

“Good! Can you, then, account for yourself on the night of the 14th?”

Felton was somewhat taken aback at this question. However he answered promptly:—

“I was at the opera, as you know, and after leaving there I returned to my chambers.”

“Did you see Edward Thornton?”

“Only for a few moments.”

“You did not go out with him to Brompton?”

“No! certainly not.”

His companion stared in utter amazement at these words.

“On your honour?”

“On my honour I only saw Thornton for a few minutes at his rooms, and I have not seen him since.”

“Stop! sir,” said Mr. Gayford, angrily; “I know more, perhaps, than you imagine—more than you deem possible. Can you assure me that you did not accompany Edward Thornton to Walnut-Tree Walk.”

“I pledge you my word of honour that I have not seen him since half-past nine on the evening which you have mentioned.”

“Then I have been most grievously mistaken. Edward Thornton has been guilty of a most disgraceful, cowardly, and base action. I feared that you had abetted him in it.”

“Do you mean, then——”

“I mean that the scoundrel has eloped with Mary. There, I have told you all.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Felton; but a smile of malignant triumph passed across his face. “And to have deserted Alice! Upon my word, she deserved a better fate. I had hopes at one time that I should have been able to make her happy.”

“I would to God that your hopes had been realised!”

“This is shocking! Poor Alice! she must feel the blow severely.”

“I hope she will spurn the unworthy fellow from her memory.”

“I will do all I can to help you. May I call upon you?—may I endeavour to comfort Alice?”

“Come, if you can aid me.”

And as he slowly walked away, he muttered, with an abstracted air:—

“Who can it have been with Thornton? Who can have aided him in this piece of villany? I must and will find out.”

Perhaps Henry Felton might have thrown more light upon the whole subject had he thought fit to do so.

CHAPTER IV.

BITTER indeed were the thoughts of Thomas Gayford as he retraced his steps to the house in Claremont Terrace. True, he had so far succeeded in the inquiries which he had set on foot as to leave no doubt in his mind as to the fate of his daughter Mary; but the conviction to which he was driven, showed to him that she had eloped with the affianced lover of her sister. Painful as was the contemplation of such a thing—impossible as it seemed at first sight, there was absolutely no other supposition upon which he could fall back. The details he had learned, the information procured by the detective, the strange and otherwise unaccountable absence of Thornton from London—all pointed to the same conclusion. Reason as he might against the improbability of the thing, the letter came to crown the evidence; and so firmly did he become impressed with the idea of Edward's baseness, that he gave himself up to hopeless and gnawing despair.

He called to mind all the circumstances attendant upon the engagement of Alice; he thought of Edward's constant and assiduous attention for months past, on the high character which he had always borne among his friends, and the events of the last few days seemed to him almost incredible. Still, there were the facts—hard, stubborn facts—which he found it impossible to gainsay; and he was lost in utter bewilderment as he endeavoured to trace the steps in this treachery, and the causes which had led to so mournful a disaster. The only thing that seemed to him to be out of place in the facts which he had learned was the solemn avowal of Felton that he had not gone out with Thornton.

With a heavy heart, he re-entered his home. Alice met him at the door, and, looking earnestly up into his face, asked sorrowfully if he had gained any information.

"Tell me, papa," she said, "if it be bad news; I can bear it, but I cannot endure this suspense. I feel so anxious about Mary—and about Edward."

Her father placed his hand gently on her hand, and looked down in her face:—

"Alice, I will tell you, but you must try and bear up; I have sad news."

They entered the room in which Mrs. Gayford was sitting. The tears were pouring fast down her cheeks, for she could tell, by the manner of her husband's address, that he had the very worst intelligence to communicate.

"I will listen quietly to what you have to say," said Alice, though she shuddered as she observed the rigid expression of her father's features. "I am prepared for evil tidings, and I will bear up against this bitterness as a woman alone can bear misfortune."

"Alice, my dear, there can be no doubt that Mary fled from us voluntarily."

"Papa!" she said, faintly.

"I have traced her. She is now at Southampton. I possess indubitable evidence of it. What can have led her to take this step I know not, nor can I decide whether I ought to follow her, and bring her back, or leave her to reap the fruits of her conduct."

"Oh! bring her back, papa."

"Hush, Alice!" he almost whispered. "Mary has not gone alone; she has gone with—"

He stopped, and gazed with terrible earnestness into his daughter's face, for she trembled so violently, and became so deadly pale, that he almost feared to go on. Suddenly she summoned up her sinking courage, and asked in a desperate tone, "With whom?"

"With Edward Thornton!"

Her face, which had before been pale, now became of a perfectly livid hue. She beat the air once or twice wildly with her hands, and then, with a scream of anguish and terror, fell back into the arms of her father, faintly muttering the words "Edward—Edward—Mary!" till all sense and motion seemed to die utterly away.

* * * * *

The same evening Mr. and Mrs. Gayford were seated alone, discussing the grievous details of the past events. "Thomas," said she to him, "you must have had good grounds for what you have said, or you would hesitate long before bringing so grave a charge against one who is so dear to us."

"I have, indeed, the most indisputable evidence. In the first place, I received intelligence of what has happened from a private friend, who mentioned it quite casually to me, little thinking to what a painful mystery he was giving me the key. In the second place, the detective whom I have employed has confirmed in every detail the first account which reached my ears. I am fully convinced now that we have all along been grossly deceived in our estimate of Edward Thornton's character. Yes! there is no hope left. Edward was seen with Mary on the night she left our house."

"Oh! who could have thought that we should live to see such days as these? Formerly we had much trouble with Mary. The affair of Arthur Harland was a sad trial for us. But that was nothing compared with the sorrow that has fallen upon us."

"Better—far better—that she should have married Harland, than that it should have come to this. But appearances were certainly terribly against him. I remember, too, how Thornton pleaded his cause at the time, though what was his motive Heaven only knows. It could have been no good one."

"We may have been deceived."

"In whom? In Thornton?"

"No, in Arthur Harland."

"I have sometimes had that idea myself. But I thought that Mary was getting over that trouble, and I did not wish to open an old wound."

"It might have spared us this crowning misery."

"No! Edward Thornton must have been playing the traitor for some time, and nothing that we could have done or said would have deterred him. He laid his plans deeply."

"Still Arthur might have foiled him."

"But it would not have been right to receive him, unless the stain on his character were wiped off."

Now, Arthur Harland was the son of an early friend of Thomas Gayford's. When in his twenty-first year, he had met and become enamoured of the youngest daughter of his father's companion, and, being favourably received by Mary, he had immediately proposed to her father for her hand. To his suit no objection was raised, and young Harland was on the point of receiving her father's consent, when a fraud was discovered in the mercantile firm, with which he was connected; and though no share in the transaction could distinctly be brought home to him, still the finger of suspicion was so unmistakeably pointed at him, and several stray facts were brought to light by Henry Felton, who had been in the same house with him before taking to the profession of the law, that Arthur Harland was compelled to resign his appointment, in order to avoid the disgrace of being dismissed. Shortly after this equivocal passage in his life he succeeded to a fortune, but he never was able to clear his character.

The consequences of this transaction were fatal to his hopes of obtaining the hand of Mr. Gayford's daughter. In spite of Edward Thornton's pleading in behalf of the sanction of the engagement, in spite of Mary's earnest entreaties, and in spite of the knowledge that her happiness was seriously involved, her father unhesitatingly and decisively put his veto upon it. The effect upon her at the time had been great, and at one time her parents had feared that she kept up a clandestine correspondence with her lover: but latterly they had consoled themselves with the reflection that she had rooted out the forbidden passion from her heart, and the only visible result was a slight souring of the temper, and an occasional

tendency to rebel against the parental authority. This, however, her father was inclined in some measure to overlook, in consideration of the trial through which she had passed; and he was congratulating himself on her improvement, when the events of the 14th of May burst upon him like a thunder-clap, and overwhelmed him with bitter and painful remorse. Still he could not bring himself to think that he had acted harshly towards Harland. It was his duty, at all risks and hazards, to rescue his daughter from an alliance, with one who, to all appearances, had been guilty of a great crime. The evil consequences could not justly be laid to his charge; for no one could maintain for a moment that Thornton's betrayal of the trust reposed in him in any way proceeded from Mr. Gayford's action towards Harland.

Just as he was engaged in the conversation with his wife, a servant brought in two letters to him. He recognised the handwriting at a glance. One was from his daughter, and the other from Edward Thornton. He thrust them instantly and hastily into the fire.

"She shall never set foot again in my house!" he exclaimed, and an angry frown settled on his brow.

CHAPTER V.

THE shock which Alice Gayford suffered on receipt of the distressing news of Mary's flight, and her lover's inconstancy, proved of a more serious nature than was at first anticipated. For some days she persistently refused all nourishment, and, studiously avoiding everyone in the house, gave herself up to the most bitter anguish and grief. The agony of mind which she endured, became daily more intense; as she reflected on her sudden transition from happiness and joyous expectation to misery and blank despair. She had flattered herself that she had won the heart of the man whom she so truly and so dearly loved; and now, on the point of consummating her happiness, at the eleventh hour, this terrible blow fell upon her: and he—the idol of her young heart, the hero of her ardent mind—had deserted her, and was lost to her for ever. Aye! more irrevocably lost, than if the grave had closed over him. Then she might have consoled herself that it was the hand of Providence that had removed him to another world—summarily putting an end to his toils, his troubles, and his stay upon this world. Then she would have grieved, but could have bowed to the stern decree; she would have revered his memory, and treasured up his image in the inmost recesses of her heart. But now, how bitter were her thoughts—how sad the history of her youth! Could such baseness,

such treachery, such cruelty, have a place in Edward Thornton's breast? Could he, whom she had looked upon as her guide and comfort in the trials of life, as her support in troubles, as her pattern in morality, be nothing more than a heartless deceiver? Could he, whom she had regarded as the type of all that was honourable and true, prove so false and dead to all the calls of honour? It was a picture, difficult for her to realise. All had seemed bright and prosperous, and now at one blow her happiness had passed away for ever. There seemed no hope, no comfort, no prospect; life was nothing to her—aimless, hopeless, and full of sad regrets. At the best, her existence must be a dull, void blank. He, whom she trusted with her whole heart, had deceived and outraged her. She had bestowed love, confidence, and trust: she had received in return treachery, deceit, and base inconstancy.

As she thought on these things, she shed tears of bitter sorrow, and at times she almost blamed Heaven that she had lived to witness such a day. Better—far better, if she had died, believing in Edward's truth and constancy, and fondly clinging in her last moments to the tender memory of his love.

And then she pondered over the circumstances attendant upon the discovery of her lover's perfidy. Bad enough, indeed, would it have been if Edward Thornton had deserted her for a stranger; but the thought that her sister, her only sister, on whom she had always so fondly doated, should have betrayed her, and robbed her for ever of her aim in life, increased the terrible poignancy of her grief, and made the anguish of her desolation almost greater than she could bear. In the morning she would wake, scarcely believing that it could be true, almost fancying that it must be the lingering memory of some hideous dream, till the reality of her situation forced itself upon her in all its vivid freshness, and brought before her in stronger force the wretchedness of her lot.

After a time she allowed her mother to talk to her on the subject; but she could minister but little consolation to her broken heart. Mrs. Gayford appealed to her womanly pride, exhorted her to rouse herself from her apathy, and conjured her to think no more of one who had proved so utterly worthless, and who had so basely betrayed her loving trust. But these appeals were vain. Alice Gayford grieved, sorrowed, and wept; but she could not forget Edward Thornton. Love is a passion not easily destroyed, even by neglect and treachery. It will leave its traces upon the heart, and defy the utmost efforts to efface them. So, in spite of the too manifest desertion of Edward, she clung to the memory of his love; and while she thought on the bitterness of the present, she could not help reverting to the joy and happiness of the past. Sometimes even a doubt would cross her mind, sweep

for a moment through her brain, and then disappear again, leaving her as barren as ever. Still, this feeling was gathering force, from the frequency of its recurrence; and it appeared to her like an oasis in the desert—a bright spot in the darkness that surrounded her. She had only heard the damaging reports about Edward, and on one occasion she declared to her mother that she would never yield up her last hope, till with his own lips he should declare to her that his love had passed away, and that the tie which united their hearts was snapped asunder for ever.

What still further angered her was the importunity of Henry Felton. Her father had received further letters from his daughter and from Thornton, but had invariably burnt them; and had advertised in the columns of the *Times* that he would receive no communications, and that he had cast his daughter off for ever. He then urged Alice to listen to the suit of Felton, for he was an honourable man, and would show himself worthy of the trust which Edward Thornton had so wantonly betrayed.

One morning Felton was in the drawing-room at Claremont Terrace, eagerly pressing his suit upon his unwilling listener.

“Alice,” he said, in soft and persuasive tones, “will you not give me the chance of making you happy? Never shall you regret it: the past may be buried and forgotten—the future shall atone for it.”

“Mr. Felton,” she answered, sternly, “I have no heart to give, and my hand can never be bestowed on one whom I do not truly love.”

“Alice, you will learn to love me in time; my every thought—my whole life shall be devoted to you—my only aim shall be to render you happy.”

“Nay, it is useless; I entreat you not to press me; nothing can ever change my mind.”

“If you would but grant my prayer, all would again be well. Your father would be well pleased——”

She interrupted him angrily. “Mr. Felton, I have the greatest respect for my father’s wishes, and would do anything to please him or make him comfortable. But in this matter my own heart must be my only guide. Once for all, I can never be your wife. My heart has been given to Edward Thornton, and it can never—never be another’s.”

At that instant she started from her seat, and exclaimed, “Edward, Edward!”

Felton looked through the window into the street, and instantly a deadly paleness overspread his face.

Without another word she hurried away to the library, where her father was sitting.

"Papa!" she said, almost between her breath, "he is come; you will see him?" and she looked up into his face tenderly and piteously, with earnest entreaty upon her countenance.

"See whom? Who is come?" asked Mr. Gayford, hurriedly, and in some surprise.

"Oh! do promise to see him. You do not know what I am suffering, or you would not refuse to hear what he has to say."

"Who? who?" repeated her father, almost angrily.

"Edward!" she gasped, nervously.

At the same instant a servant entered with a card. It was that of "Mr. Edward Thornton."

Mr. Gayford looked at it placidly for a moment, said to the servant in the quietest of tones, "Not at home," and then threw the offending missive into the grate.

"Papa!" cried Alice, "you are unkind—you are cruel."

"My dear," he answered, soothingly, "I have a duty to perform, and I must not flinch from it."

The tears poured down her cheeks, and she sank, sobbing deeply, into a chair by his side.

* * * * *

A few hours later in the day, Mr. Gayford was sitting in his office in the City, fumbling his papers, glancing at the newspaper, occasionally looking out of the window, but paying very little attention to business. He was evidently deep in thought: and it was palpable that his meditations were not sources of pleasure to him. Once or twice he clenched his hands, as if in anger at the subject of his reflections, and a dark frown settled on his brow as he paced uneasily from side to side of the room. Presently he opened a drawer, and took from it a letter which had been delivered to him a few minutes before by a *commissionaire*. After looking at the superscription for some time, he opened it, and read its contents. It was written in a cramped hand, the result either of nervousness or an attempt at disguise; and it was as follows:—

"Sir,—If you value the happiness of your daughters, you will at once lay aside any opinion that you may have formed with respect to late events, and listen dispassionately to the facts which will be laid before you by the writer of this letter. Nothing is too strange to be true."

There was no signature to this extraordinary communication, though the reader of it had very little difficulty in guessing from whom it came. For a few minutes he held it in his hand, pondering over its contents, half undecided whether he should destroy it, or replace it in the drawer from which he had taken it. In the midst of his hesitation, one of his clerks entered to say that a gentleman

wished to see him. With a little hesitation in his manner, he gave orders that the stranger should be shewn in. Then just as the clerk withdrew, and before Mr. Gayford had time to speak, the person in question brushed abruptly by, closed the door, and calmly took his stand with his back to the entrance.

The city merchant highly resented this violation of his sanctum, but his indignation speedily gave way to a feeling of astonishment, for it was Edward Thornton who thus confronted him.

"Sir," he exclaimed; "your conduct is incomprehensible, and totally unjustifiable. I do not understand it."

"You gave orders to your clerk that I should be admitted."

"But you did not wait for that order. I could see by your manner you would have entered, whatever had been my answer. I must request you at once to quit this apartment."

"Then I am under the painful necessity of declining to comply with your request."

"Sir! must I summon assistance?" and he was about to sound the hand-bell.

"No," answered Thornton, resolutely placing himself in front of him; "you must do no such thing."

"What! violence to me in my own office."

"No! Mr. Gayford, no violence whatever. But you must listen to what I have to say. I will be heard. I have borne this long enough: I can endure it no longer. I presume you received my note this morning?"

Mr. Gayford was as pale as ashes, and for nearly a minute he stood motionless and speechless. At length he so far mastered his passion as to answer.

"I received an insulting letter. Whether from you, sir, I neither know nor care."

"Excuse me if I differ with you. You do care."

"I should feel obliged by your terminating this interview at once. I will not listen to you."

"You must—and, what is more, you will."

"This is too much——"

"Stop!" said Edward, "I have written to you twice before; you did not think proper to answer my letters."

"I did not even take the trouble to read them."

"Good!" he replied, and a smile of satisfaction crossed his face; "I thought as much. Had you condescended to read either my letters, or those of your daughter, you would not have acted thus."

"Villain!" exclaimed Mr. Gayford, losing all command over himself; "do you dare to speak to me of my daughter?"

"I pass over the epithet you have bestowed upon me. I

can make all allowances, considering that appearances have been somewhat against me. I do dare to speak of Mary."

"You must be mad, sir."

"I have almost become so, at the issue of events. You have been labouring under the most terrible delusion. I have done nothing to deserve the epithet which you just now bestowed upon me. We have all been victims of a great mistake."

Mr. Gayford stared at the speaker in utter amazement; he could scarcely credit the evidence of his senses. Could this indeed be Edward Thornton endeavouring to palliate his conduct?

"What do you mean?" he asked confusedly.

"I mean that you have been grossly deceived."

"By you, sir?"

"No! by appearances."

"Explain, sir, or leave me at once," exclaimed the merchant, with an impatient gesture.

"I will explain; but you must hear me patiently, and not interrupt me if what I say should startle or surprise you. You may, perhaps, remember the man who was once a suitor for the hand of Mary Gayford."

"But too well."

"You can perhaps call to mind the reasons which induced you to withhold your consent from the engagement."

"I do. And I would to Heaven that I had examined the matter farther at the time, and had not acted so hastily. This crowning misery might then have been spared to me."

"Ah! say you so. Then answer me this question: would you now refuse your consent to the alliance?"

"Do you insult me?"

"Answer me," said Edward in an excited tone, "for the love of heaven, speak. I adjure you, by all that you hold dear on earth, to answer me this question."

"I would no longer withhold my consent.

"Ah! then hear me. Doubtless you have accused me, in your mind at least, of inconstancy, nay, of base villany. There were apparently good grounds for such a charge; but it is not too late. All may yet be well."

"Not too late!" exclaimed Mr. Gayford, still more surprised.

"Even so! You have accused me, doubtless, of many things which I should shudder to hear mentioned. I almost thought you knew me better. I can refute everything. Mary is the wife of Arthur Harland."

"Edward Thornton!" cried his companion, starting forward, and grasping him by the arm: "have my senses deceived me, or did you really say it. Mary the wife of Arthur Harland!"

"Yes!"

"How shall I believe this?"

"Take, and read this. It is the marriage certificate of your daughter."

"With Harland?"

"Yes."

"Thank heaven!" exclaimed the merchant, fervently, as he read the paper which was handed to him: "and you, Edward—you are true to Alice?"

"True—to the last breath."

"My God! the weight seems already removed from my mind."

"But, Mr. Gayford, there is still more for you to hear. You must know that Harland bears a striking resemblance to me. It was he whom Mary met at Walnut-Tree-Walk, and with whom she went to Southampton. I was utterly ignorant of it till two days after it occurred. Henry Felton aided him to carry off Mary—with an evil purpose. He spread abroad the report that she had eloped with me. Arthur's fair fame is re-established. It has been proved that Felton was the guilty man in that fraud upon the mercantile firm. He it was who first threw the blame upon Harland, and secretly, but studiously encouraged it. He it was, who, foiled in his suit for the hand of Alice, swore vengeance; and had well-nigh succeeded in accomplishing it. He it was who suggested the evil interpretation of my actions. But I have baffled him. I hold in my possession indisputable proofs of his crime; it is his turn now to suffer the agony which he has inflicted upon others. Under the guise of friendship, he had all but ruined me; but we are saved at the eleventh hour. It is not yet too late. The letter which you received on the evening of Mary's disappearance is easily explained. I was engaged in a painful business that night, connected with my sister's husband. He had become involved in heavy pecuniary difficulties, and I had arranged to meet him that night with his wife. I wrote two notes—one to Alice, explaining my absence; the other to my sister. In my haste, I placed them in the wrong envelopes. Hence the terrible mistake."

"Edward!" exclaimed Mr. Gayford, when he had heard all: "I have wronged you bitterly and cruelly; I have most fully aspersed your character. Can you forgive me? Can you understand my anxiety for the happiness of my daughters?"

"Say no more of that. It is past: let us not revert to it. Say that you are prepared to welcome Arthur Harland as your son-in-law, and to restore to me your good opinion, and I am made happy for life."

Mr. Gayford grasped him warmly by the hand.

"Edward," he said, "let us be friends now for ever—for ever."

Never again will I distrust you. Most heartily do I thank Heaven for the deliverance that this day has brought to me.

The same afternoon a brougham drew up at Claremont Terrace. Mr. Gayford got out by himself first, and hurried into the house. He speedily found Alice.

"Alice, my darling," he said, "I'm not cruel now; I have brought some friends to see you."

She looked up in his face inquiringly, and a smile lighted up her eyes. He then narrated to her everything that had taken place; how her sister had returned with her husband; how Edward had been true through all; how he had succeeded in establishing Harland's innocence; how Felton had conspired to destroy their happiness, and might have carried his plans to a successful issue had it not been for the prompt decision of Edward Thornton, who had thwarted him, and had already procured his arrest.

To all this she listened with a heart overflowing with gratitude and joy. Fear, grief, sorrow—all seemed to have fled; and once more her old happy smile played upon her face.

As Edward entered the room, she fell upon his breast, and with eyes full of tears, exclaimed,

"Edward, my own, it has indeed been a bitter trial, but I knew you were true."

"My darling, it has indeed been a fearful trial. But our troubles are now ended. Henceforth we may be happy. God bless you, my Alice!" And he strained her to his heart, and kissed her tenderly.

A month after the above events, Edward Thornton was married to Alice, the eldest daughter of Thomas Gayford; and as they went away, they carried with them the blessing and best wishes of all their friends.

Felton, the evil genius of the Gayfords, was tried, convicted, and condemned to penal servitude; and he is now expiating in a distant land the crimes by which he so nearly destroyed the happiness of the merchant's daughters.

M. S.

CLEOPATRA

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY DR. A. H. DICK.

PART II.

For the next three years after Cæsar's murder, Cleopatra devoted herself to the cares of good government at home. The struggle between Antony and the assassins of Cæsar—the triumvirate of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus—and the march of affairs till the division of the Roman Empire between Antony and Octavius, left her free from Roman interference in Egypt. Sosigenes, her astronomer-royal, pursued his researches in peace under her patronage; Photinus brought out his work on mathematics, naming it after her, the Canon of Cleopatra; Dioscorides, her physician, wrote a work long celebrated, on herbs and poisons; and literature and learning flourished again in Alexandria. Temples were built, too, especially that pretty one of Hermonthis near Thebes, dedicated to the Sun, in the names of Cleopatra and Cæsarion. Her brother and nominal husband died during these years, and no one, even in name, shared her power. She was far, however, from being free from care. Her chief perplexity was the maintenance of neutrality in Roman affairs, so as to give no party an excuse for attacking her. She did, indeed, once fit out a fleet, apparently to help Mark Antony against Cassius. Sickness, or the pretence of it, availed to excuse her from going with it herself. Serapion, her general, instead of aiding Antony, sent the ships to Cassius. When, at length, Brutus and Cassius closed their career at Philippi, and the western part of the empire fell to Octavius—the eastern to Antony—it was clear that, from one or other of these danger to Egypt was to be anticipated. Her sister Arsinoë, too, gave some cause of anxiety. She had returned, from imprisonment in Rome to Alexandria, and for a while dwelt safely there, having promised, probably, to disturb no more her sister's government. But suddenly, in the year 42 B.C., she fled from Alexandria, and took refuge in the Temple of Diana at Miletus. Clearly her movements required to be looked after. She might afford the very pretext these Roman generals wanted, and induce one of them to invade Egypt as if for her restoration.

The next year brought with it the close of Cleopatra's freedom from Roman interference. A messenger from Mark Antony, then in Cilicia, arrived, ordering her to appear before him, and answer for

her lukewarmness in assisting, the avengers of Cæsar. A most insolent message, indeed, from a republican general to an independent queen, but one not to be slighted. All Asia was at his beck. The messenger, Dellius, told her she had nothing to fear. She needed not such assurance. The armour with which she had bent Cæsar to her will, was it not still hers? Instead of all shields, instead of all spears, had not nature given it to her? She that has beauty conquers fire and sword; and at twenty-eight, with her charms matured, should a woman's beauty fail her, when, with the unripeness of sixteen, she had won a Cæsar? Antony, besides, as report spoke of him, was worthy of conquest. It spoke of him as the most susceptible of men—as one so responding to all human emotions that his soldiers of every grade were ready to die for him. He was extravagant and luxurious, but equal to the greatest hardships, and ready to share them with his poorest comrades. She had probably noticed but little of him among the crowds who surrounded her in Cæsar's days; but now, when his fortunes and position made a knowledge of him a necessity, there were materials enough at hand to lead to a judgment in his favour. She could probably remember her own first sight of him, as he headed the cavalry of Gabinius at the restoration of her father, and gallantly protected the citizens of Alexandria against the outrages of the Roman soldiers. He had then won a good name in the city, more especially by his pious care in burying the body of an old friend, who had fallen in the Alexandrian ranks fighting against Gabinius. Then, too, there were numerous stories of his bravery in Cæsar's wars—of the extraordinary hardships he had endured—of his unflagging strength and spirits, and his unbounded generosity—and of his likeness to the favourite god of her fathers, Hercules, from whom he claimed to be descended. Add to these, her knowledge of his later doings—of his eloquence and address in stirring up the populace of Rome against Cæsar's murderers, in those days when she was fleeing sadly back to Egypt—of the skill with which he out-manceuvred the assassin oligarchy—how he had avenged the murder of her first lover on the contemptuous Cicero—and it is hardly to be doubted that, whilst the necessities of her throne and country made her now seek him as a protector and instrument of safety, she was unconsciously prepared to give up to him her admiration and her love. Educated as she had been, she would be not the less so disposed, even though the grossly exaggerated stories of his licentiousness related in Cicero's *Philippics** were known to her. It might be true, that while acting as lieutenant for Cæsar (absent in Spain),

* Merivale : "Romans under the Empire," ii. 222

he had been drawn through Italy by tame lions, amid courtezans with whom he scrupled not to associate his own mother and his wife; but to her, as a foreigner dreading Roman conquest, even this might appear, as it has done to a modern Roman historian, a mode of triumph which "stands in luminous contrast with the devastating march of most of Italy's conquerors." * With this one purpose, at least, to save Egypt from the fate of the other countries which had fallen under the shadow of the Roman republic, if with no other, Cleopatra set sail for Cilicia. Tarsus, where Antony was encamped, stands by the river Cydnus, on the woody slopes of Mount Taurus. It was a busy trading-place then, and for some time after; a learned place, too, sending out teachers to all parts of the world. The great apostle of Christianity went forth from it some eighty years later. In the meantime, its population gathered outside the town, upon the river-banks, viewing with astonishment the gaudy pageant with which the Canopic Circe meant to stay the attack of the Roman wolf upon her father-land. Readers may turn up for themselves Shakspeare's † paraphrase of Plutarch's description of the pageant.

The result of the meeting is well known to all lovers of romance. Cleopatra's triumph was complete. The dexterity which had worn out the eloquence of Cicero, and baffled the united wisdom of Roman senators—the military skill which gave confidence to the bravest army in the world,—were laid at her feet. Antony became her slave. Egypt was safe—for the present at least. To secure it somewhat for the future, Sister Arsinoë must pay for her past treasons. Antony managed that matter for his mistress. Arsinoë was dragged from the altar of Diana and slain. Had any one, reasoning from a morality unknown to Cleopatra, told her that Arsinoë's fate was preferable to her own—that it was nobler for a woman to sacrifice her life than her purity—we may be sure that the Queen's answer would have been, "Both are due to our country in its hour of need."

All her efforts were now directed to retaining Antony near her till her influence over him was confirmed. She induced him to accompany her to Alexandria, where they spent the winter together (B. C. 39) in luxury and amusement. Every day fastened the Queen's toils more completely around him. The intrigues of Octavius at Rome, the rebellion of Labienus, his own lieutenant, in Asia, were calling for his attention. He forgot everything for Cleopatra. But the spring brought news that roused him as from a drunken sleep. Fulvia, his wedded wife, was stirring heaven and earth to detach him from her rival. Antony was Fulvia's third

* Merivale: "Romans under the Empire," ii. 222.

† "Antony and Cleopatra," act ii. scene 4.

husband. She had been notoriously unfaithful to Clodius, her first, and to Curio, her second. Antony had fixed her roving passions on himself as intensely as his own were now fixed on Cleopatra. Blind to everything but the recovery of her husband, and trusting that a new civil war would bring him back, Fulvia had induced Lucius Antony, Mark's brother, and others, to join her in a conspiracy against Octavius. The conspiracy was crushed, with fearful suffering to the partisans of Antony. He heard of it, and shook himself once more for the fray. Breaking from his charmer, he started for Italy. On the way he learnt how Fulvia had brought about the disaster to his cause—doubtless, too, he knew why. She was then at Sycion, on her way to meet him. He sent her letters from Athens, full of reproach. Worn out by fatigue, despair, and jealousy, death came to her relief. To hers, but not to Cleopatra's; for the messenger that brought the joyful news of Fulvia's death to Alexandria was quickly followed by another, with tidings that Antony had gone on to Italy—had patched up a peace with Octavius, and as a cement to the peace, had married Octavia, the sister of Octavius. The blow fell heavily upon the Egyptian queen, for with whatever feelings she had first sought Antony's presence, she had by this time learned to love him dearly. If she had laid a trap for him, she had fallen into it herself. If she had sought him as an enemy, to be soothed and wiled, and had taxed her intellect to lead him to her purposes, her heart now sought its only satisfaction in being near him. Historians have not unfrequently presented Antony as a gay, reckless, and bitterly revengeful fool; but the facts of history tell another tale. The man whom Cæsar most trusted as his agent, the man who could gather round him such a host of friends as Cicero accused Antony of having;* the man who could fix the roving affections of such a woman as Fulvia; the man for whom two such different women as Cleopatra and Octavia could be brought to strive, was evidently anything but a fool. And herein lies the true interest of Cleopatra's story, that it was no meretricious purpose which swayed her later relations with Antony, but a passion, deep, and strong, and true. So far she had "contended gallantly for the throne of her ancestors with the weapons which nature had given her,"† these weapons had, at last, recoiled upon herself. To love Antony was to expose herself to misery, when his policy led him to form other connexions, as now in his marriage with Octavia; to love him was to endanger Egypt, and risk the success of the one purpose of her former life, in case of his defeat by Octavius. And yet she did love him. From this, too, the perplexities as well as

* Cic. : Philipp. ii.

† Merivale: "Romans under the Empire," ii. 349.

the charm of her story spring. The singleness of purpose which marked her heretofore disappears. Her determination to preserve Egypt is modified by an equally strong determination to cling to Antony. To this double motive we must have regard in judging of her future actions.

The Romans hoped that a new civil war was averted by the marriage of Antony with the gentle sister of Octavius. Nor were they disappointed for awhile, Antony undertook and carried out a successful campaign in Asia, Octavia having accompanied him on the way as far as Athens. The grave and pretty matron, though somewhat astonished at the freaks of her husband, his showy dress, his parading, here and there, like Bacchus, varying his strange orgies with discussions among the Athenian literati, and his sudden outbursts of rage at some new provocation from her brother, did faithfully her duty by her brother, her husband, and her country. On her mediation and loving wisdom hung the peace of the Roman empire; and all men, weary of political convulsion, prayed heartily that her influence might long endure. Cleopatra, in the meantime, reigned disconsolate in Alexandria. Egypt, indeed, was hers, but Antony was Octavia's. At length a definite treaty was drawn between the brothers-in-law, at Tarentum, through the unwearied mediation of Octavia, and instead of watching each other, they set out to arrange the entangled affairs of their respective divisions of the empire,—Octavius, to put down Sextus Pompey, who was ravaging the coasts of the Mediterranean—Antony to Asia, to punish the Parthians. Octavia, this time, remained at Rome, guarding her own children by her first husband, and those of Antony by Fulvia.

She never saw Antony again. For as he neared Syria the image of Cleopatra, dimmed of late by political exigency, arose in all its former brightness before his ill-regulated imagination; or as Plutarch puts it "the unruly steed broke loose once more." He sent for her to meet him in Lycaonia. She hastened thither at once. His power was greater than ever now, his love no less. He lavished kingdoms upon her as gifts: Phœnicia, Cœlo-Syria, Cyprus, part of Cilicia and of Palestine, were all annexed to Egypt. Her empire was wider than that of any Ptolemy had been; her ambition and love were both gratified. She began henceforth to count the years of her reign anew, this (36 B.C.) being the first. Like a true daughter of the Ptolemies she added to the library of Alexandria that of Pergamus, which Antony gave her—two hundred thousand volumes. It was something towards repairing the damage done by the fire during the blockade of Cæsar in the palace. Her two children born to Antony were publicly adopted by him; and parents and children held court together in all the style of Eastern poten-

tates. Thus the winter passed. In spring Antony must march for Parthia. Cleopatra accompanied him eastward as far as the Euphrates, fearful to leave him till he was far enough from Italy and Octavia. After a disastrous campaign he again met her in Syria, whither she had once more come to prevent his approach to Italy without her. Another winter was spent in the palace of the Ptolemies, another Parthian campaign undertaken in the spring, and again Cleopatra was by his side as far as Syria.

Meanwhile, Octavia, as earnestly as Fulvia before her, and more wisely, sought to detach her husband from the sorceress of the Nile. His cause at Rome was suffering. Men began to speak of him with mingled hate and pity—hate, that he should make the foreigner powerful,—pity, for the unpatriotic madness which could prefer a dark Egyptian to the gentle Roman lady. The country and the love of Octavia both called upon her; nothing tended more to disturb the peace of Rome than Antony's connection with Cleopatra—only she, if any one, could prevent an outbreak between her brother and her husband. She equipped a splendid corps of two thousand men-at-arms as a body-guard for Antony, raised also a large sum of money, and went with them to Athens, hoping to meet him on his way eastward, perhaps to recal him to his duty by this proof of her love and care. Now, if ever, charmer, charm! If Octavia meet him and recal him to a sense of his true interest, you are undone! The Canopic Circe won the day. Antony accepted the gifts and spurned the giver, sending word to her not to advance beyond Athens, but to return at once to Rome. With calm and dignified submission, Octavia obeyed, returning to Rome amid universal pity for herself, and execration of the Egyptian.

The Eastern campaign was abandoned for a year. Next year (B.C. 34) it was resumed, and Artavasdes, king of Armenia, with a long train of nobles, was brought prisoner to Alexandria. Now came news to Rome that spread fear, as well as hatred, of Cleopatra and her influence. Antony had celebrated a triumph in Alexandria. A Roman triumph out of Rome! Think of that, ye dregs of Romulus! Others, besides yourselves are to have the sport of dragging captive kings in chains along their streets, and strangling them when it is over. Artavasdes, and a train of chained chiefs, with music, pictures, and eagles, have been made to march in procession, amid shouting Copts and Macedonians, and to halt before a golden throne on which sat the Canopic Circe. One circumstance it may please you to hear of. On being ordered to prostrate themselves before the queen, the sturdy mountaineers refused. They would die, but let Antony threaten as he pleased; but they would not bow down before this woman. Antony, touched by their boldness, as one hopes, waived the ceremony,

Then the astonished Romans hear that on the same evening Antony regales the citizens of Alexandria. An assembly is held. Antony and Cleopatra sit on thrones of equal height—Antony with scimitar and royal diadem—Cleopatra in the sacred robe of the goddess Isis—the foreign woman equal to the Roman Emperor—his wife and queen, practically, if not with proper religious or prætorian ceremony. Then, on lower chairs, sit the children of Antony and Cleopatra, and that base-born son of the great Cæsar, all in royal array. Antony makes a speech to the gaping mob of Macedonians and Copts, Greek slaves and negroes, as if they had been so many Roman citizens. He declares Cæsarion's legitimacy, and thus makes Cleopatra to have been the wife of Cæsar. He proclaims all Cleopatra's children, whether by himself or Cæsar, not kings merely, but kings of kings. Alexander, the eldest of his own is to rule Armenia, Parthia, and Media; Ptolemy, his second, Assyria, Cilicia, Syria, and Phœnicia; Cleopatra, his daughter,—as pretty as her mother,—they say, she is to be queen of Cyrene. Well might the Copts and Macedonians shout, for here were kingdoms given away in their sanctioning presence, as if Alexandria had been Rome, and they been Romans!

One may imagine the feelings of patrician and plebeian alike, on hearing of all this.* Rome, then, was not to have the monopoly of plundering the provinces of the world. Alexandria was to become another Rome, and, possibly, annihilate that one on the Tiber. Had the work of one woman, cajoling her lovers for mere national existence, come to this?† Were Apis, Isis, and Anubis, to outroot the worship of Neptune, Venus, and Minerva?‡ Could Antony mean that that woman should yet, as she threatened, § dictate laws from the Roman Capitol? Such thoughts and fears as these filled every Roman heart with hatred of Cleopatra, a hatred, the cries of which reverberate still through the wide field of Roman literature.

But while the queen triumphed, the woman was in misery. She could command others, but was herself

"Commanded

By such poor passions as the maid that milks,
And does the meanest chares."

* Compare Horace : Odes, i. 37.

† "Interque maritos
Discurrens, Ægypton habet, Romamque meretur."

LUCAN ; Pharsalia x. 358.

‡ "Deam monstra, et latrator Anubis
Contra Neptunum et Venerem, contraque Minervam,
Tela tenent."

VIRGIL : Æn. viii. 698.

§ "Fœdaque Tarpeio conopia tendere saxo ;
Jura dare et statuas inter et arma Mari."

Propertius : II. ii. 45.

She could defy the Roman State, but one Roman woman was more dreaded by her than all Rome: Octavia was Antony's wife, and might yet resume her influence. In the midst of all display, that worm gnawed at her heart. She feared a return of Roman feeling in her lover. Hence she plied all her ingenuity to invent amusements and excitements for him; all her archness and wit to help him to forget. She sang and played as perhaps only she could sing and play in those days; she led him to the Museum, and made him preside at philosophical conversazioni. She acted in Court masques; even strolled the streets with him in disguise, and bandied rough jokes with the passers-by. Doubtless, she sought, when it was safe, to lead him to higher amusements, and to interest him in the arts, literature, and wondrous antiquities of her dominions. Her task was no easy one, for Antony's fits of gloom and despondency were far from unfrequent. He could not shut out all thought of Rome, or of old friends judging now so hardly of him, as he knew well. Nor was he without a conscience; and grim sights, such as that of Cicero's bleeding head and mangled hands, may often have risen before him in periods of reaction from debauch. Hateful to himself at times, he fancied that every one was leagued against him, and intriguing with Octavius. Even she was his enemy at these times, and had to bear his rude, unmanly taunts. In his disordered imagination, she was going to poison him, and seek favour with Octavius. He would taste no food in her palace unless she first tasted it. It was difficult to laugh away these whims—to reason them away, impossible. Pliny tells us that at one time, to prove the absurdity of his suspicions, she steeped the garland he was to wear at dinner in poison. Her own garland was fresh. At the table she dipped hers in the wine to flavour it. Antony did the same with his. As he raised the poisoned cup to his lips, she stopped him, and gave the wine he was about to sip to a condemned criminal. The man died on drinking it. The story is possibly false, yet it is emblematic. It suggests, at least, that Cleopatra, in the very moment of success, found it as difficult to retain her lover as to maintain the independence of her country.

All this time Octavius was making way at Rome to be the acknowledged head of the state. An astute youth—he was quite willing that his rival should sink himself lower and lower in public estimation, regardless of any suffering it might cause his sister Octavia. Doubtless, too, he made the most of her troubles, parading the meek sufferer, and leading the public mind to contrast the gentle woman Antony had deserted with the terrible Amazon by whom he abode. The hollow friendship of the two Roman leaders soon came to an open rupture. Mutual recriminations began to pass between Rome and Alexandria. At last Antony

girt himself for the strife. Not too soon, for his allies were deserting one by one, bribed by Octavius. His very retainers in Alexandria were secretly going over. The Romans would fain have avoided a war; and a tax which Octavius imposed made Antony for a time even the favourite at Rome. With his own army of Roman soldiers, a splendid equipment of Asiatic allies, and a large fleet, furnished by Cleopatra, he reached Ephesus, accompanied by the queen. Fearing some compromise between the two generals, and a return of her lover to Octavia, Cleopatra would not leave him. His generals besought him to dismiss her: her presence was of evil omen. It was better, they urged, to sacrifice the two hundred ships and twenty thousand talents she had contributed than retain one whose presence inflamed the hatred of the enemy, and diminished the confidence of his own soldiers in himself. Antony's answer, that besides sharing in the expense of the expedition, she governed her own kingdom better than any other of his royal allies, and even lightened his work in the administration of the Eastern world, silenced all remonstrance.

They spent the winter (32 B.C.) in the island of Samos, with flute, and tabor, and Bacchic festivals—"little Samos piping and dancing while almost the whole world beside was venting its anguish in groans and tears."* The Egyptian Circe was triumphant, while Octavia wept the strife between her husband and her brother. As they tarried at Samos, Octavius found an unexpected means of reviving his own popularity, and the Roman readiness for war. The treachery of deserters betrayed to him the place where Antony's will was deposited. He tore it from the sacred keeping of the Vestal Virgins, and broke the seals which divine and human law alike made inviolable. At first, even the Romans were disgusted by such a base and impious act. But when the contents of the will became known, indignation against Antony swallowed up every other feeling. In it Cæsarion was acknowledged as Cæsar's legitimate son; the eastern part of the empire was, after Antony's death, to be divided between Cleopatra and her children; and it was directed that Antony's own body should be buried in Alexandria, in the mausoleum of Cleopatra.

This was not to be borne. War was instantly and solemnly declared; not, however, with Antony, but with Egypt. Antony was not as yet declared a traitor, but left to declare himself one, should he draw sword for Cleopatra. He retorted by a declaration of war on his own part, and by a bill of divorce for Octavia. As for Cleopatra, the rapid march of events had more than fulfilled her wildest dreams. The opening of Antony's will had revealed to

* Plutarch; Vit. Anton.

herself, as well as to the Romans, the extent of her success. Egypt and the East were secured to her and to her children; a kingdom as wide as Alexander's—wider than that of any Ptolemy—was now her own. Perhaps more prized than even that was the divorce of Octavia and the open declaration of war. She had henceforth no need to fear a compromise; Antony was all her own for life, and even in the grave. If the queen's ambition might well be gratified, the woman's love could ask no more.

But in the very triumph lay imbedded the seeds which could not but grow into ruin. Antony's position, and that of every Roman in his army, was a false one. Reason as they might about this being a final and inevitable struggle between Octavius and Antony—one essentially of the same nature as the former struggle between Cæsar and Pompey, the soldiers of Antony and Cleopatra could not disguise it from themselves, that they were fighting for Egypt against Rome; for the, to them, unsacred Nile, against the sacred Tiber, to which Horatius Cocles had prayed of old; for a foreign courtesan against their mothers, sisters, wives.* As they looked out from their tents, the very sunbeams glancing on the Egyptian canopy, reared alongside of the Roman eagles, seemed to reproach them.† Coriolanus had at least some cause for seeking revenge on his native city, but his proud heart had broken under the thought of injuring it. Should they, uninjured by Rome, with every tie of kindred there, advance against it? All the glorious array of Roman traditions, all the beliefs of childhood rose up in their minds to damp enthusiasm for the cause in which they were engaged. Antony's ranks became daily thinner by desertion; his own mind began to be unnerved. But he had gone too far to recede; he would trust, however, more to his allies than to his Roman legions. In his countless squadrons of orientals, led by native chiefs—in his ships, and those of Cleopatra, manned by Africans and Asiatics chiefly, he saw that his main hope of victory lay.‡ When, therefore, the fleets and armies of the contending generals were brought face to face, on the waves and along the shores of the Ambracian Gulf, Antony determined to risk the

* "Ausi Jovi nostro latrantem opponere Anubin,
Et Tyberim Nili cogere ferre minas;
Romanamque tubam crepitanti pellere sistro."
PROPERTIUS; III. 9, 41.

† "Interque signa turpe militaria
Sol adspicit conopium."
HORACE: Epod ix. 15.

‡ "Hinc ope barbaricâ varisque Antonius armis
Victor, ab Auroræ populis et litore rubro
Ægyptum viresque Orientis, et ultima secum
Bactra vehit; sequiturque nefas! Ægyptia conjux."
VIRGIL, Æn., viii. 686.

‘battle by sea, rather than by land. He knew, indeed, that his Romans could fight best by land if they fought willingly; but he knew that in the coming fight they were to be led against their country. There were those, indeed, among his legionaries, who would have fought to the last for him under any circumstances. They could not understand the resolution to fight by sea. “Imperator,” said one of these, a centurion, “Imperator, why rest your hopes on rotten wood—why distrust us who have borne these scars for you? Let Egyptians and Phœnicians fight at sea, but give us the land—the land on which we have learnt to conquer or to die.”

But every hour brought him proof of the unwillingness of his legionaries as a whole to fight against their country; for every hour brought him tidings of desertion by one or another of his oldest friends. To fight by sea, then, was but a natural resolution. The Roman historians have all attributed this resolution to the fatal influence of Cleopatra. She it was who urged it upon him, say they, for she intended flight and desertion of him, and her treachery could most easily be carried out at sea. They were unwilling to impute an intention of flight before a battle to any Roman general, even to one in arms against his and their country. That easiness of flight, as well as despair of success by land, was a motive for fighting by sea in the mind of Antony, we need not doubt—but Cleopatra’s desire to flee from him is one of the many myths in Roman history. Should defeat occur in the approaching battle at Actium, in flight *with* him, not from him, lay her only hope of saving Egypt. The resources of her own country were undiminished, and Antony’s military skill might yet with these retrieve the Empire of the East. Neither love nor hope were abated in her, as she joined in the council which decided to fight on the water. With Antony by her side, and the wealth of Egypt at her command, much might be done. Even if the worst came—should they be compelled to leave Egypt, still, she argued, there were lands far to the south beyond the Red Sea, of which the Romans knew nothing—beyond Alexander’s farthest conquest, along a sea which no Roman or Carthaginian ship had ever navigated. There they might found, or conquer a new empire. She would have all her vessels dragged across the narrow isthmus of Suez, and they would seek together new fortunes across the Indian Ocean, in lands where no Octavius or Octavia could trouble them. Thus, as always, woman’s hope sought to cheer man’s despondency—to give him energy for the present trial, and hope for the worst beyond. Thus, unitedly, and with a definite common purpose, the two decided to meet Octavius on the waters off Actium. With such a purpose formed, Antony staved off, as he best could, all remonstrance. “Why should we

put the sails on board?" said one of the pilots to him. "The oars alone are needed in action." "Put them on board," said Antony; "they will be useful in chasing the enemy."

Five days off the entrance to the Gulf of Corinth, the two fleets watched each other. Five days the winds prevented their meeting. Five days from the heights on either side of the strait the two land armies waited, and signalled their respective ships. On the sixth, the numerous but small vessels of Octavius, were able to approach the huge hulks of Antony. From the shore the legions watched every movement with interest unspeakable, and longed to join in the fray. Massive stones were hurled from Antony's vessels down upon the boats of Octavius—immense grappling irons were thrust out, and skilfully evaded—clouds of arrows flew, and death had a glorious feast. Heavily rolled Antony's monsters, keeping to one spot—lightly flew the skiffs of Octavius round and round them. Hours passed, and victory declared for neither side. Suddenly the wind changed to the north-east, the very wind for Egypt. Cleopatra saw in the change an omen favourable for the projected flight. Uprose from her gilded deck the purple sail—her galley threaded quickly the maze of battling boats, making off Egypt-wards. Antony, sick of shedding his country's blood, jumped into a five-oared galley, and followed. Then arose a cry of rage and shame from all who saw—a cry that must have rung for ever after in the ears of Antony.

The feeling that sought vent in that cry has been more or less shared by the world ever since. Antony's act was, indeed, one of desertion, but one necessitated by the circumstances. He was a Roman, and could not, any more than his soldiers, fight against his country. The sentiment thus common to himself with his soldiers made victory improbable even, if he did fight. A new career might open for him in the east—a career of success against other lands than Rome, in following which he might yet again win power, retain the love of Cleopatra, and leave Rome at peace. And, besides, he was not leaving his army without a leader, to the mercy of a pitiless conqueror. He knew that the foe would be only too glad to receive their submission and allegiance, and that they themselves would, by their submission, be relieved from the conflict of duty to their old general and duty to their country. Some, indeed, of his vessels at once took flight after him, others only fought more stubbornly for a time. But ere night came three hundred of the lumbering hulks were totally deserted, and burning slowly to the water level. The flames told Antony's army on shore of the defeat of their master. They knew not of his flight. They waited seven days, expecting that he would come up to join them from some part of the coast, to which he might

have escaped. Despair came at last. Canidius, their lieutenant, deserted them; they entered the service of Octavius, and Rome had again but one master, the heir of the murdered Julius.

When Antony, after some skirmishing with pursuing galleys, made up with that of Cleopatra, he went on board. But he could not bear to look her in the face. In spite of all reasonings, in spite of all that had been previously arranged, with that cry ringing yet in his ears, he felt himself a disgraced man; and going forward to the prow, he sat down there, burying his face in his hands. He would speak to no one—listen to no one. The Queen and her women tried to recal him to his old manliness—with patience and gentleness she urged that all was not yet lost. Egypt might yet be held—or, along the shores of the Indian Ocean, safety and new power be found. They could carry her yet immense treasures with them thither. They landed at Taenarus, near Parætonium. In vain she urged him to come forward with her to Alexandria. The broken-spirited Roman—Roman no longer—had sunk into a state which made him false to his own schemes, and false to her whose energy, united with his skill, might yet have yet redeemed all, and given a different turn to the history of discovery and conquest in the east. She left him brooding and meditating suicide, on the border of the Lybian desert, in a retreat which he called his Timonium. He gave up all for lost, divided his remaining valuables with those who had followed him, and urged them to go and seek service with his fortunate rival. A change coming over his mood, he sailed after Cleopatra. The active Queen, in order to gain time, and concert her measures undisturbed, had sailed into Alexandria with all the paraphernalia of victory, streamers flaunting, and prows crowned with laurel. She called the chief citizens into her presence, arrested those whose disaffection she had most reason to fear, and ordered some to instant death. She sent off ambassadors to all the late allies of Antony, who were likely yet to adhere to him, made large promises to them, and then set about measures for the temporary defence of Egypt, and for the hauling of her ships across the Isthmus. The foe, she knew, would soon be near. Antony arrived in Alexandria as she was in the midst of her preparations. A gleam of his old spirit seems to have come back upon him. He would not listen to the plan of abandoning Egypt. Why should they flee into unknown seas? There were here in Egypt, under her sway, three hundred thousand men able to bear arms. Cleopatra hopefully, yet hesitatingly, gave up her dreams of an Arabian or Indian sovereignty; her lover's instances were backed by the news that the first detachment of ships carried across the isthmus had been burnt by the Arabs of Petra.

To avoid the evil effects of Egyptian prejudice against sole female rule, she proclaimed her sons joint kings with herself; and in every other way, since the enemy was to be met in Egypt, she endeavoured to prepare for him. But again the desponding fit seized Antony; again she was left to herself. She sent ambassadors, in her own name and that of Antony, to learn the intentions of Octavius. Octavius returned no answer. Deserted on all hands, even by him on whom she had most relied, she began to lose hope at last. Octavius, fearing that her despair might cheat him of his triumph over the living queen, sent Thyrsus, his freedman, with a message that he hoped soon to be at her feet as an admirer. Even if the message had not been accompanied by a request that she would make away with Antony, or deliver him up, its hypocrisy was patent enough. In misery she sought once more to rouse Antony. She tried the old mode of revelry and excitement. Once more, surrounded by danger, the wassail-bowl went round. But the mirth was hollow, the orgies were forced. In former times, with boon companions, Antony and Cleopatra had formed a society for the cultivation of invention in luxury, called the "Club of the Inimitable Life;" now they formed another, with the name of the "Companions in Death." Like that old group in the gardens near Florence, they were bound to amuse each other. As day after day elapsed, and all hope of Antony's return to his former self passed away, the amusements became more ghastly. Seeing that the end was near, Cleopatra began to inquire how one could most easily die. Experiments on convicts with different kinds of poison, on themselves with the same in small quantities, and on animals with different weapons, became then the chief source of amusement and instruction for the Brotherhood of Death. The problem how to die with least pain is said to have been solved among the learned members by the judgment that an asp-bite soonest brings forgetfulness upon the senses, and so painless death.

At last the conqueror approached Egypt. Pelusium, its main stronghold on the east side was surrendered without a blow. Antony was drowning care in wine when it fell. He roused himself, as is the wont of the besotted, to assail all round him with reproach. Cleopatra, he was sure, had betrayed the place, and him. The suspicions of his drink-bred delirium have passed into history as facts. In a rush of blind fury, with only a few retainers he made for the gates of Alexandria, before which Octavius was encamped. The unexpected assault drove back for a time the Roman cavalry. The interval of energy, perhaps the short abstinence from wine which it involved, seemed for a moment to bring back the old Antony. Cleopatra met him on his return from the successful sally. He kissed her, and recommended to her

notice a centurion who had done good service in the skirmish. The queen presented him with a helmet and breastplate. "That same night," says Plutarch, with brief irony, "the man went over to Cæsar." In the morning Antony sent his fleet out to attack the Roman ships. Like the centurion, the fleet deserted its drunken master. Antony stood with his cavalry on a hillock outside the city, and instead of the attack which he expected, he witnessed the desertion; his cavalry witnessed it too, and suddenly striking spur, they rode off, whither all the world was going, to the camp of Octavius. Maddened, as he thus beheld the effects of his own ill-timed despondency, Antony sought to vent his rage on the unhappy queen. She it was who had betrayed him and encouraged the deserters: he would make his vengeance terrible. Cleopatra fled from the sight of his blood-shot eyes—from the hearing of his violent taunts. Egypt and Antony both lost—Roman captivity at hand, for herself and for her children, and exposure in a Roman triumph—she had every motive to die, and nothing to live for. Near the temple of Isis she had built a splendid mausoleum, in which she meant that herself and Antony should be buried together. Hither, for some time, she had been secretly conveying her chief treasures. With the calm purpose of despair she had filled the building with gold, silver, ivory, pearls, and cinnamon, as well as flax and other burning material. To this she now fled, and shut herself and her attendants in, as firmly as could be done by bolts and bars with female hands. She sought but to die and end her troubles. The application of a torch would end them all, and baulk Octavius of his treasure and his triumph.

But to die, having parted with Antony in anger—that thought tortured her. He would know, of course, when her death was reported to him that his suspicions had been unmanly; that, so far from betraying, she had no hope but in him; and, when that hope was lost, she had sought only to die. Convinced, then, of her truth, his love would return. But might she not even yet, before the final fulfilment of her purpose, bring back that love, and at least bid him more lovingly farewell? Suppose that he should hear of her death before it happened; suppose that in his revulsion of feeling he should seek to gaze upon her corpse; then, before she had closed her eyes for ever, she might once more see her lover at her feet, once more listen to his words of endearment. All beyond the grave was black and dark to her. What more natural than that she should desire, and even scheme, to have by her to the very last, all that earth held precious? In this hope, while preparing her funeral pyre, she gave orders to her maidens to spread the report of her actual death, so that Antony might hear it. Antony did hear it, and in his wild frenzy at the news, he

upset all her calculations. Without doubting the report, without desiring to see her remains, with his reason dulled by despair and dissipation, he gave way at once to remorse and grief: she had died to convince him of her faith to him; he would die too, and not be outdone in courage by a woman. He besought his freed-man Eros, in fulfilment of a custom which the Stoic philosophy had made honourable, to kill him. The promise to do this when required had been one of the conditions of his freedom. Eros drew the sword, but instead of pointing it at his master's breast, he plunged it into his own, and fell dead. Antony, shocked and reproved, stabbed himself, but not so as to die at once. As he lay in mortal agony, Cleopatra, doubting the success of her false report, sent her secretary with a last message: would he not come and see her before she died? Hearing that she still lived, he ordered his attendants to carry him at once to the mausoleum. Afraid of being taken alive, the queen would not open the gate; cords were let down from the window, and Antony, with much tugging on the part of the women, and suffering to himself, was drawn up. The queen wiped the blood from his countenance, called him her lord and emperor, "and," says Plutarch, "seemed to forget in his sufferings that she had any misery of her own." Antony lingered awhile, then died in her arms, his last breath spent in advising her to live and try to make terms with Octavius.

By this time fate was closing in upon herself. The whole city was in the hands of Octavius. He feared to lose the treasures shut up in the mausoleum; he would fain, too, have the beauty of the world to grace his triumph, and to be a living proof that he had not merely shed Roman blood in civil war, but had, besides, won foreign territory and added a new province to the empire. He sent Proculeius to get possession of Cleopatra alive, if possible. Proculeius, at the gate, professed that she might safely surrender, and trust everything to the grand nephew of her first lover. Only on condition of remaining queen of Egypt and the East, would Cleopatra consent to give herself up. It was clear that she meant to die the death of Sardanapalus. Octavius had recourse to stratagem. Gallus was sent to the gate of the mausoleum, and professed to hold converse with her on the terms of her surrender. While her attention was thus engaged, Proculeius scaled the wall, got in by the window into which Antony had been drawn, and, descending the stairs, seized Cleopatra suddenly by the arm. He snatched from her the dagger which she drew to put herself beyond his power. She knew her fate now—to be carried to Rome, made a show of, and hooted by that mob which had lately quailed at the mention of her name. Her presence of mind did not forsake her. Pretended submission could alone avail her. She listened with apparent

satisfaction to the assurances of Proculeius that Cæsar meant kindly by her, suffered herself to be taken to the palace, and begged that she might be permitted to bury Antony, her husband, as became a king of Egypt. She plunged into the depths of dissimulation to gain her purpose. Her one chance of obtaining the privilege of death was to make Octavius believe she wished to live. Dion Cassius tells us that when he visited her, she again tried her old arts of female enchantment on her former lover's grand nephew, receiving him in negligee mourning habit, picture and letters of the great Julius lying near her. Plutarch, more simply and probably, says that she gave up to him, on his visit, that which he most eagerly desired, an inventory of all her treasures. But, like a perfect actress, she got up a scene which could not but lead him to think that he had her all safe for Rome. Seleucus, one of her treasurers, was present as she gave the inventory. Whether by previous compact, or of his own mean nature, he accused her of keeping back some articles of jewellery. She flew at him like a tigress, pulled his hair, and scratched his face. "I have indeed reserved a few things," she said, "not for myself, but as gifts for Octavia and Livia, at Rome. I may need the good offices of your sister and your wife when I get there." Octavius, little knowing with whom he had to deal, left her presence secure of the coveted addition to his coming triumph.

Yet once again, even in her low plight, Cupid aided her in her purposes. Cornelius Dolabella, a young Roman in Octavius' train, had seen, admired, and pitied her. His pity grew to love. He offered his services, and kept her informed of all that concerned her. She learnt from him, that in three days she and her children were to be sent off to Rome. She then begged permission to pay a last visit to Antony's tomb. This was unsuspectingly granted. She and her waiting-maids, Charmion and Iras, entered the splendid mausoleum, crowned Antony's tomb with flowers, and spent the day in mourning, uninterrupted by the sentinels waiting outside. She desired to sup once more under the same roof with Antony. This, too, was accorded. After supper a native peasant presented himself with a present of figs for his mistress. The guards, admiring their beauty, sent the basket in to her. She then wrote a note to Octavius, gave it to the guards, and desired to be left undisturbed for a while with only her female attendants. The letter contained an earnest request that she might be buried beside Antony. Octavius saw its purport at a glance, and sent immediately to the tomb. The door of the apartment in which they had supped was fast. It was soon broken open. Within on a golden bed, in royal array, lay Cleopatra dead. Iras, too, lay dead at her feet; and Charmion dying, was striving, with affection that would not die, to

adjust the diadem on the head of her mistress. "Charmion, was this well done?" cried one of the astonished Romans. "Yes, well, and worthy of the daughter of Egyptian kings," said Charmion, and fell back dead.

Tradition says that in the Copt's basket of figs lay hid one or more asps. With these the three had contrived to escape Octavius's triumph. If tradition err, then no man knows how the death of Cleopatra was effected. To such result the studies of the Companions in death had led. Perhaps a guess may be allowed, that whatever the instrument of death, poison or asp, it was obtained as the last and only service of despairing love; that Dolabella, by previous concert, had sent it to her in the basket of figs. Octavius had to content himself, at his triumph, with a waxen female figure, reclining on a golden couch, an asp clinging to either arm.*

Cleopatra's life struggle, whatever judgment we form of it, was in vain. The civilisation of the East was doomed to fall before that of the West; human progress necessitated that. Egypt, the last stronghold of freedom, in the long strife of the world with republican Rome, was now annexed. A Roman prefect was appointed to govern it; and its writers dated from the battle of Actium as a new era. Cæsarion, hateful to Octavius, as the son and pretended heir of Julius, was put to death at once. A son of the daughter of Cleopatra and Mark Antony became afterwards king of Mauritania. Another grandchild of Antony and Cleopatra was that Drusilla, who with her husband Felix, listened to the teacher of a higher civilisation than that of Rome, and of an infinitely higher morality than that by which, in all fairness, the unhappy Cleopatra ought to be tried.

* *Brachia spectavi sacris admorsa colubris
Et trahere occultum membra soporis iter.*

PROPERTIUS: III. ix., 51.

ACTORS AND ACTING

POSSIBLY there is no other class of persons concerning which more curiosity exists amongst the rest of the community, than actors. Certainly there is none professing a legitimate public calling which is so little really understood. What are actors like in their domestic life? and do they—nay, can they—behave as ordinary mortals do? We know them and recognise them upon the stage, and to their exertions do we confess ourselves indebted for many an hour of pure enjoyment. We sympathise with them in their imaginary transports: we laugh with them when they are joyous, and weep with them when they are sad; we have a personal interest in them, and for them, as long as they are before us there. But what then? When the green curtain is down for the last time, and the crowded pit and gay tiers of boxes are left in solitude and darkness, what becomes of them *then*? Whither do they disappear? What final transformation do they undergo? There are few of us, perhaps, who, at one time or another, have not asked ourselves these questions, and few, concerning themselves with theatrical matters at all, who have not felt some interest in the inquiry. Who is it has ever passed a theatre-door by daylight, without regarding curiously whatever idlers were perchance lounging thereabout? Who is it—among the more youthful of us, at least—that has not regarded with a certain amount of veneration and awe anyone supposed to be upon intimate terms with these mysterious beings? Kings and queens excite our wonder and our admiration; literary ladies and literary lions we love to follow and to gaze upon; but a real live actor in the flesh! one whom we know by a score of familiar names, and in a score of familiar characters, and all different,—how would we wish to see him engaged in some utterly homely and unimaginative occupation:—nursing his own baby, let us say, by his own fireside; comparing accounts with the milkman; or “having it out” with Eliza the housemaid, or Sarah the cook, upon some matter closely relating to domestic comfort. And Eliza the housemaid, and Sarah the cook, how can we believe that they do unto him as unto other masters? He is, we will suppose, a high tragedian, and they have been to the play upon his orders, and they have seen him throttling Desdemona or plotting Duncan’s murder, or excitedly conversing with a mild-looking gentleman in a grey suit of clothes, whom he has addressed as his father’s ghost; and is it to be believed that these deeds will not be present to them amid details of a housekeeping and menial nature? Or he is, upon the other hand, a “first low comedian,” and he—that very individual who is now, without a blush, accusing them of encouraging the attentions of B 999, or Corporal Boots, of

the Blues—they have themselves seen winning his way by artful devices and insidious wiles, to the affections of some fair handmaid like unto themselves, and in a thousand ridiculous and undignified positions. Or we wonder of them, what their feelings are with regard to green fields and blue skies, to the purer and simpler enjoyments of mankind. They whose life appears to us wholly artificial: paint and tinsel, the language and the emotions of others,—they have spoken, perchance, of such joys as these, as they have spoken of a thousand other things which they neither remember nor care to recal; but have they ever felt the full happiness of a bright, still summer day? Have they ever struggled with real emotions, or grappled with passion in their own hearts?

There is this atmosphere of doubt and mystery about actors, naturally, upon account of their occupation, which is an imaginative and non-material one, but much promoted, we believe, by custom, which assigns to them a sphere of their own to move in, separate from the rest of their kind. Their lot in modern society does not seem to be a just one. They are, for the most part, regarded with suspicion, which is both illogical and ignorant; illogical, inasmuch as they profess a calling recognised by law, encouraged by society, and applauded by wisdom and by taste; and ignorant, inasmuch as it is a relic of ancient and mistaken modes of thought. Let us see what is this stigma which attaches to actors? whence does it come? and by whom is it imposed? In ancient times, that is, more especially, under the civilisations of Greece and Rome, the drama held a high, perhaps the highest, rank in the field of literature; and in the former, at all events, contributed more than anything else towards elevating and refining the standards of taste and morals. The remains of that drama which still exist are justly looked upon as models; its influence is felt to the present day. But that age was an age when arms and military renown occupied the foremost place upon the rolls of fame; in those young days of society, indeed, no other profession was honourable, and intellectual prowess was regarded as wholly inferior to physical. Thus the occupation of acting being both peaceable and intellectual, actors fell into disrepute; and thus it was the martial spirit of antiquity which first fixed a stigma upon them. In the eyes of the ancient Greek or Roman, an actor was contemptible, simply because he was not a soldier, and because his occupation was other than cutting throats or battering brains out. But in process of time came the irruption of the northern barbarians, and all the classical civilisation was swept away! A new dominion arose—the dominion of the Church—and became the civilising influence for the time. With avidity this new power seized upon the drama for itself, and, in the shape of “mysteries” and “moralities,” used it for its own ends; the actors were the priests

and their myrmidons, and not a vestige of its former greatness remained. Then gradually education began to spread from beyond the walls of the convents, and then gradually the drama began to secularise; actors once more appeared who took to acting as a calling, and people went once more to see and to applaud. But by this time the jealousy of the Church was aroused, and soon perceiving what a mighty engine was passing from under its control, it resolved to make a vigorous effort to nip the danger in the bud. The world was not now so martial as when the Roman legions had garrisoned all its known surface, but if not so combative, it was far more bigoted and superstitious; and this was enough, and more than enough, for the purpose now in view. The thunders of the Church were launched against actors, their aiders and abettors. They were denied all Christian rites, were over and over again described with consummate accuracy as the chosen children of Satan, and carefully damned throughout time and all eternity. Because the occupation of actors was, in a military age, peaceful, they were reviled as cowards; because it was, in a superstitious age, secular, they were condemned as infidels. Not because—let us distinctly bear in mind—the occupation was, in the first case, an essentially fearful and pusillanimous one, and, in the second case, an essentially demoralising one, was this so, for *it was the occupation alone that never changed*; but because it happened to come into contact with two different prejudices at two different times, and to incur the hostility of both. What, then, supposing that this had not happened so? Supposing the opposite to have occurred? If the accident had been a liberal and fostering support, instead of a bigoted and destructive opposition? Would actors then be regarded in the light in which they chiefly now are?—we cannot suppose it.

For what is it that is really contemptible or immoral in their profession? Is it that they portray nature? Is it that they give expression to the thoughts of others? But what else does any other artist do but this? The painter, the poet, the orator, the sculptor—what is the aim of all of them? What is the height and hope of their ambition? Or is it that their lives are, *in fact*, immoral, their habits dissipated and vicious? Alas! that it should be so. There is truth in this, but truth which rebounds upon their opponents to their confusion and disgrace. For admitting what is generally assumed without controversy, that the accusation is just, why is it that they are so, and to what but social usage are they indebted for the unenviable distinction? If society closes its gates upon them, can it, then, blame them for keeping without the pale? If it refuses them the shelter of its conventionalities, how can it expect that they will be overshadowed by them? Nor let us forget that it is not actors alone who have been victimised after this fashion, but all who

have ever resigned themselves to pursuits not in immediate unison with the vulgar tendencies of their age, and almost all who have ever resigned themselves to any intellectual and imaginative pursuits whatever. How long is it, we should like to know, since literary men have been other than a scouted and despised class, fit subject for the sneers and calumnies of the common lot unable to appreciate or understand their worth? Were not philosophers and *litterati* of all sorts treated as the very scum and refuse of the earth until scarcely a century ago? And what person of respectability was it formerly who would have admitted a poet into his house, except as a dependant to be used and abused at will? Why, Grub-street in its glory is almost within the memory of some of the present generation, and is deep in the fond and grateful memory of all to whom English literature is dear. Precisely the same influence which fixed a stigma upon actors, fixed it also upon poets, and philosophers, and men of genius, and by precisely the same reasoning was it originated and sustained; they also had religious prejudice arrayed against them at the time that religion meant bigotry, and they also were in like manner caluminated and vilified by it. But the great liberalising of opinion at length set in; by degrees the world began to discriminate between its friends and foes, till now when it may fairly be said that literary ability fully occupies the position to which, in virtue of its utility, it is righteously entitled. And so reasoning by analogy should it be ere long with actors; the same circumstances which so long stood between them and public estimation, stood for an almost equally long time between public estimation and literary men, and the results of those accidental circumstances are gradually becoming obsolete. What, then, remains to debar the actor from his share of social regard? we confess we cannot see what is still to shroud him in invidious mystery? we know of naught. And then, too, when he shall be traced out to his lair, and all his inner life revealed, when the curiosity, which has so long followed him, shall be satiated at length, what is it that we shall expect to see of him? and what is it that we shall see? Shall we find him but the painted exterior of a man, noble only in the fancies of others, himself debauched, depraved, inert? shall we find him a living lie, incapable of aught but artificial raptures, without emotions, affections, sympathy? or, shall we not perchance find that he is as other men, a little good, a little bad, with something still to be improved, and something which deserved a better fate than scorn?

Necessarily in close connection with the subject of actors is that of acting, and of more than ordinary interest at the present day. The reason we say of "more than ordinary interest," is because the present is a transition period, to the termination of which it is im-

possible for lovers of the drama to look without some anxiety. The old models are fast becoming obsolete, and few actors now aspire to fame except through the medium of originality. It is not enough now to endeavour to act well in the ordinary sense of the phrase—that is, in the sense in which our fathers understood good acting; a new reading must be given, or a new style introduced, to command applause and to achieve success. It is not to be denied that to a certain, and that a very considerable, extent, that this tendency is a desirable one, and it had especially become so latterly, when the mannerisms of the old school were carried to the highest pitch of absurdity, by second and third-rate actors aping the postures and delivery of the great masters. All who are conversant with theatricals at all are conversant with this type, the ranters, and with their absurd and wearisome conventionalities. There was the resolute *pose* in the middle of the stage for the delivery of a sentiment which we knew so well; the well-calculated three steps forward at the termination for a climax, and the look of ineffable disdain cast upon the audience, apparently suitable to all occasions. There was the artifice of the dialogue mathematical in its precision, when, at a given signal, but without any apparent cause, the two speakers would suddenly cross the stage to opposite corners, returning again in a similarly inane and collected manner, when another certain point was reached. And there was the regulation exit, most necessary of all! and the skip, or jerk, by which it was accompanied, which consisted in kicking one foot sharp upon the heel with the other, and performing a manoeuvre compounded of the first step of the *deux temps*, and the feat known in military drill as changing step. All these we remember but too well, and these are but types of the many blots which disfigured the old system. It was felt that some change was inevitable, and that in the dearth of both dramatic actors and authors, and, under the altered circumstances of modern taste, the ancient models were no longer sufficient to their end.

The change that came was probably the change that was most needed, as it certainly was one the most radical and complete. The new school of acting is, indeed, in most respects, the exact opposite of the old, and both in theory and method separated from it by very broad distinctions. We may, perhaps, be allowed to call it the *concentrative* as opposed to the *demonstrative* style, these expressions indicating pretty fairly the most striking characteristics of each. The old idea was to raise the voice and use gestures when it was desired to be more than ordinarily impressive—to *demonstrate*, in fact, by every natural power that could be brought into action, the force of the sentiments delivered. The new idea was, on the contrary, to lower the voice below its ordinary pitch at the impressive passages, and to deliver them with a *concentratéd* energy,

giving an idea of suppressed power, rather than a display of the power itself. The first was more robust, striking, and picturesque; the second claims to be more refined, dignified, and chiefly more of accord with reality and nature. This is the corner-stone of the whole argument against demonstrative acting. It is continually alleged, by the admirers of the new style, that it is more *real*, that it bears a nearer resemblance to what actually occurs in life, and is therefore more natural, consequently more fit. The whole object of acting, they say, is to represent with the greatest fidelity upon the stage what occurs in ordinary life, to "hold the mirror up to nature," as Shakspeare himself expressly declares, and this they contend is not to be accomplished by demonstration. "Who," they say, "ever saw a man under the influence of emotion throwing himself into extravagant postures, rolling his eyes in his head, and beating the air with his hands, as we see actors do upon the stage?" When persons in real life are resolving upon some deed in the future, or meditating upon one in the past, they do not accompany their reflections with gesticulation, nor do they intone their thoughts to suit the nature of them; which, nevertheless, is essential according to the demonstrative theory. But do they not rather concentrate their powers upon the matter under consideration and suppress all outward show? Is the conduct of actors of the old school a faithful picture of the conduct of persons under the circumstances which they portray? Does it give a just impression of what persons so placed commonly do? The answer to these questions is very simply—"No, it does not," with the addition that "neither is it intended so to do." The duty of an actor, the "mirror theory" notwithstanding, is not to represent nature as it has been at any given time or place, but as it might or could be under the circumstances supposed. If persons in real life do not gesticulate when they are thinking, neither do they commonly think aloud at all; if they do not exhibit all the outward signs of agitation which we are accustomed to expect from actors, it is solely because they have no necessity to impress their agitation upon themselves, seeing that they are from the first conscious of it. But precisely what is the duty of an actor is this:—to impress his agitation upon others; and all means which he can employ towards that end are legitimate and proper means. It is, indeed, in nothing but the use made of these means, that the difference between good and bad acting consists, for of what use would it be that an actor should himself feel his part, if he cannot make his audience sharers in his emotion?

The truth is, that this idea, and a great many other false ones connected with the dramatic art, proceeds from one radically mistaken notion which has at all times been much prevalent. This

notion is, that an audience at a theatrical representation conceives itself to be present at a real transaction instead of at a purely fictitious one, and sympathises, not so much with the efforts of the actors to entertain it, as with the mimic dangers and difficulties to which they are, throughout the piece, exposed—that it mistakes illusion for reality, and resents, accordingly, anything in the shape of exaggeration or even of unconventionality. But a very little reflection must prove the entire folly of this idea. If such were the case, how would it come that the worst characters of a play are constantly those the most applauded, and that such gloomy ruffians as Macbeth and Richard, and such unsympathetic villains as Iago and Iachimo, are precisely those the most often summoned before the curtain to receive the plaudits of an approving public? How would it come that tragedy would be otherwise than a painful exhibition?—that the presence in melodrama of deep distress, and the cruel torturings of passion, could be viewed with pleasure, and could contribute to enjoyment? But in reality it is exactly because people know that these effects are feigned, and these emotions simulated, that they tolerate them at all, and, according as they are simulated well or ill, that they accord to them the tribute of their admiration or the reverse. As works of art, and not as works of nature, they regard them, and by criterions of art, and not of nature, is it that they are necessarily judged.

What, then, becomes of the argument against demonstrative acting upon the plea that it is unnatural? Simply that exactly the opposite appears to be the case. The truly legitimate aim of stage representations is to exaggerate nature for the very purpose of making it appear more natural; and to the accomplishment of this its efforts are almost solely directed. For what other purpose is it that actors must paint their faces? or that plays must be constructed so as to contain striking and unusual situations? Why, the very scenery of a theatre, while professing to represent nature the most closely, must be painted unnaturally large for that very purpose, and so must everything of or belonging to it. What is nature in appearance to one or a few in private life and in a limited area, is not nature to a large and miscellaneous audience collected in a public building for the purpose of seeing actions, and passions, and events portrayed. But, moreover, demonstrative acting pre-supposes greater and more striking ability than concentrative; it pre-supposes many gifts unknown to its milder rival. An individual may be a good concentrative actor without, for instance, being a great elocutionist, or possessing a powerful and melodious voice, but he cannot be a good demonstrative one. Power and sympathy are about equally necessary to both—the power to move your audience with your author's words, the sympathy to comprehend and feel his

meaning ; but with these must be joined, in the latter case, a rare tact and self-command never to overstep the bounds of propriety, or to allow the expression of your passion to degenerate into extravagance. It is thus a good concentrative actor may be a good character actor ; but we doubt if he is ever as fit for the loftier and nobler flights of dramatic art as he who takes demonstration for his cue. There is a sublimity and grandeur about human passion when excited to the uttermost which demands something more than a tame reproduction for the sight of it to have its due weight with a spectator. Even in composition, intended only to be read, poets are aware of a certain necessity of fitting the sound of their language to the sentiments it is intended to express, rising when they rise, falling when they fall ; harsh and breathing of consonants and aspirates when the theme is stern and warlike ; soft, mellifluous, revelling in vowels and diphthongs, when of tranquillity or of love. How much more so, then, when poetry is spoken, should this beautiful rule of art be attended to ! and how much more perfectly will he fulfil his task who brings to the performance of it an harmonious voice and graceful person, the power of expressing, by his tones and gestures alone, the passion which he is supposed to feel, than he whose energy is wasted in concentration, and who has not considered it necessary to cultivate those rare abilities whose power over the imagination of the multitude is so undoubted and so great !

W. C. T.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE

ON board a tiny bark
 I gaily put to sea,
 The light winds crept to the silken sails,
 The ripples danced in glee.
 The air was sweet with the scent of flowers,
 Jubilant voices came from the shore,
 As the favouring gale played with the sail,
 And I toyed with the idle oar.

'Mid isles of beauty rare,
 Engirdled by green sea,
 My shallop glided merrily on
 To the small wave's melodie.
 Glad birds were singing amid the leaves,
 And water-lilies floated at will,
 By the verdant bank, where long and lank,
 Grey herons stood watchfully still.

Many a fathom down,
 Within the crystalline sea,
 Pebble and gem, and tangled weed,
 Were visible to me.
 I saw pale star-fish shine on the rocks,
 And downwards leaning, I seemed to hear
 Weird music sweet, as ever did greet
 Enchanted mortal's ear.

Forward bounded my bark,
 Out to the deep blue sea,
 Till the fairy isles were left afar
 Some leagues upon my lee.
 Then the winds waxed strong, and the waves arose
 With crested heads, like adders in wrath ;
 And to and fro small birds did go,
 Flitting athwart my path.

Black clouds came over the sky,
 Shadowing all the sea ;
 I shrank the sails to the bending masts
 To let the storm go free.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE

My frail boat stooped to the water's edge,
As stoopeth the tempest-troubled grain,
And loud with a sound, like hail on the ground,
Swept down the lashing rain.

I tossed with a soul in pain
Upon that awful sea ;
Till my pulses flagged, my heart grew sad
As a human heart can be.
I saw the flashing of signal guns,
I heard the breaker's sullen moan ;
Yet I gave no cry, for my tongue was dry
As sand on the desert stone.

At length a change did come
Over the angry sea,
Oceanward sped the grey sea-mew
From meadow and clover lea ;
And the waters, rocking themselves to rest,
Sank down to a delicious calm,
As I grappled the oar and pulled to the shore,
I chanted a thankful psalm.

Now merrily I do sail
On radiant, rippling seas,
Coasting the bank of a sunny land
By flowering shrubs and trees.
I have taken farewell of stormy clouds,
Surf-beating breakers and wintry gales ;
Joy sits laughing amid the shrouds,
And Hymen trims the sails.

ROBERT HANNAY.



THE POOR CLERGYMAN'S TALE

CHAPTER I.

I NEED not tell the reader why, on a hot, dusty day in August, I entered a small, mean coffee-shop, or eating-house, in a bye-street not far from St. Martin's-le-Grand. Suffice it to say that, on the occasion above cited, I found myself in temporary possession of a stained and greasy copy of yesterday's *Times*, together with a dark, turbid mixture in a cup before me, which a hulking lad of eighteen, with dirty shirt-sleeves rolled up to his elbows, had just brought me in response to my request for coffee. As I listlessly cast my eyes adown the long list of "wants" exhibited in the columns of the "Thunderer," I became aware of the presence, at a table opposite, of an individual who, like myself, was engaged in scanning the newspaper, but, unlike myself, with no listless or incurious air. On the contrary, his grey and somewhat bloodshot eye traversed column after column with an eagerness that told its own tale. I saw that he, too, was noting the varied "wants," which, meeting here as in a common centre, are drawn up, military fashion, in long, unbroken lines, ready for the inspection of all whom they may concern—a most comprehensive class, reaching from the nobleman in search of a valet to the publican in need of a potboy. There was something in his shambling, restless, and, at times, tremulous air, which took hold of my sympathy and excited my curiosity. He was dressed in rusty black; there was about him a decayed but decidedly clerical aspect, which even his unmistakable poverty could not conceal or obliterate. The crumpled and well-worn black gloves, lying on the napless but smoothly-brushed hat that stood on the table beside him; the yellow-white wisp of linen which, unwholesome and flabby, surrounded his neck just where his chin almost touched the waistcoat, buttoned up so closely to meet it—bespoke,

at a glance, the clergyman of broken fortunes. His hair was iron-grey, and thinning with premature age, his cheeks hollow, his eye hid beneath thick, overhanging brows, his mouth—the lower lip especially—somewhat pendulous—bibulous, in a word; internally, unnaturally purpled—externally, scaly with the fever of drink.

I need not narrate how I got into conversation with the stranger, nor by what slow degrees I wormed myself into his confidence. Suffice it to say that, not many evenings after our first interview, I found myself seated *tête-à-tête* with him, with a bottle of Maraschino between us, which, to do him justice, my new acquaintance was not at all backward in putting to its proper use.

He began by saying:—"It is now nearly eight-and-forty years ago that I left ——— University, a young and hopeful man of two-and-twenty. I had studied hard, for my father had struggled for years with adverse circumstances, and it was with difficulty he supplied me with the means of supporting myself during my academical career. Hardly had I returned home for a short period of leisure—a brief resting-place, so to speak, between my college life and the period of my entering on a curacy which had been promised me in the West of England—when my father died, and with him terminated the annuity on which he had entirely depended during the latter years of his life.

"The proceeds of the sale of his furniture did not much more than suffice for the payment of my father's debts and funeral expenses. It was, therefore, with a light purse and a heavy heart that I turned my back on the scenes of my boyhood and adolescence, fraught with many a pleasant memory of days spent in joy or peace with young companions as gladsome as myself. In a few days I found myself in the place which was to be the scene of my future labours—and of my coming troubles."

He sighed, lifted his glass, held it for a moment between his eye and the lamp, in the manner of a connoisseur, then drained it, and continued—

"It was a large, straggling village, lying on the Somersetshire sea-shore, with a pleasant look-out towards the setting sun. It will suit me better to call the place by the fictitious name of Whitecliff, than to tell you its real appellation. At the foot of a bold and rather barren headland, jutting out into the channel, and forming one side of a charming bay, stretched out for many a mile a rather narrow beach of sand and shingle. At the back of this beach, nestled closely under the huge cliffs, stood a group of fishermen's huts. Above them rose up, in massive grandeur, pile upon pile, the grey, weather-stained, lichen-clad rocks. Here and there a winding walk gave access to the downs above, where the sheep of the neighbouring farmers depastured on the fine, short herbage. A

mile or so inland, the soil and aspect of the country rapidly improved, and the land was carefully cultivated. Spacious farm-houses stood here and there, with ricks of wheat and hay, and substantial barns and outbuildings. Even the labourers' cottages, if not picturesque objects from the high road, had nothing of the squalid aspect which poverty assumes in some of our large towns. Altogether, the parish was a well-to-do, thriving agricultural district, and, after a day's survey, I returned to my lodgings, rather pleased that my lot had fallen for the present in so agreeable a neighbourhood. Nor, to say the truth, was my satisfaction at all diminished by the reflection that, as my rector almost constantly resided in the milder atmosphere of Southern France, my influence and position among the parishioners would thereby be considerably promoted.

"Sunday came, and with it a large congregation for so scattered a parish assembled in Whitecliff Church, curious to see and to hear 'the new curate.'" It was with some nervousness that I mounted the pulpit. I was young, and practice had not yet enabled me to bear unmoved the scrutiny of an audience, however uncultured. But, as I advanced with my discourse, my nerves strung themselves to the task, and ere I had finished it, I felt a consciousness of success, and it was with a flush of self-gratulation that I concluded the services of the morning.

"In country parishes it is usual for the more considerable parishioners to remain some minutes in the churchyard, for the purpose of exchanging a few words of greeting with the minister who has just been leading their devotions. On this particular Sunday it so happened that the 'squire' of the neighbourhood—Armitage by name—was from home. There were, however, some half-dozen substantial men—yeomen and tenant-farmers—who pressed forward from the crowd of gaping rustics to give me a west-country greeting. The grip and shake of the hand with which they expressed their good-will was something tremendous. For my part, I responded to their honest warmth as heartily as my more artificial habits would allow me; nor was it without emotions of a more pleasing kind that I exchanged civilities with the wives of my stalwart friends, and, as I felt, underwent another and a more minute scrutiny from their bright-eyed and rosy-cheeked daughters. Their daughters—ah! There was one of them with whose destiny I was fated, ere long, to be irrevocably identified. On that day was forged by fate the first link of that chain which through many a year I have been compelled to drag up and down this weary world, and from which I shall never be free until death strikes it off from my aged limbs."

There was a tear of maudlin self-pity in his grey eye as he said

this. I looked at the gaunt wrinkled form and face before me, and asked myself, "Can *this* being ever have inspired the tender passion?"

He seemed to read my thoughts, for he went on—"I was then but two-and-twenty; life was before me, and Hope lit up the prospect with her own gaudy colours. I was as upright as a dart; active as a panther; my eye had the bright fulness of youth, my cheek, the glow of health; these grey thin locks were then black as the raven's wing; by birth, education, and habits, I was a gentleman—though a poor one. These were qualifications which, in the eyes of rustic beauty, accustomed to the boisterous *bonhomie* of their bucolic admirers, placed me on a peculiar footing. As a clergyman, I was looked up to with a feeling of reverential friendship; modified, however, by a sort of unacknowledged proviso, that, after all, I was but the curate. I could exact neither dues nor tithes. Had I been the rector now, my reception would have been more ceremonious, but less friendly; but with the young curate, everybody could feel at home. I feel, however, that, in making these remarks, I am anticipating. The kindly welcome I speak of belongs rather to my subsequent history: let me revert to the events of my first Sunday in my new cure. Whether it was owing to the exalted and excited state of my mind, after church, or whether, had I met her under other and calmer circumstances, I should have loved Lucy Barrington, I cannot say. Love, unlike any other passion, starts into full-blown existence in an instant of time. Other mental phenomena have their stages of growth; their germ, perfection, and decay, succeed each other, as naturally as do those stages in the life of a tree or a flower. But love, if it be worthy the name, starts into being, Minerva-like, with a bound—perfect nature, complete, having no need of growth, or slow process of development; for in one instant it has filled the whole man, and taken captive all his faculties as with the irresistible strength of a giant.

"So it was with me. As I walked home with Lucy and her father, it was as though I had been suddenly gifted with wings. I felt an exaltation of soul which was altogether new to me. I seemed lifted above this earth, with all its petty, grovelling pursuits, into a higher state of existence. I was intoxicated, as it were, with an overwhelming sense of happiness. My mind had room but for one grand idea, before which all other ideas shrank and shrivelled up like parchment before the fire.

"We reached the house of the Barringtons, an irregularly-built farmhouse on the outskirts of the parish, many-gabled and antique, full of odd nooks and corners, and altogether a sort of "old-world" place, as the folks in that part of the kingdom not inaptly describe it.

“ Seated at table, I found that the family consisted of Mr. Barrington and his daughter. Mrs. Barrington had died many years since, and the household duties were performed by Lucy, with the assistance of a couple of red-armed and apple-cheeked maidens. The table, however, was set for four persons, and who was to be the fourth was presently explained by the entrance of another guest—a tall, handsome, well-grown fellow, who was introduced to me as Mr. Henry Armitage, nephew of ‘the squire’—the usual time-honoured and recognised title of the village potentate.

“ Henry Armitage, apparently, had not expected to meet me or any one else at the Barringtons’ that day. He looked at me with some surprise, shook me warmly by the hand, and then, seating himself opposite me, began to do justice to the good things before him. I noticed that he drank very freely of Mr. Barrington’s strong and sparkling ‘October’—nor did the tankard stay long with him after dinner; and yet, notwithstanding these copious draughts, wound up, at length, with a couple of glasses of spirits and water, he did not seem any the worse for the fluids he had swallowed.

“ Mr. Barrington was a ‘hearty’ host. Following the custom which then prevailed all over the country, he ‘pressed’ his guests to eat, almost forcing on their plates huge slices of mutton, and compelling them to consume the choicest cuts from a fine turkey. He had a notion, apparently, that, unless we individually consumed enough for two able-bodied labourers at least, we were not ‘making ourselves at home.’ Nevertheless, neither he nor his daughter followed their own precepts. Mr. Barrington was tall, rather spare, with a slight stoop; but he was strongly knit, and in his youth must have been very active and powerful, for he still retained an amount of endurance which would have tired out many a younger man. I found that he was passionately fond of shooting, and that his achievements in that line were as great, if not greater, than even those of Henry Armitage, who was young enough to be his son. His eyes were the most noticeable feature in his countenance. They were a bright grey, inclining to blue, and as they ‘glinted’ from beneath a pair of thick iron-grey eye-brows, their power of penetration was at times startling. They seemed to look *through* you. It was difficult to analyse the feeling which that lightning-like glance left behind it. For my own part, whenever mine caught his, and dwelt for a moment on its peculiar expression, I could not help a transient feeling of distrust; and yet, the next moment, so frank and cordial was Mr. Barrington’s manner, that I felt disposed to blame my own want of charity, and to attribute the sensation to my overheated state of mind.

“ The conversation during my visit was such as the ordinary

topics of the day suggested. I remember nothing of it except that the sound of Lucy's voice had in it for me a charm I had never noticed before in human speech. She was no heroine—only a handsome, well-grown girl, full of good nature, blessed with good health, and a sound, practical understanding. Such is my present estimate of her; but *then*, Love, the mighty magician, held before my eyes a glass, which made her, to my mental vision, a goddess of perfection, surrounded with an aureola—a being to be approached with awful admiration, because separated from the rest of her sex by the special perfections with which nature had endowed her above all other women whom I had ever beheld.

“Mr. Barrington, I found, was a class-leader among the Methodists, a body who possessed a chapel in the next parish. Moreover, he occasionally officiated as a preacher, whenever an emergency necessitated his appearance in the pulpit. Nevertheless he sometimes attended the parish church; hence his presence there on the first morning of my ministrations in Whitecliff.

“I discovered the *quasi* clerical phase of my host's character, not from any reference to the subject which emanated from himself—for, to do him justice, he was a man not inclined to self-laudation—but from the arrival, towards the conclusion of our meal, of a solemn-looking personage, clad in black, with white tie to match, who, I was given to understand, officiated as ‘the pillar’ of the neighbouring conventicle, where he preached often as opportunity offered, besides filling all sorts of offices necessary to the existence and well-being of the society. He arrived most opportunely at ‘pudding time;’ and although he declared he had just dined, contrived nevertheless to do ample justice to Miss Lucy's good fare, washing it down, by way of a digester, with a couple of glasses of strong brandy and water. Having thus refreshed his inner man, our solemn acquaintance seized his hat, and walked off in company with our host Barrington. As they disappeared through the low gate which led through the dwarf wall at the end of the garden, I could not help contrasting the two men, so different were they in their appearance, and so opposite in character.

“I was compelled to return to the parish church, where the bell had already begun to peal for the afternoon service. I asked Lucy and her friend to accompany me. She consented, and left the room where she had dined. Something in my manner must have struck young Armitage as peculiar, for I caught his eye directed towards my face in an inquiring and suspicious manner; he rose, and with a careless good-bye sauntered out into the stable. The next moment I was in the seventh heaven again, for Lucy was walking by my side, and was listening rather silently and with downcast eyes to my voluble talk. Shall I confess it? Yes, I was weak enough to wish to dazzle her

understanding by a display of my varied acquirements. I, a scholar and a gentleman, with a mind stored by observation and instruction at the fountain head of knowledge, laid myself out to catch the admiration of a simple country girl, whose only intellectual gifts were an ordinary English education and good sterling common-sense. Her sense told her that she had better remain silent rather than display her ignorance. So I rattled on from one subject to another, her conviction of my vast superiority becoming painfully evident to her own mind as I proceeded, and her admiration of the new curate increasing accordingly.

“It was not without a secret pang that I saw young Armitage lounge into church during the reading of the second lesson. There was a grand pew set apart for the devotions of the squire and his family; but, instead of entering it, he seated himself beside Lucy Barrington, and at the conclusion of the service escorted her home, a fact which I ascertained from my own observation. I returned alone to my lodging; my mind was in a whirl of excitement, and so, refusing one or two invitations from some of my new parishioners, (for I longed to be alone, that I might indulge my day-dreams to the full), I turned up the steep water-worn road which led to my place of abode. It was a small house, or rather large cottage, perched on one of the bold cliffs overlooking the sea. A garden, where flowers and vegetables throve side by side, lay on a gentle slope between the cottage and the cliffs, terminating abruptly on the edge of the precipice. At the foot of the cliffs the waves chafed and roared amidst an assemblage of dark fantastic-looking rocks; the white spray dashed upwards high into the air, where it was caught by the wind and dispersed in showers of mist. This commotion lasted only whilst the tide was at its highest; as it fell the water left betwixt the rocks and the edge of the surf a narrow strip of sand and shingle which might be traversed safely twice every day.

“The master of the house in which I had my bachelor lodging had been gathered to his fathers some three years before I took up my quarters in the little parlour overlooking the sea, which once was his. The widow, with the assistance of her sturdy boy, cultivated the garden aforesaid. A few cows browsed industriously amidst the stunted bushes and short grass which contrived to exist along that rock-bound coast. Their milk enabled her to ‘make the two ends meet,’ as she phrased it—though I suspect that the ‘lodger,’ when she had one, formed the chief item in her revenue.

“Before he had gone to his rest in the village churchyard, Mrs. Trevelyan’s lord and master had erected, for his own especial ease and delight, an arbour. A fantastic structure it was, sure enough. Its materials, by right, belonged to Neptune. Neither Flora nor Pomona had anything in common with the old boat which Trevelyan

had ingeniously manufactured into a smoking booth, and had braided and festooned with blooming jasmine and fragrant honeysuckle. But, putting aside its ugliness, it formed a pleasant look-out in fine weather; and here, telescope in hand, the old salt had passed many of the last days of his life, smoking the pipe of peace, or examining, through his glass, the various ships, steamers, and craft of all sorts which crossed his field of vision.

“The harbour, being situated close to the edge of the cliff, commanded an uninterrupted view of the beach. In truth, it was a pleasant retreat, either for reading or for whiling away a leisure hour in the society of a choice Havannah. On the evening of my first Sunday in Whitecliff (I remember the incident even now, because it formed the first link in an important chain of coming events), I had wandered into the garden with my cigar, and presently found myself seated in my favourite spot, my eye wandering abstractedly over the darkened expanse, my mind dwelling on the varied events of the day, and especially on Lucy Barrington, whose face, voice, and undefinable gracefulness of person and carriage I was unable to banish from my mind—although, as a clergyman just entering on an important charge, my thoughts ought to have been otherwise employed.

“How long I sat there I did not know until I returned to the house. The night had closed in, after a beautiful sunset; a cool, moist air from the sea gently played in my hair—the monotonous swell of the waves rose and fell with a soothing murmur. All nature was hushed. Save the restless sea, there was no sound to break the intense stillness of the hour.

“I was in the act of rising, for it was getting late and chill, when my ear caught the distant tread of a horse's feet; the next moment I perceived that the animal was coming along the sandy strip at the foot of the rocks. Then I heard the sound of wheels, also muffled by the sand, and evidently approaching the spot where I stood. My curiosity was instantly on the alert: the hour—the place—were so extraordinary, that I strained eye and ear to ascertain, if possible, who it was riding there at such a time. But the darkness defeated my intention. All I could contrive to make out was, that the vehicle was a cart of light construction, drawn by a single horse, and that the driver was seated in it. He did not look up, and, if he had, he could hardly have perceived me amidst the group of lilac bushes where I had happened to be standing. I watched for a few minutes, until the vehicle disappeared behind the rocks.

“Suddenly the profile of the driver stood out in relief against the glassy sea, just where a last lingering strip of light glimmered beneath the western horizon. The next moment he was gone, but

that point of time had left on my mind a startling impression—a tingling sensation which passed through my nervous system like an electric shock. But, as I stepped into the little parlour through the small French window which opened into the garden, the impression passed away as suddenly as it had come to me. 'No,' I thought, 'I *must* be mistaken. It could *not* have been Mr. Barrington.' As I undressed for bed, I reflected that the chances of a mistake were as a hundred to one. I had not been in the parish a week, and had formed but few acquaintances. Other men might be found in the neighbourhood so closely resembling Mr. Barrington, as, under the circumstances, to deceive the quickest eyesight. But hardly had I laid my head on the pillow, ere, with all the fidelity of a young man's excited imagination, I seemed to stand again on the same spot, and saw as clearly as with the natural eye the aquiline nose, the large chin, and stooping figure of Lucy's father. I slept at last, and when morning came dismissed my overnight's impression as too absurd to merit a moment's examination.

"Two days after this incident, a rumour spread through the neighbourhood that a daring and clever burglary had been effected in the house of a gentleman situated about twelve miles from Whitecliff. The robbery had been perpetrated at an early hour on Monday morning. The coincidence of the adventure on the sands with the time when the crime was perpetrated struck me as strange; but further reflection dissipated my half-formed suspicions; and a visit from Mr. Barrington, accompanied by his daughter, fully restored my feeling of friendship for the father and of love to Lucy. To be sure, I did not mention what I had seen—somehow, I felt tongue-tied on the subject. Nevertheless, I brought all my knowledge of physiognomy to my aid, and perused my friend's face with a closeness which I fancied brought a flush to his cheek. But it passed away, and his manner was so cordial, so cheerful, and unrestrained, that I dismissed the unpleasant subject at once, not without a twinge of self-reproach for having harboured a thought to the disparagement of so excellent a man. Soon afterwards, happening to take up the county paper, I saw an account of the robbery, supplemented by a report of the apprehension and committal for trial of two men suspected of the offence.

"My visits to Lucy now became frequent, and their object could not long be concealed either from her family or from the gossips of the neighbourhood. But I soon discovered that my position as her recognised lover was disputed by Henry Armitage, whom I met at the farm much oftener than I thought desirable. There was no open acknowledgment of the feeling of rivalry which we both felt to exist between us. Nevertheless, there it was; and no show of

friendliness could smooth over the mutual repugnance which we felt to be growing up into an inveterate hostility. He had been an old friend of the Barringtons—had known them in his boyhood—had lounged in and out, in his easy way, for years—had contracted for Lucy a sort of attachment, half brotherly, half lover-like. He had never *spoken* of love, for, with his inherent indolence, he had never formed any definite future for himself; and the idea of a wife was much too formidable a one to be seriously entertained. But the appearance of a rival in the field was a fact not to be ignored, even by Henry's indolent nature. I was not long in observing certain outward and visible indications which told me that my enemy was gathering up his forces for the conflict, and that he was determined to throw all his energies into the struggle. He became exceedingly attentive to the style and fit of his attire; his manner became more polished; he neglected none of those little acts of politeness which a young lady reasonably expects from a lover. Of course, his relationship to the squire stood him in good stead; whilst my position as a poor curate could not but place my pretensions in an unfavourable light when contrasted with those of my antagonist. I discovered, too, from the gossip of my landlady, that Henry, though, for appearance sake, called by the squire 'my nephew,' in reality was his illegitimate son. Some one-and-twenty years ago there had been a 'delightful' scandal pervading the tea-tables of the country-side for miles around Armitage Hall, touching certain indiscretions of a fair but frail domestic in the squire's household, the master of which was involved in the meshes of the tale. When she could no longer decently remain in the house of her bachelor master, she disappeared, never to return. It was said that she had died, but this was never known for certainty. There was one family in the parish which claimed distant kindred with her, but they were people of no very good repute, and they professed ignorance as to the whereabouts or the fate of their relative. But from that time forward these people had become, somehow or other, better off than before. Twelve years elapsed, and one night Squire Armitage arrived at the hall-door from a journey, accompanied by a sprightly, good-looking lad, whom he called his nephew. But the secret could not be hid, and so it came generally to be understood that, though the entailed property could not be his, yet that Squire Armitage would take good care of the lad's interests hereafter, and that he would one day be the inheritor of considerable wealth.

"Lucy was a girl of good sound sense. She was no heroine of romance, however richly my excited imagination may have endowed her at that time. As the rustic phrase is, she 'knew which side her bread was buttered;' and it would have been strange

indeed if a young woman of her practical tendencies had not preferred the scion of the Hall to a wooer whose only recommendation was his personal qualifications, derived from education and refinement. Perhaps, if the contest had rested on personal recommendations alone, irrespective of pecuniary considerations, I might, from the first, have been the winner in the race. But Lucy had not that blind trust in an unknown future which sometimes leads young girls to risk everything for the sake of 'love and a cottage.' Nor, like Miss Lydia Languish, in Sheridan's comedy of 'The Rivals,' had she stimulated the romance of her nature by diligently perusing the forgeries of fiction until she fancied herself one of the creations of the novelists' teaming brain, and was ready to perpetrate any absurdity so that she could but find a precedent for it in her favourite reading.

"Matters stood thus for some months. Henry and I continued to visit pretty frequently at Mr. Barrington's, but for nearly a year the relative positions of us all remained apparently unchanged. Many a time did I vainly make up my mind to tell Lucy of my love, although she must long since have read it in my voice, my looks, my conduct. One fair autumnal evening, however, was destined to bring this treacherous calm to a close. I remember the very spot where I first felt my hopes perish within me.

"It was a golden evening. The ruddy sunset glittered on the church spire, and set the weathercock aflame. The air was full of evening quietude. Peace and beauty rested on hill-side and meadow, cottage and hall—peace such as settles at eventide on rustic churchyards, and falls on harvest-fields which all day long have resounded with the talk and laugh of the merry reapers—beauty which lights up every hill, and shadows every purple hollow, turning to poetry what from the dusty highway had looked an hour before but a dull, prosaic landscape.

"There was at the back of Mr. Barrington's farm a small orchard, through which a pathway led into the homestead. That evening it chanced that I took this very pathway. The shadow of a high brick wall fell coolly on one half of this enclosure; but where the sunlight streamed over its moss-grown summit, it glowed warmly on mellow apple and russet leaves. Beneath one of these sun-burnished trees,—a fantastic, writhing thing it seemed, so curiously had its limbs twisted and knotted themselves in a hundred grotesque contortions,—sat on a garden-seat Henry and Lucy. I was almost close upon them before I remarked the figures on the seat, and then I saw something that fixed me for a moment like a statue, devoid of the power of motion. His arm was round her waist,—their lips were pressed together,—their eyes were full of love,—the light of love was upon their faces.

“Several days elapsed before I could summon up courage enough to visit the Barringtons. I remained at home as much as possible, brooding over my disappointment, nourishing revengeful feelings against Henry Armitage, and foreswearing ‘the sex’ as false and fickle; persuading myself the while that I had been very ill-used by both Lucy and her lover. Nearly a week had thus passed away, when I was roused into something like action and self-forgetfulness by receiving a message from the village surgeon, requesting my presence at the bed-side of one Jem Ward, a notorious smuggler and a regular ‘rough,’ who had been desperately wounded in a fight with the Revenue officers of His Majesty’s cutter, ‘Beagle.’ The King’s ship, it seemed, had pounced on Ward and his associates whilst in the act of running a cargo of Dutch spirits from a lugger which had been observed standing on and off in the dusk of the evening. There had been a hand-to-hand fight, in which the smugglers had mostly got off scot-free, leaving, however, the ‘kegs,’ as a ‘contraband of war,’ in the hands of the Revenue men. In the confusion, Ward had crawled off to his cottage, badly wounded, and there he lay hovering between life and death. He got well eventually, much to the amazement of the surgeon, who, as I said, had sent for me to visit the wretched man, in what everyone anticipated would be his final moments.

“This distressing incident broke the force of a blow which must otherwise have prostrated me on a sick-bed. There was something in the smuggler, reckless and godless as he was, which took hold of my sympathies. Nor, as you may be aware, was it then thought a crime, by men of his class, to evade the excise laws. The bold and adventurous smuggler was rather a hero in the eyes of the hardy seafaring population of that rock-bound coast, who were ever found ready to lend their willing assistance whenever the lugger appeared off the place of rendezvous.

“About the same time, too, the news of more house robberies again became frequent. These burglaries were mostly perpetrated in the mansions of the neighbouring gentry, not exactly in the immediate vicinity of Whitecliff, but at distances of twenty or thirty miles from the village. In those days intelligence did not travel so fast or so accurately as in this epoch of railways and electric telegraphs. Still, the magnitude and boldness of these outrages were such as to fix public attention on them, and to set in motion the machinery which the law then possessed for tracing the perpetrators of crime. Bow Street runners were procured from town. Locks, bolts, and bars were strengthened, or added, far and near. The cleverness with which the thief had carried on his operations, and the tact with which he had contrived to remove all traces of his retreat, after possessing himself of the booty, extorted the admiration

of the officers, who unanimously pronounced the 'work' to be 'first-rate,' and the 'job' to be done decidedly 'clean.' Still, with all their experience and tact, the Bow Street men were unable to hit 'the trail.' They were forced to confess themselves beaten by the burglar's superior sagacity; and, after pottering about the various localities where these mysterious crimes had been perpetrated, and consuming some weeks in the quest, the defeated 'runners' quietly stole back again to town.

"But, during these weeks, important events had occurred affecting Henry Armitage and his suit with the fair Lucy. With these events I had no immediate connection; they arose from his attachment to Miss Barrington—now beginning to be openly discussed by the gossips of the neighbourhood—and the opposition which he met with from his 'uncle' (as that gentleman still chose to be called), who, on learning what had passed between the contracting parties, at once sternly forbade the further progress of the engagement. My visits to the Barringtons had gradually been resumed, but, of course, had become much less frequent than formerly, and latterly they had meant nothing more than simple manifestations of a friendly feeling; for I had, as I thought, wrestled down my passion, and as I had never openly spoken to Lucy of love, it was comparatively easy for me to fall back upon my friendship for the family, as the excuse for my continued interest in her and her father.

"In this capacity of half-friend, half-pastor, I soon got on a footing of intimacy which insensibly won my way into the confidence of the family at the farm. Even Henry, when he perceived that he had nothing further to fear from me, resumed his naturally frank and open bearing towards me. And so, in time, it came to pass that the family affairs of the Barringtons were discussed in my presence without reserve, and, amongst the rest, the opposition of 'the squire' to the intended nuptials.

"This last-named topic, which eventually became the engrossing subject of all our talk—till, sooth to say, it became to me not a little wearisome,—never failed to rouse Henry's hot and impulsive nature, and to draw forth from him the wildest declarations, touching his determination to have his own way in the matter, and his ire at a control which he felt to be both hateful and irresistible. He reminded me of a high-spirited colt which first feels the curb. Fear, surprise, and anger alternately shook him to the very depths of his nature. His uncle had given him a month to consider the matter, the alternative being either to renounce the engagement, or 'to quit the Hall, and shift for himself.'

"'What can I do?' he would bitterly exclaim. 'Had I a profession, I could easily make my way in the world, like many a

better man before me. But my uncle has taught me nothing. I have been brought up in idleness, and now am become so dependent on him for everything, that he has me completely in his power.'

"Various expedients were proposed, one being that he should marry Lucy and join Mr. Barrington in the farm; but to this proposal Mr. B., for some reason, steadily objected; nor, to say the truth, did the proposal of hard work at all seem to agree with Mr. Henry. It seemed to me that, notwithstanding his vapouring, there was a want of decision of character underlying his mental constitution. No two days was he in the same mind. In one thing only was he steadfast, and that was his love for Lucy. But his plans for winning and wearing her were visionary, almost childish, and even to my unpractised eye betokened a want of worldly experience, which, while I could not but smile at, did not cause me the least surprise, when I reflected on the very culpable manner in which his youth had been allowed to pass away by his natural guardian, uncultivated by observation or tuition.

"His 'uncle,' I found, was a cold, hard man, of a grasping and avaricious nature—one who made no friends, and had but one good feature in his character,—namely, his love for poor Harry, his nephew-son. It was for Henry that the old man was saving, and scheming, and investing; and it was the object of his ambition to see his darling Henry 'well married,' meaning, married to a number of broad acres and a handsome sum in the five per cents, as they were then. This attachment for a farmer's daughter struck at the root of the fabric which he had been years raising, and his anger was all the more intense in proportion to his love for his son, whose prospects would be utterly blasted unless something interposed to prevent the match.

"The last day of the month arrived, but no compromise had been effected between the Armitages. The evening came, and with it Henry, as usual, made his appearance at the Barringtons' fireside. I happened to look in the same evening, for I was anxious to see how the matter would end, and, besides, a vague hope whispered within me that, after all, something might turn up which would one day give me the prize. Henry was flushed and excited. I saw by his heated face and sparkling eye that he had taken more wine than was good for him. He talked loudly and laughed boisterously; but beneath all this show of bravery, I saw the workings of a mind distressed, and the pangs of a heart ill at ease.

"There was a prolonged leave-taking, after supper, in another room, of course, so that what took place can never be certainly known. No doubt Henry talked a deal of nonsense, after the manner of lovers in similar circumstances. But on Mr. Barrington's asking him what he intended to do, he had but one answer—

“ ‘Marry her, sir, to be sure.’

“ ‘Marry her?’ answered the father, dubiously; ‘and what then? How do you intend to live?’

“ Poor Henry looked hard at his intended father-in-law, but the stern resolved face did not encourage him. He twisted his hat nervously, and said, ‘Oh, as to that, I have no doubt that something or other will turn up. My uncle will relent when he finds that opposition is useless. But a few weeks or months and I shall be back again in the Hall—dear Lucy will be the sweet mistress of the old place—and we will have it done up grandly to receive her.’ He feebly smiled as he concluded his aerial picture, but there was no response on Mr. Barrington’s hard features. He replied—

“ ‘And what if Mr. Armitage does *not* relent?’

“ ‘Why in that case we must decide as to what it would be best to do.’

“ ‘Mr. Armitage, if you have no better answer than that, after the month you have taken to consider, I can only say that, until you *have* a better answer than that, you don’t marry a daughter of mine. Good night!’

“ Mr. Barrington withdrew, leaving poor Henry, as the sailors say, ‘with the wind taken out of his sails.’

“ I must confess I pitied him as he departed. His usually good-humoured face had an expression of pain upon it which I had never seen there before. These impetuous and impulsive natures are susceptible of tortures such as colder temperaments can scarcely comprehend.

“ Report said (and the assertion was founded, I believe, on the authority of the few servants who garrisoned the Hall), that when Henry reached home he found his uncle up, and waiting to receive him. Voices were heard in angry altercation, and this continued for some time. The following morning Henry had disappeared from the mansion.

“ The next news of him was that he was living with his mother’s relations—a low and disreputable lot, who were located in a remote part of the large parish of which I had the cure. For some few weeks, I saw little of him, and that little did not redound to his credit. More than once he was decidedly the worse for liquor. On another occasion I saw him in close consultation with Jem Ward, the daring smuggler, of whom I have already spoken. This man had recovered from his wounds after all hope of his restoration had been given up. With surprising luck, he had not only given death the slip, but justice also; for his trial at the assizes had resulted in an acquittal, so cleverly had his counsel confounded the intellects of the jury. These gentlemen, on their part, needed little persuasion to recognise the innocence of a man about whom the

very worst that could be said was that he had outwitted 'the gaugers'—no very black sin in the eyes of a Somersetshire jury of those days.

"I must confess I felt sorry to see even my rival in Lucy's affections hand and glove with so dubious a character. I resolved to remonstrate with him on the spot, and was trying to overtake the pair, when Ward, hearing me behind him, looked round, and they separated just where three roads met. I saw that Henry wished to avoid me, and so desisted from my design.

"Poor Lucy began to look pale and ill. Henry, indeed, still visited her rather frequently, and was evidently as fond as ever of her. But his love now bore a widely different expression to what it had in happier times. He seemed to labour under a depression of spirits, which yielded to but one remedy—the stimulus of drink. That elevation once attained, his affection glowed with a fiery ardour inspired by the spirit-bottle. When these fits were upon him, I have seen Lucy look to me with an appealing glance, which bespoke what her tongue would never have uttered. She actually feared him, and would not for the world be left alone with him. I pitied her, and remained. As for Mr. Barrington, he neither encouraged nor forbade Henry's visits. All he had to say to him was comprised in a short sentence, which ran thus:—'Directly you can obtain Mr. Armitage's consent, Lucy is yours. You can do nothing to support her, and I have worked too hard for what little I have to throw it away on a son-in-law who has too much gentility to be useful, and no means to carry out his gentility.' Thus Mr. Barrington showed himself to be a thorough worshipper of mammon. Under the mask of affection for his child, his hard, cold, avaricious nature might be seen in all its deformity. This state of things went on so long that I often wondered that Lucy did not take the law into her own hands, and contrive to marry her wild, unhappy lover secretly. I know not whether he ever proposed to her this extreme step; if he did, her calm good sense would, I feel sure, dissuade her from taking it. I have often heard her say they were both young, and could afford to wait. Her submission to her stern, inflexible parent often extorted my admiration, especially when I reflected on the fact that he might easily have had the young people to live with him, if he had chosen; for he was a man well-to-do in the world, and one who was known to have been growing comparatively rich for years past. Indeed, it was a common remark that 'all Barrington touched turned into gold.' Let the harvest be never so bad, or the murrain never so destructive, Barrington contrived to prosper in spite of it all. No wonder that many envied him, and some spoke evil of him. What, then, could hinder this prosperous man from taking his son-in-law into his own

home? This was the question I used, at that time, to ask myself. Little did I dream that it would soon be answered in so awful a manner.

“But before I proceed to narrate those events, I will briefly allude to my own feelings with regard to Lucy, because much of my subsequent conduct, evil as it was, may be palliated when you come to know the force of the temptation which led me astray. Ever since I had seen the young couple on the orchard seat, as I have described them to you, I had regarded my passion as hopeless. We all know that love is fed by hope, and by degrees I had so far mastered my love for Lucy by the simple expedient of representing it to my own mind as lying beyond the pale of any reasonable expectation that it could ever be returned, as to quench it beneath the ashes of my young desires, and there it lay to all appearance extinct and dead. But I did not know the force of my own intense longing for that love which it seemed never could be mine. It was still vital, still instinct with life and power, waited but the warmth of hope's bright day to start into being, and appal even myself with its terrible potency.

“It was a chill November evening; the sun had sunk over the sea sickly and wan, and the brief leaden twilight had been succeeded by a night of utter blackness. Low fitful gusts swept in from the ocean, rattling the seared foliage where it still lingered scantily on bush and hedgerow. The moan of the troubled waves, as they chafed and foamed amongst the rocks and caverns of that wild coast line, mingled with the rough of the eddying blast.

“I had just made up my mind to a quiet evening in my bachelor lodgings,—had placed my slippered foot on the fender, and was in the act of luxuriously cutting the leaves of one of Byron's great poems, then new from the press, and smelling of the shop. (Oh! that sweet perfume of a new book, so grateful to the nostril of the bibliolater; with what an extatic antepast does he pause over the feast that lies before him! The virgin pages all stainless and uncut, and about to yield up their sweet, and as yet unknown delights to the loving mind that gently woos them for his own!) Hardly had I cut half-a-dozen leaves, when a knock at the door rang through the small house. Presently, my landlady presented herself in my sitting-room, holding the door as she spoke, after the manner of her tribe, and telling me that Silas Jenkins's boy had come for me: ‘His mother's worse, and not likely to last the night, and would I step out and just see the lad?’ Of course, I was obliged to comply. Wistfully did I lay down my precious companion. My boots, which I had, as I thought, discarded for the night, were resumed, with the addition of a pair of gaiters; and before long I found myself threading the mazes of the muddy lanes, under the guidance of Silas Jenkins's boy aforesaid.

“The nearest way to the cottage where lay the moribund woman, lay through the domain surrounding Armitage Hall. There might have been forty acres or thereabouts within the enclosure; though originally intended for a park, and well wooded in some parts, in others the timber had been felled by the present squire, and the open spaces thriftily converted into a sheep-run. Everything about the mansion bore the impress of the same meanness of spirit: the stables and coach-houses wanted repairs; here and there the tiles had blown from their roofs and still lay heaped in mud-grown fragments, where they had fallen years ago; the doors were gone, or hung slantwise on broken hinges. In the house the same neglect was everywhere manifest: a portion of the servants' offices had long ago been shut up, and looked damp and desolate enough; even in those parts of the domestic department of the Hall where a few servants still lingered there were windows stopped here and there with paper, or rags, and doors worn to the very wood of which they were composed. In the front of the house, which opened on a balustrated terrace of some architectural pretensions, the drawing-rooms had been kept closed until the shutters were festooned with cobwebs, and the glass had become opaque with dust. Only three or four rooms were reserved for the squire's use, and these were kept in tolerable order, although everything within them looked faded and crazy. The paths, drives, and borders had mingled, through their neglect, into one undistinguishable whole of rank and unwholesome growth and decay.

“Nothing of what I have been describing was visible on that chill November night. I merely tell you the condition of the place, as I had often seen it by daylight; for I had occasionally called on the squire, as in duty bound, but more out of respect for his *status* in the parish than from any pleasure I took in his society. I found that money-making was his god. The one object of his life was to accumulate *wealth*, and that not for the purpose of enjoying it, but simply to gratify a morbid desire to feel himself the owner of so much money or land. Start what topic I would, the conversation was sure to come back to the squire's bargains, or the shameful way in which he had been outwitted by some other purchaser, who, perhaps, had stepped in, and ‘bought the place over his head,’ after he (the ill-used squire) had arranged to purchase it for about half its value. Then the defalcations of his tenants were a constant theme of complaint with him, with the subsequent legal proceedings consequent thereon, and the awful sum of money that the luxury of ‘revenge according to law’ had cost him. Singularly enough, his person harmonised most appropriately with his mental constitution. His face always reminded me of a sharp, watchful terrier. His forehead was bald,

but his baldness was redeemed by a profusion of coarse white hair, which being carefully brushed forward over his temples, ludicrously completed his resemblance to the canine animal aforesaid.

“As we passed the Hall, I observed that, with one exception, all the windows were totally dark. A feeble light was burning in Mr. Armitage's usual sitting-room on the ground floor, opening to the terrace; but beyond this there was no other indication of life in the place, either by sight or sound. The dreary abandoned look of the almost deserted mansion struck on my mind with a chill I could not account for by any inductions of philosophy. Was it that the Spirit of Evil, hovering around that evil house, where no good deed of charity was ever known to be performed, overshadowed me for a moment with his baleful influence? I can easily imagine that there are certain exalted conditions of the human mind when we do dimly but actually receive impressions, either for good or evil, from spiritual intelligences. Certain it is, that as I passed the ill-omened house, a foreboding of approaching evil sank down into my heart; but, with an effort, I shook it from me, quickening my pace in order to escape from these gloomy impressions by a change of scene.

“Suddenly a light shone out from the drive which swept round the north side of the mansion. It moved steadily along for a little space, paused a few moments, and then disappeared. It had come and gone in little more than a minute. ‘Who could be stirring there at so unusual an hour, and at such a place?’ I asked myself; for the north side was entirely shut up, and had been kept closed for years past.

“The rough country lad who was with me had also perceived the light. He pressed close to my side, and said, rather tremulously—‘The bogles be at work again, sir. That's *their* light. Naught that's human ever carries that lantern.’

“Willing to draw from my companion all that he knew or thought about this unusual appearance, I affected to believe that it must have been caused by one of the servants, who, for some unexplained reason, might have been exploring this disused side of the house.

“‘No, no, sir,’ was the reply; ‘catch old Joseph or old Molly round there after dark! Why, they're frightened nigh to death in their own kitchen, or their own beds, by all sorts of uncanny noises about the place; and as to going out after dark, it's more than they would do for their lives. I heard old Molly Edwards tell Farmer Ditcher so with my own ears. No, no, that's the bogles' light, depend on it, sir.’

“‘But, my good fellow, bogles, as you call them, don't walk about the outside of people's houses, and as early as ten o'clock,

too. I always thought they waited till the parish clock had tolled twelve before they began their pranks.'

" 'The old folks say 'tis a bogle—the squire's bogle—his warning to prepare for t'other world; for they do say that before the old squire (present squire's father) died, a 'corpse-light' was seen gliding about the place o' nights, just as you may see it now.'

"I saw it was useless to try to argue my guide out of the notion he had got hold of. Ignorance and superstition are not easily to be dislodged from the mind of a genuine country lad.

"It might have been twelve o'clock when I again passed by Armitage Hall. As I went my way, along the same footpath by which I had gone on my errand of mercy two hours ago, the appearance which had then arrested my attention all at once recurred to my mind (for, up to that moment, the solemn death-bed scene I had just witnessed had dislodged it from my thoughts); and I paused, almost expecting to see the 'corpse-light' shine out again. But all was dark, save that by the glimmer of the rising moon, which struggled feebly through a canopy of unbroken clouds that filled the entire area of the visible sky, the outlines of the building looked wan and ghost-like. As before, a light was burning in one of the rooms opening to the terrace. Silence reigned around, utter and unbroken, for the wind had gone down, and one might hear, in the dead hour of night, the occasional fall of a withered leaf, as it whirled downwards from its parent branch to join its brethren in decay.

"A cry—loud, piercing, and full of misery—rang through the night. A dark figure suddenly passed between me and the lighted window; a tall figure, with a peculiar stoop of the shoulders. Down the terrace-steps it came swiftly and silently. It crossed the turf, and made directly towards me. The face was muffled in a handkerchief—the hat pulled forward over the eyes—the whole figure dark and inscrutable. A minute more and it was upon me. I could have touched it, had not surprise paralysed my arm. But with a spring and a recoil, as though I had then suddenly become visible to him, the stranger dashed off into the gloom of night, and was gone.

"He was gone, but not until I had seen something in his hand—a small black box, which he held by the handle. Not until, in his startled anxiety to escape, he had dropped his hat! My first impulse was to seize it—my next, to ascend the terrace-steps. The light still shone steadily through the window of Mr. Armitage's room. Passing swiftly along the terrace, I paused before the window and listened. I could feel my heart beat and my head throb, as, with senses preternaturally sharpened, I drew in and analysed every sound. A sickening anxiety came over me, for which

I could hardly account to myself. I strove to control and steady myself, and with some success.

“Within the house reigned the silence of the grave. A distant wind roared in the Park trees, and a few heavy drops, the remnants of a recent rain-storm, fell one by one from the parapet with a distinctiveness which even then seemed to me marvellous. My ear told me nothing. I must try other means if I meant to satisfy the intense craving to find out the mystery of that cry, which by this time had taken possession of my whole being. The Holland window-blind, which had been drawn down to its full length, inside the window, whilst it did not wholly shut in the light, yet effectually prevented me from looking into the room. I tried to lift the sash, but it resisted my efforts. At that moment I heard voices, and looking up, saw a light glancing on the staircase windows, and then illuminate the fan-light over the front door. That decided me. I raised the knocker, its heavy strokes reverberated through the bare cold passages and up the uncarpeted staircase. Footsteps approached—then voices in whispered eager conversation. A pause ensued, followed by the tremulous inquiry, in a thin, age-stricken voice, ‘Who’s there?’

“‘It is I, Joseph,’ was my reply, for I recognised the tones of the only man-servant whom Mr. Armitage’s parsimony permitted him to keep in his service—a sort of factotum who officiated by turns in the parlour, the stable, or the kitchen garden, did his master’s errands, or warned intruders off the preserves—an elderly, steady-going, quiet man, much too good for such a house. ‘It is I—Mr. Brydges, the clergyman. Is anything the matter? Open the door. I certainly heard some one cry out in the direction of Mr. Armitage’s rooms.’

“‘Mr. Brydges, is it?’ was the answer. ‘Wait a minute, and I’ll let you in, sir.’

“A nervous and prolonged unfastening of bolt, chain, and lock followed, and I stood inside the house, face to face with the scared serving-man, and caught sight of two pale female visages peering over the bannisters of the staircase.

“‘I’m heartily glad you’re come, sir,’ said Joseph. ‘Something’s the matter with master, that’s certain. Will you come with me to his room? Did you hear that dreadful shriek, sir?’

“‘Yes, Joseph. I happened to be passing at the time, and I heard the very cry you describe. What can it be?’

“The old servant looked at me wistfully. ‘Ah, sir,’ he said, with a solemn shake of the head, ‘I don’t know what’s come over the old place. It used to be quiet enough, but lately one hardly ever gets a night’s rest—such strange noises disturb us. Whether they belong to this world or the other, I can’t say; but, wherever

they come from, they are awful sounds—quite enough to make us tremble in our beds.’

“Talking in this disjointed style, Joseph led the way along the echoing passages, and knocked at the door of Mr. Armitage’s room. There was no reply. The door was ajar, so we pushed it open, and went in. It was a large, gloomy apartment—so large and so gloomy that the light seemed to be swallowed up and lost in it. The furniture, heavy, dark, and massive, added to the sombre air which invested the place, and, in truth, formed a scene most appropriate to the tragedy which revealed itself to our horror-stricken eyes. On the hearth-rug—within the light and warmth of his own fire-side—lay on his face a grey-haired man, his arms thrown forwards, his hands firmly clenched in mortal agony. Kneeling by his side was Henry Armitage, in the act of raising the prostrate figure. There was that in his face which can never be described; so awe-struck, so rigid with insupportable dread was it, that from that instant it became a portion of my memory; I have never been able to forget it. With a terrible feeling of dismay, which, for the time, seemed to hold in abeyance the very faculty of thinking, and to reduce one’s actions to little more than a blind impulse, I sprang forward to assist him, dropping on my knee, the more readily to aid in lifting the prostrate figure. Then—and, strange to say, not until then—did I perceive in my left hand the hat which I had picked up on the lawn a few minutes before, and which I had unconsciously retained. As I put it down, a flash of thought darted through my brain with the speed of lightning, and with more than the blasting power of that terrible agent; for it burnt and scorched my very soul within me, leaving its impress behind it, ineffaceable and never to be forgotten!

“The thought was this. The dark figure I had seen on the terrace was that of the murderer, and to the murderer belonged the hat I had seen him leave behind in his hurry to escape. The light fell full upon it as I put it down, and then I recognised at a glance the fearfulness of my position. You will guess my secret. The owner of that hat was known to me, but *I could not betray him!* The discovery fell on me with a terrible weight. It brought dismay, guilt, misery with it—and yet I could not betray him!

“I spare you the horrible details of that fearful night. It will be sufficient for my story if I tell you, in brief, that on turning the old man’s ghastly face to the light, we found that life was quite extinct. His agony must have been short, for the injuries he had received must have been almost immediately fatal. The skull had been fractured by several blows of fearful violence. Hideous and sickening sight, never to be effaced from my memory! Even now, as I narrate the tale to you, after these many years have rolled away,

the scene embodies itself to my mind's eye with a vividness all too horrible. It comes to me in dreams; and once, in the delirium of fever, my ravings, I was afterwards told, were so dreadful, that the nurse, used as she was to such revelations, could hardly be persuaded to remain in my sick room.

"They lifted him up, his withered face all distorted and ghastly, his nerveless arms dangling in the utter helplessness of death, and yet retaining that fearful mockery of life which one sees in newly-made corpses before the vital warmth has flitted quite away, and given place to the rigidity and coldness of the grave. The old serving-man, trembling in every limb, and almost idiotic with terror, talked incessantly to himself like a lunatic. Henry, on the contrary, pale as marble, uttered scarcely a word, but seemed quite dazed and confounded by the sickening scene. The two simple women folk of the household had followed us into the room; one of them was nearly beside herself with awe; she could do nothing—poor creature!—but wring her hands, and re-echo Joseph's cries and lamentations. Altogether, it was such a scene as no language of mine can portray, and one which you could not realise unless you had ever chanced to witness such a death, surrounded by circumstances such as I describe.

"Morning at length stole through the cold, grey, misty air, but it brought little comfort to that desolate house. It had formerly been a mansion of some pretensions; but, as I looked on it that day, its utter desolation struck me with a feeling of loneliness, from which I was only too glad to escape. A group of villagers had begun to assemble even at that early hour, attracted by the news of the squire's murder, which had spread far and wide even in the few hours which had elapsed since midnight. I was glad of the relief which even their presence afforded. But even then, as I listened to the remarks of the rustics, congregated in awe-struck and whispering discussion of the miserable event, and endeavoured to fix my mind on their simple comments and *sagacious* reflections, conscience would not let me rest. There was that within which *would* not be pacified. Truth and justice, on the one hand, the love of Lucy Barrington on the other, struggled for the mastery of my secret. Never was a being more wretched than I was then, and for a long time afterwards. I knew and recognised the right way, but I had not strength to act up to my convictions. It was in vain that I tried to persuade myself that the discovery of the murderer was no business of mine—that I might leave it with a safe conscience to the emissaries of the law, whose duty it was to find out the secret, if they could. Justice reminded me that one word of mine would put them at once on the right scent; by withholding it, I was actually a participator in the bloodguiltiness of the crimi-

nal—a *particeps criminis* in the very worst of all offences which epraved humanity could commit before heaven and earth.

“The hat I had found belonged to Mr. Barrington.

“In the confusion and dismay which had paralysed the faculties of poor Joseph and his fellow-servants, it had not been observed. Ere morning I had hidden it away. I now watched for an opportunity of conveying it, unobserved, to my own lodgings. I could not keep down the thought; I kept thrusting it down, but it would rise, and thrill me with a terrible but fascinating power—‘Lucy Barrington is yours. With this secret you may buy her. Her father’s life is in your sole keeping. To save that, she will—she must—be yours.’ Again and again did I thrust it from me—again and again did it come back—this wicked suggestion. It gathered strength with each repetition. At last, I seemed to hear the very words spoken in my soul. ‘Well, well,’ said I, almost speaking audibly in reply, ‘I must think of it. So momentous a step requires deep reflection. To-morrow will serve as well as to-day. A few hours’ delay can be of little moment.’”

“It was a relief to me when a chaise and pair rattled up to the door, bringing two new actors on the stage—Mr. Leversedge, an active and experienced county magistrate, and Mr. Allan Fitzherbert, a young Nimrod of the neighbourhood, whose vocation seemed to lie rather in the hunting-field than in the justice-room. These gentlemen had come provided with their clerk. A stout tything-man descended from the box, and as he opened the door of the chaise, I remarked the end of an ominous-looking staff which peeped from the pocket of his ample great-coat.

“I was requested by the magistrates to walk with them into the mansion. It was now ten o’clock. The blinds were partially drawn, and the dim light of a dull November day shone grimly into the darkened house. They had placed the body on a couch, and had thrown over it a covering of some sort. The poor, ghastly face was alone visible; and, as we entered the room, a sickly ray of sunshine settled on that face for a few moments, lighting it up with a gleam that contrasted all too vividly with the deep shadows of that heavily-furnished, wainscotted, sombre, and cheerless apartment. Henry Armitage was still there. I had avoided him, for my guilty secret oppressed me more than ever in his presence. He was listlessly gazing through a window at the crowd of rustics, and as we entered, he came forward, and received the magistrates with all due respect.

“We all drew near to the couch, and stood round it, conversing in low, sad voices. We shook our heads, said it was a bad business—agreed that the poor old gentleman had been most inhumanly murdered—and then quietly withdrew into another room.

“Next we were called on by the eager Joseph to examine the marks on a small back door—half-door, half-window—of certain housebreakers’ tools. The shutter had been skillfully cut through—it opened on the outside—a pane quietly and deftly removed, the bolt drawn back, and an entrance easily effected.

“‘This must have been done by a crack hand,’ quoth Mr. Leversedge, musing.

“We searched the passage, but could find nothing likely to identify the murderer, whoever he might be. He had not left behind him so much as a button. Then we went into the garden. Here there were traces—footprints on some sandy gravel just outside the door. The keen grey eye of Mr. Leversedge expanded. He had made a discovery. His face became instinct with thought. He quietly led the way back into the sitting-room and closed the door.

“‘Let us be seated,’ said he.

“We all sat down, wondering what was coming next.

“‘Mr. Brydges, will you have the goodness to tell me what you know of this business? All—everything, however apparently trivial or minute?’

“I felt the blood rush from my heart into my brain, and tingle in my ears. A faint, giddy sensation came over me as though I were falling.

“‘It is come,’ thought I, ‘the moment big with the fate of my after-life. Shall I—*can* I sacrifice *her* father? Oh, I cannot give her up.’ And her sweet face rose before my mind’s eye, and she felt dearer to me than ever—dearer than honour—dearer than peace—dearer than life itself.

“‘No one knows it but yourself,’ I heard a voice whisper within me.

“That decided me.

“My agitation was put down to the fearful circumstances of the case. The magistrates waited respectfully silent, until I had mastered myself.

“Then I told them how I had seen a light in passing, on my way to a sick bed. How, on my return, I had heard a cry in the direction of Mr. Armitage’s room. How I had knocked and found Joseph just aroused by the same cry; how we had gone together into the room, and there found Mr. Armitage recently murdered.

“‘And Mr. Henry Armitage alone with the body?’ asked Mr. Leversedge, suddenly.

“‘Exactly so,’ I replied. The next moment there flashed in on me a new light. ‘What if they should accuse Henry of this murder?’ I had not thought of that, and the idea filled me with dismay; for, although Henry was my rival, the thought of placing him in the murderer’s dock was too terrible to be entertained.

“ ‘Mr. Henry Armitage was not on good terms with his uncle, I think?’ asked Mr. Leversedge, holding me with his glittering eye as he spoke.

“ ‘I believe not,’ was my answer.

“ ‘And he has lately absented himself entirely from this house?’

“ ‘So I have understood.’

“ ‘Mind, Mr. Brydges, this is quite an irregular examination on my part. You are not bound to criminate any one. At the same time I beg you to remember that the cause of justice may be promoted by your co-operating with me in this inquiry. You say that on entering the room you found Mr. Henry Armitage alone with the deceased; that for some time past there has been an estrangement between them, in consequence of which Henry Armitage was forbidden the house by his uncle. Now, what motive can be assigned for Mr. Henry’s sudden appearance there on the night of the murder?’

“ I was silent, for I could assign none. Was it possible, I thought, that Mr. Barrington and Henry were in league in this dark deed? A thought suggested itself.

“ ‘Mr. Leversedge,’ I said, ‘you must excuse my giving any opinions on so important a subject. It is possible that Mr. Henry may have come here for the purpose of reconciling himself to his relative; but this is only surmise on my part. I was not intimate with the late Mr. Armitage, and therefore was not in possession of the family secrets.’

“ ‘Mr. Leversedge rang the bell. It was answered by Joseph. ‘Joseph,’ said he, ‘I wish to know whether Mr. Henry Armitage was here yesterday by his uncle’s invitation, or whether he intruded himself on the old gentleman? In short, tell us all you know about his coming and going.’

“ ‘Joseph protested that he knew nothing about it. Certainly, Mr. Henry had not been there for some months; not since July, at all events, because he ‘minded’ that the great chimney stack fell down the very night when he left. ‘My old master,’ he added, ‘was so vexed with Master Henry, that he dared him ever to come back, and told me never to let him darken the doors again.’ You mind it yourself, don’t you, Master Henry?’ added the old serving-man. ‘How frightful master cursed and swore, and’—

“ ‘And since then,’ cut in Mr. Leversedge, ‘how often has Mr. Henry visited his uncle?’

“ ‘How often, sir? Why, not at all, to my knowledge. My old master was not a man to play fast and loose. When he said a thing he meant it, and though I always said it was rather hard’—

“ ‘Then you did not admit Mr. Henry yesterday at all?’

“ ‘I did not—you know I did not, Master Henry.’

“ ‘No,’ said Henry, speaking for the first time during this discussion; ‘you did not. I found the back door open, and I walked in.’

“ ‘That is true to a certain extent, at least,’ remarked Mr. Leversedge, ‘for I saw the impression of your boot on the wet gravel. I compared the old footprints with the new ones, and at once concluded that you had passed that way not long since.’

“ ‘And were mine the only footprints you perceived, Mr. Leversedge? Some one must have passed through that door very shortly before I did, for on entering this room I found my uncle dead.’

“ This was said with such an air of truthfulness, that it had a telling effect on the mind of the justices. Mr. Leversedge conferred a little apart with his brother magistrate, and then, turning on Henry Armitage, remarked, not unkindly, ‘Mr. Henry, it would not be right were I to conceal the fact that your position is an awkward one. Let me caution you to be careful as to what you are saying; for what you do say will be considered evidence in a court of law, and may be produced against you should this affair unhappily’—

“ ‘End by my being accused of murder,’ said Henry, completing the sentence which Leversedge had not the heart to do. ‘Thank you, sir, for the caution, which, I know, you have given me with the kindest intentions; but I am innocent, and therefore have nothing to conceal. When I came here last night, it was not with the remotest intention of doing my uncle any harm. I had reasons for not going to the front door; I thought I might find the back entrance open, or, if not, I might contrive to force it. But you may judge of my surprise, when I tell you what occurred. The door was ajar,—I opened it, and in an instant some one pushed by me, and rushed away into the darkness. Who it was I know not, for the man’s features were concealed by some sort of covering. I can only say he seemed to come and go like an apparition—so swift and noiseless was he, that he had all but vanished before I could recover from my surprise. With a fearful foreboding, I went into my uncle’s room, and there he lay on the hearthrug, a bleeding corpse, but still warm and palpitating. Hardly knowing what I did, I cried out for help, quite forgetting the hour, and the almost certainty that the servants were in bed.’

“ ‘And that cry must have been the very one which attracted your attention,’ observed Mr. Leversedge, turning his sharp eyes on me.

“ ‘Pray, Mr. Brydges, did *you* see anything of this mysterious figure that Mr. Henry Armitage describes?’

“This question was propounded by Mr. Fitzherbert, who had hitherto been silent, but who now, to use one of the sporting phrases, ‘took up the running,’ and in his turn looked through me—or, at least, so my guilty conscience suggested.

“I could not yet make up my mind to tell a direct lie, so I parried the question by saying, ‘It was so dark that it would scarcely have been possible to see a hay-stack.’

“A coroner’s jury sat the next day, and returned a verdict of ‘wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.’ Henry and I had to tell our tale again before the twelve enlightened agriculturists, whose duty it was to settle the question as to how Mr. Armitage came by his death. For the first time in my life I was guilty of perjury, for I had sworn on the Gospels to tell ‘the whole truth,’ and I kept back the great secret which would have cleared the innocent, and punished the murderer.

LITERARY FRIVOLITIES

UTILITY is not always the chief object of literary labour, and neither is "value received" always its aim and end; for in this kind of work, as in other kinds, difficulty and expectant applause is frequently a great incentive. With many writers, more particularly in former times, various curious styles of composition were much in favour—one, for example, would have a predilection for composing verses with the omission in each stanza of a particular letter; others would write in such a way as to enable their writings to be read from the end to the beginning of the line, or *vice versâ*, as the reader chose; while a third, again, vexed himself in the composition of alliterative, or, perhaps, anagrammatic, poetry. Another class of literary triflers, among others, might be named, those who chose to display a microscopic skill by writing so small that their work appeared to the naked eye only a mere wavy line. Laborious ingenuity of these kinds, so far from being discouraged, was rather pleasurably indulged in by some of the best ancient writers, of whom might have been expected other and better things. Take as an instance of one of these literary frivolities, for which the author seldom, if ever, receives either fame or emolument, many of the works of Lopez de Vega—works now never heard of, and, perhaps, better so, since many of them were of a character unworthy of their author. The Spanish poet wrote no less than 1,800 plays, of which only about a fifth occupy a place in the literature of his country; and among his other writings were five novels, from each of which one of the five vowels were excluded, a conceit which must have cost their author considerable labour. Of this kind of literary work, which has been called Lipogrammatic, there have been many instances—Tryphiodorus, for example, composed a Greek *Iliad*, from the first book of which the letter *a* was excluded, the second book excluded *b*, and so on throughout the alphabet in succession. Pindar, too, wrote an ode from which he omitted the letter *s*; and Fulgentius, a monk, performed a similar feat to that of Tryphiodorus in the sixth century. It has been recorded also of a Persian poet that he read a poem to the king in which the letter *a* was altogether excluded; but his royal highness speedily wearied of hearing it, and instead of complimenting the poet upon his skill and ingenuity, bluntly recommended that all the other letters should be sent to keep company with the exiled *a*.

In relation to those who have chosen to exert themselves in the way of microscopic writing, the fact that the *Iliad* of Homer has been written in so small a compass as to be wholly enclosed in

a nut-shell, has been often referred to as one of those things which would require to be seen ere it could be believed. However doubtful such a feat may appear, it is certain that one Huet, who at first thought it impossible, demonstrated by experiment that it could be done. A piece of vellum, 10 inches in length, and 8 wide, would hold 250 lines, each line containing 30 verses, and thus filling both sides of the vellum, 15,000, the whole number of verses in the *Iliad*, could be written upon it; and this piece of vellum, folded compactly, would go easily into the shell of a walnut. It is nothing unusual to find now-a-days writing of a still more minute character than this, seeing that the Ten Commandments have been written in a compass small enough to be covered by a sixpence. There is a portrait of Queen Anne in the British Museum, on which appear a number of minute lines and scratches, which, when examined through a microscope, are shown to be the entire contents of a small folio book which the librarian has in his possession. A similar effort in the way of microscopic calligraphy was some years ago discovered in London by a gentleman who had bought at a sale a pen-and-ink portrait of Alexander Pope, surrounded by a design in scroll-work. Examining it through a glass, in order, if possible, to discover the artist's name, he was astonished to find that the fine lines in the surrounding scroll was nothing less than a life of the poet, so minutely transcribed as only to be legible by the aid of a magnifier. This was an evident imitation of a similar effort in the way of portraiture which was at one time in a library at Oxford, where a head of Charles I. was drawn in minute characters, so fine as to resemble the lines of an engraving, but which, when closely examined, were found to be the Book of Psalms, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. One other instance of this kind has been recorded of a portrait of Cardinal Richelieu, which appears on the title-page of a French work; the Cardinal's head is surrounded by a glory of forty rays, each ray containing the name of a French academician.

While thus some one would exercise their skill in a species of manual dexterity, others would write verses in fantastic and grotesque shapes—a style of composition which was exceedingly popular at one time in France as well as in our own country. The forms of a bottle, a glass, or a lady's fan were imitated, and this was done by lengthening or shortening the lines as required, though with sad detriment to the verse. Where the design was a bottle, a number of short lines would go to form the neck; gradually lengthening, the shoulder would be formed, and then the body. We read also of verses arranged in the form of "a pair of gloves, a pair of spectacles, and a pair of pot-hooks." Specimens of this kind of literary frivolity are to be found plenteously scattered

throughout French, Spanish, and English books of the sixteenth century. Both in China and Japan such literary feats are held in great esteem, even in the present day; in the latter country the poet not unfrequently arranges his verses in the shape of a man's head—thus, perhaps, giving a facial outline of the subject of his verse; and though the Chinese may not make so nice a choice, choosing perhaps a cow or other animal for the design, they display greater ingenuity by so doing. Puttenham, in his “Art of Poesie,” has defended earnestly this species of literature, and gives specimens of poems in the form of lozenges, pillars, &c.; he gives also a specimen of his own designing, being a poem in honour of Queen Elizabeth, in the form of two pillars, each of which consists of a base of lines of eight syllables, the shafts of lines of four syllables, the capitals being the same as the bases—one pillar reading up, the other down.

Another kind of foolish ingenuity in the way of literary labour was the concoction of Chronographs or Chronograms—a system of indicating dates in the midst of words by *capitalising* particular letters. This practice was in use originally among the Latins, and was again revived during the Middle Ages. It is almost needless to say anything at length upon this kind of literary conceit, and an example or two need only be given to show its frivolous nature. The line of Horace—

FERIAM SIDERA VERTICE,

gives the year of our Lord MDVI.; another is made up from the Latinised name of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham:—

GEORGIVS DVX BVCKINGAMIE,

which gives MDCXVVIII (1628), the year of the Duke's murder by Lieutenant Felton. This altogether was a silly device, for it must be evident that almost any date could be given by indicating particular letters at intervals, as in the above instances.

Of that kind of ingenious trifling called Karkinic Poems, or Reciprocal Verses, not many specimens can be had, being of peculiar difficulty, but still unworthy of the labour which their composition would call for. These were written in such a manner that the line was the same whether read from the beginning to the end or from the end to the beginning. There is extant a volume of Greek poetry constructed on this principle, written by one Ambrose Pamperes, and founded on the speech made by Catharine II., of Russia, when she heard of the betrayal and massacre of a body of her troops by the hands of the Poles. The following occurs as the opening line of her speech:—

“Rypara, anoma ta, ata mona, ara pyr;”

which, read from the end to the beginning, gives precisely the same

letters as read the proper way. This book of Pamperes consists of 160 pages, and is dedicated to Alexander I., of Russia. The dedication commences with—

“Onax es o, ethete te Theos, ex ano.”

The following line is from a Latin poet, and has been much admired :—

“Roma tibi subito motibus ibit amor.”

Peculiar difficulty exists in the composition of such verses ; but still no good end is served by them, and though the reader may admire the skill and ingenuity displayed, he cannot but regret that so much labour has been expended in vain and uselessly.

Anagrams, which have been defined to be a “dissolution of a name into its letters,” form another kind of literary frivolity. They are simply a transposition of the letters of a word, so as to form another conveying a different signification—their chief merit consisting in the association of ideas relative to or consistent with the original or primary word from which the anagram has been derived. This kind of composition was at one time a favourite amusement of the most witty and learned, and was more esteemed as an exercise of ingenuity than acrostics, which are certainly nothing more than a mechanical arrangement of the component letters of a name. By the ancients anagrams were classed among the cabalistic sciences, and it was often thought that the qualities of a man’s mind and his future destiny could be guessed at by anagrammatising the letters of his name. This literary trifling was very popular at one time at Court in our own country, and became a favourite method by which those who sought favour flattered the great ones whose influence they wished. One courtly writer, who sought to find favour for his book by dedicating it to King James, states that in the name of his royal patron, James Stuart, he has found a *just master*—this anagram containing what is considered the best feature in this kind of writing, an appropriate signification and relation to the original word. Anagrams were not only in use among courtiers, however, but even the Puritans found in them a modified wordly pastime, and some writers of that party actually commended them as being of a good tendency. In New England, among the Puritans there, puns and conceits of a laborious kind and uncouth fashion were much admired, and the death of any noted person there was sure to call forth several elegies, which were almost certain to contain some curious play upon the deceased’s name, or characteristic feature—thus, John Norton, a learned divine, wrote as follows upon the death of one Anne Bradstreet :—

“Her breast was a brave palace, a *broad street*,
Where all heroic, ample thoughts did meet.”

In a similar manner, Cotton Mather, the well-known writer on Witchcraft, in an elegy upon the death of the above-named John Norton, writes as follows :

" His care to guide his flock and feed his lambs,
By words, works, prayers, psalms, alms, and *anagrams*."

Addison gives a somewhat humorous description of an anagrammatist, who shut himself up for some months, for the purpose of twisting the name of his mistress into as many of these conceits as he possibly could, but was astonished to find, after all his mental throes, that he had misspelt her name, and that consequently his anagrams were all faulty and insufficient. Some writers appear to have had a peculiar facility in composing anagrams, for a French poet one day sent his mistress no less than three dozen of them, all written upon her name, which was Magdelaine. Anagrams were as frequently sarcastic, however, as complimentary ; and thus, though Scaliger might have felt the palpable hit in having his name rendered into *sacrilege*, Sir John Wiat might have enjoyed the anagram as a compliment, which said Wiat was *a wit*, and this latter is a very simple example. The ingenious writer who discovered in Pilate's question—" *Quid est veritas?*" (What is truth ?) its own answer, "*Est vir qui adest*," (It is the man who is here), found one of the best and neatest anagrams which has yet been written. Of those which have been reckoned among the best of these literary trifles, are the one upon the mistress of Charles IX. of France, Maria Touchet, *Je charme tout* (I charm all) ; and another upon a lady named Eleanor Davies, who belonged to the court of Charles I., and pretended to be possessed of supernatural and prophetic powers. To substantiate this assertion on her part, she anagrammatised her name, Eleanor Davies, into "Reveal, O Daniel !" and this, though faulty in regard to having too much by a letter *l*, and too little by an *s*, was sufficient in her mind to justify her assumption. Arranged before the Court of High Commission, the judges found that reasoning had no effect upon her, all attempts to disprove by Scripture her claims to inspiration being of no avail, till at length one of the deans took a pen and wrote another and more excellent anagram upon her name—" Dame Eleanor Davies ; *Never so mad a ladie !*" This had the desired effect—the engineer being hoist with his own petard—and put the prophetic lady into so despondent a state, that she never afterwards put forth a claim to supernatural powers. The word "monastery" has been a fruitful source of anagrams, for it has been twisted and transposed into many different renderings—as Nasty Rome, More nasty, Stone Mary, Mean story, Money arts, Tory means, Many tears, No mastery, &c., &c.

Another curious phase of literary labour is alliteration, which

has been considered by some critics a "false ornament in poetry," by others it has been looked upon as frivolous, while a third class have sanctioned its use as a worthy and impressive embellishment. It is a somewhat mechanical aid to the rhythm of verse, and in the reciting or reading of a long piece of poetry, the reader might find his organs of speech aided in some degree by the succession of similar sounds, and it might also have a pleasant sound to those who heard. This, however, could only apply for a short time, for alliteration too long continued would weary and become ridiculous, and suggest that a laborious effort had been made to keep up the alliterative strain, and the pleasure derived from it would only be as transitory as that derived from witnessing the clever feats of an acrobat, with a corresponding sigh of relief when the performance was safely concluded. Alliterative writing does not necessarily imply, however, that each word or syllable must commence with the same letter, it being sufficient that a repetition of similar or imitative sounds are produced, so as to give a certain degree of harmony and strength; and in the sense of its utility in this way it has been used by the whole range of poets. In the early ages such a feature in poetry might have been welcome, and in some degree necessary, when the rhyme was usually wanting, and something was needed to fix the attention and create an interest. In this way, we find that in the Scandinavian and old German poetry alliteration took the place of rhyme; and, even yet, Icelandic poetry considers the same feature its greatest charm. Alliteration does, however, when sparingly and discreetly used, add to the beauty of a poetical sentiment, and may also aid the force and piquancy of a witty remark. For the one, take an example from Sidney Smith, who, when contrasting the position of curates and the higher dignitaries of the English Church, spoke of them as "the Right Reverend Dives in the palace, and Lazarus in orders at the gate, doctored by dogs, and comforted with crumbs;" for the other, take Pope's line—

"Fields ever fresh, and groves for ever green."

Thus, when an alliterative phrase presents itself with some degree of spontaneity, it adds to the expression of the sentiment; but when hunted after and strained for, it is as certain to deform it. Our early poets, Spenser, Dryden, Gray—the latter two professing to take their style from the first-named—all dealt largely in alliteration. Gray especially gave particular heed to this embellishment, and, in his Odes, almost every strophe begins with an alliterative line, thus:

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless king."

"Weave the warp, weave the woof."

"Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin."

"Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn."

The early Scottish poets also used this style frequently—Gawain Douglas, Dunbar, and Alexander Scot especially. The “Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins,” by Dunbar, contains the following verse :—

“Then Ire came in, with sturt and strife,
His hand was aye upon his knife,
He brandeist like a bear ;
Boasters, braggarts, and bargainers,
After him passit in pairs,
All bodin in feir of weir.
Next in the dance followed Envy,
Filled full of feud and felony,
Hid malice and despite.”

Alexander Scot, who has been called the Scottish Anacreon, sent “Ane New Year’s Gift” to Queen Mary, which contains many alliterative lines, such as the following ; when speaking of the Reformers, he says they go about

“Rugging and rying up kirk rents like rooks ;”

and the Address concludes with a stanza beginning—

“Fresh, fulgent, flourist, fragrant flower formose,
Lantern to love, of ladies lamp and lot,
Cherry maist chaste, chief carbuncle and chose,” &c.

Neither has Shakspeare omitted this feature, for, amid many others, we find this example in “As You like It :”—

“The churlish chiding of the winter’s wind.”

Lord North, at the court of James I., wrote a set of sonnets, each beginning with a letter of the alphabet, in regular succession ; and, in the seventeenth century, this practice was carried to the verge of absurdity, when, even in the pulpit, the minister would address his flock as the “chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the Spirit, and the swallows of salvation.” Our later poets have also found a charm and occasional aid in this style, and Coleridge, in one of his poems, gives a fine specimen of this kind of word-painting :—

“The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free.”

And Burns terms Tam o’ Shanter,

“A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum ;”

while he calls the ploughman’s collie,

“A rhymin,’ rantin,’ rovin’ billie.”

From Mr. Southgate’s “Many Thoughts on Many Things,” we call the following acrostic alliteration :—

“A n Austrian army awfully arrayed,
B oldly by battery besieged Belgrade ;
C ossack commanders cannonading come,
D ealing destruction’s devastating doom ;
E very endeavour engineers essay
F or fame, for fortune, forming furious fray.

G aunt gunners grapple, giving gashes good ;
H eaves high his head heroic hardihood ;
I braham, Islam, Ismael, imps in ill,
J ostle John, Jarovlitz, Jem, Joe, Jack, Jill,
K iek kindling Kutosoff, kings' kinsmen kill ;
L about low levels loftiest, longest lines ;
M en marched 'mid moles, 'mid mounds, 'mid murd'rous mincs.
N ow nightfall's near, now needful nature nods,
O pposed, opposing, overcoming odds.
P oor peasants, partly purchased, partly pressed,
Q uite quaking, Quarter ! quarter ! quickly quest.
R eason returns, recalls redundant rage,
S aves sinking soldiers, softens signiors sage.
T ruce, Turkey, truce ! truce, treach'rous Tartar train !
U nwise, unjust, unmerciful Ukraine,
V anish, vile vengeance ! vanish victory vain !
W isdom wails war,--wails warring words. What were
X erxes, Xantippe, Ximenes, Xavier ?
Y et Yassey's youth, ye yield your youthful yest.
Z ealously, zanies, zealously, zeal's zest."

The Latin language has also had its alliterative versifiers, for we find that one Hugbald, a monk, wrote an *Ecloga de Calvis*, in which all the words began with a *c*. So also in the *Nugæ Venales*, there is a poem of a hundred lines, called *Pugna Porcorum, per Publium Porcium, Poetam*, in which all the words begin with a *p*. Subjoined are a few lines of this curious effusion :—

"Propterea properans Proconsul, poplite prono,
 Præcipitem Plebem, pro patrum pace poposcit.
 Persta paulisper, pubes preciosa ! precamur.
 Pensa profectum parvum pugnae peragenda.
 Plures plorabant, postquam præcelsa premetur
 Prælatura patrum, porcelli percutientur
 Passim, posteaquam pingues porci periere."

Whatever beauty may lie in alliteration, it is to be found largely in the proverbial expressions and common sayings of all countries ; thus, in our own, we frequently couple " hearts and hands," " hearths and homes," " life and limb," " great and good." The last instance we give is one picked up in a provincial newspaper, containing an account of a local *fête* and not only the words, but each syllable in the line begins with the same letter :—

" Let lovely lilies line Lee's lonely lane."

In contrast with the alliterative style, others have exercised their ingenuity in reversing the process, and made their lines all end with a particular letter, as in a poem entitled the *Moral Proverbs of Christiana of Pisa*, of which every line almost has been made, by its noble author, Earl Rivers, to end with the letter *e*.

Without commenting further upon these various kinds of literary frivolities, we may conclude with a notice of one which, we trust, is unique, for nothing even approaching it in absurdity or inutility has come under our notice—or that of anybody else, it is

to be hoped, as it might fairly be taken as an evidence that something was decidedly wrong with the mental condition of any person who might throw away his time and labour upon so frivolous an object. The case referred to was that of an unfortunate genius, who had discovered that there were 33,535 ways of spelling the word *scissors*! Imagine any sane person sitting down and laboriously following out the idea of writing any word, and this word especially, 33,535 times. Imagine the frequent revisals necessary to ascertain the certainty of non-repetition—reminding one forcibly of the labours of Sisyphus, always pushing the stone up the hill, and then having immediately to go back and repeat the process when it had rolled down again. Yet this was actually done—done in a neat and handsome manuscript volume, containing three hundred pages of three columns each. The most patient man that ever lived would have been beaten in a trial of this nature—the crank were nothing to this.

W. T. D.

LIFE IN A NORTH-GERMAN CHATEAU

BY THE COUNTESS VON LAUENBRÜCK

CHAPTER XVII.

"EVERY one is going up to the Schloss to-night, Jacob," said Mr. Secretary Fuch's pretty young wife, in pleading tones. "You might let me go, too. I could be with the Frau Försterinn, and I would come home again as soon as the play was over."

But that functionary, glancing askew at his wife, with a somewhat evil gleam in his ferret eyes, proceeded to take a large garnet breast-pin, of oval form, surrounded with crystals, from his crooked mouth, and to adjust his neck-cloth in silence before the four inches of sea-green glass, which hung against the wall. Emboldened by his silence, the girl rose from her seat.

"Do let me go, Jacob!" she said, almost caressingly. "It's so seldom I have a treat!"

"And you certainly won't have this one!"

"But every one else is going."

"If there are fifty fools bent on the same errand, you shall not make the fifty-first."

"But why not, Jacob?"

"Why not? Because I won't have it, and that's enough. If you want another reason: because I'm not going to have you following in the footsteps of that jade, your sister; because I don't choose you to go amongst all those brave young officers and gentlemen, who will turn your foolish head with their impertinent flatteries, and try to make themselves agreeable by ridiculing your husband to you, madam. No, no! You are my wife, and your proper place is home!"

The poor girl was nearly crying now. "The gentlemen wouldn't speak to me, Jacob," she said; "they wouldn't notice a poor girl like me; why, there are beautiful ladies enough at the Schloss; how would they ever think of looking at me?"

"Did they never think of looking at your sister?" he asked, maliciously. "No, no, madam; prevention is better than cure;" saying which, he took his hat from a nail, and went out, locking the door after him.

A smile of malignant satisfaction was on his face as he crossed the grass-plot, where the fountain plashed and twinkled so merrily in the early autumn moonlight, and whence the whole façade of the Schloss seemed one blaze of light. "There'll be mischief yet for you, with all your proud airs, my lady," he muttered, glancing up

at the windows, and nodding his head complacently; "no one ridicules me in vain; and there is not a sneer that you have had at my expense, or a laugh that you have uttered, but what you shall pay for it yet; ay, and bitterly rue. I am slow, but I am sure: I bide my time." But the clocks were chiming eight, and the luxury of such reflections must be curtailed. Passing up the stone staircase towards the theatre, he met Fritz, who, not being engaged to take any part in the play, was wandering rather listlessly up and down, giving an occasional order as to the lighting and decorations, but on the whole rather bored at his enforced solitude.

"Good evening, Mr. Prompter," he said, coming towards the secretary; "every one is dressing, so I am stage-manager."

"Could I speak for a moment to Countess Hilda?"

"I scarcely think so, for she, too, is dressing; but I will see," and Fritz knocked at the dressing-room door. But Hilda answered through the keyhole that it was impossible, and that he had better send in his message or come later, when she had completed her toilet.

"And where is Graf Stralenheim? dressing also?"

"Probably, but you had better go and see," answered Fritz, to whom an indefinite something in the secretary's tone was disagreeable. Gliding along the passage till she came to the door of Graf Stralenheim's room, the malignant little hunchback held his way.

"Come in!" shouted that gentleman in answer to his knock. Then the secretary went in. There ensued a conference of some ten minutes, and then the handsome representative of Faust rose: Ah! he said so? Well, he is mistaken; his only fault is that he is a confiding fool, and that is more his misfortune than his fault. Many thanks; another time, Herr Sacretär, we will square accounts; for the present the debt of gratitude remains on my side." Then he shut the door, and the dismissed courtier went down the passage again, with a gleam of malignant joy on his saturnine countenance.

There was an atmosphere of evil about this man, that it was impossible to ignore. Abstract goodness must be beautiful; but we have often seen a lovely soul shining through a plain face, and redeeming all material ugliness from being unpleasant; but, such an ugliness as the crooked secretary's had never crossed my path, or cast its shadow upon my way. He was literally as "ugly as sin," and during those days of rehearsal, when his duties as prompter brought him amongst all that was fair and lovely, all that was strong and graceful, he seemed all the more terrible for the contrast; and a shudder would pass over me, as I saw the malevolent gleam of his eye when it rested on Hilda, who, in reckless spirits, was the centre of all attraction, ordering, counter-ordering, perplexing, provoking, and bewitching everybody by her caprices and exactions.

"Upon my word, Hilda is making that poor fellow wretched!" Fritz had said, with a comical sympathy for Strahlenheim that was droll beyond words. "He has forgiven her for refusing him, and if she doesn't take care, will fall more in love with her than ever."

A cough made me look round. Mr. Fuchs was walking away.

"Give her a hint about it; she is so full of fun and spirits that she does not think of anything of the kind."

"Oh, I dare say!—fun to her, but death to him!"

Graf Strahlenheim did not appear the sort of subject for such a pathetic end; but it would be as well if Hilda got a hint as to appearances, perhaps, so I ventured to say, "I am sure, if you said a word, Fritz, she would be sobered at once."

"I speak to her! Never! She shall never say or think that I have watched or mistrusted her; I never have—I never shall! She shall never have to complain of my interfering with her pleasures. Poor girl! they are few enough, and far between, in this gloomy old nest."

"I beg your pardon, Graf Fritz," said the secretary's voice, at his elbow; "but Gräfin Hilda begs you will read Graf Strahlenheim's part for him in the next act. She and the Herr Graf are obliged to speak to the *costumier* from X—— about some of the dresses to be sent over from the Grand Ducal Theatre."

Was it my fancy that Fritz's colour deepened? But he rose, and complied with the request. This had been at one of the rehearsals. After half-an-hour's absence, Hilda and Graf Strahlenheim had returned to the stage. She was smiling, and very animated.

"Well, how did it go? Pretty well?"

"Admirably, Frau Gräfin!" answered the prompter. "You have done unwisely in not choosing Graf Fritz as an adjunct. He reads excellently, and has evidently studied histrionic art in detail."

Hilda looked at him haughtily. "Graf Fritz does not choose to act. Pray be so good as to hear the next piece."

"I regret that I should have displeased you, Gräfin Hilda. I merely meant to say that Graf Fritz has profited greatly by the theatrical studies he has made at X——."

Then Hilda had flushed very deeply, had glanced at Strahlenheim, and from him to her husband. "I think you mistook what I said, Mr. Secretary," she answered, coldly. "Be good enough to attend to the rehearsal of our second piece."

On the night of the grand representation, Helmine von Wolfram seemed to me like some angel of light. Such perfect radiance and loveliness, next to Major von P——'s "Mephistopheles," was

almost painful; but then Graf Stralenheim's noble bearing and grand, manly beauty, made "Faust" and "Margaret" so well-matched a pair of perfect human creatures, that in looking at them an involuntary murmur of admiration arose to one's lips. I could not help feeling glad that Hilda had refused the part of "Margaret." As it was, her face was a study during the whole performance. "Gretchen's" anxious questionings as to her lover's religion, and his plausible answers—her childish earnestness in the game of "He Loves Me; He Loves Me Not," as she walked to and fro, plucking the white petals from her flower-namesake—the jewel scene,—all were given with a truthfulness and simplicity, which showed that the fair young actress was not only a beautiful creature to be looked at with eyes of admiration, but an intelligent, refined being, capable of understanding and reproducing one of those master-pieces of art that knows no time, by reason of its own immortality. When Hilda's turn came, there was a certain irresolution and nervousness about her that made me tremble for her success; but no sooner did her feet touch the stage than she regained all her old self-possession, and retained it throughout, acting with a grace, tenderness, and vivacity that were all her own. When Graf Stralenheim, as the long-lost brother, re-appeared upon the stage her cry of joyful emotion, and her look of unspeakable happiness, as she turned towards him, and flew into his arms, were painfully life-like. Loud applause followed, and Graf Stralenheim, leading her to the front of the stage, bowed with all the gravity of a professional actor. Hilda seemed radiant with triumph. She had determined that the lovely "Margaret" should not throw her into the shade—she was destined not to be disappointed. The Grand-Duke paid her the prettiest compliments on her performance.

"Your Royal Highness is too gracious," she said, smiling and blushing; "but commendation from such lips is flattering indeed!"

Every one was anxious to bring his meed of praise. Major von P— seemed tamed to a state of conventional mildness, and came and laid his tribute at her feet with a gentleness that was almost touching. Graf Stralenheim was, of course, all that gallantry and chivalry could suggest. He continually made pretty little allusions to his charming "sister," and followed Hilda like her shadow, whilst she sent him hither and thither with an inventiveness of caprice bewildering to the more matter-of-fact mind.

"Come, Mabel; you have not given me a word of praise!" she said, suddenly, standing before me, and looking straight into my eyes with an air of daring that rather provoked me.

"You can scarcely have missed my word,—you have had so many of flattery to-night."

“Flattery! Yes! but now I want another thing; I want good honest, hearty praise;” and she looked at me, laughing defiantly. But such praise it was not mine to give.

“I will keep my praise for another time, Hilda.”

“Oh, then, is it blame? Well, blame will keep; but praise might be enjoyed on the spot, if it is to be enjoyed at all. But, Fritz, surely you have something civil to say to me?”

Fritz, who was looking rather doleful than otherwise, had no reply ready for this attack.

“Ah!” she said, “I am nothing to the Eckstein, of course! but then I have not had the advantages of that young person.”

As Hilda made this observation twenty eyes looked at her; there was a momentary pause, and then every-one began speaking to his neighbour in an animated manner, as though to cover the second's silence, which had made itself as sensibly felt as the report of a cannon. But Hilda seemed quite reckless. “His Royal Highness, whom we may fairly call a good judge on such points, has not been so backward to acknowledge my merits,” she said, looking at Fritz, and laughing again, but this time not quite so successfully.

“Good heavens, Hilda! you do not know what you are saying.” It was Fritz, who, deadly pale, spoke these words in an undertone. She looked at him for a moment with an air of half pity, half contempt.

“*Allons, mon frère,*” she said to Graf Stralenheim, taking his arm with a pretty confiding gesture as she spoke; “let us go to the supper-room.”

As they went I saw Graf Stralenheim speak a few hurried words to her, looking round as though fearful lest he should be observed. What he said I could neither hear nor guess, but Hilda drew back her head proudly, and then laughed, as though her momentary annoyances had given place to second thoughts of a pleasanter character.

The Grand-duke, with his suite, was to leave Lauenbrück early the next morning; he therefore took a gracious farewell of everyone after supper, as he intended breakfasting in his own apartment before starting, shortly after daybreak.

Gracious, pleasant words were spoken to Countess Lauenbrück and her husband, then a few kindly ones to Fritz. When it came to Hilda's turn, the Grand-duke thanked her again for her exertions, and added, that he hoped, on the Grand-duchess's return, the court might have some attraction for the young and gifted ladies of the neighbourhood.

That night, or rather early that morning, when I was just sinking into an uneasy slumber, Cuthbert woke me by saying. “Of all the flirts I ever set eyes upon, poor Fritz's wife is the most outrageous.” The time was not propitious for argument, and I made no answer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ A TELEGRAM!—for me? Surely you are mistaken!”

But it was no mistake; Bertie had telegraphed. Uncle Halford was dead, and Cuthbert must go over immediately.

“ Oh, Cuthbert, let me go with you! I will be ready in half-an hour.”

“ Quite impossible! In a quarter of an hour I must be off. I will return in a week or ten days' time, and then we will go home together. Now, I am not going home. I am going to Lethbridge; and you would have to go to London, and remain there until everything was settled.”

It was useless to say anything more; but with feelings of dismay, so strong that they were an offence to the friendliness and hospitality with which I had been received, I saw him pack his portmanteau—if “packing” such an operation as the one I witnessed might be justly termed, and offered no helping hand; for I was offended with Cuthbert.

Just as the carriage was on the point of driving away with him—we, all upon the steps watching his departure, and I still sulky—he came jumping out into the midst of us again, and began rushing up the steps towards the hall-door.

“ What do you want, Cuthbert?”

“ Can I fetch you anything?”

“ My dear fellow, you will be too late!” said half a dozen voices.

“ I have not said ‘ Good-bye ’ to Fritz!” Cuthbert had shouted to his pursuers. “ I must go and say ‘ Good-bye ’ to him!”

“ But Fritz is at X——! He went with Zulau and the other fellows early this morning.”

Then Cuthbert had slowly and sadly relinquished his intention. But he shook hands with Hilda again before he went. “ Mind you tell Fritz that I should have liked to say ‘ Good-bye ’ to him!” he said. And Hilda promised, but added that it was scarcely worth while, since he (Cuthbert) would be back again in a week. To this Cuthbert had made no reply, and then the carriage had driven off, and we all turned listlessly to each other, as saying, “ How are we to kill time to-day? How dull everything seems!” The reaction had come, after the last few days' excitement. We all felt unsettled—“dissipated”—Hilda had not inappropriately called it; all but Fraulein von Wolfram, who, with a well-regulated mind and a charming “morning cap,” sat in the breakfast-room, knitting a counterpane. Near her sat also Karl the Invisible—he had come to light again, and seemed very well satisfied with the present

posture of affairs, as from time to time he picked up the lovely Helmine's ball of cotton, and got every time the same murmured "Tausand Dank" for his exertions on behalf of the coverlet. Max, Hugo, Graf Strahlenheim, and Count Lauenbrück presently went off with the Forester.

"And now for your praise, Mabel," said Hilda, putting her arm into mine, and walking towards the fountain.

"What!—the last thing last night, and the first thing this morning! You are insatiate."

"This morning I want a tonic; come and lecture me."

"But I have neither time nor talent for lecturing."

"I will judge of the talent; as for time, what can you have to do? The problem is, how to kill time?"

"I must go and see baby: he has been shamefully neglected the last few days."

"Ah, you have *des ressources*; but still you can lecture me."

"But I have no inclination so to do."

"Then sacrifice your own inclination: it is a doubly meritorious duty you are doing."

"I deny it to be my duty."

"Then make a pleasure of it."

"That I cannot do."

As I said this, Hilda stopped short, and looked at me.

"I was a true prophetess," she said: "you do not even like me any more."

"You have no right to say so, Hilda."

"Right!—why not? Every human being has a right to say what he thinks and feels at times, though it is a prerogative that '*les convenances*' often prevent us from exercising."

"But you have no right to speak or think unjustly, and you are now very unjust—unjust to yourself, and unjust to me, Hilda."

"As to being unjust to myself, that doesn't much matter. I am not unjust to you. It's of no good beating about the bush, Mabel—you are angry with me, and your husband is angry with me, and Fritz is angry with me, and I am angry with myself."

"I am not angry with you, Hilda."

"Do you think I don't see what Cuthbert thinks of me! Why did he dash into the house to look for Fritz this morning? Why did he give me that solemnly impressive message? That was a demonstration, Mabel. Of course, I knew that. And I know also that a mild man like Cuthbert does not make demonstrations without having first formed very decided opinions. And I know also that you are the depository of those opinions, and re-echo them in your heart of hearts, as a submissive wife should do."

"But what is it you want me to say, Hilda? You are begging

the question, and trying to make me answerable for certain opinions, or expressions of opinion, of the very existence of which I am ignorant. I will not submit to it."

"Now you are getting angry. Tell me all that Cuthbert has said about me—if you dare."

"Yes, I dare."

"Well, begin."

"With the praise or the blame."

"Oh! the blame first. The praise will be like a bonbon after bitter physic."

"Then for the blame. Last night, or rather early this morning Cuthbert said to me, I being between sleeping and waking—shall I tell you, Hilda?"

"Yes, yes, tell me."

"Of all the flirts I ever saw, Fritz's wife is the most outrageous."

Hilda reddened. "Now for the praise," she said.

"There has been no praise since then."

"But before?"

"Yes—before he thought you, as every one else does, very charming, and very winning, dear Hilda."

"And what answer did you make to that ill-natured observation of his?"

"I made none."

"Why not?"

"Well, I would not agree with him, and I was sleepy: there you have two reasons."

"Then you should have disagreed with him."

"What if I could not, dear Hilda."

"There we have it," she said; "now go on with your lecture."

"I have no lecture, Hilda, and I will not go on; I will not be drawn into saying things which might make you angry. If you are angry with yourself, as you say you are, you shall not be angry with me. To be angry with oneself is a wholesome anger, and may do good; to be angry with other people, never does good."

"Very well, since you will have it so! I shall soon be like that philosophically inclined miller on the Banks of Dee, of whom Karl sings, that he 'cared for nobody, no not he, because nobody cared for him.'"

"You would not sing that philosophically, Hilda, if you could sing it with truth."

"Perhaps not. Meanwhile, I do not sing at all; and you want to go to your baby; and I ought to return to the lovely Helmine, and her crotchet counterpane."

I was dismissed. But it was my own fault. I was glad to get away.

That evening some mention was made of Fritz. Now Fritz was absent, and we all knew that "*les absents ont toujours tort.*" "Fritz is a capital good fellow!" Count Karl had said, speaking of his nephew (the young men never made use of the word "uncle" towards their handsome relative),

"Fritz is growing to be a hero," Hilda had answered gravely.

"He's a thorough good fellow, that *I* know," said Count Karl again, with italicised emphasis on the personal pronoun, implying a reference to his nephew's goodness which he was not at liberty to more fully describe.

"He is remarkably good-natured," Graf Stralenheim had said.

"Do you not admire good-nature, Herr Graf?" asked the lovely Helmine; for there was a covert sneer in the words, or rather in the tone, and to me it sounded as through he had said, "He is a most remarkable fool."

"Of course, I admire good-nature, mein Fraulein; and I especially admire it when embodied in so fair a form as I now have before me."

"Well, for my part, I think good-nature as becoming in a man as in a woman," replied the lovely maid of honour. Had Hilda made the observation it would have had an epigrammatic flavour and raciness, which it was now quite without, so true is it that the tones and the manner make the music. In Hilda's mouth the words would have contained a hidden satire for Graf Stralenheim; in Fraulein von Wolfram's the satire was a second thought, only half suspected, and the commendation of manly good-nature, and, by inference, of Fritz's, the leading idea. Stralenheim smiled.

"You are very severe," he said.

"Do you feel me to be so?"

Count Karl murmured his approval of Fraulein von Wolfram's skilful answer.

"Even implied severity from one so gentle is painful," said Stralenheim.

"I am not aware of meriting your reproach, Herr Graf."

"You think I am not indulgent in my criticisms of others."

"Nay, I never said, or even implied so: it is your own conscience that you must accuse—not me."

"I should be sorry that you had an unfavourable opinion of me."

"You are very complimentary to lay any stress on my opinion."

"Do leave off splitting straws," exclaimed Hilda, impatiently.

"Let us return to the first proposition. Fritz is good-natured. His being good-natured does not make us ill-natured; indeed, I think, we are all agreed as to the goodness of his nature; that we are all of us equally delightful no one will venture to deny; at least, not on the present occasion."

She spoke petulantly. Graf Stralenheim moved his chair an inch nearer to Fraulein von Wolfram's; Count Karl did the same on the other side. Hilda rose and walked towards a flower-stand. In a few minutes she returned with a bunch of beautiful, sweet-smelling blossoms in her hand. One of the flowers she put into the fair Helmine's rippling golden locks; a cluster she laid upon her knees, the remaining blossoms she placed in Count Karl's button-hole. "Thank you, my dear!" he said, looking up at her very kindly; but Graf Stralenheim's face darkened, and, rising abruptly, he left the room.

Soon after this Fritz came in. No one asked him what had taken him to X——. He seemed somewhat depressed, but no one inquired into the cause of his depression. After supper he took Count Karl's arm, and went away with him towards the billiard-room.

"Fritz does not seem to have enjoyed the theatre as much as usual to-night," said Graf Stralenheim to Hilda.

"I do not know that he has been to the theatre."

"He must have left before the play was over, to get home so early. Perhaps the Eckstein did not play; *Quel contretemps fasheux!*"

"Your sympathy will doubtless be very agreeable to him."

"I trust not more so than it is to you?"

"Provided it only be equally so."

"You are very flattering!"

Then others had come between, and I had heard no more. Count Stralenheim's eye had an ugly expression at times; even while he was laughing and jesting with Hilda, he would now and then show his claws. Of late days he had paid much attention to Fraulein von Wolfram. He no longer appeared to find her "insipid." He seemed to look upon Graf Karl as a rival, and seemed resolved to oust the handsome invalid out of his present position. Hilda was not slow to see what others saw. She set to work to counteract the mischief she apprehended.

MAGNA CHARTA: ITS HISTORY AND PROVISIONS

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

MAGNA CHARTA is familiar by name to most Englishmen. Many, who have never examined its provisions, have learned to regard it as something like the palladium of British liberty. The objects of the present paper is to give an outline of its enactments, and, at the same time, to show what the abuses were that it was meant to reform. Though it is necessarily associated with King John, who sealed it on June 15th, A.D. 1215, we are not to suppose that the evils which evoked it had their origin with that monarch, or were confined to his reign. They had been growing under previous kings; and such was their severity that it had been felt before John's days that something should be done to check them. Henry the Second, the first of the Plantagenet kings, and father of John, granted a charter, which, it will be seen, was made the basis of Magna Charta. But, although John was not the direct author of the grievances, under which his subjects were living and murmuring, he had not made any efforts to diminish them; and a sketch of the events of his reign, which have a bearing on this charter, and show the steps by which it was helped forward, until it was finally conceded, may usefully precede a short notice of its provisions, and elucidate its objects.

To those who attach importance to omens, King John might seem to have begun his reign with inauspicious tokens. At his accession, Hubert, who was then Archbishop of Canterbury, gave utterance to words that might be regarded as foreboding no good. He reminded those who were assembled, that succession to the throne was not to be considered a matter of hereditary right, but was to be regarded as depending on the fitness of those who were eligible to that exalted position. He instanced the cases of Saul and David, who were chosen to reign over Israel, not by hereditary right, but for their personal qualities; the one for his moral goodness, the other for his physical powers. At the same time the Archbishop maintained, that if there were any in the offspring of the deceased king who were personally worthy, they should be chosen in preference to others. He wound up by recommending John as such a person; but his recommendation is couched in terms which sound somewhat suspicious. This speech caused considerable sensation, for the Archbishop was regarded as a pillar of steadfastness and wisdom. Soon after he was asked why he had expressed

such views. He replied that he had advanced them from a presentiment (if we may so express it), that John's reign would be an unfortunate one for the throne and country, and that he, therefore, wished him to understand beforehand on what terms he was made king. The misgiving seems to have been strong in the Archbishop's mind; for when, afterwards at his coronation, John swore to love the Church, and to preserve it from the attacks of malignants; to repeal bad laws, and to enact good laws in their stead; and, generally, to exercise right judgment in the realm of England, Hubert adjured him not to take the regal dignity, unless he meant to fulfil what he had sworn. John then promised, by God's help, in good faith to fulfil his oath.

These repeated admonitions of the Archbishop both betray a doubt of John's integrity, and imply the existence of abuses and consequent discontent. John was not without a rival for the throne; his attempt to gain it in Richard's time, disloyal as a subject and worse as a brother, was not likely to produce a favourable opinion of him; and when the throne was vacant by Richard's death, his nephew Arthur, the son of an older brother than John, put forward his claims. In these days such a succession would be the legitimate one. When her present Majesty succeeded to the throne, she had uncles living, the Dukes of Sussex, Cumberland, and Cambridge; but she succeeded as the daughter of an elder brother of those Dukes. Thus, the fact of a question being raised about Arthur's succession shows that the order of succession was not then so strictly defined that either John or Arthur could say,—“I am king by right,” and we find that the succession often depended on the nomination of the preceding sovereign. Thus, Richard nominated John, and John, in his turn, named his son Henry. It was the anointing by the Archbishop at the coronation that fixed the regal character; a story in connection with the siege of the barons in Rochester Castle by king John, is instructive on this head. When he was going round it to make his observations, one of the cross-bowmen remarked,—“With this arrow I can shoot the blood-thirsty king;” to which the chief of the besieged replied:—“Silence, wretch! wouldest thou slay the Lord's anointed?”

Arthur was supported by Philip, king of France; he had done homage to Philip for his possessions in France, whereas John seems to have given some umbrage in that quarter by taking possession of his French fiefs without doing homage. Though king of England, he ranked in France as a baron of that country, by virtue of his castles and lands in it; and Philip expected him, like any other baron, to do homage, as was usual, for his possessions; to whatever extent Philip was influenced by this, he certainly took up the cause of Arthur, and when on John's visiting France, soon after his coro-

nation, the two kings had an interview, the demands that Philip made for himself and for Arthur were such that John neither could nor would accede to them. We need not go minutely into this quarrel between the two kings, as it does not bear directly on our main subject. It seems once to have been patched up, when a marriage was arranged between Louis the French king's son, and Blanche, John's niece, and when, furthermore, Philip assisted John with his advice in choosing a queen in the place of the wife whom he divorced. These were only temporary lulls; and Philip again repeated his demands for Arthur. Thus matters went on for some three years or more, when Arthur, who had come into John's hands, suddenly disappeared from the castle in which he was confined; by what means he came to his end was never certainly known. But John was strongly suspected of having killed him, and that with his own hand; and he was formally summoned by Philip to answer the charge before his peers. This summons he did not think fit to obey, and he was eventually pronounced a felon and traitor, and his lands in France were declared to be forfeited. The suspicion against John was so strong that many of his barons were alienated from him; the depth of the feeling thus engendered was shown in after years, when John found it necessary to enact anew an oath of allegiance from his barons, demanding hostages at the same time. Some of the more powerful nobles refused to give such; "for how," they said, "can we trust him with our children, when he wickedly slew his nephew with his own hand?"

When Philip proceeded to attack the castles of the English king in France, the latter was spending his time in indolence, solacing himself with the thought that he could soon recover what Philip was taking from him. Disgusted with his conduct, many of the English nobles returned home. The king knew their reasons, and took advantage of their withdrawal to accuse them of having caused him the loss of his castles by their departure, and to impose upon them an exaction which extended to conventual and parish churches. By such proceedings his barons and subjects generally were embittered. But as yet they did not see their way to bring about a better state of things. Some one was wanted to take the lead, and show them how they might act in concert.

In July, A.D. 1205, Archbishop Hubert died. He was no favourite with the king, who suspected him of a leaning towards Philip. His expressed misgivings of John's unhappy reign were, most likely, known to the king, and would not diminish his dislike. At the same time Hubert exerted considerable influence over him, as also did Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, the chief justiciary; and on the death of the latter, some time after, the king showed his feelings towards him and the archbishop by the profane exclamation, "Then

he can salute Hubert in hell, for he will doubtless find him there."

But John might have been thankful if Hubert had lived. His death was the beginning of more serious troubles than John had yet passed through. It embroiled him in a quarrel with the mightiest power of that day—a quarrel that was the cause of long, and miserable, and irremediable injuries to his people. But the archbishop's death also gave the barons the head they wanted. It involved the election of a successor.

Reginald, the sub-prior of Canterbury, seems to have been popular with the younger monks. In their zeal for his election to the vacant throne, they waited neither for the funeral of the deceased prelate, nor for the royal permission to proceed to an election. They at once, in an irregular manner, chose the sub-prior. They chanted the *Te Deum* at midnight, then placed the sub-prior, first on the high altar, and afterwards in the archbishop's throne. Apprehending that, if their proceedings should come to the king's ears, he would declare their election void, they wished to have the pope on their side. No time was, therefore, to be lost in securing his confirmation of the appointment they had made. Accordingly, the same night, Reginald, the sub-prior, and some of the monks, started for Rome. On arriving there, he announced his election, and prayed that it might have the confirmation of the pope and cardinals. But the pope seems to have suspected that there was something wrong—he took time to hear more particulars, and to consider.

Meanwhile, the monks at home, hearing of the sub-prior's breach of faith in making known his election as soon as he reached Flanders, and acting as archbishop elect, contrary to his solemn promise to keep his election secret until his arrival at Rome, applied to the king for leave to elect a successor to Hubert. The king granted it, and recommended John de Grey, then Bishop of Norwich, for the vacant throne. The monks acted on the king's recommendation, and chose the Bishop of Norwich. They then sent to Rome for the Pope's confirmation of their election.*

Innocent the Third, who then occupied the papal throne, was no ordinary man. He had succeeded to the place once held by the famous Hildebrand (or Gregory VII.), and he equalled him in the powers that he claimed for the papacy. Nor was he behind him in the resolution with which he carried out his ambitious purposes. His words on one occasion are well known, but will bear repeating. "As God, the Creator of the universe, placed two great luminaries

* At the same time the suffragans of the province complained of an irregularity in this election, alleging that the monks should elect conjointly with three suffragans. The pope decided this question in favour of the monks.

in the firmament, the greater to rule the day, and the less to rule the night; so, in the firmament of the Universal Church, He has established two great dignities, the greater to bear rule over souls, which are signified by days, and the less over bodies, which are signified by nights. These two dignities are the pontifical and regal powers. But as the moon is in all things inferior to the sun, and draws her light from him, so does the regal power derive its splendour and dignity from the pontifical source."

About the time of which we speak, Innocent was endeavouring to rouse Europe to greater energy in the crusades, and even purposed joining the expedition himself. The papal authority had been for some time on the increase in England, as well as elsewhere, and now an opportunity offered itself to not the least grasping or the most scrupulous of popes, to push that power still further. Popes had before sent the pall—Innocent had now an opportunity of interfering directly in elections. Two bodies of monks from the same conventual church appeared before him. Each came to ask for his confirmation of their respective elections—the one, of the sub-prior, the other of the Bishop of Norwich. The case was argued on both sides. The pope cut the knot by quashing both elections. He then bade those monks of Canterbury who were at Rome proceed to a new election, there and at once. When they demurred, on the ground that they could not do so without the consent of the king and their brother monks, Innocent informed them that it was not usual to wait for the consent of princes in the case of an election that was made at the Holy See; and he required them, on the ground of their obedience, and under pain of anathema, to proceed at once. Though against their will, they obeyed the Pope's command, with the exception of Master Elias of Brentfield, who appeared for the king and the Bishop of Norwich, and who still stood out. Stephen Langton was then chosen Archbishop of Canterbury. He was an Englishman, and a prebend of York. While pursuing his studies in France, he had made the acquaintance of Innocent before he became pope; and so high was the opinion that Innocent had formed of him, that, on rising to the pontifical dignity, he drew Stephen, though with some reluctance on his part, to Rome. There he held a prominent and distinguished place, both for his learning and his virtues. It speaks well for Innocent that he was willing to give up such a man to fill the throne of Canterbury.

But now came another difficulty. How was the newly-chosen archbishop to take possession of his see? It was easy for the pope to tell the monks that, in elections made at Rome, it was not necessary to wait for the consent of the English monarch; but he also knew that, without that consent, there might be a serious difficulty

in getting Stephen into England, and into possession of his see and its temporalities. Innocent proceeded to grapple with it. He first of all tried the effect of bland and soothing measures on the king. He had heard that John had a taste for precious stones; this was, accordingly, selected as the weak point on which the first attempt was to be made. The pope sent the king four valuable rings, and with them a letter, couched in the most friendly terms, begging his acceptance of the rings, and explaining to him certain mystical lessons, salutary for princes to know and remember, that were conveyed by the form, number, material, and colour. The form, being round, signified eternity, without beginning or end. The rings were four in number; and four, being a square number, sets forth steadfastness of mind, which is based on four great virtues, viz., justice, which is to be exercised in judicial matters; fortitude, to be maintained in adversity; prudence, to be a guide in doubtful cases; and temperance, to be a guide in prosperity. The material of which the rings were made was gold, an emblem of wisdom; the colours of the precious stones were to be noticed to the same end—the emerald setting forth faith, the sapphire hope, the garnet charity, the topaz good works. The king was delighted with these presents at the time; but his satisfaction with his rings was short, and, alas! the wholesome lessons that they were to teach him, made but little impression, and were forgotten in the stirring events that followed.

The next time he heard from the pope it was to be told of Stephen's election to Canterbury. Innocent urged John to receive the archbishop with kindness. He reminded him that Stephen was an Englishman; he spoke of his great learning, which was even eclipsed by the stainless innocency of his life and the loftiness of his character; and with many courteous and persuasive words, betokening, at the same time, that Innocent felt himself in somewhat of a dilemma, he tried to win over the king, and induce him to receive Stephen. But John was not so easily to be won over; he fell into a violent passion, the first vehemence of which descended on the devoted heads of the monks of Canterbury. They were expelled from England, their goods were confiscated and plundered, and their lands were left uncultivated, as were those belonging to the archbishop. To the pope the king wrote in an angry tone; he reminded him of the good things that Rome got out of England; he spoke of Stephen as a man unknown to him, and as one who had lived among, and associated with, his enemies in France; he avowed his full determination not to recal the election of the Bishop of Norwich; and wound up with sundry threats, and a declaration of his firm resolve to stand for the liberties of his crown, if necessary, to death.

Innocent, in his reply to this despatch, still addressed the king as "his very dear son." He contrasted his own loving letter to John with the threatening epistle he had received from him. He told him that in giving up Stephen Langton he had offered him the highest honour he could. He met the objections that John had made to Stephen on the ground of his stay in France, by telling him that he was there for the purpose of prosecuting his studies. He reminded him that, so far from Stephen being a man unknown to him, he had actually written to offer his congratulations when Stephen was raised to his dignity at Rome. He spoke again of Stephen's English birth, of the fidelity and devotion of his parents, and of the preferment he held in England. He added, that though it was not usual to wait for the consent of princes in elections made at Rome, he had nevertheless sent two messengers to communicate with him; but they had been detained on the road. And he finished by hinting that, if John did not yield, he might find himself in a difficulty from which it would not be easy to release himself.

But neither the courtesies nor the threats of Innocent had any effect on John. On ascertaining this, the pope directed the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester, to obtain an audience with the king, and once more try what wholesome admonitions would effect. If they failed, the bishops were then to give him to understand that severer measures would be at once resorted to. By severer measures was signified an interdict.

On hearing this, the king again worked himself into a tremendous frenzy. He cursed the pope and cardinals, and swore by the teeth of God that if they dared to put the kingdom under an interdict, he would send all the prelates of England flying to the pope, and confiscate all that belonged to them; and, if any of the clergy of Rome were found in his kingdom, he would have their eyes put out, and their noses mutilated, and so they should be sent off to Rome. He bid the bishops get out of his sight with all speed. This was on March 17th, 1208.*

On the 23rd of the same month the interdict was published. The effect of this, when fully carried out, was to suspend all the ordinances of the church, except baptism for infants, and confession and communion of the dying. The dead were to be buried like dogs, in cross-roads or ditches, without prayers or any kind of service.

The king vented his rage chiefly, of course, on the clergy. They

* An interview on March 12th between the king and Simon Langton, Stephen's brother who had been expressly sent, came to nothing. It seems that Simon was commissioned to accept nothing short of an unconditional surrender on the king's part.

were despoiled of their possessions, expelled from abbeys and monasteries, and their revenues confiscated. But it extended itself to some of the laity. The parents of the archbishop and bishops were plundered and imprisoned. In order to secure his nobles, John required from the leading men among them, and from those whom he most suspected, hostages, as pledges of their fidelity. Some gave them; others, for reasons previously adverted to, chose rather to leave the kingdom than to trust their sons into his hands.

At the end of two years from the proclamation of the interdict, Innocent made another move: he proceeded to excommunicate John. But the king still held out. It seems as if he had tried to harden himself under his deprivation of spiritual benefits, and to make as light of them as possible. When he was on one occasion enjoying the chase, and a remarkably fine deer had been brought down, he noticed its size and beauty, and then added, with a sneer that betrayed the bitterness of his feelings, which he meant to hide, "A fine animal truly! and yet he never heard mass."

It was in the year 1211, as John was returning from a successful expedition to Ireland and Wales, that he was met at Northampton by Pandulph, a papal legate, and Turand, a Knight Hospitaller, who had been sent by the pope to try again if a reconciliation could be effected between him and his very dear, but refractory son. The result of the conference that then took place was, that the king agreed that the archbishop, the proscribed bishops, and the other clergy should return; but he refused to make any satisfaction for the losses and confiscations which they had suffered. On this, Pandulph returned to France, and the pope proceeded one step further. He now absolved kings and all others from fidelity and subjection to John. This is said to have been welcome news to many of his nobles; for, among them were those whose wives and daughters he had injured—others whom he had beggared by his exactions—others, whose friends he had banished, in order to secure their possessions for himself, so that he had almost as many enemies as nobles; and they were right glad to be released from their fealty and subjection. It is even said that, on hearing of this step on the part of the pope, some of them went so far as to promise their support to Philip of France if he would come over and take the throne of England.

Again, John's enormities and incorrigible perverseness were reported to the pope; and he now determined that the king should be deposed, and his kingdom given to another. The French king was chosen by the pope to undertake the expedition. Nobles were exhorted to unite themselves with Philip. Pandulph, the legate, was again sent to France: there, too, were the archbishop and the English bishops who had left the country. Pandulph had in-

structions as to the course he was to pursue if John should show any signs of repentance; and he was secretly charged with conditions of peace, if that should be the case. It is needless to dwell on the preparations that were made on both sides. Suffice to say that John was able to bring together forces, both by land and sea, more than sufficient to defend him against any attacks, if his troops had only been heart and soul with him; but they were drawn together more from the fear of forfeiting their possessions than from attachment to him: and he knew it; for he had been previously forewarned that his nobles might some day betray him.

It was at this critical juncture, when John was with his forces at Dover, and Philip was proceeding with his preparations, that two Templars passed over from France and had an audience with the English king. They informed him that they appeared for Pandulph, to say that he wished for a conference with his Majesty, having conditions of peace to offer. The king agreed to the interview. The legate, on his arrival, informed him of the preparations that Philip was making against him—of the pontiff's authority with which he was charged—of the banished clergy and laity who were with him—of the promises of support which Philip had received from many of the English nobility; and he conjured him now at last to submit. The legate's words, connected with other things, disturbed and confounded the king. He had now been five years under excommunication; the French preparations against him were on a large scale; and, worse than all, and what he seems to have dreaded most, his own subjects were absolved from their allegiance to him, and could not be depended on; they might desert him, or even deliver him to his enemies. Reduced thus to perplexity, he submitted to the legate's offers, though still, as might be expected, not with the most hearty good will. He swore, however, on the Holy Gospels, that he would obey the judgment of the Church, binding himself to stand to the commands of the pope in all matters for which he had been excommunicated. He promised to give peace and security to the archbishop, the other bishops who had left the kingdom, the monks of Canterbury, and the clergy and laity generally; not to injure them, or suffer them to be injured or obstructed in the discharge of their duties; to dismiss all feeling of animosity; to grant letters to the archbishop and others, empowering them to adhere to the apostolic commands, even if he did anything to oppose them; to make full restitution for what had been taken from either clergy or laity, whether effects or liberties; to recal the sentence of outlawry that had been decreed, whether against ecclesiastics or laymen; and to restore moveables that had been taken by force. The archbishop and bishops were to pledge themselves by oath that they would

neither by themselves, nor others, make any attempt on his person or crown, while he kept inviolate the peace and security that he had promised. The amount of compensation in some cases was fixed. The interdict was to be removed. These conditions were agreed to on May 13th, 1213.

Two days later, he resigned his crown with the realms of England and Ireland, into the hands of the pope and his successors, to hold his kingdom as a fief of the pope, binding his heirs and successors to fealty to him, and to pay 1000 marks sterling annually to Rome, seven hundred for England and three hundred for Ireland. The king delivered the paper with these promises to Pandulph; and there, before all present, he did, homage as follows:—"I, John, by the grace of God, king of England, and Lord of Ireland, from this time forth will be, as before, faithful to God, S. Peter, and the Roman Church, to my Lord Pope Innocent, and his catholic successors. I will not do or say, with consent or counsel, anything whereby they may lose life or limb, or be seized by violence. If I know what is for their injury, I will obstruct and stop it, if it is in my power so to do; otherwise, I will inform them as soon as possible, or make it known to those, who, I believe, will report it to them; the counsel, with which they entrust me by themselves, or by messages, or by letter, I will keep secret and knowingly reveal to none to their injury. The patrimony of S. Peter, and especially the realms of England and Ireland, I will help to maintain and defend against all men to the utmost of my power.—So help me God and the Holy Gospels."

A curious story is told in connection with king John's resignation of his kingdom. There was a hermit of Yorkshire, Peter by name (for Yorkshire also could produce a "Peter the hermit"), who had gained a reputation for wisdom by many predictions which he had uttered. Among other things, he foretold of king John that, on Ascension Day next following his words, John would not be king, for that by that day the crown of England would have passed to another. The hermit is said to have made no secret of his prophecy, and it reached the ears of the king; he was summoned to the royal presence, and required to say whether the king was to die on the day mentioned, or in what manner he was to lose his throne. The hermit declined to come to particulars; he merely said, "Know for certain that on that day you will not be king; and, if I am convicted of falsehood, do with me as you please." The king delivered the hermit to the custody of William de Havecart by whom he was kept in close confinement till Ascension Day should prove the truth or falsehood of his prediction. When that day passed, and the king was still safe and sound, he ordered the hermit to be taken from his confinement at Corfe Castle, tied to a horse's tail, and after being thus drawn through the streets of Warham, hanged together with his son. But it was on the eve of the ascension that John made the formal resignation of his kingdom to the papal legate.

Pandulph, on his return to France, communicated to the archbishop and other exiles the result of his visit to the English sovereign. He had also to countermand the expedition for which Philip, by the pope's directions, had made great preparations. This was not well received by Philip. But into this matter, and also into the naval and military expeditions that John sent about this time against the French king, we need not enter further than to say that John thought his successes against Philip warranted him in making an attempt to recover his lost possessions in France; but his nobles refused to follow him, alleging that his sentence of excommunication had not yet been removed. Upon this, the promised security was given to the archbishop and others to come to England. On July 16th they landed at Dover. That day brought back to the shores of England the very man who was wanted to unite the disaffected nobles into one body, to give an aim to their wishes for a better state of things, and to guide their murmurs to a tangible result. All this time that we have run over, there was evidently a deep under-current of discontent among the barons. There was a sense of evils and oppression which had been long growing. It exhibited itself in the unwillingness of the nobles to attend the king on his expeditions, submitting rather to his exactions on them for their non-attendance. The king showed that he was aware of this feeling by taking hostages from many of the barons as security for their fidelity. But no plan had hitherto been taken for united action—no specific reforms had been asked; they groaned, but bore their yoke, or fled the country. In Archbishop Stephen they found a man who could draw them together, and give them a definite object; he had lived in France and at Rome, but still he was an Englishman. Close as his intimacy had been with Pope Innocent, and great as were his obligations to him, he felt that he owed more to his country; and the consequence was, that soon afterwards, Innocent, who had visited John with all his censures for not receiving Stephen as archbishop, suspended Stephen, to oblige the king, for the part the archbishop took with the barons in their demands on John.

On his arrival the archbishop proceeded with his companions to Winchester, where the king then was. John went out to meet him, fell at his feet in tears, and implored him to have compassion on him and his kingdom. The archbishop and bishops raised him; and, giving him the place of honour between them, conducted him to the door of the church, where the 51st Psalm was chanted, and he was absolved in the presence of his nobles. Then he swore to defend the church, to restore the good laws of his predecessors, especially those of King Edward,* to repeal unjust laws, and to give justice to

* Commonly called "the Confessor." This reference to the laws of King Edward is

all. He was then conducted into the cathedral, when the archbishop celebrated the Holy Eucharist, though (it is important to remember) the interdict was still unrevoked; afterwards the king entertained the prelates and his nobles at a joyous feast. This was on July 20th, 1213.

It was not long before the archbishop crossed the king's path. When his excommunication was removed, John renewed his purpose of starting on his French expedition. This time the knights who had assembled complained that they had been kept so long waiting that their money was spent; and they averred that, unless they were supplied from the royal exchequer, they could not follow him. To this the king demurred, and they returned to their homes. The king had gone on board ship, but was now, of course, obliged to return. The conduct of his barons must have been annoying to him. In the first place, they could not go with him because he was under excommunication; then, when the sentence was removed, they pleaded that all their money had been spent in the interval, and, without money they could not attend him. These excuses betoken their dissatisfaction; but we cannot wonder at John wishing to inflict some chastisement upon them. For this purpose he collected some troops, and had proceeded as far as Northampton, when the archbishop presented himself, and reminded him of the promise he had made when his excommunication was withdrawn, not to make war without the judgment of his court. Early the following morning, the king, in great indignation, moved forward to Nottingham, but thither the archbishop pursued him with the same remonstrances.

Here, however, we are somewhat anticipating matters. On the day after he was released from his excommunication, the king caused letters to be issued, summoning a council at St. Alban's, on the fourth of August, to ascertain what was due to the bishops and others for damages in the late disorders. The king, bent on his French expedition, was not present at the council, but had committed the regency to Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, his justiciary, and the Bishop of Winchester, authorising them, with the advice of the archbishop, to carry on the government in his absence. It was under the direction of these men that the council which met at St. Alban's ordained that the laws of Henry I. should be universally observed in the kingdom, and all unjust laws entirely abolished. The council also forbade sheriffs, foresters, and other royal officers to practise violent extortion, or inflict injuries, or exact certain payments, *as they had been wont to do*. The council

noticeable, as it shows that the archbishop was well acquainted with the evils prevailing in the country, and the remedy which (as will be seen afterwards) had been promised in a former reign, viz., the restoration of King Edward's laws.

was then adjourned to the twenty-fifth of the same month, when the archbishop, bishops, abbots, priors, and nobles assembled in London, at St. Paul's. It was there that the archbishop took the nobles apart, and reminded them of the king's promise, made to him at Winchester, to restore the laws of King Edward. He then produced a charter, granted by Henry I., by which that king pledged himself to reform abuses that were still existing, and to restore the laws of Edward the Confessor. Many things were specified in it. The archbishop had it read to the barons. They heard it with joy. It seemed to open a way by which they might proceed; and they swore that, on seeing a fitting opportunity, they would fight, even to death, to obtain these liberties. The council then broke up—but the ball had been set a-rolling.

THROUGH GLEN-MORRISON

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THREE WEEKS IN SKYE," "ACROSS ROSS-SHIRE, &c.

THE parish of Glenshiel ends about the middle of Loch Cluany, where the tourist passes into Glen Morrison, and into the county of Inverness. At the head of Glen Morrison, the scenery begins to grow more soft. Near Ceann-a-Cnoic, which means *head of the hillock*, there is a sweet wooded valley, with green knowes on the left, and birch-wooded slopes on the right. The stream, which runs out of Loch Cluany flows quite close to the road at this point, gurgling and sparkling over a rocky bed. As we passed out of Glen Cluany and came upon this more favoured spot, the sun began to shine out through the mist, and shed a glint of gladness on everything around. Here it must have been that Dr. Johnson thus beautifully describes his situation :—

“I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had, indeed, no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which, by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour well, I know not, for here I first conceived the thought of this narrative.”

The critical reviewers of the time, with a flattery now unknown in literature, remark upon this, if we may trust Boswell's note :—
“We congratulate the public on the event with which this quotation concludes, and are fully persuaded that the hour in which the entertaining traveller conceived this narrative will be considered, by every reader of taste, as a fortunate event in the annals of literature. Were it suitable to the task in which we are at present engaged, to indulge ourselves in a poetic flight, we would invoke the winds of the Caledonian mountains to blow for ever, with their softest breezes, on the bank where our author reclined ; and request of Flora that it might be perpetually adorned with the gayest and most fragrant productions of the year.”

About two miles to the east of the lower end of Loch Cluany the river, now called the Morrison, is spanned by Doe Bridge (probably the Gaelic *Dobhaidh*, “boisterous”), a structure of two arches. Here we were much struck with the beauty of a glorious wood of birches, whose millions of light-green leaves harmonised charmingly with the darker green of the old native pine, of which

there were several noble specimens. To a Londoner the scent of these pines is delightful, more exquisite far than all the odoriferous compounds of Rimmel or Piesse and Lubin. The road now runs along the right bank of the river, while a short way below the bridge, Doe Glen opens to the left, and at its mouth stands a handsome shooting lodge, whose white-washed face was welcome to us, as it was the first house we had seen since leaving the inn at Cluany. The road again passes through a thick wood of birch, the banks on either hand sloping like those of the green lanes of Devon, and covered, like them, with abundance of wild-flower — indeed of honeysuckle, campion, and geranium, but with harebell, wild strawberry, and rich purple heather. These are indeed the braes

“Where the blackberry grows
Mid the bonnie blooming heather.”

Those sweet birch-woods form one of the greatest charms of Highland scenery, and we were quite sorry when the envious wheels brought us to the outskirts of the planting, at which, if the reader pass that way, and care to test the minuteness and truth of my narrative, he will find a gate, and beside it, one of those cairns so common in the Highlands; where a dead body has been found, or perhaps a coffin rested, and of which we had encountered half-a-dozen at least since our landing at Glenelg. And to add to our chagrin, the country began again to grow bleak, almost as bleak as it had been in Glen Cluany, the hills being tame and destitute of all clothing save heather. This spot, however, is rendered interesting by the adventures of the unfortunate Prince Charles, whom the Highlanders loved so fondly, and of whom they loved to say—

“His right are those hills, and his right are these valleys.”

In the recesses of Corriegoe, (the corrie of the blacksmith), the range of hills between Strath Glass and Glen Morrison, the Prince lay concealed for several weeks, exposed to every hardship.

“The eagle finds rest in his eyrie on the mountain,
The red deer is safe by the lone moonlit fountain:
But though tempests should rave as the night round him gathers,
Our Prince finds no home in the land of his fathers.”

About four miles above Torgoyle, a faithful follower of the Prince, Mackenzie by name, was descried by the king's soldiers, and shot close by the wayside. As he lay in the agonies of death he cried out, “You have killed your Prince!” a feint which completely misled the troopers, and suspended for a time all pursuit of Charles, who had thus time to get out of the district. So great was the resemblance that Mackenzie bore to his master, that it was not till his head was taken to Edinburgh, and there pronounced by one who knew the Prince's person well, not to be the right head at all,

that the mistake was found out. After a residence of three weeks in a cave of Corriegoe, where his wants had been supplied by seven freebooters, who, notwithstanding that a reward of £30,000 was on his head, were never tempted to betray him, the Prince escaped to Lochaber, whence he removed to the recesses of Ben Alder, near Loch Erich, and thence to Moidart, where he had first landed. "And thus," as Mr. Chambers remarks, in his "Rebellion and Jacobite Memoirs of 1745," "and thus was he destined to return here, which returns after a hard chase to the same form from which it set out, to leave Scotland, where he had undergone so long and so deadly a chase, precisely at the point where he had set foot upon its territory." The same writer thus beautifully paints the scene of embarkation. "The wretchedness of his appearance was strangely inconsistent with the magnificence of the hopes with which he tried to cheer the fainting hearts of his followers. The many noble spirits who had already perished in his behalf, and the unutterable misery which his enterprise had occasioned to a wide tract of country, returned to his remembrance; and looking round him he saw the tears starting into many a brave man's eye, as it cast a farewell look back upon the country which it was never again to behold. To have maintained a show of resolution under circumstances so affecting was impossible. He had drawn his sword in the energy of his harangue, but he now sheathed it with a force which spoke his agitated feelings; he gazed a minute in silent agony, and finally burst into a flood of tears. Upwards of a hundred unfortunate gentlemen accompanied him on board, when the anchor, being immediately raised, and the sails set, the last of the Stuarts was quickly borne away from the country of his fathers."

The Ettrick Shepherd, in the favourite Jacobite song, "Flora Mac-Donald's Lament," has, with much poetic beauty, added to this scene the charming incident of the "bonnie young Flora" sitting, "sighing her lane,"

"Down by the corrie that sings to the sea,
The dew on her plaid, and the tear in her e'e."

and singing—

"The conflict is past, and our name is no more:
There's nought left but sorrow for Scotland and me."

Near this spot are the farmhouse and village of Unach (in Gaelic, *Aonach*, meaning, "the lonely moor"), which have been immortalised in the narrations of both Johnson and Boswell. The former says: "Early in the afternoon came to Anoch, a village in Glen Mollison of three huts, one of which is distinguished by a chimney. Found some books on a shelf, among which were a volume or two of Prideaux's *Connexion*. The house stood in a

glen, pleasantly watered by a winding river. But this country, however it may delight the gazer or amuse the naturalist, is of no great advantage to its owners. Our landlord told us of a gentleman who possesses lands eighteen Scotch miles in length, and three in breadth—a space containing at least a hundred square English miles. He has raised his rents, to the danger of depopulating his farms, and he sells his timber, yet, after exerting every art of augmentation, he has only obtained a yearly revenue of four hundred pounds—about one halfpence an acre!”

The value of land in Inverness-shire has increased very much since then. On consulting a table of statistics, I find that the gross annual rental of the county, under Schedule A. of the Property Tax, is now £237,416, and that the total number of square miles is 4255; so that, over all (to say nothing of the timber and the rack-rents), the rental of land in this county is about fifteen times what it was in Dr. Johnson's time. The conversion of the small crofts into sheep-farms, and the preservation of the deer, have chiefly contributed to this enhancement of the value of property. Boswell's testimony on this point is important. He observes:—“A red-coat of the 15th Regiment—whether officer, or only sergeant, I could not be sure—came to the house, in his way to the mountains to shoot deer, which it seems the Laird of Glen-Morrison does not hinder any one to do.” At this latter privilege the present Laird of Glen-Morrison must feel inclined to smile. When wealthy brewers from London, and cutlers from Sheffield, are willing to give twenty pounds a head for every deer they shoot, it is not one red-coat in ten thousand that would receive such a privilege at the present time.

The constructive and interior arrangements of the dwelling-houses, however, have not improved with the rentals. Instead of Prideaux's Connexion, too, I fear the cotters of the present day prefer Spurgeon's Sermons, which are now to be found, translated into Gaelic, in the remotest glens of the Highlands. Boswell writes:—“The house here was built of thick turfs, and thatched with thinner turfs and heath. It had three rooms in length, and a little room which projected. Where we sat, the side-walls were wainscoted, as Dr. Johnson said, with wicker, very neatly plaited. The landlord had made the whole with his own hands. Our room had some deals laid across the joists, as a kind of ceiling. There were two beds, and a woman's gown was hung on a rope, to make a certain separation between them. Joseph had sheets, which my wife had sent with us, laid on them. We had much hesitation whether to undress or lie down with our clothes on. I said at last ‘I'll plunge in. There will be less harbour for vermin about me when I am stripped.’ Dr. Johnson said he was like one hesitating

whether to go into the cold bath. At last he resolved too. After we had offered up our private devotions, and had chatted a little from our beds, Dr. Johnson said, 'God bless us both, for Jesus Christ's sake! Good night!' I pronounced, 'Amen!' He fell asleep immediately; I was not so fortunate for a long time. I fancied myself bit by innumerable vermin under the clothes, and that a spider was travelling from the wainscot towards my mouth."

In place of the three huts of Johnson's time, we found a long, scattered range of dwellings, which, however comfortless and dingy they might be within, looked positively picturesque in the soft light of the clouded sun, which glinted forth now and again, painting everything in fresh and attractive colours. Smiling corn-fields, too, began to gladden the eye; fields of potatoes, suggestive of plenty for the denizens of the clachan, lay on either side of the road; around the farm-house hay-heaps smelt pleasantly, the rain's drops on them glistening like pearls in the sun; and fowls picked peacefully among the clover—the whole forming a sweet domestic picture, quite cheerful and refreshing after the barren sterility of the wastes we had left behind. Those Highland clachans are indeed wonderful places in their way, and though little better, and sometimes not so good as English stables or cow-houses, they yet have a strange attractiveness to the outer eye that makes many an artist dote upon them. Hear what the author of "A Painter's Camp in the Highlands" has got to say on the subject:—

"A Highland clachan is one of the most picturesque things in the world, all its beauty being due to nature, and its colouring exquisite—gold of lichen, rose of granite, green of moss, the peat-stacks, with their intense depth of mingled purples and browns, making the walls gleam like jewellery. The landscape near it is generally lovely—a grey precipice, a purple hill, or a rocky stream; cows, in lovelier fur than any other cows; nothing grander than a little Highland bull, black as coal, marching heavily, with a strong sense of his own personal dignity and might. Sheep, too, with twisted horns, which the travelling tinker will make spoons of some day for the cottagers' wives; a little field of corn, all green and gold in its partial ripening, and laid, perhaps, by thoughtless gales; a little kail-yard, and the Highland woman, her eyes brown as the pool of a stream in the heather, her cheeks full and florid as red apples, her hair of the deepest brown or black."

About four miles beyond Unach is the village of Torgoyle (the Lowlander's mound or grave), which is eight miles from Invermorison. The river has now acquired a considerable breadth, a fact testified to by the greater length of the bridge, which is a handsome granite structure of three arches. At the western end stands a gamekeeper's cottage, with lots of skins and tails nailed to its walls

—the *spolia opima* of the neighbouring glens and hills. There is an inn at the eastern end, but it is small, and, perhaps, only worthy of the designation given to it in a guide-book, of “a respectable public-house.” Beside it there is a Roman Catholic Chapel, and, further on, a Free Church. The Established Church is also well represented in the glen, there being two preaching-stations, with a resident missionary. The parish church is in the neighbouring glen of Urquhart, Glen-Morrison and Glen Urquhart forming one united parish.

Beyond Torgoyle the road skirts a long, thick wood of larch to the right, and soon after we passed a beautiful birch plantation, which, with some noble specimens of dark-green pine intermixed, stretched out on both sides of the road. We were now becoming anxious about catching the steamer, which was due at Invermorrison Pier at twelve o'clock; but the pony was a lazy brute, callous alike to coaxing and objurgation; the “young man from Boleskine’s” throat grew dry, and the whip was applied with unsparing hand; but, alas! the animal’s hide was as hard as its moral sense; and losing temper and his pennyworth of whip-crack to the bargain, John began to apply the butt-end with a force and rapidity that in a few minutes would have produced a crop of weals on the brute’s posteriors, had we not interfered and assured him that, come what might, we would hurry no man’s cattle in that fashion.

The last two or three miles of Glen-Morrison are surpassingly beautiful. The hills are clothed to the summit with the most charming woods, and the river foams over a rocky bed, which, at some places, is pretty deep down from the road, and at times entirely hid from the view, only the thunder of the water being heard from below. Though the Morrison is considerably larger than the stream which Burns so sweetly describes in the lines:—

“Whyles ower a linn the burnie plays,
As through the glen it wimples;
Whyles round a rocky scar it strays,
Whyles in a wiel it dimples,—”

those words describe fitly the changing character of the scene. Now the river tumbles over a succession of scars, foaming and booming; now it becomes smooth as glass, with large mirrors of pools, in which the graceful forms of the birch, that beautiful “lady of the woods,” love to admire themselves all day long; and now it throws its circling arms round a rocky island, on whose thin and scanty soil the native pine alone finds nourishment. The pretty cascades that occur at frequent intervals have given to the glen the beautiful name which it bears, the term Morrison being from the Gaelic words *Mor* and *easain*, meaning “mighty, or many waterfalls.” This “glen of the many waterfalls” is indeed

of surpassing loveliness, every bit as fine as Killiecrankie, Strath Glass, or Strath Affric, and certainly finer, though more contracted, than the valleys of the Tay, the Tummel, or the Garry. In contemplating the exquisite beauty of the lower half of the glen, we felt inclined to say, in the words of Wordsworth—

“ Full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have we chanced to spy
Among the mountains ; never one like this.”

About a mile from the pier stands Invermorrison Inn, nestling comfortably amid the thick woods that surround it. Just in front of the inn, the road crosses the river by a two-arched bridge, the water still tumbling below over a rocky channel. We were now close to our destination, the rapid whirl of the wheels soon bringing us within view of the blue and sparkling waters of Loch Ness, and of the little pier, on which, to our great satisfaction, we descried a knot of passengers waiting for the coming boat. Having satisfied the natural expectations of “ the young man from Boleskine,” and sent him trundling homewards in his ancient vehicle, we were glad to stretch our legs in a walk to the nearest point, to see if the steamer were in sight. While doing so, we had ample opportunity for admiring at our leisure the soft and almost lowland scenery in the midst of which we walked ; soft and lowland certainly, when contrasted with the overwhelming grandeur of many of the scenes through which we had just passed. Though the mouth of Glen-Morrison has a fine environment of hills, yet they are comparatively low, though sufficiently striking in outline. Chief among them, and almost overshadowing the pier, is *Sroin-a-mhuic*, literally the “Pig’s Snout,” a name given because of its real or fancied resemblance to the prominent feature in an animal which, more than any other, seems to have been a domestic favourite in Celtic households in ancient times, if we may venture to draw such an inference from the data of topography. There are few districts in the Highlands that have no geographical term signifying Pig’s Hill, Pig’s Glen, or Pig’s village. Thus we have *Glen muic*, “ the Pig’s Glen ;” the second highest mountain in Scotland is *Bienn-na-muic-dhuibh*, “ the hill of the black pigs,” and in going through Drumouchtar (the upper mountain ridge), one of the finest passes on the Highland railway, the traveller sees towering above him on one side the Badenoch boar, and on the other, the Athole sow.

After all our hurry, we had upwards of an hour to wait at Invermorrison pier, an hour, however, that was not unpleasantly spent. The pier, we were informed, belongs to Lord Lovat, while the land as far back as Cluany, and even that on the opposite side of Loch Ness, is the property of James Murray Grant, Esq., whose fine residence, Invermorrison House, romantically situated at the

mouth of the glen, and shaggy woods and heath-clad hills, is a fit residence, indeed, for a Highland chieftain. The delay in the time of the steamer's arrival was soon explained when we saw her round the little point to the south. Instead of the swift packet we had expected, the little tub-looking "Cygnet," which is constructed on the most limited principle, so as to overtake the route by the Crinan Canal, hove in sight, churning the water with much haste, and little speed. On board were as motley a crowd as it has been my lot to mix with on board of any steamer; holiday-makers from Inverness, who had been spending the day in a trip to Fort Augustus and back. It was painful at first to leave the quiet solitude of the hills and glens, and mix with those noisy elements of humanity; but as the crowd was really a noteworthy and amusing one, our attention soon became engrossed by a study, equally interesting and profitable in its way, the study of human nature.

JAMES LEITCH.

GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY?

(FROM MRS. WHITMORE TO HER SISTER.)

Arleigh House, Dec. 2, 18—.

MY DEAR CONSTANCE,—All the enjoyment which fine weather, a charming abode, and the kindest of all kind hosts can afford, is mine in this pretty place. There is rather a large party assembled in the house, and Sir Ivon Maynard, and his excellent, kind-hearted sister, do all in their power to amuse and render us happy. Better than all, they have that instinctive refinement of kindness which allows us to be happy *in our own way*. Can you and I forget what we endured some years ago, when on a visit to Colonel Harper, and what martyrs we were to the relentless perseverance with which he mapped out the proceedings of the day? True to her obliging determination that her visitors shall, in all respects, follow their own inclinations, Miss Maynard has installed me in a room the very look of which invites one to study. One side of it is occupied by a large and handsome bookcase, the shelves of which are furnished with valuable works, both ancient and modern, several of them, to my great delight, being in German and Italian. On ushering me into the room, the old lady said, in her genial way, "No one shall disturb you in your retreat; you shall read and write to your heart's content." And then she said more than I choose to repeat about my being "so clever," "such a linguist," and also an authoress, she was sure, although I would persist in denying it! The view from the window of this room often recalls to my mind that in front of the little boudoir which you and I shared in our happy home at Vernon Ashleigh. After breakfast I always repair to my "study," as Miss Maynard terms it, and here I read and write till the gong summons us to luncheon. This agreeable retreat is doubly acceptable, on account of the entire want of congeniality I feel with the visitors here. The tone of conversation is never raised beyond the most ordinary standard, and though one of the guests, a Miss Gordon, is highly educated and accomplished, yet she seems none the wiser for the wisdom which was drilled into her at the rate of £200 a-year. Do not imagine that I say this in ill-nature; you always wish me to write as undisguisedly as I should speak. From time to time you shall hear of the proceedings of

Your affectionate sister,

GERTRUDE WHITMORE.

(MR. VERNON'S PRIVATE JOURNAL.)

Dec. 4.—Stayed indoors all the morning, writing letters; among others, one to Sir Ivon Maynard, accepting his invitation to spend a few days with him this Christmas; and a most acceptable change it will be to a poor lonely creature like myself. If this visit proves as agreeable as the last, it will do. What a happy chance it was that threw him in my way, or rather, threw *me* into *his* way, for not one man in ten could have pulled up a horse so suddenly when a pedestrian was under its very nose! He may well say he owes his life to me, though I should be just as well pleased if he would not harp so pertinaciously upon the same string. It is a saying that “one half of the world does not know how the other half lives,” and I am sure that one half does not know how very unpleasant some subjects are to the other half. I wonder if there are many visitors at Arleigh House, and whether they are young or old, grave or gay? Not that it matters to me, for I have been apprenticed to the world long enough to have learned the trade of making one's self agreeable to all, though, if I had my choice, I should always associate with people of my own age, which (as this journal is strictly private) I do not mind stating—I am just forty-eight. There is a country (China, I think) where, on the graves, they do not inscribe the actual age of the deceased, but they reckon according to the number of years of happiness that person enjoyed while living. If *my* epitaph were made out in that style, the passer-by would imagine I died amazingly young! What desperate efforts I am always making to delude my journal and myself into the belief that I am of a cheerful turn of mind! Well, for the moment it amuses me, and lightens my load; one must cast superfluous articles overboard now and then, or the boat will sink; goodness knows it has work enough to weather the storm.

(MRS. WHITMORE TO HER SISTER.)

Arleigh House, Dec. 10, 18—.

MY DEAR CONSTANCE,—The society in a country-house is generally of a shifting nature, and, since my last letter, some of those who were then staying here are gone, and others are come. Miss Gordon still remains, and her brilliant performance on the piano adds greatly to the cheerfulness of our evenings. The thaw is hailed with delight by such of the visitors who find pleasure in hunting; but for us ladies it is not so agreeable, as the country roads are almost impassable for walking, and it is still too cold to

enjoy driving. Consequently, we do what we can to amuse ourselves and others in the house. In this endeavour we have an able assistant in a young man named Holroyd, who, with his mother, arrived two or three days after I wrote to you. His talent for drawing is quite extraordinary, and his sketches are the most spirited I ever saw; he also takes likenesses with a degree of correctness which many a professional artist might envy, and he has taken a pencil sketch of almost every member of the company. But another of the company deserves especial mention; his name is Vernon, and he is, I should imagine, nearly fifty years of age, though his countenance is so variable that he looks much younger sometimes than at others. The habitual expression of his countenance is thoughtful, yet observant, and his usual manner is grave. At these times he appears fully the age I have stated, but when, as it occasionally does, his countenance lights up with mirth or enthusiasm, he looks very little over forty. He has made quite a sensation in our somewhat monotonous circle by his conversational powers (when he chooses to talk), and by the readiness with which he can adapt himself to each individual of the party. To Sir Ivon he talks of magisterial duties, and the tricks and trials of elections; to Miss Maynard of her well-ordered household, and the best method of securing a country-house against the attacks of midnight robbers (the good old lady being greatly in need of reassurance on this point). He praises Mr. Holroyd's sketches, compliments Miss Gordon on the lightness and agility of her touch, and sings duets with her. To myself he is a most agreeable and intelligent companion, being well read both in English and foreign literature. He has been in Italy, and reads and speaks its language almost like a native. Sir Ivon's acquaintance is quite recent, and it commenced thus. Sir Ivon, who is rather deaf, was crossing the road in front of Apsley House, and had nearly reached the pavement in safety, when he was almost knocked down by a horse, whose rider, self-absorbed, did not see the old gentleman's danger until it was nearly too late to avert it. With wonderful strength and promptitude, however, he checked his horse, and the old gentleman was saved. The rider was Mr. Vernon. Sir Ivon, who is very impulsive, grasped his hand, vowed eternal friendship, wrote down his name and address on the spot, and followed up the introduction by an invitation to Arleigh House. This is his second visit here. Sir Ivon frequently alludes to the circumstance, and persists in calling Mr. Vernon his "life-preserver." This sort of thing seems to distress Mr. Vernon, rather than to gratify him, and he begs Sir Ivon to drop the subject, modestly assuring him that in rendering this little service, he only acted on the natural impulse by which each and all would endeavour to save a fellow-creature from an untimely death. He is un-

doubtedly an intelligent companion, for he endows even common-place subjects with interest, or at least speaks of them in an unusual manner. Sir Ivon laid down the newspaper yesterday with a vehement exclamation, and said to his sister, "What a dreadful thing!—the "Mary Thompson" is lost, and Mr. Russell's nephew was on board!—that poor boy who was left to his uncle's care. Russell grudged him every mouthful he ate, and more than once he was heard to say how he wished the boy was dead. This has evidently happened as a judgment upon him for harbouring such a wicked wish. My belief is, that that man is as much a murderer in the sight of God as though he had put the boy on board the ship, *knowing* it would go down." That afternoon I went alone for a walk, and on my return met Mr. Vernon, who joined me, and began to speak of the agitation Sir Ivon had betrayed. "How curious it is," said he, "to hear men deliberately deciding upon the Almighty's motives for this and that. Sir Ivon, you see, has settled that the whole thing happened for the especial benefit of Mr. Russell. Just imagine one or two hundred souls hurried into eternity in order that a certain Mr. Russell may think to himself, 'Dear me! how shocking! I wish now that I had never longed for that boy's death.' I did not like this mode of treating the subject, and said that, though it was not for us to determine by what motives the Almighty is actuated, yet that, if any one allowed so murderous a wish to take possession of the mind, the fulfilment of that wish must fill the mind with a horror and remorse akin to the sensations of an actual murderer. I spoke strongly; for, as I before said, it seemed to me that he dealt too lightly with so solemn a subject; but instead of appearing staggered by my remarks, he laughingly congratulated me on my wonderful insight into the workings of the human mind; and then said, "How curious it is to see how differently diverse minds are affected by the very same event! Take the case in point, for instance. A ship goes down—'My valuable cargo is lost! thousands of pounds are irrevocably gone!' cries the merchant. 'My husband was on board—he is dead!' exclaims the disconsolate widow. 'My son is lost!' shrieks a heartbroken mother. A poet has the tidings, and fired by melancholy inspiration, describes how the lightning flashed, the vessel was disabled, and how the last shriek of the doomed ones died unheeded on the midnight air." Then, with one of his sudden changes of mood, he added—"And Sir Ivon hears of it, and decides that this awful calamity took place in order to recal Mr. Russell's sins to his remembrance, and make him feel uncomfortable!" But, I think, nevertheless, that my intended rebuke was not quite lost upon him, for several times during that evening he looked thoughtful. This letter has gone far beyond my usual limits, but you made me pro-

mise to tell you everything of interest that occurred during my visit.

I remain, as ever, dear Constance,

Your affectionate sister,

GERTRUDE WHITMORE.

(MR. VERNON'S PRIVATE JOURNAL.)

Dec. 9, Midnight.—Early hours are kept here, and all but myself are asleep. Miss Maynard—good old soul—apologised for putting me into a room so far from the other bedrooms, adding, “But bachelors must put up with inconveniences.” Most true, old lady, but if the worst inconvenience is that of having a room undisturbed by passing sounds, I readily submit. Let me see—I arrived at Arleigh House on the sixth instant, and have consequently been here three days. I wonder whether *every* third day some unpleasant subject will be mooted; I do hope not, for it would be so nice to lay aside one’s armour for a time. Vain hope—it can never be; I must for ever wear a helmet of brass—a coat of mail—and be prepared to defy the army of mankin in general, and any David who may present himself in particular. However, vessels do not founder every day, so I may trust that, during the remainder of this visit life may flow on in easy nothings, and cheerfulness be sustained by every-day tittle-tattle. Why could not the old man have been content with telling us of the shipwreck, without adding such a vehement expression of his conviction that that unlucky Mr. Russell was a murderer, because he had wished to be rid of a companion whose presence was a daily torment to him? A murderer, indeed! How I hate such overstrained notions! People have no right to give utterance to them, at all events. Not that the opinion of an old fellow like that is of any importance, and it would have passed off as a mere piece of bombast, had not Mrs. Whitmore followed it up when I so unluckily encountered her in my walk. She is a charming woman, though, and stands out from the rest of her sex as a specimen of what intellect can do. I declare that, though I have spent years in Italy, her critical knowledge of Italian surpasses my own. I never thought to quail before a woman, but the flash of her eyes startled the very depths of my soul as she said THAT. Some speeches can be forgotten; others are stereotyped for ever. Had she written down her words in characters of fire, they would not have burned themselves more indelibly into my brain. The wind is howling to-night, and its roar among the fir-trees is like the rushing of mighty waters, but louder than the tempest, and above the sound of that mimic ocean, I hear those terrible words—“murderous wish”—“horror and remorse akin to the sensations of an actual murderer.”

Bah! I am nervous. This comes of my silly habit of sitting up when I ought to be courting forgetfulness in sleep. To-morrow I will sing nonsensical love-songs with Miss Gordon, talk metaphysics with Mrs. Whitmore, joke Miss Maynard about loaded pistols, and thieves—and, in short, appear in the best spirits possible. They shall not think that the discussion of to-day has made any impression on my mind. How absurd I am!—why *should* they suppose it would do so? I am always forgetting that my armour is invisible, though never put off.

(MRS. WHITMORE TO HER SISTER.)

Arleigh House, Dec. 16, 18—.

MY DEAR CONSTANCE,—I wish more and more to have you here with us; I never thought that so much amusement could be found in a country-house. Yet our party has dwindled down to a small number; this is, perhaps, better, for it makes us seem quite like a family circle. Mrs. Holroyd and her son are still here; also a nephew of Sir Ivon's, a lively boy of about sixteen years of age, whom we call Charlie. Miss Gordon has left, and a Mrs. Lyndsey has taken her place. These, together with Mr. Vernon and myself, constitute the party now staying in the house. I am glad to find I have succeeded in interesting you in Mr. Vernon, otherwise, having written so much about him, you would have been wearied of the theme. But you will be still more interested when I tell you that he is undoubtedly a relative, or, at any rate, a connexion of our family. The fact of his name being Vernon I did not particularly notice; but on discovering that his Christian name is Ashleigh, I could not but remark the coincidence, and ask him from what county he came; and when he replied, "From Berkshire," it, of course, settled the question. He could only make indefinite replies to my questions about our mutual relatives; but, as he has been abroad almost all his life, his ignorance on the point is easily explained. This discovery is a pleasant link between us; and Mr. Lyndsey, who seemed much amused at my cross-questionings, has decided that the relationship is that of hundredth cousin, with two removes! Sometimes Sir Ivon gives evening entertainments, to which he invites many of the families in the neighbourhood. On these occasions, Charades and *Tableaux Vivants* are the usual amusements, and our "hundredth cousin" displays great talent in acting. The arrangement of the groups is generally referred to Mr. Holroyd, in compliment to his artistic taste. When we have decided on the subject, Mr. Holroyd makes a rough sketch, in order to judge of the effect, and this renders our decision easier.

Both Sir Ivon and Mr. Vernon oppose us strongly when we propose any scene of a tragic nature, although, from the general tone of the conversation of the latter, one would imagine it would be more in unison with his disposition. We were about to represent some *Tableaux Vivants*, two or three days ago, and I proposed the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots; Sir Ivon objected, and Mr. Vernon seconded his objections. Lady Jane refusing the crown was then suggested, but rejected by a majority. Charlie then said he was sure nothing would be "so jolly" as Queen Eleanor offering the bowl of poison to Fair Rosamond. Again Sir Ivon interposed his veto, and we at last decided to give up the idea of *Tableaux*, and to act Charades.

"We won't have anything melancholy," said Charlie, then. "I'll tell you a word, 'Courtship.' The first scene shall be in Court, and it shall be the trial in 'Pickwick;' that will just suit Mr. Lyndsey, as he is a barrister, and it is the greatest fun in the world."

"No; not a trial, my dear Charlie," pleaded Miss Maynard. "I went into Court during the Assizes, once, when I was a young girl, and saw the judge put on the black cap, and I fainted, and never could bear to see a trial since."

"But Pickwick was not tried in the Crown Court," said Mr. Lyndsey, with quiet humour, "nor, even there, does the judge *invariably* wind up his proceedings by putting on the black cap. Sometimes it is not requisite, and sometimes even those who deserve condemnation manage to escape it."

Miss Maynard then gave way, and we acted the word which Charlie had suggested. I scarcely know whether Mr. Lyndsey or Mr. Vernon acted the best. The latter is such a singular mixture of self-possession and modesty; I never saw a man so shrink from being brought forward in any way. Yesterday was Sir Ivon's birthday, and we all drank his health at dinner. In returning us his thanks, he said that his being alive and well at that moment was owing to the presence of mind of one whom he was now proud to call his guest; need he say he alluded to Mr. Vernon? He then proposed his health, calling him, as before, his "life-preserver." Mr. Vernon seemed quite distressed at this public homage, instead of being gratified. He also strenuously refuses to have his likeness taken, although Mr. Holroyd has often begged to be allowed to do so. He seemed quite vexed to-day when Mr. Lyndsey pressed him for the reason of such excessive modesty; but he quickly recovered himself, and laughingly assured him that it was not from modesty, but a conviction that no one would do him justice. I do not think I quite like Mr. Lyndsey. If one can suppose such a thing of a man, he appears jealous of Mr. Vernon, and to grudge him the

regard which is bestowed upon him by us all. He has, at times, a brusque, unpleasant method of addressing him, and that about such trifles. This afternoon, for instance, he was writing letters, and asked if some one would lend him a seal, whereupon Mr. Vernon offered him one. "Thanks!" said Mr. Lyndsey, shortly. Then, instead of sealing the letter at once, he examined the seal with a critical air. "A. V.," he said; "what singular initials!—so very uncommon? I only once met with them until now, and it was some years ago—a young man named Antonio Vincenzo. I met him in Rome." He then pushed the seal back, rather than returned it, and said bluntly that he was obliged for the offer of it, but that he preferred a plain seal. I am always dreading lest his *brusquerie* should pass the bounds of endurance, and be the cause of a quarrel between them. In fact, I almost think they have had a quarrel this evening, for, while I was dressing for dinner, I saw them walking rapidly up and down a path near my window; and once Mr. Lyndsey's voice was raised so high, that, had I listened, I might have heard his very words. I am convinced that his temper is very irascible, and am sorry he ever came to destroy the harmony of our agreeable circle. I make a point of showing him that I look upon Mr. Vernon as an intellectual companion; and a few minutes after the affair of the seal, and while he was standing by, I gave Mr. Vernon an Italian novel, begging him to read it, and give me his opinion of it, at the same time hinting at one or two defects. He declined, saying that he had so little time for reading; but Mr. Lyndsey would see, nevertheless, that however great his own prejudice may be, there are those who appreciate the clever stranger, for such he is, although claiming cousinship with the Ashleighs of Vernon Ashleigh. Again saying, "How I wish you could have shared with me the enjoyment of this visit,"

I remain, dearest Constance,

Your ever affectionate sister,

GERTRUDE WHITMORE.

(MR. VERNON'S PRIVATE JOURNAL.)

Dec. 12.—I declare that if I ever accept an invitation to a country-house again, I will bargain with my host that he shall not keep on shifting and changing the visitors about. He asks a certain set of people, and why, in the world, cannot he be satisfied to let them stay till he has had enough of them, and then turn them all out together? That boy, Charlie, had far better be at school, or in his mother's nursery, than playing his tricks here; not that he can mean any harm; but one never knows what a boy may do or

say next. And that Lyndsey! Who wants barristers to be intruding into country-houses, and prying into their neighbours' concerns? Confound the fellow! Whenever I look up, his eyes are fixed upon me. This I should not mind so much (for some persons have a habit of staring), but do what I will, I cannot get rid of the notion that I have seen him before. If I thought it possible that it could have been *there*. What absurd folly to conjure up phantom horrors, when the real, daily horror of perpetual watchfulness ever attends me. Yet, what have I to fear in reality? Nothing. True, the world is not on my side, yet what can it do to me? Again I answer nothing; for it has tried to do its worst, and has failed. But that man! I would give all I possess to get rid of him, with his searching, watchful looks. The more I think of it, the more I feel convinced that I have seen him before; a miserable and harrowing feeling, for no effort of mine can recal when and where it was; yet I am equally certain I never spoke to him. I have half a mind to cut my visit short, and take a sudden departure, telling Sir Ivon that business calls me away. It would hardly do, though; it might look suspicious. There I go again! Just as if there was cause for suspicion. I declare that everybody is against me; at least, I mean in the way of saying the things most calculated to annoy me, and keep up my wretched feeling of being for ever on the defensive; Mrs. Whitmore—my cousin!—being an exception, for her superiority of mind leads her to speak to me only on subjects of so intellectual a nature, that it does not trench on private feelings. Holroyd, for instance; I wish he were at Hanover, with his everlasting drawings and sketches. If I tell him I don't choose to have my likeness taken, what business is it of his? I have said 'No,' and one word is as good as a thousand. And those charades, too; that was the worst business of all. Let me see: William the Conqueror began to reign in 1066, Queen Victoria in 1837. Out of all the events which have taken place in this interval, fancy that young idiot, Charlie, fixing upon that scene of all others. "So jolly," indeed! Not that the subject decided upon is much better. I would far rather have had a hand in beheading the unfortunate Mary, for there would be nothing in that scene to recal; but what folly it is to do so. Re-call, *i. e.*, call again, call up what is past; at least, the memory of it. For my part, I never could discover the benefit of memory, and firmly believe it was invented at the Fall, as the worst part of the curse. Look at Adam—happy fellow! He sprang into life a reasonable man, nothing to remember, nor to regret. If he had had a past, could he have revelled in the beauties of paradise, and drawn perfect bliss from its cloudless skies and undying flowers? But he fell, and as he passed out from the gates of paradise, memory tracked his footsteps,

and was his avenging spirit from thenceforward. I would give something to know whether that fellow, Lyndsey, had a *reason* for what he said. If I thought so—"deserve condemnation" forsooth! Who is *he* that he should decide whether a sentence is just, or unjust? I hate the very sight of him. I never meet his eye without a deepening conviction that we have met before. But what if we have? What if the past, which tortures me, is known to him also? If, in his fixed and haunting gaze he tells my conscious spirit that he knows all, what can he do? Nothing! I will meet the voiceless accusation with a gaze as dauntless as his own, and defy him.

Dec. 16.—All is over; I can defy him no longer. What a day has this been to me! I rose this morning with a strange depression of spirits, which was evidently the foreshadowing of coming disaster. Yes, all is over; I must begin life again, and elsewhere. I wonder how "A. V." will fare *this* time? Allan Vyse? No; that won't do. Archibald Vicars? No; I don't like that either. Ah, that will do—Arthur Vivian; a capital name. So please to remember that Ashleigh Vernon is dead, *i. e.*, he will be dead in a few hours; as dead as Antonio Vincenzo, whom I buried in Italy! "A. V." Yes, they *are* rather uncommon initials, Mr. Lyndsey; you are right there. What an unlucky impulse it was that prompted Sir Ivon to cross the road at the identical moment when I was riding along, and cogitating about my future; for had it not been for that little accident, I should never have made his acquaintance, never stayed at Arleigh House, and consequently, should not have met Lyndsey. But it evidently was to be. It is what some people call Fate—others Providence. I wonder which is right? A little of both perhaps. But it is useless to write in this strain, and try to cheat myself into the belief that I am indifferent to what has befallen me. I flatter myself I can deceive others with no small success, but it is a vain attempt to try to cheat myself. Do I not know that the shadow has fallen upon me at last, and thrown the remainder of my life into gloom? Do I not know that from the time Lyndsey's glance fell upon me, it withered every hope of future comfort, and doomed me to perpetual banishment? I tried to joke about my new name, "Arthur Vivian," but it is far away, in some distant land, that I must bear it. I know now that from henceforth I must be homeless and friendless. Alone, too, though I should be with crowds of my fellow-creatures; for a word has but to be spoken—a whisper, and I am doomed to solitude; my *poor* words would be powerless to turn aside so weighty a testimony as that of public opinion.

When Holroyd began again this morning about taking my like-

ness, and Lyndsey took up the subject, I knew that the time was come. There was such a look of determination in his eye, that I knew all was over. How little could any one else guess the fiendish depth of meaning in his inquiry why I objected to having my likeness taken—*what I feared!* Still, so far it might have passed off by my stifling my indignation, and (I cannot hide it from myself) my dread; but when he returned my seal with the name of “Antonio Vincenzo” on his lips—then I felt that my hour was come. The feigned carelessness of his tone and manner was more dreadful to me than an open threat or accusation; had that been his mode of action, I might have defied him, and dared him to prove the truth of his insinuations, but his coolness seemed to numb every faculty, and I was overwhelmed with a sudden horror. I turned away, and then—then came the death-blow, dealt (oh! how unconsciously!) by her whose intellectual companionship has been so invaluable to me (though I can scarcely feel to thank her for the utterance of those haunting words when she was speaking of the shipwreck). Her kindly heart was roused by Lyndsey’s offensive manner in returning the seal; and, as if to endeavour to compensate for his rudeness by her own extra courtesy, she began to speak to me of an Italian novel which she had been reading, offering to lend it to me, as she wished to hear my opinion of it. She gave me a slight sketch of the tale, and that moment was the drop too much in my cup of misery. To think that, of all subjects, THAT should be the one touched upon in a book recommended to *me!* I know not what excuse I made, but I muttered something, and left the room. I knew now that a hand was laid upon me—a mighty, an irresistible hand—and that, after all my struggles, I must yield at last. Whose hand is it? Is it a blind destiny, or did her thrilling words contain the awful truth that the indulgence of a wish makes me Guilty in the sight of the Almighty?

An hour later, and I had sought Lyndsey, who was pacing one of the garden paths. An interview of a few minutes sufficed. He had seen me in Rome, knew my previous history, recognised me on his arrival at Arleigh House, and was resolved that I should no longer “appear in false colours, and impose upon the credulity of so kind and estimable a host.” I did not attempt to shake his resolution, but I said a few words which he looked upon as the commencement of a long self-justification. He interrupted me, and said, “Do not vindicate yourself; you have been pronounced ‘not guilty.’ Society, however, has uttered a different verdict, thereby placing you beyond its pale. It is an inexorable judge, and you must abide by its sentence of condemnation.”

I returned to the house, dressed for dinner, and came down as if

nothing had occurred. Long habit has taught me to follow a train of thought wholly distinct from the indifferent subjects on which I am speaking, and, while bearing part in conversation, I was thinking to myself, "To-day these people smile upon me, and acknowledge me as a friend; to-morrow they will shudder at the remembrance that I have been among them; they will load my memory with reproaches, and feel they have contracted a life-long stain in that contaminating intercourse." But I shall not be there to hear them: I shall be far away, though I know not whither to direct my steps. I only wait till night has fully closed in, and the household is sleeping, and then I go. To-morrow all will be known, and I cannot remain to brave looks of scorn, and perhaps words of hatred and loathing. Kind old Sir Ivon begged me to spend Christmas with him, but when the happy bells ring the birth of that morning, telling of "peace on earth, and good will to men," I shall be wandering in search of the peace which I can never obtain, a wanderer and an alien from my country for ever.

For years have I felt that this must be my fate. No less when among my fellows than in my hours of loneliness, have I experienced the prophetic dread of what has now fallen upon me. But, *till it came*, I drove it from me, cursing my momentary cowardice, and resolving to defy fate, and dare my accusers. Alas! where is my boasted defiance, that I should thus shrink from what I had nerved myself to endure?

(MRS. WHITMORE TO HER SISTER.)

Arleigh House, Dec. 17, 18—

This letter follows quickly on my last, dear Constance, but I have heard sad and strange things since yesterday, and I hasten to tell you of them. Sir Ivon and his sisters make no strict rules for their visitors with respect to morning hours, but allow them to come down to breakfast when they like, consequently, if one or two have not appeared, their absence causes no remark. But we meet at luncheon, and if all are not there, the absent one receives a second summons. The repast was nearly over to-day, when Miss Maynard said, "Where can Mr. Vernon be?"

"I dare say he is gone for one of his long walks," returned Sir Ivon, "and forgot the time."

"Do you know, brother, I had a terrible fright last night," continued Miss Maynard. "When I had been asleep a long time, I heard a door creak, and then I heard a step, just like a man without shoes.—Now you need not laugh, Ivon, for I heard it distinctly!"

"I do not doubt it," answered Sir Ivon. "That makes about the fiftieth burglary, according to you, within the last six months."

"But I certainly heard it," she persisted; "what could it have been?"

"Easily explained!" said Sir Ivon. "The creaking door was the squeaking request of a juvenile mouse, that its mother would go in search of some dainty for its supper; and the man without shoes was the mother in question on her way to Mrs. Smith's store-closet."

"You may laugh at me as much as you choose," said Miss Maynard; "but it *was* a man, and he did not walk straight on, but kept stopping, as if to listen. I have determined now that I will have a cord communicating with the alarm-bell, and have it hung where I can pull it at night when I am frightened."

"In order," said Sir Ivon, "that the neighbourhood may turn out, well armed, to take into custody the first mouse they meet running pit-a-pat, 'without shoes,' in the passages of Arleigh House."

Miss Maynard bore our laughter good-naturedly, and joined in it, but added—

"I am not convinced, though."

"Are women *ever* convinced?" returned Sir Ivon.

Again the cheerful old lady laughed, calling him a rude old bachelor, while he maintained that he had made no statement—he had merely asked a question. In the midst of our merriment, Mr. Lyndsey sat silent, and, as I supposed, moody and disagreeable. When luncheon was over, and we were about to rise from the table, he said, with some perturbation, that there was something he wished to say to us—would we oblige him by giving him our attention for a little time?

"Your ear did not deceive you last night," he continued, addressing Miss Maynard; "there *was* a step in the passage—the stealthy step of one who at that moment was leaving your house, and who, therefore, was beyond the reach of your summons to-day."

A look of amazement was on every face, and Sir Ivon said—

"Do you allude to Mr. Vernon?"

"I allude to him whom you *call* Mr. Vernon," was the reply, "but whose real name is Anthony Vincent, and over whose former history their lies a fearful suspicion. The moment I entered your drawing-room I recognised his countenance, though, for an hour or two, I could not recal his name, nor where I had met him; then it all rushed into my mind, and I remembered that it was the Anthony Vincent of whom I had heard before going abroad, and whom I found living at Rome under the name of 'Antonio Vincenzo.'"

“What, had you heard of him?” asked Sir Ivon, almost breathless.

Mr. Lyndsey then gave us the following particulars. I will condense them into as short a space as possible:—

Anthony Vincent was an only child; his mother died when he was an infant, consequently all his father's hopes were fixed upon him. Finding that he was a boy of no ordinary abilities, he had him highly-educated at a first-rate school, and then sent him abroad for three years with a tutor. About two years after his return home, a widow lady and her daughter came to reside in a villa near that occupied by Anthony and his father. They were persons of large fortune, and Mr. Vincent, anxious for the aggrandizement of his son, urged him to pay his addresses to the daughter, Miss Pearson. Anthony, who did not particularly like what he had seen of the young lady in question, was not at all inclined to forward his father's views; but Mr. Vincent would not give up, and wearied his son, day after day, with entreaties on the subject, not dissuaded even by his son's remonstrance that there was insanity in Mrs. Pearson's family, and that she at times required the control of a confidential servant who lived with her. Mr. Vincent made very light of this—it was merely the mental weakness so frequently met with in elderly ladies. Besides, allowing her sad state to arise from the disease in question, it did not follow that the daughter would be afflicted in a similar way, and he surely would not be such a fool as to throw aside all hope of a handsome fortune just for the anticipation of a chance. At last young Vincent yielded, and made Miss Pearson an offer, which was accepted with an alacrity that did not add to the small sensation of regard he already felt towards her. Once engaged, Miss Pearson seemed anxious to rivet the chain as securely as possible; and it might truly be called a chain of gold, so assiduously and generously did she load him with costly presents. To withdraw was impossible; and although the young lady made it a *sine qua non* that her mother and her attendant should form a part of their household, Anthony dared not object. They were married; and when settled in a handsome house at Clifton, they entered on a round of gaiety so foreign to Anthony's inclination, that, after a few months of incessant visiting and excitement, he ventured to remonstrate, and to suggest that it might be wiser not to spend their money quite so fast. This was his first remonstrance on that subject, and his proud spirit resolved that it should be his last; for he could ill brook his wife's contemptuous reminder that the money was hers, and that, as he had aspired to a young lady of fortune, he must not presume to dictate how that fortune must be spent. Month after month did her temper become more violent and unreasonable, until the once quiet and yielding Anthony became,

under its influence, morose, with occasional outbursts of furious passion, when he would give utterance to the words of anger which he had so long restrained—words brought against him in after-times.

One day, when he was vehemently upbraiding her for her unwife-like disregard of all his wishes, she answered, by saying, "Why should she be wife-like to one for whom she had never felt any regard, and whom she only married in order to rid herself of the reproach attending the daughter of a partially insane mother? The only one whom she had ever loved had slighted her on this ground, and married another girl immediately afterwards; and it was in order to conceal from the world her real grief at his desertion that she had married the first person who had made her an offer." Other, and still more bitter words did she utter; retort after retort followed, and from this time all semblance of peace between them was over. Mrs. Brown, the confidential servant before mentioned, was often witness to their quarrels, and as she was devoted to her young mistress, she proportionately hated Anthony. At last this life became unbearable, and one day the husband was missing. A note was found on his table, addressed to his wife, and containing these words:—

"I can endure this perpetual wrangling no longer, and I go—possibly not to return. You have changed my whole nature; instead of being the quiet, peaceable character I once was, you have transformed me into a violent, revengeful man. Such an existence could not last long; *it must have ended in the death of one of us*. Do not attempt to seek, or to recal me. If I ever return, it will be at my own time, and for some reason of my own.

"ANTHONY VINCENT."

Two years passed by, and nothing was heard of the wanderer. At the end of that time, Mrs. Vincent became ill with some internal malady—hopeless, and causing such intense suffering, that only by frequent doses of laudanum could she obtain even temporary ease. One afternoon she seemed so much better, that Mrs. Brown left her for an hour in charge of a young housemaid, while she herself went to visit a relative in the town. When she returned, she saw to her great amazement that Mr. Vincent was sitting by his wife's bed—Mrs. Vincent herself being asleep. To Mrs. Brown's indignant inquiry, what he wanted, and why he came? he replied haughtily, that he had a motive in coming, and certainly should not divulge it to *her*. He then left the room, and as he did so, he said, "If Mrs. Vincent asks to see me again, you will find me at the Royal Arms Hotel; but I do not *think* she will ask it." One two, three hours went on, and still Mrs. Vincent

neither moved nor waked; the glass in which she took her accustomed doses of laudanum was on the table, close to the bed, and two or three drops remained in it. This long-continued sleep so alarmed Mrs. Brown that at last she tried to rouse her; she spoke to her, shook her gently, then more roughly, and, finally, raised her up by main force. But the heavy, unresisting form fell back again—Mrs. Vincent's sleep was the sleep of death. Mrs. Brown uttered cries of horror, which brought every servant, and the poor, feeble mother into the room. And then arose another cry—for vengeance on the murderer who had walked uninvited into his wife's room, dismissed, with a bribe, the person in attendance, and who had then administered that fatal draught of which the tell-tale drops yet remained in the glass. Anthony Vincent was arrested that night and committed to prison. In due time his trial came on, and so universal was the conviction of his guilt, that there was scarcely a thought of pity for his coming fate. The evidence against him was overwhelming. That Mrs. Vincent's temper had been so violent that the servants (even the devoted Mrs. Brown) knew not how to bear it at times, seemed all forgotten now, for charity itself does not cover so vast a multitude of sins as are lost sight of in the grave. True, she had had her faults, but she was dead—murdered by him whose harsh words and angry tones had so often been heard when he was speaking to his wife. Mrs. Brown had entered the room one day when they were quarrelling, and had heard Mrs. Vincent say, "But whatever was my motive in marrying you, we must make the best of it, for you are now my husband 'till death do us part.'" And Mr. Vincent had replied, "Which may be sooner than you think." Again, what but murder must have been in his thoughts when, immediately after calling himself "a violent and revengeful man," he had written and underscored these words,—"*It must have ended in the death of one of us.*" What did these words imply, but murder, or contemplated suicide?

On the last clause in the farewell note (the counsel went on to say) the prisoner's subsequent course had thrown a fearful light—"If I ever return, it will be for some reason of my own"—a reason only too easily explained by his entrance into his wife's room, his dismissal of the servant, and the discovery of the laudanum close to where he had been sitting. Well, might he say he did not *think* his unhappy wife would ask for him!

The prisoner made his own defence; he would not entrust it to another, and opinions were divided as it proceeded—some thinking him candid, others reckless.

"He had listened attentively to the talented counsel who had so cleverly endeavoured to make him out a murderer, and could not

but admire the ingenuity with which he almost proved the guilt of one who, nevertheless, was not guilty. He admitted the truth of every statement made by the witnesses, owned that he had written the note in question, and was not ashamed of having done so. With regard to the rejoinder, which Mrs. Brown had overheard, life was proverbially uncertain, and surely he did not deserve to be hung for reminding his wife that the parting to which she alluded might take place earlier than she anticipated. In the letter which had just been read to the court, he had stated that his very nature was changed, and he was become a violent and revengeful man; this statement was true, and how painful a truth let those own, who had experienced the transition from an easy, quiet disposition, to its exact opposite. How could it be otherwise, when living in the atmosphere of perpetual bickerings? when subjected to the out-breakings of a passionate temper, so as to be for ever on the defensive, could one avoid becoming violent in return, and ready to revenge, by bitter retorts, the suffering heaped on one's self by the same means? This, and this alone, was the revenge to which he had alluded. He begged to say, in direct opposition to the learned counsel, that in stating his conviction that this miserable state of things must have been the death of one of them had it continued, he had not contemplated murder, for such an alternative had never suggested itself to him, nor suicide, for he had always particularly wished for a long life,—a desire which he trusted the gentlemen the jury would bear in mind when considering their verdict. No, his meaning was this,—and any medical man who might happen to be in court, would bear out his statement, though it might not be technically worded. The nerves of those who live in daily worry, are kept on the perpetual stretch, and as the nerves are distributed through every part of the body, the whole system is more or less affected by means of their derangement; consequently, health must fail, and, after a time, be irremediably lost. This is the process he had in view, when saying so confidently that such a miserable state of things must, if continued, be the death of one of them; his inward conviction moreover being that he himself should be the first victim.

With regard to the last sentence in the note in question, and to which the learned counsel attached such a terrible signification, he begged leave to say he meant literally nothing, save to hold out an empty threat, which has more effect on some dispositions than a defined dread."

The prisoner's whole look and manner then changed, as he passed on to the more conclusive part of the charge.

"It had been confidently stated that his unlooked-for return, and his entrance into his wife's chamber, was the premeditated fulfilment of the supposed threat contained in his farewell letter.

With an honest and true heart, he could meet unabashed the penetrating gaze of his earthly judge, and deny this charge; nay, more than this, he could appeal to the Judge of all mankind, and declare before Him his entire innocence of the crime of which he was accused. Full of anger and indignation against his wife, he had left her, resolved (in spite of his hinted threat) that he would never see her more; but when, after an interval of two years, he by chance heard of her serious illness, his better feelings revived, and he determined to see her once more, and be reconciled before her death. Accordingly he proceeded to Clifton, and not wishing to be denied entrance to the house, nor to encounter and alarm Mrs. Pearson, he entered the house unperceived, and proceeded at once to his wife's room. To his relief, a young girl was there instead of Mrs. Brown, who, in her well-known antipathy to him, might have refused him admittance. He dismissed the girl with a piece of money, and an injunction to silence, and then approached the bedside of his wife. She was much agitated, and bade him be gone, but he spoke soothingly, and she seemed disposed to listen. Suddenly a spasm of pain came on, and she again begged him to leave her. She then seized a small bottle which was on the table by the bed, and began to drop some of its contents into a wine-glass. He offered to do it for her, seeing how her hand trembled; but she persisted in doing it herself, saying that she often did so when Mrs. Brown was not there. While dropping the medicine, she had partly turned away, so that he could not see what was the quantity she took; but, from the time occupied in dropping it, it was only too evident to him, on reflection, that, owing to the unsteadiness of her hand, she had taken an over-dose of the medicine, which, when she put the bottle down, he saw was laudanum. She did not speak again, and quickly sank into a deep sleep.

“While full of his painful thoughts, Mrs. Brown entered the room, restoring him to his former mood of angry defiance, and thereby keeping up in her mind her previous impression, that his re-appearance would be attended by some calamity. He then returned to his hotel, stating where he could be found, if Mrs. Vincent wished to see him, but which he thought very improbable. That evening he was arrested on the charge of murdering her from whose companionship he had often longed to be freed, but whom he could not have injured had the wealth of worlds been offered as a recompense for the murderous act.”

The judge then summed up, and the jury retired to consider their verdict. Their absence was short; the verdict, “NOT GUILTY.”

I said, dear sister, that I would condense Mr. Lyndsey's tale into as small a space as possible, but I have unavoidably gone far

Beyond the length of an ordinary letter. Little remains to be told. Notwithstanding his exculpation, the circumstantial evidence could not be forgotten; by the majority, his defence was considered a clever piece of sophistry, and so strong and so universal was his condemnation, that, for his personal safety, he deemed it advisable to quit England for some years. He went to Italy, Italianised his name, and it was at an hotel in Rome that Mr. Lyndsey saw him. He heard him speak Italian, and supposed he was a native; but a few minutes afterwards, he spoke English with so perfect an accent as to induce Mr. Lyndsey to inquire who he was. Gradually his real name and English birth came out, and Mr. Lyndsey (who was familiar with the story, and firmly believed in his guilt) knew then that "Antonio Vincenzo" was merely the literal translation of Anthony Vincent. Imagine, then, his amazement and consternation at meeting him, as a fellow-guest, nearly ten years afterwards, under another feigned name! I cannot wonder that, in his indignation, he unmasked and betrayed him. He told us these sad circumstances with far more feeling than I should have supposed him capable of displaying. In fact, the melancholy tale has depressed us all. I can add no more; I am wearied in body and mind.

Believe me, dear Constance,

Your affectionate sister,

GERTRUDE WHITMORE.

P.S. (11 o'clock, p.m.)—This afternoon, Sir Ivon went into Mr. Vernon's room (he will persist in calling him Vernon), and found a small piece of paper, closely written upon, lying on the floor of his room, as if it had fluttered out of a writing-case or desk. I enclose a copy of it. God be merciful to the poor wanderer, who has again gone forth on the wide world, bearing his heavy burden in that dreary solitude.

"In vain I linger; the driving rain ceases not; the pitiless wind keeps up its raging voice. If I wait till the tempest is over, morning may dawn, and it must not find me here. Oh, coward heart! why can I not deride the derision of the world—confront it with folded arms, defy its scorn, and trample under foot the accusation which I know is false? Vain questions—for years have I worn the armour, and defied my enemies, but the moment is come when I must turn and flee before them. Yes, onward and onward I must go, bearing the punishment of Cain, without his crime. Yes, *without his crime*, for my hand is guiltless of the deed for which, nevertheless, I am branded as a murderer, and doomed to be a wanderer on the earth. Brightly the sun will rise over the distant hill, and, all the darker for that surrounding brightness, my fate will follow in its

train; I cannot meet it; it would be more terrible to me than the darkness through which I must grope my way this night. It is the stormy wind, and driving sleet that makes me thus shudder and tremble? No, it is not bodily fear that assails me; a deeper, and more enduring dread has fallen upon me since those words were uttered—"murderous wish." Oh, terrible words! This bitter blast will shriek them in my ear, and when I quit my native land for ever, I shall hear them in the sound of the rushing waves. Little did she guess when I masked my face in smiles, and commended her insight into the workings of the human mind, that it was *my* inward struggles she had so unconsciously described, and that the horror and remorse of which she spoke, had long been preying on my tortured heart. Yet, can it be true—I dare not think so—is there murder in a thought? I look back upon that moment—that awful moment, when upon a man's verdict hung my fate for life or death. I gasp for breath—he speaks—I breathe again, for he has pronounced me "NOT GUILTY."

But there is a higher court; what if I do not stand acquitted there? There is a heart-searching Judge; has *He* pronounced me innocent?"

H. P.

OLD NEWSPAPERS

HAVING nothing particular to do for half an hour one evening, I turned down a dusty alley in the neighbourhood of B——, which led to an old book-stall. I took a cursory glance at the books, their proprietor informing me (as he has done before), “that they were all *standard*,” and as he has ever since I have known him, been of opinion that they will be to the day of the Millennium, I was quite assured what a vain thing it would be to try and convince him to the contrary, so I left him to hold his extraordinary notion in peace. On his stall were books, ancient, middle-aged, and modern, ranged with more attention to their size than to their contents. In the most charming confusion were mixed up the following books:—“Burn’s Justice of the Peace,” “Seneca’s Morals by Way of Abstract,” “Yorick’s Sentimental Journey,” “Œuvres de Racine,” “Klopstock’s Messiah,” “Roderick Random,” “Eldon’s Botany,” “The Spectator” (not half complete), “Tom Jones,” &c., &c.

But after giving the stall a good look,—one always ought to, for sometimes curious facts are brought to light from the dust of an old book-shop,—my eye was attracted by three old newspapers, which, if I had not rescued, would have been used to wrap up acid-drops and Persian-sherbet, as the old book-stall man deigned to supply these articles (*in limited quantities*) to the young Arabs of the neighbouring street, among whom he was popularly designated as “Old Taffy.” I eagerly inquired their price, and having come to satisfactory arrangements, I pocketed my prizes, reached home, drank a cup of coffee, stuck on my slippers, lit my lamp, and settled myself comfortably in an easy chair, to peruse my old newspapers, intitled “*The St. James’s Chronicle, or British Evening Post*,” and surmounted by a figure of that amiable being, Britannia, “squatted” (as A. Ward has it) on a tub, with a shield by her side, and a toasting fork (?) in her hand, and looking, on the whole, as though she had lately recovered from a very severe attack of rheumatism.

I turned the paper over, and my eye was first attracted by an advertisement, headed as follows:—

“TO THE LADIES

Who for convenience wish to dress their own hair, or to have it done by their servants, either to ride in, or for a dress; or for such as have little or no hair on their temples, &c.

“VERY CURIOUS cushions and toupes, which cannot be distinguished from real nature. They are such though imitated, cannot be equalled by

any other person in the world, for lightness, ease, elegance, and convenience. No head of hair when dressed by the completest hand can excel them for elegance, and beauty of dress. They sit easy, light, and firm to the head, without slipping back, and are put on without any trouble or difficulty, so that any lady may, in a few minutes, dress her own hair, as well as if done by the most accomplished dresser.

“ENTIRE WHOLE FETES made on the same principle.

“To be had only of Mr. Evans, perfumer and hair-dresser to her Majesty, at No. 3, Dover Street, Piccadilly, and at his shop, the corner of St. Bride’s Passage, No. 83, Fleet Street.

“VERY FINE LONG HAIR FOR BRAIDS, &c., remarkably cheap; and ladies’ and gents’ hair dressed as usual, at home and abroad. Those who please to favour him with their commands may always depend upon being waited on by some of the best hands in London.”

I have no doubt some of my fair readers will wish that “Mr. Evans” existed in the present civilised period, and I really think his “cushions and toupes” would be very useful during the present *chignon* mania.

I passed on from Mr. Evans’ polite advertisement to the following, which came under the head of “Country News,” and which shows that there were as many rascals in the world at that time as there are now:—

“During Wimborn fair on Monday last, Mr. Talbot, a miller in that town, standing at the door of an inn, was accosted by a stranger, genteely dressed, who asked several questions about the fair, remarked upon the late plentiful harvest, the price of meat, &c.; and Mr. T., finding so agreeable a companion withdrew with him into the inn that he might have the pleasure of his company over a glass of ale, where they chatted upon mills, corn, &c. They had not been long together before a third person, apparently a stranger, accosted them abruptly, cursing the fair, saying he had been seeking to purchase a white horse which he could not find, and, talking in an extravagant manner, added he had been to Southampton to receive £1,500, a legacy by an old aunt, and that seventy guineas were already spent since Saturday. Being questioned how he could make away with such a sum in so short a time, he replied he had fallen into company with some sailors, who prevailed on him to play at a game they termed A.B.C., and had rooked him of seventy guineas. He now offered to show how the game was played, and some trifling bets were made which Mr. T. was suffered to win. The pretended spendthrift appeared free with his cash and very liberal in his strictures on Mr. T. and his companion, whom he repeatedly charged with poverty, and challenged to produce £50. Whereupon the latter proposed a bet of £25, which he produced, and the miller also drew out a canvass bag containing £102, and deposited it on the table as a security for his stake. The other genius, as it were by way of frolic, instantly swept the whole into his hat, and danced out of the room. Mr. T. was a good deal alarmed at this, but on his companion laughing and assuring him it was only done in jest,

and that he would certainly return in a few minutes, he was satisfied. After sitting some little time in expectation of the man and the money, Mr. T. proposed going for him, when his companion desired him to sit still and he would find him, which he certainly did in a few minutes, for both mounted their horses and instantly decamped with their booty. The unfortunate dupe waited a quarter of an hour for their return, and was then convinced he was cheated. A general hue and cry of horse and foot set out various roads in pursuit; but in vain, as the sharpers got clear off. They were nearly taken, however, at Woodycat's, where Mr. Hart's son, of Wimbourne, came up with them, but they got in some woods and eluded pursuit."

The gentlemen who "eluded pursuit" would not have got off quite so comfortably in the present enlightened century. The telegraph wires would have spread the news far and wide; the "Bow-streets" would have been on the alert before a "quarter of an hour" had elapsed. It must have been about the time that this happened that highway robberies were most notorious, and when "Dick Wilde" and his crew were spreading terror into the hearts of the inhabitants of distant houses. It has been said of this last-named gentleman that he was most polite, and that when robbing females on the high road, if he found much difficulty in despoiling them of their gold and jewellery, he always requested them to "sit down," a chair being ready at hand. Another good and remarkable trait in his character was that he never outraged any female whom he robbed.

Under the head of "London News," I found the following advertisement, relating to the celebrated Nathan Solomon, who, I dare say, still lives in the memory of the Alley:—

"Early this morning Nathan Solomon, the great Jew broker, sent a letter to the Stock Exchange, declaring himself a lame duck, and that his intention was never more to return to that house. He complains of a confederacy formed against him by the brokers, and that he therefore thought it his duty to take care of himself. It is said that he had bought nearly one million of scrip, and that his differences were very considerable. By this letter the whole body of speculators in the funds were thrown into confusion, and two or three brokers of inferior note waddled out of the Alley."

We may infer, I suppose, from the following advertisement that mechanics in France were on the strike then, as they are in England now, and that, having nothing to do, the following ingenious gentleman (here I quote from the paper)—

"A mechanic at Nancy, in Lorraine, has been for some time busied about the invention of a machine for enabling men to fly. He began by weighing the carcasses of all the birds he could procure, and measuring the expansion of their wings, to discover the proportion of the one to the

other. He has yet succeeded no farther than to fly from a high barn, and to alight on the ground at a distance of a 100 yards. In one flight a gale of wind blowing him a little out of his direction he fell into a large pond, to the no small entertainment of his neighbours. His wings spread so great a space that he drops perpendicularly from the highest steeples without danger, descending too gradually to be hurt."

It is patent to all of us that this gentleman did not meet with much success in his invention, as nobody has "flown" yet. It *would certainly* be a good thing if the mechanics, instead of making a row and holding reform meetings, as they do now, would make wings, and they would then, to the no small delight of peaceable *householders*, be enabled to fly from the scene of their *supposed* outrages.

The next thing I noticed was the poet's corner of this old newspaper, and I am sorry to find that it was vastly superior to many "Poet's Corners" which meet our gaze in the local papers of the present century. By the way, I think poets have a great deal too many corners, and it is not possible to find a corner *not* infested with them. As, however, I flatter myself that *this corner* will be interesting to my readers, I shall copy it off "*literatim et verbatim*." The verses are a translation from the following French:—

"Le monde est plein de foux, et pour ne pas les voir,
Il faut rester tout seul, et casser son miroir."

Translation.

I.

"Of fools the world is full,
Whom, if you would not see,
Follow one easy rule,
Effectual it will be.

II.

"Alone you must remain,
And as you hate an ass
(Excuse my being so plain),
Quick smash your looking-glass."

I was just proceeding to read another English translation of these lines, by some other "hopeful," when a favourite cat, who usually sits on the back of my chair, jumped from that elevated position into my lap, and curling herself up comfortably, went to sleep. As I, too, felt drowsy, I permitted her to stay as she was, and my old papers not being a quarter exhausted, I shall, with the learned editor's permission, reserve the remainder for future publication.

C. J. C. P.

A LIFE'S MYSTERY

BY CLINTON HOPE.

CHAPTER XLII.

RECONCILIATION.

THE softening influences at work in Liliás's heart, during her stay with Mrs. Lyttleton, led her to confess, in the thwarting of her deadly designs, a something higher than chance. Eager as she had been to entrap Hinda to the Abbey, and steadfastly as she had braced herself to take advantage of whatever power she might win over her foe, she was now fervently grateful that the opportunity for crime had been mercifully withheld. There were, beyond this, other causes for self-congratulation. Liliás believed that, as Mary's growing distrust was uprooted, she would come to consider it a sacred duty to oppose her sister's schemes of "retribution," and henceforth discard the cruel vigilance of a rival for the active exertions of an ally. Then, had she not gained by her visit a sight of her little favourite, and been permitted to exchange gifts with him?

The remembrance of Melbourne's devoted love for her was as a solitary star in a dark sky, a something beautiful to dwell upon, in contrast to the gloom of the surrounding scene. Everywhere she saw cause for anxiety and grief, save in the recollection of his gushing, warm attachment. She longed so much—oh, so very much!—to bear him away by stealth from his foster-mother to her own home, where she might always have the privilege of being with him. Always! Merciful Heaven! well might she tremble with apprehension as she spoke the word! In a few months, or even weeks, she might be driven from her husband's hearth, a wretched fugitive from the wrath of her vindictive pursuer—unable to find protection for herself, much less for another. To what lengths might not Hinda's fury lead her? She had said she would never yield till the death of one or other put an end to the warfare existing between them; and Liliás believed her. Never was a vow recorded with a more stubborn resolve for its fulfilment than that one. Hinda would have no mercy upon her, so she must act for herself;—but how? What could she do to frustrate designs of which she knew not the full meaning?

My lady ordered the coachman to drive back slowly to the Abbey, for she wanted time to think before facing her husband. That he would question her concerning the note she was fully convinced, and she wished to prepare an answer before she reached Welgrave.

The marquis met his wife in the hall, and linking her arm in his, led her silently to the nearest room, carefully fastening the door behind him; then, facing Liliás, he asked her for Hinda's letter. His whole manner assured her that he believed her to be guilty of intentionally abstracting it; but she would not appear to notice the unusual harshness of his bearing, and told a short tale about having laid her handkerchief upon the table, which she had hastily taken up on leaving the room, and thrust into her muff, where, to her "great surprise," she had discovered the note.

"Did you read it?" ejaculated his lordship, nearly choking with suppressed agitation.

"No, Henry," replied Liliás, lightly; "but if I had known you would have looked so fiercely about it, I think I should have been tempted to do so. Who is it from, that you are so desirous of keeping its contents a secret from me?"

Her husband did not answer for a moment, and when, at length, he spoke, it was quite differently from what Liliás had expected. His face was clouded with care, and his voice hard and dry with the effort he made to calm the violence of his feelings.

"Liliás," he said, "it gives me immeasurable pain to hear you speak so carelessly of an act whose meanness should make you blush! And why add the sin of falsehood to the one you have already been guilty of?"

His wife gazed at him with unfeigned amazement.

"What is it you mean? Explain yourself!" she cried, excitedly. "Such language from you to me is perfectly inexplicable. When have you found me guilty of meanness and falsehood?"

Her husband walked the length of the room two or three times before replying; he was undetermined whether to expose his doubts to her, or let them remain longer concealed in his own breast. If he attempted to justify his accusation, what could he say? Merely that he had observed her at times to look sad without any apparent cause; farther, that Miss Lyttleton had let fall words connected with her which bore a horrible significance. All this was enough to cause the mental unrest he suffered from, though it was not sufficient to explain his altered behaviour to her, nor to account satisfactorily for the evil construction he placed on the disappearance of Hinda's letter. Liliás had certainly accounted for her possession of the missing document in a very probable way, but he could not put implicit faith in her statement. At any other time he would have credited it without hesitation, now he was in a mood for suspicion and unbelief.

Again Liliás questioned him as to the meaning of his strange speech, but he merely murmured a few sentences well-nigh incom-

prehensible, in answer to her impatient appeal, though in them she detected the words, "I thought you had purposely taken it." Lilius turned towards him, her eyes lit with a wrathful glare, and her features convulsed with strong feeling.

"And why," she exclaimed, irefully, "did you think this? How is it that you have thus altered towards me? Is it not enough that you are become silent and gloomy, but that I must be subjected to insinuations as degrading to you who utter, as for me who am compelled to listen to them. I have never given you cause to discredit my word, and I bid you beware how you make me conscious of your great injustice in condemning me for some imaginary offence, without so much as making an inquiry of me concerning it. The idle rumours you have been weak enough to hearken to—and which, for aught I know, may have been gathered from the most questionable sources—seem adequate grounds to you for insulting me. I would not say it, did not your unfounded charges compel me, but you are neither generous nor candid; had you been the former, you would never have given ear to the slanders of evil-minded or idle persons; and had you been the latter, I should not be humbled by hearing insinuations muttered because you fear openly to reveal them, and yet cannot resist the temptation of making use of the scandal you have collected. I thought you noble-hearted, and above the common failings of mankind; I believed that in you I should find a friend whose love would be proof against any calumny and impenetrable to mistrust; but I am mistaken in you, and it is with bitter sorrow I am compelled to own it."

All the time Lilius was speaking, Lord Welgrave appeared like one distracted, and completely incapable of motion or utterance. He gazed at her with dilated eyes, and passive but overwhelming grief. What had he done to cause this flow of violent invectives? Did the half words his secret pain had forced from him merit the expression of so much indignation and contempt? Did she really mean what she had said, that she was disappointed in him? Was it possible that she considered him devoid of candour and generosity, and, worse than all, did she question his affection for her? His brain was on fire; he could not think or do anything save stare at his young wife, who looked even more bewitchingly enticing in her anger than during moments of serenity. When Lilius had concluded some little time, waiting patiently for his tardy reply, she turned away from him, and would have left the room, had he not caught hold of her, and impulsively prostrated himself upon his knees before her, with a look of earnest supplication.

Lilius gazed at his upturned face with an expression of scornful surprise, and drew her hand away from his grasp; yet even these exhibitions of her displeasure failed to drive him from her.

"Lilias," he cried, with eagerness, "you shall hear me! I never thought—never dreamed, of condemning you unheard. God is my judge, that although my mind has been sorely racked with doubts, I have never given credence to any slanderous whispers against you. Will you not believe me? Oh! Lilias, my wife, say you did not mean what you have just spoken, and that it was only in the heat of your anger that you pronounced those cruel words! I cannot—cannot bear you to think meanly of me, and would rather die than live without your affection. Tell me I have no need to despair of righting myself in your good opinion! Lilias, my darling, speak to me!" and the strong man bowed his head upon his hands, as he finished speaking, in an agony too great to be mastered.

It is not the fashion, perhaps, for married men to deport themselves in this fanatical, lover-like way to their own wives; they may use fond rebuke, protestation, and appeal to somebody else's wife without shame; but if, in the greatness of his soul, he magnified the unjustness he had done Lilias, and felt her reproaches to be merited, his ebullition of penitent sorrow was to be applauded, for he is unworthy of respect who will not acknowledge himself in the wrong, if his conscience admonishes that he is so. Even had Lilias been heartless, it would have been good policy on her part to receive her husband's avowal of contrition graciously; but with her quick sensibility, and the consciousness that to her alone was real blame attributable, she could scarcely keep back the confession of her sinful concealment.

"Rise, Henry, I beg of you! It is not for you to kneel to me," she faltered, while tears of remorse and pity dimmed her eyes.

"Not till you unsay your harsh sentence, and promise to forgive me."

She held out her hand to him, saying, in a still more softened tone—

"You are fully forgiven. I hardly know what I said, and must ask your indulgence for the pain I have caused you; you know," she continued, as Lord Welgrave rose and smoothed her hair with his hand, "I can scarcely be deemed accountable for it. I felt too grieved at the doubts of my sincerity your words and manner implied, to be able to govern my feelings, or prevent the expression of sentiments which have no place in my heart. I was, for the moment, a prey to disappointment, but now I regard you the same as ever. Tell me why you have let suspicion enter your mind."

"I cannot, my darling, or I shall make you even more angry with me, for my distrust was based principally upon another's surmises."

"And that other?" questioned Lady Welgrave, with a frown.

"Is Miss Lyttleton," answered her husband.

"So I supposed. Henry, you make me ashamed for you. Was it not she who poisoned your mind against me before? Really," she added, ironically, "your credulity would be amusing were it not productive of such dreadful results."

His lordship sighed heavily, resuming his penitent look.

"You may well condemn me for my folly, Lilius; but from this moment, I declare to you that I will not merely disbelieve any rumour injurious to you, but more, I will never even listen to the breath of slander in its attack upon you. How base I must have been, knowing your purity and nobility of character so well, to allow myself to become the victim of fabrications detrimental to your fame! Can you ever truly forgive my blindness?"

"Such a resolution, coupled with a repentance so like yourself, makes me esteem and love you more than ever," rejoined my lady, earnestly.

Her husband gazed upon her with unutterable affection, and kissing her brow, murmured—

"We will never misunderstand each other's motives or actions again, dearest. I am glad that this has happened."

His emotion was too great to admit of further speech; and hastily unfastening the lock of the door, he walked out of the house into the dreary grounds, which, however, appeared far from gloomy in his sight; his joy shed over all a bright halo of beauty.

Lady Welgrave, left standing on the spot where her husband had been at her side, smiled a quiet, meaning smile. She was glad that his love had returned with its original fervour; but this was not all that brought up the look of satisfaction which now played upon her countenance. She was thinking of what Hinda Lyttleton had twice averred—that she would cause Lord Welgrave to loathe and despise her.

"She never can do this," she murmured to herself, in a tone of security; "she may make the attempt, if she likes. He is on my side, and ever will be; nothing can turn him now."

Once more all was brightness in the heart of Lord Welgrave; unrestrainedly he gave himself up to the delightful return of confidence in Lilius. Though all the old causes for suspicion remained, he now despised them; one thought of the enchantress would then have scared a whole legion of doubts from his mind, and make him fully believe in her unsullied perfection; and when so few reasons for mistrust were procurable, how easy was it for him, in the vivid remembrance of his new faith, to scatter his anxiety to the wind!

Lilius had thought rightly—nothing, not even proofs, could have convinced him of her guilt; the blandishments of her beauty and love had deluded him entirely; he neither could nor would credit

ought against her. In the first ecstasy of his delight at discovering her, as he thought, to be innocent of the charges imputed to her, he would have promised anything and everything she could have demanded. The close of that day, which dawned so darkly for him, was one of the happiest portions of his life, "for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." He would not allow her to leave his side the whole day, and, hovering near her, listened delightedly to the rich melody of her voice in song for hours together; and when Lilius tired—for he would never have wearied—he took his place by her, with his arm around her, and his eyes bent lovingly on her face.

While Lord Welgrave and Lilius were conversing, a servant brought a letter, and presented it to Lady Welgrave, who, upon taking it, paled slightly; her fears were, however, banished directly she read the superscription, and with the exclamation, "It is from Ada!" she opened it, and began to read.

When she had got half through it, she handed it to her husband, without speaking.

"So Herbert Randall and your friend are going to be married," Lord Welgrave said when he had read a few lines, "and unless his disposition becomes changed for the worse as he grows older, I am sure Miss Hartop will have no cause to regret that her choice has fallen upon him."

"No," returned my lady; "there is, I think, little cause to fear that their lot will not be a happy one, if Mr. Randall is all you describe him to be. Ada is a sweet-tempered girl, and, I know, is very much attached to him; indeed, no union could be cemented under more favourable auspices. You see, Henry," Lilius added, after a silence of a few seconds, "she quite expects us to go; it is a pity she forgot to have the letter posted sooner, for I perceive it has been written nearly a week."

"I suppose it makes no great difference," her husband returned, smilingly; "we can just as well congratulate them; it is never too late to wish any one joy. When is the happy event to take place?"

"The day after to-morrow," Lilius answered, continuing despairingly to herself, "What may not happen by then?"

CHAPTER XLII.

AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

THE moment Hinda Lyttleton had despatched her note to Lord Welgrave, she commenced preparing for her journey to Blackheath, for she fully expected his lordship would comply with her request,

and made no hesitation in acting as though she already possessed the information which it depended upon him to furnish. The note she had sent so early that Lord Welgrave received it before breakfast; she consequently expected a speedy answer, nor was she disappointed. Lord Welgrave replied by her own messenger, and in a perfectly satisfactory strain. He gave her the address of Sarah King without comment, farther than the reminder of the promise she had made to explain everything to him, as soon as it lay in her power to do so. It was about ten o'clock when the messenger returned from the Abbey with the marquis's note, and as she had before packed whatever she might require during her absence, there was no reason for further delay, and she forthwith sent a servant for a conveyance to take her to Summertown station, that being the nearest. Meanwhile she took a farewell of her sister-in-law, more affectionate and kind than seemed consistent with her ordinary harsh and unfeeling treatment of that long-suffering, amiable woman. For the child Melbourne, Hinda had conceived as great a dislike as could possibly be borne towards so interesting and unoffending a being; yet upon this occasion she allowed her usual frown to melt into a compassionate sigh for him. Was she thinking, as she looked on the fair, expansive brow, the large, candid eyes, the delicately-chiselled features, and thick brown curls, of the brother whom he so strongly resembled, and whose wrongs she devoted her life to avenge? or of the beautiful and unfortunate woman whose happiness, in the dawn of her life, she was intent upon destroying? Surely it must have been a momentary pang of remorse for the misery she had already heaped upon the fair young creature whom she thought to be the child's mother, and for the greater misery she was preparing to add to her present tortures, that caused that fleeting glance of pity, and the quickly-dying fear that she was directing her energies wrongly, and taking upon herself to do the work which, under any circumstances, belongs only to the All-seeing, All-just God.

The voice of the housemaid, announcing the arrival of the vehicle, aroused Hinda from the painful but salutary thoughts which had been awakened in her mind, and in the bustle of getting her luggage and herself properly bestowed, did every softened emotion vanish; yet when she was again alone, she was compelled (in order to encourage herself to the performance of the task of investigation) to recal every rousing incident attendant upon her brother's premature death. Strange it was, but even the recollection of Lilius's rare loveliness failed just then to excite in her the exaggerated hate which she had all along entertained towards the luckless Marchioness of Welgrave, whose youth and charms seemed for the first time to make the persecution of her the more cruel.

"She has," Hinda soliloquised, "everything that earth affords of good—love, talent, position, and health. No blight upon her path, save the knowledge of her secret sin; which must outweigh all. Every hour of her life is one of retribution. Why cannot I, then, leave her to the judgment of her Maker? May I not, if I really strive, be enabled to relinquish my design? But then, my vow; I must not break it; no, no, I will not—my brother's blood calls for an avenger, and its cry shall not remain unanswered. I am an idiot to let these maudlin sentiments so work upon me. Her beauty and fascinations should only harden my heart the more, for by these accursed gifts she wrought Norman's ruin. Why, too, should I pity her on account of her youth and position? Did she not, in the plenitude of his fame, the flower of his youth, murder the man who trusted in her? And love—should this be left to her who estranged the affections of a husband from his wife—a brother from his sister? No! a thousand times, no! Her extreme youthfulness, and her capability of inspiring fondness, make her wickedness the more revolting. Had she not been clever and insinuating, I should have had my brother still, and as her tender years and delicate nurture saved her not from crime, neither shall my consideration on their account shield her from ignominy."

Hinda had scarcely formed this resolution, and finished the process of mollifying her weakness, as she termed the short-lived triumph of compassion over hatred, when the cab, giving a violent jolt, cut short her meditations, and soon afterwards drew up with a shock sufficient of itself to announce that she had arrived at her destination, had not the thronging around the vehicle of some half-dozen ragged little imps (each actuated by the praiseworthy desire of winning a few coppers) still farther admonished her that the station was reached.

Miss Lytton, on this occasion, proved herself to be no patroness of ambitious merit, for she haughtily swept past the clamorous group, to direct a porter to see after her luggage, leaving the young *gentlemen* to regale themselves with choice scraps of sarcasm at her expense, which, it is to be hoped, served as an emollient to their disappointed feelings.

There is, perhaps, nothing more calculated to excite feelings of melancholy than the appearance of a railway-station, between the time of a train going out and another coming in. The contrast the stillness and loneliness presents to the bustle attendant upon the departure or arrival of the great locomotive, may be likened to the instantaneous depression which is occasioned by the dropping of the green curtain after a mirthful burlesque or sprightly ballet. The mistiness of the morning imparted an additional gloom to the

small station, whose drowsiness was fully participated in by the clerk at the booking-office; but whether his somnolency was caused by inhaling the fumes of charcoal burning in the stove, or was the result of an innate repugnance to activity, I do not know; assuredly during the time he took to issue Miss Lyttleton's ticket, she had ample opportunity—had she been so inclined—to speculate on the subject.

After waiting some time for the arrival of the train, beguiling the period with pacing the platform like a caged beast, Miss Lyttleton's angry impatience was at length appeased by the sound of its approach, and before it had fairly stopped she jumped in, at the probable risk of breaking her own neck, and the positive breaking of the company's rules; for she seemed to think that being once within the carriage she was nearer the object of her desires. Vain imagining! The porter who saw to her luggage, as though anxious to add his testimony to the slowness of the whole proceedings, informed her, with provoking *sang froid*, that there was no occasion for hurry, as the train must wait for the down express to pass.

Hinda had no companion during the journey, so divided her attention pretty evenly between abusing the railway officials (from the directors down to the porters, for having deprived her of twenty valuable minutes), and in trying to form plans for the direction of her conduct, when she should have arrived at her journey's end. She had made no definite arrangements, farther than to proceed directly to Blackheath, even when she stepped out of the carriage at London Bridge, but resolved to be guided by the result of her conference with Sarah King.

Had the snakes upon the head of Medusa been glaring at her, every one with a deadly purpose, the nurse could not have looked more frightened and surprised than when she beheld Miss Lyttleton, who, without noticing her in any manner, as if she had seen her before, asked shortly if her name was King, and if she were Lady Welgrave's nurse.

The poor woman's confusion was so great as hardly to permit of her answering; she managed, however, after some little hesitation, to falter out the words, "I am; in what manner can I serve you, madam?"

"By answering with sincerity whatever questions I may put to you," returned Hinda; "but first allow me to come in; my business is such that cannot be transacted here."

Sarah made no remark upon this speech, and showing her visitor into the little parlour (where she with her beloved young mistress had spent so many hours, talking and sorrowing), closed the door, and stood waiting for Miss Lyttleton to speak. Hinda did not stay to be invited to a seat, but immediately drew a chair

nearer to the hearth, where she sat down, mechanically drawing off her gloves and warming her cold fingers at the cheerful blaze. She was thinking how to begin the conversation, which was rather a delicate one. With a different person from what she believed the widow to be, she would have taken care that the object of her inquiries should not be seen; but with Sarah, she concluded it would be time and labour thrown away to attempt disguising her drift, so, without any unnecessary circumlocution or preface, asked Sarah if she had been to see her mistress lately.

The nurse replied unhesitatingly, that she had; she scented trouble to Liliias, and resolved that petty deceits should not add to the sum of it.

With an air of deep reflection, Hinda smoothed her gloves upon the table, and then folded them neatly together.

"You went to the Abbey one evening early in October," said she, raising her eyes to the troubled face of the nurse, and speaking very emphatically; "you had a conversation with your mistress in the garden before the old summer-house, and departed without seeing any member of the household. Is not this true?"

Sarah thought Hinda must be possessed of witchcraft to know all this, but she answered quietly, "It is, madam; I had just heard of the illness of a cousin who lives about ten miles beyond Welgrave, and as I was so near I could not help calling to see my dear lady, though only for a few moments."

"And," rejoined Hinda, sarcastically; "you were equally unable to avoid discussing with your *dear lady* affairs of a strictly private nature, in the close vicinity of the arbour, without looking to see that it contained no listeners; but no, possibly I am mistaken, and you were quite indifferent as to who heard what you were talking of."

Sarah did not reply, but the alarm exhibited in her countenance deepened into absolute horror as she listened, and she was forced to seat herself, lest her senses should give way. Her agitation was not lost upon Hinda, who beheld it with a cruel joy, and was compelled for a short time to maintain silence, to prevent betraying her inhuman satisfaction.

After a few seconds she got tired of watching Sarah's pale face, and opening a small leather bag she had brought with her, fumbled in it for a something it contained. That something was an exquisitely coloured photograph of a young and handsome man. He had large dark blue eyes, features at once manly and refined, and a mass of rich brown hair that decorated a broad white forehead. Miss Lyttleton gazed at the portrait for an instant with a strange expression of tenderness, then, thrusting it into Sarah's hand, bade her tell if she had known the original.

If it were not a consciousness of innocence, it must have been by the aid of a superhuman command over her voice and features, that Sarah King was enabled to reply unfalteringly. She did not change colour, or in any way betray alarm, as she said that she was quite ignorant of the gentleman whose portrait she was looking at, and had to her knowledge never seen anyone at all like him. This might be true. Hinda could hardly tell what to think; she felt sure from what she had gathered of King's devotion to Liliás, that for her sake she would do or say anything, but yet the perfectly self-possessed manner of the nurse mystified her, and made her waver in her former belief that the nurse was an accomplice in my lady's secrets.

To the mind of the faithful King, obedience to the wishes and interest of her mistress signified all that was requisite for the proper discharge of her social obligations. If her compliance with Liliás's desires ran counter to her moral duty, she was sorry, but her sorrow did not prevent the ready fulfilment of that desire. She blindly submitted to Liliás's wishes in everything, and appeared to think that following her dictates was equal to following the dictates of Scripture itself. Her childlike, unwavering faith would have been truly sublime had it been directed higher; as it was, it daily led her into faults. Was it necessary for her to fib in order to save Liliás's secrets from detection, she did it with little or no compunction, and would have done much worse things to oblige her mistress, with the same zeal and heartfelt belief that it was right in her to do it.

Unflinchingly she met Miss Lyttleton's intent gaze as she returned the portrait. The absolute necessity for composure had steadied her nerves, and she was now prepared well-nigh for anything.

"Then you sincerely declare," exclaimed her visitor, sternly, "that you have never seen the original of this, and know nothing concerning him?"

Again the nurse protested her ignorance of the gentleman and his affairs, and Hinda was forced to retreat from that point and make an onset in another quarter.

"Can you also assure me," said she, impressively, "that, as far as you are aware, your mistress has never had any connection with any one unknown to her father, and that she has not made you her confidant?"

A tremor scarcely perceptible passed over King's features, but she answered in a steady voice, "I am quite willing to do so, madam." The fortress was impregnable here, too; so Hinda was constrained to try still another attempt, and in a portion of the citadel less strongly guarded.

"Did you not," resumed Miss Lyttleton, "in the July of last

year, take a child of a few months' old to the residence of a lady in Cambridgeshire; and was not the child your mistress's?"

"What do you mean by asking such a question?" cried the nurse, flushing suddenly; "I take a baby, and Miss Liliass's, to a place I never heard of?"

"What!" almost screamed her visitor, "will you be so shameless as to affirm that you have never seen me before, and that you do not know me to be the sister of Mr. Lyttleton, whom your mistress secretly corresponded with and was visited by? Do you pretend to say that the features of that miniature—" pointing to the photograph, which lay upon the table—"are strange to you? Hypocrite! how dare you say so?"

Her hearer looked at her very much as though she had the inclination to turn her out of the house, but replied with a coolness that stung Hinda nearly to madness.

"I certainly have never seen you before, nor, I must confess, am I pleased to make your acquaintance if you are always as violent as at present."

Miss Lyttleton took no farther notice of this severe remark, except bestowing an expression of ineffable scorn upon the offender, and proceeded just as stormily as before.

"Will you deny to my face that in your conversation with that vile woman whom you serve, you expressed a fear of being seen by me lest I should recognise you? You are beyond doubt the same person who, in answer to the advertisement for a child, brought a boy, whom you named Melbourne, and whose likeness to my brother and Lady Welgrave proclaim him to be their child, even in the absence of corroborative proof. Did not your mistress express, also upon that evening, a dread lest her love for the child, together with the similarity it bears to her, should be the means of revealing her secret? Can you, dare you, profess to controvert what I say?"

Hinda had risen from her seat in the height of her passion, and now stood before the trembling Sarah, her arm raised menacingly, and her face blanched with rage.

"What!" vociferated she in continuation, as her auditor, for a second too shocked to speak, stared at her in painful bewilderment; "will you have the audacity still farther to deny my assertions? what answer can you give me in their contradiction?"

"A very simple one," was the nurse's unshaken reply; she had recovered her composure, and seemed, indeed, to fear less every moment; "my answer to all your wild talk is, that you make an utter mistake with regard to me; what you have been saying cannot possibly be meant for me, and I therefore cannot stay to hear more."

Saying this, Sarah, with a firm step and erect mien, retired

from the room, leaving its occupant too stunned by this procedure to make any attempt to stop her.

Hinda's disappointment at her ill success, and vexation at her violence (to which she attributed her failure), was almost beyond bounds.

"If I had flattered and given her money, perhaps it would have been different," was her inward reflection, and so it would; but not the kind of alteration she desired would have followed such a proceeding; she would have had her presents and flatteries thrown back at her with indignation, and instead of the calm contempt with which she had been used, would possibly have received words of defiance and insult.

Clever as she conceived herself to be, Hinda was foiled; the presence of mind of an illiterate woman had dashed her hopes and laid low her pride; she was humbled in her own eyes; and self-abasement, with a nature like Miss Lyttleton's, is, if possible, more galling than public mortification. To think that she had come there with the hope of collecting evidence to destroy Lady Welgrave, and yet must return no wiser than she went. But stay, a happy thought struck her—something useful might be learned from the domestic she had seen as she entered the cottage. Sarah King was most likely in her own room, pondering over what had transpired; there could, then, be no difficulty in questioning the maid. No sooner had this idea presented itself to her, than gliding noiselessly from the parlour, she proceeded to a small kitchen at the back of the house, where she found, not the diminutive handmaiden who had lately been in King's service, but the stout, rosy-cheeked girl who had admitted Sir Shenton Bellamy on the day he went to Rose Cottage to inquire after his lost daughter. The girl was turning over a beefsteak upon the gridiron, and did not see the intruder for a few moments.

"Oh, dear!" was her exclamation, as the apparition of the lady made itself visible to her.

"Don't be frightened, my good girl; I have come merely to ask a few brief questions, which if you reply to without reserve, I will well reward you. How long have you been here?—I mean in the employ of Mrs. King."

"Nearly two years, ma'am, though not all at once; I went to America, where I have been staying for about eighteen months. I have only come back about three weeks ago."

"Can you remember if you were here in the months of May and June, in the year fifty-three," asked Hinda, with intense anxiety.

"That was the year before last—it is now fifty-five," murmured the girl. "Yes, ma'am, I was here then; it was not till July that I left."

"Do you know the date?" asked Hinda, breathlessly.

The girl thought for a moment, and then said she did not. Miss Lyttleton looked disappointed, and had begun a new question, when the girl interrupted her.

"Excuse me, ma'am, but I remember now; I left the day after my brother's birthday, and that is why I can call it to mind; his birthday was on the fifth, and I started from here on the afternoon of the next day."

"The very day he died," murmured Hinda to herself, "whatever happened before then, which she can tell me, I shall learn."

It was not singular that Hinda should conclude Lilius's meetings with Norman to have taken place at the cottage, knowing the intimacy which had always existed between my lady and her nurse, neither that she should fancy, in so small and homely a dwelling, the servant knew a great deal of her mistress's private concerns.

The smell of burning attracted the maid's attention to her cooking, and Hinda had to wait till the steak was taken off the fire, and put into the oven, before the maid was again at liberty.

"If you can come with me into another room, I shall be glad," said Miss Lyttleton, looking with disgust at the culinary apparatus around her.

The domestic muttered something about "missis," but could not refuse to comply with the request of a lady who spoke in so commanding a tone, and who, moreover, had promised to reward her for answering her questions; so washing her greasy hands at the tap, and drying them upon her apron, she expressed herself as being at Hinda's service, who accordingly took her into the apartment she had been shown into by Sarah King, and with closed doors, commenced interrogating her. The examination took not more than ten minutes; at the end of which time, the lady and the servant emerged from the room, both appearing vastly gratified at the conference; indeed, it would have been difficult to say which was the most so, the former, who had purchased the means of destroying the object of her hatred for a couple of sovereigns, or the latter, who, with the two golden pieces in her palm, weighed the respective merits of a warm, serviceable gown, with those of a showy flimsy silk.

Miss Lyttleton left the girl still undecided in this momentous difficulty, and walking quickly, again made her way to the station, and took a ticket for London. Arrived there, her business was to proceed to an hotel, where she engaged a bed-room and private parlour, for it was her intention to remain for at least a few days in the metropolis. It is no pleasant task to follow that revengeful, scheming woman to the little sanctum she was ushered into by the bowing waiter. Her thoughts were not of an agreeable nature; she

had at last discovered that which, she was convinced, would injure the reputation of Lady Welgrave past all hope of amendment, if, indeed, her vengeful feelings might not be glutted by Liliás's complete destruction. To bring down punishment upon her brother's murderer was what for the last two years she had lived and prayed for; yet when the time of her partial success had arrived, and she might confidently hope to see the object of her hate degraded to the full extent of her desires; when, I say, the dearest wish of her heart was on the very point of realisation, a sensation of uneasiness, approaching to dread, invaded her relentless soul, and a something, which in another she would have stigmatised as childish weakness, caused her pulse to beat quickly at the least sound, and her head to burn and throb.

The dinner she had ordered was unexceptionable; yet in her fretfulness she pronounced it to be perfectly uneatable; and so, till the hour of retiring, did she vent her ill-temper upon everything and everybody within sight of her. The time which should have been given to sleep was for the most part occupied in thought, which lingered one instant upon the events of the last few hours, and another upon the far past, but more frequently dwelt upon the anticipated future. Imagination pictured to her the dismay and terror which the lovely and sensitive Lady Welgrave must feel, in common with her noble partner, when she should be arrested upon a charge of murder.

But not now, as they had done, did these ideas of the torture about to be inflicted upon Liliás swell her mind with triumphant joy; it was almost with fear she thought of the awful result of her investigation into that hidden life. Unflinching and vindictive as was her nature, she could not rejoice at the success which had attended her journey to Blackheath; perhaps it was too sudden, and excitement overpowered her delight.

The transports of pleasure are divided by so imperceptible a line from the opposite ecstasy of pain, that it might be owing to the overstepping of the narrow boundary her restless dissatisfaction was attributable; or, let us trust, it was the supremacy of clemency over hatred that caused her, even in a moment of victory, to feel the anguish of defeat; account for it in whatever possible manner, certain it is, that Liliás herself, in the extreme season of her remorseful misery, had not been more a prey to disquietude than was Hinda Lyttleton during the night following the day she longed for with such intense earnestness—the day on which the power to avenge her brother's death had been awarded to her.

CHAPTER XLIV.

DRAWING TO A CLOSE.

ALTHOUGH Sarah King had been supported by an unnatural courage during her interview with Miss Lyttleton, she suffered all the torture and depression of reaction when her visitor had left, and there was no longer the necessity to veil her feelings. Her's was a violent nature, strong while under the influence of powerful emotions, but incapable of long endurance. She might be likened to the soldier, who, during the turmoil and heat of battle, is perfectly heedless of danger; yet, when the excitement of the fight is past, and the delusive vision of glory is substituted by mutilations, quails with a truly human fear at the thought of dissolution. When the pageant of war is over, and the inspiring notes of the trumpet are exchanged for the suppressed groans and cries of agony, and while the warrior, a bleeding and disfigured mass, lies in his lonely tent untended, his stout heart will fill with dread at the fate he has so often braved.

Not until evening did Sarah leave her room, but spent the intervening hours in lamentations and sobbings; she saw that the end was nigh, and trembled, though not for herself; her anguish was entirely for her young mistress.

After some little scruple, the servant revealed to Sarah King that Miss Lyttleton had put some questions to her; and when the nurse at length drew from her a full relation of what had taken place, she seemed like one beside herself. Whatever it was that Hinda Lyttleton had gleaned from the girl, Sarah now became acquainted with, and the horror of its import, overpowering all other feelings, caused her to swoon.

The girl might think what she had told very unimportant, but to King it contained a deadly significance. In that simple story, the nurse found a clue to Lilius's most fatal concealment. The whole of the next day the unhappy woman spent in torments almost insupportable. What she had heard was too terrible to believe, but at the same time too probable to entertain a great doubt of; and in the wild hope of finding her fears untrue, she at last resolved to pay a visit to her mistress.

Lady Welgrave was that evening alone in her boudoir, preferring the cheerfulness of the small apartment to the more imposing magnificence of the drawing-room. Her husband had gone out, and she expected to pass the remainder of the day in solitude. Having convinced herself that she could do nothing to prevent Hinda from the pursuit of whatever designs had taken her to Blackheath, she forced herself to abstract her thoughts as much as possible from the

painful subject, and tried to wait calmly the farther unfolding of her opponent's hostile intentions. To have seen her placidly reading a volume of "The Rambler," with her whole soul ostensibly engrossed in the occupation, a smile upon the lips, and a healthy bloom upon her cheek, no one could have imagined her to be other than the most contented of women. Appearances are proverbially deceptive, for there are as many breaking hearts beating beneath the cross of honour or satin robe as under the fustian jacket or tattered cotton gown.

Happily for her, Lady Welgrave possessed for reading an interest so lively that, in the midst of overwhelming troubles, her mind was capable of abstracting itself from them; and in the fortunes of fictitious characters she lost sight of her own. Not long, however, was she enabled to indulge the delightful oblivion from care which is the portion of the truly good reader. A knock at the door, cautious and low, roused her from the land of visions to that of painful realities. It was with a sigh that she relinquished the brief forgetfulness of her position, laid the book upon the table, and bade the applicant enter. Her air and tone had been languidly indifferent as she did this, but it was far otherwise when she recognised and spoke to the unlooked-for visitor.

"Gracious heavens!" she exclaimed, rising hastily; "can that be you, nurse?"

"No other, my lady," returned the voice of Sarah King, who, coming forward to meet her young mistress, almost fainted upon her shoulder from excess of emotion.

Lilias was greatly alarmed, for she scarcely ever remembered seeing Sarah look so excited and haggard before, and knew not what to ascribe her apparent agitation to, nor her late arrival.

"Sit down, Sarah," she said, affectionately, drawing nearer the fire the vacant seat she had left; "and I will remove your bonnet and cloak, for you must be both cold and tired."

Lilias might well think this, for the poor woman's teeth chattered, and she was so exhausted with the combined effects of sorrow and fatigue as to be quite unable to help herself. Her mistress therefore divested her of the cumbrous wrappings she was enveloped in as a protection against the bitter cold; and drawing an ottoman close to the feet of the nurse, she seated herself upon it and talked to her, while she watched the flames as they darted up, and died suddenly out of the lurid coals.

Sarah King did not speak, except in monosyllabic replies, to Lilias's questions, who soon became wearied of having all the talking to herself, and at length begged Sarah to explain fully the cause of her coming. The nurse's face became pale as she heard this request, and a resolute look settled about the corners of her

mouth, and her eyes flickered wildly in the uncertain light of the fire.

"You shall know, my lady," she said, struggling with vehement excitement; "I will tell you, if the words choke me; I cannot live in doubt any longer, and I can hardly feel more miserable, whatever your answer may be. Oh! my dear lady," she continued, a wild passion convulsing her frame, and giving a pathetic earnestness to her tones, "I pray you will answer the question I am about to put to you as truly as though you were answering your Maker on the last day. Tell me you will do so—oh! tell me you will not deceive me?"

The alabaster whiteness of Lady Welgrave's face rivalled that of the snowy handkerchief she crumbled with spasmodic grasp in her clenched hand; her eyes assumed the unnatural brilliance peculiar to them when she was under the influence of any great internal pain, and her whole appearance was such as might be looked for in an agonised criminal about to receive the sentence of death. Her frame quivered with agony as her nurse thus solemnly adjured her, but she forced herself to answer; and the ringing but gentle murmurings of her accents as they formed into the words, "I promise," rose above Sarah's stifled sobs, who had dropped from the seat upon her knees, and with her head bent upon her mistress's lap, was weeping tears of wormwood.

There was a silence, almost awful in its fulness, which lasted for a few moments; nothing save the nurse's occasional moans and the all-but imperceptible ticking of Lilius's watch was heard, and these sounds served only to make the hush more ghastly. At last, being wrought well-nigh to a pitch of frenzy, Lilius demanded from Sarah what it was she wished to ask. For a little while she received no answer, and when she was going to repeat the question, Mrs. King raised her head, and gazing with an intensity of supplication at her mistress, faltered out—

"Forgive me, if it is possible for you to do so, my dear mistress! I am so miserable that I must confide the cause of my sorrow to you; the weight of such fears as I have borne this day would soon kill me—it is so awful to think of. I will not—I can never believe it, till with your own lips you confess its truth—it is so terrible!"

"Dear nurse, tell me what you mean!" Lilius cried, agitatingly. "Pray, do not longer delay, but explain to me what it is that troubles you so much."

The nurse made a great effort to be calm, overcame her sobs, and finally asked, in a more collected voice than she had yet used, if Lilius remembered a servant of hers who had left to go to America.

"I do, perfectly well," rejoined Lady Welgrave. "What have you to say concerning her?"

"And do you also remember the date she went away, my lady?"

An impatient shake of the head was Liliias's only answer.

"It was on the sixth of July, the very day on which——"

Here the sound of the nurse's voice was drowned in sobs, and the words "died" was the only one audible.

"Yes, yes, I remember now; but what has she to do with *that*?"

This was spoken by my lady, with a more deeply interested manner than she had previously exhibited, and as she concluded, again a flitting horror passed like a deadly blight over her fair countenance, transforming its loveliness into a something fearful to look upon.

"I will explain to you how this girl is linked with your secret," answered the nurse; "but first, I must tell you what occurred yesterday. Miss Lyttleton came to Blackheath: did you know this, my lady?"

"Yes," Liliias replied, with a half-distracted air; "I remember now. It is this, then, that has brought you here; I had forgotten for an instant, events crowd so thickly, that I am sometimes unable to recollect them, or only to remember them indistinctly, as though they were mere emanations of fancy. I think at times," she resumed, with a complete hopelessness of manner pitiable to witness; "that I cannot be really an actor in this drama; my part in it appears too terrible. Ah, me! how weary I am of it all! how I long to be eternally at peace!" And truly, she did look weary, sick even to death, of the cares and deceptions which seemed to have no end, but only led her the more completely into an inextricable confusion of anxieties.

Urged by her mistress, Sarah King commenced relating, as succinctly as she was able, the conversation which had taken place the preceding day between herself and Miss Lyttleton, to all which Liliias listened with the calmness of despair.

When the nurse had finished her narrative, my lady said, "I thank you, Sarah, for your fidelity, but your devotion will scarcely serve to divert the impending blow one hour. I feel that all will soon be over; that the secret I have tortured myself so unremittingly to keep hidden must shortly be divulged, and this reflection relieves me rather than otherwise. The worst I have to look forward to cannot be harder to bear than this constant and corroding fear. Certainty, however terrible, must be better than the suspense I now endure."

Liliias bent her face until it was almost hidden, when she had

done speaking, nor did she raise it again for many minutes; but when she looked up its expression was more determined. The jaded heart had communed with itself, and taken courage to recommence its wretched plotting work, which must know no cessation till death's cold hand stayed its anxious throbbings.

"What else had you to say to me?" inquired Lilius, of her nurse. "This is not all, I think!"

"No, I have yet something to add," answered Sarah, dismally; "but I cannot say it aloud, the sound of my own voice as it spoke the words would terrify me; come nearer."

In compliance with Sarah's wish, Lady Welgrave approached so closely that her ebon tresses mingled themselves with Sarah's entangled hair, and her rich garments half covered, with its ample folds, the humble habiliments of the nurse.

What a picture would Lilius and Sarah King at this moment have made for the pencil of a Frith, or a Maclise; their stooping figures, bent in an attitude of painful earnestness, forming the foreground, while the elegant room, enveloped in soft shadow, completed a scene of surpassing interest.

My lady's countenance bore that stern, resolute expression which complete hopelessness occasionally assumes, but retained all its old perfection. Harsh and ungodly passions might rage within, but the outside was ever fair; her long hair fell in rippling masses to her feet, and reflected back the ruddy firelight like polished steel; and her dark flashing eyes were bent with a look of foreboding and pity on her companion, whose tear-stained face and excited bearing contrasted strongly with Lilius's unnatural passiveness.

The whispered communication was very short, but it must have been startling in its character, for every trace of colour faded from Lilius's features, a moan of excruciating anguish broke from her quivering lips, and she staggered as though she had received an electric shock.

"This, my lady," resumed Sarah, aloud, "is what I came to tell you, and hear you deny, for I cannot believe it—I cannot possibly think it true; for pity's sake, say you did not do it!" she screamed, wildly, clasping her hands and gazing appealingly at her mistress. "Oh, Miss Lilius! I implore you to say you did not do it; tell me so—tell me so—or I must go mad!"

Another moan, more despairing, if possible, in its agony than the preceding one, and no other reply but this one to that eager and heartrending petition.

Sarah King rose from her recumbent posture with a majesty of grief, and standing before the shivering wife of Lord Welgrave, said, in a tone to whose utter wretchedness words cannot do justice,

"You have no need to answer me, Lady Welgrave; you cannot, I see, deny it, and I do not want you to say you——" A choking sensation came in King's throat as she laboured to finish the sentence, and she fairly broke down as she added, "to think that I have nursed you from a baby for this! But it is impossible, it must be so; I implore, I entreat you to say I am in the wrong; tell me so, my darling; blame me for having doubted you, but as you love me, assure me that my fears are unfounded, that what the girl said was untrue, or that I did not understand her aright?"

"What if I dare not say this," Lilius interrupted, speaking but just above her breath; "if in honour I cannot refute the truth of her assertion—what then? Will you desert me, Sarah, when I have most need of your support! when not one in the wide earth would love me but yourself, knowing what you do?"

"No, no," groaned her nurse, and weeping afresh; "I will never desert you; but God knows, I can scarcely bear this."

It did, indeed, seem too much for her strength, for falling heavily upon the ground she lay stunned with horror and grief, though not insensible.

Lilius did not offer to move to her assistance; she had forgotten everything but the new danger that menaced her; the added peril which promised to be too great to overcome. The whole horrible proceedings of a trial for murder presented themselves to her imagination; the court filled with anxious, terror-stricken faces; the grave judge and passionless jurymen; the witnesses upon whose evidence, whether true or false, the life of the convicted depends; and amongst these witnesses, forward in malice and elated with expectant triumph, she fancied she saw Hinda Lyttleton, now replying, with a calm but fiendish delight, to the questions put to her by the counsel, and now turning an instant to feast her eyes upon the helpless wretchedness of her victim. Following all this my lady's fancy led her to a narrow cell, as devoid of light and comfort as the heart of its inhabitant, who, with wild anguish or silent despair, walked up and down the unhealthy den, or stretched her delicate limbs upon the hard prison bed. And farther still, the morbid workings of her mind transported her, even to the dropping of the fatal bolt, the last struggle of the dying, and the last backward glance of the retreating spectators; and then her brain becoming dizzy with fear, she was forced to arouse herself and bathe her throbbing temples to save her from fainting.

CHAPTER XLV.

A BIRTH.

IN the dead of that night, the same in which Hinda Lyttleton exulted over the discovery she had made, a child was born to Lord Welgrave. The shock of Sarah's communication brought on premature birth, and instead of the fine healthy boy his lordship had hoped for, to succeed to his ancient name, his wife presented him with a puny daughter, whose strangely pensive little face seemed born to care and suffering. It made no cry, but bore the first washing and dressing with a mute endurance that quickly inspired the admiration of Sarah King, whose hands received the infant from the doctor. The event looked forward to with such delight by the Marquis was fraught not only with disappointment, but with alarm, for Lilius was pronounced by her medical attendant to be in imminent danger. From one fainting-fit she relapsed into another throughout that long, long night, and even when the morning broke, and she had been thrown into a deep sleep by means of an anodyne, the peril was not quite past. At last, before the day closed, she was so much better as to give hopes of her speedy recovery. To her the advent of the little stranger was no source of joy, for she could not be said to love her husband, and desired no tie which should bind them to each other more securely; then, too, she knew not what might be her fate, and trembled at the thought of being forced to leave the babe to the care of aliens. It was so delicate that already her heart clung to it with a fondness which she never expected to feel for any human being again.

Lady Welgrave was sleeping composedly in the evening, with the infant tenderly pillowed on her bosom, when Sarah, who watched near her, was startled by a knocking at the chamber-door, and a moment after the light step of Emma Adams crossed the threshold. Her pretty features were as emotionless, and her voice as low and gentle, as of old; the only visible change was that her cheeks had gained a healthier glow from her sea-side rambles, and perhaps there was a shade of coquetry in the arrangement of her dress, which had not been observable before.

As Emma entered Sarah put up her finger in token of silence, glancing significantly towards the bed at the same time. Emma looked in the direction indicated, and smiled ambiguously, as the tiny face of the heiress of Welgrave met her sight; then, without making any attempt to speak, she took off her bonnet and shawl, and, having placed them on a chair, sat down close to the nurse, who regarded her with an expression of suspicion, if not of absolute dislike.

The maid's cat-like movements, and the strange, incomprehensible smile with which she greeted the baby, had created an unfavourable impression upon Sarah, and she shrank involuntarily from contact with her. She knew not why, but something caused her to feel uneasy in the maid's presence, and snatching up a book that lay near her, she tried to concentrate her attention upon it, in order to forget her companion; but this Emma would by no means allow, not that she cared for being neglected, or that in any way she was desirous of winning the nurse's good opinion, for the distaste Sarah had for her society she fully reciprocated. The girl had something to communicate, and with a quiet imperiousness, peculiar to her, she bade King lay down the book and listen.

"I have been," she commenced, "to Hastings, and returning to Welgrave, I passed through Sedgley, for I wanted to see a few friends there, and likewise to report to my lady how Sir Shenton was. I reached the Hall about three o'clock this afternoon, and made inquiries from the housekeeper, who assured me he was quite well; she also said that she was just then engaged in conversation with a strange lady, who had but a few minutes arrived. The footman, who had taken the lady's card to Sir Shenton, came into the housekeeper's room as we were speaking, and from him I learned the visitor's name; it was no other than the one of my lady's late guest—can you guess it, or have I any occasion to mention it to you?"

"No, none," Sarah gasped,—“I know it but too well; my poor, poor mistress!"

"Then my mistress is, as I have long suspected, in the power of Miss Lyttleton," remarked Emma in an under tone, and with the same impressive manner she had used in alluding to the visitor at Sedgley Hall.

Her hearer, unwilling to assent, remained in painful thought some little time, then she said, earnestly, "Emma, you must say nothing of this to your mistress."

"I will not!" the maid replied, earnestly and gently; "I am fully aware, at such a time, it must be her death." And here the conversation was put an end to by the awakening of Lillas.

Emma Adams's report to Sarah was a correct one. Hinda Lyttleton had that day visited Sir Shenton Bellamy. The mental pain she endured throughout the sleepless night which followed her visit to Rose Cottage, made her not a whit the more merciful; it rather hardened her heart, and caused her to be less regardful of the misery she proposed inflicting upon Lady Welgrave, and, through her, all who loved her. So worn out was she from want of rest and inquietude of spirit, that she was compelled, despite her wish, to remain at the hotel many hours inactive.

However, about one o'clock, she took her place in a train for Sedgley, with the intention of communicating to the baronet all she had been enabled to gather concerning his daughter's secret. The snow was falling in thick heavy flakes as Miss Lyttleton was being driven to the Hall in a cab, whose dilapidated condition was only equalled by the unfortunate animal, who, in the last stage of decay, was forced to drag his heavy burden from early dawn till dark. Miss Lyttleton's hands and feet were benumbed with cold as she alighted at the Hall; her body seemed dead to every sensation; but the heart, till it ceased to beat, seemed as though it would be the seat of revenge.

She opened her business to Sir Shenton with an expression of sorrow for the pain she was about to give him by her recital; which profession the venerable and benevolent appearance of the noble old man drew from her involuntarily. She had intended not to put herself to the trouble of showing a politeness foreign to her disposition, but the natural dignity of Sir Shenton extorted the courtesy she would not have otherwise displayed.

There was an embarrassing pause for the space of about three minutes, after which Hinda struck boldly into her subject. She told every circumstance that had inclined her to the belief of Liliast's guilt, without, however, saying that what she related was connected with his daughter. This information she reserved for the end, if, indeed, it would be necessary to give it, as she was unwilling to agitate the baronet to such a degree that he should be prevented from hearing out her narrative. She was resolved that he should drink the bitter draught to the dregs.

Sir Shenton could not be said clearly to understand the meaning of his visitor's complicated history, but it nevertheless made a terrible impression upon him. He listened intently to each word, with a dread that increased with every syllable she uttered. Why he felt thus he could not tell; what he heard was certainly shocking, though not more so than accounts he had often read in the newspapers with a passing shudder and quickly forgotten. It could be nothing to him, he reasoned, the crimes of this young and beautiful woman,—but still he trembled; and a thousand fears, entertained long before, came back to him with a double strength. He was beginning by slow degrees to comprehend it all, yet he hearkened just as calmly as he had done throughout. It was as though he had been bereft of the power to do aught but listen; his other senses might be as acute as ever, but he appeared able only to hear. The grim figure of his visitor, the roaring fire, and the bleak winter prospect, were to him as though they had not been; a mist shadowed his faculties.

With the exception of Miss Lyttleton's unflinching tones,

nothing present seemed real, while the past assumed the form, not merely of memory, which is often vague and dream-like, but of circumstances actually existing.

Hinda had related her suspicions, and the foundations upon which they were based; but the worst was yet to be told. She had at present spoken only of surmises, she came now to facts; briefly she described the interview which had passed between herself and Sarah King on the previous day, still disguising the names of the persons figuring in the fearful story. She related also the result of her colloquy with Sarah's maid, declaring that she had recognised the portrait her mistress had denied all knowledge of, as belonging to the gentleman who, two years-and-a-half back, had visited the cottage.

The baronet was too much horrified to be enabled to ask the question which formed itself upon his lips, and it died away in a groan.

Miss Lyttleton forestalled his second attempt to speak.

"You would inquire," she said, "why the girl gave no information of the circumstance I have detailed to you? At the time she was unsuspecting; she could not guess the murderous intentions of the smiling fiend, and she did not hear of my brother's death till I told her of it yesterday, when she innocently gave me the information, which, in any court of justice, would condemn this high-born woman to the gallows."

Again Hinda Lyttleton paused; but only to resume instantly with renewed malevolence.

"I had forgotten one thing; a ring treasured by this lady came accidentally into my hands, when I immediately knew it to be my brother's. Have you ever seen it, Sir Shenton?"

As she spoke, she placed before the baronet the ring she had received from Lord Welgrave; the same that had given rise to suspicion of Lilius's truth in the mind of the baronet.

The moment his eye rested upon it all mystery was done away with; he knew that it was of his daughter Miss Lyttleton had been speaking the whole time; he now learned fully the awful truth—that his child had perjured herself to him. No word or cry escaped him; his eyes closed, as though in death, and he fell with a loud crash upon the floor. Hinda's presence of mind, at this crisis, entirely forsook her; she thought she had killed him, and, iron-nerved as she was, all but fainted with dismay; she could not summon the power to ring for assistance, but seemed rooted to her seat with alarm. Fortunately the servants had heard the sound of their master's fall, and hastened to the room. Their entrance roused Hinda; she assisted the housekeeper to unfasten the baronet's cravat, and strove, by dashing cold water upon his face, to recal

consciousness, while she despatched a messenger for a surgeon. Dr. Darby's residence being fortunately little removed from the Hall, he was quickly in attendance; but so completely was he shaken from his professional dignity, at sight of his old friend's dreadful condition, that it required a great effort on his part to enable him to give the requisite orders for his patient's treatment. Miss Lyttleton was called upon to explain the cause of so sudden an attack; and in answer stated that she had been the bearer of unfortunate tidings, the hearing of which overpowered Sir Shenton so much as to result in the catastrophe the domestics had witnessed, but beyond this she would divulge nothing. If her purpose, in visiting Sedgley Hall, had been to kill its owner, by a detail of the suspicions she nourished against his daughter, her object was nearly being accomplished. Dr. Darby declared his friend to be stricken with apoplexy, which he believed would prove fatal either to his intellect or his life.

From the sick-bed of Sir Shenton, we must return to Liliias, who was happily unconscious of her father's illness. After the first token of improvement, her restoration to health promised to be rapid; her constitution, like her temper, was elastic, and quickly rebounded to its original state of healthiness, despite every pressure. She might suffer from a malady of mind or body which to another would prove destructive; yet such was the flexibility of her mental and physical disposition, that soon the ill effects were forgotten in restored vigour and gaiety.

A telegram, containing the news of her child's birth, had been forwarded to Sedgley as soon as its mother was pronounced in safety, and she could not but feel surprised that she had not received a letter from her father, or a visit in *propria persona*. It was so unlike his habit to delay answering any communication, and particularly one so important as the one relating to her baby's birth, and she knew not what to think of his silence. She assiduously refrained, however, from confiding her uneasiness to her husband; and as Sarah King, worn out by suffering and fatigue, had returned home, she could not disburthen her soul of the distressing fancies which crowded it; for she continued to avoid, as carefully as heretofore, any unnecessary confidence with her maid.

Though naturally of a most confiding disposition, the communion she had been compelled to hold with the world convinced her that trust is more frequently betrayed than properly appreciated, and that he who would not have his faith abused must be wary of those upon whose honour he stakes his happiness or safety. It was a hard lesson for one so full of faith to learn, and how she had acquired the knowledge she best could tell; but early, very early, she had, with bitter anguish, acknowledged the truth of the seer's

warning in a wider sense, than that it is unwise to put your confidence in princes. Thus, repentance for the past, and evil foreboding for the future, must all be pent up in her own breast.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE RETURN OF OLD MEMORIES.

THE baby heiress of Welgrave had not drawn breath more than three days when its mother received a new cause for agitation, in the shape of a letter from her cousin Maude, who, in the first place, told how, in removing from one city to another, she had failed to receive Liliás's letters, till after they had undergone a round of nearly eight months' travelling. She congratulated her dear cousin upon her marriage, expressing simultaneously her regret at not having been present at the ceremony, and the usual number of wishes for her happiness, which in this case could lay claim of coming from the heart. But it was not the portion of Maude's long letter which related either to herself or Liliás that was much regarded by the latter. The part fraught with most interest to her was that which related to Mrs. Ashton having formed a new acquaintance, who proved to be no other than Liliás's friend and lover, Owen Arnold, whom she had wept as dead.

"We met Mr. Arnold," wrote Maude Ashton, "under circumstances the most interesting and romantic. He had been severely wounded at the taking of Sebastopol; and through being but badly attended during his subsequent illness, was left in such a weak state of health as to become a ready victim to a fever, which has been doing great ravages at Smyrna. He was spending his leave of absence with a cousin of papa's, when the fever seized him; and my cousin's wife being much alarmed about infection, Frank, who, I am happy to say, is now with us, begged mamma to have him brought to our house, for they are both in the same regiment and attached friends. Of course, mamma was just at first immensely terrified at the suggestion, though she ultimately consented to it; for you must know she can never long refuse anything to Frank. It being settled that Mr. Arnold should come, the question arose, who was to nurse him? Frank could not, despite his willingness to take upon himself the task, and mamma would as soon have thought of committing suicide as of entering a room where any one was ill with fever. But then he could not be wholly entrusted to a servant; and as we had undertaken the charge of nursing him, it would indeed have been ungenerous not to bestow upon him every attention; so it was at length decided, though not without

a deal of persuasion on mine and my brother's part, that I should be duly installed mistress of the sick room, with the proviso that I should take all possible precaution to prevent 'martyrising myself at the shrine of duty,' which, I believe, is the conventional phrase for making and administering jellies, &c., and shaking up pillows and medicine bottles. To be sure, I felt greatly elevated in my own estimation when fully invested with the rights of nurse, and formed many very flattering comparisons of myself to the sisters of mercy, who performed such marvels of patience and self-abnegation. But it is not my intention to detain you with an account of the manner in which my spirits rallied or flagged with the health of my patient, and how, at last, when he was well enough to join Frank and mamma down stairs, I received his thanks very clumsily, heartily wishing that, with the sisters of mercy aforesaid, I could have been allowed permission to bid my patient farewell immediately upon his recovery. Owen—for being so accustomed to think of him almost as a brother, I now call him by his Christian name—is, I discover, a friend of yours. I never heard you speak of him, and am quite surprised that you should not have done so, since each day brings into notice some trait in his character which makes me proud to think of him as Frank's friend, and thankful that I have been the means of doing him a service. He continually speaks of you with the warmest admiration, though in a manner that appears to me exceedingly sad; still it is delightful to converse concerning you in whatever fashion, and I assure you that a day never passes without the recurrence of this pleasure. Poor Frank is, of course, excluded from these conversations; for he has long ago exhausted every possible inquiry concerning your disposition and person, and not having the privilege of knowing you, can take no part in your praises. The misfortune of being absent when you were with us in London Frank hourly deplures, as his friend describes you with an enthusiasm worthy of his subject.

"I cannot, my dear cousin, quit this theme without first inquiring of you if Owen Arnold is suffering from the effects of any misfortune, or whether the melancholy which invests him is constitutional. He is at times so melancholy and silent that I am puzzled what to think of him, and am, indeed, to look for an explanation of his moodiness in some irreparable calamity; though occasionally I fancy it is love for my beautiful cousin that causes the depression under which he labours. This is certainly a most natural conclusion, and yet not without its contradictions. Tell me if my supposition is a correct one.

"And now I come to the task of speaking of myself, always an unpleasant one with me; but as you said you should be displeased

if I failed to give you a full, true, and particular account—as newspaper vendors say—of the state of my health, I must e'en commence the ungrateful work. I am very much better, and entertain great hopes of my complete restoration to health, both of body and mind. I am not unhappy, dear Liliás; it would be sinful if I could longer continue so, while I have yet such numberless blessings. During a long period spent in reflection, I have learned to be resigned to my fate, which is, after all, infinitely preferable to that of thousands. It is out of my power to console myself for the loss of happiness by romantic notions of the peculiarity of my situation; daily may be witnessed fond hearts crushed more severely than my own, for surely the fate of the wronged wife is more deplorable, as her misery is frequently shared by beloved and innocent children.

“My mamma is quite well, and sends her love and congratulations, as does also Frank, who is all impatience to come to England, if only for your sake; he is already sincerely attached to you, though only knowing you from report; judge, then, what his feelings will be when he sees and becomes acquainted with you.

“And now, my sweet cousin, I must for a time bid you adieu, and believe me, your ever devoted friend, MAUDE ASHTON.”

Liliás read her cousin's letter many times, with feelings scarcely describable. She was overjoyed to hear of Owen's safety, yet mingled with this glad emotion was one of jealousy. She foresaw that the gratitude of Owen to her amiable cousin might make him forgetful of herself; and though she never expected to see him again, and was severed from him as much by duty as by distance, this was no pleasant reflection to one whose chief craving was for affection. Greatly she blamed herself for entertaining this selfish feeling, and tried every persuasion to convince herself that she was glad they had met; but for a long time her efforts were fruitless. At last she brought her mind to think rightly on the subject, and be pleased that a prospect seemed opened for the reward of her cousin's and Owen's patient suffering in a mutual attachment. She could not but acknowledge that they were eminently suited for each other by every qualification of person, disposition, and fortune; and this acknowledgment was a great step towards vanquishing the sore feeling in her heart, which had at first arisen at the thought of the probable marriage of the man she had loved. I say “had loved,” for her passion for Owen Arnold could not be lasting, being little more than a spontaneous rush of pity and self-condemnation for her cruel treatment of him; and when, in addition to being separated from him, she was ever associated with so amiable a man as Lord Welgrave (who, besides the claim he had upon her through the relation of husband, now possessed a still greater one in being the

father of her child), the unfortunate sentiment she nourished for the unhappy Owen could not do other than diminish. Latterly, indeed, she had seldom thought concerning him, for, added to the numberless causes for anxiety which constantly surrounded her, the unremitting fondness her husband evinced towards her was doing its work upon her heart, and fast subduing its coldness into tenderness. For one who bore her such extreme love, it was impossible for ever to continue unrelenting, and had it not been for the peculiar jealousy, common alike to man and woman, when their image seems likely to be supplanted by another's, she would have felt no pang of sorrow at the idea of the affection, once her own, being transferred to Maude Ashton. Lady Welgrave resolved not to acquaint her husband of the receipt of this letter, lest it should recal the spirit of dislike against Owen with its old vigour; but after replying to it, in a manner the most affectionate and sincere, she destroyed it.

All the rest of that day, as Lilius pondered upon the subject of Maude's letter, a strange thought haunted her; it seemed as if, like the chief actor in a drama, she should wait to see the other characters punished or rewarded according to their several merits, and then herself depart from the scene, never to be heard of more. Possibly it was a childish fancy, but it nevertheless distressed her exceedingly. Was it a presentiment of the end that was so near?

During the following day, when Lady Welgrave was composing herself to sleep, she was startled by the announcement of a visitor. Her husband deemed the surprise would be an agreeable one, so, without any previous notice, led into the room—Mrs. Lytton. Mary's face was clouded with care: she had not heard from her sister-in-law since her departure for Blackheath, now nearly a week ago, and she was necessarily anxious about her. Although the last parting between Mary and Lilius had been quite friendly, yet this did not prevent the former from being liable to suspicion, and when Hinda's unaccountable silence was considered, it was but natural that the old scruples concerning my lady should again revive.

Mrs. Lytton entertained very little love for her imperious sister-in-law, still this want of affection made her none the less solicitous for her safety, nor less alarmed at not hearing from her. Mary had said she could never more enter Welgrave Abbey, nor would she now, but for the hope that she should hear some tidings of Miss Lytton. Lilius received her visitor in a constrained manner, which was not lost upon the quick perception of Mary, and conveyed a bad impression to her mind.

"I thought," was my lady's greeting, "that you would not be so unkind as to adhere to your resolution of never visiting me again. I wish you could have come to stay for a few days."

"I am obliged to you, Lady Welgrave," was the cold response; "but I cannot remain; my object in coming is to inquire concerning my sister; do you know anything of her?"

Lilias gazed at her interlocutor with a thoroughly bewildered air.

"Really, you greatly surprise me," she remarked; "how should I know aught of Miss Lyttleton's movements? I cannot possibly think why you should question me concerning her."

"I thought," resumed Mrs. Lyttleton, lowering her voice to an impressive whisper; "that you, who are most interested in her actions, would keep a watch over them."

This observation brought an indignant flush to Lady Welgrave's face, but she only said rather distantly, "You utterly mistake; I take no more than a friendly interest in your sister," and then, to divert the subject, she asked after Melbourne, and why Mary had not brought him with her.

My lady tried to appear unconcerned as she made this inquiry, but Mary partly understood her feelings, and answered with a spitefulness that made her afterwards blush for herself,—that the boy did not wish to come. She did not say, as she might have done, that the child had spoken and thought of little else besides his new mamma (as he delighted to call Lilias) since her visit; and also, what Mary knew perfectly well, that he would have been wild with delight to have accompanied her, had she but have informed him that she was going to the Abbey.

In justice to Mary, who was seldom betrayed into any act of deliberate unkindness, it must be said that she was far from being aware of the severity of the pang inflicted by her words; and in farther extenuation of her unfeeling remark, that she so loved Melbourne as to be jealous of any preference he evinced towards any one else. He was her all, and it is hard for frail humanity to be unselfish where the affections are concerned.

Mary did not prolong her visit to any great extent, and only touched upon common topics of conversation. She remarked to Lilias that she had seen the announcement of Miss Hartop's marriage, and discussed some of the list of fashionable people present at the wedding, who were known to her either personally or by report; admired the baby (as was her duty to do), and, in conclusion, bade her ladyship a somewhat formal adieu.

As Mary was passing through the boudoir, she met Emma Adams, who was carrying something upon a tray for her mistress's luncheon. "Can you spare a moment to answer me a few questions?" asked Mrs. Lyttleton of the maid.

Emma immediately replied in terms proper for the occasion, and resting her burden upon the table, listened respectfully. Mrs. Lyttleton was no diplomatist, but came direct to the point; she

told the girl frankly that she had reason to believe Lady Welgrave was possessed of a secret which it was right she should learn, and begged Emma to confide to her what she knew of her lady's private concerns; assuring her that no harm should accrue to herself through her communication, while it would be the means of removing a painful mystery and furthering the ends of justice.

There was a depth of pathos in Mrs. Lyttleton's voice that touched the girl's sensibilities, but she would not betray her mistress, persisting that she knew nothing of her concerns.

"I can scarcely credit this ignorance on your part," replied Mary, with unwonted energy, "and your reserve the more convinces me, not only that Lady Welgrave holds a dreadful secret, but that she is also concerned in my sister's lengthened absence. I know that she feared the discovery of it by my sister, and thus am I induced to think that she is instrumental in her detainment, and may be even in her death."

Emma turned pale as she listened to the unexpected charge made against her mistress, and dared not trust herself to speak, lest her emotion be taken as a proof of Lady Welgrave's guilt. After a pause, in which Mary strove to overcome her emotion, she resumed, "You will doubtless repeat this conversation to the Marchioness, and in addition you may say to her, unless I speedily hear of Miss Lyttleton's safety, I will myself take up her work, and though I have been hitherto a cipher in the dreadful inquiry, I shall be none the less formidable, now I am roused by this increased suspicion of wrong, to bring forward the guilty to punishment." A sudden transformation seemed to be effected in Mary Lyttleton, as she uttered this threat. Her manner was not passionate or in any way violent, but there was a settled resolution in her accents and mien that terrified her auditor. The awful surmise which had taken possession of her—that Lilius had caused the detention, if not the death, of Hinda, excited in her mind an activity of purpose all the more energetic because of its unusuality.

Observant, placid dispositions, when awakened, are ever the most determined, and thus the harsh feelings, which had lain dormant throughout Mary's life, woke into being with a strength alarming even to their possessor. Had Emma, as Mrs. Lyttleton hoped, given her satisfactory information respecting Hinda, the fearful idea that Lilius had destroyed her persecutor would never have entered her brain; as it was, she felt thoroughly convinced that with her rested the secret of Hinda's silence, and she decided never to be satisfied until she had discovered the fate of her husband's sister. In this manner Lilius undeservedly gained another foe, and one, though less prejudiced, almost as unrelenting as Hinda in her pursuit of what she considered to be a duty.

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