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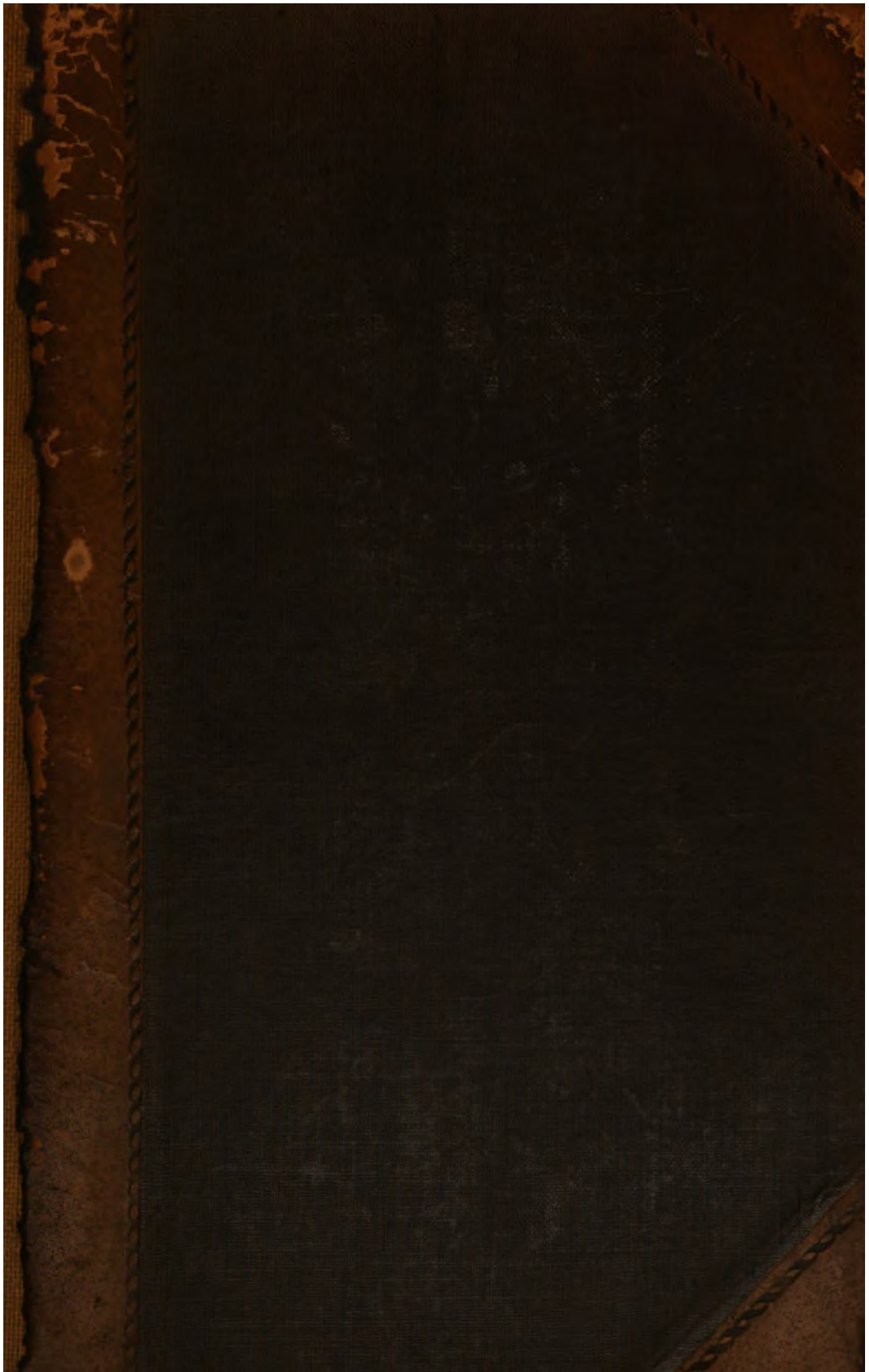
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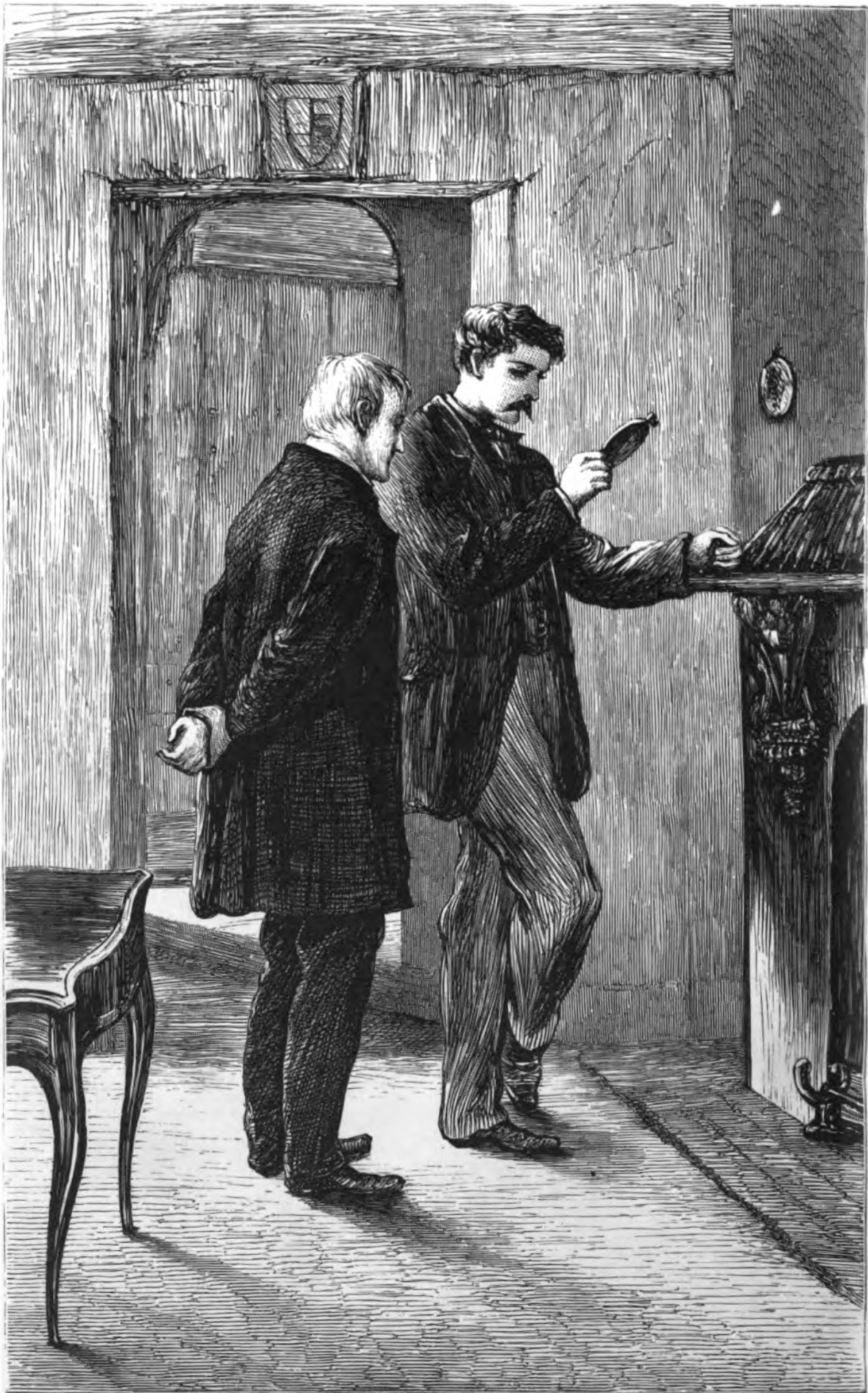
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M. E. Edwards, del.

Edmund Evans, sc.

"IT WAS THE PICTURE OF CHARLOTTE HALLIDAY."

# BELGRAVIA

A LONDON MAGAZINE

CONDUCTED BY

M. E. BRADDON

—AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," "AURORA FLOYD," ETC. ETC.

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# BELGRAVIA

MARCH 1867

## BIRDS OF PREY

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," &c

Book the Third

HEAPING UP RICHES

CHAPTER VII. AUNT SARAH

AFTER that interview in Gray's-inn, there were more interviews of a like character. Valentine received further instructions from George Sheldon, and got himself posted up in the Haygarthian history, so far as the lawyer's information furnished the materials for such posting. But the sum total of Mr. Sheldon's information seemed very little to his coadjutor when the young man looked the Haygarthian business full in the face and considered what he had to do. He felt very much like a young prince in the fairy tale who has been bidden to go forth upon an adventurous journey in a trackless forest, where, if he escape all manner of lurking dangers, and remember innumerable injunctions, such as not to utter a single syllable during the whole course of his travels, or look over his left shoulder, or pat any strange dog, or gather forest-fruit or flower, or look at his own reflection in mirror or water-pool, shining brazen shield, or jewelled helm, he will ultimately find himself before the gates of an enchanted castle, to which he may or may not obtain admittance.

Valentine fancied himself in the position of this favourite young prince. The trackless forest was the genealogy of the Haygarths ; and in the enchanted castle he was to find the crown of success in the shape of three thousand pounds. Could he marry Charlotte on the strength of those three thousand pounds, if he were so fortunate as to unravel the tangled skein of the Haygarth history? Ah, no ; that black-whiskered stock-broking stepfather would ask for something more than three thousand pounds from the man to whom he gave his wife's daughter.

"He will try to marry her to some rich City swell, I daresay,"

thought Valentine ; "I should be no nearer her with three thousand pounds for my fortune than I am without a sixpence. The best thing I can do for her happiness and my own is to turn my back upon her, and devote myself to hunting the Haygarths. It's rather hard too, just as I have begun to fancy that she likes me a little."

In the course of those interviews in Gray's-inn which occurred before Valentine took any active steps in his new pursuit certain conditions were agreed upon between him and Mr. Sheldon. The first and most serious of these conditions was, that Captain Paget should be in nowise enlightened as to his protégé's plans. This was a strong point with George Sheldon. "I have no doubt Paget's a very good fellow," he said.—It was his habit to call everybody a good fellow. He would have called Nana Sahib a good fellow, and would have made some good-natured excuse for any peccadilloes on the part of that potentate.—"Paget's an uncommonly agreeable man, you know ; but he's not the man I should care to trust with *this* kind of secret." Mr. Sheldon said this with a tone that implied his willingness to trust Captain Paget with every other kind of secret, from the contents of his japanned office-boxes to the innermost mysteries of his soul.

"You see Paget is thick with my brother Phil," he resumed ; "and whenever I find a man thick with my relations, I make it a point to keep clear of that man myself. Relations never have worked well in harness, and never will work well in harness. It seems to be against nature. Now, Phil has a dim kind of idea of the game I want to play, in a general way, but nothing more than a dim idea. He fancies I'm a fool, and that I'm wasting my time and trouble. I mean him to stick to that notion. For, you see, in a thing of this kind there's always the chance of other people cutting in and spoiling a man's game. Of course, that advertisement I read to you was seen by other men besides me, and may have been taken up. My hope is that whoever has taken it up has gone in for the female branch, and got himself snowed up under a heap of documentary evidence about the Judsons. That's another reason why we should put our trust in Matthew Haygarth. The Judson line is the obvious line to follow, and there are very few who would think of hunting up evidence for a hypothetical first marriage until they had exhausted the Judsons. Now, I rely upon you to throw dust in Paget's eyes, so there may be no possibility of my brother getting wind of our little scheme through *him*."

"I'll take care of that," answered Valentine ; "he doesn't want me just now. He's in very high feather, riding about in broughams and dining at West-end taverns. He won't be sorry to get rid of me for a short time."

"But what'll be your excuse for leaving town? He'll be sure to want a reason, you know."

"I'll invent an aunt at Ullerton, and tell him I'm going down to stop with her."

"You'd better not say Ullerton; Paget might take it into his head to follow you down there in order to see what sort of person your aunt was, and whether she had any money. Paget's an excellent fellow, but there's never any knowing what that sort of man will do. You'd better throw him off the scent altogether. Plant your aunt in Surrey—say Dorking."

"But if he should want to write to me?"

"Tell him to address to the post-office, Dorking, as your aunt is inquisitive, and might tamper with your correspondence. I daresay his letters will keep."

"He could follow me to Dorking as easily as to Ullerton."

"Of course he could," answered George Sheldon, "but then you see at Dorking the most he could find out would be that he'd been made a fool of; whereas if he followed you to Ullerton, he might ferret out the nature of your business there."

Mr. Hawkehurst perceived the wisdom of this conclusion, and agreed to make Dorking the place of his relative's abode.

"It's very near London," he suggested thoughtfully; "the Captain might easily run down."

"And for that very reason he's all the less likely to do it," answered the lawyer; "a man who thinks of going to a place within an hour's ride of town knows he can go any day, and is likely to think of going to the end of the chapter without carrying out his intention. A man who resolves to go to Manchester or Liverpool has to make his arrangements accordingly, and is likely to put his idea into practice. The people who live on Tower-hill very seldom see the inside of the Tower. It's the good folks who come up for a week's holiday from Yorkshire and Cornwall who know all about the Crown jewels and John of Gaunt's armour. Take my advice, and stick to Dorking."

Acting upon this advice, Valentine Hawkehurst lay in wait for the Promoter that very evening. He went home early, and was seated by a cheery little bit of fire, such as an Englishman likes to see at the close of a dull autumn day, when that accomplished personage returned to his lodgings.

"Deuced tiresome work," said the Captain, as he smoothed the nap of his hat with that caressing tenderness of manipulation peculiar to the man who is not very clear as to the means whereby his next hat is to be obtained,—“deuced slow, brain-belabouring work! How many people do you think I've called upon to-day, eh, Val? Seven-and-thirty! What do you say to that? Seven-and-thirty interviews, and some of them very tough ones. I think that's enough to take the steam out of a man."

"Do the moneyed swells bite?" asked Mr. Hawkehurst with friendly interest.

"Rather slowly, my dear Val, rather slowly. The mercantile fisheries have been pretty well whipped of late years, and the fish are

artful—they are uncommonly artful, Val. Indeed I'm not quite clear at this present moment—as to the kind of fly they'll rise to most readily. I'm half-inclined—to-be doubtful whether your gaudy pheasant-feather, your brougham and lavender-kid business, *is* the right thing for your angler. It has been overdone, Val, considerably overdone; and I shouldn't wonder if a sober little brown fly,—a shabby old chap in a rusty greatcoat with a cotton umbrella under his arm,—wouldn't do the trick better. That sort of thing would look rich, you see, Val, rich and eccentric; and I think, on occasions—with a *very* downy bird—I'd even go so far as a halfp'orth of snuff in a screw of paper. I really think a pinch of snuff out of a bit of paper, taken at the right moment, might turn the tide of a transaction."

Impressed by the brilliancy of this idea, Captain Paget abandoned himself for the moment to profound meditation, seated in his favourite chair, and with his legs extended before the cheerful blaze. He always had a favourite chair in every caravanserai wherein he rested in his manifold wanderings, and he had an unerring instinct which guided him in the selection of the most comfortable chair, and that one corner, to be found in every room, which is a sanctuary secure from the incursions of Boreas.

The day just ended had evidently not been a lucky one, and the Captain's gaze was darkly meditative as he looked into the ruddy little fire.

"I think I'll take a glass of cold water with a dash of brandy in it, Val," he said presently; and he said it with the air of a man who rarely tasted such a beverage; whereas it was as habitual with him to sit sipping brandy-and-water for an hour or so before he went to bed as it was for him to light his chamber-candle. "That fellow Sheldon knows how to take care of himself," he remarked thoughtfully, when Valentine had procured the brandy-and-water. "Try some of that cognac, Val; it's not bad. To tell you the truth, I'm beginning to get sick of this promoting business. It pays very little better than the India-rubber agency, and it's harder work. I shall look about me for something fresh, if Sheldon doesn't treat me handsomely. And what have you been doing for the last day or two?" asked the Captain, with a searching glance at his protégé's face. "You're always hanging about Sheldon's place; but you don't seem to do much business with him. You and his brother George seem uncommonly thick."

"Yes, George suits me better than the stockbroker. I never could get on very well with your ultra-respectable men. I'm as ready to 'undertake a dirty job' as any man; but I don't like a fellow to offer me dirty work and pretend it's clean."

"Ah, he's been getting you to do a little of the bear business, I suppose," said the Captain. "I don't see that your conscience need trouble you about that. Amongst a commercial people money must change hands. I can't see that it much matters how the change takes place."

"No, to be sure ; that's a comfortable way of putting it, at any rate. However, I'm tired of going about in the ursine guise, and I'm going to cut it. I've an old aunt settled at Dorking who has got a little bit of money to leave, and I think I'll go and look her up."

"An aunt at Dorking! I never heard of her before."

"O yes you have," answered Mr. Hawkehurst with supreme nonchalance ; "you've heard of her often enough, only you've a happy knack of not listening to other people's affairs. But you must have been wrapped up in yourself with a vengeance if you don't remember to have heard me speak of my aunt—Sarah."

"Well, well, it may be so," murmured the Captain, almost apologetically. "Your aunt Sarah? Ah, to be sure ; I have some recollection : is she your father's sister?"

"No, she's the sister of my maternal grandmother—a great-aunt, you know. She has a comfortable little place down at Dorking, and I can get free quarters there whenever I like ; so as you don't particularly want me just now, I think I'll run down to her for a week or two."

The Captain had no objection to offer to this very natural desire on the part of his adopted son ; nor did he concern himself as to the young man's motive for leaving London.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CHARLOTTE PROPHESES RAIN.

MR. HAWKEHURST had no excuse for going to the Lawn before his departure ; but the stately avenues between Bayswater and Kensington are free to any man ; and, having nothing better to do, Valentine put a shabby little volume of Balzac in his pocket and spent his last morning in town under the shadow of the mighty elms, reading one of the great Honoré's gloomiest romances, while the autumn leaves drifted round him, dancing fairy measures on the grass, and scraping and scuffling on the gravel, and while children with hoops and children with balls scampered and screamed in the avenue by which he sat. He was not particularly absorbed by his book. He had taken it haphazard from the tattered collection of cheap editions which he carried about with him in his wanderings, ignominiously stuffed into the bottom of a port-manteau, amongst boots and clothes-brushes and disabled razors.

"I'm sick of them all," he thought ; "the de Beauseants, and Rastignacs, the German Jews, and the patrician beauties, and the Israelitish Circes of the Rue Taitbout, and the sickly self-sacrificing provincial angels, and the ghastly *vieilles filles*. Had that man ever seen such a woman as Charlotte, I wonder—a bright creature, all smiles and sunshine, and sweet impulsive tenderness ; an angel who can be angelic without being *poitrine*, and whose amiability never degenerates into debility. There is an odour of the dissecting-room pervading all my



friend Balzac's novels, and I don't think he was capable of painting a fresh, healthy nature. What a mass of disease he would have made Lucy Ashton, and with what dismal relish he would have dilated upon the physical sufferings of Amy Robsart in the confinement of Cumnor Hall! No, my friend Honoré, you are the greatest and grandest of painters of the terrible school; but the time comes when a man sighs for something brighter and better than your highest type of womanhood."

Mr. Hawkehurst put his book in his pocket, and abandoned himself to meditation, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees and his face buried in his hands, unconscious of the trundling hoops and screaming children.

"She is better and fairer than the fairest heroine of a novel," he thought. "She is like Heloise. Yes, the quaint old French fits her to a nicety :

' Elle ne fu obscure ne brune,  
Ains fu clere comme la lune,  
Envers qui les autres estoiles  
Ressemblent petites chandoiles.'

Mrs. Browning must have known such a woman :

' Her air had a meaning, her movements a grace :  
You turned from the fairest to gaze on her face ;'

and yet

' She was not as pretty as women I know.'

Was she not ?" mused the lover. "Is she not? Yes," he cried suddenly, as he saw a scarlet petticoat gleaming in the distance, and a bright young face under a little black turban hat—prettiest and most bewitching of all feminine headgear, let fashion change as it may. "Yes," he cried, "she is the loveliest creature in the world, and I love her to distraction."

He rose, and went to meet the loveliest creature in the world, whose earthly name was Charlotte Halliday. She was walking with Diana Paget, who, to more sober judges, might have seemed the handsomer woman of the two. Alas for Diana! the day had been when Valentine Hawkehurst considered her very handsome, and had need to fight a hard battle with himself in order not to fall in love with her. He had been conqueror in that struggle of prudence and honour against nascent love, only to be vanquished utterly by Charlotte's brighter charms and Charlotte's sunnier nature.

The two girls shook hands with Mr. Hawkehurst. An indifferent observer might have perceived that the colour faded from the face of one, while a blush mounted to the cheeks of the other. But Valentine did not see the sudden pallor of Diana's face—he had eyes only for Charlotte's blushes. Nor did Charlotte herself perceive the sudden change in her dearest friend's countenance. And that perhaps is the bitterest sting of all. It is not enough that some must weep while

others play ; the mourners must weep unnoticed, unconsolated ; happiness is so apt to be selfish.

Of course the conversation was the general sort of thing under the given circumstances—just a little more inane and disjointed than the ordinary small talk of people who meet each other in their walks abroad.

“How do you do, Mr. Hawkehurst? Very well, thank you. Mamma is very well ; at least no, not quite well ; she has one of her headaches this morning. She is rather subject to headache, you know ; and the canaries sing so loud. Don't the canaries sing abominably loud, Diana?—loudly they would have made me say at Hyde-lodge ; but it is only awfully clever people who know when to use adverbs.”

And Miss Halliday having said all this in a hurried and indeed almost breathless manner, stopped suddenly, blushing more deeply than at first, and painfully aware of her blushes. She looked imploringly at Diana ; but Diana would not come to the rescue ; and this morning Mr. Hawkehurst seemed as a man struck with sudden dumbness.

There followed presently a little discussion of the weather. Miss Halliday was possessed by the conviction that there would be rain—possibly not immediate rain, but before the afternoon inevitable rain. Valentine thought not ; was indeed positively certain there would be no rain ; had a vague idea that the wind was in the north ; and quoted a dreary Joe-Millerism to prove the impossibility of rain while the wind came from that quarter. Miss Halliday and Mr. Hawkehurst held very firmly to their several opinions, and the argument was almost a quarrel ; one of those little playful quarrels which form one of the most delicious phases of a flirtation.

“I would not mind wagering a fortune—if I had one—on the certainty of rain,” cried Charlotte with kindling eyes.

“And I would not shrink from staking my existence on the conviction that there will be no rain,” exclaimed Valentine, looking with undisguised tenderness at the glowing animated face.

Diana Paget took no part in that foolish talk about the possibilities of the weather. She walked silently by the side of her friend Charlotte, as far away from her old comrade, it seemed to her, as if the Atlantic's wild waste of waters had stretched between them. The barrier that divided them was only Charlotte ; but then Miss Paget knew too well that Charlotte in this case meant all the world.

The ice had been broken by that discussion as to rain or no rain ; and Miss Halliday and Mr. Hawkehurst talked pleasantly for some time, while Diana still walked silently by her friend's side, only speaking when compelled to do so. The strangeness of her manner would have been observed by anyone not utterly absorbed by that sublime egotism called love ; but Valentine and Charlotte were so

absorbed, and had no idea that Miss Paget was anything but the most delightful and amusing of companions.

They had taken more than one turn in the broad avenue, when Charlotte asked Mr. Hawkehurst some question about a piece which was speedily to be played at one of the theatres.

"I do so much want to see this new French actress," she said. "Do you think there is any possibility of obtaining orders, Mr. Hawkehurst? You know what a dislike Mr. Sheldon has to paying for admission to a theatre, and my pocket-money was exhausted three weeks ago, or I wouldn't think of giving you any trouble about it."

Philosophers have observed that in the life of the plainest woman there is one inspired moment in which she becomes beautiful. Perhaps it is when she is asking a favour of some masculine victim—for women have a knack of looking their prettiest on such occasions. Charlotte Halliday's pleading glance and insinuating tone were irresistible. Valentine would have given a lien on every shilling of his three thousand pounds rather than disappoint her, if gold could purchase the thing she craved. It happened fortunately that his occasional connection with newspapers made it tolerably easy for him to obtain free admissions to theatres.

"Do not speak of the trouble; there will be no trouble. The orders shall be sent you, Miss Halliday."

"O, thanks; a thousand thanks! Would it be possible to get a box, and for us all to go together?" asked the fair encroacher; "mamma is so fond of the theatre. She used to go often with poor papa, at York and in London. And you are such an excellent critic, Mr. Hawkehurst, and it would be so nice to have you with us; wouldn't it, Di? You know what a good critic Mr. Hawkehurst is?"

"Yes," answered Diana; "we used to go to theatres together very often."

This was a cry of anguish wrung from a bleeding heart; but to the two absorbed egotists it seemed the simplest of casual observations.

"Do you think you could manage to get a box, Mr. Hawkehurst?" asked the irresistible enslaver, putting her head on one side, in a manner which, for the protection of weak mankind, should be made penal.

"I will try my uttermost," answered Valentine.

"O, then, I'm sure you will succeed. And we shall be amused by your deliciously bitter criticisms between the acts. One would think you had studied under Douglas Jerrold."

"You do me too much honour. But before the new piece is produced I shall have left London, and shall not have the pleasure of accompanying you to the theatre."

"You are going to leave London?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

“So soon!” cried Charlotte with undisguised regret; “and for a long time, I suppose?” she added very mournfully.

Miss Paget gave a little start, and a feverish flush lit up her face for one brief moment.

“I am glad he is going,” she thought; “I am very glad he is going.”

“Yes,” said Valentine, in reply to Charlotte’s inquiry, “I am likely to be away for a considerable time; indeed my plans are at present so vague, that I cannot tell when I may come back to town.”

He could not resist the temptation to speak of his absence as if it were likely to be the affair of a lifetime. He could not refrain from the delight of sounding the pure depths of that innocent young heart. But when the tender gray eyes looked at him, so sweet in their sudden sadness, his heart melted, and he could trifle with her unconscious love no longer.

“I am going away on a matter of business,” he said, “which may or may not occupy some time; but I don’t suppose I shall be many weeks away from London.”

Charlotte gave a little sigh of relief.

“And are you going very far?” she asked.

“Some distance; yes—a—hundred and fifty miles or so,” Valentine answered very lamely. It had been an easy thing to invent an ancient aunt Sarah for the mystification of the astute Horatio; but Valentine Hawkehurst could not bring himself to tell Charlotte Halliday a deliberate falsehood. The girl looked at him wonderingly, as he gave that hesitating answer to her question. She was at a loss to understand why he did not tell her the place to which he was going, and the nature of the business that took him away.

She was very sorry that he was going to disappear out of her life for a time so uncertain, that while on the one hand it might be only a few weeks, it might on the other hand be for ever. The life of a young English damsel, in a prim villa at Bayswater, with a very commonplace mother and a practical stockbroking stepfather, is rather a narrow kind of existence; and to such a damsel the stranger whose hand lifts the curtain that shrouds new and brighter worlds is apt to become a very important personage, especially when the stranger happens to be young and handsome, and invested with that dash of Bohemianism which to artless and sentimental girlhood has such a flavour of romance.

Charlotte was very silent as she retraced her steps along the broad gravel-walk. As they drew near the Bayswater-gate she looked at her watch. It was nearly one o’clock, and she had promised Mrs. Sheldon to be home at one for luncheon, and afterwards shopping.

“I’m afraid we must hurry home, Di,” she said.

“I am quite ready to go,” answered Miss Paget promptly. “Good-bye, Valentine.”

“Good-bye, Diana; good-bye, Miss Halliday.”

Mr. Hawkehurst shook hands with both young ladies; but shaking hands with Charlotte was a very slow process compared to the same performance with Diana.

“Good-bye,” he repeated in a lingering tone; and then, after standing for some moments silent and irresolute, with his hat in his hand, he put it on suddenly and hurried away.

The two girls had walked a few steps towards the gate when Charlotte stopped before a stony-looking alcove, which happened at this nursery-dinner-hour to be empty.

“I’m so tired, Di,” she said, and went into the alcove, where she sat down to rest. She had a little veil attached to her turban hat—a little veil which she now drew over her face. The tears gathered slowly in her eyes and fell through that flimsy morsel of lace with which she would fain have hidden her childish sorrow. The tears gathered and fell on her lap as she sat in silence, pretending not to cry. This much rain at least was there to justify her prediction, uttered in such foolish gaiety of heart half an hour before.

Miss Halliday’s eyes were undimmed by tears when she went back to the gothic villa; but she had a feeling that some great sorrow had come upon her—a vague idea that the last lingering warmth and brightness of summer had faded all in a moment, and that chill gray winter had closed in upon Bayswater without any autumnal interval. What was it that she had lost? Only the occasional society of a young man with a handsome pale face, a little haggard and wan from the effect of dissipated habits and a previous acquaintance with care and difficulty—only the society of a penniless Bohemian who had a certain disreputable cleverness and a dash of gloomy sentimentality, which the school-girl mistook for genius. But then he was the first man whose eyes had ever softened with a mysterious tenderness as they looked at her—the first whose voice had grown faintly tremulous when it syllabled her name.

There was some allusion to Mr. Hawkehurst’s departure in the course of dinner, and Philip Sheldon expressed some surprise.

“Going to leave town?” he said.

“Yes, papa,” Charlotte answered; “he is going a long way into the country,—a hundred-and-fifty miles, he said.”

“Did he tell you where he was going?”

“No; he seemed unwilling to mention the place. He only said something about a hundred-and-fifty miles.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### MR. SHELDON ON THE WATCH.

MR. SHELDON had occasion to see Captain Paget early the following day, and questioned him closely about his protégé’s movements. He had found Valentine a very useful tool in sundry intricate transactions of the commercial kind, and he expected his tools to be ready for his

service. He was therefore considerably annoyed by Valentine's abrupt departure.

"I think young Hawkehurst might have told me he was going out of town," he said. "What the deuce has taken him off in such a hurry?"

"He is going to see some mysterious old aunt at Dorking, from whom he seems to expect money," the Captain answered carelessly. "I daresay I can do what you want, Sheldon."

"Very likely. But how comes that young fellow to have an aunt at Dorking? I fancy I've heard him say he was without a relative or a friend in the world—always excepting yourself."

"The aunt may be another exception; some poor old soul that he's half ashamed to own, I daresay—the inmate of an almshouse, perhaps. Val's expectations may be limited to a few pounds hoarded in a china teapot."

"I should have thought Hawkehurst the last man in the world to care about looking after that sort of thing. I could have given him plenty to do if he had stopped in town. He and my brother George are uncommonly intimate, by the bye," added Mr. Sheldon meditatively. It was his habit to be rather distrustful of his brother and of all his brother's acquaintance. "I suppose you can give me Hawkehurst's address, in case I should want to write to him?" he said.

"He told me to send my letters to the post-office, Dorking," answered the Captain, "which really looks as if the aunt's residence were something in the way of an almshouse."

No more was said about Valentine's departure. Captain Paget concluded his business with his patron and departed, leaving the stockbroker leaning forward upon his desk in a thoughtful attitude and scribbling purposeless figures upon his blotting-paper.

"There's something queer in this young man running away from town; there's some mystification *somewhere*," he thought. "He has not gone to Dorking, or he would scarcely have told Lotta that he was going a hundred-and-fifty miles from town. He would be likely to be taken off his guard by her questions, and would tell the truth. I wonder whether Paget is in the secret. His manner seemed open enough; but that sort of man can pretend anything. I've noticed that he and George have been very confidential lately. I wonder whether there's any underhand game on the cards between those two."

The game of which Mr. Sheldon thought as he leant over his blotting-paper was a very different kind of game from that which really occupied the attention of George and his friend.

"I'll go to his lodgings at once," he said to himself by and by, rising and putting on his hat quickly in his eagerness to act upon his resolution. "I'll see if he really has left town."

The stockbroker hailed the first empty hansom to be seen in the crowded thoroughfare from which his shady court diverged. In less

than an hour he alighted before the door of the house in which Captain Paget lodged.

"Is Mr. Hawkehurst in?" he asked of the girl who admitted him.

"No, sir; he's just left to go into the country. He hasn't been gone ten minutes. You might a'most have met him."

"Do you know where he has gone?"

"I heard say it was Dorking, sir."

"Humph! I should like to have seen him before he went. Did he take much luggage?"

"One portmanteau, sir."

"I suppose you didn't notice where he told the man to drive?"

"Yes, sir; it was Euston-square."

"Ah, Euston-square. I'll go there, then, on the chance of catching him," said Mr. Sheldon.

He bestowed a donation upon the domestic, reëntered his hansom, and told the man to drive to Euston-square "like a shot."

"So! His destination is Dorking, and he goes from Euston-square!" muttered Mr. Sheldon in sombre meditation, as the hansom rattled and rushed and jingled and jolted over the stones. "There's something under the cards here."

Arrived at the great terminus, the stockbroker made his way to the down platform. There was a lull in the day's traffic, and only a few listless wretches lounging disconsolately here and there, with eyes ever and anon lifted to the clock. Amongst these there was no Valentine Hawkehurst.

Mr. Sheldon peered into all the waiting-rooms, and surveyed the refreshment-counter; but there was still no sign of the man he sought. He went back to the ticket-office; but here again all was desolate, the shutters of the pigeon-holes hermetically closed, and no vestige of Valentine Hawkehurst.

The stockbroker was disappointed, but not defeated. He returned to the platform, looked about him for a few moments, and then addressed himself to a porter of intelligent aspect.

"What trains have left here within the last half-hour?" he asked.

"Only one, sir; the 2.15 down, for Manchester."

"You didn't happen to notice a dark-eyed, dark-haired young man among the passengers—second class?" asked Mr. Sheldon.

"No, sir. There are always a good many passengers by that train; I haven't time to notice their faces."

The stockbroker asked no further questions. He was a man who did not care to be obliged to others for information which he could obtain for himself. He walked straight to a place where the timetables were pasted on the wall, and ran his finger along the figures till he came to those he wanted.

The 2.15 train was a fast train which stopped at only four places—Rugby, Ullerton, Murford, and Manchester.

“I daresay he has gone to Manchester,” thought Mr. Sheldon—“on some racing business, most likely, which he wants to keep dark from his patron the Captain. What a fool I am to trouble myself about him, as if he couldn’t stir without meaning mischief to me! But I don’t understand the friendship between him and George. My brother George is not likely to take up any man without some motive.”

After these reflections Mr. Sheldon left the station and went back to his office in another hansom, still extremely thoughtful and somewhat disquieted.

“What does it matter to me where they go or what they do?” he asked himself, impatient of some lurking weakness of his own; “what does it matter to me whether those two are friendly or unfriendly? They can do *me* no harm.”

There happened to be a kind of lull in the stormy regions of the Stock-exchange at the time of Valentine Hawkehurst’s departure. Stagnation had descended upon that commercial ocean which is such a dismal waste of waters for the professional speculator in its hours of calm. All the Bulls in the zoological creation would have failed to elevate the drooping stocks and shares and first-preference bonds and debentures, which hung their feeble heads and declined day by day, the weaker of them threatening to fade away and diminish to a vanishing-point, as it seemed to some dejected holders who read the Stock-Exchange lists and the money-article in the *Times* with a persistent hopefulness which struggled against the encroachments of despair. The Bears had been busy, but were now idle,—having burnt their fingers, commercial gentlemen remarked. So Bulls and Bears alike hung listlessly about a melancholy market, and conversed together dolefully in corners; and the burden of all their lamentations was to the effect that there never had been such times, and things never had been so bad, and it was a question whether they would ever right themselves. Philip Sheldon shared in the general depression. His face was gloomy, and his manner, for the time being, lost something of its brisk business-like cheerfulness. The men who envied his better fortunes watched him furtively when he showed himself amongst them, and wondered whether Sheldon, of Jull, Girdlestone, and Sheldon, had been hit by these bad times.

It was not entirely the pressure of that commercial stagnation which weighed on the spirits of Philip Sheldon. The stockbroker was tormented by private doubts and uncertainties which had nothing to do with the money-market.

On the day after Valentine’s journey to Ullerton, Mr. Sheldon the elder presented himself at his brother’s office in Gray’s-inn. It was his habit to throw waifs and strays of business in the attorney’s way, and to make use of him occasionally, though he had steadily refused to lend or give him money; and it was his habit, as it were, to keep an



eye upon his younger brother—rather a jealous eye, which took note of all George's doings, and kept suspicious watch upon all George's associates. Going unannounced into his brother's office on this particular morning, Philip Sheldon found him bending over an outspread document—a great sheet of cartridge-paper covered with a net-work of lines, dotted about with circles, and with little patches of writing in red and black ink in the neatest possible penmanship. Mr. Sheldon the elder, whose bright black eyes were as the eyes of the hawk, took note of this paper, and had caught more than one stray word that stood out in larger and bolder characters than its neighbours, before his brother could fold it; for it is not an easy thing for a man to fold an elephantine sheet of cartridge when he is nervously anxious to fold it quickly, and is conscious that the eyes of an observant brother are upon him.

Before George had mastered the folding of the elephantine sheet, Philip had seen and taken note of two words. One of these was the word *INTESTATE*; the other the name *HAYGARTH*.

"You seem in a great hurry to get that document out of the way," said Philip, as he seated himself in the client's chair.

"Well, to tell the truth, you rather startled me," answered George. "I didn't know who it might be, you know; and I was expecting a fellow who—" And then Mr. Sheldon the younger broke off abruptly, and asked, with rather a suspicious air, "Why didn't that boy announce you?"

"Because I wouldn't let him. Why should he announce me? One would think you were carrying on some political conspiracy, George, and had a modern Thistlewood gang hidden in that cupboard yonder. How thick you and Hawkehurst are, by the bye."

In spite of the convenient "by the bye," this last remark of the stockbroker's sounded rather irrelevant.

"I don't know about being 'thick.' Hawkehurst seems a very decent young fellow, and he and I get on pretty well together. But I'm not as 'thick' with him as I was with Tom Halliday."

It was to be observed that Mr. Sheldon the younger was very apt to refer to that friendship with the dead Yorkshireman in the course of conversation with Philip.

"Hawkehurst has just left town," said Philip indifferently.

"Yes, I know he has."

"When did you hear it?"

"I saw him last night," answered George, taken off his guard by the carelessness of his brother's manner.

"Did you?" cried Mr. Sheldon. "You make a mistake there. He left town at two o'clock yesterday."

"How do you happen to know that?" asked George sharply.

"Because I happened to be at the station, and saw him take his ticket. There's something underhand in that journey of his, by the

way ; for Paget told me he was going to Dorking. I suppose he and Paget have some game of their own on the cards. I was rather annoyed by the young man's departure, as I had some work for him. However, I can find plenty of fellows to do it as well as Hawkehurst could have done."

George was looking into an open drawer in his desk while his brother said this. He had a habit of opening drawers and peering into them absently during the progress of an interview, as if looking for some particular paper that was never to be found.

After this the conversation became less personal. The brothers talked a little of the events of the day, the leaders in the morning papers, the probability or improbability of a change in the rate of discount. But this conversation soon flagged, and Mr. Sheldon rose to depart.

"I suppose that sheet of cartridge-paper which you had so much trouble to fold is one of your genealogical tables," he said as he was going. "You needn't take so much trouble to keep things dark from me, George. I'm not likely to try to steal a march upon you ; my own business gives me more work than I can do. But if you have got a really good thing at last, I shouldn't mind going into it with you, and finding the money for the enterprise."

George Sheldon looked at his elder brother with a malicious glitter in his eyes.

"On condition that you got the lion's share of the profits," he said. "O yes ; I know how generous you are, Phil. I have asked you for money before to-day, and you have refused it."

Mr. Sheldon's face darkened just a little at this point.

"Your manner of asking it was offensive," he said.

"Well, I'm sorry for that," answered George politely. "However, you refused me money when I did want it ; so you needn't offer it me now I don't want it. There are some people who think I have sacrificed my life to a senseless theory ; and perhaps you are one of them. But there is one thing you may be certain of, Philip Sheldon : if ever I *do* get a good chance, I shall know how to keep it to myself."

There are men skilled in the concealment of their feelings on all ordinary occasions, who will yet betray themselves in a crisis of importance. George Sheldon would fain have kept his project hidden from his elder brother ; but in this one unguarded moment he forgot himself, and allowed the sense of triumph to irradiate his face.

The stockbroker was a reader of men rather than books ; and it is a notable thing what superiority in all worldly wisdom is possessed by men who eschew books. He was able to translate the meaning of George's smile—a smile of mingled triumph and malice.

"The fellow *has* got a good thing," he thought to himself ; "and Hawkehurst is in it. It must be a deuced good thing too, or he wouldn't refuse my offer of money."

Mr. Sheldon was the last man in the world to reveal any mortification which he might experience from his brother's conduct.

"Well, you're quite right to stick to your chance, George," he said with agreeable frankness. "You've waited long enough for it. As for me, I've got my fingers in a good many pies just at present; so perhaps I had better keep them out of yours, whatever plums there may be to be picked out of it by an enterprising Jack Horner. Pick out your plums for yourself, old fellow, and I'll be one of the first to call you a good boy for your pains."

With this, Mr. Sheldon slapped his brother's shoulder and departed.

"I think I've had the best of Master Phil for once," muttered George; and then he thrust his sinewy hands into the depths of his trousers-pockets, and indulged in a silent laugh which displayed his strong square white teeth to perfection. "I flatter myself I took a rise out of Phil to-day," he muttered.

The sense of a malicious triumph over a social enemy is a very delightful kind of thing,—so delightful that a man is apt to ignore the possible cost of the enjoyment. It is like the pleasure of kicking a man who is down—very delicious in its way; only one never knows how soon the man may be up again.

George Sheldon, who was tolerably skilled in the science of human nature, should have known that "taking a rise" out of his brother was likely to be a rather costly operation. Philip was not the safest man to deal with at any time; but he was most dangerous when he was "jolly."

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## Book the Fourth.

### VALENTINE HAWKEHURST'S RECORD.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

Black Swan Inn, Ullerton, October 2d.

As the work I am now employed in is quite new to me, and I am to keep Sheldon posted up in this business day by day, I have decided on jotting down the results of my inquiries in a kind of diary. Instead of writing my principal a formal letter, I shall send a copy of the entries in the diary, revised and amended. This will insure exactitude; and there is just the possibility that the record may be useful to me hereafter. To remember all I hear and pick up about these departed

Haygarths without the aid of pen and ink would be out of the question ; so I mean to go in for unlimited pen-and-ink like a hero, not to say a martyr.

And I am to do all this for twenty shillings a week, and the remote possibility of three thousand pounds ! O genius, genius ! in all the markets of this round world is there no better price for you than that ?

How sweetly my Charlotte looked at me yesterday, when I told her I was going away ! If I could have dared to kneel at her feet under those whispering elms,—unconscious of the children, unconscious of the nursemaids ;—if I could have dared to cry aloud to her, “ I am a penniless reprobate, but I love you ; I am a disreputable pauper, but I adore you ! Have pity upon my love, and forget my worthlessness ! ” If I could have dared to carry her away from her prim suburban home and that terrible black-whiskered stockbroking stepfather ! But how is a man to carry off the woman he adores when he has not the *de quoi* for the first stage of the journey ?

With three thousand pounds in my pocket, I think I could dare anything. Three thousand pounds ! One year of splendour and happiness, and then—the rest is chaos !

I have seen the oldest inhabitant. *Ay de mi !* Sheldon did not exaggerate the prosiness of that intolerable man. I thought of the luckless wedding guest in Coleridge’s grim ballad as I sat listening to this modern-ancient mariner. I had to remind myself of all the bright things to be bought for three thousand pounds, every now and then, in order to endure with fortitude, if not serenity. And now the day’s work is done, I begin to think it might as well have been left undone. How am I to disintegrate the mass of prosiness which I have heard this day ? For three mortal hours did I listen to my ancient mariner ; and how much am I the wiser for my patience ? Clever as you may fancy yourself, my friend Hawkehurst, you don’t seem to be the man for this business. You have not the legal mind. Your genius is not the genius of Scotland-yard, and I begin to fear that in your new line you may prove yourself a failure.

However, where all is dark to me, the astute Sheldon may see daylight, so I’ll observe the letter of my bond, and check off the residuum of the ancient mariner’s prosiness.

By dint of much pumping I obtained from my ancient, first, his father’s recollections of Matthew Haygarth a few years before his death, and secondly, his grandfather’s recollections of Matthew in his wild youth. It seems that in those last years of his life Matthew was a most sober and estimable citizen ; attended the chapel of a nonconforming sect ; read the works of Baxter, and followed in the footsteps of his departed father ; was a kind husband to a woman who appears to me to have been rather a pragmatistical and icy personage, but who was esteemed a model of womanly virtue, and who had money. Strange that these respectable and wealthy citizens should be so eager to

increase their store by alliance with respectable and wealthy citizenesses!

In his later years Matthew Haygarth seems to have imitated his father in many respects. Like his father, he executed more than one will; and like his father, he died intestate. The lawyer who drew up his will on more than one occasion was a man called Brice—like his client, eminently respectable.

After his marriage, our esteemed Matthew retired to a modest mansion in the heart of the country, and some ten or fifteen miles from Ullerton. The mansion in question is at a place called Dewsdale, and was the property of the wife, and accrued to him through her.

This house and estate of some thirty acres was afterwards sold by the rev. intestate, John Haygarth, shortly after his coming of age, and within a year of his mother's death.

This much and no more could I extort from the oldest inhabitant relative to the latter days of our Matthew.

Respecting his wild youth I obtained the following crumbs of enlightenment. In the year 1741-2, being then one-and-twenty years of age, he left Ullerton. It is my ancient mariner's belief that he ran away from home, after some desperate quarrel with his father; and it is also the belief of my ancient that he stayed away, without intermission, for twenty years,—though on what precise fact that belief is founded, is much more than I can extract from the venerable proser.

My ancient suggests—always in the haziest and most impracticable manner—the possibility that Matthew in his wild days lodged somewhere Clerkenwell way. He has a dim idea that he has heard his grandfather speak of St. John's-gate, Clerkenwell, in connection with Matthew Haygarth; but, as my ancient's grandfather seems to have been almost imbecile at the time he made such remarks, *this* is not much.

He has another idea—also very vague and impracticable—of having heard his grandfather say something about an adventure of Matthew Haygarth's, which was rather a heroic affair in its way—an adventure in which, in some inexplicable manner, the wild Matthew is mixed up with a dancing-girl, or player-girl, of Bartholomew Fair, and a nobleman.

This is the sum-total of the information to be extracted in three mortal hours from my ancient. Altogether the day has been very unsatisfactory; and I begin to think I'm not up to the sort of work required of me.

*Oct. 3d.* Another long interview with my ancient. I dropped in directly after my breakfast, and about an hour after his dinner. I sat up late last night, occupied till nearly ten in copying my diary for Sheldon—which was just in time for the London post—and lingering over my cigar till past midnight, thinking of Charlotte. So I was late this morning.

My ancient received me graciously. I took him half a pound of mild bird's-eye tobacco, on diplomatic grounds. He is evidently the sort of person who would receive Mephistopheles graciously, if the fiend presented him with tobacco.

I returned to the charge—diplomatically, of course; talked about Ullerton and Ullerton people in general, insinuating occasional questions about the Haygarths. I was rewarded by obtaining some little information about Mrs. Matthew. That lady appears to have been a devoted disciple of John Wesley, and was fonder of travelling to divers towns and villages to hear the discourses of that preacher than her husband approved. It seems they were wont to disagree upon this subject.

For some years before her marriage Mrs. Matthew was member of a Wesleyan confraternity, in those days newly established at Ullerton. They held meetings and heard sermons in the warehouse of a wealthy draper; and shortly before Mrs. Matthew's demise they built a chapel, still extant, in a dingy little thoroughfare known as Waterhouse-lane.

On these points my ancient mariner is tolerably clear. They belong to the period remembered by his father.

And now I believe him to be pumped dry. I gave him my benediction, and left him smoking some of my tobacco, content with himself and with the world—always excepting the authorities, or board, of the almshouses, against whom he appears to nourish a grievance.

After leaving him, I walked about Ullerton for an hour or so before returning to my humble hostelry. The streets of Ullerton are sealed with the seal of desolation—the abomination of desolation reigns in the market-place, where the grass flourishes greenly in the interstices of the pavement. The place has known prosperity, and is prosperous no longer: but although its chief trade has left it, there are still some three or four factories in full swing. I heard clanging bells, and met bare-headed women and uncouth-looking men hurrying to and fro. I went to look at the Wesleyan chapel in Waterhouse-lane. It is a queer little building, and bears some resemblance to a toy Noah's Ark in red brick. Tall warehouses have arisen about it and hemmed it in, and the slim chimney-shaft of a waterworks throws a black shadow aslant its unpretending façade. I inquired the name of the present minister. He is called Jonah Goodge, began life as a carpenter, and is accounted the pink and pattern of piety.

*Oct. 4th.* A letter from Sheldon awaited me in the coffee-room letter-rack when I went downstairs to breakfast.

“MY DEAR HAWKEHURST,—Don't be disheartened if the work seems slow at first. You'll soon get used to it.

“I should recommend you to adopt the following tactics:

“1st. Go to the house at Dewsdale, inhabited by M. H. and his wife. You may have some difficulty in obtaining admission—and full liberty to explore and examine—from the present servant or owner; but you are not the man I take you for if you cannot overcome such

a difficulty. I enclose a few of my cards, which you can use at your discretion. They show professional status. It would be as well to call yourself my articled clerk, and to state that you are prosecuting an inquiry on the behalf of a client of mine, who wishes to prove a certain event in the past, connected remotely with the H. family. If asked whether your business relates to the property left by the rev. intestate, you must reply decisively in the negative. But I must remind you that extreme caution is required in every move you make. Wherever you can do your work *without* any reference to the name of Haygarth, avoid such reference. Always remember that there may be other people on the same scent.

“2d. Examine the house in detail; look for old pictures, old furniture, old needlework; if you are lucky enough to find the Haygarth furniture was sold with the property, which I should think probable. The rev. intestate must have been at the University when he made the sale; and a young Cantab would in all likelihood pass over his ancestral chairs and tables to the purchaser of his ancestral mansion, as so much useless lumber. It is proverbial that walls have ears. I hope the Dewsdale walls may have tongues, and favour you with a little information.

“3d. When you have done all that is to be done at Dewsdale, your next work must be to hunt up any scion of the lawyer Brice; if such scion be in existence at Ullerton. Or if not to be found in Ullerton, ascertain where the descendant, or descendants, of Brice, is, or are, to be found. Brice, the lawyer, must have known the contents of those wills executed and afterwards destroyed by Haygarth, and may have kept rough drafts, copies, or memoranda of the same. This is most important. Yours truly. G. S.”

This Sheldon is a wonderful man, and a cautious!—no signature to his letter.

I started for Dewsdale immediately after my breakfast. I have made arrangements for boarding in this house, which is a second-rate commercial inn. They have agreed to give me board and lodging for twenty shillings a week—the full amount of my stipend: so all that I gain by my researches in the affairs of the departed Matthew is food and shelter. However, as this food and shelter is perhaps more honestly obtained than those little dinners which I have so often partaken with the great Horatio, I will try to fancy a sweetness in the tough steaks and greasy legs of mutton. O sheep of Midlandshire! why cultivate such ponderous calves, and why so incline to sinews? O cooks of Midlandshire! why so superficial in the treatment of your roasts, so impetuous and inconsiderate when you boil?

A railroad now penetrates the rural district in which the village of Dewsdale is situated. There is a little station, something like a wooden Dutch oven, within a mile of the village; and here I alighted. The

morning savoured of summer rather than autumn. The air was soft and balmy, the sunshine steeped the landscape in warm light, and the red and golden tints of the fading foliage took new splendour from that yellow sunshine. A man whose life is spent in cities must be dull of soul indeed if he does not feel a little touched by the beauty of rustic scenery, when he finds himself suddenly in the heart of the country. I had seen nothing so fair as those English fields and copses since I left the pine-clad hills of Forêtdechêne. An idiotic boy directed me across some fields to Dewsdale. He sent me a mile out of the way; but I forgave and blest him, for I think the walk did me good. I felt as if all manner of vicious vapours were being blown out of my head as the soft wind lifted my hair.

And so to Dewsdale. Strolling leisurely through those quiet meadows, I fell to thinking of many things that seldom came into my mind in London. I thought of my dead mother—a poor gentle creature, too frail to carry heroically the burden laid upon her, and so a little soured by chronic debt and difficulty. I have reason to remember her tenderly; we shared so much misery together. I believe my father married her in the Rules of the Bench; and if I am not sure upon this point, I know for a certainty that I was born within those mystic boundaries.

And then my mind wandered to those nomadic adventures in which poor Diana Paget and I were so much together. I think we were a little fond of each other in those days; but in that matter I was at least prudent; and now the transient fancy has faded, on Di's part as well as on mine.

If I could be as prudent where Charlotte H. is concerned!

But prudence and Charlotte's eyes cannot hold their own in the same brain. Of two things, one, as our neighbours say: a man must cease to be prudent, or he must forget those bewitching gray eyes.

I know she was sorry when she heard of my intended departure.

## CHAPTER II.

### MATTHEW HAYGARTH'S RESTING-PLACE.

I FOUND the house at Dewsdale without difficulty. It is a stiff, square, red-brick dwelling-place, with long narrow windows, a high narrow door, and carved canopy; a house which savours of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*; a house in which the short-faced gentleman might have spent his summer holidays after Sir Roger's death. It stands behind a high iron gate, surmounted by a handsome coat of arms; and before it there lies a pleasant patch of greensward, with a pond and a colony of cackling geese, which craned their necks and screamed at me as I passed them.

The place is the simplest and smallest of rural villages. There is a public-house—the Seven Stars; a sprinkling of humble cottages; a



general shop which is at once a shoemaker's, a grocer's, a linendraper's, a stationer's, and a post-office. These habitations, a gray old church with a square tower, half-hidden by the sombre foliage of yews and cedars, and the house once inhabited by the Haygarths, comprise the whole of the village. The Haygarthian household is now the rectory. I ascertained this fact from the landlord of the Seven Stars, at which house of entertainment I took a bottle of soda-water, in order to *sonder le terrain* before commencing business.

The present rector is an elderly widower with seven children; an easy good-natured soul, who is more prone to bestow his money in charity than to punctuality in the payment of his debts.

Having discovered thus much, I rang the bell at the iron gate and boarded the Haygarthian mansion. The rector was at home, and received me in a very untidy apartment, *par excellence* a study. A boy in a holland blouse was smearing his face with his inky fingers, and wrestling with a problem in Euclid, while his father stood on a step-ladder exploring a high shelf of dusty books.

The rector, whose name is Wendover, descended from the step-ladder and shook the dust from his garments. He is a little withered old man, with a manner so lively as to be on the verge of flightiness. I observed that he wiped his dusty palms on the skirts of his coat, and argued therefrom that he would be an easy person to deal with. I soon found that my deduction was correct.

I presented Sheldon's card and stated my business, of course acting on that worthy's advice. Could Mr. Wendover give me any information relating to the Haygarth family?

Fortune favoured me throughout this Dewsdale expedition. The rector is a simple garrulous old soul, to whom to talk is bliss. He has occupied the house five-and-thirty years. He rents it of the lord of the manor, who bought it from John Haygarth. Not a stick of furniture has been removed since our friend Matthew's time; and the rev. intestate may have wrestled with the mysteries of Euclid on the same old-fashioned mahogany table at which I saw the boy in brown holland.

Mr. Wendover left his books and manuscripts scattered on the floor of the study, and conducted me to a cool shady drawing-room, very shabbily furnished with the spindle-legged chairs and tables of the last century. Here he begged me to be seated, and here we were ever and anon interrupted by intruding juveniles, the banging of doors, and the shrill clamour of young voices in the hall and garden.

I brought all the diplomacy of which I am master to bear in my long interview with the rector; and the following is a transcript of our conversation, after a good deal of polite skirmishing:

*Myself.* You see, my dear sir, the business I am concerned in is remotely connected with these Haygarths. Any information you will kindly afford me, however apparently trivial, may be of service in the affair I am prosecuting.

## BIRDS OF PREY

*The Rector.* To be sure, to be sure! But, you see, though I've heard a good deal of the Haygarths, it is all gossip—the merest gossip. People are so fond of gossip, you know,—especially country people: I have no doubt you have remarked that. Yes, I have heard a great deal about Matthew Haygarth. My late clerk and sexton,—a very remarkable man, ninety-one when he died, and able to perform his duties very creditably within a year of his death—very creditably; but the hard winter of '56 took him off, poor fellow, and now I have a young man,—old Andrew Hone—that was my late clerk's name—was employed in this house when a lad, and was very fond of talking about Matthew Haygarth and his wife. She was a rich woman, you know, a very rich woman—the daughter of a brewer at Ullerton; and this house belonged to her—inherited from her father.

*Myself.* And did you gather from your clerk that Matthew Haygarth and his wife lived happily together?

*The Rector.* Well, yes, yes; I never heard anything to the contrary. They were not a young couple, you know. Rebecca Caulfield was forty years of age, and Matthew Haygarth was fifty-three when he married; so, you see, one could hardly call it a love-match. [*Abrupt inroad of bouncing damsel, exclaiming "Pa!"*] Don't you see I'm engaged, Sophia Louisa? Why are you not at your practice? [*Sudden retreat of bouncing damsel, followed by the scrambling performance of scale of C major in adjoining chamber, which performance abruptly ceases after five minutes.*] You see Mrs. Haygarth was *not* young, as I was about to observe when my daughter interrupted us; and she was perhaps a little more steadfast in her adherence to the newly-arisen sect of Wesleyans than her husband, as a Church-of-England man, could approve. But as their married life lasted only a year, they had little time for domestic unhappiness, even supposing them not to be adapted to each other.

*Myself.* Mrs. Matthew Haygarth did not marry again?

*The Rector.* No; she devoted herself to the education of her son, and lived and died in this house. The room which is now my study she furnished with a small reading-desk and a couple of benches, now in my nursery, and made it into a kind of chapel, in which the keeper of the general shop—who was, I believe, considered a shining light amongst the Wesleyan community—was in the habit of holding forth every Sunday morning to such few members of that sect as were within reach of Dewsdale. She died when her son was nineteen years of age, and was buried in the family vault in the churchyard yonder. Her son's adherence to the Church of England was a very great trouble to her. [*Inroad of boy in holland, very dejected and inky of aspect, also exclaiming "Pa!"*] No, John; not till that problem is worked out. Take that cricket-bat back to the lobby, sir, and return to your studies. [*Sulky withdrawal of boy.*] You see what it is to have a large family, Mr.—Sheldon. I beg pardon, Mr.—

*Myself.* Hawkehurst, clerk to Mr. Sheldon.

*The Rector.* To be sure. I have some thoughts of the Law for one of my elder sons; the Church is terribly over-crowded. However, as I was on the point of saying when my boy John disturbed us, though I have heard a great deal of gossip about the Haygarths, I fear I can give you very little substantial information. Their connection with Dewsdale lasted little more than twenty years. Matthew Haygarth was married in Dewsdale church, his son John was christened in Dewsdale church, and he himself is buried in the churchyard. That is about as much positive information as I can give you; and you will perhaps remark that the parish register would afford you as much.

After questioning the good-natured old rector rather closely, and obtaining little more than the above information, I asked permission to see the house.

“Old furniture and old pictures are apt to be suggestive,” I said; “and perhaps while we are going over the house you may happen to recall some further particulars relating to the Haygarth family.”

Mr. Wendover assented. He was evidently anxious to oblige me, and accepted my explanation of my business in perfect good faith. He conducted me from room to room, waiting patiently while I scrutinised the panelled walls and stared at the attenuated old furniture. I was determined to observe George Sheldon’s advice to the very letter, though I had little hope of making any grand melodramatic discovery in the way of documents hidden in old cabinets, or mouldering behind sliding panels.

I asked the rector if he had ever found papers of any kind in forgotten nooks and corners of the house or the furniture. His reply was a decided negative. He had explored and investigated every inch of the old dwelling-place, and had found nothing.

So much for Sheldon’s idea.

Mr. Wendover led me from basement to garret, encountering bouncing daughters and boys in brown holland wherever we went; and from basement to garret I found that all was barren. In the whole of the house there was but one object which arrested my attention, and the interest which that one object aroused in my mind had no relation to the Haygarthian fortune.

Over a high carved chimney-piece in one of the bed-chambers there hung a little row of miniatures—old-fashioned oval miniatures, pale and faded—pictures of men and women with the powdered hair of the Georgian period, and the flowing full-bottomed wigs familiar to St. James’s and Tunbridge-wells in the days of inoffensive Anne. There were in all seven miniatures, six of which specimens of antique portraiture were prim and starched and artificial of aspect. But the seventh was different in form and style: it was the picture of a girlish face looking out of a frame of loose unpowdered locks; a bright innocent face, with gray eyes and marked black eyebrows, pouting lips a little parted,

and white teeth gleaming between lips of rosy red; such a face as one might fancy the inspiration of an old poet. I took the miniature gently from the little brass hook on which it hung, and stood for some time looking at the bright frank face.

It was the picture of Charlotte Halliday. Yes; I suppose there is a fatality in these things. It was one of those marvellous accidental resemblances which every man has met with in the course of his life. Here was this dead-and-gone beauty of the days of George the Second smiling upon me with the eyes and lips of Philip Sheldon's step-daughter!

Or was it only a delusion of my own? Was my mind so steeped in the thought of that girl, was my heart so impressed by her beauty, that I could not look upon a fair woman's face without conjuring up her likeness in the pictured countenance? However this may be, I looked long and tenderly at the face which seemed to me to resemble the woman I love.

Of course I questioned the rector as to the original of this particular miniature. He could tell me nothing about it, except that he thought it was *not* one of the Caulfields or Haygarths. The man in the full-bottomed Queen-Anne wig was Jeremiah Caulfield, brewer, father of the pious Rebecca; the woman with the high powdered head was the pious Rebecca herself; the man in the George-the-Second wig was Matthew Haygarth. The other three were kindred of Rebecca's. But the wild-haired damsel was some unknown creature, for whose presence Mr. Wendover was unable to account.

I examined the frame of the miniature, and found that it opened at the back. Behind the ivory on which the portrait was painted there was a lock of dark hair encased in crystal; and on the inside of the case, which was of some worthless metal gilded, there was scratched the name "Molly."

How this Molly with the loose dark locks came to be admitted among the prim and pious Caulfields is certainly more than I can understand.

My exploration of the house having resulted only in this little romantic accident of the likeness to Charlotte, I prepared to take my departure, no wiser than when I had first crossed the threshold. The rector very politely proposed to show me the church; and as I considered that it would be well to take a copy of the Haygarthian entries in the register, I availed myself of his offer. He despatched a maid-servant to summon his clerk, in order that that functionary might assist in the investigation of the registers. The girl departed on this errand, while her master conducted me across his garden, in which there is now a gate opening into the churchyard.

It is the most picturesque of burial-grounds, darkened by the shadow of those solemn yews and spreading cedars. We walked very slowly between the crumbling old tombstones, which have almost all

grown one-sided with time. Mr. Wendover led me through a little labyrinth of lowly graves to a high and ponderous iron railing surrounding a square space, in the midst of which there is a stately stone monument. In the railing there is a gate, from which a flight of stone steps leads down to the door of a vault. It is altogether rather a pretentious affair, wherein one sees the evidence of substantial wealth unelevated by artistic grace or poetic grandeur.

This is the family vault of the Caulfields and Haygarths.

"I've brought you to look at this tomb," said the rector, resting his hand upon the rusted railing, "because there is rather a romantic story connected with it—a story that concerns Matthew Haygarth, by the bye. I did not think of it just now, when we were talking of him; but it flashed on my memory as we came through the garden. It is rather a mysterious affair; and though it is not very likely to have any bearing upon the object of your inquiry, I may as well tell you about it,—as a leaf out of family history, you know, Mr. Hawkehurst, and as a new proof of the old adage that truth is stranger than fiction."

I assured the rector that I should be glad to hear anything he could tell me.

"I must premise that I only tell the story as I got it from my old clerk, and that it may therefore seem rather indistinct; but there is an entry in the register yonder to show that it is not without foundation. However, I will waste no more words in preamble, but give you the story, which is simply this—"

The rector seated himself on a dilapidated old tombstone, while I leaned against the rails of the Haygarth vault, looking down upon him.

"Within a month or two of Matthew Haygarth's death, a kind of melancholy came over him," said the rector. "Whether he was unhappy with his wife, or whether he felt his health declining, is more than I can say. You must remember that my informant was but a lad at the time of which I speak, and that when he talked to me about the subject sixty years afterwards he was a very old man, and his impressions were therefore more or less vague. But upon certain facts he was sufficiently positive; and amongst the circumstances he remembered most vividly are those of the story I am going to tell you.

"It seems that within a very few weeks of Matthew's death, his wife, Rebecca Haygarth, started on an expedition to the north, in the company of an uncle, to hear John Wesley preach on some very special occasion, and to assist at a love-feast. She was gone more than a fortnight; and during her absence Matthew Haygarth mounted his horse early one morning and rode away from Dewsdale.

"His household consisted of three maids, a man, and the lad Andrew Hone, afterwards my sexton. Before departing on his journey Mr. Haygarth had said that he would not return till late the next evening, and had requested that only the man (whose name I forget) should sit up for him.

“ He was punctiliously obeyed. The household, always of early habits, retired at nine, the accustomed hour ; and the man-servant waited to receive his master, while the lad Andrew, who slept in the stables, sat up to keep his fellow-servant company.

“ At ten o'clock Mr. Haygarth came home, gave his horse into the charge of the lad, took his candle from the man-servant, and walked straight upstairs, as if going to bed. The man-servant locked the doors, took his master the key, and then went to his own quarters. The boy remained up to feed and groom the horse, which had the appearance of having performed a hard day's work.

“ He had nearly concluded this business when he was startled by the slamming of the back door opening into the court-yard, in which were the stables and outhouses. Apprehending thieves, the boy opened the door of the stable and looked out, doubtless with considerable caution.

“ It was broad moonlight, and he saw at a glance that the person who had opened the door was one who had a right to open it. Matthew Haygarth was crossing the court-yard as the lad peeped out. He wore a long black cloak, and his head drooped upon his breast, as if he had been in dejection. The lad—being, I suppose, inquisitive, after the manner of country lads—made no more ado, but left his unfinished work and crept stealthily after his master, who came straight to this churchyard,—indeed to this very spot on which we are now standing.

“ On this spot the boy Andrew Hone became the secret witness of a strange scene. He saw an open grave close against the rails yonder, and he saw a little coffin lowered silently into that grave by the sexton of that time and a strange man, who afterwards went away in a mourning coach, which was in waiting at the gate, and in which doubtless the stranger and the little coffin had come.

“ Before the man departed he assisted to fill up the grave; and when it was filled Matthew Haygarth gave money to both the men—gold it seemed to the lad Andrew, and several pieces to each person. The two men then departed, but Mr. Haygarth still lingered.

“ As soon as he fancied himself alone, he knelt down beside the little grave, covered his face with his hands, and either wept or prayed, Andrew Hone could not tell which. If he wept, he wept silently.

“ From that night, my sexton said, Matthew Haygarth faded visibly. Mistress Rebecca came home from her love-feast, and nursed and tended her husband with considerable kindness, though, so far as I can make out, she was at the best a stern woman. He died three weeks after the event which I have described, and was buried in that vault, close to the little grave.”

I thanked Mr. Wendover for his succinct narrative, and apologised for the trouble I had occasioned him.

“ Do not speak of the trouble,” he answered kindly; “ I am used

to telling that story. I have heard it a great many times from poor old Andrew, and I have told it a great many times."

"The story has rather a legendary tone," I said; "I should have scarcely thought such a thing possible."

The rector shrugged his shoulders with a deprecating gesture.

"In our own day," he replied, "such an occurrence would be almost impossible; but you must remember that we are talking of the last century—a century in which I regret to say the clergy of the Church of England were sadly lax in the performance of their duties. The followers of Wesley and Whitefield could scarcely have multiplied as they did if the flocks had not been cruelly neglected by their proper shepherds. It was a period in which benefices were bestowed constantly on men obviously unfitted for the holy office—men who were gamblers and drunkards, patrons of cockpits, and in many cases open and shameless reprobates. In such an age almost anything was possible; and this midnight and unhallowed interment may very well have taken place either with the consent or without the knowledge of the incumbent, who, I am told, bore no high character for piety or morality."

"And you say there is an entry in the register?"

"Yes, a careless scrawl, dated Sept. 19th, 1774, recording the burial of one Matthew Haygarth, aged four years, removed from the burial-ground attached to the parish church of Spotswold."

"Then it was a re-interment?"

"Evidently."

"And is Spotswold in this county?"

"Yes; it is a very small village, about fifty miles from here."

"And Matthew Haygarth died very soon after this event?"

"He did. He died very suddenly, with an awful suddenness, and died intestate. His widow was left the possessor of great wealth, which increased in the hands of her son John Haygarth, a very prudent and worthy gentleman, and a credit to the church of which he was a member. He only died very lately, I believe, and must therefore have attained a great age."

It is quite evident that Mr. Wendover had not seen the advertisement in the *Times*, and was ignorant of the fact that the accumulated wealth of the Haygarths and Caulfields is now waiting a claimant.

I asked permission to see the register containing the entry of the mysterious interment; and after the administration of a shilling to the clerk—a shilling at Dewsdale being equal to half-a-crown in London—the vestry cupboard was opened by that functionary, and the book I required was produced from a goodly pile of such mouldy brown leather-bound volumes.

The following is a copy of the entry:

"On Thursday last past, being y<sup>e</sup> 19 Sep<sup>r</sup>, A.D. 1774, was interr'd y<sup>e</sup> bodie off onne Matthewe Haygarthe, ag<sup>d</sup> foure yeres, remoov'd

fromm y<sup>e</sup> Churcheyarde off S<sup>t</sup>. Marie, under y<sup>e</sup> hil, Spotswolde, in this Co. Pade forr so doeing, sevven shill."

After having inspected the register, I asked many further questions, but without eliciting much further information. So I expressed my thanks for the courtesy that had been shown me, and took my departure, not wishing to press the matter so closely as to render myself a nuisance to the worthy Wendover, and bearing in mind that it would be open to me to return at any future time.

And now I ask myself—and I ask the astute Sheldon—what is the meaning of this mysterious burial, and is it likely to have any bearing on the object of our search? These are questions for the consideration of the astute S.

I spent my evening in jotting down the events of the day, in the above free-and-easy fashion for my own guidance, and in a more precise and business-like style for my employer. I posted my letter before ten o'clock, the hour at which the London mail is made up, and then smoked my cigar in the empty streets, overshadowed by gaunt square stacks of building and tall black chimneys; and so back to my inn, where I took a glass of ale and another cigar, and then to bed, as the worthy Pepys might have concluded.

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## LYRICS OF THE MONTHS

### MARCH

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TO-DAY is my last with the hounds  
                                    This year,  
As to-morrow for town we are starting :  
How sad is the note the horn sounds  
                                    To hear,  
For our meet will be more like a parting !

The breakfast at eight, and the drive  
                                    To cover,  
Trot the roses out on my cheeks ;  
With eyes, too, so fresh I arrive,  
                                    A lover  
Might dream of their light for weeks.

But in town, after dancing at balls  
                                    All night,  
Which are only delusions and snares,  
One rises in time to make calls,  
                                    Or write  
Invitations to crowd Papa's stairs.

Though waltzing I cannot deny  
                                    Affords  
A run which brings with it delight,  
A spin o'er the fields in full cry  
                                    Tries chords  
Which Tinney could never excite.

Then farewell to bullfinches and larks !  
                                    Farewell  
To the jump in and out of the lane !  
My mare and I can't like the Parks  
                                    As well,  
Where one scarcely dare loosen a rein.



Alfred Thompson, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

MARCH—THE HUNTING BREAKFAST.



## NEW COURTS-OF-JUSTICE DESIGNS

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IN an unpretending temporary building in New-square, Lincoln's-inn, may be seen a collection of designs unsurpassed in interest by any that has ever been exhibited in this country. The inconveniences from which all who have anything to do with the law have long suffered have latterly attained proportions which are felt to be intolerable; the late Government, therefore, sought the assistance of the architectural profession to devise a scheme for placing all the Law Courts, with their almost endless adjuncts, on a plot of ground fronting on the Strand at Temple Bar, about 700 feet in length and 500 feet in depth. The architects invited to compete, each receiving 800*l.* towards his expenses, were Messrs. Deane, Garling, Abraham, Lockwood, E. M. Barry, Scott, Street, R. Brandon, Waterhouse, Burges, and Seddon, whose designs will be submitted to the judgment of the Hon. W. Cowper, Mr. Gladstone, Sir Alexander Cockburn, Sir Roundell Palmer, and Sir W. Stirling Maxwell, M.P., aided by such professional assistance as they may see fit to avail themselves of. The designs are now on view in the temporary structure above named.

If any justification were needed for the prevailing tendency to run down the architectural profession, and to attribute to it an acquiescence in the present state of things, and an unwillingness to attempt, if not an incapacity to inaugurate successfully, any important movement in a new direction, it will be found in the results produced by the recent important competitions. Whether we take as examples the designs for the New National Gallery, now being exhibited at Westminster, or confine ourselves to those under immediate notice, we cannot fail to acknowledge that the leading architects have come to the conclusion that everything which is most admirable in their art has been already done; and that whereas all is retrogression, it is merely a question at what point that retrogression should stop. All the competitors have chosen the Gothic style of nearly the same period, varied by English, French, or Italian feeling, according to their several predilections. Now although this is scarcely the place for an exhaustive argument on the respective merits of the Classical and Gothic schools, we may briefly remark that architecture was a natural development or exponent of civilisation; and we are sure that the civilisation of the present day is more in sympathy with that of Athens under Pericles and Rome under Augustus than with that which existed during what are dubiously called the Middle Ages. In science, art, or literature, the educated Greek or Roman was the superior of the illiterate mediæval squire; in war he was at least the equal;

in his ability to frame laws, and his respect for them, he set an example which we have only recently followed. In his social intercourse and domestic relations he was a good fellow and a pleasant companion. We should prefer Chian wine to mead, and the remote Falernian to metheglin; and would sooner regularly sit down to an Apician banquet than to an ox roasted whole on one day, and a dish of spurs on the next. It is almost idle to speak of the literature of the respective periods; but we think more instruction can be gained from Æschylus and Euripides, and amusement from Aristophanes and Terence, than from the Miracle Play or Mystery *le mieux monté* that Coventry ever saw. The architects seem to think otherwise; and their designs must be judged for what they are, and not for what they might have been.

The following list of courts and rooms may give some idea of the vastness of the task to which the competitors have lent their energies, though a mere list by no means represents either the actual number of rooms or the amount of accommodation afforded:

The Lord Chancellor's Court, and sixteen rooms; the Lord Justices' Court, and fourteen rooms; Vice-Chancellor Kindersley's Court, and eleven rooms; Vice-Chancellor Wood's Court; spare Equity Court; the Master of the Rolls' Chambers; the Vice-Chancellors' Chambers; the Registrars' Offices; the Taxing Masters' Offices; the Petty Bag Office; the Examiners' Office; the Enrolment Office; Masters in Lunacy; Visitors in Lunacy; Registration of Lunacy; the Solicitor in the Suitors' Fund; Courts of Common Law; Queen's Bench Court, and sixteen rooms; Nisi Prius, and eleven rooms; Common Pleas Court and two Nisi Prius Courts, and rooms; Exchequer Courts, and two Nisi Prius Courts and rooms; Exchequer Chamber, and four rooms; Chambers of Common Law Judges; Common Law Masters' Offices; the Associates' Offices; the Crown Office; the Queen's Remembrancer; Circuit Associates' Offices; Registry of Acknowledgments of Deeds by Married Women; Court of Probate and Matrimonial Causes; the Registrars' Offices; the Seats and Correspondence Departments; Personal Application Department; Clerk of the Papers' Department; the Record-keeper's Department; the Inland Revenue Department; the Receiver of Wills; the Sealer; Admiralty Court and Chambers; the Registrars' Office; the Record Room; the Marshal's Offices; Additional Court for Ecclesiastical and Admiralty business; the Appellate Court, and rooms; Crown Officers' room; Bankruptcy Court and Offices; Land-registry Office; Offices for Royal Commissioners on matters connected with the law. The head "miscellaneous" includes a library, robing-room for bar, refreshment and arbitration rooms, room for exhibiting cause list, reporters', shorthand-writers', kitchen, lavatories, firemen, police, telegraph-office, attendants' rooms, and all accommodation not elsewhere specified. A formidable list truly, as some of the competitors seem to have found; though in the majority of cases the difficulties have been boldly met and successfully grappled with.

The great reputation which Mr. G. G. Scott has acquired, and the expectations which have been formed of his designs, causes the portion of the building where they are situated to be a centre of interest, or rather a starting-point. Although placed at the remote end of the gangway, few pause to look at anything until they have satisfied their curiosity as to what Mr. Scott's design is like. Of the amount of satisfaction it conveys we can give no exact measure; but it appears to us that admiration is not so general a sentiment as to preclude all access to disappointment. As a whole, the design is of noble proportions, the plan easy to follow, the hall and corridors stately, the ambulatories effective, the library magnificent, and the courts all that could be desired. In this last particular it is but fair to state that the Instructions were so precise that there is but small difference between the plans of the several competitors. A seat for the judge, a box for the witness, a few benches for the bar and attorneys, and a jury-box, are the accommodation required. It may here be well to observe that the jury-box should be divided into two rows of seats, each to contain six jurymen. The facility with which they can thus communicate with the foreman and each other is obvious; but in the designs of one of the competitors the jury are placed twelve a row, where, with nothing to distract their attention, it is to be hoped they may "remember with advantages" all that should be borne in mind. The special duty of the Commission will be to see that the Instructions are strictly complied with; and the public have a right to expect that those who have obeyed them most faithfully will meet with due consideration when the final award shall be made. Of Mr. Scott's special interior features the most remarkable is the central hall, octagonal in plan, covered by a circular cupola, or, as it is commonly but incorrectly termed, dome. This is encircled by sculptured and painted decoration representing Scripture history, and, as nearly as we could make out, the Last Judgment. The inner portico of the Strand entrance is very handsome, being adorned with statues of various eminent framers and administrators of the law. The mouldings and details generally have a strong smack of Italian feeling, suited rather to marble than freestone. An alternative design for the great hall shows the roof entirely of glass; a mode of treatment eminently unsuited to a permanent building. The three perspective views of the Strand front are masterly in execution, if not perfect in conception; for beyond the points to which we have called attention, we must somewhat stint our expressions of praise. The elevations are lamentably thin in detail, and are evidently designed in forgetfulness of the facts that the building will not be constructed of white marble, and that the atmosphere of London is at times, to say the least of it, more or less charged with smoke. The Italian *motif* running through the design is apparent enough in the too open parapet, in the mast-headed statues—bad enough at Milan, but worse in London; nay, we feel ill-used when

the Giotto tower is thrust upon us in pairs; for in these days of excursion trips under the management of the enterprising Mr. Cook, the veriest Cockney may boast that he has "swum in a gondola," and possibly may bring back with him recollections more or less vivid of a certain tower in the Piazza, a few columns and capitals in the Piazzetta, with faint impressions of the Certosa and the Duomo of Milan. The design should be executed in cast-iron; and we cannot help arriving at the conclusion, that though it is one of the best in the exhibition, in all that goes to make up originality in its truest, and therefore highest sense, it is the least original. The estimated cost, exclusive of figure sculpture and painted decoration—without which, by the way, the design would be nothing—is 1,253,620*l.*

Contiguous to Mr. Scott's designs are placed those of Mr. Abraham, a circumstance which perhaps induces the public to pay less attention to them than they otherwise would. The plans show abundance of light; and though we question whether a cupola will adapt itself to Gothic architecture, it must be admitted that Mr. Abraham has made a bold effort in that direction. Whatever merits these drawings may possess, we cannot overlook the fact that successfully to plan a large public building requires an apprenticeship, so to call it, to that especial class of design. All the other competitors have previously exercised their ingenuity on sets of plans for great public works, and can consequently more readily grasp the scope of the present undertaking. We can only regard Mr. Abraham's efforts as evidences of a race in which he was hopelessly overweighted. This is the kindest remark that can be made, and with it we shall take our leave of his plans. The estimate, which seems moderate, is 1,234,266*l.*

The considerations which apply to Mr. Abraham's shortcomings can find no place in our estimate of Mr. E. M. Barry's design; he can neither plead inexperience nor unfavourable handicapping. We will proceed first to draw attention to his good points. The plan is similar to that of Mr. Scott, inasmuch as he adopts the expedient of internal streets, named respectively Chancery Avenue, Lord Chancellor's Avenue, and Queen's Bench Avenue; an arrangement which has commended itself to most of the other competitors. This, or a very similar disposition, is the only one that could be made with advantage. His central hall is a handsome feature "overlooked," as his report says, "but not entered by the public." This is a great point, as it is imperative to keep the general public out of those portions of the building devoted to business. The access to the courts is very convenient. The details generally are delicate, and a certain amount of propriety pervades the whole; but this is the utmost that can be said in positive praise of any part of Mr. Barry's conception. As regards the exterior, the old story may be read. For general outline we have his National-Gallery design in a Gothic dress. For Strand façade he gives us an ill-disguised *replica* of the Strand and Cannon-street Hotels; while his cupola so strongly sug-

gests the Pisan Baptistery, that we suspect he must have an alabaster model of that celebrated structure constantly in view. Inasmuch, however, as his cupola is more or less copied from a good example, it is immeasurably superior to that of Mr. Scott, which has been most ruthlessly "cheated of its fair proportions." The clock tower, alas, is like other clock towers we wot of, as the façade is like other façades. In the perspective view, which is beautifully tinted, the absence of a central feature is very conspicuous. The entire cost is put at 1,237,571*l*.

The visitor will find it a positive relief to turn to the compartment in which Mr. Waterhouse exhibits his beautifully executed drawings. His plan resolves itself into a main central block, with streets at the north and south; the whole surrounded by a belt of offices and chambers. This arrangement—with unimportant modifications—is adopted by more than one of the competitors; but Mr. Waterhouse is the only competitor who provides a private carriage entrance for the judges at the Court level. This plan has many merits; but the Commission will hardly be blind to the inconvenience which would result from placing three Courts one above the other; and they may have doubts as to whether a sufficiency of light and air is provided, and also whether the Gordian knot of difficulty has not been somewhat rudely cut in more than one instance. The central hall is a handsome stone structure of bold features, covered in with a glass roof extending laterally to a considerable distance, embracing a large space on either side. The roof, therefore, seems less to belong to the hall than to an extensive series of buildings of which the hall is but a part. It is proposed, in order to give an appearance of solidity, to divide the roof into alternate bays of larger and smaller size; the larger being covered entirely by glass, and the smaller being boarded and decorated. Such an arrangement is most objectionable; nor can we conceive a single useful purpose to which it would contribute. The amount of heat which so large a quantity of glass would admit would be most trying. If we imagine a huge conservatory nearly 500 feet long giving light, and in a great measure air also, to numerous offices, some idea may be formed of Mr. Waterhouse's scheme for a central hall. We are not altogether sure that recollections of the Panorama Gallery, or even the Burlington Arcade, have not inspired the architect; for although there are open streets in plenty, a very considerable portion of the building seems to be under glass. The views of the Court of Queen's Bench from side gallery, that of the Barristers' Library, and the view of the central hall, will give a good idea of the general interior character of the building. A view of one of the internal streets, with the Will Tower, conveys a favourable impression of this portion of the arrangements. Of the perspective views of the exterior it is difficult to speak in terms of too high praise. In the centre of the elevation on the Strand is a huge lofty central mass. At the corners are towers of great height and distinctive character. The Will



Tower and Ventilating and Smoke Tower are very fine; but there seems to be one too many for a perfectly satisfactory grouping; though, seen from a distance, and in connection with the new Record Tower on the other side of Chancery-lane, this defect will not be so apparent. The execution of these perspectives is admirable, and the points of view well chosen for exhibiting the building to advantage; they are, however, points which are practically inaccessible; and no one who looks at Mr. Waterhouse's principal view, taken from the Shot Tower in Southwark, need expect to see the same effect in Fleet-street or the Strand. With regard to style and materials, he says, "Fresh expedients are required, rather than recourse to precedent." Gothic of the thirteenth century is the style that, maugre "fresh expedients," has been resorted to; but any extreme delicacy of detail has been avoided as "unsuitable to the atmosphere of London"—and we think very wisely. In this respect Mr. Waterhouse compares most favourably with Messrs. Scott and Lockwood, though he has not carried simplicity to the extent which marks the clever design of Mr. Burges. To carry out the picturesque idea of Mr. Waterhouse the sum of 1,419,842*l.* would be necessary. We may add, that these drawings leave a more vivid recollection in the mind of the visitor than some more elaborate designs; and many, before leaving, return to them for a last look.

The admirers of pure early English ecclesiastical architecture will see much to admire in Mr. R. Brandon's elaborate plans. It is remarkable that although no better ecclesiologist has entered the lists, none have produced designs less suited to the purposes of a Palace of Justice than Mr. Brandon and Mr. Street. Without denying Mr. Brandon's ability, we consider the external elevations of his building as unsuited to their real purpose as were the notable devices of Fonthill Abbey. That the design is striking is unquestionable; the central hall, which takes the form of a minster nave, is of noble proportions, though too plain in the groining of the roof. The flying buttresses on the exterior, could they be seen from any convenient point, would be most picturesque; and the two western towers would give a great amount of solemn grandeur to the composition, which, however, could only be mistaken for a cathedral at a distance, and conveys not the slightest idea of a palace of justice on nearer approach. Mr. Brandon has furnished another example of the impossibility of combining ecclesiastical with domestic features. The supposed cost—which, considering the expensive character of the work, seems very moderate—is 1,414,013*l.*

Mr. Street exhibits an excellent plan; with abundance of light direct from vertical side lights; a free circulation of air is secured; and the accommodation he provides is ample. The public hall, for business only, 188 feet by 57, is divided down the middle by columns, thereby lacking the dignity which distinguishes that of Mr. Seddon. The corridors are simply cloisters, and the conventual character of the building

is perpetually forcing itself on the spectator. The style is Gothic, of a thoroughly English type, with the exception of the Record Tower, in which there are traces of inspiration from France, and more particularly from Belgium. The whole is of a degree of plainness that would go far to satisfy the strictest utilitarian; the pinnacles are few, and only in the most telling situations; and were the building on a different scale, and for another purpose, there would be no hesitation in pronouncing it of singular merit. A glance, however, at the view of the Strand front, showing a new bridge at Temple Bar, will convince the most sceptical that the scope of the work has been misunderstood, this single drawing betraying the spirit which pervades the entire design. The narrow footway, the diminutive openings, and blank wall space, and the narrow arch under the bridge, point rather to the college on the high street of a university town than to a pile designed for the accommodation of the principal Law Courts of a great country.

Mr. Street has on many occasions shown himself to be an able restorer of churches and designer of buildings up to a certain size; but neither in the National-Gallery competition nor in the present has he been able to divest himself of a tendency to regard art, as it were, through the wrong end of the telescope. A broad method of treatment, in which oriels and gargoyles, and little posterns, and narrow slits for windows do not play an important part, he seems to have no sympathy with whatever. The estimate—1,314,360*l.*—considering the quasi-domestic character of the building, is certainly high.

In direct contrast to the design of Mr. Brandon, which is purely English, may be seen Mr. Burges's original and effective conception. Like Mr. Garling, he dispenses with a central hall, because, as he says in his report, "it introduces the public, and to a certain extent public traffic, into the middle of the building, where quiet is most essential. It is also apt to place the judges' apartments and corridor on the exterior, and those of the bar and legal public in the interior—thus reversing the order of things; for the judges' apartments should obviously be placed in the interior, so as to secure quiet, and to enable them to consult with each other with facility. . . . it most materially diminishes the areas for light and air; and, should it be circular, it has the extra disadvantage of causing sundry of the open areas to assume an inconvenient shape. In the second place, it is a very serious addition to the expense, if carried out on a proper scale." In all these remarks we thoroughly agree, and have quoted thus much because the choice will lie between the central-hall system of arrangement and that of a disposition in zones. Mr. Burges does, however, provide in the centre of his building what he terms a Judges' Hall, of moderate dimensions, but well-proportioned. His design shows that abundance of light and air are admitted, and his communications are nearly perfect. In one drawing (No. 14) he exhibits a bay at large, which, had he never done anything before, and should never do anything again, is enough

to show the originality of his genius. His view of one of the courts, seen from the gallery, gives a fair idea of the style of his interior. In the exterior it must be confessed that some startling effects are produced, and the propriety of castellated treatment may be questioned; but the lighting is excellent, and the continuous second-story arcade or fenestration produces a most satisfactory appearance of unity, the composition being bound together as with a belt. In one of his towers there is more than a *soupeçon* of the Palazzo Vecchio; and spite of the general picturesqueness, for which the design is so distinguished, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Mr. Burges has at least seen Gustave Doré's wonderful illustrations of the droll work by Honoré de Balzac, *Tourangeau*. When such an extraordinary perspective view is exhibited, it is the most natural thing in the world to establish humorous comparisons; but Mr. Burges may be assured that, from whatever source he drew his inspiration, the result will not be overlooked at a time when anything original is certain to be valued at its full worth. His estimate, 1,584,589*l.*, is next to the highest.

Mr. Seddon's design, if not the best, is certainly the most striking. That it has great merits is incontestable; but these are overborne by the eccentricity of fancy which pervades all parts. Among its merits may be mentioned the fact that all the courts are lighted by clerestory windows, that ample external corridors and staircases to chambers are provided for the business public, and that peculiar facilities exist for ventilation. The large central hall, the entire length of the building—size, indeed, characterises every portion of this design—has a very pleasing effect, owing to the breadth and simplicity of the vaulting. By a very simple arrangement, disposing in pairs the columns whence the vaulting springs, much of the effect of a wagon-headed ceiling is obtained, giving the greatest facility for effective coloured decoration. Mr. Seddon has endeavoured to give a certain amount of classicity to the capitals of the columns; and herein there can be little doubt that he has failed; for though originality is desirable, it should not be produced at the sacrifice of harmony. A commodious refreshment-room is provided beneath the central hall; but the vaulting cannot be considered graceful. Effective drawings of the Appellate Court and the library are given. Of the exterior it may be remarked, that the architect calls the style early English, with a French feeling. We can only say that the French feeling decidedly preponderates, and that the great Yorkshire abbeys will not be eager to claim kindred with the early English style, as Mr. Seddon renders it. Sooth to say, Mr. Seddon has but one idea—"an excellent good one," it is true; but if the most varied symphony, by frequent repetition, palls somewhat on the ear, a better result can scarcely be expected from a performance confined to monochords and *da capo*. When we look at his enormous Will Tower of fourteen or more stories, scarcely varied, and recollect his design for the hotel at Aberystwith, we cannot avoid mentally en-

treating him to "harp no more upon that string." In short, while the plan is in many respects good, the building has a heavy and gloomy air even in the drawings; an impression which would be painfully increased were the actual building subjected to a short exposure to the atmosphere of London. Moreover, the arrangement of gables and chimneys is objectionable, and far from being original. Bruges teems with such examples, and Chancery-lane is not without its specimens. This estimate is the highest, being 2,046,644*l*.

The design next in order is that of Mr. T. N. Deane; of which it is not too much to say that it will be found worthy of most careful study. For picturesqueness, restrained within decent bounds, it holds its own with any, and is in every respect a design of which its author may be proud. A well-proportioned hall occupies the centre, and thence a handsome staircase leads to the various departments. The general public will not use this hall, and are in fact, in accordance with the spirit of the Instructions, unable to do so. The roof is of peculiar construction; and this we take to be the weakest portion of the design, as though well enough adapted for a small church, or hall in a manor-house, it cannot look well on a very large scale. The library, 145 feet by 29, is a handsome room, and shows the general style of the interior; but it is in the external views that a true idea must be sought of the marvellous picturesqueness which gives the *timbre* to this beautiful composition. Open in a remarkable degree to light and air, the disposition of the respective blocks into which the building is divided gives a variety of outline, which, without the adventitious aid of prodigious towers, or other features of excessive size, cannot fail to please. The style betrays a strong leaning to the Italian school, especially in the details; but from its outline the general impression the building conveys is certainly that of the fourteenth century—English Gothic. The whole composition groups into three grand features,—the Record Tower, Clock Tower, and Central Tower over the Strand entrance. A peculiar arrangement of stairs in the Record Tower for the convenience of firemen is worthy of note. In the thickness of the walls a stairway is carried to the top of the tower, so that a conflagration occurring on any story can be reached from without, and to a certainty subdued. With such an arrangement it would be a difficult, if not impossible, task to obey Jack Cade's orders to "burn all the records of the kingdom." Mr. Deane's sketches of the Record Tower and Temple-Bar Tower are admirable. It is a source of regret that in this, as in other instances, a mere description should convey so inadequate an idea of the design under notice. The probable cost for which Mr. Deane's ideas could be realised is set down at 1,074,278*l*.

Mr. Lockwood's plan, which follows next in order, is the most simple of the collection. It consists of zones, surrounding streets and areas; and he has so far complied with the Instructions that he has entirely avoided the use of skylights. In the centre, a great hall,

236 feet by 72 feet, is approached by the principal loggia, staircase, and corridor, from the Strand on the south ; and by wide porches, corridors, and staircases from the east and west. The hall is surrounded by a quadrangular area, 20 feet in width, and, by means of corridors and covered bridges, gives access to the several courts. East and west of the great hall, and opening into it, are situated the Probate Hall and the Exchequer Hall, surrounded by their respective groups of courts. The northern side of the great hall will serve as a rendezvous for those having business in the Chancery Courts, and the southern side will accommodate the public attending the Common Pleas Courts. A more simple disposition can scarcely be conceived ; and if the central-hall scheme be not abandoned, nothing could be urged against this arrangement. The Instructions were, however, so precise on the point of keeping the frequenters of the various courts apart, that it may be questioned whether a central hall will not involve such disadvantages as to lead to its rejection by the Commissioners. Of the internal appearance we can only say, that it is very large and lofty, with a roof which is by no means an improvement on that of Westminster Hall. Some of the spandrels are decorated with iron tracery, against which we emphatically protest ; and the entire filling-in is of too slight a character. The west window is not such as we should desire to see carried out ; as, in common with many other parts of the hall, it displays a want of repose, and is wiry rather than elegant, with more than a suggestion of foreign feeling. The front towards the Strand is very symmetrical—too much so, indeed ; and the spire in the centre of the façade, 420 feet high, or considerably higher than St. Paul's, would have borne very simple treatment. There can be no doubt that this design possesses many features of great excellence ; and the art displayed in the Probate Court is, as may be seen from the view, of no mean order—the ceiling in particular being original and striking. The external elevations are not equal to those of several of the other competitors, having all the defects which mark those of Mr. Scott, without possessing all their merits. A large feature of some sort is necessary to give character to a building of this description ; but it may well be doubted whether the Commissioners will view with complacency the enormous outlay which the erection of the contemplated lofty central tower would entail. The entire cost is given as 1,235,383*l*.

Mr. Garling's design completes the series. Its distinguishing feature is the absence of a central hall, for which he substitutes other arrangements, in his opinion, equally convenient. He proposes to effect communication by means of wide corridors, and by placing at the back of each court a distinct lobby or hall, equal in area to the court itself, and in the aggregate equal to a very large central hall, to accommodate all whose business keeps them about the court, though not actually in it. While acknowledging the temptations for gaining architectural effect offered by the central-hall plan, he considers that as

the Instructions especially lay down that convenience is in every instance to supersede all questions of mere architectural effect, he is justified in disposing of his space as above stated. In his report he says, "A central hall, in fact, would be scarcely used except by loungers, and that class whose exclusion is especially aimed at in the Instructions. . . A central hall would be simply a show-place for people from the country and foreigners to visit and admire as one of the lions of the metropolis. And once admit people on any other plea but business, and a building like this would be overrun with idlers. My corridors provide ample opportunity, being 26 and 30 feet wide, for those who wish to walk about ; they are also provided with shallow recesses for seats and tables against the windows." By his peculiar utilisation of space Mr. Garling has succeeded in placing all his courts on one floor, besides gaining many other advantages not so conspicuous, but nevertheless of marked importance ; more rooms, for instance, are attached to each court on the court level than in any of the other designs. The large lobby or vestibule before mentioned is provided with seats and accommodation for private conference, which in a large central hall would assume an uncomfortable and peripatetic character. The courts are spaced more widely than in other instances, admitting more light and air ; and as they and their appendages are all arranged on precisely the same principles, it follows that those who know one court can find their way about any other. The staircases are all lighted from side windows—a point of great advantage to near-sighted persons ; and indeed there is very little top-lighting in any part of the building. The chamber corridors are lighted by side windows ; in which respect this design is exceptional, as in many of the others the chamber corridors have no better light than that borrowed from a room by a glazed partition.

Positive as were the Instructions that the public are not to be allowed to congregate together, but to be split up and forced to separate each to his place of business, this design fully complies with them ; and we are inclined to think that while the inconveniences of a central hall are so patent, as many of the designs show them to be, the Commissioners will give every attention to a plan which, without curtailing the accommodation of the public, dispenses with a central hall altogether.

The exterior has a repose which distinguishes it from all the others, produced mainly by the long almost unbroken line of machicolated cornice carried even round the towers. There are no fussy pinnacles on the parapet ; the main divisions are bold and strongly marked ; the central tower is decisive and sufficiently plain ; but an increase in its height would be an improvement. The statues are almost without exception under canopies ; and taken as a whole, the building looks like a townhall or seat of justice, and like nothing else—which we take to be no mean merit, and more than can be said of some of its competitors. It displays, besides, a continuity of idea, and a commendable

plainness, which cannot fail to find favour with those whose experience enables them to appreciate the strong and detect the weak points of a design. It is picturesque without a trace of whimsicality, and original without being extravagant. The approximate estimate is 1,090,061*l*.

The display, in short, is one of which the country at large, no less than the architects concerned, may well be proud. If all cannot command success, all have striven hard to deserve it; and though the decision of the Commission must be unpalatable to the majority, each may be sure that he has, through this exhibition, gained a host of private admirers. With such a collection of designs from which to select, and so much talent available, if the Commission acts with the judgment and discrimination we have a right to expect, London will be adorned with a Palace of Justice befitting our national dignity, if not illustrative of our national architecture.

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## MY FRIEND'S VILLA

BY WALTER THORNBURY

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"So you are determined, Signor Owen," said Count Galli to me as we returned together from a pleasant evening party at the Casa Guidi, "determined to leave Florence to-morrow, and spend a hermit's week in that dismal villa of mine on the road to Pistoia? Eh bien! tastes differ. I pity you, that's all; and in the name of all that is beautiful in the Pitti Gallery, and all that is sublime in the Duomo, let me, as an old friend, dissuade you from going."

"Count Galli," replied I, as we entered his house, not far from the Boboli Gardens; throwing down my white glove on one of the huge mosaic tables as I spoke, "don't compel me to refuse to take your advice; I must hide myself for a week. I have some literary work to do that cannot be delayed. To-morrow, my good friend, I positively tear myself from the Ghiberti gates, and from pleasant walks in the Cascine, to bury myself in that quiet villa of yours among the hills, far from all the fascinations of your delightful Florence. I have been there before, Count, and I know the delicious quietude of the spot."

"Now, one cigar, then, my friend, before we part for the night," said the Count; "and the more so because you will probably start before I am up to-morrow. Francisco Luigi"—here he clapped his hands, a habit the eccentric old nobleman had contracted from a long residence in the Lebanon—"bring some cigars and a bottle of yellow Chartreuse. I must tell you one or two things that have made Carmignano disagreeable to me."

My kind host was one of the most eccentric men in Florence. (I am speaking now of a year or two before the Austrians were chased out of Lombardy.) He was an old bachelor nobleman, living by himself in an enormous palace in the suburbs of the city, which he had crammed with second-rate pictures, old china, old books, and musical instruments. He always wore a droll spencer over a quaintly-cut tail-coat, and those obtrusive Hessian boots.

The first-floor room in which we sat was an exact model of its owner's spacious but dusty and slovenly brain. All round the wall stood stacks of unarranged pictures, that had been waiting for years, with their faces to the wainscot, to be hung. There, in the centre of the marble floor, stood an old rickety spinnet, on which the Count had practised ever since he was a boy. It was piled with plates, tumblers, guitars, flutes, and annotated copies of "Dante." Against it leaned great dusty portfolios of the rarest etchings. Upon a side-table, propped up by a box of chessmen, lay Frisi's great treatise



on Hydraulics. The room was, like the Count's mind, a series of promises, sketches, and uncompleted plans.

The Count smiled benignly at the Chartreuse, as he poured out the yellow glutinous liquid into two liqueur glasses; then solemnly divested himself of his eye-glass, as if it had been an order of knight-hood ponderous with jewels, and waiting till Francisco closed the door after him, sat back in his chair, and with two vigorous kicks sent his patent-leather Hessian boots flying to opposite corners of the room. Finally, complacently biting off the tip of the cigar, he lit a spluttering Vesuvian, and began to talk from out of a cloud of fragrant smoke.

"My friend," said he, "most men have a secret. Trees may grow over it, and flowers flourish on the turf above it, but there it remains still, deep in their souls, like the dead body in a murderer's garden. I also have mine. When I was a stripling my father and mother lived at Carmignano. I used to amuse myself by fishing in the trout-streams between the mountains. Sometimes I ventured too far from home, lost myself, and had to seek shelter for the night at the peasants' cottages. My favourite walk was to a ruined tower, once a villa of the Medici, that was stuck, like a bull's horn, on the edge of a neighbouring mountain. It was overgrown with brambles; and the quick green lizards flashing across the stones of the ramparts were the only living things to be seen within the walls. One day I met a peasant girl watching some goats that were feeding beside the torrent that passed below the castle. She was very beautiful, with those dark eyes, that lavish wealth of black hair, and that rosy-brown complexion which distinguishes our country beauties. God help me! I was very young and passionate; I fell at once into an abyss of love; but a love pure and unselfish as it was timid and innocent. I made the contadina sit by my side and tell me the legend of the tower. Years ago, she said, with a voice that was angel's music to my ear, her violet breath playing upon my cheek,—years ago a wicked marchese had lived in that castle. He was cruel; he oppressed the poor, and hated all good men. He had a special and inextinguishable hatred for the poor mendicant friars, who occasionally wandered up the valley from Florence to seek alms for their convent from peasants poorer even than themselves. When he could catch one of these holy men, he would have a deep hole dug in his olive-garden, bury the friar in it up to his chin, and then bowl stones at him till he died. At last the people of Florence heard of this; came here, attacked and burnt the castle, and tying the marchese to one of their military engines, hurled him into the valley below, where he lay till the foxes and crows devoured him piecemeal. Well, I need scarcely tell you, a poet, how my love grew till its roots filled every fibre of my heart and brain; how I found excuses every day to obtain stolen interviews with Lisa; or how at last—for

my love was always a pure and refined one—I swore, one Ave-Maria time, to wed Lisa and defy my kinsfolk, as soon as I returned from Paris, where I was to be sent for a year. I went to Paris. I am afraid that a wicked but secret joy filled my heart when my proud mother died; and in less than eight months my father wrote to me to return to Florence to accept a commission in the army of those accursed Austrians. I came on the third day. I made some excuse to hurry down to Carmignano. I rushed into Lisa's cottage. O giorno maledetto! O cruel fortune! I found her sitting on the floor singing a song I had once taught her, as beautiful as before, but a maniac. Some accursed being, born of hell and doing Satan's work, had discovered our love, told my father, and persuaded him to tell Lisa that I was married in Paris. She had fallen into a fever, and finally her reason had left her. My friend, I try to be a Christian; I seldom miss confession; but I swear to you by the glory of Paradise, that even now, if I knew where that accursed villain could be found, I would never rest till I had split his heart with this knife, or till, in a death-grapple, one of us had thrown the other into the bottomless darkness."

Here the Count, overcome with agony of grief and rage, hid his face for some minutes in his hands, and rocked himself to and fro. I had never felt so strongly the difference of the Englishman and Italian as I did now, when I saw a love and rage so inextinguishable still cast up flames from the old man's heart.

"What will be, will be," he continued, after a short but painful pause. "I placed Lisa with Tyecchi, a young doctor of Carmignano, and allowed him an annual pension for her support. I never saw her again. I have never been to Carmignano since; but even in that plausible doctor I was deceived. Five years after that, our good old *fattore* (steward), Antonio—your favourite—came to me, and told me that I had been cheated; that Lisa was dead two years since, and that Dr. Tyecchi, worthy Tyecchi, had concealed the poor girl's death in order to steal the pension. I sent for him, and reproached him with the theft; but somehow or other the rascal got over me with his plausible ways and his lies framed to please me. Liar! I know they were to please me. He told me that Lisa before her death had recovered her reason, and died kissing my miniature. I forgave him, and sent him back to Carmignano without a public exposure. Signor Owen, beware of that man; he is bad; there is a taint in his blood. I could bet a thousand scudi he is the man, or it is his son, who continually writes me anonymous letters about the good old *fattore*, heaping abuse on him, and trying to make me distrust him. The people at Carmignano are rough and bad. Robberies are frequent there, and no one ever seems to catch the thieves. There must be connivance somewhere."

I expressed my sympathy in a few sincere words. But how hard it is to find in a moment the right plaster for the right wound!

"Dear Count," I said, "time brings roses; time to me is sorrow's best anodyne. You and Lisa will one day meet in heaven."

And here, to change the conversation, I sat down to the spinnet and played that charming old air of Gluck's, "Che farò senza Euridice?" music so full of quaint melancholy.

It soothed my friend.

"My Lisa," I said, "is in England. I fear no shafts from dark eyes when I think of her. In spite of all your evil omens, Count, I long for the quiet of your Carmignano—its gray olive-trees, its cream-coloured oxen, its little green wheat-fields, its flowery vines."

The Count had shaken off his brooding thoughts, and was again the volatile gay old nobleman. He displaced me at the spinnet, and dashed off the drinking song from *Fra Diavolo*.

"Ha! heretic," he said, shaking his eye-glass at me, "give me life in the city, as one of your Anglo-Italian poets says; the blessed church-bells to waken one; the diligence rattling in with the news from Bologna; then the market-place below one's window gay with Pulcinello, the travelling doctor, or a crowd reading the last edict (curse it!); or at noon a procession, with our Lady in spangles, and seven swords in her heart, the monks and the penitents with candles, the soldiers in the rear. O, give me the city!"

"I am satisfied, O Mecænas," said I, "with the olives blowing silvery in the wind, the wheat sharp and green pricking up from the clods, and in due time with the fire-flies sparkling in the twilight, and the cicadas chirping in the hot noontide. I am a poet, you know; and it is my profession to like these things better than what I think the lower delights of your artificial pleasures."

"Well," said the Count, rising and lighting his bed-room candle, "you ought to be able to decide by this time, for you spent all last May at Carmignano; but I notice that you never require more than one month's leave. Buona sera—Bu-o-na se-ra!"

I was just shaking hands with the good mercurial old Count when Luigi entered, and, in the brisk manner of a stage servant, handed a clumsy letter to the Count.

"It is a letter from Antonio," said the servant; "it came this morning, but Francisco forgot to give it you."

"And, diable! why didn't Francisco bring it, that I might scold him?" said the Count laughing. "O, these servants, these servants! When shall we be waited on by machinery?"

The Count read the letter: "Dearest master—(good old Antonio)—I and Catherine—(dear old souls—mumble-mumble)—sold two meadows of hay to Dr. Tyecchi. Third year—not paid. Tells me of a plan to rob the house; but I have hired as a watchman young Lorenzo, the miller's son."

"Tell Antonio, my dear Owen, to press the doctor for payment, and by all means to hire another watchman. Now doesn't that deter you

from detestable Carmignano? If it were not for old Antonio, I'd sell that place. I tell you it is unlucky to our race."

"No," said I; "I go, and my servant goes with me, and we have each a revolver. Besides, it's only for a week. Good night, Count—a rivederlo!"

The next morning early I started for Carmignano with my servant, and arrived there late in the afternoon, the road from Florence to the village being steep and bad.

I found Antonio and his good old wife in a state of fear at some village gossip hinting at an intended robbery; but my coming reassured them, and the sight of my revolver, and that of Jackson's, seemed to make Antonio quite martial.

Before I went to bed that night, I ordered the miller to be sent for, that I might see how far I could trust our watchman. I found him a clear-eyed, frank young fellow, full of honesty and courage; from that moment I threw aside all anxiety, ordered him a glass of absinthe, and went to bed.

The next morning I was sitting at breakfast at the open window, sipping my coffee with that luxurious idleness with which a busy man prepares for a hard day's work. It was a fine May morning, and the air (as it does sometimes in spring) seemed to be laden with the scent of flowers. There was just breeze enough to vibrate the vine-branches at the window, and to stir inquiringly among the leaves of the "Guicciardini" that lay before me on the snowy table-cloth for reference. I had laid down the tedious historian for a moment to read one of Michael Angelo's finest sonnets, when the door opened, and who should come gliding in but Dr. Tyecchi! He did not seem to look me straight in the face, though there was a hard smile on his pale lips; and he advanced rubbing his hands together in the fawning manner of a low-bred parasite who tries to be grandly courteous and to assert an equality.

"Benvenuto," said he in a harsh Italian patois. "Welcome again to little Carmignano. Ha! how I have longed for a chess-fight once more with you, Signor Owen! And how is the dear Count, our excellent lord and master? How we wish for him here! It is a dull monotonous life for us country doctors—no opera, no processions, nothing."

I shook the intrusive doctor's hand somewhat coldly, I fear—for I can never conceal a dislike—and offered him a chair.

"But, doctor," said I, "you have scarcely known much, except through reading, of the gay city life you lament so much." (The moment I said this, I remembered that I had heard that the doctor had been driven from the great hospital at Florence for misconduct.)

The doctor coloured. It was not a blush that rose on his yellow cheek, but a fever-spot of red glowed on each cheek-bone. "Yes," said he; "I have known city life; but poverty compelled me to come and settle amongst these rude and turbulent village people. Ha! signor mio, how the good priest and I have been longing for your return!"

There is no society for us nearer than Pistoia, and even the best friends grow at times tired of each other, you know."

Now this was a falsehood; for the priest himself had told me that he would never associate with the doctor, for he cheated him at cards and had given up confession. I thought it best, however, to say nothing; for I knew the stealthy serpent-like nature of the man I had to deal with.

I am not naturally suspicious, but I could not help observing that the doctor, as he sat opposite to me, kept his snuff-box open on the table, and his hand, the forefinger and thumb of which held a pinch of what I supposed to be snuff, was extended across my books, so as almost to touch my coffee-cup.

"Delightful book!" said the doctor gaily, as he took up a volume of Redi; "but have you read the *lussuriosi sonetti* of Aretino?"

"No!" said I angrily; "that infamous writer is unfit to be read by any honest man."

The doctor bit his lip, and replied:

"Well, well; every one has scruples; I myself am no prude; I profess to be a cosmopolitan, though I have not travelled; but look! what is that bird there over the dove-cot?"

I turned and looked round quickly at the back-window. I could see nothing. I snapped round again equally quickly, and saw the doctor's hand touch the milk-jug, and draw swiftly back from it, but not swift enough to escape my notice.

He coloured again.

"I beg ten thousand pardons," said he, laughing (a dry metallic laugh it was); "in my hurry to point out the kite, that flew away just as I called out (bungler that I am!), I nearly upset the milk-jug. And now let me retire, for I see you look full of business. Be assured I should not have come in so suddenly and unannounced, had not I seen good old Antonio busy nailing up a pomegranate-tree in the garden, and I would not disturb him. I hope to see you often, signor carissimo. Addio, addio, addio!"

And the odious man bowed himself out with as much ceremony as if I had been Lorenzo de' Medici come to life again.

Ten minutes afterwards old Antonio entered to take away the breakfast things.

"Have you been gardening, Antonio?" I said.

"No, signor mio; I have been down in the village to buy charcoal."

I saw in a moment that the doctor had watched his opportunity to find me alone; but I did not mention my suspicions to Antonio.

"Antonio," said I, "if Dr. Tyecchi calls any day while I am here, mind I am engaged."

"Si, signor." And old Antonio gave me a respectful wink, which implied a supreme knowledge of my wishes.

"Antonio," said I, as the faithful old *fattore* was just piloting

my breakfast-tray through the doorway; Antonio turned his head back over his left shoulder—"Antonio, pour out the rest of that milk into a saucer, leave it on my table, and send Zanze in to me."

"Si, signor," replied Antonio, with his usual grave bow, this time somewhat impeded by the loaded tray.

A moment after, the door was opened by Antonio, and in sprang Zanze, a favourite large milk-white Persian cat that I had bought at Venice: he began to arch his back and sidle to me, and purr in a low beseeching way. I put down the saucer of milk; Zanze lapped it up eagerly. A minute or two afterwards I was roused from my writing by a scream and a dash at the door. It was poor Zanze. Then he came to my side, mewed as if he were in pain, lay down, shivered, and died. Three minutes afterwards the body was stiff and stark. I could not doubt but that he had been poisoned; but I did not at the time suspect the doctor, or establish in my own mind any connection between his visit and Zanze's death.

Antonio, who wrung his hands when he saw dead Zanze, attributed his death to the malice of a neighbour's son. The next two days I spent head down at my task, and in writing home to my wife; but the third day, a letter from a correspondent, an antiquarian at Pistoia, determined me to take horse and visit that town, in order to see an old Lombardic church, some account of which would serve to illustrate one of my principles in an architectural work which I was then engaged upon.

I gave orders to have my carriage instantly prepared for the road.

Antonio heard the news of my intended departure with singular alarm. A presentiment of some evil seemed weighing upon him. He hoped I would soon be back, and asked me if I should object, as the house would now have fewer defenders, to have a second watchman. I laughed at the old servant's fears, but at the same time ordered the miller to hire a colleague in the village.

The carriage came round to the door, and I got in. As I passed through the corridor leading to the entrance, I had, I should mention, found Antonio praying before a statue of the Virgin, before which a lamp was kept continually burning by the Count's wish, and I distinguished my name in the prayer he uttered half to himself. Both he and his old wife came to the door to see me off, to bow, and to wish me *buon viaggio*.

Just as Antonio slammed the door, a little peasant girl leaped up to the window, and offered me homage in the shape of a bunch of those little red tulips that grow among the corn. I threw her a silver bit, but I saw Antonio's shadow spit on the ground three times, as Italians do when the omens are bad, and, taking the flowers from her hand, he trod them under foot.

I had no time to stay and ask Antonio the meaning of his action;

for off dashed the horses, and in a minute or two we had left Carmignano far behind us.

All that five hours' journey I was tyrannised over—I know not why—by one thought. How is it that the mind sometimes seems to keep singing one and the same note, and will pass on to no other? The face and bearing of Dr. Tyecchi kept continually occurring to my imagination. I tried to exhaust the thought and throw it aside, but I could not.

Again and again rose to the carriage-window that hard livid face, with its unchangeable mocking expression, with its small metallic eyes, and its bitter pinched mouth. The dry neutral-coloured hair, the flesh unwarmed by blood, but darkened by bile and green humours, every detail of that loathsome man passed and inventoried themselves in my mind. It was not till I arrived at Pistoia that those disagreeable thoughts passed away. I finished my sketches and notes on the second day, and started again for Carmignano.

The horses went well till we came within seven miles of the village. Then the near-horse suddenly betrayed a lameness for which no examination of the foot could account. It soon increased to such an alarming degree, and our pace became so intolerably slow, that I got out, and expressed my intention (as the road was straight and clear) of walking on to Carmignano, followed by my servant, each of us armed with a revolver.

It was one of those nights when the moon, without being visible, seems to cast a dim light through the struggling gray clouds that environ it. Once, and once only, a clear fresh wind swept away the rolling and struggling vapours, and out slipped the moon for a moment and launched herself into the dark-blue ocean of air.

The mountain road was dry and hard; below, in the ravines, we could hear the roar of the leaping torrents, the wind surging among the sloping fir-trees. I was in high spirits with my walk, and sang one of Uhland's fine ballads as a vent to my animal spirits.

We entered the village. There was the mill, there the priest's house, there the cluster of cottages; yonder the road flying on toward Florence. We reached a by-road leading to the villa. I saw no signs of the miller or his friends patrolling. I had half-determined to fire my revolver to alarm and expose these loitering hirelings, when, to my astonishment, two men suddenly brushed past me, and ran furiously down the road in the direction of the village. They did not see us, for we were at that moment hid in shadow.

They had got about a hundred yards from us, still running violently, when the moon turned its lamp upon them for a moment. That moment's glimpse convinced me that, whoever the second fugitive might be, the first was Doctor Tyecchi.

A strange vague alarm seized me; I hurried on. I found the village-gate thrown open; on the doorstep lay the body of a dead man, the

chopper that had killed him lying beside it. We lifted it; it was Antonio dead, but still warm. A lantern, extinguished, lay beside him. The doorstep was a pond of blood; the half-shut door and the door-posts were crimson-wet with the gore of the poor *fattore*.

But this was not all. Leaving Antonio's body, we ran in to see after the safety of his old wife. Alas! the wretches had been before us. We found her chopped to death on the marble staircase leading from the hall. One hand still clutched the balustrade. She had been killed, I think, as she had turned to fly to her bed-room, and there bolt herself in from the murderers.

After what I had seen I could not doubt but that the murderer was the doctor and some unknown accomplice, perhaps his son. The motive—robbery, revenge, a desire to escape the payment of some debt, or all these motives combined. Poor Antonio's presentiment, though merely a vague fear, had indeed come true.

The trial of the doctor and his son was an unsatisfactory one. The Florentines have a dread of capital punishment; and by their law no man can be found guilty of murder on the evidence of one witness alone. My proof of the doctor's identity was thought insufficient. The only accepted witness was the little girl who brought me the red tulips. She was the niece of the doctor's housekeeper. She deposed that on the night of the murder, being a-bed, she woke up and saw the doctor and his son enter the room and change their coats, which were wet and stained with something red. But this was not sufficient for a conviction; and the doctor, on showing a receipt, said to be in Antonio's writing, for the three years' hay, escaped.

At the trial Tyecchi had looked anxious, but betrayed no emotion. He was plausible, fawning, deprecating as ever, and audibly prayed God to pardon me, when I stood up to give my evidence.

The very day of his acquittal I was taken ill of a low fever, and being very weak, and now and then light-headed, my servant sent for Dr. Tyecchi, there being no other medical man to be found nearer than Pistoia.

I myself was too ill to be consulted on the subject. All I can remember is, that on feebly opening my eyes I saw Dr. Tyecchi, pale and trembling, enter the room, and look about him in a troubled way.

"Was it not here," I heard him say to the servant, "that the good old f—f—f—*fattore* was m—m—murdered?"

"No," replied the servant roughly, "that was at the outer door—it was his wife that the wretches killed on the stairs outside this room."

Then the doctor advanced, lancet in hand, to bleed me; but he was so nervous that he could not strike the vein.

I could bear it no longer; perhaps he would pierce an artery, or poison my medicine in revenge. I had just strength enough to pull my arm under the clothes.



"Why, doctor," I said in a low voice, "the last time you came to this house you let blood sooner than this."

The doctor turned ashy pale, stammered, dropped the lancet, and exclaiming, "His mind is gone!" rushed from the room.

I had just strength enough to say, "Luigi, do not let that man enter the house again. Despatch a mounted messenger directly to Florence to Count Galli, and ask him to send me Dr. Guarducci."

In a week I had pretty well recovered, and was able to return to Florence. Three days before, Dr. Tyecchi and his son had left Carmignano, on their way to Leghorn, to embark for Alexandria—a great resort for implicated Italians. The younger son, a farmer, remained in the village.

A month later I started for England *via* Paris. In the November of that year I received a letter from Count Galli; it contained the following passage:

"You remember that rascal Tyecchi, whose crime gave such a ghastly conclusion to your visit to my villa—that visit which I warned you against; but you English are so obstinate, and you call it being firm—firm: yes, so is a wild boar when it charges on a hunting spear. Well, I think, after all, the rogue came to a bad end. He sailed in The Carmagnuola from Leghorn, in June last. That vessel was burnt at sea. Not one passenger escaped, and only three seamen and the captain. One of these survivors, writing to a New York paper, says, 'We pulled from the wreck about six P.M. The passengers had all taken refuge in the mainmast, the flames being then, as it was believed, put out. At half-past six, however, there was a tremendous explosion. The fire had reached the magazine. There was a roar, a fan of fire, a burst of splinters and bodies, and then we saw the smouldering wreck, looking scarcely larger on the horizon than a red-hot coal, sink down swift into the yawning darkness.' So much for Dr. Tyecchi, the Jonah of that unhappy vessel, the Carmagnuola, of Livorno. The family indeed seems a doomed one; for Orazio Tyecchi, the youngest son, is now in prison for murdering his mistress, of whom he was jealous, and a friend who tried to interpose between them. The Carnival was dull this year. I want an English barouche of the best quality; never mind price," &c. &c.

## DECLINE OF THE DRAMA

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THERE are few pieces of social cant more common than the habit of perpetually lamenting the decayed condition of the modern stage. That there are few with a smaller foundation will be readily acknowledged by any one who takes the trouble to investigate the matter. The notion is not, however, wholly unnatural. As a modern poet has said,

“ . . . the moments that are speeding fast  
We heed not ; but the past, the past  
More highly prize.”

Longfellow, in saying this, intended to convey a strictly moral lesson ; but the sentiment his words contain is deeper and wider than the poet thought. The old man who finds fault with the modern actor, and compares the stage of our own day with what he remembers of Kean and Macready, is something more than a mere dissatisfied grumbler with the goods the gods provide him. Unconsciously he is illustrating a curious metaphysical problem, and exemplifying a magnificent and consolatory truth. He is, indeed, proving the evanescent nature of all evil, and the permanence and strength of good. In his youth he, in all probability, heard similar complaints. The veteran of the present day compares the modern men with the elder Kean and the great John Kemble. In his youth we may be sure that there were plenty of old play-goers whose mouths were filled with the praises of Garrick and Quin and Sheridan. And so the chain might be taken up and examined link by link with the same result throughout. It is obvious that this is the result of that mental faculty which preserves in our memories only the pleasant part of past events. The people who concentrate their unwisdom in aphorisms refuse to accept this truth. They tell us that the good done in a man's life is often wholly blotted out, while the evil alone is permanent. In the rare instances when this is true, it will be found upon investigation that in the life of him to whom it applies the sum of good was so infinitely below that of evil, that the former is overshadowed by the latter, and so in time, as only broad outlines remain, and those of evil being the largest and darkest, they are naturally the most conspicuous. As a rule it will, however, be found as we have said. Take, for example, the case of a sayer of good things—a Sheridan, a Sydney Smith, or a Jerrold. Each and all of these have said thousands of good things, and by them they are remembered. The innumerable dull, flat, and pointless sayings to which each has given utterance fade from the memories of their hearers, and become like water spilt in the sand. Of any truth so ob-

vious as this it is needless to multiply examples. Applying it to our immediate subject, we shall at once perceive that the modern stage is scarcely likely to be worse than that of our ancestors; or that if it be so, its conditions must have materially altered, and that thus its defects arise less from want of ability in those concerned than from the increased difficulties against which they have to struggle. That English theatres, however, satisfy all demands that may be made upon them, is a position which few people will like to take up; on the contrary, it will generally be conceded that, whether as regards plays or their actors, we are yet a long way from perfection, and even far below the standard of cultivation which has generally been reached in other matters. The following pages are an attempt to suggest some of the reasons for this state of things.

First, then, as regards plays, it will be conceded that, from a merely literary point of view, the average drama of the nineteenth century is by no means such as a reading man has a right to expect. With the exception of Mr. Robertson, concerning whose dramatic faculty it is possible to hold two opinions, there is at the present time no absolutely original writer for the English stage. Mr. Falconer, it is true, has produced one or two works for which he claims the merit of originality. The coolness with which they have been received is, however, a very sufficient answer to his pretensions. For the rest, managers have to fall back upon Mr. Tom Taylor, Mr. Oxenford, and Mr. Dion Boucicault. The first-named has certainly the gift of writing very neat and appropriate dialogue. He may not have the brilliant wit of Congreve, or the terse incisiveness of Balzac; but he writes always with a sort of gracious humour which is eminently attractive. It is to this latter faculty that he owes the power he undoubtedly possesses of causing his characters to unfold themselves by slight touches rather than by elaborate description. Mr. Oxenford possesses the same power, though in a minor degree. His dialogue is always good sense and good English; but it is seldom so thoroughly characteristic as that of his rival. Possibly this arises from the different sources from which the two writers obtain their inspiration. The first takes usually for his text a French, and the latter an Italian or Spanish play. The work of the one is the more laborious, that of the other the more satisfactory. Mr. Tom Taylor finds the greater part of his dialogue ready to his hand. All that he has to concern himself with is its faithful rendering into English—faithful, that is to say, not in the sense of literality, but in that of appropriateness to the personage into whose mouth it is put. That he does this to perfection, most people will readily grant; that it is what is really meant by dramatic writing, few will believe. Mr. Oxenford proposes to himself a somewhat higher task. His speciality is the adaptation of the works of foreign authors in a wider sense than the mere translation of their words. As a rule, he seldom takes more from his original than the plot and a few hints as to the

manner of working it out. Unfortunately his power of conception is greater than his facility of elaboration; and the result is, that an impression of disappointment is left on the mind of the spectator, not to be effaced even by the brilliant passages which are by no means unfrequent in his plays. Of Mr. Boucicault's literary qualifications it is difficult to speak. Most people who have ever seriously examined the sensational dramas which have brought so much money and fame to this prolific writer will be apt to think rather meanly of his ability. He is, however, a consummate master of stage effect. Himself an actor, and with every item of stage business at his fingers' ends, he is perfectly aware of the best way in which to bring his practical knowledge to bear. He knows too that it is always worth while to cater for the "gods" and for the "groundlings." Hence he treats his auditors sometimes to little bits of sham sentiment, at others to pieces of ostentatious realism, and invariably to one great sensational scene in which the whole interest of the evening is concentrated. *Flying Scud*, which is now running so successfully at the Holborn Theatre, depends for its effect partly upon its realism, and partly upon two scenes; one of which at least might be cut out without the smallest injury to the action of the piece. The play opens with a scene wherein a real pump is introduced, out of which real water flows into a real bucket. Later on, a real horse is brought on the stage; and in the great scene of the course at Epsom on the Derby-day, the spectators are treated to a real Punch and Judy, and to a real Italian out of the slums of Saffron-hill, with a real monkey and hurdy-gurdy. Regarded purely as a matter of literature, the play is never above mediocrity; seldom, indeed, up to the ordinary level of second-rate author-craft. The characters are conventional and "stagey" to the last degree, and none of the incidents are fresh enough either in their nature or treatment, to render their evolution a matter of particular interest to the spectator who cares more for art than for glitter. The highest praise that he will be able to bestow on the author is that of being a clever mechanic—of acquaintance with all the mysteries of stage construction, and of a certain degree of skill in making use of his knowledge. For those higher qualities of passion, human interest, and the dramatic evolution of character, which reading may have prepared him to expect, he will look in vain. The first is utterly absent, the second is contained in a supremely absurd love-affair, and the last finds expression only in the adventures of a gang of swindling gamblers.

Weary of comedy "adapted from the French," and of melodrama pillaged from popular novels, the play-goer perhaps betakes himself to a theatre where burlesque is the order of the night. Strictly speaking, these are hardly dramatic pieces at all, though from their appearance on the regular stage, and from being played by actors and actresses of fair ability in other walks of their profession, they are usually classed under that heading. A clever writer attempted, not many years ago,

to prove that the writers of modern burlesques were the legitimate successors of Aristophanes; but though he asserted that there was only a step between the ancient playwright and his modern representatives, he was fain to confess that step a very long one. His position is, however, untenable. In the wildest fun of the Greek author there was always a purpose; in the modern works it would be hard to find any, except that of tickling the ears of the audience with music-hall melodies, or of exhibiting a number of actresses in the dress of Tom Moore's "pretty young Israelites"—"very thin clothing, and but little of it." Happily the taste for pieces of this description seems to be on the decline. The present manager of one theatre, who began by making burlesque its principal attraction, has reduced it to a secondary place, and, to judge by appearances, is in a fair way to get rid of it altogether, except at those festive periods when the theatrical world seems to imagine it necessary to lose sight of common sense. Burlesque needs, however, no ponderous artillery to crush it. A fashion of the day, it has blossomed, bloomed, and is now apparently dying unaided and unhindered alike by criticism. We ought not, moreover, to be too severe on a style of dramatic writing which has reared such genuine artists as Miss Marie Wilton, Mr. Hare, and Mr. John Clarke.

The reasons for the commonness of translations and the scarcity of original dramatic writing are neither numerous nor difficult of discovery. In the first place the manager has to be considered. He finds the production of a new piece a very expensive business in these days of costly scenery and elaborate mechanism. The old times of permanent stage-doors—"which," as Johnson's Ghost says, in the *Rejected Addresses*, "decorated with frappant and tintinnabulant appendages, now serve as the entrance of a lonely cottage, and now as the exit of a lady's bedchamber; at one time insinuating plastic harlequin into a butcher's shop, and at another yawning as a floodgate, to precipitate the Cyprians of St. Giles's into the embraces of Macheath;"—those days have passed away for ever. Scenery so elaborate that three or four generations ago it would have furnished the material for a special exhibition, is now employed in the illustration of even the poorest melodramas which are put on the stage. Naturally enough the manager looks to a long run to compensate him for the expense and labour of production on such a scale as this implies. Such a run is at least partially guaranteed by the success of the piece on the stage on which it was first produced. A little pruning and refining may be necessary; but that is a matter about which there need be no uneasiness. Pieces are not now damned on the first night of their performance; and it is so easy to cut out whatever the public palpably object to, by the second representation, that managers now appear to regard the first night rather as a dress-rehearsal than as a serious performance. Then, again, either the managers or the public, or perhaps both, have a distrust of "native talent." It is true that the former sometimes advertise it; but all the world knows that patriot-

ism and puffery bear a good deal of likeness to each other. As a rule the description which Mr. Forster gives of the booksellers of the last century is far more applicable to the people who creep—nobody quite knows how—into the position of managers. The writer just mentioned says of booksellers that as a class they “are more remarkable for the misvaluation of the raw material of their trade than any other in existence.” This might be said of a good many managers, with an addition, in some cases, to the effect that they do not even know the said “raw material” when they see it, and that they are as little capable of properly criticising an original drama as they are of adjusting a controversy on the Æolic digamma or the binomial theorem. The result is, that the work of criticism is intrusted to a subordinate, whose chief qualification is boundless impudence, and a force of assumption before which even his employer’s histrionic powers must fail.

But the responsibility for the present condition of affairs does not rest wholly with the managers. Dramatic authors are open to some of the blame, though it must be owned that their excuses are greater. Across the Channel an original writer can, as a rule, manage with little difficulty to maintain a fair position in the world, and even in some cases to accumulate a modest fortune. The neatest equipages in the Bois de Boulogne, the prettiest houses in the avenues of Passy, the chief places at feasts imperial and princely, the best stalls at the Opera, and the best *loges* at the little theatres, are all reserved for the successful dramatist. To him also are open other privileges, by no means to be despised, such as an occasional *fauteuil* in the Academy, or a post under Government with a large income and limited duties. All this is because the dramatic art is recognised as a branch of the higher species of literature, and, as such, is taken under the paternal protection of the Government. Here in England—not altogether absurdly perhaps—we talk about our independence, and rely upon the patronage of the public. Unfortunately, however, so many people come between the public and the playwright, that the latter gets only a small share of the reward designed for him. The sums paid even for good dramatic work in this country are notoriously inadequate ; so much so, in fact, that I believe there is not a single instance of any dramatic author in this country living by the profits of his vocation. Of those who are thus known to the public, some occupy various not very important posts in the Civil Service of the State ; others are actors and managers of theatres ; and others earn their daily bread by criticism and other literary work. Thus in all these cases there is a strong amateur element. Now—*pace* the *Saturday Review*—amateur work is seldom likely to be the best of its kind. Surely the man whose business it is to write must know better how to do his business than the man whose time is chiefly occupied, say, in official and departmental work in a Government office. No one would employ an amateur upholsterer to furnish his rooms, or expect that an amateur builder would succeed better in the construction

of a house than the trained artisan. And yet it is the opinion of some sanguine persons that furniture for the mind can best be created by amateur workmen. The fallacy is so self-evident that it surely needs only to be plainly stated in order to show its weakness. From all this I would argue the necessity for paying dramatic authors at least sufficient to enable them to live solely by work of that kind. That being done, dramatic writing is at once elevated to a profession; and instead of its practitioner giving only his spare time and a portion of his energies, he will be able to give the cream of both, with corresponding benefit to his work and to the public. Just now the quantity of fiction annually brought into existence is almost appalling. There seems little reason to doubt that some of the energy thus exhibited would work itself out upon the stage, if only the opportunity were afforded and the reward were assured.

Something more than an increase of reward is, however, necessary before we can expect any marked improvement in the quality of modern dramatic pieces. In the first place, the number of theatres demands an immediate increase; and in the second, the details of their management and the qualities of their companies both call for attention. Against the first step the managers of existing houses would of course protest loudly. Their craft would certainly be endangered, and it may very probably happen that their inordinate profits would suffer some diminution. As things are, however, the theatres are each and all of them sections of a vast and injurious monopoly. In nothing else have monopolies been found advantageous to the commonwealth, and there seems no reason to expect that this case should be an exception to the rule. The countries which are given up to monopolies and patent rights are the most backward in civilisation, and only advance therein as those monopolies are abandoned. Why, then, should we not have free-trade in the dramatic as in every other business? The public would assuredly be benefited; for, independently of the increased liberty of choice afforded to them, they would see the end of the system of inordinately "long runs" of the same play. As things are at present, no manager seems to be satisfied unless he can put up outside his theatre a transparency announcing the two-hundredth or three-hundredth night of the piece in course of performance within. The result is, that it is quite possible for the average playgoer to visit every theatre in succession within a fortnight, and then to have no further opportunity of so doing—unless, indeed, he likes seeing the same entertainment a second time—for four or five months. It is hardly necessary to urge the unpleasantness of this monotony to the auditors; but its evil effect upon the actors is scarcely appreciated. No one can, however, be a frequent visitor at any of the theatres where this system prevails without partially discovering it. After the first month or so of a piece the interest for all concerned has faded out. It becomes a tedious matter of business, only to be got through as soon and as easily as possible.

Once let the number of theatres be increased, and this system will receive its death-blow. Managers will be compelled to vary their programmes, and to give actors and audiences a change from the monotony which is crushing all life out of the dramatic art.

As regards the actors themselves, it is perhaps treading upon dangerous ground to suggest the possibility of an improvement. Yet that there is ample room for it every one must admit. The reasons are not very difficult to discover, and will probably be found to resolve themselves into two. First, actors, generally speaking, have no professional training; and, second, whatever original genius the supporter of a minor part may possess is utterly destroyed by the "starring" system. The want of professional training was formerly supplied—and on the whole with fair success—by the provincial theatres. They bore the fond title of "nurseries of the drama;" and they may be fairly considered to have justified it. A young man with a taste for the stage would, a century ago, attach himself to one or other of the great provincial companies. Once having gained his footing there, he was liable to be called upon to play almost any part at any moment. The traditions of the stage became familiar to him, and the wide range of his "business" enormously enlarged his professional knowledge. His work was, of course, exceedingly hard, and often very indifferently rewarded; but, after all, the time passed in the provinces was, to a man of any real ability, simply an apprenticeship, from which he emerged a more or less finished actor. Such was the training which prepared for the metropolitan stage every one of those great artists whose names are in the mouths of all who care for dramatic literature. We have changed all that within the last few years. The provincial stage is now a reproduction, on a smaller scale, and with peculiar defects of its own superadded, of that of the metropolis; and in the mean time its place has not been supplied by any professional dramatic school. As a consequence, we find that a young man is deemed fit for the stage after a few lessons from a tenth-rate artist, or a course of amateur performances at suburban tea-parties. Once on the stage, his opportunities for improvement are—except in very rare cases—utterly gone. He plays one part a year, and, naturally enough, finds the constant repetition of the same words and action an unmitigated bore, only to be got through as soon as possible, and with as little exertion as is compatible with an escape from the reproofs of the stage-manager. Time, care, and patience might have made him an artist; the fashion of the day has made him a hopeless drudge. Nor is the "star" system less injurious. Its most common development is where the same person is both actor and manager. Then the condition of the minor actors is pitiable indeed. The "star" must have all the "good business;" nobody must get in front of him, no matter what the exigencies of the part may be; and when he is on the stage the attention of the audience must on no account be distracted from him. Good acting is therefore rather a source of



dismay than of pleasure to the "star," and is carefully repressed by all possible means. It would perhaps be invidious to specify any particular theatre by name where this system prevails; but no habitual playgoer can help remembering one London house where it is in full vigour. There the manager began with an excellent working company. Every part in any ordinary piece could be intelligently filled, and the performance of a play, carefully rehearsed and sensibly cast, was a real intellectual treat. Gradually, however, Mr. Manager found that some of the minor characters attracted nearly as much attention as his own part. The season came to an end, the theatre closed for a short recess, and when it reopened the public discovered that all the actors who had been imprudent enough to play as well as they knew how were "eliminated" from the company. A similar process has been repeated more than once, and the end is that Mr. Manager finds himself "one star in a bundle of sticks," gets all the applause, and is gradually awakening, as he surveys his half-empty theatre, to the conviction that the patience of even the long-suffering British public may be exhausted at last.

Little can, however, be done towards improving the condition of the British drama until it becomes subject to a greatly-improved system of criticism. It might almost be said, indeed, that there is no such thing nowadays as dramatic criticism. The notices of theatrical performances which appear in the various journals can only by a stretch of courtesy be dignified by such a title, save in a few instances. Mr. Puff in the *Critic* is the model whom most of our modern censors appear to draw. "The day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received. I have the plot from the author, and only add: 'Characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—fund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—Attic salt.' Then for the performance: 'Mr. Dod was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry. That universal and judicious actor Mr. Palmer perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the Colonel. But it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King; indeed, he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience. As to the scenery, the miraculous powers of Mr. de Louthembourg's pencil are universally acknowledged. In short, we are at a loss which to admire most—the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers.'"

It does not of course follow, though much of our modern dramatic criticism seems modelled on this pattern, that every dramatic critic is a Mr. Puff. Far from that being the case, they are in most cases gentlemen of culture and education; but they are under an infinite number of restraints in the expression of their opinions. The proprietors of some newspapers impose many, friendly relations with actors, actresses,

and dramatic authors impose yet more; while the system of free admissions is in many cases an almost insurmountable barrier to plain-speaking. That managers so regard it, is evident from a correspondence which was made public not long ago. On that occasion a certain critic had been bold enough to find fault with both the acting and the management of a particular theatre. In reply, the manager counted up the number of free admissions which had been given to the newspaper in which the strictures appeared, and ended by withdrawing the *entrée* altogether. There were circumstances about the case which to some extent excused the manager; but the unpleasant fact remains, that in some quarters at least the free admissions are looked upon as bribes for favourable notices. The possibility of such a thing could surely be done away in the future. It would not be a very onerous tax on newspaper proprietors were they to be called upon to pay the necessary price of admission in those cases where the notice of a new piece was deemed desirable; and such a step would, at the lowest, relieve the critic from the uneasy feeling that he is censuring a performance the manager of which has admitted him gratuitously in hope of a favourable verdict. Other influences may not be got rid of so easily, especially the tendency which besets certain critics to make their work the vehicle of personal spite or equally personal friendliness. This one reform may, however, be accomplished without the smallest trouble; and if newspaper proprietors are the disinterested beings which some people imagine them, there is no reason why it should be delayed. For the other reforms which our theatres demand we may perhaps have to wait. Perfection is a plant of slow growth, and can scarcely be expected in this world. In Utopia—or in Salt Lake City, according to Mr. Hepworth Dixon—we may perhaps find a perfect theatre; in London such a thing may be hopeless. There is, however, no reason why the very obvious defects which we have pointed out should not be removed, and some approach made towards bringing our amusements up to the standard which has been attained in almost everything else. Let an attempt in this direction once be made, and little more will be heard of the worn-out cry about the “Decline of the Drama.”

J. FRANCIS HITCHMAN.

## IN THE WIND

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BOREAS,—rude, ruddy, jovial king!—  
Sad pranks plays he with her hair ;  
The old fellow has got an eye for effect,  
And he knows when a picture is fair.

A gold lock strays from the prisoning hat ;  
And the hue of the midsummer rose  
Is not one scruple more tenderly pink  
Than the cheek upon which he blows.

And the bright eyes dance with a light in their blue,  
As they're caught by the mischievous wind,  
With the wholesome joy of a vigorous health,  
And the peace of an innocent mind.

There is "consciousness" 'neath that "fall" of lace—  
For she knows she is fair as the day ;  
An arch glance is thrown upon *me*, upon *you*,  
Upon *both*—upon—who can say ?

The small booted feet trip over the road,  
And the wayfarer's glance is caught,  
Since the scarlet-corded—you know what I mean—  
Is, it may be, a trifle short !

So the frigate daintily saileth on,  
Right daintily picks her way,  
With her trim taut sails all set in the breeze,  
Her artillery all in array.

Broadsides into our hearts she pours,  
And she cripples and kills with a frown,  
Till our tottering mast-heads "go by the board,"  
And we haul our colours down !

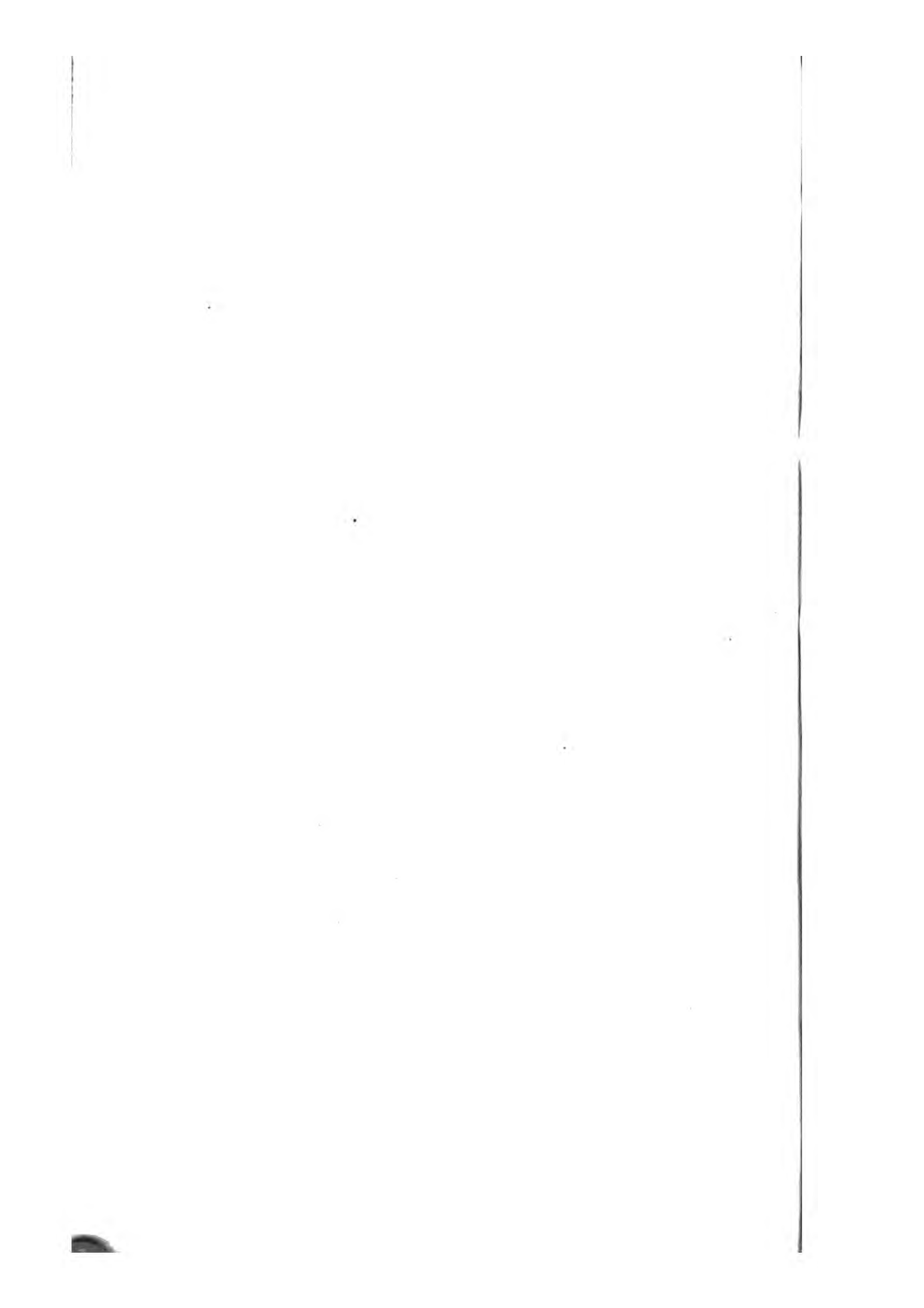
ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.



J. G. Thomson, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

IN THE WIND.



## FROM ST. PAUL'S TO PICCADILLY

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To the Londoner every London street has an unmistakable individuality. I use the term "Londoner" in a restricted sense; for by it I mean not a mere resident in London, but one who is intimately acquainted with the great city in all its ramifications. It requires but little familiarity with London streets to be able to distinguish at a glance Piccadilly from Fleet-street, or even Oxford-street from the Strand; for the physical distinctions between these great thoroughfares are broadly marked. But to know Baker-street from Wimpole or Harley-street—to be able to state positively, from the mere aspect of the two places, whether you are in Bedford or Russell-square—argues an exceptional familiarity not only with the geography, but with the minuter physical attributes of the respective localities. Every street in London, however, possesses peculiarities of its own, which distinguish it in the eyes of an *habitué* from every other of the same class. I do not allude to mere architectural peculiarities, but rather to the individuality which it derives from the characteristic men and women who are to be found in it. This is particularly true of the main thoroughfares of London. I do not, of course, mean that a man who may be taken as a representative characteristic of a particular street is not to be met with beyond its precincts; we find costermongers in Piccadilly, and peers in Whitechapel; but Piccadilly and Whitechapel retain, nevertheless, their unmistakable identities.

Perhaps this curious feature of the streets of London is seen to the best advantage in the course of a walk from, say, Ludgate Hill to Hyde Park corner. In the course of this walk you meet with thirty or forty distinct types of men who may be broadly taken as belonging to the same social class, but who possess, nevertheless, individualities which a skilled observer will have very little difficulty in detecting. Authors, artists, publishers, actors, government and bankers' clerks, barristers, attorneys, members of parliament, dramatists, men about town of every type, medical men, students of law, physic, and divinity—together with an infinite variety of types of a lower class—small tradesmen, barristers' and attorneys' clerks, comic singers, detectives, Jew cigar-dealers, foreigners in trouble; and in a lower class still, carc and skittle sharpeners, acrobats, and beggars. Each and every one of these classes of "representative" men may be divided and sub-divided by a skilful observer into an infinity of smaller groups, each of which has a strongly-marked individuality of its own.

If I start westward from St. Paul's Churchyard, the first important

type that I meet with is the Old-Bailey witness. And it is curious to observe how wonderfully alike these Old-Bailey witnesses are, considering that they are not brought together by any process of selection. They are merely a "fortuitous concourse of atoms" brought into contact by totally distinct chains of circumstance. They have, probably, no concern in common, save the desire to procure the conviction or acquittal of the prisoners in whom they are respectively interested; but they seem to be drawn from precisely the same class of society, and to be, moreover, on intimate terms with each other. They all look as if they had been waiting about the corner of Ludgate-hill and the Old Bailey for months past, and had had no opportunity of attending to their toilets during the time. They all look mildewy and unwholesome; and they wear, for the most part, the same look of painful preoccupation. But, wonderfully as they resemble each other at first sight, it does not require the eye of a detective to distinguish the thieves' witnesses from those for the prosecution. The "witnesses to character," the respectable tradesman "who has known the gentleman at the bar from a babby," may be identified by the hope, that is photographed in his face, that there may happen to be no detective in court who knows that he is "wanted." The wife who has been stamped upon is there to exaggerate the provocation she has given her husband, in the hopes that it will reduce his sentence, and so restore the bread-winner (such as he is) to her in a shorter time than if she told the bald truth about it. They are an unsavoury set, these witnesses; and moreover there are many professional pickpockets among them, who are apt to while away the weary hours of waiting by the exercise of their professional calling upon casual passers-by. So we will, if you please, tarry among them no longer than we can help.

Who are these seedy, gin-flavoured, red-nosed, knowing-looking fellows who hang about the corner common to Bridge-street and Fleet-street? They occupy the whole breadth of the footway, and so drive respectable passers-by into the muddy roadway. They are betting-men, and they are busy with their books on the principal forthcoming "events." A curious feature of these gentry is that their toilet is spruce and to a certain extent neat, though decidedly flashy as regards the upper part of their persons; but the lower you go down, the seedier they get. Their hats are old, but they are glossy notwithstanding—glossy with the gloss they derive from the application of wet sponges; their collars are often clean, and their neck-scarfs are arranged with an elaborate precision which you would look for in vain among members of recognised professions; you will find them secured with a thick gold pin, and this thick gold pin will be stuck with mathematical precision right into their exact centres. But after this comes a falling off. The coat, which once was blue or green, is a rusty brown, except in those parts which are partially protected from atmospheric and other influences by the collar, pocket-flaps, and arms, and from which you

may obtain a clue that will guide you to the garment's original colour. But bad as are their coats, they are quite respectable when the trousers are taken into consideration ; and the trousers are evidently ashamed (and with reason) of their association with the boots. I suppose that this anomalous state of things is to be accounted for by the fact that these gentlemen transact their business in great crowds, and the lower part of their persons being consequently concealed from view, they do not see the necessity of spending much money upon its adornment. Moreover, the money they save in boots and trousers they are enabled to spend upon neckties and gold pins, and so convey an impression of capital which they otherwise might find some little difficulty in doing.

Between this and Chancery-lane the predominant feature in the crowd will be a number of seedy, rather dirty, but more or less intellectual-looking men, with long hair, unkempt beards, and no gloves. These are probably journalists. They all know each other, and they are all very sociably disposed. So much so, indeed, that they find it a work of time to get from one end of Fleet-street to the other. A "gentleman of the press" who sets out from Temple-bar to, say, Shoe-lane, meets another at the Inner-Temple Gate, who is going in the opposite direction. For the sake of a few minutes of congenial companionship, he walks westward with him as far, perhaps, as Essex-street, where, finding Polter of the *Morning Muffin* travelling in the direction in which he originally started, he hooks on to Polter, and travels with him towards Shoe-lane. But Polter is only going as far as Wine-Office Court, at the corner of which is the Cheshire Cheese, where sherry and bitters may be had. They have their sherry and bitters ; and as they are about to part, who should come in but Balderby, who does smart leaders for the *Daily Detonator* ! Balderby is going to his publisher's in the Strand about some reprints, and the traveller to Shoe-lane turns back with Balderby, and saunters with him as far as Fetter-lane. Here he meets Wilkins the comic artist, who is going home to Camberwell to finish the sketches for his pantomime masks, which are all behindhand ; and it is just possible that, as Wilkins engrosses my traveller's attention by displaying his rough sketches one after another, as they walk along arm-in-arm, my traveller may reach the desired haven of Shoe-lane without further interruption.

Other features of this eastward half of Fleet-street are pale-faced men with shock heads and weak eyes, who go about in shirt-sleeves and slippers, and small boys with smudgy faces, big dirty calico aprons, and arms bared to the elbow. These are printers and "devils." They are to be found in great numbers about the turnings north of Fleet-street, especially Wine-Office Court, between one and two o'clock in the afternoon. They will turn up again when we have passed the Church of St. Mary-in-the-Strand.

Now we come under Temple influences. The ugly, clever-looking men, with powerful mouths and firm upper lips, who are dressed



carelessly enough, but who look like gentlemen notwithstanding, are barristers eminent at Westminster and Guildhall. It may be taken as a tolerably safe rule that the shabbier the barrister, the more he has to do. There are certainly such things as dandy Queen's Counsel and needy men in their first year to be found; but these may be taken as the exceptions which are said to prove every rule. The string of gentlemanly, well-dressed young fellows who are turning into Inner Temple Lane as we pass are bar-students, who are bound for the Common-Law lecture in Inner Temple Hall. They are smart enough now; but ten years hence, if they attain anything like success in the profession they have chosen, they will be as careless as to their personal appearance as they are now particular. The snuffy, dried-up old gentleman who is crossing the road towards Chancery-lane, and who would look like an undertaker's mute if we judged him by his clothes alone, is an eminent common-law judge on his way to Judges' Chambers in Serjeants' Inn.

But, as a rule, the shabbiness of the working barrister is a totally different thing to the shabbiness of an unsuccessful professional man. His clothes are well cut, and they are shabby not because they are old, but because they are carelessly kept; his hat is not worn out, it is simply unbrushed; and then his linen is in good order. He wears no gloves, and his hands are habitually in his trousers' pockets; and he carries no stick or umbrella when you see him in mid-day, for he is only going to the "Cock," or to Prosser's, or to Lynn's, for his afternoon chop or a dozen oysters, or he is bound for Judges' Chambers or his bookseller's. Very different to the shabbiness of the barrister is the shabbiness of the attorney, when *he* is shabby. He is often carefully dressed; for he is brought face to face with clients and witnesses much more frequently than the barrister, who, save perhaps at an occasional consultation, never sees either until the case in which they are concerned is called on in court. But if the attorney *is* shabby, he is shabby indeed. His clothes wear the seediness of clothes that never were good, and his boots bulge with the lopsided bulginess of boots that are bought ready-made.

The dapper showy young men who cross and re-cross to Chancery-lane are barristers' clerks—I mean, clerks that really are clerks, and not domestic servants. There are two classes of barristers' clerks: young and middle-aged men, who work hard and well at legitimate clerking, and who are often intelligent assistants to their employer in his professional duties; and small boys and faded old men, who are "shared" by three or four briefless ones, and whose only duties are to receive and deliver messages for their masters, to fetch and carry beer and oysters, and to assist the local "laundress" in her domestic duties. If the proprietors, or any of them, of a small boy happen to get into professional business, the small boy's prospects will probably improve with those of his master's; but for the faded old men there is little hope.

The attorneys' clerks are a totally different class of men. They are seldom very showy (except on Sundays, with which we have nothing to do), and they carry their briefs as if they were not ashamed of them. They are very knowing in the matter of the respective merits of different eminent counsel, and speak of them in a horribly familiar manner.

Temple influences extend to Essex-street; and from Essex-street to Somerset-house there is little to remark in the passers-by, except that there is a certain rustic look about many of them, combined with an expression of thoughtful anxiety on their faces which suggests that they are inventors, and would-be patentees, who are occupying temporary lodgings in Norfolk and Arundel-streets. Passing a group of raw youths, who are King's-College students, we find ourselves in the midst of a crowd of passengers, most of whom are government clerks. These are gentlemanly-looking young men, who are *employés* in the Admiralty and Audit Offices, and others, not quite so gentlemanly, who devote their attention to the innumerable details of the Inland Revenue. In the "season" these young men are, for the most part, carefully dressed; for they are liberated from their official duties at four o'clock, and intend to spend the two subsequent hours over the rails in Rotten-row, of which they are—especially the younger members of them—distinguished ornaments. A government clerk knows no medium between being a great swell and an irreclaimable dowdy. The great swells marry on 250*l.* a-year; and, becoming dowdies perforce, they have to exchange hansom cabs and Rotten-row for the tops of omnibuses and a dreary cottage at Hammersmith.

As soon as we have passed Wellington-street, the Strand assumes a theatrical tone which there is no mistaking. Close-shaven men, with new hats, blue chins, and moustachios, pervade the thoroughfare in twos and threes, between Wellington-street and Lacy's, the theatrical bookseller. Young ladies,—whose faces you seem to know, but you can't think where you have seen them,—pass and repass, nodding to the blue-chinned gentlemen, whose appearance is not altogether unfamiliar to you, although you can't make out, for the life of you, where you and they have met. These are actors and actresses—not of the first rank in the profession perhaps, but decent middle-class professionals, whose names, at all events, are known to you, if you are a pretty regular theatre-goer. They are going to, or coming from, rehearsal; or perhaps the gentlemen are out of engagements, and having no "lengths" to study and no rehearsals to attend, find a consolation in spending the tedious day in the neighbourhood of the theatrical taverns and small clubs with which the district north of the Strand abounds. And perhaps the ladies are bound for their afternoon coffee and buns at Creighton's.

The interval between Southampton-street and the Adelphi may be regarded as the peculiar property of dramatists, actors, essayists, and authors of every reputable class. Three or four well-known literary

and theatrical clubs are within a few hundred yards of this classic spot; and it will rarely happen that you can traverse the short distance between Southampton-street and the Adelphi without meeting someone whose name, at all events, is or should be familiar to you, if you pretend to be at all *au fait* in literary or theatrical affairs. This is particularly the case on a Saturday afternoon. New pieces of importance are usually produced on Saturday nights nowadays; and the actors, dramatists, and critics who are interested in the result usually dine at one or other of the clubs to which I have alluded, before they proceed to the "business of the evening."

The interval between the Adelphi and Pall Mall has perhaps less individuality than any other portion of the route we have chosen, though the Lowther Arcade, the cheaper military lodging-houses of Craven-street and Northumberland-street, the Charing-cross railway, and the National Gallery, each and all contribute their peculiar quota to the busy tide of passers-by. Perhaps it is because the stream owes its existence to so many sources that I find a difficulty in readily identifying its nature. The intending travellers by the Charing-cross line, the family party for the Lowther Arcade, the soldierly occupants of the Northumberland-street lodgings, and the country or holiday visitors to the National Gallery may be identified at a glance.

We will, if you please, avoid the Haymarket, and make our way westward through Pall Mall. After passing an unsavoury collection of Jew cigar-dealers, distinguished foreigners, and cheap little men about town, which infests the Colonnade, we reach the eastern limit of West-end life. Pall Mall is, as everybody knows, the head-quarters of London clubdom. The first indication of this is to be found in the pursy, mottle-faced old warriors who are to be seen going in and out of the "Senior." They do not lounge on the steps of their club, these mottle-faced old gentlemen, as do their younger brethren of the "Rag." They go in and come out with an air of doing it with a purpose: for the most part, their days of lounging and loafing about London are long past. They have been bucks of the first water in their day; but their day is gone by, and though they are bucks still, they are bucks with a smack rather of the Regency than of the Victorian era. They still stick to the high collars, stiff satin stock, curly hat and tight straps of forty years ago; but, for all their accuracy of dress and punctilio of manner, these old gentlemen, as a rule, are very jolly old gentlemen indeed, when they get together. They have good stories to tell about this or that dowager,—when she was a reigning beauty in '23; though, for matter of that, they do not confine their attention to dowagers. The beauties of '23 have grown old in mind as well as in body; but the dashing subs who admired them then have remained much as they were, save in the matter of rank and outward appearance. Their faces are redder and their moustachios whiter, their sword-belts have been let out some half-dozen holes, and their morning headaches have given way

to chronic gout; but their tastes are those of young fellows of thirty, nevertheless. They have the reputation of being stern old pipeclayists, and the stiff high stock, cross-belts, and white-braided coatee, find staunch advocates among them still. Many of them are decrepit enough now; but see them on a levee day: decrepitude never looks so well as when decked out in stars, medals, and K.C.B. ribbons, and passers-by who would not hesitate to sneer at the quiet and rather eccentric-looking old gentleman in clothes of superannuated cut as a "mouldy old foggy," step respectfully aside to allow him to pass, when decked in the bravery he has won in the Peninsula, India, and Crimea.

Who are these solemn old gentlemen, with gold eye-glasses, and ngly but intelligent faces, who are turning in and out of the building at the opposite corner of Waterloo-place? They are members of the Athenæum, the most eminent, from an intellectual point of view, and the most unsociable from a domestic point of view, of all the first-class clubs in London. These grave old gentlemen are distinguished antiquarians, adventurous travellers, eminent divines, successful barristers, popular novelists, and first-class essayists. If you want to make one of them, you must wait patiently for the fifteen years or so which must elapse between your nomination and election—don't be deterred by the consideration that you are not an eminent man now—you may be utterly unknown to every soul in England except your relations and your tradespeople at the date of your nomination, and Great Britain may ring with your fame long before your election. You will have plenty of time between those two dates to make for yourself a famous name—and to lose it, and be utterly forgotten too, for the matter of that.

These busy, independent-looking gentlemen are members of the Reform Club; and those remarkably gentlemanly-looking] old Conservatives are members of the Carlton—two clubs that sit side by side, and frown at each other out of the corners of their eyes, like two old ladies who are not "on terms," but who happen to rent adjoining stalls at the Opera.

Another batch of dashing-going civil servants are hovering about the entrance to the War Office; and opposite a group of smart young warriors are lounging about the steps of the Rag. These young gentlemen are a fair type of better middle-class young Englishmen. They are generally well-dressed; they smoke fair cigars; they are honourable; they are in debt; they are brave; they are rather fast, but, nevertheless, they are gentlemanly. I should like to talk about them for two or three pages more, for I take a kindly pleasure in studying the ways and means of these military and civil servants of the Crown; but the exigencies of time and space will only allow me to glance at them *en passant*. The British linesman is altogether a peculiar being—utterly unlike any other member of any other profession, and he deserves an essay to himself. As you see him here, on the steps of the Rag, he is probably up from Aldershott, Canterbury, or Colchester, for a few

days in Piccadilly, the Burlington Arcade, and (in the season) Rottenrow and the drive—and for a few nights at the burlesque theatres.

Passing the gloomy portals of the Oxford and Cambridge Club, with its clerical and country-gentlemen members, and the snug little "Guards," with its soldierly aristocratic *habitués*, we come upon St. James's-street, where the constituents of all the clubs in Pall Mall, besides those of Arthur's, White's, Boodle's, the Conservative, the St. James's, the New University, and half-a-dozen others, meet on common ground, and so into Piccadilly, where the stream of West-end life is considerably adulterated by the admixture of a powerful trade element—which, however, may be said to cease where the Green Park begins, and from this point to Hyde Park Corner the people you meet are for the most part such as those you found in Pall Mall, together with a considerable sprinkling of the mercantile and clerkly element, especially between four and six o'clock in the afternoon.

I have only glanced at the different classes of men who may be said to be typical of the various districts of the great thoroughfares through which we have passed ; but I have, I think, made out my case, that every 100 yards of metropolitan street has a distinguishing characteristic of its own—entirely apart from that which it derives from its architectural peculiarities. And this is as true of Whitechapel and Shoreditch as it is of Pall Mall and St. James's-street. In the eyes of the practised East-ender there is as great a difference between Whitechapel and Shoreditch as there is between Piccadilly and Pall Mall in the eyes of a West-end loungeur.

W. S. GILBERT.

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## GUSTAVE DORÉ

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MOTHERS are continually discovering in their little treasures marvellous tendencies to every talent man was ever blessed with; and, as a natural consequence, mothers are sometimes in the right as regards their offspring's latent tastes. Such a mother, the wife of a civil engineer at Strasbourg, accompanied by her little boy, called some twenty years ago on the celebrated Frenchman Horace Vernet, the painter of those numerous battle-pieces which fill so many of the galleries at Versailles. The lady had brought a portfolio of sketches, which she submitted to the judgment of the artist of the day; and the child at her side was the artist thus introduced to his already famous compatriot.

Horace Vernet, struck with the originality which stamped the character of these youthful attempts, exclaimed on seeing them: "Encourage your son to continue in the path he has chosen, madame; but, whatever you do, *don't let him have a master.*"

The mother took the artist's advice; and such was the boy's progress, that at fourteen years of age he was employed by Monsieur Philippon, the proprietor of the *Magasin Pittoresque*, and the founder of the *Journal pour rire*, on the staff of artists, among whom Gavarni, Valentin, and Tony Johannot, were most prominent.

This boy was Gustave Doré, who not twenty years after received the decoration of the Legion of Honour for his illustrations to Dante's *Inferno*, and whose prolific pencil is now continually occupied by firms in London or Paris in the artistic embellishments to popular works which the taste of the day demands, and which public judgment in his case has crowned with its preference.

Although prophets are supposed generally to receive little or no encouragement in their own country, it is very rare nowadays for an artist to find his works popular in a foreign land. By popular we mean, known to the people. But the name of Gustave Doré is now certainly as well known in this country as that of John Gilbert or John Leech; and we owe much to Messrs. Cassell for the publication in an English form of most of the best known of Doré's works, and certainly of the best productions of his genius. To Mr. Moxon, however, the credit is due of being the first English publisher who has made use of this artist's powers to illustrate on steel the work of a contemporary genius; and *Elaine*, by Alfred Tennyson, illustrated by Gustave Doré, is a most interesting proof of the cordiality existing at the present day between the artistic sympathies of France and England.

If the reader will kindly accompany us as *cicerone*, we will go

through the Doré Gallery, and point out the more especial beauties which make of this young artist the greatest feature in modern art.

The first work of Doré's which made its appearance in England, and which the indefatigable Messrs. Cassell have since republished with an English version of the ballad, was the *Wandering Jew*; and in many points this will never perhaps be surpassed by the artist. His later works no doubt give proof of more diligent study of the figure, of a more decided mastery of composition, of greater *art*, in fact; but it is just that natural unsophisticated originality running riot through the picture-stanzas of this weird legend which gives the charm which we miss in some of his more modern fantasies.

What is remarkable in almost everything produced by M. Doré is the separate individuality which characterises his pencil. He seems to incorporate himself with his subject; and while his power of mental vision grasps all the ramifications of one line of thought and all the variations of which imaginative generation is capable, he has the rare faculty of transferring the same to canvas; and whatever his failings, no artist has ever succeeded in representing the *quasi*-infinite as Doré has. This power of following his subject to the core is startling in the illustrations to the *Wandering Jew*. From first to last the wretch who is expiating on earth his cruelty to the fainting Saviour is pursued by the vision of his crime. As he treads the solitary forest he sees the patient sufferer in the branches that moan above him, in the shadows thrown on the ground he crosses, in the very clouds that pass across the moonlight: though beleaguered by fighting armies, he passes safe, wounded only by his conscience, which still pictures the cross and the goading torturers that surround it; though forced to suffer all the risks by sea and land which flesh is heir to, he fears but the remembrance of his heavy sin. As an example of Doré's powers of grotesque humour we may draw attention to the design representing the Wandering Jew in the *Platz* of some old German town, surrounded by wondering burghers and gaping children. The very geese are clamorous at the sight;

"On n'a jamais vu  
Un homme aussi barbu."

His passion for the delineation of the grimly grotesque was first noticeable in France in the illustrations to Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques*; stories written by the giant romancer in imitation of the facetiæ which were so much the delight of the Courts of Louis XI. and Francis I.—stories the imitative fidelity of which unfortunately prohibits positive translation, although we should feel grateful to any publisher who would adapt them so as to give the public the benefit of more of Doré's earlier marvels.

The artist certainly revels in the purely fantastic; and it is this tendency, tempered by a greater knowledge of the requirements of art, which led him to illustrate the works of a poet whose extraordinary powers in describing the horrors of a world of punishment made him

shunned by his own countrymen, and pointed out by the superstitious as one who had trod the confines of the supernatural. It took a Doré to delineate what Dante imagined; and richly did the artist deserve the decoration which he received.

Look at the picture of Dante wandering helplessly in the gloomy forest where he is met by Virgil, who offers to show him the punishments of hell and purgatory. As far as the eye can pierce there is a visible darkness creeping round the gnarled trunks of a primeval forest—not an outlet, and scarcely an entrance, but for the light which falls on Dante, hopelessly bewildered in the midst of tangled briars and silent solitude.

Admire, as you pass on, the constant variety of form in the artist's treatment of masses, the crowds of nude figures which recur, but are never repeated. Come into the eighth circle, where sinners who have deceived the hearts of too resistless women are scourged by demons. How intense the movement expressed! what delight the devils feel at the pain they extract from the writhing flesh of their victims!

On farther into the ninth or frozen circle (*Inferno*, xxxii.), where Virgil and Dante cross the sea of ice in which the traitors are frozen up. All around heads pierce the glittering floor. Here bodies stand out, stiffened not in death but with frost; while far away the dreadful river hides itself in the black frosty night.

Or that series which represents in all its sad horror the dreadful episode of Count Ugolino's imprisonment,—the father and his sons left to famish in the tower of Pisa by Archbishop Ruggieri. He awakes before dawn, and hears his starving sons ask him in their sleep for bread. The craving of his famished children and the despairing inability to help pictured on the father's face are admirably represented in the series of these pictures which accompany the story. He sees them one by one die around him, and then Doré draws a curtain over the concluding horrors.

In the Milton there are few designs which can compare with those in the Dante. The *Paradise Lost* does not afford the same scope for romantic imagination; but there is a tameness in the conception of most of the illustrations which makes one fear that the artist does not give himself sufficient time for the necessary development of his thoughts. Another reason brings us to what may be called the clay feet of the golden statue. Doré, undeniably great as he is in almost every style of his art, has up to the present moment an insurmountable barrier in female beauty. It is not that he does not feel feminine grace—for he has the sentiment of loveliness in most of his figures—but, with scarcely an exception, all his women are particularly plain, and very often ugly. In the nude she is open to the objection of being too Michael-Angelesque, without the beauty of that great man's spirit; but draped, she is almost always graceful, never lovely. And this has rendered *Paradise Lost*, in which Eve is the principal personage, out of



Doré's reach. The Eve of Doré is as commonplace as any ordinary model can be. Look at the Francesca di Rimini, again, in the Dante. Heavy and essentially unlovely. Some figures with a little more pretention to good looks may be found after search in the illustrations to *Don Quixote*, which do more to stamp Doré as a master than any other work. In these illustrations he has reached the climax in his mastery over composition; and this more particularly refers to the wonderful pictures which will be found at the headings of most of the chapters. The harmonious balancing of his masses of light and shade—and in these headings the brush is rarely if ever used—the perfect distribution of the interest, while the intention is never lost sight of, have never been surpassed, and form a series of groups of which the old masters might be proud, and which, though often sketchy in treatment, are never careless, and always original.

Of the larger drawings there are many to admire and to wonder at. The representation of Camacho's wedding, with the crowds of musicians, jongleurs, beggars, dancers, bridesmaids, men, women, and children, will bear comparison for bustle, jollity, and perpetual motion with the Kermesse of Rubens and the camps of Callot. On one side the rollicking round of dancers; on the other the entry of a troupe of Bohemians; here a noble visitor distributing largesse, and there an unfortunate mignon left *planté* in his sedan, the bearers dashing after the rolling coin with the rest. No one incident sacrificed to another, but one complete picture of the ever-varying interests of the crowd.

Although it would be undeniably a difficult thing to give a better idea of Don Quixote, whose individuality is remarkable through the series, yet the figure of Sancho Panza will probably better satisfy the lovers of Cervantes; and for this there is the excellent reason that the ready-witted peasant so charmingly rendered by the Spanish romancer still exists. And as the indefatigable Doré travelled over the same country as the knight of the rueful countenance, he had many opportunities for studying the nature of the country and its inhabitants. The groups of Spanish peasants and the views of sierra, sandy plains, and stunted heaths, are all *taillés sur le vif*, drawn from life.

The marvellous facility which Doré possesses of adapting his scenery to his figures is in the *Quixote* to be accounted for from the fact of his travelling for that purpose; but if you will turn to the designs accompanying the Atala of Chateaubriand, you will find the poetry of savage life so intuitively comprehended by Doré that it seems incredible to hear that the artist has not passed his life among jungles and lianas. The boundless solitude of the prairie, the grandeur of the rolling cataract, the voice of the Great Spirit in the woods that bend to the storm, all seem as familiar to him as the ice-fields of Dante or the posadas of Cervantes.

Open at the river which Chactas and Atala are swimming across: how gracefully the broad-leaved water-plants break the hanging lines of

the lianas! how the whole seems bathed in liquid sunlight! Pass on to the Forest on Fire: where can his eye have seen these herds of frightened animals, this stampede for life? One hears the wood crackle behind as column after column of smoke rolls upwards. Remark the change from the poetry of movement to that of repose in the cypress wood, where the chief lays out his dead love. For dramatic effect this moonlight scene has never been surpassed. In this work, again, the smaller drawings are equal to anything Doré has ever done; and we are glad to hear that arrangements have already been made between the French publishers and a London firm for the production of Chateaubriand's *Atala* in which are found incontestably Doré's best landscapes.

The success of this young artist has arrived at such a point that a rush, so to speak, has been made, and his art has been in such demand that many of his later works suffer in consequence. The Bible and the works of Milton certainly contain many fine compositions, but more which are weak, and many still which are commonplace. The illustrations to the New Testament are nearly all undistinguished by originality, most of the compositions being familiar in the old masters' treatment of similar subjects. And indeed, were it not for some dozen gems among the drawings in the Old Testament, we should almost regret that Doré had dared the task. But those few are gems worth setting. The Sending out of the Dove, the Plague of Darkness, and the Cutting-down Cedars for the Temple, may be mentioned first. Then the attention is arrested by the finest effort of wood-engraving ever known. The Return of the Ark from its captivity is simply a marvel, and shows how the Parisian engravers have felt what Doré intended. The hot sunny atmosphere that pervades the whole scene where the reapers are looking up, and behold with delight the return of the symbol of their faith, has never been surpassed in reality by Turner or Claude, with all the colours of the prism at their command.

Doré has opportunities for indulging in the sublimely grotesque, as he only can, in the visions of Ezekiel and Daniel,—the Dry-bones made flesh, and the Beasts in the Sea. Then, again, there is another superb example of the dramatic in the Jonah and the Whale: the commotion of the sea caused by the retreat of the monster, the evident wonder of Jonah on the coral rock at his miraculous escape, the sunset after the storm, make of this design a masterpiece of art.

Many of the battle-pieces are well worthy of the artist's fame, especially the death of Eleazar of the Maccabees. Of the New Testament, the best are some of the parables; and of these perhaps that one containing the story of Dives and Lazarus will retain its hold of memory the longest. Among other works of Doré's which have made their way into English homes are, the Fairy Stories of Perrault, the Adventures of Baron Munchausen, and the Legend of Croquemitaine,—in all of which he uses the remarkable powers which he possesses for grim humour and original distribution of light and shade. All

these drawings—of which there are thousands now in circulation—have been drawn, and in many cases painted, on the wood, and we cannot leave them without calling attention to the masterly way in which they have been translated by the gravers of Pisan and Pannemaker. There is an erroneous idea extant, that it is far easier to render a painting in wood-engraving than to produce a *fac-simile*; and for this reason we are overrun with drawings which are made to resemble etchings, instead of bringing out the power of wood-engraving. It is not to be denied that a faithful *fac-simile* requires great care and judgment; but is there an engraver in England, except perhaps Linton himself, who could bring out the silvery tones of Doré's pictures in the way these Frenchmen have? We fear not.

But the last additions to the Doré Gallery are the result of work on steel, and, as we have already said, are due to the publishers, Messrs. Moxon and Co. These are the first drawings of the artist which had been produced on steel; and how well the engravers—of whom Mr. J. H. Baker is the principal—have done their task was evident while the original sketches in ink and white were lying for inspection at Messrs. Colnaghi's in Pall Mall. The comparison will show the advantage perhaps of using wood in preference to steel; for there are crisp contrasts of light and shade more intense in the originals than in the engravings; but as far as steel can go it has gone in these illustrations to *Elaine*.

The frontispiece, engraved by Mr. Baker, is the body of Elaine on its way to King Arthur's Palace. In the front of the picture is the corpse stretched on the boat—

“And the dead,  
Steer'd by the dumb, went upward with the flood.”

Behind rise the wooded banks of the river, such as one still sees on the Wye; above are the battlements of a massive castle, thrown out by the bright moonlight, which falls on the floating figure of the dead Elaine. All is beauty in the landscape; and there is but one drawback to the entire design, and that is the unnatural length of the body, which would be foreshortened with the boat in which it lies, and which must be at least ten heads in length. But you may hear the ripple in the stream as the old man dips his oars, and the very trees seem to whisper a dirge as the boat passes.

In the next King Arthur discovers the skeletons of the brothers. There is a good dramatic effect, which Doré has often used before, in bringing out the principal figure on horseback against the sky. The third, which shows Sir Lancelot riding through the forest of Astolat, is charming in tone and conception, but has already been used by Doré in most of his works, with little difference in composition. In the sixth engraving (by Baker) Doré is much more original, and the distribution of the groups of foliage is most happy. The figure of Elaine is another proof of what we have already said respecting his powers of portraying female beauty.

The next engraving is one of the finest of the series. The brothers of Elaine, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine, are weeping on the brink of the river, to which they have brought their sister's corpse. This is another of the marvellous atmospheric effects which steel-engraving has so well reproduced, and which is again strikingly evident in the last of the series, representing Lancelot's remorse. It is the simplest in its composition, but none the less beautiful for its simplicity. Lancelot,

"At the inrunning of a little brook  
Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd  
The high reed wave."

There is a sad bitterness about the scene which must have pleased the poet, whose lines are so well understood, while a cold air seems to pervade the landscape, quite in contrast to the warm glow in the frontispiece.

Short and unsatisfactory as is this description of the most remarkable of these nine designs, it is a proof that Doré works with as good a will, with as great an intellect, for the benefit of *perfid*e Albion as for his own France. The book is the finest art-volume which has made its appearance in London, and we heartily congratulate the editors on the way in which it has been produced.

Considering the fact that Doré has produced little short of fifty thousand drawings, it would be impossible in our limits to conduct our reader, if he has followed us so far, through the different works which remain unlooked at. The work which he is now engaged on promises to bring him out as a rival to many styles in which he has as yet not been supposed to excel; but he seems capable of meeting any artist on his own ground; and his delineations of animals, which may be seen in those numbers of La Fontaine's Fables which have appeared, will rank him with any animal-painters now living; while his study of still life (the Country Mouse and the Town Mouse) is as good as anything Lance ever painted. Doré is a poet as well as an artist, and can grasp a poet's ideas. His colouring power, as exhibited by his drawings, is far greater than those seen in his pictures, many of which have been exhibited in Paris, but which alone would not have been sufficient to insure immortality. As it is, we are sure that if Doré never drew another line, his works will rank among those of the best masters; and Strasbourg may be justly proud of the giant artist born within its walls.

A. T.

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## STONE'S LOVE AFFAIR

BY DUTTON COOK

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It was agreed on all hands that Ned Stone was a very practical fellow. By some this may have been said of him disparagingly, though others undoubtedly applied the words in a complimentary sense. Practicality has its eulogists, but it has also its censors. There are people who will find fault with prose because it isn't poetry; the same sort of people consistently denounce practicality because of its deficiency in speculativeness. For it is a common form of criticism to condemn a thing not so much for being what it is as for not being something else; that desiderated something else being, in most cases, something entirely antipodean and irrelevant to the original and disrelished thing.

If Ned Stone had ever heard fault found with him on the score that he *was* practical and that he *wasn't* poetical, he might have answered with Mistress Audrey—supposing (and it's a doubtful case) that he was informed of the existence of that rustic,—“I do not know what poetical is: is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?” Certainly in both word and deed he was himself honest and true. For things that were otherwise he was quite without sympathy. Indeed he was for the most part without knowledge concerning them; being a simple straightforward gentleman, who went his own way, lived his own life, did what it fell to his lot to do, in a curiously sober, steady, homely fashion. He never swerved to the right or to the left. It did not occur to him, apparently, to deviate from a compact plan of consistent conduct. He never seemed to say anything he did not mean, or to mean anything he did not say; the while his openness had not about it that element of offensiveness which characterises the unreserve of some people; with whom “speaking their minds,” as they phrase it, is rather like cracking a bad egg—an operation better pretermitted than performed.

Ned Stone's mind ran pure and clear as a brook. You were of course at liberty, if such was your humour, to deride it as being merely a water-brook after all—preferring a fount of strong claret, perhaps. Still the former, be it remembered, is available at all times and delectable ever in its own mild way; whereas the latter is only for occasions of festivity at long intervals, never running for any protracted period, nor always quite clear, and, with all its charms, capable upon provocation of giving you a headache or of throwing you into a fever.

He was a broker in the City—nothing more nor less than that. Whether his labours and profits had to do with tea or sugar, or ships or stock, I am not certain. I found it sufficient to know that he was a broker of some kind in the City. The fact conveyed a certain idea to my mind. If I had sought to enlarge the idea by clarifying the fact, I

might have found myself less enlightened than further confused about the matter; for inquiry, I notice, often bewilders as much as it instructs. He had been very poor at one time of his life, and had had to work very hard. His industry, however, had in the end met with its due reward. Arrived at middle age, he was very comfortably circumstanced; and he saw no reason to doubt that his prosperity would continue. When he announced to his friends, therefore, that he thought of taking to himself a wife, it was felt generally that the step he meditated was a prudent and proper one, and only what might, under all the circumstances of the case, have been reasonably expected. And when he further stated that he had made an offer of his hand to one Miss Georgina Warren, the daughter of a wealthy East-India merchant, and that his offer had been accepted by that lady, we of course hastened to tender him our hearty congratulations on the happy occasion. When I say "we," I must not be understood as employing the editorial first person plural by way of veiling my own individuality, but as speaking on behalf of myself and various other friends of Ned Stone's, who were also *my* friends, and who cordially agreed with me in wishing joy to our friend upon the proposed important change in his life.

Ned Stone spoke of the matter in his own simple sober way.

"Well, you know I'm getting on," he said, "and if I am ever to marry, it's about time I should think of setting about it. A few years hence it will be too late. I shall be settled down then in a bachelor kind of life, have adopted bachelor views and habits, and bachelor ways of looking at things, which I shouldn't be able to alter or get out of at any price. A few years ago I couldn't have afforded it, to put the matter plainly, and so it was out of the question. But I always looked forward to getting married when I could afford it; and so now, when I *can* afford it, I'm going to carry out the notion. You're very kind. I think I shall be happy—in fact I've no doubt about it—as happy as a fellow has any right to expect to be. One ought not to expect too much, of course. But I'm fond, in my way, of this Georgina Warren; and I think that she, in her way, is fond of me. She is not too young, nor too old; not too good-looking, nor too plain. She's sensible enough, and accomplished enough; and I don't see why she shouldn't make me a very good kind of wife; and, similarly, I don't see why I shouldn't make her a very good kind of husband. I know I'll do all I can to make her happy and comfortable, and I've no doubt she'll do the same on her side. What more is there to be said? Perhaps I'm not very fond of old Warren, the father; and perhaps also old Warren, the father, isn't very fond of me. But still I don't see that that need matter very much. I daresay we shall understand each other better by and by; meantime we must rub on as well as we can; and I must try and make the best of the old gentleman's humours, and not run counter to him more than I can avoid. We needn't be meeting so very often, you know. And it seems to me that the old fellow would be no fonder

of anybody else who might want to marry his daughter than he is of me. And if Georgina likes me (and she says she does), and if I like Georgina (and I know I do), that seems to me the chief part of the business. I don't think I need trouble myself much about the old man's views on the subject. You see it's *our* affair—Georgina's and mine—and not *his*; though it's hard to make him see it in that light. But I daresay it will all come right in the end. That's what I tell Georgina when she takes up with rather gloomy views about her father's temper. She's very good sense, and I think she looks at the matter very much as I do—only of course she can't help feeling that he *is* her father; whereas, thank goodness, he is not mine. I'm much obliged to you all for your good wishes, I say again."

It will be seen that Ned Stone was not a lover to "sigh like a furnace." As for "writing a woful ballad to his mistress' eyebrow," I don't fancy he could have accomplished such a feat, even if his life had depended on his doing so. His pulse beat ever steadily and punctually. The thermometer of his love stood at temperate, with no tendency towards a rise. Let Cupid do all he could, it did not seem that he was able to work very vital changes in these respects. Stone, it was evident, persisted in contemplating love and marriage from the prosaic and practical point of view. Notions of poetry and sentiment on those or any other subjects were not possible to him. His constitutional serenity refused to be disturbed at all by "the quotidian of love." There was nothing about him demonstrating "a careless desolation." The "marks of love," as they are ordinarily understood, were not discernible upon him. He was indeed a great disappointment to conventional ideas in relation to the lover. Many perhaps would be inclined to think that he was not to be regarded as a lover at all; that he was simply a man going to be married, which character does not necessarily involve the former more attractive and showy *rôle*. Certainly he did not attitudinise or speechify or behave in the eccentric way which is popularly expected of a lover. He affected no particular raptures as to the proposed change in his life, though he looked forward to it with a sort of calm satisfaction. He never said a word as to the agitated state of his breast, or the excitement of his feelings. He did not regard Miss Warren as an angel or a goddess; probably he would have been the first to contradict any allegation that might have been made to the effect that she was anything of the kind. Passion did not perplex or discompose his vision. Miss Warren seemed simply to him what she seemed to everybody else—a nice-looking sensible English girl. If he was to be considered as a lover at all, why then it was as a lover with a large infusion of the man of business. At the same time it should be noted that as a man of business Ned Stone was a strictly honourable and thorough-going gentleman.

Stone's love affair might not be very interesting to a looker-on; if it could be called a romance at all, it was unquestionably a dull one. Yet

there was something respectable about it too. His affection was not at all for display, but wholly for use; a solid and durable-looking article, and in that light commanding attention. It was not a wine that sparkled and effervesced, bubbling over the glass's brim in rose-tinted foam; yet it might, for all that, be of a sound, still, and potent vintage. Possibly, too, it would be found to *keep* better than its more dashing and sumptuous rival.

I liked the man. His worthiness, indeed, commanded the regard of all. Moreover he was a staunch generous fellow, a most trusty and resolute friend. To me the progress of his love affair was a matter of curious study. I was often considering the question, Would it change him much? would his practicability ultimately succumb? was his philosophy wholly proof against passion? would he not rather, like most other men, however coolly he might enter upon the matter, find at last an unexpected fire kindling and crackling in his breast?

I called upon him one evening. He was alone. He looked a little grave, and he held in his hand a small sealed packet. We discussed various indifferent topics; then I inquired concerning Miss Georgina Warren.

"O, haven't you heard?" he said quietly. "But of course you couldn't have heard. The affair's off; our engagement has come to an end."

"You don't mean that?"

"Yes; the thing's 'broken off,' as people say. It's a bad job, and I'm sorry about it; but it can't be helped."

Had the lady resented his serenity and dismissed him? I asked myself. As though he had heard the question, he went on:

"It's the old man's doing. I hope he's satisfied now. He's the most unreasonable and disagreeable old fellow I ever had the misfortune to meet with."

"But what did he do?"

"Well, we fell out about the settlements; that was where the hitch arose. I'm sure I did all I could to please him. I gave up condition after condition, quite in opposition to the advice of my solicitor. I told him to settle what money he proposed to settle upon his daughter—it wasn't much, after all—just as he pleased; I didn't want to touch a halfpenny of it. He might settle it, I told him, just as strictly as ever he pleased; or he might settle nothing at all upon her, if he liked that better. It was his daughter I wanted, and not his money. And for my part, I'd take care that my wife didn't come to want. I undertook to insure my life for a large amount, and to assign the policy to trustees for her benefit, in case of my death, covenanting, of course, to pay the premiums regularly, and to keep up the insurance in the usual way. I thought that a fair arrangement enough; but it didn't content him. He wanted to tie my hands completely. He hadn't a ha'p'orth of confidence in me. He gave me credit for no sort of affec-



tion for his daughter. He insisted that any money I might in future become possessed of I should covenant to bring into the settlement. It was most absurd. Of course I couldn't consent to it. I had my business to consider. It may be very desirable by and by to invest further capital in it. Why should I be hindered from investing my own money in the way I might deem best? Of course my wife and my children—if I ever have any—will reap the benefit of it just as much as I shall. However, he wouldn't listen to me; so there was nothing more to be said. He wouldn't give in; and I wouldn't. I told Georgina exactly how the matter stood. She's of age. I asked her whether she'd marry me without the old man's consent. Poor girl! she was in a dreadful way. But she didn't dare do that. She shrunk from offending her father; so there's no help for it—the thing's broken off, and I'm not to be married, it seems—this time, at any rate."

He spoke rather sorrowfully, but still without the slightest trace of temper. I endeavoured to console him in a commonplace sort of way. It was a difficult matter to know what to say upon such an occasion, and consolation at all times is apt to run into rather commonplace forms.

He opened the small packet he had been holding in his hand.

"This is pleasant," he said. "Here are all my letters to Georgina. And here's a little present I gave to her, sent back to me."

There were not many letters. They were written, I could see, in my friend's usual bold, plain, legible hand. Their contents I could guess: little enough like conventional love-letters probably—very unecstatic compositions; yet simple and to the purpose, and unmistakable enough. The present was a ring, a large diamond heavily set in plain gold; just the valuable, substantial, simple present I could have fancied Ned Stone selecting for his betrothed.

"I suppose they'll expect me to send back Georgina's letters to me," he said.

"Undoubtedly."

"It's the usual way when engagements come to an end like this?"

"Certainly it's the usual way."

He rubbed his chin and seemed to reflect a little.

"Have a cigar," he said presently, "and let's talk about something else; this is not the most agreeable subject in the world. Tell us what you've been doing with yourself lately."

So we fell to talking again about this, that, and the other. Presently I left him. As I went away he said quietly, "I think I shall try and see Georgina once more, for a particular reason."

I did not ask what the particular reason was, and he did not tell me.

A few nights afterwards I saw him again. He was at no time subject much to change of mood, or at any rate seldom betrayed any variation of that kind. Yet it struck me that, if anything, he was in rather better spirits than usual.

“You didn't mention,” he said, “what I told you the other night—that my engagement was broken off?”

I explained that I had not mentioned it for a particularly good reason. I had not seen any person whom it would interest to be informed of the fact.

“It's just as well,” he said, “because, as it happens, the engagement isn't broken off; or rather it's on again.”

“Indeed! I'm sure I'm very glad to hear it.”

“I told you I should try and see Georgina again. Well, I knew that she often went with her father and other relations and friends to the Zoological Gardens on Sunday. I couldn't call at old Warren's house, you know, because I understood that I was as good as kicked out of that. So I went to the Zoological,—I've a friend who's a Fellow, who gives me a ticket for Sundays whenever I ask him,—and I looked about for Georgina. I soon discovered her, with Warren and a lot of other people. She saw me, and understood by my signs that I wanted to speak to her on the quiet. Well, she lingered behind a little, and when the rest of her party went to look at the kangaroos, she slipped with me into the snake-house. She looked rather frightened, and the tears stood in her eyes; so I put my arm round her—it didn't matter to me who saw me, you know—and told her there was nothing to be alarmed at, and that I only wanted to say a word or two. I then told her that I was sorry I had not sent back her letters as I ought to have; but the plain fact of the matter was, I couldn't do it. ‘You love me still then, Ned?’ she said. ‘Of course I do, Georgy,’ I said; ‘who's been telling you I don't?’ Then she began crying terribly. ‘Come, Georgy,’ I said, ‘let's be married, whether papa likes it or not; only say the word.’ She didn't say the word. Poor child! I don't think she could speak for crying; but she looked at me, and she gave ever such a little nod, and then she began laughing through her tears. It was the prettiest thing you ever saw. Of course I kissed her: and then I turned, and who should be standing close at my side but old Warren! Georgy gave a little scream, and then tried to make believe that we were only looking at the boa-constrictor. But of course that didn't do; so I said to old Warren in a cheery sort of way, putting out my hand, ‘Mr. Warren, Georgy and I are going to be married; that's quite settled. But you and I may as well be friends all the same. We'd much rather have your consent than not. Suppose you give it us.’ He was so astonished, that before, I think, he quite knew what he was doing, he'd taken my hand, with all his friends standing round and looking on. Of course he couldn't go back after that; and so—and so—the thing was settled.”

I congratulated him heartily. Presently I said by chance, “How lucky it was you didn't send back Miss Warren's letters!”

“My dear fellow, that was what I wanted to explain to her. I couldn't send them back.”

"You found them too dear to you?"

At last then he'd been betrayed into a feeling of romance.

"Not at all," he explained. "I couldn't send them back because—I hadn't kept them. I'd destroyed them."

"Destroyed them?"

"Yes. What was the good of them? I only keep business letters; they're all regularly docketed at my office. But for Georgy's letters, they were no use. It was no good keeping them. *I made them into pipe-lights!*"

"You didn't tell her that?"

"No; I hadn't time. I never arrived at my explanation about the letters."

"Then, my dear Stone, let me entreat you, whatever you do, *don't* give Miss Warren your explanation about the letters."

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Don't you see? She thought you didn't send back her letters for a sentimental reason; because they were so dear to you that you couldn't part with them; and so, in point of fact, that little misunderstanding of hers led to the re-establishment of your love affair."

"Do you think so?" he asked musingly. "But if Georgy's made any mistake about the matter, I think I'm bound to set her right."

"My dear Stone, take my advice; for fear of accidents, set her right—if you must set her right—*after* the wedding ceremony, not before."

Whether or not he took my advice I'm not aware. He was married in due course to Miss Warren; and I know that that lady was often heard to declare subsequently she had married the best husband in the world.

His practicality had answered; and it may be a good plan to convert love-letters into pipe-lights; still I shrink from laying it down as a rule that such a course should be invariably adopted. Lovers must be left in that respect to pursue their own devices and to do what may seem right in their own eyes. It must be owned, however, that the story of Stone's love affair shows that there is something to be said in favour of practicality.

## A RED-INDIAN LEGEND

BY REV. H. S. FAGAN

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THERE is no lack of famous English missionaries—men who, like Bishop Mackenzie and Dr. Livingstone, have stamped their names upon a continent; men who have been civilisers as well as preachers. But other nations and other churches have their missionaries too, sometimes in places where there are no English to compete with them. Ever since the French began to colonise Canada, there has been a constant stream of priests towards the far north. Frenchmen had lived and died among the savages of the Red River and the Athabasca, long before we had thought of sending out a bishop to Rupert's Land. They are still at work through all the country from Lake Winnipeg to the mouth of the Mackenzie; but, as in missions elsewhere, men for the work are harder to get hold of than money. With Frenchmen the favourite quarter just now for missionary efforts is the far East. Young men want to get out to China or Japan. There's a chance of being martyred in those civilised countries; and the recent canonisation of ever so many Japanese martyrs has given an impulse in this direction. So, at least, says M. Fernand Michel, who, in his "*Eighteen Years among the Red Indians*," being the life of Mgr. Faraud, Vicar Apostolic of the Mackenzie," has given us a most interesting book on a subject which is too often treated in a peculiarly uninteresting style. There are none of the conventionalities of religious biography in M. Michel's work. He lets the good bishop tell his own story,—how, when he first settles down near Lake Bonnet, he rings his bell but nobody comes, and so he has Mass all to himself. Next Sunday in walk an old man and an old woman and six children. To them he preaches; but finds out after service, much to his disgust, that the man is deaf and the woman blind. All the tribe are out at a grand sacrifice; so he goes after them, and attacks the chief, who replies: "I'm busy with my great medicine; but I told my young people to go to your chapel." He then threatens that if they won't come properly to service, he will break up the mission and go away. "O, don't do that," says the chief; "if you went away, there would be nobody to give us any more tobacco."

This is enough to show us that Bishop Faraud's savages are by no means models of perfection. The principle of selection is in full force among them. Woe betide the old and the weakly in communities where the struggle for life is continual. They have a trick, too, of eating their sons and daughters, by way of diminishing the number of mouths to be supported. "How are those two children I baptised last

summer?" asks the bishop of one of his Creek-Indian converts. The man hums and haws, and tries to put the question aside; but at last he is forced to confess, "We had a shockingly hard time of it in the winter. Our poor children had got very thin; they were in pain: so we took pity on them. They could not have lived long, you know."

Hospitality and gratitude are rare virtues in those high latitudes. The noble savage, who shares his last bone with the stranger who has wandered to his wigwam, does not seem to be so common in real life as he is in Fenimore Cooper's novels. Mgr. Faraud once goes through thirty leagues of snow-covered forest to visit a sick man who had sent for him. He starts in a hurry, without taking much food. He and his guide get into the hut half-dead with fatigue; and prayers are begun forthwith, to the great delight of the sick man, who brightens up at once, but never thinks of offering them any refreshment. At last they have to ask for something to eat. "Really," says the savage, "I've nothing but a very little fish and meat, and I want both of them for myself." "Give us a few dried fish, then," says the bishop. "I'll lend them to you, father; but you must be sure to give them back when I come round to you in the spring."

A missionary (we must remember) is always tempted to depreciate the natives among whom he works; their being in a bad state is to some extent his warrant for labouring to convert them. Were it not true that "manners they have none, and their customs are beastly," there would be less reason for Societies to take them in hand. Even Mgr. Faraud allows his Red Indians some good points. When a man goes out hunting for his family, he will bear the most terrible hardships rather than come back empty-handed. Custom does not allow him to take any food with him; and so he is often out four or five days without tasting any thing. They are clever conjurors too, these savages. A medicine-man will let himself be tied up, arms and legs, with small cords, in any manner and by anybody you please, and in two or three minutes he will have undone all the knots, without the need of any dark cupboard.

Some of their legends, again, are very beautiful. Mgr. Faraud gives us several, one or two of which seem as if he must have unconsciously thrown in a spice of Christian thought in translating them. The following, however, has about it a savour of thorough originality:

Once upon a time, in Beaver-land, there dwelt an old man, Eltchel-lekouyé by name, along with his two grandsons, who had the same name, with the addition respectively of Onié and Oniym. And one day the old man said to them: "My children, I am getting old; I shall soon have gone away into the land of spirits, and the land we dwell in has grown bad, for the Good Spirit has deserted it, and almost all wild creatures have gone from it. You will die of hunger when I am gone, unless you do what I bid you." They listened in silence like good boys, determined to do what their grandfather ordered. "Mind you always

keep your word," said the old man, "wherever you are; and now go and get a canoe and set off hunting; but never come back here any more." "O, don't drive us off, grandfather." "I have said you must go, my children." "But whither?" "The Good Spirit only knows. He has a land prepared for those who obey him. So mind you do whatever he orders." "But why, grandfather?" "You must never ask 'why,' my children."

So they set off with their bows and arrows; and after three days' journeying, they caught two little bustards, and tied them up ready for killing next day; and then they lay down and slept in the canoe. And while they slept, a voice said to them, "Harness the bustards to your canoe." They did so; and for three days they were drawn on with wonderful speed, until they came to a vast lake, of which they could not see the further shore. "Alas, we shall never see land again!" said they. "Surely it was the bad spirit who bade us harness the bustards."

Just then they came in sight of the shore; but it was all white sand, without a tree or a blade of grass. "Here we shall die of hunger," said they. So they cried themselves to sleep. "Brother," said Onié, when they woke, "a voice came to me, saying, 'Eat the bustards.'" And as he was speaking, the birds came and nestled down by the boys; and, lo, they had grown to their full size, and were covered with fine feathers. So they killed them, and eat one and put the other by, and lay down again to sleep. And the voice came once more, and said, "Burn the canoe, and warm yourselves, and then journey onward." So they made a fire and cooked the other bustard, and then walked on, till they came upon huge footprints, as it were of giants, with great long heels. And while they doubted what this should mean, they saw a big wigwam, in front of which the giant's children were at play. "Mother," cried they, "look what funny little men we have found." So the mother of the giants came out, and kindly invited them to come in and rest. The father-giant was out fishing; but he soon came back, — a bearded man, three times as high as other men; and when he heard his children laughing at the "little mites of men," he reproved them, saying, "Have I not often told you that from the land of the sunrise should come little white men, whom also the Great Spirit protects, and who shall found a new nation?" So he fed the brothers many days, till at last he said, "It is time for you to go whither the Spirit will lead you." "And how shall we know the way?" asked the boys. Then the giant lifted one up in each hand, and held them aloft, and said, "You see where the sun sets? there is your promised land." He gave them also a pie made of dried fish and fat, and to each a bow and arrows. "Never eat all your pie," said he, "at one sitting; and if an arrow goes astray, be sure not to search for it." "Why not?" said the boys. "You must never ask 'why,'" replied the giant.

So they go on their way right merrily. The pie always grows whole again by next day, and the arrows that are lost come back under their

pillows. At last they get among a number of partridges, and begin to shoot at them for fun ; but soon Oniym's arrow catches in a tree just above their heads. "Brother, you're taller than I am; just reach me down my arrow," says Oniym. But Onié cannot knock it down with his bow; and when he stands on his brother's knee, and even on his shoulder, the arrow always sways a very little out of reach. At last he gets angry, and makes a spring at it; and straightway the arrow fastens itself to his hand and carries him off through the sky. Poor Oniym is terribly grieved to see his brother taken away. He lies down beside a tree, and says, "Never will I taste food again. It is my fault that my brother is lost." At last he falls asleep, and sees a big bird, thrice as big as a canoe, settle down beside him. "Now," thinks he, "I am going to be eaten, and I deserve it." But the bird is the Great Spirit, who cheers him on, and bids him be more obedient, and march on still towards the sun-setting. Meanwhile, after a long, long flight, his brother drops to the ground, and finds himself in the midst of winter, with snow-mountains all round him. He falls asleep; and, awaking, sees a pair of snow-shoes by his side. They are too big; so, after vain attempts to fit them on, he falls asleep again; wakes again, and finds them altered to his size, but thongless; sleeps the third time, and at his third waking finds them quite ready to put on. "He who watches over me will guard my brother also," is the thought with which he comforts himself. At last he gets to a hut where dwell an old woman and her two daughters. "'Tis he," says the mother, as soon as she sees Onié; but, hiding her surprise, she bids him lie down and rest on some branches; and while he is asleep she blacks his face, "for I don't wish my girls to fall in love with him yet," says she. When Weasel-catcher and Mouse-catcher (for so were her daughters named) came back and saw his black face, they burst out laughing and said, "Mother, what strange beast is that you've got here?" "That strange beast, as you call him, is the elect of the Great Spirit; and you will love him as a brother." "No, we sha'n't have such bad taste, mamma." So they go out to play; and the mother washes Onié's face, dresses his hair, wakes him, and tells him: "I have two daughters; they will both want to marry you; but you must not have either of them yet. Love them as sisters; and be sure never to look at them while they are asleep." "Why?" asks Onié. "Never ask 'why,' young man," replies the mother. The girls peep in through the leather curtain to have a look at their mother's monster; but he is a monster no longer. Instead of laughing, they both cry out, "I shall have him," and rush into the hut. "No, no," says Onié, "be my sisters, both of you; and I will be your brother." Many days he lives with them in the hut, hunting and bringing home daily good store of moose or elk or white partridge. But he is not happy. He cannot help thinking of his brother. The old woman is very good to him; she shows him over the mountains the great lake, beyond which is the happy land reserved by the Great Spirit for them

that obey him. She tells him on which side of the snow-hills he must always be sure to keep when he is out hunting; and when he asks "Why?" she stops him with the usual "Don't ask why." But one night he can't sleep for thinking of the lost Oniym. So after lying a long time he calls out, "Sisters, are you asleep?" No answer. At last he gets up and walks about, and just then the moon shines in and shows him the two girls in the far corner of the hut. But no sooner has he looked than the frozen snow gives way, and he falls down, down, through the floor of the hut. He is lying in a hole among the snow, right on the other side of the mountain, mourning over his second disobedience, and expecting to die of hunger, when he hears a gruff voice cry, "I smell man's flesh." "How can we dig him out?" replies a still gruffer voice. "Go and get me the bear's claws we saw by the roadside, and I'll dig." The claws are brought; but just as Onié is dragged to the surface, they break, and he falls back again. "Go and get me that big thigh-bone we saw under the tall trees," says the gruff voice. Meanwhile Weasel-catcher and her mother and sister are searching, disconsolate, up and down over the snow-covered hills, when suddenly they come on a hideous monster with only one leg, one arm, and one eye, and a mouth six times as big as other peoples'. He holds a big thigh-bone in his hand; but the three women, though terribly frightened, pluck up courage to ask if he has seen their friend. The monster grins horribly, and roars out, "Come along to my master." So they go on, emboldened by their love for Onié. But the second monster, more hideous than the first, the moment he sees them cries with a voice that makes the trees shake, "There's nice meat." "Yes, very nice meat," replies the serving-monster. "Hold your tongue; it's not meat for you," answers his master. In an agony of fear the two girls fall down at the monster's knees, crying, "O, don't eat us; we're looking for our brother." "Wow, wow; I'm very hungry, and I've got your brother in this hole." "Don't eat him, dear monster," say they, clinging to his legs. "Yes I will, unless one of you will marry me," hissed the monster, glowering on them with his one round eye. The two sisters looked at one another; and the monster began digging, and soon dragged poor Onié out. "Wow, wow! there's nice meat on him," he roared. "Yes; nice meat on him," chorussed the servant. "Hold your tongue; he's meat for your master," replied the other, and began sharpening his knife. "Spare him, spare him. We'll marry you," cried the girls both at once. "No; I'm hungry, and I mean to eat him first." Just then was heard a mighty rushing of wings; and the two monsters fell down as if struck with lightning. But Otelballé the Good Spirit, for it was he, seized one in each of his talons and flew off. Just then a vulture darted by, pursuing a humming-bird. "Quick, quick, girls; kill the vulture," says the mother. Mouse-catcher shoots it; and the poor little humming-bird falls chilled and terrified into her bosom. They soon light a fire, warm the bird, and then, with solemn words of prayer, let it go



as an offering to the Good Spirit. "Little bird, go tell the Good Spirit to bring my brother to me," adds Onié to the form of prayer.

On, on, over the snowy hills; till at last they find a hut in which a little child is lying asleep on a deer's skin. "Little child, where are your parents?" asks the old woman. "There," said the child, which had woke at the sound of her voice; and he pointed eastward, falling asleep the moment he had done speaking. "Little sleeping child, where is my promised land?" asked Onié. "There," said the child, pointing westward, and straightway fell asleep again. By and by they meet an old man with a bow and arrows. He gives Onié two arrows, —a male arrow for shooting the buck, a female one for shooting the doe; "but take care the girls never get hold of the arrows," adds he. "Why?" asks Onié. "Never ask why, my son." Alas, thought Onié, how constantly I keep forgetting my grandfather's injunctions! So they marched on and on, building a snow-hut every night, till early one morning Weasel-catcher said, "How lovely is this land! Look at the flocks of white partridges, and the sun glinting on the frozen snow. Why should we be always moving on?" "Sister," said the other girl, "how often our mother has told us we must never ask why!" Just then two deer showed themselves on a little knoll hard by. The girls, used to hunting all their lives, feel their fingers itch to have a shot at them. "Onié's asleep; why not take his arrows?" But, alas, the moment they touch them the earth opens and they both sink down into a huge cave, where they are seized by the Good Spirit, and whirled off to the sand-desert, where dwell the man-loving giants. Outside the big wigwam they see the children at play, and are taken in to the mother-giant, who receives them kindly, and seems to know all about them. "Daughters," says she, "you have been punished for your disobedience; but the Good Spirit has forgiven you. Come and eat." Meanwhile Onié is heartbroken at the loss of his sisters. The mother comforts him, and tells him she is dying, and that the rest will all meet soon in the promised land. He believes her, because truth is in the mouths of the dying. "Hope on," says she. "You shall marry Weasel-catcher, and your brother shall marry her sister." And so saying, she dies; and Onié dutifully wraps her up in plantain-leaves, and sets her high up in a tree, and then lies down to sleep at its foot. Scarcely has he closed his eyes when, with a great rushing of wings, down swoops the Good Spirit's son and comforts him in his sorrow, telling him he shall surely come to a good land, where is plenty of winter-snow and summer-shade, and rivers full of fish, and moose and deer and musk-ox, and also many beavers. "But have a care," said he, "never to hunt the beaver after sun-down, and never to go out of the wigwam at night." "Why?" "Don't ask why," replied the son of Otelballé. Onié promises obedience; and is carried through the air and under the earth to a new land, where the big bird leaves him, bidding him push on westward, even to the great lake, and giving him

a little billet of wood which he is to throw thereon, and wait to see what will happen. This time Onié does not ask 'why,' but marches on, and at last, on the border of the lake, meets his brother, who has been quietly moving westward, living on the good giant's pie, and always keeping a bit for to-morrow. When their first joy at meeting again is over, Oniyim says, "Eat, brother." "Nay, first," replies Onié, "I must do what the Spirit ordered." So he throws the billet into the water, and it turns at once into a fine canoe.

But what had become of the sisters all this time? They lived many days among the good giants; but they were very sad always. And at last the father-giant calls them aside one day, and says, "Little folks, it is time to go whither the Spirit calls you." Thereupon he lifts them up in his hands and shows them the path of the setting sun, which they are to follow. "And shall we see our mother?" "She is dead; but see you that white swan flying overhead? That is her spirit." So they march forward, the swan flying before them, till after many days they see the sun set in the great lake. Very soon they come in sight of the two brothers; and while Onié rushes joyously to meet them, Oniyim stands weeping on the sand. He is soon comforted; and whilst they are sitting together, the swan comes up, and the humming-bird alights at their feet, and the Great Spirit birds, father and son, hover in mid air and shield the sun from them. "Let us be going," say they with one accord, and as soon as they have embarked, the canoe makes way of itself; the swan swims in front of them; and on the fifth morning they reach the land of promise. "We thank thee, O Spirit," they all cry out, lifting their hands to heaven; and stepping on shore, they are aware of a venerable old man followed by a youth, each carrying a bow and arrows. "Who am I?" asked the old man. "You gave me the male and female arrows," says Onié. "True: and this is my son, the babe you found asleep in the wigwam." "Why has he grown so fast?" asks the forgetful Onié. "Young man, you must never ask why." Then the old hunter tells them the story of their birth: "You, Eltchellekouyé Onié and your brother, are the sole survivors of a mighty nation which lived toward the sun-rising, hunting by day and resting by night, and living in plenty, because they were obedient to the Good Spirit. But by and by the evil spirit came among them; they took to going out of nights, and soon began to fight and destroy one another. So the Good Spirit left them, and the beasts ceased out of the land, and they took to slaying and eating one another; all but one family, who kept to the good old ways. Those also, nevertheless, the famine laid hold on; and the father and mother died; and you two and your grandfather were left. And the Good Spirit said to him in a dream, 'Arise, and go away from this evil nation, for I will make of thy posterity a nation which shall honour me. Onié and Oniyim, you know the rest. And as for you, Weasel-catcher, you and your

sister are all that is left of another great and powerful nation, which dwelt close to the land of ice, where live the one-eyed monsters who devour men. Long time the Good Spirit protected the nation of your fathers, and hid them from the monsters. But at last he gave them up by reason of their disobedience. So all perished except one woman and her two daughters, which were preserved because they only had kept the right way. Know you, my children, who was that old woman? And now, ye four shall establish a nation which shall be faithful, for whom also this good land has been reserved from of old. Therefore, every morning before you go out hunting or fishing, take care to offer the first whiff of your pipe to the Good Spirit; and when you come home, burn in his honour the purest of the fat of the beasts which you have killed." As the old man spoke, his face grew wonderful to look upon, and there was as it were a glory round his head. "Teach these things," said he, "to your children and to your children's children. And now, Onié, take thy wife and build thy hut on this side of the forest; and thou, Oniym, go with thy wife to the other side. Begone, and hunt." Having so spoken, the old man vanished, and his son likewise; and the swan flapped her wings, uttered a joyous cry, and flew away.

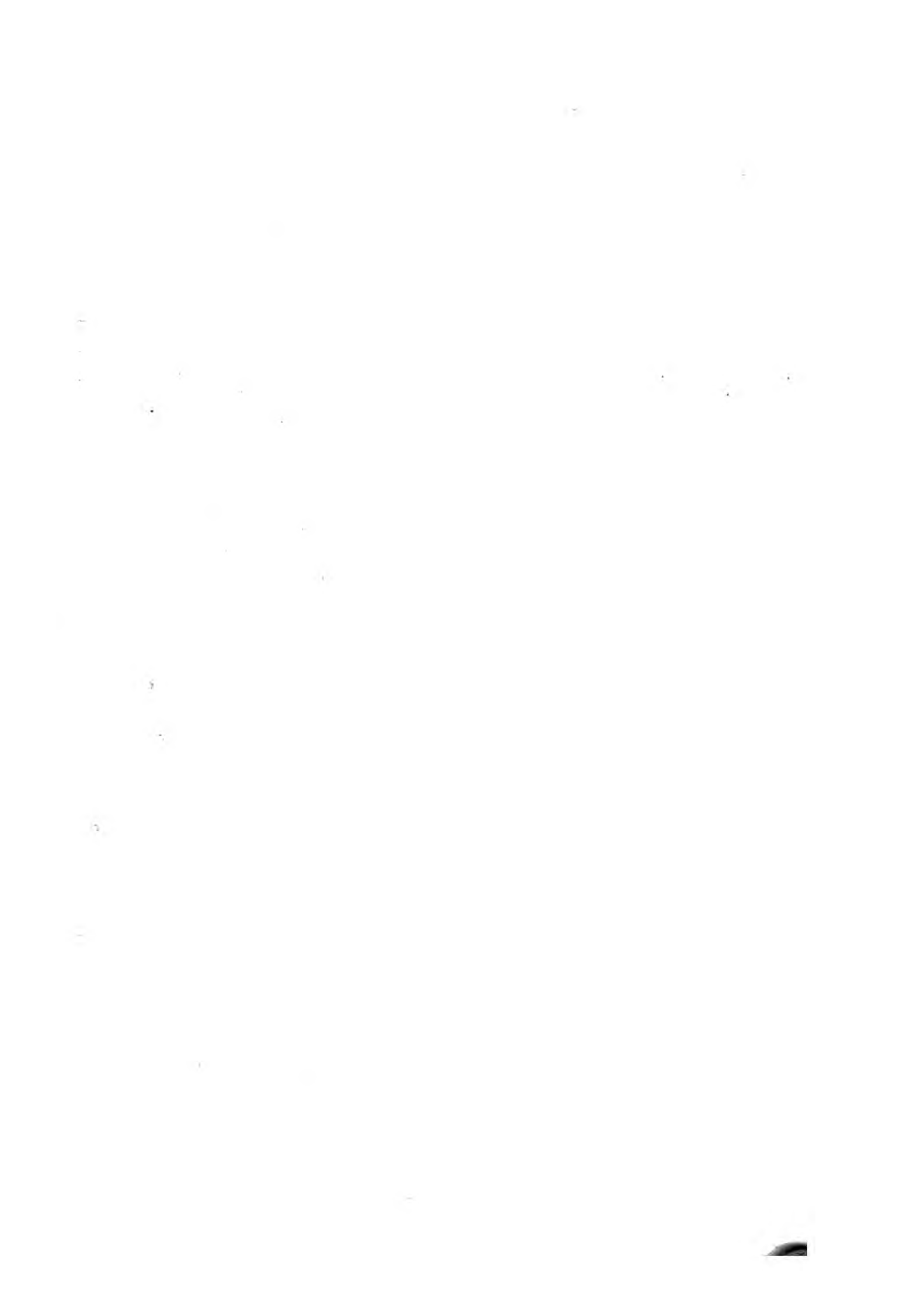
Such is one of Father Faraud's Indian legends; and, simple as it is, it makes us wish that our missionaries would more frequently indulge us with similar means of judging of the aborigines among whom they labour. Why should Missionary Societies' reports, which a little care might make much more interesting than most books of travels, be in general the dullest of all dull publications? Do English people care so very much to see how much was collected by the Misses Neate, or what was the amount of the offertory at Slocombe, or the total gathered in the archdeaconry of Muttyn, that all that is left of the Report, after printing a dry sermon, full of the eternal commonplaces, is to be taken up with subscription-lists? I for one would much rather give my money to support a man who shows that he is a bit of an antiquary, perhaps a comparative philologist in a mild way, than one whose views are limited to the burning of idols and stopping dances and all other native ceremonies. I shall never forget the horrid scripture-reader whom I once met beyond Kenmare, and who, pointing out to me a holy well, said, "There used to be a little cross there, and the silly people actually believed that it had something to do with the goodness of the water; so one night I came and carried it off, and they have never found out to this day who did it." Destructive missionaries I look on as probably in many cases worse than no missionaries at all. Now, clearly, Bishop Faraud is not one of the destructives. He is stern enough in what he takes to be essentials; giving now and then, as in duty bound, a rap at the English, his rivals, who, he says, are kept by their *morgue insulaire* from really getting at the natives, and who yet don't a bit mind admitting to communion a chief with half a

dozen wives. The Romanist missionary is specially bitter against these anticipators of Colenso: what becomes of the wives whom he obliges his converts to give up he does not say. But, professional jealousy apart, he likes us very well indeed; for the English as a nation he has a good word in almost every chapter. The Hudson's Bay Company help him in his wanderings; indeed he would several times have perished but for timely food and rest at one or other of their forts: for the good father has a trick of starting late on his visitations; and winter comes on suddenly in those quarters—lovely weather breaking up in a day, and giving place to deluges of rain, followed by piercing cold and deep snow. But he has a stout heart; and keeps a cheerful face amid circumstances which might well excuse a man for looking somewhat downcast. "Le missionnaire ne meurt pas" is his talisman for rousing his comrades when, worn-out with work and exposure, they are giving way to despair.

The history of his wanderings is very interesting—just as interesting in its way as the notices which he has collected of the Indian legends, and which in the hands of some one like Dr. Dasent might be made to prove any amount of foregone conclusions about the transmission of the myth. Hiawatha had prepared us for a legend-loving race; the legends in M. Michel's volume makes us feel something like love for the race which could invent them. In fact the whole book is as pleasant reading as one could have for improving one's French. What a happy change there is, by the way, in this respect! Years ago, when "we" were beginning French, there was no choice between *Charles the Twelfth*, or *Télémaque*, or *Numa Pompilius*, or some such miracle of dulness, and what Browning calls "your crapulous French novel, on gray paper with blurred type." Now there are scores of really interesting books, which young people will like to read, and which they need not thrust under the sofa-cushion when anybody is coming. Look at that *Bibliothèque Rose*, to which the Countess de Ségur contributes her lively stories. Read *Jean qui grogne et Jean qui rit*, or the *Mémoires d'une Caniche*; read Macé's *Bouchée de Pain et les Serviteurs de l'Estomac*, and confess that we are better off than our fathers—in our appliances for learning our neighbours' tongue at any rate. But has the *Bibliothèque Rose* made its way yet into our boys' and girls' schools? Alas, there the old "classics" hold their own, as soon as the unhappy learner has got through some *recueil* of more or less disconnected *morceaux*. No doubt a good teacher can do a great deal with bad tools; and a boy or girl who really wants to learn French will learn it even from Massillon's sermons. But good teachers and young persons who want to learn French as fast as they can are both rare. The thing, then, is to secure books which will interest those who read, and which will supply such a store of new words and phrases that the worst teacher shall not be able to hinder progress. French should not exactly be looked on as we are

so constantly told Latin ought to be — as a means to an end. It is in itself quite a sufficient end; and a practical knowledge of it is much more likely to be obtained by reading works the matter of which is interesting, than by confining the learner to a class of books which he will forget as soon as he has finished them. Too many of us are beginning to know a little about French; too few have any thing like a thorough knowledge of it—such a knowledge as “the” Lord Chesterfield had, for instance, or the Duke of Beaufort showed the other day, when he returned thanks at the Jockey Club dinner. It’s all very fine to talk of the pleasure of appreciating a foreign literature. You can read most French prose of any value in very passable translations; and it requires a long apprenticeship to realise anything like beauty in French poetry. What those of us who want French at all want it for is chiefly for practical uses. “The man who can speak both is as good as two men,” said the wonderfully civil Cherbourg banker who lionised us all over his town when he found, by our coming in to get a sovereign’s worth of francs, we were strangers. Yet even he was far from having mastered the idiom of the English, which he was so proud to display. “Expect, gentlemen, till I shall descend,” said he, as he left us to run up *au troisième* and (for our sakes) hold parley with a clerk at the Admiralty. Still his English was practical. He could have made his way even in a day’s shopping. How had he learnt it? He had picked out the English books that he thought would please him best, and made his teacher work them through with him. And among books likely to please and safely commendable I rank this life of Mgr. Faraud, of which you have been reading a sample. Read it, and you will both improve your French and also exalt your idea of human nature. For if ever there was a devoted and zealous and humble-minded missionary, this Romanist bishop *in partibus* is surely one.

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F. L. Lawson, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

MARRIED FOR MONEY.

## MARRIED FOR MONEY

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### I.

'Twas all over between us, you thought, when we parted,  
It was good-bye to me and to trouble or care;  
A sigh and a tear, a poor boy broken-hearted,  
Mattered not, for what feelings had you then to spare?  
It was nothing to you that my best hopes were shattered,  
For you knew all the time that you meant we should part;  
Did you think with fair words I should ever feel flattered,  
From lips feigning truth with such falseness at heart?

### II.

Ah, lovely and lost one, I lurk in the gloaming,  
And think of one midsummer twilight last year,  
But one little year past, when we two were roaming  
With hand locked in hand by the still solemn mere.  
Have *you*, love, forgotten that night and those pledges,  
Half whispered, half sobbed, 'neath that calm summer sky?  
While still in my ear faintly shiver the sedges,  
And still the low splash of the water sounds nigh.

### III.

They tell me you're happy; and yet, on reflection,  
I find they talk more of your wealth than of you;  
And if you have moments of thought or dejection,  
It may be those moments are known but to few.  
You've a boudoir in buhl, and an Erard à *queue*, love;  
You breakfast off Sèvres of the real *bleu du Roi*;  
While what could *I* give you, whose heart was so true, love,  
Save that poor posy ring, with its "*Pensez à moi*"?

### IV.

Now blame not your husband, nor think you're used badly,  
For 'twas simply a matter of money and trade;  
You named him your "figure," he paid it most gladly,  
But your heart was no part of the bargain he made.  
He wanted a wife who could well head his table,  
Who would humour his whims and obey his behests,  
One lovely and clever, one willing and able—  
To prove his good taste and to talk to his guests.



v.

There are times when 'midst riches and splendour you languish—

When to still your poor conscience you fruitlessly try—

Whilst tears are fast falling in bitterest anguish,

You confess there *is* something that money can't buy.

Yes, love, there are mem'ries that will not be buried,

There's a ghost of the dead past that will not be laid ;

And while in the Maelstrom of pleasure you're hurried,

Do *you* never meet the sad eyes of the shade ?

J. ASHBY STERRY.

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# VIVISECTION

BY DR. SCOFFERN

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IN TWO PARTS:—PART I.

FROM time to time the necessity or non-necessity for vivisection comes up to harrow the public mind. It has so come up of late, the presumed cruelties of French veterinary practitioners having been the starting-point. I say presumed, because of the matter I personally know nothing. The thesis, moreover, can be treated impersonally, without vilifying the French.

There are some things in respect of which ideas intuitively arise so strongly tinged with preconceptions that an investigator's first care should be to admonish his own judgment, to be guided by evidence only; as juries are admonished by the presiding judge.

Of such things, assuredly, vivisection is one. The all-wise decree of God, whereby death is made a mystery, implies a corresponding reverence for animal life:—reverence for all the elaborate machinery with which life is associated, and with which animal vitality is alone compatible. The well-ordered mind naturally shrinks from inflicting unnecessary pain. It recoils with shuddering and abhorrence from the idea of dissecting a live animal.

To adduce laboured proofs in support of the proposition that the sentiment of repugnance to pain-infliction is natural to every well-ordered human mind, is hardly needful. The universality of that sentiment must be conceded; concurrently with maintenance of the proposition that no mere repugnance of a mind to the idea of vivisection would furnish rational and valid ground for barring its practice, if testimony should prove vivisection needful; the interests of humanity regarded.

Let us accept the postulate that—however repugnant the idea of vivisection, however repulsive, still, no argument founded upon that sentiment wholly can be admitted to have logical reference to the case. Let us eliminate, therefore, all inbred prejudices relative to vivisection, discussing the matter on the strength of intrinsic evidence.

First, addressing ourselves to the question whether vivisection be necessary or justifiable, needful to impart dexterity to the operator,—I say emphatically, No; coupling that denial with an expression of surprise that the affirmative should ever have gained credence.

Needful to give dexterity of hand in operating! Operating upon whom or what? Is it operations upon the human subject that are contemplated, or operations upon brutes? If it can be shown that human surgeons never avail themselves of this means of acquiring dexterity, then assuredly no sufficient plea can be adduced on behalf of veterinary surgeons.

Here it is proper that a certain condition limitatory to the performance of vivisection in aid of operative dexterity should be apprehended. In such a case the operation, if performed at all, must be *identical*, not *analogical*. The cutting open one animal of one species could afford, as will soon be proved, no guidance to a surgeon designing to operate upon another animal of another species; whereas, if furtherance of science be the plea for vivisection, then investigations conducted on a lower animal may lead to deductions that shall be applicable to the case of a higher animal. Whether the conception be rational or irrational, well or ill-grounded, we shall endeavour to determine farther on.

The incompetence of analogical vivisection to give dexterity of hand in operating is a proposition self-evident to every anatomist. Inasmuch, however, as this is written for people who are mostly not anatomists, I will endeavour to demonstrate the proposition by some easily comprehensible evidence. Success in the performance of a surgical operation—other things being equal—will depend on the practical conversance the operator has acquired with the arrangement of parts and the distribution of organs he has to operate upon. Just as rationally might an engineer seek to make himself acquainted with the scheme of ramification of the gas- and water-pipes of London by studying the gas- and water-pipes of Manchester, as an operator to acquire dexterity of hand upon one animal through experience gained by operations conducted upon another. Even if it so had happened that animals were devoid of pain—an hypothesis under which all objections to vivisection on the score of cruelty would be disposed of—still, analogical vivisection would never be performed by any intelligent surgeon, to the end of imparting dexterity of surgical manipulation.

I am under no concern that my denial of the need of vivisection as an aid to surgical dexterity should seem to be laboured. Better any amount of supererogation than that there should remain on the mind of anyone the smallest lingering trace of a belief in the advantages derivable from analogical vivisection (none else is possible) to the end and with the object here contemplated. The reason for emphasising the words *analogical vivisection* will be presently recognisable. It will soon be demonstrated by a process of exclusion that vivisection is unnecessary to veterinary operators; arguing that, inasmuch as it is never had recourse to by operators on human beings (the major case), hence there can arise no good plea for adopting it as an aid to dexterity in operations performed upon brutes (the minor). In what, let us now

ask, consists the knowledge requisite for the performance of surgical operations?—whence comes the power of operating? It comes from the conviction, the self-assurance, in the mind of an operator that he has mastered the topography, the relation of parts, the arrangement of nerves, veins, arteries, and muscles of the organism he operates upon. The acquaintance he needs is a mechanical, not a functional acquaintance; and being this, he requires to pursue his investigations on an animal mechanism of exactly similar pattern to the one to be operated upon hereafter. The knowledge he seeks is topographical. The topography is not to say amply revealed by mortuary dissection, but revealed with a completeness, a clearness, that never could result from vivisection, however remorselessly conducted. The chief difficulties attendant upon surgical operations have reference to arteries and nerves in their relation to adjacent organisms. In respect to nerves, death effects no visual change upon them; whilst in respect to arteries, a dead body offers manifest advantages of demonstration over a living body, inasmuch as arteries may be—and for purposes of mortuary dissection commonly are—injected with some liquid composition, which, ultimately setting hard, brings out into full relief before the anatomical student each arterial branch and ramification far more completely than the organism of any living body could be made to reveal: and lest the very completeness of topographical illustration thus demonstrated should seem to prove too much—should seem to imply the need of vivisection, by way of furnishing difficulties that are obviously removed by the condition of arterial plethora resulting from injection—the obvious rejoinder is, “that the anatomist, if so minded, need not inject his subject at all.” In this matter he has his choice. He may vary his conditions. Having begun with applying himself to the easiest conditions within the scope of the problem, he may end by encountering the most difficult. Another obvious advantage of mortuary dissection over vivisection is the following, namely, the superior facility it gives of coming to just conclusions relative to variations of normal standards in animal organisms, relative to peculiarities of distribution and arrangement. Here, before discussing the proposition, it will be needful to beg a postulate; one that the writer assumes would be universally granted even by the most strenuous advocates of the necessity of vivisection in aid of operative dexterity. Whereas no sentiment is opposed to mortuary dissection being practical, up to the extreme limit determined by facility of supply, yet—as the writer assumes—nobody, not even the most strenuous vivisectional advocate, would claim a field of operation so wide for the practice of vivisection. Neither would the vivisector be able to acquire a field of action comparable for extent with the one occupied by the mortuary dissector, even were he to press the claim. Even though it were possible to make out a case distinctly favourable to the practice of vivisection in aid of surgical dexterity—ay, of vivi-

section on whatever behalf prosecuted—still, the natural repugnance to this practice is so strong, the balance of human sentiment is so much against it, that the sentiment through the operation and effects of which mankind are influenced and their actions determined would limit the practice to a comparatively narrow field. If we calmly and thoughtfully reflect on the spring and causation of human impulses; if we seriously propose, each individual to himself, the cause and reason of our likes and dislikes, the result of that inquiry may astonish some who may not have been in the habit of entering upon it. Although human beings, having regard to the glorious attributes of thought, investigation, reflection, and judgment which appertain to human nature, should be able ultimately, and after the exercise of sufficient thought with its concomitants, to adduce a reason for individual likings and antipathies, yet the end arrived at by this process of ratiocination is slow. It is so slow that God has seemingly impressed us with instincts to stand in aid, before the judgment founded on ratiocination can take effect. In this way we tend to like or dislike persons or things, acts or policies, on the instant; and were there time for entering upon a theme only collateral here, I believe the position could be demonstrated, that in by far the majority of instances the unreasoned intuitive likings and dislikings, which impress us whether we will or no, are substantiated and confirmed by ratiocination in the end.

Assuming as granted that vivisection could never be prosecuted over so large a field as mortuary dissection, then one great disadvantage of it by comparison with mortuary dissection, regarded as a means of giving operative facility, will now be made apparent. It fails, and must fail, in evolving the law of averages as affecting abnormal conditions of organism. An anatomist will at once perceive the scope and purport of the objection last made; but to aid the comprehension of it by others, I will give an illustrative example having a strictly practical bearing.

One of the surgeon's greatest solitudes, if not the very greatest, in the conducting of operations is that of heeding the arteries. It happens that Nature is somewhat irregular in her scheme of arterial distribution. Looking at the general aspect of arterial supply, the impression likely to be created is, that Nature has considered it a matter of secondary moment how any part or parts of any organism or organisms be supplied with blood, so that supply be effected. Nevertheless there exists in all animals provided with a blood-circulation such a preponderance towards one general arrangement, that the anatomist is under no difficulty to establish a type; speaking of all derivatives from that type as irregularities. In respect to these irregularities, it is a matter of the highest as well as most commonly recognised value amongst surgical operators that the comparative importance of each leading derivative from the normal type of distribution should be ap-

preciated, and impressed upon the mind statistically; in other words, from the consideration of average probabilities. In respect to this assuredly no argument is needed to make good the proposition, that directly proportionate to the field upon which the observations are conducted, so will be the approximation to truth conveyed by the resulting average. Of course it hardly need be observed that the illustrations here adduced, and the arguments founded upon them, are restricted by the very nature of the case to the limits of veterinary practice; inasmuch as *identical*, not *analogical*, vivisection is that alone taken cognisance of for the present. Nobody, at this time, need be at the trouble of controverting the proposition that it is needful and desirable to vivisect one living *human* being in order to acquire facility of operating upon another.

It being now shown that vivisection in aid of securing dexterity is not used, that it cannot be used, and, I may add, is not desired to be used by surgeons operating upon human individuals, it may seem conclusive to the minds of people in general, as it does to me, reasoning analogically and *à fortiori*, that the necessity of such aid to operation upon brutes is barred by exclusion. If vivisection be not adopted in the case of major importance, then what plea for its adoption in the minor?

Be it now remembered that the question "whether it be necessary or desirable, for the purpose of giving dexterity to the operator, that vivisection should be practised?" has hitherto been discussed on terms of manifest advantage to those who maintain the affirmative. Premising, though the premiss may be hardly necessary, that the discussion is limited to brute vivisection and veterinary operations, an important concession hitherto made must be adverted to—one hypothetical merely, and for sake of argument. It has been hitherto assumed, tacitly and inferentially, that human surgical operations and veterinary surgical operations stand on an equality, whether the gravity of them be regarded or the interests involved.

As concerns the interests involved, no argument is needed; seeing that between the value and destinies of human life on the one hand, and of brute life on the other, the difference is infinite. Wherefore it only remains that we apply ourselves to the question, "whether the number and the gravity of veterinary surgical operations are equal to the number and gravity of operations performed, or liable to be performed, upon the human subject?"

Relative to the answer, there can be no shadow of a doubt. It will be emphatic and negative; and this for obvious reasons, all founded upon a consideration of the difference between brute and human life.

Under no circumstance or possible contingency is the surgeon permitted to take the life of his patient, whatever the gravity of an accident; whereas the contrary rule legitimately applies to veterinary surgeons.

The consideration of this fundamental difference reduces at once the veterinary surgeon's responsibilities to very small dimensions. Regarding him as a mechanic only—one whose duty may call upon him to move amidst and to handle parts of machinery more or less delicate belonging to the mechanism wherewith he has to concern himself—measuring his duties and responsibilities as an engineer with those of the surgeon—then will the call for dexterity on the veterinary surgeon's part fall to a low comparative standard. When one of the animated machines which claims his solicitude gets disordered beyond certain limits, he then without compunction, and in the interests of his patient, destroys the machine by taking away the force—life—that alone can actuate it.

Contemplated according to the light thus disclosed, the veterinary surgeon's operative responsibilities will be seen to be small as to extent and insignificant as to gravity, when placed in comparison side by side with the ever-varying and often tremendous operations it may be the surgeon's duty to perform from time to time.

Perhaps when the whole field over which veterinary operations are possible is scanned, then it will appear that the removal of tumours represents the veterinary surgeon's art in its highest phase of advancement, in its greatest delicacy. And assuredly in respect of tumours it may be averred, that if the plea of vivisection, considered as a means of giving facility of hand, be weaker in any one case than another, the very limit of weakness is here reached. No two tumours are ever alike, whether as to exact size, or as to exact relationship with other parts; and furthermore, a tumour does not admit of being made to order in furtherance of vivisection.

The conclusion at which we arrive is that of the utter needlessness of vivisection, considered as an aid to promote dexterity of hand in operating.

I have endeavoured to show that conclusive evidence against the practice of vivisection for operative purposes can be adduced without invoking the aid of human sentiment, moving to pity and compassion. I not only deny the need of vivisection for operative purposes, but I deny the existence of conditions under which that need could possibly arise. I support the denial by reference to the opinions and practice of every surgeon of high position and repute that it has ever been my lot to meet with; nay, I might even aver, by the opinions and practice of surgeons of all grades. At this point the argument might be considered exhausted, so far as any plausible reasoning to the contrary has ever been adduced. Inasmuch, however, as what may seem puerile to one mind may seem plausible to another, let us not conclude without adverting to a plea sometimes urged in defence of vivisection for operative purposes—urged, however, by persons who demonstrate, by the very reasoning on which their arguments are based, the worthlessness

of any opinions they might advance relative to this matter. It is urged by them, that vivisection is desirable as a means of deadening sentiment, and accustoming the operator to look unmoved upon the shedding of blood and animal suffering; whereby (as they submit) he may the better prosecute a surgical operation without the trembling of hand or disturbance of mind that might wait on inexperience. So low a ground of advocacy never has been taken, and never will be taken, by any disputant whose knowledge of the springs of human impulse is deep enough and refined enough to warrant him in forming an estimate of the qualities which go to constitute a successful operator. Any amount of confidence in operating that might accrue from aught save knowledge would be no other than recklessness at the best—an obviously undesirable quality. Assume a surgeon to be well versed in anatomy—to be moved to the performance of some operation by the sense of duty, yet to fail in the particular sort of courage (as we will designate it) that, according to the assumption, can only be imparted by the sight of blood and suffering;—assuming this, then a case is made out, not for vivisection indeed, but for the abandonment of a profession by one whose temperament is so peculiar. Were it possible to grant the case of only one surgeon ready and willing to operate, accessible; him to possess the requisite knowledge, him to favour the operation, but refusing to operate save under the proviso that he might be allowed to fortify his courage by a preliminary course of vivisectional torture—then there might be grounds for taking into consideration the following question, “Whether the bad confidence of recklessness would not be better than the absence of all confidence?” Obviously this is a mere hypothesis. It is one beyond all probable, even all possible, limits.

There does not exist a greater fallacy than the one whereby a connection is assumed between cruelty of disposition (whether natural or acquired) and the ability to conduct with dexterity and success a surgical operation. According to my experience—and it is not small—the best, the most philosophic, the most resolute surgeons, have each possessed a nervous system delicately attuned to all impressions; and in respect to this I would here parenthetically remark, that I never yet did see, and I never expect to see, the delicacy of touch so indispensable to a good operator associated with a hard, stolid, unimpressionable nervous organisation.

Those persons who would strive to make us believe that a cold and stolid, if not an absolutely cruel disposition of mind and temperament is a quality to be aimed at by operative surgeons, found their postulate on an assumption that is wholly untenable: the assumption, namely, that the performance of operations is and should be regarded as constituting the highest aim of surgery, the ideal perfective goal to which their education should tend. The legitimate aims of surgery are not in this



direction, but in one diametrically opposed. Looking back on a somewhat long experience with surgeons of many grades and social ranks,—on surgeons of many nationalities,—I cannot call to mind a single one of mark or position who failed to own that a surgical operation, so far from being a triumph of surgical skill, implied a defect; in the sense of being a tacit acknowledgment of the mastery of disease or accident over the surgeon's curative power. This reasoning is applicable to amputations and excisions in the highest degree; but there are few, if any, surgical operations to which the remark is not applicable in some measure. So far as my experience enables me to judge, surgeons high and eminent in their calling look upon all the class of excisions and amputations very much as philanthropists and statesmen look upon war,—as a necessary evil, that is to say; one inseparable from the conditions of humanity indeed, but still an evil, and hence to be avoided. Not only, so far as my experience extends, have surgeons of highest mark and fame been men of tender mental organisation, but, what is more, the most highly endowed in this respect have proved themselves the best operators. As affording a pertinent illustration, an incident comes to mind that may here with propriety be stated. It was a question of removing the scapula or blade-bone of a man, together with the corresponding arm, on account of disease underneath, which had extended some way amongst the important vessels of the arm-pit, or axilla. Operation was finally decreed, the intending operator being one who then was, as he still is, a surgeon attached to one of the largest metropolitan hospitals. This being an unusual as well as a terrible operation, the prospective operator set about qualifying himself for the task. By what means—what training? That of vivisection? Assuredly not; though, if the practice of vivisection in aid of surgical dexterity could admit of palliation in any case, this might have been the one, inasmuch as between the blade-bone and accessories of a dog and the blade-bone and accessories of a man there is a very close structural analogy. Yet no sense of duty, no consciousness of what would be a fitting exercise, prompted the surgeon whom I have now in my mind to operate upon the blade-bone of a living animal. He repaired to the dissecting-room, where upon the tranquil and unconscious dead he operated again and again. It might have done good to certain men who profess the belief that cruelty, either natural or acquired, is a profitable quality in operative surgeons to have visited the dissecting-room that day, and studied well the operator. It was but a corpse his bright scalpel lacerated—the unconscious, painless dead. Yet to see the pale look of resolute anguish the operator's countenance wore—to note the large sweat-drops falling from his brow, as, glancing alternately from the stop-watch beside the corpse to some new revelation of artery, nerve, or vein each movement of his delicate hand calmly yet rapidly and resolutely laid bare, he worked on; to have seen

all this as I saw it, would have left an impression never to have been eradicated. On the hypothesis of cruelty being needful to the operator, the surgeon whom I have so vaguely sketched would have given small promise of acquitting himself well. He was then, as now, recognised as one of our chief operative surgeons. When the excision had to be done, it was well done ; rapidly, as behoves the operator, who shrinks from needless prolongation of suffering, but not recklessly.

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## BELGRAVIAN PROSE BALLADS

No. IV.

### BEHIND THE SCENES

THERE'S a world I have longed to fly to—a world where all is bright  
—and all is pleasure—at least all that isn't tinsel or distemper;  
a world which a broad gulf of gas-jets separates from the hum-  
drum every-day of the pit and the yawning elegance of the  
boxes—a world which interests most of us,

Behind the scenes.

Of course I know that all those fascinating butterflies flitting on the  
boards before me are not so beautiful as they are painted. And  
they tell me—some of my knowing friends—that they are  
painted. But then I have seen such elegant *coupés*, such per-  
fect broughams, hanging about certain stage-doors, that surely  
some must earn more than a guinea a week; all are not old and  
friendless,

Behind the scenes.

Do you know Flowers in the Foreign Office? Of course you do.  
Cheeky Flowers we call him. Well, *entre nous*, he has his  
*entrées* into half the theatres of London. The other half would  
be only too glad to see Cheeky's face in their boxes. But Cheeky  
never commits an act of *lèse-société*. So Cheeky has his *entrées*  
unrestricted,

Behind the scenes.

And he has promised to take me into Drury-Garden—the Garden of  
the Hesperides. Just now too, while the pantomime is still  
on—when fairies are looking up, and all the inhabitants of the  
four elements are pluming their feathers and furbishing their  
spangles in the rising lime-light. Peris are enjoying a  
glimpse of Paradise, while demons have left the purgatory of  
the Music Hall to revel once more in the Dismal Domains of  
Drear Distemper,

Behind the scenes.

Through this swing-door? Certainly. Up that dark staircase? If I  
possibly can manage it. And is this the stage? It looks more  
like a manufactory from which the machines have been removed  
by the hands who have struck. Wait till night? Certainly,

again. Take a look round. I have already taken many looks, round and oblique: one of the latter has caught sight of a paper which contains a quantity of dull-looking little discs of metal. Why, they are spangles! Wait till night; these dull bits of dross will meander in liquid fire over demons' tights and dryads' gauze, and flash out like the gold fiend's eyes from Beauty's bodice or from Beast's cuirass. Wait till night,

Behind the scenes.

Will those dreary-looking dowdies who are heavily urging on their wild career, accompanied by the one, two, three—one, two, three curses of that dissipated-looking, round-shouldered little man with the violin—will these flash out to-night, I wonder? And why not? If I don't get run over by indignant carpenters, or charged down by tyrannical stage-managers, I may get near enough to speak to one of the lovely beings. As a spangle by day she is not much; pasty at the best as to complexion, and not over clean; but rouge does duty for health, and pearl-white for cleanliness. So let me only see her by gas, for that is her element,

Behind the scenes.

Let's run up to the painting-room while the house is filling—up flights of cold stone stairs. As we go up, we pass a door which must be the gate of Mahomet's Heaven, for is not "Ballet" written on it? Have you heard jackdaws at dawn round the old church belfry? Have you seen sparrows fighting for a worm, or swallows crowding under the eaves when wet is coming on? A flock of ladies of the ballet can make more noise and chatter than jackdaws, sparrows, and swallows all together. "Now then, Foxy, where's my wings?" "I say, Jimmy, don't you try that on." "I'll box your ears, dear!" rise to the top of the bubble-and-squeak that is going on within. Fancy nymphs responding to the charming *sobriquets* of "Foxy" and "Jimmy"! Shades of Egeria! I wonder, by the way, if, when Aristophanes was stage-manager, all the actors and chorus called each other "my dear"—*φιλ*! They all do in Drury-Garden,

Behind the scenes.

There, look at the great M'Bleaves! the man whose genius is astonishing the artist-world with his Haunts of the Hamadryads! and his Chalybeate Cells of Chrysopras! Shall I ever forget them? Show me him; for the name of M'Bleaves is as a mile-stone on the road to perfection! He is not yet in the theatre. He doesn't appear until the moment arrives for him to acknowledge the applause his splendid talent merits. But here we are in the

painting-room, and, behold, a scene for the Easter Extravaganza, scarcely finished. Who is this giving the final masterly touches to the canvas? O, that is M'Bleaves's guardian-angel; a young man who lends his talent for so much a week, but whom no one knows except a few,

Behind the scenes.

"Make out my speech, drudge!" says the popular member. "Write me a sonnet, hireling!" sighs the lover. "Prompt me, serjeant-major!" whispers the captain. And so M'Bleaves paints the unrivalled scenery which you may have had the pleasure of applauding in the grand Christmas Harlequinade entitled "Rinderpest the Ritualist, or Harlequin Meg Merrilies, and the Pig that went to Market." Even spangles shine with a borrowed light. Come away. We shall only fall over a pot of umber or into a tub of size—and even M'Bleaves would not be able then to transform us into any thing respectable. Here we are again,

Behind the scenes.

In spite of jostling and being jostled, asking pardon and being cursed, losing our way and finding our mistake, we have discovered that the Princess Peerless has a father who is a carpenter; that the manager drops his h's all over the place; and makes himself most disagreeable to the hundred-and-fifty princesses who expect to receive from one to three shillings a night from his Serene Munificence; that the Harlequin beats the Columbine when he is at home; that the animated coffee-pot is unhappy, for we heard him state to a colossal earwig, who goes on in the Wimbledon scene, that "if the ghost didn't walk to-night, mother would have to go without her supper;" that Foxy is not paying the slightest attention to Major Stodger's opera-glasses in the stage-box, but is wondering how much of her salary must go to buy a new chignon; and that Jimmy feels her corns shooting "*worse than hever, my dear,*"

Behind the scenes.

If we have learnt no other, one great truth comes home to the casual's mind—this providing pleasure for the holiday world is a business, and we the idlers are in the way—very much in the way. Nobody has any time to speak to us. Were we candle-snuffers, we should extract some modicum of attention. The wicks would know us, and we should have a right to snuff something; but we are only in the way, and we learn that it is much more comfortable to stay in the stalls, than to be sworn at,

Behind the scenes.

# CIRCE

Or Three Acts in the Life of an Artist

BY BABINGTON WHITE

ACT THE FIRST :—FATA VOLENTEM DUCUNT

“What was I, that I should love her—save for feeling of the pain?

O, she walk'd so high above me, she appear'd to my abasement,  
In her lovely silken murmur, like an angel clad with wings.”

SCENE THE FIRST :—A PAINTING-ROOM IN CHARNOCK-STREET

THERE is a neighbourhood which the brotherhood of painters has marked as its own. Radiating from Fitzroy-square, the London pedestrian finds a labyrinth of dingy streets, where ever and anon he sees the elongated window peculiar to the painter's den. These dull murky streets, which have a certain air of having seen better days, are the haunt of struggling art. Successful art takes to itself wings and flies away to Kensington, where the painter's soul expands in a fairer region, beneath brighter skies, and amid the twittering of birds and rustling of forest-trees. Here and there some great man lingers in the dingy neighbourhood, as if loath to leave the strugglers alone and disheartened; but the neighbourhood grows dingier every day, and every day the successful painters are flying westwards.

To Laurence Bell, gold medalist and student, hard at work in his painting-room all day long, the dulness of the neighbourhood was a matter of small importance. A man does not live only in the square brick-box he hires from his landlord. He has a habitation of his own, situated in a world of his own creating, for which he pays neither rent nor taxes. You shall find two men occupying the same house, and yet living as far apart as if they were inhabitants of Kamschatka and Peru. One may be the dweller in a fair flowery region, where the voices of singing-birds make music for him all day long; the other, the denizen of an Arctic wilderness, peopled by prowling bears. You shall see two men pacing the same stone pavement; and while one treads lightly on the blossom-starred turf of a paradise, the other tramps toilsomly through the hot ashes of a pandemonium.

“'Tis in ourselves that we are thus, or thus.”

The world occupied by Laurence Bell was a very pleasant one. He was a painter; and the surroundings of Charnock-street, Fitzroy-square, were not so real to him as the white-walled palaces of Italy, and the airy façades of Athens, which he had seen only in his dreams.

He was young; and to his mind a glorious future seemed a bright certainty, so fair and dazzling that it is scarcely strange if he was somewhat blind to the dinginess of the present. The glamour of his art was upon him; and the world was a radiant panorama inhabited by the gods and goddesses of the Italian painters.

Nor was there wanting in his life that other species of enchantment common to commoner men. As Laurence Bell sat before his easel in the chilly March twilight, a girlish figure stood beside his chair, and as fair a face as any he had ever painted looked tenderly down into the painter's dark blue eyes.

There are some men into whose cradles the Graces seem to have showered their richest gifts. There are some story-book princes and princesses of this world to whose christening festivals no malicious fairy has found admittance. Laurence Bell was one of these. Grace, genius, and beauty are no small gifts; and on Laurence all three had been bestowed with a lavish hand.

The only fault in the fair young face was that it was just a little too faultless. The Antinous is a beautiful image; but they who seek a noble type of manhood will find it rather in the Hercules. His fellow-students of the Faubourg du Fitzroy told Laurence Bell that he was like Raffaele; and it is possible that he cultivated the likeness. The long loose golden hair, which fell on his Byronic collar, might have been an unpardonable affectation in an older man; but to an offender of two-and-twenty much is forgiven. And who was the young student? From what grand old race of mediæval warriors did he inherit those profoundly blue eyes? from what patrician ancestry did he derive those slender white hands, with the tapering fingers and rose-tinted filbert-shaped nails? to what Arab chieftain's blood did he owe the arched instep, beneath which water might flow? Alas for romance and poetry! this young Antinous was the son of a German tailor and his pretty English wife; an honest humble couple, who had fought the hard battle of life bravely enough in their own quiet way, only to be beaten. They were both at rest now, after the hard bitter struggle. They slumbered side by side in a little suburban cemetery, where Laurence went sometimes in the summer gloaming to decorate the lowly grave with flowers.

Laurence must in all probability have followed his father's joyless trade, designing nothing grander than the pattern of a waistcoat, if Signor Antonio Mocatti—better known to his friends and the public as Mr. Mocatti—had not happened to walk past the tailor's shop one summer's afternoon when the boy was seated on the doorstep drawing.

Nothing in the shape of daughtsmanship ever escaped the glance of Mr. Mocatti. He was a big broad-shouldered Neapolitan, with the blackest and sharpest eyes possible to humanity, and a very thick black moustache, which was the pride and delight of his soul. For the rest, he was a man whom people called handsome, a florid hook-nosed per-

sonage, with a harmless weakness for resplendent satin stocks, black velvet waistcoats, and braided overcoats lined with fur.

There were people who said that Antonio Mocatti had followed more than one calling in the vast city of his adoption, and who even went so far as to affirm that the nest-egg of the signor's fortune had been earned by him as a dealer in penny ices, in the days when penny ices were as yet an agreeable novelty to the mind of the Londoner. The signor himself declared that he was the son of a noble house, exiled on account of his too liberal opinions; and as he had some amount of education, the penny-ice legend was maintained only by his enemies. Whatever his antecedents, Mr. Mocatti, of Pelham Lodge, Old Brompton, was now a distinguished picture-dealer, the patron of rising talent, and the plenipotentiary from the court of art to the kingdom of commerce.

When a wealthy Manchester magnate wanted pictures, he gave Mr. Mocatti carte blanche, and, lo, his dining-room and entrance-hall became resplendent with gems of the purest art. Even those who abused Antonio Mocatti for a cheat and a charlatan were fain to admit that the man's taste was faultless, and that a bad picture never came out of his hands.

"He smells them out, sir," cried an angry artist. "It's that big nose of his does all the business. If there's a pretty little bit in the darkest corner of a room full of duffers, Mocatti's down upon it before he's been in the room three minutes; and he couldn't do that if it wasn't for his nose, sir."

Mr. Mocatti swooped down on the little fair-haired boy and seized the slate in his big primrose-gloved paw.

"By Jove," he cried, "it's the Apollo! Where did the brat get the Apollo?"

He pointed to the figure on the slate transfixed in astonishment. There was the Apollo in little, scratched by a tailor-boy's ignorant hand on a tailor's slate, amidst memoranda about coats and trousers.

"Please, sir, there's a stationer's shop round the corner, and the picture of the man is in the window, and I've looked at it very hard, sir, and I was trying to do it."

"O, you're trying to copy a picture round the corner, are you?" said the dealer. "What would you say if I set you to copy pictures that would not be round the corner, and, after that, real-life men and women, who would stand on a platform till their bones ached for your convenience? How would you like that, little tailor-boy?"

"I should like it very much indeed, if you please, sir," answered the boy, abashed by the splendid stranger.

Whereupon Mr. Mocatti went into the tailor's humble shop and bought the tailor's son, so far as the laws of England will allow the purchase of a boy. Laurence Bell was to be the goods and chattels of Antonio Mocatti for the next ten years of his life; during which time



he was to be fed and taught and clothed by that speculator. For the five following years half the painter's earnings were to be the property of the picture-dealer, and it was during these last five years that Mr. Mocatti was to reap the fruits of his investment.

The bargain seemed fair enough. What could Peter Bell and his wife do with the genius that had been born to them?

"It is a hard thing to part from him," said the tailor; "but it would be a harder thing that the child should be running of errands for me when the Italian gentleman can put him in the road to become a great painter;" and the poor man wiped his eyes piteously as he contemplated his son, eager as are ever such young fledglings to fly away from the parental nest.

So, after a few days' consideration and more than one wakeful night, the father dressed the lad in his smartest raiment, and handed him over to the picture-dealer; but not before he had duly signed a document prepared by that gentleman's solicitor. Mr. Mocatti took his young protégé straight to the house of another protégé, a middle-aged painter who had never achieved any marked success, and who now worked solely for the Neapolitan dealer.

"Look here, Graystone," said the speculator, "this boy has the makings of a great painter. I want you to lick him into shape. He can attend the life-academy when he's old enough, and so on; and he can live with you. I'll allow you a hundred a year for his board and instruction, and you must contrive to make something good out of him, Tom Graystone."

Mr. Graystone was poor, and perhaps it was his poverty rather than his will which consented to oblige Mr. Mocatti. There was no kindly matron in the painter's household, and Laurence Bell's new life would have been strange and lonely if it had not been for the companionship of his master's only child, a little girl, three years younger than Laurence, very fair and delicate and pretty, a fond caressing little creature, whose presence brightened the dull dusty rooms, and whose young voice made music all day long.

Mr. Mocatti was a man who never made mistakes. His investment in a boy turned out as lucky as most of his other investments. At nineteen years of age, Thomas Graystone's pupil was the wonder of the life-academy. At two-and-twenty he had distinguished himself as an exhibitor, and his pictures already commanded decent prices.

"They sell pretty well, as I work them, sir," said Mr. Mocatti, whereby he would have implied that it was his working rather than the merit of the pictures which procured the prices in question.

Thomas Graystone had been a conscientious master. He now acknowledged that his pupil had passed beyond his teaching. "Let the boy go to the Vatican and take a lesson from Raffaele," said he; "I can do nothing more for him."

Antonio Mocatti was not so easily pleased.

“What is that which you sing me there?” he cried contemptuously, in his Neapolitan French, “this child knows no more how to paint than a monkey. I will find you a monkey in your garden of plants here, which will do as much as he if you keep him in your painting-room a month or two. My monkey will draw you Dutch dolls, and will mix you flake-white and vermilion and gamboge upon his palette, and call it flesh-colour, and will paint his Dutch dolls dark on one side and light on the other, and call it chiaroscuro. It is not such great things for my monkey. Bah, Tom Graystone, the day will come when Laurence Bell will be a painter, but to-day he paints—like that!” and the connoisseur emphasised his speech with a little gesture that savoured of the Mabelle.

“You don’t tell your Manchester men that,” said Mr. Graystone with a malicious grin.

“I tell my Manchester men that I have a protégé who paints tableaux de genre better than any man in London,” answered Mr. Mocatti; “but I don’t offer to sell my Manchester men that cream-coloured Venus yonder. Laurence paints his Venuses *pour se distraire*; but we must have pretty little women in yellow satin, with Spanish mantillas on their heads, and big black eyes which look at you like one thousand devils, to boil the pot, as you say in your English slang.”

Laurence Bell painted “pot-boilers” as his patron directed him. Charming little pictures these pot-boilers were; now a scene from such perennial sources of inspiration as the Vicar of Wakefield or Don Quixote; now a hazardous little bit from Alfred de Musset; anon a glimpse of graceful home-life, rich with the sheen of satin and the luminous glow of a fire, or the mellow light of a shaded lamp; now a girl on a balcony looking up at the stars; now a shrouded cavalier waiting at a Venetian street-corner, with murderous eyes flashing athwart the dusk. Mr. Mocatti was very well satisfied with his bargain, though it was his habit to be contemptuous and doubtful of his protégé’s merits in a good-humoured way. There was a certain amount of sincerity even in this affectation of scorn. The man’s belief in the young painter was so great that to him these pretty cabinet pictures, these crude undeveloped nymphs and goddesses, seemed only the blind gropings of a mighty genius which was trying to push its way into the light.

“There is the stuff in you to make a greater painter than your pragmatism England has seen for a hundred years,” cried the dealer; “but you are only playing with art. You are a child; you want depth and passion, force and fire. You want a little madness, my friend, to make you a genius. There are no sane geniuses.”

While Laurence Bell grappled with the rudiments of his art, Amy Graystone received the orthodox young lady’s education at a Brixton boarding-school. When Laurence attained his majority, and the agree-

ment between his dead parents and Antonio Mocatti became so much waste paper,—Mr. Mocatti took care not to inform his protégé of this fact, by the way,—Miss Graystone came home from school, being eighteen years of age, and “finished.” She brought a great many gaudily-bound prize volumes with her, the covers of which offended her father’s eye for colour, and she was posted in the dates of every important event in the world’s history, from the destruction of Sennacherib to the passing of the Reform Bill. The gaudy bindings of the prize volumes faded and grew dingy in the dust and sunshine of Charnock-street, and the dates melted one by one out of Miss Graystone’s memory. When these were gone, there remained very little result from the Brixton education; but Amy Graystone was just one of those charming and lovable creatures who have no occasion to be clever. She sang Moore’s melodies in a voice which went straight to the hearts of her listeners; and she could play tender little scraps of Italian music, and wailing German waltzes, which were very sweet to hear in the twilight. She was very pretty, but her beauty was of so unobtrusive a character that you might be in a room with her an hour before you discovered how great a claim she had on your admiration. She was, in short, one of those women who may pass through a London season of balls and parties, and flower-shows and races, unrewarded by a single conquest, but who cannot inhabit the same house with a man for a week without making him her slave.

Laurence Bell had lived under the same roof with the painter’s daughter for a year, and long before the year was over he loved her and had declared his love. He was the sort of man whose heritage it is to be idolised by women, and to suffer at their hands. He was of the stuff which makes a Chastelard or a Konigsmark. To Amy he seemed the ideal of all that is brightest and most poetical in mankind. To be loved by him was to be the elect of the gods.

Thomas Graystone, the painter, consented to his daughter’s engagement, but he was by no means rapturous in his observations on the subject. “I had rather you had fallen in love with a tallow-chandler,” he said. “I daresay you think it’s a fine thing to marry a genius, poor child! You don’t know as much of that kind of creature as I do. The wife of a genius is a social martyr, who fits herself to wear the palm while her husband earns his laurels. I suppose you never read poor Haydon’s diary. Read a few pages of that interesting work, my love, and compassionate Mrs. Haydon.”

Miss Graystone raised herself upon the points of her pretty little feet and kissed her papa; but she set very small value upon his worldly wisdom; she thought so much of her lover that she had very little leisure for the consideration of her own interests. If there was palm to be worn by one of them, she was ready to accept the crown of martyrdom, provided there were plenty of laurels for her idol. She hated the gorgeous Neapolitan picture-dealer, with his braided overcoats,

and velvet waistcoats, and resplendent patent-leather boots that were always so disagreeably new, and the odour of musk and ambergris which came with his presence, and his disdainful shrugs and contemptuous gnawing of moustache and pulling of whisker, and his tradesman-like talk of subjects that would sell or would not sell, and effects that were or were not adapted for the work of the engraver.

This evening, while Laurence rests himself in the gloaming after a laborious day, he and Amy are talking of the great Mocatti.

"I look forward to the day when you will be your own master, Laurence," said Amy; "and then you will be able to paint what you please."

"Yes, I shall be able to paint my *Œdipus at Colona*," answered the young man in an excited tone; "such a grand subject, Amy; grander than *Lear*. The old man—blind—dying—with uplifted hands and awful sightless eyes invoking the divinities of Hell, and calling down destruction upon his unworthy sons; the two devoted daughters—the classic background—the—O Amy, if I could only follow the bent of my own fancy—if I could find time to paint that picture—"

"What a noble waste of time, and canvas, and colour, and bristles of innocent pigs, there would be!" cried a sonorous voice in the doorway of the chamber; and then the door, which had been standing ajar, was pushed open, and enter Mr. Mocatti, with the usual odour of musk, and the usual splendour of velvet and braiding. "Mon enfant, there is no longer room in civilised Europe for your blind old conundrum-guessing king, unless it is against a newly plastered wall in some provincial Mechanics' Institute, where there is once in a month a lecture on chemistry or the sidereal heavens, and where your *Œdipus* will become as blue and mouldy as a stilton cheese. How do you do, Miss Amy?—as pretty as ever—and as much in love with our young Raffaele as ever, I suppose. We give you leave to fall in love with him, Miss Amy, but not to marry him. He is not to marry for ten years to come. He is not to marry until he has done great things."

"Hands off, there, if you please, Mr. Mocatti!" cried Laurence; "you have bought a claim on my industry, but not my freedom as a man. Miss Graystone will become my wife whenever I can obtain her consent to accept that position. I shall neither consult you before fixing my wedding-day, nor ask you to support my wife; and I shall certainly not tolerate the faintest approach to insolence in your conduct towards Miss Graystone."

Amy was not in the room when her lover so bravely defended his right of action. She had withdrawn quietly into the adjoining chamber; but as the door of communication between the two rooms was not quite closed, it is just possible that the young lady was gratified by hearing Mr. Bell's spirited assertion of independence.

She heard no more; for the Machiavellian Mocatti espied this unshut door, and closed it deliberately before continuing the conversation.

"And so you are going to marry, *mon cher*?" he said.

"Yes; I am proud to say Miss Graystone has consented—"

"Never mind Miss Graystone," cried the Neapolitan, with a contemptuous snap of his fingers; "there are a hundred thousand Miss Graystones in the world, ready to be the eternal perdition of rising genius. Look at that window there, my friend, two stories high, and overlooking a nice little area and a row of strong iron spikes, which might serve to finish a man if the fall were not sufficient. Will you be so kind as to throw yourself out, *mon enfant*?"

Mr. Bell contemplated his patron in silent wonder.

"Oblige me by throwing yourself out of the window," said Mocatti, in his most insinuating tone. "I don't suppose it hurts one—much—to fall upon spikes, because you see one is happily stunned by the concussion of the air before one arrives at the spikes. At the worst, it is much better for you than marriage."

"Pshaw! you talk like an idiot," muttered Laurence impatiently.

"I talk like a man who has had his dealings with genius, and knows what stuff it is made of. Do you want to be a trader in coloured canvas, or a great painter? I want you to be a great painter. I have plenty of protégés who bring me money; I want you to do something more than that. The diamonds that every jeweller deals in are very well in their way; but the jeweller has his profit, and there an end. I want to be pointed out as the owner of a blue diamond; and it is in you to be that blue diamond if you please, Laurence Bell."

This appeal went straight home to the weakest spot in the painter's character; it flattered his vanity. He felt a thrill of rapture as he thought that it might indeed be in his power to become the blue diamond among painters.

"I know how much you have done for me, Mocatti," he said, considerably softened in tone and manner, "and I hope I have done my duty. You have never had reason to complain of my want of industry—"

"Bah!" cried the picture-dealer; "industry is a journeyman tailor's virtue. I want something more than that."

"You cannot ask more from me than I am willing—nay, eager to give. I am ready to devote every faculty I possess to art. What else do I live for? But the artist has a right to a home. Why, then, do you oppose my marriage?"

"Because for you marriage would be ruin."

"But why?"

"But why? but why?" echoed the dealer impatiently. "Why does laudanum make you sleepy? why does water extinguish fire? I tell you, a genius married and settled is a genius flat-ironed into a commonplace rate-paying, cradle-rocking, church-going, two-o'clock-dinner-eating nonentity. Poor wretch! his dreams were once peopled with

gods and goddesses; now his slumbers are haunted by butcher's bills. He used to wander away into lonely places and waste long hours face to face with nature; but now he must wheel a perambulator and contemplate nature in Bloomsbury-square. His habits used to be wild, nomadic; sometimes tramping over Welsh mountains, sometimes lingering in the fairest valleys of Southern France, anon lost amid the grandeurs of Alpine peak and glacier; but now his wildest roving is comprised in an autumn trip to Margate or Broadstairs. Do you think art can survive the rocking of cradles and vexation of butcher's bills? I tell you it cannot. If you are a genius, your proper element is fire; so much the worse for you if you don't like to be scorched. You are consumed by fever! So much the better. You pass from transports of hope to agonies of despair. You are lifted to the skies to-day; you grovel in the dust to-morrow! So much the better! And again and again, so much the better! Do you know why art is at a low level nowadays? It is because artists are too well recompensed. They live in comfortable houses, they pay their debts, they have dinner every day: and we have no more of those inspired works which were achieved in that golden age of art when painters died of starvation. And you want to marry a pretty boarding-school miss, who will think it a fine thing to make you happy and comfortable—after the fashion of a lawyer's clerk or a country curate. *Nom d'un nom!*" cried the excited Mocatti; "I will not live to behold such a sacrifice. Sooner would I stab myself, and intercept my bleeding corpse between the altar and the victim. No, no; one thousand times no, my Laurence, my pride, my glory! Break this girl's heart; break your own, if you like; but don't talk of marriage."

"I would rather trample all my hopes in the dust than I would give Amy Graystone one hour's sorrow," answered Laurence gravely. "Let me be happy in my own way, Mr. Mocatti."

"Happy in your own way! Do you think, foolish child, that any creature can be happy who is false to his destiny? Do you think you can shut up genius in a little box, and screw it down with a lid, like the mannikin in a child's toy? Do you think you can imprison the soul of a giant in the body of a dwarf? Bah! do not let us put ourselves into passions," said Mr. Mocatti, who had worked himself into fever-heat, and was fain to mop his floridly handsome face with a still more florid silk handkerchief; "we will say no more of marriage. You shall paint pictures, and more pictures, and again more pictures. And ten years hence, when you have made Europe ring with your name, and have earned the fortune of a Rothschild, if you like to marry the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, with their hair all combed off their faces and tied up into horse's tails, after Hemling, I will not forbid the bans."

Laurence Bell did not reply to this exordium. He had not attempted to stem the torrent of Mr. Mocatti's talk; but when Mr.

Mocatti had said all he had to say, his protégé reserved the right to please himself.

“And now let me see what you have done while I have been at Brighton,” said the dealer; “I am very well in with this year’s hanging committee, and I want to see something of yours on the line. *Il faut marcher, jeune homme*. What is that under the green baize? Light the gas, and let me see what I can. I was detained at a sale at Christie’s, or I should have been with you before the light was all gone.”

Laurence lighted the gas, and placed first one and then another canvas on his easel. They were pretty little cabinet pictures, of the kind one sees so often, and in which one almost always finds something to admire. One was a coquettish little soubrette of the Louis Quinze period, feeding some doves at an open window; the other a pair of lovers seated in an open boat, drifting on a sunny river, with a forgotten guitar at their feet.

“‘Music on the water,’” muttered Mr. Mocatti, looking at the label which the painter had pasted on the back of his picture; “yes, that’s pretty, very pretty. The sunshine on the girl’s face is very nicely managed. Your rushes are rather stiff—look as if you’d done them with a grainer’s comb—and there’s a little too much of the palette-knife in your sky. Still, as far as it goes, it’s a nice bit. They’ll hang it in a corner, and it’ll sell for five-and-thirty pounds. The ‘Girl and Birds’ may fetch twenty. One may almost calculate those things to a sixpence. But when are you going to leave off painting pretty pictures? When are you going mad? When do you mean to give me my blue diamond?”

Laurence blushed, and hesitated, as he tried to answer this impetuous demand. The volcanic Italian fathomed the meaning of that blush.

“*Mais, mon Dieu!*” he cried, “you have something more to show me. The blue diamond is coming.”

“I am afraid it is scarcely worth showing you,” faltered the young man, taking hold of a kitcat-sized canvas that was turned with its face to the wall. “The subject is hackneyed enough, you see—and—and I daresay the treatment is quite as commonplace as the subject; but I dreamt of the face one night after I’d been reading a translation of *Æschylus*—”

“Stop!” cried Mr. Mocatti, “the subject isn’t from *Æschylus*, I hope?”

“No, it’s from Shakespeare.”

The connoisseur gave a disdainful sniff.

“Humph!” he said; “Shakespeare is no great things; but he is better than *Æschylus*.”

Laurence Bell placed his canvas on the easel, and stood beside it watching Mr. Mocatti’s face more anxiously than it was his habit to do when that gentleman pronounced judgment on his work.

There was rather a long pause, during which Mr. Mocatti scrutinised the picture, with his hands arched over his eyebrows.

It was the picture of a woman—dark, imperious, grand—with a face that flashed out of the clear obscure with a lurid brightness. She might have been Judith or Clytemnestra, Semiramis or Joanna of Naples; but for the satisfaction of an English public Laurence Bell had christened her Lady Macbeth. He had put daggers in her gleaming white nervous hands; he had draped her in heavy robes of purple and orange woollen stuff, and had placed a rude diadem on her queenly head. In her face he had strangely mingled vengeful passion and heroic resolve. So might look an angry goddess; so might look a murderous woman. Shrinking from her, and with his face half hidden, there was a cowering wretch, whom one knew for the thane of Cawdor. The scene was a grim stone hall, with one wide-open window, through which one saw a dark gray sky, black wind-driven clouds, and one red solitary star—which might have been the planet that rules in the house of an assassin.

“*Vous y êtes, mon cher,*” said Mr. Mocatti, after his leisurely contemplation of the canvas; “you’ve done the trick. If that picture is not hung on the line; if it is not written about, and talked about, and better abused than anything else in the Academy, say that Antonio Mocatti is an imbecile. Embrace me, my treasure,” cried the dealer; “I can hope anything from you now; you are beginning to go mad.”

SCENE THE SECOND:—IN THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

THERE were many equipages in Trafalgar-square, and there was a mighty gathering of footmen on the steps and in the portico of the Royal Academy; for that spring noontide had come which is of all noontides the chiefest and grandest in the world of art. It was the day set apart for the private view of the treasures to be exhibited that season in Trafalgar-square. Stately dowagers and elegant young women swept the crimson drugget with their rustling silken draperies. The academicians fidgeted to and fro nervously, receiving the congratulations of their friends. The art-critics chewed the ends of their pencils, and made occasional notes in their catalogues, as marking down the quarry upon which they meant anon to swoop. The few privileged outsiders looked furtively at the painters while pretending to be absorbed in the pictures.

When the room was at its fullest—not filled with a jostling crowd, as on common days, but agreeably furnished with animated faces and the sheen and flutter of feminine apparel—when the clock of St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields was striking three, there entered Mr. Mocatti, the great picture-dealer, upon whose coming there arose just the faintest possible commotion among the crowd; for the Neapolitan was known to the initiated, and was a person to be pointed out to the uninitiated



as one of London's celebrities. Mr. Mocatti looked his handsomest, after his own florid manner, and had arrayed himself with more than usual splendour.

He was on speaking terms with all the best people in the room; and while he was doing homage to aristocratic patrons and patronesses on every side, people had time to look at a young man who had entered the room with him, under the great man's wing as it were, and with a somewhat deprecating manner, as if conscious of being too small a creature to come amongst that privileged assembly.

"Who is that young man with the long yellow hair?" asked a lady; "of course he is a painter: no one but a painter would presume to exhibit such hair."

"He exhibits something better than his hair," answered a royal academician, who was great enough to be generous. "Have you seen the Lady Macbeth?"

"What, that small full-length figure, 'Give me the daggers!' Why, it is the best picture of the year—except—" And here the lady faltered and broke down.

"Except mine," said the academician, laughing; "of course that is understood. No, it is not the best picture of the year, Lady Burton; but it is the most singular, and the most promising. That young man will do great things if he takes care of himself."

While people were talking of his picture the young man with the flowing locks kept as close as he could to the elbow of his protector; and that gentleman, having made obeisance to his customers and done a stroke or two of business, was now at liberty to patronise his protégé.

"I told you you'd done the trick," he said confidentially; "the Lady Macbeth will be the sensation of the season, and you are a made man, provided you steer clear of matrimony and butcher's bills. A little more madness and a little more force and fever and fire and flame," said Mr. Mocatti, fondly prolonging the alliterative substantives, "and you will have mounted the ladder of fame; and that is a ladder which men ascend with a rush or not at all nowadays, *mon ami*. There is no such thing as creeping upwards by easy stages. Prometheus didn't steal his fire by instalments."

"Prometheus was a failure," murmured the young man, rather sadly. "Has anyone bought the picture?"

"I might have sold it half-a-dozen times within the last hour," replied the dealer; "but I am keeping it."

"Keeping it? For whom?"

"For a lady, one of my best customers. She is almost sure to be here to-day, and she is quite sure to want your picture."

"Why?"

"Because it is wild and strange. She has a mania for everything wild and strange. *Elle en raffole*. Yes, she will come," murmured

Antonio Mocatti, meditatively, "and you will see her; and then, perhaps, you will cease to talk to me of *cette jeunesse*—Miss Graystone."

"There is no woman on earth whose influence can lessen my regard for Miss Graystone," answered the young man earnestly.

"*Attendez un peu, mon cher.* You have not yet seen all the women on earth. And now let us take a turn in the rooms, and I will show you the lions."

The young man gazed reverently on the faces which he had seen before only in a photographic album or a printseller's window. There was Mr. Vanike Willis, tall and handsome, and with a certain haughty indifference of manner, talking to a sunny-faced matron, plump and comely as one of her husband's King Charles's beauties—fair sister among the brotherhood of the brush; and yonder came graceful Miss Edgars, as bright a vision as any of the slim young heroines her facile pencil scatters broadcast for the enthrallment of pensive youth. There was Mr. Skith, R.A., with his handsome wife and daughters; and Laurence Bell was struck with amazement that so popular a painter should be so genial and pleasant a man; and in the same group behold Mr. Belmore, also genial and pleasant, and making little jokes about everything and everybody. Afar stalked Mr. MacMoorilyo, a trifle stern, but devoid of all taint of affectation; and to Mr. Belmore comes Mr. Brooklet, the great landscape-painter and amateur of old silver, exclaiming joyfully,

"Another pair of Queen-Anne candlesticks, Belmore! Come to the Grove, and expire with envy."

"And who is that noble-looking elderly gentleman with the picturesque white hair, and why does he walk about with his hat in his hand, as if he were in church?" asks the innocent Laurence.

"O, that is Mr. O'Chuzzlewit, the great art-critic," replies Mocatti, "who has ruined himself three times over by his extravagant purchases from rising young painters. Look at that bearded gentleman in spectacles, with a grave handsome dark-haired lady; and look at him respectfully, young man, for his is the voice that speaks in the columns of the *Morning Zeus*. There is Mr. Catullus FitzHorace, with his hair very wild and his hands in his pockets, and the sweetest kindest smile on his frank good-looking countenance. He writes delicious little verses, sparkling as Epernay, and classic as Falernian, and slashing articles in the *Conservative Sphæra*. See, he is talking to Mr. Slayter, another art-critic—nay, indeed, a critic of all-work, and a smart young novelist, and altogether a very brilliant young man; but when he has mounted a ladder he kicks it down, and kicks it spitefully into the bargain: 'which is not rightly to behave, my Slayter.' That dashing gentleman in the doorway is Captain de Boots, the long-sword-saddle-bridle novelist; and there, in a blue bonnet, is clever Miss Dushikk, who imitates and caricatures his novels. There is Miss Katherine Clive, the favourite young actress—*une tout jeune fille, n'est-ce pas?*—

as tall and slim and white as a lily. And now let us go and look at the engravings. I'm afraid my lady is not coming to-day."

She was not coming, this nameless lady who was to buy his picture. The young painter felt one little pang of disappointment. It had of late seemed to him that there was only one woman in the world, and that her name was Amy Graystone. But in spite of this, his interest, or at any rate his curiosity, had been aroused by Mr. Mocatti's brief description of his patroness.

"What is the name of this wonderful woman?" he asked presently.

"Her name is Giulia d'Espramonte, otherwise the Princess d'Espramonte."

"A princess!" murmured the young man with a gasp. Even with the divinity of art upon him, he was still the son of a German tailor, and for the moment the high-sounding title took away his breath.

"The widow of a Roman prince," said Mr. Mocatti with a shrug: "*ça ne vaut pas grande chose*. Luckily for her, the prince was a Jewish banker, and had amassed the largest fortune ever accumulated within the papal dominions. But the princess has a genius for squandering money, and this generation may see the end of old Aspramonte's millions. *Parlez des anges, et—*" muttered the dealer, dropping his catalogue nervously; and, lo, Laurence Bell lifted his eyes towards the doorway of the little octagon chamber and beheld the lady who was to buy his picture.

He recognised her immediately. Why he knew that this stranger was the woman Mocatti had been talking of; why the beating of his heart quickened and the blood surged upward to his brain as he looked at her,—formed a portion of the great enigma for which he never found any solution.

For the moment he was only conscious of his youth, his inexperience, his blushes, his awkwardness. How gladly he would have sunk through a convenient trap-door in the flooring of the octagon chamber, to hide himself from the penetrating glances of that radiant being! Was she really so radiant? was she indeed so very lovely? She was Italian, and had eyes and hair of that midnight blackness peculiar to the daughters of the South. Her face was cast in the true classic mould; too pale perhaps for beauty, a little worn and aged, as if the woman had lived and suffered much within the span of her thirty years; a face which one might fancy sublime when illumined by the lightning of passion, terrible if overshadowed by the gloom of despair; a face full of suggestiveness for poet or painter. Laurence Bell contemplated it wonderingly. It was so old and yet so new to him. He had seen it so often in his dreams, but never in earthly semblance till this day.

"Go and distract yourself among the pictures," muttered Mr. Mocatti; "I'll introduce you presently."

Laurence bowed and retired. He had to pass the Roman princess, and as he passed his artistic eye caught every detail of her careless

toilette. Ah, what an ineffable charm there was in that carelessness! The princess looked as if she had dressed herself *en passant*. The morning dress of soft India muslin and lace was a costume to be worn in a boudoir, and over that loose cloud-like robe there hung, for sole outer garment, the unstudied folds of a scarlet cashmere, worn as only a continental beauty can wear her shawl. For head-gear the princess had a bonnet of old point-lace, with one real yellow rose nestling between the soft fabric and her purple-black hair. To the painter's fancy, it seemed as if the flower bent its perfumed petals to kiss the Roman lady's brow. In her hand she carried a bouquet of yellow roses, and their perfume filled the little room with an almost overpowering sweetness.

"I should like to paint such a head with a garland of yellow roses," he thought to himself as he made his way through the larger rooms.

In the middle room he found Mr. Graystone and his daughter. Thomas Graystone was well in with some of the great Forty, and had procured tickets for this privileged view. Amy's soft blue eyes were on the watch for her lover. She greeted him with smiles and blushes; and when he felt the little clinging hand in his own, that vision of a dark head crowned with flowers vanished out of Mr. Bell's mind.

"I have seen *the* picture, Laurence," whispered Miss Graystone. "Everyone is talking of it. I am so proud of you, so happy, I can scarcely tell you what I feel, dear. It is almost too much joy."

Her lover slipped the little hand under his arm, and as it rested there he felt it tremble. This was the love that genius might be proud to win. The consciousness of its depth and purity awoke a thrill in the painter's heart as he looked down at the girl's expressive face. The emotion of the moment made her very lovely. She was not the type of a classic heroine; she was not a being of whom to dream, or for whom to go mad. She was a woman made to be trusted and loved.

"Yes, the *Lady Macbeth* is a success, Amy," answered Laurence, as they stood arm-in-arm before a picture; "and now there is nothing to hinder our marriage. I am on the high road to fortune, darling, and we'll tread it hand in hand."

"But if I were to be a hindrance to your success, Laurence,—if I were a burden to weigh you down?"

"A burden, my sweet one? You don't know how weak I am, and how much I need your love. I fancy myself strong enough to conquer the world when I feel this dear hand upon my arm."

While the young lovers walked slowly round the rooms, looking at the pictures, and thinking of each other, Madame d'Aspramonte went here and there fitfully, now hurrying across the room to examine something that had attracted her eye, only to turn from it contemptuously after a nearer inspection, now dawdling listlessly before the pictured walls, with her catalogue dangling loosely in her hand, and a disdainful indifference depicted in her countenance. Wherever she went Mr. Moccatti attended her, deferential, subservient, watchful. An imaginative

observer seeing the two might have fancied in them some vague resemblance to a splendid lioness and her keeper: the queen of the forest, proud, impetuous, uncertain, dangerous; the keeper gravely anxious.

The princess had scarcely deigned to admire anything, when they came to Laurence Bell's picture.

"Your exhibition grows worse every year," she said. "*Tout est fade, débile, usé*, and the same, and the same—always the same. The same cornfields, the same sunshine, the same plump piquant beauties in the reign of your Charles, the same sailor-boys in the same boat. Bah! I am tired of it all," cried the princess, shutting her catalogue with a little impetuous gesture.

"How does her excellency find that?" asked the dealer, pointing to his protégé's picture.

Madame looked at it long and steadily, and then flashed her dark eyes upon Mr. Mocatti.

"I find that it is a little like me," she said, with a touch of anger in her tone.

"Exactly what I thought when I first saw the picture," murmured the dealer.

"Does the man who did that know *me*?"

"He has never seen you until to-day, except in his dreams. It is a wonderful bit of light and shade, is it not, madame?"

"For your light and shade, *je ne m'en soucie guère*," exclaimed the princess; "the woman's face is wonderful. 'No. 126, Give me the Daggers,'" she read from her catalogue; "Shakespeare. Always your Shakespeare. I must have that picture, Signor Mocatti."

"But if it is already sold, signora!"

"*Qu'est-ce que cela me fait?* Whether it is sold or not, I must have it all the same. Do I not know that with you art is always a question of money? You want a great sum of money for your picture, I suppose. Cheat me as much as you please, Signor Mocatti, but that picture must be mine."

"Can I refuse a request so graciously preferred?" murmured the dealer in his mother-tongue. "The picture shall be yours, madame. Have you no curiosity about the painter?"

"Your painter is an insolent person," said the princess haughtily.

"Because he presumed to dream of beauty he had never beheld? Surely you will not blame him for a coincidence."

"Who is he?" asked the lady disdainfully. "One of your academicians, I suppose, though his style seems new to me."

"His style is very new; and he is not even an associate, as your excellency will perceive if you take the trouble to look at your catalogue. He is a young man called Laurence Bell, and this is his first triumph. He is a protégé of mine, madame, and the triumph is also mine."

Hereupon Mr. Mocatti told the story of the little German genius.

In telling it he took the liberty of an editor, changed the venue from Clerkenwell to Vienna, and transformed his humble protégé into the orphan son of a ruined Austrian officer.

The princess deigned to be interested.

“And what is he like, your protégé?” she asked.

“Raffaelle in a modern frock-coat. Raffaelle at two-and-twenty. The Raffaelle whom Buonarotti insulted because he had the retinue of a prince, and looked like a prince.”

“He ought to succeed,” murmured the princess thoughtfully.

“He ought, madame,” replied the enthusiastic Mocatti, “and his success would be a certainty if he had not determined on throwing himself out of a window.”

“What?” cried the princess.

“Pardon. If he had not decided on marrying. It is almost the same thing.”

And then Mr. Mocatti expounded his favourite theory.

“He will marry,” he exclaimed, “he will sacrifice his genius on the domestic hearth. His fancy will wither in the vulgar atmosphere of a middle-class home; his finest ideas will take flight at the sound of a tax-gatherer’s knock; his grandest aspiration will be annihilated by a water-rate. He will be lost to you, to me, to the universe. O madame, it is more than a sacrifice, it is a sacrilege. The divine afflatus was never designed to fan the fire that cooks the domestic dinner. O madame, can we do nothing to prevent this calamity?”

“*We!*” cried the Princess, elevating her eyebrows in superb amazement; “what have I to do *dans cette galère?*”

“*Pardon, Princesse,*” murmured the dealer apologetically; “I—I ventured to think that if you deigned to express some admiration for the picture—some slight interest in the painter’s career—he might be—that is to say, his eyes might be opened to the glorious future that lies before him—and—”

“*En voilà de vraies chimères,*” exclaimed the Princess; “at a word from me the young man is to abandon a *fiancée* whom I conclude he loves—”

“Judge for yourself, Princess,” said Mr. Mocatti; “there they stand, painter and *fiancée*. As pretty a picture as any in the room; is it not?”

He indicated the spot where Laurence and his betrothed stood side by side, with the sunlight on their faces. It was the last time that they ever stood thus, side by side, in the sunshine, with no shadow of doubt or sorrow between them.

Madame Aspramonte looked at the two with a prolonged scrutinising gaze, Mr. Mocatti watching her while she looked.

“Very pretty, isn’t she?” he said presently; “every one in the rooms has been admiring her.”

“Every one has very bad taste, then,” remarked the Princess, with

more than usual nonchalance. "The girl is the personification of your English dowdiness—a housemaid *endimanchée*."

"But surely the face is beautiful; the expression—now, as she looks up at her lover—almost seraphic; is it not, Princess?"

"I know nothing of your seraphs," replied the lady, with considerable truth; "that girl is evidently consumptive."

"And my protégé? May I present him to you?"

"If you please," assented the Princess, in the last extremity of languor. "Has he ever painted in fresco?"

"Oh, *Ciel*, I divine your happy thought! The frescoes which you want painted for your new music-room; the frescoes for which you have so long sought a painter. My Princess, he is the man of men. His dreams are all of the classic; they are peopled with gods and goddesses. His ideas are large—sublime—antique; the fancies and aspirations of an Apelles. And I curb him, poor child; I tie him down; I say, you shall paint me little bits for the houses of Manchester men; beyond a bishop's half-length your genius shall not soar. His wings are bruised, so much he has beaten them against the bars of his prison-house, dear angel. Ah, madame, be yours the hand to break his bondage! open the cage of this young eagle! release this chained Prometheus! Let him paint your music-room in fresco," concluded Mr. Mocatti, descending from the sublime to the business-like.

"Before I know whether he can paint anything but the wicked glaring woman from your Shakespeare!" exclaimed the Princess. "*C'est aller un peu trop vite*, Signor Mocatti."

"Mr. Bell," cried the dealer, beckoning Laurence across the room, "Madame d'Aspramonte does you the honour to admire your picture, and permits me to present you to her."

"Yes, I have the pleasure to possess your picture, Mr. Bell," said the Princess, in her languid, legato, contralto tones; "it is very striking. I hope you mean to do even grander things. I see you have studied the Italian painters. I have some very good examples of the Venetian school, which I shall be happy to show to you if you care to see them. I am at home every Tuesday evening to receive my friends."

She gave him her card as she said this:

PRINCESS D'ASPRAMONTE.

*Adrian's Villa, Fulham.*

He bowed, murmured some scarcely audible acknowledgment of the lady's graciousness, and returned to the spot where Amy stood watching him.

"Are you satisfied now, Signor Mocatti?" asked the Princess.

"*Parfaitement*," replied the dealer, with an ominous smile.

# BELGRAVIA

APRIL 1867

## BIRDS OF PREY

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," &c

Book the Fourth

VALENTINE HAWKEHURST'S RECORD

CHAPTER III. MR. GOODGE'S WISDOM

OCTOBER 5<sup>th</sup>. My dreams last night were haunted by the image of gray-eyed Molly, with her wild loose hair. She must needs have been a sweet creature; and how she came amongst those prim fishy-eyed men and women with absurd headgear is much more than I can understand. That she should mix herself up with Diana Paget, and play *rouge-et-noir* at Forêtdechêne in a tucked-up chintz gown and a quilted satin petticoat in my dreams last night—that I should meet her afterwards in the little stucco temple on the Belgian hills, and stab her to the heart, whereon she changed into Charlotte Halliday—is only in the nature of dreams, and therefore no subject for wonder.

On referring to Sheldon's letter I found that the next people to be looked up were descendants of Brice the lawyer; so I devoted my breakfast-hour to the cultivation of an intimacy with the oldest of the waiters—a very antique specimen of his brotherhood, with a white stubble upon his chin and a tendency to confusion of mind in the matter of forks and spoons.

"Do you know, or have you ever known, an attorney of the name of Brice in this town?" I asked him.

He rubbed the white stubble contemplatively with his hand, and then gave his poor old head a dejected shake. I felt at once that I should get very little good out of *him*.

"No," he murmured despondently, "not that I can call to mind."

I should like to know what he *could* call to mind, piteous old meanderer!

"And yet you belong to Ullerton, I suppose?"



"Yes ; and have belonged to it these seventy-five years, man and boy ;" whereby no doubt the dreary confusion of the unhappy being's mind. Figurez donc, mon cher Qui-que-ce-soit, fifty-five years or so of commercial breakfasts and dinners in such a place as Ullerton. Five-and-fifty years of steaks and chops ; five-and-fifty years of ham-and-eggs, indifferently-buttered toasts, and perennial sixes of brandy-and-water ! After rambling to and fro with spoons and forks, and while in progress of clearing my table, and dropping the different items of my breakfast equipage, the poor soddened faded face of this dreary wanderer became suddenly illumined with a faint glimmer that was almost the light of reason.

"There were a Brice in Ullerton when I were a lad ; I've heard father tell on him," he murmured slowly.

"An attorney?"

"Yes. He were a rare wild one, he were ! It was when the Prince of Wales were Regent for his poor old mad father, as the saying is, and folks was wilder like in general in those times, and wore spensers—lawyer Brice wore a plum-coloured one."

Imagine then again, my dear, an attorney in a plum-coloured spenser ! Who, in these enlightened days, would trust his business to such a practitioner ? I perked up considerably, believing that my aged imbecile was going to be of real service to me.

"Yes, he were a rare wild one, he were," said my ancient friend with excitement ; "I can remember him as well as if it was yesterday, at Tiverford races—there was races at Tiverford in those days, and gentlemen-jocks. Lawyer Brice rode his roan mare—Queen Charlotte they called her. But after that he went wrong, folks said—speckilated with some money, you see, that he didn't ought to have touched—and went to America, and died."

"Died in America, did he ? Why the deuce couldn't he die in Ullerton ? I should fancy it was a pleasanter place to die in than it is to live in. And how about his sons ?"

"Lawyer Brice's sons ?"

"Yes, of course."

My imbecile's lips expanded into a broad grin.

"Lawyer Brice never had no sons," he exclaimed, with a tone which seemed to express a contemptuous pity for my ignorance ; "he never married."

"Well, well ; his brothers. He had brothers, I suppose ?"

"Not as *I* ever heard tell on," answered my imbecile, relapsing into hopeless inanity.

It was clear that no further help was to be obtained from him. I went to the landlord—a brisk business-like individual of Transatlantic go-aheadism. From him I learned that there were no Brices in Ullerton, and never had been within the thirty years of his experience in that town. He gave me an Ullerton directory in confirmation of that

fact—a neat little shilling volume, which I begged leave to keep for a quarter of an hour before returning it.

Brice was evidently a failure. I turned to the letter G, and looked up the name of Goodge. Goodge, Jonah, minister of Beulah Chapel, resided at No. 7 Waterhouse-lane—the lane in which I had seen the chapel.

I determined upon waiting on the worthy Goodge. He may be able to enlighten me as to the name of the pastor who preached to the Wesleyan flock in the time of Rebecca Caulfield; and from the descendants of such pastor I may glean some straws and shreds of information. The pious Rebecca would have been likely to confide much to her spiritual director. The early Wesleyans had all the exaltation of the Quietists, and something of the lunatic fervour of the Convulsionists, who kicked and screamed themselves into epilepsy under the influence of the Unigenitus Bull. The pious Rebecca was no doubt an enthusiast.

I found No. 7 Waterhouse-lane. It is a neat little six-roomed house, with preternaturally green palings enclosing about sixty square feet of bright yellow gravel, adorned by a row of whitewashed shells. Some scarlet geraniums bloomed in pots of still more vivid scarlet; and the sight of those bright red blossoms recalled Philip Sheldon's garden at Bayswater, and that sweet girl by whose side I have walked its trim pathways.

But business is business; and if I am ever to sue for my Charlotte's hand, I must present myself before her as the winner of the three thousand. Remembering this, I lifted Mr. Goodge's knocker, and presently found myself in conversation with that gentleman.

Whether unordained piety has a natural tendency to become greasy of aspect, and whether, among the many miracles vouchsafed to the amiable and really great Wesley, he received for his disciples of all time to come the gift of a miraculous straightness and lankiness of hair, I know not; but I do know that every Methodist parson I have had the honour to know has been of one pattern, and that Mr. Goodge is no exception to the rule.

I am bound to record that I found him a very civil person, quite willing to afford me any help in his power, and far more practical and business-like than the rector of Dewsdale.

It seems that the gift of tongues descended on the Goodges during the lifetime of John Wesley himself, and during the earlier part of that teacher's career. It was a Goodge who preached in the draper's warehouse, and it was the edifying discourse of a Goodge which developed the piety of Miss Rebecca Caulfield, afterwards Mrs. Haygarth.

“That Goodge was my great-uncle,” said the courteous Jonah, “and there was no one in Ullerton better acquainted with Rebecca Caulfield. I've heard my grandmother talk of her many a time. She

used to send him poultry and garden-stuff from her house at Dewsdale, and at his instigation she contributed handsomely to the erection of the chapel in which it is my privilege to preach."

I felt that I had struck upon a vein of gold. Here was a sharp-witted, middle-aged man—not an ancient mariner, or a meandering imbecile—who could remember the talk of a grandmother who had known Matthew Haygarth's wife. And this visit to Mr. Goodge was my own idea, not prompted by the far-seeing Sheldon. I felt myself advancing in the insidious arts of a private inquirer.

"I am employed in the prosecution of a business which has a *remote* relation to the Haygarth family history," I said; "and if you can afford me any information on that subject I should be extremely obliged."

I emphasised the adjective "remote," and felt myself, in my humble way, a Talleyrand.

"What kind of information do you require?" asked Mr. Goodge thoughtfully.

"Any information respecting Matthew Haygarth or his wife."

Mr. Goodge became profoundly meditative after this.

"I am not given to act unadvisedly," he began—and I felt that I was in for a little professional discourse; "the creatures of impulse are the children of Satan, the babes of Lucifer, the infants of Beelzebub. I take counsel in the silence of the night, and wait the whispers of wisdom in the waking hours of darkness. You must allow me time to ponder this business in my heart and to be still."

I told Mr. Goodge that I would willingly await his own time for affording me any information in his power to give.

"That is pleasant," said the pastor blandly: "the worldly are apt to rush blindly through life, as the roaring lion rushes through the forest. I am not one of those rushing worldlings. I presume, by the way, that such information as I may afford is likely to become a source of pecuniary profit to your employer."

I began to see that my friend Goodge and the rector of Dewsdale were very different kind of people, and that I must play my cards accordingly.

"That will depend upon the nature of your information," I replied diplomatically; "it may be worth something to us, or it may be worthless."

"And in case it should be worth something?"

"In that case my employer would be glad to remunerate the person from whom he obtained it."

Mr. Goodge again became meditative.

"It was the habit of the sainted Wesley to take counsel from the Scriptures," he said presently; "if you will call again to-morrow, young man, I shall have taken counsel, and may be able to entreat with you."

I did not much relish being addressed as "young man," even by

such a shining light as the Rev. Jonah Goodge. But as I wanted the Rev. Jonah's aid, I submitted with a tolerable grace to his patriarchal familiarity, and bade him good-morning, after promising to call again the following day. I returned to my inn and wrote to Sheldon in time for the afternoon mail, recounting my interview with Mr. Goodge, and asking how far I should be authorised to remunerate that gentleman, or to pledge myself to remunerate him for such information as he might have to dispose of.

*Oct. 6th.* A letter from Sheldon.

“DEAR HAWKEHURST,—There may be something very important behind that mysterious burial at Dewsdale. Go without delay to Spotswold; examine registers, tombstones, &c.; hunt up oldest inhabitant or inhabitants, from whom you may be able to discover whether any Haygarth or Haygarths ever lived there, and all that is known respecting such Haygarth or Haygarths. You have got a clue to *something*. Follow it up till it breaks off short, as such clues often do, or till you find it is only leading you on a wild-goose chase. The Dewsdale business is worth investigation. Mem.: how about descendants of lawyer Brice? Yours truly,

G. S.

“G.'s Inn, Oct. 5th.”

Before starting for Spotswold it was necessary for me to see Mr. Goodge. I found that gentleman in a pious and yet business-like frame of mind. He had taken counsel from the Scriptures, like the founder of his sect; but I fancy with rather less spiritual aspirations.

“The text upon which the lot fell was the 12th verse of the 9th chapter in the Book of Proverbs, ‘If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself;’” he said solemnly; “whereby I perceive that I shall not be justified in parting with that which you seek without fitting recompense. I ask you therefore, young man, what you are prepared to give.”

The Rev. Jonah's tone could scarcely have been more lofty, or his manner more patronising, if he had been Saul and I the humble David; but a man who is trying to earn three thousand pounds must put up with a great deal. Finding that the minister was prepared to play the huckster, I employed no further ceremony.

“The price must of course depend on the quality of the article you have to sell,” I said; “I must know that before I can propose terms.”

“Suppose my information took the form of letters?”

“Letters from whom—to whom?”

“From Mrs. Rebecca Haygarth to my great-uncle, Samson Goodge.”

“How many of such letters have you to sell?”

I put it very plainly; but the Rev. Jonah's susceptibilities were not of the keenest order. He did not wince.

“Say forty odd letters.”

I pricked up my ears; and it needed all my diplomacy to enable me to conceal my sense of triumph. Forty odd letters! There must be an enormous amount of information in forty odd letters; unless the woman wrote the direst twaddle ever penned by a feminine correspondent.

“Over what period do the dates of these letters extend?” I asked.

“Over about seven years; from 1769 to 1776.”

Four years prior to the marriage with our friend Matthew; three years after the marriage.

“Are they tolerably long letters, or mere scrawls?”

“They were written in a period when nobody wrote short letters,” answered Mr. Goodge sententiously,—“the period of Bath post and dear postage. The greater number of the epistles cover three sides of a sheet of letter-paper; and Mrs. Rebecca’s caligraphy was small and neat.”

“Good!” I exclaimed. “I suppose it is no use my asking you to let me see one of these letters before striking a bargain—eh, Mr. Goodge?”

“Well, I think not,” answered the oily old hypocrite. “I have taken counsel, and I will abide by the light that has been shown me. ‘If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself;’ such are the words of inspiration. No, I think not.”

“And what do you ask for the forty odd letters?”

“Twenty pounds.”

“A stiff sum, Mr. Goodge, for forty sheets of old letter-paper!”

“But if they were not likely to be valuable, you would scarcely happen to want them,” answered the minister. “I have taken counsel, young man.”

“And those are your lowest terms?”

“I cannot accept sixpence less. It is not in me to go from my word. As Jacob served Laban seven years, and again another seven years, having promised, so do I abide by my bond. Having said twenty pounds, young man, heaven forbid that I should take so much as twenty pence less than those twenty pounds!”

The solemn unction with which he pronounced this twaddle is beyond description. The pretence of conscientious feeling which he contrived to infuse into his sordid bargain-driving might have done honour to Molière’s Tartuffe. Seeing that he was determined to stick to his terms, I departed. I telegraphed to Sheldon for instructions as to whether I was to give Goodge the money he asked, and then went back to my inn, where I devoted myself for the next ten minutes to the study of a railway time-table, with a view to finding the best route to Spotswood.

After a close perusal of bewildering strings of proper names and dazzling columns of figures, I found a place called Black Harbour, “for

Wisborough, Spotswold, and Chilton." A train left Ullerton for Black Harbour at six o'clock in the afternoon, and was due at the latter place at 8.40.

This gave me an interval of some hours in which I could do nothing, unless I received a telegram from Sheldon. The chance of a reply from him kept me a prisoner in the coffee-room of the Swan Inn, where I read almost every line in the local and London newspapers pending the arrival of the despatch, which came at last.

"Tell Goodge he shall have the sum asked, and get the letters at once. Money by to-night's post."

This was Sheldon's message: sharp and short, and within the eighteenpenny limit. Acting upon this telegram I returned to the abode of Mr. Goodge, told him his terms were to be complied with, showed him the telegram, at his request, and asked for the letters.

I ought to have known my reverend friend better than to imagine he would part with those ancient documents except for money upon the counter.

He smiled a smile which might have illuminated the visage of Machiavelli.

"The letters have kept a long time, young man," he said, after having studied the telegram as closely as if it had been written in Punic; "and lo you, they are in nowise the worse for keeping: so they will keep yet longer. 'If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself.' You can come for the letters to-morrow, and bring the money with you. Say at eleven A.M."

I put on my hat and bade my friend good-day. I have often been tempted to throw things at people, and have withheld my hand; but I never felt Satan so strong upon me as at that moment, and I very much fear that if I had had anything in the way of a kitchen-poker or a carving-knife about me, I should have flung that missile at the patriarchal head of my saintly Jonah. As it was, I bade him good-day and returned to the Swan, where I took a hurried repast and started for the station, carrying a light carpet-bag with me, as I was not likely to return till the following night, at the earliest.

I arrived at the station ten minutes before the starting of the train, and had to endure ten minutes of that weariness called waiting. I exhausted the interest of all the advertisements on the station walls, found out how I could have my furniture removed with the utmost convenience—supposing myself to possess furniture; discovered where I ought to buy a dinner service, and the most agreeable kind of blind to screen my windows in sunny weather. I was still lingering over the description of this new invention in blinds, when a great bell set up a sudden clanging, and the down train from London came thundering into the station.

This was also the train for Black Harbour. There were a good many passengers going northwards, a good many alighting at Ullerton; and

in the hurry and confusion I had some difficulty in finding a place in a second-class carriage, the passengers therein blocking up the windows with that unamiable exclusiveness peculiar to railway travellers. I found a place at last, however; but in hurrying from carriage to carriage I was startled by an occurrence which I have since pondered very seriously.

I ran bolt against my respected friend and patron Horatio Paget.

We had only time to recognise each other with exclamations of mutual surprise when the clanging bell rang again, and I was obliged to scuffle into my seat. A moment's delay would have caused me to be left behind. And to have remained behind would have been very awkward for me; as the captain would undoubtedly have questioned me as to my business in Ullerton. Was I not supposed to be at Dorking, enjoying the hospitality of an aged aunt?

It would have been unlucky to lose that train.

But what "makes" the gallant Captain in Ullerton? That is a question which I deliberated as the train carried me towards Black Harbour.

Sheldon warned me of the necessity for secrecy, and I have been as secret as the grave. It is therefore next to an impossibility that Horatio Paget can have any idea of the business I am engaged in. He is the very man of all others to try and supersede me if he had an inkling of my plans; but I am convinced he can have no such inkling.

And yet the advertisement of the Haygarth property in the *Times* was as open to the notice of all the world as it was open to the notice of George Sheldon. What if my patron should have been struck by the same advertisement, and should have come to Ullerton on the same business?

It is possible, but it is not likely. When I left town the Captain was engaged in Philip Sheldon's affairs. He has no doubt come to Ullerton on Philip Sheldon's business. The town, which seems an abomination of desolation to a man who is accustomed to London and Paris, is nevertheless a commercial centre; and the stockbroker's schemes may involve the simple Ullertonians, as well as the more experienced children of the metropolis.

Having thought the business out thus, I gave myself no further trouble about the unexpected appearance of my friend and benefactor.

At Black Harbour I found a coach, which carried me to Spotswood, whither I travelled in a cramped and painful position as regards my legs, and with a pervading sensation which was like a determination of luggage to the brain, so close to my oppressed head was the heavily-laden roof of the vehicle. It was pitch-dark when I and two fellow-passengers of agricultural aspect were turned out of the coach at Spotswood, which in the gloom of night appeared to consist of half-a-dozen houses shut in from the road by ghastly white palings, a grim

looming church, and a low-roofed inn with a feeble light glimmering athwart a red stuff curtain.

At this inn I was fain to take up my abode for the night, and was conducted to a little whitewashed bed-chamber, draped with scanty dimity and smelling of apples—the humblest, commonest cottage-chamber, but clean and decent, and with a certain countryfied aspect which was pleasing to me. I fancied myself the host of such an inn, with Charlotte for my wife; and it seemed to me that it would be nice to live in that remote and unknown village, “the world forgetting, by the world forgot.” I beguiled myself by such foolish fancies,—I, who have been reared amidst the clamour and riot of the Strand!

Should I be happy with that dear girl if she were mine? Alas! I doubt it. A man who has led a disreputable life up to the age of seven-and-twenty is very likely to have lost all capacity for such pure and perfect happiness as that which good men find in the tranquil haven of a home.

Should I not hear the rattle of the billiard-balls, or the voice of the *croupier* calling the main, as I sat by my quiet fireside? Should I not yearn for the glitter and confusion of West-end dancing-rooms, or the mad excitement of the ring, while my innocent young wife was sitting by my side and asking me to look at the blue eyes of my first-born?

No; Charlotte is not for me. There must be always the two classes—the sheep and the goats; and my lot has been cast among the goats.

And yet there are some people who laugh to scorn the doctrines of Calvin, and say there is no such thing as predestination.

Is there not predestination? Was not I predestined to be born in a gaol and reared in a gutter, educated among swindlers and scoundrels, fed upon stolen victuals, and clad in garments never to be paid for? Did no Eumenides preside over the birth of Richard Savage, so set apart for misery that the laws of nature were reversed, and even his mother hated him? Did no dismal fatality follow the footsteps of Chatterton? Has no mysterious ban been laid upon the men who have been called Dukes of Buckingham?

What foolish lamentations am I scribbling in this diary, which is intended to be only the baldest record of events! It is so natural to mankind to complain that, having no ear in which to utter his discontent, a man is fain to resort to pen and ink.

I devoted my evening to conversation with the landlord and his wife, but found that the name of Haygarth was as strange to them as if it had been taken from an inscription in the tomb of the Pharaohs. I inquired about the few inhabitants of the village, and ascertained that the oldest man in the place is the sexton, native-born, and supposed by mine host never to have travelled twenty miles from his birth-place. His name is Peter Drabbles. What extraordinary names that class of people contrive to have! My first business to-morrow morning



will be to find my friend Drabbles—another ancient mariner, no doubt—and to examine the parish registers.

*Oct. 7th.* A misty morning, and a perpetual drizzle—to say nothing of a damp, penetrating cold, which creeps through the thickest overcoat, and chills one to the bone. I do not think Spotswold can have much brightness or prettiness even on the fairest summer morning that ever beautified the earth. I know that, seen as I see it to-day, the place is the very archetype of all that is darksome, dull, desolate, dismal, and dreary. (How odd, by the way, that all that family of epithets should have the same initial!) A wide stretch of moorland lies around and about the little village, which crouches in a hollow, like some poor dejected animal that seeks to shelter itself from the bitter blast. On the edge of the moorland, and above the straggling cottages and the little inn, rises the massive square tower of an old church, so far out of proportion to the pitiful cluster of houses, that I imagine it must be the remnant of some monastic settlement.

Towards this church I made my way, under the dispiriting drip, drip of the rain, and accompanied by a feeble old man, who is sexton, clerk, gravedigger, and anything or everything of an official nature.

We went into the church after my ancient mariner No. 2 had fumbled a good deal with a bunch of ghostly-looking keys. The door opened with a dismal scroop, and shut with an appalling bang. Grim and dark as the church is without, it is grimmer and darker within, and damp and vault-like, *à faire fremir*. There are all the mysterious cupboards and corners peculiar to such edifices; an organ-loft, from which weird noises issue at every opening or closing of a door; a vaulted roof which echoes one's footsteps with a moan, as of some outraged spirit hovering in empty space, and ejaculating piteously, "Another impious intruder after the sacramental plate! another plebeian sole trampling on the brasses of the De Montacutes, lords of the manor!"

The vestry is, if anything, more ghostly than the general run of vestries; but the business mind is compelled to waive all considerations of a supernatural character. For the moment there flashed across my brain the shadows of all the Christmas stories I had ever read or heard concerning vestries; the phantom bridal, in which the bride's beautiful white hand changed to the bony fingers of a skeleton as she signed the register; the unearthly christening, in which all at once, after the ceremony having been conducted with the utmost respectability, to the edification of the unauthorised intruder hiding behind a pillar, the godfathers and godmothers, nurse and baby, priest and clerk, became in a moment dilapidated corpses; whereon, the appalled intruder fell prone at the foot of his pillar, there to be discovered the next morning by his friends and the public generally, with his hair blanched to an awful whiteness, or his noble intellect degraded to idiocy.

For a moment, the memory of about a hundred Christmas stories was too much for me—so weird of aspect, and earthy of atmosphere, was the vestry at Spotswold. And then, “being gone” the shadows of the Christmas stories, I was a man and a lawyer’s clerk again, and set myself assiduously to search the registers and interrogate my ancient.

I found that individual a creature of mental fogginess compared with whom my oldest inhabitant of Ullerton would have been a Pitt, Earl of Chatham. But I questioned and cross-questioned him until I had in a manner turned his poor old wits the seamy side without, and had discovered, first, that he had never known anyone called Haygarth in the whole course of those seventy-five years’ vegetation which politeness compelled me to speak of as his “life;” secondly, that he had never known anyone who knew a Haygarth; thirdly, that he was intimately acquainted with every creature in the village, and that he knew that no one of the inhabitants could give me the smallest shred of such information as I required.

Having extorted so much as this from my ancient with unutterable expenditure of time and trouble, I next set to work upon the registers.

If the ink manufactured in the present century is of no more durable nature than that abominable fluid employed in the penmanship of a hundred years ago, I profoundly pity the generations that are to come after us. The registers of Spotswold might puzzle a Bunsen. However, bearing in mind the incontrovertible fact that three thousand pounds is a very agreeable sum of money, I stuck to my work for upwards of two hours, and obtained as a result the following entries :

1. Matthew Haygarthe, aged foure yeares, berrid in this churchyard, over against y<sup>e</sup> tombe off M<sup>rs</sup>. Marttha Stileman, a bout 10 fete fromm y<sup>e</sup> olde yue tre. Febevarie 6<sup>th</sup>, 1753.

2. Mary Haygarthe, aged twentie sevene yeers, berrid under y<sup>e</sup> yue tree, Nov. 21, 1754.

After copying these two entries, I went out into the churchyard to look for Mary Haygarth’s grave.

Under a fine old yew—which had been old a hundred years ago, it seems—I found huddled amongst other head-stones one so incrustated with moss, that it was only after scraping the parasite verdure from the stone with my pen-knife that I was able to discover the letters that had been cut upon it.

I found at last a brief inscription :

Here lieth y<sup>e</sup> body of

MARY HAYGARTH, aged 27. Born 1727. Died 1754.

This stone has been set up by one who sorroweth without hope of consolation.

A strange epitaph; no scrap of Latin, no text from Scripture, no conventional testimony to the virtues and accomplishments of the de-

parted, no word to tell whether the dead woman had been maid, wife, or widow. It was the most provoking inscription for a lawyer or a genealogist, but such as might have pleased a poet.

I fancy this Mary Haygarth must have been some quiet creature, with very few friends to sorrow for her loss. Perhaps only that one person who sorrowed without hope of consolation.

Such a tombstone might have been set above the grave of that simple maid who dwelt "beside the banks of Dove."

This is the uttermost that my patience or ingenuity can do for me at Spotswold. I have exhausted every possibility of obtaining further information. So, having written and posted my report to Sheldon, I have no more to do but to return to Ullerton. I take back with me nothing but the copy of the two entries in the register of burials. Who this Matthew Haygarth or this Mary Haygarth was, and how related to *the* Matthew, is an enigma not to be solved at Spotswold.

Here the story of the Haygarths ends with the grave under the yew-tree.

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## Book the Fifth.

### RELICS OF THE DEAD.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### BETRAYED BY A BLOTTING-PAD.

AT an early hour upon the day on which Valentine Hawkehurst telegraphed to his employer, Philip Sheldon presented himself again at the dingy door of the office in Gray's-inn.

The dingy door was opened by the still more dingy boy; and Mr. Sheldon the elder—who lived in a state of chronic hurry, and had a hansom cab in attendance upon him at almost every step of his progress through life—was aggravated by the discovery that his brother was out.

"Out!" he repeated, with supreme disgust; "he always *is* out, I think. Where is he to be found?"

The boy replied that his master would be back in half an hour, if Mr. Sheldon would like to wait.

"Like to wait!" cried the stockbroker; "when will lawyers' clerks have sense enough to know that nobody on this earth ever *liked* to wait? Where's your master gone?"

"I think he's just slipped round into Holborn, sir," the boy replied with some slight hesitation. He was very well aware that George had secrets from his brother, and that it was not judicious to be too free in his communications to the elder gentleman. But the black eyes and white teeth of the stockbroker seemed very awful to him; and if Philip chose to question him, he must needs answer the truth, not having been provided by his master with any convenient falsehood in case of inquiry.

"What part of Holborn?" asked Philip sharply.

"I did hear tell as it was the telegraph-office."

"Good!" exclaimed Mr. Sheldon; and then he dashed downstairs, leaving the lad on the threshold of the door staring after him with eyes of wonder.

The telegraph-office meant business; and any business of his brother's was a matter of interest to Mr. Sheldon at this particular period. He had meditated the meaning of George's triumphant smile in the secluded calm of his own office; and the longer he had meditated, the more deeply rooted had become his conviction that his brother was engaged in some very deep and very profitable scheme, the nature of which it was his bounden duty to discover.

Impressed by this idea, Mr. Sheldon returned to the hansom cab which was waiting for him at the end of Warwick-court, and made his way to the telegraph-office. The ostensible motive of his call in Gray's-inn was sufficient excuse for this following up of his brother's footsteps. It was one of those waifs and strays of rather disreputable business which the elder man sometimes threw in the way of the younger.

As the wheel of the hansom ground against the curbstone in front of the telegraph-office, the figure of George Sheldon vanished in a little court to the left of that establishment. Instead of pursuing this receding figure, Philip Sheldon walked straight into the office.

It was empty. There was no one in any of the shaded compartments so painfully suggestive of pecuniary distress and the stealthy hypothecation of portable property. A sound of rattling and bumping in an inner office betrayed the neighbourhood of a clerk; but in the office Mr. Sheldon was alone.

Upon the blotting-pad on the counter of the central partition the stockbroker perceived one great blot of ink, still moist. He laid the tip of his square forefinger upon it, to assure himself of that fact, and then set himself deliberately to scrutinise the blotting-paper. He was a man who seldom hesitated. His greatest coups on the money-market had been in a great measure the result of this faculty of prompt decision. To-day he possessed himself of the blotting-pad, and examined the half-formed syllables stamped upon it with as much coolness and self-possession as if he had been seated in his own office reading his own newspaper. A man given to hesitation would have looked to the right and the left and watched for his opportunity—and lost it.

Philip Sheldon knew better than to waste his chances by needless precaution; and he made himself master of all the intelligence the blotting-pad could afford him before the clerk emerged from the inner den where the rattling and stamping was going forward.

"I thought as much," muttered the stockbroker, as he recognised traces of his brother's sprawling penmanship upon the pad. The message had been written with a heavy hand and a spongy quill pen, and had left a tolerably clear impression of its contents on the blotting-paper.

Here and there the words stood out bold and clear; here and there, again, there was only one decipherable letter amongst a few broken hieroglyphics. Mr. Sheldon was accustomed to the examination of very illegible documents, and he was able to master the substance of that random impression. If he could not decipher the whole, he made out sufficient for his purpose. Money was to be offered to a man called Goodge for certain letters. He knew his brother's affairs well enough to know that these letters for which money was to be offered must needs be letters of importance in some search for an heir-at-law. So far all was clear and simple; but beyond this point he found himself at fault. Where was this Goodge to be found? and who was the person that was to offer him money for the letters? The names and address, which had been written first, had left no impression on the blotting-pad, or an impression so faint as to be useless for any practical purpose.

Mr. Sheldon put down the pad and lingered by the door of the office deliberating, when the rattling and hammering came to an abrupt termination, and the clerk emerged from the interior den.

"O," he exclaimed, "it's all right. Your message shall go directly."

The stockbroker, whose face was half averted from the clerk, and who stood between that functionary and the light from the open doorway, at once comprehended the error that had arisen. The clerk had mistaken him for his brother.

"I'm not quite clear as to whether I gave the right address," he said promptly, with his face still averted, and his attention apparently occupied by a paper in his hand. "Just see how I wrote it, there's a good fellow."

The clerk withdrew for a few minutes, and returned with the message in his hand.

"From George Sheldon to Valentine Hawkehurst, Black Swan Inn, Ullerton," he read aloud from the document.

"All right, and thanks," cried the stockbroker.

He gave one momentary glance at the clerk, and had just time to see that individual's look of bewilderment as some difference in his voice and person from the voice and person of the black-whiskered man who had just left the office dawned upon his troubled senses. After that one glance Mr. Sheldon darted across the pavement, sprang

into his cab, and called to the driver, "Literary Institution, Burton-street, as fast as you can go."

"I'll try my luck in the second column of the *Times*," he said to himself. "If George's scheme is what I take it to be, I shall get some clue to it there." He took a little oblong memorandum-book from his pocket, and looked at his memoranda of the past week. Amongst those careless jottings he found one memorandum scrawled in pencil, amongst notes and addresses in ink, "*Haygarth—intestate. G. S.; to see after.*"

"That's it," he exclaimed; "Haygarth—intestate; Valentine Hawkehurst *not* at Dorking, but working for my brother; Goodge—letters to be paid for. It's all like the bits of mosaic that those antiquarian fellows are always finding in the ruins of Somebody's Baths; a few handfuls of coloured chips that look like rubbish, and can yet be patched into a perfect geometric design. I'll hunt up a file of the *Times* at the Burton Institution, and find out this Haygarth, if he is to be found there."

The Burton Institution was a somewhat dingy temple, devoted to the interests of science and literature, and next door to some baths that were very popular among the denizens of Bloomsbury. People in quest of the Baths were apt to ascend the classic flight of steps leading to the Institution, when they should have descended to a lowlier threshold lurking modestly by the side of that edifice. The Baths and the Institution had both been familiar to Mr. Sheldon in that period of probation which he had spent in Fitzgeorge-street. He was sufficiently acquainted with the librarian of the Institution to go in and out uninterrogated, and to make any use he pleased of the reading-room. He went in to-day, asked to see the latest bound volumes of the *Times* and the latest file of unbound papers, and began his investigation, working backwards. Rapidly and dexterously as he turned the big leaves of the journals, the investigation occupied nearly three quarters of an hour; but at the expiration of that time he had alighted on the advertisement published in the preceding March.

He gave a very low whistle—a kind of phantom whistle—as he read this advertisement. "John Haygarth! a hundred thousand pounds."

The fortune for which a claimant was lacking amounted to a hundred thousand pounds! Mr. Sheldon knew commercial despots who counted their wealth by millions, and whose fiat could sway the exchanges of Europe; but a hundred thousand pounds seemed to him a very nice thing nevertheless, and he was ready to dispute the prize the anticipation whereof had rendered his brother so triumphant.

"He rejected me as a coadjutor," he thought, as he went back to his cab after having copied the advertisement; "he shall have me as an antagonist."

"Omega-street, Chelsea, next call," he cried to the driver; and was soon beyond the confines of Bloomsbury, and rattling away towards

the border-land of Belgravia. He had completed his search of the newspapers at ten minutes past twelve, and at twenty minutes to one he presented himself at the lodging-house in Omega-street, where he found Captain Paget, in whose "promoting" business there happened to be a lull just now. With this gentleman he had a long interview; and the result of that interview was the departure of the Captain by the two-o'clock express for Ullerton. Thus had it happened that Valentine Hawkehurst and his patron encountered each other on the platform of Ullerton station.

## CHAPTER II.

### VALENTINE INVOKES THE PHANTOMS OF THE PAST.

*Oct. 7th, Midnight.* I was so fortunate as to get away from Spotswood this morning very soon after the completion of my researches in the vestry, and at five o'clock in the afternoon I found myself once more in the streets of Ullerton. Coming home in the train, I meditated seriously upon the unexpected appearance of Horatio Paget at the head-quarters of this Haygarthian investigation; and the more I considered that fact, the more I felt inclined to doubt my patron's motives, and to fear his interference. Can his presence in Ullerton have any relation to the business that has brought me here? That is the question which I asked myself a hundred times during my journey from Spotswood; that is the question which I ask myself still.

I have no doubt I give myself unnecessary trouble; but I know that old man's Machiavellian cleverness only too well; and I am inclined to look with suspicion upon every action of his. My first business on returning to this house was to ascertain whether anyone bearing his name, or answering to my description of him, had arrived during my absence. I was relieved by finding that no stranger whatever had put up at the inn since the previous forenoon. Who may have used the coffee-room is another question, not to be so easily set at rest. In the evening a great many people come in and go out; and my friend and patron may have taken his favourite brandy-and-soda, skimmed his newspaper, and picked up whatever information was to be obtained as to *my* movements without attracting any particular attention.

In the words of the immortal lessee of the Globe Theatre, "Why I should fear I know not . . . and yet I feel I fear!"

I found a registered letter from George Sheldon, enclosing twenty pounds in notes, and furnished therewith I went straight to my friend Jonah, whom I found engaged in the agreeable occupation of taking tea. I showed him the money; but my estimate of the reverend gentleman's honour being of a very limited nature, I took care not to give it to him till he had produced the letters. On finding that I was really prepared to give him his price, he went to an old-fashioned

bureau, and opened one of those secret recesses which cannot for three minutes remain a secret to any investigator possessed of a tolerably accurate eye or a three-foot rule. From this hiding-place—which he evidently considered a triumph of mechanical art worthy the cabinet of a d'Argenson or a Fouché—he produced a packet of faded yellow letters, about which there lurked a faint odour of dried rose-leaves and lavender which seemed the very perfume of the past.

When my reverend friend had laid the packet on the table within reach of my hand, and not till then, I gave him the bank-notes. His fat old fingers closed upon them greedily, and his fishy old eyes were illumined by a faint glimmer which I believe nothing but bank-notes could have kindled in them.

After having assured himself that they were genuine acknowledgments of indebtedness on the part of the old lady in Threadneedle-street, and not the base simulacra of Birmingham at five-and-twenty shillings a dozen—thirteen as twelve—Mr. Goodge obligingly consented to sign a simple form of receipt which I had drawn up for the satisfaction of my principal.

“I think you said there were forty-odd letters,” I remarked, before I proceeded to count the documents in the presence of Mr. Goodge.

That gentleman looked at me with an air of astonishment, which, had I not known him to be the most consummate of hypocrites, would have seemed to me simplicity itself.

“I said from thirty to forty,” he exclaimed; “I never said there were forty-odd letters.”

I looked at him and he looked at me. His face told me plainly enough that he was trying to deceive me, and my face told him plainly enough that he had no chance of succeeding in that attempt. Whether he was keeping back some of the letters with a view to extorting more money from me hereafter, or whether he was keeping them with the idea of making a better bargain with somebody else, I could not tell; but of the main fact I was certain—he had cheated me.

I untied the red tape which held the letters together. Yes, there was a piece of circumstantial evidence which might have helped to convict my friend had he been on his trial in a criminal court. The red tape bore the mark of the place in which it had been tied for half-a-century; and a little way within this mark the trace of a very recent tying. Some of the letters had been extracted, and the tape had been tied anew.

I had no doubt that this had been done while my negotiation with Mr. Goodge had been pending. What was I to do? Refuse the letters, and demand to have my principal's money returned to me? I knew my friend well enough to know that such a proceeding would be about as useless as it would be to request the ocean to restore a cup of water that had been poured into it. The letters he had given me might or might not afford some slight link in the chain I was trying



to put together ; and the letters withheld from me might be more or less valuable than those given to me. In any case the transaction was altogether a speculative one ; and George Sheldon's money was hazarded as completely as if it had been put upon an outsider for the Derby.

Before bidding him a polite farewell, I was determined to make Mr. Goodge thoroughly aware that he had not taken me in.

"You said there were more than forty letters," I told him ; "I remember the phrase 'forty-odd,' which is a colloquialism one would scarcely look for in Tillotson, or in John Wesley, who cherished a prejudice in favour of scholarship which does not distinguish all his followers. You said there were forty-odd letters, and you have removed some of them from the packet. I am quite aware that I have no legal remedy against you, as our contract was a verbal one, made without witnesses ; so I must be content with what I get ; but I do not wish you to flatter yourself with the notion that you have hoodwinked a lawyer's clerk. You are not clever enough to do that, Mr. Goodge, though you are knave enough to cheat every attorney in the Law List."

"Young man, are you aware—?"

"As I have suffered by the absence of any witness to our negotiation, I may as well profit by the absence of any witness to our interview. You are a cheat and a trickster, Mr. Goodge, and I have the honour to wish you good afternoon !"

"Go forth, young man," cried the infuriated Jonah, whose fat round face became beet-root colour with rage, and who involuntarily extended his hand to the poker—for the purpose of defence and not defiance, I believe. "Go forth, young man, I say unto you, as Abimelech said unto Jedediah, go forth."

I am not quite clear as to the two scriptural proper names with which the Rev. Jonah embellished his discourse on this occasion ; but I know that sort of man always has a leaning to the Abimelechs and Jedediahs of biblical history ; solely, I believe, because the names have a sonorous roll with them that is pleasant in the mouth of the charlatan.

As I was in the act of going forth—quite at my leisure ; for I had no fear of the clerical poker—my eye happened to alight on a small side-table, covered with a chessboard-patterned cloth in gaudy colours, and adorned with some of those sombre volumes which seem like an outward evidence of the sober piety of their possessor. Among the sombre volumes lay something which savoured of another hemisphere than that to which those brown leather-bound books belonged. It was a glove—a gentleman's glove, of pale lavender kid ; small in size for a masculine glove, and bearing upon it the evidence of the cleaner's art. Such might be the glove of an exiled Brummel, but could never have encased the squat paw of a Jonah Goodge. It was as if the

*point d'Alençon* ruffle of Chesterfield had been dropped in the study of John Wesley.

In a moment there flashed into my mind an idea which has haunted me ever since. That glove had belonged to my respected patron, Horatio Paget, and it was for his benefit the letters had been abstracted from the packet. He had been with Jonah Goodge in the course of that day, and had bought him over to cheat me.

And then I was obliged to go back to the old question, Was it possible that the Captain could have any inkling of my business? Who could have told him? Who could have betrayed a secret which was known only to George Sheldon and myself?

After all, are there not other people than Horatio Paget who wear cleaned lavender gloves? But it always has been a habit with the Captain to leave one loose glove behind him; and I daresay it was the recollection of this which suggested the idea of his interference in the Goodge business.

I devoted my evening to the perusal of Mrs. Rebecca Haygarth's letters. The pale ink, the quaint cramped hand, the old-fashioned abbreviations and very doubtful orthography, rendered the task laborious; but I stuck to my work bravely, and the old clock in the market-place struck two as I began the last letter. As I get deeper into this business I find my interest in it growing day by day; an interest *sui generis*, apart from all prospect of gain—apart even from the consideration that by means of this investigation I am obtaining a living which is earned *almost* honestly; for if I tell an occasional falsehood or act an occasional hypocrisy, I am no worse than a secretary of legation or an Old Bailey barrister.

The pleasure which I now take in the progress of this research is a pleasure that is new to me; it is the stimulus which makes a break-neck gallop across dreary fields gridironed with dykes and stone walls so delicious to the sportsman; it is the stimulus which makes the task of the mathematician sweet to him when he devotes laborious days to the solution of an abstruse problem; it is the stimulus that sustains the Indian trapper against all the miseries of cold and hunger, foul weather, and aching limbs; it is the fever of the chase,—that extinguishable fire which, once lighted in the human breast, is not to be quenched until the hunt is ended.

I should like to earn three thousand pounds; but if I were to be none the richer for my trouble, I think, now that I am so deeply involved in this business, I should still go on. I want to fathom the mystery of that midnight interment at Dewsdale; I want to know the story of that Mary Haygarth who lies under the old yew-tree at Spotswood, and for whose loss some one sorrowed without hope of consolation.

Was that a widower's commonplace, I wonder, and did the unknown mourner console himself ultimately with a new wife? Who knows? as my Italian friends say when they discuss the future of France. Shall

I ever penetrate that mystery of the past? My task seems to me almost as hopeless as if George Sheldon had set me to hunt up the descendants of King Solomon's ninety-ninth wife. A hundred years ago seems as far away, for all practical purposes, as if it were on the other side of the flood.

The letters are worth very little. They are prim and measured epistles, and they relate much more to spiritual matters than to temporal business. Mrs. Rebecca seems to have been so much concerned for the health of her soul that she had very little leisure to think of anything so insignificant as the bodies of other people. The letters are filled with discourses upon her own state of mind; and the tone of them reveals not a little of that pride whose character it is to simulate humility. Mrs. Rebecca is always casting ashes on her head; but she takes care to let her friend and pastor know what a saintly head it is notwithstanding.

I have laid aside three of the most secular letters, which I selected after wading through unnumbered pages of bewailings in the strain of a Wesleyan Madame Guyon. These throw some little light upon the character of Matthew Haygarth, but do not afford much information of a tangible kind.

I have transcribed the letters verbatim, adhering even to certain eccentricities of orthography which were by no means unusual in an age when the Pretender to the crown of Great Britain wrote of his father as *Gems*.

The first letter bears the date of August 30th, 1773, one week after the marriage of the lady to our friend Matthew.

“REVERED FRIEND AND PASTOR,—On Monday sennite we arriv'd in London, wich seems to me a mighty bigg citty, but of no more meritt or piety than Babylon of old. My husband, who knows y<sup>e</sup> towne better than he knows those things with wich it would more become him to be familiar, was pleas'd to laugh mightily at that pious aversion wherewith I regarded some of y<sup>e</sup> most notable sights in this place. We went t'other night to a great garden called by some Spring Garden, by others Vauxhall,—as having been at one time y<sup>e</sup> residence or estate of that Arch Fiend and Papistical traitor Vaux, or Faux; but although I felt obligated to my husband for y<sup>e</sup> desire to entertain me with a fine sight, I could not but look with shame upon serious Christians disporting themselves like children amongst coloured lamps, and listening as if enraptured to profane music, when, at so much less cost of money or of health, they might have been assembled together to improve and edify one another.

“My obliging Mathew would have taken me to other places of the like character; but inspir'd, as I hope and believe, by y<sup>e</sup> direction of y<sup>e</sup> spirit, I took upon myself to tell him what vain trifling is all such kind of pleasure. He argu'd with me stoutly, saying that y<sup>e</sup> King

and Queen, who are both shining examples of goodness and piety, do attend Vauxhall and Ranelagh, and are to be seen there frequent, to the delight of their subjects. On which I told him that, much as I esteemed my sovereign and his respectable consort, I would compleat my existence without having seen them rather than I would seek to encounter them in a place of vain and frivolous diversion. He listen'd to my discourse in a kind and sober temper, but he was not convinc'd; for by and by he falls of a sudden to sighing and groaning, and cries out, 'O, I went to Vauxhall once when y<sup>e</sup> garden was not many years made, and O, how bright y<sup>e</sup> lamps shone, like y<sup>e</sup> stars of heaven fallen among bushes! and O, how sweet y<sup>e</sup> music sounded, like y<sup>e</sup> hymns of angels in the dewy evening! but that was nigh upon twenty years gone by, and all y<sup>e</sup> world is changed since then.'

"You will conceive, Reverend Sir, that I was scandalised by such a foolish rapsodie, and in plain words admonish'd my husband of his folly. Whereupon he speedily became sober, and asked my pardon; but for all that night continued of a gloomy countenance, ever and anon falling to sighing and groning as before. Indeed, honour'd Sir, I have good need of a patient sperrit in my dealings with him; for altho' at times I think he is in a fair way to become a Christian, there are other times when I doubt Satan has still a hold upon him, and that all my prayers and admonitions have been in vaine.

"You, who know the wildness and wickedness of his past life—so far as that life was ever known to any but himself, who was ever of a secret and silent disposition concerning his own doings in this city, tho' free-spoken and frank in all common matters—you, honour'd sir, know with how serious an intention I have taken upon myself the burden of matrimony, hoping thereby to secure the compleat conversion of this waywarde soul. You are aware how it was y<sup>e</sup> earnest desire of my late respected father that Mathew Haygarth and I shou'd be man and wife, his father and my father haveing bin friends and companions in y<sup>e</sup> days of her most gracious majesty Queen Anne. You know how, after being lost to all decent company for many years, Mathew came back after his father's death, and lived a sober and serious life, attending amongst our community, and being seen to shed tears on more than one occasion while listening to the discourse of our revered and inspired founder. And you, my dear and honour'd pastor, will feel for me when I tell you how I am tormented by y<sup>e</sup> fear of backsliding in this soul which I have promised to restore to y<sup>e</sup> fold. It was but yesterday, when walking with him near St. John's Gate at Clerkenwell, he came to a standstill all of a sudden, and cried in that impetuous manner which is even yet natural to him, 'Look ye now, Becky, wouldst like to see the house in which the happiest years of my life was spent?' And I making no answer, as thinking it was but some sudden freak, he points out a black dirty-looking dwelling-place, with overhanging windows and a wide gabled roof. 'Yonder it stands, Becky,' he cries;

'number seven John-street, Clerkenwell; a queer dingy box of four walls, my wench—a tumble-down kennel, with a staircase that 'twould break your neck to mount, being strange to it—and half-a-day's journey from the court-end of town. But that house was once paradise to me; and to look at it even now, though 'tis over eighteen years since I saw the inside of it, will bring the tears into these poor old eyes of mine.' And then he walk'd on so fast that I could scarce keep pace with him, till we came to Smithfield; and then he began to tell me about Bartholomew-fair and the brave sights he had seen; and must needs show me where had stood the booth of one Fielding—since infamously notorious as the writer of some trashy novels, the dulness whereof is only surpassed by their profligacy; and then he talks of Fawkes the conjurer, who made a great fortune, and of some humble person called 'Tiddy Doll,' a dealer in gingerbread and such foolish wares. But he could tell me nothing of those early preachings of our revered founder in Moorfields, which would have been more pleasant to me than all this vain babble about drolls and jesters, gingerbread bakers and showmen.

"When we had walked the round of the place, and it was time to take coach for our lodging at Chelsea—he having brought me thus far to see St. Paul's and the prison of Newgate, the Mint and Tower—the gloomy fit came on him again, and all that evening he was dull and sorrowful, though I read aloud to him from the printed sermons of a rising member of our community. So you will see, honour'd sir, how difficult it is for these children of Satan to withdraw themselves from that master they have onced served; since at the sober age of fifty-three yeares my husband's weak heart yet yearns after profligate faires and foolish gardens lighted by color'd lampes.

"And now no more, reverend friend, my paper being gone and it being full time to reflect that y<sup>r</sup> patience must be gone also. Service to Mrs. Goodge. I have no more room but to assure you that y<sup>e</sup> gayeties of this foolish and erring citty have no power to withdraw y<sup>e</sup> heart of her whose chief privilege it is to subscribe herself

"Your humble follower and servant,

"REBECCA HAYGARTH."

To my mind there seems just a shadowy hint of some by-gone romance in this letter. Why did the dingy house in John-street bring the tears into Matthew's eyes? and why did the memory of Vauxhall and Bartholomew Fair seem so sweet to him? And then that sighing and groaning and dolefulness of visage whenever the thought of the past came back to him?

What did it all mean, I wonder? Was it only his vanished youth which poor, sobered, converted, Wesleyanised Matthew regretted? or were there pensive memories of something even sweeter than youth associated with the coloured lamps of Vauxhall and the dinginess of

Clerkenwell? Who shall sound the heart of a man who lived a hundred years ago? and where is the fathom-line which shall plumb its mysteries? I should need a stack of old letters before I could arrive at the secret of that man's life.

The two other letters, which I have selected after some deliberation, relate to the last few weeks of Matthew's existence; and in these again I fancy I see the trace of some domestic mystery, some sorrowful secret which this sober citizen kept hidden from his wife, but which he was on several occasions half inclined to reveal to her.

Perhaps if the lady's piety—which seems to have been thoroughly sincere and praiseworthy, by the bye—had been a little less cold and pragmatical in its mode of expression, poor Matthew might have taken heart of grace and made a clean breast of it.

That there was a secret in the man's life I feel convinced; but that conviction goes very little way towards proving any one point of the smallest value to George Sheldon.

I transcribe an extract from each of the two important letters; the first written a month before Matthew's death, the second a fortnight after that event.

“ And indeed, honour'd sir, I have of late suffered much uneasinesse of speritt concerning my husband. Those fits of y<sup>e</sup> mopes of w<sup>h</sup> I informed you some time back have again come upon him. For awhile I did hope that these melancholic affections were y<sup>e</sup> fruit put forth by a regenerate soul; but within this month last past it has been my sorrow to discover that these gloomy disorders arise rather from y<sup>e</sup> promptings of the Evil One. It has pleased Mr. Haygarthe of late to declare that his life is nigh at an end; and indeed he affects a conviction that his days are number'd. This profane and impertinent notion I take to be a direct inspiration of Satan, of a like character to y<sup>e</sup> sudden and unaccountable fitts of laughter which have seized upon many pious Christians in the midst of earnest congregations; whereby much shame and discomfiture has been brought upon our sect. Nor is there any justification for this presumptuous certainty entertained by my husband, inasmuch as his health is much as it has ordinarily been for y<sup>e</sup> last ten years. He does acknowledge this with his own lips, and immediately after cries out that his race is run, and y<sup>e</sup> hand of death is upon him; which I cannot but take as y<sup>e</sup> voice of y<sup>e</sup> enemy speaking through that weak mouth of y<sup>e</sup> flesh.

“ On Sunday night last past, y<sup>e</sup> gloomy fitt being come upon him after prayers, Mr. Haygarthe began all on a sudden, as it is his habit to do:

“ ‘ There is something I would fain tell thee, wench,’ he cries out, ‘ something about those roystering days in London which it might be well for thee to know.’

“ But I answered him directly that I had no desire to hear of profane roysterings, and that it would be better for him to keep his peace,

and listen reverently to the expounding of the Scriptures, which Humphrey Bagot, our worthy pastor and friend, had promised to explain and exemplify after supper. We was seated at y<sup>e</sup> time in y<sup>e</sup> blue parlour, the table being spread for supper, and were awaiting our friend from the village, a man of humble station, being but a poor chapman and huckster, but of exalted mind and a most holy temper, and sells me the same growth of Bohea as that drunk by our gracious queen at Windsor.

“After I had thus reprov'd him—in no unkind speritt—Mr. Haygarthe fell to sighing; and then cries out all at once:

“‘When I am on my death-bed, wife, I will tell thee something; be sure thou askest me for it; or if death come upon me unawares, thou wouldst do well to search in the old tulip-leaf bureau for a letter, since I may tell thee that in a letter which I would not tell with these lips.’

“Before there was time to answer him in comes Mr. Bagot, and we to supper; after which he did read the sixth chapter of Hebrews and expound it at much length for our edifying; at the end whereof Satan had obtained fast hold of Mr. Haygarthe, who was fallen asleep and snoring heavily.”

Here is plain allusion to some secret, which that pragmatistical idiot, Mrs. Rebecca, studiously endeavoured not to hear. The next extract is from a letter written when the lips that had been fain to speak were stilled for ever. Ah, Mistress Rebecca, you were but mortal woman, although you were also a shining light amongst the followers of John Wesley; and I wonder what you would have given for poor Matthew's secret *then*.

“Some days being gone after this melancholic event, I bethought me of that which my husband had said to me before I left Dewsdale for that excursion to the love-feasts at Kemberton and Kesfield, Bropindean and Dawnfold, from which I returned but two short weeks before my poor Matthew's demise. I called to remembrance that discourse about approaching death which in my poor human judgement I did esteem a pestilent error of mind, but which I do now recognise as a spiritual premonition; and I set myself earnestly to look for that letter which Matthew told me he would leave in the tulip-leaf bureau. But though I did search with great care and pains, my trouble was wasted, inasmuch as there was no letter. Nor did I leave off to search until ev'ry nook and crevvis had been examin'd. But in one of y<sup>e</sup> secret drawers, hidden in an old dog's-eared book of prayers, I did find a lock of fair hair, as if cut from the head of a child, entwin'd curiously with a long plait of dark hair, which by reason of y<sup>e</sup> length thereof, must needs have been the hair of a woman, and with these the miniature of a girl's face, in a gold frame. I will not stain this paper, which is near come to an end, by the relation of such suspicions as arose







M. Ellen Edwards, del.

Edmund Evans, sc.

THE BLUE PARLOUR.

in my mind on finding these curious treasures ; nor will I be of so unchristian a temper as to speak ill of the dead. My husband was in his latter days exemplarily sober, and a humble acting Xtian. Y<sup>e</sup> secrets of his earlier life will not now be showne to me on this side heaven. I have set aside y<sup>e</sup> book, y<sup>e</sup> picture, and y<sup>e</sup> plaited hair in my desk for conveniency, where I will show them to you when I am next rejoic'd by y<sup>r</sup> improving conversation. Until then, in grief or in happiness, in health and sickness, I trust I shall ever continue, with y<sup>e</sup> same sincerity,

“ Your humble and obliged servant and disciple

“ REBECCA HAYGARTHE.”

Thus end my excerpts from the correspondence of Mrs. Haygarth. They are very interesting to me, as containing the vague shadow of a vanished existence ; but whether they will ever be worth setting forth in an affidavit is extremely uncertain. Doubtless that miniature of an unknown girl which caused so much consternation in the mind of sober Mrs. Rebecca was no other than the “Molly” whose gray eyes reminded me of Charlotte Halliday.

As I copied Mrs. Rebecca's quaint epistles, in the midnight stillness, the things of which I was writing arose before me like a picture. I could see the blue parlour that Sunday evening ; the sober couple seated primly opposite to each other ; the china monsters on the high chimneypiece ; the blue-and-white Dutch tiles, with queer squat figures of Flemish citizens on foot and on horseback ; the candles burning dimly on the spindle-legged table ; two poor pale flames reflected ghastly in the dark polished panels of the wainscot ; the big open Bible on an adjacent table ; the old silver tankard, and buckhorn-handled knives and forks set out for supper ; the solemn eight-day clock, ticking drearily in the corner ; and amid all that sombre old-fashioned comfort, gray-haired Matthew sighing and lamenting for his vanished youth.

I have grown strangely romantic since I have fallen in love with Charlotte Halliday. The time was when I should have felt nothing but a flippant ignorant contempt for poor Haygarth's feeble sighings and lamentings ; but now I think of him with a sorrowful tenderness, and am more interested in his poor commonplace life, that picture, and those two locks of hair, than in the most powerful romance that ever emanated from mortal genius. It has been truly said, that truth is stranger than fiction ; may it not as justly be said, that truth has a power to touch the human heart which is lacking in the most sublime flights of a Shakespeare, or the grandest imaginings of an Æschylus ? One is sorry for the fate of Agamemnon ; but one is infinitely more sorrowful for the cruel death of that English Richard in the dungeon at Pomfret, who was a very insignificant person as compared to the king of men and of ships.

## CHAPTER III.

## HUNTING THE JUDSONS.

*Oct. 10th.* Yesterday and the day before were blank days. On Saturday I read Mrs. Rebecca's letters a second time after a late breakfast, and spent a lazy morning in the endeavour to pick up any stray crumbs of information which I might have overlooked the previous night. There was nothing to be found, however; and, estimable as I have always considered the founder of the Wesleyan fraternity, I felt just a little weary of his virtues and his discourses, his journeying from place to place, his love-feasts, and his prayer-meetings, before I had finished with Mrs. Haygarth's correspondence. In the afternoon, I strolled about the town; made inquiries at several inns, with a view to discover whether Captain Paget was peradventure an inmate thereof; looked in at the railway-station, and watched the departure of a train; dawdled away half an hour at the best tobacconist's shop in the town on the chance of encountering my accomplished patron, who indulges in two of the choicest obtainable cigars per diem, and might possibly repair thither to make a purchase, if he were in the place. Whether he is still in Ullerton or not, I cannot tell; but he did not come to the tobacconist's; and I was fain to go back to my inn, having wasted a day. Yet I do not think that George Sheldon will have cause to complain of me, since I have worked very closely for my twenty shillings per week, and have devoted myself to the business in hand with an amount of enthusiasm which I did not think it possible for me to experience—except for——

I went to church on Sunday morning, and was more devoutly inclined than it has been my habit to feel; for although a man who lives by his wits must not necessarily be a heathen or an atheist, it is very difficult for him to be anything like a Christian; even my devotion yesterday was not worth much, for my thoughts went vagabondising off to Charlotte Halliday in the midst of a very sensible practical sermon.

In the afternoon I read the papers, and dozed by the fire in the coffee-room—two-thirds coke by the way, and alternating from the fierceness of a furnace to a dreary blackness—still thinking of Charlotte.

Late in the evening I walked the streets of the town, and thought what a lonely wretch I was. The desert of Sahara is somewhat dismal, I daresay; but in its dismality there is at least a flavour of romance, a smack of adventure. O, the hopeless dulness, the unutterable blankness of a provincial town late on a Sunday night, as it presents itself to the contemplation of a friendless young man without a sixpence in his pocket, or one bright hope to tempt him to forgetfulness of the past in pleasant dreaming of the future!

Complaining again ! O pen, which art the voice of my discontent, your spluttering is like this outburst of unmanly fretfulness and futile rage ! O paper, whose flat surface typifies the dull level of my life, your greasy unwillingness to receive the ink is emblematic of the soul's revolt against destiny !

This afternoon brought me a letter from Sheldon, and opened a new channel for my explorations in that underground territory, the past. That man has a marvellous aptitude for his work ; and has what is more than aptitude, the experience of ten years of failure. Such a man must succeed sooner or later. I wonder whether his success will come while I am allied to him. I have been used to consider myself an unlucky wretch, a creature of ill-fortune to others as well as to myself. It is a foolish superstition, perhaps, to fancy oneself set apart for an evil destiny ; but the Eumenides have been rather hard upon me. Those "amiable" deities, whom they of Colonnæ tried so patiently to conciliate with transparent flatteries, have marked me for their prey from the cradle—I don't suppose that cradle was paid for, by the bye. I wonder whether there is an avenging deity whose special province it is to pursue the insolvent, a Nemesis of the Bankruptcy Court.

My Sheldon's epistle bears the evidence of a very subtle brain, as I think. It is longer than his previous letters. I transcribe it here, as I wish this record to be a complete brief of my proceedings in this Haygarth business.

" Gray's Inn, Sunday night.

"Dear Hawkehurst,—The copies of the letters came duly to hand, and I think you have made your selections with much discretion, always supposing you have overlooked nothing in the remaining mass of writing. I will thank you to send me the rest of the letters, by the way. You can take notes of anything likely to be useful to yourself, and it will be as well for me to possess the originals.

"I find one very strong point in the first letter of your selection, viz. the allusion to a house in John-street. It is clear that Matthew lived in that house, and in that neighbourhood there may even yet remain some traces of his existence. I shall begin a close investigation to-morrow within a certain radius of that spot ; and if I have the good luck to fall upon any clear-headed centenarians, I may pick up something.

"There are some almshouses hard by Whitecross-street Prison, where the inmates live to ages that savour of the Pentateuch. Perhaps there I may light upon some impoverished citizen fallen from a good estate who can remember some contemporary of Matthew's. London was smaller in those days than it is now, and men lived out their lives in one spot, and had leisure to be concerned about the affairs of their neighbours. As I have now something of a clue to Matthew's roystering days, I shall set to work to follow it up closely ; and your

provincial researches and my metropolitan investigations proceeding simultaneously, we may hope to advance matters considerably ere long. For your own part, I should advise you forthwith to hunt up the Judson branch. You will remember that Matthew's only sister was a Mrs. Judson of Ullerton. I want to find an heir-at-law in a direct line from Matthew; and you know my theory on that point. But if we fail in that direction, we must of course fall back upon the Judsons, who are a disgustingly complicated set of people, and will take half a lifetime to disentangle, to say nothing of other men who may be working the same business, and who are pretty sure to have pinned their faith on the female branch of the Haygarthian tree.

"I want you to ferret out some of the Judson descendants with a view to picking up further documentary evidence in the shape of old letters, inscriptions in old books, and so on. That Matthew had a secret is certain; and that he was very much inclined to reveal that secret in his later days is also certain. Who shall say that he did not tell it to his only sister, though he was afraid to tell it to his wife?

"You have acted with so much discretion up to this point that I do not care to trouble you with any further hints or suggestions. When money is wanted, it shall be forthcoming; but I must beg you to manage things economically, as I have to borrow at a considerable sacrifice; and should this affair prove a failure my ruin is inevitable.

"Yours &c.

G. S."

My friend Sheldon is a man who can never have been more than "yours et-cetera" to any human creature. I suppose what he calls ruin would be a quiet passage through the bankruptcy court, and a new set of chambers. I should not suppose that sort of ruin would be very terrible for a man whose sole possessions are a few weak-backed horse-hair chairs, a couple of battered old desks, half a dozen empty japanned boxes, a file of *Bell's Life*, and a Turkey carpet in which the progress of corruption is evident to the casual observer.

The hunting-up of the Judsons is a very easy matter as compared to the task of groping in the dimness of the past in search of some faint traces of the footsteps of departed Haygarths. Whereas the Haygarth family seem to be an extinct race, the Judsonian branch have bred and mustered in the land; and my chief difficulty in starting has been an *embarras de richesse*, in the shape of half a page of Judsons in the Ullerton directory.

Whether to seek out Theodore Judson, the attorney in Nile-street East, or the Rev. James Judson, curate of St. Gamaliel; whether to appeal in the first instance to Judson & Co., haberdashers and silk mercers, of the Ferrygate, or to Judson of Judson and Grinder, wadding manufacturers in Lady-lane—was the grand question. On inquiring of the landlord as to the antecedents of these Judsons, I found that they were all supposed to spring from one common stock, and to have

the blood of old Jonathan Haygarth in their veins. The Judsons had been an obscure family—people of “no account,” my landlord told me, until Joseph Judson, chapman and cloth merchant in a very small way, was so fortunate as to win the heart of Ruth Haygarth, only daughter of the wealthy nonconformist grocer in the market-place. This marriage had been the starting-point of Joseph Judson’s prosperity. Old Haygarth had helped his industrious and respectable son-in-law along the stony road that leads to fortune, and had no doubt given him many a lift over the stones which bestrew that toilsome highway. My landlord’s information was as vague as the information of people in general; but it was easily to be made out, from his scanty shreds and scraps of information, that the well-placed Judsons of the present day had almost all profited to some extent by the hard-earned wealth of Jonathan Haygarth. “They’ve nearly all of them got the name of Haygarth mixed up with their other names somehow,” said my landlord. “Judson of Judson and Grinder is Thomas Haygarth Judson. He’s a member of our tradesman’s club, and worth a hundred thousand pounds, if he’s worth a sixpence.”

I have observed, by the way, that a wealthy tradesman in a country town is never accredited with less than a hundred thousand; there seems a natural hankering in the human mind for round numbers.

“There’s J. H. Judson of St. Gamaliel,” continued my landlord, “he’s James Haygarth Judson; and young Judson the attorney’s son puts ‘Haygarth Judson’ on his card, and gets people to call him Haygarth Judson when they will—which in a general way they won’t, on account of his giving himself airs, which you may see him any summer evening walking down Ferrygate as if the place belonged to him, and he didn’t set much value on it. They *do* say his father’s heir-at-law to a million of money left by the last of the Haygarths, and that he and the son are trying to work up a claim to the property against the Crown. But I’ve heard young Judson deny it in our room when he was spoken to about it, and I don’t suppose there’s much ground for people’s talk.”

I was sorry to discover there was any ground for such talk; Mr. Judson the lawyer would be no insignificant opponent. I felt that I must give a very wide berth to Mr. Theodore Judson the attorney, and his stuck-up son, unless circumstances should so shape themselves as to oblige us to work with him. In the mean while any move I made amongst the other Judsons would be likely, I thought, to come to the knowledge of these particular members of the family.

“Are the Judson family very friendly with one another?” I artfully inquired.

“Well, you see some of ’em are, and some of ’em ain’t. They’re most of ’em third and fourth cousins, you see, and that ain’t a very near relationship in a town where there’s a good deal of competition and interests often clash. Young Theodore—Haygarth Judson as he calls

himself—is very thick with Judson of St. Gamaliel's—they were at college together, you see—and fine airs they give themselves on the strength of a couple of years or so at Cambridge. Those two get on very well together. But Judson, of the Lady-lane Mills, don't speak to either of 'em when he meets 'em in the street, and has been known to cut 'em dead in my room. William Judson of Ferrygate is a dissenter, and keeps himself to himself very close. The other Judsons are too fast a lot for him : though what's the harm of a man taking a glass or two of brandy-and-water of an evening with his friends is more than *I* can find out," added mine host musingly.

It was to William Judson the dissenter, who kept himself to himself, that I determined to present myself in the first instance. As a dissenter, he would be likely to have more respect for the memory of the Nonconformist and Wesleyan Haygarths, and to have preserved any traditions relating to them with more fidelity than the Anglican and frivolous members of the Judson family. As an individual who kept himself to himself, he would be unlikely to communicate my business to his kindred.

I lost no time in presenting myself at the house of business in Ferrygate, and after giving the servant George Sheldon's card, and announcing myself as concerned in a matter of business relating to the Haygarth family, I was at once ushered into a prim counting-house, where a dapper little old gentleman in spotless broadcloth, and a cambric cravat and shirtfrill which were soft and snowy as the plumage of the swan, received me with old-fashioned courtesy. I was delighted to find him seventy-five years of age at the most moderate computation, and I should have been all the better pleased if he had been older.

I very quickly discovered that in Mr. Judson the linendraper I had to deal with a very different person from the Rev. Jonah Goodge. He questioned me closely as to my motive in seeking information on the subject of the departed Haygarth, and I had some compunction in diplomatising with him as I had diplomatised with Mr. Goodge. To hoodwink the wary Jonah was a triumph, to deceive the confiding linendraper was a shame. However, as I have before set down, I suppose at the falsest I am not much further from the truth than a barrister or a diplomatist. Mr. Judson accepted my account of myself in all simplicity, and seemed quite pleased to have an opportunity of talking about the Haygarths.

"You are not concerned in the endeavour to assert Theodore Judson's claim to the late John Haygarth's property, eh?" the old man asked me presently, as if struck by a sudden misgiving.

I assured him that Mr. Theodore Judson's interests and mine were in no respect identical.

"I am glad of that," answered the draper; "not that I owe Theodore Judson a grudge, you must understand, though his principles and mine differ very widely. I have been told that he and his son hope

to establish a claim to that Haygarth property; but they will never succeed, sir—they will never succeed. There was a young man who went to India in '41; a scamp and a vagabond, sir, who was always trying to borrow money, in sums ranging from a hundred pounds, to set him up in business and render him a credit to his family, to a shilling for the payment of a night's lodging or the purchase of a dinner. But that young man was the great-grandson of Ruth Haygarth—the eldest surviving grandson of Ruth Haygarth's eldest son; and if that man is alive, he is rightful heir to John Haygarth's money. Whether he is alive or dead at this present moment is more than I can tell, since he has never been heard of in Ullerton since he left the town: but until Theodore Judson can obtain legal proof of that man's death he has no more chance of getting one sixpence of the Haygarth estate than I have of inheriting the crown of Great Britain."

The old man had worked himself into a little passion before he finished this speech, and I could see that the Theodore Judsons were as unpopular in the draper's counting-house as they were at the Swan Inn.

"What was this man's Christian name?" I asked.

"Peter. He was called Peter Judson; and was the great-grandson of my grandfather, Joseph Judson, who inhabited this very house, sir, more than a hundred years ago. Let me see; Peter Judson must have been about five-and-twenty years of age when he left Ullerton; so he is a middle-aged man by this time if he hasn't killed himself, or if the climate hasn't killed him long ago. He went as supercargo to a merchant vessel; he was a clever fellow, and could work hard when it suited him, in spite of his dissipated life. Theodore Judson is a very good lawyer; but though he may bring all his ingenuity to bear, he will never advance a step nearer to the possession of John Haygarth's money till he obtains evidence of Peter Judson's death; and he's afraid to advertise for that evidence for fear he might arouse the attention of other claimants."

Much as I was annoyed to find that there were claimants lying in wait for the Rev. intestate's wealth, I was glad to perceive that Theodore Judson's unpopularity was calculated to render his kindred agreeably disposed to any stranger likely to push that gentleman out of the list of competitors for these great stakes, and I took my cue from this in my interview with the simple old draper.

"I regret that I am not at liberty to state the nature of my business," I said, in a tone that was at once insinuating and confidential; "but I think I may venture to go so far as to say, without breach of trust to my employer, that whoever may ultimately succeed to the Rev. John Haygarth's money, neither Mr. Judson the lawyer nor his son will ever put a finger on a penny of it."

"I am not sorry to hear it," answered Mr. Judson, enraptured; "not that I owe the young man a grudge, you must understand, but



because he is particularly undeserving of good fortune. A young man who passes his own kindred in the streets of his native town without the common courtesy due to age or respectability; a young man who sneers at the fortune acquired in an honest and reputable trade; a young man who calls his cousins counter-jumpers, and his aunts and uncles 'swaddlers'—a vulgar term of contempt applied to the earlier members of the Wesleyan confraternity;—such a young man is not the individual to impart moral lustre to material wealth, and I am free to confess that I had rather any one else than Theodore Judson should inherit this vast fortune. Why, are you aware, my dear sir, that he has been seen to drive tandem through this very street, as it is; and I should like to know how many horses he would harness to that gig of his, or how openly he would insult his relatives, if he had a hundred thousand pounds to deal with!"

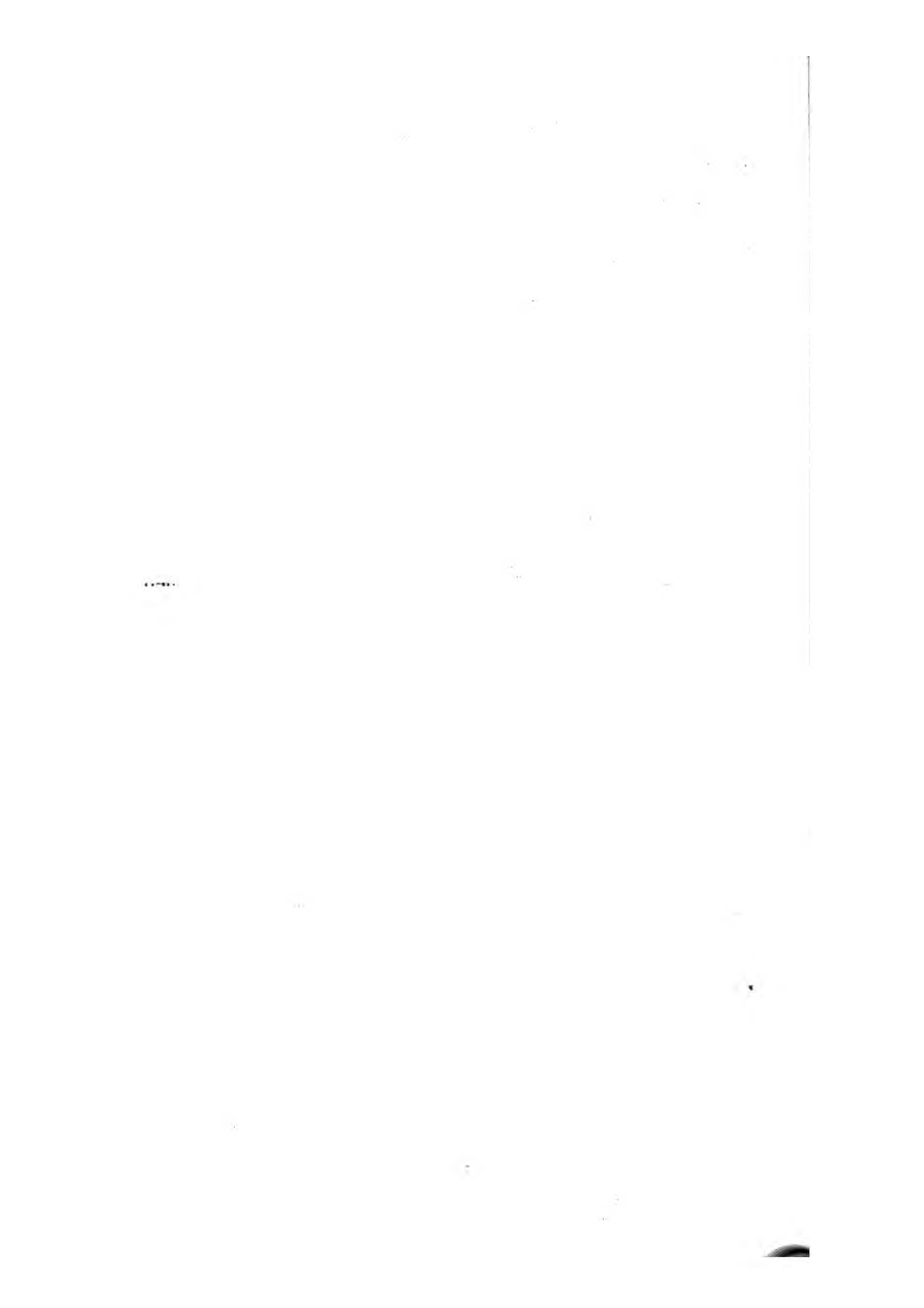
For a second time Mr. Judson the draper had worked himself into a little passion, and the conversation had to be discontinued for some minutes while he cooled down to his ordinary temperament.

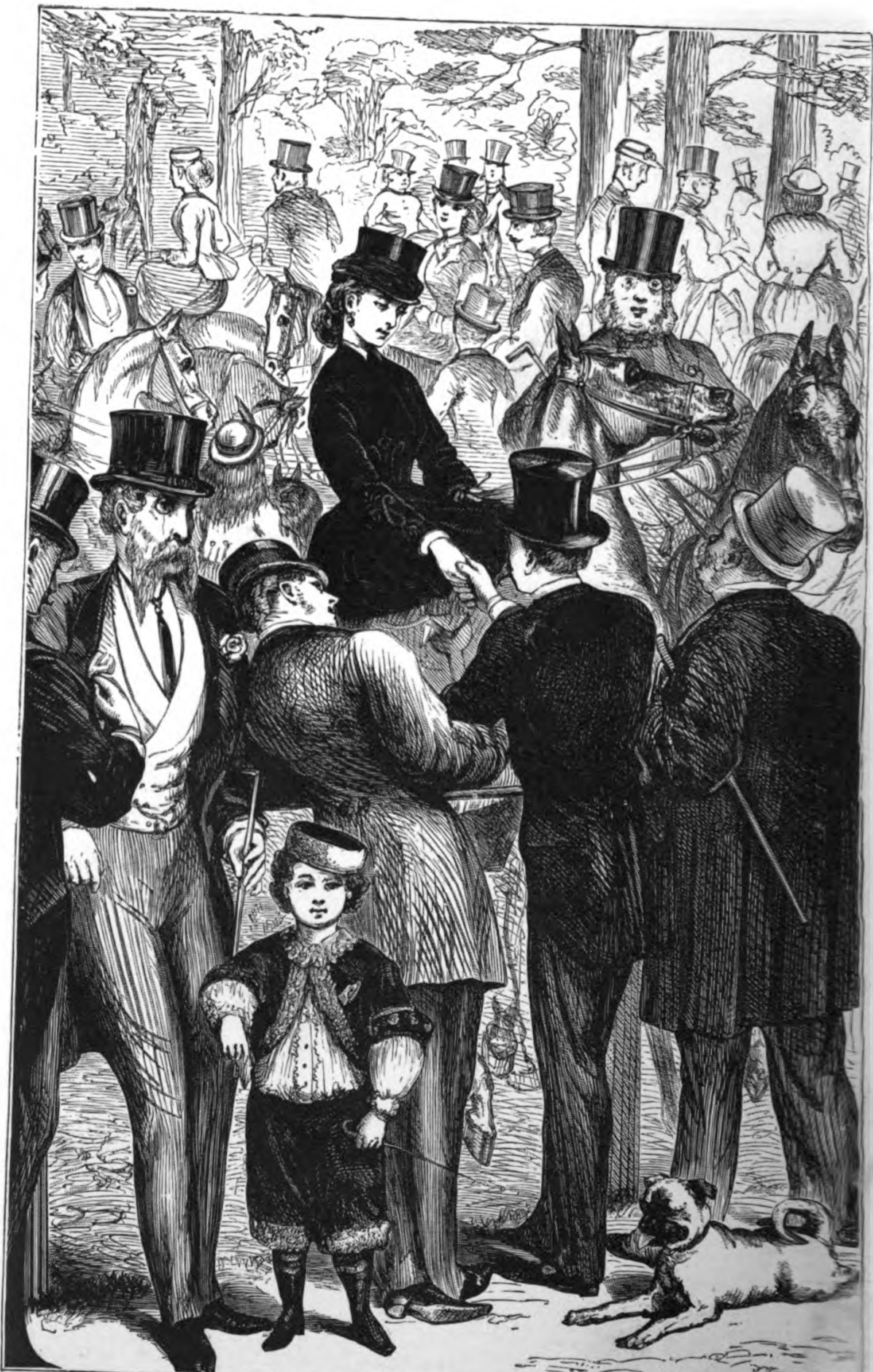
"I'll tell you what I will do for you, Mr.—Mr. Hawkeshell," he said, making a compound of my own and my employer's names, "I will give you a line of introduction to my sister. If any one can help you in hunting up intelligence relating to the past she can. She is two years my junior—seventy-one years of age—but as bright and active as a girl. She has lived all her life in Ullerton, and is a woman who hoards every scrap of paper that comes in her way. If old letters or old newspapers can assist you, she can show you plenty amongst her stores."

Upon this the old man wrote a note, which he dried with sand out of a perforated bottle, as Richard Steele may have dried one of those airy tender essays which he threw off in tavern parlours for the payment of a jovial dinner.

Provided with this antique epistle, written on Bath post and sealed with a great square seal from a bunch of cornelian monstrosities which the draper carried at his watch-chain, I departed to find Miss Hezekiah Judson, of Lochiel Villa, Lancaster Road.

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Alfred Thompson, del.

W. L. Thomas

APRIL.—THE QUEEN OF THE ROW.

## LYRICS OF THE MONTHS

APRIL

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### The Queen of the Row

I SEE her flush as she appears ;  
Her ears, those rosy shell-like ears,  
    Tingling with the hum of admiration  
As she passes down the line—  
    The incense of a people's adulation  
At a goddess' shrine.

See how she bows with graceful ease  
As one by one her devotees,  
    Craving a smile of recognition,  
Worship her with earnest eyes,  
    Proving each a fresh addition  
To her other victories.

When she checks her horse's stride,  
Laughing as she nears my side,  
    Does she notice a commotion  
Rising in the jealous band?  
    Does the warmth of my devotion  
Thrill her glove-imprison'd hand?

She babbles of the days we met  
When children. Can she, then, forget  
    How she was queen when we were playing  
Not so very long ago?  
    And she'll be queen of this year's Maying  
As she passes down the Row.

A. T.

## PARIS UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION

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IN common, I fear, with many of your readers, I enjoy that very doubtful blessing of being perfectly old enough to recollect the time when his Royal Highness Prince Albert, in 1851, started the idea of a material Peace Congress, to be held in London, and which, by a series of perverse accidents, almost marked the date of the rupture of a forty years' peace and the inauguration of a series of wars which will be barely ended when the International Exhibition opens on 1st April 1867 in the Champ de Mars. It is only another proof of the saying, *L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose*; and poor Prince Albert's sparkling shrine of art and industry was scarcely less fragile than the profound and lasting peace it was to introduce.

It may seem absurd to say it, but the mere proposal to open an Exhibition to which foreigners, especially French and Italians, were to be freely invited, caused quite a panic in the elderly circles of London. Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington, who really ruled the army and regulated to a great degree the state, was then alive—alive, but naturally sinking, after a life of unheard-of greatness and incredible work; and he was decidedly against the affair. "It was not an idea of his time." A lot of foreigners would get here, and who would answer for what they would do? Lax morality, revolutionary principles—nay, even an attack on God's regents on earth,—what might not be expected? Police! what use are they?

*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*—who shall inspect the inspectors?

Nothing could do but soldiers; and young readers in 1867 will scarcely credit that, "under the rose," military preparations on a large scale were made to meet that revolutionary outbreak which the wariest old man in England actually believed to be possible on that fine 1st of May 1851.

Prince Albert introduced foreign Art into London, and the troops were under arms to receive her! A dubious compliment.

I remember as well as possible not going to the opening. In those days the *vil-admirari* feeling raged, or was affected more than it was before or has been since.

If we owe nothing else to the wars which succeeded the great Peace Conference of Hyde Park, we must at least credit them with the earnestness, hard-working life, and practical views which came in after the premature peace which terminated the Crimean war, just as England was beginning to show that she was still forged in the old metal.

In 1851, however, a terrible spirit of apathy was abroad. Living in the most reckless, extravagant, and voluptuous manner, the young men of England were simply bored; their extravagance did not gratify them, their pleasures did not amuse them, nor their difficulties alarm them.

"Go to see the thing in Hyde Park! No, thank you. Hate sights. Shall go and dine at Richmond. Nobody will be there."

One idiot makes many—so I say. I distinctly remember *not* assisting at the opening of that blessed-by-bishops ceremony. What we did do was this: we, having calmly breakfasted in the great neighbourhood of Belgravia, tried to get to St. James's-street; we were, however, brought up short opposite Buckingham Palace by the 1st Life-guards, who were keeping the ground there. Having then discussed things in general with "Tiny" (who was the officer on duty, and who was looming above his men) for some minutes, he let us through the ranks, and we made our respective clubs about 2 P.M. When I entered B——'s, a house-of-call in those days for the oldest Whigs (who, I need not say, are your true *Tories*), I found, as usual, the bay-window filled with fogies. To them enters another foggy, who it was evident from his appearance and manner had done something, and was full of news.

"Well, Sir John," said a voice from the bay-window, "you've been there?" "Yes, Sir William" (they were, I believe, *all* old county baronets), "and it *all went off as quietly as possible*—policemen everywhere; and the Duke himself had seen to the posting of the troops!"

Chorus: "*Well, I confess I'm glad it's over.*"

To us in 1867 it seems strange to hear of the opening of a Universal Exhibition "going off quietly." Indeed we have since 1851 had so many, that some of the first days went off a good deal *too* quietly. Witness that of Florence in 1861, when the Government, thinking they must have a high price for the first day, set it at five francs; and so the Italians simply stopped away. But, at first, there was great alarm.

Independent of the actual Exhibition, however, it is impossible not to look back with interest (now that we are aged, sober, and sensible) at the glass palace of 1851. Who would not like to possess the original sketch (made by Sir Joseph Paxton on a sheet of blotting-paper) which caused the subject of the last business conversation ever held by the great Sir Robert Peel? Riding from that preparatory meeting, he fell from that well-remembered old cob, was hurt to death, picked up by Mrs. Lucas, and taken home to die.

I have spoken above of the Florence Exhibition—the only one, I believe, yet attempted in Italy. It was charming—no crowd, no hurry—not, perhaps, much of the "useful" to be seen, but mines of the "beautiful" to be worked. It was worth a journey to Florence—and that in those days was really no joke—to see the sculpture alone.

I must descend for a moment from the "beautiful," and enter most practically into the "needful." I trust that if any Paris tradesman, hotel-keeper, or other of the necessary scourges of every-day life, reads

this, he will take heed of it, and avoid the example of his Florentine fellow-fleecers. There, in 1861, they raised the price of everything *one hundred* per cent on account of the Exhibition, and entirely omitted to reduce those "war prices" when peace was proclaimed. The palace in the "Cascine" melted away; still prices were stiff. Art went back to its normal value; but life—by which I mean living—held its own, and even exacted a good deal from mere travellers, who fancied that, having escaped the "Exhibition season," they might be let down easy to their old level. *Non crederlo!*

Now Paris has already shown symptoms of availing herself of that "pressure from without" which must come by railroad and steamer, by diligence, omnibus, and country cart; and the first preparation for a visit to the Champ de Mars should be a hardening of the heart and an opening of the purse. So shall you be imposed upon. Yes; but being prepared, you will rather pay and smile than remonstrate, perhaps fight—here cocked-hats and dress-swords on swallow-tailed coats appear on the scene—and have to pay, *plus* police expenses, later.

Napoleon III., by the grace of God and the will of the people Emperor of the French, was not a man to miss the great points which might be secured from really playing out the great game which Prince Albert had commenced. It was easier for the Emperor than the Prince: a few lines in the *Moniteur* and a few words in season—I mean, of course, the parliamentary season—by a Minister of Public Works, does away with all your rubbishing discussions in the "faithful Commons," and avoids all those unpleasant questions of utility and those remonstrances against extravagance which I believe are sometimes heard in the House of Commons. At any rate the Emperor had a Great Exhibition in 1855, and erected a "Palace of Industry," which still exists in the Champs Elysées as a lasting monument of the vile taste of the French architect.

This much, however, must be said of the Palais de l'Industrie: it is useful. Fat beasts are exhibited, and model furniture. Cocks and hens cackle there under the winter's sun in Christmas-week. Cheese knows what competition is there; and there is also the annual exhibition of nude pictures, which constitutes the yearly "Royal Academy Exhibition of Paris." I would advise anyone fond of pictures,—any amateur of modern painting, anyone, in a word, devoted to modern art,—to remember that this Exhibition is open during the summer months from 10 till 6 (entrance a franc), and to be very careful *not* to go there if he does not wish to tear his hair with vexation and cry out his eyes by weeping over the want of taste in artistic Paris.

And now, after this dreary introduction, it is time that I should come to our Great Industrial Palace of to-day. Great industrial palace! great iron monstrosity!

Still, we used to be told as children that it was better to be "good" than "handsome;" and we were always called upon to admire Peter,

who, being asked whether he would rather have a fine uniform or a new greatcoat, chose the latter more serviceable article; and so "next day Peter appeared in a new blue coat," and we, the rising generation, were called on to admire his practical taste! Now the oblong iron case in the Champ de Mars is a very "Peter" of utility and ugliness. When I first saw its metallic outlines, I confess I quite shuddered; but I was not so bad as the gentleman who accompanied M. Leon le Play to the ground; for *he* observed, "Well, I suppose you will have got rid of *that* in a very few hours?" thinking it was one of the things which were to be cleared away to make room for the new palace! However, judges say that, ugly as the erection—if you can call that an erection which cowers down close to its mother mud—really is, it is eminently useful. True, we can have no great official ceremonies, no opening *services*, no long processions; for there is no place where they could be seen, or to or from which they could proceed; but as a show-board for the art, science, and industry of the world, judges declare the building to be perfect. It has the usual "spots," however,—it is badly ventilated (even now, when one of those rare rays of spring sun fall on the building, it becomes too hot), very dusty, and liable to be burned to the ground on the shortest notice. So great is that latter risk, that the Norwich Insurance Society—which is not usually believed to be easily frightened—for a long time declined to accept *any* insurances, and has only just reversed that decision. You can insure there now, and also in a company started in Paris by the Duc de Valney and Mr. Hankey. So now, if (O my exhibitors!) your goods and chattels are destroyed by what the newspapers call the "devastating element," your heirs can be consoled at the expense of the Norwich Society and the French duke.

This is only an introductory article, short and, let us hope, sharp and to the purpose. Indeed it is not easy—although I see several "Special Correspondents" are daily condemned to do so—to describe that which at present does not exist, *De non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio*. So there is as yet very little reason to describe the shrine of art and industry which to-day is but a shell—a shell, however, which will be opened for the public inspection on the day on which the present number of the *Belgravia* appears in the delighted world of its subscribers.

The Champ de Mars is, as probably nine-tenths of your readers know as well as I do, a great oblong space between the river and the Ecole Militaire, and is, as I read, 3084 feet by 2290 feet, or say 1028 yards by 764 yards. Yet I daresay even that lucid explanation will not give so clear an idea of the space now occupied by the building and gardens of the "Great International Exposition" as will be given by my saying that on August 14th, 1865 I saw a *corps d'armée* of 80,000 men of all arms reviewed there without the slightest crowding or "clubbing" of battalions. The "gasometer," as it was originally



christened by a lady in Paris (a *bon-mot* on which correspondents have been living ever since), occupies now the centre of this review-ground, and the army of occupation has thrown out skirmishers which occupy the whole space. Many reserves too are as yet out of sight. In open order round the main building, which may be said to have "formed oval" to receive visitors, are scattered an imperial tribune, a club, a lighthouse, model houses (contributed by the Emperor); a lake, on which are to float the craft of all nations (here the Empress also is an exhibitor, sending a funereal gondola and a light caique), Indian pagodas, Turkish mosques, Egyptian tombs, a photographic establishment; Spiers and Pond's institution for the dissemination of useful knowledge, as represented by a taste for pale ale; a telegraphic station, from which many hundreds of messages will be flashed, arriving at their destination sooner, or rather—only later rather than sooner. Then there is a garden, already green with the promise of spring—a promise, by the bye, which Nature seems this year rather inclined to renew than to pay. The weather has been very much against the Exhibition up to this time; not only causing inconvenience to visitors, but actual serious delay to exhibitors. At Bellancourt, an island on the Seine as little known to the readers of the *Belgravia* as that of Juan Fernandez, there is a sort of supplementary exhibition, chiefly devoted to the elevation of the bucolic mind, but also a little to the amusement of the bucolic body, which as in London one requires casino after cattle-show, so here one is supposed to want a *café chantant* after a model plough. This island has been, I regret to say, half washed away, and is in a dilapidated, used-up state. However, *resurgam* is the imperial motto, and so all will be ready on the day of *fools* and *fish* of April. If I could give you a list of the still unveiled beauties which have already arrived for the Exhibition, it would indeed be a curious revelation of chaos! Blocks of coal and black pearls; preserved meat, with pickles of the period; the latest fashion of setting diamonds, and a new plan for planting shrubs; an improved billiard-table; a pulpit warranted to carry to the longest range; harness without straps, buckles, anything; cigars which consume their own smoke; "drags" fitted up with cells to bring back in "solitary confinement" the refractory from Greenwich and Richmond. Strange animals will come to us, and deuced odd fish! We shall be a prey to strange birds; dining-houses of all nations will disgust us (fancy "bird-nest soup" in July, 14 francs the portion!); theatres of all nations will weary us; and, in a word, to the denizen of Paris life will be a bore! Too much pudding, we know, has an unhealthy effect even on the canine race, and too much to see will blind a Christian.

"Duchess," said a young man the other night in one of the best-frequented salons of Paris, "where shall you be to be found chiefly when the Exhibition is open?"

"*Mais, mon dieu,*" replied the lady, "*chiefly in bed!*"

She had reason, that duchess!

F. M. W.

## VALERIAN'S HONEYMOON

### A Fragment

BY THE AUTHOR OF "RITA," ETC.

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My darling stepped out from the little inn-window on to the wooden balcony, draped with vine-leaves and heavy bunches of half-ripened purple grapes, which overhung the door of the *osteria*. It was a lapis-lazuli night, such as is only known in Italy. Below us lay a great water, calm as that bay of contentment whereinto our lives had now glided. Stars trembled there, and the moon swung her full-fed lamp on the very edge of the ripple that washed the shore. There came a heavy odour of orange-blossoms from the gardens about us, blent with the less rare odour of tobacco, from the pipes of ostlers and wayfarers seated around the door below. The murmur of their voices was all that broke the silence.

Between the *osteria* and the lake ran the dusty high-road, where the diligence half an hour ago had passed, and stopped here to change horses. But there was not much traffic, saving a cart or two, oxen-drawn and laden with maize, and a curious old vehicle, half-gig, half-chaise, bearing a notary from the neighbouring town to the bedside of some village Dives, cumbered in his last hours with the disposition of his wealth (so the waiter informed me). Saving for these the dust had slept undisturbed, in layers several inches thick, upon the road, during all the hours we had been here. And now the night had come, and even such infrequent traffic would cease.

But, contrary to our expectation, as we two stood there hand-in-hand upon the balcony, listening to a cicada in the dusty roadside grass and a frog in the water-weeds, and the hum of the smokers' voices below us, there fell on our ears the distant cracking of a post-boy's whip, with the familiar accompaniment of jingling harness. A minute more, and in the white moonlight we saw an open travelling-carriage coming rapidly towards us. There was a rush among the smokers to the front; the postillion worked up his whip into a state of frenzy as he neared his goal, and finally swung himself lightly to the ground, as he pulled up exactly under our window. The carriage was occupied by two persons—a gentleman and lady. The head of the *calèche* being thrown back, I could see the man's face very distinctly in the moonlight, which was as clear as day. I thought I recognised it: so, perhaps, did my companion, for she drew yet closer to me, and I felt her little hot hand tremble in mine. The doubt, if it was one, lasted but a minute: the lady threw back her veil; the small black-lace bonnet framed—it did not shroud—that carved ivory face on which the moonlight flooded. God forgive me! I had

reason to know it too well ; and so had she who stood beside me. My poor little darling nestled close to me like a frightened dove, and she pulled me quickly back under the shadow of the vine-leaves, as she murmured : " O, Valerian ! that woman again ! That woman *here !*"

" My darling, what are you afraid of ? She can do us no harm. Depend on it, she is not troubling her head about *me.*"

" Why does she come here ? O, Valerian, we were so happy !"

" Hush ! Let us hear what they say."

" Bring out the *livre des étrangers.* We will see who has been passing this way." It was the gentleman who spoke.

" Just the romantic spot for a love-sick couple," laughed the lady ; and her fine musical laugh fell on my ear like a discordant peal of bells. " I should not wonder if there was some one staying here."

We saw the greasy strangers' book handed to them by their courier, and the lady, by the light of the moon alone, turned over the pages and read the names written there. A dear little curly head was hidden on my breast, and a small voice whispered plaintively :

" You won't go down to her ? You won't see her ? Promise me. She'll try and take you from me, as she did before. I shall die if you go, Valerian !"

" Never fear, my darling. She bewitched me once ;—I was mad then, I believe. But have I not something better now ? While I hold my treasure here in my arms, what to me are all the fairest women in the world ?"

" Ah ! you didn't think so once," she sobbed ; " and I know nothing can resist her—nothing ! Even now, you cannot take your eyes off her. Ah, Valerian, if she drags you away from me *this time*—"

I put my hand across her mouth, and listened with hungry eyes and ears.

" *Mon Dieu !*" cried the lady, clasping her hands and laughing. " Look here !—what a *rencontre !*—read this : '*Mons. Valerian, peintre, Paris, avec sa femme.*' Only think of *his* being here ! I have not seen him since he threatened to blow out his brains."

" Poor devil ! You treated him very badly, Cora. Who did he marry ?"

" O, some little English model, to whom he had been engaged for years—ever since she was a child. I wish her joy of him. Have you a mind to see them ? Shall we stop the night here ? You wanted a sketch of the lake ; he shall make me half-a-dozen."

" That sort of fellow's a bore," said the gentleman, lighting his cigar. " Besides, you'll have to make the fellow believe you're in love with him again, in order to get your sketches ; and it isn't worth it. How can you ever have found *anything* worth it ? Gratified vanity, eh ? You twisted him round your little finger, the young fool, all the time I was in Russia. Well, I hope you found it amusing. I always think society of that second-rate sort a nuisance."

"He was really very tolerable ; the whole thing rather amused me, for a time—until he began to take it *au grand sérieux*. When he grew dull and taciturn, talked of nothing but death and despair, of course I was obliged to shut the door in his face. It would rather interest me to see him again, though," added the lady, carefully buttoning her glove. "Let us send for him."

And this was the woman for whom, one short year ago, I would have laid down my life—for whose sake I had cast aside the treasure which, undeserving as I was, I had found nestling in my heart once more! Blind fool that I had been! O, for those wasted, worse than wasted, hours! I felt, in that moment, how one burning drop of shameful memory may embitter a whole cupful of present happiness. Else were there no justice under heaven ; while faithful men, whose love has never swerved, are for ever severed, this side the grave, from all they have best loved on earth. Was it my darling's avenging angel who had brought this couple here to-night, that my ears might testify to the baseness of her who had seduced me from my heart's first allegiance ?

This is what I heard the husband reply :

"*Ma chère*, it would be dull work for me watching you try to re-hook your fish. No doubt you would succeed—you always do. But I put it to you fairly—*est-ce que cela vaut la peine ?* You, who have had emperors at your feet,—you may leave your poor artist in peace at last, eh, to the miserable enjoyment of his' model wife. She punishes him enough for his infidelity before marriage, depend on it."

"No doubt ; and I should like to have seen my friend henpecked," replied the lady with a smile. "It was just because he was so different from all the men of one's own set that I amused myself with him, *mon cher*, during your absence. I knew *you* would never have tolerated him in the house—as he never plays *écarté* ; but as you were in Russia, it was rather an amusing change, after all the *blasés* men of the Jockey Club, to listen to this passionate sentimental painter, with his talk about Christian art, and his enthusiasm about the colour of one's hair and the turn of one's neck, and his utter absence of all conventionality. He was quite refreshing, I assure you, until he came to be a bore. By the bye, you never saw the picture he did of me, in the dress I wore at the Princesse Mathilde's *bal costumé* ? If we stayed here the night—"

Here the fresh horses were brought out ; and in the imprecations which accompanied the tugging at the rope harness and the shoving of the beasts into their places at the pole, I lost the remainder of this sentence.

"If I have any luck, before we return to Paris I'll send to the fellow and buy his picture," said the husband ; "but to-night, remember that Schwartzenheim is to meet us at Como."

"And *he* plays at *écarté* ! I will get the miniature from Valerian, however, without your buying it, *mon ami*."

"You shall not have long to wait," I murmured ; and disengaging

myself from the arms of my darling, who followed me, pale and bathed in tears, I entered our little room, and ran to a case which stood near the bed. Among a number of other miniatures was one half-finished, which I had not looked at for months. I seized a sponge full of water, and passed it several times across the hard, beautiful, white face, that looked out at me less and less distinctly, until nothing but the faintest shadow of a face was left. Then I wrote with my pencil across it:

VALERIAN'S LAST GIFT.

I ran into the balcony. They were just starting. The *padrone*, surrounded by his satellites, stood cringing and congéing at the door: the postillion was already in his saddle, the courier climbing deftly into his rumble. I took my aim just as the whip went 'crack!' and the wheels, with a sudden jerk, began revolving: the bit of ivory dropped straight into her lap. She was startled, and looked quickly up. Our eyes met. I was leaning well over the balcony this time, with my arm around my angel's neck; and it was with no feigned fervour of passion that I pressed my lips to hers. The carriage was rolling out of sight in the moonlight and the dust, but I could just catch the scornful smile on that pale sculptured face, under its black-lace bonnet, before a turn of the road hid the woman from me—for ever.

Yes, for ever on this side the grave; for I learn that she is now dead. It was a painful lingering end; some internal torture eating away her life, and with it her dearly-cherished beauty. What comfort had she in those last hours, when her husband was playing *écarté* at his club, and her admirers had all deserted her, with no baby-fingers clasped about her neck, no children's voices to cheer the love-forgotten silence? Was the solitary woman haunted by the memory of lives she had ruined, of hearts she had burned up and laid desolate?

Why have I written down the story of those few moments in a balcony? Because I look back to them with thankfulness, as to the crisis when my eyes were fully opened. I know myself. I know that until then, blinded by the woman's beauty, I never really saw her as she was. But for this, there have been times haply when I might have regretted that my little angel lacked the Athenian grace and brilliancy that in another exercised so fatal a spell over me. As it is, I thank God for the helpmate He has given me; for her sweet trusting nature, for the heaven of her face, which always brings me peace when I look into it. And when I see her baby curled like a rose-leaf on her bosom, and her two sturdy boys, who clean father's palette and mimic father's pictures in chalk upon the studio-wall,—ah, well, I say to myself, there is nothing the Schwartzenheim palace contains, nothing that poor dead woman's life ever compassed, that I would take in exchange for the joys my wife has given me!

## DEAN SWIFT'S CATHEDRAL

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THE Cathedral of St. Patrick's presents many attractions worthy of observation and remembrance. As we enter it, the bust of Dean Swift commands us to look at this effigy of departed genius, greatness, and eccentricity. As I gaze upon that simple monument, what shadows of the past arise before my mental vision! I can fancy one chill autumn midnight in the eventful year 1745. A solemn procession paces that dimly-lighted central aisle. The funeral is a very quiet one; but he who is buried to-night goes to his grave lamented by all Dublin. The wild fitful soul has found its repose at last, and Jonathan Swift, too strange a being ever to be fairly understood on earth, goes to be judged at the Great Tribunal. That his own proud spirit was bowed very low at the dismal close of his feverish life seems clearly expressed by some of his last words. After a whole year of helpless idiocy and utter silence, a gleam of the old light came back to him on his birthday, when his housekeeper told him of the bonfires and illuminations in honour of that event. "It is all folly," he replied; "they had better let it alone." And then in another brief interval he said, "I am what I am—I am what I am." And these words he repeated two or three times. Is there not something very touching in his reply to Mr. Delany's "How do you do, Mr. Dean?" "I am not the Dean," replies Swift; "I am not what I was. Pity me, and pray for me."

The monument to the memory of Stella is likewise interesting; it is near that of the Dean. Both of the mementoes adjoin the door that leads to the robing-room of the clergy. It is a singular fact in reference to Stella, that she left a sum of money to endow a vicarage the possessor of which should be a bachelor; and upon a recent occasion the candidate who succeeded in procuring the office was in that position, with this apparent impediment—an intention of taking a wife. This, however, did not vitiate his claim to seek the office.

There are many memorials of the Dean about the cathedral. Of these, the slab erected by him to his servant, Alexander Magee, in commemoration of his discretion, fidelity, and diligence, is one of the most interesting. When the Dean published the *Drapier's Letters*, a reward was offered for the discovery of the author. At this time the Dean, who had quarrelled with Magee, and discharged him, was apprehensive

that he would betray him. However, the young man was faithful. He afterwards returned to the Dean's service, and in that service died; whereupon Swift erected the slab to his memory. Many are the stories told of the brusque and sometimes violent manner of the Dean. Two of these are in my mind as I write. For a long while he endeavoured to induce the descendants and representatives of Duke Schomberg, who was killed at the Battle of the Boyne, to erect a monument to his memory. This they refused or neglected to do; whereupon he raised one himself, a black slab, on which he inscribed high praise of the gallant dead and low abuse of the ungenerous living. It is said that the body of the great General never was removed from the cathedral. The other story told of the Dean is as follows: George Falkner, his publisher, went to London to collect subscribers for his (the Dean's) works. When he returned to Dublin, he presented himself before the Dean dressed in a laced waistcoat, a bag-wig, and other fopperies. The Dean turned him out as an impostor. Again he waited on the Dean, attired in another manner; and on this occasion he received him cordially; thus: "My good friend George, I am heartily glad to see you. An impudent fellow in a laced waistcoat was here, and would fain have passed for you; but I dismissed him with a flea in his ear." It was this Falkner who was instrumental in dedicating the bust and tablet to the memory of the Dean. Near the bust of Swift is the little chapel in which is placed the baptismal font. Few children have been baptised in it. I have heard of one only, and he was said to be an *odd* child; a single child, I presume, was meant, not an eccentric one. The bust of John Philpot Curran is full of character; the eye, the nostril, the mouth bespeak the fire of genius. The pictures of the orator do not flatter him. He has in them a very mean ostler-like look. In the bust he appears the gifted and courageous man, with brilliant thoughts and daring soul. A principal object of interest is the monument to the memory of Captain Boyd, R.N., who lost his life at Kingstown on the 9th of February 1861, in an attempt to rescue the crew of a sinking vessel. The attitude of the statue is bold and striking. The gallant sailor stands firmly on a rock. A rope is wound about a fragment of rock and his own body; this rope he extends to the struggling sailors. On the pedestal are poetical lines, but not very descriptive. The concluding lines describe the event and picture:

"The Christ-taught bravery that died to save—  
The life not lost, but found beneath the wave."

The noble statue of the Duke of Buckingham arrests the attention. That of the Right Honourable George Ogle is but a poor and inelegant work of art, depicting the worthy senator as a finikin dancing-master. The memorials to the 18th Royal Irish who fell in China in 1840-2, with the torn flags on the wall above, are touching in the extreme. One

of the most interesting memorials in the cathedral is that which, as I have said, was erected by Dean Swift to Frederick Duke Schomberg. Anyone who has read Macaulay's vivid description of the death of Schomberg at the Battle of the Boyne will view the monument with veneration. In a dark corner, near the place in which the colours of the 18th Royal Irish have been deposited, near also to the beautiful monument to the late Archbishop Whately, the unassuming slab to the memory of Schomberg will be found; indeed, it is as plain a tablet as was ever erected to commemorate the achievements of a great general. But it was scarcely requisite. The obelisk on the Boyne, erected where he fell, is sufficient to keep his image in the minds of Irishmen while the spot endures. It is very likely that the mural souvenir would never have been erected at all had not the Dean felt indignant at the indifference and neglect evinced towards the memory of the great commander. After the battle the remains of Schomberg were deposited in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and on the 10th of July 1690 were placed under the altar. Till the year 1731 (forty-one years after) no memorial was erected; the relations of Schomberg, who derived all his wealth and honour, having treated his memory with an indifference bordering on contempt.

In the month of May 1725, Swift wrote to Lord Carteret in the following plain terms: "The great Duke of Schomberg is buried under the altar in my cathedral," he says. "My Lady Holderness is my old acquaintance, and I wrote to her about a small sum to make a monument for her grandfather. There was also a letter from the Dean and Chapter with the same request. It seems Mildmay (now Lord Fitzwalter), her husband, is a covetous fellow, or, whatever is the matter, we have no answer. I desire you will tell Lord Fitzwalter that if he will not send fifty pounds to make a monument for the old duke, I and the Chapter will erect a small one of ourselves for ten pounds, wherein it shall be expressed that the posterity of the duke (naming particularly Lady Holderness and Mr. Mildmay) not having the generosity to erect a monument, we have done it ourselves. And if for an excuse they pretend they will send for his body, let them know it is mine; and rather than send it, I will take up the bones and make of it a skeleton, and put it in my registry-office, to be a memorial of their baseness to all posterity." The fifty pounds was never sent. And here am I, in the year 1867 (just one hundred and forty-two years after Swift wrote his manly letter), deciphering the inscription on this slab, which, compared with other monuments erected to do honour to illustrious men, resembles the lid of a parish-coffin. The inscription is as follows:

"Hic infra situm est corpus Frederici Ducis de Schomberg, ad Bubendam occisi, A.D. 1690. Decanus et capitulum maximopere etiam atque etiam petierunt, ut hæredes Ducis monumentum in memoriam parentis erigendum curarent. Sed



postquam per epistolas, per amicos, diu ac sæpe orando nil profecere; hunc demum lapidem statuerunt; saltem ut scias, hospes, ubinam terrarum Schombergenses cineres delitescunt. Plus potuit fama virtutis apud alienos quam sanguinis proximitas apud suos.\* A.D. 1731."

The sentence commencing *saltem ut scias*, &c. first ran thus:

"Saltem ut sciat viator indignabundus, quantilla cellula tanti ductoris cineres delitescunt."†

But the Dean altered it, as it was considered too severe.

It was quite clear that there was some misunderstanding amongst the family. The Prussian envoy at the court of England had married a granddaughter of the great duke, and it was considered expedient to allow his name "to rest in the shade." The envoy was irate at the transaction, and complained to Queen Anne that the intention of the Dean in erecting the slab was to foment a quarrel between his master and the crown of England.

This monument to Schomberg brings us back to the Boyne. The battle is over. The body of Schomberg has been placed in a leaden coffin for interment in Westminster Abbey. King James has reached Dublin Castle in safety, and prepared for further flight. The witty Tyrconnell again beholds him flying for his life. The hills of Wicklow have been crossed, Waterford has been reached, Kinsale gained, a vessel carries him to Brest. Tyrconnell has retreated, and conducted his broken army by the road that leads from the city to "the vast sheep-walk which extends over the table-land of Kildare." The friends of William have recovered the panic of uncertainty. What a revolution the electric telegraph has worked in *our* day! what a tranquilliser, what a soother! what evils and misconceptions does it not prevent or allay! William has arrived at Finglas; his dragoons have entered Dublin and fraternised with the citizens in College Green, and now the conqueror is coming to be crowned in the grand old Cathedral of St. Patrick. This is the point at which I return to my subject. If you have ever sat in the chair in Westminster Abbey in which the ancient kings of England have been crowned, you must have felt history infusing itself into the palms of your hands, and tipping your fingers' ends as with an electrical rod. If you have ever sat in Buonaparte's coach in

\* "Here, underneath, lies the body of Frederick Duke of Schomberg, who was slain at Boyne in the year of our Lord 1690. The Dean and Chapter again and again earnestly requested the Duke's heirs to provide for the erection of a monument in memory of their father; but when—after lengthened and frequent entreaties by letters, by friends—they found their efforts unsuccessful, they set up this slab, that, at all events, you, O stranger, may know what spot of the globe hides the ashes of Schomberg. The renown of valour availed more among foreigners than proximity of blood among his own kin."

† "That, at all events, the traveller may know, while resenting the same, in what a pigeon-hole (cranny) the ashes of a chieftain so illustrious are entombed."

Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, you likewise felt a very novel and all-absorbing sensation ; but when I sat in the chair in which William was crowned, I felt more intensely than on either of the occasions ; local associations, I presume, being the cause. Visions of the battle came upon me : the sickly and wounded but unflinching soldier crossing the Boyne, his sword in the left hand, his horse's rein in the right, bandaged and almost useless though that hand was ; the battle won ; the entry into Dublin ; the crown worn by James on state occasions at the king's inns, placed, if I mistake not, by his own hand upon his head. As Napoleon crowned himself in Italy, so William crowned himself in Ireland, in the choir where now are waving the banners of the Knights of St. Patrick. The chair is now in the chapter-room, its back to the scene of that day's rejoicings, Sunday the 6th of July 1690. The ceremony over, the victor marched back to Finglas, where he had pitched his camp ; not to the castle—the atmosphere there savoured too much of the fallen Stuart king so newly departed—but to the soldiers' bivouac in that classical ground which a graceful river (a pleasant playground for sweetest trout), the royal Tolka, now irrigates with its refreshing waters—to old Finglas, haunt of Swift and Tickel, Drennan and Delany, Sheridan and Addison, and, “though last not least,” the head-quarters of the jolly old Tolka Club. Macaulay tells us that “the king's resolution to attack the Irish was not, it appears, approved of by all his lieutenants ; Schomberg in particular pronounced the experiment too hazardous, and when his opinion was overruled retired to his tent in no very good humour. When the order of battle was delivered to him, he muttered that he had been more used to give than to receive such orders. For this little bit of sullenness, very pardonable in a general who had won great victories when his master was still a child, the brave veteran made on the following morning a noble atonement.” When the grand crisis in that great struggle arrived, “Schomberg, who had remained on the northern bank, and who had thence watched the progress of his troops with the eye of a general, now thought that the emergency required from him the personal exertion of a soldier. Those who stood about him besought him in vain to put on his cuirass. Without defensive armour, he rode through the river and rallied the refugees, whom the fall of Caillemot had dismayed. ‘Come on,’ he cried in French, pointing to the squadrons of James, ‘come on, gentlemen ; there are your persecutors.’ Those were his last words. As he spoke, a band of Irish horsemen rushed upon and encircled him in a moment. When they retired, he was on the ground. His friends raised him, but he was already a corpse. Two sabre-wounds were on his head, and a bullet from a carbine was lodged in his neck.”

Near the memorial to Schomberg, and pendent from a chain, is the cannon-ball that struck St. Ruth at the Battle of Aughrim. You may

here observe that there is nothing of exclusive party in the preservation of these mementoes. St. Ruth was the star of the Irish, Schomberg was the veteran soldier of William the Third. Many have asked, when they observed the ball, what it was. The reply is, that it is the identical ball, mentioned by Macaulay, as that which struck the intrepid general. Thus writes the historian: "The fight had lasted two hours; the evening was closing in, and still the advantage was on the side of the Irish. Ginkel began to meditate a retreat. The hopes of St. Ruth rose high. 'The day is ours, my boys,' he cried, waving his hat in the air; 'we will drive them before us to the walls of Dublin.' But fortune was already on the turn. Mackay and Ruvigny with English and Huguenot cavalry had succeeded in passing the bog at a place where two horsemen could scarcely ride abreast. St. Ruth at first laughed when he saw the Blues in a single file struggling through the morass, under a fire which every moment laid some gallant hat and feather on the earth. 'What do they mean?' he asked; and then he swore that it was a pity to see such fine fellows rushing to certain destruction. 'Let them cross, however,' he said; 'the more they are, the more we shall kill.' But soon he saw them laying hurdles on the quagmire; a broader and safer path was formed; squadron after squadron reached firm ground; the flank of the Irish army was speedily turned. The French general was hastening to the rescue, when a cannon-ball carried off his head." The distant is brought near, and words are converted into objects when we look up and behold the ball. We see the fearless soldier in the thickest of the fight, trying to rally the soldiery. We see him stricken to the earth, and we almost realise the concluding passage of the historian: "Those that were about him thought that it would be dangerous to make his fate known. His corpse was wrapt in a cloak, carried from the field, and laid with all secrecy in the sacred ground among the ruins of the ancient monastery of Loughrea." From the sublime to the ridiculous is certainly only a step; and I confess I never think of the hero without recalling a historical drama that was the charm of my boyhood before I read *Macbeth*, namely, *The Fall of Mons. St. Ruth*. How like a strain of Beethoven's these lines fell upon my boyish ears:

"Secure, brave Sarsfield, in our camp we lie,  
And from our lines the British force defy"!

Then, as the dramatist began the business of the play, we had "the horn sounding without," and St. Ruth exclaiming:

"Hark! a post arrives, who does some message bear. [*Enter a Post.*  
*Post.* With important news I from Athlone am sent;  
 Be pleased to show me to the general's tent.  
*Sarsfield.* Behold the general there; your message tell.  
*St. Ruth.* Declare your message; are our friends all well?  
*Post.* Athlone is lost without your timely aid;  
 At six this morning an assault was made, &c.

*St. Ruth.* Dare all the force of England be so bold  
To attempt to storm so brave a town, when I  
With all Hibernia's sons of war are nigh?  
Return, and if the Britons dare pursue,  
Tell them that Ruth is near, and *that will do.*

*Post.* Your aid would do *much better than your name.*"

Coupling the grandiloquent words "that will do" with the memory of the ball now pendent in the old cathedral, and which truly *did* for the military saint, no one could avoid a smile. I cannot resist the temptation to say that the play of the *Battle of Aughrim* comes next in serious humour to that of *Bombastes Furioso*. The poet thus describes the fate of St. Ruth:

"Aughrim is now no more; St. Ruth is dead,  
And all his guards are from the battle fled;  
As he rode down the hill he met his fall,  
And died a victim to a cannon-ball."

How touching these words of Sarsfield! The boundary-line of the light of St. Ruth's genius is here nicely drawn:

"There lies the man whose deeds shall ever shine  
In Flanders, France, and *all along the Rhine.*"

That the reader may fully understand the genius of the dramatist, I shall quote another passage; it is to be found in the scene in which Sir Charles Godfrey has, like Hamlet, a colloquy with the ghost of his father. He (the ghost) has told his son that he has "hovered down to let him know his fate," for having been "prompted by love to fight against his king." Sir Charles, addressing him, says, in language grave as any to be found in Butler's *Analogy*,

"Could such vain trifling thoughts as these entice  
A ghost for to abandon Paradise?  
Answer me this, if it be no offence—  
When thou'rt at rest, where is thy residence?  
For mortal men on earth are prone to say,  
Were ghosts in heaven, in heaven *they would stay;*  
*Or if in hell, they could not get away.*"

The object that next attracts the spectator in this part of the cathedral is the memorial dedicated to the worth and genius of the late archbishop (Whately). The figure is recumbent on a couch, a pillow under the head, the right hand crossed upon the breast, the left by the side. The prelate is represented as in tranquil repose. The statue is by the same sculptor (Farrell) that produced the noble figure of Boyd. The style is different; in each the style and execution are masterly; action and repose, life and death, have been boldly or softly delineated. The following inscription, a translation of which is affixed, appears upon the monument:

## DEAN SWIFT'S CATHEDRAL

IN MEMORIAM

RICARDI WHATELY, S.T.P.

Archiepiscopi Dublinensis,

Pro Christi veritate,

Pro ecclesiæ salute,

Pro hominum bono

Indefessa per

Annos XXXII. sollicitudine

Episcopatu functus,

Obdormivit in Domino

VIII. Idus Octob. 1863,

Anno ætatis 77.

In ecclesia SS. Trinitatis altera hujus Diocesis Cathedrali  
Jacet pulvis.

"Etiamsi mortuus fuerit vivet." Joan. xi. 25.\*

While gazing on this monument I am forcibly reminded of the Dean of Emly's exquisite lines on the illustrious dead. Describing the funeral, the Dean asks, "Why do men lament? What prince or great man has fallen?" and he answers:

"Only an old archbishop, growing whiter  
Year after year; his stature, proud and tall,  
Palsied and bowed, as by his heavy mitre;  
Only an old archbishop—that is all.

Only the hands that held with feeble shiver  
The marvellous pen (by others outstretch'd o'er  
The children's heads) are folded now for ever  
In an eternal quiet—nothing more."

At the close of this fine poem the Dean says, as if addressing the crowd that thronged the aisles of Christ Church, in one of the vaults of which Whately has been buried,

"Ye mourning thousands, quit the minster slowly,  
And leave the great archbishop with his God."

So well has the sculptor executed his work, that the effigy, the marble similitude, the perishable memorial, looks like the archbishop himself wrapt in profound slumber; the hand that held the marvellous pen, and the brain within whose mysterious convolutions were treasured the wonders of eloquence, wit, and wisdom, quiet for a while, to be again awakened.

\* To the memory of Richard Whately, Professor of Sacred Theology, Archbishop of Dublin. For the truth of Christ, the safety of the Church, for the good of men, having for a space of thirty-two years, with unwearied anxiety, discharged the duties of his episcopal office, he fell asleep in the Lord on the 8th of October 1863, aged 77. In another cathedral church of this diocese, the Holy Trinity, his ashes repose.

"Even though he were dead yet shall he live." John xi. 25.

Only one monument do I remember as perfect in its truth to nature, and that is the effigy of some distinguished ecclesiastic in the Cathedral of St. Bavon at Ghent—a monument which will no doubt be remembered by every tourist through the quiet cities of Flanders.

The more I consider this splendid cathedral the more I love it. I do not agree with those who say that cathedral worship is not solemn and impressive, and that they would as willingly go to a theatre as to such a church. If there be a fault, it is in the hearts of the congregation, not in the cathedral. There is no grander form of worship, none older than the chant, the anthem, and the chorale; and if the feelings are reverential, the spectator or devotee must be impressed with the solemnity of the ceremony. I admit that there may be certain people to whom those solemn aisles seem only a convenient arena for elegant flirtation, or the exhibition of the last eccentricity in the way of bonnets; but I trust these frivolous spirits are in the minority. To the really devotional mind there can be surely nothing more sublime than the swelling peal of anthem and canticle, when the voices of the singers and the deep-toned thunder of a fine organ resound beneath the vaulted roof of an old Gothic cathedral.

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## HOW MY DEBTS WERE PAID

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY FLAVIA," ETC.

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IT was the accident of birth—so I was vehemently assured by a very energetic Chartist lecturer with whom I travelled from Kenmare to Killarney, on one of Bianconi's jaunting-cars; it was the accident of birth that gave my name a place in *Debrett* and on the Lord Lieutenant's list of aides-de-camp. And I am sure that it was the accident of fortune—which in my case meant the not having any—that kept me, the Hon. Augustus Mildmay, after eight or nine years unprofitably spent, still a subaltern in Her Majesty's Brigade of Guards.

My story was a common one enough, so far. I was a younger son, brought up to indulge expensive tastes and to form expensive habits, and then suddenly cut adrift to sink or swim as best I might, with the lifebuoy of a very modest patrimony in addition to my lieutenant's pay. It is not easy for a guardsman to practise thrift; and our battalion, in particular, had a reputation for ultra extravagance. There were rich men among us, and there were poor men; but we all spent more than we had, and with the usual result that attends such a seed-time of wild oats. There had been all sorts of complicated bill transactions, playfully known as kite-flying—dangerous playthings are those same kites, soaring high and proudly only to topple down with an ugly crash upon the luckless wight that launched them—and the collapse had come. What was the exact amount or nature of our indebtedness no one seemed to know. We were all liable for one another, in the most intricate maze of mutual obligation; but a scapegoat was necessary, and I was, somehow or other, more deeply dipped in the quagmire of impecuniosity than the rest of us.

Corker, the knowing wine-merchant of Conduit-street—(we always went to Corker when perplexed by legal difficulties: he was pleasanter than a regular lawyer, and had indeed been an attorney himself before taking to the wine trade)—Corker, the most good-natured of men, hard-headed as he was, and who always gave us a very tidy tap of sherry during these consultations, was decidedly of opinion that I must leave London, if I wished to avoid an arrest. "Mr. Mildmay," such was the opinion of our Anacreontic adviser, "would very likely find himself in Queer-street, which in this case meant Whitecross-street prison, unless he went abroad for a time, till a composition could be effected."

Too true. Before long, lawyers' letters of the most alarming character, closely followed up by ominous bits of stamped paper, the

contents of which were couched in a horrid legal jargon unintelligible to even the most experienced of our field-officers, began to pour in; and men with black whiskers, hook noses, and an aspect disagreeably suggestive of Cursitor-street, were observed skulking about the barrack-gates and lounging near the steps of our club. Then I was advised to feign illness and apply for sick leave; was smuggled into a hansom cab, and reaching the railway terminus in safety, breathed more freely as I found myself rattling down to Dover at the full speed of the early express. Markham, one of ours, who had arranged the details of this Hegira of mine, accompanied me to the station; and as the train moved off, his last words were ringing in my ears: "Good-bye, Mildmay! good luck to you, old fellow. Let us know how you enjoy yourself in Paris. I quite envy you the trip; but mind you soon come back to us, Gus, my boy."

But if Captain Markham, in his kindly wish to raise my drooping spirits, spoke thus cheerily, I was very far from feeling myself an object of envy as I was borne whirling along through the rich Kentish landscape, hop-gardens and orchards, meadows and wooded hills, smiling peacefully in the early sunlight of the summer's morning. My prospects were dark enough. The precise sum total of what I owed, on behalf of myself and my brother officers, I really did not know; but I could as soon from my own resources have liquidated the National Debt as have settled scores with Messrs. Shadrach of Chancery-lane. My only hope—and that a vague one—was that my eldest brother would shell out, "for the credit of the family;" but the odds against John's paying my debts were overwhelming. There were five of us cadets knocking about the world,—in the army, in the diplomatic service, or as gentlemen at large, like poor Tom at Baden; and the precedent of discharging a younger brother's liabilities would have been a dangerous one. The present lord was married too, and had children of his own to provide for; and his wife was a very prudent woman. John was naturally kind; but I could not expect such a tremendous sacrifice on his part as the payment of those hydra-headed bills and notes-of-hand implied. Meanwhile I had leave; but leave, even with a guardsman, cannot last for ever. The time must come when I should be reduced to the delightful alternative of selling out for the benefit of creditors, or of returning home, with the certainty of being arrested on the parade-ground. These were bitter reflections, and they were rendered none the more palatable by the remembrance that all this ruin was brought about by my own folly and my own fault. Did ever, I wonder, a man take comfort from the consciousness that he had fallen into a pit of his own digging, or that he had no one but himself to blame for bringing a wasps'-nest of duns and bailiffs about his bankrupt ears? Whoever of the passengers in that early express flying seaward may have enjoyed the beauties of nature and the calm joyousness of the unclouded morning, of a certainty it was not Lieutenant and Captain the Hon. Augustus Mildmay, as



the little gilt-edged volumes of drawing-room literature were pleased to style me.

Fine as the day was, I was surprised, on reaching Dover, to find how very rough a passage lay before me. There had been nearly a week of boisterous weather; and although the wind had lulled, the sea was still dark and angry, and the hoarse growl of the surges, as they broke upon the solid stonework of the Admiralty pier, was like the smothered roaring of wild beasts. Far out at sea, the white wave-crests flashed up into sight for an instant and then vanished again in endless succession, and the steamer jerked and heaved uncomfortably even in her snug mooring-place beside the massive jetty. But all this, which might have made mere pleasure-seekers hesitate, was nothing to a gentleman in imminent peril of the peremptory hospitality of that imperious Amphitryon, Mr. Sheriff's-officer Grab of Cursitor-street; so I went on board at once, with such light luggage as I had been able to bring away with me. The bell was already ringing clamorously as I set foot on the deck.

There were not many passengers. London was very full just then; and it was too early for the annual migration of the jaded votaries of the season, and yet too late for the exodus of those sober families with children to educate and plans of retrenchment and continental residence that may be met with every spring upon the Rhine and elsewhere. The bell clanged out a second warning; ropes were run inboard, hawsers were cast off, the gangway planks were withdrawn, and the paddle-wheels began to revolve. Just as we were in motion there was a shout and an entreaty to stop, and somebody came hurrying to the edge of the pier. My first idea was that the Jews had been too many for me after all, and that the noisy individual on shore was no other than an emissary of Messrs. Shadrach, armed with a *ne exeat regno* for my discomfiture. But one glance sufficed to show me that this late arrival was a *bonâ fide* passenger; a tall, shambling, high-shouldered, awkward fellow, with a red head and flame-coloured whiskers, high cheek-bones, and a travelling-suit of black-and-white tweed, in the loudest of loud patterns, monstrous chequers of black and white, like the squares of a backgammon-board. He was followed by a panting porter, who carried his effects,—hat-box, dressing-case, trunk, and rugs; and he vociferated a petition to be taken on board. But the captain shook his head. He was a tough, wary old Channel commander, and had had too much experience to risk the rasping off the weather-boards of his starboard paddle-box against the piles of the pier by any undue reversal of the engine. "Too late, sir," he answered;—"go on ahead!" And ahead we went, leaving the intending passenger standing disconsolate, like a male Ariadne of clumsy figure and queer attire, on shore. Nobody seemed much to compassionate poor Redhead's disappointment; on the contrary, a funny bagman near me dubbed him "the Chancellor of the Ex-chequer," on account of the pattern of his travelling costume; and

there was a general laugh at this mild witticism. Then we got beyond the bar, and into very rough water, with a wet deck and showers of spray; and after a miserable passage we reached Calais five-and-thirty minutes behind time. The train, however, made up in extra speed for the delay occasioned by the Channel swell, and we arrived at Paris with tolerable punctuality.

Followed by a porter, who carried my scanty store of personal property—merely a portmanteau and a hat-box—I sallied out of the great gloomy hall where the baggage is distributed to its respective owners, and emerging on the outer platform, bade the man call me a *fiacre*. I knew Paris so far as an occasional fortnight's holiday enables an Englishman to know it; and I meant, for the present at any rate, to take up my abode in my old quarters at the Hotel du Louvre. The porter did as he was bid; but scarcely had he set down my luggage upon the asphalté of the pavement before a *chasseur* in a splendid livery—one of those gorgeous retainers whose cocked hat, white plumes, and gold aiguillettes and embroidery are worthy of a field-marshal—came bustling up, and took one glance at my hat-box and portmanteau—which bore, I must observe, my initials, A.M., in brass nails—and another at myself. “This way, if Monsieur please!” said the man in villanous English, but with infinite respect, lifting his feathered hat with a flourish. I stared at him. “Madame attends—*voyez plutôt!*” said the *chasseur*, calling my attention to a handsome barouche that had been drawn up at the edge of the platform, and the only occupant of which was a lady, very well dressed, and who was waving her gloved hand, and smiling and bowing and beckoning, obviously to *me*. She was a perfect stranger to me, this lady; and at first I turned my head, in the idea that I should see at my elbow the friend to whom these nods and becks and wreathed smiles were addressed; but no. No one was near me but a brace of bagmen, a German governess in tinted spectacles, and a stout French citizen with a nankeen coat and a green umbrella.

“Augustus! Gussy!” exclaimed the smiling lady—who was not, I may remark, as young as she used to be—a well-preserved, upright, commanding-looking dame, with aquiline features and a tall figure. She was richly dressed, and in excellent taste; while her equipage, from the magnificent horses, that rattled their silver-mounted harness as they chafed against the bit, to the stately English coachman, solemn as an undertaker and rosy as a carnation, was one that would have passed muster even in Hyde Park. I knew Paris sufficiently well to be aware that none but people of large fortune and lavish expenditure were in the habit of maintaining so well-appointed a carriage as that. But why the proprietress of all these splendours, and whom to the best of my remembrance I had never seen before, should hail me thus familiarly by my name, I could not conceive.

“Some mistake,” I said; but the *chasseur* would take no denial, and I found myself impelled towards the barouche. Its mistress held out

her hand, nay, both hands, towards me as I lifted my hat and stared at her in a bewildered fashion that I am sure must have been ludicrous enough.

"Why, Augustus! why, you naughty boy! were you actually going to give me the cut direct?" And she gave me a playfully reproachful tap over the knuckles with her lace-bordered parasol.

"Really, madam," I stammered, "I am afraid—that is—"

"I see how it is," said my persecutress, clapping her hands together with unaffected delight. "The child has really forgotten me. That is too bad; but I told the girls it would be so. I should have known you, dear boy, anywhere."

This was very embarrassing. I tried to smile, but for the very life of me I could not find appropriate words in which to convince the lady of her mistake. She seemed so positive too, so certain of the truth of her own impressions, that I was staggered. My own memory was, I knew, a tolerably good one, but I might be wrong; and, after all, faces *do* sometimes escape our recollection in the most provoking and unaccountable manner. While these contradictory thoughts were passing through my puzzled brain, the lady of the barouche was rattling on, best pace, with a flow of words that seemed exhaustless. Yes, she vowed the family likeness would have enabled her to identify me anywhere. What a passage I must have had! *Fi donc!* What did that man mean by saying that Monsieur's *fiacre* waited, when she had brought her carriage into that out-of-the-way quarter of Paris on purpose to fetch me? I was one of the privileged. There were very few whom she would have met at a horrid railway station. Let Anatole (the chasseur) look to my luggage; and as for me, why didn't I get into the barouche?

It was done. Before I could frame a proper remonstrance I found myself hustled, so to speak, with gentle violence, into the carriage. "Home," was the word; the plumed chasseur sprang nimbly to his perch, and sat there like an enormous gold-and-green parrot, with a white cockatoo's crest of feathers to supplement his own gorgeous array; and I found myself sitting beside this new old friend of mine, and listening, half distracted, to her incessant babble of small-talk, as the splendid bays whirled us far from the mercantile district in which stands the busy terminus of the Northern Railway.

"What sort of a French scholar was I? Ah, a bad one, no doubt, like most young Englishmen. I was always an idle boy at my lessons, and it was partly her (the lady's) fault; for of course I remembered how she used to spoil me, long ago."

Little by little, this discourse lulled my nerves into a state of calm repose, pretty much as I have heard our assistant-surgeon at mess describe to be the case with Indian serpents soothed by the flute of the snake-charmer. Once or twice the wild idea occurred to me that I might be the victim of a mystification or the dupe of a monomaniac.

But no. To carry out a practical joke by the aid of "properties" such as that dashing equipage and those grave and respectful servants would have been beyond the power of any amateur of hoaxing with whom I had the pleasure of an acquaintance. And the lady of the barouche was obviously sane enough to have passed a triumphant examination before even a bevy of mad doctors. She was a voluble talker, but her speech was coherent enough; and, with all her indulgence to me, she had the air of a woman accustomed to be obeyed, and to order matters according to her own will and pleasure.

I felt as if the whole adventure were part of a not unpleasant dream; the rather when, in the heart of that fashionable quarter which has grown up on the outskirts of the Champs Elysées, the carriage passed through a stately porte-cochère and drew up in front of a fine flight of marble steps, the double doors surmounting which were quickly opened by a brace of powdered footmen in gold and green. The house itself was one of those spacious mansions or hotels, *entre cour et jardin*, that are the boast of Paris, and compared with which the finest of modern London houses offers but scanty accommodation. Mechanically I gave my arm to the ultra-hospitable owner of all these good things, and walked up the marble steps with a hazy conviction that this was the kind of adventure I used to read of in the *Arabian Nights* when I was a boy, and that somehow the French air must have changed my identity, and converted me into a wandering prince, a calendar (not one-eyed), or possibly Bedredde Hassan in a costume suited to the improved civilisation of the age. "Now for the cream-tarts without pepper," I murmured to myself almost audibly as we passed on up the wide staircase.

The drawing-room into which I was introduced was a large one, and splendidly furnished, as befitted the house. Its only occupants were two young ladies, very pretty and very fashionably dressed, but both of them with bright honest faces, unmistakably English. They came forward frankly, but a little timidly too, to greet me, while the mistress of the house kept up a running fire of conversation—if that might be called conversation which was in truth almost a monologue. Had I forgotten my old playfellow Laura? To be sure she had grown very much since I had seen her. And Emma—Emma used to be too tiny a creature to share our sports, but Laura I *must* remember; and Laura had been talking of cousin Gussy all the morning, and wondering what he would be like; and so on, and so on. I despair of conveying any accurate impression of my feelings as I listened, bewildered, to all this.

It may seem strange perhaps that I had not the moral courage to say, "Madam, you appear to me to be under some singular delusion regarding me. I never, to the best of my knowledge and belief, set eyes on these aquiline features of yours, those black eyebrows, that firm yet smiling mouth, before to-day. I have not the remotest idea

of your name ; if I was a playmate of your eldest daughter, it must have been in a previous state of existence, or I must be a sleep-walker without knowing it ; the only link between us is that you call me familiarly by my Christian name, and that I answer to the call, as a stray dog will do if you summon him correctly as Tray or Rover." But I did nothing of the sort. False shame, awkwardness, and a vague sentiment of curiosity combined to put a padlock on my lips, and I merely murmured some unmeaning inanities about the weather, the sea-passage, and everybody's exceeding kindness.

Very kind indeed they all were, and I found myself a valued guest, and was bidden to consider myself at home. The bedroom assigned to me was a very handsome one ; and the huge pier-glasses, gilded cornices, and silken hangings, were all of the very best and most sumptuous of their order. People dine earlier in Paris than in London, so that by the time my toilet was complete it was almost dinner-time. A better dinner,—considering that it was no grand gala-day, but a quiet *repas de famille*, as my hostess, who had a pestilent knack of bringing out little scraps of French in the course of her fluent small-talk, was pleased to call it,—a better dinner no man need wish to eat, and I have seldom sipped better wine. There was a display of plate that gave me an exalted idea of the pecuniary circumstances of my entertainer ; and the French majordomo was as solemn, and very much more intelligent than even a prize London butler. As for the manner in which I was treated, that left nothing to be desired ; and as my reserve thawed a little under the benign influence of Clicquot's champagne and some wonderful Burgundy, that I rather think had been bought at the auction of Talleyrand's cellars, the young ladies and I became very good friends. I was particularly struck and pleased with Miss Laura, the eldest, and the one with whom I was supposed to have trundled hoops and chased butterflies at some remote period of our childhood.

It must not be supposed that our conversation turned wholly upon the past, or was made up of reminiscences, more or less genuine ; and I confess to having perpetrated some tremendous fibs regarding mythical swings and imaginary daisy-chains and games at shuttlecock—fibs of the "don't-you-remember" class, which had an undeserved success, and were received in perfect good faith. No. There was much desultory talk about the gaieties and routine of Parisian fashionable life, and the names of a great many foreigners of rank,—Russian, German, Polish, French as well,—were often introduced ; so that I felt tolerably certain that my entertainers, whoever they were, moved in some of the most brilliant circles of the *beau monde* of Paris.

A very agreeable evening followed the so-called family-dinner, and I found myself getting on swimmingly towards an intimate friendship with a set of delightful people, whose very names were unknown to me. That circumstance, however, did not distress me so much as perhaps it should have done. My new allies seemed to know me so well, to take so

sincere an interest in me, and to be so thoroughly contented with their guest, that I not unnaturally took it for granted that they must be the best judges of what was fitting. I was constantly addressed by my Christian name, as Augustus, 'Gus, or Gussy; and a man of a more angular nature than mine could hardly have failed to feel himself at home with entertainers so charming, frank, and unaffectedly kind. As for myself, I had always possessed somewhat of the *laissez aller* temperament of a lotus-eater, and now, in this haven of rest into which my wandering barque had somehow been wafted, I gave myself up to the calm enjoyment of the hour, without a thought of the future and without an apprehension of the possible result.

Laura, the elder sister, sang very sweetly; and at my request she had just begun one of my favourite English ballads—to which her clear bell-like voice added an effect that co-operated with her sunny smile and the liquid lustre of her eyes in playing mischief with the heart of Augustus Mildmay—when the sleek majordomo glided into the room and whispered something to my hostess. That lady started, and looked first incredulous, and then angry. She rose from her seat—"Let him leave the house at once. I never heard of such effrontery!" she exclaimed, in a harsher tone than I had thought to hear from her lips; and then I caught the servant's muttered reply;—"So positive. Insists on seeing madame!" "Let him be turned out at once. Call the *garde* if he refuses to go," said the mistress of the house, arching her black eyebrows; "or, stay, I *will* see the wretch, since he presumes." And she left the room.

Immediately afterwards I heard a confused sound of voices, most of them voluble in French, a noise as of scuffling, and then the slamming of a door. My hostess came back with a dignified air, but with a heightened colour. She made a sort of apology for the recent disturbance. "An impudent impostor," she declared, "had just had the audacity to present himself at the hotel, pretending to be—what did I suppose? what did the girls suppose?—why, Gussy, of all people in the world. She had never known, with all her experience of Parisian roguery, so barefaced an attempt at imposition. And yet the trick, though a clever one as to its design, had been ill carried out. The "creature" who had just been ignominiously hustled out of doors by the servants was an ugly, uncouth person, whom one glance sufficed to detect, and he had not the slightest likeness to any of the family. "As if I should not have known my own nephew!" the lady added, patting me affectionately on the shoulder.

After this, I think that Laura sang again; but even to her musical voice my ear remained insensible, while my bewildered brains seemed to be performing a saraband in harmony with the notes of the piano accompaniment. "Her own nephew!" My stately hostess had uttered the words in all seriousness. Was I dreaming, or had the wonderful Burgundy bemused my faculties to such a pitch that I could not trust

my own senses? Had I, in some un conjectured way, become an inmate of a private lunatic asylum, and were my new friends the victims of some strange delusion? Or was it possible that I was myself the dupe of some extraordinary hoax, more complicated and better sustained than any since the days of the caliph Haroun Alraschid? Impossible! And yet, could it be that I had more aunts than I was aware of, and that I had stumbled unawares upon a tribe of unsuspected relatives? all of whom, however, knew all about my unworthy self, and—

My dream was rudely broken. Again—and this time with a very ominous expression of face—the smooth majordomo glided in, bringing with him on a silver-gilt salver a card, which he offered for the inspection of his mistress, while he murmured a few words in French, the purport of which I did not catch. “Mr. Studleigh, of the English Embassy!” exclaimed the mistress of the mansion. “It is very extraordinary. Show them in, Dupont, at once.” And for the first time my new-found aunt appeared to cast a scrutinising and almost a suspicious glance at me.

Dupont bowed and left the room, but instantly returned, ushering in two gentlemen; one of whom, a middle-aged dandy in a wig and dyed whiskers, was evidently one of those steady-going veterans of minor diplomacy whose experience of court balls, protocols, circulars, and *précis*-writing, renders them the pillars of our British legations abroad. This elderly emissary of the Foreign Office had some slight acquaintance with my hostess; and as he came forward, bowing, she advanced and offered him her hand. But who was the individual at Mr. Studleigh’s side? I actually rubbed my eyes, in the desperate hope that the whole affair might turn out to be a vision of the night, which one waking moment would banish for ever. No; rub as hard as I might, there was still before my eyes the uncompromising fact that, confronting me, stood tall, shambling, awkward, high-shouldered, rueful, resentful Redhead himself—the identical traveller in the checked garments, and with the flaming whiskers, who had been just too late for the steamer on Dover pier. There he was, glaring at me as fiercely as if he had been an ogre.

Meanwhile a rapid interchange of question and answer had been going on between my entertainer and the *attaché*, or whatever he was; and presently I caught the words, “Know him perfectly well. Met him at Lord Glenlusk’s, in County Donegal, where I stayed for the salmon-fishing last year. Met him just now, bewildered in the street, awfully excited. He told me you had disavowed him for your nephew, and that the servants assured him that your real nephew had arrived hours before. I—” But here the mistress of the house turned frowningly to me.

“I begin to be afraid, sir,” she said, “that you have been practising most unwarrantably upon our simplicity. Are you my nephew? Are you Augustus Metcalfe?”

"Let him say so—only let the scoundrel say so—and I'll break every bone in his skin," roared Redhead, clenching a huge big-knuckled fist; and he made a dash at me, but Mr. Studleigh grasped his arm, while the young ladies chorused a cry of alarm that brought the vigilant majordomo back again.

Then followed a long and lively scene of reproaches, questionings, explanations, and apologies. My position was not an enviable one. It was soon made apparent that Redhead, of the loud-patterned travelling-dress and blazing whiskers, was the real Simon Pure; the long-expected nephew of the elder, and cousin of the younger, ladies; Laura's ex-playfellow, and the rightful occupant of the handsomely-furnished bedroom into which I had, on false pretences, been inducted. His identity was established; while I was regarded as a detected impostor, who had most unpardonably personated the welcome guest, and who had permitted myself to be fed on the fat of the land, to be caressed and kindly entreated, when all the time I was perhaps guilty of evil intentions towards the spoons. I heard Mr. Studleigh whisper to Dupont to send for the police; but for that I cared little. What really gave me pain was to see the bright faces of the girls so sad and indignant.

"As you are not Augustus, sir—" began my hostess, with a withering contempt.

"But I am Augustus!" I exclaimed recklessly; "for heaven's sake, madam, listen to me for one moment. You call me a deceiver; but pray consider if you have not deceived yourself and me too throughout. You addressed me invariably as Augustus. I can't help my Christian name. This"—drawing out my card-case—"will prove that I have a right to bear it; and if you can convict me of having told you a single untruth, I'll cheerfully put up with the heaviest punishment of your merited contempt." And I held out my card.

"Mr. Augustus Mildmay, of the Guards: not one of old Lord Porchester's sons, surely!" exclaimed the black-browed lady. "Why, what a coincidence! You are not my nephew certainly; but we are cousins, after all."

And so it proved to be. A long and amicable conversation succeeded to the recent wordy storm, and many dark things were made clear. My hostess was in very truth a distant relation of our family; Mrs. Sharpe, the wealthy widow of old Sharpe, of Diddlecot Hall, a great parliamentary agent and attorney in his day, and to whose tenacious fingers much money of bribe-giving candidates had adhered. Mrs. Sharpe was herself the daughter of a coastguard lieutenant, and her one claim to connection with the aristocracy was the fact that her mother had been a Mildmay, and a cousin of my father's. She had inherited a large fortune from her aged husband, and had done the best with it for herself and her pretty daughters by spending it in Paris, where she lived in excellent style, and where she found her wealth an easier pass-



port into good French society than it would have proved in the more cold and critical penetralia of Belgravia. Harmony once more prevailed in the establishment, and I was heartily made welcome in my own character, and was pressed to remain as a guest in the mansion which I had entered as an unconscious impostor. And, to cut short a story that threatens to expand to undue proportions, before the end of six weeks I was the affianced lover of charming Laura Sharpe, my cousin; and in due course we were married at the Embassy Chapel, my debts being very liberally paid by my quondam "aunt" and present mother-law, who, at the same time, made a sufficient settlement on Laura to enable us to live in London. As for Redhead—or Augustus Metcalfe—in spite of his ungainly appearance, he turned out to be the best of good fellows, and we had many a good-humoured laugh together over the exciting commencement of our acquaintance. He is, I believe, now paying his addresses to my sister-in-law, Miss Emma, who used at first to tease him unmercifully, but is gradually relenting. I am sure I wish him luck with all my heart.

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J. F. Skill, del.

W. Cranston, sc.

ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE STREAM.

## THE WRONG SIDE OF THE STREAM

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ONCE more do I feel the soft summer wind blowing,  
    Whilst it tenderly rustles the trees ;  
Again the clear water is trilling and flowing,  
    As the rushes are bent 'neath the breeze.  
The grand purple shadows are dreamily spreading  
    Their gloom o'er the sunshiny gleam ;  
Through tall nodding grasses I fancy I'm treading,  
    By the side of the murmuring stream.

Ah ! don't you remember, sweet Amy, the talking  
    You caused down at Silverdale Hall ?  
How men were all wild to attend you in walking,  
    Or to carry your sunshade or shawl ?  
You laughed and you flirted, and were so provoking,  
    For you reigned like a despot extreme ;  
And issued your edicts—part earnest, part joking—  
    From your throne by the side of the stream.

Then you had your fav'rites I can't help confessing,  
    Though you treated us all as your slaves—  
One moment were angry, the next were caressing,  
    More capricious than wind-driven waves.  
'Twas then Charlie Lincoln and I were both vying  
    To be first in your love and esteem,  
Whilst swiftly the rosy young hours were flying  
    At your court by the side of the stream.

Thus it often occurred in that bright sunny weather  
    That we both were ensnared by your wiles ;  
You gave one a flower, the other a feather,  
    Whilst you gladdened us both with your smiles.  
At last came a time of most exquisite rapture—  
    How short did that afternoon seem !—  
As rosy lips pouted, I made my first capture,  
    When I met you alone by the stream.

Alone, did I say? Charlie Lincoln had seen us ;  
That he had I could tell by his look ;  
What matter? With osiers and hurdles between us,  
With a thick tangled hedge and—a brook.  
'Twas all one to me, for he could not come over ;  
So he bowed in a manner supreme,  
And envied the lot that had cast me in clover,  
With himself the wrong side of the stream.

How tender and true were those words softly spoken !  
How lovely the light in your eyes !  
How earnest those pledges, ne'er meant to be broken,  
Those whispers that melted to sighs !  
No longer a fancy—my fate was decided ;  
No mere phantom or fairy-like dream :  
I blessed the good luck that my rival had guided  
Thus to walk the wrong side of the stream !

J. ASHBY STERRY.

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## AMUSEMENTS OF PARIS

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FROM this month forward Paris promises to be a centre of interest for the civilised world; at all events for that portion of it which takes its pleasure in the agglomerations of shops which bear the name of "International Exhibitions." As, however, the ugly structure in the Champ de Mars is scarcely likely to absorb the entire attention of the numerous visitors who may be attracted to the gay city, a few notes on the other pleasures of the place, as they presented themselves to a visitor a very few months back, may not be altogether out of place. Any attempt to describe them in detail would, of course, be absurd in the limited space allotted to me here. A large volume would be wanted to exhaust the subject; and when it was completed, there is only too much reason to fear that it would be anything but amusing. Next to the professional guide-book, there are few drearier things than the reminiscences of those excellent persons who try to amuse one at second-hand by describing the matters that pleased them; who begin a dull story with, "I will tell you such a capital joke—make you die with laughing," and so forth; or who end similarly monotonous recitals with, "and we all laughed so." About as tedious are those other well-meaning people who attempt to create amusement by rehearsing their own past pleasures, who weary their hearers by describing the good points of their partners at last night's ball, or the wild orgie with which they wound up the evening. They are all very good fellows, no doubt. They "mean well,"—a phrase which covers an appalling amount of stupidity and evil-doing—they would not hesitate perhaps to lend a friend a ten-pound note at a pinch; but, in spite of all their good qualities, one learns instinctively to avoid them, and to take all possible pains to get out of their way when they once open their mouths with the intention of being funny. Now what these persons are in daily life the writer who announces his intention of dealing specifically with amusements has a great tendency to become. Should he avoid that fault, another danger not less serious besets him on the other side—he may become didactic and guide-bookish. As I take it, however, that those who can buy *Murray* or *Galignani* are not likely to care about a second-hand version of their contents, while those other people who are fortunate enough to read the leaders of some of our daily papers will similarly care very little for second-hand moralising, nothing of either kind will find place here. Apart from these two descriptions of writing, there are, however, plenty of things which the average English traveller who rushes through Paris, on his way to Italy or Switzerland,

is by no means likely to remark, but which have an infinite interest for those who find their greatest pleasure under the sunny sky of the French capital—who have learned to love its people, to sympathise with their occupations, and to consider, in a word, that Paris is the true centre of the universe of pleasure.

First on the list of the greater pleasures come, of course, the theatres; and equally, of course, the Opera is first amongst these. Unlike ourselves, our lively neighbours take a really scientific interest in the theatrical art. The Government grants annually a considerable subsidy to several of the theatres, and maintains besides, as a national institution, the Conservatoire, at which dramatic artists, in the true sense of the word, are educated. Still more, when necessity arises for the destruction of one of the older houses, it is the Administration which provides the new. Thus have arisen two of the pleasantest as well as the two handsomest theatres in the whole city—the Lyrique and the Châtelet. In the same way it is now engaged in the construction of a new Grand Opera, designed to eclipse all similar structures both in and out of Paris. Of course plenty of people will say of this liberality, that it is only a new development of that ancient custom which led a despotism to provide its subjects with *panem et circenses*; but when it is considered that precisely the same thing was done, though on a smaller scale, under the constitutional government of Louis Philippe, it is evident that such a sneer has no particular applicability. The truth is, the talent of the French people is essentially dramatic. They are passionately fond of theatrical entertainments; and although the direction of their tastes is sometimes to be lamented, there can be no question that the love of the theatre is as genuine as it is universal. One class only, as a class, either does not like the stage, or pretends to care little for it. “Gandinism” leads its votaries to the lyric theatres, and to them only, except when the announcement of a new actress or of a new danseuse induces one of the class to present himself at one of the smaller theatres of the Boulevards, where he may be seen, in the unusual glory of evening-dress, languidly talking to his friends during the serious parts of the piece, and attentive only to the appearance of the charmer, whose name has brought him so far from his usual haunts. This class is, however, tolerably powerful. Half the wealth of the city is in their hands, and they spend it royally. For them rise those gorgeous *cafés* which excite the surprise and envy of the ignorant Britisher; for them clubs have been instituted which emulate, in the splendour of their fittings and the extravagance of their charges, the most aristocratic of London establishments of the same class; for them coach-makers design those splendid “Tilburys” and “Victorias” which dot the Bois de Boulogne from five till seven daily; for them horse-dealers import those magnificent English horses which make that same Bois no unworthy competitor of the “Row;” for them Madame de Bréda paints her cheeks with the finest rouge, and wears the most impossible of bonnets; and

finally, for them M. Charles Garnier, with his four distinguished *aides*,—MM. Louvet, Jourdain, Pascal, and Leschault,—is building the most beautiful theatre that the world has yet seen.

About half way up the Boulevard des Italiens, on the left as you come from the Madeleine, somewhere about half a square mile of houses have been pulled down to make room for the new Opera. The space of ground which the theatre itself will occupy is in the shape of an heraldic lozenge with the corners cut off. The front faces the Boulevard, and is already beginning to give promise of the splendours it will exhibit in future. As, however, there is no reason to hope for the completion of the work before 1869, that promise is as yet somewhat dim. Still it is possible to see something of what is to be done, and to judge by the preparations already made of what kind the future work will be. The reader who visits Paris cannot do better than put himself in communication with the kindly and intelligent clerk of the works, M. Noël, who is apparently only too pleased when he can do a service to a stranger, and whose explanations will be found by every one of the greatest value. He will tell his guest that the whole front of this new house is to be a mass of sculpture, of inlaid stone, and of columns large and small, with capitals carved in the richest fashion. Inside, the arrangements are to be on a scale commensurate with the magnificence of the exterior. Under the theatre itself there will be an immense waiting-hall for the accommodation of visitors whose carriages have set them down at any of the numerous entrances, or who have come in from the huge *café glacier*, which will form part of the building. From this hall, which will be a perfect triumph of decorative art, a staircase “of honour” will ascend, together with two smaller staircases—one on each side. The centre staircase, which will be of immense width, will be of white marble, with a balustrade of that beautiful tinted stone known as Sarancolin. These staircases will reach only to the first story. Above them will be two others of equal splendour, but slightly removed, so as to afford a comfortable break in the ascent. The details have all been arranged; and if the finest granite and marble, carved by the most skilful artists of Paris, can make a long ascent easy, this staircase will surely be the pleasantest in the capital. The *foyer*, that pleasant lounge which the thoughtfulness of managers provides by way of atonement for the long “waits” between the acts, will be double, and will be decorated after the same fashion as the theatre itself. As for the theatre proper, it is scarcely necessary to say that, after so much pains bestowed on the entrance, it is not likely to be a very dull place. All the effect that brilliant colour and constructive decoration can give will be lavished on it. One exception only can be made to the design—the lighting is to be effected by means of an enormous chandelier, the effect of which, in the atmosphere of Paris, must be felt to be appreciated. When a system so simple and so convenient as that of the “sun-lights” is available, it seems strange that vast expense should be incurred for the



sake of show at the cost of comfort. Save in this respect, however, the comfort of the *habitues* will be studied in every way. Every box, even to the fourth tier, will have its ante-room; while dressing-rooms and all necessary conveniences will be arranged on every floor. Finally—and this is no small consolation in a theatre—the precautions against fire are exceptionally minute. The whole of the interior of the house, except in the places where it has been found impossible to dispense with wood, will be of stone and iron. Thus, even supposing a fire to break out, it can be extinguished directly; and at worst is only likely to spoil a few decorations and a little of the flooring.

At the other side of Paris—a couple of miles from “the centre of civilisation,” as an ancient Paris resident has dubbed the Café Cardinal—there is a theatre which presents a singular contrast in every respect to the Grand Opera. This is the Odéon, beloved of the students in whose quarter it is, as well as by that unfortunately not so numerous body who believe that the drama means something besides an exhibition of half-naked women, or a fairy tale flavoured with immorality, and drawn out through five acts and fifty *tableaux*. Here is the real home of the modern French drama, where the visitor may see the best works of the new school acted to perfection. For some time the stage was occupied last autumn with a drama which, though it is not precisely the sort of thing to which one would like to take his mother or sisters, is yet a work of the highest interest from a psychological point of view. It is called the *Maître de la Maison*, and turns upon that well-worn subject, the love of a wife for another than her husband. The real “master of the house,” a banker—stern and cold outwardly, but full of suppressed love and indignation—finds his place occupied by a music-master. Not merely does this latter supplant the lawful husband in the affections of his wife, but he pushes his audacity so far as to take up his abode in the house. Hence endless difficulties, with all of which the husband bears for the sake of his daughter, to whose marriage he looks forward as the moment of release. He succeeds in finding a son-in-law; the marriage takes place, and is followed immediately by a duel between the injured husband and his betrayer. The latter is killed on the spot; and the last scene shows the miserable husband in his death-agony blessing his daughter, and allowing his wife a last embrace in token of forgiveness. Not a very pleasant story this in any way; but the perfect dramatic tact with which it is played redeems its faults. Every actor knows not merely his words and “business,” but knows also how to keep himself in the background at the right times. The London playgoer who visits a French theatre with the unpleasant memories which one sometimes carries away, is the person most likely to appreciate the perfection of such acting. He sees a lady’s-maid who, wonderful to relate, does not make herself the most prominent person on the stage every time that she enters; he sees a valet who does not try to get a laugh every time that he makes his

exit; and, better still, he sees two of the principal characters in the underplot played by actors of the first force, who are content to keep themselves in the background throughout. This particular piece deserves all the ridicule which the little press of Paris has thrown upon it; but it is a singular testimony to the peculiar notions which "our lively neighbours" have on some ethical points, that such a drama should be produced as a picture of the manners of everyday life. We ourselves may not be more moral—indeed, very few people who read the newspapers are likely to indorse the favourite theory of British virtue—but at least we do not parade our vices. If we are corrupt, we do not go out of the way to corrupt other people, which is sometimes more than can be said for the French stage.

On his way back to the Boulevards—which to the visitor is almost equivalent to saying back into Paris—the traveller crosses the Seine, and passes two theatres which face each other, close to the Pont au Change, and at the bottom of the Boulevard Sebastopol. That on the right is the Lyrique, where French opera of the lighter sort is played nightly; while its neighbour is the famous Châtelet, where the lightest dramatic fare in the capital is provided. For six months the attraction at this house was a *féerie* on the time-honoured subject of *Cinderella*. What with its own enormous length, the multitude of the scenes, the long ballets, and the still longer pauses between the acts, this one piece fills up the entire evening. Its story is simply nothing; the only reason that can be given for its extraordinary success is its splendour. In that respect it is certainly without parallel in England. There is no scene in this piece such as that in the Easter *féerie* at the same house—*La Lanterne Magique*—where Eve in full costume sat to see four hundred women go by in procession in every conceivable dress which the sex have worn since the Fall. To atone for this, there is, however, a sustained splendour and brilliancy which are quite as agreeable, and apparently quite as attractive. Following the course of the Boulevard Sebastopol, a very few minutes bring the traveller once more to the Boulevards proper. Here a few steps to the right take one to the famous Porte St. Martin. This theatre has unhappily fallen upon evil days, and has given itself up, like the rest of the theatres, to spectacle. Here was produced the famous *Biche au Bois*, which ran for about a year and a half, Sundays and week-days, until, as tradition says, the actors fairly refused to play in it any longer. It was next succeeded by another play, so stupid that even a good-natured Paris audience hissed it the first night. It bore the title of *Parisiens à Londres*, and turned on the fortunes and misfortunes of a party of *bourgeoisie* who go to London as ignorant as Frenchmen usually are of all that they are likely to see and to do. In the earlier part, the fun of the piece is drawn from the unsavoury subject of sea-sickness. Later on, the characters come to grief about their beds. Those who know the kind of fun which pleases a Frenchman of the lower class will easily imagine the "points" made out of these

incidents. The second part of the piece is an extravaganza clumsily tacked on. Bad though it was, it gave a spasmodic life to the play, which had a very fair run. When it is added, however, that the great scene of the piece was one which had delighted the *habitués* of the Alhambra in London for some six months or so, probably few readers will care to hear more about it.

Hitherto we have spoken wholly of the theatres. It must be acknowledged, indeed, that they are a very important part of Paris life; but the city offers other pleasures quite as numerous, and, to a good many people, much more attractive. Not the least of these are the delights which the environs of the capital present. The common ideal of the average Frenchman is that he is a being intensely attached to the town, and that no pleasures save those which he can attain there are popular. In one sense this is true. Not very long ago, a well-known author of considerable ability declared in print that he had never been more than about twenty miles out of Paris, and that he had no desire to extend his travels. Perhaps this was an extreme case; but the same thing might be said of many thousands of the shopkeeping and mercantile classes. Yet even amongst them there is a passion for rural pleasures of a sort. Nowhere in the civilised world is what Goldsmith used to call "shoemaker's holiday" more common. Every Sunday thousands of decent shopkeepers, with their wives and children, troop out to the pleasant little villages round Paris, and make themselves thoroughly happy under the simplest conditions. Perhaps their destination may be Sceaux, or Fontenay aux Roses. To reach these places, a short run on the oddest little railway which has yet been made in Europe is necessary. It is worth while for the stranger to make this excursion for the sake of the journey alone. The station is a very small circle, with a garden in the middle; and the line zigzags about in what seems a most perilous fashion throughout the whole of its short course. One is bumped, too, very disagreeably; but the unpleasantness of the journey only seems to make the people who undertake it laugh the more uproariously. They remember, perhaps, that the line was made as an experiment to demonstrate the possibility of sending trains up and down very steep inclines, and round very sharp corners, with a possible afterthought of discovering to how much shaking the human body may be subjected in a given time without serious consequences. Arrived at Sceaux, the first care of the sensible traveller is to secure his breakfast. To this end he prefers usually to climb a tree, and *au petit Robinson* his desires can be fully gratified. This house is a restaurant—not of the first order—perched on the side of a sandy hill. In the garden of the house are two very large old elm-trees, in which are built little nests, reached by a ladder. The dishes and the wine are hauled up by a rope and pulley; and if the breeze is not too violent, there are few things pleasanter, after the glare of the Boulevards and the brilliancy of the white streets of Paris, than to sit

amidst the greenery and look out on the smiling plain below. After breakfast the one street of Sceaux assumes the appearance of a fair. You may shoot at a target for nuts, gamble—with the certainty of losing—for china and toys, have your fortune told for ten sous, and see the face of your future wife or husband for two. To wind-up the day, the Parc is open, “by permission of M. le Maire,” with a theatre, a platform for dancing, and a display of fireworks. The last train leaves soon after ten o'clock; so that the gaities of the day soon end, and the village is left to itself and the darkness.

There are a dozen other places besides Sceaux to which the *habitué* of the Boulevards soon learns to bend his steps when in search of a change or of fresh air. Passy, beloved of journalists and politicians, is within very easy reach. For six sous an omnibus conveys one from any part of the city; and once arrived, there is a restaurant, with a deliciously fresh garden in which to eat, and with a cook who might be coveted by some of the pretentious hotels in the heart of the town. A short walk through the Parc—where on fine days the great Rossini may be seen pacing about in the sun while describing to a casual friend his inimitable method of cooking macaroni—brings one to the village of Boulogne, from which the Bois takes its name. Thence another stroll of half-an-hour or so through the by-paths of the wood carries the voyager to St. Cloud. Happy is he who arrives there during the month of September. From the first to the last Sunday of that month a fair of the most obstreperous kind is held within the Parc, almost under the very windows of the palace—a fact which makes it easy to understand why the Emperor should find the waters of Vichy beneficial to his constitution during that month, and why the Empress should be so anxious to refresh herself after the fatigues of the season by the sad sea waves at Biarritz. The fair itself is the noisiest of all conceivable gatherings. In the first place, every second or third person carries a *mirliton*, a kind of penny trumpet about six feet long and proportionately noisy, with which he or she (generally the latter) perpetually discourses most melancholy music. Then every booth has its separate implement of noise. Drums, trumpets—speaking and other—bells, organs, hurdy-gurdies, rattles, and long tin whistles, all worked at once with the full strength of the arms and lungs, make a din which, in the phrase of the penny-a-liner, “may be more easily imagined than described.” One item of noise I have omitted—the military theatres. Of these there are always two, and sometimes three. At the larger the public are entertained with the spectacle of *Jeanne d'Arc, or the Conquest of the English*, in which the English army, represented by seven knock-knee'd men in anything but uniform, are put to flight by the sole bravery of Jeanne and a wonderful gray horse, which is so like a big dog, that one begins to expect him to sit down and scratch his ear with his hind leg. The play wisely ends with the heroine's victorious career. The latter part of her life was anything but creditable to her own

countrymen, so that it is as well that they should not recall its details, even by misrepresenting them. At the other theatre more modern events form the staple dish. The capture of Peking one year is followed by the capture of Mexico the next, which in turn will give way to the capture of Kanghoa, or some other place with which France has happened to be at war. Whatever be the title of the piece, the incidents are, however, pretty much the same. There is always a general officer and a brave sous-lieutenant, to whom the general gives a cross for his services—always a pretty *vivandière*, who performs prodigies of valour, only equalled by the comic private, who is perpetually getting into scrapes, and getting out of them in the most marvellous way. The incident of his pelting a small army of Mexicans with ammunition bread, whereby he kills two or three and slightly wounds as many more, is always received with unbounded applause; as is also the scene in which he attempts to kiss the *vivandière* and gets his ears soundly boxed for his pains. After about the sixteenth volley of musketry the stranger probably gets tired of the noise, and beats a retreat on his own account. Madame, whose children form the majority of the company, is standing at the door, and as he passes out looks piteously at him out of haggard eyes. She fears that monsieur has found their poor performance *triste*. With a bow and an excuse, one is glad to escape into the open air and out of the smell of gunpowder. The sunshine looks doubly pleasant after the smoky oil-lamps, and the fresh air savours deliciously after the innumerable breaths and the general closeness of the booth. An hour or two of the fair will be found enough by most strangers. Gambling for nuts is not an exciting pastime, and the gilt gingerbread of the booths has, somehow or other, small attractions for people who are past thirty. Better far go back to Paris for such a dinner as Vachette alone can give us. A little steamer with a puffy high-pressure engine takes us back in half-an-hour or so, and lands us on the noble quay under the private gardens of the Tuileries. One thing only renders this journey undesirable—the presence of one or two half-drunken Alsatian tailors. They have been spending the day and their money in the cheap luxuries of the fair; their pockets are crammed with nuts; they carry enormous *mirlitons* in their hands, and one of them has, besides, an article which is rarely carried in public in England. Unlike the thoroughbred Frenchman, these fellows are atrociously noisy, and repulsively filthy both in dress and person. Happily some of their companions are somewhat less drunk and dirty, and they by threats and coaxing keep them from offering any very great annoyance to the quieter passengers. It ought in justice to be said, however, that cases of this kind are very rare. Drunkenness is assuredly not a French vice. A few of the working classes, generally the very poorest and most miserable amongst them, give way occasionally; but even with this class such habitual indulgence as is unhappily too common in England is scarcely known. If it were,

however, the consequences would be terrible. Most Frenchmen can get up a very tolerable amount of excitement on a tumbler of water and a tea-spoonful of brandy. Were they to begin on the vile compound which is sold under the name of gin in London, it is highly probable that murder would be the mildest result of a "gay evening."

Here we are, however, back in the city. The Place du Palais Royal is busy and animated. The merchants, stockbrokers, and clerks who live a little way out of town are taking their places on the omnibuses, grisettes (or the imitations of them who are still found in the streets of Paris) are flitting about, *sergents de ville* pace solemnly backwards and forwards in their wonderful cocked-hats, and voitures jog steadily along as we cross into the cool arcades of the Palais Royal itself. There everything is changed. The genius of lounging seems to have made this place his home, and as we walk through the long arcade we yield insensibly to his influence. The fountain sparkles in the sunshine, the band brays out its loudest, and the little children dance on the dusty gravel within the enclosure; the shops, always gay and pleasant, look brighter than usual. A few minutes more and we are at Vachette's—pleasantest of restaurants, and endowed with the best cook in Paris. The memories of past feasts are always sad—especially when really good cookery is unattainable. So we may say of wine. Let us therefore draw a veil over the dinner, which, if not one of the amusements, is decidedly one of the greatest pleasures which Paris can afford. Afterwards comes the crowning delight—the cup of coffee and the quiet cigar outside the *café*. To many people—and I confess myself of the number—that hour is the most delightful of the day. You have a vivid moving panorama before you; you have a soft air which makes the mere fact of existence a pleasure; your own physical condition is the most favourable for placid enjoyment; and above all, THERE ARE NO ORGANS. Consider that last fact, dear reader, and pray for an *ædile* who shall do for London the same beneficent work which M. Haussmann has done for our lively neighbours.

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## BRIC-A-BRAC HUNTING

BY MAJOR H. BYNG HALL

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### QUEST THE FIRST.

#### ON BRIC-A-BRAC IN GENERAL.

IN a useful little work entitled *Les Eccentricités du Langage Français*, I find the word "Bric-à-brac" or "Bric-à-bracquer" explained thus:—"revendeur de meubles et d'objets d'art." The celebrated Monsieur Pons, a remarkable collector of days lang syne—a romance of whose life has been so ably imagined and written by Balzac—continually uses the words bric-à-brac and bric-à-bracquer; the latter simply implying a collector, or one passionately devoted to works of art.

In plain English, the amiable and valuable promoters of this refined pursuit are generally alluded to as "curiosity-hunters;" but this denomination is, to my mind, a gross and uncourteous error, inasmuch as works of art, of whatever nature, if they be of any value, can scarcely be denominated curiosities, although a curiosity may possibly be a work of art. I own to a very unpleasant indignation when asked to exhibit my humble collection as if it were a Museum of Curiosities: while poor Monsieur Pons was as jealous of his art-treasures as an ardent lover of his mistress, and scarcely desired that any eye save his own should behold them. Like Othello, he would not "keep a corner of the thing he loved for others' uses." In our day bric-à-brac shops abound in all the capitals of Europe, as well as in most large towns abroad and at home. These emporiums of art and virtu are commonly called "curiosity-shops," because possibly it has been found difficult to describe them more correctly. I deny, however, *in toto* the accuracy of the term. A Worcester or a Wedgwood vase, Sèvres, Dresden, or Vienna cups, Capo di Monte or Chelsea groups, are not curiosities, but, if good specimens, are works of the most refined art; though they may be found in the so-called curiosity-shops. If these emporiums of precious things are curiosity-shops, it certainly follows that the Kensington Museum, the Musée de Sèvres, the Vienna Museum—collections public or private—should, in fact, all come under the same denomination.

I confess I have as yet never been able clearly to ascertain why certain individuals of varied tastes and habits become as they advance in life the collectors of china, old plate, manuscripts, autographs, pictures, and all those miscellaneous objects of art or relics of past

generations classed under the comprehensive name of antiquities, apparently without any refined or ardent taste for the rare and the beautiful. It matters little who they are; but it is a fact that there are nowadays thousands and tens of thousands of persons whose prevailing passion is the collection of "bric-à-brac"—in which comprehensive term I include all that is precious and beautiful as well as mediocre in art, whether pictures, porcelain, ivory or wood carving, terra cotta, miniatures, jewelry, or plate. I can fully understand that the man of wealth should be anxious to adorn his home with works of rare art, works to be looked on and admired by others, yet on which individually he may scarcely care to gaze, and of the real value of which he is in a great measure ignorant. I can also fully understand that the dealer in "bric-à-brac" should be desirous of obtaining a thorough practical knowledge of the value of the goods which he barter, in order that he may buy in a cheap market and sell in a dear one, till eventually the love of art-possession may so creep into his heart that even his commercial soul may suffer a pang at parting with some rare and precious object; and I know that among the higher class of dealers there are to be found men of varied attainments and great taste and knowledge. But I know also that the Honourable Mrs. Bonheur, or my Lady Lovecup, will very often invest a large amount in the purchase of a Sèvres cup of that most lovely colour termed "Rose du Barry," or of a Wedgwood vase of the most elegant form and design, in order that others may envy and admire; while to the fair and aristocratic possessor herself the one is a mere cup, the other simply a vase.

I believe my friend Mrs. Haggleton's taste for collecting the plate of Queen Anne's era originated in the fact of her aunt having left her a teapot of that admirable period of the goldsmith's art in England. The teapot inspired an ardent desire to possess other articles in the same style. The lady mildly commenced with salt-spoons, and became in due course the proud owner of mustard-pots, salt-cellars, and one large piece of sideboard plate, which from the day she purchased it to that of her death every night faithfully accompanied her to her bedroom. My old bachelor friend Croker, again, began collecting Wedgwood ware because some one had told him he possessed a very fine specimen; while to my certain knowledge he was as ignorant of its value and exquisite design as his own footman could have been.

There are, however, far higher and more agreeable motives which lead the man of refined taste to become a real practical collector, whatever his position or means; and when that man is found who collects from pure devotion to art, he at once becomes a benefactor to the human race, as his object is to instruct and improve the artisan of our day, whether it be in furniture, lace, porcelain, jewelry, texture designs, or wood-carving.

It is an obvious fact that the art-genius of the day in which we



live is turning to the past for its designs. We invent nothing that is new and beautiful, but we repeat much of the beautiful of past periods. Our jewellers owe their most elegant designs to Etruria and Greece. In domestic furniture we are reproducing the graceful forms of the French upholsterers who furnished the salons and boudoirs of Athenais de Montespan, the Pompadour, the Du Barry, and the luckless daughter of the Cæsars. And when we aspire to make our dinner-tables elegant, we seek to imitate the delicate fragility of mediæval Venetian glass, embellished with designs copied from classic exemplars. And the bric-à-brac shops of all the capitals of Europe are filled with lace, every design of which is a revival.

Now all these manifest features of industrial art are to be attributed to the collections of those who have dedicated their time and experience to the gathering together of various specimens of the art of past ages. The treasures of the Kensington Museum and those in Paris, Vienna, and elsewhere, which have lately been thrown open to the public, are of infinite practical utility. Yet I will venture to say that the individuals who collected these art-treasures commenced their pleasing labours in the first instance from the simple desire to gratify personal vanity, or with the less noble thirst of gain. Say nay who will, there is no greater pleasure to the collector than that of buying cheap and selling dear, even if money be no great object. Indeed, I have known more than one collector sell his whole collection for the mere pleasure of recommencing his researches for another, or to obtain some precious and unique relic, the possession of which shall elevate him above all vulgar connoisseurs. Depend upon it the collector is more or less the slave of vanity, although he may be also a man of taste. My experience tells me that there are people who claim as their own a rare Venetian glass, a noble Wedgwood vase, an exquisite Sèvres cup, or an elegant Dresden group, or any perfect or rare object of art, who would like to smash every one else's vase or group, as the Dutch tulip-grower would have crushed under his feet the rival bulb of a rare and precious flower, that it might bloom in no other garden than his own.

The amateur collector who wishes to indulge in a little traffic with his friends need not be ashamed of dabbling in the business of the bric-à-brac merchant. Very aristocratic individuals have dealt in such merchandise. His Highness the Duke of Brunswick deals in diamonds; and the Duc de Morny was a dealer in pictures, as was Marshal Soult before him. When once a man becomes a collector, he can hardly escape becoming a seller.

The Jews have always been conspicuous dealers in the fine arts; and the Rothschilds are well-known collectors of the finest art-treasures of the past.

Kings and queens, emperors and men of high degree, for centuries past have loved the ceramic art with no common passion; while, by an

assiduous cultivation of the same art, men of low birth and little education have raised themselves to honour and high estate. Who that dwells with pleasure on the search for bric-à-brac has not perused the fascinating life of the poor potter Palissy? What collector does not remember the struggles and triumphs of the noble-minded Wedgwood? What worshipper of art has not listened to anecdotes of Bottcher?

The Chinese emperors by high rewards alone obtained the then unrivalled egg-shell china, since so gracefully imitated, and sold for so low a price. The Celestials testified their admiration of the inventor by enrolling the potter-martyr in the catalogue of deities.

The Duke of Urbino introduced the highly artistic, if not the graceful, majolica.

Henry II. and Diana de Poitiers gave the name to the varied beauties of Faience; while that prince and his consort, Catherine de' Medicis, developed the genius of Palissy. Augustus the Strong, Maria Theresa, Frederick the Great, and other reigning princes of Germany founded and brought to perfection at their own expense the porcelain manufactories of their respective countries. Russia, where day by day the art is improving, and where it has indeed already obtained considerable celebrity, owes to Elizabeth and Catherine the Second its progress. In Italy royal patronage also nurtured the ceramic art.

Charles III.—whose memory be honoured for this single act—founded the unrivalled manufacture of Capo di Monte and Buen Retiro, to my taste the most interesting and refined of all ornamental china, not excepting Sèvres, which Pompadour's influence over Louis XV. helped to bring to its elegant perfection; while the bewitching Jeanne Marie Vaubernier secured the lovely rose colour so well known and so highly esteemed among connoisseurs as Rose du Barry.

At home we have as high, if not higher, claims to the perfection of ceramic art. William, duke of Cumberland, supported the far-famed manufactures of Chelsea, while the name of Queen Charlotte added to Wedgwood's glory.

Men of all ages, all countries, all ranks have devoted themselves to the worship of the beautiful in art.

I have known a dignitary of the Church, a man of high attainments, a Christian in all the attributes of life, to go home from a sale with a bilious attack because he had failed to secure a group bearing the monogram of Carl Theodore, for which porcelain—and I fully sympathised with him—he had an intense liking. One of the keenest sportsmen of my acquaintance was as eager to obtain a Sèvres cup that he had been longing for as to kill his fox after an hour's run. Ay, and two of our bravest admirals, Nelson and Byng, were not only intense lovers of the ceramic art, but bric-à-brac hunters; in the families of each are retained valuable relics of their labours.

Seeing that the collection of rare and precious examples of art has now become a fashion as well as a passion, I venture to think that the

friendly advice of an experienced collector may be of some value; and with that belief I propose to tell my readers how for years, amid the varied pursuits of life, the search after bric-à-brac has afforded me days and hours of unalloyed pleasure, not altogether unaccompanied with profit, and always combined with great interest and instruction.

To the wholly ignorant amateur no book ever published, however valuable, interesting, or correct it may be, is of much avail; whether it be Baignart or any other, not excepting that most useful work to all collectors, the Catalogue of Bernal's Sale, published by Mr. Bohn, who is himself the owner of a most valuable and highly interesting collection of varied porcelain and ancient pictures. If the bric-à-brac hunter have not the eye for art combined with refined taste, whether as regards ancient or modern works, together with years of practical knowledge, he is a mere child in the hands of the dealers; and even when possessed of taste and experience he is not unfrequently deceived. An extensive and correct list of works is of great theoretical service to the collector; but, alas, in the age in which we live, I have yet to learn that there exists any article ever produced by the inventive mind and hand of man that cannot be in some measure—ofttimes admirably—imitated. I therefore venture to assert, after long years of constant practice and study, that practical knowledge, that instinctive appreciation of perfection, which is the fruit of long experience, are the only real and efficient guides by which the bric-à-brac hunter may secure prizes in the markets of the world. A Sèvres cup may be a Sèvres cup, and worthless, save that it is Sèvres. There is Wedgwood and Wedgwood. Between two Dresden groups there may be all the difference of the highest and lowest art. A Carl-Theodore figure may bear clearly developed the initials of Carl Theodore and the Crown Elector of Palatine, a Berlin cup may be graced with the pencil of a Watteau, and yet the specimens may not be true, the porcelain may not be fine, the outline and execution may fall far short of that perfection which alone can satisfy the eye of the accomplished connoisseur. Again and again will the novice in these researches become the victim of his own ignorance, unless he avails himself of the taste and experience of some practised collector. How is he to distinguish hard paste from soft? how resist the fascinations of modern Wedgwood, which, beautiful as it may be in its form and colour, lacks the keen and artistic outline of those never-dying productions of Wedgwood's own day? Will the novice judge and estimate the merits and demerits of the Marcolini and the royal period of Dresden china? No, believe me; clever as he may consider himself, he will not.

Look at some of the old productions of Frankental and Carl Theodore. How striking in character, how lovely in design and execution! what living figures produced in clay! Gloat, if you be a connoisseur, on a Capo di Monte or Buen Retiro group, whose living grace and loveliness have scarcely been rivalled by the sculptured art of Canova or

Gibon. What avails it to tell you of the works so carefully produced, in the words I have named to you? If the passion for such works of art exist not in your heart, second only to the love of woman, you may seek for treasures in vain; and your researches will only obtain for their result the merest everyday specimens, to be picked up in the highways and byeways of every capital in Europe.

Think me not presumptuous. *Moi, qui vous parle*, am only a humble collector, and have been frequently deceived, though the passion has reigned for many a year in my breast, and is in a manner hereditary. For many years I have followed the pursuit of a collector throughout the length and breadth of Europe. Alas, only in the most simple and economical fashion. But far removed as my power of purchasing may be from that of a Rothschild, it has been my privilege to linger with admiring eyes and longing heart over some of the finest specimens in Europe. I have gloated, I have longed, and then have flown from those treasures as from typhus-fever, conscious of my inability to purchase the finest, and not caring to possess inferior examples, or modern manufacture. But if my means are not large, my experience has been extensive; and as an official wanderer over the face of the earth, I have been enabled from time to time to peep into many a bric-à-brac shop in the various continental capitals, which others may never have had the chance of visiting. Thus have I made friends with many a choice specimen, erst the ornament of a palace, and have by good fortune secured some small treasures for the adornment of my cottage home. As I smoke my meditative cigar, and gaze with contemplative eyes upon those precious *déjeuners* and sweetmeat bowls, which are to me as are his scalps to the Indian warrior, memory recalls many a quaint record of my wanderings and researches, which may be of value to those who may chance to follow in my footsteps in search of a bric-à-brac, and which may not altogether prove uninteresting to those who are comparatively indifferent to these ceramic pursuits. In my early boyhood, I confess for many a year to have imagined that all the fine specimens of china I looked on were the productions of the Chinese. I believed, in fact, that china was made in China, and in China only. But years passed on, and I found that, after all, that which is termed Oriental china and Japan ware was far less pleasing to my eye and taste than those works of art which are purely European.

In Addison's day no aristocratic mansion was considered properly furnished without a vast quantity of grotesque objects in china, or, as the ladies called them, "loves of monsters." Oriental china was then contraband; and I conclude that everything that was contraband was fashionable. Many of these "loves of monsters" may be had in the days we live in; and I trust my readers may learn not to be taken in by them, unless they chance to discover a monster of pure "forget-me-not blue" of real antiquity, and then both his mane and his tail are

of value. The colour must be that beautiful tint which the French term *bleu d'œil*, and which makes some specimens of Sèvres invaluable.

And now, ere I ask my readers to walk with me through many a high-street and bye-street of the various capitals I have visited, and pass with me a few hours in pure bric-à-brac hunting, I must own to being an enthusiastic lover of art, whether that art be that of the painter or the sculptor, or whether it arise from the noble institutions of Sèvres, Dresden, Chelsea, Derby, Frankenthal, Höchst, Capo di Monte, or Buen Retiro, from the never-dying elegance of Wedgwood, or the more recent talent of Minton. To my mind there can be no purer pleasure than this unaffected love of art, nor is there any taste more elevating in its influence on a man's nature; for I most fully believe that he who possesses this taste, and cultivates it, will soon turn his back on the grosser pleasures and frivolities of life. The higher order of art is, moreover, the constant handmaid of religion; and many of the great masterpieces which adorn the collections of Europe owe their origin to the inspirations of piety, and have been for centuries, and are still, powerful aids to meditation and devotion.

I have not seldom been asked by those who have chanced to visit my cottage home—the windows of which look on a small but well-kept lawn, o'ershadowed by trees such as are rarely seen out of England, and which lies within gun-shot of the winding Thames—what possible delight I can have in so small a room crammed with old china. It is true, my treasures are generally admired; true, that the specimens which during my travels I have gathered together at trifling cost are coveted by many; while the questions, “Are you not afraid they will be broken? who do you get to dust them? why not sell them?” and so forth, are asked with unfailing sameness. The reply of my only and motherless boy, if present, is as follows: “They are papa's toys; he is keeping them for me.” I should be almost ashamed to confess *how much* pleasure these fragile treasures afford me. For hours I sit amidst my friends, pen or book in hand. That group before me was purchased under particular circumstances, and not only recalls to mind pleasant days, but tells me much of the history of the country whence it was obtained, and the era in which it was produced. Who will venture to say that the lips of a Pompadour or Du Barry may not have kissed those small but exquisite Sèvres cups? Is not Wedgwood paying me a morning visit with his friend Flaxman as I look on those vases? Do not the guns of Wellington's artillery sound in the distance as I contemplate that glorious group of Buen Retiro? And does not the Bay of Naples spread itself before me, and the towering peak of Vesuvius send forth its flames, as I handle that creamy china cup, with its exquisite painting of Capo di Monte? My Chelsea ware recalls the memory of Addison, who dated so many of his pleasantest essays from that locality. My Battersea reminds me of sceptical Jacobite Bolingbroke. At one moment I am at Florence, then at

Vienna. For a few minutes I dwell in the Palatine, and thence take wing to Dresden. Now I touch my lips with the thin emerald-coloured glass of early Venice, then hold aloft the heavier but richer goblet of Bohemia.

Bottcher, Harring, Morin, Lucca del Robbia, Palissy, are my constant companions. Ay, and how full of interest is their society! how faithfully they recall the memory of past ages! and how fully they convince us that, despite all the go-ahead and vulgar presumption of the day in which we live, they may have rivals, yet have no equals either in taste or manipulation!

In days lang syne, when those who had the means and inclination were wont to visit foreign lands, the knowledge necessary to the search for bric-à-brac was confined to a limited circle. Moreover, the taste was by no means evinced as it is in the present day. Thus, pictures were purchased at high prices, and brought home as Murillos or Raphaels, Rubens or Titians, solely because they were purchased in Italy or Spain by those who had probably much more money than taste or discrimination; at all events little knowledge of pure art, or that refined and correct eye, granted by God and nurtured by practice, which could alone guide them. It is almost inconceivable what an amount of rubbish thus found its way to the rural homes of England and to the picture marts of the metropolis. It is true that a few possessing the requisite knowledge obtained prizes, while others made fortunes; but in those days they had a fine field, and little opposition. To-day such good fortune is rare indeed, and happy is the man who chances to meet with a gem. Porcelain was also purchased from every capital of Europe and the East, neither purchaser nor seller having much appreciation or knowledge of what they bought or sold; and thus, while now and then a charming specimen was obtained for a sum insignificant in reference to its real value, some worthless object was often purchased at a price given in these days for a perfect example of Sèvres or Capo di Monte.

Then, travellers went their way rejoicing in well-sprung comfortable English carriages, driven by postillions in heavy quaint boots and long pigtails, content with what was, admiring all they saw, paying all that was asked of them, eating everything, and pronouncing it good because it was foreign, and gratefully acknowledging the well-paid-for civilities and courtesies they received—if they did receive them.

Many a high titled nobleman of our fatherland, many a possessor of broad acres, with a courier and interpreter in the rumble of his easy-going carriage, rushed from city to city, from river to lake, from snow-clad mountain to luxurious vale,—here, there, everywhere,—scarcely enjoying the beauties of nature granted by God, ignorant of one word of the language of the country through which he travelled. Having decided on the termination of his journey at a given spot, to that point

he hastened, little caring how he got there, or at what cost ; deterred neither by dirt nor by what might be justly called discomfort ; enduring with a heroic resignation bad roads, bad hotels, and high charges. But *nous avons changé tout cela* ; the fairest spots in Switzerland, the highest peak of the Alps, the most rugged pathways of the Apennines, the remotest German spas, the wildest fisheries of Norway, are now pervaded by the travelling Englishman. You meet your tailor at a picnic in the Black Forest ; your bootmaker salutes you on the "castled crag of Drachenfels;" and if you elect to dine at a *table d'hôte*, you are apt to find yourself amidst a host of compatriots whom perchance you may have met with in Cheapside or Whitechapel, when some untoward event may have called you to either of those localities. Bah! I would sooner go up in a balloon, or pass a week at Kovno on the banks of that historical river the Niemen.

Do not misunderstand me, my reader ; hundreds of doubtless admirable people do now go abroad, whose grandfathers, nay fathers, scarcely knew that Malta was an island ; and most unquestionably would have been plucked by the Civil Commissioners if requested to explain the position of Badenbach, within so short a railway flight of that spot, where Bettcher, an apothecary's assistant, lived, and brought to light in 1755 the exquisite beauties of Dresden china.

And yet, forsooth, many of these doubtless amiable Saxons must have bric-à-brac, in order to show themselves equal in taste and refinement to my Lord This, the Duke of That, a Baron Rothschild, and other distinguished connoisseurs who are known to have collected glorious specimens of Wedgwood, Sèvres, or Majolica. And why not, if they really prize them, and have the means of obtaining them ? I do not refer to the money, inasmuch as half the tradesmen in the west-end of London or in Paris can wear three new hats to one of half the younger branches of England's nobility, and pay for them too. It is not a question of money. Real treasures are all but unobtainable ; or if met with, the price asked for them is so exorbitant, that the novice holds up his hands with astonishment or disgust ; and, being utterly unable to form a correct judgment of that combination of beauty and art which constitutes a perfect object, refuses the actual worth of his money, and only secures modern trash. I do not presume to say that there is not much that is beautiful and highly artistical in modern art ; but it has never been my good fortune to meet with anything to equal the purest specimens of ancient porcelain. The reason of our modern inferiority is clear. The celebrated artists who in other days painted on china were equal to the leading artists of the present era ; and who among our leading great men, at home or abroad, would condescend to paint on china, save at a price that would make a cup or a vase equal in value to a first-rate picture ?

Now we will suppose that a party of travellers arrive, we will say, at Dresden. They walk forth to visit the city, to see its justly

acknowledged beauties, and, what is still more delightful to the feminine mind, its *shops*. Amongst these one of the first that attracts their attention is the emporium of a dealer in bric-à-brac. Miss Harriet gazes with delight at the cups and vases, with here and there a group, displayed in the window, and thus exclaims: "O, mamma dear, look at these lovely cups; are they not beautiful? While we are in Dresden, we must buy some Dresden china;" and so they enter, accompanied by a commissioner. There are commissioners and directors of all denominations in these days as thick as blackberries in autumn: fishery commissioners, railway commissioners, travelling commissioners, and, alas, financial commissioners. But Miss Harriet's commissioner is one of the class less aristocratically called guides, or interpreters. The hotel commissioner is a shabby-genteel gentleman, who, like the rest of the world, will do anything for anyone—at his own price. Miss Harriet carefully handles a cup, and exclaims on its unrivalled beauty; she gazes with rapture on a figure or a group; she flutters admiringly over a *comptoir*; while the owner of these modern and moderate works of art points out the marks: this of the Marcolini period, and that used under the direction of Hörolat in 1720—and so forth; to the genuine nature of which signatures or warranties Mr. Commissioner very readily testifies. So dear Harry, having expressed her delight, becomes the possessor of some objects of art, which she fondly supposes to be the rarest gems, and which possibly form the commencement of a collection destined to rival that of the late Mr. Bernal or Mr. Henry G. Bohn of Twickenham—at least such is the belief of dear Harry, as it is of a hundred other dear Harrys and Georgies. "And pray, what *are* we to believe in, if not in marks and signatures, monograms and crossed daggers?" ask my fair bric-à-brac huntresses in despair. Alas, my dear young ladies, I regret to say that, amidst all the chicanery of this limited-liability and swindling era, there is none equal to that of a bric-à-brac seller.

However, the cups and figures and so forth are purchased, carefully packed, and treasured as "the exquisite old china we bought in Dresden, my love—an enormous bargain, though the price seems very large to people who don't understand that kind of thing." And poor Miss Harriet remains happily unconscious that similar treasures, ay and possibly far better, might have been purchased in the Strand for half the money; since I have no doubt dear Harry's "old" china was only recently produced at Meissen, that glorious manufactory, which all lovers of art ought to visit.

Now my object in writing these pages is to offer some practical remarks, which may tend to aid the inexperienced lover of bric-à-brac in his researches. Not for one moment, however, do I presume to call myself a first-rate judge. Many and many a blunder have I made; and sorely have I paid for my apprenticeship. Often have I become the



possessor of some piece of trumpery, which in my vanity I believed to be a priceless treasure. Indeed, I am satisfied that there are few connoisseurs living, whatever their knowledge or experience, who are not at times deceived—I do not say as to their judgment of beauty and outline and execution, but as to period and country. Beautiful as are many of our specimens in the Kensington Museum, there is only one person connected with that institution—and I say so with no intentional discourtesy—in whom I should have great faith as a purchaser. Much that is good has been refused at moderate prices, and much that is mediocre obtained at heavy ones. Indeed the taste and knowledge of many of the leading dealers of London render them better judges than the best of amateurs. And this is only natural; for is it not their daily, nay hourly, business?—a business in which they hazard thousands, and from which they sometimes realise fortunes. Before starting on our first bric-à-brac quest, I would unhesitatingly say, that for all moderate specimens of ceramic art there is no place so cheap, be it where it may, as London; while in that city the highest price is obtainable for the finest specimens. In Paris, good, bad, and indifferent objects are all alike dear, unless that fickle goddess Fortune, who does at times befriend you, gives you a helping hand. But we will leave these great emporiums of bric-à-brac for the present, and take our first trip eastward—not quite so far east as China or Japan, but to the Sublime Porte, where we will pass a pleasant morning in the Persian Bazaar, which, by the way, is by some termed the Arms Bazaar.

When, in my earliest boyhood, as I have already said, I was wont to fancy that all porcelain, of whatever kind, was the produce of China and Japan, I had, at least, some slight justification for my idea, since in those kingdoms it no doubt originated. Porcelain is an intermediate substance between pottery and glass,—more translucent than the one, more opaque than the other,—and is presumed to be of Chinese origin, its manufacture dating from so early a period as the beginning of the Christian era. Be this as it may, there is evidence of its use in the fifteenth century and in the beginning of the fourteenth. The famous tower of porcelain at Nankin was built three hundred and thirty feet high, and still stands. It consists of nine stories of enamelled bricks or tiles, in five colours,—white, red, blue, green, and brown. Japanese china existed at almost as remote a period, and was perhaps in all respects finer than Chinese; while in the days of Queen Anne and the first Georges china vases, dishes, and hideous monsters, were to be seen in all the houses of the rich in old England.

As I grew older, however, I learnt another lesson; and although I fully admit the rare beauty of many of the productions of China and Japan, both modern and ancient, and am aware that fine specimens still command high prices, I confess that European specimens are far more agreeable to my taste; and I fancy the Oriental china now in the market, which if gathered together would more than fill the Crystal

Palace or two Crystal Palaces, is no longer valued as it was wont to be. There was, indeed, a period when the china termed "crackles" was highly appreciated, and when specimens of that ware sold for more than their weight in silver. But now even the finest specimens appear to be of no great value; so capricious is taste, or fashion, or whatever you like to call that inconstant deity whose wand rules the desires of Belgravian mankind. It is not long since I acquired a practical knowledge of this fact. Happening to have in my possession two small crackle vases, one green, the other yellow, and wishing to get rid of them, I took them to a dealer, expecting a large price for them. Judge my surprise when he offered me two pounds for my treasures, with the assurance that his profit would not be ten shillings; and I have had from subsequent experience no just reason to doubt him.

Indeed, a gallant friend of mine, who had been present at that which may be fairly termed the ransacking of the Palace of Peking, informed me only recently that he had brought home some fine specimens of Japan and Oriental china, most of which he had sold in London for at least a third less than he could have obtained from the natives ere he left; and he added, "If all the specimens, good, bad, and indifferent, which now overburden the English market were returned from whence they came, they would sell for double the price to be obtained either in London or in any other of the European capitals. In fact, the natives are highly indignant that so much which is precious to them should leave the country." Some of our largest collectors or dealers may act on this hint, if so minded. I place the suggestion unreservedly at their service.

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# VIVISECTION

BY DR. SCOFFERN

IN TWO PARTS :—PART II.

WE come now to discuss the second proposition, “Whether vivisection is necessary or justifiable for the general purposes of science?”

Irrefragable as is the chain of reasoning to my mind whereby I am led to the conclusion that the practice of vivisection, considered as a means of imparting surgical dexterity, is wholly unnecessary, and hence unjustifiable, I am not less firmly convinced that the interests of science justify vivisections in certain cases and under certain limitations. I have no difficulty in coming to that conclusion; whatever difficulty I feel has reference to the defining of cases and the imposing of limitations.

Lest the general admission here made to the justifiableness of vivisection in aid of science should beget a repugnance in certain minds,—one unfavourable to the process of tranquil investigation of the proposition on its merits alone,—I will cite an illustrative example, concerning which it will surprise me much if the very strongest dissentients to the practice of vivisection do not accede to the justifiableness, ay, the duty of performing it.

Here, perhaps, it may be desirable to enlarge the field of debate so as to take in certain cases of pain-infliction—not vivisectional truly, but so far appertaining to a kindred category that they concern the revelation of vital action through the pain-inflicting scrutiny of living animal organism. The cases here referred to belong to the toxic or poison-scrutinising department of physiology, and involve the administration of poisons with a view of noticing their effects. It may be that the administration of certain poisons is attended with a degree of pain more excruciating than has ever resulted from vivisection.

The field of debate being thus enlarged, two questions present themselves for thought and action. The first is an abstract, the second a practical question. Is it justifiable, on moral grounds, to inflict pain in order that science may be advanced? or what comes to the same thing, in order that truth may be revealed?—then if justifiable, what are the justifying limits?

Now, in regard to the first or abstract question, we must hold it to be universally conceded; wherefore the second question, involving the limit of pain-infliction, only remains to be debated.

The first limit is one that is imposed by an obvious and ever-present moral conviction. I assume the tacit acquiescence of every rational and sane human being to the general proposition, that pain

should not be inflicted—not to say gratuitously, but not without presumptive need. Animal life is very precious, and pain is hateful. Vivisection should obviously be restricted to occasions when there seem no possible means of revealing the truth sought by any other class of experiment. He who recklessly and cruelly adopts so terrible a means of truth-revelation as that of vivisection, unmoved by pity for the creature under the torture of his hands, thereby proclaims himself unfitted for the task he has undertaken. Philosophy has nothing to expect from the labours of such a man; let him, then, abandon her shrine, and cease to desecrate her temple. Instances there have been of foreign physiologists violating the conditions of restraint here laid down; cutting live animals to pieces recklessly and remorselessly, operating as a sculptor might have operated upon a block of marble, or a carpenter on a log of wood. Has science been advanced by these men? have the fields of science been enlarged through their cruelties? Scarcely. I am disposed to think, in no degree; but assuredly the physiological truths revealed by these men are no way comparable for extent or importance with others that owe their origin to men who shrank from the infliction of pain, even when they deemed such infliction needful.

Perhaps the whole range of physiological inquiry does not present an example of a truth appertaining to the mystery of life so clearly revealed, and placed beyond the limits of doubt or cavil, as that of the dual construction, as well as dual function, of the spinal nerves. In order that general readers who are not anatomists may apprehend the scope and purport of this subject, let it be understood that the spinal nerves of a vertebrate animal present to the eye a certain regularity of form and arrangement strongly prompting to the belief that they are typical; and that observations conducted in regard to them might be reasonably expected to make known, not the functions of spinal nerves merely, but, through analogy, the functions of cerebral nerves also. Each spinal nerve of a vertebrate animal joins the spinal marrow by two roots. Each of these is made up of nervous filaments, which after travelling a short distance unite together, pass into one envelope, and henceforward are regarded—anatomically, though not physiologically—as one nerve. It remained for Sir Charles Bell to discover the reason of this double origin, and, starting from this discovery, to impart the elements of order, method, and regularity, to a branch of physiological inquiry that had up to his time been marked by disorder and lack of method in the highest degree—namely, to the study of the nervous system, “neurology” as it is called. Inasmuch as I regard (with what amount of truth or justice readers must determine) the investigations of Sir Charles Bell on the nervous system to have ended in bringing about the grandest revelation to man of coördination between structural form and vital function ever vouchsafed, I may, it is assumed, be pardoned for dwelling upon this case somewhat at length; and in order that my observations may be fully intelligible to all, whether conversant with

anatomy or not conversant, some preliminary statements must be set forth. Referring to the double origin of each spinal nerve, the reader's attention is now directed to the anatomical circumstance, that whereas the anterior nervous root has the appearance of a simple plain nervous chord, the posterior root has more the appearance of a chord that has had a knot tied in it. The posterior root is furnished with what, in anatomical language, is called a "ganglion." Out of the knowledge of this come important deductions.

Physiologists had speculated upon the use of nervous ganglions prior to Sir Charles Bell—had even attributed a specific use to them. When he began his neurine inquiries, the prevalent belief in the use of ganglions was, that they were endowed with the function of cutting off the power or faculty of sensation from any nerve upon which they might exist; leaving such nerve endowed, however, with the faculty of motion.

Slightly to anticipate the development to which a systematic inquiry into the experiments and conclusions of Sir Charles Bell on the nervous system would lead us, it will be convenient to announce in this place that the great British physiologist's experiments led him to a deduction the very converse of that assigned by prevalent belief concerning the use and endowment of nervous ganglions. He proved the posterior or ganglionated root of a spinal nerve to be made up of sensitive fibres exclusively; whereas the anterior or non-ganglionated root he proved to be made up of motor fibres exclusively. Next, having extended his inquiries to the cerebral nerves, he eventually came to the conclusion that, functionally regarded, they were symmetrical with the spinal nerves; differing from the latter in mechanical arrangement of parts truly, but conforming to the typical ordinance that sensitive nervous fibre should ever be associated with ganglionic nervous matter.

Here, then, was effected not only a very grand but a very clear physiological discovery. There is nothing veiled, misty, or indeterminate about it. The truth stands revealed in sharp-cut outlines prominently. It is comparable, in this respect, to a geometrical truth, such as the equality between the three angles of a triangle to a pair of right angles; or the equality between a large square on the hypotenuse and the sum of the two small squares on the two sides of a right-angled triangle. The demonstration accomplished by Sir Charles Bell, moreover, so far from having been prompted or led up to by discoveries that had preceded him, and opinions founded thereon, were diametrically opposed to the latter, and assuredly not prompted by the former. All persons who have had at any time to concern themselves with the unravelling of truth by experiment leading to evidence, will be at no loss to appreciate at its full worth a demonstration arrived at under such a combination of circumstances.

It may be reasonably apprehended that a full and just appreciation of the value of the knowledge conveyed by the discovery that the anterior

root-filaments of a spinal nerve are wholly motor, whereas the posterior root-filaments are wholly sensitive, will be impossible to a reader except he be one who has undergone medical training. I must therefore beg by postulate the concession of that value.

The concession made, then will the conclusion be obvious, that the discovery effected by Sir Charles Bell could only have been arrived at by vivisection. No apparatus, save that of a living-animal organism, could have been made to reveal a function appertaining to animal life. No experiment, short of operating upon a living spinal chord, could have made known the separate and respective functions of the anterior and posterior spinal roots.

So soon as the idea of duality of function corresponding with duality of form, in the origin of these spinal nerves, had suggested itself to Bell, the promptings of curiosity, the love of truth—all the complexity of impulses and motives by which an experimentalist is urged along in his experimental course, he hardly knows how or wherefore—must have tempted him to solve by vivisection the suggested mystery. The temptation must have been one of a force and energy and wildness beyond the ability of the non-experimental mind to conceive. Did Sir Charles Bell readily yield to the temptation—legitimate, although I submit it to have been? Did he lay hold of the first brute creature that fell in his way and vivisect that creature? By no means. He distinctly gives his readers to understand that he long deferred the performance of an experiment which would have solved the question that had presented itself to his mind, in consideration of the disagreeable nature of the experiment, *because of the cruelty of it*. When at length the physiologist's mind had adopted the resolve to operate, a vertebrate animal was chosen—a rabbit—having a nervous system less delicately amenable to pain than is that of many vertebrate animals that have sometimes been made the subject of vivisectional experiments—dogs, cats, horses, and asses, for example. Then, whilst further prosecuting his investigations, Sir Charles Bell found that it was quite possible to make the organism of a rabbit reveal the crucial truths he needed, under circumstances of vivisection which reduced suffering to a minimum. The amount of suffering was below that commonly experienced, indeed, by animals whilst being slaughtered by man for purposes of food. He soon came to operate upon rabbits made insensible—or rather stunned—by a blow delivered on the back of the head. Subsequently Bell, as well as the majority of other experimenters upon the nervous system by vivisection, used frogs for subjects. These being vertebrate animals, having vertebral nerves of the ordinary bifid type, present the needful conditions of research; whilst frogs having a low nervous organisation, their susceptibility to pain is low in a corresponding degree.

Is it incumbent on me in this place and on this occasion to disclaim the tenet of belief, or rather of poetic expression, whereby it is affirmed that all animated beings are susceptible to pain in an equal degree?

“The poor beetle that we tread upon” does *not* feel “in corporal sufferance a pang as great as when a giant dies.” No unbiassed person, coming to the present inquiry with an amount of anatomical and physiological knowledge competent to the occasion, can entertain a doubt as to *that* point. Speaking approximately, and for purposes of general comprehension, it may be affirmed that the capacity of an animal for physical pain is in a direct ratio to the intellectual intelligence of such animal. A leech may have its tail cut off when sucking and not desist from sucking. A spider may have a leg amputated without seemingly interfering with its immediate appetite for a fly; and, to take a rather extreme case, a bull-dog (which is assuredly not the most intelligent among the race of dogs) may be beaten and kicked without seemingly heeding that usage, if his fangs be closed upon an antagonist or a victim.

At this point arrived, the investigator does not fail to apprehend that what we have called “*analogical vivisection*” can, in the examples at least of physiological inquiry already contemplated, be used with effect. In proof of this, accept the illustration of a frog being made to reveal the conditions of nervous arrangement and nervous energy in a human being. Various palliative and suggestive thoughts, moreover, arise, predisposing the human mind to tolerate vivisection for scientific uses; and, in the first place, palliative thoughts based on the obvious infrequency of the need for having recourse to these physiological vivisections. If it could have been shown that vivisection is needed to give aid in operating, then a case would have been made out for the frequent performance of vivisection. Every successive student would be called upon to acquire the faculty of dexterously operating, by performing the necessary vivisectional tortures each one on his own behalf. There is clearly no parallel need to this in the acquisition of physiological knowledge. A fundamental truth once proved remains proved for ever. What chemist now ever thinks it needful to burn diamonds in oxygen gas to the end of satisfying himself that the result of such combustion is carbonic acid? and what physiological student need give himself the trouble (to take no other ground) of operating upon a living animal in order to prove (what no one doubts or for a long time past has doubted) that the anterior root of a spinal nerve is a motor root, whereas the posterior one is made up of sensitive filaments? This observation, however, must not be construed as signifying that an experimenter may not, if there be reasonable cause of doubt in his mind, repeat any experiment by the teaching of which other people had come to their conclusions. There must be no dogmas of infallibility in the teaching of experimental science; no affectation of high-priesthood. Testimony based upon experiment is all in all in such a case. This I fully admit, whilst affirming (what must be obvious) that so soon as testimony is held to be conclusive to the mind of any given philosopher, he will not desire to re-perform an experiment. This is a deduction

almost self-evident. It is one that teachers of physiology should impress upon the minds and understandings of all physiological students. The pride of knowledge is sometimes represented as being very strong. I do not accede to the truth of that doctrine; though fully acquiescing, if for the expression "*knowledge*," "assumption of knowledge" be substituted. It is often a tendency of young men to think themselves competent to the investigation of recondite problems in science before they have mastered preliminaries that alone could give presumptive hope of success. In this way, and actuated by this motive, I have seen young men, not naturally cruel, urged to the practice of vivisection under the belief that they were acquitting themselves of a needful though disagreeable duty. I have seen this, but rarely.

Having recognised as justifiable the aid of vivisection pursued in the interests of scientific advancement, and at the same time being fully impressed with the desirability, not to say duty, of restricting that mode of inquiry within the narrowest profitable limits; recognising too the force of the general proposition—that it is inexpedient for individuals scientifically inclined to be impeded in their experiments; impressed with all this, I am conscious how difficult it is to suggest practical means whereby the sentiments here expressed in regard to vivisection may find practical application. I am of opinion that this means of acquiring knowledge ought to be regarded as an exceptional means, and to be dealt with exceptionally. I would be found amongst the foremost to contemplate with horror the contingency of an individual who—impressed by the belief that he had a special call to the department of physiological science, yet unprepared through previous education to profit by any evidence the organisation of a living animal might be made to reveal—should tamper unchecked with animal life, and inflict pain recklessly, by vivisection or otherwise. I think that no detriment would accrue to science if an Act of Parliament were passed restricting vivisection to medical schools, registered as such, and amenable to the supervision of the inspector of anatomy. I can imagine exceptional cases, to the circumstances of which it were well that the provisions of such an Act of Parliament did not apply. I am, moreover, aware that such an act could not be easily worded so as to avoid legislative miscarriage through ridicule. Literally, the gardener who cuts an earth-worm in twain is a vivisector. So is an angler who lacerates an earth-worm on his hook. A really efficient act should be loosely worded. It should avoid all recondite definitions. The interpretation of it in every separate case should be made under the light of common sense.

I apprehend that neither here nor abroad is the practice of vivisection *in aid of scientific inquiry* so commonly performed, or so cruel in its results, as to call for strong reprehension. I apprehend that it is to vivisection performed in furtherance of operative dexterity by veterinary surgeons upon which the opprobrium of civilised humanity should



be concentrated. I hold that vivisection, to this end employed, is a stupid misapplication of a cruel mode of experiment ; that it is a practice useless, not merely to the operator, but injurious, for reasons already set forth. I hold it to be one in whose defence no argument can be adduced that does not admit of being easily disproved and set aside ; a practice, consequently, that ought to be put down, if needful, by the strenuous force of law.

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Thomas Gray, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc

" SWEET VIOLETS ! "

## “ SWEET VIOLETS ”

“ Violets, sweet violets ! all April's in the cry.”

LEIGH HUNT.

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### I.

MY Isabel, do you remember  
How, in the fitful April weather,  
Through squares and terraces suburban  
We, plighted lovers, walked together,  
While, shrill beneath the changeful sky,  
Rang out the violet-seller's cry ?

### II.

Ah, Love, how bright those hastening hours !  
How fair the hopes that shone before us !  
For us the Earth put forth her flowers,  
For us the blackbirds sang their chorus,  
And Spring herself seemed only made  
To glad us with her light and shade.

### III.

And still I see your sweet face soften  
With tender smile and pensive pity,  
As in our path we meet a maiden—  
A child waif from the seething city ;  
And still rings out the violet cry,  
And still the changing clouds flit by.

### IV.

Last week I pass'd you in the Row,  
Last night I met you at a *soirée* ;  
I watch'd your fair head meekly bent  
Above the last *chef-d'œuvre* by Doré ;  
But your heart's hidden mystery  
'Tis not for mortal eye to see.

## V.

Enough that since that bygone spring-time,  
When we two lovers walk'd together,  
Your heart has caught a trick of changing,  
Capricious as that April weather ;  
And the lorn violet-seller's cry  
Sounds like a dirge as I go by.

## VI.

Your bouquets now are rare exotics,  
Imported from far Southern bowers ;  
But who shall say those splendid blossoms  
Are sweeter than my lowly flowers—  
The violets that we stopp'd to buy  
Beneath that sunlit April sky ?

## VII.

Alas ! 'twas then our spring-time, dearest,  
And o'er life's path there shone a glory,  
While all our footfalls went to music,  
Like mystic lute in fairy story :  
But now youth's glamour shines no more  
On the dull earth we wander o'er.

## VIII.

Some day perchance, for mere distraction,  
You'll ransack a forgotten casket,  
And light upon the faded posy  
I gave you from the vagrant's basket ;  
And those poor wither'd flowers shall be  
Almost a link 'twixt you and me.

## LITERARY CRITICISM

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“There is a certain race of men that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning or genius, who stand as sentinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving IGNORANCE and ENVY the first notice of a prey.”—*The Rambler*, No. 3.

“Criticism is a study by which men grow important and formidable at a very small expense. The power of invention has been conferred by nature upon few; and the labour of learning those sciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a critic.”—*The Idler*, No. 60.

To Italy we owe the newspaper, while to France we are indebted for the institution of journals specially devoted to criticism. The first newspaper, or *gazetta* as it was called, belonged to the Venetian Government. Having been commenced previous to the invention of printing, it was necessarily issued in manuscript; but it continued to be published in manuscript long after the art of printing was well known and practised. The elder Disraeli, in his valuable and interesting *Curiosities of Literature*, states, that in the Magliabechian library at Florence there are thirty volumes of *gazettas* all in manuscript. Until recently it was supposed that the earliest newspaper printed in this country was the *English Mercurie*, a copy of which was found by Mr. George Chalmers, the distinguished antiquary, in the British Museum, early in the present century; but Mr. Thomas Watts, of the Museum, some time ago clearly proved that this paper was a forgery.

The earliest journal of criticism was the production of Denis de Sallo, a counsellor in the parliament of Paris. It was published on 30th May 1665, under the title of *Le Journal des Sçavans*. It was favourably received, and translated into various languages; and in the following year imitations of it were published in several parts of Europe. His criticisms soon brought down upon Sallo the vengeance of the literati whose works he assailed; and after completing the third volume of his *Journal*, he retired from the judgment-seat in which he had installed himself. He had various successors; some of whom contented themselves with publishing simply the titles of new books, accompanied with extracts, while others went to the full extent in panegyric and satire. The *Monthly Review*, which was commenced in 1749, was the first critical journal established in England.

As a taste for literature spread among the people, the number of journals devoted to criticism rapidly increased; and now we have in this country numerous weekly, monthly, and quarterly reviews. Our

newspapers have also combined the criticism of current literature with their other functions—an old custom revived, and, according to Isaac Disraeli, “a retrograde step for the independent dignity of literature.” Criticism has, indeed, reared a literature of its own, and affords profitable employment to numerous individuals.

That criticism is capable of exercising an important influence upon literature is beyond all question; but whether the multiplicity of critical journals has tended to the improvement of literature is very doubtful. By some they are regarded as the enemies of literature. Disraeli, in his *Curiosities*, says: “Their multiplicity has undoubtedly produced much evil; puerile critics and venal drudges manufacture reviews: hence that shameful discordance of opinion which is the scorn and scandal of criticism. Passions hostile to the peaceful truths of literature have likewise made tremendous inroads in the republic, and every literary virtue has been lost.” This is strong language, but it is to some extent warranted. At one period in our literary history, criticism appears to have consisted for the most part of either fulsome adulation or bitter invective; and accordingly we find many writers occupying their “prefaces” with attacks upon the critics, and answers to their anticipated censures. The dramatists also wrote “prologues” and “epilogues” with apparently no other object than to vent their spleen upon the wits and critics by whom the pit of the theatre was frequented.

Many of these criticisms are full of the fiercest and most passionate denunciation, and wholly destitute of any literary virtue. The vulgar abuse which Dryden heaped upon Elkanah Settle was not criticism. The early volumes of the *Edinburgh Review*, *Blackwood's Magazine*, and the *Quarterly Review* contain many criticisms written in a style which we can scarcely think would now be tolerated. Those of *Blackwood* and the *Quarterly* upon Keats's *Endymion*, and that of the *Edinburgh* upon Byron's *Hours of Idleness*, are notable examples. We live in quieter times; but every one who is familiar with the critical journals must frequently have observed many criticisms which were wholly unworthy to be so called—productions which showed their writers to be utterly wanting in every quality of which a true critic ought to be possessed. Productions like those to which I have referred bring criticism into contempt, and justify to some extent the assertion of Disraeli.

Critics are self-elected judges—men who consider themselves endowed with greater discernment, a purer taste, and a judgment superior to the rest of mankind. They arrogate to themselves the duty of deciding upon the merits of authors, and of saying what shall and what shall not be deemed worthy of public patronage. Anyone may become a critic, for “criticism is a goddess easy of access and forward of advance, who will meet the slow and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning she supplies with words, and the want of spirit she recompenses with malignity” (*Idler*, No. 60). It is vain to expect that none but fully qua-

lified persons will take upon themselves the duties of the critic. The number of men who are competent for the task, and willing to undertake its performance, is too small to supply matter for the vast number of critical journals in existence. As a consequence of this, we have a vast deal of stuff palmed off as criticism which is wholly unworthy of the name. Reviews are literally "manufactured" to order; but comparatively few of the workmen really understand their business. Critics of the Dick Minim school form the majority—men who try to cover their ignorance with flippancy and cant, weak sarcasm, and petty malignity. These form but sorry substitutes for genuine criticism. It is only occasionally that a really valuable criticism is met with. If criticism were always fair and unbiassed, it would exercise a genial and purifying influence upon literature; but when dictated by either favouritism or malice, or when the offspring of ignorance and conceit, it is productive only of evil.

The profession of literature has a sacred duty to perform; and criticism is by no means the least important or the least influential of its branches. The aim of criticism ought ever to be to ennoble and purify literature; to separate what is valuable from what is worthless; to winnow the wheat from the chaff. To the formation of a really good critic a combination of many qualities is necessary. He ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the subject treated in the work which he criticises, and possessed of a fine taste, a thoroughly logical mind, and a clear and forcible style of expression. As he occupies the position of a judge, he should ever be calm and unbiassed, permitting no prejudices to obscure his vision and affect his judgment. True criticism cannot exist where there is passion and prejudice. Addison, who was an excellent critic, has, in one of his *Spectator* papers, beautifully defined a pure taste to be "that faculty of the soul which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike." But the dislike of an author's imperfections ought never to be allowed to ruffle the temper, and beget a dislike of what is really good; the good should not be condemned with, but carefully distinguished from the bad. It is a common practice with many critics to pick out all the petty faults of an author, as if criticism consisted in fault-finding. To this Addison refers in another of his *Spectator* papers—one of the series on Milton's *Paradise Lost*—and says: "One great mark by which you may discover a critic who has neither taste nor learning is this, that he seldom ventures to praise any passage in an author which has not been before received and applauded by the public; and that his criticism turns wholly upon little faults and errors. This part of a critic is so very easy to succeed in, that we find every ordinary reader, upon the publishing of a new poem, has wit and ill-nature enough to turn several passages of it into ridicule, and very often in the right place. . . . A true critic ought to dwell rather upon excellences than imperfections, to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and com-



municate to the world such things as are worth their observation. The most exquisite words and finest strokes of an author are those which very often appear the most doubtful and exceptionable to a man who wants a relish for polite learning; and they are those which a sour undistinguishing critic generally attacks with the greatest violence. . . . A little wit is equally capable of exposing a beauty and of aggravating a fault; and though such a treatment of an author naturally produces indignation in the mind of an understanding reader, it has, however, its effect among the generality of those whose hands it falls into—the rabble of mankind being very apt to think that everything which is laughed at, with any mixture of wit, is ridiculous in itself. Such a mirth as this is always unseasonable in a critic, as it rather prejudices the reader than convinces him, and is capable of making a beauty as well as a blemish the subject of derision. A man who cannot write with wit on a proper subject is dull and stupid; but one who shows it in an improper place is as impertinent and absurd” (*Spectator*, No. 291).

Doubtless every author entertains a very high opinion of his own productions; but fortunately their fate is not regulated by his opinion. The literary taste of the public is to a very great extent ruled by the critical journals; but the power of which they are thus possessed is frequently misdirected. A critic can, if so inclined, praise or condemn the work on which he sits in judgment wholly irrespective of its real merits; and as criticisms are for the most part anonymous in this country, the critic incurs comparatively little risk of injury by even a wilfully false criticism. Criticisms of this kind are not by any means uncommon. False criticism is attributable to many causes, and is exhibited in many ways. Sometimes it is attributable to friendship, and at other times to enmity; sometimes to political prejudice; oftentimes to ignorance, envy, and malice. Bayle affords a notable instance of false criticism in his *Republic of Letters* and *Critical Dictionary*. In the former work Jurieu, his friend, is lavishly praised; while in the *Critical Dictionary* the same Jurieu, his enemy, is quoted in illustration of numerous literary faults which were unperceivable, or unperceived, when the *Republic of Letters* was written. Scarcely a single writer of reputation has escaped this tyranny of criticism. Even the classic authors of antiquity were subjected to it long before periodical criticism rose into existence. Homer and Horace were accused of the most unblushing plagiarisms, and Plato of almost everything that was bad; while Socrates was stigmatised as illiterate, and Virgil as utterly destitute of invention. No one who pays any attention to current criticism can fail to observe the same thing still going on. It is curious to observe the variety of opinion which is expressed by the critical journals when any work of importance is noticed by them. In one journal a work will be highly praised, while in another journal the same work will be censured in unmeasured terms; and yet the writer

in each journal pretends to the possession of a refined taste and a superior judgment, such as to enable him to decide upon the real merits of the work which he criticises. Mr. Tennyson affords another illustration of critical discernment. When he first appeared as a poet there were not wanting critics who sneered at his abilities, and treated his productions with the most unmerited contempt. They would have ridiculed the idea that he would ever wear the laurel wreath; but in spite of the critics Mr. Tennyson has long been recognised as not only a poet, but the truest poet of the time. The *Endymion* of Keats was treated contemptuously; but it also has outlived the criticism which hurried on the poet's death. The Edinburgh reviewer who criticised Lord Byron's *Hours of Idleness* never for a moment dreamt that the author of these poems would produce *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. It would be idle to multiply instances of such superior discernment on the part of critics. It really seems astonishing that in the face of such facts they should be credited with any superiority whatever. The wonder rather is that any faith should be placed in them.

For all this variety of opinion there must be some cause. Either the critic is ignorant of his business, or his criticism is dictated by some unworthy motive. True criticism there cannot be unless the critic is possessed of all the qualities necessary for that superior discernment of which he pretends to be capable; and he must be wholly uninfluenced by any motive other than the desire to express an unbiassed opinion upon the work which he criticises. When he steps aside from this, in however small a degree, he abuses the power of which he is possessed. It is immaterial whether he praise or censure, if his criticism be not the expression of a wholly unbiassed opinion formed from a careful perusal of the work criticised.

And in the expression of his opinion a critic ought carefully to avoid all unnecessary harshness, which is a wanton exercise of power. He may frequently be under the necessity of expressing an unfavourable opinion; but it is not, and never can be, his duty to do so in a harsh and unfeeling spirit. The critic's task, I am well aware, is one which is oftentimes most trying to the temper; but it ought to be borne in mind that it is a self-assigned task. A man who has not a perfect control over himself is not the proper person to take upon himself to direct or influence the public taste; and a display of temper on the part of a critic is a sure sign that, however competent he otherwise would be to form an authoritative opinion, he is not a person fitted to express that opinion in the pages of a journal which is looked up to as a guide in literary matters. It is quite possible to condemn a work without displaying any unnecessary harshness. An unfavourable opinion may be expressed in such a manner that even the most fastidious in this respect must fail to take offence; but when the critic pours out the full venom of his sting, regardless of everything but to make the unhappy author feel his power, he is guilty of an abuse which, in its

turn, cannot be too severely censured. If a work be very bad, it is wholly unnecessary for the critic to be venomous, for "bad books die rapidly enough without the executioner." By all means let him condemn; but let his condemnation be so expressed that it will bear upon its surface the marks of candid criticism—criticism uninfluenced by any mean desire—and not the marks of bitter malevolence. Unnecessary harshness of criticism has frequently produced most melancholy results. It is truly remarked by Isaac Disraeli (*Curiosities of Literature*, article "Anecdotes of Censured Authors") that "the feathered arrow of an epigram has sometimes been wet with the heart's blood of its victim; fortune has been lost, reputation destroyed, and every charity of life extinguished, by the inhumanity of inconsiderate wit." Shelley tells us that upon Keats the effect of the *Quarterly Review's* criticism of *Endymion* "appeared like madness, and he was with difficulty prevented from suicide." He never recovered from it: it hurried on his death, and he desired that his epitaph should be, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." Ritson, who was of an extremely irritable disposition, suffered dreadfully from the attacks of critics, and latterly became insane. In the preface to his *Metrical Romances* he writes that he is "brought to an end in ill-health and low spirits; certain to be insulted by a base and prostitute gang of lurking assassins who stab in the dark, and whose poisoned daggers I have already experienced." "Died from the effects of criticism" might truly and appropriately be written upon many an author's tombstone. The criticism of the *Edinburgh Review* upon Byron's *Hours of Idleness* happily produced something different. He himself said, "I well recollect the effect which the critique of the Edinburgh reviewers on my first poems had upon me. It was rage and resistance and redress, but not despondency nor despair. A savage review is hemlock to a sucking author; and the one on me" (which produced the *English Bards*, &c.) "knocked me down, but I got up again. That critique was a masterpiece of low wit, a tissue of scurrilous abuse. I remember there was a great deal of vulgar trash about people being 'thankful for what they could get;' not looking a gift-horse in the mouth, and such stable expressions. But so far from their bullying me, or deterring me from writing, I was bent on falsifying their raven predictions, and determined to show them, croak as they would, that it was not the last time they should hear from me" (*Byron's Poems*—8vo, Murray, 1859—p. 421, note 2). In his *Life of Pope*, Dr. Johnson remarks that "an author places himself uncalled before the tribunal of criticism, and solicits fame at the hazard of disgrace. Dulness or deformity are not culpable in themselves, but may be very justly reproached when they pretend to the honour of wit or the influence of beauty. If bad writers were to pass without reprehension, what should restrain them? *impune diem consumpserit ingens Telephus*; and upon bad writers only will censure have much effect. The satire which brought Theobald and Moore into con-

tempt dropped impotent from Bentley, like the javelin of Priam. All truth is valuable; and satirical criticism may be considered as useful when it rectifies error and improves judgment. He that refines the public taste is a public benefactor" (*Works*, vol. ii. p. 164). This may be very true as a general proposition; but it altogether fails to excuse the spirit in which much of the *Dunciad* was written. Of this Johnson was conscious; for in the same essay he writes, "That the design was moral, whatever the author might tell either his readers or himself, I am not convinced. The first motive was the desire of revenging the contempt with which Theobald had treated his (Pope's) *Shakespeare*, and regaining the honour which he had lost, by crushing his opponent. Theobald was not of bulk enough to fill a poem, and therefore it was necessary to find other enemies with other names at whose expense he might divert the public." The morality of satirical criticisms, like the *Dunciad* of Pope and the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* of Byron, is more than questionable, although they may sometimes be excusable as provoked by unmerited severity of criticism; but satires such as these do not belong to criticism proper. The "quarrels of authors" which have been commenced by abusive criticism form a curious item of our literary history.

To political bias the misdirection of criticism is frequently attributable. Some time ago I read two criticisms upon a number of the *Quarterly Review*, which, as everybody knows, is one of the organs of the Tory party. One of these criticisms appeared in a leading Tory, and the other in a leading Whig journal. In the former almost every article was highly praised; while in the latter, with, if I remember rightly, only two exceptions, every article was censured with the utmost severity. Both criticisms displayed very considerable ability; but it was perfectly apparent that the writer of one or both of them was blinded to the real merits of the articles in the *Quarterly* by reason of his political prejudices. Each of these journals pretends to excellence in all its departments, that of literary criticism included; and when political bias is not at work, they each have, on the whole, very able criticisms. But as it was a Tory organ which was under review, doubtless the Tory critic considered it his duty to proclaim its excellence, while the Whig critic, actuated likewise by a sense of duty, considered himself bound to proclaim its weakness. The articles criticised were for the most part foreign to politics, so that the natural difference of opinion on that score could not account for the extreme diversity of opinion which was exhibited. This is but one instance out of many which could be cited. Take the literary productions of any man of eminence in the political world—productions having no connection whatever with politics—and you will find that in almost every instance the criticisms upon them are favourable or the reverse according as the political opinions of the critics—or rather of the journals in which the criticisms appear—agree with or differ from those of the

author. It may be said that each must support his party; but I cannot see that politics should be permitted to interfere with the formation of an opinion on what is in no way connected with politics. Literary criticism should be above all party influence whatever; and if it is to hold that place in letters to which it is fully entitled, it must be fair and candid, resting its judgment solely upon the books themselves, and not upon the party connections of the author. The book, and the book alone, is what the critic has to deal with.

Another fault with which criticism is often chargeable is what may be termed *personal* criticism. To this species of criticism young and unknown authors are frequently subjected. "First productions"—unless the author is, from his position or otherwise, possessed of some recommendation to notice—are frequently passed over with silent contempt, or when criticised, the criticism relates more to the author than to his work. A first production is an excellent stimulant to what is called "smart writing"—that besetting sin of literature. Numerous instances of such criticism could be cited; but they must be familiar to every reader of the critical journals. Personal criticism is only another expression for unmitigated impertinence; but it is an impertinence not by any means uncommon. Again, when an author has failed in one branch of literature, and subsequently appears in another and wholly different one, he is not unfrequently subjected to ridicule for his pains, independent altogether of the merit of his new production. Thus, for instance, he who has failed as a poet, if he appear as a novelist, will have himself and his novel abused because he formerly wrote bad poetry. Instances of such criticism are not rare. It may or may not be that his novel is also bad; but let it be judged on its own merit, and independent of the author's failure as a poet. Having failed in one line of composition, he may afterwards discover wherein his strength lies. It is wholly unfair, and altogether apart from candid criticism, to condemn a novelist because he has not previously succeeded as a poet.

The office of the critic is also frequently abused in the holding up as worthy of all praise books which in themselves are weak and frivolous, but which, through friendship with the author, connection with the firm by which they are published, or some other similar cause, the critic considers himself in a manner bound to praise. It is no excuse that the failure to favour such books would be productive of serious consequences to the critic; for if no other alternative be open to him, he can easily abstain from reviewing such works. It is truly a pitiful and contemptible spirit which prompts a man harshly and unfeelingly to condemn a work simply because it is published by a firm which is a rival of his employers; and it is equally pitiful and contemptible when the critic lauds a work simply because it is published by his employers. And yet such is frequently done. Most of the leading critical journals are either connected with or influenced by publishing firms; and it is

remarkable that almost the whole of the publications of these firms brought under review in the pages of their respective journals are praised in scarcely measured terms.

The proprietors of many public journals regard the criticism of current literature as of very little importance; and entertaining this opinion, they pay very little attention to the persons by whom and the manner in which their reviews are written. This assertion has little or no application to the leading and most influential journals; but all journals are not leading ones, although they each to some extent direct the literary taste of their respective readers. Everybody does not read the *Times*, or the *Saturday Review*, or the *Quarterly Review*, or *Blackwood*; but almost everybody nowadays reads a paper or periodical of some kind or other; and newspapers and periodicals, even of very slight pretensions, do not altogether neglect criticising the current literature. New books are reviewed in nearly all of them, with more or less ability; but even among many of the higher-class newspapers and periodicals that attention is not always given to literary criticism which the subject deserves. In many newspapers and periodicals the reviewer's task is performed by a single individual, or at most two or three, who unhesitatingly undertake the criticism of works on all subjects—science, art, history, poetry, fiction, &c. It is really amusing to read some of these criticisms. To-day Jones, the solitary hack, is drawing some novelist over the coals; next week he will pick holes in the *History of Man during the pre-Adamite Ages*, if such a work should be issued from the press. He it was who criticised, *inter alia*, Darwin's *Hypothesis, Essays and Reviews*, and the Bishop of Natal's *Pentateuch*, for the especial delectation of the worthy people of Muttonhole who read the *Weekly Thunderbolt*. And after all, why not? Is there not many a Jones among the "Superfine reviewers" and literary slashers who hesitate not to criticise volumes which they have never read, or which, if they have read, they have failed to understand? There is a mystery in such things; but it is not the first time that slashing criticisms have appeared in leading journals the writer of which has read only so much of the books he reviewed as would suffice for a quotation or two. Such doings as these bring criticism into contempt. Much better would it be if the book were never reviewed at all than that it should be reviewed by a person possessed of little or no knowledge of the subject of which it treats. The criticism may appear to display a considerable amount of learning upon the part of its author; but this only to those who know nothing of the subject treated in the work reviewed. To others the critic's ignorance will be apparent; consequently the character of the journal in which his criticism appears will suffer. As to the practice—which is said to be rather common than otherwise—of reviewing books which the critic has never read, the man who can so lower himself in his own estimation as to be guilty of so doing, and the proprietors and editors

of journals who are aware of this, and continue to employ such men, are alike unworthy even of contempt.

Criticism is doubtless productive to some extent of superficiality, and the fear of it entails much evil upon literature; but it is nevertheless, when genuine, extremely valuable; for it is impossible that the literary student can read every book for himself, and of very many books a general knowledge is sufficient. But literary criticism, to be genuine, must be independent of every evil influence. Unless the critic can and does set himself to his task with an unprejudiced mind, and can perform his work with an unruffled temper, he is unworthy to discharge the duty which he undertakes. He may write a very brilliant and attractive essay, abounding with flashes of wit and sarcasm; he may be capable of causing an author to dance with delight or to shiver in his shoes; he may be a man whose slightest word of applause will raise, or whose condemnation will freeze an author's fame; but unless his work is performed in every case with candour and truthfulness—allowing no prejudice or passion to cloud his judgment, but executing his task with calmness and firmness, whether it be to praise or censure,—unless he can do this, he cannot be considered as one fitted to discharge the duties of a critic as these duties should be discharged.

J. CAMPBELL SMITH.

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# CIRCE

Or Three Acts in the Life of an Artist

BY BABINGTON WHITE

## ACT THE FIRST :—FATA VOLENTEM DUCUNT

“Vous ne connaissez pas les artistes! Une race puissante et débile tout à la fois, des imaginations ardentes et mobiles comme la flamme, qui sont attirées irrésistiblement par tout ce qui brille, par tout ce qui caresse l’orgueil : le luxe, le velours, la soie, les fleurs, les mains blanches et l’hermine parfumée des duchesses, voilà ce qui les fascine, ce qui les damne, ces pauvres enfants!”

### SCENE THE THIRD :—DEFECTION.

MR. MOCATTI presented himself in Charnock-street early upon the Tuesday after the private view. He found Laurence standing before his easel, working energetically at a new idea ; and alone.

“Humph !” exclaimed the dealer, “what has become of *cette jeunesse* ?”

“Miss Graystone is in her own room,” Laurence answered gravely.

“*On vient de se brouiller en peu* ?” hazarded Mocatti.

“One has come to do nothing of the kind. Ada was here half an hour ago. But I was absorbed in my work, and a little fretful and impatient, I fear ; so she left me. I begin to think it is a mistake to have any one in the room when one is painting.”

“*Cela marche*,” muttered the dealer. “There are several mistaken ideas which you will get rid of in good time, young friend.—What is that ?” he asked, looking at the canvas ; “rather hazy at present, but bold and free. Is it to be something wilder than the Lady Macbeth ? eh, *amico mio* ? Ha, ha ! the hand shakes a little,” he cried, watching the young man as he worked ; “put down your brush, and *causons un peu*.”

Laurence put aside his brushes and palette with an impatient gesture, and flung himself into a chair. His patron watched him with profound satisfaction.

“Ha, ha !” he said to himself, “he improves ; he begins to put himself into passions ; his phlegmatic Saxon temperament is aroused at last ; the storm and the fire, the rage and the fever, are coming ; and I shall have a great painter.”

He seated himself opposite the young man, contemplating him fondly, as a physician might study an interesting patient.

“Your cheeks are flushed, Laurence, and your eyes are haggard,” he said presently. “Let me feel your pulse. Ah, that is as it should



be—110 beats in a minute—*le vrai pouls d'un Raffaele*. My friend, you are going to be a great man. Do you not feel it mounting into your brain, *la gloire?*" cried the dealer, running his bejewelled hands through his oily black ringlets, as if he too felt his brain fevered by the intoxicating fumes of glory.

"I feel a sense of hurry—an excitement, an impatience which I never experienced before," answered the painter with a sigh; "I am dissatisfied with myself, with my position, with my work, with everything in the world. O, Mocatti, is there something poisonous in the intoxication of a first success? I was so tranquil, so happy, before I exhibited that picture; and now—"

"*Enfant!*" exclaimed Mr. Mocatti, "do you suppose the grub is not happier coiled snugly in his comfortable cocoon than when he receives his fatal dower of beauty, and flies away in the sunlight, bruising his fragile wings against every obstacle, until he perishes the prey of a child's cruelty? If you want to be happy, burn your palette and brushes, and turn lawyer's clerk or linendraper's shopman. If you want to tread in the footsteps of Raffaele, the road lies clear before you."

"Mocatti, you know that I live only for my art."

"I know nothing of the kind, when you preach to me about tranquillity and happiness. Art is storm and passion; and if you want to be great, you must bare your breast to the tempest, and say to the lightning, 'Strike!' Your fortune is made, Laurence. That tide in the affairs of men, of which your Shakespeare talks, is at its flood for you."

And then Mr. Mocatti told his protégé about that spacious music-room which the Princess d'Aspramonte intended to have painted in fresco.

"Figure to yourself, then, *mon cher*," he cried, "yards and yards of gods and goddesses—Amphion, Orpheus, Apollo, *et tout le tremblement*. Do you not pant to begin?"

"Yes," exclaimed Laurence, his eyes fixed, and luminous with the artist's rapture. "Yes; Amphion in fresco—that would be grand; the infant brothers Amphion and Zethus, reared by the shepherds of Mount Citheron; the golden lyre given by the god; the blocks of stone and marble animated with life and motion by those magic strains. I will make a sketch this very day. O, Mocatti, shall I ever have such a chance? Do you really think she will let me paint those frescoes?"

"Who knows?" said the Neapolitan, with a shrug; "fortune comes to some men in their sleep; and while you have been dosing and dawdling over your sentimental little pot-boilers, and your impossible Madonnas with blue porcelain saucers instead of eyes, behold, there comes a princess, carrying a laurel crown and a bag of gold, and only asking permission to place one upon your brow and to lay the other at your feet. The chance is in your hands, Laurence. But remember that your princess is capricious, and must be courted, or she may carry

off her laurels and her gold to some wiser genius. Let me see; is not to-day Tuesday?"

"Yes," answered Laurence, with a conscious look that was not lost upon his patron.

"And it is on Tuesday evening the Princess receives her friends? Have you a dress-coat, *mon ami*?"

"I bought a dress suit out of the last money you gave me. But do you really think I ought to go—so soon?"

"That is for yourself to decide. The Princess d'Aspramonte's invitations seldom go begging; and there are a great many candidates for the honour of painting her music-room."

"I daresay I ought to go, Mocatti; and I see that you wish me to go. I was only thinking—"

"What?"

"Whether Ada would not be hurt by my going to parties without her. I know the dear old governor has a prejudice against fashionable people, and considers a young painter who goes into society on the road to ruin."

"Poor old Tom Graystone!" cried Mr. Mocatti, "that is a road to ruin which he has never been invited to tread. He is a very good master, and a better anatomist than half the men who have walked over his poor honest old head. But Fashion has passed him by; and he is bitter against the society that has ignored him. Do not listen to him, Laurence. If you want to be great, you must first become popular. The fashion of to-day is the greatness of to-morrow. It will be a good beginning if you are to forfeit your first grand chance in order to stop at home and toast muffins for Miss Graystone and her papa. I think I have seen you toasting muffins."

Laurence blushed. Yes, he had been surprised in that degrading act. How often he had knelt on the hearthrug balancing a muffin on a twopenny toasting-fork, and talking to his sweet Ada, while his sweet Ada's papa doted on the other side of the hearth! What happy evenings he had spent in the comfortable parlour below the painting-room, talking of art and poetry, or jotting down vague fancies in his sketch-book, while Ada played her dreamy waltzes, or sang her tender little songs! What bright visions of the future had glorified that common chamber; what divine affection had shone upon the fair face of his betrothed! But at this moment he remembered nothing except that he had toasted muffins; and that it was ignominious to have done so.

"At what time shall I go to Madame d'Aspramonte's?" he asked presently.

"You had better arrive a little before ten. After ten her rooms are apt to be crowded. Shall I call for you?"

"If you please."

"That will be the best plan. Be sure you are ready for me at nine; the drive will take us nearly an hour."

Mr. Mocatti departed, and Laurence resumed his pencil. But he found himself disinclined for work, and fancied himself unable to work; so he went in search of Mr. Graystone's well-thumbed classical dictionary, and wasted his morning in reading the stories of Amphion and Orpheus.

At three o'clock Ada summoned him to the family dinner of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. He had no appetite; and there seemed to him something revolting in that vulgar solid food. Mr. Graystone dined in his usual hearty manner, and was concerned by his pupil's inability to do justice to the sirloin.

"You've been overworking yourself, Laurence," he said. "If you don't take care what you're about, Antonio Mocatti will be the death of you. Your organisation is too sensitive to bear being played upon by that man. You are like one of those thorough-bred yearlings that a speculative trainer enters for the Derby. He is trained to win the great race, and wins it; but never comes in first after that day. Mocatti wants you to make a great hit before you've thrown him off, Lal; and he doesn't care how much it costs you to make it."

Ada had been watching her lover anxiously while her father spoke.

"Do you think that Laurence is looking ill, papa?" she asked.

"I do," growled the painter. "He has been working too hard, I tell you. He wants fresh air—change—rest. We'll all run down to Windsor by the first train on Sunday morning, and prowl in the forest. The rhododendrons must be in bloom on the road to Virginia Water, and the young rabbits are frisking across the roads with their tails in the air. We'll lunch upon bread-and-cheese and bitter beer at the Wheatsheaf, since their dinners are too costly for poor painters, and come back to smoky Babylon in the twilight—eh, Laurence?"

Mr. Bell assented to the proposition, but without enthusiasm. He went listlessly back to the painting-room, and took up his palette and brushes; but the sketch that had pleased him in the morning pleased him no longer, and he worked languidly.

Ada opened the door, and peeped in at him presently.

"I am going for a walk in Regent's Park with Miss Wilson, Laurence," she said; "and papa says it will do you good to come with us. Will you come, please, dear?"

"When am I to work, Ada?" Mr. Bell asked reproachfully.

"Papa says you work too much."

"And I feel that I achieve nothing. You don't know what it is to have the fancy *here*, Ada," he cried, striking his forehead, "and yet not have the power to give it form and life *there*, on the canvas. O, my darling, don't think me unkind; but I can't come with you to that cockney park, where the trees are all so small and straight and meagre, like the little wooden trees in a child's box of toys. I can't endure your friend Miss Wilson, with her milliner's-apprentice talk about fashions, and flounces cut on the bias."

"Laurence," said Ada sadly, "it is so unlike you to be impatient."

"Yes, I know. I have been dull, sluggish—content to tread the beaten track; but that is over. I have felt what it is to succeed, and I am an altered creature. You know what the critics have said of me. There is the stamp of genius upon my picture—untutored, undeveloped; and I must work. They all preach the same sermon, Ada—work, work, work! and I feel that I have been idling."

"But, dear Laurence, the Exhibition only opened yesterday."

"Only yesterday?—no; but I have wasted time since the day of the private view. O, my darling, support me and sustain me in every good resolution, I beseech you. I am so weak, so capricious; and it is in my power to achieve so much."

He went on to speak to his betrothed about the Princess d'Aspramonte, and the frescoes to be painted on the walls of her music-room.

Amy listened with a thoughtful countenance, until Laurence was almost inclined to be angry with his betrothed for her lack of enthusiasm.

"I thought you would have been pleased to hear of this grand opportunity," he said reproachfully.

"Is it a grand opportunity?" asked the girl very earnestly. "Papa has always said that such patronage does a man more harm than good. This Italian lady may be very rich, very liberal; but she is no doubt capricious and difficult to please. Art was never meant to be a woman's plaything, Laurence. You are so weary of Mr. Mocatti's tyranny, and yet you will accept a new bondage from this lady!"

"My dear girl, you talk like a baby!" exclaimed Mr. Bell with extreme impatience. "I accept no bondage from Madame d'Aspramonte. She has built a superb apartment, which she intends to decorate in the old Italian manner. It is such an opportunity as rarely falls to the lot of an English artist. You know how I despise the paltry subjects I have painted for Mocatti. This commission will give me scope for grandeur, sublimity. If it is in me to be great, Amy, this chance will develop all my powers."

"But you have never painted in fresco, Laurence."

"I will learn to paint in fresco, if I get the commission. Mocatti wants me to go with him to Madame d'Aspramonte's villa this evening; and I shall know more about my chances when I have seen her again."

There was no promenade in the Regent's Park. Miss Graystone sent an apology to her friend, and spent her afternoon alone in the vacant sitting-room stitching patiently at a pile of her father's shirts, which needed certain restorations of collars and wristbands. The bright May sunshine flooded the shabbily-furnished chamber, and transformed the faded crimson curtains into luminous draperies. Miss Graystone's canary sang a pæan of praise to the splendid luminary, and Mr. Graystone's French poodle luxuriated in the pleasant warmth; but there

was a sharp pain in Amy's breast as she remembered the early May afternoons of the preceding year, when Laurence had thought a ramble in Regent's Park the most delightful recreation, and had been very well pleased to hear Miss Wilson discourse feminine twaddle, while Amy's little hand rested on his arm.

"Mr. Mocatti is right," she thought to herself despairingly; "genius cannot be shut in a cage. It is mean and cruel of me to grudge Laurence his successes because success takes him away from me."

There was no cloud upon Miss Graystone's brow when she presided at the tea-table an hour later; and she took her lover's side of the question when old Tom Graystone pooh-poohed the Princess d'Aspramonte and all her set. It is the attribute of a woman to be generous with an aching heart.

"What would Rubens have done without Albert and Isabella?" she said playfully.

"Albert and Isabella were a gentleman and lady," replied the old painter savagely. "The Princess d'Aspramonte is—well, I have heard of the lady before to-day, and my advice to Laurence is, keep clear of her. He has his Odyssey at his fingers' ends, and he knows what came to Ulysses when he got into strange company."

"Mocatti wishes me to go," murmured Laurence, half apologetically.

"Mocatti has found a goose that lays golden eggs, and he is going to kill his goose, in order that he may have all his eggs at once," said Tom Graystone, rising from the table and lighting his dingy old meer-schaum.

Laurence left the room very soon after this, though Amy had seated herself at the little cottage-piano, and was playing one of her plaintive waltzes, lingering pensively on the notes.

Charnock-street grew dim in the spring twilight as the young man attired himself in his ceremonial costume. The clocks of the neighbourhood were striking nine as he went downstairs, looking his handsomest in that simple evening-dress. There was no light in the painting-room, but Laurence Bell went there to await his patron, rather than to the chamber below, whence came that low wailing murmur of German waltzes. He loved Amy Graystone very dearly; but he had a vague dread of meeting her tender eyes to-night, lest he should see in them some shadow of reproach. It seemed a very small thing, this visit to the Princess d'Aspramonte, and yet he felt as if it were a kind of apostasy.

Mr. Mocatti's brougham dashed up to the door at a quarter after nine, flashing two fiery eyeballs upon the darkness of Charnock-street. The picture-dealer was great in horse-flesh, and exhibited his black moustache in the park every afternoon in the season, mounted in a superb mail-phaeton. His high-stepping chestnuts pawed the paving-stones of Charnock-street impatiently while the brougham waited, as if

conscious that it was not the kind of pavement they were accustomed to paw.

"Let me look at thee, *jeune homme*," cried the Neapolitan, bouncing into the house like a whirlwind, and meeting Laurence in the lighted passage. "Ah, heaven, thou art perfect—handsome as Adonis, elegant as a secretary of legation!"

It was only in moments of extreme satisfaction that the patron was wont to *tutoyer* his protégé.

"Thou hast a latch-key?" he asked. "The Princess has a party to-night, and thou wilt be late."

No, Laurence Bell had never yet required that unholy privilege. He went into the sitting-room to bid Amy good-night, half-proud, half-ashamed to show himself in his evening-dress, and to ask rather nervously for Mr. Graystone's latch-key. The girl rose from the piano to look at her lover.

"It is true what the art-students say, Laurence," she exclaimed; "you are like the old prints of Raffaello."

She laid a caressing hand on his arm as she contemplated him admiringly, but withdrew the poor little hand at sight of Mr. Mocatti's grinning face peering at her from the doorway. He looked like a modern Mephistopheles waiting for a modern Faust.

"*N'est-ce pas qu'il est beau, le jeune homme?*" cried Mephistopheles. "*Fiez-vous à lui, Mademoiselle Graystone, ce n'est pas la pâte dont on fait les maris—mais il fera fureur auprès des dames.*"

Laurence asked for the key with which Mr. Graystone was wont to gain admission when he returned late from an artists' club in the neighbourhood. Amy gave it to him silently, nor did she appear conscious of the poisoned arrow launched by Mr. Mocatti.

"Good-night, Amy."

"Good-night, Laurence."

Two minutes after this the fiery chestnuts were tearing westward, like demon steeds newly let loose from the Plutonian stables.

#### SCENE THE FOURTH :—FASCINATION.

AMIDST some half-dozen acres of nobly timbered grounds, which, until five years past, had surrounded a red-brick pedimented Georgian mansion, the Princess d'Aspramonte had built for herself a classic villa, rich in columns and colonnades, and marble courts wherein bloomed shrubberies of orange and citron. Without and within, the Roman lady's villa was a marvel; and almost fabulous was the sum which the marvel was rumoured to have cost in the course of erection. For three years the Princess had been the joy of architects, builders, decorators, and landscape gardeners. "Extras" had fallen from her lips with every word, like the jewels in the fairy tale. The richest firms in London had grown richer by her patronage. She had swept with imperious

footstep through the halls of Jackson and Graham, ordering cabinets in *pietra dura* and armoires in Italian *marqueterie* as coolly as commoner mortals might order a three-and-sixpenny box of furniture for a doll's house; and the appearance of her stately figure in Christie and Manson's sale-room had put an additional twenty-five per cent on the value of every object sold. She was the sort of person to take one sweeping glance at a famous collection of pictures and *bric-à-brac*, and then murmur languidly to the custodian thereof, "You may send me home *tout cela*." She had furnished and unfurnished her house half-a-dozen times before she was satisfied with its arrangements; and it was only when the villa had consumed more thousands than even the Princess cared to remember that she discovered the appalling fact that there was no room in it large enough for music.

She was a creature, not of impulse, but of impulses, and was possessed by a new mania every season. During the last year her passion had been music; and while the passion was at fever-heat she had built for herself a spacious chamber, constructed in accordance with the last discoveries in the science of acoustics. Before the walls of the room were dry Madame d'Aspramonte's passion for harmony languished a little in favour of painting; and having achieved a ceiling which was one gigantic sounding-board, she devoted her walls to the sister art. Her dreams were of a chamber glorious with Italian frescoes, and she awaited the advent of the painter. As she deigned neither to take counsel from any creature, nor to act after the manner of ordinary mortals in any event of her life, her selection of a master was likely to be governed ultimately by the caprice of a moment. Mr. Mocatti knew this, and his soul thirsted for the thousands that were to be drawn from that inexhaustible fountain of gold of which the Roman lady was mistress.

To-night the classic chambers were thronged with such men and women as only fancy had shown to Laurence Bell until now. In those rooms, amidst that glitter of starry gems and starry eyes, in that atmosphere pervaded with a nameless perfume, the young painter felt himself in some strange waking dream. That odour of all-permeating beauty and splendour was more intoxicating to the senses of an artist than the juice of any earthly vine—it was the ichor of the gods. Ah, was he really upon earth to-night, or was he not rather the dupe of some divine enchantment? could the dingy brick-boxes of Charnock-street and this fairy palace belong to the same planet? Ah, no: he was Laurence Bell no longer, but Faust the alchemist; and this grand creature who came out of a crowd of gods and goddesses to greet him with a smile of welcome must be Helen, the daughter of Jupiter and Nemesis.

Surely much folly may be forgiven to a sensitive young man, a being composed of the dreams and fancies which are the seedlings of genius, who finds himself transported all at once into a world which is

quite new to him. Is it so strange if his inexperienced eyes mistake the unholy glitter of the lamps that light the halls of Eblis for the divine radiance of the stars, or fashionable beauty, fresh from the restoring hands of her Parisian maid, for the Venus Anadyomene with the salt-water drops scarcely shaken from her hair ?

Laurence bowed to the splendid vision that shone before him, which Mr. Mocatti, the picture-dealer, greeted without any embarrassment.

"I have brought you my young Raffaella, Princess," he said.

"You can have no better cicerone than Signor Mocatti to show you my pictures, Mr. Bell," said the Princess very graciously.

If she had seemed beautiful to Laurence in her careless morning-dress, to-night her splendour appeared to him almost supernal. He was not sufficiently master of his senses to separate her toilette from herself, or to perceive the exact point at which the beauty of the woman left off and the triumph of the milliner began. He knew that Giulia d'Aspramonte's figure was the form of a goddess, her eyes the stars of a tropical night, her shoulders the animated marble of a Pygmalion. Her costume to-night affected the gorgeous eccentricity of the Tuileries rather than the chaster elegance of English fashion. It was a cloudlike mass of white tulle, over which there seemed to be flying tiny tropical birds whose eyes were jewels. Upon her head she wore a coronet of tropical plumage, amidst which blazed a tremulous diamond star, and in her hand she held an Indian fan of the same many-coloured plumage. Such a ball-dress might Dido or Semiramis have ordered from the milliners of Carthage or Babylon ; but this barbaric splendour came only from a masculine manteau-maker in the Rue de la Paix, to whom the Princess paid four or five thousand a year for a perennial supply of costumes *à la Lionne*.

The rooms were thronged with well-bred men and handsome women. The continental element preponderated, more especially among the women, and the conversation took higher flights than it is apt to take in ordinary English society.

"The Princess poses herself *à la Blessington*," said Mr. Mocatti to Laurence, in his character of mentor. "Look at her as she talks to that scraggy little man with the bald head and sandy moustache. He is a great German philologist, and she is deep in a discussion as to the authorship of the *Odyssey*. She is great in Homeric geography, and will tell you the bearings of every island in the Ægean Sea. She takes her stand on Schubarth's theory, and insists that the epic of the Greeks was written by a Trojan. *Les femmes s'accrochent toujours à toute espèce de paradoxe, et c'est la plus femme des femmes*. You see that dark yellow-faced man pushing his way to her. That is Carlo Venturini, the Italian patriot. She will drop Homer and plunge into Italian politics in the wink of an eye. And then she will discuss the Darwinian philosophy, the second Faust, the topography of Carthage, the authenticity of the last batch of Marie Antoinette's private correspondence, Emile Augier's



last comedy, George Sand's last novel—*tout ce que vous voudrez*. A wonderful woman, *n'est-ce pas, mon ami?*"

Laurence Bell's lips uttered no reply, but his eyes followed the Princess as she turned from one guest to another; and they said enough for Mr. Mocatti.

"And now I will show you the house," said the dealer. "Nice, isn't it? This is the atrium. Observe the silver shrine for the Lares and Penates yonder in the corner—candelabrum in bronze, by Barbedienne, five feet high, copied from a pair found at Pompeii; doors plated with Corinthian brass and ivory; mosaic pavement representing groups of gladiators—a pretty feminine fancy, isn't it, and thoroughly classical? From the atrium we pass into the cavædium; and you will have to learn the classic names of the chambers if you wish to *entrer dans les bonnes grâces de la Princesse, mon ami*. Here we have statues, and colonnade in luna marble, compluvium in jasper and porphyry. Yonder to the left there is the sphæristerium, tennis-court, gymnasium, *tout ce que vous voulez*. And now we will go and look at the pictures. *Vous m'en direz des nouvelles.*"

Mr. Mocatti led his protégé beneath colonnades in which Sallust might have loitered amongst flute-players and flatterers. Statues gleamed whitely in the uncertain light; and in the midst of the court Laurence beheld a wide porphyry basin, in which the water looked black and deep under the stars. Beyond this quadrangle there was a curtained door, through which the two men passed into an ante-chamber hung with black velvet, whereon were emblazoned the arms and mottoes of the Aspramontes, for here the Princess had elected to be Elizabethan. The ante-chamber opened into a long gallery, hung from floor to ceiling with pictures; and here Mr. Mocatti left Laurence to his own devices, having interests of his own to be furthered amongst the guests of the Princess.

Laurence lingered long among the pictures. The atmosphere of the salon had been almost stifling to him, and it was a relief to be alone. In the centre of the gallery there was a portrait of the Princess, painted *en buste*, mounted on a gilded stand, and hung with dark-green velvet. The head was finely painted by a daring hand, and in the eyes the painter had kindled a light which was not the seraphic radiance.

Laurence knelt on a tapestried prie-dieu opposite the picture, and abandoned himself to the contemplation of that darkly-splendid face.

"Yes, she is like my Lady Macbeth," he said to himself. "What a face for a painter! By what strange fatality did it haunt my dreams until it grew into life upon my easel? Shall I ever forget it now that its strange charm has once possessed me? Not a face to love,—no, no, no,—but a face to dream of, a face to paint, a face to develop the latent genius of him who paints it. What a rude sketch that portrait is! though one can see that it is the work of a master hand. If the

Princess would only sit to me; if she would let me study her face line by line, shape my genius in the mould of her beauty, ah, then I might achieve a picture that would live for ever, like Raffaele's Fornarina, like Guido's Beatrice Cenci. After all, it is the woman who gives immortality to the painter, and not the painter who immortalises the woman."

He abandoned himself to a delicious dream, in which he fancied himself the painter of a portrait—only a portrait—which should be the wonder of the art world. He imagined the praises of critics, who agreed that the golden age of painting had come back all at once, and that there had arisen a young man worthy to rank with Raffaele and Guido. Had he done wrong in coming to this woman's house? Ah, no, surely; for he felt that a fire was kindled in his breast that had never burned there before, and he told himself that it was the glow of that volcano men call genius.

"Mocatti is right," he said to himself; "I have been a dawdler—a tradesman—painting for my daily bread. It is now for the first time I feel what ambition means—the fever, the insatiable longing, the thirst which is akin to agony! O, heaven! to be great at any cost, by any ordeal; to paint one great picture which should stamp itself upon the minds of all nations for ever and ever in the years to come. Such things have been. What was Raffaele, that no new Raffaele should ever be born amongst men? Was there a fiercer fire in his breast than that which burns in mine? Was he more ready to sell his life for art than I am to sacrifice mine? No; I have set my lips to the cup of success, and I will drink deeply of that god-like draught—or die."

He was two-and-twenty—mad, foolish if you will. He had been flattered by his patron, praised by his master, honest out-spoken Thomas Graystone, and worshipped by a romantic girl. As he knelt before Giulia d'Aspramonte's portrait, he fancied that it was in him to become a second Raffaele.

And kneeling thus, as if in homage, before that unholy shrine, was there falsehood towards Amy Graystone in his heart? No; the intoxication which possessed him was not the influence of love. It was the artist, not the lover, who was enthralled by this woman's picturesque beauty. A soft *trainante* voice startled Laurence from his reverie.

"What do you think of my picture, Mr. Bell?"

The painter looked up, and beheld Madame d'Aspramonte standing by his side, looking down at him with her glorious Italian eyes.

He would have started to his feet, but she laid her hand lightly on his arm.

"Do not be so eager to rise," she said smiling. "Your attitude is a most delightful flattery. Do you like my portrait? It is considered one of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of poor Ingres."

"It is not grand enough, or beautiful enough," cried Laurence, emboldened by her easy manner—half patronage, half admiration;

"and yet it is both grand and beautiful," he murmured, with dreamy eyes fixed on the canvas. "Ah, madame, if you would permit me to paint your picture."

"Perhaps I may some day be induced to grant you that privilege," replied the Princess, smiling at his enthusiasm; "but I warn you that I am a most intolerable sitter. So you think you could paint a better portrait than Ingres? You have at least daring, and I think you have genius," she added very softly, after a pause and a long scrutinising look at the young face gazing upward to her own with such profound admiration. "Yes, I think you have genius," she repeated in a thoughtful tone; "and you shall paint my picture. I will sit to you more patiently than I sat to poor Ingres. Yours is another kind of genius, Mr. Bell—tender, plastic; a genius that must be cherished and warmed into life in an atmosphere of perpetual summer; not a genius to climb mountain-peaks and bare its brow to the hurricane. It is an exotic blossom, and must inhabit a hothouse. Yes, you shall paint my picture."

"Madame—"

The exclamation expressed wonder, rapture, gratitude, self-abasement. Laurence was still kneeling on the prie-dieu chair, still looking upward with reverential eyes at the face of this gracious divinity.

"Genius," murmured the Princess; "the real fire of Prometheus. Ah, what happiness to see the god-like flame brighten in the lamp of clay! You do not know how I have worshipped genius, Laurence Bell; how my dreams have been peopled by the shadows of the mighty dead; how my soul has yearned for communion with the heaven-gifted souls of the living. I have gathered around me all that is brightest in art and poetry. But to see genius in its celestial dawn; to foster the fitful flame with my own hands—that would be a delight beyond all parallel. Yes, that is the new joy which the despot Sybarite should have found for himself when he had exhausted all earth's common pleasures."

She paused, with her clasped hands resting on the back of the chair, her eyes fixed on the painter's face with as rapt a gaze as if they had been indeed watching the growing brightness of some supernal flame.

Laurence was silent, transfixed by that gaze. His loosely-falling hair drooped over the clasped hands of the Princess as he looked upward to her thoughtful face.

"You shall paint my portrait, Mr. Bell," she said in a lighter tone; "and if that is a success, you alone shall paint my frescoes. Signor Mocatti has pleaded your cause very earnestly since I saw you at the Academy; and I am inclined to be governed by his advice. You need paint for money no longer. I am rich; and my banker shall be yours till the frescoes are completed, when the exorbitant Mocatti will know how to make his own bargain."

Her bracelet struck against his brow as she withdrew her clasped hands from the chair on which they had rested. The band of gold and

gems felt hard and cold, and hurt him as it struck. The sudden change in Madame d'Aspramonte's manner seemed to him hard and cold, like the bracelet, and inflicted a sharper pain than the blow.

"I must return to my friends, Mr. Bell," she said; "they were waltzing when I left the room, and the waltz must be over now. You can come with me if you like. Remember, from to-night you are to paint only for fame—and for me."

She led the way through ante-room and quadrangle; and Laurence followed her back to the long drawing-room. Here the dancing was suspended; and a German professor was achieving wonders on a newly-invented instrument, which was at once organ and piano. The Princess seated herself on an ottoman, and her satellites flocked round her, hiding her completely from the eyes of Laurence Bell, the painter of Charnock-street.

He saw men with stars and ribbons on their breasts, men in semi-official costume, men who bore the stamp of military rank in every careless movement, men in whom the blue blood made itself evident even to the unaccustomed eyes of Laurence Bell. Of the women he knew only that all were elegant, and many beautiful. For the rest, he knew that the scene in which he found himself was like a glimpse of a new world, and that it pained him to remember how soon he must return to the old one.

Mr. Mocatti circulated amongst the fashionable guests, quite at his ease. People who would have been outraged by his presence in an English house accepted the fact here as an eccentricity peculiar to the continental mind. Had not a distinguished photographer been seen of late years to disport himself at an ambassador's ball, offering himself as a partner in the waltz to high-born damsels from whom he would have been happy to earn a guinea next morning?

The signor found Laurence standing unnoticed amidst a covey of secretaries of legation, who were grouped in a doorway, ready to rise at the opening bar of the next waltz.

"*Eh, bien, mon ami,*" he said cheerily. "*Vous avez déjà l'air du pays.* How do you like Adrian's Villa? People have been asking me questions about you; and you are known as the painter of the Lady Macbeth. You may come here every Tuesday evening if you choose. Perhaps now we shall hear no more of *cette jeunesse!*"

Laurence Bell seemed unconscious of this last remark.

"I am to paint the frescoes, Mocatti," he exclaimed. "The Princess has told me as much with her own lips. If I have indeed to thank you for this, I thank you with my whole heart."

He wrung the Neapolitan's hand in both his own as he said this. Mr. Mocatti looked at him with an expression which was not unmingled with pity.

"The divine spark has taken fire," said the dealer. "You will paint great pictures. The Princess is talking of you to Sir Edgar

Verbockhaven. See, she looks this way. She is beckoning you. Go, and be presented to the great Academician."

The young man's face lighted up as he obeyed the summons of his patroness. Antonio Mocatti looked after him with a thoughtful smile.

"You have to thank my diplomacy a little, Mr. Bell," he said to himself; "but you have also to thank your own pretty face, and the caprice of a woman more capricious than the cloud and sunshine of your murderous English Aprils and Mays."

SCENE THE FIFTH :—REPUDIATION.

THE flood-tide of success had come, and it swept Laurence onward at its will with the force of a maelstrom. Before the month of May was ended Thomas Graystone knew that his pupil was lost to him; and Amy wept in secret over the defection of her lover. It was not that he had committed any overt act of inconstancy. He still painted in the big bare chamber in Charnock-street; he still occupied his old place at the painter's modest dinner-table; he still rendered to Amy Graystone some portion of that homage which is the legitimate right of an affianced wife. But the change in him was none the less complete because he had not yet shaken himself free of his old surroundings. The butterfly had spread his splendid wings; and if some remnants of the shattered cocoon that had been his prison-house still hung about him, he only waited the fitting moment to throw them off for ever.

Amy endured her sorrow in silence. Her lover no longer talked of the future which those two had hoped to share. He talked of nothing but his art, his hopes, his fears, his ambition. He had become all at once the very incarnation of egotism. He who so lately had been interested in every bonnet-ribbon chosen by his affianced wife was now so absorbed in his own day-dreams as to be scarcely conscious of her presence, except when she came between him and the light.

That guardian angel of youthful genius, Mr. Mocatti, hovered about the house in Charnock-street in a state of mind approaching rapture. His stalwart arm had rescued his protégé from the muddy vortex of domestic life; and instead of little bits of *genre* painting, worth twenty-five guineas, the patron and proprietor could now hope to behold those wild flights of art which make the world aghast with wonder or delight, and necessitate substantial evidences of triumph, in the shape of a railing and a policeman to ward off an enraptured crowd of starers.

"Ah, thank heaven," cried the sentimental Neapolitan, "thou hast elevated thyself above that quagmire of butcher's bills and perambulators. Thou dreamest no longer of a cottage at Camberwell, where the walls would not be thick enough to muffle the screams of thy teeth-cutting children, and where thy finest fancies would be startled by the sound of shrill tradesmen's boys shrieking '*Yep!*'"

Mr. Bell no longer protested against his patron's anti-matrimonial ideas.

"I shall not marry till I have made myself a name," he said; "I begin to think there is some truth in what you say. My affection for Miss Graystone is unalterable—and—"

"Will be all the better for keeping—*comme les vins de meilleur cru*," replied Mocatti.

The young painter had now very few mornings to spare for sober drudgery in the Charnock-street painting-room. Mr. Graystone plodded steadily on at the bread-and-cheese of his art; but the enthusiastic talk of his pupil and fellow-worker no longer cheered him as he stood before his easel. He shook his head doubtfully when friends and brothers of the brush asked after Laurence.

"He has had the misfortune to make a success," he said drily; "and he has had the still greater misfortune to find an aristocratic patroness. You must go and ask your way to some swell villa out at North-End if you want to find Laurence Bell. He rarely condescends to honour this house with his presence nowadays."

Yes, before the June roses were in bloom it had come to this. Laurence spent the greater part of his life at Adrian's Villa. The Princess had given him her music-room for his studio; and here was already set up an easel on which Mr. Bell was to paint his sketches for the frescoes.

She was as generous as the godmother of a fairy tale. When first her protégé beheld the music-room it was a great bare chamber, with plastered walls and undraped windows.

"It shall be your painting-room," cried the Princess. "Bring your easels and paraphernalia in a day or two, and everything shall be ready for you."

The painter would have protested, but she stopped him with her accustomed gesture *à la Semiramis*.

"You must make your sketches *here*," she said. "You have no idea how difficult to please I shall be about these frescoes. I want to have my part in the painter's triumph, and to say, 'It was I who inspired that expression, it was I who suggested that detail.' You must have this room, Mr. Bell. You can bring your Mr. Graystone also, if you please; and he can work at your backgrounds."

Laurence knew that Thomas Graystone was the very last of men to undertake the painting of backgrounds for his late pupil. But he did venture to make some kind of proposal to his friend and master. He offered to share the commission with the plodding old painter.

"The Princess wants her room finished in a year," he said, "and there must be more work than I could do in three. Why shouldn't we work together, Graystone?"

"I am not a great man, Mr. Bell, nor do I ever hope to be one," answered the painter gravely; "but before I would prostitute my small

abilities to the caprices of your Princess, I would put on a little red jacket—which would be far from becoming to my middle-aged figure—and kneel down in the street to black shoes at a penny a pair. Do you know what a greater lady than your Roman Princess said when a sketch of William Etty's was shown to her? 'Take the thing away,' she cried in disgust; 'the poor man doesn't know what we want.' And the thing was put in a shed, where it rotted; and the poor man was offered 40*l.* for his work. *That* is what aristocratic patronage means in England, Mr. Bell; and I am one who will have none of it. Besides which," added the painter rather sadly, "you and I have done with each other now. You have learnt more than I ever taught you; and you belong to Antonio Mocatti. He has created you, and he will have his value out of you."

"How can you say that we have done with each other, dear old friend," cried Laurence, "when I am looking forward to the day in which I shall call you father?"

"Ah," sighed Mr. Graystone, "go on looking forward. The day is a long way off."

This was said in an undertone, and was unheard by Laurence. His fancies had taken wing, and were among those denizens of Olympus with whom a man who paints in fresco must hold frequent converse. When he went again to the villa at Fulham he found the music-room hung with amber damask and carpeted with purple velvet pile. Marbles and bronzes, Florentine mosaics, and Flemish carved-oak furniture had been arranged in the apartment with that perfect taste which knows how to achieve the semblance of carelessness as the result of care. Wherever the young man's eyes rested, they fell on a gem—here a jasper vase; there a bronze Hercules, with the bull crushed in an agonised heap beneath his conqueror; anon a single cup and saucer in Sèvres, bought for fifty-one guineas and a-half in Phillips's sale-room, and bought in the teeth of Mr. Von Stohnn, the great publisher and collector, who had vowed to himself a vow that he would not go beyond fifty. Laurence Bell surveyed the apartment with bewildered eyes; while the Princess watched him, amused by his astonishment, and while Mr. Mocatti rubbed his hands in the background, always more or less like Mephistopheles.

"*Vous voilà tout ébloui!*" exclaimed the Princess; "did you think that I should ask you to paint in a room with bare floors and plastered walls? No, Mr. Bell; I know that to art beautiful surroundings are as necessary as the sunshine and air to my flowers yonder." Mr. Mocatti thought of Hemling, the convalescent, painting a certain *chasse* in the hospital of Bruges, of Poussin in his garret; but he held his peace.—"This room is to be yours until the sketches are completed, Mr. Bell," said the Princess, when the painter had murmured some half-audible expression of his rapture and gratitude; "and then I suppose we must unfurnish it again before you begin your frescoes. In the mean time

remember it is you who are at home here, and I who am the visitor. The room is detached from the villa, as you see, and the only communication is through that orangery. Lock the doors of the orangery, and *vous êtes chez vous.*"

What could the painter say in acknowledgment of so much graciousness? Had he been ten years older and wiser, he might have rejected such a weight of obligation from a woman's fair hand; but he was only two-and-twenty years of age, inexperienced, imaginative, sensitive, credulous, and he was plastic as wax in the hands of this imperious beauty. He who had been so lately an obscure student, toiling patiently among other students, might well be intoxicated by such subtle flattery. His head was turned; he thought of Tasso and Leonora, of Chastelard and Mary Stuart—of anything and everything except his plighted wife and his own independence as a man.

After this he went almost daily to Adrian's Villa. On some days Madame d'Aspramonte was from home, or otherwise invisible, and he came and departed without seeing her; and on those days he worked tolerably well. On other days she would come in and out of his painting-room, as Amy Graystone herself might have done, except that she was less considerate of his labours than Amy had been, and very careless as to the waste of his time. She would sit in one of the mediæval chairs talking of art in her own wild fitful way, or would order her box of water-colours to be brought, and establish herself in one of the windows. She was an accomplished amateur in this, and in every other art, as it seemed to Laurence. It was delightful to him to look over her shoulder now and then as she worked; and on these days the sketch upon his own easel made small progress.

Thus little by little Amy Graystone's lover was lured away from Charnock-street. On some evenings he dined at the villa; he attended the weekly receptions of his patroness; he was invited by people whom he met at those receptions; he had a place in Madame d'Aspramonte's opera-box for all the best performances at either house; and he had therefore few unoccupied evenings to moon away amidst the dusky shabbiness of the Fitzroy faubourg. The few evenings which he did pass in Mr. Graystone's household seemed long and wearisome; the drowsy quiet of the house weighed upon his spirits; the meanness and sordid ugliness of the furniture was an actual torture to his sensuous soul; he languished for the lights and the perfume, the feast of form and colour which awaited him at the Fulham Villa.

It was not that Amy Graystone was less loving and lovable, or that he had ceased to value her love or admire her beauty. He loved her still; but he loved her as a drunkard or a gambler loves the fair young wife whom he abandons night after night for the delights of the tavern or the gaming-table. At Adrian's Villa the painter had found an intoxication worse than wine; and having tasted the fiery spirit, he could find no further delight in sober pleasures.



His friends in Charnock-street saw how it was with him, and felt his defection according to their different natures. Amy accepted the decree of Fate with sublime resignation. He was hers no longer, this genius she had worshipped and loved. He belonged to the universe, to the future, to all time to come. What was she, that she should fling herself across his pathway, and cry, "Stay with me; you are mine!"

She bowed her head, and relinquished her lover, sacrificing her happiness to his glory, as she would have sacrificed her life for his pleasure, had need been. If by any hazard he made some careless allusion to the future in which she was to be his wife, she smiled faintly, and her smile was beautiful to behold; but it was the smile of a martyr.

Tom Graystone contemplated events from a very different point of view. He was indignant with his quondam pupil, though he gave no direct utterance to his indignation. Had he not sufficient cause for that silent rage which consumed him, when he saw his only child's face grow paler day by day, and a wan sad look in the eyes that had so lately beamed with hope and happiness?

For some time there was a lowering cloud upon the old painter's brow; and those evenings which Laurence Bell spent at home were painful to more than one. Amy knew that her father was angry, and that all her tenderness and patient management would be needed to ward off the threatened storm. She was her lover's protector and champion all through that bitter time, defending him *à tort et à travers* with a breaking heart; and Laurence Bell had no consciousness of her nobility or his own meanness. The intoxication which possessed him was a blind, mad drunkenness in its way. He thought of nothing except his successes of the present and the future. He was to be great. Mocatti, the enthusiast and trader, had said so. The Princess had told him the same—she who was a genius herself, and must therefore possess the divine gift of understanding the genius of others.

He was aroused as by the touch of a magic wand from that dull, patient industry which had been a kind of sloth. The blood that had flowed so slowly in his veins was changed to fire; he was consumed by fever and impatience; he was fretful, capricious, irritable, intolerant of small annoyances, disgusted with the common course of everyday life.

This was a part of his divine heritage; this was the penalty of genius.

One day the storm burst. It was Amy's birthday, and the painter had planned a little festival. He had ordered a fly from the livery-stables, and intended to take his daughter and his pupil to dine at "The Spaniards."

Mr. Graystone only announced his intention at the breakfast-table. He took it for granted that Laurence, even in these days of his defection, would be pleased to pay some tribute to the occasion.

"You seem to forget that it is somebody's birthday, Lal," said the painter in a more cordial tone than he had of late employed to his pupil.

Laurence looked up from his untasted breakfast with a vacant stare.

"Birthday?" he said. "O, some of the royal family, I suppose. They are always having birthdays. What day is it, by the bye? I haven't written a letter for an age."

"I think you might have remembered the 29th of June without the aid of letter-writing," retorted Mr. Graystone sharply.

The angel in the house was quick to the rescue.

"Laurence works too hard to remember dates," she said. "It is only clerks and shopkeepers who want to know the day of the month."

"He might have remembered your birthday," answered the offended father.

"Amy's birthday! Ah, to be sure, the twenty-ninth; and I have nothing to give you," exclaimed the young man, aroused at last. "Never mind, Amy; I may be able to make you a noble birthday-gift next year, if my pictures are successful."

"Give me one leaf from your laurel crown, dear, and I shall be quite satisfied," the girl said gently.

"Laurel fiddlesticks!" growled Tom Graystone. "Consider yourself lucky if the young man can give you a ten-and-sixpenny pencil-case. When a painter begins life by wasting his nights at parties, and his days in dancing attendance upon a woman of fashion, one can make a tolerable guess as to the result. However, I don't want to grumble to-day, Lal; you're young and foolish, and I suppose we mustn't be surprised if the tall talk about your glowering woman with the carving knives has done you a little mischief. Wait till next year, when you exhibit another glowering woman, and the critics say you have repeated yourself; or exhibit a simpering woman, and are told that you have missed the fire and dash so remarkable in your work of promise.—Well, I mustn't quarrel with him if he gathers his roses while he may, must I, dear?" said the painter, nodding at his daughter.—"I'll tell you what I'm going to do for you, Lal, in honour of this little girl's nineteenth anniversary. I'm going to give you a cockney holiday, a drive by Finchley and Highgate, and chicken and moselle at the Spaniards; and you shall talk poetical nonsense to Amy while we drive homeward in the moonlight, when the lamps in all the villas are twinkling gaily, and the tired organ-grinders are going home to their kennels behind Hatton Garden."

Laurence Bell's fair Raffaele face flushed crimson. "I should have liked it of all things," he said; "but—"

"But!" roared Tom Graystone in a voice of thunder, "is there such a word as 'but' on my girl's birthday?"

"You must know how I should have liked to be with you, Amy,"

pleaded Laurence, with an appealing look at his sweetheart, "but I forgot that to-day would be the 29th, and I promised Mocatti—and—the Princess, to dine at the Star and Garter, where there is to be—a kind of artistic gathering—Sir Edgar Verbockhaven—young Curtius Rock—the 'Monmouth after Marston Moor' man, you know—and—"

"You can break your promise on my girl's birthday," interrupted Mr. Graystone sternly.

"No, papa, he shall not break it," cried Amy, rising suddenly from that humble breakfast-table, and hurrying towards the door; "he shall not break his promise—to the Princess; for I know he would rather keep it."

It was the first time she had ever been angry with her lover. Laurence looked at her in amazement. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes kindled as she spoke; but before he could stop her she had left the room. She ran upstairs to her own sanctuary—a small apartment overlooking dreary leads and chimneys—and here she fell on her knees by the little bed, and abandoned herself to her despair. It was very real despair, though it was only a girl's first sorrow. She remembered her last birthday, celebrated by no grand festival, a hopelessly wet day, dreary and dull beyond all measure; but, O, how happy she had been, wasting the hours in the painting-room, while Laurence and her father lounged over their work! What a cheery little dinner they had eaten together, with a bottle of sparkling wine opened in her honour, and what merry talk and laughter there had been while the wine was being drunk! In the evening they had all gone to a theatre to witness some clumsy adaptation of a flimsy Odéon comedy; and papa had been betrayed into slumber before the piece was finished, and Laurence had drawn his chair close to hers to talk nonsense, which, to that one fair critic, had seemed wittier than all the smart Gallicisms that illumined the play. She remembered all this to-day, as she knelt beside her bed, and the remembrance stung her keenly.

Tom Graystone turned fiercely upon his pupil as Amy left the room.

"Now, sir," he cried, "the sooner this farce is ended the better."

"What farce?"

"Your residence in this house—your position as my daughter's lover."

"My dear Mr. Graystone," remonstrated Laurence, "you surely don't suppose that I am the less attached to my dearest Amy because I accept an invitation to Richmond—"

"No, Mr. Bell, but because you have begun a life of Richmond dinners; because you have sold yourself to the devil, as the man in the old story sold himself. You have got your price—make the most of it. No daughter of mine shall sacrifice her young existence to the unpaid drudgery of matrimony, unless the heart of the man who sues for her is honest and true to the core. Yours is not. You have chosen your

course. If you want a wife, look for one in your patroness—your Roman princess—your Madame d'Aspramonte."

"I beg, Mr. Graystone, that you will respect the name of that lady," cried Laurence, growing suddenly pale.

"Is the wound so deep already?" said the old painter, half in irony, half in sadness. "Well, well; let me remember that you are young and foolish. Perhaps it is better as it is. I know very little of your Princess, except that nobody seems to know much about her; and that in itself is sometimes considered evidence against a lady. She calls herself the widow of a Roman banker, and she spends so much money that it is to be hoped the banker was a Rothschild. It is her caprice to patronise art and artists. Her parties are agreeable, and her guests are legion. But though you may find charming women among her acquaintance, you will find no women of marked position in the great world. This is all I have ever heard for or against your Princess, and this is all I have to say of her. And now, Mr. Bell, the sooner you and I bid good-bye to each other the better."

"Do you mean this, Mr. Graystone?" asked the young man.

"Most emphatically."

"And Amy—"

"Amy Graystone shall never speak to you again with my leave," answered the old painter. "You have chosen your road; take it, and keep to it. I and my daughter resign our claims upon you."

"As you please, Mr. Graystone," replied Laurence.

He flung himself out of the room, took his hat from a peg in the passage, and went out of the house that had sheltered him for ten years of his life. This was his farewell to boyhood and youth.

He hailed the first empty cab he encountered and drove straight to Pelham Lodge, where he found the great Mocatti attired in a gorgeous velvet morning-gown, dipping his fork meditatively into a Strasburg pie, *en terrine*. To him Mr. Bell related the unjustifiable conduct of Mr. Thomas Graystone.

"Thou hast done well to escape from their clutches," cried the dealer. "It was one thing to learn the A B C of thine art from plodding old Thomas Graystone; it is another thing to marry his daughter. And so thou hast left Charnock-street for always. It was high time. The great world has begun to be aware of thee, and the great world will not direct its notes of invitation to Charnock-street. I will find thee an apartment *de garçon* at the West End. For to-night thou canst sleep in this house."

Laurence Bell submitted to his destiny. He kept his appointment at Richmond, whither he travelled very comfortably in Mr. Mocatti's new phaeton. The dinner was a brilliant success; and amongst the guests of Madame d'Aspramonte Mr. Bell forgot that it was Amy's birthday, and that his presence at that banquet was a kind of treason.

He thought of Amy as he drove homeward in the moonlight. It

may be that he was scarcely sorry to be free from a yoke that had begun to be galling to him. He believed himself still true to his love, but he was not the less tired of Charnock-street; and it was with a sense of relief that he found himself outside the dull old house which had sheltered him so long, and knew that he had no occasion to enter it again.

He wrote Miss Graystone a long letter before he slept that night, full of passionate protestations of truth and constancy, interspersed with feverish rhapsody about that laurel crown which was to be laid at the young lady's feet by and by. It was the sort of letter that can only be written by a man who feels and believes all he writes—while writing it; and it was the sort of letter which is almost invariably belied by the after-conduct of the writer.

Laurence Bell blotted the manuscript with his tears; he kissed the name which he had written at the top of the page; and then, having addressed and sealed his letter, he threw himself down to sleep, worn out by the day's excitement, and dreamt of Giulia d'Aspramonte.

He awaited a reply to this letter, but did not await it very impatiently; for the Princess absorbed the greater part of his time and thought. Mr. Mocatti gave him a cheque for a hundred and twenty-five pounds—just half the amount paid for the Lady Macbeth by Madame d'Aspramonte; and with this small capital he felt himself secure from all sordid cares. The same kind friend and mentor introduced him to a crack tailor, and found him a couple of pretty little rooms on a second floor in North Audley-street, *un vrai nid de gandin*, as the mentor said, with the daintiest chintz draperies lined with pink, and the most luxurious of easy-chairs.

Having established his protégé in this delightful nest, Mr. Mocatti bade him farewell, prior to his departure for a scamper through the continental art exhibitions, with an eye to business.

"If you want more money before I come back, you will draw upon me," he said in this farewell interview. "I have no fear of your future. The Princess will make you fashionable, and to be fashionable nowadays is to be great. I do not say that Madame d'Aspramonte has any real position amongst your insular noblesse, with their grand airs of exclusiveness; but in a certain circle she is a kind of queen; and when people know you are painting for her you will have plenty of commissions. The frescoes will give you a great chance, for they will be talked of everywhere. And now, adieu; and remember my hopes of thee. I have set thee on the high road to the Temple of Fame. *C'est à toi d'y arriver à pas de géant.*"

Upon this Mr. Mocatti embraced—or would have embraced—his protégé, wiped away a tear with one finger of his irreproachable glove, and departed, leaving the young man to his all-absorbing dream of success, and to the tender mercies of his patroness.

And thus ended the first act in the career of Laurence Bell the painter.

# BELGRAVIA

MAY 1867

## BIRDS OF PREY

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," &c

Book the Fifth

RELICS OF THE DEAD

CHAPTER IV. GLIMPSES OF A BYGONE LIFE

OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup>. I found the villa inhabited by Miss Hezekiah Judson very easily, and found it one of those stiff square dwelling-houses with brass curtain-rods, prim flower-beds, and vivid green palings, only to be discovered in full perfection in the choicer suburb of a country town.

I had heard enough during my brief residence in Ullerton to understand that to live in the Lancaster Road was to possess a diploma of respectability not easily vitiated by individual conduct. No disreputable person had ever yet set up their unholy Lares and Penates in one of those new slack-baked villas; and that person must have been very bold who, conscious of moral unfitness or pecuniary shortcoming, should have ventured to pitch his tent in that sacred locality.

Miss Hezekiah Judson was one of the individuals whose shining sanctity of life and comfortable income lent a reflected brightness to the irreproachable suburb. I was admitted to her abode by an elderly woman of starched demeanour but agreeable visage, who ushered me into a spotless parlour whereof the atmosphere was of that vault-like coldness peculiar to a room which is only inhabited on state occasions. Here the starched domestic left me while she carried my letter of introduction to her mistress. In her absence I had leisure to form some idea of Miss Judson's character on the mute evidence of Miss Judson's surroundings. From the fact that there were books of a sentimental and poetical tenor amongst the religious works ranged at mathematically correct distances upon the dark-green table-cover—from the presence of three twittering canaries in a large brass cage—from the

evidence of a stuffed Blenheim spaniel with intensely brown eyes reclining on a crimson velvet cushion under a glass-shade, I opined that Miss Judson's piety was pleasantly leavened by sentiment, and that her Wesleyanism was agreeably tempered by that womanly tenderness which, failing more legitimate outlets, will waste itself upon twittering canaries and plethoric spaniels.

I was not mistaken. Miss Judson appeared presently, followed by the servant bearing a tray of cake and wine. This was the first occasion on which I had been offered refreshment by any person to whom I had presented myself. I argued, therefore, that Miss Judson was the weakest person with whom I had yet had to deal; and I flattered myself with the hope that from Miss Judson's amiable weakness, sentimentality, and womanly tenderness, I should obtain better aid than from more business-like and practical people.

I fancied that with this lady it would be necessary to adopt a certain air of candour. I therefore did not conceal from her the fact that my business had something to do with that Haygarthian fortune awaiting a claimant.

"The person for whom you are concerned is not Mr. Theodore Judson?" she asked, with some asperity.

I assured her that I had never seen Theodore Judson, and that I was in no manner interested in his success.

"In that case I shall be happy to assist you as far as lies in my power; but I can do nothing to advance the interests of Theodore Judson junior. I venture to hope that I am a Christian; and if Theodore Judson junior were to come here to me and ask my forgiveness, I should accord that forgiveness as a Christian; but I cannot and will not lend myself to the furtherance of Theodore Judson's avaricious designs. I cannot lend myself to the suppression of truth or the assertion of falsehood. Theodore Judson senior is not the rightful heir to the late John Haygarth's fortune, though I am bound to acknowledge that his claim would be prior to my brother's. There is a man who stands before the Theodore Judsons, and the Theodore Judsons know it. But were they the rightful claimants, I should still consider them most unfitted to enjoy superior fortune. If that dog could speak, he would be able to testify to ill-usage received from Theodore Judson junior at his own garden-gate which would bespeak the character of the man to every thoughtful mind. A young man who could indulge his spiteful feelings against an elderly kinswoman at the expense of an unoffending animal is not the man to make a worthy use of fortune."

I expressed my acquiescence with this view of the subject; and I was glad to perceive that with Miss Judson, as with her brother, the obnoxious Theodores would stand me in good stead. The lady was only two years younger than her brother, and even more inclined to be communicative. I made the most of my opportunity, and sat in the vault-like parlour listening respectfully to her discourse, and from

time to time hazarding a leading question, as long as it pleased her to converse; although it seemed to me as if a perennial spring of cold water were trickling slowly down my back and pervading my system during the entire period.

As the reward of my fortitude I obtained Miss Judson's promise to send me any letters or papers she might find amongst her store of old documents relating to the personal history of Matthew Haygarth.

"I know I have a whole packet of letters in Matthew's own hand amongst my grandmother's papers," said Miss Judson. "I was a great favourite with my grandmother, and used to spend a good deal of my time with her before she died—which she did while I was in pinafores; but young people wore pinafores much longer in my time than they do now; and I was getting on for fourteen years of age when my grandmother departed this life. I've often heard her talk of her brother Matthew, who had been dead some years when I was born. She was very fond of him, and he of her, I've heard her say; and she used often to tell me how handsome he was in his youth, and how well he used to look in a chocolate and gold-laced riding-coat just after the victory of Culloden, when he came to Ullerton in secret, to pay her a visit—not being on friendly terms with his father."

I asked Miss Judson if she had ever read Matthew Haygarth's letters.

"No," she said; "I look at them sometimes when I'm tidying the drawer in which I keep them, and I have sometimes stopped to read a word here and there, but no more. I keep them out of respect to the dead; but I think it would make me unhappy to read them. The thoughts and the feelings in old letters seem so fresh that it brings our poor mortality too closely home to us when we remember how little except those faded letters remains of those who wrote them. It is well for us to remember that we are only travellers and wayfarers on this earth; but sometimes it seems just a little hard to think how few traces of our footsteps we leave behind us when the journey is finished."

The canaries seemed to answer Miss Judson with a feeble twitter of assent: and I took my leave, with a feeling of compassion in my heart. I the scamp—I Robert Macaire the younger—had pity upon the caged canaries, and the lonely old woman whose narrow life was drawing to its close, and who began to feel how very poor a thing it had been after all.

*Oct. 11th.* I have paid the penalty of my temerity in enduring the vault-like chilliness of Miss Hezekiah Judson's parlour, and am suffering to-day from a sharp attack of influenza; that complaint which of all others tends to render a man a burden to himself, and a nuisance to his fellow-creatures. Under these circumstances I have ordered a



fire in my own room—a personal indulgence scarcely warranted by Sheldon's stipend—and I sit by my own fire pondering over the story of Matthew Haygarth's life.

On the table by my side are scattered more than a hundred letters, all in Matthew's bold hand; but even yet, after a most careful study of those letters, the story of the man's existence is far from clear to me. The letters are full of hints and indications, but they tell so little plainly. They deal in enigmas, and disguise names under the mask of initials.

There is much in these letters which relates to the secret history of Matthew's life. They were written to the only creature amongst his kindred in whom he fully confided. This fact transpires more than once, as will be seen anon by the extracts I shall proceed to make; if my influenza—which causes me to shed involuntary tears that give me the appearance of a drivelling idiot, and which jerks me nearly out of my chair every now and then with a convulsive sneeze—will permit me to do anything rational or useful.

I have sorted and classified the letters, first upon one plan, then upon another, until I have classified and sorted them into chaos. Having done this, my only chance is to abandon all idea of classification, and go quietly through them in consecutive order according to their dates, jotting down whatever strikes me as significant. George Sheldon's acumen must do the rest.

Thus I begin my notes, with an extract from the fourth letter in the series. Mem. I preserve Matthew's own orthography, which is the most eccentric it was ever my lot to contemplate.

“*December 14, '42.* Indeed, my dear Ruth, I am ventursom wear you are concurnd, and w<sup>d</sup> tell you that I w<sup>d</sup> taik panes to kepe fromm another. I saw y<sup>e</sup> same girl w<sup>h</sup> it was my good fortun to saive from y<sup>e</sup> molestashun of raketters and mohoks at Smithfelde in September last past. She is y<sup>e</sup> derest prittiest creture you ever saw, and as elegant and genteel in her speche and maner as a Corte lady, or as y<sup>e</sup> best bredd person in Ullerton. I mett her in y<sup>e</sup> nayborood of y<sup>e</sup> Marchalsee prison wear her father is at this pressent time a prisener, and had som pleassant talke with her. She rememberr'd me at once, and seme'd mitily gladd to see me. Mem. Her pritty blu eys wear fill'd with teares wen she thank'd me for having studd up to be her champyun at y<sup>e</sup> Fare. So you see, Mrs. Ruth, y<sup>r</sup> brotherr is more thort off in London than with them which hav y<sup>e</sup> rite to regard him bestt. If you had seen y<sup>e</sup> pore simpel childeish cretur and heeard her tell her arteless tale, I think y<sup>r</sup> kinde hart w<sup>d</sup> have bin sore to consider so much unmiritted misfortun; y<sup>e</sup> father is in pore helth, a captiv, y<sup>e</sup> mother has binn dedd thre yeres, and y<sup>e</sup> pore orfann girl, Mollie, has to mentane y<sup>e</sup> burden of y<sup>e</sup> sick father, and a yung helples sister. Think of this, kinde Mrs. Ruth, in y<sup>r</sup> welthy home. Mem. Pore Mrs. Mollie is prittier than y<sup>e</sup> fineist ladies that wear to be sene at y<sup>e</sup> opening of y<sup>e</sup> grand new roome

at Ranellar this spring last past, wear I sor y<sup>e</sup> too Miss Gunings and Lady Harvey, wich is alsoe accounted a grate buty."

I think this extract goes very far to prove that my friend Matthew was considerably smitten by the pretty young woman whose champion he had been in some row at Bartholomew Fair. This fits into one of the scraps of information afforded by my ancient inhabitant in Ullerton Almshouses, who remembers having heard his grandfather talk of Mat Haygarth's part in some fight or disturbance at the great Smithfield festival.

My next extract treats again of Mollie, after an interval of four months. It seems as if Matthew had confided in his sister so far as to betray his tenderness for the poor player girl of the London booths; but I can find no such letter amongst those in my hands. Such an epistle may have been considered by Mrs. Ruth too dangerous to be kept where the parental eye might in some evil hour discover it. Matthew's sister was unmarried at this date, and lived within the range of that stern paternal eye. Matthew's letter appears to me to have been written in reply to some solemn warning from Ruth.

"*April* 12, 1743. Sure, my dear sister canot think me so baise a retch as to injoore a pore simpel girl hoo confides in me as y<sup>e</sup> best and trooest of mortals, wich for her dere saik I will strive to be. If so be my sister cou<sup>d</sup> think so ill of me it wou<sup>d</sup> amost temt me to think amiss of her, wich cou<sup>d</sup> imagen so vile a thort. You tel me that Mrs. Rebecka Caulfeld is mor than ever estemed by my father; but, Ruth, I am bounde to say, my father's esteme is nott to be y<sup>e</sup> rule of my ackshuns thro' life, for it semes to me their is no worser tyrrannie than y<sup>t</sup> wich fathers do striv to impose on there children, and I do acount that a kind of barbarity wich wou<sup>d</sup> compel y<sup>e</sup> hart of youth to sute y<sup>e</sup> proodense of age. I do not dout but Mrs. Rebecka is a mitey proper and well natur'd person, tho' taken upp with this new sekt of methodys, or as sum do call them in derission swaddlers and jumpers, set afoot by y<sup>e</sup> madbrain'd young man, Wesley, and one that is still madder, Witfelde. Thear ar I dare sware many men in Ullerton wich wou<sup>d</sup> be gladd to obtane Mrs. Rebecka's hand and fortun; but if y<sup>e</sup> fortun wear ten times more, I wou<sup>d</sup> not preetend to oferr my harte to herr w<sup>h</sup> can never be its misteress. Now, my deare sister, having gone as farr towards satisfieing all y<sup>r</sup> queerys as my paper wou<sup>d</sup> welle permitt, I will say no more but to begg you to send me all y<sup>e</sup> knews, and to believe that none can be more affectionately y<sup>r</sup> humble servant then your brother,

"MATHEW HAYGARTH."

In this extract we have strong ground for supposing that our Matthew truly loved the player-girl, and meant honestly by his sweetheart. There is a noble indignation in his repudiation of his sister's doubts, and a manly determination not to marry Mrs. Rebecca's comfortable

fortune. I begin to think that Sheldon's theory of an early and secret marriage will turn up a trump card; but heaven only knows how slow or how difficult may be the labour of proving such a marriage. And then, even if we can find documentary evidence of such an event, we shall have but advanced one step in our obscure path, and should have yet to discover the issue of that union, and to trace the footsteps of Matthew's unknown descendants during the period of a century.

I wonder how Sisyphus felt when the stone kept rolling back upon him. Did he ever look up to the top of the mountain and calculate the distance he must needs traverse before his task should be done?

The next letter in which I find a passage worth transcribing is of much later date, and abounds in initials. The post-mark is illegible; but I can just make out the letters P.O. and L. The two first close together, the third after an interval; and there is internal evidence to show that the letter was written from some dull country place. Might not that place have been Spotswood? the P.O. and the L. of the post-mark would fit very well into the name of that village. Again I leave this question to the astute Sheldon.

The date is March 1749.

"M. is but porely. Sumtimes I am pain'd to believe this quiett life is not well suted to herr disposishun, having bin acustumed to so much livlinesse and nois. I hav reproched her with this, but she tolde me with teres in her eys, to be neare mee and M. and C. was to be happie, and y<sup>t</sup> it is il helth onlic wich is y<sup>e</sup> cawse of y<sup>e</sup> sadnesse. I pray heaven M.'s helth may be on y<sup>e</sup> mending hand soone. Little M. grows more butifull every day; and indede, my dear sisterr, if you cou'd stele another visitt this waye, and oblidge y<sup>r</sup> affectionat brother, you wou'd considerr him y<sup>e</sup> moste butifull creetur ever scene. So much enteligenge with sich ingaging temper endeaers him to all hartes. Mrs. J. says she adors him, and is amost afraide to be thort a Paygann for bestoeing so much affection on a erthly creetur, and this to oure good parson who cou'd find no reproche for her plesant folly.

"We hav had heavy ranes all y<sup>e</sup> week last past. Sech wether can but serve to hinderr M.'s recovery. The fysichion at G., wear I tooke her, saies she shou'd hav much fresh aire every day—if not afoot, to be carrid in a chaire or cotche; but in this wether, and in a plaice wear neither chaire nor cotche can be had, she must needs stop in doors. I hav begg'd her to lett me carry her to G., but she will not, and says in y<sup>e</sup> summerr she will be as strong as everr. I pray God she may be so. Butt there are times whenn my harte is sore and heavy; and the rane beeting agenst the winder semes lik dropps of cold worter falling uponn my pore aking harte. If you cou'd stele a visitt you wou'd see wether she semes worse than whenn you sor her last ortumm; she is trieing y<sup>e</sup> tansy tea; and beggs her service to you, and greatfull thanks for y<sup>r</sup> remembrance of her. I dare to say you here splended accounts

of my doins in London—at cok fites and theaters, dansing at Vorxhall, and beeting y<sup>e</sup> wotch in Covin Garden. Does my F. stil use to speke harsh agenst me, or has he ni forgott their is sech a creetur living? If he has so, I hope you wil kepe him in sech forgetfullnesse,—and obliage

“y<sup>r</sup> loving brother and obediant servent,

“MATHEW HAYGARTH.”

To me this letter is almost conclusive evidence of a marriage. Who can this little M. be, of whom he writes so tenderly, except a child? Who can this woman be, whose ill health causes him such anxiety, unless a wife? Of no one *but* a wife could he write so freely to his sister. The place to which he asks her to “steal a visit” must needs be a home to which a man could invite his sister. I fancy it is thus made very clear that at this period Matthew Haygarth was secretly married and living at Spotswold, where his wife and son were afterwards buried, and whence the body of the son was ultimately removed to Dewsdale to be laid in that grave which the father felt would soon be his own resting-place. That allusion to the Ullerton talk of London roysterings indicates that Matthew’s father believed him to be squandering the paternal substance in the metropolis at the very time when the young man was leading a simple domestic life within fifty miles of the paternal abode. No man could do such a thing in these days of rapid locomotion, when every creature is more or less peripatetic; but in that benighted century the distance from Ullerton to Spotswold constituted a day’s journey. That Matthew was living in one place while he was supposed to be in another, is made sufficiently clear by several passages in his letters, all more or less in the strain of the following:

“I was yesterday—markett-day—at G., wear I ran suddennly agenst Peter Browne’s eldest ladd. Y<sup>e</sup> boy openn’d his eyes wide, stearing like an owle; butt I gaive him bakk his looke with interrest, and tolde him if he was curiouse to know my name, I was Simon Lubchick, farmer, at his servise. Y<sup>e</sup> pore simpel ladd arsk’d my pardonn humbly for having mistook me for a gentelman of Ullerton—a frend of his father; on wich I gaive him a shillin, and we parted, vastly plesed with eche other; and this is nott the fust time the site of Ullerton fokes has putt me into a swett.”

Amongst later letters are very sad ones. The little M. is dead. The father’s poor aching heart proclaims its anguish in very simple words.

“Nov. 1751. I thank my dear sister kindly for her frendlinese and compashin; butt, ah, he is gone, and their semes to be no plesure or comforte on this erth without him! onlie a littel childe of 6 yeres, and yett so dere a creetur to this harte that the worlde is emty and lonely

without him. M. droopes sadly, and is more ailing every day. Indede, my dere Ruth, I see nothing butt sorrow before me, and I wou'd be right gladd to lay down at peece in my littel M.'s grave."

I can find no actual announcements of death : only sad allusions here and there. I fancy the majority of Matthew's letters must have been lost, for the dates of those confided to my hands are very far apart, and there is evidence in all of them of other correspondence. After the letter alluding to little M.'s death, there is a hiatus of eight years. Then comes a letter with the post-mark London very clear, from which I transcribe an extract.

"October 4th, 1759. The toun is very sadd ; every body, high and low, rich and pore, in morning for Gennerel Wolf : wot a nobel deth to die, and how much happier than to live, when one considers the cairs and miseries of this life ; and sech has bin the oppinion of wiser fokes than y<sup>r</sup> humble servent. Being in companie on Thersday sennite with that distingwish'd riter, Dr. Johnson,—whose admir'd story of *Raselass* I sent you new from y<sup>e</sup> press, but who I am bound to confesse is less admirable as a fine gentlemann than as an orther, his linning siled and his kravatt twisted ary, and his manners wot in a more obskure personn wou'd be thort ungenteel,—he made a remark wich impress'd me much. Some one present, being almost all gentelmenn of parts and learning except y<sup>r</sup> pore untuter'd brother, observed that it was a saying with the ainchents that y<sup>e</sup> happiest of men was him wich was never born ; y<sup>e</sup> next happy him wich died the soonest. On wich Doctor Johnson cried out verry loud and angry, 'That was a Paggann sentyment, sir, and I am asham'd that a Xtian gentelmann shou'd repete it as a subject for admerashun. Betwene these heathen men and y<sup>e</sup> followers of Christ their is all y<sup>e</sup> differenc betwene a slave and a servent of a kind Master. Eche bears the same burden ; butt y<sup>e</sup> servent knows he will recieve just wages for his work, wile y<sup>e</sup> slave hopes for nothing, and so conkludes that to escape work is to be happy!' I could but aknowlege the wisdomm and pyety of this speche ; yett whenn I see y<sup>e</sup> peopel going bye in there black rayment, I envy the young Gennerel his glorious deth, and wish I was laying amongst the slane on the hites of Quebeck. I went to look at y<sup>e</sup> old house in J. St., but I wou'd not go in to see Mr. F. or y<sup>e</sup> old roomes : for I think I shou'd see the aparishions of those that once liv'd in them. C. thrivs at Higate, wear the aire is fresh and pewater. I go to see her offen. She is nerely as high as you. Give my servis to Mrs. Rebecka, sinse you say it will plesse my father to do so, and he is now dispos'd to think more kindly of me. Butt if he thinks I shal everr arske her to be my wife he is mityly mistaken. You know wear my harte lies—in y<sup>e</sup> grave with all that made life dere. Thank my father for the Bill, and tell him I pass my time in good companie, and neether drink nor play : and will come to Ullerton to pay him my respektts when he pleses to bid

me. Butt I hav no desire to leeve London, as I am gladd to be neare C."

Who was C., whom Matthew visited at Highgate, and who was nearly as tall as Ruth Judson? Was she not most likely the same C. mentioned in conjunction with the little M. in the earlier letters? and if so, can there be any doubt that she was the daughter of Matthew Haygarth? Of whom but of a daughter would he write as in this letter? She was at Highgate, at school most likely, and he goes to see her. She is nearly as tall as Mrs. Judson. This height must have been a new thing, or he would scarcely impart it as a piece of news to his sister. And then he has no desire to leave London, as he is glad to be near C.

My life upon it, C. is a daughter.

Acting upon this conviction, I have transcribed all passages relating to C., at whatever distance of time they occur.

Thus, in 1763, I find—"C. has grone verry handsome, and Mrs. N. tells me is much admir'd by a brother of her frend Tabitha. She never stirs abrorde but with Tabitha, and if a dutchess, cou'd be scarce wated on more cairfully. Mrs. N. loves her verry tenderly, and considers her the sweetest and most wel bredd of young women. I hav given her the new edishun of Sir Charls Grandisson, wich they read alowde in y<sup>e</sup> evenings, turn and turn about, to Mrs. N. at her spinning. C. has given me a wool comforter of her owne worke, and sum stockings wich are two thick to ware, but I hav not told her so."

Again, in 1764: "Tabitha Meynell's brother goes more than ever to Higate. He is a clark in his father's wearhouse; very sober and estimabel, and if it be for y<sup>e</sup> hapiness of C. to mary him, I wou'd be y<sup>e</sup> laste of men to sett my uthoritty agenst her enclinashun. She is yett but ayteen yeres of age, wich is young to make a change; so I tell Mrs. N. we will waite. Meanwhile y<sup>e</sup> young peapel see eche other offen."

Again, in 1765: "Young Meynell is still constant, expressing much love and admirashun for C. in his discourse with Mrs. N., butt sattisfide to wait my plesure before spekeing oppenly to C. He semes a most exempelry young man; his father a cittizen of some repewt in Aldersgait Street, ware I have din'd since last riting to you, and at hoose tabel I was paid much considerashun. He, Tomas Meynell y<sup>e</sup> father, will give his son five hundred pound, and I prommis a thousand pound with C. and to furnish a house at Chelsee, a verry plesent and countrie-fide vilage; so I make no doubt there will soon be a wedding.

"I am sorrie to here my father is aleing; give him my love and servise, and will come to Ullerton immediate on receiving his commands. I am plesed to think Mrs. Rebecka Caulfeld is so dutifull and kind to him, and has comfortedd him with prairs and discourses. I

thank her for this more than for any frendshipp for my undeserving self. Pray tell her that I am much at her servise.

“Our new king is lov’d and admir’d by all. His ministers not so; and wise peopel do entertain themselves with what I think foollish jokes a-bout a *Skotch boote*. Perhappes I am not cleverr enuff to see the funn in this joke.”

In this letter I detect a certain softening of feeling towards Mrs. Rebecca Caulfield. In the next year—’66—according to my notes, Matthew’s father died, and I have no letters bearing the date of that year, which our Matthew no doubt spent at home. Nor have I any letters from this time until the year of Matthew’s marriage with Rebecca Caulfield. In the one year of his union with Mrs. Rebecca, and the last year of his life, there are many letters, a few from London and the rest from the manor-house at Dewsdale. But in these epistles, affectionate and confidential as they are, there is little positive information.

These are the letters of the regenerate and Wesleyanised Matthew; and, like the more elaborate epistles of his wife Rebecca, deal chiefly with matters spiritual. In these letters I can perceive the workings of a weak mind, which in its decline has become a prey to religious terrors; and though I fully recognise the reforming influence which John Wesley exercised upon the people of England, I fancy poor Matthew would have been better in the hands of a woman whose piety was of a less severe type than that of Wesleyan Rebecca. There is an all-pervading tone of fear in these letters: a depression which is almost despair. In the same breath he laments and regrets the lost happiness of his youth, and regrets and laments his own iniquity in having been so ignorantly and unthinkingly happy.

Thus in one letter he says—

“When I think of that inconsideratt foolish time with M., and how to be nere her semed the highest blisse erth cou’d bistowe or Heven prommis, I trimbel to think of my pore unawaken’d sole, and of her dome on wich the tru light never shown. If I cou’d believe she was happy my owne sorow wou’d be lesse; but I canot, sence all y<sup>e</sup> worthyest memberrrs of our seck agree that to die thinking onely of erthly frends, and clingeng with a passhunate regrett to them we luv on erth is to be lesse than a tru Xtian, and for sech their is but one dome.”

And again, in a still later epistle, he writes—

“On Toosday sennite an awakning discorse fromm a verry young man, until lately a carppenter, but now imploid piusly in going from toun to toun and vilage to vilage, preaching. He says, that a life of cairlesse happyness, finding plesure in y<sup>e</sup> things of this worlde, is—not being repented of—irretreable damnation. This is a maloncally thort! I fell to mewsing on M., with hoom I injoy’d such compleat happyness,

tel Deth came like a spekter to bannish all comferte. And now I knowe that our lives wear vanity. I ashure you, dear sister, I am pro-didjusly sadd when I reffleckt upon this truth—ashuredly it is a harde saying.”

Anon comes that strange foreknowledge of death—that instinctive sense of the shadowy hand so soon to lay him at rest; and with that mystic prescience comes a yearning for the little child M. to be laid where his father may lie down beside him. There are many passages in the latter letters which afford a clue to that mysterious midnight burial at Dewsdale.

“Last nite I drem’t of the cherchyarde at S. I satte under the olde yewe tree, as it semed in my dreme, and hurd a childes voice crying in a very pitious mannerr. The thort of this dreme has oppress’d my speritts all day, and Rebecka has enquier’d more than wunce wot ales me. If little M. but lay nere at hande, in y<sup>e</sup> graive to wich I fele I must soone be carrid, I beleive I shou’d be happyer. Reproove me for this folley if you plese. I am getting olde, and Sattan temts me with seche fooleish thorts. Wot dose it matter to my sole wear my vile bodie is laid? and yet I have a fonde fooleish desier to be berrid with littel M.”

And in these latest letters there is ample evidence of that yearning on Matthew’s part to reveal a secret which Rebecca’s own correspondence betrays.

“We tawked of many things, and she was more than ordinary kind and gentel. I had a mind to tell her about M., and aske her frendship for C.; but she seemed not to cair to here my sekrets, and I think wou’d be offended if she new the trooth. So I cou’d not finde courage to tell her. Before I die I shal speek planely for the saik of C. and M. and y<sup>e</sup> littel one. I shal cum to U. erly nex weak to make my Wille, and this time shal chainge my umour no more. I have burnt y<sup>e</sup> laste, not likeing it.”

This passage occurs in the last letter, amongst the packet confided to me. The letter is dated September 5, 1774. On the fourteenth of the following month Matthew died, and in all probability the will here alluded to was never executed. Certain it is that Matthew, whose end was awfully sudden at the last, died intestate, whereby his son John inherited the bulk, and ultimately the whole, of his fortune. There are many allusions to this infant son in the last few letters; but I do not think the little creature obtained any great hold on the father’s heart. No doubt he was bound and swaddled out of even such small semblance to humanity as one may reasonably expect in a child of six or seven weeks old, and by no means an agreeable being. And poor weak-minded Matthew’s heart was with that player-girl wife whom he never acknowledged, and the little M.



And thus ends the story of Matthew Haygarth, so far as I have been able to trace it in the unfathomable gloom of the past.

It seems to me that what I have next to do will be to hunt up information respecting that young man Meynell, whose father lived in Aldersgate-street, and was a respectable and solid citizen of that ilk; able to give a substantial dinner to the father of his son's sweetheart, and altogether a person considerable enough, I should imagine, to have left footprints of some kind or other on the sands of Time. The inscrutable Sheldon will be able to decide in what manner the hunt of the Meynells must begin. I doubt if there is anything more to be done in Ullerton.

I have sent Sheldon a fair copy of my extracts from Matthew's correspondence, and have returned the letters to Miss Judson, carefully packed in accordance with her request. I now await my Sheldon's next communication and the abatement of my influenza before making my next move in the great game of chess called Life.

What is the meaning of Horatio Paget's lengthened abode in this town? He is still here. He went past this house to-day while I was standing at my window in that abject state of mind known only to influenza and despair. I think I was suffering from a touch of both diseases, by the bye. What is that man doing here? The idea of his presence fills me with all manner of vague apprehensions. I cannot rid myself of the absurd notion that the lavender-glove I saw lying in Goodge's parlour had been left there by the Captain. I know the idea *is* an absurd one, and I tell myself again and again that Paget *cannot* have any inkling of my business here, and therefore *cannot* attempt to forestall me or steal my hard-won information. But often as I reiterate this—in that silent argument which a man is always elaborating in his own mind—I am still tormented by a nervous apprehension of treachery from that man. I suppose the boundary-line between influenza and idiocy is a very narrow one. And then Horatio Paget is such a thorough-paced scoundrel. He is *lié* with Philip Sheldon too—another thorough-paced scoundrel in a quiet gentlemanly way, unless my instinct deceives me.

*October 12th.* There is treachery somewhere. Again the Haygarthian epistles have been tampered with. Early this morning comes an indignant note from Miss Judson, reminding me that I promised the packet of letters should be restored to her yesterday at noon, and informing me that they were not returned until last night at eleven o'clock, when they were left at her back garden-gate by a dirty boy who rang the bell as loudly as if he had been giving the alarm of fire, and who thrust the packet rudely into the hand of the servant and vanished immediately. So much for the messenger. The packet itself, Miss Judson informed me, was of a dirty and disgraceful appearance, un-

worthy the hands of a gentlewoman, and one of the letters was missing.

Heedless of my influenza, I rushed at once to the lower regions of the inn, saw the waiter into whose hands I had confided my packet at half-past ten o'clock yesterday morning, and asked what messenger had been charged with it. The waiter could not tell me. He did not remember. I told him plainly that I considered this want of memory very extraordinary. The waiter laughed me to scorn, with that quiet insolence which a well-fed waiter feels for a customer who pays twenty shillings a week for his board and lodging. The packet had been given to a very respectable messenger, the waiter made no doubt. As to whether it was the ostler, or one of the boys, or the Boots, or a young woman in the kitchen who went on errands sometimes, the waiter wouldn't take upon himself to swear, being a man who would perish rather than inadvertently perjure himself. As to my packet having been tampered with, that was ridiculous. What on earth was there in a lump of letter-paper for anyone to steal? Was there money in the parcel? I was fain to confess there was no money; on which the waiter laughed aloud.

Failing the waiter, I applied myself severally to the ostler, the boys, the Boots, and the young woman in the kitchen; and then transpired the curious fact that no one had carried my packet. The ostler was sure he had not; the Boots could take his Bible oath to the same effect; the young woman in the kitchen could not call to mind anything respecting a packet, though she was able to give me a painfully circumstantial account of the events of the morning—where she went and what she did, down to the purchase of three-pennyworth of pearl-ash and a pound of Glenfield starch for the head chamber-maid, on which she dwelt with a persistent fondness.

I now felt assured that there had been treachery here, as in the Goodge business; and I asked myself to whom could I impute that treachery?

My instinctive suspicion was of Horatio Paget. And yet, was it not more probable that Theodore Judson senr. and Theodore Judson junr. were involved in this business, and were watching and counter-checking my actions with a view to frustrating the plans of my principal? This was one question which I asked myself as I deliberated upon this mysterious business. Had the Theodore Judsons some knowledge of a secret marriage on the part of Matthew Haygarth? and did they suspect the existence of an heir in the descendant of the issue of that marriage? These were further questions which I asked myself, and which I found it much more easy to ask than to answer.

After having considered these questions, I went to the Lancaster-road, saw Miss Judson—assured her, on my word as a gentleman, that the packet had been delivered by my hands into those of the waiter at eleven o'clock on the previous day, and asked to see the envelope.

There it was—my large blue wire-wove office-envelope, addressed in my own writing. But in these days of adhesive envelopes there is nothing easier than to tamper with the fastening of a letter. I registered a mental vow never again to trust any important document to the protection of a morsel of gummed paper. I counted the letters, convinced myself that there was a deficiency, and then set to work to discover which of the letters had been abstracted. Here I failed utterly. For my own convenience in copying my extracts, I had numbered the letters from which I intended to transcribe passages before beginning my work. My pencilled figures in consecutive order were visible in the corner of the superscription of every document I had used. Those numbered covers I now found intact, and I could thus assure myself that the missing document was one from which I had taken no extract.

This inspired me with a new alarm. Could it be possible that I had overlooked some scrap of information more important than all that I had transcribed?

I racked my brains in the endeavour to recall the contents of that one missing letter; but although I sat in that social tomb, Miss Judson's best parlour, until I felt my blood becoming of an arctic quality, I could remember nothing that seemed worth remembering in the letters I had laid aside as valueless.

I asked Miss Judson if she had any suspicion of the person who had tampered with the packet. She looked at me with an icy smile, and answered in ironical accents, which were even more chilling than the atmosphere of her parlour:

“Do not ask if I know who has tampered with those letters, Mr. Hawkehurst. Your affectation of surprise has been remarkably well put on; but I am not to be deceived a second time. When you came to me in the first instance, I had my suspicions; but you came furnished with a note from my brother, and as a Christian I repressed those suspicions. I know now that I have been the dupe of an impostor, and that in intrusting those letters to you I intrusted them to an emissary and tool of THEODORE JUDSON.”

I protested that I had never to my knowledge set eyes upon either of the Theodore Judsons; but the prejudiced kinswoman of those gentlemen shook her head with a smile whose icy blandness was eminently exasperating.

“I am not to be deceived a second time,” she said. “Who else but Theodore Judson should have employed you? Who else but Theodore Judson is interested in the Haygarth fortune? O, it was like him to employ a stranger where he knew his own efforts would be unavailing; it was like him to hoodwink me by the agency of a hireling tool.”

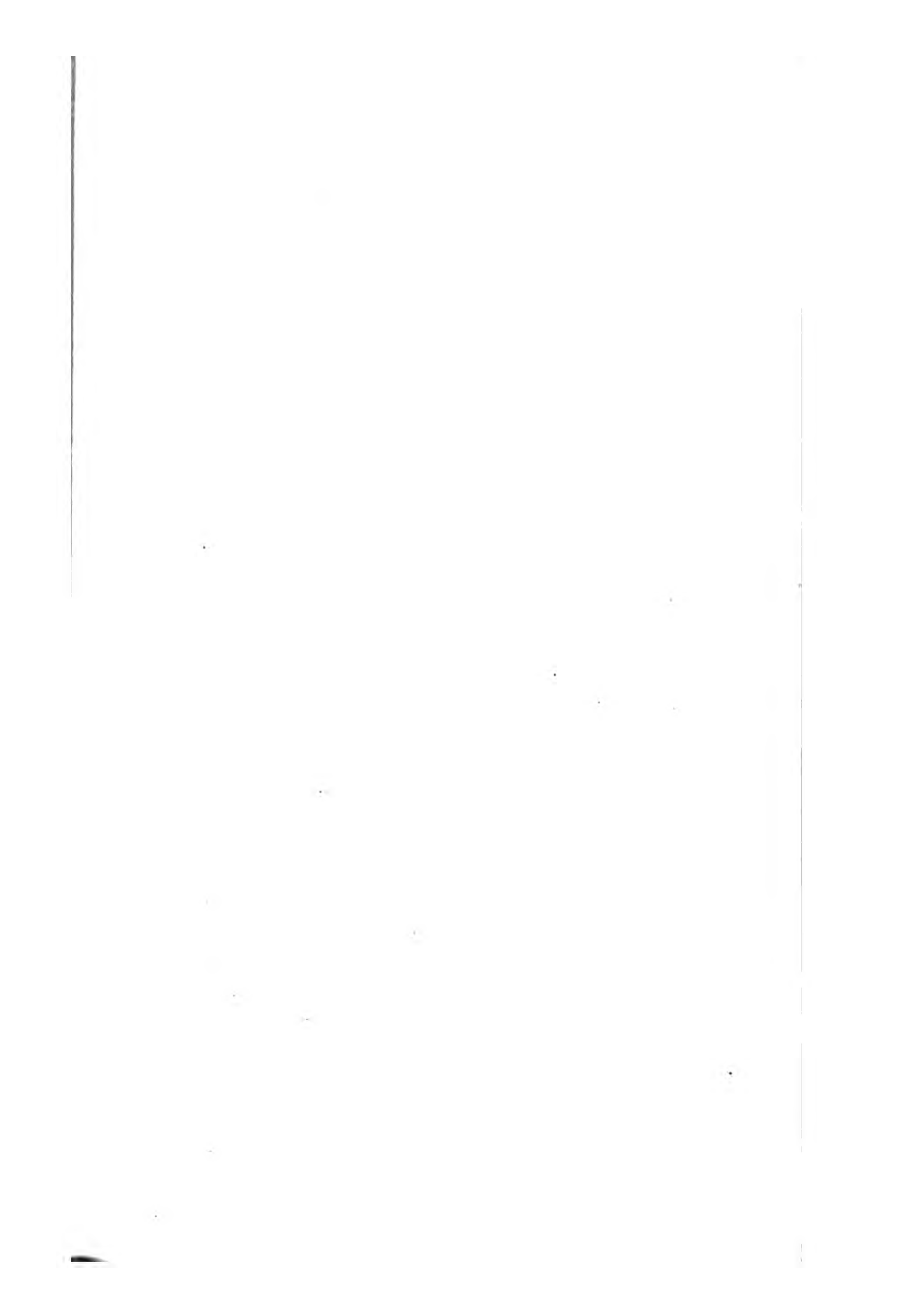
I had been addressed as a “young man” by the reverend Jonah, and now I was spoken of as a “hireling tool” by Miss Judson. I scarcely knew which was most disagreeable, and I began to think that board and lodging in the present, and a visionary three thousand pounds



M. Ellen Edwards, del.

Edmund Evans, sc.

THE MISSING LETTER.



in the future, would scarcely compensate me for such an amount of ignominy.

I went back to my inn utterly crestfallen—a creature so abject that even the degrading influence of influenza could scarcely sink me any lower in the social scale. I wrote a brief and succinct account of my proceedings, and despatched the same to George Sheldon, and then I sat down in my sickness and despair, as deeply humiliated as Ajax when he found that he had been pitching into sheep instead of Greeks, as miserable as Job amongst his dust and ashes, but I am happy to say untormented by the chorus of one or the friends of the other. In that respect at least I had some advantage over both.

*October 13th.* This morning's post brought me a brief scrawl from Sheldon.

“Come back to town directly. I have found the registry of Matthew Haygarth's marriage.”

And so I turn my back on Ullerton; with what rejoicing of spirit it is not in language to express.

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## Book the Sixth

### THE HEIRESS OF THE HAYGARTHS

#### CHAPTER I.

##### DISAPPOINTMENT

OF all places upon this earth, perhaps, there is none more obnoxious to the civilised mind than London in October; and yet to Valentine Hawkehurst, newly arrived from Ullerton per North-Western Railway, that city seemed as an enchanted and paradisaical region. Were not the western suburbs of that murky metropolis inhabited by Charlotte Halliday, and might he not hope to see her?

He did hope for that enjoyment. He had felt something more than hope while speeding Londonwards by that delightful combination of a liberal railway management, a fast and yet cheap train. He had beguiled himself with a delicious certainty. Early the next morning—or at any rate as early as civilisation permitted—he would hie him to Bayswater, and present himself at the neat iron gate of Philip Sheldon's gothic villa. *She* would be there, in the garden most likely, his divine Charlotte, so bright and radiant a creature that the dull October morning would be made glorious by her presence—she would be there, and

she would welcome him with that smile which made her the most enchanting of women.

Such thoughts as these had engaged him during his homeward journey; and compared with the delight of such visions, the perusal of daily papers and the consumption of sandwiches, whereby other passengers beguiled their transit, seemed a poor amusement. But, arrived in the dingy streets, and walking towards Chelsea under a drizzling rain, the bright picture began to grow dim. Was it not more than likely that Charlotte would be absent from London at this dismal season? Was it not very probable that Philip Sheldon would give him the cold shoulder?

With these gloomy contingencies before him, Mr. Hawkehurst tried to shut Miss Halliday's image altogether out of his mind, and to contemplate the more practical aspect of his affairs.

"I wonder whether that scoundrel Paget has come back to London?" he thought. "What am I to say to him if he has? If I own to having seen him in Ullerton, I shall lay myself open to being questioned by him as to my own business in that locality. Perhaps my wisest plan would be to say nothing, and hear his own account of himself. I fully believe he saw me on the platform that night when we passed each other without speaking."

Horatio Paget was at home when his protégé arrived. He was seated by his fireside in all the domestic respectability of a dressing-gown and slippers, with an evening paper on his knee, a slim smoke-coloured bottle at his elbow, and the mildest of cigars between his lips, when the traveller, weary and weather-stained, entered the lodging-house drawing-room.

Captain Paget received his friend very graciously, only murmuring some faint deprecation of the young man's reeking overcoat, with just such a look of gentlemanly alarm as the lamented Brummel may have felt when ushered into the presence of a "damp stranger."

"And so you've come back at last," said the Captain, "from Dorking?" He made a little pause here, and looked at his friend with a malicious sparkle in his eyes. "And how was the old aunt? Likely to cut up for any considerable amount, eh? It could only be with a view to that cutting-up process that you could consent to isolate yourself in such a place as Dorking. How did you find things?"

"O, I don't know, I'm sure," Mr. Hawkehurst answered rather impatiently, for his worst suspicions were confirmed by his patron's manner; "I only know I found it tiresome work enough."

"Ah, to be sure! elderly people always are tiresome, especially when they are unacquainted with the world. There is a perennial youth about men and women of the world. The sentimental twaddle people talk of the freshness and purity of a mind unsullied by communion

with the world is the shallowest nonsense. Your Madame du Deffand at eighty and your Horace Walpole at sixty are as lively as a girl and boy. Your octogenarian Voltaire is the most agreeable creature in existence. But take Cymon and Daphne from their flocks and herds and pastoral valleys in their old age, and see what senile bores and quavering imbeciles you would find them. Yes, I have no doubt you found your Dorking aunt a nuisance. Take off your wet overcoat and put it out of the room, and then ring for some hot water. You'll find that cognac very fine. Won't you have a cigar?"

The Captain extended his russia-leather case with the blandest smile. It was a very handsome case. Captain Paget was a man who could descend into some unknown depths of the social ocean in the last stage of shabbiness, and who, while his acquaintance were congratulating themselves upon the fact of his permanent disappearance, would start up suddenly in an unexpected place, provided with every necessity and luxury of civilised life, from a wardrobe by Poole to the last fashionable absurdity in the shape of a cigar-case.

Never had Valentine Hawkehurst found his patron more agreeably disposed than he seemed to be this evening, and never had he felt more inclined to suspect him.

"And what have you been doing while I have been away?" the young man asked presently. "Any more promoting work?"

"Well, yes, a little bit of provincial business; a life-and-fire on a novel principle; a really good thing, if we can only find men with perception enough to see its merits, and pluck enough to hazard their capital. But promoting in the provinces is very dull work. I've been to two or three towns in the midland districts—Beauport, Mudborough, and Ullerton—and have found the same stagnation everywhere."

Nothing could be more perfect than the semblance of unconscious innocence with which the Captain gave this account of himself: whether he was playing a part, or whether he was telling the entire truth, was a question which even a cleverer man than Valentine Hawkehurst might have found himself unable to answer.

The two men sat till late, smoking and talking; but to-night Valentine found the conversation of his "guide, philosopher, and friend" strangely distasteful to him. That cynical manner of looking at life, which not long ago had seemed to him the only manner compatible with wisdom and experience, now grated harshly upon those finer senses which had been awakened in the quiet contemplative existence he had of late been leading. He had been wont to enjoy Captain Paget's savage bitterness against a world which had not provided him with a house in Carlton-gardens, and a seat in the Cabinet; but to-night he was revolted by the noble Horatio's tone and manner. Those malicious sneers against respectable people and respectable



prejudices, with which the Captain interlarded all his talk, seemed to have a ghastly grimness in their mirth. It was like the talk of some devil who had once been an angel, and had lost all hope of ever being restored to his angelic status.

"To believe in nothing, to respect nothing, to hope for nothing, to fear nothing, to consider life as so many years in which to scheme and lie for the sake of good dinners and well-made coats—surely there can be no state of misery more complete, no degradation more consummate," thought the young man, as he sat by the fireside smoking and listening dreamily to his companion. "Better to be Mrs. Rebecca Haygarth, narrow-minded and egotistical, but always looking beyond her narrow life to some dimly-comprehended future."

He was glad to escape at last from the Captain's society, and to retire to his own small chamber, where he slept soundly enough after the day's fatigues, and dreamed of the Haygarths and Charlotte Hallyday.

He was up early the next morning; but, on descending to the sitting-room, he found his patron toasting his *Times* before a cheerful fire; while his gold hunting-watch stood open on the breakfast-table, and a couple of new-laid eggs made a pleasant wabbling noise in a small saucepan upon the hob.

"You don't care for eggs, I know, Val," said the Captain, as he took the saucepan from the hob.

He had heard the young man object to an egg of French extraction too long severed from its native land; but he knew very well that for rural delicacies from a reliable dairyman, at twopence apiece, Mr. Hawkehurst had no particular antipathy. Even in so small a matter as a new-laid egg the Captain knew how to protect his own interest.

"There's some of that Italian sausage you're so fond of, dear boy," he said politely, pointing to a heel of some grayish horny-looking compound. "Thanks; I'll pour out the coffee; there's a knack in these things; half the clearness of coffee depends on the way in which it's poured out, you see."

And with this assurance Captain Paget filled his own large breakfast cup with a careful hand and a tender solemnity of countenance. If he was a trifle less considerate in the pouring out of the second cup, and if some "grounds" mingled with the second portion, Valentine Hawkehurst was unconscious of the fact.

"Do try that Italian sausage," said the Captain, as he discussed his second egg, after peeling the most attractive crusts from the French rolls, and pushing the crumb to his protégé.

"No, thank you; it looks rather like what your shop-people call an old housekeeper; besides there's a little too much garlic in those compositions for my taste."

"Your taste has grown fastidious," said the Captain; "one would think you were going to call upon some ladies this morning."

"There are not many ladies on my visiting-list. O, by the way, how's Diana? Have you seen her lately?"

"No," answered the Captain promptly. "I only returned from my provincial tour a day or two ago, and have had no time to waste dancing attendance upon her. She's well enough, I've no doubt; and she's uncommonly well off in Sheldon's house, and ought to think herself so."

Having skimmed his newspaper, Captain Paget rose and invested himself in his overcoat. He put on his hat before the glass over the mantelpiece, adjusting the brim above his brows with the thoughtful care that distinguished his performance of all those small duties which he owed to himself.

"And what may *you* be going to do with yourself to-day, Val?" he asked of the young man, who sat nursing his own knee and staring absently at the fire.

"Well, I don't quite know," Mr. Hawkehurst answered hypocritically; "I think I may go as far as Gray's-inn, and look in upon George Sheldon."

"You'll dine out of doors, I suppose?"

This was a polite way of telling Mr. Hawkehurst that there would be no dinner for him at home.

"I suppose I shall. You know I'm not punctilious on the subject of dinner. Anything you please—from a banquet at the London Tavern to a ham-sandwich and a glass of ale at fourpence."

"Ah, to be sure; youth is reckless of its gastric juices. I shall find you at home when I come in to-night, I daresay. I think I may dine in the city. *Au plaisir.*"

"I don't know about the pleasure," muttered Mr. Hawkehurst. "You're a very delightful person, my friend Horatio; but there comes a crisis in a man's existence when he begins to feel that he has had enough of you. Poor Diana! what a father!"

He did not waste much time on further consideration of his patron, but set off at once on his way to Grays-inn. It was too early to call at the Lawn, or he would fain have gone there before seeking George Sheldon's dingy offices. Nor could he very well present himself at the gothic villa without some excuse for so doing. He went to Gray's-inn therefore; but on his way thither called at a tavern near the Strand, which was the head-quarters of a literary association known as the Ragamuffins. Here he was fortunate enough to meet with an acquaintance in the person of a Ragamuffin in the dramatic-author line, who was reading the morning's criticisms on a rival's piece produced the night before, with a keen enjoyment of every condemnatory sentence. From this gentleman Mr. Hawkehurst obtained a box-ticket for

a West-end theatre; and, armed with this mystic document, he felt himself able to present a bold countenance at Mr. Sheldon's door.

"Will she be glad to see me again?" he asked himself. "Pshaw! I daresay she has forgotten me by this time. A fortnight is an age with some women; and I should fancy Charlotte Halliday just one of those bright impressionable beings who forget easily. I wonder whether she is *really* like that 'Molly' whose miniature was found by Mrs. Haygarth in the tulip-leaf escritoire; or was the resemblance between those two faces only a silly fancy of mine?"

Mr. Hawkehurst walked the whole distance from Chelsea to Gray's-inn; and it was midday when he presented himself before George Sheldon, whom he found seated at his desk with the elephantine pedigree of the Haygarths open before him, and profoundly absorbed in the contents of a note-book. He looked up from this note-book as Valentine entered, but did not leave off chewing the end of his pencil as he mumbled a welcome to the returning wanderer. It has been seen that neither of the Sheldon brothers were demonstrative men.

After that unceremonious greeting, the lawyer continued his perusal of the note-book for some minutes, while Valentine seated himself in a clumsy leather-covered arm-chair by the fireplace.

"Well, young gentleman," Mr. Sheldon exclaimed, as he closed his book with a triumphant snap, "I think *you're* in for a good thing; and you may thank your lucky stars for having thrown you into my path."

"My stars are not remarkable for their luckiness in a general way," answered Mr. Hawkehurst coolly, for the man had not yet been born from whom he would accept patronage. "I suppose if I'm in for a good thing, you're in for a better thing, my dear George; so you needn't come the benefactor quite so strong for my edification. How did you ferret out the certificate of gray-eyed Molly's espousals?"

George Sheldon contemplated his coadjutor with an admiring stare.

"It has been my privilege to enjoy the society of cool hands, Mr. Hawkehurst; and certainly you are about the coolest of the lot—bar one, as they say in the ring. But that is *ni ci ni là*. I have found the certificate of Matthew Haygarth's marriage, and to my mind the Haygarth succession is as good as ours."

"Ah, those birds in the bush have such splendid plumage! but I'd rather have the modest sparrow in my hand. However, I'm very glad our affairs are marching. How did you discover the marriage-lines?"

"Not without hard labour, I can tell you. Of course my idea of a secret marriage was at the best only a plausible hypothesis; and I hardly dared to hug myself with the hope that it might turn up trumps. My idea was based upon two or three facts, namely, the character of

the young man, his long residence in London away from the ken of respectable relatives and friends, and the extraordinary state of the marriage-laws at the period in which our man lived."

"Ah, to be sure! That was a strong point."

"I should rather think it was. I took the trouble to look up the history of Mayfair marriages and Fleet marriages before you started for Ullerton, and I examined all the evidence I could get on that subject. I made myself familiar with the Rev. Alexander Keith of Mayfair, who helped to bring clandestine marriages into vogue amongst the swells, and with Dr. Gaynham — agreeably nicknamed Bishop of Hell — and more of the same calibre; and the result of my investigations convinced me that in those days a hare-brained young reprobate must have found it rather more difficult to avoid matrimony than to achieve it. He might be married when he was tipsy; he might be married when he was comatose from the effects of a stand-up fight with Mohawks; his name might be assumed by some sportive Benedict of his acquaintance given to practical joking, and he might find himself saddled with a wife he never saw; or if, on the other hand, of an artful and deceptive turn, he might procure a certificate of a marriage that had never taken place,—for there were very few friendly offices which the Fleet parsons refused to perform for their clients—for a consideration."

"But how about the legality of a Fleet marriage?"

"There's the rub. Before the New Marriage Act passed in 1753 a Fleet marriage was indissoluble. It was an illegal act, and the parties were punishable; but the Gordian knot was quite as secure as if it had been tied in the most orthodox manner. The great difficulty to my mind was the *onus probandi*. The marriage might have taken place; the marriage might be to all intents and purposes a good marriage; but how produce undeniable proof of such a ceremony, when all ceremonies of the kind were performed with a manifest recklessness and disregard of law? Even if I found an apparently good certificate, how was I to prove that it was not one of those lying certificates of marriages that had never taken place? Again, what kind of registers could posterity expect from these parson-adventurers, very few of whom could spell, and most of whom lived in a chronic state of drunkenness? They married people sometimes by their Christian names alone—very often under assumed names. What consideration had they for heirs-at-law in the future, when under the soothing influence of a gin-bottle in the present? I thought of all these circumstances, and I was half-inclined to despair of realising my idea of an early marriage. I took it for granted that such a secret business would be more likely to have taken place in the precincts of the Fleet than anywhere else; and having no particular clue, I set to work, in the first place, to examine all available documents relating to such marriages."

"It must have been slow work."

“It *was* slow work,” answered Mr. Sheldon with a suppressed groan, that was evoked by the memory of a bygone martyrdom. “I needn’t enter into all the details of the business,—the people I had to apply to for permission to see this set of papers, and the signing and counter-signing I had to go through before I could see that set of papers, and the extent of circumlocution and idiocy I had to encounter in a general way before I could complete my investigation. The result was *nil*; and after working like a galley-slave I found myself no better off than before I began my search. Your extracts from Matthew’s letters put me on a new track. I concluded therefrom that there had been a marriage, and that the said marriage had been a deliberate act on the part of the young man. I therefore set to work to do what I ought to have done at starting—I hunted in all the parish registers to be found within a certain radius of such and such localities. I began with Clerkenwell, in which neighbourhood our friend spent such happy years, according to that pragmatistical epistle of Mrs. Rebecca’s; but after hunting in all the mouldy old churches within a mile of St. John’s-gate, I was no nearer arriving at any record of Matthew Haygarth’s existence. So I turned my back upon Clerkenwell, and went southward to the neighbourhood of the Marshalsea, where Mistress Molly’s father was at one time immured, and whence I thought it very probable Mistress Molly had started on her career as a matron. This time my guess was a lucky one. After hunting the registers of St. Olave’s, St. Saviour’s, and St. George’s, and after the expenditure of more shillings in donations to sextons than I care to remember, I at last lighted on a document which I consider worth three thousand pounds to you—and—a very decent sum of money to me.”

“I wonder what colour our hair will be when we touch that money?” said Valentine meditatively. “These sort of cases generally find their way into Chancery-lane, don’t they?—that lane which, for some unhappy travellers, has no turning except the one dismal *via* which leads to dusty death. You seem in very good spirits; and I suppose I ought to be elated too. Three thousand pounds would give me a start in life, and enable me to set up in the new character of a respectable rate-paying citizen. But I’ve a kind of presentiment that this hand of mine will never touch the prize of the victor; or, in plainer English, that no good will ever arise to me or mine out of the reverend intestate’s hundred thousand pounds.”

“Why, what a dismal-minded croaker you are this morning!” exclaimed George Sheldon with unmitigated disgust; “a regular raven, by Jove! You come to a fellow’s office just as matters are beginning to look like success—after ten years’ plodding and ten years’ disappointment—and you treat him to maudlin howls about the Court of Chancery. This is a new line you’ve struck out, Hawkehurst, and I can tell you it isn’t a pleasant one.”

"Well, no, I suppose I oughtn't to say that sort of thing," answered Valentine in an apologetic tone; "but there are some days in a man's life when there seems to be a black cloud between him and everything he looks at. I feel like that to-day. There's a tightening sensation about something under my waistcoat—my heart, perhaps—a sense of depression that may be either physical or mental, that I can't get rid of. If a man had walked by my side from Chelsea to Holborn whispering forebodings of evil into my ear at every step, I couldn't have felt more down-hearted than I do."

"What did you eat for breakfast?" asked Mr. Sheldon impatiently. "A tough beefsteak fried by a lodging-house cook, I daresay—they *will* fry their steaks. Don't inflict the consequences of your indigestible diet upon me. To tell me that there's a black cloud between you and everything you look at, is only a sentimental way of telling me that you're bilious. Pray be practical, and let us look at things from a business point of view. Here is Appendix A.—a copy of the registry of the marriage of Matthew Haygarth, bachelor, of Clerkenwell, in the county of Middlesex, to Mary Murchison, spinster, of Southwark, in the county of Surrey. And here is Appendix B.—a copy of the registry of the marriage between William Meynell, bachelor, of Smithfield, in the county of Middlesex, to Caroline Mary Haygarth, spinster, of Highgate, in the same county."

"You have found the entry of a second Haygarthian marriage?"

"I have. The C. of Matthew's letters is the Caroline Mary here indicated, the daughter and heiress of Matthew Haygarth—doubtless christened Caroline after her gracious majesty the consort of George II., and Mary after the Molly whose picture was found in the tulip-leaf bureau. The Meynell certificate was easy enough to find, since the letters told me that Miss C.'s suitor had a father who lived in Aldersgate-street, and a father who approved his son's choice. The Aldersgate citizen had a house of his own, and a more secure social status altogether than that poor, weak, surreptitious Matthew. It was therefore only natural that the marriage should be celebrated in the Meynell mansion. Having considered this, I had only to ransack the registers of a certain number of churches round and about Aldersgate-street in order to find what I wanted; and after about a day and a half of hard labour I did find the invaluable document which places me one generation nearer the present, and on the high-road to the discovery of my heir-at-law. I searched the same registry for children of the aforesaid William and Caroline Mary Meynell, but could find no record of such children, nor any further entry of the name of Meynell. But we must search other registries within access of Aldersgate-street before we give up the idea of finding such entries in that neighbourhood."

"And what is to be the next move?"

"The hunting-up of all descendants of this William and Caroline Mary Meynell, wheresoever such descendants are to be found. We are now altogether off the Haygarth and Judson scent, and have to beat a new covert."

"Good!" exclaimed Valentine more cheerfully. "How is the new covert to be beaten?"

"We must start from Aldersgate-street. Meynell of Aldersgate-street must have been a responsible man, and it will be hard if there is no record of him extant in all the old topographical histories of wards, without and within, which cumber the shelves of your dryasdust libraries. We must hunt up all available books; and when we've got all the information that books can give us, we can go in upon hearsay evidence, which is always the most valuable in these cases."

"That means another encounter with ancient mariners—I beg your pardon—oldest inhabitants," said Valentine with a despondent yawn. "Well, I suppose that sort of individual is a little less obtuse when he lives within the roar of the great city's thunder than when he vegetates in the dismal outskirts of a manufacturing town. Where am I to find my octogenarian prozers? and when am I to begin my operations upon them?"

"The sooner you begin the better," replied Mr. Sheldon. "I've taken all preliminary steps for you already, and you'll find the business tolerably smooth sailing. I've made a list of certain people who may be worth seeing."

Mr. Sheldon selected a paper from the numerous documents upon the table.

"Here they are," he said: "John Grewter, wholesale stationer, Aldersgate-street; Anthony Sparsfield, carver and gilder, in Barbican. These are, so far as I can ascertain, the two oldest men now trading in Aldersgate-street; and from these men you ought to be able to find out something about old Meynell. I don't anticipate any difficulty about the Meynells, except the possibility that we may find more of them than we want, and have some trouble in shaking them into their places."

"I'll tackle my friend the stationer to-morrow morning," said Valentine.

"You'd better drop in upon him in the afternoon, when the day's business may be pretty well over," returned the prudent Sheldon. "And now all you've got to do, Hawkehurst, is to work with a will, and work on patiently. If you do as well in London as you did at Ullerton, neither you nor I will have any cause to complain. Of course I needn't impress upon you the importance of secrecy."

"No," replied Valentine; "I'm quite alive to that."

He then proceeded to inform George Sheldon of that encounter with Captain Paget on the platform at Ullerton, and of the suspicion

that had been awakened in his mind by the sight of the glove in Goodge's parlour.

The lawyer shook his head.

"That idea about the glove was rather far-fetched," he said thoughtfully; "but I don't like the look of that meeting at the station. My brother Philip is capable of anything in the way of manœuvring; and I'm not ashamed to confess that I'm no match for him. He was in here one day when I had the Haygarth pedigree spread out on the table, and I know he smelt a rat. We must beware of him, Hawkehurst, and we must work against time if we don't want him to anticipate us."

"I sha'n't let the grass grow under my feet," replied Valentine. "I was really interested in that Haygarthian history: there was a dash of romance about it, you see. I don't feel the same gusto in the Meynell chase, but I daresay I shall begin to get up an interest in it as my investigation proceeds. Shall I call the day after to-morrow and tell you my adventures?"

"I think you'd better stick to the old plan, and let me have the result of your work in the form of a diary," answered Sheldon. And with this the two men parted.

It was now half-past two o'clock: it would be half-past three before Valentine could present himself at the Lawn—a very seasonable hour at which to call upon Mrs. Sheldon with his offering of a box for the new play.

An omnibus conveyed him to Bayswater at a snail's pace, and with more stoppages than ever mortal omnibus was subject to before, as it seemed to that one eager passenger. At last the leafless trees of the Park appeared between the hats and bonnets of Valentine's opposite neighbours. Even those brown leafless trees reminded him of Charlotte. Beneath such umbrage had he parted from her. And now he was going to see the bright young face once more. He had been away from town about a fortnight; but, taken in relation with Miss Halliday, that fortnight seemed half a century.

Chrysanthemums and china-asters beautified Mr. Sheldon's neat little garden, and the plate-glass windows of his house shone with all their wonted radiance. It was like the houses one sees framed and glazed in an auctioneer's office—the greenest imaginable grass, the bluest windows, the reddest bricks, the whitest stone. "It is a house that would set my teeth on edge, but for the one sweet creature who lives in it," Valentine thought to himself as he waited at the florid iron gate, which was painted a vivid ultramarine and picked out with gold.

He tried in vain to catch a glimpse of some feminine figure in the small suburban garden. No fluttering scarlet petticoat or coquettish feather revealed the presence of the divinity.



The prim maid-servant informed him that Mrs. Sheldon was at home, and asked if he would please to walk into the drawing-room.

Would he please? Would he not have been pleased to walk into a raging furnace if there had been a chance of meeting Charlotte Halliday amid the flames? He followed the maid-servant into Mrs. Sheldon's irreproachable apartment, where the show books upon the show table were ranged at the usual mathematically correct distances from one another, and where the speckless looking-glasses and all-pervading French polish imparted a chilly aspect to the chamber. A newly-lighted fire was smouldering in the shining steel grate, and a solitary female figure was seated by the broad Tudor window bending over some needlework.

It was the figure of Diana Paget, and she was quite alone in the room. Valentine's heart sank a little as he saw this solitary figure, and perceived that it was not the woman he loved.

Diana looked up from her work and recognised the visitor. Her face flushed, but the flush faded very quickly, and Valentine was not conscious of that flattering indication.

"How do you do, Diana?" he said. "Here I am again, you see, like the proverbial bad shilling. I have brought Mrs. Sheldon an order for the Princess's."

"You're very kind; but I don't think she'll care to go. She was complaining of a headache this afternoon."

"O, she'll forget all about her headache if she wants to go to the play. She's the sort of little woman who is always ready for a theatre or a concert. Besides, Miss Halliday may like to go, and will easily persuade her mamma.—Whom could she not persuade?" added Mr. Hawkehurst within himself.

"Miss Halliday is out of town," Diana replied coldly.

The young man felt as if his heart were suddenly transformed into so much lead, so heavy did it seem to grow. What a foolish thing it seemed that he should be the victim of this fair enslaver!—he, who until lately had fancied himself incapable of any earnest feeling or deep emotion.

"Out of town!" he repeated with unconcealed disappointment.

"Yes; she has gone on a visit to some relations in Yorkshire. She actually has relations: doesn't that sound strange to you and me?"

Valentine did not notice this rather cynical remark.

"She'll be away ever so long, I suppose?" he said.

"I have no idea how long she may stay there. The people idolise her, I understand. You know it is her privilege to be idolised; and of course they will persuade her to stay as long as they can. You seem disappointed at not seeing her."

"I am very much disappointed," Valentine answered frankly; "she is a sweet girl."

There was a silence after this. Miss Paget resumed her work with skilful rapid fingers. She was picking up shining little beads one by one on the point of her needle, and transferring them to the canvas stretched upon an embroidery frame before her. It was a kind of work exacting extreme care and precision, and the girl's hand never faltered, though a tempest of passionate feeling agitated her as she worked.

"I am very sorry not to see her," Valentine said presently, "for the sight of her is very dear to me. Why should I try to hide my feelings from you, Diana? We have endured so much misery together that there must be some bond of union between us. To me you have always seemed like a sister, and I have no wish to keep any secret from you, though you receive me so coldly that one would think I had offended you."

"You have not offended me. I thank you for being so frank with me. You would have gained little by an opposite course. I have long known your affection for Charlotte."

"You guessed my secret?"

"I saw what anyone could have seen who had taken the trouble to watch you for ten minutes during your visits to this house."

"Was my unhappy state so very conspicuous?" exclaimed Valentine laughing. "Was I so obviously spoony? I who have so ridiculed anything in the way of sentiment? You make me blush for my folly, Diana. What is that you are dotting with all those beads?—something very elaborate."

"It is a prie-dieu chair I am working for Mrs. Sheldon. Of course I am bound to do something for my living."

"And so you wear out your eyesight in the working of chairs! Poor girl! it seems hard that your beauty and accomplishments don't find a better market than that. I daresay you will marry some millionaire friend of Mr. Sheldon's one of these days, and I shall hear of your house in Park-lane and three-hundred guinea barouche."

"You are very kind to promise me a millionaire. The circumstances of my existence hitherto have been so peculiarly fortunate that I am justified in expecting such a suitor. My millionaire shall ask you to dinner at my house in Park-lane; and you shall play *écarté* with him, if you like—papa's kind of *écarté*."

"Don't talk of those things, Di," said Mr. Hawkehurst, with something that was almost a shudder; "let us forget that we ever led that kind of life."

"Yes," replied Diana, "let us forget it—if we can."

The bitterness of her tone struck him painfully. He sat for some minutes watching her silently, and pitying her fate. What a sad fate it seemed, and how hopeless! For him there was always some chance of redemption. He could go out into the world, and cut his way

through the forest of difficulty with the axe of the conqueror. But what could a woman do who found herself in the midst of that dismal forest? She could only sit at the door of her lonesome hut, looking out with weary eyes for the prince who was to come and rescue her. And Valentine remembered how many women there are to whom the prince never comes, and who must needs die and be buried beneath that gloomy umbrage.

"O, let us have women doctors, women lawyers, women parsons, women stonebreakers—anything rather than these dependent creatures who sit in other people's houses, working p<sup>ri</sup>e-dieu chairs, and pining for freedom," he thought to himself, as he watched the pale stern face in the chill afternoon light.

"Do leave off working for a few minutes, and talk to me, Di," he said rather impatiently. "You don't know how painful it is to a man to see a woman absorbed in some piece of needlework at the very moment when he wants all her sympathy. I am afraid you are not quite happy. Do confide in me, dear, as frankly as I confide in you. Are these people kind to you? Charlotte is, of course. But the elder birds, Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon, are they kind?"

"They are very kind. Mr. Sheldon is not a demonstrative man, as you know; but I am not accustomed to have people in a rapturous state of mind about me or my affairs. He is kinder to me than my father ever was; and I don't see how I can expect more than that. Mrs. Sheldon is extremely kind, in her way—which is rather a feeble way, as you know."

"And Charlotte—?"

"You answered for Charlotte yourself just now. Yes, she is very, very, very good to me; much better than I deserve. I was almost going to quote the collect, and say 'desire or deserve.'"

"Why should you not desire or deserve her goodness?" asked Valentine.

"Because I am not a lovable kind of person. I am not sympathetic. I know that Charlotte is very fascinating, very charming; but sometimes her very fascination repels me. I think the atmosphere of that horrible swampy district between Lambeth and Battersea, where my childhood was spent, must have soured my disposition."

"No, Diana; you have only learnt a bitter way of talking. I know your heart is noble and true. I have seen your suppressed indignation many a time when your father's meannesses have revolted you. Our lives have been very hard, dear; but let us hope for brighter days. I think they must come to us."

"They will never come to me," said Diana.

"You say that with an air of conviction. But why should they not come to you—brighter and better days?"

"I cannot tell you that. I can only tell you that they will not

come. And do you hope that any good will ever come of your love for Charlotte Halliday; you, who know Mr. Sheldon?"

"I am ready to hope anything."

"You think that Mr. Sheldon would let his step-daughter marry a penniless man?"

"I may not always be penniless. Besides, Mr. Sheldon has no actual authority over Charlotte."

"But he has moral influence over her. She is very easily influenced."

"I am ready to hope even in spite of Mr. Sheldon's opposing influence. You must not try to crush this one little floweret that has grown up in a barren waste, Diana. It is my prison-flower."

Mrs. Sheldon came into the room as he said this. She was very cordial, very eloquent upon the subject of her headache, and very much inclined to go to the theatre, notwithstanding that ailment, when she heard that Mr. Hawkehurst had been kind enough to bring her a box.

"Diana and I could go," she said, "if we can manage to be in time after our six-o'clock dinner. Mr. Sheldon does not care about theatres. All the pieces tire him. He declares they are all stupid. But then, you see, if one's mind is continually wandering, the cleverest piece must seem stupid," Mrs. Sheldon added thoughtfully; "and my husband is so very absent-minded."

After some further discussion about the theatre, Valentine bade the ladies good-afternoon.

"Won't you stop to see Mr. Sheldon?" asked Georgina; "he is in the library with Captain Paget.—You did not know that your papa was here, did you, Diana, my dear? He came in with Mr. Sheldon an hour ago."

"I won't disturb Mr. Sheldon," said Valentine. "I will call again in a few days."

He took leave of the two ladies, and went out into the hall. As he emerged from the drawing-room the door of the library was opened, and he heard Philip Sheldon's voice within, saying,

"—your accuracy with regard to the name of Meynell."

It was the close of a sentence; but the name struck immediately upon Valentine's ear. Meynell—the name which had for him so peculiar an interest.

"Is it only a coincidence," he thought to himself, "or is Horatio Paget on our track?"

And then he argued with himself that his ears might have deceived him, and that the name he had heard might not have been Meynell, but only a name of somewhat similar sound.

It was Captain Paget who had opened the door. He came out into the passage and recognised his protégé. They left the house together; and the Captain was especially gracious.

"We will dine together, Val," he said; but, to his surprise, Mr. Hawkehurst declined the proffered entertainment.

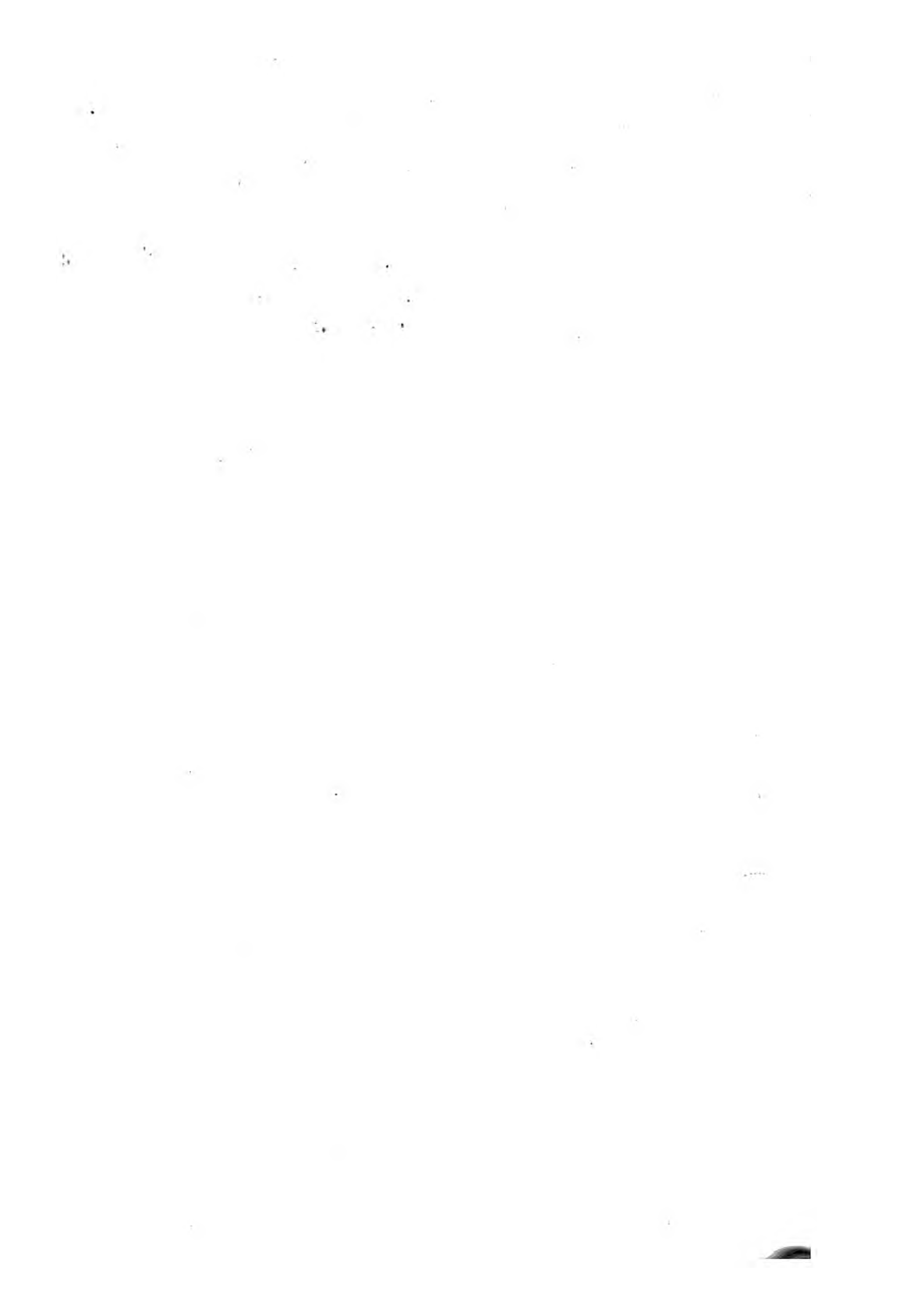
"I'm tired out with a hard day's work," he said, "and should be very bad company; so, if you'll excuse me, I'll go back to Omega-street, and get a chop."

The Captain stared at him in amazement. He could not comprehend the man who could refuse to dine luxuriously at the expense of his fellow man.

Valentine had of late acquired new prejudices. He no longer cared to enjoy the hospitality of Horatio Paget. In Omega-street the household expenses were shared by the two men. It was a kind of club upon a small scale; and there was no degradation in breaking bread with the elegant Horatio.

To Omega-street Valentine returned this afternoon, there to eat a frugal meal and spend a meditative evening, uncheered by one glimmer of that radiance which more fortunate men know as the light of home.

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Alfred Thompson, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

MAY.—A PRIVATE VIEW.

## LYRICS OF THE MONTHS

### M A Y

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A HUNDRED critics lie in wait,  
With ruthless pens my fame to slay ;  
But one fair critic held my fate  
In her small hand that happy day,  
When, chaperoned by "dearest aunt,"  
She came to see a painter's haunt.

She came, she saw, she conquered ; yet  
The victory so sweetly won  
Her willing slave will ne'er regret ;  
While the dull room she looked upon  
Henceforward must for ever be  
Illumined by her memory.

She talked of Holman Hunt and Titian ;  
She skipped from Millais to Van Eyck ;  
But vowed, 'midst all the Exhibition,  
My picture most each eye would strike :  
"Yes, you'll bear off the palm," she cried.  
"*This* be the palm, then," I replied,—

"This rosy palm within my grasp,  
So soft and coy ; this little hand  
Give me the right through life to clasp,  
And it shall lead me to the land  
Where Fame with laurel-wreath awaits  
The victor at her temple-gates."

M.



## ENGLISH PICTURES AND PICTURE-DEALERS

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IN a few days "the private view" will have come and gone; and the dinner of the Royal Academy, with its realisation of Wordsworth's "forty feeding like one," will have come and gone also. The speeches of the President and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have been duly admired, and artists and patrons had their annual glorification. In other words, the great picture firm in Trafalgar-square will have opened their establishment with an entirely new stock in surprising variety, and will look with confidence for an increase of business from their friends and customers.

First, as to the banquet, which deserves recognition in a much higher sense than that time-honoured domestic institution which collects our civic aristocracy every November in Guildhall. The dinner of the Royal Academy is of a far more intellectual description. The skill of the *cuisinier* may not quite realise the idea of the feast of reason, any more than the directions of the toastmaster the flow of soul; indeed, ill-natured outsiders may stigmatise the whole thing as an affair of shop, borrowed from provincial auctioneers, who consider that a generous competition is only to be expected from a full stomach. Be this as it may, it is doubtless a pleasant road to connoisseurship. If a nobleman or gentleman blessed with an ample income and a good appetite cannot be made profitably æsthetic after the academical three courses and a dessert, including *Non nobis Domine* and all the artistic oratory, he must be fit for the institution at Earlswood.

Now as to the exhibition. That annual tax upon human patience, the Catalogue of the Royal Academy, is, let me assume, in the hands of the guests, who can see at a glance the amount of artistic industry of the supporters of the great firm they have been invited to patronise. Probably, however, they do not know that a very large number of intended contributors have been rejected, while another considerable moiety choose to exhibit elsewhere. They cannot help seeing that their hosts prefer their own manufacture, and that they have availed themselves of their proprietorship of the exhibition to monopolise the places for having them seen to the best advantage. But nothing can be more natural than this proceeding on the part of the Royal Academicians. Each is gifted with organs of vision; and if he is expected to live by his profession, while he looks to the interests of art it is hard to ask him to be blind to his own. As a corporation, therefore, they are obliged to support their shop; and, individually, they cannot help showing their customers that they have an eye to business.

On closer inspection there appears in the list of titles and names an evident falling-off of favourite contributors. This is accounted for by the recent opening of a still more attractive sale-room in Paris. The great Exhibition there is expected to command the purses of the world; and the better market this season has naturally received the best wares. Nevertheless a fair amount of business will be done at the private view, taking into consideration the fact that our Court takes little interest in purchasing, and that many of our art patrons have reserved their customary outlay in this direction for their visit to the French metropolis. The great pictures executed by the Academicians and Associates are, with very few exceptions, commissions; and the little pictures, if sufficiently pleasing, are commissions also, being for the most part trade speculations. The bulk of the show, including many clever productions, is still unsold, and, I am afraid, may remain so. The anticipated recompense of hundreds of exhibitors will be reserved for Paris.

But now we have a word or two to say about picture-collecting.

It is within the memory of man when in England this was a luxury confined to a few favoured individuals possessed of enormous wealth, or of galleries created by the taste of their ancestors. Mr. Hope, the Amsterdam banker; Mr. Rogers, the banker and poet; and Sir Robert Peel, the heir of the rich cotton-spinner, set examples to the commercial community of filling their mansions with the choicest specimens of "the old masters," as they were styled, till they rivalled the aristocratic heirlooms of the Grosvenors and the Staffords. There was certainly a trade in pictures at this period—indeed, it had flourished for more than a century—and great gains were made by such men as Emerson, Buchanan, and the Woodburns. In Italian, in French, and in Dutch and Flemish art there was an increasing demand—very high prices being readily obtainable for choice works. For English art there was the smallest demand. It is quite true that patrons were found for Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Romney, and a few other clever figure, portrait, and landscape painters; but their productions were little in request compared with those of Vandyke or Rubens, of Raffaele or Coreggio, of Teniers, of Ostade, or of Gerard Dhow. It was not till the excellence of the English school had further developed itself in the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Turner, of Wilkie, of Hilton, of Leslie, of Etty, and of Landseer, that anything like liberal encouragement was afforded to English artists. Still it fell infinitely short of what was given to those time-honoured recipients of artistic patronage, "the old masters." In these the picture-dealers made their largest speculations; and examples of the Netherlandish and Italian schools continued to increase in the houses of the Nortons, Woodins, Farrers, Bentleys, and other enterprising leaders in the trade. They dealt in Reynoldses, in Wilsons, in Gainsboroughs, even in Morelands, in Cromes, and in Nasmyths, when they had a chance, and doubtless profited by the occasion; but

the most patriotic of them would have thrown such ventures to the winds whenever there existed a prospect of securing a Backhuysen, a Vandewelde, a Cuyp, a Titian, a Guido, or a Michael Angelo.

The trade expanded; and with a more general diffusion of wealth, consequent on commercial prosperity, arose two potent inclinations—the one to display the evidence of great riches by an accumulation of expensive articles of luxury; the other, to find an investment for surplus capital which should afford the largest amount of pleasure and the greatest prospect of profit. At this period there appeared a growing distrust of those long-established favourites of fortune, “the old masters.” Some appeared to think that their fault was in not being old enough. Hence arose a partiality for “the Pre-Raphaelites;” but the majority of art patrons evidently yearned “for fresh fields and pastures new;” and finding in the best examples of the now more highly developed English school attraction as well as security, the tide of favour set in, and floated to fame and fortune the Friths, the Coopers, the Wards, the Faeds, the Robertses, the Stanfields, the Millaises, and the Holman Hunts.

Remarkable was the contrast between the picture-dealer of to-day and the picture-dealer of yesterday. Thousands of the once popular masters lay heaped on floors or neglected on walls, hardly getting so much as a glance from the picture-buyer. When the example was fine and its condition sound, there was still among real connoisseurs a spirited competition for possession; but the dingy, vamped-up, or doubtful fell lower and lower in public estimation, till, except as “furniture” to occupy wall space economically, there was no sale for them at all. The demand for modern pictures continued rapidly to increase. Bankers, merchants, manufacturers, and successful speculators of every description, entered into a spirited rivalry to secure the richest collection. It was not always taste that influenced their purchases; indeed, ideas on art were often as singular as they were characteristic. We know one instance in which a presumed millionaire invariably calculated the value of the choicest paintings submitted to him for approval by their superficial measurement; an Elmore, an Egg, being considered worth so much, a Goodall or a Pyne so much more—*per inch*. A Brummagem estimate, of course.

With this expansion of the demand for modern pictures there arose a corresponding development in the trade. Indeed the largest dealers, by the extent of their speculations, deserve to be regarded as picture-merchants, many thousand pounds having sometimes been invested by them in such merchandise; and to display this large stock to the greatest advantage they have had recourse to spacious and handsome galleries, where English—sometimes a few French and Flemish—paintings of more or less merit are hung for sale.

The advantage to the artist of having a middle-man between himself and the public has been called in question; indeed, articles have

recently appeared in some journals commenting unfavourably on the arrangement. It is one, however, that has long existed in the commercial as well as in the literary world, and picture-dealers are apparently quite as useful in their vocation as brokers or publishers. But let us see how it works. The picture-buyer goes, like the rest of the artistic world, to the Royal Academy Exhibition. "The hanging committee" have monopolised the best places on the walls for the works of themselves and their Fellows and Associates, leaving the outsiders wherever their frames can be made to fit in—high up, low down, anywhere. He wearily goes over the middling pictures and the bad pictures till he arrives at what are considered the best, where, if he chooses to be hustled by a mob till he can secure a view, he may make himself acquainted with their merit, or want of it, as the case may be. When he at last comes upon something he wishes to possess, the chances are a hundred to one that it was either disposed of before completed or sold at the "private view." Finally, he quits the building with aching eyes and a stiff neck, after craning at such clever compositions as have been hung too near the ceiling to be seen with comfort.

Then he lounges down "the sweet shady side of Pall Mall," till opposite Marlborough House. A clever painting in a window attracts his attention. He opens a door, and finds himself in the first of a series of galleries filled from floor to ceiling with carefully-selected oil-paintings. They are various in character: *genre* and landscape, idealistic and realistic; but all are attractive, some very desirable, to the connoisseur. He proceeds from gallery to gallery, making himself acquainted with or recognising the characteristics of the great masters of the English, French, and Flemish schools, ancient and modern. The picture-buyer soon realises a fact of paramount importance to him, and to all venturing to gratify a taste with limited experience, in securing the best and safest means for its enjoyment. Everything around him is genuine; the quality is indisputable; and the largeness of the field of selection is not more obvious than its excellence. The question now suggested to him is, Is it not more advantageous, as well as much more agreeable, to go leisurely over these three or four hundred examples, with the quiet companionship of some half-a-dozen spectators who have come on a similar errand, than to hunt fruitlessly through a host of inferior, undesirable, or unattainable works, in the midst of a crowd of sight-seeing Cockneys enjoying a holiday?

Some artists complain that these really private views attract noblemen and gentlemen from whose liberality they derive no profit. This, however, is not exactly the case. A picture is bought direct from the artist, at the dealer's sole risk. He exercises the judgment of a lifetime, and invests a princely fortune, in producing an attractive exhibition. Should he succeed in selling the picture at an enhanced price, he is materially assisting to establish the artist's reputation. This success permits him to make another venture on more advantageous

terms to the vendor. Thus patronage is brought indirectly, doubtless in the end directly, to the artist, when he can readily get his own price.

It must be remembered that there are several such galleries in London, each of which is supported by a similar spirit of enterprise. Thus a painter of any merit has so many markets open to him, independently of the town and provincial exhibitions and his own private friends. It is the competition so created which has secured to the leading members of the profession gains which the greatest of the great masters of their art never realised.

The true history of prices, with regard to this branch of commerce, has yet to be written. In several cases that have come within my knowledge there has been much exaggeration—for a trading purpose, of course. In one, a popular painting was reported to have produced the enormous sum of eleven thousand pounds for the picture and copyright; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer having had his attention directed to the contrast between this amount and the sums returned by the fortunate artist for income-tax assessment, the latter was put on his oath, when the eleven thousand collapsed to two! But two thousand pounds for a single picture by a modern English artist, given as a speculative venture by a dealer, ought to be considered a liberal recompense. Compare the gains obtained by Sir Joshua Reynolds; go higher still, and take the earnings of Rubens, Vandyke, Titian, Raffaele, and Michael Angelo: the comparison ought to be in the highest degree satisfactory to their successor in the same branch of art.

Other Englishmen have been quite as munificently appreciated; as in the "Joan of Arc" of Etty, which, though certainly not his happiest production, realised about three thousand guineas. Fine works of Landseer and of Maclise command as high a commercial value. As for the masterpieces of Turner, it is scarcely possible to over-estimate them. Their more skilful contemporaries have profited largely by this rise in value of first-class English works; and if attractive landscape and figure painters do not make a noble income, they must be either very idle or very difficult to deal with.

Under these circumstances it demands much capital to speculate in this direction to any considerable extent. An approximation can be obtained of the amount thus invested by reviewing the value of the stock possessed by the great dealers. In one it reaches 100,000*l.*; in two others it is about 60,000*l.*; and the less enterprising are content with an outlay of from ten to thirty thousand. In the possession of Messrs. Gambart, Cox, Wallis, Agnew, and Worby may be found the richest portion of this commerce; nevertheless, in town as well as throughout the provinces, there are a multitude of small dealers who help to swell the amount invested in art to half a million sterling. From this some idea may be formed of the extent of art patronage. The wealthy resort to the gallery of the dealer, not only because there

is variety, but because there is selection there; and no doubt in the majority of instances because they have more confidence in the judgment there displayed than in their own. Nevertheless, sooner or later they are sure to find their way to the studio, however secluded may be the habits of its tenant or eccentric his characteristics. In this direct way were made those important collections which one after another have been added to the National Gallery. Mr. Vernon was a jobmaster, Mr. Sheepshanks a clothier. They are instances of the gains of trade invested in art; and the desire of maintaining a gallery thus created ultimately inducing its presentation to the nation. Several collections having a similar origin have had a different fate. Prominent among them was an excellent one formed by Mr. Acraman, a Bristol iron-master, that was dispersed by auction at the bankruptcy of that once prosperous man. Among manufacturers and merchants a monetary pressure has not unfrequently forced them to realise; but returning prosperity is pretty sure to revive the taste for art where it has once existed.

At present one of the largest and most valuable collections has been formed by a celebrated steel-pen maker. It was this enterprising gentleman who beat up the quarters of our greatest landscape-painter, notwithstanding the representations made to him of the artist's intractableness. His only letter of recommendation took the shape of Bank-of-England notes of the value of a thousand pounds. Five of these displayed one after the other made an impression. Turner took his opulent customer into his studio, and pointed out pictures he was ready to sell, naming his price. It was agreed to without a moment's hesitation, though rather high; moreover, the sum was *in guineas*. The artist then said he would not conclude the bargain unless he had a commission for a companion to each picture. This also was promptly complied with. The seller became more exacting, and declared that he did not dispose of the frames with the pictures: the frames were conceded. The money was paid, and the transfer completed.

During the transaction Turner had no idea that his liberal customer had been assured that it was a hopeless task trying to get him to part with any of his productions; nor was he aware that the pen-maker had set his heart upon adding some of the choicest of them to his collection, cost what they might; therefore Turner could not quite understand why he had been permitted to have his own way in the negotiation so completely.

"Now tell me," said he, putting on a confidential manner, "why was it you did not, like everybody else who has come to buy my pictures, try to get me to take pounds instead of guineas?"

"Because," was the prompt reply, "I knew you would not let me have your pictures unless I paid you in guineas."

This is not a solitary instance of close dealing on the part of some of our great artists. Wilkie has been known to be equally eager to se-

cure his frame, after getting a handsome price for his painting. To their honour, however, be it said, that a totally opposite spirit in dealing with their customers is much more general. By the way, it does not always happen that their customers deal with them in a liberal spirit. There is a well-known instance of an illustrious patron of art who, having engaged a select number of Royal Academicians to paint a series of pictures to decorate a summer-house, paid them at the very inadequate rate of 30*l.* apiece. Government seems inclined to go to the other extreme, as witness the sums paid to Mr. Dyce and his co-labourers for the mural decorations of the Houses of Parliament. Judged by the merit of the work done, I do not think 5000*l.* too much ; but for perishable frescoes, totally unfit for our climate, it is dear indeed. The same objection may apply to the cost of the lions for the Nelson monument. Landseer's 6000*l.* and Baron Marochetti's 5000*l.* may be considered an extravagance. What sum, I wonder, would have contented Michael Angelo, Benvenuto Cellini, or Canova, for as good a model ?

R. FOLKESTONE WILLIAMS.

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# LETTERS FROM LILLIPUT

BEING ESSAYS ON THE EXTREMELY LITTLE

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

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## I. ON LITTLE DICKY-BIRDS

Do you prefer a Little Dinner to a Large one? Which would you rather have :—the snug, cosy, cheerful repast at the little table, where everybody knows everybody else, and everybody is not more than a quartette in all ; where you can crack your nut and your joke, and drink your modest vintages *à petits coups*, as good old Béranger counsels, and, if need be, sing your little song when the cloth is drawn, and, perchance, indulge in a little flirtation in a little brougham, going home— or the grand, solemn, Big Dinner, at which your right-hand neighbour scowls at you because he doesn't know who you are, and your left-hand one bores you because he does—the dinner where scraps of meat with outlandish names are thrust under your nose by contemptuous lacqueys—the dinner where the host is glum, because half an hour before dinner he has had a few words with the hostess—the dinner, in fact, where you see Society and have to put on company airs, and are aware that, in exchange for perhaps a crown's worth of indifferent food and wine, you are doomed, when the mournful banquet is over, to march upstairs to a big drawing-room, where you are sure to sit on chairs which are not meant to be sat upon ; to open *carte-de-visite* albums which have been left on the table by mistake, and are not intended for the inspection of strangers ; to ask the wrong questions ; to talk to the wrong people, and mortally offend the right ones by not talking to them ; and finally, having swallowed some bad tea and some worse wine and water, and listened to the vocal and instrumental spoiling of some good music, to depart in a depressed and crestfallen condition, contemned by the butler because you haven't a carriage and flunkeys, and with but one dominant impression in your mind—that if you do not straightway proceed to your club and order selzer, cigars, and things, you must inevitably commit suicide. If you like the Big Dinner better than the Little, pass on, honest reader, pass as quickly as you can to the next paper in *Belgravia*. Our hostess is discriminative as well as bountiful, and there are viands at her table to suit every palate.

Which would you rather have : a Little Wife or a Large one? a Husband Tall or a Husband Short? Gentlemen, if you admire the tall



spouse, the bouncing spouse, the spouse with shoulders, the spouse with eyebrows, the spouse with a voice—you know the shoulders, the eyebrows, and the voice, I mean—I pray you to pass on. Ladies, if the cynosure of *your* admiration be the Life-guardsman husband, the tremendous Benedict who is always stroking his big beard, and trying to look over that bushy hedge at his patent-leather boots, the husband who swaggers, the husband whose very shirt-front in a room looms as large as would the mainsail of a three-decker—in the days of three-deckers—among a flotilla of tiny yachts at Cowes—the husband who catches up his wife when he comes home until her toes are off the ground, and in a tone like thunder asks “How is my Betsy?”—*le mari bel homme* in short, as strong as Hercules and as brazen as the Colossus of Rhodes: if this be the kind of husband you pin your faith to, I pray you, again, to pass on. I entreat you not to read these Letters. They are designed only for the perusal of those who love the Extremely Little.

Having made this declaration—and I assure you that I make it deliberately—it is, of course, all over with me. I am a gone 'coon, I know. “How dare he!” I hear the elegant but attenuated Miss Cleopatra Needleton exclaim. “It is fearful!” echoes Mrs. Simon Stylites, of Obelisk Villas. Miss Needleton is engaged, as everybody knows, to little Molehill the dentist; and it has been irreverently said of Sim Stylites—as worthy a creature, for the rest, as ever drew breath—that he is so short, that he would have to stand on a sheet of writing-paper to look over twopence. “Confound the fellow’s impudence!” roars Captain Bonassus of the Heavies. Ah, Bonassus! we know all about your little weakness for Miss Gildrig of the Prince of Como’s theatre. There is old Lord Mountblankly, too. They crowned him monarch of the Mountain Club long ago; and his head, which is as white as snow, towers at soirées and conversaziones above the tallest visitor there. I saw his lordship reading the first number of *Belgravia* some months since at Piali’s reading-room in the Piazza di Spagna, Rome. He condescended to inform me that he considered it “doosed good.” But what will that tall peer say to these papers? It is quite notorious that his lordship is desperately in love with Mrs. Tiddydoll, the charming Indian widow, and intends to elevate her to the peerage as soon as her time of mourning for Saib Tiddydoll, who backed his liver to run a race with brandy pawnee and lost, shall have passed away.

It is comfortable, is it not, to begin a series of papers with the full knowledge and conviction that you cannot please anybody? It is as though, in a controversy between High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church, you were quietly to remark that you were a Mahometan. Unless you wore a turban, you would find that everyone would shrink from you with horror. It is as though, in an argument between Whigs, Tories, Radicals, Liberal Conservatives, and Adullamites, you were to confess that you had no politics at all beyond the simple creed that if a

man fears God and honours the Queen, and washes himself, and works, and teaches children to grow up honest men, he is All Right. How would your political friends look upon you after such a confession? Well, I have pleaded *my* plea, and have only this neck-vert to offer in extenuation. It will give me no benefit of clergy, I fear. Oil and vinegar, salt and sugar, will not marry among the inanimates; nay, I never heard of a camelopard who took a weasel to wife, or a tiger who lived long and happily with a rabbit. But come to humanity, and you will find that big men usually like little wives, and that little women preferably choose tall partners. Little men always use big opera-glasses, and ride the highest horses to be purchased or hired. Little women always wear the largest crinolines and the biggest brooches, and long for double-bodied carriages and grand-pianofortes. Take a big man to a hatter's, and he will choose the tiniest hat Mr. Melton has to sell. Meet him in the Park, and he will be bestriding a pony no bigger than a Newfoundland dog. The fair admire the dark. Solemn people court facetious sweethearts. Harlequins sigh, and undertakers chirp. Soldiers are never happy save in mufti; the pride of a civilian's existence is when he can appear in some kind of military uniform; and the first thing a sailor does when he comes on shore is to hire a cab.

My only hope of meeting with some favour while these Essays are in progress lies in the existence of a *tiers parti*. I give up the little people who like the large, the large who like the little, simply from the principle of opposition in taste. I throw myself into the arms of those who are neither big nor small themselves, but who cultivate the diminutive for its own sake. Give me for readers the people who love Little Things—the little dinner, the little wife, the little child, the little dog, the little bird, the little book, the little newspaper, the little picture, the little song, the little language, the little game. These Letters are from Lilliput, and I propose to treat only of the *Infiniment Petits*. My talk shall be of the Troglodytes. I deal but with pigmies. You big editors and mighty critics, you thundering conversationalists and awful authorities, I have nothing to say to you. Let me be. Exhaust your ire; air your wit; try your sharp swords on foemen worthier of your steel. I am small and weak, and tired of fighting. I desire not to walk in the giant's path. Let him not step out of his way to tread on so tiny and so modest a worm. Have you written a big book and seen it fall? Have you had a big house and seen it sold? Have you loved a big dog and found it dead? Have you cherished big hopes, and watched them, one after another, crushed and blighted? If you have, you can pity and sympathise and bear with me if I am petty and trivial and nonsensical, and acknowledge that, after all, the little fishes are those that eat the sweetest, and *les petites gens*, the little people, are, after all, the best.

Can a pigeon reasonably be called a dicky-bird? Perhaps it can-

not ; but I warned you that in these papers I should very probably talk nonsense. A great authority on Little Things, who, indeed, suggested these Letters, and is at my elbow while I write them, habitually applies the term "dicky" to every fowl that flies, and that of "coodleloo" to birds that merely strut or sail in farm-yard or on the water. The last-named race I hold—away from the dinner-table—in great disfavour. They have big wings: they could knock you down or break your leg with a flap from a pinion ; why don't they fly? Arrogant, bombastic, and yet indolent, they remind me of the pedants who are always boasting of the vast quantity of Latin, Greek, and mathematics they learnt at school, and who yet never make any use of their acquirements. It is better to try to fly and fall, than to have wings and use them only to flap over the humble tenants of the *basse cour*. As for Chanticleer, I esteem him simply as a bragging fellow, with his hands in his pockets, jingling halfpence which he will not spend. The peacock I admire, but despise ; and what are ducks but the merest quacks, busily advertising the brightness of their plumage, and seeking sustenance from the very foulest sources? I am always uncomfortable with a swan when he leaves the ornamental water, to waddle about on the grass ; and, in regard to the turkey, I honestly confess that I am afraid of him. You wouldn't like to be alone with "the old dragon underground." You wouldn't, if you were quietly bathing, like to see a steam-ram bearing down on you. I remember being left alone with a turkey once in the court-yard of a great *hacienda* in the Valley of Mexico. I had nothing to say to him, save in connection with sausages. I did not wish to be introduced to him, save through the intermediaries of oysters or celery-sauce. He was very tall, and fine, and splendid ; but I care not to court the great. I should go out of my wits at a levée, and I never spoke to a bishop without trembling. This turkey made at me, wagging his head and his crest and his epaulettes and aiguillettes and tags and frogs and his many-coloured tassels, gobbling and clucking and screeching in an abominable manner. There was no pitchfork handy : I was thoroughly demoralised. I repeat, I had nothing to say to the creature ; so I "took the opportunity" of an open window on the ground-floor of the farm-house, and beat a retreat, which may have been dishonourable, but which was prompted by the purest motives. I am sure that turkey meant to be the death of me ; but I had the gratification a week afterwards of eating two slices from the breast of the partner of his joys and woes, on the which there was fat at least an inch and a half thick, and like cream.

Will you accept the pigeon as a dicky-bird? I sincerely hope you will. Consider : he is brother-in-law to a dove ; and if a dove be not of the "dicky" tribe, and a darling to boot, I will burn my Buffon and sink my copy of *Our Feathered Pets* full fathom five. As a rule, it is impossible to say any harm about a dicky-bird, and who ever could take away the character of a pigeon? A simple, trusting, inoffensive crea-

ture he is, connected, in some vague mysticism in our mind, with love, and hope, and consolation, and forgiveness. Hundreds of harmless superstitions centre on a white pigeon. We associate the thing with slender maidens with golden hair, and clad in flowing robes of spotless white. He is the messenger-bird too—the bringer of good tidings, be they the news of a race that is run, or a Byzantium rescued by blind old Dandolo from the Turk. He is the bird of Peace. Even slang, which respects nothing, treats him gently, and the soft, easy, credulous dupe, born to be plucked and swindled, is called a pigeon. The unkindest thing that has been said about him is, that he is destined to fall from the air into a pie-dish, with his legs sticking through the crust. But, if I had my way, I would banish the pigeon from the cuisine as utterly as I would the lark. His flavour may be exquisite; but there is scarcely anything upon him. His is such a *very* little game. Without rumpsteak and oysters and hard-boiled eggs, where would be your pigeon-pie? It would be like claret-cup without any claret. I have passed a happy minute now and then with him roasted, and as a *compote* for flavour he is without compare; but really I have been ashamed of trifling with those small bones. Our table is surely well furnished enough to warrant us in dispensing with pigeons.

Will you have this pigeon, then, as a dicky-bird? In any case I have, I conceive, as clear a right to call him one as had the Shakespearian gentleman to address as Peter the man whose name was really John, or as had the landlord of the hotel at Cheltenham, in the days of the Game Laws, to sophisticate his bill of fare, and call a hare a lion. It is my present purpose to treat the pigeon as a pet and a darling—as a dicky-bird, in fact: as he is treated in Russia, in Asiatic Turkey, and in that part of Italy which is called Venetia. The Russians would as soon dream of eating a carrion crow as of ordering a pigeon for dinner. His life is shielded by an immunity of tradition as sacred as that which surrounds the Robin Redbreast with us. It is free of the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg, and woe to the beggar-brat who should dare to throw a stone at him. Nor will a good Musulman kill a pigeon—especially a white one—if he can help it. In Venice he has been a household bird for many hundreds of years. The legend, as I hinted above, is, that the news of the conquest of Constantinople by the Doge Dandolo was brought to Venice by carrier-pigeons; but I am afraid this story rests on no stronger foundation than does ours—that Queen Bess was eating roast goose when the tidings of the destruction of the Spanish Armada were brought to her. Reading both legends by the light of poetical justice, it would certainly seem that the Venetians have shown themselves far more grateful to the pigeons than we have to the geese. They spare the lives of the descendants of blind Dandolo's courier; but, we sacrifice the Michaelmas bird, and eat him, with sage and onions for incense. The pigeons of Venice, whose number Babbage would be puzzled to calculate, after having

been for centuries the honoured guests of the Republic, passed afterwards under the dominion of the French; nor did the Austrians during their half-century of dominion show themselves rigorous to these inoffensive dickys. They are fed every day at two o'clock in the afternoon, at the charge of the city of Venice: vast quantities of grain and bread-crumbs being thrown for that purpose from certain windows in St. Mark's Place. The punctuality with which these sweet creatures arrive at the banqueting-place as the clock in the Torre del Orologio chimes two, is astonishing.

I was in Venice on the eighth of November 1866, standing, not precisely on the Bridge of Sighs, but on the bridge immediately below it, towards the Mole, and which is called the Ponte della Paglia. Thus I had, as completely as though I had been looking from one of the dungeon-cell windows in the Sospiri, "a palace and a prison on each side." I felt idle and inclined to "moon" just then, being tired out with many days' hard sight-seeing and harder work, and had been lolling over the parapet of the bridge for full twenty minutes, now gazing listlessly, and with my thoughts, perhaps, five thousand miles away, at that queer *bas-relief* of patriarch Noah discovering the virtues of the vine, sculptured at one of the angles of the Palazzo Ducale. From the effigy of the admiral overtaken in liquor—and never did plastic art more cunningly portray the expression of an honest seafaring man who has taken too much after a long voyage—I turned to a living mariner, a fisherman from Mioggia, who, after too copious libations of *vino nostrano*, at four soldi the quart, was lying all of a heap at the foot of the bridge. Its steps are of pure white marble, polished smooth as glass by the footsteps of many centuries, and consequently treacherous to the children of Bacchus. He was quite helpless, but perfectly comfortable and happy, and from time to time hiccuped out, that now Italy was free, and everybody was the equal of everybody else—"Noi siamo tutti iguali"—and that he was ready to die. No; he was ready to drink some more *vino nostrano*, to which, but that I feared for his head in the morning, I would have treated him gladly. I turned from him to a bawling vendor of cheap reproductions of reproduced photographs, and, at the rate of three halfpence apiece, became the possessor of a select portrait-gallery, comprising Victor Emanuel, the Princes Umberto and Amedeo, Cialdini, La Marmora, and Garibaldi. Seven days since this vendor would no more have dared to bawl such wares for sale than to tear down the black-and-yellow banner surmounting the pile of drums in the Austrian guard-house under the pillars of the palace. And then I laid out some coppers in half-a-dozen cheap Venetian newspapers which had just appeared, and were doomed, mostly, to enjoy but an ephemeral existence—business beginning, say, on a Monday, and the whole small concern, from want of capital or talent, bursting up before Saturday night. After that, I think I patronised to the extent of twopence-

farthing an old dame who sold hot chestnuts ; but she dared not sell me any salt to give savour to my nuts withal. Salt is a monopoly, as well under the Cross of Savoy as under the Austrian Eagle. So I was fain to walk a few paces down the Quay of the Sclavonians till I could find a government salt and tobacco shop, and then, returning to the Straw bridge, but to the prison side,—for I had by this time had enough of the palace,—I took out my chestnuts (which were wrapped in a fragment of the *Gazzetta Offiziale* three weeks old, containing half a fierce leading article, in which the impossibility of Austria ever evacuating Venetia was triumphantly demonstrated), and munched and munched and munched, contemplatively happy, but as idle as any of the naughty boys held up as dreadful examples in the juvenile picture-books. I hope, had any lady accosted me, and begged for some of the delicious but indigestible edibles I was munching, I should have returned a politer and more hospitable reply than that given by the sailor's wife to the sorceress in *Macbeth*.

It came to be about two o'clock in the afternoon, and still I loitered on the Bridge of Straw, musing on the black stone walls of the great prison and its windows thick barred with iron. Well, Italy was free, and Victor Emanuel was now an honoured guest in the palace where Francis Joseph had given audience to Venetian functionaries, who approached him with courtly smiles on their lips but with hatred in their hearts. Venice was delivered, and there were no more Austrian patrols to prowl about St. Mark's Place—no more Austrian gendarmes to brow-beat the shopkeepers in the Merceria if they hung out a shred of tri-coloured bunting—no more Austrian spies to listen at the doors of wine-houses in the Giudecca, and assure themselves that no seditious songs were being sung, no treasonable strophes of Garibaldi's Hymn played by hurdy-gurdy men. But how about those poor rogues in chokee? How about the forlorn caitiffs in the dark dungeon? How about your brother in the county gaol? Do you ever think about him—you who are in England, honest, happy, and free? Do you ever bear in remembrance the luckless wretch in the particoloured suit, and "H. L." embroidered on the back, doomed for his sins to spend so many weeks, or months, or years, in a room not much larger than a port-wine bin, and with a perforated zinc plate in the door, through which visiting magistrates may regard him, when he is refractory, as though he were a wild beast in a cage at the Zoo? We talk a great deal about the "luxuries" bestowed on convicts, and their being so much better off than paupers; but how would you like it—"chokee" county gaol, the "jug"? We are too apt to forget that in the administration of the poor-law there are two parties to the contract. Guardians and relieving officers may do their best or worst to make poor Jack uncomfortable; but if Jack doesn't like it—if he objects to the skilly and the boiled paving-stone soup—if his soul revolts at the slavish toil of the stone-yard or the oakum-shed, if he thinks it intolerably cruel and unjust to be separated, because he

is a pauper, from Jill his wife—why, he may shift his quarters. He may discharge himself. He may go away and starve, and die in a ditch, like an independent gentleman. No such option is offered to the lamentable rascal laid by the heels for stealing things or “muzzling bobbies”—by which is meant the demolition of police constables. He may like to wear a full beard and moustaches; but they shave him close as the skin of a drum. He may have a passion for a tail coat; but they put him in a jacket. He may have a partiality for broad-brimmed hats; yet they force him to wear a cap. He may be proud of his comely features; yet when he leaves his cell he is compelled to draw down the peak of his cap and mask his face, as though he were a familiar of the Inquisition. He likes roast meat; they give it him boiled. He is a convivial soul, fond of his glass, his pipe, and his song; he must drink cold water, eschew tobacco, and be silent. He is incorrigibly idle; they put him on the wheel or to the crank, and stop his victuals or fling him into the black-hole if he neglects his work. He is dirty; they make him clean. He is godless; they strive their best to make him religious. The moral of all this is, of course, that he shouldn't have broken into Mr. Walker's shop; that he shouldn't have garrotted the gentleman in Hart-street, Bloomsbury, robbed him of his watch and chain, and smashed his jaw besides; that he shouldn't have “muzzled” the bobby, and jumped on his ribs and tried to gouge him. But are we exempt from thinking or caring for the rogue in the black-hole, because he is there, and has got his deserts? May not some faultinesses, some shortcomings of our own have been remotely the means of getting him there? Can any one of us—the honestest, happiest, freest, most honoured—tell but a day may come when we shall be shaved and victualled, and clothed and worked against our will, and when the warder shall push us into the stone port-wine bin, and the justices look at us through the perforated plate, as though we were the Laughing Hyæna? “There goes my unfortunate self,” Fénelon was accustomed to exclaim when he saw a thief going to the gallows. That good archbishop was evidently one of those who cared to think of the rogue in the black-hole. Suppose you were an Irishman, and that, with some mistaken notions of patriotism muddling your head, you plunged head over heels in that disastrous madness of Fenianism. Would all your respectability, integrity, or sobriety—would all the work you have done, the pictures you have painted, the books you have written, the good name you have striven for so many years to earn—save you from the felon's garb, the felon's toil, the felon's shackle—save you from being a degraded, abject thing at the beck and call of a gaoler? Better men than any of us have worn their shackles. Think of Silvio Pellico. Think of Andryani. And for my part, in view of the countless accidents which may occur to the ship of life, I see no reason why, in praying for our daily bread and to be kept out of temptation, we should not also pray that we might keep out of gaol. Perhaps the third supplication is implied in the second.

The rascals in the black Venetian prison had been told, I was assured, that the liberation of Venice was accomplished, and that the Austrians were gone away for ever. They must have noticed the change in the uniforms of their guards—nay, through their dungeon-bars they must have heard the shouting of the multitudes yesterday, as the King of Italy floated down the Grand Canal in his golden barge to land at the Piazzetta. It may be that they enjoyed a surcease of toil on the 7th of November in honour of that ever-memorable day, and that over an ounce or so of bread, and a scrap of meat added to their pittance, with a finger's length of wine to cheer their wretched hearts withal, they were permitted to cry "*Viva Italia!*" and to make merry after their miserable fashion. The very convicts in our stern London Newgate are regaled at Christmas-time with beef and pudding. Surely these soft indolent Italians would not care to be sterner than the gaol committee of the Court of Aldermen?

So was running my reverie, when there flew across the canal which separates the palace from the prison one of my dicky-birds—a beautiful gray-and-green pigeon. He had a rendezvous, and was on business evidently, for he stooped not to regard some fragments of chestnut which I ostentatiously scattered on the marble parapet of the bridge. He made straight for a dungeon-window on the second floor in the wall over against the palace, and, perching in the deep embrasure, began amicably to flap with his wings against the bars. It was an invite—a summons to someone within. Anon I saw a hand at the prison-window; and then the bird stooped his head, and began to eat merrily. More than this the laws of perspective would not enable me to see. A greedy pigeon this, evidently: after dining at the expense of the municipality in St. Mark's Place at 2 P.M., to come here and begin a fresh banquet for nothing! A selfish pigeon too, devouring a poor convict's cates. The poor devil's prison allowance was, I will wager, none too ample. A cruel pigeon too, to mock the hapless captive—chained perhaps to the floor—with the sight of his merry head and bold free wings. Ah! say not greedy. Ah! say not selfish. Ah! say not cruel: He was, perhaps, the prisoner's friend, his only companion, his only consoler; and though the man within could only stretch his hand up to the bars, and could not see his guest, but only the shadow of him on the wall, his innocent neighbourhood was breeding in him day after day solemn and tender thoughts, and gradually softening a heart heretofore harder than the nether millstone. He could only see his shadow; yet he knew that it was the same pigeon, come at his usual hour to be fed; and he loved him.

I hope, with all my heart and soul, that it was the same pigeon. I would not go back to the Bridge of Straw the next day at the same hour, for fear that I should find at the dungeon-window another bird, and of a different mien and hue. Tax us and teach us, crush us under Positivism; tell us that there is nothing new; find fossil bundles of



tracts in the drift, and petrified crinolines in the stomach of the megatherium ; tell us that our grandfathers were monkeys, and our remotest ancestors codfish; that the world wasn't made in seven days; that the sun, moon, and stars are not hung by chains from the firmament like chandeliers; and that Adam and Eve did not fall for the sake of an apple ;—but leave us some few illusions, some few dreams of sympathy between man and brute, even if those illusions be trivial and superstitious and nonsensical.

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## EPISODES IN THE LIFE OF MISS TABITHA TRENOODLE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MILDRED'S WEDDING," ETC.

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It is a very fine thing doubtless to have a man to protect one; but then it doesn't always turn out so satisfactory as one expected. There was my friend Mrs. Squeamish, a widow with a pension and no children. She said to me once, "O, I wouldn't go to a theatre without a gentleman for all the world!" Soon after this she went to a certain little country theatre with a gentleman who got "screwed," and made a disgrace of himself in the boxes, and was carried out over the heads of the people, crying out "Shame! shame!" Poor Mrs. Squeamish fainted, and came to just as twenty voices were shouting, "She's drunk too!—dead drunk! Bundle her out!" Upon which she fainted again, and was "bundled out" with ignominy, and her dress quite spoilt, besides her chignon pulled down and left behind on the seat. Then the pit got it, and stuck it on a stick, and went round asking the boxes would they buy it, or own it. Mrs. Squeamish left. She has never been seen in that town since.

Such an accident would not have driven *me* away, although I don't pretend to belong to the strong-minded lot either. As to the circumstance of her being a widow and my being single, I don't see at all how that can make the case different. The fact is, I've gone through a worse adventure than Mrs. Squeamish's, and faced it out boldly: the difference in our characters led to her running away and my standing my ground—that's about the truth of it. Getting married is all nonsense; it no more alters a woman's brain than it does a man's beard. I have seen plenty of my friends get married, and never perceived that they could reason or chop logic—whatever condiment that may be, or why always chopped, I can't say—with more success than in their maiden days. If I were to marry to-morrow, I feel certain of this—I shouldn't be able to understand Euclid one atom more than I do now. I should still look upon it—somebody says I ought to say *him*; but that's absurd—as a book full of ridiculous puzzles, scratchy drawings, like the Freemasons' arms without the compass, and capital letters stuck upways, and downways, and sideways, and any way except straight on like a Christian alphabet. And how any man can study all that without being addle-headed is beyond me to tell. For my part, I never look at a page or two without feeling as though I was gone crazy, chasing a lot of runaway letters, all bumping over one another, and all swearing A was B, and B was C, and D was nothing in par-

ticular. That's how *I* feel; and if Euclid really was a man, I can only suppose he was some poor slave or savage, who tatoored himself with the alphabet, because he couldn't learn it any other way, and then he was made a Freemason of, and tatoored himself with that too. After saying which, I hope I've proved satisfactorily that my being single was not the cause of my following a course diametrically (I got that from Euclid) opposed to the conduct of Mrs. Squeamish. If my arguments don't convince folks, it will only be because they are a set of know-nothings, with no brains worth convincing. At all events I've convinced myself, and that's enough.

After which, here's my adventure in black and white—which is a very different thing to mud and water, and that's how it came to me.

I live out of the world, down in Cornwall; but my house is in a cheerful spot, the sea is on one side of it, and the English Channel is on the other; and behind is an old mine, with a good many worked-out shafts. These being stuck about the pathways make an evening walk rather exciting; and I generally take with me a large umbrella *spread* and a speaking-trumpet; the first to break my fall, and the second to make my position known to my neighbours. I am not without neighbours: there's a lighthouse on the sea side, which can be reached in fine weather; and on the Channel side there's an island with a coastguard station on it, whereon reside three men and a boy. They pass their time cheerfully in taking sights at the ships going up and down Channel, punching the boy,—who seems to do all the washing and cooking, as far as I can make out with my telescope,—and in fishing for conger-eels. At first government placed a woman with them as housekeeper; but after a week's trial, they put this female into an open boat, and sent her adrift. When the monthly provision-boat came to them, they very properly mentioned what they had done, adding they should all have died if they had kept her on the island, as she tyrannised over them to that extent that they never knew what to eat, drink, think, or avoid, much less sleep. "In fact," said the eldest man of the party, "that woman had neither sense, shape, recollection, nor smell. I ain't seen her since we sent her packing;—have you, comrade?"

The men in the shore-boat, with a wicked twinkle in the eye, said they hadn't seen her either.

As far as I can learn, no one has seen her since; at all events, she hasn't been heard of up to this time. Perhaps she is at the Scilly Isles; or she may have drifted up to London. If any gentleman in chambers knows a tyrannical female without sense, shape, recollection, or smell, maybe he'll have the kindness to send me information of the fact through the editor. My kindly neighbours on the island will, I am sure, be glad to hear of it. They are too good-natured to owe the woman a grudge.

My other neighbours are a few fishermen and their families—

capital people!—and the parson and his wife. The wife, however, is a howling maniac—through loneliness, he says, which is nonsense. You perceive, therefore, I am very agreeably placed with regard to locality and neighbours, so there is no necessity for me to go gadding about for a change. However, when a cousin asked me into Devonshire for a week, I resolved to oblige her, since she was so very pressing.

I started in a kittereen,\* and after a goodish drive reached the rail, by which I made my way to Saltash—a little town where the women row about in boats stronger than men, and the streets are so steep you want to run down by yourself, like a wheelbarrow; or if you are going up, you feel like a pole with a leg of mutton atop, or ought to be, which I needn't say it isn't. And the Royal Albert Bridge is there, which nobody ever calls Albert, leave alone Royal, but simple Saltash Bridge—and quite enough too, I think.

My cousin lives up a little creek—lakes they are called here—on the Devonshire side of the Tamar, and of course I thought the right way to get to it was to walk across the bridge. But, bless you, no! The very first step I take a man starts up and says, “Ma'am, you can't go this way.”

“What! isn't a bridge made to be walked over?” I asked.

“This bridge isn't, ma'am; it's made only for the trains.”

“That's a mighty sensible arrangement, young man,” I answer, as provoked as an owl in daylight. “Here's a bridge joining two counties, and a side-walk no consequence to directors, with company's money like dirt. And yet respectable people are to drown, or stay in Cornwall for ever. Dear me!” I said, working myself up a bit, “anyone would think a Cornishman was to have his head cut off, if he went into Devonshire, just as he had in King Egbert's days.”

“Not at all, ma'am,” says the man, quite civil. “You might have passed over in the train as safe as the Queen herself.”

“I must have gone to Devonport, then,” I answered, cooling down, “and that would be six miles out of my way. I'm going to Tavvytree.”

“There's no conveyance to be had here, ma'am; you had better have gone to Devonport and taken a fly.”

“Tavvytree is only two miles from this; I can walk that distance, and save my shillings. Only I must cross the river first,” I said, as sweet as I could speak. “I'm sure you'll have no objection to let me over the bridge. You don't wish to see a lady drown herself, I suppose?”

“I hope not, ma'am. But as for the bridge, ma'am, it's impossible, and more'n my place is worth. A boat will take you over for a shilling; or if you wait for the steam ferry-boat, which crosses every half-hour, you can go by that for a penny. It's because of the ferry, ma'am, we are bound to let no passengers cross the bridge. Special clause in the Act, ma'am, to protect the interest of ferry people.”

\* A covered cart or van.

"Since that's the case," said I, highly indignant, "that ferry shall never see a penny of mine as long as there's a bucketful of sea round the Land's End."

Upon which, wishing the young man good evening, I walked down to the river's edge and called for a boat. "It's very muddy walking in the lanes after you've crossed, ma'am," said the boatman, "leave alone it's being very lonesome for a hunprotected lady. I'll take you right up to Tavytree quay for eighteenpence, ma'am, and nothing to fear with a man with you all the way, ma'am."

"Ah, well!" I thought to myself, "there's nothing like having a man with one, after all. I'll close with this proposition."

We started immediately. I was quite calm and tranquil, having a man with me; and I must say, while we kept to the Tamar, I had a beautiful time. The water was smooth as crystal; and though the night was dark, yet since there was nothing to be afraid of—no steamers bursting about, or lazy barges rolling along like porpoises in liquor—dark or light mattered little. But when we turned into Tavytree lake, this being much narrower than the Tamar, and the banks very high and wooded, I certainly did wish the days were a bit longer,—or even a lantern would have been cheerful.

"Tavytree lake has got a very cranky channel," I said to the man. "I suppose you know it pretty well?"

"All right, ma'am," says the man. And he rowed on without another word.

"Don't fidget," is my motto. If you are under a man's care, leave him alone; don't pull the reins out of his hand, and pretend you can drive better than he, because the chances are you can't. Acting up to my motto, I didn't suppose that I could row, or understand the tide, better than the boatman. It was darker than I liked; but he said nothing, and I said nothing, till at last the boat bumped a bit, and then stopped.

"Why don't you go on?" I said, very civilly.

"We are stuck, ma'am."

"Stuck!"

"In the mud, ma'am; and the tide is running down very fast."

"If it is running fast, it may take the boat with it," I remarked.

"More likely to leave her high and dry, ma'am; leastways, unless I can push her off."

"Then push her off, by all means."

Having a man with me, of course I did not feel in the least alarmed; but I was certainly a little shocked when he divested himself of shoes and stockings right before my eyes, then clambered over the side of the boat and disappeared bodily. I screamed.

"No harm done, ma'am; the water is rather deep this side, that's all. I'll find the channel, and get the boat in it in a jiffy."

Off he went, taking soundings on his way with a pole.

It was so dark by this time, that he had not taken three steps before he became invisible. At first I heard a good deal of floundering, but at last that died away in the distance, and all was quiet. Fifteen minutes went by, and the boat got rather one-sided, with a queer inclination to tip over. Still I was placid: nothing can go wrong when an unprotected female has a man to take care of her. Nevertheless, when half-an-hour slipped on, and there was not a sound to break the stillness, and no signs of the man, I grew nervous.

"It may be pleasant to have a man with one, but I don't know that it's pleasant to have a drowned man," I said to myself; "especially if this drowned man goes 'bobbing around' all night while I sit in this boat. Of course I must sit here all night, if he doesn't return. And in the morning, when his corpse goes floating by, I shall have to catch it and tie a string to it, and tow it home to his wife. That's horrid enough; but how do I know that I sha'n't be accused of killing him? Who is to prove I didn't? I can't be a witness for myself. I know exactly how the newspapers will put the case: 'A weak man, lame of one foot, is seen to depart in the darkness, with a muscular and bony female'—I am bony, I don't deny it—'and this man is never seen again alive. But in the morning the audacious murderess returns to Saltash, towing the body of her victim, attached by her scarf and pocket-handkerchief to the boat, and tells the incredible tale that the man has drowned himself. Her story is, that he deliberately flung himself from the boat, and went *on foot* through the river; and she affirms she never saw him again, till his dead face bobbed up before her eyes, at six this morning. We leave this incredible statement to the comments of our readers. For ourselves, we assert that no man would quit a boat to *walk up* a river, and no lady, worthy of the name, would remain in an open boat all night. No! this female ruffian has murdered that poor, lame, harmless man; and, in the name of Man, we demand justice!"

This was the sort of paragraph that would appear, and I felt myself get damp as I thought of it.

At this instant a faint voice reached me, gradually developing into frantic cries of—

"Hoy! hoy! boat there!"

"Boat there!" I said to myself. "Of course the boat is here; and it's tipping over more and more, too."

"Boat! Hoy, ma'am! Boat!"

It was impossible for me to condescend to make any reply to this nonsense. But the cries only grew more frantic from my silence.

"Boat! hoy! Holler, ma'am! holler!"

"Hollow!" I observed. "It's my private opinion the boat won't be hollow much longer, for if she tips a little more she'll fill."

"Holler, ma'am! I can't see nothing! I can't find the boat! Holler, for marcy's sake!"

O, I understand the matter now! The poor man had lost the

boat in the darkness, and had been wading and floundering up and down the river all this time in search of it. Of course I "hollered" immediately, only I didn't quite know how to do it.

"Ah! Ah! Ah! O!" I said very genteelly.

"Holler, ma'am! holler! I'm getting the cramp!"

Upon this I stood up—the boat tipped dreadfully—and cried out, more genteelly, "O! O! O! Ah!"

"Boat there! I'm most done! Holler! or can't you show something white!"

Good heavens! show something white! Was the horrid man mad? Ah, I would wave my handkerchief.

This was getting exciting and romantic. I would do a noble deed; I would wave my handkerchief, and save the man's life.

I waved it.

A great splash—a floundering—a gasp—a bubbling—then a choked voice, desperate:

"Boat! boat! Holler!—for life's sake, holler!"

I dropped my handkerchief, I dropped my gentility, and I "hollered," ay, and like a boatswain too.

I did more. I showed something white. The man's life was at stake, and mine—for if he drowned I should hang. My petticoat was of dimity, ironed and starched that morning; it glistened, it gleamed like a beacon; the drowning man saw it—he had not the least idea in the world what it was—and made for the boat. When he reached it, gasping and trembling, I was a modest mass of dark drapery—not a ray of white about me. And he positively was *not* grateful; but then I confess he asked no questions. Thus do woman's noblest sacrifices ever remain unseen, unappreciated by man!

Unconscious of my devoted act, this man sat down, wet as a shag, and blowing like a porpoise, not uttering a word of thanks. His first sentence was even a reproach:

"Why didn't you holler before, ma'am? I've come near bein' drowned."

"My good man, I *did* holla," I answered with dignified calm. "Now why don't you get the boat off at once?"

"Because I can't, ma'am. And if I could, there's no water to float her higher up."

"The fact is, you don't know the channel," said I severely.

"Couldn't find it in the dark, ma'am. And if I could, one man's strength wouldn't shove the boat into it off this mud."

"Then what's to be done?" I asked with a little scream, as the boat went right over on her side, nearly tilting me into the man's lap.

"We can't do nothing but sit here till five o'clock to-morrow morning; by that time I reckon the tide 'll get her off."

"What!—sit here in this stick-in-the mud boat all night with you!" I shrieked—"that's impossible."

Good gracious, I thought, here's a position for an unprotected female! Sitting up till five in the morning, in pitch darkness, up a lonely creek, with a boatman! O, this is nice, this is respectable!—this is having a man to take care of one, this is! I had better have let the creature drown himself.

“If you won't sit here till high tide, what 'll you do, ma'am?” said the man.

“What will I do? I'll wade the river,” I answered.

“You will, ma'am!” he cried. “Well, I must say you are a plucky one.”

He bent forward towards me, and shook the wet off himself upon my tea-green silk. I held myself very stiff, in order to let him see that I wanted no admiration.

“Now, my good man,” I said, “let us start.” At the same time I prepared myself to show boldly my white dimity, my scarlet stockings, and balmoral boots.

“La bless you, ma'am, you can't wade yet; you must wait a hour at least; the tide isn't low enough, you'd be drowned now.”

“Very well, I'll wait an hour.”

I said this with the composure of a martyr.

The boat was very much on one side. I sat on the high or tilted side; the man moved over to the same bench. I pretended not to see him; this appeared to me the most proper mode of noticing his conduct.

“Beg pardon for sitting so near you, ma'am, but I'm feared she'll go quite over if I stays t'other side. Don't want to capsize her, you see.”

“Sit where you please,” I responded. After this there was a dignified silence of ten minutes; then I knew by the sprinkles that reached me the man was getting fidgety, and shaking out his garments as it were to the night.

“If you please, ma'am, may I ax—” I coughed as loud as I could to discourage him—“ax a favour of you?”

“My good man, this is really not a time—”

“Seems to me, ma'am, 'tis the very time: 'tis uncommon lonesome and dark here, and I'm as cold as a lump of ice 'most. 'Twould warm me a bit, if you didn't mind it, ma'am.”

“Why did I holla?” I said to myself. “Why didn't I let this man drown? I should feel more comfortable if he was a corpse tied on to the stern than I do now.”

“Please, ma'am, I wouldn't ax if I hadn't got the shivers. And some ladies don't object—leastways my wife never does.”

“Perhaps not,” I said drily. I really could not tell how to keep up a conversation with this man.

“And it's a very small pipe, ma'am, and good bakker—and I'll sit as far off as I can without capsizing the boat, ma'am.”

“There, there,” I answered, “not a word more; smoke if you like.”

He smoked; and by the light of the glowing weed I saw his eye



fixed on me with a droll expression. Was he wondering where I kept my purse? was he thinking how easy it would be—No, this was not a land of thieves and sharpers; I would banish such London fancies from my mind.

He finished his pipe, knocked the ashes out, put it in his pocket, then jumped over the side of the boat. This time he returned in a few minutes.

“I think the water is low enough now, ma’am; I’ve sounded it all along to the bank. If you are real serious about wading, I believe you can go safe.”

I looked into the river, running on in black darkness, and I felt a little bit of a shiver. Not that I was afraid. O dear, no!

“Must I really either wade or sit here till five o’clock?” I asked.

“Why, you see, ma’am, the tide has been running down three hours; it’ll be on the turn about half arter one, and I reckon there won’t be water enough in this here creek till nigh upon five—”

“Enough; I’ll go.”

I tucked up my tea-green silk, I tied my shawl tightly around me, I put one foot outside the boat.

“’Tis a pever pity,” said the man; “them nice boots—and knee-deep the mud is quite. I ar’n’t so wet as I was, ma’am; and if you don’t mind my back being in a way moist, and if you put both arms round my neck tight, and hold on hard, I think I could do it.”

I looked up the river and down—all was darkness; a glimmer of starlight on the water making us but dimly visible to each other—of course it was ridiculous and horrid—of course if it were daylight it would be impossible; but in this pitch darkness, and the respectable Mrs. Grundy slumbering far away, and the river so muddy and cold, and all my things would be spoiled—mightn’t I act like a sensible woman and—

I put my arms around the man’s neck.

“I am not very heavy, and you’ll promise to be careful,” I said.

“I’ll be as kearful as though you was a babby.”

We started—I, Tabitha Trenoodle, with my arms round a man’s neck for the first time in my life. And I must confess I could not consider the thing in itself at all pleasant. My hands were clasped beneath his chin; and I felt it would be more convenient if my feet could be there too, for my boots dangled in a remarkably unpleasant way, and shrinking them up from contact with the river gave me the cramp. For a few paces all went well, then I felt a sudden giving way of my supporter on one side, and my right stocking went into the water.

“You ar’n’t clinging harf tight, ma’am. Hold me round the neck close as chokes, please.”

Was I come to this? Well! after all, I am not a Mrs. Squeamish, and it’s useless to fidget. I held him tighter. But now there was a

giving way on the other side, and my left stocking went into the river—deep. Another moment there was a giving way altogether; but feeling the catastrophe coming, I sprang off my pillar of support on to a mud-bank, just as he himself disappeared bodily down a hole.

The water was nearly to his neck; but with my help he scrambled out, and stood by my side dripping.

“I missed my soundings then,” he said. “Do you think you could manage to hold on again, ma’am?” he added, presenting his back with great politeness.

“No, boatman, I could not. I’ll trust to my own feet this time.”

The poor man was profuse in his sorrow; but he was lame, and he had staggered painfully beneath my weight. I felt it would be cruelty to animals to put such a load on him again. And besides I couldn’t be much muddier than I was.

Thus thinking, I stepped boldly into the river, following my conductor, who, taking soundings and warning me of danger, walked before.

We crossed safely. By the bye, did Julius Cæsar *wade* the Rubicon? If he did, I admire him; but if he went in a boat I really don’t see why his boastful exclamation of having passed the Rubicon should come down to posterity with so much fuss.

Well, we were on the Tavytree side, landed safely among the rushes; but O, the pil-garlick I was! Walking behind the man had given me full liberty to protect the white dimity and the tea-green silk, but the rest of me would have astonished a flounder.

“What are we to do next? Can we walk along the river-side?”

No, the mud was too deep; and in some places, where the channel was narrow, the water was too deep.

Devonshire and Cornish rivers—always tidal—do not resemble the streams of the midland counties; the banks are high, rocky, wooded, and the course of the river can usually only be followed above cliff. This was the case here; so there was nothing for it but to mount the rocks and get into the wood above.

If the river was dark, the wood was a chimney, only blacker, and no soot. The man by my side might have been on the Monument as far as I could see him.

“Have you been in this here wood before, ma’am?” he said in a frightened voice.

“Often. I know my way in it well enough by day, and even by night if I could get into the path. It runs through the centre.”

“In that case, ma’am, we must go straight upwards, and we shall be sure to strike it.”

“I’ll try by myself. You had better go back to your boat.”

“No one will run away with my boat, ma’am. I’ll find her safe enough at five in the morning; but you’ll never get out of this yur wood without a man to help you—never, ma’am.”

It was dark as a bag. I might have been tied up in one for aught I knew; and the place was horribly lonesome. I confessed in my own mind that I should be afraid to take a step by myself. And besides, what greater happiness can befall the unprotected female than to have a man to take care of her?

"I'm sure I'm much obliged to you," I said gratefully; "and my cousin, to whose house I'm going, will give you a bed, or a seat by the kitchen fire; and that will be better than sitting in your boat till the tide is high enough to take her off."

"Certainly it will, ma'am. Please come along."

I came along; and in two minutes I knocked my bonnet off against a tree, and in another minute knocked my nose, and made it bleed like prize-fighting.

"You'd better give me your hand, ma'am," said my protector, "and let me lead you along."

After perching myself on his back, with my arms round his neck, I felt it would be folly to refuse this aid. I took his hand and went on with confidence. Bang! he pulled me plump against another huge tree, and I felt a big bump rise on my forehead, and knew my bonnet-cap was dangling round my neck.

"Well, I dunno how I missed feeling of that tree;—hope you ar'n't hurt, ma'am?"

I was nearly stunned, but replied faintly that there was life in me yet.

"I reckon t'wull be heasier to go this way," said the man, grabbing my hand tight, and dragging me in a direction *from* Tavytree.

"*Now* he's going to show himself in his true colours. *Now* he's going to turn out a villain and murder me," I said to myself. I stood still with horror, and rooted my soaked boots deep as I could in the mud.

"I'll not go that way," I cried.

"But, my dear lady, we shall strike the path then, and if we keeps the course of the river we never shall; and we shall knock our brains out agin the trees. In course they grows thickest by the water, and the undergrowth too."

"I don't care. I won't stir a step that way. Let go my hand."

He immediately grasped it tighter.

"No, ma'am, I can't. If I lets go, and you stirs honly a hinch, I shall never catch you hup again."

O, the blood-thirsty villain! He would not give his victim even a chance for her life.

"Please, ma'am, can you see me?"

"No, man, no; no more than if you were your own ghost," I answered.

"Nor I you, ma'am. So you perceives if we lets slip hands, we may go hollering all night through this yur wood like them blessed babbies

the robins was undertakers to, and yet never lay holt to one another again. I can't see your hand, ma'am, I declare, though I'm gripping of it."

It was true that the darkness was even as intense as this; and the thought of being alone in such blackness, or of being hunted through it, made my flesh creep.

"There's a shimmer of light on the lake," I said in my civillest tone; "that will surely help us a little if we keep to its course."

"That ain't nothing of a help, ma'am. If we goes straight hup, we must strike the road; but if we keep along here, we may be two hitches hoff and yet not find it."

Ah! he knew of some pit in which he could throw me, or of some horribly lonely place "straight hup" where a throat could be cut, and the unpleasant body never be found!

"What's the good of wasting time, ma'am? Come along!"

He gave me a frightful tug with his strong hand, upon which my soaked boots gave way, and I went two jerks forward; then I threw my arm around a tree, and held on. And to make it harder to him to move me, I sat down in the mud—I did—and spoilt my tea-green silk for ever.

"You are very hard to help along, ma'am," he said savagely.

O, you villain! Now you are beginning, are you?

"My good man," I observed blandly, "you are dragging me now against my will. Go *my* way, and I shall be easier to help."

O my unfortunate stars! if he would only let go my hand I'd run. To have stopped in the boat even would have been better than this.

The man couldn't see I was sitting down in the mud.

"Crikey!" he said to himself, in a very respectful manner, as he kept tugging my arm off without moving me.

I thought I'd try a little fierceness.

"Man, I won't go!" I shrieked; "I won't! How dare you pull me?"

He turned meek directly. The idea of a man being frightened of me!

"I'll go your way if you like, ma'am," he said, as mild as milk; "but we don't get out of the wood then till daylight. And if you'll strike straight hup, ma'am, I'll be sponsabul for the path."

This was a handsome offer. I reflected—I consented. I had found I could snub the man, and I knew I could knock him down. I determined to be brave. I got up from the mud and unwound my arm from the tree.

"Very well; I'll strike up. I hope you'll find the road at once."

A furze bush caught my dress, and tore it out of the gathers; then I hit my hand against a thorn, and scratched the flesh to the bone. Still I went on. The man was "sponsabul," and I ought to be thankful. I said this to myself so often, that at last I grew quite comfortable in

my mind, although my dress was tatters and my bonnet flitters, and I knew my forehead was one great red bump, and my nose another, and my boots were two mud pies. I must say the man was kind; he warned me of branches and trunks, against which he bumped himself first, and took off the first shock, as it were, before they hit me.

Inky darkness! I demolish the last bit of my bonnet against a branch, and nearly leave my best boot in something soft. But this scarcely counts, for in another moment the man and I step off upon *nothing*, and find ourselves upon our faces in something very soft indeed—slush is the only word for it.

The shock strikes us helpless; we lie still, not sure if we are alive.

Black darkness, and silence, and no attempt, either on his part or on mine, to move. Then the man's voice, very low:

"My dear lady, are you killed?"

"No, man, I am not."

This was said snappishly, my mouth being full of mud. Certainly that man was meek as Moses, for he was civil still.

"Thank heaven for that! My dear, good, blessed lady, are we down at the bottom of a shaft?"

"No; there are no shafts hereabout."

No sooner had I spoken, than the poor bewildered creature sprang to his feet and recovered his wits.

"I made sure we were down a shaft," he said in an awed tone.

If any accident happens to a Cornish man, his first idea is that he is down a shaft.

"Are you hurt, ma'am?"

"Not a bit," I answered, springing up likewise.

We congratulated each other upon this; and in two minutes more, to my great delight, we stepped off the bushes and brambles and under-wood, on to the hard, firm, open road.

"Ah! I knowed we should strike the path this way," said the man, triumphant.

I was generous. I did *not* say, "Yes, but we might have been killed in stepping off that great high bank, which will frighten you a little when you look at it to-morrow morning, Mr. Boatman."

I did not even remark that we might have broken our bones. I simply said, I should like him to look at that place by daylight, that was all.

He said he would.

We clambered over a gate, and found ourselves in the fields, close upon the village of Tavytree.

It was a respectable village—highly respectable. It had eight villas in it, all standing in their own grounds. In the eight villas might be found nine old maids, and one old bachelor on crutches, three widows, poor, with children, and two married couples, rich, without. With the exception of a little scandal about two of the old maids, who had fallen

in love with the Methodist preacher and declined to go to church, there was never anything to be seen, or heard, in the village but the most orthodox respectability.

Now in the fields I could see myself a *little*, and a nice object I saw. There was nothing left of my bonnet but the cap, and that was hanging round my neck in rags. My face was a cake of mud, mingled with blood from my prize-fighter's nose and scratches. I was torn, and worried, and mangled, and rolled, just like an early Christian virgin and martyr that minute pulled out of the fangs of wild beasts.

And in such a shape as this I was to enter that respectable village, and perhaps greet some of my respectable acquaintances. And a man with me, too! And morals here so severe! Luckily it was eleven o'clock, and everybody went to bed at ten at Tavytree. There was a hope I might not be seen.

As we neared the village, the manly protector to whom I owed my woes seemed to feel some compunction. "Ma'am," he said mysteriously, "if you like to go back, we can wait at the corner of the wood till the first glimmer of daylight; then we can wade to the boat, or I'll carry 'ee I'm sure with all the pleasure in life; and I'll row sharp, and get 'ee into Saltash unbeknown. My wife keeps a hinn; you can clean yourself there, and come here to-morrow respectable-like. Nobody 'll know."

This obliging offer made me smile. O, the simplicity of man! Better face all the outraged virtue of Tavytree, than throw myself on the mercy and forbearance of a wife. After studying human nature so long among my neighbours, I was not quite such a goose as to put my head into a trap.

I declined with thanks, and walked on faster. A man approached us. I rejoiced to see that his gait was none of the soberest; and keeping to the dark side of the road, and folding the remnants of my drapery around me, I deceived his bemuddled eyes; he deemed me a respectable figure—he even touched his hat.

Fortunately this blind individual was the only creature we met. Sneaking along by back ways, I reached my cousin's house unseen. The moment the door was opened I jumped inside. In the blaze of light in the hall I looked at the man; he looked at me. He was a muddy merman; I was a hideous tatterdemalion. The servant screamed; my cousin rushed out from the parlour; she screamed. I could not embrace her; I was too dirty even to give her my hand.

I gasped forth, "Is my box come?"

"Yes," she said.

"Clean things and bath! When I'm a Christian woman again I'll tell you everything. We've had a frightful accident—been nearly killed."

I thought it wise to exaggerate a little; but there was no exaggeration equal to our appearance,—judging from that we had both been chawed up by sharks, and resuscitated in a mud-bath.

“Good gracious!” cried my cousin. “And this poor man, I suppose, has saved your life. What a comfort you had a man with you!”

Looking at him gratefully, she handed him over to the cook.

Unlimited supper, and a tub of hot water in back-kitchen.

Those were her orders.

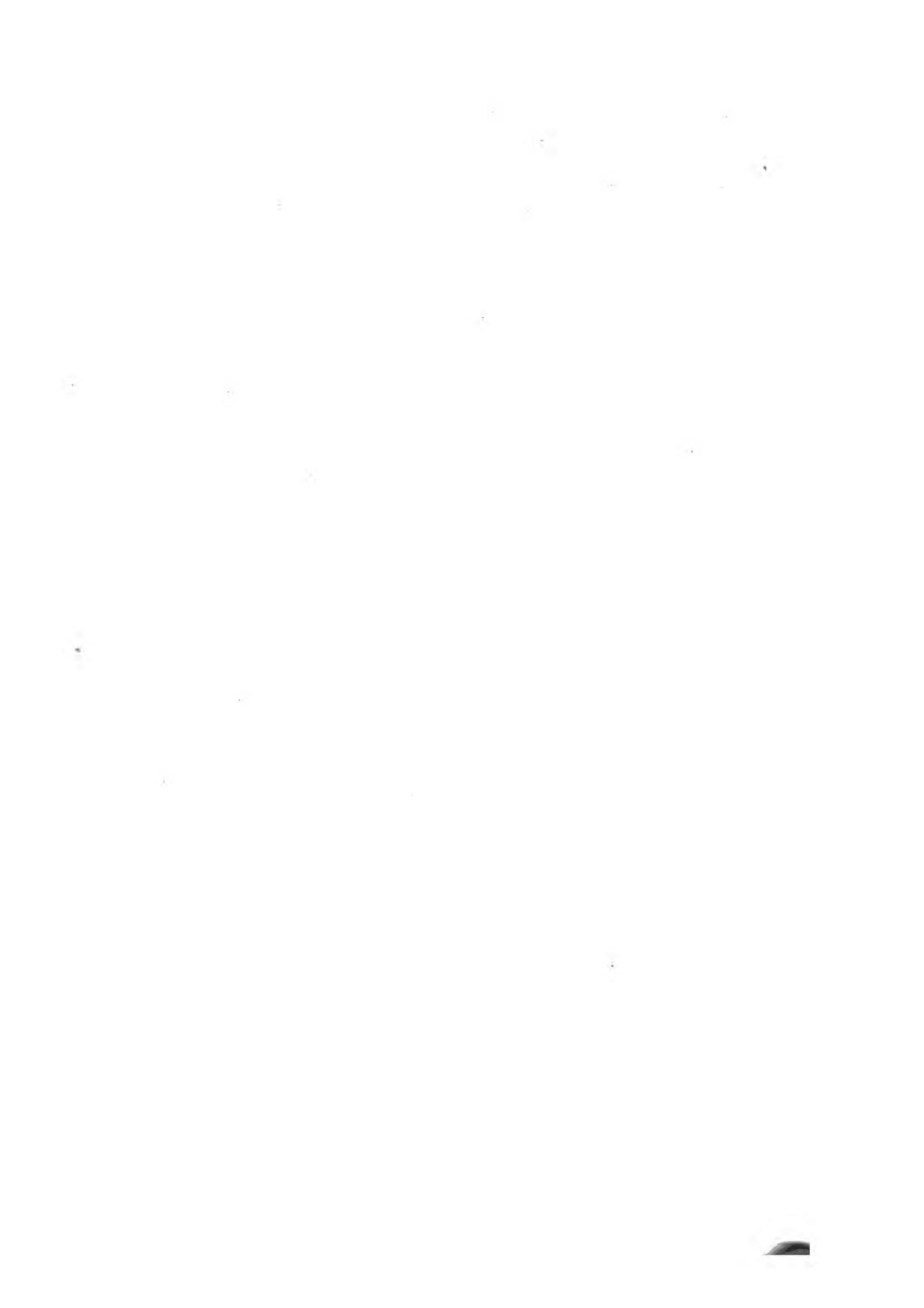
I went upstairs, spoiling the carpets; and feeling myself unequal to the task of dressing, I went from my bath to my bed. The next day I found myself black and blue. When I fell from the high bank I had fancied myself unhurt; but the fact was, the excitement and shock had destroyed pain. I felt it now, and, bruised from head to feet, I lay quite helpless for a week.

When I recovered, I faced the entire village. I recounted my adventure at every tea-party, and thereby made a lion of myself for a whole month.

As to the man, he went wading back to his boat at five in the morning, and I never saw him again. Long afterwards I heard that *his* village was in a commotion at his disappearance that night; and his wife, refusing steadily to believe his meek statement of facts, bullied him so tremendously that he ran away, and has not been heard of since.

I understand he cursed all womankind before his departure, and declared that *I* was the cause of all his misfortunes. Such is man!

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Thomas Beech, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

AT LAST.

## AT LAST

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SUNSET banners were unfurled above him ;  
To me like a conqueror he came :  
Could my wayward heart do aught but love him,  
When he made such music of my name ?  
Lo! the lily-leaves were all a-tremble,—  
Did an unseen lover pass them by ?  
Could I palter with him and dissemble,  
When my face would give my words the lie ?

Others came as he came, and his story  
By another's lips had first been told ;  
Was it that the sunset's golden glory  
Made him seem a man of nobler mould ?  
Could I keep a free heart in quiescence,  
Undisturb'd by passion's painful bliss,  
With no sudden tremors at his presence  
And no thrilling rapture at his kiss ?

But his arm was round me, and his passion  
Shaped itself in words of strangest power ;  
Had another spoken in such fashion,  
I had scarcely waited for that hour.  
Darling, never more may fate dissever  
My hand from the hand that holds it fast ;  
Lily, you have lost me now for ever,  
And my heart has found a home at last.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

## LITERARY HONOURS

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THERE are a hundred things which "they manage better in France" than we do here at home. A truth we are complacently fond of admitting—as though it were a matter on which to plume ourselves—and perpetually appealing to Mr. Sterne's *very words*; though that reverend gentleman's remarks applied merely to the French *douane*, and the expression used was, "They order this matter better in France." But there is one other matter which that lively writer would have confessed, and confessed heartily, was ordered in France with as much superiority; and just as their custom-house officers treated the thin, odd-looking clergyman in black, so do the French people and their government treat their brilliant and refined guild of writers—or "literary men," as the phrase goes. Fancy an Englishman having the humiliation to explain a transaction that occurred only yesterday to a sensible and inquiring Frenchman; fancy his amused air and look of enjoyment as it is explained to him. It *must* be explained to him that in our country we do indeed take care of poets; but their claim must rest on their being rhymers of the lowest degree conceivable. What is all this *tapage* about "*ce poète Young*"? What sort of a *Henriade* has he written? he will ask. And when it has to be explained that the lucky recipient of *mille francs par an* has poured forth effusions separated by a very faint line from the street-ballad, certainly wanting the rude vigour of such performances, and at best hardly aiming so high as the unpaid celebrity of the "poet's corner" of a country paper; with what a comic shrug will this news be received! But then our great poets, according to this proportion, what a splendid recognition must be in store for them! If Young and doggrel are thus handsomely acknowledged, what magnificent treatment is in store for genuine poetry—for Tennyson and Browning—names perhaps only faintly present to the most cultivated Frenchman, who may add perhaps instead, "*Vot' Go'smidt et Biron's.*" And then, fairly driven into a corner, and to save ourselves from a ludicrous and humiliating position, we must explain that the whole is indeed a fiction; that we do allow the State directly to recognise literature or its service, but that to secure even this wretched alms literature must disguise itself, put on political rags, daub itself over with one of the two party colours, and then its application may be considered. We may appeal to any sensible person, if this is not the only logical, yet humiliating, extrication from the slough in which the nation's bounty to its poet Young has involved us. Or has it its origin in some lingering of the old Grub-street associations, as though writers were the mean hungry fellows they used to be, and we are rather ashamed of this class of our children?

They do indeed order this matter far better in France. There is a sumptuousness in the nation's dealings with its writers, painters, and musicians worthy of an imperial nation. Curiously enough, at the moment when England is rewarding her poet Young, France has voted a grant of the magnificent sum of 16,000*l.* sterling to an embarrassed poet, and a poet certainly not of the first class. "The government," says this munificent proposal, "has thought the moment has arrived to confer on M. de Lamartine a manifestation of national gratitude. It desires to intervene during his lifetime, to give him a striking testimony for his former services, a noble and precious assistance in his present difficulties, and a guarantee for his security and tranquillity in future." . . . "The legislative body will not hesitate to think with the government that it is worthy of France to honour the celebrity of M. de Lamartine by an act of high munificence." Wonderful words! and yet more wonderful government! Phrases indeed hardly to be realised by us in any shape; and, above all, in the shape of a right honourable Secretary of State coming down to the House, and proposing that his right honourable friend should include in the estimates a grant to that amount for the embarrassed Dr. Goldsmith, the admirable Mr. Fielding, who was worn down with dropsy, and had hardly funds enough to take him out to Lisbon. This was long ago; but to think of the Right Honourable Spencer Walpole or of Sir George Grey, baronet, standing up to propose *any* grant or honour to any historian, poet, or novelist, would be improbable, if not ludicrous in the highest degree.

It is true there is some dissatisfaction in France at this proposal, and some doubts also as to whether it will be endorsed by the country. But the ground of this disapproval is not what might be expected—objection to the amount or to the principle. The distressed poet has been helped again and again, has been always sending round "the hat," and has been overwhelmed with charity.

The principle indeed they were not likely to ignore. French men of letters have always enjoyed a sort of nobility, which is only natural, as they live among a lively, a witty, and a highly cultivated community. We see their breasts glittering with orders—not with the cheap "chevaliership" of the Legion of Honour, but with its higher and more substantial grades, which are as high and rare in France as a Commandership of the Bath is with us. Some are "barons;" some enjoy great pensions. We see them in the brilliant halls of the Tuileries, not making part of an indiscriminate herd, asked *en masse*, but welcomed with the "select few," and received with exceeding honour. Does M. Ponsard bring out one of his highly polished plays, the lords and ladies of the Court, and the head of the Court itself, fill the theatre; the author is welcomed in the imperial box, and loaded with compliments—earnest of something more substantial to follow. Think of the Duke of Bayswater, and Lord Foppington, and all "the

fashionables," crowding to the Olympic for the first night of Doctor Goldsmith's new play; or—more far-fetched still—of the Court, after the triumphant welcome of yesterday's melodrama, sending for its author to the royal box, to receive compliments, and despatching the order of the Bath to him next morning. The men whom the Paris "roughs" of 1848 thought of for their business were Lamartine and Arago—a poet and an astronomer. Guizot was a prime minister. In every other country the principle of such recognition prevails. America sends her literary children to Europe as ministers and consuls; and at a grand military banquet at St. Petersburg, held to commemorate the gallant defence of Sebastopol, the president distributed copies of a popular military novel among the military guests, by whom it was received with rapture.

About a century ago there was a certain recognition of literary services; and literary men were "jobbed" into 400*l.* a year, 300*l.* a year, and similar sums. But to earn this, some political scavengery was expected from them. Dr. Johnson was so recognised; but they hoped to buy his vigorous pen. And it is a melancholy illustration of the strange tone which English governments have always held towards writers, that when he was very ill, and a small grant and an increase to his pension was pressed for with great interest to help him out to Italy, it was refused. Had he been a hack writer, and helped the wretched ministries of his day, there would have been no difficulty. The same principle would seem to have come down to our own days. There is no country so lavish and magnificent in its rewards for services; but, alas, it does seem as though these services must be of the "shopkeeping" order, and conduce to the wealth and profits of what was so disrespectfully called "the nation of shopkeepers."

Men who have saved territory, or, better still, have added territory by the sword, are handsomely considered. Does an Indian general rout Sikhs, dethrone rajahs, and annex their kingdom—coronets and handsome pensions come showering on him as a matter of course. Yet it would be hard to grudge the skilful soldier his honours. But there is a worse prostitution of rewards in the less dazzling fields of political service and commercial employment. The peerage is certainly the most brilliant honour the country can bestow—through its sovereign—on its sons who have served it faithfully. However substantial other rewards may be, they do not approach this gorgeous shape of testimonial, which in England almost sets an aureole over the head of the fortunate recipient, and brings reverence, connection, and is even a glorified substitute for wealth. Yet let a man enter the prosy ground of politics, and take the spade as a diligent under-secretary or secretary, taking care to keep close to the Whig or Tory chief gardener, and after a decent service he very often retires ennobled. A long list could be made out of obscure secretaries for India, of plodding official "hodmen," respectable in their homely talents and decent drudgery,

Whiglings or Torylings, Right Honourable Taper Tadpoles or Harding Hanapers from the India Board or Duchy of Lancaster, who have been thus splendidly ennobled. So with the cheaper tribute of a baronetcy. Is a man successful at his railways or his warehouses; has he been a Lord Mayor of London; has he got the contract for an exhibition or a railway, and been successful to his own exceeding profit,—and he is called to the front, and sent away with the Red Hand upon his banner. Who shall blame this selection in a great commercial country? Nay, when the great Ocean Telegraph is laid, the fortunate chairmen of the companies—shrewd men of business, who were dreaming only of business and forty per cent in the matter—find themselves, perhaps to their surprise, honoured and “baroneted” handsomely. So with science, geology, what not; so with medicine and doctors, departments which bring profit or comfort to the coffers of the country. Does it not look, with this lavish showering of honours, as though this was the instinct in the great public mind, and that only those who contribute to the substantial wealth or comfort of the State are to be glorified?

Literature alone is unhonoured by a people that indignantly repudiates being called a “nation of shopkeepers,” and holds itself out as an intellectual and reading nation. The poets, who furnish whole hours of waking dreams and feasts of the most gorgeous and heavenly scenery, more exquisite than even its first pantomime to a child—enchanters whose works drift the labouring and the weary into Paradise—they are passed by. But the political upper-clerk, who has patiently uncoiled red tape with due tact for many years, and for whom a hundred thousand brothers could be found, as patient and as laborious—*his* head is measured for the glittering coronet, or *his* Christian name is drawn from obscurity by a decorative “Sir.” Novelists—those other enchanters (that is, when of the first rank)—who thinks of them? True there is the starved pension-list, the alms of forty pounds and a hundred pounds, but which we are now told, on good official authority, is no perquisite of the literary ranks, and which indeed, so far as it stretches, is fairly expended in relieving needy widows and failing men, who have been humble navvies and paviours in the very lowliest walk of letters. Nor indeed can it be said that the ranks of the fiction writers, in the main, deserve such recognition, any more than the ranks of the Harding Hanapers or Taper Tadpoles. These titles—baronetcies or peerages—are the common counters, the pieces-of-eight in which these debts are paid; and so far we fall in with the vulgar notion that being made a lord or baronet is just verging on the beatific vision. This is the accepted shape of bauble with which men are supposed to be made happy; and therefore we claim it and would accept it also. As the lawyers, doctors, contractors, soldiers, geologists, chairmen, &c. are thus popularly made happy, so the men of letters might be dealt with in the same way. They have done as much service in their generation to their country and countrymen as any secretary or contractor. Surely

this diffusion of grand thoughts, of poems largely read and got by heart, of fine story and generous humanity, at least makes government cheaper and easier. Tennyson, Anthony Froude, Thomas Carlyle, and Robert Browning, are surely more valuable than some of the poor flashy cheap Jacks who go about in their political carts, and sell their wares—poor wares enough too—with such profit. There seems small prospect of this neglect being amended; and looking down the long and splendid line of English writers, we see the stray scraps of title flung to a Scott or a Macaulay—a bounty apologised for on the ground of some political desert. But what can be expected where, in a country now literally being overrun with brass and marble figures, the grand, the immortal Shakespeare, whom we rave of, whom we would fight for, the “Divine Williams” whom the French depreciate, whose works we buy and illustrate, but do not read quite so diligently as might be supposed, is at this moment without a decent monument?

But there is one name—a household name not only in England but on the Continent,—a name which will be known in the great house as well as in the humbler cottage when the cheap reputation of our day shall have passed away for ever. It is indeed a disgrace to our generation that it should not have thought of Charles Dickens, to whom it owes so much. Even the “first gentleman” of Europe, who *did* do some surprisingly gentlemanly things, after all, had the grace to acknowledge and dignify the surpassing services of Walter Scott. Yet our splendid and perfect Britannia, in her lavish distribution of premiums, money, &c. to all her good children, has forgotten the child of whom she has most reason to be proud.

But the tribe of secretarylings, mayors, chairmen, merchants, &c. have all done service, and public service, to the State. And the State, it will be said, cannot take official cognisance of those moral services, which, like virtue, are to be their own reward. But I will venture to say, that for actual positive service, for work done, for money saved to the State, which is a grand point, the country is indebted to her writers. Myriads of the Harding Hanapers and Taper Tadpoles, hard at work for generations in their little political circles, and Home Secretaries bringing in bills that fail to realise any social improvement, have done nothing to compare to Mr. Dickens's labours. He has been the great prophet of the union of classes—the link between rich and poor, never weary of showing to the former what virtues and endurance and what charity is found under rags and in hovels; and to the latter, that the rich are not monsters and tyrants. Who will say that this is not a public service, and that it has not done more than the costly machinery of boards and secretaries and commissions? And yet the fact remains behind: the Right Honourable W. Putt, an ex-secretary, becomes Lord Skelper, in acknowledgment of his services, whatever they are; and the noble English writer is still plain Charles Dickens.

# LONDON SQUARES

BY WALTER THORNBURY

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## I. BLOOMSBURY-SQUARE AND BEDFORD-SQUARE

TURNING our back resolutely on the eastern squares, we leave behind us regretfully Salisbury-square, although Richardson, in grave full-dress, wrote his *Pamela* there, within ear-shot of all the jangle of his printing-office; Charterhouse-square, although Addison and Steele ran about there when schoolboys, and, long years after, Thackeray and Leech played at marbles in its dingy precincts; and Lincoln's-inn-fields, although Smollett's spluttering Duke of Newcastle held state there, and the Sachaverel rioters made bonfires of dissenting pulpits in its enclosure. We should have delighted to have pointed out the lofty fourth floor where Tennyson, in his "golden prime," dreamed of the Caliph Haroun and saw the vision of Fair Women; but our goal is westward, and we may not stop for a moment—not even in Red Lion-square—to mention the place where Cromwell's body is supposed to have been buried, to prevent the Royalists insulting it, as they afterwards did the supposed Cromwell that they dragged from the Abbey and hung—to their own disgrace—upon the gibbet at Tyburn.

Let our first halt be in Bloomsbury, where great lawyers and physicians once lived.

The story of Bloomsbury-square is soon told, unless its historian wishes not to tell it soon. It was first mapped out by an excellent man, the Earl of Southampton, son of Shakespeare's first patron, and the father of that pure and noble Lady Rachel Russell, who acted as amanuensis in her husband's trial. Evelyn, six years after the Restoration, describes dining with the Lord-Treasurer in "Blomesbury, where he was building a noble square or piazza, a little towne." He says, "his own house stands too low, some noble rooms, a pretty cedar chapell, a naked garden, to the north, but good air." Sir John, marry, good air! Southampton House occupied all the north side of the square, and of course looked out on fields. The square was originally called Southampton-square, but took the name of Bloomsbury from the old district before 1674. The *Gazette* of that year contained an offer of twenty shillings for the recovery of Lady Baltinglasse's "great old Indian spaniel or mongrel—crop ears, curled all over." The south side was originally named Vernon-street, the east Seymour-row, and the west Arlington-row. Baxter, the excellent divine, was residing in the square in 1681, where his wife died in what he called his "most pleasant and convenient house." This wise and moderate man, who



had been a chaplain in the parliamentary army, but had refused to acknowledge Cromwell as Protector, was afterwards offered a bishopric by the king, and persecuted by Judge Jeffreys.

In Queen Anne's time the square was fashionable enough, and silk coats and diamond stars, and blue-ribbons and garters, were seen here as often as anywhere. Pope mentions it favourably :

“ In Palace-yard at nine you'll find me there—  
Or ten for certain, sir, in Bloomsbury-square.”

The Earl of Chesterfield, one of De Grammont's not very reputable gallants, died here in 1713. In 1736 Ralph, an authority on topographical matters, praises the Duke of Bedford's agreeable gardens and his view of the country, which rendered a second retreat from town almost unnecessary. In 1763 another guide describes the square as large, openly situated, and mentions the ducal palace (built from a design by Inigo Jones) as elegant and spacious.

In George the Second's time, when the Duke of Bedford was first Secretary of State, then Keeper of the Privy Seal, and lastly Regent (Lord Justice) during the king's visits to Hanover, there must have been regal state kept here. Junius poured his hottest vials of Greek fire on this overgrown favourite's head. He accuses him of betraying Lord Bute; of selling his country to France; of being surrounded, like Hogarth's prodigal, with jockeys, gamesters, blasphemers, gladiators, and buffoons—that is to say, racing men, men-about-town, prize-fighters, and wits. He declares that Mr. Humphrey, a country attorney, horse-whipped him on Lichfield race-course, and that he gave a rout at Bedford House a fortnight after his son's death. It is also said that the duke, although he had 60,000*l.* a year, sold all his son's clothes, down even to his slippers, and put the money in his own pocket, to defraud the poor anxious valet.

Junius closes his attack with words that seem bitten into copper by the most acrid aqua fortis: “Your friends,” he screams to the duke, “will ask, Whither shall this unhappy old man retire? Can he remain in the metropolis, where his life has been so often threatened, and his palace so often attacked? If he retire to Walmer, scorn and mockery await him. He must create a solitude around his estate if he would avoid the face of reproach and derision. At Plymouth his destruction would be more than probable; at Exeter *inevitable.*” Is not this worthy of Tacitus? This tremendous duke died in 1771. Yes; death was unmannerly enough to come even to the Minister-plenipotentiary, the Recorder of Bedford, the Colonel of the Devonshire militia, the President of the Foundling, and the Elder Brother of the Trinity House rolled into one; in the quiet grave he ceased to be envied or detested, and another Duke of Bedford arose to be inveighed against by Burke.

Palaces, like tin-kettles, have their day. In 1800 Bedford House went to the hammer, and soon after the hammer came to it; for, after

the sale, it was immediately pulled down. A lucky casual dropper-in, says that sound authority, Mr. Peter Cunningham, bought the furniture and pictures (including Thornhill's copies of Raphael's cartoons, now in the Royal Academy) clear off for a paltry 6000*l.* The old stem of an acacia which stood in the front court, and which Horace Walpole remembered when young, light, and graceful, and praised in his Essay on Landscape-gardening, was sold at the same time.

That eminent naturalist Sir Hans Sloane, the friend of Ray and Boyle, lived in Bloomsbury-square till 1742, when he went to reside on his own manor of Chelsea. He was rather a grand person to live near; for he was not only President of the College of Physicians and court-physician to that choleric hero of Dettingen, George II., but also the successor of Sir Isaac Newton as President of the Royal Society. Of Irish origin, Sloane had studied in Paris and Montpellier, and visited Jamaica as physician to the Duke of Albemarle. Though sneered at by Pope as a potterer over butterflies, Sloane seems to have been an indefatigable student, and a kind-hearted though parsimonious man. He was a friend of that eminent man, Dr. Sydenham, and under his auspices lectured in public on the "Star of the Earth," a supposed specific for hydrophobia now forgotten. He edited for years the *Philosophical Transactions* (then crude and quaint enough), and he was the first to start a dispensary for the poor; and for this alone we ought to venerate his memory, and to give him a kindly thought when we pass through the old square that knows him no longer. Sir Hans, stingy to himself, was princely to the public; for he gave the Company of Apothecaries the freehold of the Chelsea Botanical Gardens, on condition that the Company should present yearly to the Royal Society fifty new plants, till the number should amount to 2000. This purchase-number was completed in the year 1761.

Sir Hans died, a very old man, in 1752; his body lay in state, and his funeral was a public one, attended by people of all ranks and conditions. This wise and consistent man, unwilling that his cabinet and collections should be scattered to the winds on his death, bequeathed them to the public on condition that 20,000*l.* should be made good by parliament to his family. This sum, though considered large then, was hardly more than the intrinsic value of the gold and silver medals, the ores and precious stones, the first cost of which had been at least 50,000*l.* The library alone consisted of 50,000 volumes, 347 of which were illustrated with coloured engravings. There were also 3560 manuscripts. It was half a gift, and parliament gratefully accepted the legacy and fulfilled the conditions. The money was partly raised by a lottery, and Montague House instantly bought to receive the collection. To this purchase we owe that mine of treasures, the British Museum, which, if it increases much more, will in time want a town to itself. In 1845 the Printed-Book Library contained about 300,000 volumes. It was singular that the fine coins and

rare books and curiosities from all parts of the world should come back at last and nestle down so near their old dépôt in Bloomsbury-square.

That great overbearing court-physician, Dr. Radcliffe, also lived in Bloomsbury-square, removing there from Bow-street, where Sir Godfrey Kneller had been his neighbour, for fresher air and more quiet. The boisterous, parsimonious son of a Yorkshire yeoman lived to deride the Princess Ann and her hypochondriacal "vapours," and to roughly tell King William, who showed him his dropsical legs, "I would not have your Majesty's two legs for your three kingdoms."

The old Jacobite bachelor, however, though Queen Anne detested him for his rude candour, got great masses of money in his time, and fees such as Hippocrates or Galen never hoped to have. William III. sent him five hundred guineas from the privy-purse for curing his two favourites Bentinck and Zulestein. For watching our Dutch king's dry cough, Dr. Radcliffe received about 600*l.* a year. Queen Mary sent him a noble douceur of one thousand guineas for curing her son, the infant Duke of Gloucester. For attending the Earl of Albemarle at Namur the Abernethy of his time secured sixteen hundred guineas, a diamond ring, and the offer of a baronetcy. The Whigs could neither live with him nor without him. Steele and Mandeville laughed at the miserly doctor in the *Tatler*; but the doctor went on sipping his wine and scraping together his fees, little disturbed by the raillery of the wits or philosophers. The Bull's-Head tavern, in Clare-market (afterwards a haunt of Hogarth's), was a favourite resort of the great doctor. There is perhaps no disease of the mind so contradictory as avarice. This same hard man, who never paid a bill if he could delay the payment, who shunned his poor relations as if they were lepers, occasionally broke out into the most generous and considerate actions. He sent a poor, drunken, broken-down barrister of the Temple, who had been his boon companion at the Bull's-Head revels, five hundred guineas; he left one poor sister, whom he had starved all his life, 1000*l.*, and another 500*l.*, a year. He gave, under an assumed name, 50*l.* a year for ever to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; he sent, in the same humble and truly Christian way, 500*l.* to the poor forlorn non-juring clergy, and 500*l.* to the distressed Scotch Episcopal ministers. He maintained the foolish, wrong-headed Obadiah Walker, who had tried to turn half University College to Romanism. He generously helped forward Dr. Mead when a struggling competitor. He sent fifty guineas privately to his old rival Dr. Drake, when that partisan writer was broken and impoverished. Last of all, he heaped his hard-earned thousands on Oxford; gave a splendid east window to University College; left his fine library for the use of the students for ever; and from his imperial gift arose the Radcliffe Infirmary, the Radcliffe Observatory, and the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowships. Such are the contradictions of human nature.

One day, as the doctor alighted from his gilt coach at his door

in Bloomsbury-square, a pavior, who had been employed to repair the roadway opposite the house and could not get paid, waylaid him with bow and scrape, and touch of his old cocked-hat. The parsimonious humourist eyed him with a droll malice.

"Why, you born rascal!" he cried, looking contemptuously at the road, "do you pretend to want to be paid for such a piece of work as that? Why, you've gone and spoiled my pavement, and then covered it up with earth to hide the bad work!"

"Doctor," replied the pavior, giving as good as he got, "mine is not the only bad work they put earth over."

The doctor winced, laughed, and paid the man.

The doctor was dying, testily and with a struggle, in 1714, at his country house in the pleasant village of Carshalton, in Surrey, when an order of Council came requesting him to attend Queen Anne, who was dying. The man whom Swift in his bitter way called "a puppy" was too ill to go, satisfied with what he heard of the mode of treatment from Arbuthnot and Mead. The mob was furious with the old surly Jacobite. When the Queen died, the doctor was afraid to go out of his door, and an anonymous letter warned him that thirteen gentlemen had resolved on his assassination, "the ghost of her Majesty crying aloud for blood." Dr. Radcliffe died three months after the Queen, a victim to gout and mental vexation.

The elder Disraeli, that admirable old scholar who left us so many pleasant books on authors' loves and quarrels, lived in Bloomsbury-square, on the west side (the first house from Hart-street, so it was described in 1828). Here that learned old Jewish gentleman, surrounded by his books, brought to a completion his *Curiosities of Literature*, and made his chirpy sensible notes on Pope's spite and Swift's vitriol, discussed Tasso's madness and Chatterton's forgeries, and was no doubt often visited by his clever son, then with a conveyancer in Lincoln's-inn, attired, as Lady Morgan once described him to us, in eccentric and rather foppish black velvet, and disporting an ivory-topped cane.

The Disraeli house had been the residence of its original builder, Mr. Isaac Ware, the architect, whose rise and progress is interesting. A gentleman of taste and fortune in Hogarth's time, riding one day past Whitehall, observed a sickly little chimney-sweeper intent on drawing the street-front of Whitehall on one of its own basement-stones, constantly running into the street, defiant of the coaches, to see the next point of the elevation. The gentleman called the young artist to his carriage. The boy, crouching in fear, burst into tears, and begged the gentleman would not tell his master, for he would wipe all the mess off directly. The gentleman encouraged the boy, threw him a shilling, and ascertained his master's name. He instantly went to Charles's-court in the Strand, where the master-sweeper lived, and asked about the lad. The master said he was a very good boy, but so weakly that he was of

little use. He laughed about the boy's "chalking," and showed his own walls, which were covered with sketches of the portico of St. Martin's Church. The generous gentleman was struck by this. He purchased the rest of the boy's apprenticeship, gave him an excellent education, sent him to Italy to see Palladio's and Sansovino's masterpieces, and, upon his return, employed him and introduced him to his friends as an architect. His bust by vivacious Roubilliac is one of that clever Frenchman's best productions in portraiture. Mr. Ware (that was the boy's name) compiled a folio Palladio, became a man of property, and a friend of Hogarth's and all the celebrities and "elect" of his day, and built himself a country mansion at Westbourne (Bayswater), where Mr. Cockerell, the architect, afterwards resided. He was a frequenter of old Slaughter's coffee-house in St. Martin's-lane, once the rendezvous of Dryden and Pope.

The habitués of Slaughter's at that time were Gravelot, a drawing-master in the Strand, whose illustrations to Shakespeare were engraved by Grignon; Gwynn, Dr. Johnson's friend, the architect who competed with Milne for the building of Blackfriars-bridge; Roubilliac, the sculptor; Hudson, that miserable portrait-painter who was Reynolds' first master; M'Ardell and Sullivan, Hogarth's engravers; Gardelle, the French miniature-painter, afterwards hung in the Haymarket for murdering and burning his landlady, Mrs. King; old Moser, the keeper of the St. Martin's-lane drawing-academy; that neglected genius, poor Richard Wilson, the famous landscape-painter; Parry, the blind Welsh harper, a great draught-player; Nathaniel Smith, father of Nollekens Smith, the malicious but delightful writer of *The Book for a Rainy Day*; and Rawle, the friend of Captain Grose the antiquary, Burns's ally. Ware became a learned, powdered, punctilious old gentleman; but it is said that his skin retained the stain of soot till his dying day.

The great Lord Mansfield resided in the north end of the east side of Bloomsbury-square. This fourth son of Lord Stormont, born in 1705, had in 1737, when still unrecognised by government, the honour of having an imitation of the sixth epistle of Horace dedicated to him by Pope, who admired his graceful manner and aristocratic accomplishments. The little poet of Twickenham had given Murray instruction in the art of elocution, and had recognised the keen and comprehensive intellect and the clear cool judgment that afterwards raised him to the highest honours of the law, only to become a target for the poisoned arrows of Junius and the hatred and rage of the anti-Catholic mob. Cibber, often a match for his little scorpion of an antagonist, cleverly parodied the bathos of Pope's two lame lines:

"Graced as thou art with all the power of *words*,  
So known, so honour'd at the *House of Lords*."

Cibber substituted for them:

"Persuasion tips his tongue where'er he talks,  
And he has chambers in the King's Bench walks."

Shortly after this unfortunate eulogy the handsome young lawyer was married to Lady Betty Finch, daughter of Daniel Earl of Nottingham; and in 1742 was made Solicitor-general, and began rapidly to mount the ladder of preferment.

So just and urbane was this great lawyer, whom Lord Chatham enlogised as superior to Somers and Holt, and whom even Bishop Warburton commended, that he was praised for his eloquence and learning by Lord Lovat, though that eloquence brought the old rebel's head to the block. Although condemned by the old lawyers of his time as an innovator and despiser of precedent, Lord Mansfield was hated by the people as an opponent of Wilkes and a Catholic-relief and Divine-right advocate.

In 1780, when this wise and good man, whom Swift had mentioned with praise and whom even disappointed suitors had hardly been found to blame, had grown old, the attempt to relieve the Roman Catholics from a ponderous weight of tyrannical penal laws exposed him to the full storm of popular hatred. On June 2d that crack-brained, mischievous fanatic, Lord George Gordon, led his sixty thousand enthusiasts and scoundrels, conspicuous by their blue cockades, from St. George's-fields—where Bedlam now is, and ought to have been then—to Westminster. That day Lord Mansfield's coach was pelted in Parliament-street, the old lawyer's robes torn and his wig disordered. On the same day the mob, bearing blue flags and roaring "No Popery," burnt and plundered the chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors; and but for General Conway's threat to pass his sword through Lord George on the first rioter bursting in, there might have been a massacre of the members of both Houses of Parliament. On the 3d and 4th there were riots in Moorfields, but the military were not called upon to act. On the 5th the storm rose higher. Sir George Saville's house in Leicester-fields was sacked, and all the furniture burnt before the door. The houses of two tradesmen who had been active witnesses against the rioters were also gutted, and Catholic chapels in Wapping and Smithfield; and the trappings and wreck brought in procession to Lord George Gordon's house in Welbeck-street, and then burnt in the adjacent fields. On the 6th the mob again surrounded Westminster, and wounded Lord Sandwich and destroyed his carriage. While Burke was recommending defensive associations, and Fox was urging the expulsion of Lord George Gordon, whose blue cockade had been all but pulled from his hat by Colonel Herbert, the mob was attacking the minister's house in Downing-street; but was repelled by the military, as it was at the Temple-gate by its own fears and the derision of the Templars. The shouting rascals with the blue cockades now divided themselves into bands, levying contributions and attacking houses on whose doors or shutters "No Popery" had not been chalked. On foot

and on horseback all the villany of London advanced towards the prisons, eager to release their incarcerated friends. Newgate and Clerkenwell, the Compters, the Fleet, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea, and Southwark Gaol disembogued their felons, murderers, and debtors to swell the army of thieves and incendiaries.

Twenty or thirty fires blazed in different parts of London. The blue cockades, mad with stolen drink, were burning and plundering wherever caprice or suspicion led them. The first pretext had been almost forgotten. Honesty was cowed.

Sir John Fielding's house in Bow-street was sacked; and then the cry of the blue cockades was "Lord Mansfield's!" This was very early on the 7th. The attack had been foreseen; but Lord Mansfield, unwilling to exasperate the true Protestants, had refused to surround the house with foot-guards, but placed the soldiers in ambuscade in St. George's Church away from observation, but ready for action. When the blue cockades, however, came, they poured into the usually quiet square in such a deluge that all attempts to disperse them would have been useless. While the rioters pelted the windows and drove at the barred hall-door with crowbars and heavy sledge-hammers, the old earl, wrapped in a cloak and leading his countess, escaped by a back-door, and sought shelter at the palace. The door soon yawned open before the crushing and furious blows, and the rioters poured in, shouting "No Popery" and "Death to thieves." The yelling Protestants broke looking-glasses, slashed pictures, tossed sofas and tables out of window, and carried out the books to feed the bonfires that soon turned the windows of the frightened square crimson as with ghastly day-break. Men, women, and children joined in the work of destruction.

Men who said books could do no harm, and who expressed regret, were threatened with being thrown from the windows into the fires. One fanatic was seen tossing silver dishes and handfuls of guineas into the flames, and thanking God that there would be less to be spent on masses. The books included all the law Mss. and notes collected during Lord Mansfield's whole lifetime. No guineas could replace these.

The ringleaders kept urging the mob, who were emptying the larder and cellars, to go to the Bank, where there was a million of money to pay them for their pains; and shouted the names of obnoxious houses, and the Guards would not act, as the magistrates had run away. When the ringleaders cried, "Push forward, boys! No Popery!" the officer only took off his hat and said, "I will not hurt a hair of your heads; but you must disperse."

The attack began at half-past twelve. At five o'clock the soldiers fired on the mob; and having burnt the Bloomsbury house down, they rushed shouting down Holborn towards the Langdales', two Roman Catholic distillers, near the bridge that then crossed the Fleet at the bottom of the hill. The rioters, maddened with greedy draughts

of spirits snatched from the vats or lapped from shattered casks, set fire to the distilleries, and soon floods of liquid flame rolled into the Fleet and swept along the roadway. Dozens of howling wretches perished in this fiery sea, or fought for the deadly plunder, and shouted "No Popery" even when the soldiers' bayonets were at their breasts.

The great pyramid of flame that rose above the ruins and shone on ten thousand drunken and maniacal faces also lit to the spot the Northumberland Militia and a detachment of Colonel Holroyd's regiment, who instantly shot all rioters found breaking into or firing houses. The mob dispersed before the quick fire of the soldiers, and were driven back over Blackfriars bridge, many falling from the balustrades. Two attacks on the Bank were also repulsed, as well as an attempt to cut the leading water-pipes. A ringleader on a roof opposite the Fleet was shot down; a standard-bearer, carrying trophies from Newgate, was killed in Cheapside. The Light-horse sabred down a hundred wretches; the Association troops and Guards mowed down as many more with their steady rolling fire. The rioters tried to gather up their dead, shouted, and then fled. Wilkes arrested many seditious persons. In the morning there were soldiers bivouacked in St. James's-park, Lincoln's-inn-fields, and the Museum-gardens. Two days after, that mischievous madman, Lord George, was committed to the Tower. He eventually turned Jew, and died in Newgate.

In Parliament Lord Mansfield laid down the law as to military interference as calmly and dispassionately as if he had not lost a dish. All persons—soldiers or civilians—were bound to apprehend any persons engaged in breaches of the peace or treason. If soldiers in doing so exceeded their powers, they must be tried by common and statute law. The metropolis was not under martial law, and the soldiers had no more power since the riot than before.

There was great sympathy shown by the House for Lord Mansfield's cruel injuries. When he observed that he had formed his opinion without the aid of books—for "indeed I have no books to consult"—the House felt the pathos of the words, and seemed to deplore the loss he had sustained, Adolphus tells us, as a national misfortune and disgrace. Eight years after, this great lawyer resigned his appointment, and Erskine delivered a warm-hearted address from the Bar on his retirement. He died calmly in 1793, and was buried near the Earl of Chatham in Westminster Abbey. What a congress of the great and good meet under that consecrated pavement, mixed with strange oddities and some scoundrelism!

In Bloomsbury-square, a recent agreeable chronicler of the lawyers says, our grandfathers used to lounge and peep at the house of Mr. Edward Law (afterwards Lord Ellenborough) in hopes of seeing his beautiful wife (*née* Townly) appear in her balcony to water the flowers. She was the belle of the square, and the delight of legal London. On becoming a peer and chief-justice, Law moved to St. James's-square;



the first common-law judge, Lord Campbell says, who left the old legal quarters for the West-end.

Lord Chief-Justice Willes, one of Hogarth's owlish judges, lived in Bloomsbury-square, and died there in 1761.

We must be in a hurry indeed, and under great press of sail, if we ever pass by Westmacott's ponderous bronze seated statue of Charles James Fox without stopping for a moment. It is so beefy, so like a fat aldermanic Cæsar of the Lower Empire. We have seen its great round head periwigged with snow, scorching with a *coup de soleil* under a July sun, and buzzed about by autumn leaves. In all weathers it is irresistibly droll. What, that Roman senator, the Charles James Fox of Gilray, with the swarthy gross face and the portentous black eyebrows? Where is the collarless coat, the little three-cornered hat that he pinched as he denounced Pitt? where is the deep-flapped waistcoat and the knee——? Is this bronze Cato, stolid and grave, the Fox whom Gibbon describes as playing knee-deep in soiled cards for twenty-two consecutive hours, and placidly losing 500*l.* an hour? Is this sable butcher the gamester who won 4000*l.* in one night, and declared that the greatest pleasure in life, after winning at cards, was losing?—this Rhadamanthus the punster, the dice-rattler, the card-shuffler, who, after a Waterloo of a night at hazard or faro, was found by Beauclerk cosily reading Herodotus? This Pluto in soot cannot be the reckless genius who used to have to borrow guineas from the waiters at Brookes's, and was even dunned by his (sedan) chairmen. Impossible! This is a Roman, not an English orator; our gorge rises at him first, and then our laughter.

When that malignant and narrow-minded man John Wilson Croker pretended one day in parliament to be sublimely ignorant of where one of the Bloomsbury-squares lay, the property in that district, it is said, instantly sunk in value. Such is the cowardice of our middle-class nature. Theodore Hook, son of a writer of Vauxhall songs, having tuft-hunted and joked himself into high society, turned round and tried to prove his gentility by deriding the middle class, from the lowest grade of which he had sprung. After all, it was only deriding the new money to flatter the pride of the old. Greengrocers, butlers with poddy gloves, grooms brought in from the stable to wait, penny tarts for dessert—cheap ostentation, sometimes mean in its forms of display—was meanly satirised by this man, who loved to toady great people. He obtained at last an appointment, from which he retired disgraced; and died at last a worn-out, sottish, beggared, forlorn old rake, neglected and despised. But let him alone; he is forgotten now, and we have learned to hold at its true worth those dishonest political partisans who prompted Hook to his clever flippancy, and left him at last to perish in poverty and neglect.

Bedford-square derived its name from the adjoining Bedford House.

Lord Eldon's changes of residence mark his several steps up the ladder. First in Cursitor-street, close to the detestable sponging-house with the barred windows and chained door, not long since pulled down. There he took the Newcastle banker's daughter, Bessie, almost a child, loving and frugal. A step westward, and he goes to Carey-street, going out to market himself in Clare-market. A few more successful steady years of hard thought and patient industry, and we find him in a large roomy house, No. 42 Gower-street, where he lived when Sir John Scott; and as attorney-general he conducted, in 1794, the unsuccessful, and to him rather humiliating, prosecutions of those stubborn liberals, Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall, whom Erskine delivered from the legal tormenter.

A step higher, and Lord Eldon has a house in Bedford-square, No. 6, with more room to breathe in after the sulphurous smell of lying parchments and the fetid heat of the Chancery-court. Here his Chinese Toryism revelled in the triumphs of Pitt, Perceval, and Sidmouth; here he spread his ægis over that noisy sufferer the Princess of Wales, and collected the evidence that was to expose the neglect, perfidy, and infamy of her heartless husband. In that house, according to the old king's prompting, the good-for-nothing prince was spoken of as a hopeless Absalom and a cruel persecutor of injured innocence.

In his Bedford-square house, in June 1808, the dubitating chancellor entertained the coarse, reckless Princess at a grand banquet, that must have made the rather shy, unsocial, and penurious Lady Eldon (who had not the courage to be present) shudder and fret. Alas for the stability of things! A few years later, and at the same table sat the portly and flaxen-wigged Regent, presiding at a still more splendid feast. The Regent had changed quickly; his vices now were mere exuberances of life and spirit, his mean detractions were accusations only too lamentably true. Selfish prudence and selfish profligacy were allies now; the Princess, after all, was a shameless, impudent, abandoned woman. Wrongs! what wrongs had a woman whose favourites were her valet and dragoman? Such, no doubt, was the turn the Bedford-square conversation took when the greatest friend of tailors who ever lived, and the man who contrived to live longest with the smallest pin's-head of a heart to diffuse his circulation, spread a halo of high life over fortunate, consecrated Bedford-square.

In April 1815 a mastership of Chancery became vacant by the death of Mr. Morris. Lord Eldon was importuned by the Prince Regent to appoint his brilliant and witty friend Jekyll to the vacant post. The chancellor doubted and delayed as usual. He was afraid of the scandal that would be occasioned by the appointment of a mere popular *bon vivant*. The Prince, accustomed to no opposition to his wishes, either from his own conscience or that of others, grew impatient and angry. One day in June he called on the stubborn lord chancellor and requested to see him. Lord Eldon had the gout, was confined to his

bedroom, and could not be seen even by the Prince. The Regent saw how the wind lay, and what had brought on the gout. He instantly decided on his course: he waved back the frightened footman and the astonished butler, and skipped upstairs to the chancellor's bedroom; there, with a mocking bow, he threw himself into an easy-chair and sighed heavily.

"Ah, poor Lady Eldon!" he said.

"Why do you say *poor* Lady Eldon, your royal highness?"

"Because I do not mean to leave this room, Eldon, till you have given Jekyll that appointment."

On the 23d of June the old lawyers of the Temple groaned to hear of Jekyll's appointment. The labour and the responsibilities of office, however, altered the witty man of the world, and he became a decorous master, holding his power laughingly but respectably. Old age and sickness led him from the court, which he had by no means disgraced.

On the day after his retirement (so my friend Mr. Jeaffreson says, in his delightful book about lawyers), the veteran met Eldon, his old but long-since reconciled enemy, and said, with pleasant and thoughtful triumph:

"Yesterday, Lord Chancellor, I was your master; to-day I am my own."

Lord Eldon at last obeyed the great law of London migration, and moved westward to Hamilton-place, Piccadilly, where Queen Caroline's friends threatened to oust him by taking the adjoining house for the clamorous woman and her tagrag levées.

In 1815, when that incredibly mischievous Corn Bill was passed to keep up high prices for the farmers and make bread dear for the poor, the old square saw another riot. Lord Eldon, always on the wrong and the strong side, and against the people and necessary reforms, had resisted any further discussion on the bill, and roused the mob to an unusual state of irritation. On the evening of March 6th the chancellor's house was fiercely attacked, the windows smashed, the iron rails plucked up. The old lawyer, however, had not carried a musket in the "Devil's Own" for nothing. He had already sent a footman for the Grenadiers on duty at the British Museum, and they marched in at the back entrance in Bedford-square just as the rioters came shouting in through the broken panels of the front door. They paused when they saw the bayonets keen and ready. Lord Eldon knew the human mind: he shouted to a supposed ambuscade in the back rooms,

"Guards, reserve your fire."

The mob (according to the old gentleman's story, after his second bottle of port) instantly fell back. The chancellor sprang forward, and dragged in two of the ringleaders.

"If you don't mind what you're about, lads," said the for once prompt chancellor, "you'll all come to be hanged."

“Perhaps so, old chap,” replied one of the graceless rascals; “but I think it looks just now as if you’d be hung first.”

Satisfied with his generalship, yet still distrustful of the rioters, Lord Eldon now made a masterly retreat by a back way to the British Museum under the protection of the soldiers, who were perhaps unwilling to leave the Museum long undefended. Even if the gates were forced, escape would be easy in that vast burrow. The mob, however, was satisfied with its protest, and soon dispersed.

The next day the Duke of Wellington called on Lord Eldon to congratulate his old Tory friend on having baffled and outgeneralled the rabble.

Great men can afford to pay absurd compliments. The Duke was pleased and flattering.

“I am glad, my lord,” he said, “that I left the field before you began to act the general, or you would certainly have beaten me in that career.”

It is pleasant to think of the tenacious, handsome old lawyer as we pass through Bedford-square, for he was a man of strong fibre, and a sound though not adaptable brain. He shed courtly tears with George IV. when Peel and Wellington deserted the Anti-Catholic Emancipation cause, and he made many a Chancery suitor shed tears by his delays. But he was an honest man, and acted according to his lights; and he was a decorous, pure-hearted man in a somewhat demoralised and disreputable age.

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## VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ

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IN a fine passage of *Modern Painters* Mr. Ruskin lays down the rule that there are two orders of poets, but no third. Under the first he classes those who are most distinguished by their creative faculty, and under the second those who are chiefly characterised by their reflective or perceptive powers. To the first class he refers poets like Shakespeare, Homer, and Dante; to the second such as Wordsworth, Keats, and Tennyson. So far as it goes, this distinction of the greatest of English critics is unimpeachable; nor can we take exception to his demand, that whatever the class may be to which poetry is referred, both of them should be first-rate in their range. In thus classifying poetry, however, Mr. Ruskin puts out of sight altogether that species to which is applied the title at the head of this page. Poems which come under this heading belong to neither class; yet that genuine poetry may be found in them few readers will be disposed to deny. By way of clearing the ground, it will be as well, however, to define exactly what is the meaning of the phrase *vers de société*. To do this it will be better to refer to older canons of criticism than those observed by the writer to whom reference has just been made. That his distinction is in some respects the more scientific is quite true; but there are occasions upon which scientific terminology is out of place. Thus, although the botanist finds it convenient to speak of a certain plant as the *alcea rosa*, with a mystic letter appended in brackets, commonplace people find it much more pleasant to call the same plant a hollyhock, both as regards the certainty of being understood and for the associations connected with the name. So is it in speaking of poetry: it is much more easy to classify it as dramatic, epic, or lyric, than as creative, perceptive, or reflective. Adopting, therefore, the old system of nomenclature, the *vers de société* may at once be classed amongst lyrical poetry. If, however, the reader insist on distinguishing it by the formula laid down by Mr. Ruskin, he may add that it belongs to the perceptive rather than to the reflective order. The definition is, however, still incomplete; for it is obvious that while many lyrics may be referred to this class and to this order, they are expressive of far stronger emotion than is permissible in poems of the class to which we refer. To rectify this defect it will, therefore, be well to add, that although in ordinary lyric poetry intense passion may very properly find expression, yet in the *vers de société* it is altogether out of place. The poet's lyre may be tuned to concert-pitch for the outer world; but when he once enters this region matters must be wholly different. Nothing

then must be so forcible as to jar upon the refined ears of the denizens of the drawing-room; nothing must suggest to them that emotions more intense than those which the poet expresses can find place in the human heart. And yet, in spite of its character of subdued refinement, poems of this class may, in their way, be perfect. Claret is an admirable wine, in spite of the fact of its lacking the strength and body of port. Just so with poetry. Great though the difference may be, all kinds are good in their way; the light sparkling *vers de société* equally with the spirit-stirring lyric and the grave and dignified epic. It is scarcely necessary to add that Mr. Ruskin's reservation as to quality holds good in this as in the case to which he refers it. To revert to the comparison of which we have just made use, it does not follow, because our tastes lead us to claret rather than to port, that we are bound to content ourselves with the compound with which Mr. Gladstone's name is associated. There is claret and claret; and the wise man prefers a single glass of the Château Margaux "with the red seal" to a gallon of the cheap decoction of sloes in red ink which the low tariff has made common.

First among the points which distinguish poetry of this class must be placed its exquisite refinement. In all the four hundred and thirty poems which are contained in Mr. Locker's delightful volume\*—to which I would here offer a tribute of well-deserved and hearty praise—there is not one which could offend the most delicate susceptibility. Lyrics of another kind may deal with strong emotions in forcible words, may excite hearty laughter by broad strokes of humour, or may rouse the passions by strong and spirit-stirring appeals. Here the case is different. The poet is writing for none of these ends. Well-fitting kid encases the hand which strikes the lyre, and the voice which accompanies it must "roar as gently as any sucking dove." If the singer be a lion at all, he must be "a lion *en papillotes*;" his claws must be pared, and his tail must cease to lash his flanks into rage. Instead of the odours of the desert and the nude naturalism of savage life, he must bring with him the perfumes of Bond-street and the garments of Saville-row; the air he breathes must be made soft with womanly voices and sweet feminine associations; nothing violent or self-assertive must be allowed to appear, however powerful or contented with himself the poet may be,—all such things, like "the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind," are out of place amongst those for whom he sings: yet under all this delicacy of externals there may reasonably be a body of the truest and purest poetic feeling and instinct. The guardsman in the drawing-room is the mildest of created beings. His voice is soft, his manner subdued, and his person fastidiously cared for; yet the same man, when occasion demands, can utter his word of command with sufficient energy, can assume a carriage of unmistakable bravery, and can even content himself with coarse fare and a ragged uniform. Just so is it with the poet. In the drawing-room he

\* *Lyra Elegantiarum*. Moxon and Co. 1867.

too is subdued and calm. The stormy passion which winged his words erewhile has given place to the calmer and less obtrusive emotions developed by modern civilisation, while his voice is tuned to harmonise with the thoughts which he has to express; yet, in spite of all this, he is not the less a poet. Beneath the dress-coat and white tie of modern life his heart may beat as strongly as ever; and let him be once removed from the repressive influences, it will find room for expansion and abundant reason as well. Whether restraints such as these are always advisable, is a question upon which we have no desire in this place to enter.

Next after its refinement come the qualities of sincerity and spontaneousness. From even that dramatic assumption which is the glory of some of our greatest poets, the writer of the genuine *vers de société* is free. It is true that his character is not very striking or very magnificent; but it has the merit of reality. During by far the greater portion of our existence the passions by which we are agitated are anything but overwhelming, more especially when that existence is passed amongst the sparkling trifles of a modern drawing-room. In reducing, therefore, those milder emotions to an intelligent and agreeable form, the poet is simply transcribing those matters which are most commonly to be found in his own daily life. As a writer in the *Times*, who is quoted by Mr. Locker, has said of this species of verse, "It is the poetry of men who belong to society, who have a keen sympathy with the lightsome tone and airy jesting of fashion, who are not disturbed by the flippancies of small-talk, but, on the contrary, can see the gracefulness of which it is capable, and who nevertheless, amid all this froth of society, feel that there are depths in our nature which even in the gaiety of drawing-rooms cannot be forgotten." But all this sincerity, however essential, will be of little value unless expressed with ease and spontaneity. The true *vers de société* is certainly not composed without pains; yet it should read as if it had been written as fast as the pen could travel over the paper, and as if the mind of the author had gone through as little preparation before its production as that of the reader before its enjoyment. Such a result, it need hardly be said, is not obtained at once. "Easy writing," said Sheridan, "is very hard reading." The converse is always true; but never more entirely so than in the case of poetry of the kind now under consideration. In the first place, the key-note is pitched in a purely conversational tone, which from its very commonness is one of the least easy things to reproduce in a poetic form without the loss of some part at least of its *timbre*. Much more difficult does this become when this conversational quality has to be clothed in a rhythm light, crisp, and sparkling with frequent and telling rhymes, and with all those verbal tricks of alliteration, pun, and antithesis which give such a charm to the lighter species of writing. All these qualities would appear to imply that poetry of this class must be the work of the poet by profession, and of him alone. Yet on examination it will be found that this is very seldom the case.

The best *vers de société* has in fact been written by men who have lived an active life—in whose character there has been nothing of that absorption in their work and devotion to poetry for its own sake which we regard as essential to him who would win the laurel. Præd, for example—to whom the world is indebted for some of the most sparkling and brilliant verses of this kind in the language—was a busy, active, and thoughtful politician. Even Canning, of whose political ability and laborious life there can be no question, has bequeathed pieces of occasional verse of no contemptible quality. The reason is, however, by no means difficult of discovery. All these writers might have been poets of a high class but for circumstances. The accidents of their birth, education, friendships, and environments made of them politicians, men of business, active men of the world. Poetry was their recreation; and since, from the limited time they could give to its pursuit, they were unable to attempt the higher species, they gave the best of their powers to the smaller and lighter. Again, the very circumstances of their outward lives helped to raise the quality of their verses. To write such poems as these in perfection, a constant contact with the world is necessary. Mr. Locker well expresses this truth when he says, “they submit their intellects to the monotonous grindstone of worldly business, and their poetical compositions are like the sparks which fly off, and prove the generous quality of the metal thus applied; and it must be remembered that, but for the dull grindstone, however finely tempered the metal might be, there would be no sparks at all.”

One special charm which distinguishes verses of this class is the philosophical tone by which they are characterised. It need scarcely be said that this philosophy is that of the drawing-room, that it is never very profound, never very grave or pretentious, but that its perfection consists in its lightness, vivacity, and humour. Irony, the more subtle the better; satire, the most playful of its kind; sarcasm, never passing beyond the limits of good breeding, may all find place; but beneath them all there must be a definite philosophic creed, no matter, in the interests of art, whether good or bad. Take, for example, Præd's well-known *Chaunt of the Brazen Head*,—a poem which unites all the best qualities of the true *vers de société*:

“ I think whatever mortals crave  
 With impotent endeavour—  
 A wreath, a rank, a throne, a grave—  
 The world goes round for ever.  
 I think that life is not too long;  
 And therefore I determine,  
 That many people read a song  
 Who will not read a sermon.

I think you've looked through many hearts,  
 And mused on many actions,  
 And studied man's component parts,  
 And nature's compound fractions :



## VERS DE SOCIETE

I think you've picked up truth by bits  
 From foreigner and neighbour ;  
 I think the world has lost its wits,  
 And you have lost your labour.

I think the studies of the wise,  
 The hero's noisy quarrel,  
 The majesty of woman's eyes,  
 The poet's cherish'd laurel ;  
 And all that makes us lean or fat,  
 And all that charms or troubles,—  
 The bubble is more bright than that,  
 But still they are all bubbles."

It would be pleasant to quote the whole of this charming set of verses, did not reasons of space forbid. Enough, however, has been given to show how great a master in this branch of art Præd was. The creed he here evolves is not perhaps a very dignified one; but it is put with such grace and with such delicacy of tone and manner, is so wrapped about with graceful allusions, and is illustrated with so many "quips and cranks," that we would not have it other than it is. Cynicism is scarcely a creed by which to live and die, but it is not out of place in this connection. At any rate it is better and pleasanter than that everlasting laudation of the greatness of the nineteenth century, the triumphs of steam, or the manifold virtues of the irrepressible working man, of which we have heard so much of late. Or, in another vein, take the following little scrap of Hood, which, slight though it be, is yet worth a hundred times its length of pretentious sham epic or spasmodic lyric:

" My temples throb, my pulses boil,  
 I'm sick of song and ode and ballad ;  
 So, Thyrsis, take the midnight oil,  
 And pour it on a lobster salad.

My brain is dull, my sight is foul,  
 I cannot write a verse or read ;  
 Then, Pallas, take away thine owl,  
 And let us have a lark instead."

Such verses need no comment. The reader who cannot appreciate them in their unadorned simplicity is scarcely likely to be more fortunate if he is called upon to receive them beclouded with criticism.

Here I must pause. In what I have said I have had two principal objects: first, to show on what grounds the *vers de société* claims a place in literature; and second, to point out upon what principles it ought to be criticised. For these ends further comment would be useless. An *omelette soufflée* is not improved by too careful dissection, nor the savour of occasional verses by too minute examination. In both cases it is best to taste with discretion, and to decide on the quality in the act of so doing.

J. FRANCIS HITCHMAN.

## THE LATE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF JERSEY

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A MEMOIR of this lady, who through several generations has been a leader of fashion, may not be without interest, while it will serve to dispel the erroneous impression still prevalent, that the too celebrated Lady Jersey of George IV.'s reign has only just died.

The royal favourite, who, strangely enough, was the daughter of Dr. Twysden, Bishop of Raphoe, would have counted no less than a hundred and fifteen summers had she lived until now. She died, however, in 1821.

The lately deceased Countess Sarah Sophia Child Jersey was the eldest daughter of the tenth Earl of Westmoreland. She was born in 1785, and bore the name of Lady Sarah Fane previously to her marriage.

Independently of her beauty, she had obtained great celebrity by her having become heiress to the immense fortune of Mr. Child the banker, her maternal grandfather. By right of primogeniture her elder brother, Lord Burghersh, ought to have had the largest share of the inheritance ; but peculiar circumstances induced the old banker to dislike his first grandchild. It appears Mr. Child had many crotchets, foremost among which was his hatred of the nobility. When talking of his property, he was in the habit of saying that no aristocrat should ever touch one penny of it.

One morning he was thunderstruck on being informed that his only daughter, the presumptive heiress of all his wealth, had eloped with the Earl of Westmoreland, a young spendthrift over head and ears in debt. Mr. Child's rage knew no bounds. Guessing the route they had taken, he immediately followed them. Promising a high reward to the postillions, he was driven at such a furious pace as not only to gain on the happy pair, but actually to overtake them. At the moment, however, when his carriage came up with Lord Westmoreland's, and when Mr. Child was in the act of jumping out, the earl's postillion turned round, fired, and killed one of the banker's leaders. During the confusion which followed this unforeseen act the earl's carriage dashed unmolested by on the road to Gretna Green.

This gallant deed was gratefully acknowledged by Lord Westmoreland, who immediately took the faithful post-boy into his service, where he was promoted from one post to another. More than sixty years after the event just narrated took place he was still in the family. His first patron having died, old Gilham had been installed in the lodge at Middleton Park, the Countess of Jersey's seat in Oxfordshire, where he remained until his death.

Mr. Child, being thus suddenly stopped in his pursuit when his daughter was almost in his grasp, was exasperated beyond measure. Returning to a home made desolate by her desertion, he vowed to spurn all her advances towards a reconciliation. That vow he kept for a considerable time. Even when her eldest son was born his anger remained undiminished. It was only on the birth of a daughter, when Lady Westmoreland's health began to fail, that the old father's heart softened towards her, and they became reconciled. To prove, however, the strange waywardness of the human heart, he could never bring himself to like his daughter's firstborn, whom he in a manner disinherited by making a will in which the whole of his enormous fortune was settled on her little girl, the subject of this memoir.

On Mr. Child's death Lady Sarah Fane became possessed of a yearly income of fifty thousand pounds, in addition to a share in her grandfather's bank. For many a long year on a certain day, when the affairs of the establishment were made up for the twelvemonth, Lady Jersey's carriage might be seen wending its way towards Temple Bar, where the *pontifex maximus* of fashion might be seen to descend and enter the bank building. There for once, laying aside the ways of a fine lady, she quietly dined with the partners, afterwards devoting the whole evening to business.

Possessing rank, beauty, and riches, it may easily be imagined that Lady Sarah Fane had many admirers, and that candidates for marriage presented themselves in numbers. From amongst them she chose George Villiers, fifth Earl of Jersey, son of the Countess Frances, the Bishop of Raphoe's daughter. The match was one of pure affection on either side, and remained so to the end of their singularly happy wedded life. He was her senior by twelve years, was of an amiable disposition, and, as far as personal appearance was concerned, was an admirable match for her. They are said to have been the handsomest couple of their time, to which their portraits, painted about sixty years ago, bear testimony.

In the large library at Middleton Park there is a life-length portrait of Lady Jersey of such surpassing beauty as fully to justify the rhapsodies of contemporary poets and the adulation of the fashionable crowd. It was painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and might have been intended for a representation of Juno. Tall and majestic, like the queen of heaven, with regular features, small nose, dark silken hair, deep blue eyes, beautiful rounded form, and alabaster skin, through which the delicate veins showed as if traced by the artistic pencil of Rachel,—such was Lady Jersey when, at the age of twenty-two, she was portrayed by the great artist.

Time had so little impaired her beauty, save stamping it with maturity, that, when nearly sixty, she looked exceedingly handsome dressed in the costume of a sultana. This consisted of a sky-blue Cashmere robe embroidered in coral, and a white and gold turban, and had been

presented to her by Count Wornozow, governor of Circassia. To account for this singular preservation of beauty, which was almost like Ninon de l'Enclos', it may as well be stated that Lady Jersey invariably substituted gruel for soap and water at her toilet, the latter being considered injurious to the skin.

In the matter of dress Lady Jersey's taste was exquisite, and the *tout ensemble* in such perfect harmony as never to look elaborate. It must be admitted, however, that her fastidiousness and luxury were carried beyond ordinary bounds. Knowing that the eyes of all female exquisites were turned on her, she changed every article of clothing from head to foot four times a day. Although this may appear excessive, she was less luxurious than the late Empress of Russia, who, not content with dressing herself nightly in three different costumes, also compelled the ladies of her court to do the same by these simple words: "*Mesdames, vous êtes chiffonnées.*"

Having taste and tact in perfection, Lady Jersey became, by general consent, a leader of fashion, and the *haute volée* acknowledged her as such by implicitly obeying any laws she chose to lay down. When therefore she decreed that, to be distinguished from the *parvenues*, the "exclusives" must in future make a change in their pronunciation of certain words, not a dissentient voice was heard, all being eager to follow their leader.

Saying "to be drove in a charrot," "to have a goold ring," "chopped hands," and making use of similar *recherché* phrases, was considered a sufficient sign of exclusiveness. In a very short time everybody with the least pretension to fashion talked in imitation of Lady Jersey, and most of these expressions still survive. As patroness of Almack's she ruled for many years supreme, and is said to have been so conscientious in the distribution of her vouchers as to have first required ocular proof of the candidates' skill before admitting them to the Terpsichorean temple.

Her own private parties were gayer than other people's, and her balls the most brilliant of the season. Independently of her faultless taste in the ornamentation of the rooms, the success of her entertainments was chiefly due to her own fascinating manners, and to her singular talent of adapting them to every age. This was the key to her great and long-continued popularity, for her invitations were sought with like eagerness by the lisping guardsman and the hoary politician. The latter were, however, her favourites, and remained so to their end, for she outlived them all.

Two generations of politicians, all personal friends of the Countess of Jersey, had passed away before she herself ended her earthly career. During the first years of her married life, all the great statesmen, including Fox, Pitt, Canning, Castlereagh, and others, used to meet at her house, where politics were freely discussed, she being considered by all worthy of their confidence. Strange as it may appear, Lord Jersey,

though always present at these discussions, never took any active part in politics. It was said he once rose from his seat in the House of Lords, when it was whispered, "Lord Jersey is going to speak," and a breathless silence followed. The good man, however, merely went to shut the door, after which he quietly sat down again.

Unlike many other women of fashion, who fill up their idle hours by intrigue, Lady Jersey never condescended to encourage even a flirtation. Hers was an open, noble nature, which derived no pleasure from the insipid conversation of a *cavaliere servente*. She had hundreds of admirers at her feet, was on terms of friendship with them all; talked loudly, so as to be heard in the farthest corner of the room, and walked with heavy, majestic step.

She alone, with her husband constantly by her side, could with propriety offer an asylum to Lord Byron when every other door was closed against him. During the years of 1814-1815 he found a hospitable shelter at Middleton Park, where he passed the greater part of that dark period in seclusion, brooding over his wrongs, whether real or imaginary. When the evil spirit domineered, he hated the sight of a human being. Avoiding all communication with the family, he at those times remained shut up in his room during the day, living on hard biscuits and water. In the dead of night, when every soul was asleep, he would leave the house, and rush through the adjoining wood until daylight and the early labourers appeared, when he would creep back into his room, haggard and worn out.

Neither Lord nor Lady Jersey interfered with the unhappy man, whose state of mind was at that time bordering on insanity. They pitied him, and received him with great kindness whenever he chose to join them at dinner. This he would do now and then, when less excited, especially when a certain neighbouring lord, a reputed hard drinker, was expected. Lord Byron, who had been living like an anchorite perhaps for a month past, or even longer, would then lay a wager to drink Lord C—— under the table, a feat which he invariably accomplished. Coolly walking off to bed, he then left to the servants the task of conveying the drunken man to his room—no easy task, his lordship getting, as a rule, so helplessly drunk as still to reel about next morning when following the hounds.

When the scandal about Carlton House was freely commented on, the young Countess of Jersey refused to appear any more at a court presided over by George the Fourth. Resenting this slight, the Prince Regent thought of inflicting a terrible punishment on her by sending back her portrait, which had belonged to his "gallery of beauties." This ungallant act induced Lord Byron to write in Lady Jersey's album those well-known verses, which are too familiar to need repetition here. Strictly adhering to her resolution of retirement, the young Countess held *her* court during that time at Middleton Park: the Lady Jersey whose name appears so conspicuously among the visitors at Carlton

House was the Countess Frances, who had been a widow since 1805. Middleton Park had been originally her country seat; but she being of a saving disposition, and the earl far from rich, the house is said to have been a mean structure when their son married Lady Sarah Fane in 1804. On his inheriting the title and estate, the old house was demolished and rebuilt under the Countess Sarah's direction in the present style, which for more than half a century has been considered the perfection of elegance and comfort.

Before misfortune visited the family—the time from which my personal observation dates—the whole estate was a real Eden, owing to Lady Jersey's princely liberality. The usual staff of servants for the house, including those for dairy, laundry, gardens, and stables, amounted to more than seventy, and at festive seasons extra hands were engaged from the village. Lady Jersey was radiant when there happened to be among her guests a sprinkling of royalty, for whom she had a great *penchant*, though their suite and the company invited to meet them used to swell the original number of her establishment to sixteen hundred a week. At least, the returns in the cook's, steward's, and house-keeper's room all agree in this respect. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

The Countess's own life being like an open book she never harboured the least suspicion against others; consequently, while priding herself on the capital management of her household, she little dreamt that her health was nightly drunk in champagne, hock, and tokay by the ladies and gentlemen in the steward's room, and that her maids, when being handed in to dinner by these gentlemen, were dressed out in her finery. It was only when being informed that her old house-keeper had been measured for a riding-habit, and was talking of buying one of Lord Jersey's left-off horses, that a light seemed to dawn on her; and dismissing the unfaithful stewardess, she replaced her by one more discreet in language.

It had been Lady Jersey's custom to stay at Middleton Park from August until the end of February, during which time a succession of visitors arrived and departed as at a court.

There, in her maturer years, a second generation of politicians visited her, and valued her friendship as much as their predecessors had done. They were cosmopolitans, having the old though not venerable-looking Talleyrand at their head, whose sardonic features, chin buried in a formidable cravat, and high wooden shoe gave him the appearance of *le diable boileux*. Another welcome visitor was Prince Pozzo di Borgo, by birth a Corsican, who, in spite of being described by one of his colleagues as *un fin matou*, became silly as a little child at the end of his career, and was said to have, childlike, played with a doll. The Russian Count Pahlen, Sir Robert Peel, the Duke of Wellington, and a long string of Esterhazys, with their chief, the ambassador Prince Paul, were also frequent guests. The latter, one of Lady Jersey's oldest friends, was said to have taught her to

waltz before this dance was known in England. There must be some truth in this statement; for one night these two diplomatists distinguished themselves in a waltz in such a manner as only master and pupil could have done.

Someone was playing a march, when the prince, mistaking it for his favourite dance, gallantly engaged Lady Jersey. While everybody in the room was smiling, the two politicians whirled round steadily and gracefully until the last chord had been struck, when both exclaimed, "*Quelle jolie valse!*"

The Countess did not excel in music; nor, if the truth must be told, did she excel in any accomplishment. Hers was an active but restless mind, which did not incline towards study. Independently of politics, she was feminine in her occupations; and, after the evening papers had been read, was as a rule employed about some Berlin wool-work, which, however, seemed never to get finished on account of the numerous mistakes made during an animated conversation.

Besides her mother tongue she spoke only French, which she spoke fluently and habitually even to her children. This custom, though no doubt well meant, gave to their daily intercourse an air of restraint, none of them being on the same familiar footing with her as with their father, who always talked to them in English, and to whom they clung with truly filial affection.

Although the Countess was devotedly attached to all her children, her solicitude was chiefly directed towards her daughters, regarding whose health she was in constant communication with Sir Henry Halford, the *Æsculapius* of the time. While young, the Ladies Villiers had their own establishment in a distant part of the house at Middleton Park, and went to their mother only at stated times to say their catechism and to receive instructions respecting their daily exercise and their evening toilet. They also saw her at dessert, and stayed with her while she read evening prayers to the servants; on which occasions her maids would come into the room very demurely, wearing the Countess's delicate laces, her stockings at four guineas the pair, and even flourishing her own gold-embroidered pocket-handkerchiefs, with a crown in the corner, under her very nose. Her thoughts being in the work before her, they were quite safe from her scrutiny.

The education of the Ladies Villiers was chiefly intrusted to foreigners; in addition to whom they had also some English masters, both laymen and divines. So anxious was Lady Jersey about her daughters' spiritual welfare, that when instructing a new governess in her duties, she said, alluding to their religious training, "*Je veux que leur première pensée le matin soit à Dieu.*" From a sense of duty the Countess paid every morning a flying visit to the schoolroom; and from the same notion she came once a week to hold a kind of general examination. On the latter occasions such startling questions were asked as to throw the Italian governess, who, like most inhabitants

of the south, had a fiery temper, invariably into *une crise nerveuse*. Driven to frenzy one day, when Lady Jersey insisted on knowing, How long the Romans stayed in America, and in what part were their encampments? the governess wrote a long letter, in which she complained of her ladyship's interference. The Countess at once discontinued her examinations, saying good-naturedly, "*Je croyais vous assister.*"

Notwithstanding her grandfather's munificent provision and her own brilliant career, Lady Jersey was not exempt from troubles, which being occasioned by those nearest and dearest to her, cut the more deeply into her soul. Though her sorrows did not come until late in life, she bore them bravely, to all outward appearance. Retiring to her own rooms, she lived there for weeks in deep seclusion, Lord Jersey alone being witness to her grief.

At those sad times the servants moved about with stealthy steps, and spoke in whispers as if some heavy calamity were pending. They felt there was something the matter with "my lady;" but being unable to fathom the truth, came to the conclusion that nothing but ill temper could induce her to desert the library. The silvery streaks in her dark hair, however, looking much brighter on her reappearance, sufficiently explained the cause of her absence. It was the custom of Lord and Lady Jersey to sit at night in the library surrounded by their children, their guests, and a whole array of ancestors adorning the walls. Many of the family portraits were full length and in magnificent frames. They included the family group of the celebrated Duke of Buckingham, the intriguing Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, Adrian de Villars, grand master of the Knights of Rhodes, and the celebrated Barbara Villiers, best known as Lady Castelmaine in Charles II.'s time. There were also portraits of Lord Jersey's sisters, represented as biblical characters or in fanciful costumes, according to the prevailing taste of the time.

Far away from these gorgeous pictures, hidden by projecting bookshelves, hangs in a dark corner a little portrait which, although possessing the attributes of "fat, fair, and forty," forms a melancholy contrast to those magnificent portraits in glittering frames. It is the only likeness preserved of Lord Jersey's mother. Every other trace of her who formerly inhabited the house is carefully obliterated, nor was her name ever pronounced by any of the family except in one instance.

A large party was one evening assembled, when some lady, happening to light on a little manuscript music-book, began playing its contents. The conversation, which until then had been very loud, suddenly stopped, while a strange whispering took its place, which increased when Lady Jersey, in answer to her inquiry about the name of the piece, was informed it was "George IV.'s favourite march." With great tact she praised it, and requested a repetition of the same; while Lord Jersey, delighted to recognise the march his mother used frequently to play, explained that it was her music-book which was just then being explored.



Like all women in a conspicuous position, Lady Jersey was much envied by many of her own sex, who accused her of conceit and pride, though the former became with her almost a virtue. The consciousness of having the largest diamonds and being the handsomest woman in the room deterred her from being jealous of others, and kept her in that happy and even temper which was her greatest charm.

Her pride, on which frequently much stress has been laid, consisted chiefly in exalting her husband's family by tracing with great persistence the descent of the Jerseys to the celebrated Duke of Buckingham, James I.'s favourite. Pride never entered into Lady Jersey's domestic relations. Annually she gave a ball at Middleton Park, to which all the upper servants and chief villagers were invited. There was no restraint, though the Countess, her family, and all her friends joined in the dance.

Owing to Lady Jersey's unbounded charity there were no really poor people at the village of Middleton. She supported the old and infirm, gave employment to the robust in health, and provided comfortable cottages for all. About Christmas an immense stock of warm winter-clothing was distributed by the Ladies Villiers among the old and needy, who, far from being grateful, often received their presents almost grumblingly, because "her ladyship" did not give them herself, and never chatted with them as "the wicked Lady Jersey" formerly had done. Want of sympathy with the poor could, however, not be laid to the Countess's charge. At the rebuilding of the house at Middleton several severe accidents occurred, and two of the workmen were killed on the spot. Lady Jersey immediately took charge of the children; but they being mere infants, she had them carefully brought up and sent to school until old enough to be taken into the house. I myself remember two orphans in her household who had been there from their earliest infancy. The eldest, after having passed through the different gradations in the nursery until she herself became head-nurse, married on a retiring-pension granted by the Countess.

Such was Lady Jersey as here depicted. No mortal is perfect, whether man or woman; all have faults; and I leave it to my readers to judge whether the former arbitress of fashion had not fewer faults, and whether she was not a much better woman, than most of her sex would be if equally flattered and equally subjected to the baneful influences of fashionable life.

J. FRANCES SCOFFERN.





## THE ROUTE

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THE town is astir ; for 'tis known that to-day  
The soldiers will leave us, and ride far away ;  
And the route has brought sorrow to many a heart,  
For friends must be severed, and lovers must part.

The trumpet's shrill warning has called the parade,  
The sun flashes bright upon helmet and blade,  
And the glittering column moves off in its pride,  
While the music strikes up a farewell as they ride.

They pass with a jingle and clatter of feet,  
And the crash of the band wakes the quiet old street ;  
While many a sad face looks wistfully down  
On the long line of helmets that ride from the town.

They are gone,—and the music comes faint on the breeze ;  
While far down the road, through the hedgerows and trees,  
The gleam of bright scarlet and steel points them out  
To the tear-bedimmed eyes that are watching the route.

But little care they, as they ride on their way,  
For the hearts that will ache for them many a day ;  
Since a welcome awaits them from faces as fair,  
And the old loves are past—*Vive l'amour ! vive la guerre !*

T. S. S.

## THE WIZARD OF THE EDGE

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WITHIN half an hour's journey from Manchester is the village of Alderley. It lies in the middle of a fertile plain, and its sides are beautifully wooded with trees of oak, beech, and fir. Its highest point is three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and from its summit lovely views are obtained of the surrounding country. Coming down the hill from the Beacon is a winding path which leads to the Holy Well. What may be the traditional virtues of its water we will not pause to inquire, but place ourselves on the edge of the rock overhanging the well to view the lovely landscape beneath and around, and also to relate to the lovers of legendary lore the story connected with this pleasant locality. The greater part of the property is owned by Lord Stanley of Alderley, whose name is probably more familiar than the legend I am about to recount. Like all such mythical tales, it must of course commence in the usual way.

"Once upon a time," Farmer Marshall set off to Macclesfield fair to sell the white mare on which he rode. His way thither lay through Alderley Edge. It was a dreary day in autumn when he left his house; the wind blew, and the rain fell fast; so fast, that the poor farmer was well-nigh drenched to the skin. At length the storm became so violent, that he reined-in his steed, to look about for some place of shelter; but at the moment that he did so, the mare began to prick up her ears and plunge furiously at sight of a fearful apparition in her path. It was a gaunt dark figure, of most strange aspect, with eyes like balls of fire, beneath bushy eyebrows, which added to the fierceness of their expression. It had long loose white robes, which waved in the wind; whilst the wearer, with uplifted hand, and in a sepulchral voice, thus addressed the horror-stricken man, whose hair fairly stood upright with fear:

"Stranger, attend! and, traveller, hear!  
I know what business brought thee here;  
I know thine errand, and full well  
Thy sordid purpose can I tell:  
Thou'dst give thy favourite mare for pelf,  
And sell for little more thyself;  
But know, thy horse is doom'd to be  
Heir to a nobler destiny.  
Sell as thou wilt that steed of thine,  
'Tis fated that the steed be mine;  
Yet go—though I can ne'er deceive—  
Thy stubbornness will ne'er believe.

Mix with the chapmen all, and try  
 Who chaffers for her—who will buy ;  
 A vain attempt ; but be it so,  
 And to the purposed market go.  
 But mark me well : 'tis my behest,  
 That when the sun sinks in the west,  
 And ere the moon with silver light  
 Shall make yon waving pine-tree bright,  
 Return thou here, and bring thy steed.  
 Fear not, if here ; else fear indeed !  
 Go, ponder on my firm behest ;  
 But mark the hour, and watch the west."

Scarcely had the last words been uttered when the unearthly form of the speaker vanished, leaving the terrified farmer more dead than alive with fright. He, however, quickly recovered on perceiving no sign of the wizard ; and assuring himself of the possession of his mare, he urged her onwards to the fair. There his beautiful Bess obtained her full meed of admiration ; but no one offered to buy her. That day and the next passed away without any bid having been made for his beast. He then bethought him that the spell must be upon her and himself alike ; and remembering the fatal words, as he watched the sun sink below the horizon, he bade adieu to the crowd, and made for the trysting-place appointed by the wizard. Sure enough there he stood ; and commanding the farmer to follow him, he led the way past Stormy Point, which is a few minutes' walk from the well. There his form seemed to expand until it reached a fearful height,

" Whilst with more fire, and brighter, glow'd  
 His piercing eye—he breathed a spell."

And the yawning earth opened wide her mouth between two iron gates, as if ready to receive its prey. The wizard waved his hand, whereupon the horse plunged violently, throwing its rider to the ground. The poor farmer looked up beseechingly to the enchanter, who promised to give him his powerful protection after having led him past

" innumerable stalls,  
 Where milk-white steeds, each side by side,  
 Just like his own, were careful tied ;  
 And close by every steed was found  
 An armèd man in slumber bound."

On and on they went, passing men and horses innumerable, until they reached the farthest extremity of the cavern, where the farmer seemed to forget for a while his terrors, as his eyes rested with delight on the heaps of gold piled one above another, and by their side a huge iron chest, which the wizard opened, and paying the farmer liberally for his mare, gave him permission to return. This he was unwilling to do without venturing an inquiry as to the meaning of the

sleeping warriors and their steeds, which was thus explained by the enchanter :

“ These are the cavern'd troops, by Fate  
Foredoom'd the guardians of our state.  
England's good genius here detains  
These arm'd defenders of her plains,  
Doom'd to remain till that fell day  
When foemen, marshal'd in array,  
And feuds intestine shall combine  
To seal the ruin of our line.  
Thrice lost shall England be, thrice won,  
'Twixt dawn of day and setting sun ;  
Then we, the wondrous cavern'd band,  
These mailèd martyrs for the land,  
Shall rush resistless on the foe ;  
And they the power of Cestrians know ;  
And this all-glorious day be won  
By royal George, great George's son.  
Then bootless groans shall travellers hear,  
Who pass thy forest, Delamere ;  
Each dabbled wing shall ravens toss,  
Perch'd on the blood-stain'd, headless cross.  
But peace ! maybe another age  
Shall write these records on her page !  
Begone.”

So runs the legend, which goes on to say that the farmer, having obeyed, found himself standing alone on the hill, and the gates fast closed behind him. To endeavour to find the cavern would be a bootless search ;

“ And till the hour decreed by Fate,  
None e'er shall see the iron gate.”

It will nevertheless remain as an agreeable retreat from the din of cities, and the favourite resort for pic-nics during the bright summer days. Whilst writing the above legend, I have been struck with its remarkable resemblance to an incident in the career of our old friend Gil Blas. It will be remembered how he went to Salamanca fair to sell his mule ; how her progress was impeded by the beggar ; how Gil was at length taken to a subterranean home, where was stable-room and provender for twenty horses, &c. ; and how he finally escaped the vigilance of the Hermandad.

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## ON A CLIFTON PEBBLE

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I PICKED up that bit of pebble, ten years ago, upon St. Vincent's rocks. A fustian-coated fellow polished it for me, and I gave him sixpence for his trouble. Yesterday I visited the same place again, and there were a dozen polishers—I beg their pardons, "lapidaries," dealers in precious stones and curiosities. The old polisher had disappeared, and a dozen successors had come with stalls and pink tissue-paper, each rivalling the curiosity-store at Hotwell House at the foot of the rocks below.

My pebble was a genuine bit of local stone, characteristic of the place in every respect. The new polishers have brought their pebbles and slabs with them—from the Lowther Arcade and the old Thames Tunnel. And this is in keeping with all the changes which the windy march of improvement is making in this classic spot of Clifton. I am not an old man; I will be content to take you back to the place ten years ago. Then you stood upon that point of rock near the Observatory, and challenged the Rhine to compete with that splendid bend of river, those umbrageous woods surrounding Nightingale Valley, that distant sweep of "banks and braes," and the glimmering peep of ocean which the sunshine disclosed far away against the Welsh hills. Delightful it was, when woods were green and the ships came up with the evening tide, to sit upon that point of rock, and listen to the birds singing a thousand wood-notes wild in the trees that crept down to the river's bank, and made a background of dark green for those tall masts with fluttering pennants that came up to Bristol on the brown bosom of the Avon.

If you had the companionship of a pleasant, chatty, local friend, he would tell you how some of the great people of the western city made their money by the slave-trade; he would point out the ships that came from the Indies with sugar and molasses, and those others that came from Quebec laden with timber. He would tell you how Brunel had pushed out a plank from the top of one of those bridge-buttresses, walked to the end of it, and dropped a plummet-line over the river, whilst the men who stood upon the other end to balance the frail platform gazed with astonishment at the intrepid engineer. He would point to a bend of the river, and show you where a fine East Indian ship, the Demerara, broke her back the very day she was launched; and he would point to the Hotwells, and up the river to the place where Bristol built the



Great Britain, in a dock that was discovered to be too small to let her out. He would tell you of some of the enterprise and courage of the merchant venturers of that fine old city, and a hundred curious stories of its charities, its quaint institutions, and the palmy days before Liverpool went ahead of this famous port, and left Bristol alone in its glory. All this and much more your friend may tell you now; but you cannot sit snugly in the old spot and listen to him. Those pillars that looked like monuments of departed greatness have been bridged over. With something like romance in their practical wisdom, the Bristolians purchased Brunel's chains, upon which swung Hungerford Bridge, and they have hanged up the London bridge upon the Clifton pillars,—and a magnificent thing it is; but those crowds of sightseers and loungers who affect the locality affect you and me, my friend, on that quiet spot of ten years ago; and they bring those polishers, and mendicants, and German bands along with them. And, O, this march of progress! there are more noisy bands at work amongst the rocks on our right—bands of navvies, blasting the stone, and wounding the air with thundering reports. Nay, more; at the foot of the rocks—that charming solitude of ten years ago, where you watched the rooks sailing down beneath you, and saw a miniature carriage now and then creep along the river's bank—is a railway; and they have made a tunnel for it here and there, but you see the snaky-looking thing curl along by the road beneath, and you hear its shriek, and you see those grand old ships standing up high above it, and fluttering their white flapping sails as if in fear or derision.

What a change it is! Poor Chatterton, who used to walk here when he was composing those Rowley ballads,—he would not know the place now that the new polishers have taken up their stations on the rocks above. And Southey, who lived in the neighbourhood, and Amos Cottle (ye gods, what a name!),—what would they think of it now, if the last ten years alone have made so great a change? Dr. Smollet, who wrote *Humphrey Clinker* hereabouts, how would he have regarded that steam-engine whizzing and fizzing by the spring concerning which one of his heroes wrote so graphically? And Beau Brummell, who came from Bath sometimes to the Hotwell Springs, he would certainly never have survived those plebeian crowds which throng the ancient pump-room. Poor Judge Halliburton, who wrote that amusing *Life in a Steamer*, with local references to Bristol,—he would have rejoiced at these changes, for he took an interest in the progress of the western port.

But the advent of the new and fashionable polishers with their foreign pebbles, the excursionists on the bridge, and the railway train below, are nothing to the next contemplated change. The Hotwell House is "to be sold by auction," and the classic ground of fashion and quackery is to be cleared for "river improvements." The "Hotwell," from which Mr. Jer. Melford wrote to Sir Watkin Phillips, of

Jesus College, Oxon, that famous letter on the opinions of Dr. B—— and Dr. L——, is to be swept from off the face of the earth. That haunt of fashion where our great-grandfathers and grandmothers drank the waters, made love, flirted, and read the novels and poems of the old school, is to disappear before the march of progress. Will somebody tell us the history of the fine old house before the Avon swallows it up, and the ships ride over the ancient spring? Joseph Leech, of Bristol journalistic repute, has already dropped a small historic tear upon the auctioneer's placard ; but what you and I, my friends, who have drunk the waters, and sat in that quiet spot on the rocks above, want, is a well-written story of the Hotwell House, that rivalled the famous Pump-room of Bath. The immortal author of *Vanity Fair* would have told us all about the people who frequented the locality in the time of the Georges, and that would have been highly entertaining ; but the Hotwell Spring has a history going back for two centuries at least, and within the last sixty years it has been as fashionable a resort as Cheltenham and Bath. But latterly the spring has lost its celebrity, and the shipping of Bristol crowded into such close proximity that the invalids departed, years and years ago, to kneel before the presiding nymphs of other springs.

The virtue of the Bath waters was discovered, the legend says, by the outcast Bladad's observation of the effects produced by warm mud-baths upon the coats of sundry pigs which he tended. At the sister city of Bristol several most important discoveries seem to have been made in dreams. The story of the Hotwells is far less traditional than that of Bath. More than two hundred years ago, when the spring was a little gurgling rivulet, making its way with a tinkling murmur down to the river, the sailors discovered its efficacy in healing scorbutic complaints, and they carried its waters far away to distant lands ; but it was not until 1668 that the virtues of the spring endangered its own imprisonment. In the summer of that year one William Gagg (ominous name !), a baker suffering from diabetes, dreamed that he drank of this water and was cured. Acting upon this inspiration, he took the water in the early mornings regularly, and was cured. My friend Mr. Leech suggests that the early morning walk, and the Atlantic breeze coming up the river, cured the baker ; but the world believed the water did it, and so the spring became celebrated. Thus Bath raised its superstructure of grandeur upon the story of an outcast scorbutic prince, and the Bristol Hotwells became fashionable through a baker. By and by the little houses in the neighbourhood lodged patrician swells ; and then there sprang up rows and terraces of mansions ; and in due time the Hotwells became famous, and did much to increase the popularity and attractions of Clifton. The usual method of drinking the water, as described by a local authority, was to go to the pump-room in the morning and drink a half-pint glass of it, and then to sit down with the company in the room for half an hour. A

band of music played every morning in the season, for the support of which each person was expected to subscribe five shillings. For those who preferred exercise to sitting still, there was a colonnade with shops erected under the rocks, and a gravel walk shaded with trees by the side of the river, so that the invalid could have a pleasant and dry walk in the wettest weather. This course of drinking, and walking, and paying for the support of the band, was to be continued for some days; and then the invalid might drink two or three glasses of the water before breakfast, at intervals of half an hour each, and the same doses in the afternoon. These six glasses a day were the recognised quantity; and the local recorder says the invalids drank it with avidity, because of its pleasant taste.

The baker's dream was one of much greater importance, and had more reality in it, than many Bristolian dreams; but there is another local record of dreaming, which has so much to do with the history of that splendid row of houses above the Hotwells, that I take leave to repeat it in this place. The story is told with some variations; perhaps the most reliable is the following version: "A Bristol plumber—his name was Watts—retires to his bed one night as usual, and has a most extraordinary dream. He is—so his fancy paints him to himself—crawling about upon a church-roof, about to solder up a defect in it, when, by one of those unaccountable incidents which we take very quietly when they come to us in dreams, down goes the ladle of boiling metal into a pool in the street below. 'Try again,' says old Honesty; and he descends to get his ladle and his lead. The former is there, sure enough; and the latter is represented by a myriad of tiny perfect spheres. With real material lead, and his eyes wide open, he goes next morning through the exact process he has noticed in his dream, and inaugurates the manufacture of lead shot. The patent he had for his invention he sold for 10,000*l.*; and with this sum he built, for the embellishment of his native city, a crescent of houses, which the citizens were unpolite enough to call 'Watts's Folly.'" A local rhymster, Thomas Dich,—whose book is long since out of print,—describes the process of making the patent shot with graphic simplicity:

"A tower was built for making shot,—  
It stood on Redcliff Hill;  
And, as I'm certain it was not  
Remov'd, it stands there still.  
An old square tower: far, far below  
Its base was dug a well,  
Which all may see who wish to know  
If truth the Muse doth tell.  
Still from the summit of that tower  
The molten lead falls like a shower  
Of shining silver rain  
Into the water far below,  
Which cools it suddenly, and lo!  
Small shot it doth remain."

The same quaint writer directs our attention to one of those beautiful terraces which sprung from the dream the baker dreamt a hundred and fifty years or more before the plumber dropped his ladle:

“ He who from Rowneham ferry-boat  
 Just upwards casts his eye,  
 A *Terrace*, Windsor called, will note  
 Between him and the sky :  
 Bright with the sunshine, can it raise  
 One thought of melancholy ?  
 Alas ! another name betrays  
 Its history—‘ *Watts’s Folly*.’  
 For Mr. Watts, retired from trade,  
 To build it resolution made,  
 And found to his chagrin  
 That cash a great deal faster went,  
 When ’twas on ‘brick and mortar’ spent,  
 Than ever it came in.  
 On mere *foundations* went his all ;  
 And *Watts’s Folly* still we call  
 That luckless spot of ground.”

There is another “tower” and another “folly” not far off, on the heights above the river,—Cook’s Folly, a portion of which still remains, enshrouded with ivy. The legend goes that one Mr. Cook, a wealthy man residing here, had a son of whom it was predicted that he would meet with a fatal calamity when he was in his twenty-first year ; that this tower was erected by the anxious father to preserve his child from harm ; that the son and heir lived here, attended by a faithful servant, until he was just entering upon his twenty-first year, food and fuel being conveyed to him by means of a pulley-basket ; that on the last night of his voluntary imprisonment a bundle of faggots, conveyed to his room in the usual way, contained a viper which stung him to death ; so that on the morrow, when he should have come forth amidst rejoicings, his body was borne from the tower amidst lamentation and woe. There is a cavern in St. Vincent’s rocks, some distance on this side of Cook’s Folly, which is said to have been the abode of an anchorite. It was excavated in honour of St. Vincent, whose martyrdom at Valencia in 305 is more likely to be true than that legend of Mr. Cook’s unfortunate son and heir.

Meanwhile the auctioneer puts up and knocks down the famous Hotwell House, with all its curiosities and associations, and that Bristol’s fount, the punch-making virtues of which Dr. Maginn has sung, and the health-giving properties of which have been the theme of poets in generations past, is to be desecrated by trade and commerce, and swamped by the muddy tide of the Bristol river. The polishers and dealers of foreign wares have taken possession of the place, and the classic days of the Hotwell Spa are gone for ever. In November 1775, when Lisbon was destroyed by earthquake, 30,000 persons perishing by the catastrophe, the Hotwell Spring became red and turbid, and

did not recover its purity for a very long period. We live in too practical an age for the spring to make any miraculous sign now, when its melancholy taking off might fairly warrant some marked demonstration of protest on its part. But we cannot see these relics of bygone days disappear without a sigh. Hardly a week passes by in London that does not see improvement's spade demolishing some historic relic. One has almost come to look to the provinces to guard and protect those landmarks of manners and customs of former days which are disappearing so rapidly in town; but there are railways, and river improvements, and auctioneers in the country as well as in London; and thus our relics of the past are being speedily improved off the face of the earth.

We must go further afoot now, *cher ami*, when we desire to see any of the unchanged beauties of those picturesque banks that shut in the Bristol river—further afoot than we went ten years ago. The old stone-polisher is gone before the universal march, and an army of "lapidaries" have taken his place. They have come, like the donkeys and the woman in the blue sun-bonnet, and the Bath-chair men at Clevedon, upon civilisation's earliest wave; and the grand repose of St. Vincent's rocks is no more. Shady snug trim villas no doubt will spring up amongst the trees beyond the Nightingale Valley; and the lapidaries will open shops, and combine jet brooches and Swiss carvings with Bristol diamonds and St. Vincent's pebbles—from Buxton and Matlock and the Lowther Arcade.

Be it so; but let the historian record the change, with all its details; that there be no page omitted from that wonderful romance of history which the age is building up by its wonderful pullings down.

JOSEPH HATTON.

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# CIRCE

Or Three Acts in the Life of an Artist

BY BABINGTON WHITE

ACT THE SECOND :—*QUEM DEUS VULT PERDERE, PRIUS DEMENTAT.*

“ Si l'on vous dit que l'art et que la poésie  
C'est un flux éternel de banale ambrosie,  
Que c'est le bruit, la foule, attachés à vos pas,  
Ou d'un salon doré l'oisive fantaisie,  
Ou la rime en fuyant par la rime saisie,  
Oh, ne le croyez pas !”

SCENE THE FIRST :—*THRALDOM.*

THE June roses grew pale in the feverish noontides of July. The summer, so newly begun, already seemed waning ; and the denizens of western London were on the wing, pleased to find the labours of the season ended, and prompt to seek fairer habitations than the stuccoed palaces of South Kensington. The corn-fields were changed to lakes of rippling gold, and the London season was over.

To Laurence Bell that London season had been one brief night of enchantment ; a day-dream in a sunny garden ; a wild bewildering vision after a masquerade supper ; a delightful piece of diablerie—anything rather than the sober reality which he had hitherto known as life.

Was this because “ Love took up the glass of Time and turned it in his glowing hands” ? Ah, no, surely not because of that alone ; for Love had turned the glass before to-day, and the quiet evenings in Charnock-street had passed very quickly through his influence. The hours had glided past the two lovers with gentle footsteps, like noiseless waters past a drifting boat ; but now the hours seemed feverish, and drunken as with strong wine ; they danced and hurried onward in an intoxicating measure that knew neither rest nor respite. The painter lost his hold upon time ; and at night, when he looked back at the day that was done, he marvelled to find what a feather he had been upon the resistless current that had carried him onward. He was drifting down no common river ; the stream which bore him on its capricious waters had falls gigantic as Niagara, whirlpools profound as the great northern Mahlstrom. What could he do but suffer himself to be dashed headlong down the cataracts or engulfed in the whirlpools, according to the sweet will of his Eumenides, and be thankful if there was any remnant of life left in him when the ordeal was passed ?

Mr. Bell did submit himself unquestioningly to his fate. Whether the influence which had subjugated his plastic soul were angelic or demoniac, was a question he did not care to ask himself. Youth is not given to self-analysis; it is supremely unconscious of its own follies, slow to suspect itself as to suspect others. Of himself and of his own life Laurence Bell had little knowledge. He knew that his hopes of future glory and future happiness lay in the rosy palm of a woman's hand: he did not know that the woman would have crushed them with as little compunction as if those bright hopes and aspirations of genius and youth had been a handful of faded rose-leaves.

Fame had come to him—Fame the goddess; or perhaps only that subordinate being, inhabitant of some middle region between this dull earth and the Olympian clouds, that smooth-faced smiling enchantress called Popularity—she who sets a stage-garland of painted calico upon the brow of aspiring genius instead of the eternal bay-leaves. But to Genius himself the enchantress who brings the garland is always a goddess, the wreath always of immortal growth.

Public recognition, the praise of critics, the caresses of connoisseurs and dilettanti, had come to the struggling painter of Charnock-street—those blessings which a few months ago had seemed to him remote possibilities, visionary delights, glimmering star-like far away in the cloud-land of the future—prizes which, if fortune favoured him, might come to him, when he was stout and gray and grizzly like dear old Tom Graystone, as the reward due for a life of patient industry. And behold, without an effort, by one lucky inspiration vigorously interpreted, he had attained the desire of his life; he had won all—and had lost the woman who was to have been his wife!

Did he think of this when he counted his gains? Well, you see, his existence of late had been so wild a fever that he had no leisure in which to count his gains or to remember his losses.

Have you ever watched the caresses which capricious beauty lavishes on her Maltese spaniel, and envied the creature his favoured destiny—to be near *her*, at her feet—to feel the touch of her soft hand—to have one's face swept by her perfumed hair—her *own* hair *bien entendu*, and not purchased tresses from the unsophisticated beauties of Moldavia or Bokhara, from the dark-eyed peasant girls of Brittany, or the gray-eyed syrens of Southern Ireland. What a delightful fate! what a privileged existence! And yet would beauty's most devoted worshipper accept the sweet slavery? To lie at her feet all through the summer's day—ah, what rapture! But in the evening the favoured slave might be seized with a fancy for going to his club, or might remember a very special appointment with Fitzjones of the Jockey-club, made with a view to squaring-up after the Cæsarevich.

Laurence Bell had assumed the delicious bondage, and had yet to discover that chains are not pleasant wear, even when made of roses. Just now the roses retained all their freshness, and the thorns were in

abeyance; so if Mr. Bell was not quite happy, he did not know himself to be unhappy, and that is the negative stage of happiness.

Never was masculine vanity fed on sweeter diet. He was the last lion on view at Adrian's Villa, and happily for himself was unaware how many lions had reigned before him. Nor did he know that the tenure of his glory was almost as frail as the hold by which certain despotic Orientals have grasped their greatness, knowing themselves sovereign lords and rulers over the slaves beneath their feet, and only occasionally disturbed by the consideration that they were liable to be quietly assassinated at the first convenient opportunity.

Mr. Bell saw himself the centre of an enchanted circle. The Princess was never weary of repeating his praises. He was her genius—her *trouvaille*—the painter she had discovered and given to an obtuse but grateful world. This was the gist of her romantic talk; though it was dressed up in such pretty words, entwined with so many flowers of feminine fancy, that Laurence may be forgiven if he failed to discover the serpent of *parvenu* insolence lurking beneath the blossoms.

The Princess declared that Laurence Bell was the painter of the future, and that she admired him beyond all measure. The adorers of the Princess lived only to minister to her caprices, and were quite as ready to accept Laurence Bell as they were to accept her Maltese lap-dogs, or her toilettes from the Rue de la Paix. The painter was less obnoxious than the lap-dogs—not so much in the way as those robes à queue which interposed impassable billows of silk and lace between Giulia d'Aspramonte and her worshippers.

So the narrow world of Adrian's Villa welcomed the rising star of this new Raffaele, and Laurence drank deeply of the intoxicating cup which his patroness offered to his feverish lips. People told him of his future greatness, and he believed in their flattering promises; he believed in them, and in himself. Did not this wild throbbing in his breast, this quenchless fire in his veins, forebode the coming glory? He was no longer of the common herd—patient, industrious, hopeful—content with small successes—a happy gleam of sunshine, a cleverly-handled bit of still-life, the careful making-out of a textile fabric. Ah, no! he sighed for some single and signal triumph; he waited some wild impulse of unfettered genius, which should lift him at one bound to the topmost heights of Olympus, and place his name among the names that are remembered with those of the gods.

He had heard of late so much of his future that it is scarcely strange if he had grown a little idle, or perhaps rather fitful as to the manner of his work in the present. When a man has the certainty of being a millionaire sooner or later, he can hardly be expected to take cognisance of small wastes and expenditures pending the falling-in of his fortune. The world of Adrian's Villa had assured the young man of the wealth of his genius; and he may be forgiven if, feeling himself so rich, he was inclined to squander some small portion of his vast



possessions. Without periphrase, Laurence Bell's old habits of industry had forsaken him.

It was very delightful to him to sit before his easel in the splendid music-room at the villa, dreaming of that fair future, while his brushes and palette lay idle by his side. What a different life from the dull plodding days in Charnock-street! There only incessant labour, the slow advance of manipulative skill; here surroundings such as foster genius—a perpetual feast of form and colour, and inspirations that lifted him above himself.

The fact that none of the inspirations had as yet been transferred to canvas was a small thing. They had left their traces in certain pencil notes jotted in the painter's commonplace book. Unhappily those random notes, traced by the feverish hand of genius, are apt to seem very vague and incomprehensible when genius refers to them after any prolonged interval.

The sketches for the frescoes had been discussed and painted, and in many instances painted out again. It must be confessed that even at her best the Princess was *difficile*. She had her own ideas about Amphion, her own archetype in the shape of Orpheus, not easily to be translated by mortal brush.

"I should like your Amphion better if his flesh were not so pink," she said one day, when the last eccentricity imported from the Rue de la Paix had proved a doubtful fit. "I do not know much about persons of that class; but I can hardly believe that the son of Jupiter and Antiope would have so much rose-colour in his complexion."

And hereupon Mr. Bell slapped his biggest brush across the roseate limbs of the juvenile Amphion bathed in the sunrise of Mount Citheron, and flung himself into his Roman fauteuil, disgusted with the Princess, himself, and the universe.

Typhus fever is not more infectious than an uncertain temper. Laurence Bell, six months ago the most amiable of men, had become a creature of nerves and caprices—now plunged in the depths of a gloomy sulkiness, now elevated by feverish excitement; ready to abjure the favour of his princess and cut his throat off-hand at one moment; in the next prostrate at her feet and beseeching her with passionate tears to trample on the neck of her slave.

Did he love Giulia d'Aspramonte? That is a question which I, his biographer, will not take upon myself to answer. Certain it is that by reason of her influence he had ceased to love anyone else. He rarely thought of Amy Graystone now, and when he did, she seemed to him no more than a part of his vanished youth—something that had once been very precious, something not to be recalled, and no longer necessary to his existence.

"She will be happier with a better man," he said to himself. "I was not worthy of so much affection, such divine unselfishness. I am a being of storm and passion; better that I should be a slave beneath

the feet of Giulia d'Aspramonte, if I derive inspiration from her cruelty."

It is not to be supposed that the infallible milliner of the Rue de la Paix often fell short of perfection, or that the Princess often complained of the pinkness of Amphion, and otherwise depreciated the work of her protégé. There were times when she was rapturous in her admiration of his sketches; but on these happier days she was suggestive; and her suggestions, being always more or less impracticable, were apt to hinder the progress of the painter's labour, since he would fain have achieved the impossible for her sake. Thus it happened that, when the London season was over, Laurence Bell had nothing to show for his three months' work but two or three experimental sketches of Amphion and Orpheus.

The summer had waned, and he had earned nothing. Commissions would have come in upon him thickly after the notice elicited by his Lady Macbeth, had he been free to accept them; but he was not free; and it speedily became notorious that he had sold his liberty, or in other words had been "taken up" by the Princess d'Aspramonte.

"Have you ever seen a baby of twelve months old handle a piece of costly china?" said a gentleman who had known the Princess on the Continent: "for a little while what rapture the small face expresses; what babbling murmurs of unintelligible delight escape the infantine lips! But then, behold, suddenly, without a moment's warning, the darling child grows weary of the fragile toy, and dashes it to the ground to shiver into atoms. That is the way such women as Giulia d'Aspramonte treat such men as Laurence Bell."

The season waned, and the painter stood in his gorgeous studio staring blankly at his easel. The sketch he contemplated had been painted out and painted in half-a-dozen times, and looking at his work to-day he was less than ever satisfied. There were two more easels standing in the room, and on each there was a sketch. Here Orpheus and Eurydice—there the flaying of Marsyas, a hideous study of realism after the old Flemish masters.

It was upon his Amphion the young painter looked with a desponding gaze. He had dreamed such ambitious dreams, he had made such daring experiments; and his dreams and experiments seemed to have resulted in so little. The figure which he saw on his easel was not the being that had life in his brain. He had imagined a demigod, and had painted only a handsome young man. The young man was very handsome, the picture was well painted; but the sunshine of Olympus was not upon the canvas.

"My sketches are failures," the painter said to himself. "I must begin my work all over again. I will *not* attempt anything commonplace; I will not fall into the trite and feeble; I— Is it in me to do *anything* really great? I begin to doubt myself. I used to fancy I needed nothing but opportunity; but now the opportunity has come, the

power seems wanting. Perhaps I am the wrong man for the frescoes, after all."

He looked almost despairingly at the lofty walls which were to be decorated by his pencil. The amber draperies still shrouded the plaster; and more than once the Princess had hinted her weariness of those silken hangings, and her impatience for the commencement of the great work.

"At this rate I shall be quite an old woman before you finish my music-room, and then no one will care to come to my concerts," she said one day. "What slow work it seems! And I thought genius was always so rapid—a power too subtle to be under the dominion of time. I fancied you would paint my frescoes almost as easily as your Amphion built his walls; but, alas, we have no enchanted lyres nowadays—nor enchanted pencils! I wish I had lived in the age of the gods."

To such regrets as these Laurence Bell had been fain to listen very frequently. They stung him more keenly than the stab of a sword. There were times when he looked back to the quiet days of his obscurity in Charnock-street, and remembered the peace which had been his in those days.

"Would the fame of a Raffaele repay me for so much suffering?" he sometimes asked himself,—“if I win it—if I win it.”

As yet these intervals of depression were brief and infrequent. The temperament of the artist was scarcely less variable than that of his patroness. If he had his gloomy fits, he had also his intervals of happiness, of elation, as far above the gladness of common mortals as his gloom was deeper than the gloom of the vulgar. In his happier hours life seemed one long festival.

With the Princess, happiness meant the gratification of every caprice, the indulgence of every whim. To be with her was to breathe the atmosphere of a world peopled by Pereiras and Rothschilds. Her lavish expenditure, her utter disregard of the price she paid for her caprices, had won her a reputation for generosity; but whether she was really generous, was a question which could only have been answered by those who knew her well.

She would fain have loaded the young painter with pecuniary benefits, but the spirit of the tailor's son could not brook this humiliation. Nor did Laurence want money, for he had not scrupled to avail himself of Mr. Mocatti's permission when he found himself *à sec*, and had drawn upon that gentleman very freely.

Life for the rising painter of North Audley-street was a very costly affair as compared with life in the purlieus of Fitzroy-square. Raffaele cannot stoop to examine the weekly accounts of his landlady, or to question the books of his laundress. Nor can Raffaele endure the slow torture of an omnibus ride when an impatient Princess awaits his arrival.

In these latter days Mr. Bell spent more upon hansom cabs than the cost of his entire maintenance in Mr. Graystone's modest household. He lived now among men who never counted the expense of their pleasures, and the influence of his surroundings had already made him extravagant. There were times when he felt so sure of fame and fortune that his imprudences of the present seemed only so many mortgages upon the future.

The three months which had gone by since the opening of the Academy had contained for Laurence Bell more of that element which men are agreed to call "pleasure" than all his previous existence. He had drained the magical *breuvage*, which had of old been so unfamiliar to his lips; he had drunk so deeply and so greedily that already the draught was beginning to pall a little upon his fevered palate. There comes a time when a man grows weary of sparkling wines, and is fain to fall back upon calmer vintages. But that time had not yet arrived for Mr. Bell.

The season was gone; and as he stood before his easel in the sultry summer noontide, it seemed to him as if that departed season had been one ceaseless round of dinner-parties and conversaziones, races and operas, dinners at Richmond and Greenwich, and midnight drives through perpetual moonlight, behind horses that rushed homewards as if they too had been fevered by the wines of Burgundy and Rhineland.

"She sneers at the slowness of my progress," he said to himself bitterly; "but how rarely she allows me to work!"

This was very true. Having captured a tame young lion, Madame d'Aspramonte's dearest delight was to exhibit the noble creature in all his paces, and to show her admirers how abjectly the king of beasts could grovel beneath her feet. She had the instincts of a feminine Van Amburgh, and was pleased to demonstrate her power over the grand creatures that make common mortals fear.

And did society permit her to lead her own life and patronise newly-discovered genius without damage to her fair name? Yes—and no. Society had never been pleased to recognise the eccentric Roman lady. She occupied a certain kind of position in the world of fashion, but it was not a solid dwelling-place of brick and stone within the walls of the city; it was rather a tent on the outskirts, which might be struck at any hour. Madame d'Aspramonte was a wandering notoriety, who was accepted by society on condition that she should always wander. True, that the building of Adrian's Villa looked like an intention to settle; but the Princess was in all probability amongst those foolish people who build houses for wiser folks to inhabit. It was scarcely to be supposed that a lady who had grown weary of every city in civilised Europe would be for ever satisfied by the delights of Northend.

The door of the orangery was opened softly while the painter stood before his easel, and the opening of the door was followed by that

gentle rustling of silken fabric which announces the advent of an elegant woman.

"And our Amphion, *mon ami, comment s'en va-t-il?*" she asked, as she approached her despondent protégé. "What, Mr. Bell, is the despairing fit upon you to-day, that you regard your picture *d'un œil hagard*, after all your bright visions on the terrace at Richmond last night?"

"The brighter my dreams, the more bitter the waking," answered Laurence. "I am an impostor, Madame d'Aspramonte. Why do you waste your interest upon me? Let me go back to—"

He would have said Charnock-street, but a choking sensation in his throat stifled the words.

"Let me go back to my old life," he added, after a moment's pause.

"Your old life!—ah, that means Miss Graystone, I suppose?" said the Princess maliciously.

The painter did not notice the home-thrust.

"Let me abandon all thought of the frescoes, Princess," he went on, "and forget that you have ever known me."

"I cannot forget that, if you disappoint all my hopes of you. Do you know that you will render me ridiculous in the eyes of my friends if you do not achieve great things? Do you know the promises I have made for you? Is your arm to grow feeble all at once because a great opportunity is given you? There was a time when you had the daring of a genius, the industry of an artisan; now you appear to have neither."

"You do not give me time to work," the painter murmured fretfully.

"How do I infringe upon your time?" cried the Princess. "You have only to lock that door, and your apartment is sacred."

"Can I lock the door when you are on the other side of it?"

The Princess smiled a slow dreamy smile, and there was unwonted softness in her eyes as they contemplated the young painter.

"There are days on which I doubt myself—days on which I almost despair," exclaimed Laurence passionately. "You hope too much of me; you ask too much of me; you pledge me to engagements that are too heavy for me. Your praises are a burden that weigh me down. I was once content with the imperceptible progress of my monotonous days; and when the year was done, I was surprised to find how much I had achieved. Now all is changed: I seem to do wonders every day, and yet at the end of months I have done nothing. Why is this?"

"Because you are impatient."

"Who makes me impatient?"

"I suppose I am that 'who,'" answered the Princess with another smile. She was a coquette *jusqu'à la moelle*; and this subtle flattery was for her a kind of dram-drinking.

"Forgive me," pleaded Laurence. "I am ready to find fault with all the world, when I feel myself so weak and incapable."

"Do not look at me so despairingly. You will soon be secure from all intrusion."

"How do you mean, madame?"

"I mean that the season is over, and I must leave town in a day or two."

"You will leave this place?"

"Naturally. Even bankers' clerks have their holidays at this time of year. You would not wish me to deny myself the privileges of a banker's clerk?"

"Yes, they leave London," murmured Laurence disconsolately; "but this is not London."

"That is to say, it is not Cheapside or the Borough," replied the Princess.

"But in these gardens, under those old trees, one might fancy oneself a hundred miles from town."

"I have not the knack of fancying that sort of thing," answered the Princess, with a shrug of her imperial shoulders. "To my mind suburban rusticity is the poorest of all imitations, as complete a mockery as the sham diamonds of the Palais Royal. I like to have trees and flowers about me always; but I cannot imagine myself surrounded by woodland and pasture simply because I have trees and flowers. I languish for expansive plains, purple hill-tops wreathed in morning mists, far-off glimpses of a sunlit ocean,—a thousand delights that are impossible in the neighbourhood of Fulham."

"And you are going away?" asked the painter, with blank despair in his face.

Giulia d'Aspramonte paused for a few moments before she replied to this anxious question. The despairing gaze of her protégé was very pleasant to her. Such looks of anguish, such heartburnings and slow tortures, had long been to her as the very wine of life. She lingered a little to taste the aroma of that wine.

"Yes, Mr. Bell, I am going away," she said at last. "I have not quite decided where I shall spend the autumn; but I shall not spend it in England. Your climate is insufferable after July. I think I shall go to Biarritz. I have been there more than once; but, unfortunately, I have been everywhere, and must content myself with the place I am least tired of. In the mean time this room will be consecrated to your use; and on my return I shall hope to find Amphion and his people transferred from your easel to the wall."

The painter was silent for a few moments. He stood before the Roman lady trifling nervously with his sheaf of brushes, and staring absently at the floor.

"I thought that I should be inspired by your sympathy, that you would be interested in the progress of the fresco," he said thoughtfully;

and then he exclaimed passionately, "How can I work when you are away?"

"You are really more unreasonable than even genius has a right to be!" cried the Princess. "Just now you were complaining that my presence has been a hindrance to you."

"Sometimes you hinder, at other times you inspire me. Yes, Princess, you are right; I am a creature of contradictions. Sometimes I feel a fire, an energy, which seems strong enough to surmount all the difficulties that lie between me and perfection; and then there comes upon me a languor that is akin to despair. O Madame d'Aspramonte, it is in your power to give me new force, new inspiration!"

"And how, pray?" asked the Princess.

She walked away to one of the long windows as she asked the question. The action, slight as it was, seemed to Laurence painfully indicative of indifference.

"Have you forgotten the promise you made me when first I came to this house?"

Madame d'Aspramonte reflected a little, with her dark brows fixed in a meditative frown. She was standing in an open window, with the meridian sunlight on her head and dress. It is not for the masculine pen to interpret the mysteries of a Parisian toilet; but the lady's dress seemed to consist of some silken fabric of pearly gray, with knots of scarlet gleaming here and there athwart the clear-obscure of black-lace drapery. On her head she wore a cluster of black lace and scarlet poppies, which might or might not be meant for a bonnet; and with her dark beauty thus set off, she made a picture whereon a painter's gaze might well linger.

"I have such an unfortunate habit of forgetting my promises," she said presently. "What did I promise you, Mr. Bell?"

"That you would sit to me for your portrait."

"Ah, I remember," answered the Princess carelessly; "and it was to be a better portrait than that by Ingres. Let me have my frescoes first, if you please. When you have excelled Michael Angelo in fresco, you shall surpass Ingres in portraiture."

"It amuses you to laugh at me," said Laurence peevishly. "Ah, madame, you do not understand the nature of an artist."

"It appears to be something not very easily understood."

"Let me paint your portrait," pleaded Laurence. "Give me time for the frescoes, and keep your promise—the promise you made me that night when I knelt at your feet for the first time. I have been at your feet ever since."

"What if I indulge your caprice?"

"I shall produce a work of art; I shall realise your hopes of me; I shall win the fame you have prophesied for me. The world shall discover that your judgment has not been false. I tell you, Madame d'Aspramonte, that my future is in your hands. It was a shadowy

resemblance of your face which first won me distinction. Was there no fatality in that? My fate brought me face to face with the incarnation of my dreams; and from that hour—”

He paused, with his clasped hands extended towards his patroness, and a wild light in his eyes. All that was spiritual in his countenance had developed during the last three months; all that was earthly had undergone deterioration. His eyes had gained new brightness; his cheeks were tinted with a hectic glow; the perfect outline of his features was sharpened and intensified; the natural fairness of his brow had become the whiteness of marble: but the cheeks were sunken, the lips blanched, the brilliant eyes were surrounded by purple shadows. There was that in his face which would have struck terror to the heart of Amy Graystone; but which, in the eyes of Madame d'Aspramonte, was only an interesting delicacy of appearance, highly appropriate to genius.

“Why do you pause?” she asked.

“Because there are some things that cannot be put into words. I shall offend you, and you will banish me for ever.”

“I am not easily offended, nor is my vengeance altogether implacable.”

“I will not brave your wrath. My fate has made me your slave. It is in your power to give your slave renown. Let me paint your picture. I feel that it is in me to concentrate all my strength upon one solitary *chef-d'œuvre*, and that single triumph shall be the glorification of your beauty. I have dreamt of this picture until I have become the slave of my own fancy. It comes between me and all the work I attempt. Let me lay the ghost of this all-absorbing idea, and then I shall be a free man again, able to work in a groove like the dullest of plodders.”

“It shall be so,” said the Princess. “But when must I give you the sittings?”

“At once. I have the attitude, the details, all thought out. I languish to begin.”

“In that case I shall not be able to leave town.”

“Delay your departure for a little. It is fame which I ask at your hands. If you abandon me in this hour of despondency and weakness, you will sound the death-knell of my hopes. This is the crisis of my fate.”

“In plain English you mean that I am to stay in London after everybody has left, and sit for two or three hours a day on a *daïs* to be stared at. A professional model would do as much for eighteen-pence an hour.”

“I want something more than a model—I want inspiration.”

“Well, my promise shall not be broken. We will begin our sittings to-morrow.”

Tears started to the eyes of the painter—sudden tears, which he



was powerless to control. He dashed the water-drops aside with an angry gesture, cruelly ashamed of his weakness. He had yet to learn the extremity of that weakness, moral and physical.

"I thank you with all my soul!" he cried.

"Do not talk of thanks. What does it matter whether I go to Biarritz or remain in London? It is only a question of finding existence more or less tiresome. And now I am going to the last flower-show of the year. Will you go with me?"

Never yet had Laurence Bell been so heroic as to refuse this kind of invitation. He had swelled the train of the Princess at fête and flower-show, on race-ground and in concert-room, when he knew that the fleeting hours which he wasted were so many points lost in the great game of life.

Night after night he had sworn to himself that his future days should be devoted to steady labour, and the next day had seen his oath broken. He could not resist the silken thread that led him hither and thither at a woman's will.

He measured his years against those of Raffaele. "I am twenty-two, and I have done nothing. At twenty-five he had painted the Entombing of Christ, and at thirty he had made the walls of the Vatican his monument. Only ten years more; and what shall I do in ten years, if I work no faster than I am working now?"

SCENE THE SECOND :—VISIONARY TRIUMPHS.

THE Princess d'Aspramonte sat for her portrait. She was not what is commonly called a good sitter: she could not remain in a fixed attitude for an hour, simpering at pleasant stories told her by the painter, while he put in the lights and shadows about her eyes, or laboured at the modelling of her chin. She was fitful in this as in all other actions of her life, and was wont to grow suddenly tired of the whole business, and rise disdainfully from her chair of state just as the painter was warming to his work.

For Laurence Bell these sittings were a strange admixture of anguish and rapture. It was happiness to feast upon the beauty of his enchantress—it was torture to be subject to her caprices.

There had been considerable discussion as to the costume and background, and after much opposition Madame d'Aspramonte had consented to indulge the fancy of the painter. She was to be painted in classic draperies, but in more than ordinary splendour of colour. A tiara was to crown the proud brow, a voluminous mantle of Tyrian purple was to flow from the marble shoulders. The background was to be strictly classic: a chamber in Pliny's Laurentium, looking westward—the hour sunset.

It was to be a picture as well as a portrait—the picture of a Roman empress sitting alone in the sunset, with the noble pillars of a colonnade and the prismatic hues of a sunlit sea in the background.

At first this new work progressed with a marvellous rapidity, while Amphion and Orpheus remained in their embryo state, and Eurydice smiled her sad smile upon the spectator from out a haze of unfinished draperies.

After the third sitting the Princess insisted on seeing the picture, and was pleased to pronounce herself enraptured.

"It is an admirable portrait," she exclaimed. "If you take my advice, you will not touch it any more. Leave it as a sketch. There is more in it than in nineteen out of twenty finished pictures. Every added touch may weaken the effect. There is genius in it. Pray do not overlay the broad touches of genius by the laborious mechanism of the Academy."

Laurence Bell smiled incredulously.

"I shall work at this picture for months," he said with quiet decision; "it is to be my *magnum opus*."

"And pray am I to sit to you for months?"

"You must give me a sitting when you please," the young man replied sadly; "and when I cannot get a sitting, I must work from memory. I do not think that will be very difficult."

After this the work progressed very slowly—almost as slowly as the sketches for the frescoes. Yet it was not for lack of industry that the picture advanced so slowly. The painter came every day to Adrian's Villa, and worked steadily at his canvas, whether the Princess sat to him or not. Nor did he occupy himself with any other picture, though he stood in much need of the money that he might have obtained from the sale of pot-boilers.

He worked hard, and he worked constantly; but his canvas seemed to advance no more than Penelope's net, so much was he given to blotting out the progress of yesterday under the influence of the fancies of to-day.

After the third sitting he had resolutely refused Madame d'Aspramonte so much as a glimpse of his work.

"A picture is a thing of shreds and patches until the hour in which it is finished," he said; and the Princess submitted with a shrug of her shoulders.

In sober truth she submitted with so good a grace that a keener observer than Laurence Bell might have perceived that the subject had become somewhat indifferent to her.

The painter had now to rely much upon memory, for the lady very seldom honoured him with a sitting. She remained in town, however; and for that one fact he was unutterably grateful. He had feared her departure with an unreasonable terror. Whatever the nature of the spell which she had woven around him, it held him her bond slave. He had never asked himself whether the passion which possessed him was love or madness; but he knew that it was a thralldom from which there was no escape but death.

What had he in the world but this woman's sympathy? The friend of his boyhood, the girl who was to have been his wife, were for ever lost to him. Nor had he lost these only. The freshness of his heart, the elasticity of his spirit, were gone beyond recal. He had nothing, then, but his dream of fame, and the sympathy of Giulia d'Aspramonte. Had the Roman lady any warmer feeling than artistic interest in an artist's work? There had been an occasional tenderness in her eyes, a softness in her tones, which had inspired the painter with a daring dream of happiness. Some of his new friends had told him that the Princess was *éprise*, and that it rested with himself to secure the defunct Aspramonte's millions. But this idea the young man rejected with passionate scorn.

"Do you think I would ask Giulia d'Aspramonte to accept my name unless it were worthy to be worn by her?" he cried impetuously. "I shall be rich before I tell her that I love her. Wealth comes with renown nowadays; and if I ever win a great name, I shall be above suspicion."

"If you take my advice, you will not wait for the great name," replied the worldling. "A woman's caprices are as transient as the foam on a tumbler of Cliquot."

"I like my Cliquot still and dry," said Laurence haughtily. "I shall never trade upon a woman's caprices. I can afford to wait until I am loved."

The worldling shrugged his shoulders and grinned as Laurence turned away from him.

"Madder than hares in March!" he muttered to himself. "If he waits for Giulia d'Aspramonte's love, he may wait as long as the Wandering Jew. The poor creature seems in earnest; and she will bray him in her mortar as she has brayed the rest of us. She is an elegant ogress, who grinds men's bones to make her bread. And in this case there seems to be genuine heart's-blood as well as bone. That is damage, as Mocatti would say."

There were those who knew the Princess, and would have warned Laurence Bell of his danger; but he would accept no warning. He was ready to hurl his cartel of defiance at her accusers, ready to give the lie to every hint of her falsehood. Or even if she had been false; if she had lured other men to their ruin, unconsciously beguiling them to the shipwreck of their hopes by the fatal light of her eyes, was that any reason she should deceive him? With him she had always been earnest—capricious, it might be, but the very spirit of truth and candour. This is what he told himself on those rare occasions when he ventured to contemplate his position.

Yes; she loved him. Could he doubt it? Had he not surprised looks instinct with love, accents tremulous with the suppressed vibration of passion? He was beloved; and it rested with himself to become worthy to kneel at the feet of his enchantress and cry,

“ Art and fame are equal to wealth and rank. Both are mine ; and I can boldly ask you to share a name that will be remembered when the Princes of Aspramonte are forgotten.”

It rested with himself. The fever which consumed his very life was the fever of impatience. For Amy Graystone he would have been content to win his laurels leaf by leaf ; but he must needs have a crown of laurel to cast beneath the feet of his Princess, and it was to win the crown that he languished.

“ *Festina lente*,” said the Emperor Augustus ; and Laurence Bell had bitter reason to feel the wisdom of the axiom. Haste with him had not been progress ; and now, as he counted the months before the opening of the next Exhibition, he wondered whether his work would be fairly done.

“ I want months for the draperies, the details, the background,” he said to Giulia d’Aspramonte. “ I want my picture to be a feast of colour. I am trying to blend the daring of Rubens, the softness of Giorgione, and the laborious manipulation of the Pre-Raphaelites.”

“ Perhaps you are aiming at too much,” replied the Princess, who happened to be in one of her provoking moods at this moment ; “ what is that verse of your Shakespeare—‘ jumping ambition which leaps over itself,’ is it not ?”

“ If I o’erleap myself, I will bury my disgrace in the grave,” answered Laurence. “ I shall never touch a brush again, if this picture is a failure.”

“ *Ce n’est que des niaiseries !*” exclaimed the Princess.

“ There is something here which tells me that I should not survive failure,” answered the painter, striking his breast with a passionate gesture.

Could there be failure in store for him ? O, surely not. As his work progressed beneath his hand, his confidence seemed to grow with it. He felt that he had done wisely in abandoning the frescoes. This picture would make him a name that would insure the success of his future efforts.

Of his present work he knew no weariness. The subject had been indeed inspiration to him. His life seemed divided between the outer world and the world of his studio ; and he scarcely knew which of his two divinities appeared most beautiful to him—the Princess who smiled or frowned upon him in the flesh, or that other Giulia d’Aspramonte whose radiant face beamed from his canvas.

Since that occasion on which the Princess had insisted on seeing the portrait in its earliest stage, no eye save his own had looked upon the painter’s work. He had taken the most jealous care to prevent any revelation of the secrets of his art, and had even invented a special easel, with solid mahogany doors secured by a Bramah lock. Those doors were impenetrable as the gates of Paradise to the unworthy.

On this point he had been inflexible, deaf even to the pleading of

his enchantress ; and as time went by, his enchantress became very well reconciled to his refusal. She made Adrian's Villa her headquarters; but it was not to be supposed that she could survive an entire autumn and early winter without change of air and scene. She went hither and thither, attended only by her incomparable Parisian maid and an elderly German lady,—who was at once her confidante, factotum, and *âme damnée*,—sometimes to Ryde, sometimes to Brighton, sometimes to Paris.

Laurence counted the hours of her absence, and welcomed her return with a feverish rapture. He passed his nights only in the *nid de gardin*, which cost him so dearly. His real home was in his atelier at the villa. He came early in the morning ; he rarely left till midnight. On some days he dined with his patroness ; on other days he did not dine at all. The question of dining or not dining was one of the smallest possible importance in his mind ; but the hours he spent with Giulia d'Aspramonte were very precious to him.

“Does she love me?” he asked himself, after every evening passed in her society—“does she love me ; or is it all a wild dream, a mad delusion, which must end in despair ? I dare not look forward to the end.”

Thus the autumn months went by ; Christmas came and passed. The Princess spent her Christmas at Brighton. Laurence stood in the great unpeopled music-room painting, while the Christmas bells rang out upon the frosty air.

Could he do less than remember his last Christmas, and the humble festivities of Charnock-street ? At this hour Amy Graystone's little hand had rested on his arm as they walked to church together in the wintry sunlight. Now he seemed to have done with church—as he had done with friends and home, with everything except wild dreams and wilder passion. Ah, how innocently happy they had been, he and his betrothed—how full of plans for the future, how confident and hopeful ! Did she too remember that vanished happiness ? Did she too regret all that had been lost within the year that was coming to an end ? Her regrets at least must be less poignant than his, since she had no cause for remorse.

The new year found Adrian's Villa still deserted by its mistress, and Laurence Bell still working with unabated energy. Madame d'Aspramonte returned towards the middle of January ; and the old circle of artists and celebrities began to reassemble in her classic *salons*. Once more Laurence beheld his patroness the cynosure of a brilliant crowd ; and as he watched her from afar off, surrounded by friends and flatterers, it seemed to him as if she was no nearer to him than on the day when he had first seen her in Trafalgar-square.

One bleak morning in February the Princess came into the painting-room, gorgeous in violet velvet and sables, and accompanied by a gentleman who was a stranger to Mr. Bell. He was tall and dark and foreign-looking, with large piercing black eyes and a fierce mous-

tache, and a certain wildness of aspect; and Madame d'Aspramonte introduced him to the painter as Herr Frolich.

"*Les beaux esprits doivent s'entendre*," she observed graciously. "To me it seems that art is the poetry of the universe, which every great artist transcribes after his own fashion. Mr. Bell translates his inspirations by the aid of form and colour. Herr Frolich's fancies clothe themselves in harmony. In truth, Mr. Bell, I expect you to be delighted to know this gentleman, who is an old friend of mine, and a compatriot of yours."

The painter's looks did not portray the delight expected of him. He stared at the stranger with an angry light in his eyes. He held his own ground by such a feeble tenure that the idea of a rival filled him with alarm. And might not this man be a rival?

"And this is your music-room," said Herr Frolich; "charming—perfect—worthy of the mind which designed it. You will order your new Erard to be placed yonder—facing those windows? The room is charming. I only regret your hangings; those superb amber draperies will suffocate your sopranos."

"Unfortunately my only decorations are those amber hangings," replied the Princess, with a cruel glance at her protégé.

"I thought the room was to be painted in fresco," said the German professor.

"It will be painted in fresco, when I can find a painter. Unhappily the age of the Titans has gone by. The Rubens who will line the walls of a Louvre with the work of his pencil in a summer's holiday is not to be found nowadays."

"Rubens was a manufacturer," exclaimed Herr Frolich disdainfully, "and ought to have called himself P. P. Rubens and Co., unlimited. I think more of a single *chef-d'œuvre* than of square miles of slap-dash colour and daring drawing.—May I hope to be honoured with a glance at Mr. Bell's picture?" he asked courteously.

"I shall be very proud to show it to you—on the 1st of May," replied Laurence, with a sickly smile.

"But until then *c'est le fruit défendu*, I suppose," exclaimed the composer gaily. "Well, I have neither the curiosity of Eve nor the disobedience of Adam. I will teach myself to be patient."

"And now for your programme," said the Princess; "I am dying to hear what you propose."

Herr Frolich seated himself before a *bonheur du jour* in sandalwood and ormolu, by Reisner, and began to write. Laurence Bell looked aghast from the Princess to the professor, and then back to the Princess.

"You are going to give a concert?" he asked.

"Why should I not? The season is beginning; and people are teasing me for a peep at my music-room."

"I thought you would wait until the frescoes were painted before

you gave your inaugural concert," faltered Laurence, with undisguised mortification.

"I am not accustomed to wait," replied Madame d'Aspramonte, with a grandeur worthy of the *grand monarque*; "and I certainly do not care to wait a quarter of a century. Do not fear that we are going to disturb you, Mr. Bell; your easel shall be sacred. We may want the room two or three mornings for rehearsals. *Voilà tout*. Now for your list, Herr Frolich."

"Here it is. First, a quartette of Beethoven's; then a morceau of Verdi, by your favourite soprano, Miss Hamilton, who has the voice of an angel, and handles it like an idiot; then a poor little trifle of my own,—'Starry eyes,' a Reverie, respectfully dedicated to the Princess d'Aspramonte; next, a duet of Rossini's between your two military buffos, who hate each other so ferociously that they will not even consent to sing in the same key; and next—"

The professor finished the perusal of his programme, to which the Princess listened with profound attention, interrupting him more than once, however, with an objection or a suggestion. Laurence Bell locked the doors of his easel, and looked on with a sharp anguish gnawing at his heartstrings. He was always on the watch for a rival; and surely this wild-eyed German, with his sister art, was the most dangerous rival who had yet come between him and the woman who had made him her slave.

"You promised to give me a sitting to-day, Madame d'Aspramonte," he said presently, with unutterable reproachfulness in his tone.

"Did I really?" exclaimed the Princess; "then I fear for once I must break my promise. I am going to make a round of calls. Herr Frolich and I have to hunt up our amateur performers; and amateurs *veulent toujours se faire prier*. It is the most tiresome work in the world. Do not look at me so reproachfully, Mr. Bell. I have given you too much of my time already. I never knew any good come of a picture for which there were so many sittings. How many could Guido have had for his Beatrice Cenci? One half-hour at midnight on the eve of the trial, or in the dim sickly dawn before the hour of execution."

In another moment she had vanished, attended by the strange professor. Laurence stood looking blankly at the door by which she had departed.

"A concert! she is going to give concerts! She is tired of waiting for the frescoes; she is tired of my art. O God, is the dream coming to an end!" he cried aloud, in the sharp accents of despair.

Then suddenly his face changed and brightened with an almost ecstatic expression. He returned to his easel, unlocked the doors, and threw them open. For some minutes he stood transfixed before his work, gazing at the canvas in a kind of rapture.

"No," he cried; "the dream shall become a reality. This picture

will make me famous ; it will link her name eternally with mine. She has rank, wealth, beauty. It is renown alone she sighs for, and I can give her that."

He dashed at the canvas like an inspired demon, and painted furiously for hours. Through all that day he saw no more of the Princess, or her friend the professor ; but at eight in the evening a servant came to him with a courteous message from the lady, to the effect that she was waiting dinner.

He went at once to the dining-room, dressed in his painting costume of black velvet, which was the perfection of artistic coxcombry. What did it matter how much his tailor charged him, so long as he could appear pleasing in the sight of his syren? Amy Graystone had been well pleased with him in the threadbare paint-besmeared jacket, which he had worn until it was ragged at the elbows and white at the seams ; but Giulia d'Aspramonte required that all her surroundings should be beautiful.

That dinner at Adrian's Villa was one of the most miserable meals which Laurence Bell ever ate, if it can be said that he ate anything. To his fever-parched lips the carefully-studied compositions of the purest culinary art were as dust and ashes ; to his tired eyes it seemed as if the clusters of waxen tapers in the bronze candelabra were the myriad torches of Pandemonium ; to his nostrils the perfume of the hothouse flowers seemed the noxious vapours of the bottomless pit.

Herr Frolich and the painter dined alone with the Princess, whose *âme damnée* was the victim of chronic *migraine*, which kept her conveniently out of the way when she was not wanted. Never had the splendid Giulia been more fascinating than on this particular evening. Her round of calls had been successful, her amateurs were eager to assist at her concert, and she was in the highest spirits about the whole affair. Nor was the Viennese professor behind his hostess in gaiety and animation. He was full to the brim of all the freshest scandals in the Parisian world ;—the wicked things that had been done, and the good things that had been said ; the fortunes that gilded youth had devoured in a season ; the millions produced by the sale of Mademoiselle Jenny Cadine's *ameublement* in Russian malachite and ormolu ; the horrible suicide of a wealthy German banker, who had been heartlessly jilted by Mademoiselle Josepha.

To Laurence Bell this talk was like a strange language ; youth and egotism are so apt to go hand-in-hand. The mind becomes cosmopolitan as it ripens and expands. It was in a very narrow groove that the painter's thoughts travelled ; and all this conversation about frivolous scandals, and all this repetition of idle *bon-mots*, inspired him with unutterable disgust.

Nor was he much better pleased when the talk took a higher flight, and the princess and the professor discoursed eloquently of music. Laurence gnawed his nether lip savagely as he sat apart listening to



arguments in which he was powerless to join—forgotten, neglected, as it seemed to his outraged vanity.

It was no longer of Raffaele and Michael Angelo that Madame d'Aspramonte was pleased to converse. She spoke now of Beethoven, Mozart, Palestrina, Gluck; and spoke, as she spoke of everything, with the tone of a connoisseur; for this evening it was her fancy to adore music. After dinner she sat for nearly an hour lost in a reverie that was almost a trance, while Herr Frolich played dreamy sonatas for her edification.

The sound of that pensive music carried Laurence Bell back to the shabbily-furnished parlour in Charnock-street; and there arose before him, clear as in a supernal vision, the image of a pale sad face made glorious by an aureole of golden hair—the face of her who was to have been his companion and consoler—the face of the betrothed whom he had deserted.

For what reward?

He looked across the room to the spot where the Roman lady was seated by the end of the grand piano, her folded arms lying listlessly upon the instrument, her eyes fixed in an absent unseeing gaze; grand and beautiful in all the splendour of physical and mental supremacy; but O how worn and haggard and world-weary of aspect when compared with that pure image of youth and innocence which the sound of the music had evoked for Laurence Bell!

“The end of my dream is coming,” he said to himself; “I am near the hour of my awakening.”

He went back to North Audley-street on foot through the bleak February night, though the Austrian professor would fain have carried him to town in the snuggest and neatest of broughams. The painter would not accept so much hospitality as a seat in a carriage from his hated rival. He walked home, and experienced a kind of fierce pleasure in fronting the bitter blasts of February. All that night he tossed his weary head to and fro upon his pillow in a fever of restlessness and unquenchable excitement—at one moment abandoning himself to despair, in the next suddenly elevated by hope.

“I will not be cast off by Giulia d'Aspramonte,” he said to himself. “My picture must succeed, and success will bring her to my feet. It is only failure which her proud nature cannot tolerate.”

The next day and the next he worked on, always with the same fiery impetuosity, the same confidence that he was achieving wonders. On the third day he was disturbed by upholsterers and decorators, who came to prepare the apartment for Madame d'Aspramonte's concert. After this there was no more tranquillity for the painter until the concert was over. It was a success, like everything else undertaken by the Princess; for with unlimited resources a beautiful and accomplished woman can do a great deal. After the concert there was a ball, during which Laurence Bell stood apart watching the dancers. He had never

belonged to that idle half of the world which excels in dancing, and of late he had become quite unequal to the exertion of a waltz or polka. He stood apart, and felt himself out of place in that brilliant assemblage—a cipher, and a cipher too much.

“It is time that it should come to an end,” he said to himself.

With unspeakable bitterness in his heart, he still worked on at his picture. Let the Princess be never so capricious, *that* still remained—his pride and his glory, the incarnation of all his hopes and dreams. Sometimes he sat before his easel lost in a waking trance, and in the trance he beheld always the same vision.

It was the opening day of the Royal Academy, and again the familiar rooms were crowded with eager spectators. In one room the crowd gathered thickest, congregated about one particular picture—a queenly, Cleopatra-like woman, arrayed in gorgeous draperies, and with a lurid sunset behind her. On her wrist there perched a splendid tropical bird; and the eyes of the woman were fixed on the eyes of the tamed bird with a magical fascination,—Lamia-like—unholy—but inexpressibly beautiful. From one marble shoulder the purple draperies had slipped away, borne down by the weight of their golden embroidery; and in the contrast between the pearly tints of the flesh and the Tyrian dyes of the fabric the painter had contrived one of the happiest effects of his art.

This was the picture which his prophetic vision revealed to him. This was the picture that was yet in progress on his easel—the picture which haunted him day and night, sleeping or waking, relentless as the demon to whom some sinner has bartered away his soul.

Laurence had written to Mr. Mocatti, apologising for his somewhat extravagant calls upon his patron’s purse, and promising grand results from the great picture. The dealer had spent his winter in Rome—that hotbed of art—where he had a small colony of young painters sprouting up for him like early cucumbers in a forcing-pit.

The great Mocatti’s reply to his protégé’s letter was somewhat practical in tone.

“I fear you have acquired extravagant habits under the influence of your Princess,” he said. “Remember, she is wasteful as the sieves of the Danaïdes, and will spill you a small fortune as if it were a glass of water. Beware of her. I am pleased to hear of your great picture—pleased to find that is to be startling, *hors du vulgaire*, soaring above your slow-coach English prejudices—*qu’il y va du chic*. But your fresco, *comment s’en va-t-il?* You say to me no more upon that subject; and it is for your frescoes my Princess will have to open her purse. Nor do you tell me of your pot-boilers—your little bits of *genre* painting, by which you beguile your leisure. You know how I have languished for you to do something great—inspired; but the pot must be kept boiling nevertheless, and these little bits would sell for good prices now that your name has been talked about.”

This letter was somewhat more practical in tone than was quite consistent with the enthusiasm of the impetuous Mocatti ; but when the pupil had remained too long in the land of dreams, it was time the master should descend to the regions of reality.

In his letter the Neapolitan enclosed a memorandum of the sums which his protégé had borrowed from him, as a polite reminder that he desired repayment. The letter and the enclosure had a freezing effect upon the painter ; but he speedily shook off the chilling influence. Every day he soared higher and higher in that region of dreams in which the dreamer can isolate himself from the cares of this life.

He was sitting before his easel about a fortnight after the receipt of this letter, his chamber luminous with that vision of triumph which had beguiled him so often of late, when the door of the painting-room was suddenly burst open, and a familiar figure appeared upon the threshold—the portly figure of Antonio Mocatti, superb in a fur-lined overcoat, with a red camellia in the buttonhole. Only by the odour of musk and patchouli which he brought with him Mr. Bell might have recognised his first patron.

The painter sprang to his feet and dashed together the doors of his easel, throwing himself before them with an impetuous movement, as if he would have interposed his life between the hidden picture and the profane eyes that would have looked upon it.

“ *Eh bien, mon ami!* you see I have come in search of you. It is time to have our pictures ready for sending in. We have sent nothing to the British Institute nor to a Winter Exhibition of any sort. *Fi donc, jeune paresseux—rêveur!* It is time I returned to put the spur into thy side.”

The painter was still standing against the locked doors of his easel. The surprise—the excitement—had agitated him violently, and he shivered as if from cold.

Antonio Mocatti looked at him with sudden intensity of expression.

“ What are you hiding there—what is this folly of locked doors ?” he asked sharply.

“ My picture—her portrait—such a portrait as no hand has painted since the age of Titian. No, Mocatti—even you shall not see it. No one—no one shall look at my work till it is perfect.”

“ I do not ask to see your picture,” cried the dealer, half disdainfully, half regretfully ; “ I want to look at you.”

He took the young man by the shoulders, and turned his face to the light with a gentle violence. Holding him thus, he stood for some moments gazing intently at the fever-flushed face.

“ Great God of heaven,” he cried, “ it was I who brought you here! I am as bad as a murderer !”





M. Ellen Edwards, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

"MUSA, MUSÆ, THE GODS WERE AT TEA."

# BELGRAVIA

JUNE 1867

## BIRDS OF PREY

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET," &c

Book the Sixth

THE HEIRESS OF THE HAYGARTHS

CHAPTER II. VALENTINE'S RECORD CONTINUED

**O**CTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>. I left Omega-street for the city before noon, after a hasty breakfast with my friend Horatio, who was somewhat under the dominion of his black dog this morning, and far from pleasant company. I was not to present myself to the worthy John Grewter, wholesale stationer, before the afternoon; but I had no particular reason for staying at home, and I had a fancy for strolling about the old city quarter in which Matthew Haygarth's youth had been spent. I went to look at John-street, Clerkenwell, and dawdled about the immediate neighbourhood of Smithfield, thinking of the old fair-time, and of all the rioters and merrymakers, who now were so much or so little dust and ashes in city churchyards, until the great bell of St. Paul's boomed three, and I felt that it might be a leisure time with Mr. Grewter.

I found the stationer's shop as darksome and dreary as city shops usually are, but redolent of that subtle odour of wealth which has a mystical charm for the nostrils of the penniless one. Stacks of ledgers, mountains of account-books, filled the dimly-lighted warehouse. Some clerks were at work behind a glass partition, and already the gas flared high in the green-shaded lamps above the desk at which they worked. I wondered whether it was a pleasant way of life theirs, and whether one would come to feel an interest in the barter of day-books and ledgers if they were one's daily bread. Alas for me! the only ledger I have ever known is the sainted patron of the northern racecourse. One young man came forward and asked my business, with a look that plainly told me that unless I wanted two or three gross of account-books I had no right to be there. I told him that I wished to see Mr. Grewter, and asked if that gentleman was to be seen.

The clerk said he didn't know ; but his tone implied that, in his opinion, I could *not* see Mr. Grewter.

"Perhaps you could go and ask," I suggested.

"Well, yes. Is it old or young Mr. Grewter you want to see?"

"Old Mr. Grewter," I replied.

"Very well, I'll go and see. You'd better send in your card, though."

I produced one of George Sheldon's cards, which the clerk looked at. He made a little start as if an adder had stung him.

"You're not Mr. Sheldon?" he said.

"No, Mr. Sheldon is my employer."

"What do you go about giving people Sheldon's card for?" asked the clerk, with quite an aggrieved air. "I know Sheldon of Gray's-inn."

"Then I'm sure you've found him a very accommodating gentleman," I replied politely.

"Deuce take his accommodation! He nearly accommodated me into the Bankruptcy Court. And so you're Sheldon's clerk, and you want the governor. But you don't mean to say that Grewter and Grewter are——"

This was said in an awe-stricken undertone. I hastened to reassure the stationer's clerk.

"I don't think Mr. Sheldon ever saw Mr. Grewter in his life," I said.

After this the clerk condescended to retire into the unknown antres behind the shop to deliver my message. I began to think that George Sheldon's card was not the best possible letter of introduction.

The clerk returned presently, followed by a tall, white-bearded man, with a bent figure, and a pair of penetrating gray eyes—a very promising specimen of the octogenarian.

He asked me my business in a sharp suspicious way that obliged me to state the nature of my errand without circumlocution. As I got farther away from the Rev. John Haygarth intestate, I was less fettered by the necessity of secrecy. I informed my octogenarian that I was prosecuting a legal investigation connected with a late inhabitant of that street, and that I had taken the liberty to apply to him, in the hope that he might be able to afford me some information.

He looked at me all the time I spoke as if he thought I was going to entreat pecuniary relief—and I daresay I have something the air of a begging-letter writer. But when he found that I only wanted information, his hard gray eyes softened ever so little, and he asked me to walk into his parlour.

His parlour was scarcely less gruesome than his shop. The furniture looked as if its manufacture had been coeval with the time of the Meynells, and the ghastly glare of the gas seemed a kind of anachronism. After a few preliminary observations, which were not encouraged

by Mr. Grewter's manner, I inquired whether he had ever heard the name of Meynell.

"Yes," he said; "there was a Meynell in this street when I was a young man—Christian Meynell, a carpet-maker by trade. The business is still carried on—and a very old business it is, for it was an old business in Meynell's time—but Meynell died before I married, and his name is pretty well forgotten in Aldersgate-street by this time."

"Had he no sons?" I asked.

"Well, yes; he had one son, Samuel, a kind of companion of mine. But he didn't take to the business, and when his father died he let things go anyhow, as you may say. He was rather wild, and he died two or three years after his father."

"Did he die unmarried?"

"Yes. There was some talk of his marrying a Miss Dobberly, whose father was a cabinet-maker in Jewin-street; but Samuel was too wild for the Dobberlys, who were steady-going people, and he went abroad, where he was taken with some kind of fever and died."

"Was this son the only child?"

"No; there were two daughters. The younger of them married; the elder went to live with her—and died unmarried, I've heard say."

"Do you know whom the younger sister married?" I asked.

"No. She didn't marry in London. She went into the country to visit some friends, and she married and settled down in those parts—wherever it might be—and I never heard of her coming back to London again. The carpet business was sold directly after Samuel Meynell's death. The new people kept up the name for a good twenty years; 'Taylor, late Meynell, established 1693,' that's what was painted on the board above the window—but they've dropped the name of Meynell now. People forget old names, you see, and it's no use keeping to them after they're forgotten."

Yes, the old names are forgotten, the old people fade off the face of the earth. The romance of Matthew Haygarth seemed to come to a lame and impotent conclusion in this dull record of dealers in carpeting.

"You can't remember what part of England it was that Christian Meynell's daughter went to when she married?"

"No. It wasn't a matter I took much interest in. I don't think I ever spoke to the young woman above three times in my life, though she lived in the same street, and though her brother and I often met each other at the Cat and Salutation, where there used to be a great deal of talk about the war and Napoleon Bonaparte in those days."

"Have you any idea of the time at which she married?" I inquired.

"Not as to the exact year. I know it was after I was married; for I remember my wife and I sitting at our window upstairs one summer Sunday evening, and seeing Samuel Meynell's sister go by to church. I can remember it as well as if it was yesterday. She was dressed in a white gown and a green silk spencer. Yes—and I didn't marry my first



wife till 1814. But as to telling you exactly when Miss Meynell left Aldersgate-street, I can't."

These reminiscences of the past seemed to exercise rather a mollifying influence upon the old man's mind, commonplace as they were. He ceased to look at me with sharp, suspicious glances, and he seemed anxious to afford me all the help he could.

"Was Christian Meynell's father called William?" I asked, after having paused to make some notes in my pocket-book.

"That I can't tell you; though, if Christian Meynell was living to-day, he wouldn't be ten years older than me. His father died when I was quite a boy; but there must be old books at the warehouse with his name in them, if they haven't been destroyed."

I determined to make inquiries at the carpet warehouse; but I had little hope of finding the books of nearly a century gone by. I tried another question.

"Do you know whether Christian Meynell was an only son, or the only son who attained manhood?" I asked.

My elderly friend shook his head.

"Christian Meynell never had any brothers that I heard of," he said; "but the parish register will tell you all about that, supposing that his father before him lived all his life in Aldersgate-street, as I've every reason to believe that he did."

After this I asked a few questions about the neighbouring churches, thanked Mr. Grewter for his civility, and departed.

I went back to Omega-street, dined upon nothing particular, and devoted the rest of my evening to the scrawling of this journal, and a tender reverie, in which Charlotte Halliday was the central figure.

How bitter poverty and dependence have made Diana Paget! She used to be a nice girl too.

*Oct. 16th.* To-day's work has been confined to the investigation of parish registers—a most wearisome business at the best. My labours were happily not without result. In the fine old church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, I found registries of the baptism of Oliver Meynell, son of William and Caroline Mary Meynell, 1768; and of the burial of the same Oliver in the following year. I found the record of the baptism of a daughter to the same William and Caroline Mary Meynell, and further on the burial of the said daughter, at five years of age. I also found the records of the baptism of Christian Meynell, son of the same William and Caroline Mary Meynell, in the year 1772, and of William Meynell's decease in the year 1793. Later appeared the entry of the burial of Sarah, widow of Christian Meynell. Later still the baptism of Samuel Meynell; then the baptism of Susan Meynell; and finally, that of Charlotte Meynell.

These were all the entries respecting the Meynell family to be found in the registry. There was no record of the burial of Caroline Mary, wife of William Meynell, nor of Christian Meynell, nor of Samuel

Meynell, his son; and I knew that all these entries would be necessary to my astute Sheldon before his case would be complete. After my search of the registries, I went out into the churchyard to grope for the family vault of the Meynells, and found a grim square monument, enclosed by a railing that was almost eaten away by rust, and inscribed with the names and virtues of that departed house. The burial-ground is interesting by reason of more distinguished company than the Meynells. John Milton, John Fox author of the martyrology, and John Speed the chronologer, rest in this City churchyard.

In the hope of getting some clue to the missing data, I ventured to make a second call upon Mr. Grewter, whom I found rather inclined to be snappish, as considering the Meynell business unlikely to result in any profit to himself, and objecting on principle to take any trouble not likely to result in profit. I believe this is the mercantile manner of looking at things in a general way.

I asked him if he could tell me where Samuel Meynell was buried.

"I suppose he was buried in foreign parts," replied the old gentleman with considerable grumpiness, "since he died in foreign parts."

"O, he died abroad, did he? Can you tell me where?"

"No, sir, I can't," replied Mr. Grewter, with increasing grumpiness; "I didn't trouble myself about other people's affairs then, and I don't trouble myself about them now, and I don't particularly care to be troubled about them by strangers."

I made the meekest possible apology for my intrusion, but the outraged Grewter was not appeased.

"Your best apology will be not doing it again," he replied. "Those that know my habits know that I take half-an-hour's nap after dinner. My constitution requires it, or I shouldn't take it. If I didn't happen to have a strange warehouseman on the premises, you wouldn't have been allowed to disturb me two afternoons running."

Finding Mr. Grewter unappeasable, I left him, and went to seek a more placable spirit in the shape of Anthony Sparsfield, carver and gilder, of Barbican.

I found the establishment of Sparsfield and Son, carvers and gilders. It was a low dark shop, in the window of which were exhibited two or three handsomely-carved frames, very much the worse for flies, and one oil-painting, of a mysterious and Rembrandtish character. The old-established air that pervaded almost all the shops in this neighbourhood was peculiarly apparent in the Sparsfield establishment.

In the shop I found a mild-faced man of about forty engaged in conversation with a customer. I waited patiently while the customer finished a minute description of the kind of frame he wanted made for a set of proof engravings after Landseer; and when the customer had departed, I asked the mild-faced man if I could see Mr. Sparsfield.

"I am Mr. Sparsfield," he replied politely.

"Not Mr. Anthony Sparsfield?"

"Yes, my name is Anthony."

"I was given to understand that Mr. Anthony Sparsfield was a much older person."

"O, I suppose you mean my father," replied the mild-faced man. "My father is advanced in years, and does very little in the business nowadays; not but what his head is as clear as ever it was, and there are some of our old customers like to see him when they give an order."

This sounded hopeful. I told Mr. Sparsfield the younger that I was not a customer, and then proceeded to state the nature of my business. I found him as courteous as Mr. Grewter had been disobliging.

"Me and father are old-fashioned people," he said; "and we're not above living over our place of business, which most of the Barbican tradespeople are nowadays. The old gentleman is taking tea in the parlour upstairs at this present moment, and if you don't mind stepping up to him, I'm sure he'll be proud to give you any information he can. He likes talking of old times."

This was the sort of oldest inhabitant I wanted to meet with—a very different kind of individual from Mr. Grewter, who doled out every answer to my questions as grudgingly as if it had been a five-pound note.

I was conducted to a snug little sitting-room on the first floor, where there was a cheerful fire and a comfortable odour of tea and toast. I was invited to take a cup of tea; and as I perceived that my acceptance of the invitation would be accounted a kind of favour, I said yes. The tea was very weak, and very warm, and very sweet; but Mr. Sparsfield and his son sipped it with as great an air of enjoyment as if it had been the most inspiring of beverages.

Mr. Sparsfield the elder was more or less rheumatic and asthmatic, but a cheerful old man withal, and quite ready to prate of old times, when Barbican and Aldersgate-street were pleasanter places than they are to-day, or had seemed so to this elderly citizen.

"Meynell!" he exclaimed, "I knew Sam Meynell as well as I knew my own brother, and I knew old Christian Meynell almost as well as I knew my own father. There was more sociability in those days you see, sir. The world seems to have grown too full to leave any room for friendship. It's all push and struggle, and struggle and push, as you may say; and a man will make you a frame for five-and-twenty shillings that will look more imposing like than what I could turn out for five pound. Only the gold-leaf will all drop off after a twelve-month's wear; and that's the way of the world nowadays. There's a deal of gilding, and things are made to look uncommon bright; but the gold all drops off 'em before long."

After allowing the old man to moralise to his heart's content, I brought him back politely to the subject in which I was interested.

"Samuel Meynell was as good a fellow as ever breathed," he said;

“but he was too fond of the tavern. There were some very nice taverns round about Aldersgate-street in those days; and you see, sir, the times were stirring times, and folks liked to get together and talk over the day’s news, with a pipe of tobacco and a glass of their favourite liquor, all in a sociable way. Poor Sam Meynell took a little too much of his favourite liquor; and when the young woman that he had been keeping company with—Miss Dobberly of Jewin-street—jilted him and married a wholesale butcher in Newgate Market, who was old enough to be her father, Sam took to drinking, and neglected his business. One day he came to me and said, ‘I’ve sold the business, Tony,’—for it was Sam and Tony with us, you see, sir,—‘and I’m off to France.’ This was soon after the battle of Waterloo; and many folks had a fancy for going over to France now that they’d seen the back of Napoleon Bonaparte, who was generally alluded to in those days by the name of monster or tiger, and was understood to make his chief diet off frogs. Well, sir, we were all of us very much surprised at Sam’s going to foreign parts; but as he’d always been wild, it was only looked upon as a part of his wildness, and we weren’t so much surprised to hear a year or two afterwards that he’d drunk himself to death upon cheap brandy—odyvee as *they* call it, poor ignorant creatures—at Calais.”

“He died at Calais?”

“Yes,” replied the old man; “I forget who brought the news home, but I remember hearing it. Poor Sam Meynell died and was buried amongst the Mossoos.”

“You are sure he was buried at Calais?”

“Yes, as sure as I can be of anything. Travelling was no easy matter in those days, and in foreign parts there was nothing but diligences, which I’ve heard say were the laziest-going vehicles ever invented. There was no one to bring poor Sam’s remains back to England, for his mother was dead, and his two sisters were settled somewhere down in Yorkshire.”

In Yorkshire! I am afraid I looked rather sheepish when Mr. Sparsfield senior mentioned this particular county, for my thoughts took wing and were with Charlotte Halliday before the word had well escaped his lips.

“Miss Meynell settled in Yorkshire, did she?” I asked.

“Yes, she married someone in the farming way down there. Her mother was a Yorkshire woman, and she and her sister went visiting among her mother’s relations, and never came back to London. One of them married, the other died a spinster.”

“Do you remember the name of the man she married?”

“No,” replied Mr. Sparsfield, “I can’t say that I do.”

“Do you remember the name of the place she went to—the town or village, or whatever it was?”

“I might remember it if I heard it,” he responded thoughtfully; “and I ought to remember it, for I’ve heard Sam Meynell talk of his

sister Charlotte's home many a time. She was christened Charlotte, you see, after the Queen. I've a sort of notion that the name of the village was something ending in cross, as it might be Charing-cross, or Waltham-cross."

This was vague, but it was a great deal more than I had been able to extort from Mr. Grewter. I took a second cup of the sweet warm liquid which my new friends called tea, in order to have an excuse for loitering, while I tried to obtain more light from the reminiscences of the old frame-maker.

No more light came, however. So I was fain to take my leave, reserving to myself the privilege of calling again on a future occasion.

*Oct. 18th.* I sent Sheldon a statement of my Aldersgate-street researches the day before yesterday, and had a long interview with him yesterday morning.

He went carefully through the information I had collected, and approved my labours.

"You've done uncommonly well, considering the short time you've been at the work," he said; "and you've reason to congratulate yourself upon having your ground all laid out for you, as my ground has never been laid out for me. The Meynell branch seems to be narrowing itself into the person of Christian Meynell's daughter and her descendants, and our most important business now will be to find out when, where, and whom she married, and what issue arose from such marriage. This I think you ought to be able to do."

I shook my head rather despondingly.

"I don't see any hope of finding out the name of the young woman's husband," I said, "unless I can come across another oldest inhabitant, gifted with a better memory for names and places than my obliging Sparsfield, or my surly Grewter."

"There are the almshouses," said Sheldon; "you haven't tried them yet."

"No; I suppose I must go in for the almshouses," I replied, with the sublime resignation of the pauper, whose poverty must consent to anything; "though I confess that the prosiness of the almshouse intellect is almost more than I can endure."

"And how do you know that you mayn't get the name of the place out of your friend the carver and gilder?" said George Sheldon; "he has given you some kind of clue in telling you that the name ends in cross. He said he should know the name if he heard it; why not try him with it?"

"But in order to do that, I must know the name myself," replied I, "and in that case I shouldn't want the aid of my Sparsfield."

"You are not great in expedients," said Sheldon, tilting back his chair, and taking a shabby folio from a shelf of other shabby folios. "This is a British gazetteer," he said, turning to the index of the work before him. "We'll test the ancient Sparsfield's memory with every

cross in the three Ridings, and if the faintest echo of the name we want still lingers in his feeble old brain, we'll awaken it." My patron ran his finger-nail along one of the columns of the index.

"Just take your pencil and write down the names as I call them," he said. "Here we are—Aylsby-cross; and here we are again—Bowford-cross, Callindale-cross, Huxter's-cross, Jarnam-cross, Kingborough-cross." Then, after a careful examination of the column, he exclaimed, "Those are all the crosses in the county of York; and it will go hard with us if you or I can't find the descendants of Christian Meynell's daughter at one of them. The daughter herself may be alive, for anything we know."

"And how about the Samuel Meynell who died at Calais? You'll have to find some record of his death, won't you? I suppose in these cases one must prove everything."

"Yes, I must prove the demise of Samuel," replied the sanguine genealogist; "that part of the business I'll see to myself, while you hunt out the female branch of the Meynells. I want an outing after a long spell of hard work; so I'll run across to Calais and search for the register of Samuel's interment. I suppose somebody took the trouble to bury him, though he was a stranger in the land."

"And if I extort the name we want from poor old Sparsfield's recollection?"

"In that case you can start at once for the place, and begin your search on the spot. It can't be above fifty years since this woman married, and there must be some inhabitant of the place old enough to remember her.—O, by the bye, I suppose you'll be wanting more cash for expenses," added Mr. Sheldon, with a sigh.

He took a five-pound note from his pocket-book, and gave it to me with a piteous air of self-sacrifice. I know that he is poor, and that whatever money he does contrive to earn is extorted from the necessities of his needier brethren. Some of this money he speculates upon the chances of the Haygarthian succession, as he has speculated his money on worse chances in the past. "Three thousand pounds!" he said to me, as he handed me the poor little five-pound note; "think what a prize you are working for, and work your hardest. The nearer we get to the end, the slower our progress seems to me; and yet it has been very rapid progress, considering all things."

So sentimental have I become, that I thought less of that possible three thousand pounds than of the fact that I was likely to go to Yorkshire, the county of Charlotte's birth, the county where she was now staying. I reminded myself that it was the largest shire in England, and that of all possible coincidences of time and place, there could be none more unlikely than the coincidence that would bring about a meeting between Charlotte Halliday and me.

"I know that for all practical purposes I shall be no nearer to her in Yorkshire than in London," I said to myself; "but I shall have the pleasure of fancying myself nearer to her."

Before leaving George Sheldon, I told him of the fragmentary sentences I had heard uttered by Captain Paget and Philip Sheldon at the Lawn; but he pooh-poohed my suspicions.

"I'll tell you what it is, Valentine Hawkehurst," he said, fixing those hard black eyes of his upon me as if he would fain have pierced the bony covering of my skull to discover the innermost workings of my brain, "neither Captain Paget nor my brother Phil can know anything of this business, unless you have turned traitor and sold them my secrets. And mark me, if you have, you've sold yourself and them into the bargain: my hand holds the documentary evidence, without which all your knowledge is worthless."

"I am not a traitor," I told him quietly, for I despise him far too heartily to put myself into a passion about anything he might please to say of me, "and I have never uttered a word about this business either to Captain Paget or to your brother. If you begin to distrust me, it is high time you should look out for a new coadjutor."

I had my Sheldon, morally speaking, at my feet in a moment.

"Don't be melodramatic, Hawkehurst," he said; "people sell each other every day of the week, and no one blames the seller, provided he makes a good bargain. But this is a case in which the bargain would be a very bad one."

After this I took my leave of Mr. Sheldon. He was to start for Calais by that night's mail, and return to town directly his investigation was completed. If he found me absent on his return, he would conclude that I had obtained the information I required and started for Yorkshire. In this event he would patiently await the receipt of tidings from that county.

I went straight from Gray's-inn to Jewin-street. I had spent the greater part of the day in Sheldon's office, and when I presented myself before my complacent Sparsfield junior, Sparsfield senior's tea and toast were already in process of preparation; and I was again invited to step upstairs to the family sitting-room, and again treated with that Arcadian simplicity of confidence and friendliness, which it has been my fate to encounter quite as often in the heart of this sophisticated city as in the most pastoral of villages. With people who were so frank and cordial I could but be equally frank.

"I am afraid I am making myself a nuisance to you, Mr. Sparsfield," I said; "but I know you'll forgive me when I tell you that the affair I'm engaged in is a matter of vital importance to me, and that your help may do a great deal towards bringing matters to a crisis."

Mr. Sparsfield senior declared himself always ready to assist his fellow-creatures; and was good enough further to declare that he had taken a liking to me. So weak had I of late become upon all matters of sentiment, I thanked Mr. Sparsfield for his good opinion, and then went on to tell him that I was about to test his memory.

"And it ain't a bad 'un," he cried cheerily, clapping his hand upon his knee by way of emphasis. "It ain't a bad memory, is it, Tony?"

"Few better, father," answered the dutiful Anthony junior. "Your memory's better than mine, a long way."

"Ah," said the old man with a chuckle, "folks lived different in my day. There weren't no gas and there weren't no railroads, and London tradespeople was content to live in the same house from year's end to year's end. But now your tradesman must go on his foreign tours, like a prince of the royal family, and he must go here and go there; and when he's been everywhere, he caps it all by going through the Gazette. Folks stayed at home in my day; but they made their fortunes, and they kept their health, and their eyesight, and their memory, and their hearing, and a many of 'em have lived to see the next generation making fools of themselves."

"Why, father," cried Anthony junior, aghast at this flood of eloquence, "what an oration!"

"And it ain't often I make an oration, is it, Tony?" said the old man laughing. "I only mean to say that if my memory's pretty bright, it may be partly because I haven't frittered it away upon nonsense, as some folks have. I've stayed at home and minded my own business, and left other people to mind theirs. And now, sir, if you want the help of my memory, I'm ready to give it."

"You told me the other day that you could not recall the name of the place where Christopher Meynell's daughter married, but you said you should remember it if you heard it, and you also said that the name ended in cross."

"I'll stick to that," replied my ancient friend, "I'll stick to that."

"Very well then. It is a settled thing that the place was in Yorkshire?"

"Yes, I'm sure of that too."

"And that the name ended in cross?"

"It did, as sure as my name is Sparsfield."

"Then in that case, as there are only six towns or villages in the county of York the names of which end in cross, it stands to reason that the place we want must be one of those six."

Having thus premised, I took my list from my pocket and read aloud the names of the six places very slowly for Mr. Sparsfield's edification.

"Aylsey Cross—Bowford Cross—Callindale Cross—Huxter's Cross—Jarnam Cross—Kingsborough Cross."

"That's him!" cried my old friend suddenly.

"Which?" I asked eagerly.

"Huxter's Cross; I remember thinking at the time that it must be a place where they sold things, because of the name Huxter, you see, pronounced just the same as if it was spelt with a ck instead of an x. And I heard afterwards that there'd once been a market held at the place, but it had been done away with before our time. Huxter's Cross; yes, that's the name of the place where Christopher Meynell's daughter



married and settled. I've heard it many a time from poor Sam, and it comes back to me as plain as if I'd never forgotten it."

There was an air of conviction about the old man which satisfied me that he was not deceived. I thanked him heartily for his aid as I took my leave.

"You may have helped to put a good lump of money in my pocket, Mr. Sparsfield," I said; "and if you have, I'll get my picture taken, if it's only for the pleasure of bringing it here to be framed."

With this benedictory address I left my simple citizens of Barbican. My heart was very light as I wended my way across those metropolitan wilds that lay between Barbican and Omega-street. I am ashamed of myself when I remember the foolish cause of this elation of mind. I was going to Yorkshire, the county of which my Charlotte was now an inhabitant. My Charlotte! It is a pleasure even to write that delicious possessive pronoun—the pleasure of poor Alnasher, the crockery-seller, dreaming his day-dream in the eastern market-place.

Can anyone know better than I that I shall be no nearer Charlotte Halliday in Yorkshire than I am in London? No one. And yet I am glad my Sheldon's business takes me to the woods and wolds of that wide northern shire.'

Huxter's Cross—some heaven-forgotten spot, no doubt. I bought a railway time-table on my way home to-night, and have carefully studied the bearings of the place amongst whose mouldy records I am to discover the history of Christopher Meynell's daughter and heiress.

I find that Huxter's Cross lies off the railroad, and is to be approached by an obscure little station—as I divine from the ignominious type in which its name appears—about sixty miles northward of Hull. The station is called Hidling; and at Hidling there seems to be a coach which plies between the station and Huxter's Cross.

Figure to yourself again, my dear, the heir-at-law to a hundred thousand pounds vegetating in the unknown regions of Huxter's Cross-cum-Hidling, unconscious of his heritage!

Shall I find him at the plough-tail, I wonder, this mute inglorious heir-at-law? or shall I find an heiress with brawny arms meekly churning butter? or shall I discover the last of the Meynells taking his rest in some lonely churchyard, not to be awakened by earthly voice proclaiming the tidings of earthly good fortune?

I am going to Yorkshire—that is enough for me. I languish for the starting of the train which shall convey me thither. I begin to understand the nostalgia of the mountain herdsman: I pine for that northern air, those fresh pure breezes blowing over moor and wold—though I am not quite clear, by the bye, as to the exact nature of a wold. I pant, I yearn for Yorkshire. I, the cockney, the child of Temple Bar, whose cradle-song was boomed by the bells of St. Dunstan's and St. Clement's Danes.

Is not Yorkshire my Charlotte's birth-place? I want to see the land whose daughters are so lovely.

## CHAPTER III.

## ARCADIA.

*Nov. 1st.* This is Huxter's Cross, and I live here. I have lived here a week. I should like to live here for ever. O, let me be rational for a few hours, while I write the record of this last blissful week; let me be reasonable, and business-like, and Sheldon-like for this one wet afternoon, and then I may be happy and foolish again. Be still, beating heart! as the heroines of Minevra-press romances were accustomed to say to themselves on the smallest provocation. Be still, foolish, fluttering, schoolboy heart, which has taken a new lease of youth and folly from a fair landlord called Charlotte Halliday.

Drip, drip, drip, O rain! "The day is dark and cold and dreary, and the vine still clings to the mouldering wall; and with every gust the dead leaves fall:" but thy sweet sad verse wakes no responsive echo in my heart, O tender Transatlantic poet, for my heart is light and glad—recklessly glad—heedless of to-morrow—forgetful of yesterday—full to the very brim with the dear delight of to-day.

And now to business. I descend from the supernal realms of fancy to the dry record of commonplace fact. This day week I arrived at Hidling, after a tedious journey, which, with stoppages at Derby and Normanton, and small delays at obscurer stations, had occupied the greater part of the day. It was dusk when I took my place in the hybrid vehicle, half coach half omnibus, which was to convey me from Hidling to Huxter's Cross. A transient glimpse at Hidling showed me one long straggling street and a square church-tower. Our road branched off from the straggling street, and in the autumn dusk I could just discover the dim outlines of distant hills encircling a broad waste of moor.

I have been so steeped in London that this wild barren scene had a charm for me which it could scarcely possess for others. Even the gloom of that dark waste of common land was pleasant to me. I shared the public vehicle with one old woman, who snored peacefully in the remotest corner, while I looked out at the little open window and watched the darkening landscape.

Our drive occupied some hours. We passed two or three little clusters of cottages and homesteads, where the geese screamed and the cocks crowed at our approach, and where a few twinkling tapers in upper windows proclaimed the hour of bed-time. At one of these clusters of habitation, a little island of humanity in the waste of wold and moor, we changed horses, with more yo-oh-ing and come-up-ing than would have attended the operation in a civilised country. At

this village I heard the native tongue for the first time in all its purity; and for any meaning which it conveyed to my ear I might as well have been listening to the patois of agricultural Carthage.

After changing horses, we went up hill, with perpetual groanings, and grumblings, and grindings, and whip-smacking and come-up-ing, for an indefinite period; and then we came to a cluster of cottages, suspended high up in the sharp autumn atmosphere as it seemed to me; and the driver of the vehicle came to my little peephole of a window, and told me with some slight modification of the Carthaginian patois that I was "there."

I alighted, and found myself at the door of a village inn, with the red light from within shining out upon me where I stood, and a battered old sign groaning and creaking above my head. For me, who in all my life had been accustomed to find my warmest welcome at an inn, this was to be at home. I paid my fare, took up my carpet bag, and entered the hostelry.

I found a rosy-faced landlady, clean and trim, though a trifle floury as to the arms and apron. She had emerged from a kitchen, an old-fashioned chamber with a floor of red brick; a chamber which was all in a rosy glow with the firelight, and looked like a Dutch picture, as I peeped at it through the open doorway. There were the most picturesque of cakes and loaves heaped on a wooden bench by the hearth, and the whole aspect of the place was delicious in its homely comfort.

"O," I said to myself, "how much better the northern winds blowing over these untrodden hills, and the odour of home-made loaves, than the booming bells of St. Dunstan's, and the greasy steam of tavern chops and steaks!"

My heart warmed to this Yorkshire and these Yorkshire people. Was it for Charlotte's sake, I wonder, that I was so ready to open my heart to everybody and everything in this unknown land?

A very brief parley set me quite at ease with my landlady. Even the Carthaginian patois became intelligible to me after a little experience. I found that I could have a cosy, cleanly chamber, and be fed and cared for upon terms that seemed absurdly small, even to a person of my limited means. My cordial hostess brought me a meal which was positively luxurious: broiled ham and poached eggs, such as one scarcely hopes to see out of a picture of still life; crisp brown cakes fresh from that wonderful oven whose door I had seen yawning open in the Flemish interior below; strong tea and cream—the cream that one reads of in pastoral stories.

I enjoyed my banquet, and then opened my window and looked out at the still landscape, dimly visible in the faint starlight.

I was at the top of a hill—the topmost of an ascending range of hills—and to some minds that alone is rapture; to inhale the fresh night air was to drink deeply of an ethereal beverage. I had never experienced so delicious a sensation since I had stood on the grassy battlements of

the Chateau d'Argues, with the orchards and gardens of sunny Normandy spread like a carpet below my feet.

But this hill was loftier than that on which the feudal castle rears its crumbling towers, and the landscape below me was wilder than that verdant Norman *paysage*.

No words can tell how I rejoiced in this untrodden region—this severance from the Strand and Temple Bar. I felt as if my old life was falling away from me—like the scales of the lepers that were cleansed by the Divine Healer. I felt myself worthier to love, or even to be loved by, the bright true-hearted girl whose image fills my heart. Ah, if heaven gave me that dear angel, I think my old life, my old recklessness, my old want of principle, would drop away from me altogether, and the leper would stand forth cleansed and whole. Could I not be happy with her here, among these forgotten hills, these widely scattered homesteads? Could I not be happy dissevered eternally from billiard-room and kursaal, race-ground and dancing-rooms? Yes, completely and unreservedly happy—happy as a village curate with seventy pounds a year and a cast-off coat, supplied by the charity of a land too poor to pay its pastors the wage of a decent butler—happy as a struggling farmer, though the clay soil of my scanty acres were never so sour and stubborn, my landlord never so hard about his rent—happy as a pedlar, with my pack of cheap tawdry wares slung behind me, and my Charlotte tramping gaily by my side.

I breakfasted next morning in a snug little parlour behind the bar, where I overheard two carters conversing in the Carthaginian patois, to which I became hourly more accustomed. My brisk cheery landlady came in and out while I took my meal; and whenever I could detain her long enough, I tried to engage her in conversation.

I asked her if she had ever heard the name of Meynell; and after profound consideration she replied in the negative.

"I don't mind hearing aught of folks called Meynell," she said, with more or less of the patois, which I was beginning to understand; "but I haven't got mooch memory for nee-ams. I might have heard o' such folks, and not minded t' nee-am."

This was rather dispiriting; but I knew that if any record of Christian Meynell's daughter existed at Huxter's Cross, it was in my power to discover it.

I asked if there was any official in the way of a registrar to be found in the village; and found that there was no one more important than an old man who kept the keys of the church. The registers were kept in the vestry, my landlady believed, and the old man was called Jonas Gorles, and lived half a mile off, at the homestead of his son-in-law. But my landlady said she would send for him immediately, and pledged herself to produce him in the course of an hour.

I told her that I would find my way to the churchyard in the

mean time, whither Mr. Gorles could follow me as soon as convenient.

The autumnal morning was fresh and bright as spring, and Huxter's Cross seemed the most delightful place on earth to me, though it is only a cluster of cottages, relieved by one farm-house of moderate pretensions, my hostelry of the Magpie, a general shop, which is also the post-office, and a fine old Norman church, which lies away from the village, and bears upon it the traces of better days. Near the church there is an old granite cross, around which the wild flowers and grasses grow rank and high. It marks the spot where there was once a flourishing market-place; but all mortal habitations have vanished, and the Huxter's Cross of the past has now no other memorial than this crumbling stone.

The churchyard was unutterably still and solitary. A robin was perched on the topmost bar of the old wooden gate, singing his joyous carol. As I approached, he hopped from the gate to the low moss-grown wall, and went on singing as I passed him. I was in the humour to apostrophise skylark or donkey, or to be sentimental about anything in creation, just then; so I told my robin what a pretty creature he was, and that I would sooner perish than hurt him by so much as the tip of a feather.

Being bound to remember my Sheldon even when most sentimental, I endeavoured to combine the meditative mood of a Hervey with the business-like sharpness of a lawyer's-clerk; and while musing on the common lot of man in general, I did not omit to search the mouldering tombstones for some record of the Meynells in particular.

I found none; and yet, if the daughter of Christian Meynell had been buried in that churchyard, the name of her father would surely have been inscribed upon her tombstone. I had read all the epitaphs, when the wooden gate creaked on its hinges, and admitted a wizen little old man—one of those ancient meanderers who seem to have been created on purpose to fill the post of sexton.

With this elderly individual I entered the church of Huxter's Cross, which had the same mouldy atmosphere as the church at Spotswold. The vestry was an icy little chamber, which had once been a family vault; but it was not much colder than Miss Judson's best parlour; and I endured the cold bravely while I searched the registries of the last sixty years.

I searched in vain. After groping amongst the names of all the nonentities who had been married at Huxter's Cross since the beginning of the century, I found myself no nearer the secret of Charlotte Meynell's marriage. And then I reflected upon all the uncertainties surrounding that marriage. Miss Meynell had gone to Yorkshire to visit her mother's relations, and had married in Yorkshire; and the place which Anthony Sparsfield remembered having heard of in connection with that marriage was Huxter's Cross. But it did not by

any means follow that the marriage had taken place at that obscure village. Miss Meynell might have been married at Hull, or York, or Leeds, or at any of the principal places of the county. With that citizen class of people marriage was a grand event, a solemn festivity; and Miss Meynell and her friends would have been likely to prefer that so festive an occasion should be celebrated anywhere rather than at that forgotten old church among the hills.

"I shall have to search every register in Yorkshire till I light upon the record I want," I thought to myself, "unless Sheldon will consent to advertise for the Meynell marriage certificate. There could scarcely be danger in such an advertisement, as the connection between the name of Meynell and the Haygarth estate is only known to ourselves."

Acting upon this idea, I wrote to George Sheldon by that afternoon's post, urging him to advertise for descendants of Miss Charlotte Meynell.

Charlotte! dear name, which is a kind of music for me. It was almost a pleasure to write that letter, because of the repetition of that delightful noun.

The next day I devoted to a drive round the neighbourhood in a smart little dogcart, hired on very moderate terms from mine host. I had acquainted myself with the geography of the surrounding country; and I contrived to visit every village-church within a certain radius of Huxter's Cross. But my inspection of mildewed old books, and my heroic endurance of cold and damp in mouldy old churches, resulted in nothing but disappointment.

I returned to my "Magpie" after dark, a little disheartened and thoroughly tired, but still very well pleased with my rustic quarters and my adopted county. My landlord's horse had shown himself a very model of equine perfection.

Candles were lighted and curtains drawn in my cosy little chamber, and the table creaked beneath one of those luxurious Yorkshire teas which might wean an alderman from the coarser delights of turtle or conger-eel soup and venison.

At noon the following day a very primitive kind of postman brought me a letter from Sheldon. That astute individual told me that he declined to advertise, or to give any kind of publicity to his requirements.

"If I were not afraid of publicity, I should not be obliged to pay you a pound a week," he remarked with pleasing candour, "since advertisements would get me more information in a week than you may scrape together in a twelvemonth. But I happen to know the danger of publicity, and that many a good thing has been snatched out of a man's hands just as he was working it into shape. I don't say that this could be done in my case; and you know very well that it could not be done, as I hold papers which are essential to the very first move in the business."

I perfectly understand the meaning of these remarks, and I am inclined to doubt the existence of those important papers. Suspicion is a fundamental principle in the Sheldon mind. My friend George trusts me because he is obliged to trust me,—and only so far as he is obliged,—and is tormented more or less by the idea that I may at any moment attempt to steal a march upon him.

But to return to his letter :

“ I should recommend you to examine the registries of every town or village within, say, thirty miles of Huxter’s Cross. If you find nothing in such registries, we must fall back upon the larger towns, beginning with Hull, as being nearest to our starting-point. The work will, I fear, be slow, and very expensive for me. I need scarcely again urge upon you the necessity of confining your outlay to the minimum, as you know that my affairs are desperate. It couldn’t well be lower water than it is with me, in a pecuniary sense ; and I expect every day to find myself aground.

“ And now for my news. I have discovered the burial-place of Samuel Meynell, after no end of trouble, the details of which I needn’t bore you with, since you are now pretty well up in that sort of work. I am thankful to say I have secured the evidence that settles for Samuel, and ascertained by tradition that he died unmarried. The *onus probandi* would fall upon anyone purporting to be descended from the said Samuel, and we know how uncommonly difficult said person would find it to prove anything.

“ So, having disposed of Samuel, I came back to London by the next mail ; Calais in the month of November not being one of those wildly gay watering-places which tempt the idler. I arrived just in time to catch this afternoon’s post ; and now I look impatiently to your Miss Charlotte Meynell of Huxter’s Cross.—Yours, &c. G. S.”

I obeyed my employer to the letter ; hired my landlord’s dogcart for another day’s exploration ; and went further afield in search of Miss Charlotte’s marriage-lines. I came home late at night,—this time thoroughly worn out,—studied a railway-guide with a view to my departure, and decided on starting for Hull by a train that would leave Hidling station at four o’clock on the following afternoon.

I went to bed tired in body and depressed in spirit. Why was I so sorry to leave Huxter’s Cross ? What subtle instinct of the brain or heart made me aware that the desert region amongst the hills held earth’s highest felicity for me ?

The next morning was bright and clear. I heard the guns of sportsmen popping merrily in the still air as I breakfasted before an open window, while a noble sea-coal fire blazed on the hearth opposite me. There is no stint of fuel at the Magpie. Everything in Yorkshire seems to be done with a lavish hand. I have heard Yorkshiremen called mean. As if meanness could exist in the hearts of my Charlotte’s

countrymen! My own experience of the county is brief; but I can only say that my friends of the Magpie are liberality itself, and that a Yorkshire tea is the very acme of unsophisticated bliss in the way of eating and drinking. I have dined at Philippe's; I know every dish in the *menu* of the *Maison Dorée*; but if I am to make my life a burden beneath the dark sway of the demon dyspepsia, let my destruction arrive in the shape of the ham and eggs, the crisp golden brown cakes and undefiled honey, of this northern Arcadia.

I told my friendly hostess that I was going to leave her, and she was sorry. She was sorry for me, the wanderer. I can picture to myself the countenance of a London landlady if informed thus suddenly of her lodger's departure, and her suppressed mutterings about the inconvenience of such a proceeding.

After breakfast I went out to take my own pleasure. I had done my duty in the matter of mouldy churches and mildewed registries; and I considered myself entitled to a holiday during the few hours that must elapse before the starting of the hybrid vehicle for Hidling.

I sauntered past the little cluster of cottages, admiring their primitive aspect, the stone-crop on the red-tiled roofs, that had sunk under the weight of years. All was unspeakably fresh and bright; the tiny panes of the casements twinkled in the autumn sunlight, birds sang, and hardy red geraniums bloomed in the cottage windows. What pleasure or distraction had the good housewives of Huxter's Cross to lure them from the domestic delights of scrubbing and polishing? I saw young faces peeping at me from between snow-white muslin curtains, and felt that I was a personage for once in my life; and it was pleasant to feel oneself of some importance even in the eyes of Huxter's Cross.

Beyond the cottages and the post-office there were three roads stretching far away over hill and moorland. With two of those roads I had made myself thoroughly familiar; but the third remained to be explored.

"So now for 'fresh fields and pastures new,'" I said to myself as I quickened my pace, and walked briskly along my unknown road.

Ah, surely there is some meaning in the fluctuations of the mental barometer. What but an instinctive consciousness of approaching happiness could have made me so light-hearted that morning? I sang as I hastened along that undiscovered road. Fragments of old Italian serenades and barcarolles came back to me as if I had heard them yesterday for the first time. The perfume of the few lingering wild-flowers, the odour of burning weeds in the distance, the fresh autumn breeze, the clear cold blue sky,—all were intensely delicious to me; and I felt as if this one lovely walk were a kind of renovating process, from which my soul would emerge cleansed of all its stains.

"I have to thank George Sheldon for a great deal," I said to myself, "since through him I have been obliged to educate myself in the school of man's best schoolmaster, Solitude. I do not think I can ever be a



thorough Bohemian again. These lonely wanderings have led me to discover a vein of seriousness in my nature which I was ignorant of until now. How thoroughly some men are the creatures of their surroundings! With Paget I have been a Paget. But a few hours' *tête-à-tête* with Nature renders one averse from the society of Pagets, be they never so brilliant."

From moralising thus, I fell into a delicious day-dream. All my dreams of late had moved to the same music. How happy I could be if Fate gave me Charlotte and three hundred a year! In sober moods I asked for this much of worldly wealth, just to furnish a nest for my bird. In my wilder moments I asked Fate for nothing but Charlotte.

"Give me the bird without the nest," I cried to Fortune; "and we will take wing to some trackless forest where there are shelter and berries for nestless birds. We will imitate that delightful bride and bridegroom of Parisian Bohemia, who married and settled in an attic, and when their stock of fuel was gone fell foul of the staircase that led to their bower, and so supplied themselves merrily enough till the staircase was all consumed, and the poor little bride, peeping out of her door one morning, found herself upon the verge of an abyss.

And then came the furious landlord, demanding restitution. But close behind the landlord came the good fairy of all love-stories, with all the sands of Pactolus in her pockets. Ah, yes, there is always a providence for true lovers.

I had passed away by this time from the barren moor to the regions of cultivation. The trimly-cut hedges on each side of the way showed me that my road now lay between farm lands. I was outside the boundary of some upland farm. I saw sheep cropping trefoil in a wide field on the other side of the neat brown hedgerow, and at a distance I saw the red-tiled roof of a farm-house.

I looked at my watch, and found that I had still half-an-hour to spare; so I went on towards the farmhouse, bent upon seeing what sort of habitation it was. In a solitary landscape like this, every dwelling-place has a kind of attraction to the wayfarer.

I went on till I came to a white gate, upon the upper rail of which a girlish figure was leaning.

It was a graceful figure, dressed in that semi-picturesque costume which has been adopted by women of late years. The vivid blue of a bodice was tempered by the sober gray of a skirt, and a bright-hued ribbon gleamed among rich tresses of brown hair.

The damsel's face was turned away from me, but there was something in the carriage of the head, something in the modelling of the firm full throat, which reminded me of —

But then, when a man is over head and ears in love, everything in creation reminds him more or less of his idol. Your pious Catholic gives all his goods for the adornment of a church; your true lover devotes his every thought to the dressing up of one dear image.

The damsel turned as my steps drew near, loud on the crisp gravel. She turned, and showed me the face of Charlotte Halliday.

I must entreat posterity to forgive me, if I leave a blank at this stage of my story. "There are chords in the human heart which had better not be vibrated," said Sim Tappetit. There are emotions which can only be described by the pen of a poet. I am not a poet; and if my diary is so happy as to be of some use to posterity as a picture of the manners of a repentant Bohemian, posterity must not quarrel with my shortcomings in the way of sentimental description.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### IN PARADISE.

WE stood at the white gate talking to each other, my Charlotte and I. The old red-tiled roof which I had seen in the distance sheltered the girl I love. The solitary farmhouse which it had been my whim to examine was the house in which my dear love made her home. It was here—to this untrodden hillside—that my darling had come from the prim modern villa at Bayswater. Ah, what happiness to find her here, far away from all those stockbroking surroundings—here, where our hearts expanded beneath the divine influence of Nature!

I fear that I was coxcomb enough to fancy myself beloved that day we parted in Kensington Gardens. A look, a tone—too subtle for definition—thrilled me with a sudden hope so bright, that I would not trust myself to believe it could be realised.

"She is a coquette," I said to myself. "Coquetry is one of the graces which Nature bestows upon these bewitching creatures. That little conscious look, which stirred this weak heart so tumultuously, is no doubt common to her when she knows herself beloved and admired, and has no meaning that can flatter my foolish hopes."

This is how I had reasoned with myself again and again during the dreary interval in which Miss Halliday and I had been separated. But, O, what a hardy perennial blossom hope must be! The tender buds were not to be crushed by the pelting hailstones of hard common sense. They had survived all my philosophical reflections, and burst into sudden flower to-day at sight of Charlotte's face. She loved me, and she was delighted to see me. That was what her radiant face told me; and could I do less than believe the sweet confession? For the first few moments we could scarcely speak to each other, and then we began to converse in the usual commonplace strain.

She told me of her astonishment on seeing me in that remote spot. I could hardly confess to having business at Huxter's Cross, so I was fain to tell my dear love a falsehood, and declare that I was taking a holiday "up at the hills."

"And how did you come to choose Huxter's Cross for your holiday?" she asked naïvely.

I told her that I had heard the place spoken of by a person in the city,—my simple-minded Sparsfield to wit.

“And you could not have come to a better place,” she cried, “though people do call it the very dullest spot in the world. This was my dear aunt Mary’s house—papa’s sister, you know. Grandpapa Halliday had two farms. This was one, and Hiley farm the other. Hiley was much larger and better than this, you know, and was left to poor papa, who sold it just before he died.”

Her face clouded as she spoke of her father’s death.

“I can’t speak about that without pain even now,” she said softly, “though I was only nine years old when it happened. But one can suffer a great deal at nine years old.”

And then, after a little pause, she went on to speak of her Yorkshire home.

“My aunt and uncle Mercer are so kind to me ; and yet they are neither of them really related to me. My aunt Mary died very young, when her first baby was born, and the poor little baby died too ; and uncle Mercer inherited the property from his wife, you see. He married again after two years, and his second wife is the dearest, kindest creature in the world. I always call her aunt, for I don’t remember poor papa’s sister at all ; and no aunt that ever lived could be kinder to me than aunt Dorothy. I am always so happy here,” she said ; “and it seems such a treat to get away from the Lawn—of course I am sorry to leave mamma, you know,” she added, parenthetically—“and the stiff breakfasts, and Mr. Sheldon’s newspapers that crackle, crackle, crackle so shockingly all breakfast-time ; and the stiff dinners, with a prim parlour-maid staring at one all the time, and bringing one vegetables that one doesn’t want if one only ventures to breathe a little louder than usual. Here it is Liberty Hall. Uncle Joe—he is aunt Dorothy’s husband—is the most good-natured of beings, just the very reverse of Mr. Sheldon in everything. I don’t mean that my step-father is unkind, you know. O, no, he has always been very good to me—much kinder than I have deserved that he should be. But uncle Joe’s ways are *so* different. I am sure you will like him ; and I am sure he will like you, for he likes everybody, dear thing. And you must come and see us very often, please, for Newhall farm is open house, you know, and the stranger within the gates is always welcome.”

Now my duty to my Sheldon demanded that I should scamper back to Huxter’s Cross as fast as my legs would carry me, in order to be in time for the hybrid vehicle that was to convey me to Hidling station ; and here was this dear girl inviting me to linger, and promising me a welcome to the house which was made a paradise by her presence.

I looked at my watch. It would have been impossible for me to reach Huxter’s Cross in time for the vehicle. Conscience whispered that I could hire my landlord’s dogcart and a boy to drive me to Hidling ; but the whispers of conscience are very faint ; and love cried aloud,

“Stay with Charlotte: supreme happiness is offered to you for the first time in your life. Fool that would reject so rare a gift!”

It was to this latter counsellor I gave my ear. My Sheldon's interests went overboard; and I stayed by the white gate, talking to Charlotte, till it was quite too late to heed the reproachful grumblings of conscience about that dogcart.

My Charlotte—yes, I boldly call her mine now—my dear is great in agriculture. She enlightened my cockney mind on the subject of upland farms, telling me how uncle and aunt Mercer's land is poor and sandy, requiring very little in the way of draining, but producing by no means luxuriant crops. It is a very picturesque place, and has a certain gentlemanlike air with it pleasing to my snobbish taste. The house lies in a tract of open grass-land, dotted here and there by trees, and altogether of a park-like appearance. True that the mild and useful sheep rather than the stately stag browses on that greensward, and few carriages roll along the winding gravel road that leads to the house.

I felt a rapturous thirst for agricultural knowledge as I listened to my Charlotte. Was there a vacancy for hind or herdsman on Newhall farm? I wondered. What is the office so humble I would not fill for her dear sake? O, how I sighed for the days of Jacob, that first distinguished usurer, so that I might serve seven years and again seven years for my darling!

I stayed by the white gate, abandoning all thought of my employer's behests, unconscious of time—unconscious of everything except that I was with Charlotte Halliday, and would not have resigned my position to be made Lord Chancellor of England.

Anon came uncle Joe, with a pleasant rubicund visage beaming under a felt hat, to tell Lottie that dinner was ready. To him I was immediately presented.

“Mr. Mercer, my dear uncle Joseph—Mr. Hawkehurst, a friend of my stepfather's,” said Charlotte.

Two or three minutes afterwards we were all three walking across the park-like sward to the hospitable farm-house; for the idea of my departing before dinner seemed utterly preposterous to this friendly farmer.

Considered apart from the glamour that for my eyes must needs shine over any dwelling inhabited by Charlotte Halliday, I will venture to say that Newhall farm-house is the dearest old place in the world. Such delightful old rooms, with the deepest window-seats, the highest mantelpieces, the widest fireplaces possible in domestic architecture; such mysterious closets and uncanny passages; such pitfalls in the way of unexpected flights of stairs; such antiquated glazed corner-cupboards for the display of old china!—everything redolent of the past.

In one corner a spinning-wheel, so old that its spindle might be

the identical weapon that pierced Princess Sleeping Beauty's soft white hand; in another corner an arm-chair that must have been old-fashioned in the days of Queen Anne; and O, what ancient flowered chintzes, what capacious sofas, what darling mahogany secretaries, and bureaus with gleaming brazen adornments in the way of handles!—and about everything the odour of rose-leaves and lavender.

I have grown familiar with every corner of the dear old place within the last few days, but on this first day I had only a general impression of antiquated aspect and homely comfort.

I stayed to dine at the same unpretending board at which my Charlotte had sat years ago, elevated on a high chair, and as yet new to the use of knives and forks. Uncle Joe and aunt Dorothy told me this in their pleasant friendly way; while the young lady sat by, blushing and dimpling like a summer sea beneath the rosy flush of sunrise. No words can relate how delightful it was to me to hear them talk of my dear love's childhood; they dwelt so tenderly upon her sweetness, they dilated with such enthusiasm upon her "pretty ways." Her "pretty ways!" ah, how fatal a thing it is for mankind when Nature endows woman with those pretty ways! From the thrall of Grecian noses and Castilian eyes there may be hope of deliverance, but from the spell of that indescribable witchery these is none.

I whistled my Sheldon down the wind without remorse, and allowed myself to be as happy as if I had been the squire of valley and hillside, with ten thousand a year to offer my Charlotte with the heart that loves her so fondly. I have no idea what we had for dinner. I know only that the fare was plenteous, and the hospitality of my new friends unbounded. We were very much at ease with one another, and our laughter rang up to the stalwart beams that sustained the old ceiling. If I had possessed the smallest fragment of my heart, I should have delivered it over without hesitation to my aunt Dorothy—pardon!—my Charlotte's aunt Dorothy, who is the cheeriest, brightest, kindest matron I ever met, with a sweet unworldly spirit that beams out of her candid blue eyes.

Charlotte seems to have been tenderly attached to her father, the poor fellow who died in Philip Sheldon's house—uncomfortable for Sheldon, I should think. The Mercers talk a good deal of Thomas Halliday, for whom they appear to have entertained a very warm affection. They also spoke with considerable kindness of the two Sheldons, whom they knew as young men in the town of Barlingford; but I should not imagine either uncle Joseph or aunt Dorothy very well able to fathom the still waters of the Sheldon intellect.

After dinner uncle Joe took us round the farm. The last stack of corn had been thatched, and there was a peaceful lull in the agricultural world. We went into a quadrangle lined with poultry-sheds, where I saw more of the feathered race than I had ever in my life beheld congregated together; thence to the inspection of pigs—and it

was agreeable to inspect even those vulgar querulous grunTERS with Charlotte by my side. Her brightness shed a light on all those common objects; and O, how I longed to be a farmer, like uncle Mercer, and devote my life to Charlotte and agriculture!

When uncle Joe had done the honours of his farm-yards and threshing-machinery, he left us to attend to his afternoon duties; and we wandered together over the breezy upland at our own sweet wills, —or at *her* sweet will rather, since what could I do but follow where she pleased to lead?

We talked of many things: of the father whom she had loved so dearly, whose memory was still so mournfully dear to her; of her old home at Hiley; of her visits to these dear Mercers; of her school-days, and her new unloved home in the smart Bayswater villa. She confided in me as she had never done before; and when we turned in the chill autumn gloaming, I had told her of my love, and had won from her the sweet confession of its return.

I have never known happiness so perfect as that which I felt as we walked home together—home; yes, that old farm-house must be my home as well as hers henceforward; for any habitation which she loved must be a kind of home for me. Sober reflection tells me how reckless and imprudent my whole conduct has been in this business; but when did ever love and prudence go hand-in-hand? We were children, Charlotte and I, on that blessed afternoon; and we told each other our love as children might have told it, without thought of the future. We have both grown wiser since that time, and are quite agreed as to our imprudence and foolishness; but, though we endeavour to contemplate the future in the most serious manner, we are too happy in the present to be able to analyse the difficulties and dangers that lie in our pathway.

Surely there must be a providence for imprudent lovers.

The November dews fell thick, and the November air was chill, as we walked back to the homestead. I was sorry that there should be that creeping dampness in the atmosphere that night. It seemed out of harmony with the new warmth in my heart. I pressed my darling's little hand closer to my heart, and had no more consciousness of the existence of any impediments to my future bliss than I was of the ground on which I walked, and that seemed air.

We found our chairs waiting for us at aunt Dorothy's tea-table; and I enjoyed that aldermanic banquet, a Yorkshire tea, under circumstances that elevated it to an Olympian repast.

I thought of the Comic Latin Grammar:

“Musa, musæ, the Gods were at tea;  
Musæ, musam, eating raspberry jam.”

I was Jove, and my love was Juno. I looked at her athwart the misty clouds that issued from the hissing urn, and saw her beautified

by a heightened bloom, and with a sweet shy conscious look in her eyes which made her indeed divine.

After tea we played whist; and I am bound to confess that my divinity played execrably, persistently disdaining to return her partner's lead, and putting mean little trumps upon her adversary's tricks, with a fatuous economy of resources which is always ruin.

I stayed till ten o'clock, reckless of the unknown country which separated me from the Magpie, and then walked home alone under the faint starlight, though my friendly host would fain have lent me a dog-cart. The good people here lend one another dogcarts as freely as a cockney offers his umbrella. I went back to Huxter's Cross alone, and the long solitary walk was very pleasant to me.

Looking up at the stars as I tramped homeward, I could but remember an old epigram:

" Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,  
My love should shine on you like to the sun,  
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,  
Till heaven wax'd blind, and till the world were done."

I had ample leisure for reflection during that long night-walk, and found myself becoming a perfect Young—Hervey—Sturm—what you will, in the way of meditation. I could not choose but wonder at myself when I looked back to this time last year, and remembered my idle evenings in third-rate *cafés*, on the *rive gauche*, playing dominoes, talking the foul slang of Parisian Bohemia, and poisoning my system with adulterated absinthe. And now I feast upon sweet cakes and honey, and think it paradisaic enjoyment to play whist—for love—in a farmhouse parlour. I am younger by ten years than I was twelve months ago.

Ah, let me thank God, who has sent me my redemption.

I lifted my hat, and pronounced the thanksgiving softly under that tranquil sky. I was almost ashamed to hear the sound of my own voice. I was like some shy child who for the first time speaks his father's name.

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Alfred Thompson, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

JUNE.—THE DINNER AT RICHMOND.

## LYRICS OF THE MONTHS

JUNE

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### The Dinner at Richmond

I.

ACROSS the marble balustrade  
In thoughtful mood my Lady bends,  
While through the shadowy purple glade  
His way the rosy river wends.  
O Lady sweet, O Lady mine,  
Those eyes that do like Hesper shine,  
Say, are they lit by Love or Wine?

II.

Within, the drowsy elders prose,  
Or solemn sip Lafitte's Bordeaux ;  
While worn-out matrons slyly doze,  
Preferring Morpheus to Margaux.  
But I should like to know, *ma belle*,  
If those sweet eyes I love so well  
Owe *all* their brightness to Moselle.

III.

Titania's self might shameless sip  
The drops my love so shyly tasted ;  
The dancing bubbles kissed her lip,  
But half the sparkling wine was wasted.  
O dearest Lady in the land,  
One thing I fain would understand,  
*Why* trembled so that soft white hand?

## IV.

The *menu* printed on white satin,  
 And perfumed by the fam'd Rimmel,  
 I've safely kept, concealed my hat in ;  
 Yet what our banquet was, to tell,  
 Where grew the fruits, where bloomed the vine,  
 Whose juice made that ambrosial wine,  
 Would tax this memory of mine.

## V.

I only know that you and I  
 Sat whispering softly side by side ;  
 While conscious waiters passed us by,  
 Or only came to be denied.  
 But when that *Charlotte Plombières*  
 You looked on with such absent stare,  
 Where had your fancies fled, Love, where ?

## VI.

O sweet one, in the days to come,  
 When these Hyperean locks are thinner,  
 Safe in the haven of a home  
 May we recall that Richmond dinner !  
 And while we talk of auld lang syne,  
 I'll tranquil sit and sip my wine,  
 With your dear hand clasp'd close in mine.

M.

## BRIC-A-BRAC HUNTING

BY MAJOR H. BYNG HALL

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### QUEST THE SECOND

MARSEILLES—MESSINA—CONSTANTINOPLE

ONE ounce of practice is worth ten of theory,—at least so said some practical philosopher of old time; and I fully agree with him.

We are at Marseilles. The getting there in the merry month of May, when vineyards and mulberry-trees put forth their early leaves, and almond-trees are in full bloom, is a pleasant and unfatiguing journey. Few, if any, are the railways in Europe by which one travels so smoothly or arrives with such punctuality as on the line between Paris and Marseilles. We leave the former city at 7.45, and arrive at the latter on the following day at noon; so that little delay is allowed for gastronomy *en route*. A cup of *café-au-lait* at that city of democracy, Lyons—where the waiters go round the table for payment ere you have swallowed the first spoonful of your beverage—is all that you can expect till the journey ends; unless, indeed, you snatch up a slice of truffled pie during your three minutes' halt at Avignon—a halt just long enough to make you regret that you cannot linger for a late breakfast at that unrivalled buffet, where the civility of the proprietor is only surpassed by the excellency of his supplies.

The Marseilles of to-day is no more the Marseilles of our grandfathers, nor indeed of our fathers, than is the Paris of Napoleon III. the Paris of Napoleon I. Nevertheless there are few cities in Europe which, at all times and under all circumstances, present more stirring life. In this southern port men of all tongues and all nations throng together in commercial enterprise. The traveller is almost bewildered by the clamour of strange sounds; while dark and swarthy Saracenic countenances remind him that he is approaching Oriental Europe.

The heights that rise above the city are clad with the dark verdure of olives and pines, that seem to spring from a barren waste. Amid these sombre groves are scattered innumerable white-washed and green-shuttered "bastides," or villas, occupied by the Marseilles citizens. The town itself appears to repose at your feet, if indeed the word repose may be applied to that boiling, seething port; the outline of the coast being broken by a regular basin communicating by a narrow neck with the sea.

This basin produced the city. The Greeks of old found out its

advantages, and their temples and shrines marked the inlet from the Mediterranean Sea. Old Marsalia flourished like new Marseilles. The harbour was and is its heart, the salt-water its life-blood. A strange and peculiar contrast is produced by the dusty gray of the houses and the deep blue of this inland patch of sea.

The ocean is in the very centre of the town ; the buildings fence it in and encircle the harbour. It lies as if sleeping in this embrace—perhaps the one instance of a great city built in a circle broken only by one small opening. Beyond, you behold rocky hills—hard, hot, glaring ; parched in midsummer, in mid-winter bare, barren, and bleak. All round and about Marseilles they rise, till along the sea-coast you observe them glancing and flashing in the bright scorching air ; not, however, without verdure, sombre, unpleasing, and unrefreshing though it be to the eye.

Yet if the land be dark, burnt, and barren, what a splendid contrast presents itself in the glorious ocean, whose liquid azure is so profound as to become almost imperial purple !

Descend once more into the city ; observe the old harbour and the new. They were alike harbours and cesspools ; all the drainings of the vastly-populated city originally poured into them. Such had been the case for ages ; and as no tide stirs the Mediterranean, there the foul sewage lay and rotted and stagnated, and from thence its miasmatic vapours rose to spread fever, pestilence, and death.

No wonder, then, that cholera should so often have smitten the city with a strong and blighting hand. Yet beyond these stagnant pestilential lakes the breeze comes dancing freely over the ocean—at times far too freely for those about to embark on its troubled waters—and the waves are as pure as salt-water waves can be.

Graceful feluccas skim over the waters, bending under their striped canvas, while steamers of all nations and ships-of-war are dotted over the sea. All is life, motion, and varied colouring. The forest of masts, the deep-blue sea, and the bright-blue sky, seen under favourable circumstances, form altogether a picture not easily forgotten.

Such was the Marsalia of yesterday ; such, in many respects, is the Marseilles of to-day. And yet, as in the case of Vienna or Paris, he that has not journeyed there for ten years past will find a new, ay and a splendid city risen on the foundations of the old. The Canébière is a noble street ; a grand cathedral rises day by day in vast proportions. The New Exchange or Bourse is a handsome pile ; and, best improvement of all, the sanitary state of the city is much amended and now well cared for. The whole of the infectious substance, heretofore allowed to collect in the streets till it rotted and was thence carried off by violent rains into the harbours, is now daily collected and removed to the country for agricultural purposes. A new harbour of considerable dimensions is completed ; and the sewage, flowing through greatly-improved drains, is no longer allowed to pour itself into the harbours.

For which blessed improvement the inhabitants may cheerfully pay and be thankful.

So much for this proud city, which bids fair to rival the chief commercial cities of Europe.

Is there a traveller who wanders to foreign lands for health, business, pleasure, or bric-à-brac hunting, who does not expect ease at his inn, and who, having swallowed and paid for a pound of grease or a quart of oil, and endured a brief martyrdom from dirt, vermin, and bad attendance, does not quarrel with his lot and the authors of it, and mark with a double cross in his journal the entry which warns him to avoid the Blue Boar or L'Aigle d'Or, as the case may be, for the future?

I am no sybarite, yet I confess to a love for comfort and cleanliness in my caravanseraï. I am no *gourmet*, but I own that for perfect comfort I prefer an hotel where the chief cook is an artist. I may therefore as well remark that at Marseilles I should select for choice the Hôtel de Marseilles or the Petit Louvre. I know it is the fashion—alas, who leads the way that so many are wont to follow?—to select the Grand Hôtel de Paris or the Grand Hôtel de Louvre; but experience tells me that the grandeur generally exists only in the outward appearance of the house.

So, having ordered a moderate repast to satisfy the inner man at the Petit Louvre—giving strict orders for the exclusion of all provincial *plats*, for the inhabitants of the city are much given to oil, raw artichokes, and olives—let us walk forth to see the sights and visit the bric-à-brac shops.

As yet, though my visits to the commercial city have been frequent, I have only discovered four such shops at Marseilles. They are as follows: Esmeir, Rue Parcellis 22; Valli, Rue de Paradis 24; Pardieu, No. 43 in the same street; and Sondier, Rue Masquire. There is little to choose between these dealers, though the two first are generally the best supplied. Their knowledge, however, of the art gems they profess to sell is very mediocre, and their prices most exorbitant; nevertheless, the very fact of their comparative ignorance is the best chance for the practical buyer, who thus, if the wind be in his favour, may chance to carry off something worthy his collection. And as for the price demanded—bah! was there ever a correctly-judging bric-à-brac hunter who had not the courage to offer about one-half, say one-third, of the price demanded? or was there ever a seller who had the honesty to refuse the bid? Of course I by no means include in these sweeping opinions the higher class of dealers, the sellers of first-class *objets d'art*.

With reference to those of Marseilles, I neither wish to be uncourteous nor unkind when I say they are by no means to be found in that society. The wherefore is easily explained. The Marseillais taste, among rich or poor, high or low, male or female, does not rank high; in fact, the city is essentially democratic in taste as in politics. Ponderous

furniture, modern pictures and modern china, big vases, much gilding, gorgeous colouring, a prevailing gaudiness both in dress and decoration, with little art or beauty, obtain in that commercial hemisphere. The wealthy trader of Marseilles would pass by a lovely specimen of Wedgwood or Capo di Monte, and purchase some modern abomination in French china highly decorated and gilded, to adorn his rooms; while his wife, if he have one, would select the most gorgeous silk and the brightest Persian shawl with which to bedeck her person. Thus it is not often that anything really worthy of being added to an amateur collection is to be secured in this city. It by no means follows, however, that gems are not occasionally met with here; and he who loves such acquisitions never neglects the smallest chance of a bargain. Nor should the collector on any account fail to explore the emporiums of Marseilles. I shall endeavour to explain the why and the wherefore.

Marseilles is essentially a thoroughfare to the East, as well as to Spain and Italy, by the water-route, and hundreds are wise enough to know that art treasures can be disposed of *en passant* there as elsewhere. Consequently various ceramic gems do find their way into the hands of the dealers, from whom they pass onwards to Paris at a premium, not seldom being cheaply purchased and dearly sold. Now, if you can only stop a Capo di Monte group on its way from Italy, or a Bueno Retiro vase from Spain, or aught else, before it takes flight to the imperial city, which on more than one occasion it has been my good fortune to do, it will well repay you the trouble of an hour's visit to the bric-à-brac shops of the Rue de Paradis.

La Provence could formerly boast of several manufactures of pottery; but not till the end of the seventeenth century did it produce glazed or enamelled pottery, some time after that of Moustiers.

The first fabricant at Marseilles was Jean Delarisse in 1769; whereas in the middle of the eighteenth century there were several artists, some of whom produced enamelled pottery.

Robert of Marseilles was another distinguished name. His works were first produced in 1793.

The widow Perrin, or Madame Perrin Veuve, as she was called, was, I believe, the last celebrated producer. Many specimens of her ware may still be found, which are very interesting. They are generally marked with a monogram of the letters V. P. (Veuve Perrin).

And now, the weather being fine and the sea calm, say in the latter end of May and early June, the trip by sail or steamer to Messina is not the most unpleasant undertaking in life; moreover, it is of short duration. I am not aware as to whether the patriotism of Garibaldi ever moved him to collect the art treasures of the country he loves so well; but you get a view of his solitary mansion as you pass through the Straits of Bonifacio, perched as it is on a lovely and verdurous

spot on the rocky island of Caprera, and possibly say to yourself, having recently strolled up Regent-street or the Boulevards, "Though I should die of ennui or go mad were my residence fixed here through the winter, during summer a yacht and books might make it endurable."

There is no doubt that the position of Messina is a lovely one, placed as it is in a mild and pleasant climate; but it would be far more so if the city were backed with some glorious oaks, and the country around and about were overshadowed with such woodlands as old England alone can boast of. But I have little to do with the beauties of nature, having undertaken to deal specially with the beauties of art. No real lover of art, however, can be unmindful of the beauties of nature, from which all that is precious in taste or design emanates. In fact, the study of art gives the mind a keener insight into those beauties, and teaches us to observe and appreciate them justly.

Of bric-à-brac shops I have as yet never discovered one at Messina; still there is a gentleman who has had the good taste to be a collector of such gems as chance has brought to him from other lands. These he is courteously willing to show, and by no means unwilling to sell, to the stranger. I therefore feel fortunate in having made his acquaintance; and I suggest to all bric-à-brac hunters who may pass through Scylla and Charybdis to follow my example.

I owe him a debt of gratitude; but as he himself is entirely ignorant of the fact, I am by no means called on to repay it, and shall only be too glad, should circumstances lead me once more to his abode, if he will do me a similar kindness, inasmuch as he sold me an exquisite Bueno Retiro cup—saucerless, it is true—which was worth as many pounds sterling as I paid francs.

Finding myself on board one of the Messagerie steamers *en route* to Marseilles, I made the acquaintance of an agreeable little French doctor of medicine, whose taste, if not experience, was similar to my own; and having suggested a raid on shore at Messina in search of anything in the ceramic line which might turn up, I fortunately introduced him to the "baron," for such was the title our friend claimed. Whether he was a baron of the Roman empire or a Sicilian noble was of slight importance. He had pictures, such as they were,—Majolica, Grecian pottery, and some trifles in porcelain; all of which were at our service—for a consideration.

Having offered the usual courtesies which polite society dictates, I requested to be informed if he had any specimens of china to dispose of.

"Nothing but a few cups, signor," he replied; "here they are."

I forthwith selected four, three of little value. The fourth I at once knew to be a prize, it being a charming Bueno Retiro cup, on which was an exquisitely painted battle-scene. Having demanded the price



of the four—which being five francs each, I immediately paid without comment,—and then having looked round the rooms and thanked our host, we wished him good morning, as our vessel was about to sail. Ere leaving, however, I placed three of the cups carelessly in my coat-pockets, retaining the other carefully in my hand. No sooner was the street-door closed on us than the little doctor exclaimed,

“*Parbleu, mon ami*, that appears to be a nice cup; moreover, you take particular care of it. *Voulez-vous me le céder?* I will give you ten francs for it.”

“Not for a hundred,” said I.

When on board I bade him carefully examine the painting with a magnifying glass; and then he broke forth into French expressions very difficult to translate, but which in English might mean, “By jingo, it is a beauty! How tenderly you handled it!” adding, “Why, I had it in my hand first; but as you made no remark, I fancied it was no better than those you put like oranges in your pockets.”

“Precisely, doctor,” I replied; “practice and experience give knowledge. When next you visit the baron, look sharper.”

I had a little box made when on board, wrapped up my cup in cotton, consoled the doctor by presenting him one of the others, and took it to England; where, as at Paris, it was valued at from five to six pounds. Thus, my friends, be advised, and never allow a chance to escape you when bric-à-brac hunting.

Before the outbreak of the Crimean war, there was no lack of fine specimens of Oriental china in the bazaars at Constantinople; and here and there a fine specimen of Sèvres, Dresden, Italian ware, and even specimens of Wedgwood and Worcester, might be found among the multitude, military, naval, and civil, who then found themselves in that which at the period was an Eastern capital, but to-day has put on, forsooth, as far as the Frank portion is concerned, the very worst features of modern civilisation, fast obliterating all the interest formerly derived from its Oriental character.

There were naturally to be found not only men with taste and lovers of art, but also men with money without taste or knowledge. Therefore were the bazaars ransacked, and good, bad, and indifferent specimens vanished day by day. Moreover, Turks, Armenians, Persians, and Jews had but one object in view—that of robbing the Giaours, as the officers of her Majesty’s army were called, to the utmost possible extent. And while on the one hand most if not all the buyers were more or less ignorant of the fact that, when asked a hundred piastres—which in some cases might not have been an exorbitant price for the object desired, and was therefore readily given—had they been wise enough to offer twenty-five, the sum would have been cheerfully accepted.

Again, the sellers were more or less equally ignorant of the value of

that which they sold. It was therefore by no means difficult, having knowledge and experience, every now and then to obtain a gem at a very reasonable—at times, indeed, ridiculously small—outlay. But a change soon came over the dream of both buyers and sellers. The buyers, at the suggestion of interpreters or commissioners,—who all acted in the spirit of robbery, and stood the friend of either the one or the other,—would, as I have said, offer twenty piastres where a hundred had been asked; and so the sellers soon settled the matter by demanding double, conceiving, as they all did, that an Englishman was not made of flesh and blood, but of gold, and that pieces might be chipped off him as off stone. More: it soon got abroad that the Giaour would buy a tin pot for a sovereign if he were only told it was an ancient specimen from Damascus, or a china cup which he might have purchased in England for a shilling, if informed it was Dresden, or “Sax,” as they term it. And the market soon became glutted with the most inconceivable rubbish, much of which found its way back to England and France, whence it originally came, having meanwhile been purchased at a hundred per cent more than its real value.

Ten years have elapsed since those painful, yet at times merry days of war and love. And now, while the Sublime Porte has endeavoured to brighten its face with the varnish of civilisation, thus making it far more dirty than it was wont to be, the bazaars, with equal unsuccess, have in a great measure followed the European example. Let us pass a morning therein. If, however, you have not physical powers, patience, and temper, you had better remain at home, whether the season of your visit be winter or summer; for of all the fatiguing pleasures in life I know of, there are none equal to a day’s bric-à-brac hunting in the bazaars of Constantinople. Moreover, in the present year, unless you are greatly favoured by fortune—or by luck, if you prefer to call it so—after all your patience, trials of temper, and fatigues, you may return home without a single addition to your collection.

Now the bazaar in the city of the Sultan, as in all other Eastern towns, as all the travelled world is aware, is simply that portion of the town set apart more particularly for the retail trade of every possible article of Eastern and European produce; and it is also more or less the habitation of those useful relations, termed in common parlance Uncles, or Israelites; kind friends who claim, by imaginary blood, the right of lending you five shillings on a watch which cost you five pounds,—of course giving you a tolerably fair chance of redeeming it. It is also, to some extent, a *dépôt* for the reception of stolen goods. No; I will not be severe. I merely mean to say that if a pasha who has an over-abundance of Dresden, or Eastern, or even Sèvres china, desires his attendant to dust it, two or three pieces may possibly be broken in the dusting, or said to be so, and sent to the bazaar to be mended, whence they never return to their rightful owner. I have not unfrequently been informed that there is a vast

amount of ceramic treasure in the harems, as in the houses, of the rich pashas, much of which from time to time finds its way to the bazaar. Now, it is perfectly true that the amount of Sèvres coffee-cups, Dresden china, Oriental vases, and so forth, gathered together in the houses of the rich Turks, is probably immense, though for the most part modern, and of no particular value. And so, without fear of contradiction, I assert, that if the whole were placed before the eager gaze of a real connoisseur, he would not among the lot select a score of objects worthy of consideration. I will tell you why it is so, my friends, whom I more particularly desire should be successful in those researches which I so much love. It is simply because, with very rare exceptions, the Eastern taste, like that of Marseilles, is vulgar and gorgeous in gold and colouring; and I very much doubt if the Sultan—I beg his pardon, the light of the world—the grand vizier, the pasha with fifty tails, or the choicest beauties of their harems—are competent to judge, or care whether the gorgeous china that adorns their rooms, or the pretty cups from which they sip their coffee, or the dishes in which they dip their delicate hands, are made at Dresden, Pekin, Sèvres, or England; whether they be of hard paste or soft; what marks they bear; in what year they were produced; or who the artist that decorated them. Indeed, a vast quantity of porcelain is made, and has been made, at Meissen, Vienna, and elsewhere, purposely for the Eastern markets, which is marked, truly, but of particular forms, for particular purposes, to contain meats, vegetables, and sweetmeats; and this is immediately known to an experienced hunter, and rarely found elsewhere. It is true that here and there a fine specimen may be secured, and of such it has been my good fortune to collect a few. Generally speaking, however, the painting is coarse, the forms neither artistic nor tasteful, and of little value to those who look for beauty of decoration, chasteness in outline, and delicacy of execution.

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## LETTERS FROM LILLIPUT

BEING ESSAYS ON THE EXTREMELY LITTLE

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

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### II. ON LITTLE HATERS.

DOCTOR JOHNSON is reported to have said that "he loved a good Hater." The assertion is, in the first place, a paradox; for Hatred is one of the worst of human faculties, and clearly derivable from the Devil, who, if he was the first whig (another Johnsonism), was likewise the first Hater, seeing that he hated Good, and rebelled against it, and was so thrown down into the Pit. Dr. Johnson's paradox may be allowed to pass, however; for that learned and prejudiced but good man dearly loved to be paradoxical. It is extremely questionable whether, throughout his long life—embittered as it was by disease, by poverty, by bereavement, by superstition, and by hypochondria—he ever sincerely hated anybody—excepting of course the First Whig afore-said, whom he must naturally have detested as the sworn foe to all good things. But he was too noble to hate, in the real sense of the word, any human being. His temper was violent. "He was frequently provoked," writes Lord Macaulay, "to striking those who had offended him." He quarrelled fiercely with booksellers. Once upon a time he knocked one down with a folio. He morally floored Andrew Millar with a cruel gibe. He thought Henry Fielding a "low dog." He was furiously angry with the Hanoverian party for hanging Doctor Cameron. But I cannot see that he absolutely or actively hated anyone. He was continuously and unjustly sarcastic towards Scotland and the Scotch, and with narrow little pebbles of obloquy and disparagement paved a broad highway for the brilliant and triumphant revenge taken forty years after his death by Sir Walter Scott; yet his most intimate friend was the "brawest" of Scotchmen. He drew a brief for the defence of a Scotch schoolmaster charged with cruelty to his pupils; and he undertook, in the decline of his life, a pleasure journey through Scotland, even to districts then most difficult of access, and was received with the most cordial hospitality by the people he had so persistently maligned. Now, if we hate a man we don't go to dine with him, save with the Borgian view of popping a pinch of poison into his pea-soup. We do not ordinarily take the person whom we bitterly hate to be our chum and boon companion. You can't drink rum-punch with a man you hate, unless, as I hinted, you have put some Prussic acid in it. I may be somewhat weakening my own argument by granting that Johnson felt something akin to

hatred towards Voltaire. But I am persuaded that the pious, bigoted old Doctor did not hold Monsieur Arouet to be a human being. He esteemed him a fiend, the eldest son and heir of the First Whig, sent on earth—like Mr. Southey's walking demon—to see how his “snug little farm got on.” You may quote the case of Signor Piozzi against me, and maintain that the Doctor hated him. He had some reason to do so. Piozzi was his rival. Piozzi had supplanted him in the favour of a woman whom, if he did not love, he admired and revered beyond all women, and for whose health and happiness he prayed night and day. That confounded Italian music-master plucked—all involuntarily it may be—the cushion of soft down from under the weary limbs of a hipped and broken invalid. He robbed him—quite unconsciously I daresay—of the nice dinners, the choice brown legs of pork, the warm bedroom at Streatham Park, the obedient lacqueys, the not less obedient circle of admirers. The old, the tired, the feeble, the gouty—those who should have had enough of life, yet cling to it, and are desperately afraid to die,—ah! what an inexpressible solace it must be to them to be tended by a comely and graceful woman—to feel the pressure of kind young hands, to hear the silvery freshness of a young voice. Can you imagine a more horrible lot than that of Jean Jacques, gray and poor and infirm, and bullied by a cross, ugly, unfaithful old woman? Can you imagine a more delightful expiry than that of his fortunate rival Voltaire, crowned in his nonagenarianism by nymphs of the opera, and surrounded on his dying couch by court beauties? Was it a delightful expiry, though? Was Mirabeau's delightful? He had wine and beauty to the last. Was Charles's? He was gambling and toying with his mistresses, and listening to “the French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery,” as Mr. Frith shows us in his good picture, until within a week of his death. To inquire whether this was the best way of making an end of it, would take me too far. I return to Signor Piozzi, and I repeat that, the lost delights of Streatham Park and the falling away of Hester Thrale notwithstanding, it is not at all established that Doctor Johnson entertained for the Italian an actual feeling of hatred. He despised him—that was all. He contemned him because he was a professional singer—because he earned an honourable livelihood by the exercise of rare vocal talents. There was nothing else to be said against Piozzi, who, by all accounts, was a most amiable and honourable and even an instructed and witty man. The Doctor, however, classed him with fiddlers and jongleurs, with the *ambubaiv* and *pharmacopole*, with the buffoons and quacks who wept at the death of Tigellus; with the minstrels and “all the rascal company” described in the old ballad as being turned out of Saicus' house. As Mr. Hayward has observed in his admirable book on Mrs. Thrales' Life and Letters, the haughty old Johnson, had he lived in this age, might have regarded with equal scorn a Mario, a Sims Reeves, or a Santley. Did we not indeed see the palest reflex of the Johnsonian contempt in the

snobbishness of the stuck-up purists who protested against the Brighton schoolmaster numbering among his pupils the son of an eminent English actor and honourable English gentleman, Mr. Alfred Wigan? Johnson had every reason to be proud of his own attainments and celebrity. But Piozzi could meet him on grounds as honourable, though of a different nature. *L'un valait l'autre*. If I were a famous author, I should deem Signor Sivori my equal, and myself the equal of Professor Owen. On the score of birth or original social position, Johnson had not the slightest claim to contemn Piozzi, who was an Italian gentleman. The Doctor was the son of a tradesman. He had been a schoolmaster, and an unsuccessful one to boot. He had been a bookseller's hack, and next door to a beggar; and he despised Piozzi, and thought that a London brewer's wife had brought herself to undying shame by marrying a foreigner with a fine voice and cultivated taste, who had been wise enough to turn his talents into guineas. The Doctor is not to be blamed perhaps, however much we may argue in this instance against the narrow-mindedness of one who was usually the largest-hearted of humanitarians. Doctor Samuel had his full share of a quality which I call "British beefiness"—a quality by no means extinct among us at this day. My grandmother, who was as haughty an old lady as you would wish to meet on a day's march, used to say that there were two kinds of pride—"proper pride" and "stinking pride." The adjective is not pretty; but my grandmother was born in the last century. "Stinking" pride decried George Canning as an "adventurer" because his mother was an actress. "Stinking" pride, although it is forced politically to eat humble-pie and accept Mr. Disraeli as a leader, does not consider Mr. Disraeli to be quite up to the mark of the "county families," because his grandfather was a Venetian Jew, and because he himself once sat on a stool in an attorney's office, and afterwards wrote novels for a living. It was the real, malodorous, beefy pride that impelled one of the best and wisest men that ever breathed to despise a harmless Italian vocalist; and I have often thought, when reading and re-reading the incomparable Life of Savage, that the biographer—old friendship to the contrary—would not have been quite so indulgent to the hero, whom he knew to have been an idle, drunken, lying, worthless profligate, had he not always borne in mind the story—since pretty well ripped up and shown to be a bare-faced imposture—of Richard Savage being the bastard son of a Peer of the realm.

My conclusion on the whole amounts to this: that there cannot be such a thing as a "good Hater." I not only mean that a good man cannot hate, but I deny the possibility of "good" hating. We hate badly, or not at all. Ignorance and Envy are the grand parents of Hatred; and there cannot be anything good in Envy or Ignorance. The savage, priest-ridden populace of Toulouse, who loathed the Calas family because they were Protestants, and industrious, and virtuous, and who hounded on their law-officers to destroy them even to the

second and third generation : is any apology to be found for the hatred of these ferocious wretches in their ignorance? Are the Dominicans who persecuted Galileo Galilei, are the Florentines who murdered Savonarola, to be free from blame because their hatred was prompted by ignorance? Are the Capuchins who burned Urbain Grandier as a sorcerer, and in fiendish mockery held a red-hot crucifix to his lips ere the first faggot was lit—are such demons to be held scot-free because their hatred was the child of Envy? Yet all these creatures were of the “good Hater” tribe, whom Johnson in a capricious moment declared that he loved. The *odium theologicum* “Good Haters” abound among the talapoins and medicine-men: yet is their hatred “good”? Calvin sending Servetus to the stake; Milton and Salmasius wallowing in mutual invective and insult; Warburton hating half the bench of bishops, and being hated by the other half; Gibbon flinging mud at the English universities in foot-notes, and the English universities throwing rotten eggs at Gibbon in pamphlets; and, finally, Tom Paine running a-muck against everything in a black cassock and bands, and the rawest curate, preaching his first sermon, inveighing against Tom Paine as the “fraudulent gauger and impious bankrupt staymaker”—I could go on multiplying examples of “good hatred,” that is, violent, vehement, venomous detestation; but I will never admit that the people who hated so were “good haters.”

There have been Great Haters and Great Hatreds, that I know. Nelson hated the French in a noble, grandiose manner. He did not know much about them personally, it is true, and he ignored many of their good qualities; but ignorance was not the chief governing motive of the dislove which he entertained for Gaul. That he must have been fully aware of the chivalrous bravery of their soldiers and sailors, and the high sense of honour prevalent among their officers, may be, with almost certainty, assumed. It is quite certain that he would have disdained to treat a captive Frenchman with rudeness or contumely. But he hated the French collectively and personally, nevertheless. He deemed them to be deadly and implacable foes of his King, of his country, of the House of Lords, of the Church of England, of the British navy, of everything which he, Horatio Nelson, the Suffolk parson's son, held in love and veneration. He prayed against them, actively, fervently, and, we are bound to believe, sincerely. Had he been a swearer—the which he was not, I think—he would have d—d the French as roundly as our fathers were wont to do over their port-wine. And he beat the French whenever he could—which was almost always—not only because it was his duty, but because he detested them. It cannot be said that the French—the government and the naval officers who had felt his terrible swift sword always excepted—hated him. His victories were kept a profound secret in France, and I question if at the present day ten Frenchmen out of twenty have ever heard of the Battle of Trafalgar, or whether more than twenty per

cent of the entire French nation ever heard of Horatio Viscount Nelson and Duke of Bronte. Every Frenchman has heard of the Duke of Wellington.

“Faut que Lor' Vilainton ait tout pris,  
Il n'y a plus d'argent dans ce gueux de Paris.”

So sing “*ces demoiselles*” in one of Béranger’s earlier ballads. The name of the conqueror of Waterloo—always translated, however, into “Vilainton,” and never rising higher in the peerage than “Lor”—was familiar to the lowest and most degraded classes of the French population. Yet I question if they ever really hated him. The ultra-Bonapartists of course—the *vieux de la vieille*, who had been at Salamanca, at Vittoria, and at Mont St. Jean—abhorred him. The opposition journals held him up to odium for political reasons. A crack-brained fellow, who afterwards turned grocer in Brussels, made an attempt to assassinate him. But these ebullitions apart, I fancy that it was in rather a comic sort of disparagement that the French held “Lor Vilainton.” I bought a French caricature of the Great Duke the other day dated 1815, and almost good enough to be by Carle Vernet. The Wellingtonian type is wonderfully preserved, although the nose is monstrously exaggerated. He is riding down the Champs Elysées, mounted on a bony “screw,” the plumes of his cocked hat, his short cloak, and his horse’s tail flying “all abroad.” The background is composed of nursemaids and children, crying in chorus, “Aow ! beautifulle !” Now this does not look like real, virulent hatred. It is not, at all events, the kind of hatred which, during the year of occupation, the French had for the Cossacks and the Prussians ; nay, it did not equal in intensity the loathing with which they regarded their own emigrant nobles and their own Bourbons. To hate a man thoroughly you must have felt his power, his cruelty, and his wickedness. Wellington had thrashed the French a good many times ; but it was always a long way off—in Spain and Flanders. In 1814, after Toulouse, his march to Paris was an uninterrupted military promenade. So was the march from Brussels to Paris in the following year. It is true that our Guards were encamped in the Champs Elysées, that our Highlanders stood sentry at the Louvre, and that as “next best friends” to the King of Holland, we were forced to insist on the restitution of some priceless Flemish and Dutch pictures ; but we didn’t take anything for ourselves ; we didn’t want to blow up any bridges ; we didn’t burn the crops and crack the champagne bottles in the Rheims cellars as the Austrians did ; we didn’t stable our horses in the ball-room at Chantilly as the Prussians did ; we didn’t eat the tallow candles and drink up the train-oil in the lamps as the Cossacks did. We did not, in fact, lay waste fertile provinces with famine, fire, and slaughter. As Mr. Thackeray told us in *Vanity Fair*, the Duke of Wellington’s army was essentially one “that paid its way ;” and there is not a prettier passage in John Scott’s Paris revisited than where he describes the French



farm-wife going tranquilly out to her labours in the field, and leaving Donald the Highlandman, who is billeted on her, to rock the baby in the cradle. No; I will not believe that our quondam enemies across the Straits really *hated* Wellington and his brave soldiers. But they are an incorrigibly moding, grinning, parodying people. Their "revenge" for Waterloo was to invent an absurd myth of the English general—a preposterous creature with red whiskers, gleaming white teeth, a swallow-tailed coatee, and Hessian boots, and produce, him over and over again for sixty years in vaudevilles, ballets, woodcuts, pictures, and comic songs. Their "revenge" for Blenheim and Malplaquet is the inexpressibly absurd and senseless ballad called "Malbrouel s'en va t'en guerre." There is no more venom in it than in our "Young man from the country;" and a people among whom such a silly chant as this could have become popular could not have felt any very deep hatred for the formidable John Churchill. As for Marlborough himself, I don't think he hated the French. He had served in the French army. He had been the friend of Turenne. For the rest, he loved himself and his wife and his money too much to hate anything very deeply. So, too, I think that Duke Arthur did not hate the French so actively as his compeer Nelson did. He had been to school in France. He spoke French tolerably if not fluently. He must have respected the talents and bravery of the French marshals whom he had encountered and beaten; he regarded "Bonaparte" as a "person" whose existence was dangerous to the peace of Europe, and whom it was his "duty" to put down; but his inimical feelings were of a passive nature, and may be best summed up in that word "duty." Altogether, perhaps, the duke's real sentiments towards Napoleon have always been passably inexplicable. He "put him down" very completely, and should have been inwardly proud of his conquest; but he bragged about it no more than he exerted himself to save the life of Marshal Ney, or troubled himself to intercede with the gaolers of Napoleon to assuage the horrors of the exile's captivity. He thought it, perchance, no part of his "duty" to take such steps. He must have had some inward consciousness that Napoleon was a great man, and that it was rather a big thing to have beaten him; for there were pictures and statues of Prometheus vinctus all over Apsley House, and the duke himself owned that he considered the presence of "Bonaparte" on a field of battle to be equal to a reinforcement of fifty thousand men. But he has said less about his mighty antagonist, either for or against him, than perhaps any other prominent public man of his time has done. I could never help fancying that the duty-loving duke always looked upon himself as a kind of international superintendent of detective police. It was his duty to hunt down the great criminal against the tranquillity of Europe. The criminal led him a pretty dance, and gave him an infinity of trouble; but he caught him at last, and, after a terrible tussle, succeeded in throwing and handcuffing him.

After that, what became of the criminal was no concern of the superintendent. He left him to justice and the international Old Bailey.

Napoleon hated much and bitterly. He hated Pichegru, he hated Moreau, he hated Toussaint l'Ouverture—the poor brave black man—he hated his brother Louis, he hated Madame de Staël, he hated Pitt, he hated the Queen of Prussia, he hated Sir George Cockburn, he hated Lord Bathurst, and he hated Sir Hudson Lowe—not a very lovable man under any circumstances, it may be admitted; but still it was a little too bad of Napoleon to loathe the unhappy governor as he did so soon as he set eyes upon him, and, after his first interview with him, to send away untasted a cup of coffee, declaring that the governor's very look had poisoned it. But I have no wish to re-open that old St. Helena sore. Let bygones be bygones. The camp-bed at Longwood was not precisely a bed of roses; and at fifty-one, ruined, banished, in gaol, separated from your wife and child, blistering on a rock or shivering in a leaky bungalow, with your coat out at elbows, mutton at two-and-elevenpence a pound, and no salad-oil obtainable—with the knowledge of having slaughtered a good many innocent men, and left many thousands of widows and orphans—with all this, and an ulcer eating away your stomach, it is rather hard not to be allowed to hate your neighbours with feverish fierceness. But the earlier hatreds of Napoleon were far less excusable, and they were the worst of all hatreds—the little ones. He was pettily jealous of Moreau and Bernadotte. He was afraid of the shrewdness and envious of the wit of Madame de Staël, and hated her accordingly. His dislike of the patriot of St. Domingo was as ludicrous as it was wicked; and, with infernal ingenuity, he caused the hot-blooded negro, accustomed to swelter in the tropical sun, to be cooped up in a cold damp casemate, there to have chills and rheumatism till he died. He hated his brother Louis pettily, miserably, because Louis was quiet and unambitious and conscientious, and, caring nothing for his crown, was still determined to do his duty to his subjects after he had been thrust on to a throne. He hated Sir Sidney Smith, too, with a mean personal hatred, because he drove him from before St. Jean d'Acre. He hated Ducis because he would not pen fawning lines in his praise; and Admiral Brueys—whom he would have struck with a horsewhip at Boulogne had not the admiral laid his hand on his sword—because Brueys as a sailor knew his duty better than the emperor. I suppose there is not, among Englishmen, a greater fanatic in hero-worship, and a more enthusiastic worshipper of Napoleon the Great, than I am. If there can be demigods—if Hercules was one, so too was Bonaparte. But I cannot be blind to the fact, that immeasurably great as was my hero, he condescended to hate in a very mean and paltry manner. But are there not spots on the sun? His hatreds were little, but I shrink from considering him as a Little Hater.

Ah, it is the Little Hater, after all, who is the meanest of the mean, the vilest of the vile, the crawlingest of the crawlers! He is all hor-

rible. He is bad from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail. He has no good qualities. He cogs, he lies, he bears false witness, he wriggles and ramps, he crawls upon his belly in the sand, covering your boots with slime, till he is strong enough to raise himself on his hinder end, when he shakes his rattle and spits forth his poison. And he hates always. His hatred never dies. He will malign your children before they are born, and libel you after you are dead. He will whisper that you committed larceny when you were two years old, and that you had an ancestor who was hanged for coining base money in the reign of Edward IV. He goes on hating until his hair is white and his limbs are paralysed; and if you are so fortunate as to survive him, you will find that he has left you an insult in the preamble to his will. He would look out of his hearse and curse you on his way to Kensal Green if he could. As it is, you have the consolation of knowing that he is hating you down below, in the brimstone, as virulently as ever.

Little Haters may be divided into twelve principal classes. 1. People to whom you have lent money, who are too dishonest or too mean to pay it, and who hate you for having lent it. 2. People whom you have helped, not pecuniarily, but by a timely word or letter, when they were obscure and poverty-stricken, and who hate you when they have become prosperous because you knew them when they were in the mud. 3. People who imagine that the women they know like you better than they like them. 4. People who have written little poems, and whose poems you have refused to purchase, to read, or to criticise. These are among the most implacable of all little haters. 5. People whom you have detected and exposed as arrant humbugs. 6. People who are uneasily aware that your wife doesn't like them. 7. People about whom you have hazarded the unlucky verbal blunder known as "good things." The little hater never forgives a joke at his expense. 8. People with whom you have refused to dine, knowing as you do that their wine is bad, their melted butter execrable, and that their guests are bores. 9. People who have failed in some very little enterprise, while you have succeeded in some large undertaking of an analogous nature. 10. People on whose toes you have accidentally trodden, or the "gathers" of whose skirts (these are lady haters) you have accidentally torn. 11. People who are aware that their children are ugly or abominable little nuisances, and know well that you don't like them, and so hate you. 12. People about whom you know too much. Stay, there shall be a baker's dozen. In the thirteenth and most malignant category *I class the people who don't know you at all.* They hate with a vengeance.

## THE PHYSIOLOGY OF PICNICS

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PICNICS! What opposite associations, how various a train of memories, does the very name of those open-air entertainments awaken in different minds! Cross old uncle Batchelor, who likes to take his dinner, as he says, "comfortably," and who has always traced his rheumatic afflictions to that showery June day of the Richmond *fête*, growls out an indignant protest at the hateful sound. Pretty Miss Julia, his niece, to whom the day was as a fairy festival, and the boating a delicious amusement, and the willow-shaded Thames-island a bower of bliss, and even the frequent downpours of rain (when somebody held an umbrella over her, and took immense care that her little feet should be kept from the wet grass by help of uncle B.'s purloined macintosh) not disagreeable,—pretty Julia will evidently regard a picnic from quite another point of view.

The picnic—the etymology of the very name of which has given rise to a fierce though drawn battle between rival philologists—is unquestionably Great British in its origin. It is a hardy national institution, and no puny derivative from the French *fête champêtre*, as some Gallo-maniacs have affected to believe. To the French is due, no doubt, that sickly piece of practical sentimentality known to our grandmothers as a syllabub, a ceremony now as extinct as the dodo. How wearisome it must have been, that parody of Arcadia enacted on the lawn of an English country house, where London fine ladies, turned into Phyllis and Chloe for the nonce, exhibited their be-ribboned crooks for the admiration of Bond-street Corydons; where sham dairymaids, dressed by a court milliner, played the pretty rustic with a mock simplicity, and where the only touch of nature was shown by the flower-decked cow—poor thing!—when she avenged her gilt horns and garlanded neck by kicking over the milkpail and by charging the musicians!

There are picnics and picnics, almost infinite in their diversity of style, design, and execution; but they may be grouped with tolerable accuracy into four classes. The first and humblest of these is the family picnic. Family picnics, it is obvious, may be luxurious or thrifty, according to the means and inclinations of the founder of the feast. They are as much within reach of the artisan, who, with his wife and the little ones, bivouacs under an umbrella in Bushey Park, shrimps, strawberries, and a flat stoneware bottle of lukewarm beer composing the repast, as of my lord duke among his deer-haunted solitudes in the Highlands. The essential feature of the family picnic is that the *convives* should be members of one household. A stray guest or so, an intimate friend, may be present, but the majority must be of the same kith and kin. Such a picnic as this is merely home out of doors, a transferring

of the Lares and Penates to the open air, and it lacks most of the distinguishing characteristics of the picnic proper.

The picnic proper is a joint-stock affair. Its very name, in sound and in sense, appears to embody the idea that is its mainspring. Several families club their resources social and material, and fix upon some charming spot in which to dine and enjoy themselves. The choice of a trysting-place will naturally vary according to the weather and the district. There are picnickers who care for no roof meaner than the sky, and who insist that the *al fresco* meal should really be taken in a meadow, on a mountain-top, or at any rate beneath the boughs of the greenwood. Others consider that the pigeon-pie is never so toothsome, the salad so crisp, or the popping of the champagne-corks so lively, as when the table-cloth is spread in the midst of a ruined abbey, where the delicate tracery of the great oriel window stands out, like petrified lace-work, against the blue summer sky, or among the crumbling towers of an ivy-grown Norman castle. Some prefer, like Falstaff, to take their ease in an inn—any isolated hostel where a sanded parlour is at the disposal of the invaders; or to take refuge in a lonely farmhouse, where the dairy and the henroost can be laid under contribution for cream and eggs. A lighthouse, a miner's hut, and even (in Ireland) a police-barrack, have each and all done good service to pleasure-parties surprised by sudden thunder-storms; and perhaps one of the oddest and most favourite of resorts was the "Tomb of the Ancient Britons" in Wynnstay Park, which has witnessed many a merry meeting within its darkling crypt.

Whatever may be the banqueting-place, the leading feature of the true picnic never changes. It is the voluntary system applied to gastronomy, everyone's cellar and larder yielding a spontaneous tribute to the general stock. Of course in this friendly communism there are some who do more, and some less, than might fairly be expected of them. There are prudent matrons who are thought to abuse the principle of limited liability by bringing indifferent viands and the worst possible wines, with some vague notion that at a picnic, as at a fancy fair, any trash will go down. There is generally some smothered mirth among the younger members of the company, for instance, when that notorious old Mrs. Skinner's hamper is unpacked. Knives and forks are in plenty, for cutlery is of an enduring sort; but of things eatable by any creature of less vigorous digestion than an ostrich, mercy on us, what a scanty store! Had no one laid in a more liberal supply of what Major Dalgetty called "provant" than Mrs. Skinner has done, this would be a feast for the Barmecides only, and those bright clean knives might most of them go back unused. More knives, I declare! and wine-glasses, tumblers, plates, and dishes, but marvellously little to fill them. Be sure those bottles contain home-made wines—the sparkling gooseberry, the tart currant, the acid damson—dreadful beverages, that no man could ever be beguiled into tasting for the second time. And

yet how imposing the big hamper looked, conspicuously displayed on the foot-board of Mrs. Skinner's large carriage! and with what an air her coachman and footman (on board wages, and in liveries of shabby splendour) are proceeding to empty it of its contents!

Never mind Mrs. Skinner and her shortcomings. Only see what a profusion of good things, edible and potable, are in process of extrication from the straw of yonder huge baskets. Here are no shams, no braggart impostors, like that monstrous package filled with hardware and crockery which we so lately inspected. These are honest hampers, almost bursting with the good cheer that crams them to the brim; and there is small fear of starvation when once this wickerwork cornucopia of dainties has begun to yield up its abundance. It—the cornucopia—belongs to dear old Mrs. Allworthy, or perhaps to the hospitable Heavisides. Yes, that wine with the green seal, in dusty bottles that have not seen daylight for years and years, must be from the Heaviside bins. Sir John is famous for his cellar, and is one of the last surviving possessors of a hoard of old Madeira—precious liquor—rivalling Captain Cook himself in the matter of sea-voyages. It is but just to own that a plethora of creature comforts is much more frequent at picnic parties than any approach to scarcity.

How picnics vary, though, from one another, even under the most favourable circumstances of weather and the choice of a dining-place! There are sure to be some master spirits present; some strong-willed persons, who play the part of bellwethers to the rest. There is the lively young widow, said by envious chaperones to be on her promotion, and who insists that no servants shall be brought out. It will be so delightful, she says, to do everything for one's self, and to feel dependent on one's own exertions. Presently it appears that Mrs. Skittington's notions of self-dependence entail a fearful amount of toil for the members of the inferior or male sex, distributed too with a scandalous partiality. Thus, while striplings and confirmed old bachelors are kept to hard labour at carrying heavy hampers, fetching water, and the like, the more eligible of the unmarried are employed in the lighter duties of cork-drawing and cloth-laying, under the fair autocrat's own eye. Look at poor Prattles, a senior Fellow of his college and Regius Professor of Icelandic, now under sentence to pick up sticks for the fire. He has just come back with a full pail from the brook that runs purling through the osiers below. Prattles can't afford to marry, so he is a hewer of wood and a drawer of water for the time being; while young Blandish of the Foreign Office, and Chirper of the Life-Guards, and jovial Captain Rattlebury, laugh over the salad-mixing. There is always, by the way, a funny man to mix the salad on these occasions; not a wit perhaps, but at any rate a person of exuberant animal spirits. "Thank you, Mr. Prattles; I don't know what we should do without you," says Mrs. Skittington, as the hot professor comes plodding with his load of sticks. That is all the reward the poor man gets. No

wonder that there are persons who hate with an undying hatred a picnic without servants.

No fear of such white slavery as this if old Sir Mango Currie, or padded courtly General Felix from the Horse-Guards, or even that famous capitalist, Omnium, M.P. for Purseborough, be of the party. Sir Mango must have his soup, and his omelette, and his aspic of plovers' eggs, and his queer Indian sauces and condiments; while the general would as soon eat with chopsticks as drink uniced champagne, or do without his coffee and curaçoa. When these notable epicures deign to take the field, there is sure to be some of that Persian fuss and forethought and preparation, against which Horace railed so tunefully, in the arrangements. There is an advanced guard of cooks; and the *fourgon* that carries them and their flat white caps and gleaming kitchen-battery carries also the creamiest and freshest of salmon, hot-house pine-apples, Wenham ice, and what newspapers love to describe as every delicacy of the season. The waiting is sure to be as good as the cookery; and Sir Mango's butler will do his duty with the same solemn self-importance as if he were officiating at one of the nabob's heavy dinners in Eaton-square.

As a general rule, picnics are more popular with young people than with old ones; and this is curiously illustrated by the opposite predictions as to weather when one of these expeditions is at hand. Paterfamilias shakes his head as he consults his barometer, that invaluable aneroid in which he retains a robust faith, in spite of bygone deceptions. "Rain!" is the gloomy verdict of the head of the family, as he notes the drooping spirits of his dumb familiar. But it is amusing to observe how sanguine are the young folks, and how stoutly they maintain that the coming day will be the finest of all possible holidays. The girls are full of confidence. No amount of well-meant croaking over colds to be caught, or even as to spoiled hats and ruined dresses, has power to damp their hopes. As for Master Tom from school, he casts malignant glances at the aneroid as it hangs in the entrance-hall; and he has need of all his self-denial to refrain from giving a spiteful kick to the French-polished and brass-mounted monster—that "beast of a barometer," as he artlessly styles it, and which he considers as his personal enemy. At last Paterfamilias, coaxed, teased, overpowered, gives way, and so, with many misgivings, do the other elders. The barometer is voted a lying prophet, and the carriages are ordered, and the hampers packed, and forth sally the adventurers to take their chance of a wetting.

Candour must admit that a wet picnic party is a very forlorn, dismal, melancholy affair. A light shower, or even a burst, short and sharp, of massive thunder-rain, may be endurable in a wooded district, nay, may even heighten the enjoyment of the day by superadding to it a spice of adventure. There is the alarm of the coming storm, the scrambling and hurrying to reach a friendly shelter, beneath the

spreading boughs of old oaks it may be, or where the beech-trees carpet the ground with fallen mast and withered leaves. There is the half-playful terror with which the first blinding flash of real lightning is greeted by the fair guests, and the huddling together, and the outcries, and laughter, and excitement, as the thunder rolls and the big drops come pattering and plumping, thick as grapeshot, upon the leafy boughs above. The sky seems all the bluer, and the sun all the brighter, presently, for that brief skirmish of the elements.

But a regular, steady, soaking downpour of rain, or even a series of heavy showers in an unsheltered spot, will spoil the merry meeting very completely. Not, very likely, for Master Tom from school. That young gentleman is of an age when pleasure can be extracted from almost anything except lessons; and he is probably up a tree, laughing heartily with two or three fourth-form imps like himself, and pronouncing the deluge of rain to be "awfully jolly." Not, possibly, to Miss Kate and Miss Julia, Tom's elder sisters, whom cousin Harry and his friend the captain are so careful to screen with cloak and umbrella from the swooping raindrifts. But picnic parties do not consist exclusively of light-hearted schoolboys, engaged young ladies, or young ladies on the high road to an engagement, and attentive swains. And even the most chivalrous gentleman is useless without an umbrella!

Besides, it is a lamentable fact that gentlemen are not always chivalrous. They ought to be; but then so many of us ought to be something which we are not. A picnic surprised and routed by the rain affords as fine examples of human selfishness as any other scene that can easily be named. Julia is cared for, Kate is cared for; but how about Julia's plain friends, Miss Sophronia, who has a taste for botany, and her sister Elizabeth, who is learned in entomology? How about the chaperones, poor souls, the elderly young ladies, the spinster aunts, the stately matronage of the party? Lucky those who have husbands in duty bound to assist them in that wild scrambling rush towards some haven of refuge, for with some it fares ill indeed. Miss Sophronia has lost her spectacles; her sister Elizabeth, with her green butterfly net and portable tin specimen-box, has floundered into a muddy ditch, and in vain shrieks for succour; Mrs. Skinner, her new bonnet changed from mauve to maroon colour, climbs a stile unaided; and Tom's urchin laughter from his tree-top rings in the ears of the disconsolate ones like the mocking mirth of some malicious wood-fiend. Drenched, draggled-tailed, dripping, with every feather as limp as the plumage of a drowned hen, with boots the very seams of which are getting white with saturation, and the consistency of which is that of wet blotting-paper — on the victims go, only too eager to reach some farmhouse kitchen and its blazing fire, an inn, a cottage, anything! The retreat from Moscow was not much more miserable; and a chorus of voices echoes uncle Batchelor's oft-repeated vow that no one ever shall "catch him at this sort of thing again."



There are other and minor tribulations in the path of incautious picnickers. Not to mention mere trifles, against which no prudence can guard, such as wasps in one's sherry and gnats in one's soup, it is not agreeable to be suddenly reminded that a lively colony of the great red wood ant has a prior claim to the territory, and means to assert it by force of stinging; nor is it pleasant to select as one's banquet-hall a wooded slope where adders are as plentiful as violets, as will sometimes occur. It is awkward, too, to have to contest the ground with an angry bull, monarch of the meadow, who approaches the out-of-doors dinner-party, pawing the turf, and bellowing his sincere disapprobation of the proceedings.

But worse than these, and decidedly more trying to the temper, is being received as trespassers, and finding a surly gamekeeper or farm-bailiff with strict orders from "master," or my lord, or Sir William, to exclude all strangers from that Dilkoosha or garden of delight in which one proposed to dine. It is a fact that, year by year, the number of available spots for picnics becomes more and more contracted, and the Dilkooshas more constantly surrounded by inhospitable boards, warning intruders to retire. Wild unsophisticated nature has a money value in this England of ours, like other things, and is by no means to be thrown away upon all comers. No doubt we are freer, and happier too, than our ancestors were; but let who lists deny that there were once many things that we might do because nobody cared to prevent it, and that the sum-total of these is curtailed almost every day. There used to be in all parts of the kingdom, for instance, great tracts of waste land, on which nearly everyone had a tacit license to do nearly everything, from shooting the wild-fowl of the swamp in winter, to that football and hockey-playing in which the English rustic once excelled, and for which whole villages turned out, as they do now in Tyrol for target practice. In the old days, too, the merits of the picturesque were less known, and the practice of picnicking almost confined to the true Londoners, the genuine sons and daughters of Cockayne, who poured forth joyously from the city, their home, to have what they called a "maying," or, in after years, a "gipsying" party, in Epping Forest.

Most likely, however, it is due to monster excursion trains, and picnics organised by professional caterers for the public recreation, that so many pretty places are now so sternly guarded by un-Hesperian-looking dragons in leather gaiters, and that so many territorial proprietors choose to keep their glens and woods, as they keep their gardens and graperies and conservatories, for their own peculiar gratification. It can scarcely be pleasant for even the most ardent sympathiser with his species to have such queer saturnalia enacted in his park or pleasure-grounds as sometimes do take place, and to find that five score sharp pocket-knives have been employed in carving the owners' initials on his pet oaks; that the Grecian temple in the park must be whitewashed to get rid of dog-grel verses and endless christian and surnames scrawled in pencil; and

that the swans have been pelted, the shrubs broken, and the dryads generally snubbed, scared, and dilapidated.

This, the third class of picnic, is something quite new in comparison with the rest. It is a good thing that the toiling masses of the towns should get a pleasant day now and again of fresh air and novelty; but there must be an immensity of fatigue to counterbalance the enjoyment. How tired they look when all is done and the train has come, jarring, clanging, groaning, into the terminus—how tired, I say, do they look, those weary-eyed women, with two or three drowsy children clinging to their skirts, while the husband carries the heavy baby! Those young lads who shouted themselves hoarse with unmeaning huzzahs at every station of the outward journey, and who were noisy also at the start homewards, are quiet enough now as they limp through the empty streets. Young and old alike seem jaded and spent, as if it might be possible to have a surfeit even of pleasure.

Sometimes these enormous picnics are got up by some Benefit or Friendly Society, sometimes by a local corps of volunteers, as often as not by some manager of a railway company, or perhaps by one of those extraordinary Coryphæi whose singular business in life it is to collect caravans of strictly secular pilgrims, and to lead invading hosts to all sorts of attractive scenes at home and abroad. In one case, those who bivouac in the greenwood or on the slopes of a park are simply Odd Fellows, or Druids, or the appropriately-named Foresters, their wives, friends, and families; in the other, the only bond of union is probably the payment of a certain fixed sum for a ticket. Quite a novel feature in British rural life is afforded by the arrival of one of these prodigious trains, double-headed comets, that are pushed by one engine and pulled by another, and which disgorge a living freight of excursionists on the platform of some little-frequented station. The small boys set up a cheer of course, for small boys will cheer anything; but some of the adults look on with faces rather expressive of dismay than of delight. Farmer Turniptops, driving to market, pulls up to survey the newcomers. "I du hope they'll keep off of my young wheat *this* time," growls the agriculturist. Meanwhile little Sally, from the squire's entrance-lodge, runs up to tell her grandmother that she must be quick in locking the park-gates; and Turniptops is not the only farmer to grumble concerning smashed fences and trampled crops. Very few, excepting the small boys aforesaid, and, as a matter of course, the landlord of the village inn, seem glad to welcome the travellers. One would think it was Sinon's wooden horse that had just come lumbering in, and that the legions issuing from yonder peaceful excursion-train were come to sack and burn and slay, so much do they flutter the doves of the hamlet.

Yet they are well-intentioned folks enough that are congregating yonder on the gritty parallelogram of gravel in front of the station, and if they do cause a famine in the land, they will at least very honestly

pay, and at famine-prices too perchance, for what they devour. Such a host as this will now and then rush into a populous town, such as Brighton, Gravesend, or Southampton, with the unsparing hunger of an army of locusts, eating up not only every green thing, but all the shrimps, oysters, pastry, meat, bread, and miscellaneous provisions of the citizens, bringing about a sudden dearth that sends many an economist, firm in his belief that supply must meet demand, supperless to bed.

These are the Druids, people say. We had the Foresters last month, the Troubadours the week before last. No doubt that is the Arch-Druid himself, so conspicuous on the platform, splendid in scarf and apron and mystic official jewelry, giving orders to yonder knot of acolytes, aproned too, and scarf-wearing, and badged with insignia of their most ancient order. O, it is the Mill-lane Lodge, is it? And the Glasshouse-hill Lodge as well? Thank you. That gentleman in the variegated apron is a Provincial Grand Master, I understand you to say; and the other in the broad orange-and-purple sash, he who is bidding the band to strike up, is a Noble Grand. I am very much obliged for the information. The band, the Druids' band, has struck up, and plays a triumphal march; and to its brazen clangour, with a thundering accompaniment of the big drum, and with the Druids' banner floating in the breeze, off they go in long array—the Druids, and Druidesses, and little Druids not yet initiated into the hierophantic mysteries,—the whole Druidical picnic party, to dine, drink healths, and enjoy themselves. Good luck go with them!

After all, our sources of pleasure are none too numerous. We cannot afford to fill up a well, or to divert a fountain, because we may ourselves have no relish for its waters. It must be very nice to be a Noble Grand, and to wear a jewel and an apron, and to be as honestly proud of that harmless finery as a Comanche of his war-paint. If anyone enjoys a fine day, and a pretty prospect, and a dinner on the grass, any the better for sporting a silver-fringed scarf and being called a deputy something, why should he not indulge so innocent a passion for smartness? If Seged, emperor of Ethiopia—our dear old friend Seged, who offered rewards to the inventor of a new pleasure, and who having had the good or evil fortune to be cited at the head of one of the more famous papers in the *Spectator*, has been a stock example ever since—if Seged could have been a provincial grand, or a marshal, or a purple grand, perhaps the jaded nerves of that world-wearied monarch would have owned a new thrill of ecstasy. There is more in these associations than mere gorgeousness of apparel, more than junketing, more than the tinsel and the rosettes and the silken flag and braying band. There are passwords, countersigns, secrets—cabala that mean nothing, very likely, but that sound delightfully portentous and solemn. Good luck, once more, to the Druids!

The fourth genus of picnic is properly no picnic at all, but a party that happens to be given out of doors, and at some distance from the

entertainer's home. This spurious scion of the great family of picnics is apt to outshine all the rest, so far as consists in the brilliancy of its arrangements; but it is sometimes complained of as wanting in that hearty *abandon* and spontaneous spirit of fun that belongs to the picnic proper. The picnic by invitation, the picnic with a single Amphitryon, is the particular variety that has become the most thoroughly naturalised abroad. The modern Cræsus, the good paymaster of Continental watering-places, is almost sure to be Russian or American. The old legendary English milor, the rich and generous Englishman, with his capricious benevolence, his attacks of spleen, his vehement self-will, and his purse bursting with its load of British guineas, has waned nowadays to a threadbare tradition. But Muscovite boyards and United-States men, Prince Popoff, Count Ruffanoff, and Baron Tuffanoff, Mrs. General Wagg of New York, the widowed Princess Knoutouski, and Malachi N. Pook, the petroleum millionaire,—are not these actually amongst the natives of the German Brunnen to this hour, spending their easily-got cash right royally? And Russians and Americans prefer, for the most part, to take the whole cost of a picnic upon their own shoulders. It is to them a simple calculation of so many roubles or dollars as balanced against time. But then they have come to the civilised parts of Europe to stay dollars or roubles—not weeks and months. Their sojourn is meted out by the lightening of the gold in their cash-box, and by the waning of the deposit at their banker's. When the last circular note shall have been changed, the last letter of credit discounted, then it will be high time to go back to Russia, or to Petrolia, or to Wall-street, and procure a fresh supply. And the band, and the profits of the Parisian restaurateur, who is commissary-general for the day, and the fireworks that sparkle so prettily among the wooded hills, black with pines or green with rustling oaks, and the torchlight procession of carriages homeward bound along the mountain road,—these are as nothing to Mr. Pook. One flowing “ile well” would pay for all.

“It would come heavier, sir, at Saratoga,” “guesses” the old capitalist, with a quaint twinkle in his knowing eye.

Cynical old uncle Batchelor, always prone to take an ill-natured view of other people's actions and motives, declares that picnics are mere traps for flirtation. He chooses to regard them as snares and pitfalls in the way of unmarried males less prudent than himself, and will tell-off a whole bead-roll of engagements that to his certain knowledge date from one of these temporary “outbursts of savage life,” as he snarlingly calls them. He is wrong though, or at best he has but got hold of a half-truth. Quarrels, misunderstandings, jealousies, are as common at a picnic party as anything else. It is not only Romeo and Juliet who go picnicking, but angry Hermia and tearful Helena; and Lysander and Demetrius may prove fickle and faithless even at a picnic.

## THE PARIS EXHIBITION

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A THING of beauty is, as I think we have been told, a joy for ever.

The great Palace of Art and Industry in the Champ de Mars is, I fear, neither.

A thing of beauty not even its most enthusiastic admirer could call it; for it is flat as a pancake and ugly as a warming-pan. A joy for ever it can scarcely be; for I am informed the officials mean to pull it down as soon as they can turn out their present tenants. Probably in ten months the toga will have entirely yielded to arms, and forty or fifty thousand soldiers will be listening to the voice of the charmer who says "Right shoulders forward!" "Halt!" "As you were!" instead of the pleasant appeal of Messrs. Spiers and Pond, which suggests pale ale through the media of some three dozen young ladies with golden hair and good looks such as Paris rarely sees. But I fear I am getting far below the level of *Belgravia*. Still I confess that this material advantage was the first thing which struck me when I entered this much-reviled—much and unfairly reviled—Exhibition.

Why has the press of London gone raving mad about the shortcomings of the Emperor's Exhibition? Who is old enough to remember our first? Nobody, of course. Then let us appeal to their ancestors or *their* executors. Was everything quite perfect? No; everything was unfinished. I remember well dining with the Life-Guards on the Sunday previous to the opening, and the Duke of Blank saying he had just come from Hyde Park, and there was no chance of opening it for a month. "Bet fifty it's opened on the day," said Boots of that regiment. He shot his grace, and landed the fifty.

The opening here was rather a dull proceeding. You see, if you circulate you cannot go straight. So in our iron contrivance nobody can see you for above twenty yards. This is, in fact, the great drawback of the building. If you want to be amused, you must go to be amused by the Exhibition—not by the people who come to see it.

I confess I think this is a great drawback as far as the general and non-artistic public is concerned. People, after all, will come here to be pleased; and having stared their full at the wonders, will like to be treated to the beauties of the Great Exposition. When Mr. Kinglake, that most bitter and charming of writers, was only *Eöthen*, and had not been eastwards to abuse the allies of his country and the once friends of his bosom, he told us very nicely how he once "bathed his eyes in green forest" after passing a desert. Is not the metaphor quite refreshing—refreshing and charming and true? Some of us must re-

member coming back from aridity to vegetation. Now here, I think, we have too much desert, too little oasis.

Still I think that nothing can be much grander or more practical than the inner circles of this vast bazaar. You know I never undertook to describe it in detail.

Describe it in detail! Why, it would take one number of *Belgravia* to tell its readers my idea of the way to the building, and at least two more to say what I thought of its "outward and visible sign."

How to describe any of it? That is the question. About November or December we flatter ourselves we shall be quite *au fait*; to be sure it will be about to be pulled down. Still, *meglio tarde che mai*.

I think, as far as one can judge from a necessarily hasty examination of an even yet very unfinished display, that there is a vast mine of wealth locked up in the iron embrace of that curious building, the ugliness of which exceeds its size, and which seems to me to combine the two properties of being colder and wetter, and hotter and dustier than any place to which a somewhat erratic life has yet taken me. Hot indeed it is!

"We have been there, and still may go;"

but I can assure my readers that it is not the least like a "little heaven below;" indeed, it is quite the reverse.

How to describe it? That is the question. One Englishman declares that he has always started with a fixed idea from the grand entrance, and found himself, day after day, exhausted and wayworn, still in the British Exposure, as our kind other-side-of-Atlantic cousins call it. I think I will begin outside. It is very ugly to look at, this building, which we cannot call an erection; yet turn ere you enter, and look back at the scene behind you—the destroyed Trocadero, the heights of Passy, the site of the Marble Palace, which was to have been built for the residence of that poor youth who was born king of Rome and died an Austrian officer. The scene is picturesque, very. Up a great flight of stone steps crowds of all classes are mounting and descending the Trocadero, where there is now a staircase surpassing that of any giant's we may have met in our wanderings. Beneath you flashes the Seine; around glows Paris, looking as only Paris can look in early summer—dissipation later kills its city as its inhabitants; and if it happens to you, my reader, as it often happens to me, to pass that Pont de Jéna towards sunset, you will see a sight unequalled in any exhibition. The God of Gladness goes to rest in Paris in early summer almost with as gorgeous an array as he does when watched from Ceuta, or the civic magistrate's quarters at Gib.

But I wander. As you enter the garden there is on one side a photographic establishment, on the other a club. I do not think that Brooke's, White's, or Boodle's, or any well-known established club, will

suffer from that damp stucco, which will not be dry before an imperial decree dissolves this mercantile meeting. A little further on you see an imperial pavilion on the left, and a watch-tower on the right. Quite like Byron, is it not ?

“ A palace and a prison on each hand.”

The outworks of this great fortress of art and industry are carried, strangely enough, by the commissariat—(we who served in the Peninsula never saw anything like that, did we, Sir Joshua Standstill, K.C.B., with the cross of the Order of St. Somewhere in Spain ?)—but it is true. Art, science, skill, music, mechanism are involved in what I would not willingly call a vicious circle of sandwiches and pale ale, of ices and sorbets, of sweet cakes and lemonade (may cholera be lenient to them !). Nor is this unnecessary ; for four hours of exhibition would kill a gladiator, and refreshment is as necessary as air. But to begin to see the Exhibition.

*Eh bien !* Shall we go up to the top of that watch-tower—it might be a clock-tower, it is so high ? No ? Well, perhaps you are right. We will wait till all is finished, and then we will *not* go up. Regard that Mosque, and put that down on the reserved list. Shall we enter that tomb—(tomb of Tarquinius Superbus, think you) ? No ; we will wait. Shall we enter the Russian stables and coach-houses ? *Ah, voilà* M. de Thal, that amiable commissioner, and he will show us everything. Friend from the shires joins us here, and asks us to dinner first (gives us a deuced good English sort of dinner at Entresol’s—he was with Lord Rapid, you remember, and has got some of his old claret), of course. Hospitality of English growth seems to be forced in France ; and one resident of my acquaintance declares that if one other old friend from England asks him to dinner, he shall really be reluctantly obliged to ask him not to receive him in the evening, but to send a friend in the morning. Of course, however, we welcome Sir Early Crops, and proceed together to see what they call a stable in Russia.

“ I suppose the horses are toys,” says our baronet, “ since they keep them in such boxes.”

Anything prettier than the wooden stables erected by the Russians, at an expense which, not having the actual figures before me, I hardly like to write, it is difficult to conceive. They are built of pine wood, nearly perfectly white, being highly decorated as to carving and elaborate cameo and intaglio work, if you can so write of a poor plain pine. The floors of this stable are better than the halls of most family mansions. The ceilings are more lofty, and the bedrooms—I mean the boxes, for they are all boxes—more airy than those at the *Hôtel de Tout le Monde* (Entresol, ninety-five francs ; service, two francs), and the whole scene is radiant with equine health, and free from equine smell. “ And the horses ? ” naturally exclaims an irritable and elderly man at the Travellers’, who is taking a crumpet (very good, but un-

wholesome) with his tea. He is right. Now let us write about the horses—the horses of the Czar. To an English eye these horses, which are evidently a picked lot, are not good-looking; they all look like machiners; their shoulders are heavy, their legs straight, and their tails touch the ground; they have grand action, though, and can trot very fast. There are two of the Emperor's pet chargers, but there is not one hack of that class, mounted on one of which in London in June you would be safe to catch the heiress of the season. The condition is splendid, and several of the horses are valued at 350*l.*, 400*l.*, and 500*l.* The stable consists entirely of loose boxes, is exquisitely clean and tidy; and as the stablemen are got up in black and red velvet, I believe the Russian stable will be one of the most popular booths in this Vanity Fair.

The visitor to the Exhibition goes, as a rule, I find, direct to his own country. We will certainly do it, if only to watch the French watching us. The picture-gallery is a great tournament-ground for the two nations. I confess that as to oil paintings I am rather disappointed in the show of English artists which you have sent us. True, I see Mr. Eaton has sent over his Landseer—"Taming the Shrew," a host in itself; but the majority did not strike me. The water-colours, however, are simply splendid, and take away the breath of the French beholder.

Writing of pictures reminds me of a criticism uttered a few days ago in the French court. The picture has "all that there is of most French"—a very nightmare of colour. A murdered brother weltering in his blood, the affianced bride kneeling by him, and M. Cain laughing in his sleeve. Awful! "Ah," remarks my critic, "here is one which is wanting in gaiety!" I also in the English section heard a French gentleman pointing out the bust of our dear friend Speke as "that mister who found the Nile!" In the elegant and useful you should see how well England holds its own. The china is exquisite, and even Sèvres has to do all it can to beat Minton, Copeland, &c. The glass, too, is splendid, and here the French rather fail: they fail in size, and that, you know, is a fault—don't you dislike a little wine in a little glass? If it is good wine, it is not so good; and if it is bad wine, it is worse. No, a magnum bottle and a maximum glass. Well, here the French fail. They also fail, I think, in shape, preferring height and narrowness to width, and tables are never so prettily decorated in Paris as in London. While on this festive subject I will record a remark made to me last week. "Do you know that C——y is over here as a commissioner and juror to report on cheap food for the poor?" said my friend: "I give you my word the cheapest thing he ever eat was a truffle."

The English display of jewels, too, is very fine; Harry Emmanuel, Hancock, Hunt and Roskell having the most dazzling exhibitions. To be sure Lady Dudley has contributed to this part of the entertainment, and that is enough, almost enough, to turn the exhibition scale in



favour of England. They should have got Madame Rimsky Korsakow to have dressed all in her best, and then walked abroad into the Exhibition—her jewels are really wonderful.

Mr. Harry Emmanuel's "Swan," which I suppose everybody in London knows, is a great attraction here.

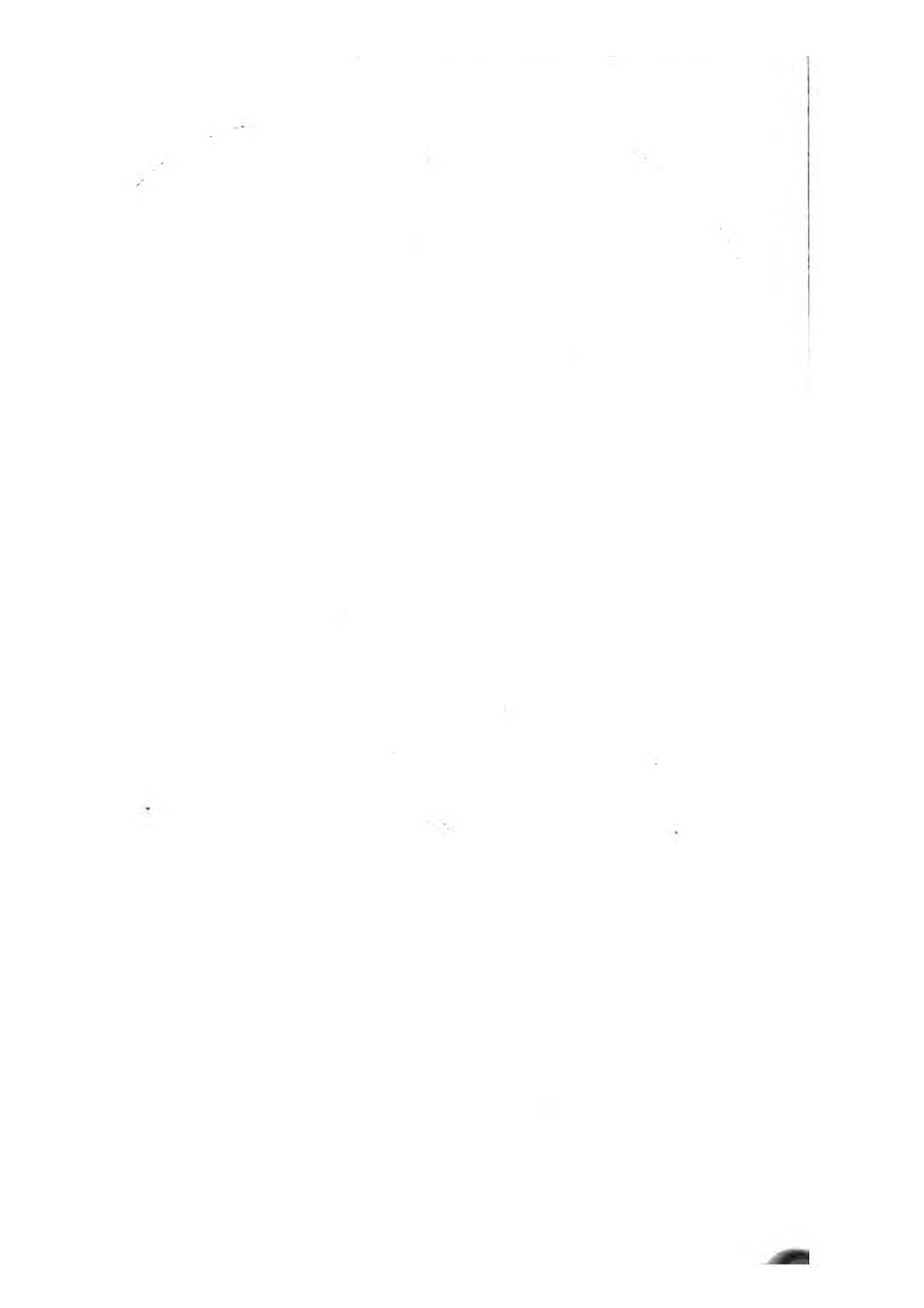
"The cygnet proudly walks the waters,"

and admiring crowds watch it swallowing a fish. *Tiens que c'est grand!* says elderly provincial party. But talking of provincial remarks, I have heard of nothing yet to come up to that of an English visitor, who looking into a restaurant, saw a person eating brown bread. "Ah!" cried she (as they used to say in old books); "the bread of the country! How interesting!"

The Italian sculpture is one of the most attractive sections of this great display. There may be perhaps many specimens which are not art—that is, are rather pretty than grand; but then they are charming, and after all, for the exoteric world, that is better.

Vela's statue of the last days of the First Napoleon is splendid. When the Emperor first saw it he was greatly impressed, and I see has now bought it. *Le petit Caporal*, wrapped up in a dressing-gown, is reclining in an arm-chair; and it seems to me that you can read on that marble face the records of regret for great errors—for badly conceived designs—for excessive ambition—in a word, a desire to live his life again. I have never been so struck by a modern statue. But I hardly think I must lecture on art; for as all your readers are sure to come to Paris and see the objects exposed, forming their own opinion of them—and mind, your own opinion, like other things, is generally all the better for being your own—I shall destroy their delight. "Cut off Charles the First's head, did they?" asked the elderly student of the history of England. "I am very sorry you told me, for you have spoiled all the interest in the book." Now I do not wish to decapitate Charles the First, or spoil anybody's interest in anything.

Next month I hope to give you not my opinion, but the opinion of that great critic, the British Tourist, on the exposures of the Exhibition. By that time MM. Tom, Dick, and Harry will have arrived, and I have a great respect for Messrs. T., D., and H. They represent public opinion:—public opinion is often wrong—so, for that matter, is private opinion, but still it affords an amusing study. I remember at the first and only English Exhibition at which I ever "assisted," I heard a lady, evidently a cook, say to another lady, evidently a housekeeper, "Can't be, I'm sure; she'd never do it!" They had lost their way in the catalogue, and gazing at the nude beauty of Hiram Powers's Greek Slave, were looking at a number which indicated Queen Victoria!





Mat. Morgan, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc.

ZOOLOGICAL MEMORIES.

## ZOOLOGICAL MEMORIES

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AH, sweet Annie Pearlyton, have you forgotten  
That sunshiny Sunday so early in June ?  
When you slyly escaped from your aunt Mrs. Hotten,  
And saucily said you'd come back again soon,  
But must see the seal and the spotted hyena,  
And doted on zoöphytes scarlet and blue—  
Poor Aunt left at three, and at six we'd not seen her,  
That bright summer Sunday we spent at the Zoo.

I remember you wearing the nicest of dresses,  
So simple and bright, though it would not compare  
With Miss Buhl's splendid train ; nor could your sunny tresses  
Attempt to out-rival her mass of false hair :  
She'd a *chaîne Benoiton*, which hung from her bonnet—  
'Twas gorgeous and costly, so heavy and new ;  
Whilst yours was of lace, with blush roses upon it,  
That gay summer Sunday we spent at the Zoo.

You recollect loitering down by the water—  
I mean by the pond where the pelicans dwell—  
A small glove was pressed, it was six and a quarter,  
A hand rather smaller was perhaps pressed as well ;  
You said it was nonsense, and would not believe me—  
I vowed, on my honour, 'twas perfectly true—  
Those lashes down-drooping could never deceive me,  
That sweet summer Sunday we spent at the Zoo.

Whilst strolling around that green pond edged with rushes—  
 I wished we could wander for miles and for miles—  
 Your eyes brightly shone, whilst the loveliest blushes  
 Flushed cheeks dimpled o'er by the sweetest of smiles.  
 Then archly you said, "How about Lizzie Frampton?"  
 And "Who was it flirted with Alice Carew?  
 Who ought to be down with his 'people' at Hampton,  
 Instead of beguiling poor girls at the Zoo?"

How swift flew the hours as we roamed there together,  
 Forgetful of Aunt as she sat in the shade!  
 'Twas really too bad in that broiling hot weather;  
 And when we returned what excuses you made!  
 "Past six, Aunt? It can't be! You surely are joking—  
 We've not seen the zebra nor red kangaroo;"  
 Then prettily pouting, you looked so provoking,  
 That fine summer Sunday we spent at the Zoo.

Whilst the white chestnut blossoms like snowflakes are falling,  
 And already the bloom of the springtime hath flown;  
 That sunshiny Sunday I can't help recalling,  
 As I sit in dull chambers and ponder alone.  
 And now you are down at "The Larches," my treasure,  
 To find bright days long, for there's nothing to do,  
 Does ever come o'er you with exquisite pleasure  
 The thought of that Sunday we spent at the Zoo?

J. ASHBY STERRY.

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## AN AWKWARD MISTAKE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LADY FLAVIA"

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"GOOD-BYE, Green! I envy you your trip, old boy, or rather, I wish you joy of it and of your promotion with all my heart, I'm sure"—had been Stodgemore's last words as I crossed the college quadrangle; and Stodgemore, senior tutor of St. Crosier's, was a thoroughly good fellow and meant what he said. As for myself, I got into my fly with a light heart, and took my railway-ticket with much buoyancy of spirits and the brightest anticipations for the future. The fact was that the last few weeks had been singularly eventful ones to me, and that my sombre professional prospects had been suddenly irradiated by the gay iris of hope. Hitherto the career of the Reverend Plantagenet Green, M.A., had been dull enough. The eight or nine years since I had taken orders had been spent in hard work, poorly paid, and leading to no visible result. That curacy at Sokenham-in-the-Fen was but a shade better than the awful post of bear-leader to young Swagmore, the conceited son of a purse-proud old sugar-refiner, who knew of no refinement save that of sugar. I had borne much in both capacities, and had been very glad to undertake the duty of junior tutor at our little college of St. Crosier's, Oxford, with the hypothetical chance of a living not worth the acceptance of Stodgemore, Dewsbury, Poundworth, and the rest of the seniors of our common room.

I had elderly female relatives who, good souls, had all my life long been confident in their predictions that, "one of these days," Lord Kilmallock would be certain to do something for me. This Irish peer was my godfather, and he had, I believe, been munificent in promises whilst I was still of tender years. But, alas, as I grew older, my hopes of advancement by help of the Kilmallock interest faded and grew dim. His lordship was good enough now and then to write oracular assurances that when "we" came into power, Plantagenet should not be forgotten; but while the grass grew the steed starved, and I had almost outgrown my childish reliance on my titled sponsor, when, on a sudden, "we" did come into power. There was a change of ministry, and Lord Kilmallock's recommendation, for the first time for years, carried weight with it.

My patron was as good as his word. There was a vacant canonry at Slochester, the filling up which of course belonged to the new Prime Minister—a nice little titbit of preferment, only five hundred a year, to be sure, but with a capital house and a walled garden famous for its

peaches; and Lord Kilmallock had obtained some promise or half-promise that this snug ecclesiastical shelf should be placed at my disposal. He wrote to me from Ireland, telling me that if I would call on him in Park-lane on a certain day in January, he would introduce me to the Premier, and I might then consider the business as settled. At the same time he cautioned me that, should I fail to keep my appointment in Downing-street, Lord Epsom would no doubt feel himself at liberty to oblige some other supporter of government. Of such unpunctuality, however, I had no apprehension. What, short of a cataclysm or a Red Revolution, could prevent my accompanying my distinguished friend to Downing-street on the day indicated?

In the mean time I had the fairest chance of a pleasant holiday trip that had ever presented itself to me. It was the Long Vacation. Oxford was deserted; and except Stodgemore (who could not tear himself away from his comfortable rooms and the vicinity of our college kitchen, the presiding culinary officer of which knew his constitution to a nicety, as the senior tutor often solemnly informed me), there was no one in residence at St. Crosier's. It so happened that I had no private pupils to read with; and there was not the slightest reason for my remaining on the neglected banks of the Isis and Cherwell, while my late companions of the common room were hooking salmon in nameless rivers, far among the fjelds of Norway, or were getting sunburnt faces and blistered hands among the glaciers of Switzerland.

Now was the time to realise a day-dream of my own, a cherished hope that I had often and often been compelled to renounce or adjourn. I was always, from boyhood, somewhat of a classical enthusiast, and had longed for years to tread the ground and breathe the air of old Hellas, to see with my own eyes the actual plains and streams where Miltiades routed the Persians, the shattered temples, the groves where Socrates taught, and the Agora where Paul preached. I have often felt as if it would have been worth a year of common life to have had one glimpse of Troy—of that bare scorched waste, dotted with a few stunted olives, through which the Scamander flows rippling over a pebbly bed, and to people the desolate landscape with, on one hand, the camp of the Greeks, gay with white tents and glittering arms, and on the other, with a swarm of mailed Trojan warriors, sallying forth from the ramparts of the beleaguered city. In a word, Eastern travel—a tour among the ruined glories of the ancient world—had been a pleasure for which I had hitherto sighed in vain.

The canon-expectant of Slochester, however, was able to permit himself a pleasure for which the junior tutor of St. Crosier's had long sighed in vain. Accordingly I set off for the Levant, taking leave of Stodgemore in the manner already recounted, and made the best of my way, *via* Marseilles, to Athens, which I meant to make the first stage of my journey. My plan was, after exploring such parts of Greece as lay within easy reach, to proceed to Asia Minor, and there

to have my fill of ruined cities and famous sites before going on to Constantinople, whence I purposed to return by the Danube route, and, crossing Italy, to have one hasty peep at Rome. My time and money—for my purse was slenderly supplied—would, I thought, just hold out through this projected scamper.

I had, to use the slang of the day, “done” Athens very completely, and had seen Salamis, and Hymettus with its myriad bees fed on the sacred heather, and the old battle-fields, and the broken stones of the glorious old shrines, and the shrunken brooks beside which mighty poets and sages had mused, and the shallow waters of which had once been crimsoned with Medish blood. I began to think of my departure, and to this end I took counsel with an intelligent young Greek, one of the commissionnaires of the *Hôtel des Quatre Vents*, where I lodged, and who knew every maritime city of the East, and every dialect spoken from Malta to the Caucasus or the Cataracts. Indeed Demetri—that was the name of the young *valet de place* who had acted as my guide and interpreter since my arrival, and who was called a dragoman in compliance with traditions of the Turkish rule—was apparently superior to most of his colleagues. I had found in him an adroit, patient, and most good-humoured cicerone; and although I suspect his scholarship was not very profound, he evidently knew something about the great deeds and great men of the past, and seemed to take a sincere interest in conducting me to the most celebrated spots in and near Athens.

I liked Demetri all the better because he possessed a virtue not too common anywhere, and especially rare among his grasping countrymen—he was not greedy for money; and although, as he said with perfect truth, I paid him but sparingly for his trouble, while the majority of English and American travellers scattered their dollars broadcast, he served me with much willingness and respect, and appeared always grateful for a kind word. He was, for a Greek, well educated, and had a Greek’s aptitude for making the most of his acquirements. He was no Athenian by birth, but a Fanariote; one of those descendants of ancient Byzantine families who are reared in the gloomy Fanar of Constantinople, whence the sultans were once accustomed to select the vassal princes of Moldavia and Wallachia. Many of these races have, as I have heard, considerable pretensions in a genealogical point of view; and Demetri once told me, laughingly, that his nurse used to assure him that he had the blood of Comneni and Palæologi in his veins, but that no one cared for such sayings now. He was a dark, smooth young fellow, of good address, and, so far as looks went, did no discredit to his ancestry.

“Si, signor; it is so. The *Messageries Impériales* boat—the French mail-steamer—is the best for your purpose. She calls at the Piræus on Thursday, and we can take your passage beforehand, if you please,” said Demetri.



I was going to Smyrna; and as my fidus Achates agreed with me in the choice of a packet, there was nothing to be done but to drop in at the office, situated in the "Street of the Winds," and secure a berth. I had very nearly exhausted the lions of Athens—of the old Athens, that is to say,—and was ready for a start. As for modern Athens, dull, dusty, and feverish, I was heartily sick of its lounging, greasy population, sham Palikars in dirty-white kilts, red-capped patriots smoking vile cigars in dingy cafés, ugly women in second-rate French finery, mosquitoes, and jingling frowsy flies bowling at rare intervals along the wide white streets. I fancied that Demetri, honest lad, seemed really sorry that I was going. I had chatted with him a good deal, telling him much about England, and hearing in return something about the East. But perhaps it was the loss of his occupation, I bethought me, that threw a shade of melancholy over the young Fanariote's dark face. Business was certainly drooping; for, besides myself, there was but one other Englishman, a client of Demetri's, as I was, staying at the hotel.

This was a young gentleman who had once been a gentleman commoner at St. Crosier's College, though his velvet cap had long been laid aside, and with whom I had therefore some acquaintance. His name was Forster, and he was rich. He had just succeeded to the property of his father, a great brewer in the Borough, and he was out in Greece with all sorts of romantic projects for helping on the cause of that phantom Greek empire which dances like a political will-o'-the-wisp before the dazzled eyes of all King George's subjects. I rather fancy that young Mr. Forster was privately of opinion that his services to the Greek cause might win for him an English peerage, or a baronetcy at any rate. He had heard and read of other Britons who had been similarly rewarded for feats performed in pushing on the liberties of Spain and Greece; and he was not unnaturally eager to secure the one distinction that his money could not purchase for him at home. There he was, then, at Athens, ready to back the Greek insurrectionary cause with all the weight of his well-filled purse; and, as a violent Philhellene, he was of course hand-in-glove with some of the most fiery spirits of the Grecian capital.

The acquaintance between Mr. Forster and myself was, as I have said, but a slight one, yet the ex-gentleman commoner, who was an outspoken sort of person, was communicative enough, in a rough boastful way, when we did meet. The handsome suite of apartments which he occupied on the first floor of the hotel (the Rev. P. Green being simply lodged much higher up, in a dormitory at which a stoic philosopher could scarcely have cavilled on the score of over-luxurious accommodation) was seldom free from the presence of several dingy and garrulous conspirators, whose talk was of Crete and Thessaly, and who flattered and toadied the rich English milordo in due proportion to the five, or, if need were, the ten thousand pounds that he was ready

to lay down for the advancement of their projects. I think that Mr. Forster must have been advised by some of his Athenian friends to practise the virtue of discretion; for of late his utterances, always boastful, had become darkly oracular, and it was in a mysterious fashion that he hinted at the great events in which he was shortly to bear a part.

I had often talked with Demetri on the subject of Mr. Forster, his wealth, and the vague ambition which was the real source of his ardour for the cause of a set of people who, I shrewdly suspected, meant to use him as a catspaw for the furtherance of their own ends. My only anxiety on behalf of my young countryman was that his sacrifices on behalf of Greek independence should turn out to be merely of a pecuniary nature, and that he should not be beguiled into trusting his person within reach of the fire of Turkish cannon and the yataghans of Turkish irregulars. But Demetri could not be brought to see the matter in the same light. He was very patriotic in his quiet, modest way, and I have often seen his fine eyes fill with tears as he spoke of Ottoman oppression, and of the desperate efforts which his co-religionists in Crete were making to break the Mahometan yoke. He was seldom in communication with Mr. Forster, who cared nothing for antiquities, and who would hardly have turned his head to look at the Parthenon; but he was always an attentive listener to what I had to say regarding my former pupil. I had no suspicion then, but I have no doubt now, that Demetri was artfully pumping me for information respecting the young Englishman and his plans.

Thursday came round at last, and the hot autumn sun threw a lengthening shadow across the dusty square in which, tall, stuccoed, and pretentious, stands the Hôtel des Quatres Vents.

"No boat yet, signor; and when she does come into the roads she has coal to take in," said Demetri, entering the *salle* of the hotel, where I sat sipping my white Hymettus wine, after the conclusion of the sparsely-attended *table d'hôte*. "You will do well to drive down to the Piræus in the cool of the evening, and get on board after dusk. Athens will be quieter then too, for there are some of our Greek hotheads abroad to-day."

And indeed I had noticed that, ever since noon, bands of able-bodied young fellows, in the national garb—fustanelle, greaves, gaudy jacket, and scarlet skull-cap—had been marching about the city to a discordant accompaniment of drum and cowhorn, and heralded by the cheers of a noisy rabble. Such demonstrations were, however, only too frequent, and I had thought little of the matter; but now I asked my cicerone what the huzzas and drumming portended. He shrugged his shoulders: "Something about Crete," he said, and turned away. But I quite agreed with him that it would be pleasanter to embark when the mob should have shouted themselves hoarse, and the road to the Piræus be clear of quasi-military processions.

Presently the short twilight died away, and was succeeded by the usual pure dark sky, spangled thick with golden stars, and a fresh breeze sprang up to seaward, warning me with its grateful coolness that the hour for departure had arrived. My preparations were soon made, my bill paid, and my portmanteau packed; and as I collected my guide-books, umbrella, and walking-sticks, Demetri came with a hurried step along the passage to my room.

“Signor, it is time.”

The voice in which the young Fanariote spoke was strangely husky, and his manner was odd and excited, as it seemed to me.

“One moment, Demetri,” said I, as I buckled the strap around my rugs and greatcoat; “I must wish Mr. Forster good-bye. Do you know—”

“The milordo is not here. The milordo is gone—this very day,” said Demetri abruptly. “His rooms are empty. Let us not lose time; the carriage is at the door.”

All this was said in a very peculiar manner, bluntly, and almost rudely when compared with the bland gentleness of the man’s ordinary demeanour. I set this disagreeable alteration down, however, to Demetri’s vexation at the unexpected loss of an employer, who, if he needed no guidance to ruins and battle-fields, at any rate was liberal in remunerating his dragoman for the trouble of fetching him operatickets, prime cigars, and saddle-horses; and my only wonder was that Mr. Forster should have gone away so suddenly, and without a word of adieu to his former tutor.

The carriage of which Demetri had spoken was in effect at the door—an open calessina, lined with cotton velvet of some bright colour, and drawn by two raw-boned horses tawdrily decked out with scarlet tassels, peacocks’ feathers, and brass ornaments that rattled at every movement, while the driver had very much the air of a theatrical brigand. This picturesque equipage at any rate possessed the merit of speed; for the lean horses, severely lashed, went at a surprisingly rapid pace down the darkling road—bordered here and there by wine-shops, whence came the sounds of brawling voices or the twanging music of the Greek guitar—that leads to the Piræus. I found the quay more crowded than I had supposed probable at that hour, and in the roads lay a steamer, a blue light burning on board of her, from the funnel of which gushed a fiery crown of ruddy flame, while the groaning and hissing that reached my ears plainly indicated that the packet had got up steam and was on the eve of starting.

“Yes, that is the French boat; *your* boat, Mr. Green,” said Demetri, in a voice that was strangely harsh and hollow.

Meanwhile my eye was attracted by the lights burning on board another vessel at some distance from the shore. Demetri noticed in which direction I was gazing.

“That is nothing,” he cried, with a petulance for which I could see

no reason. "That is a strange ship, an Austrian corvette. Make haste and jump in, or you will be left behind."

And he almost dragged me to the landing-place, where a small boat, manned by four rowers in the loose, dark Hydriote dress, lay waiting. My luggage was already embarked, and I found myself thrust down into the stern sheets, while the coxswain cast off the moorings, and, scrambling over the thwarts, took his seat and grasped the tiller-ropes. All was so rapidly done as to reduce my part in the transaction to a passive one. Somebody cried out something which I took to be Romaic for "all right," and instantly the rowers bent to their oars. I looked round for Demetri, but he was already lost in the crowd; and this odd behaviour of the young dragoman's seemed to me the more remarkable because I still was in his debt a scudo or two, and he had given me no chance of slipping a parting "gratification" into his hand. For such reflections I had not much leisure, for the boat was already bounding over the purple waves, and in a very short space of time we were alongside the steamer. Scrambling on board as nimbly as I could, while my baggage was handed up to the gangway, I was at once received by a smiling officer, with a gold band encircling his naval cap, and who welcomed me with a lengthy speech in Italian, five-sixths of which were lost to me, but which was evidently most politely intended, and which ended by an offer to conduct me to my cabin at once. I was agreeably surprised to find that the cabin allotted to me was on deck, generally the most pleasant part of a Mediterranean steamer, and that I was to be its sole occupant, whereas, having taken but a single passage, I had of course expected to have a mere berth, and no more, for my money. I could not forbear mentioning this to the ship's officer who was my guide; but he merely bowed and smirked.

"Whoever else may be ill-off for elbow-room," he said—"and I must admit that we are somewhat scant of space sometimes,—we are proud to accommodate *you*, Signor Inglese!" And with an apology for leaving me he returned to his duty.

What he had said was very flattering, if not quite intelligible; and at any rate, if the Rev. Plantagenet Green was highly appreciated as an English traveller on board the French mail-packet, it was not for that individual to find fault with what, after all, was perhaps a graceful compliment to my cloth.

I must confess myself, like most men who have led a studious and stay-at-home life, a wretched sailor, and a sea-voyage has always been to me a period of unmitigated suffering and helplessness. There was a brisk breeze blowing, and the sea, if not rough, was sufficiently disturbed for the motion of the vessel to suggest to me that a recumbent attitude would be preferable to any other, and that until I acquired my "sea-legs" by familiarity with the normal rolling and pitching of my temporary home, I had better keep strictly to my cabin. I lay down accordingly on my little bed, and listened to the trampling on deck, the

hoarse word of command, and the roar and splash of the paddle-wheels as they went round, while the engines worked vigorously, making every plank in the ship vibrate to their quick stroke. We were fairly under way, and on our eastward voyage.

The next eight-and-forty hours were spent in such black, blank, hopeless misery as none but the sea-sick can endure or appreciate. The wind Euroclydon, which from my classical recollections I knew to have always been potent in those waters, was loosed from the halls of Æolus and as mischievous as of old. The breeze had freshened to a gale; and the once-smiling Mediterranean, rough and furious, tossed our vessel about like a cork or a feather, and the timbers creaked and groaned, and the engine laboured, as we fought our way through the surges. I was very ill, wretched, and weak; and I believe I should have been rather gratified than otherwise if it had been suddenly announced to me that the ship was sinking; when, in the course of the third night, the wind lulled, and the waves abated their anger with that quickness of transition from rage to calm, or again from gentleness to wild wrath, that characterises the wayward moods of that land-locked southern sea. The heaving and tossing ceased, and I was able to stand and gaze from my cabin-window at the quiet beauty of the unclouded night, with all its million golden lamps dotting the violet sky; while shooting-stars, of a brilliancy unknown to us in England, fell flashing again and again across the dark horizon.

"My troubles are over now," said I to myself, as I lay down contentedly to rest. "I shall go on deck to-morrow, and shall, for the first time, be able to hear Sip talk of breakfast without feeling envious and disgusted."

This Sip, whose monosyllabic name was a corruption of Scipio, was the black under-steward of the steamer, and was the only person on board, as he told me with a becoming pride, who spoke English. He was an American negro, who had been brought out from Baltimore in some merchant clipper trading with the Levant, and had either deserted or been sent adrift. He was a good-humoured creature, as these sea-going sons of Ham often are, and he had been kind and attentive to me while I was helpless in my berth. On the morning succeeding the calm he came into my cabin with an air of unusual self-importance.

"Massa better? Dat right! Gentlemen in chief cabin send him compliments, and will pay massa visit directly soon."

And before I could conjecture the precise purport of this communication, there was a tap at the painted door, and in came two tall men, one of whom, to my surprise, was in the blue military uniform of the Greek army; while the capote worn by the other falling back showed the red flannel shirt of a Garibaldian, braced by a black belt, from which protruded something very suspiciously like the brass-mounted butt of a revolver.

"*Buon giorno*, noble comrade," said the gentleman in the red shirt,

speaking a mixture of bad French and Italian. "We should not have intruded but that we heard you were suffering no longer, and that, now we are almost in sight of land, we had better all consult together. If you will join us at breakfast, the council of war can—"

"The council of war!" exclaimed I, with an expression of amazement that I daresay was ludicrous enough, and staring first at one and then at the other of my visitors. They stared at me in return. The hero of the red shirt was again the spokesman.

"Signor," he said, with a ceremonious stiffness very unlike his recent hearty frankness of manner, "I crave pardon of your excellency for presuming to act as my own introducer. I am Giuseppe Minetti, of Brescia, late an officer on General Garibaldi's personal staff, and once brigade-major of the Piccolini, as we called our Sicilian recruits in the old anti-Bourbon war. This is Captain Draganopoli, of the Greek army, on furlough. We command on board, and the Cretan Committee—"

"Do you wish to drive me mad!" I said distractedly; "or is this a practical joke? What on earth can be the connection between my affairs and those of the Cretan Committee? Some mistake—"

But here in my turn I was interrupted.

"Do you mean to tell us, sir," cried the Greek captain in a voice that actually trembled with passion, "do you mean to tell us that you have changed your mind, or that your promises were made only to mislead us? Have a care, Englishman! This venture is no child's-play. Our lives and honour are at stake; and as for your paltry gold, if you have dared to deceive us, I swear by the Panagia to—"

"Land, ho!" sang out Scipio in English; and the cry was taken up, in Greek, Italian, and Maltese, by several voices on deck.

"Land!" said the Garibaldian, smiling; "then Signor Forster will, I hope, see cause to put an end to this useless mystification, since it is Crete that lies before us, and we must conquer or die!"

Then, with many words and much gesticulation, the whole imbroglio was by slow degrees unravelled. To my horror, I discovered that, instead of being a passenger in the French mail-steamer of the Imperial Messageries, bound for Smyrna, as I had in my innocence believed, I was on board the famous blockade-runner, *Panhellenion*, on her sixth trip to Crete with volunteers to aid the insurrectionary forces. But this was by no means the whole of the complication. It appeared that I had been received on board the steamer in the full belief that I was no other than Mr. Forster, and that I was thought to have come provided with a very considerable sum in specie, the use of which my former pupil had promised to the revolutionary agents at Athens, and which was destined to purchase provisions for some three hundred armed men, Greeks under Captain Draganopoli, and Italian sympathisers led by Giuseppe Minetti, who were on board the vessel, and who were about to do battle with the Turks for the liberation of Crete.

It must not be supposed that this result was arrived at by dint of quiet and patient inquiry. On the contrary, the excitable southern natures of the two chiefs of this hare-brained enterprise were all on fire with indignation and excitement; and I, the involuntary cause of all this fury, had to endure much undeserved reproach, and what I am certain were a plentiful store of opprobrious epithets, but which, being couched in modern Greek and the Lombard patois, were fortunately unintelligible. In vain I protested my own blamelessness in the matter; I could get no hearing; and before long the Garibaldian and the Greek flung out of the room, and I heard their outlandish oaths and vehement adjurations die away in the distance. In about half-an-hour Sip came in with a very frightened expression on his black face, and rolling his opal eyes fearfully.

"Gentlemen yonder," he said, pointing with one dusky finger towards the great cabin, the skylight of which was just visible as the door of mine stood ajar, "gentlemen say, shall we shoot Massa Britisher, cause he betray us? Some say, toss him overboard; some tink massa not to blame. Dey berry angry. Sip come back soon, tell massa more."

And he went, leaving me to reflections and anticipations of anything but an agreeable character.

Luckily, after a stormy debate, the council of war was kind enough to take a merciful view of my undesigned traversing of their projects. The Italian officer, who was the more civilised of the two leaders, came back to assure me that I ran no immediate risk of personal injury, although, as a friend, he must advise me to keep out of the way of the volunteers, some of whom were hot-headed lads, who might possibly be inclined to treat me as a Jonah, since unfavourable reports concerning my errand were prevalent among the crew and the fighting men.

"My own voice," said the Italian, as he rolled up and lighted a cigarette, "was decidedly against hanging you."

"You are very kind, I am sure," I answered, with a ghastly effort at being light-hearted and jocular.

The Garibaldian went on: "And I am happy to say that my arguments prevailed. I don't believe, Mr. Green, that you have played any part more culpable than that of a dupe. That rascal Demetri, the dragoman of the Hôtel des Quatre Vents, who was no doubt aware that Mr. Forster, with a large sum in gold, was to embark and share our expedition, has evidently deceived us all. He has probably caused Mr. Forster to go on board the French steamer, while you took possession of his cabin here, and our rich English ally and his treasure are thus lost to us. It was a bold and crafty stratagem, and—"

"But to what end? Why should Demetri, a respectable young man, and really a sincere patriot, play so senseless a trick?" interrupted I; "it is incomprehensible, and—"

"He is a Turkish spy!" coolly returned the red-shirted Italian, tossing his half-burnt cigarette into the sea.

The whole mystery was now made clear to me.

The committee which, from its head-quarters at Athens, directs and assists the efforts of the Porte's Rayah subjects to overthrow the Mahometan rule had for some weeks past seen cause to entertain suspicions that Demetri was playing a double part. The young interpreter, whose knowledge of Constantinople and of the Ottoman bureaucracy had enabled him to render occasional services to the Hellenic cause, was thought, and not groundlessly, to be in the pay of the Turkish Cabinet. This view of the Fanariote's artful and dangerous character was confirmed by the adroit and daring feat which he had at length performed in sending Mr. Forster and his gold by the French boat, while he had shipped me, an unworthy substitute, in his place. Minetti informed me that the steamer, the red lights of which I had observed, was the Messageries packet, and that she was to sail at the same hour as the Panhellenion. The scheme of the treacherous dragoman was simple in its execution as well as wily in design, and doubtless Mr. Forster had proved as easy a dupe as myself, and had gone on board the French packet without a single misgiving.

But what was now to be done? We were rapidly nearing the iron-bound coast of Crete, and the peaks of the great Sphakiot range of mountains, crested by early snow, frowned upon us as we approached the precipitous cliffs that seemed to bar all hope of landing. Far at sea, too, gleamed certain specks of white that a poet's fancy might have pictured as albatrosses resting on the waves, but which Minetti, who like many Garibaldians was half a sailor, and had been mate and supercargo of merchantmen in both hemispheres, gruffly pronounced to be "Turkish frigates of the blockading squadron." Here was a pleasant state of things! Not only was I carried out of my way; not only was I off the Cretan coast when I ought to have been preparing to go ashore at Smyrna,—but there was an imminent risk of being sunk, blown up, burned, or otherwise disposed of, since there is no limited liability in insurrections, and a Turkish cannon-ball could not be expected to respect the neutrality of the junior tutor of St. Crosier's. We landed, however, without accident. I say "we," for, in spite of my entreaties, I was forced to disembark with the rest; and the only indulgence that I could obtain was the permission to remain among the Sphakiot villagers, at whose hamlet the volunteers halted for their first bivouac, instead of following the fortunes of that desperate band through the almost incredible hardships and perils of a campaign, among stony mountains, where hunger and fatigue did more to thin their ranks than was effected by the shot and steel of the enemy.

As for me, after nearly three miserable months of semi-starvation spent among unwashed barbarians, in a village little better than a Hottentot kraal, where I had to part with my last dollar for black bread and sour wine, vended at prices that would have commanded the choicest dainties of a Palais Royal restaurant; after being baited by



hungry fleas, to whose palates a succulent Englishman was a novelty; and after many alarms from the Turkish Bashi-Bazouks, who were reported to be massacring man, woman, and child, throughout the disturbed districts,—I was at last taken off the island by an English man-of-war, landed penniless in Athens, and was sent home in the character of a “distressed British subject” by her Majesty’s Consul. I was hardly surprised to hear that the young scoundrel to whom I owed my present position had decamped to Stamboul without beat of drum, not caring to trust himself to the tender mercies of the fierce Athenian mob. I reached England on the first day of February, and made the best of my way to my patron’s town house. He was out; but there was a note for me: “Lord Kilmallock’s compliments to the Rev. Plantagenet Green, and regrets that, in consequence of Mr. Green’s failure to keep his appointment,” &c. &c. In fact the canonry had been given to another applicant; and I am still a poor and struggling man, with my way to make in the world, if ever a second chance should present itself of repairing the consequences of that awkward mistake.

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## CARPENTERS' SCENES

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EVERYBODY knows that "all the world's a stage;" but we, the mere players, must have been some time behind the scenes of life, and become quite accustomed to the glare of the "footlights," ere we can fully appreciate how very closely, in many details, the "Great Drama" is allied to its mimic mirror—details, so to speak, of stage arrangement.

Take, for instance, what are called "Carpenters' Scenes;" and, for the benefit of those unacquainted with theatrical terms, let me here explain, that an actual "carpenters' scene" has nothing whatever to do with carpenters. It does not represent, as might be imagined, a workshop, where some domestic hero of the plane and chisel goes through an important element of a sensation drama—by no means; for, be it known, stage carpenters are only what the public designate as "sceneshifters," and are no further concerned in the progress of the play than in arranging or "setting" the painter's tableaux. Thus, perhaps, is an audience never so little dependent for amusement on these workmen as when gazing on a scene which, in the language of the profession of acting, bears their name.

The curtain rises, displaying, in these days, always an elaborate picture; no matter whether it be one with a cleverly-constructed foreground of waterfall and rock, stretching away into the distance, by a wild defile, through which come tripping the gaily-dressed peasants to the melody of a lively chorus, or where the banditti lie in ambush, awaiting the carriage which is supposed to be winding round the mountain road.

No matter, I say, whether the stage represents this, or the magnificent interior of cathedral cloisters, with chanting monks; baronial hall, with feasting merrymakers; or a gorgeous staircase and galleries, all actually built upon the boards; the process is a very tedious one by which these results are reached. Scenes of interiors or exteriors, of this description, take a long time to "set," or to "strike" as the technical term goes for their demolition.

The least experienced of playgoers, after beholding such a picture occupying the whole of the stage, has, at the conclusion of some dramatic incident, seen it suddenly shut from his view by the intervention of the two halves of a scene, run on from either side of the stage until they join in the centre. This is the true "carpenters' scene," and is termed a "pair of flats." Worked in the first grooves, or those nearest the spectator, the entire space at the back is left free to the workmen's

use for the "striking" of the one just exhibited, and for the "setting" of the new scene. Everything is now done to gain time. There is frequently a long pause ere any character enters; and on first nights of new pieces, in ill-regulated theatres, this is sometimes so protracted as to produce signs of disapprobation from the front of the house. Then in technical parlance it is said that the "stage is kept waiting," though one would rather imagine it to be the audience that is in this predicament. At last when a move is made, who does not know what happens?

In pantomime, the harlequin and columbine give a dance; in burlesque, the prince laments in a song the cruel fate which separates him from his love; in comedy, the young gentleman importunes and bribes his rich uncle's butler, or takes familiar liberties with the pretty chamber-maid; in melodrama, the burglars or smugglers meet in the darkness, and waylay the traveller or otherwise arrange their iniquitous plans; not unfrequently the comic man indulges in a song—for which, if there is an encore, of course the carpenters are grateful; in tragedy, or indeed whatever the nature of the piece may be, sufficient time must be given by these scenes for the re-arrangement and completion of what is to be disclosed when "the flats" are again drawn asunder to the tune of the prompter's whistle.

Noise, confusion, clatter, and clash are going on behind the whole while, sometimes to the great detriment of the action in view of the audience. Who has not heard those thumps and bumps, mingled with angry voices and the sound of stamping feet? And who in life has not had the same experience in a thousand different ways upon the stage of the world?

Shams, makeshifts everywhere; at every turn "carpenters' scenes" are thrust before us, whilst eyes reddened by tears are bathed back to their natural lustre and brilliancy, or sweet smiles made to smoothe out the furrows of anger and ill-temper; while harsh, authoritative commands give place to bland, deferential, silver-toned voices, or bruised wrists are covered by sparkling bracelets; whilst the *débris* of a banquet is being cleared away, or a magnificent and awe-inspiring toilette arranged for our confusion or subjugation.

The other day I called with my newly-acquired wife on my old friend, that rising artist Bravono Hickson: he married shortly before I did; this was our return visit. He lives at "Belinda Villa, Regent's Park,"—so his cards say; but on our discovering his remote abode, we certainly thought "Camden-town," as a direction, would have more clearly indicated the locality of the "villa."

But this card was only a "carpenters' scene," put forward to gain time (let us hope), while he is working towards a more fashionable district, and to give an air of importance to his address which it would otherwise have lacked.

Upon arriving, in due course, in front of the "Belinda" establishment, which was situated at the end of a row of newly-built and un-

finished "eligible residences" stretching out upon the Hampstead fields, I came to the conclusion that the house itself was certainly but a "carpenters' scene." Do we not know—we the "players" of some years' standing—that that elaborate stone-looking portico and façade is only stucco,—or slime, as Mr. Ruskin elegantly terms it,—and that before a year has passed, it will be peeling off in green mouldiness, displaying the carpenters' or at least the bricklayers' work beneath?

But does not the stucco gain time?—gain time for the builder, while he sells or lets his house on lease to my poor friend Bravono? Inside, I know I shall find the same pretences in all the decorations; time-gaining efforts to dazzle and amuse the inexperienced; time-gaining that the house may be occupied before its impertinent and vulgar subterfuges are discovered.

We know it all for what it is worth, but dear Bravono is young, and has not yet "played many parts," so that he is innocent of the real value at least of *this* "carpenters' scene." I was prepared, I say, for what the interior would disclose; but even at the very door-step I was met by another "carpenters' scene."

Mary Jane, the maid-of-all-work, kept the "stage waiting," and me and my wife also, for a long time after we had knocked. "Ah, ah!" said I, "this gives a bad tone to the whole establishment; the management is not up to its business;" for I had opportunity to muse, and my mind went straightway back to the Theatre Royal. And there! I hear the prompter's voice! It was Mrs. Hickson's, while the words, "Very unwell; I can't see anybody this figure," rose clearly above the din and clash of moving trays, rustling dresses, and hurrying footsteps. The scene was not "set." Mary Jane did not know her part, and could not fill up the necessary interval with her "song" or "dance," while things were being put straight.

The audience expressed its disapprobation by a third and very loud knock; so that at length, in sheer despair, this miserable actress, this actress-of-all-work, rushed upon the scene by opening the door.

"Is Mrs. Hickson at home?" inquired my wife.

Poor Mary Jane! what could she do but stammer? She had been called upon at a moment's notice, not even to "read" her part, but to act it without having rehearsed or even learned it.

"Yes, ma'am—that is—no—at least—she can't—I think—master is—I'll see—" Then, seized with a paroxysm of stage fright, she helplessly ran away.

Again the stage was kept waiting; but eventually my friend, flustered but cordial, appeared in the passage, saying,

"Ah, old boy, so glad to see you—and brought your wife too—O, pray come in—hadn't a notion it was you." Why, dear good fellow, he had seen me, of course, as I came up to the house; but he was in duty bound, as acting manager, to make the best of it, and with this

little "carpenters' scene" endeavour to cover the short-comings of his establishment.

He now, however, set to work earnestly to gain time: he chatted on volubly about the weather, the new house, the new piano—on which he actually, but very properly, treated us to a short melody, precisely as if we had been at the play; thus partially drowning the sound of the thumps and bumps of the scene-shifting that was going on overhead. He was a little nervous at first, growing courageous as he found the good-humour of his guests increased. He spoke of his wife's indisposition as only temporary, interspersing his observations with snatches of song. Indeed, he acted very well, and recovered a great deal of lost ground with his audience; but then he was a popular favourite, especially with my wife, and his apologies for Mrs. Hickson's non-appearance were rather hailed as a relief; though we guessed, from what we had heard behind the scenes, that her bad headache had only been caused by our knock at the door; however, the two ladies had not taken very cordially to each other—for one of them was extremely handsome—and, on the only occasion of their meeting, had gone through a series of amiable performances ("carpenters' scenes" again), indicating their extreme delight at "making the acquaintance," &c. &c. But their artifices were mutually seen through, neither being very juvenile actresses.

On a sudden, Hickson, concluding, I presume, that he had given sufficient time for madam's change of attire and general preparation, declared that he would see if he could not persuade her to come and say, "How do you do?" She would be so sorry to miss us; and if we would only excuse her dishabille, &c.

Dishabille indeed! Why, on entering two minutes afterwards, she was arrayed in the most gorgeous fashion; little sign of her headache was left, and the play was played out to the mutual satisfaction of everybody. But what would it have been without the carpenters' scenes, and we had entered on their privacy straight from the road? What would it have been without Mary Jane, imperfect though she was? without Bravono's by-play? without time being gained for the preparation of brilliant effects and startling novelties? Why, a miserable failure, with which everybody must have felt disgusted.

Thus we see in some instances "carpenters' scenes" are as desirable, nay as absolutely requisite, on the large theatre as on the small.

The hitches that arose were only incidental to a new and inefficient management; when it has grown richer and more experienced, things will go smoothly, the "flats" work quickly in their grooves, and the actors will be up in their parts. Then the "carpenters' scenes" may pass off unobserved, except by the extremely knowing; but I would maintain again that they exist nevertheless all around us, in every household that we enter. In some do they not take the form of pomp and state?—with dashing equipages turned out to create literally a

blinding dust, that, for a time at least, effectually hides the crumbling insolvent edifice beneath?

So it is with us all; the doctor even, with his kindly manner, wise looks, head-shakings, pulse-feelings, and tongue-examinings, plays but his "carpenters' scenes," and gilds the pill (particularly for himself) that it is necessary, more or less frequently, for you to swallow.

The lawyer, as he assures you that action for libel which Jones is bringing against you can never succeed, is but pushing forward his "pair of flats," without which those "heavy sets" could never be arranged which lead to fortune in his profession.

The clergyman? well, yes, I am afraid he is obliged sometimes to resort (always for good ends we know) to similar stage arrangements.

The warrior wins or loses battles, according to the skill he displays in contriving feints, ruses, or ambuscades; these certainly are "carpenters' scenes," of an importance to the drama which has for its *dénoûment* the destiny of nations.

There is no one who watches the political arena that can have failed to observe how much acting and dumb-show goes on close to the foot-lights, whilst the diplomatic carpenters are taking their time over the construction of their superb transformation scenes, with brilliant effects of red and blue fire. Let us, however, again return to another domestic and familiar example, and, as a contrast to Hickson's household, look at Sir Benjamin Bowmantree's mansion in Mayfair, where duty led me, as it has most of us, to leave a card after that sumptuous entertainment he gave last season.

The carriage was standing but a few yards from the door, when the magnificent butler, responding instantly to my knock, asked me to walk in; consummate artist that he was, saying, "I do not know who is at home, sir; I will inquire;" thus compromising nobody. He was acting in the same relation as Mary Jane; but mark the certainty of his utterance, and the perfect knowledge of his part: yet this was a "carpenters' scene," only he was playing it a dozen times a day. On reaching the drawing-room, we found no one there; taking a seat, I was left alone; but the "stage" was not kept waiting this time. No, no, this establishment was thoroughly well regulated; and the beauteous Julia Bowmantree entered immediately, saying, "O, I am so sorry mamma and the girls have only just gone out; they will be *so* grieved not to see you;" and even as she spoke, I heard the *frou-frou* of silk dresses passing down the stairs, followed by the sound of departing wheels in the street below. She was covering their retreat, and preventing me from looking out of window by her charming acting in this, *her* "carpenters' scene."

I should have been the most ungrateful of audiences had I not been perfectly amused by her pretty syren-like song. What did it signify to me how much preparation or arrangement was going on the while behind? I was as well entertained by the perfect performance then

taking place, in front of the "first grooves," as if the entire range of the stage and whole strength of the company had been open to my gaze.

This was as it should be, and as it is in every well-regulated theatre. Lest, however, I might be inclined to take up too much of the fair Julia's time, she had appeared in her bonnet; so that when her delicious prattle ceased for a moment, I was forced in all politeness to say, as I rose from my chair, "But you *too*, I see, are going out; pray don't let me detain you."

I did not really think she was; still I was bound to act *this, my* little "carpenters' scene," as a graceful means of bringing the farce to a conclusion. And why not? I repeat, these are the things that make the great drama go smoothly. Take them away; what should we behold? Nothing but unseemly sights and actions—ghastly spectacles, framework of incompleated scenery, gaspipes, shirt-sleeved and white-capped workmen.

Those difficulties, domestic, social, or political—that skeleton, large or small, which we are told exists in all our cupboards—must be hidden by "carpenters' scenes" more or less well acted. Music must be added if the bones rattle too loudly, and, above all, time gained for the echoes to die away.

The plot of the story perhaps is seldom really much advanced by these interludes; but they will be found sometimes necessary no less in the "acting edition" of life than in that of the most trivial theatrical representations. In continental "salles de spectacle," however, they are seldom or never used, for the "act drop," or curtain, unceremoniously does duty for them, no attempt being made to fill up the gap. And when we come to think of it, is not this very much in accordance with the habits and manner of "Mossoo," who, brilliantly fascinating and polite up to the end of his grand scene, does not hesitate, when his acting is over, instantly to drop the curtain, totally disregarding your amusement and comfort, moral or physical?

The heart of my friend Bravono Hickson is not shifted from its right place, or his regard for me lessened, because his wife wanted time to startle mine by the addition of "new scenery, dresses, and decorations" to her natural beauty; nor shall I be the less ready to accept Lady Bowmantree's next invitation to dinner, because she wished probably to keep an appointment, which my untimely visit might have interfered with.

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# LONDON SQUARES

BY WALTER THORNBURY

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## II. RUSSELL-SQUARE, LEICESTER-SQUARE, AND GROSVENOR-SQUARE

RUSSELL-SQUARE was built about 1804, and derives its name from the great Whig family that, much to Theodore Hook's disgust, dominated in this convenient and central neighbourhood. Westmacott's statue of Francis Duke of Bedford might be mistaken by a clever blunderer like our old friend Hajji Baba for the deity worshipped by the district; and a zealous Whig might almost be pardoned for burning joss-sticks at the base of the pedestal.

The houses at the south corner of Guildford-street, bracketed as it were for the observer by the long slate roof of the same elevation, mark out Baltimore House. To this place, in 1767, the infamous Lord Baltimore (the Colonel Charteris of his time) brought Miss Woodcock, a milliner who kept a shop on Tower-hill. Here the cruel scenes of Richardson's *Pamela* were reënacted; and she remained imprisoned till her lover discovered her, made signs to her that there was rescue at hand, and obtained a writ of *habeas corpus* from Lord Mansfield. Lord Baltimore was tried for the abduction at Kingston in 1768, but was unfortunately acquitted. That great Scotch lawyer and eloquent orator Wedderburne (Lord Chancellor Loughborough) afterwards lived in the house for many years.

No. 21 in this square is memorable as the residence of that benevolent and far-sighted man Sir Samuel Romilly. This was that large-hearted man who laboured from 1808 to 1818 to make our criminal code less sanguinary. Thoughtful people had grown heart-sick at seeing as many as twenty persons of all ages, from almost mere children to old men, hung in one morning outside a London prison. It was death to steal five shillings from the person; death to steal five shillings' worth of goods from a shop; death to steal twenty shillings' worth of property from a dwelling-house or a vessel lying in a navigable river; death to steal a strip of devil's-dust cloth from a bleaching ground. As late as 1785 no less than ninety-seven persons were executed in London alone for shoplifting. In a debate in 1816 Sir Samuel Romilly called attention to the terrible fact that at that moment a child not ten years of age lay in Newgate under sentence of death for shoplifting. On the 2d of November 1818 this good and useful man destroyed himself, four days only after the death of his wife, to whom he was deeply attached. His mind had latterly been much worn by unceasing mental labour and



professional anxieties. When Lord Eldon came into court the next morning and saw Romilly's vacant seat, his eyes filled with tears. "I cannot stay here," he said; and, rising in agitation, he broke up the court. That same year Lord Ellenborough and Warren Hastings preceded, and Sir Philip Francis followed, Romilly to the grave.

At No. 65 Sir Thomas Lawrence lived for his last 25 years—1805 to 1830. It must be owned that there was something meretricious about Lawrence's style of painting. It was not solid and robust as that of Reynolds; it was courtly and pretty; it had not the large generous manner of the earlier age. The eyes of Lawrence's ladies are full of liquid light (Lawrence excelled in painting eyes); but there is always, to my mind, a Byronic glitter about them, a self-consciousness that is theatrical, and would be vulgar but for the exquisite art of the painter. His men are not so robust and manly as those of Reynolds; not so gallant as those of Vandyke; not so senatorial as those of Titian; not so full of intellect and genius as those of Raphael. Look at one of Titian's grand Venetians,—men whose brows are knitted with the dark secrets of the Piombi and the Pozzi, of the Council of Ten, and of the dungeons of the Inquisition. These men seem carved out of marble; Lawrence's are delicate statuettes of terra-cotta. True the men of the Regency were not much to paint. What could be done with Lord Yarmouth, Brummell, and such butterflies and dragon-flies of the day? He did not think out his men as his more strenuous predecessors did theirs. Hogarth's Captain Coram and Miss Fenton were to his work what Dryden's lashing satires were to Præd's graceful jingles. His large portraits (say, for instance, his empty full-length George the Fourth, at the Marquis of Bath's Wiltshire house, Longleate) seem to us mere surface-work. Like a showy waistcoat, they evidently have false backs. Nor is his colour very sound and good. His faces seem leaden if you look at them after, for instance, that hearty, ruddy face of the Governor of Gibraltar by Reynolds, a face in whose veins the blood seems still to glow. For my part I would rather have even such pale, faded phantoms of Reynolds's as you see at Berkeley Castle, where many of the family portraits have grown bleached and jaundiced from the treacherous "vehicles" that Sir Joshua made use of in his restless endeavours at ideal excellence, than Lawrence's finest works—his young countesses, with eyes like antelopes, or his children, aristocratic, graceful, and self-conscious. The son of the landlord of the inn at Devizes lived in a flimsier age than that of Reynolds. His work was thinner, slighter, prettier, less substantial, and more hurried. The old collarless square-cut coats and deep-flapped waistcoats had yielded to swallow-tails and muslin bolster-cravats. Those external changes typified an alteration of mental condition. In a certain portrait by Velasquez that we saw in Spain, the buttons of the doublet were literally moulded in paint. They rose from the canvas as ordinary buttons would do on a real doublet, caught the same light, and threw the

same shadows. Through all those long days of laborious painting the great artist had followed out his own aim of fitful colour, character, and effect. Every button had its own physiognomy. Had Lawrence the mental power, the energy, or the love of his art to have done this? Lawrence was the son of a desultory, restless, rolling-stone of a man—clever, fickle, and improvident; who, brought up a lawyer, married the daughter of a clergyman, and became Supervisor of Excise at Bristol. There he took the White-Lion Inn, and afterwards the Bear at Devizes, a well-known posting-house on the Western road. We have passed a thousand times the house where the great painter was born. It was once, no doubt, handsome and respectable, and in a decent neighbourhood; but the tide moved westward, and it now adjoins the most dismal and vicious alleys of the lowest and poorest suburb of Bristol. In that part of St. Philip's, when we last saw it, eight or nine people were lying dead of cholera in a single house. When a postchaise stopped at the Bear, Allan Cunningham tells us that the gossipping, officious father, in his well-powdered wig and best black suit, used to step into the parlour with his courtliest bow, and ask the lady or gentleman whether his little boy should recite poetry or take their likeness. Some were worried with the intrusive landlord and his pretty, clever, polite boy, some amused.

When Lawrence père failed, as he naturally would, and took his boy to Bath to study art under Prince Hoare, the lad was not long before he won the great silver-gilt palette of the Society of Arts, and at the age of ten began to paint historical pictures. The father, like many fathers who fail in life, now traded entirely on the success of his son. The landlord of the Bear had not become a great lawyer: he was too clever to collect customs from coffee-coloured West-India captains. He was not thrifty enough for a landlord, but there was still one pride left—*dum spiro spero*—and that was, he was the father of a genius: without him the genius would not have existed. It is wonderful how vain the father of a genius often is of himself. Getting by degrees the true showman's prudence, and full of his one great success in life, Lawrence's father in 1787 brought his clever son (born in 1769) to apartments in Leicester-square, to be near Reynolds, who was then at the top of the tree, his studio-doors thronged by the wise, the great, the rich, and the beautiful. Reynolds was a kind adviser to the young aspirant, who that very year began to exhibit at Somerset House. Soon Hoppner became his rival; but Lawrence went bland and smiling on his way through a grove of laurels, and pressed forward to fashion, wealth, and honour. No foolish aspirations for ideal excellence distracted him as they did Reynolds, who to the last struggled to be more than a face-painter and minister to wealth and vanity. Lawrence went on in his own graceful, bright way, and pleased George III., who never much cared for Reynolds, because he did not paint smooth and even like his protégé, dull intolerable West; and George IV. gave him princely com-

missions. It was after Napoleon's exile to Elba that the house in Russell-square became a meeting-place for emperors, kings, and heroes. George IV. gave Lawrence the order to paint the great potentates then in England: the handsome Alexander of Russia, the King of Prussia; that rough, cruel, stanch old hussar Blucher; and that Cossack chieftain Platoff, whose face Sir Walter Scott describes as seamed all over with a network of fine wrinkles,—were all at this house; and the Rev. Mr. Mitford describes seeing two dwarfish Cossack troopers of the Don, in their short cloaks and fur caps, seated on their little ponies at the door, keeping guard, the butts of their long lances, that had often drunk the blood of Frenchmen, resting on the pavement by their sides. The house is quiet enough now; no kings leave their cards there, no squadrons of Cossacks or of hussars gallop to the door: it can no longer crow over its neighbours; its knocker has almost forgotten the princely fingers that once lifted it.

But sternly back to our muttuns. The Waterloo Gallery at Windsor still contains the stately pictures of the kings and generals that were once lifted through the very door at which we are halting; and the people's gallery still boasts those poetical *chefs-d'œuvre* of Sir Thomas—John Philip Kemble as Hamlet, noble Mrs. Siddons, and the courtly, calm old Quaker President of the Academy, Benjamin West. They are not Titians, but they are fine sound pictures, painted by an accomplished, graceful, and learned artist. Urbane, and in his very essence a courtly man of the world, Lawrence made a most dignified President of the Royal Academy, one who raised the art in the eyes of people who live for externals. We cannot expect to have Presidents every day like Reynolds; but the time may come when we may have men not fitted to clean Lawrence's brushes babbling in the stately chair that should be the reward of consummate genius, and of genius alone.

The one great mystery of Lawrence's life, and the cause of unceasing and insatiable curiosity among his contemporaries, was the fact of his incessantly working, yet never growing rich. Into what sieve of the Danaïdes did he, then, pour his princely earnings? He was a great collector of sketches by the old masters, but even a picture-dealer's pocket is not a mile deep. Lawrence gambled, said men at the clubs. But there is really no proof that he did, and he is known to have given up billiards because his good play led to his friends betting heavily on his game. The secret was, in fact, no secret. Early in life the true careless son of a squandering father had unluckily for himself planted his easel in a thicket of those nettles that are better known under the name of small debts. He began his London life by keeping two establishments, and he never got free from the Jewish bonds and fetters that followed such a premature and sanguine outlay. His heartless flirtation with women—more especially with Mrs. Siddons's niece, whose heart he is said to have broken by his neglect—it is not for us too sternly to condemn. A man's heart may suffer a great

deal without breaking, and there were, we are inclined to think, grave faults on both sides. The butterfly man lived to repent, no doubt, as the gayest and most fascinating men often do, and to mourn the solitary home and the cheerless, lonely life that always await that great social criminal, the old regretful bachelor.

But we must hasten westward to Leicester-square. Leicester House stood at the north-east end of Leicester-square, New Lisle-street being built on the site of its gardens. It derived its name from the Earl of Leicester, the father of that stubborn republican Algernon Sydney, of the "handsome Sydney" of De Grammont, and of Lady Dorothy, the Sacharissa of Waller, the lady who, in despite of the poet's mellifluous verse, married the Earl of Sunderland.

"Give me but what this ribbon bound ;  
Take all the rest the sun goes round,"

were pretty lines, but they had one fault—they did not win the lady.

In Charles the Second's time that brave but unfortunate woman the Queen of Bohemia, driven from her dominions by the French dragoons, left her chivalrous friend the Earl of Craven's house in Drury-lane to die here. After this the palace became a mere sort of lodging-house for great people and ambassadors. The great Colbert came here, and Prince Eugene—*der edle Ritter*—the slayer of Turks and the last of the true Knights. Then the house got promoted, and became "the pouting-place of princes," as some wit of the day quaintly called it. George II., the coarse, brave, choleric king, lived here when prince ; and after him there came to reside here, also in luxurious discontent, his untoward son, Frederick Prince of Wales, whose chief favourites were that absurd puff-ball of a man, whose very name seems a joke, Bubb Doddington—afterwards Lord Melcombe—and his dancing-master, who was his "counsellor and friend," if such a simpleton could have a friend. Here Frederick railed at his father and brave old Sir Robert Walpole, courted the people, neglected his wife, and made a supreme fool of himself generally. Yet this royal critic, bad as he could be, tried to patronise Dr. Johnson, rewarded Glover for his bad verses, honoured Pope with a visit, and made great professions to Gay. Good, honest, fat, careless Gay indeed laid himself out to please the prince, and in 1724 was invited to this house to read his now-forgotten tragedy of *The Captives* to the sensible princess. The hour came ; the princess and ladies were in grave expectation. The flushed and nervous poet advanced with Ms. in hand, and in a tumult of reverence. At that moment a stool came in the way ; the fat poet fell heavily forwards, and threw down with a bang a large gilt japan screen. The princess frowned, the ladies screamed and laughed, and still the tragedy was to be read. Well, even the best toadies must suffer ; and, encouraged by the princess, Gay, still slow to learn court lessons, afterwards wrote his inimitable *Fables* for the young Duke of Cumberland. Bitter was Gay's disgust and disdain when he had to tell Pope, who really loved the *petit bon homme*, that his

only reward had been the offer of the menial post of gentleman-usher to a child-princess. At length aroused, he produced *The Beggars' Opera*, and set the Thames on fire at last.

The Duke of Gloucester, Frederick's brother, afterwards lived here; then the house faded off into Sir Aston Lever's Museum, afterwards became a needlework exhibition, then a gymnasium and a *café chantant*. The adjoining house—Saville House—was burnt down in the Lord George Gordon riots by the frenzied Blue Cockades, who were seeking all through the town for those tolerant men who wished to relieve the persecuted Roman Catholics from their disabilities.

The floating foreign population of "Leycester Skevare" was well summarised by one of the most clever of modern burlesque writers as

"Prince, patriot, or prig."

A strange bearded, hydrophobic, scowling, suspicious race haunt the street that runs beside the blackened ruins of Saville House. Princes, spies, billiard-sharpers, poets, enthusiasts, assassins, theorists, fanatics, old soldiers, swindlers, dreamers, barons, thieves, and philosophers mingle together as they mingle may. It is a witches' caldron, that foreign boulevard of ours, and contains in its eddies all the elements of human life—Orsinis, Fieschis, André Chéniers, Lacenaires, ghowls, vampires, Phaetons, Amphions, perhaps some brooding young Frenchman, hereafter to be a Napoleon and the devastator of Europe, nay of the world. What a *bal d'opéra* this life is, till death strips off the masks, and shows us how phantasmagoric a bubble is the round world, and "all that it inhabit"! Not long before Orsini threw the glass shell full of fulminating mercury at Louis Napoleon's carriage, I happened to stroll one evening into a club which held its meetings on the first floor above Wyld's reading-room. It was a red republican debating-club, and the discussion soon grew hot and furious. Every form of political fanatic was to be seen there, from the old veteran plotter to the stripling recruit. The man who was speaking as I entered was a Parisian artisan, dirty, truculent, and savage; he leant on crutches, for he had been crippled at the barricades. His speech was a torrent of lava—a furious eruption of savage threats, mysterious prophecies, and scathing denunciations of the wily French Emperor. Probably among that bearded crowd sat Orsini with high forehead, dark-lantern eyes, full of imperturbable fixity of purpose. The chairman, looking like an old soldier of the Imperial Guard, had heavy eyes, long Quixotic face, and drooping white moustachios. This was Dr. Bernard, the friend of Orsini, who was afterwards tried for his share in the Italian's desperate conspiracy, and was no doubt deeply implicated in it, although he was acquitted. I have often thought that, perhaps, that very night the plot was brought to a climax, and the glass globes shaped and filled.

From a certain memorable house (now forming the northern half

of Sablonière's Hotel) at the east of the square, whose door was once surmounted by a gilt bust, there often stepped forth into the light a certain little, keen-looking man in a sky-blue coat, with his cocked-hat tilted up so as to show a scar on his right temple. The name of that little, quick-eyed man was William Hogarth, the greatest satirist that ever painted. Here this sturdy, dogged son of the poor schoolmaster in the Old Bailey created all those wonderful types of vice and folly that live in the mind, as much realities as the Spendalls and Squanders and Altamonts and Lotharios and Littlebrains that we meet every afternoon in the Park or the Row. Before his hawk's-eye all the follies of the day passed in parade, and were jotted down for future punishment. In that house he drew the Rake surrounded by his train of toadies, parasites, and projectors; the detestable bow-legged quack doctor, with cunning malice in his wrinkled eyes; the fool's-capped Guards on their slovenly march through Finchley to that hot brush with the Highlanders on Culloden Heath; the sottish hags of Gin-lane, and the dreadful old lady with the one eye, who married the handsome young gentleman at Marylebone church; the mad gambler on his knees shouting curses; the shivering old Pharisee on her way to early service in Covent Garden; the pugilists with bald skulls barred with plaster; the dancing-masters all grimace, lace, and broken French. Thief, murderer, highwayman, bedlamite, parson, clerk, methodist, milkmaid, fiddler, turnkey, duellist, courtier, sailor, merchant, gamin, beadle—he knew them all, and painted them boldly as they were, leaving on each bad forehead his own broad-arrow brand.

It is Hogarth's statue that should adorn this square—Hogarth's, and no one else's. Half his life he was moving in this orbit. Close by here, in Cranbourne-street, this grandson of the Westmoreland yeoman was apprenticed to Mr. Ellis Gamble of the Golden Angel, to learn silver-plate engraving, and to engrave arms and ciphers on silver tankards and noblemen's sack-cups and salvers. From Leicester Fields, too, when he married by stealth the great Sir John Thornhill's pretty daughter, and remained for some time under the paternal ban, he describes himself as moping into the City with a copper-plate to illustrate Milton or *Hudibras* in his coat-pocket, and his hat pulled gloomily over his eyes. Ten guineas from the bookseller, and he would return, his hat cocked jauntily over his left eye, his sword swinging gaily at his heels, as, with Hayman or some other boon companion, he sallied off across the fields for a day's holiday at Highgate.

All Hogarth's friends must have passed under the shadow of that Golden Head on the north-east side of the square: the learned Hoadley; clever squinting Wilkes; robust ribald Churchill; poor Gardelle the miniature painter, one day to be hung for murder; bluff, benevolent, old Captain Coram, who built the Foundling; versatile Garrick, his face beaming with fun; that pleasant young Irish nobleman Lord Charlemont; Fielding the incomparable; grave thoughtful Richardson; Rey-

nolds and Gay, Horace Walpole and Quin; Boswell, Thornton, and Thompson of Exeter Change. Forth to Southwark fair and Mrs. Cornelys's masquerades, to Vauxhall and Drury-lane, has the little man, with the square broad brow, short thick nose, and droll ugly mouth, often wandered from this square; we should like to see a statue of the genius and of his pug-dog Trump take the place of that mutilated caricature of forgotten royalty, which now dominates over the nettles and old shoes, brickbats and old hats—the centre of a dismal enclosure which has become a cemetery for cats and a disgrace to London.

Hogarth was the first painter who tossed away the old ideal and carried the principles of the Dutch painters into modern life. He first wrote a novel in paint, and told a story of his own times. He was *Punch* and the *Illustrated News*; but he was also Smollett, Dickens, and Thackeray. He painted Sir Robert Walpole to-day, and Sarah Malcolm, the murderess, to-morrow: all that was human interested him. He began by laughing at Pope; he ended by defying Wilkes. The reign of George the Second lives still on his canvas. He was a thrifty and hospitable man, a kind husband, a sincere friend, and an indulgent master. He was one of the greatest observers that ever viewed this vast kaleidoscope called London. He had deep pathos and infinite drollery; he was deficient in the sense of beauty, it must be allowed; and yet there are one or two sweet primrose faces among his ribald crowds. That exquisite critic Charles Lamb says, in his own charming way, that the simple face of the sleeping child in the arms of its mother seems to tranquillise all the noise and drunken clamour of the slovenly march to Finchley. A very pure happy face, too, always seems to us that of the merchant's daughter, which leans towards her betrothed lover, the good apprentice, and looks over the hymn-book they are both holding. A calm and tranquil love is expressed by the very turn of the head; only compare it with that hideous face, spotted with patches, which in another picture leeringly greets the pretty little gosling of a country girl who has just alighted from the carrier's wagon. Very beautiful too is the refined face of the strolling actress who beats the drum in the foreground of Southwark fair. It is interesting also to remember, as we look at that pleasant sunny countenance, that it was this poor girl whom Hogarth's stout arm rescued from the brutal insolence of a strolling manager. There can be no statue in London more deserved than the one of Hogarth that we have proposed for Leicester-square. What did the Duke of York, the Stylites of St. James's Park with a bill-file coming through his stony skull, do for England, except fritter away her brave armies, and squander her money? Yet here is a man who has left behind him immortal warnings and great teachings, statueless. Well! here is a square especially consecrated to his memory. Let those who love art give a penny each, and the good work could be done to-morrow.

Another great painter also lived in this square. At No. 47, on the

west side, worthy Sir Joshua Reynolds resided from 1761 till his death in 1792. Through that door elephantine Johnson must have rolled a thousand times with Boswell, watchful and wistful, at his heels, Sterne joked dangerously, Percy quoted old ballads, Gibbon talked Roman Empire, and Goldsmith bantered. All the great and wise and good of George the Third's reign have passed through that portal: handsome old Lord Mansfield the wise, Warton the poet, Warren Hastings, dull Lord Anson, Burke, Lord Heathfield, the beautiful Miss Gunnings, Nelly O'Brien, and many other Thais and Laises. There in his octagonal studio, under one small north-light, Sir Joshua stood at his easel, day after day and year after year, painting, now the famous Marquis of Granby, flaming scarlet, now the intellectual sensitive face of the poet Beattie. We all know Sir Joshua's face, with the pleasant blunt features, the beaming spectacles, and the bushy white wig. His frilled shirt and lapelled waistcoat are familiar to us all. We even remember the prominent veins on his full forehead, and the Michael-Angelo seal dangling at his watch-ribbon. Somewhat jealous of Gainsborough and Ramsay, and strongly objecting to Barry's violent temper, Reynolds was still an equable, courteous, sensible man, beloved by the Johnson set, and deservedly so, we may be sure, for no sham affability or false time-serving could have deceived men like Burke and Gibbon. He did some harm to English art by encouraging sham ideal and generalisation, but still it must be allowed that he was the greatest of modern portrait-painters. His heads have a grace, charm, and variety, above all a dignified thoughtfulness that has been indeed seldom found since. People complain that he sold them dissolving views; but then when his pictures do keep well, how mellow, transparent, rich, and sunny they are! We like to think of the grand coaches and the sedan-chairs stopping at the door of No. 47; and Miss Burney, her head a mountain of powdered hair, which set off her fine eyes, or Goldsmith's "Jessamy Bride," tripping out, as that honest old servant Ralph Kirkman throws open the door and says: "Sir Joshua *is* at home, ma'am."

What glorious pictures, scattered to the four winds now (we came upon such a one the other day in the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg), were conceived and painted at No. 47! The infant "Hercules strangling the Snake" (for the Empress Catherine); the "Puck on the Mushroom" (painted from a dead child); the "Ugolino" of Dante (from a coal-heaver); the "Cardinal Beaton" (now at Dulwich); the "Muscipula" (arch child with a mouse-trap); Sterne's portrait, with his finger on his rounded brow; Mrs. Siddons on her throne; Nelly O'Brien in the round straw hat; gallant Lord Ligonier leaning against his horse; Garrick wavering between Tragedy and Comedy; Dr. Johnson beating down buzzing Boswell with an iron-bound elenchus.

Come and look in at those windows in the quiet dusk of a May evening, when the new-lit lamps give scarcely more light than primroses in a hazel-wood; and you may almost fancy you see one of Sir



Joshua's pleasant, ill-managed, scrambling parties, more a picnic than a dinner. Peers, artists, poets, lawyers, actors, musicians, metaphysicians, scramble for food, chat, laugh, and wrangle. The host is a conciliatory, unaffected, admirable old bachelor; most sociable and full of anecdote after his hard day's work.

Goldsmith blunders, rambles, and shouts with laughter; Beauclerc is dry as the finest old sherry; Boswell praises the port as he drinks deep; Johnson says beef-steak pie is a good thing if it ever got cold (he has burnt his gobbling and voracious mouth); Burke soars over the Indian empire, and passes a thousand rajahs in review before him; Gibbon tells a story of some antiquary having just found Essex's celebrated ring concealed in the drawer of an old cabinet; Reynolds chats about the Vatican or Florence, and flourishes his ear-trumpet like a mistaken bugle. Of all delightful feasts and symposia of the world, from Plato's Banquet downwards, through all the good eating and fun of Athenæus, no evenings could have much surpassed those at No. 47. When the candles came, the great lexicographer rolled like a leviathan into an ocean of glorious talk; stunned a disputant with every "Why, sir?" or "No, sir!" and slew an antagonist every time he rolled his head and exclaimed, "Sir, you don't see the thing clearly. You are obscure, sir. You are not profound. A moment ago your arguments were clear, sir; but then they were only clear because they were shallow."

The last day came, when Hogarth was lifted into his carriage at the Golden Head, and driven off slowly to paint "the end of all things," and die at his Chiswick house. The day came too to Reynolds. It was a July day, sad in spite even of the lavish sunshine, when Sir Joshua sighed, and, laying down his brush beside a blurred portrait, said mournfully, "I know that all things on earth must come to an end, and now I am come to mine."

A day or two after, he is seen, dejected, almost blind, groping round the railings in the square in search of a pet canary that had strayed. A few weeks more, and he lies calm and pale in his black-velvet-lined coffin in Somerset House; Burke his friend, and Barry his rough enemy, Boswell and Langton, Kemble, John Hunter, Townley, and Angerstein are looking at their dead friend ere the lid be closed for ever; and someone in a low tearful whisper repeats Goldsmith's lines:

"Still born to improve us in every part,  
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart."

Reynolds and Hogarth, these are the two intellectual deities we worship in Leicester-square; their names live while all the people in stars and garters, the pickthanks, the things of silk, the coloured bubbles, the Bubb-Doddingtons, the frequenters of Leicester House, and the toadies of Frederick Prince of Wales, are forgotten, and will remain forgotten.

Next door to Hogarth that great surgeon, John Hunter, lived (we

believe from 1783 till his sudden death in 1793). In a building behind the house, erected in 1785 at an expense of 8000*l.*, this acute-minded discoverer stored that fine museum, now at the College of Surgeons in Lincoln's-inn-fields. This collection, increased by the kindness of Sir Joseph Banks, cost him 90,000 guineas. No giant or pumpkin-headed child died in England but the little arrogant man bought the body. It is here that his gay wife's incessant music-parties vexed the soul out of this great surgeon, who is said on one or two occasions, at his return home from the hospitals, to have bundled the whole fashionable world out of the house neck and crop, to their infinite discomfiture.

Wyld's Globe was too purely instructive ever to become a national resort, and it has passed away, the dreadful eyesore that it was! The mutilated statue of George II. now reigns supreme over an arid waste—a cats' paradise, varied by old shoes and oyster-shells. This statue (lately the subject of a most daring practical joke) was, in its prime, a thing to be talked about. It came about 1754 from Canons, the seat of the great Duke of Chandos, an imperial person in his day, and drawn at full length by Pope in his best verse.

On the left hand of dingy St. Martin's-street (south side of Leicester-square) is a dark, dismal house, with a slate-covered turret, where Sir Isaac Newton once lived, and, soaring from the dirt and dinge—"fimum strepitumque"—of London, pondered over the mysteries of the worlds that fill the night thick as motes in the sun. Dr. Burney lived here afterwards, and gave his grand musical parties; and here his clever daughter, Fanny, wrote *Evelina*, the novel that Dr. Johnson so raved about; and left home at last to become entangled in the vexatious duties of a court-attendant.

Now, with a long stride westward, let us pass on to Grosvenor-square, which Pope mentions as early as 1716. It derived its name, Mr. Cunningham tells us, from Sir Richard Grosvenor, fourth baronet (of the Gros-Veneurs), who died in 1732. That arrogant, virulent friend of Pope's, Bishop Warburton, lived in this spot; here he pounded his paradoxes, and reviled methodists, Wilkites, infidels, and indeed anybody that differed from him. Thrale, the great brewer, who with his generous hospitality at Streatham cheered the melancholy of his friend Dr. Johnson, died in this square in 1781. At No. 30 John Wilkes died. The distiller's son, thin, squinting, lisping, yet delightful, after all his duels and political squabbles and sedition, came here and ended his days as a quiet Constitutionalist, active against the Lord George Gordon rioters. Wilkie's patron and Haydon's horror, Sir George Beaumont, lived at No. 29. Here he talked his pleasant platitudes about high art, and descanted over the Claudes that he used to carry about with him in his carriage. "I see no brown in grass," said Constable to him one day in the country, laying an old Cremona on the dazzlingly-green lawn, to prove that the old masters were darker than they should

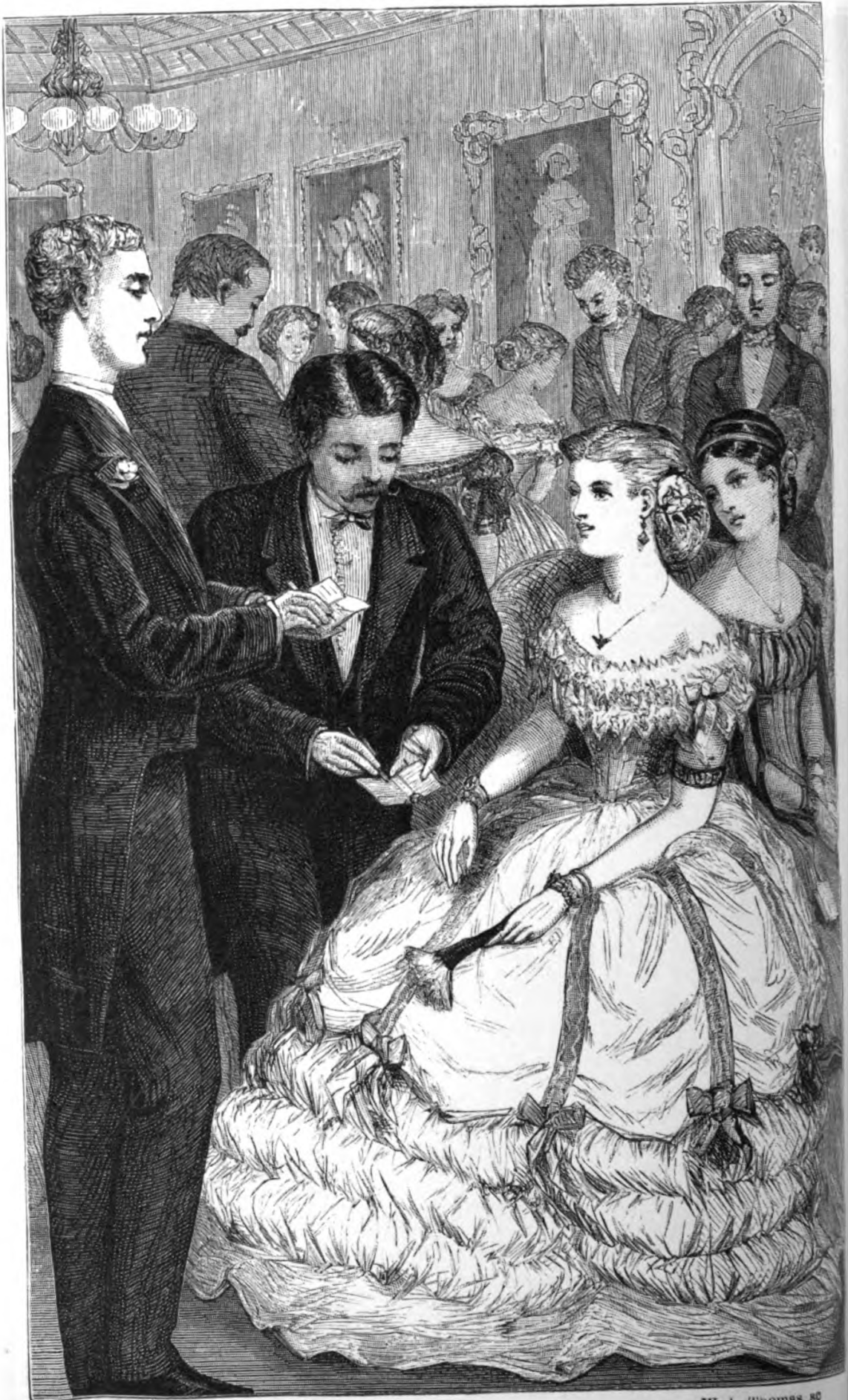
be. But Sir George's mind was not original ; and he went on with his brown trees and his receipt for composition, till Turner came and painted as Claude should have done, and put twenty miles' more landscape within the four sides of a frame than Lorraine ever could pack in.

No. 39 Grosvenor-square is a house indissolubly connected with the memory of the Cato-street conspiracy, 23d of February 1820. The conspirators—of whom the chief was Thistlewood, ex-ensign in a West-India regiment and a disgraced gambler of infamous character, who had dabbled in the Spa-field troubles, and in all the dangerous seditions of the day, with his lieutenants, Ings a savage pork-butcher, a man of colour, and a cobbler—met in a loft over a stable in Cato-street (now Homer-street), Edgeware-road. They were armed with pikes, pistols, swords, and hand-grenades ; and were to rush into Lord Harrowby's, directly Thistlewood rang the bell with a pretended letter. Some of them were to guard the kitchen-stairs and the area, to keep back the servants ; while the rest were to enter the dining-room, and slay all the cabinet-ministers that day invited to dinner. Ings carried two bags ; one intended to contain Lord Sidmouth's, the other Lord Castlereagh's head, which were to be put on pikes, and carried before the conspirators through the streets. They were then to seize the cannon of the City Light Horse in Gray's-inn-lane, fire some houses near there, and then march on the Bank and the Mansion House. The Bow-street runners surprised them as they were arming, and secured the ringleaders. Thistlewood, however, ran Smithers, one of the officers, through, and escaped. He was soon after captured, and with his coadjutors, Ings, Brunt, Tidd, and Davidson, hung at the Old Bailey ; and afterwards clumsily beheaded, much to the disgust and horror of the crowd.

Such are a few of the chief associations of one of our fashionable squares.

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F. Oakes, del.

W. L. Thomas, sc

HELD IN PLAY.

## HELD IN PLAY

(A FRAGMENT OF A YOUNG LADY'S LETTER)

So you ask me, my Clara, to tell you  
How I liked the MacAlister's ball ;  
Who were there ; whom I danced with ; but—well, you  
Shall hear my account of it all.  
There was Captain Fitz-Vane of the Lancers ;  
Young Loftus—he's only half-pay ;  
They are both of them charming—such dancers !  
So I thought I would hold both in play.

O Clara, when first they had spied me,  
I was resting upon the settee ;  
There was Laura MacHorker beside me,  
As jealous as jealous could be.  
At once they came to me ; what dances  
Would I promise them ? each bade me say :  
I wish you had seen Laura's glances  
At both, as I held them in play.

They begged for one waltz, which I gave them ;  
Nothing else, they affirmed with a sigh,  
From distraction could possibly save them ;—  
I don't think Laura liked being by.  
She was vexed—her face could not deceive me—  
I saw it as plain as the day.  
O Clara, there's nothing, believe me,  
Like holding one's " fishes" in play.

'Twas an exquisite ball, and discretion  
Makes flirting and love *comme il faut* :  
Do you think it a heartless expression ?  
'Tis fashion's grand maxim, you know.  
But still on one point a suggestion  
Pray give me, my Clara, O pray !  
Is it *always* safe—that is my question—  
Thus to hold one's admirers in play ?

## SUMMER TERM AT OXFORD

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THERE has probably been more nonsense written in prose and verse about the Oxford summer term than about any other subject connected with that far-famed seat of learning. We have heard so much of the time at which the usually steady-going old university town submits to a complete metamorphosis as to its inhabitants, and those unfortunate lines in *The Princess*, which tell us of "prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans, and sweet girl-graduates, with their golden hair," have been dragged so repeatedly into every conceivable context, that persons who are not possessed with some bigoted and irrational awe for everything to do with Oxford must have grown positively sick of the very mention of Commemoration and all its kindred glories. Yet when all due allowance has been made for the inflated eulogies passed upon the months of May and June, as spent at Oxford, by young academical coxcombs in their prize-poems, the summer term has still a certain charm of its own. As for Commemoration itself, we are disposed to regard it in the light of a delusion and a snare. Commemoration week is precisely the time during which the visitor sees not Oxford but something else. If, as a stranger, he wishes to see the University in its normal dress, then he must come at some other time; if, however, he wishes to see something that is not proper to the University at all—if he wishes merely to criticise amateur concerts, flower-shows, young ladies, *et hoc genus omne*—then let him go elsewhere. This is, in fact, the dilemma between the horns of which the Commemoration visitor is placed: he doesn't see Oxford in its own peculiar garb, and he doesn't see as well in Oxford what he might see with infinitely more comfort, less trouble, and less expense in some non-academical town. Of course the Festival of the Encænia has its own advantages from certain points of view. Firstly, it offers an extraordinary harvest to extortionate lodging-house keepers; secondly, it is a perfect godsend for diplomatic mammas with a superfluity of unmarried but marriageable daughters. The prices which dingy, comfortless apartments, whose approach lies up narrow break-neck staircases, will fetch are quite fabulous; and the demand made by starved-out and susceptible undergraduates for every variety of young ladydom is what might be expected. The advantages offered by Scarborough, Tenby, or Dawlish for fair *intrigantes* are as nothing when compared with those which are presented by the Oxford Commemoration week. If it is really true that no ordinary young man can pass two months in a country house, surrounded by all the fascinations of muslin, music, and croquet, without

offering his hand and heart to some one of the many daughters of his generous entertainer, it is at least certain that the youth of one-and-twenty, who can habitually meet at lunch, breakfast, flower-show, and ball the sisters or cousins of his college-chum without gushing out into some declaration of passion, must have a heart girt round with triple oak and brass. And a heart of this description is a rarity with ingenuous youth of one-and-twenty years.

These two important social duties discharged, it might be thought that the mission of Commemoration week was fulfilled, and that it was unreasonable to seek for anything more. The alacrity with which Oxford—young, middle-aged, and old alike—applies itself to the performance of these functions is surprising. Young Oxford is never tired of catering for the enjoyment of its fair visitors, and of doing its best to ruin itself and its parents by elaborate entertainments in the shape of breakfast, luncheon, and dinner; and even the more mature and less inflammable don is content to have his rooms turned utterly topsy-turvy for the space of a week, to go to bed at abnormal hours, to rise up earlier than his wont, and in a thousand other ways to sacrifice himself upon the altar of family or friendly devotion. For instance, there is the Reverend Henry Room. He is not very aged, it is true—five-and-thirty at most, perhaps; but then he has been fellow and tutor of his college for the last ten or twelve years; and under these circumstances he has grown prematurely staid and prematurely old in sentiment. There is nothing that wipes off the bloom and freshness of youth so much as the close atmosphere and dull conceits of a college common-room, with the accompaniment of common-room port-wine. But the reverend gentleman possesses a sister, who for one week in every year proves the bane of his existence—a merry, bright-eyed young lady, who has not yet completed her sixth lustrum. Regularly as Commemoration comes round she invades the stillness of his cloistered retreat, accompanied by an aunt for chaperone, and a brace of cousins for companions. The Reverend Henry Room has ceased to remonstrate, and has grown benignantly to acquiesce in the infliction. He is made to ask younger men—undergraduates, whose company he eschews—to his rooms to meet his volatile relatives. He knows that his sister herself cannot help laughing at him at lunch; and he knows that as he gets into the cab which is to take the party to the ball, the lads who are smoking out of their windows will grin as they see him, and say to themselves, “There’s old Room going to the Christ Church ball, and that girl there is his sister!” But Commemoration, like Christmas, only comes once a year; and as it lasts for less than a week, the college don supports it with fortitude worthy of a martyr.

But there is no need here to dwell upon the social miseries which Commemoration entails upon the college fellow, or the ruinously expensive hospitalities into which the prodigal undergraduate is ever ready to plunge. Every variation of flowery writing has been expended upon



describing the hubbub of the Theatre when young Oxford exerts its lungs to the utmost to cheer indiscriminately the ladies in white, red, blue, green, married, unmarried, and to-be-married ; upon painting the gorgeous flower-shows of New College Gardens ; the amateur theatricals of St. John's ; the flirtation that is conducted in Addison's Walk, and the betrothals that take place, or may be supposed to take place, under the cool cloisters of Magdalen. With the Oxford summer term and its peculiar aspects these have only an incidental connection. If any person would see what Oxford proper during the early summer really is, he should see it some time before the torrent of Commemoration visitors has caused hotels to overflow and lodgings to be at a premium. Let him go there when a fortnight has yet to elapse before the modern Feast of the Dedication begins to be celebrated—on one of the first days in June, or of the latter half of May. In the beginning of this month, it may be remarked, though the time is even now designated by the title of summer term, nothing worthy of that term has, as a rule, been experienced. There are exceptions, of course ; but the pleasant month of May, before it has entered its teens, has so many of the disagreeable characteristics of April, and not unseldom of March, that it is better in the dreamy world of poetry than in the windy, drizzling atmosphere of facts. However, for young Oxford it is quite enough that it is *called* the summer term. No matter whether it be wind or hail or rain or snow, it is the month of May, and everyone knows that of the *summer* term May is the commencement. It would be nothing short of a pestilent heresy to refuse to recognise the great truth that this term must be summer.

Perhaps the reader of these lines will so far exert his imagination as to suppose himself in the middle of a college-quadrangle. It is about seven o'clock. The sky has clouded over, the wind is chill, and everything seems to be grimly prophetic of rain. But it is the month of May—to-day happens to be the third. If you wish yourself with a cigar sitting in the immediate vicinity of a comfortable fire, please to remember the period, and cast your eyes up at that window there. What, you are surprised ! “What in the world,” you say, “can induce five or six young men, apparently in their right mind and clothed, to sit at an open window on a cold comfortless evening like this sipping iced sherry-cobbler ? Are fires prohibited in the University, and is this self-denying ordinance enjoined on the same principle that Blue-coat boys are forbidden to wear any coverings for their head ? Relic of barbarism in this enlightened seat of learning !” This unseasonable exhibition is easily accounted for by the fact that the summer term comes whether summer itself comes or not, and that it would be regarded as viciously heterodox in the undergraduate to demur at subjecting himself to this slow torture as it would be to decline subscribing to his college boat- or cricket-club ; and so, night after night, he makes it a point of conscience to place himself there, comforting himself with an iced liquid,

which he would rejoice to see transmuted into mulled claret, till his teeth chatter, and bidding a hasty adieu to his host, he hastens to his own room, there to light a fire of coals and solace himself therewith.

Warned by this, let the reader avoid Oxford when the summer term is in its earliest infancy, and, waiting till our fickle English climate appears to be in something like a settled mood, betake himself thither about the date already mentioned. If he is only tolerably fortunate in the matter of weather he will have a genuine treat. Just at the time when the foliage of the trees is of the freshest and brightest green, when the petals of the flowers love to unfold themselves the widest, when the song of the birds is the gayest and loudest, and when every other phenomenon of revivification which poets love to ascribe to March or April, but which is never really experienced till we are well into May, is noticeable. Oxford, too, seems to be inspired by its freshest and fullest life. The sun is shining with the brightness, but not the sultriness, of July, and the hour is about two P.M. College-lectures are over for the day; lunch is brought to a conclusion (for Oxford lunches early, by reason of its regulation dinner-hour, six o'clock), and the streets of the old place are filled with animation. Here is the typical don going out for his afternoon constitutional, which he never misses. The sun is bright, and he is indulging in a straw hat with a very high crown and a very broad black ribbon. But if you want toilets to startle you, look there. These young gentlemen sauntered into a certain well-known university shirt-maker's yesterday morning, and invested in the loudest linen which his shop contained. And their neckties! You may well open your eyes. Their pattern is, it is true, rather wildly ornithological, but it happens to be the latest thing; and perhaps in a week will have given place to some fresh variety of university costume, for undergraduate taste is proverbially fickle as regards these matters. To a stranger, perhaps, the appearance of those youths yonder, swathed up to their necks in flannel, their straw hats encircled by particoloured ribbons, might occasion some surprise. They happen to be devotees of the watery goddess of Isis, on their way to the river-bank for their afternoon row. And, by the bye, if you please, we will follow them—down the High-street, though Christ Church Meadows, till we get to the side of the Cherwell. The Cherwell is a small tributary or little offshoot of the Isis, about twenty feet wide, and looked upon by the Oxonians as a kind of ditch. There is a story which tells of a curious mistake made by some Cambridge man with reference to this stream. The extreme narrowness of the Cam is well known, and the Cambridge stranger, when being conducted by his Oxford host to the Isis, was naturally led down by the Cherwell, which he is reported to have mistaken for the veritable Isis. "Well," quoth he, "after all we have heard about it, your river is not so much larger than ours." But young Oxford is prolific in such narratives. At present the surface of the Cherwell is covered at intervals with punts, inside which, reclining

upon cushions, are seen a variety of undergraduates, looking the very embodiments of indolence and comfort. A novel is generally in their hands, and a pipe or cigar as generally between their lips. But here and there may be met with youths of austerer habits, who betake themselves to this cool though not sequestered stream to study the Ethics of Aristotle or the Republic of Plato; it may, however, be questioned whether the work which is got through in this self-indulgent fashion is generally of the soundest and most profitable kind. As a rule, perhaps, the occupation is one that would better befit some "such pleasant realm of drowsy land" as Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.

We will now take a turn up to the Bullingdon or Cowley cricket-grounds. Here the different colleges have each their small strip of land upon which, with infinite danger to themselves from their neighbours' cricket-balls, they conduct that pastime which excited so much the admiration and surprise of Talleyrand: "A beautiful game; but why do they not pay men to play it for them?" On the Bullingdon ground the spectator may often witness a variety of equestrian performances as well. There are always horses with riders on their backs at Cowley, it is true; but there are always more at Bullingdon. Bullingdon boasts also of a certain Oxford club bearing its name, which club is in its own private opinion a very illustrious and a very select one; and the young gentlemen of the Bullingdon Club are a somewhat horsey and sporting set. After all, however, cricket at Oxford is much the same amusement as cricket at any other place; and very nearly the same spectacle presented by the Bullingdon or Cowley ground may be realised any day at Lords' or the Oval. Dinner is over, and the cricket-matches are all played out, and finished or drawn for the day. The four-in-hand drags drive up, the different sets of players and their friends climb up into them, and the homeward journey is commenced. We will see if we cannot get a seat in this one. Yes, here we are in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, and a Babel of talk about the afternoon's playing. The team is good, and we are soon off at a rapid rate. Some lineal descendant of Mr. Four-in-hand Fosbrooke, *vice* driver deposed, holds the reins; and here we are just in sight of Magdalen Bridge. No one who has witnessed the spectacle presented at that point on a fine evening in summer can ever well forget it: Magdalen tower, with its infinite grace and beauty of architecture, rising just in front; beyond, the spires of University and Queen's; the river brightly flowing beneath the bridge; to the right, the Botanical Gardens,—all clad with the golden lustre of a gorgeous sunset. Of Magdalen tower pages might be written; but we are not architectural, and therefore we refrain either from minute description or detailed criticism.

Our drag draws up at the gates of our college,—no matter which that is,—and we dismount. On the steps are congregated a troop of boating-men, just returned from the river, awaiting our arrival. It is now eight o'clock or more, and supper begins to be vaguely hinted at; for

cricket and boating make us ravenous. But we are told So-and-so has a supper on that night at half-past nine. And here comes the college messenger with Mr. Jones's compliments, and will we sup with him. At half-past nine we are in Mr. Jones's rooms, and supper begins,—one of those suppers which are only celebrated during the summer term. For a full account of this the reader may be referred to his own experience; or, supposing he does not happen to possess that, will he be induced to make it his own? If, at any rate, he wants to see what has been briefly alluded to here, and much else that there has not been time to mention; if he wants to behold Oxford under its most favourable auspices, at its choicest season and its merriest festival,—let him go there during the summer term, about the time that we have suggested; but let him be advised by us, and shun Commemoration, unless of course he has some vested interest in lodging-house keepers, or wishes to further the prospects of some diplomatic mamma. *Crede experto.*

T. H. S. ESCOTT.

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# CIRCE

Or Three Acts in the Life of an Artist

BY BABINGTON WHITE

ACT THE SECOND :—QUEM DEUS VULT PERDERE, PRIUS DEMENTAT.

“Amour, fléau du monde, exécration folie,  
Toi qu'un lien si frêle à la volupté lie,  
Quand par tant d'autres nœuds tu tiens à la douleur,  
Si jamais, par les yeux d'une femme sans cœur,  
Tu peux m'entrer au ventre et m'empoisonner l'âme,  
Ainsi que d'une plaie on arrache une lame,  
Plutôt que comme un lâche on me voie en souffrir,  
Je t'en arracherai, quand j'en devrais mourir.”

SCENE THE THIRD :—MOCATTI DISSATISFIED.

“MY Laurence, what have they done to thee?” said the dealer very earnestly, after he had stood for some moments with his brows bent and his eyes fixed in a close scrutiny of the young man's haggard face. “*Tu es pâle comme un mort.* Thou hast been working too hard. Fie, then! *je ne suis pas si dur.* I do not ask thy flesh or thy bones; and if thou hast drawn upon me a little too deeply, I can wait for thy new successes to repay myself. *Mais, mon ami, tu me fais peur avec ton air effaré.* Thou hast been painting too much; it is the old story of the sword and the scabbard. Come then, let me see the triumphs of the sword. *Et puis nous aurons soin du fourreau.* I languish to behold thy work. Thy frescoes, for instance.”

The impetuous Mocatti made a sudden dash at the amber hangings. He plucked the drapery from the wall, and beheld—the bare plaster! He had not expected miracles in the way of finished work; but he had expected to see Madame d'Aspramonte's walls more or less disfigured or adorned by the daring experiments of youthful genius.

“You have remembered La Fontaine,” he said, with some touch of bitterness, “and have learnt how to avoid the errors of the hare. Let me see how you have profited by the example of the tortoise.”

Laurence responded with a sigh that was very close to a groan. “There are my sketches,” he said, pointing half contemptuously to some canvases huddled ignominiously in the corner of the room. “The Princess has been giving concerts; Clio must give place to the superior claims of Euterpe and Erato. If the sketches please you no better than they please me, they will scarcely repay you for the trouble of looking at them. I have been working very hard, and have done very

little—except this,” added the painter, laying his hand upon the closed doors of his easel with a sudden smile that lit up his pallid face.

“And what is this?” asked Mr. Mocatti, rather sharply.

“A portrait of the Princess in a classical dress—”

“I find the dress of the present season very classical: *tout ce qu’il y a de plus Grec, avec un soupçon de Lesbos*,” interrupted Mr. Mocatti. “A portrait of the Princess—that is good,” he continued, with returning cheerfulness. “You will find portraits pay, if you can sustain a certain position. Have you been painting many other portraits?”

Mr. Bell stared aghast at his patron.

“Did I not tell you that this was to be my great picture—the picture by which I am to stand or fall?” he asked.

“Yes,” replied Mr. Mocatti, pulling his moustache with fingers whereon big jewels sparkled in the pale spring sunlight; “but you told me nothing else. I want to see all you have done. First, the sketches. Ah, yes—Orpheus and Eurydice. They are near the portals of the hells. Phlegethon lies behind them—they have given the slip to Cerberus; the world of mortals is close at hand. But see, the tender husband must needs look at his adored one. He forgets the solemn mandate—he gazes—and all is lost.

‘Eurydice, rendue,  
S’échappe comme une ombre; un regard l’a perdue.  
Il la rappelle en vain du geste et de la voix;  
Elle meurt sans se plaindre une seconde fois.  
Et quelle plainte encore aurait-elle formée?  
Est-ce un crime pour lui de l’avoir trop aimée?’

Your Madame Orpheus is all bone and muscle. I don’t think any sensible man would want to look at so angular a Eurydice. Your sketches are not *chefs-d’œuvre*. Amphion appears to be a very amiable young man, but as he is in the act of falling on his face, I can only tremble for the bridge of his nose. *Vas donc, jeune ami*; do not look at me with such piteous glances. Thou hast made good progress all this time, and thou hast done some great things, no doubt; but it is not here that we must look for the signs of thy growth of power. What next hast thou to show me?”

“Nothing.”

“Nothing!” cried the dealer amazed. “Then I suppose you have sold all your pictures,” he added, changing from the second person singular to the second person plural with an alarming suddenness.

“You have sold your pictures and have spent the money, in fraud of our agreement,” was the accusation that shaped itself in his mind.

“No, Mr. Mocatti,” replied Laurence in a freezing tone; “I am a painter, and not a seller of pictures.”

“What!” cried the Neapolitan, abandoning all ceremony, “do you mean to tell me that the labour of something like a year is represented in those three flimsy sketches, all of which are infinitely below the

poorest of your experimental bits in Charnock-street! What! all the summer, all the winter is gone by, and you have painted no pot-boilers—no grisettes looking out of quaint old garret windows—no lovers drifting down your cockney Thames—no pretty English demoiselles in moonlit balconies, like the Juliet of your eternal Williams—no partings at railway stations—nothing?”

“Nothing,” answered the painter boldly, “except THAT!” He struck his hand against the screen that guarded his hidden picture, and met the gaze of his patron with defiance. “I will stand or fall by this,” he said.

“Very good,” replied the dealer; “but if you are going to fall, I hope you will first repay me the money you have been good enough to borrow from me with such aristocratic carelessness. For the son of a German tailor you have carried matters with a high hand. You must have led the train of a prince at my expense. And now, since my only chance of repayment lies in that picture, I may certainly ask to see it.”

“No, Mocatti,” answered the painter firmly; “I will exhibit that picture to no mortal eyes until the day before I send it in to the Royal Academy.”

“Indeed!” cried the irate Mocatti; “and in the mean time I am to whistle for my money, as your English idiom has it.”

“Your money shall be repaid you, with whatever interest will recompense you liberally for the use of it,” replied Laurence proudly. “My talents have been indeed overrated if they will not bring me a few hundreds.”

“They will bring you the fortune of a prince, if you will only work,” cried Mocatti, clasping his hands passionately. “My Laurence, my embryo Raffaele, my prince of protégés—my hope, my pride, my glory; forgive me if I heated myself a little just now, and said hard things to you. I have hoped so much from you. I have two or three dozen of young painters at Rome. They would line the walls of the Coliseum with pictures and roof it in with frescoes in a month, if I gave them the order. They splash, they dash, they spatter, and cover me canvas so fast that I can only reckon their work by the square yard. But what of that? In all their stupid young heads there is not so much genius as in your little finger. Think then, my Laurence, what a disappointment to me, who have counted upon so much, when I return and find nothing!”

“I tell you that the fruit of my labour is here,” said Laurence in a hoarse, faint voice, again striking the doors of his easel with a quick, passionate gesture; “it is here; on this one canvas I have expended the labour of months. I have worked as I never worked before, with untiring industry, with rapture, with passion. Would you have me work otherwise? You complained that I was cold, feeble, matter-of-fact. I lacked the true fire of genius. I was a creature with the common affections and simple aspirations of ordinary humanity. This

was not genius. You told me so, Mocatti ; and I have learnt to recognise the wisdom of your words. The fire, the fever, the passion, the rapture, the torments that were wanting in those days have all come to me. Yes, they have come," repeated the young man, with a strange smile creeping over his fever-flushed face ; "they have taken possession of me, like the demons in the gospel record, and they have set their mark here—here on this canvas, which shall make my name immortal. You have had from me the work of a drudge and a hireling, and have profited by it. Here you will have force and concentration, fire and daring, the first fruits of an awakened soul."

Mr. Mocatti brightened a little, and stood for some moments looking thoughtfully at his protégé, and tugging the ends of his moustache with a meditative air.

"One great picture would make amends for all," he said presently ; "but it would have been as well to paint the little bits of *genre* for the mercantile market between whiles, *quand même*. But we must be content with the *chef-d'œuvre*. Come, *mon ami*, you will let me have a peep?"

"No, Mocatti ; on that point I am firm as a rock."

"*Mais c'est un enfantillage.*"

"It is no childishness, no foolish vanity. I stake my future fame upon that picture, and I will cast the die with my own hand. I have had enough of criticism and suggestion. I am too completely the slave of every emotion. My own judgment falters beneath the sway of passion. If I consented to show you that picture in its unfinished state—what then? You would object to this or to that detail—to my treatment of colour here, to my manipulation of lights there. You would weaken my confidence, dash my hopes, disgust and dishearten me at the very time when I need all my strength, all my courage. *Enfantillage!* Yes," cried the painter with a hysterical laugh, "what is it but *enfantillage*? O Mocatti, you do not know what a child I have become!"

There was something almost piteous in the tone and the look which gave force to these words.

"But, Laurence, my angel, *vas donc; du courage, ami*. Why is this? What is the meaning of this change?"

"You complained of my sluggish calmness—you complained of my lack of force and passion. I have them now : force which resembles the force of a wave that dashes itself impotently in the teeth of adamantine rocks ; passion which withers and consumes."

"But the passion that creates?"

"Passion destroys more than it creates. My friends have done their best to ruin me, Mocatti, in the purest good-nature. They have fed me with lying flatteries until my ambition has outgrown my skill. I dream of painting like Raffaele, and awake to hate myself because I paint no better than Laurence Bell."



He was pacing to and fro as he spoke, like a young lion impatient of his narrow bounds. The restlessness and fever that possessed him gave colour to his cheeks and brightness to his eyes ; so that Mr. Mocatti, who had never ceased to watch him with a somewhat anxious countenance, began to think that the change in his appearance was not so alarming as it had seemed at the first glance to the returning traveller.

“But your portrait yonder—that is to be something great, is it not ?” asked the dealer.

“How do I know ?” returned Laurence impatiently. “To me it is something more than a picture. To me it is Giulia d’Aspramonte, lovelier than she is in the flesh—a spirit, a goddess ! She smiles upon me, she talks to me. Yes, Mocatti, that picture *must* make me famous. All other pictures that I have ever seen are cold and lifeless when compared to that. It is a woman, not a flat image glued against a flatter landscape—not a hybrid creature, a miserable amalgam of reality and sham, life and death—but a woman, a living, breathing, conscious being, with the free atmosphere around and about her, the breath of heaven stirring amidst her hair. Do you know that, in the twilight, when all other pictures vanish into the shadows of coming night, *that* picture shines out of the darkness, irradiate with phosphorescent splendour ? I have studied the secrets of light and shade as no one as studied them since the days of Correggio. You smile at my arrogance ; but I am no vain boaster. This time I am certain of success. Yes ; the dream of my ambition will be fulfilled—I shall have painted one great picture.”

“Thou shalt paint as many great pictures as Raffaelle or Leonardo,” replied Mr. Mocatti, in his most encouraging tone. “And now let us talk of our Princess. I have not yet seen her. She is always beautiful, of course ; and she is still kind, still interested in your progress ?”

“Yes,” said Laurence, with a sigh, “I believe she is still interested.”

“But she finds that you are rather slow—hein ?” asked the dealer, with a curious look. “She is a creature of impulse—a Vesuvius *en jupe*. I do not wonder that she has found you slow. I should strongly recommend you to make a beginning with the frescoes before your Princess loses patience altogether, and sends for another painter.”

“I am ready to resign the commission.”

“You are ready to cut your throat, or to do anything else that is preposterous ; good fortune does not come across a young man’s pathway so often that she must needs be flouted. The goddess is no *femme payée*, that will come to you at the lifting of your finger. You will begin your fresco to-morrow, before Madame d’Aspramonte’s patience is quite exhausted.”

“And my picture—”

“Will do all the better for being laid aside a little ; when you go back to it, your eye will be keener to perceive its faults—its weak points.”

Laurence Bell shook his head resolutely.

"No," he said; "I have concentrated all my energies upon that one work, and I will touch nothing else until that canvas has been sent in."

The dealer shrugged his shoulders with an air of resignation.

"*Eh bien, mon ami*; I have two dozen young men in Rome, every one of whom would give his ears to stand in your shoes. I will telegraph for a few of them to-morrow; I may induce the Princess to intrust one of them with the decoration of her walls. You have been spoiled, Mr. Bell, and you have grown lazy. Remember what Poussin said to a young painter: '*Il ne vous manque, pour devenir un bon peintre, qu'un peu de pauvreté.*' It has been very well to take matters easily while you have had my purse to dip into; but I am not the Pope, any more than you are Raffaele."

Laurence Bell flushed scarlet. This was indeed shame. To be reproached by this trader and huxter for the loan of a few pounds.

"The day will come when you will be sorry for this," he said huskily.

"That day cannot come too soon," replied Mr. Mocatti, with delightful sangfroid.

"You shall have your money, to the uttermost farthing. I will show you that I have lost neither force nor facility. The frescoes shall be begun at once; I will be no longer the slave of a woman's caprices, discouraged by the contemptuous shrug of a woman's shoulders, disheartened by the faintest elevation of a woman's dark brows. I will shake myself free from these ignoble fetters. I will —"

"What!" cried the dealer suddenly, "the influence of Madame has done mischief. Look at me then, Laurence Bell, *les yeux dans les yeux*. You have sacrificed your art to this woman's folly, instead of deriving inspiration from her sympathy; and I thought that your genius only needed the awakening touch of a magician's wand to expand into greatness. Give me your hand, *ami*. Yes, it burns like a red-hot coal. You are in a fever. *Viens, mon enfant*. You shall come into the country with me for an afternoon's holiday. You want rest, air. The atmosphere of this room is killing you."

"You are very good," Laurence answered coldly; "but I cannot leave my work. I am well enough,—quite well; and feel my hand stronger than ever. You have inspired me, you see, Mocatti," he added, with a bitter laugh. "I am impatient to begin my principal fresco. I am impatient to earn the money I have borrowed from you."

"Do not talk to me of the money. You are ill, Laurence—very ill. You must work no more to-day, nor yet to-morrow, nor for many to-morrows. The scabbard is worn very thin, *ami*."

"And the sword has done so little. I cannot think of rest until I know the fate of that picture."

"*Peste soit de ce tableau!*" cried Mocatti, with impatience. "It is

a lifetime, and not a picture I am thinking of. Where would have been the glories of the Signature Chamber if Raffaele had worked himself to death in painting his first altar-piece?"

Mr. Mocatti exhausted his powers of eloquence without success. A spirit of stubborn obstinacy had taken the place of that plastic nature which he had been wont to govern so easily. Laurence Bell refused to sacrifice a few hours of the spring daylight either to refresh himself or to oblige his patron. He set to work upon a new canvas before the dealer left him, and began the sketch for a new Orpheus and Eurydice.

"You are right, Mocatti," he cried; "my Eurydice was *fade comme une poupée de cire*. I cannot paint that fair-haired insipid type of womankind. Eurydice the second shall be dark and splendid—a Cleopatra, a Giulia d'Aspramonte. Yes, I will make this room the monument of Madame d'Aspramonte's beauty. While these walls remain, they shall endure as the record of her loveliness."

"Nothing could be more charming," replied Mr. Mocatti. "Madame d'Aspramonte *en impératrice*—Madame d'Aspramonte *en Eurydice*—Madame d'Aspramonte *par-ci par-là, pourvu qu'elle paye les frais*. But there must come an end even to that; and it seems to me that you can paint nothing except portraits of Madame d'Aspramonte."

The painter did not deign to reply. The head of his Eurydice already appeared upon his canvas, lightly sketched by a few touches of the crayon in his facile hand.

The dealer watched him for some minutes as he stood before the easel, and then silently departed.

"I shall look to *her* for an explanation," he said to himself, as he passed through the orangery.

"Bah!" he muttered, stopping on the threshold to brush a shower of waxen petals from his coat; "this place is suffocating with its perfumes and exotics. My poor Laurence is being stifled with the scent of these poisonous flowers. The atmosphere of his painting-room is dangerous. I will hire an airy first-floor at Kensington, and carry him away from this house to-morrow, *vi et armis*. *Il s'agit d'un meurtre*."

#### SCENE THE FOURTH :—CHEZ MADAME.

THE audacious Neapolitan dispensed with all ceremony, and pushed his way to the presence of the Princess, regardless of interposing lacquey or abigail. It was in her morning-room that he found the lady, seated before a miniature grand-piano, surrounded by scattered music.

There was an open violin-case on a table, and the owner of the violin to which the case appertained was in attendance on the Princess. He was a gentleman with fierce black eyes and a fierce black moustache—a moustache which for blackness and ferocity might have disputed the palm with that of the great Mocatti himself.

This gentleman was no less a person than Herr Frolich, who was greater on the violin than he was on the piano, and who condescended to improve Madame d'Aspramonte's ideas upon Beethoven and Weber by the occasional practice of concertante duets.

The Princess was not in her most amiable humour this morning. She had been what Mr. Mocatti called "difficult," whereby sonatas and symphonies had bestrown the ground beneath her imperial feet, thrown aside impatiently at the first cinquepated passage or eccentric gradation from a minor to a major key.

Herr Frolich had endured with sublime patience, only venturing on a little serio-comic deprecation of the imperial wrath. He was one of the most constant devotees at the shrine of this uncertain divinity, and had wasted a great amount of precious time in an airy kind of worship, which might or might not find its reward in the future. People had said that the Princess would end by marrying Herr Frolich; but then, unfortunately for the Herr, this matrimonial climax had been prophesied in conjunction with so many different pretenders. Queen Elizabeth herself could scarcely have been a more difficult person to dispose of in marriage than the widow of Benjamin d'Aspramonte, banker and millionaire; so many suitors had strutted their brief hour in her salons, only to vanish into the outer darkness of that Inferno where the souls of disappointed lovers are doomed to languish.

Maximilian Frolich, composer and professor of counterpoint, was one of the most patient pretenders to the royal favour. He was a gentleman who took life very pleasantly, and he endured the caprices of the Princess in a philosophical spirit which was to the last degree exasperating to the lady. He was the only admirer who never flattered her, the only adorer who worshipped with head erect, and held himself sternly aloof from the humiliating service of the temple. He even treated her *tant soit peut en Petruccio*—laughing at her anger, defying her scorn, and looking upon his fellow-pretendants with a kind of contemptuous pity. Herr Frolich called these victims "the noble army of martyrs."

"I am not without my hopes," he said, when his friends questioned him about his divinity. "It is a case in which the conquering force will be the *vis inertiae*. The Princess will tire out her admirers one after another by her caprices and exactions, her jealousies and infidelities; and the man who can stand calmly by, till the last of his rivals has retired disgusted and discomfited, is the man who will marry Giulia d'Aspramonte."

The Princess accepted this restricted homage under protest. She was always more or less angry with the professor for his attitude of self-assertion; and, accustomed as she was to walk upon the necks of her slaves, she would have given much to set her imperial foot upon this particular neck, which had never yet laid itself in the dust for her pleasure. She knew that Maximilian Frolich was a master of his art,

and while her musical monomania had lasted she had found him the most agreeable of slaves. The musical mania cooled in due course, and the Princess became the devotee of art. But Herr Frolich did not relinquish his hold upon the lady's favour. He bided his time; and when he found Madame d'Aspramonte just a little inclined to be weary of a genius that had left her walls bare and blank for the greater part of a year, the Herr returned to the charge, and offered the Princess a new source of excitement in the getting-up of amateur concerts.

The first amateur concert had proved *un succès éclatant*, and the professor had been restored to favour. A second concert was in preparation,—a concert in which Giulia d'Aspramonte was to distinguish herself in a concertante duet with the Austrian violinist,—and it was the selection of the duet which employed the Princess this morning.

She rose suddenly from her piano, with a somewhat startled air, when Mr. Mocatti entered unannounced.

"*Vous voilà de retour, Mocatti,*" she exclaimed, not without some slight symptoms of confusion. "What are my servants doing, that they cannot announce you? *C'est une entrée à la Don Giovanni.* I did not know that you were in England."

"I only arrived last night. But do not let me interrupt your musical studies."

"I shall play no more this morning," replied the Princess impatiently; "indeed, I doubt whether I shall play at all at my concert, Herr Frolich. You have brought me the most uninteresting compositions I ever attempted."

"And yet Beethoven is not often *fade*. But no matter; a lady's criticism must be accepted for what it is worth. Shall I see you at the Opera to-night, Princess?"

"Yes. I am curious about this Swedish tenor. How does he name himself?—Carlo Vitzi? They tell me he has created a *furor* at Milan and Naples."

"Yes. *Il a fait des siennes.*"

"And his story is romantic, is it not?"

"*Cela va sans dire.* The antecedents of tenors and sopranos are always romantic. Their stories are invented for them. It is a part of the programme—like that charming speech of Louis Dixhuit, 'There is nothing changed in France; there is only one Frenchman the more.' *Il faut que le roi ait dit quelque chose de spirituel*, said the Minister in his official report; and the pretty speech was composed."

"But the Swedish tenor—?"

"*Ce n'est pas la peine d'en parler.* He was a cowboy in the Dalecarlian wilds, when a connoisseur overheard him singing Donizetti's music to his cows. It is the old story. There is always the ubiquitous connoisseur, bent on the *récolte* of low-born genius."

"Is he handsome, your tenor?"

"Apollo escaped from a bandbox. *Al rivedervi, altezza.*"

The professor replaced his violin in its case, and departed, after a friendly salutation to Mr. Mocatti, with whom he was acquainted. He knew his Princess well enough to perceive signs of stormy weather in her darkening brows and impatient manner.

“Well, Signor Mocatti,” said the lady, looking up at the picture-dealer with a disdainful smile as he stood before her, severe of aspect as if he had been indeed the statue in the *Festin de Pierre*, “in what can I be agreeable to you this morning?”

“Do you remember that pointed dialogue between Jehovah and the first murderer?” asked Mr. Mocatti. “But no; I do not think the Bible is one of the books your excellency honours with your distinguished consideration. But if I were to question you, as the Creator questioned Cain, I have no doubt your reply would be an unconscious paraphrase of his.”

“*Voilà une fort belle phrase du genre de l’Ambigu Comique*. Will it be impertinent to ask what it means?”

“It means that you have destroyed a genius who might have expanded into a Raffaele. I asked your sympathy, your encouragement for my protégé, Laurence Bell; I gave his future into your keeping. What have you done with it? You have exhausted his originality in the vain endeavour to satisfy the caprices which you have called suggestions; you have blighted his fancy by your impatience; you have withered his hopes by your inconstancy; you have degraded him to the lowest depths to which manhood can descend; you have made him the slave of a woman who is without heart and without honour.”

“Signor Mocatti!”

If the lightnings of Italian eyes could strike death, the Neapolitan picture-dealer would have gone down before the flash that shone upon him as the Princess started to her feet, splendid in her fury, an insulted Semiramis.

“You dare to speak to me like this!”

“Yes, Princess; and again, and again, because I know you. *Je vous sais par cœur, madame*. Between you and me there can be no need for ceremony. There is the memory of an old time locked in both our breasts; a time when you were something less than the widow of a millionaire, and I was something less than a wealthy picture-dealer. Pardon me if the recollection is disagreeable to you. It is a hard thing no doubt for a princess to remember that she was once the penniless daughter of a petty Neapolitan innkeeper, affianced to the scapegrace son of a dealer in bric-à-brac, and with no brighter prospect than to succeed to the bric-à-brac shop when scapegrace’s father should be so obliging as to die. Happily one day there comes into the quarter a feeble pottering old gentleman from Rome, whose ancestral wealth is one of the favourite legends of the city, and who is money-lender in ordinary to half the royal houses of Europe. The old gentleman sees my innkeeper’s handsome daughter—nay, *madame, il n’y a pas*

*de quoi sourciller*—what was Rienzi but the son of an innkeeper?—is dumbfounded by her marvellous beauty—*puisqu'elle était belle alors comme les anges déchus*—and marries her out of hand; whereupon the scapegrace dealer in bric-à-brac packs a few of his father's cabinet pictures in a cotton handkerchief, and brings them to London, where he hires a parlour in an alley near the Bank, and makes for himself a business among citizens and stockbrokers. There you have a romance of real life, madame, in half-a-dozen sentences. I have never presumed upon these recollections. You have been pleased to patronise me *en princesse*, and I have been respectfully forgetful of the day in which the young *marchand des objets d'art* was jilted by the aubergiste's daughter. But to-day, to-day, when I find you in the very act of murder—the cold-blooded assassination of which a merciless coquette is capable—it is time that I should speak; it is time that I should tell you that although you may treat the rest of the world *de haute en bas*, you will have to swallow plain truths from the lips of Antonio Mocatti."

"May I be permitted to ask what has inspired this long tirade?" asked the Princess, with a yawn which was the concentrated expression of patrician insolence.

"It was inspired by the sight of your victim's face."

"My victim! *Lequel?*"

"The last, or the last that I have seen made ready for the sacrifice—Laurence Bell."

"You find him looking ill?" inquired the Princess with charming listlessness.

"I find the stamp of death upon his face, madame. He brushed his handkerchief across his lips while I was talking to him, and I saw that it was stained with blood."

"What of that? All artists spit blood. It is a part of their *métier*; *une affectation de jeune homme qui se pose en agonisant.*"

"Giulia d'Aspramonte, you have neither conscience nor heart!" cried the dealer savagely.

"*Cela ce peut.* I suppose if I had been troubled with a conscience, it would have kept me true to the merchant of bric-à-brac; and if I had been gifted with a heart, it would have made me false to my millionaire husband. So you see I was better off without either. Now pray what is your ground of quarrel with me? I am a coquette? Granted. It is my pleasure to deceive men, who would find an equal pleasure in deceiving me; I use the privileges that nature and fortune have given me; and use them against the sex who know neither mercy nor honour in their dealings with mine. I am one of those women who are created every now and then to avenge the woes of their sisters. You knew me when you brought Laurence Bell to my house; and if my influence has been unfortunate for him, you should have foreseen the danger."

"Could I think that he would be so weak, or you so heartless? I

thought that you would treat him as Julius the Second and Leo the Tenth treated Raffaele; as Marie de' Medici treated Rubens. But no, *that* kind of patronage would afford you no pleasure; it would not swell the muster-roll of your victims, or foster your diabolical pride. All who come across your pathway must come within your thrall. *Morituri te salutant*. You ask neither gratitude nor friendship; you will have admiration, and always more admiration. The daughters of the horse-leech are not more avid with their clamorous 'Give, give!' Shall I prophesy your future? You will outlive your beauty and your wealth; you will die without a friend; and at your last hour, when you cry aloud for a cup of cold water, it shall seem to you that the voices of your old admirers reply from a far distance, 'We worshipped you in the day of your glory, and suffered the bondage of your pride. We have no part in your hour of anguish and desolation.' Yes, Madame d'Aspramonte, that is the fate which overtakes heartless women."

"Always supposing they are so unlucky as to lose their fortunes," replied the Princess with a sneer. "I trust I may be so prudent as to retain a decent income to the last, and that I may be at least provided with an experienced maid whose *petits soins* may smooth the last journey."

"And from whose friendly hand a dose of arsenic may hasten the tardy departure. There is no such thing as purchased friendship, Madame d'Aspramonte. Let your hireling be never so faithful, you have the consciousness that her fidelity is paid for, and that, tempted by a larger wage, she will transfer her affection to your next-door neighbour."

"I think this must be what your evangelical preachers call an awakening sermon, Mr. Mocatti. And now that you have honoured me with all this alarming declamation, perhaps you will permit me to bid you good-morning."

"Not till you have answered one question."

"I am not accustomed to be catechised," replied the Princess, moving towards the door with that languid hauteur which was almost habitual to her; "but since you claim the privilege of an old acquaintance, *dites*."

"Do you mean to marry Laurence Bell?"

Madame d'Aspramonte laughed a low melodious laugh, and looked at her questioner with supreme astonishment.

"Do you think I am mad?" she exclaimed. "I, Giulia d'Aspramonte, become the wife of Mr. Bell!"

"You know that this young man loves you—madly, passionately."

"I know nothing of the kind; nor am I responsible for his madness or his passion, supposing your assertion to be correct."

"You have fooled him to the top of his bent."

"In what manner have I fooled him? You recommend him to me as the fittest painter for my frescoes. I say, 'Very well then; let him



paint my frescoes.' You complain to me that he has no painting-room —no space in which his genius may expand its wings and soar skyward; while, attached to this house, there is a spacious unoccupied chamber which his pencil is to decorate. I offer him the free use of this room, and when he comes here to paint, I treat him with ordinary civility. What harm is there in all this?"

"Only this amount of harm: your patronage has been deadly; your protégé is dying. There are some men who can endure to be made the plaything of a woman's cruel sport; but genius is not to be found amongst those men."

"Indeed. Have you finished?—is there an end to your sermon?"

"Yes; I have said more than I need have said. I shall take Laurence Bell away from this house to-night, never to reënter it."

A slow dreamy smile crept over Madame d'Aspramonte's face.

"You will take him away?" she said.

"Most certainly."

"*Je gage que non,*" replied the Princess with her laziest drawl. "I sometimes grow tired of my admirers; but I do not allow them to grow tired of me."

"*Vous êtes une — diablesse!*" muttered Mr. Mocatti under his breath; and then, with a deprecating movement of his shoulders, he wished the Princess good-morning.

"She is the Milwood of the nineteenth century," he said to himself, "and I am the uncle her victim is to murder. What a fortune I hoped to make out of that young man, and—even more than fortune—what a reputation! I intrust him to this woman, believing that her influence will exalt his ambition and inspire his fancy. I come back to him to find that he has idled away a year, and that the stamp of death is on his face. But it may not yet be too late; it *shall* not be too late. I will not let my young genius wither and perish before my eyes. I will take him away from this hateful house; I will rescue him from the Tophet in which his genius is being devoured, *bon gré, mal gré*. You have defied me, Madame d'Aspramonte. *Gare à vous.*"

SCENE THE FIFTH:—MOCATTI TO THE RESCUE.

FROM the villa Mr. Mocatti went on a journey of exploration in the wide regions between Kensington and the extreme border-land of Notting-hill. At Notting-hill he found what he wanted—a spacious unfurnished drawing-room, with three long windows looking northward. The drawing-room was over a very large shop, which smelt of damp stucco, and which had been taken by an enterprising young chemist, who was able to testify in a doleful spirit to the healthfulness of the neighbourhood. He was very glad to let his big drawing-room and a bed-chamber adjoining; Mr. Mocatti undertaking to send in furniture for both apartments from a neighbouring upholsterer in the course of the afternoon.

"Your tenant will sleep here to-night," said the dealer when the bargain was concluded. "Have fires lighted in both the rooms, and be sure you keep them burning all day. The place smells damp and cold; and Mr. Bell is an invalid."

The countenance of the apothecary brightened, and he looked involuntarily towards a choice brand of cod-liver-oil, two years in bottle. An invalid would require prescriptions made up, and if of a hypochondriac turn of mind might be worth a small fortune to this despondent young chemist.

Mr. Mocatti selected his upholsterer, and gave his orders: for the bed-chamber, substantial comfort of the plainest description; for the painting-room an easy-chair, a Pembroke table, and a square of Dutch carpeting.

"I will reduce him to his primitive condition," thought the dealer; "I will starve him into greatness. He has been enervated by the atmosphere of that woman's house. I will give him a cold *douche* of poverty."

After having completed his arrangements, Mr. Mocatti hurried back to Adrian's Villa, where he made his way at once to the music-room. The doors of the easel were shut, and Laurence Bell was sitting in a listless attitude, looking dreamily across the lawn, where the shadows of the cedars were dark and solemn as the shadows in a churchyard.

Mr. Mocatti stood in the doorway for some moments, looking at his protégé.

"Come, Laurence," he said at last, "rouse yourself, my friend. I am here to fetch you away."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I love thee too well to leave thee longer in the clutches of Giulia d'Aspramonte. Come, my friend, I tell thee the air of this house is poisonous. You languish, you die, and you do not know it. I have found thee a studio which shall be thine own. I would rescue thee from thy Sybarite bondage. I would give thee once again thy liberty and thy genius. Come."

"Leave this place—leave her!" cried Laurence, aghast.

"But yes," exclaimed the dealer impatiently. "She no longer desires thy presence; she is beginning to be weary of thee and thy fancies. If thou hast independence of spirit, manhood, self-respect, it is time thou shouldst assert thyself."

"Leave this place!" reiterated the painter—"this room which she has made so beautiful for me!"

"Which she has made so beautiful!" echoed the dealer contemptuously. "A few dozen yards of amber damask, and a little Wardour-street patchwork in the way of old oak furniture, made up from the disused lumber of forgotten Flemish churches! The copper stew-pans in her kitchen must have cost her more money. And now I look round, my friend, it seems to me that I miss some of those objects which

beautified your apartment when I left England. Where is your Hercules and his bull; your *bonheur du jour* with the medallions in old Sèvres; your Etruscan candelabra; your Louis-Seize clock?"

Laurence Bell looked listlessly round the room, following the eyes of his patron.

"I did not miss them," he said carelessly; "I suppose they were removed before the Princess gave her concert."

"Take the hint, my Laurence. The work of *déménagement* has begun; it cannot finish too quickly."

"And my picture?" cried Laurence huskily.

"You will carry your picture to your new painting-room in a four-wheeled cab. *C'est de la prose, n'est-ce pas, après la poésie? mais c'est mieux que la tragédie.* Pack up your brushes, and come."

The painter laughed almost hysterically.

"You are dreaming, Mocatti," he said; "I cannot surrender this room until my picture is finished. I must have more sittings; there are minute touches wanting yet. I have not yet achieved my great effect—the languorous splendour of the eyes. The eyes in my portrait are splendid, but they still want the dewy softness of life."

"My Laurence," murmured the dealer gravely, "your Princess will sit to you no more."

"But she has promised."

"She will break that promise, as she has broken many others. You and your art have made a very pleasant distraction for a summer season; but there are many seasons in the life of Madame d'Aspramonte, and she requires fresh distractions. I thought that while her caprice lasted you would do something great—inspired, fevered—*tant soit peu* maddened, perhaps, by her laudation. Unhappily you have outlived her caprice, and have done nothing."

"You do not know; it is not a caprice; it is—"

"What?"

"It is love. Yes, Mocatti, she loves me!" cried the painter passionately; and then, ashamed of his avowal, he exclaimed, "Ah, why do you force me to betray myself—to betray *her*?"

There was infinite tenderness in the accentuation of those last words.

Antonio Mocatti smiled—a sardonic smile, but not unmingled with pity.

"My poor Laurence, do you really believe this?" he asked gravely.

"If I did not believe it I should go mad."

"Then I have indeed reason to repent having brought you across the threshold of this house. Madame d'Aspramonte is incapable of loving you, or any one else. There is a class of women created without heart or conscience, and she is of that class. She is a coquette *acharnée*. Do you remember what Ninon de l'Enclos said of Monsieur de Sévigné the younger? 'His heart is a cucumber fried in snow;' a comparison

which savoured of the *bourbier* whence the demoiselle came. But, believe me, there are such hearts."

"Stop, Mr. Mocatti; you have said quite enough. Another word and you may have said too much. I will not permit any slander of Madame d'Aspramonte."

The voice in which the painter made this protest was hoarse and tremulous—the voice of a man in whom mental emotion struggles against physical weakness.

"My Laurence, we will forget Madame d'Aspramonte, and we will go to Rome and see the Vatican."

The time had been when the very name of the Eternal City would have been sufficient to awaken sudden rapture in the heart of Laurence Bell; but now the universe had narrowed itself into the one little spot on which Giulia d'Aspramonte happened to be standing.

"I cannot abandon this room until my picture is finished," he said resolutely.

"But I have taken lodgings; I have furnished a new painting-room for you."

"I am sorry that you have wasted your time and trouble; but you had no right to make such arrangements without my knowledge. For the present I cannot conform to your wishes. I have lodgings in North Audley-street, and my painting-room is here."

"And pray who is to go on paying for your North Audley-street lodgings?"

"You will not refuse to lend me a little more money, if I want it," replied Laurence carelessly. "It will not be for long. I tell you I have a certain success in that picture."

He pointed to the covered easel as he spoke. Mr. Mocatti looked at him despairingly.

"If I were to tell you all that I know of Giulia d'Aspramonte—" he said thoughtfully.

"I should believe nothing to her discredit," Mr. Bell interposed with a threatening look. "Do not let us discuss this matter any further. I acknowledge no right of yours to question my actions. I owe you money, which I shall very soon be in a position to repay. And now I must wish you good-morning; I am going back to town."

"You are in a hurry."

"Yes; it is past five, and I have to dine and dress."

"You have some engagement this evening?"

"The Princess has offered me a seat in her box at Covent Garden."

"I fancy I remember hearing her talk of some *début* that is to take place to-night," replied the dealer meditatively; "a Swedish tenor. How passionately she loves music, by the way, our Princess! She attends all the *débuts*; and to receive a bouquet from her is to be crowned by one of the Muses. And again, there is something peculiarly interesting in the idea of a Swedish tenor."

The face of Laurence Bell while Mr. Mocatti made these careless remarks would have been a fitting model for the study of a soul in purgatory.

“Does the Princess know this singer?” he asked with a gasp.

“Not yet. If he makes a hit to-night, she will perhaps permit him to appear at her next party. She is the patroness of newly-fledged genius, as you know by experience.”

“Yes,” answered Laurence with a sardonic smile; “she will tell him how she worships his art, how she believes in his genius; she will talk to him of his glorious future until his senses are intoxicated by her eloquence. And then she will fritter away his time at flower-shows and morning concerts. She will send him to carry messages to her coach-builder and her florist; and when a year has gone by, and his art has made no progress, she will spare neither irony nor reproach until she has made him drink the cup of shame and disappointment to the very dregs.”

“You know her so well, and yet remain to be her victim!”

“What have I said of her?” cried Laurence, passionate, inconsistent, ready in a moment to revoke every word of blame—“What have I said, except that she is a woman, with all a woman’s unreasonable caprices; thoughtless, reckless, the creature of the hour, with the uncertain temper of a spoiled child; but still grand, noble, generous, unconscious of the wrongs she inflicts.”

Mr. Mocatti was silent. Before this infatuation he felt himself helpless. He had loosened the flood-gates, and had no power to stop the torrent which his hand had set free.

“What shall I say to him?” he asked himself. “To what good shall I argue with him while he is under the spell? Would all the wise men of Greece have persuaded Titania to be reasonable about the weaver *à la tête d’âne*? Let things go; I can do nothing.”

Laurence Bell looked at his watch, and moved impatiently towards the door.

“I am coming,” said Mr. Mocatti; “my brougham is waiting. I have almost lamed my horses in your service, *ingrat*; and to what good? My man shall drive you to North Audley-street. I shall see you at the Opera, for I too am curious about this Swedish tenor.”

#### SCENE THE SIXTH :—AT THE OPERA.

It was a grand night at Covent Garden, and the Princess d’Aspramonte was in her glory. Her box was on the pit-tier—roomy, luxurious, and close to the stage; a box which demanded no fatigue in the mounting of stairs from the pilgrim who came to pay his homage to the insatiable divinity. The Princess delighted in first representations and *débuts*. To assist at the success or the failure of a new opera or a new singer was rapture to her. It was excitement; and she only existed in

the hope of finding new excitements. For the man who had written the opera, for the singer whose future was at stake, she was pitiless—ready to laugh with the loudest at a failure, or to applaud a triumph.

On these nights her beauty was always most brilliant. She caught the fever of an excited multitude, and of late her beauty had needed the glow of fever to conceal the ravages of time. Prosaic people had begun to repeat a dreary truism to the effect that Madame d'Aspramonte had once been younger. But on these nights she outshone all youthful beauties in the blaze of her meridian splendour.

"That woman is consuming her life by the violence of her temper," said one of her admirers. "You can see it in her face. *Elle est belle comme un incendie !*"

Laurence had taken his place in the box before the arrival of his patroness. The opera had begun, but the painter was sitting in a corner with his back to the stage, meditating upon his own destiny in a moody attitude, when Madame d'Aspramonte entered, with Herr Frolich and a secretary of legation in attendance.

"Ah, Mr. Bell!" she cried; "you have come to assist at the *début*."

Laurence started to his feet as if reanimated by the presence of his enchantress. He contrived to edge himself in between the young diplomat and the Roman lady, and to take up his post behind her chair. There was something in his manner to-night that was new to Madame d'Aspramonte—a certain air of self-assertion, a tone which seemed almost that of an accepted lover.

The opera was *Dinorah*. The new tenor appeared presently. He was a young man with a girlish prettiness, a masculine *beauté du diable*. He sang his music with exquisite taste, and with a clear fresh young voice. But there was neither depth of feeling nor passion; it was the effeminate softness of Guido rather than the rugged grandeur of Michael Angelo; it was the bird-like carolling of thoughtless youth, not the eloquent melody of impassioned manhood.

Happily for the youthful Dalecarlian the cards in the grand game of Destiny had been packed for him by more cunning hands than his own. His success had been arranged in advance, and to-night the Princess had the satisfaction of presiding at a triumph.

She declared herself enchanted by the young man's performance, and leant forward on the velvet cushion to fling him her bouquet with her own fair hand, while Laurence Bell stood by her side grinding his teeth in impotent rage—against her—against the singer—against himself—against all the world.

Herr Frolich watched the scene with a sardonic grin. "Shall I present the hero of the night?" he asked; "he will be only too proud to receive your compliments."

"He must sing at my concert," exclaimed the Princess; "his voice is delicious. No, you shall not bring him here to-night. I am tired,

and I am going home immediately. Let me see—this is Saturday. You can bring him to me next Tuesday evening, and we will talk of the concert. Do you think he will sing for me?”

“He will sing for you—die for you, if you will, and make a swan-like end, fading in music,” answered the composer as he left the box.

Mr. Mocatti entered as Herr Frolich departed. One glance at Laurence Bell's face told him how the evening had sped.

“Well, madame,” he said, “there has been a grand success, I hear.”

“*Un triomphe éclatant!*” replied the Princess; “Carlo Vitzi is a new Mario—a Swedish Reeves.”

“And you have invited him to sing at your next concert?”

“Not yet; but I shall certainly do so.”

“*Ce pauvre Carlo Vitzi!*” muttered the dealer. “Come, Laurence Bell; I am waiting to take you home.”

He laid his hand heavily on the painter's shoulder; but the touch did not awaken Laurence from the moody abstraction of mind into which he had sunk since the falling of the curtain.

“Come,” cried Mocatti imperiously; and the young man rose and obeyed him with the unconscious manner of a sleep-walker. He left his Princess with a brief adieu. On other occasions he had attended her to her carriage, lingering on the curb-stone till the dashing little brougham drove away,—lingering in the hope of some last word or look. To-night he was under the influence of a passion which made him reckless of such random words or looks as had once been all-sufficient for his happiness. It was the monster jealousy whose sharp tooth was gnawing at his entrails.

“Well,” cried Mr. Mocatti, when he and his protégé were seated in his carriage, “do you begin to understand your Princess? You have only been one amongst many. It is her own insatiable vanity, her own ambition, which has been fostered by your genius. It is not your glory she desired, but the honour of giving the world a new painter. You have disappointed her hopes, and she turns to a new quarter for the gratification of her pride. She is to astonish the world as an amateur of music, and Carlo Vitzi is to be the latest edition of Orpheus, father of songs.”

“You knew her, and flung me across her path!” gasped Laurence.

“I did not know *you*. I wanted you to catch a spark of the Promethean fire, and you must needs plunge headlong into an abyss of flame. Ah, well, I suppose it is no more than the necessary ordeal. You were cold and tame. You wanted force—originality—the power that comes from suffering. You have suffered, and you will be great. Prometheus is the universal type of genius. It dares—it triumphs. The gods are envious and angry, and then there comes the little episode of the indefatigable vulture perpetually dining on an inexhaustible liver. If we would surmount the heights of Olympus, *mon ami*, we must reconcile ourselves to the inconvenience of the vulture.

Come, come, cheer thee, Laurence; achieve a triumph which shall make your Princess blush for her inconstancy."

"Inconstancy!" The word sounded like a reproach to the ears of Laurence Bell. What inconstancy could be baser than his—or so base?

"O, my youth!" he cried; "my honour, my happiness, my glory! she has trampled them beneath her feet."

"*Canaglia!*" muttered the dealer between his set teeth. "But we will show her that you can be great without her patronage."

"Yes, yes!"

"You will fetch your picture to-morrow, before she has left her room?" urged Mr. Mocatti.

"No, not to-morrow. I must have one more sitting, Mocatti."

The dealer replied with a growl of execration.

"No," remonstrated Laurence; "I am not the weak fool you fancy me. It is the picture I am thinking of, not the woman. One more sitting—one last long scrutiny of that proud passionate face, and I shall have stamped her beauty on the canvas in its noontide splendour. Let me finish my picture, Mocatti. If I possess that, I can laugh at her infidelity; for the triumph of my art will remain for ever—unchanging—immortal—"

"When the widow of Benjamin d'Aspramonte has gone to the dogs. She is more proud and wicked than the painted woman in the Bible, and the end must be the crunching of her bones. Go no more to her house. She is the enchantress of Homer, who changes men into strange creatures, and no friendly goddess has given thee the philtre that shall secure thee against her spells. Trust thyself no more across her threshold. *Cave canem*, says the motto on her door-step. Beware of her who is more dangerous than the lurking house-dog. For thy picture, I will fetch it, and mock myself to her nose if she tries to hinder me."

"I must have one more sitting, Mocatti," replied the painter doggedly; "my future is at stake."

"Bah! thou hast the fever. See, we are at your door. *Soyez sage, mon ami*. Go to bed and sleep, and let thy dreams be troubled by no shadows of Roman widows or Swedish singing men. Take thy rest, *poverino*. Next week we will turn over new leaves. We will go back to our innocence and our poverty, and our little bits of *genre* for the milords of Manchester."

"Go back!" cried Laurence Bell bitterly. "No man can retrace his steps on the road I have taken."

SCENE THE SEVENTH :—OUT OF TOWN.

THE day after Signor Carlo Vitzi's *début* was Sunday, and Mr. Mocatti, being of a philosophical turn of mind, and not given to any idle superstition in the way of church-going, devoted his morning to a round of



calls upon his artist acquaintance. Some of these knew Laurence Bell, and they shook their heads ominously when the dealer spoke of his protégé.

“It looked as if he was going to do great things last year,” said a painter of some repute; “but since then he has grown idle and conceited—a hanger-on of Madame d’Aspramonte’s. I am afraid you won’t get a great haul out of Mr. Bell’s success, Mocatti. The young man promised well; but he has dried up, sir—dried up.”

Mr. Mocatti left his friends depressed and meditative. He felt his disappointment very keenly. He had hoped so much from the little boy he had picked up on a London door-step—so much *kudos*, so much solid pudding in the shape of pecuniary recompense. It was not the fear of pecuniary loss which so deeply affected him, though he had a very sincere regard for his money, and considerable pleasure in the augmentation of his wealth. But in this case his hopes had soared above the mere acquisition of so much vulgar dross. He had been sneered at as a pretender; his protégés had been denounced as charlatans; his art decried as tricky and commonplace—of the shop, shoppy. To Laurence Bell he had looked for the assertion of his own taste and judgment. He had boasted of his *trouaille*—his unconscious genius, who was to astound the slow-coaches of the Academy—his budding Raffaele. Nor was this all. Latent in Antonio Mocatti’s selfish soul there was a dim spark of affection for the fatherless lad whose fate he had taken into his hands. The boy’s fair Raffaele face, his helplessness, his plastic, almost womanish character, had endeared him to his taskmaster; and in the disappointment which the Neapolitan felt to-day there was a keener sting than the mere sense of loss that afflicts the speculator.

“Who shall say that I was not right, after all?” he argued, after abandoning himself for a while to despair. “This picture of which he raves may make a hit that will more than realise my hopes. He believes in it himself; and the instincts of genius are infallible. Why do I goad and torment him because he has not covered many yards of canvas? I have sighed for a blue diamond, and this picture may prove the matchless gem of my heart’s desire. Shall I be angry with him because he has not given me a sack of blue diamonds? No, rather let me restore and cherish him with the tender cares of friendship. Poor fragile creature, let me snatch him from the yawning jaws of the grave.”

While the bells were ringing for afternoon service, Mr. Mocatti drove to North Audley-street. He was anxious to discover what ravages last night’s torments had made on his protégé’s peace.

He found Laurence in walking-costume, restlessly pacing his small sitting-room; and he could see by the freshness of the painter’s gloves and the Parma violets in his button-hole that the influence of the Princess d’Aspramonte was still in the ascendant.

"He is going to call at the Villa," Mr. Mocatti said to himself.

The painter did not wait to be interrogated.

"I have just this moment returned from Fulham," he cried. "Her people tell me she is at Brighton. Can you believe it, Mocatti? There was no mention of Brighton last night. O Mocatti, do you think she would deny herself to me?"

"*Que sais-je?*" replied the Neapolitan, with his shrug *dans la manière de Méphistophélès*. "Do I think the wind will be in the west to-morrow because it is in the west to-day? With your English climate that is a question your wisest cannot answer. Your English climate is all that there is of the most accursed; but it is not so capricious as Giulia d'Aspramonte. When you can pin your faith to that little image of a fox up yonder over that stable-yard, which twists and twists, sometimes his nose to the east, sometimes his nose to the west, you may rely on Madame d'Aspramonte."

"You think, then, that she was at home when I called?" asked Laurence nervously.

"I think nothing. I would guard myself well to think, where it is question of the Princess. What more likely than that she should be at Brighton? If the whim seized her to go, she would go. How I pity that wretched German woman whom she drags about the world with her! That woman is a relation of Herr Frolich's; and between those two there will be mischief for the Princess before the end of the world. Come with me, *mon ami*; my phaeton is below. I will drive thee somewhere in the fresh air, and take thee home to dinner. I have some hock which is more precious than the constancy of women, and almost as rare."

Laurence Bell was too feeble to offer any resistance to his patron's hospitable desires. He followed Mr. Mocatti to the phaeton no more meekly than he would have followed him to the stake, so apathetic had he become to all the minor details of existence.

Once seated in his phaeton, that pride in horseflesh, which seems a natural attribute of mankind, occupied the thoughts of Mr. Mocatti; and he allowed his companion full leisure for meditation, while his own artistic eye dwelt fondly on the perfections of his chestnut *steppares*.

Laurence Bell sat silent by the side of his Mentor, looking dreamily out at the newly-budding trees and the still blue sky, bright and cold as the face of a heartless woman.

There were the usual Sunday-afternoon promenaders in the Park: the swells of the counter and the counting-house, rejoicing in their glorious raiment after a week's imprisonment, and happy in the idea that they are enjoying themselves after the manner of the *gandins* from the Rag and the Traveller's. It is the day on which the tigers roam abroad, and ape the stately walk and kingly roar of the lion. Here and there, perhaps, a little group of the genuine leonine breed congregate to yawn and stare in friendly companionship; but the tiger species

is in the ascendant, and the monarch of beasts feels himself in a false position.

“Come away, Fitz, old fellow,” says young Slender of the Prancers Purple to his friend Fitz-Shallow of the Plungers Red; “I smell *patchouli*. There must be tradespeople somewhere. I consider the great problem of the present age is what a man is to do with himself on Sunday. If he stops at home, he reads *Bell's Life* and that sort of thing, till he makes his eyes weak; if he drops in at the Zoo, he meets all manner of unknown people from the immediate neighbourhood; and if he drives to Richmond or Greenwich, he finds himself crowded by creatures with intrusive elbows, who talk loud and drink port and sherry.”

To display himself and his phaeton in the Park was the delight of Mr. Mocatti's heart. He had the continental idea, that to drive a pair of horses was a rare and glorious achievement; and he had the continental notion, that the merits of a horse may be measured by the height and general splashiness of his action. To tear through the drive with sound and fury, and some danger to scudding children and young persons with perambulators, was to Mr. Mocatti's mind the perfection of scientific driving; and he despised the tranquil-looking, fair-faced “insulars” who trotted their drags and phaetons calmly past him, and who stared in supercilious wonder at his *bruyant attelage*.

After displaying himself in the Park to his heart's content, and receiving the admiring glances of innumerable nursemaids, Mr. Mocatti drove to Hammersmith Bridge, and thence to the fair stretch of common-land between Barnes and Putney.

“*Eh bien, mon ami*, you are mute as the tombs of the Pharaohs. What do you think of all this time?” he asked Laurence at last.

“I have been thinking of my picture. It haunts me, Mocatti, like a living presence. The face that I have painted is always before me.”

“Paint other faces, and you will cease to be haunted.”

“I cannot.”

“Ah, well! we will see about that by and bye, when your picture has been exhibited, and has made people talk. I wish you would let me see it.”

“No, Mocatti; there I am firm as rock. I have suffered too much from ‘suggestion.’ If I make mistakes, they shall be all my own. I will not alter a line on the advice of friend or critic. When the picture is ready to send in, you shall see it. It will then be too late for the possibility of alteration.”

“I languish for the hour of its completion. I have already begun to diplomatise for a good position; and I know if the picture is worth anything, it will be well hung. Tell me frankly now, Laurence; you must know whether you have done well or ill. Is the picture as strong as your ‘Lady Macbeth’?”

Mr. Bell looked at his Mentor with a contemptuous smile.

"I should indeed have wasted my life if my Roman lady were no better than the 'Lady Macbeth,'" he said. "That was the inspiration of an hour, painted in less than a week. To this picture I have given months of solid labour, sleepless nights of thought and study. I have brought to bear upon it all the resources of my art, all the secrets that the experience of the dead can impart to the living. You could never imagine the books I have searched for hints and suggestions, the experiments I have made, the toil I have wasted in order to make this one work a lasting triumph. I am not very strong, you see, Mocatti," the young man continued somewhat sadly; "and I have sometimes fancied latterly that this picture may be the last I shall ever paint. I don't want to die and be forgotten like a lawyer's clerk or a shop-keeper's errand-boy. Since I have no kindred to be sorry for me, I want my name to be remembered by the world—at least as that of a man who might have done something, if he had lived longer."

"*Pouah!*" cried Mr. Mocatti, "that is a young man's fancy. Youthful genius always thirsts for death; it is a kind of short cut to immortality. The picture or the poem might have been better, but the painter or the poet died so young. It requires the force of a Titian or a Goethe to surmount the ignominy of old age. But we are not going to let you die, *mon ami*. You have a little cold, a little fever; you have been working a little too hard on one subject. All that will pass like these chill spring breezes. You shall live to write R.A. after your name."

"*She* would be sorry for me, perhaps, if I were dead," murmured the painter absently.

He had indeed no desire to survive the single triumph which was now the sole hope and dream of his life. He felt an immeasurable weariness and disgust, for which there seemed no other cure than death.

Mr. Mocatti looked at him for a few moments with a compassionate smile, and then relapsed into silence.

"This fever, this madness must have their course. It is my work," the dealer said to himself remorsefully. "*Je ne savais pas de quelle trempe il était, ce jeune homme.*"

Mr. Mocatti drove across Barnes Common, and returned Londonwards by Putney Bridge. He had just cleared the town of Fulham, dashing along the middle of the road at his usual pace, when he had to make way a little for an advancing barouche. Laurence looked up, as the carriage passed; looked up in time to see the Princess in her accustomed listless, half-reclining attitude, but with a bright animated face.

Her German *dame d'atours* was by her side, and opposite her were seated Herr Frolich, and Signor Carlo Vitzi the Swedish tenor.

"O, ho!" cried Mr. Mocatti, when the barouche had passed; "this is how the Princess spends her Sunday at Brighton. *Il s'agit du Star and Gartèrre.*"

## THE TRINITY OF ART

“ L'Art a besoin ou de la solitude, ou de la misère, ou de la passion.”

ALEXANDRE DUMAS, FILS.

### I.

Ay, solitude, agony, passion!  
This marvellous trinity brings  
From afar the fierce fancies that flash on  
The poet, who dreams and who sings.  
Wild wandering, happy and lonely,  
Through stream-haunted woodlands serene,  
There were days when his joyaunce was only  
With Nature, sole goddess and queen.

### II.

But from loneliness, indolence, beauty,  
We pass to the turmoil of life ;  
Sharp steel are the fetters of duty,  
Bite keenly the acids of strife.  
Ah, Genius, too free is thy charter  
For the plausible Philistine's rules ;  
So the world makes the poet a martyr,  
And the poet takes vengeance on fools.

### III.

Far sweetest of all that he utters  
Are the snatches of passionate rhyme  
Which come when a loving heart flutters  
On his, in the royal summer-time.  
Then the wine of his life hath bright foam on't,  
Then joy is more puissant than tears,  
Then a brief keen miraculous moment  
Outweighs the slow torture of years.

MORTIMER COLLINS.





