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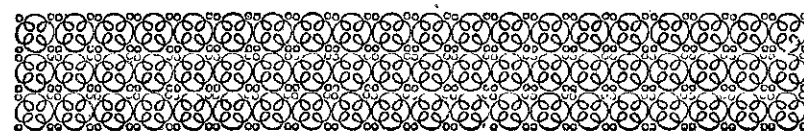
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Story of the Baked Head.

THE present Khon-khor* of Roum is a staunch Mus-
sulman, and a rigid upholder of the true faith.
Upon his coming to the throne, he announced his
intention of doing away with many customs common to the
infidels, which had crept into the administration of the state
during the reign of his predecessor; and he thought it his
duty to endeavor to restore things to their primitive sim-
plicity, and to adopt a mode of government purely Turkish.
Accordingly he resumed a custom which had almost got
into disuse—that of going about the city in *tebdil*, or dis-
guise; and he was so careful about the disguises which he
adopted, and the people whom he admitted into his secrets
on these occasions, that he took all sorts of precautions,
and invented all sorts of schemes of secresy, in whatever
related to his dresses, and the characters in which he chose
to appear.

It is not long ago that considerable discontent prevailed
throughout Turkey, and rebellion threatened to break out

* *Khon-khor*, literally "blood drinker;" so the sultan of *Roum*, or
Turkey, is styled in Persia.

in Constantinople itself. He was then very anxious to ascertain the temper of the public mind; and, in his usual wary manner, determined to get a suit made that would make him undiscoverable by even his own immediate attendants.

He usually sent for different tailors at different times, and in different places. On this occasion, he ordered his favorite slave, the white eunuch, Mansouri, to bring him one of no repute, with all the requisite secrecy, at midnight, in order that he might receive instructions about a dress.

The slave, in great humility, made his *bash ustum* (on my head be it), and went his way to execute the command.

Close to the gate of the *Bezesten*, or cloth-market, he saw an old man in a stall so narrow that he could scarce turn himself about in it, who was taken up in patching an old cloak. He was almost bent double with constant labor at his shop-board; and his eyes seemed not to have benefited by his application, for a pair of glasses were mounted on his nose. "This is precisely the man I want," said the slave to himself: "I am sure he can be of no repute." So intent was he upon his work, that he did not heed the salutation of "Peace be with you, friend!" with which Mansouri accosted him; and when he did look up, and saw the well-dressed personage who he thought had spoken, he continued his work without making the usual reply; for he could not suppose that the salutation was meant for such a poor devil as he.

However, finding that he was the object of the eunuch's attention, he doffed the spectacles, threw away his work, and was about getting on his legs, when he was stopped, and requested not to disturb himself.

"What is your name?" said Mansouri.

"Abdallah," said the tailor, "at your service; but I am

generally called Babadul by my friends, and the world at large."

"You are a tailor, are you not?" continued the slave.

"Yes," said the other; "I am a tailor as well as the muezzin at the little mosque in the fish-market. What more can I do?"

"Well, Babadul," said Mansouri, "have you a mind for a job—a good job?"

"Am I a fool," answered the old man, "that I should dislike it? Say what it is."

"Softly, my friend," remarked the eunuch; "we must go on slow and sure. Will you suffer yourself to be led blindfolded, at midnight, wherever I choose to take you, for a job?"

"That's another question," said Babadul; "times are critical, heads fly in abundance, and a poor tailor's may go as well as a vizier's, or a capitan pacha's. But pay me well, and I believe I would make a suit of clothes for Eblis, the foul fiend, himself."

"Well, then, you agree to my proposal?" said the eunuch, who at the same time put two pieces of gold in his hand.

"Yes, most surely," said Babadul, "I agree. Tell me what I am to do, and you may depend upon me."

Accordingly they settled between them that the eunuch was to come to the stall at midnight, and lead him away blindfolded.

Babadul, being left alone, continued his work, wondering what could be the job upon which he was to be so mysteriously employed; and, anxious to make his wife a partaker of the news of his good luck, he shut up his stall earlier than usual, and went to his house, that was situated not far from the little mosque in the fish-market, of which he was the muezzin.

Old Dilferib, his wife, was almost as much bent double as her husband; and in consequence of the two gold pieces, and in contemplation of more which they expected to receive, they treated themselves to a dish of smoking *kabobs*, a salad, dried grapes, and sweetmeats, after which they consoled themselves with some of the hottest and most bitter coffee which the old woman could make.

True to his appointment, Babadul was at his stall at midnight, where he was as punctually met by Mansouri. Without any words, the former permitted himself to be blindfolded, whilst the latter led him away by the hand, making many and devious turns, until they reached the imperial seraglio; there, stopping only to open the private iron gate, Mansouri introduced the tailor into the very heart of the sultan's private apartments. The bandage over his eyes was taken off in a dark chamber, lighted up only by a small lamp, which stood on the shelf surrounding the top of the room, but which was splendidly furnished by sofas of the richest brocade, and by carpets of the most costly manufacture. Here Babadul was commanded to sit, until Mansouri returned with a bundle, wrapped in a large shawl handkerchief; this being opened, a sort of dervish's dress was displayed to the tailor, and he was requested to look at it, to consider how long he would be making such a one, and then to return it again, duly folded up, to its shawl covering. In the meanwhile, Mansouri told him to stay there until he should return to take him away again, and then left him.

Babadul, having turned the dress over and over again, calculated each stitch, and come to its proper conclusions, packed it up in the handkerchief as he had been commanded; but no sooner had he done this, than a man of lofty demeanor and appearance, whose look made the poor tailor shrink within himself, came into the room, took up

the bundle, and walked away with it, without uttering a single word.

A few minutes after, as Babadul was pondering over the strangeness of his situation, and just recovering from the effects of this apparition, a door opened in another part of the apartment, and a mysterious figure, richly dressed, came in, bearing a bundle, equally covered with a shawl, about the size of that which had just been taken away; and making the lowest prostrations before the tailor, in great apparent trepidation, approached him, placed it at his feet, kissed the ground, and retreated without saying a word, or even looking up.

"Well," said Babadul to himself, "this may be something very fine, and I may be some very great personage, for aught I know; but this is very certain, that I had rather be patching my old cloak in the stall than doing this job, however grand and lucrative it may be. Who knows what I may have been brought here for? These comings in and goings out of strange-looking people, apparently without tongues in their heads, do not argue well. I wish they would give me fewer bows and a greater supply of words, from which I might learn what I am to get by all this. I have heard of poor women having been sewn up in sacks and thrown into the sea. Who knows? perhaps I am destined to be the tailor on such an occasion."

He had scarcely got thus far in his soliloquy, when the slave Mansouri re-entered the room, and told him, without more words, to take up the bundle; which having done, his eyes were again blindfolded, and he was led to the spot from whence he came. Babadul, true to his agreement, asked no questions, but agreed with the slave that in three days the dress should be ready for delivery at his stall, for which he was to receive ten more pieces of gold.

Having got rid of his companion, he proceeded with all

haste to his house, where he knew his wife would be impatiently waiting his return; and as he walked onwards he congratulated himself that at length he had succeeded in getting indeed a job worth the having, and that his fate had finally turned up something good for his old age. It was about two o'clock in the morning when he reached the door of his house. He was received by his wife with expressions of great impatience at his long absence; but when he held up the bundle to her face, as she held up the lamp to his, and when he said, "*Mujdeh*, give me a reward for good news: see, I have got my work, and a handsome reward we shall get when it is finished," she was all smiles and good humor.

"Leave it there till we get up, and let us go to bed now," said the tailor.

"No, no," said the wife; "I must look at what you have got before I retire, or I shall not be able to sleep;" upon which, whilst he held up the lamp, she opened the bundle. Guess, guess at the astonishment of the tailor and his wife, when, instead of seeing a suit of clothes, they discovered, wrapped in a napkin, in its most horrid and ghastly state, a human head!

It fell from the old woman's hands, and rolled away some paces, whilst the horror-struck couple first hid their faces with their hands, and then looked at each other with countenances which nothing can describe.

"Work!" cried the wife, "work, indeed! pretty work you have made of it! Was it necessary to go so far, and to take such precautions, to bring this misfortune on our heads? Did you bring home this dead man's head to make a suit of clothes of?"

"*Anna senna! Baba senna!* Curses be on his mother! Perdition seize his father!" exclaimed the poor tailor, "for bringing me into this dilemma. My heart misgave me as

that dog of an eunuch talked of blindfoldings and silence to me: I thought, as true as I am a Turk, that the job could not consist only in making a suit of clothes; and sure enough this dog's son has tacked a head to it. Allah! Allah! what am I to do now? I know not the way to his home, or else I would take it back to him immediately, and throw it in his face. We shall have the *bostangi bashi*, and a hundred other *bashis*, here in a minute, and we shall be made to pay the price of blood; or, who knows, be hung, or drowned, or impaled! What shall we do, eh, *Dilferib*, my soul, say?"

"Do!" said his wife; "get rid of the head, to be sure: we have no more right to have it palmed upon us than anybody else."

"But the day will soon dawn," said the tailor, "and then it will be too late. Let us be doing something at once."

"A thought has struck me," said the old woman. "Our neighbor, the baker, *Hassan*, heats his oven at this hour, and begins soon after to bake his bread for his morning's customers. He frequently has different sorts of things to bake from the neighboring houses, which are placed near the oven's mouth over night: suppose I put this head into one of our earthen pots and send it to be baked; nobody will find it out until it is done, and then we need not send for it, so it will remain on the baker's hands."

Badabul admired his wife's sagacity, and forthwith she put her plan into execution. When the head had been placed in a baking-pan, she watched a moment when nobody was at hand, and set it on the ground, in the same row with the other articles that were to be inserted in *Hassan's* oven. The old couple then double-barred the door of their house, and retired to rest, comforting themselves with the acquisition of the fine shawl and napkin in which the head had been wrapped.

The baker Hassan and his son Mahmûd were heating their oven, inserting therein thorns, chips, and old rubbish, at a great rate, when their attention was arrested by the extraordinary whinings and barking of a dog, that was a constant customer at the oven for stray bits of bread, and much befriended by Hassan and his son, who were noted for being conscientious Mussulmans.

"Look, Mahmûd," said the father to the son; "see what is the matter with the dog; something extraordinary is in the wind."

The son did what his father bade him; and seeing no reason for the dog's noises, said, "*Bir chey yok*, There is nothing," and drove him away.

But the howlings not ceasing, Hassan went himself, and found the dog most extremely intent upon smelling and pointing at the tailor's pipkin. He jumped upon Hassan, then at the pot, then upon Hassan again, until the baker no longer doubted that the beast took great interest in its contents. He therefore gently drew off the lid, when, need I mention his horror and surprise at seeing a human head staring him in the face?

"Allah! Allah!" cried the baker; but being a man of strong nerves, instead of letting it fall, as most people would have done, he quietly put on the lid again, and called his son to him.

"Mahmûd," said he, "this is a bad world, and there are bad men in it. Some wicked infidel has sent a man's head to bake; but, thanks to our good fortune, and to the dog, our oven has been saved from pollution, and we can go on making our bread with clean hands and clear consciences. But since the devil is at work, let others have a visit from him as well as ourselves. If it be known that we have had a dead man's head to bake, who will ever employ us again? We must starve, we must shut up our oven; we shall get

the reputation of mixing up our dough with human grease, and if perchance a hair is found, it will immediately be said that it came from the dead man's beard."

Mahmûd, a youth of about twenty, who partook of his father's insensibility and coolness, and who, moreover, had a great deal of dry humor and ready wit, looked upon the incident in the light of a good joke, and broke out into a hearty laugh when he saw the ugly picture which the grinning head made, set in its earthen frame.

"Let us pop it into the shop of Kior Ali, the barber opposite," said the youth: "he is just beginning to open it; and as he has but one eye, we shall be better able to do so without being seen. Do, father," said Mahmûd, "let me; nobody shall discover me; and let it be done before there is more daylight."

The father consented; and Mahmûd, catching the moment when the barber had walked to the corner of the street to perform certain ablutions, stepped into his shop, and placed the head on a sort of *takcheh*, or bracket on the wall, arranged some shaving towels about it, as if it had been a customer ready seated to be shaved, and, with a boy's mischief in his heart, stepped back to his oven again, to watch the effects which this new sort of customer would have upon the blind barber.

Kior Ali hobbled into his shop, which was but ill lighted by a glimmering of daylight, that hardly pierced through the oil-papered windows, and, looking about him, saw this figure, as he supposed, seated against the wall, ready to be operated upon.

"Ha! peace be unto you!" said he to it; "you are rather early this morning; I did not see you at first. My water is not yet hot. Oh! I see you want your head shaved; but why do you take off your *fese* (skull-cap) so soon? you will catch cold." Then he paused. "No

answer," said the barber to himself. "I suppose he is dumb, and deaf too, perhaps. Well, I am half blind, so we are nearly upon equal terms; however, if I were even to lose my other eye," addressing himself to the head, "I dare say, my old uncle, I could shave you for all that; for my razor would glide as naturally over your head, as a draught of good wine does over my throat."

He went methodically about his preparations; he took down his tin basin from a peg, prepared his soap, then stropped his razor on the long bit of leather that was fastened to his girdle. Having made his lather, he walked up to the supposed customer, holding the basin in his left hand, whilst his right was extended to sprinkle the first preparation of water on the scone. No sooner had he placed his hand on the cold head, than he withdrew it as if he had been burnt. "Eh! why, what's the matter with you, friend?" said the barber; "you are as cold as a piece of ice." But when he attempted a second time to lather it, down it came with a terrible bounce from the shelf to the floor, and made the poor shaver jump quite across his shop with the fright.

"Aman! aman! O mercy! mercy!" cried Kior Ali, as he thrust himself into the furthest corner without daring to move. "Take my shop, my razors, my towels—take all I have; but don't touch my life! If you are the *Shaitan*, speak; but excuse my shaving you!"

But when he found that all was hushed after the catastrophe, and that nothing was to be feared, he approached the head, and taking it up by the lock of hair at the top, he looked at it in amazement. "A head, by all the imams!" said he, accosting it; "and how did you get here? Do you want to disgrace me, you filthy piece of flesh? but you shall not! Although Kior Ali has lost one eye, yet his other is a sharp one, and knows what it is

about. I would give you to the baker Hassan there, if his rogue of a son, who is now looking this way, was not even sharper than this self-same eye; but now I think of it, I will take you where you can do no harm. The Giaour Yanaki, the Greek *kabobchi** (roast-meat man), shall have you, and shall cut you up into mincemeat for his infidel customers." Upon this, Kior Ali, drawing in one hand, in which he carried the head, through the slit on the sides of his *beniche*, or cloak, and taking up his pipe in the other, walked down two streets to the shop of the aforesaid Greek.

He frequented it in preference to that of a Mussulman, because he could here drink wine with impunity. From long practice, he knew precisely where the provision of fresh meat was kept; and, as he entered the shop, casting his eye furtively round, he threw the head in a dark corner, behind one of the large sides of a sheep that was to be used for the kabobs of the day. No one saw him perform this feat; for the morning was still sufficiently obscure to screen him. He lighted his pipe at Yanaki's charcoal fire, and, as a pretext for his visit, ordered a dish of meat to be sent to him for breakfast; a treat to which he thought himself fully entitled after his morning's adventure.

Yanaki, meanwhile, having cleaned his platters, put his skewers in order, lit his fires, made his sherbets, and swept out his shop, went to the larder for some meat for the shaver's breakfast. Yanaki was a true Greek—cunning, cautious, deceitful; cringing to his superiors, tyrannical towards his inferiors; detesting with a mortal hatred his proud masters, the Osmanlies, yet fawning, flattering, and

* The *kabob* shops at Constantinople are eating-houses, where, at a moment's notice, a dish of roast meat, and small bits of meat done on skewers, are served up to whoever asks for them.

abject, whenever any of them, however low in life, deigned to take notice of him. Turning over his stock, he looked about for some old bits that might serve the present purpose, muttering to himself that any carrion was good enough for a Turk's stomach. He surveyed his half sheep from top to bottom; felt it, and said, "No, this will keep;" but as he turned up its fat tail, the eye of the dead man's head caught his eye, and made him start, and step back some paces. "As ye love your eyes," exclaimed he, "who is there?" Receiving no answer, he looked again and again; then nearer—then, thrusting his hand among sheep's heads and trotters, old remnants of meat, and the like, he pulled out the head—the horrid head—which he held extended at arm's length, as if he were afraid that it would do him mischief. "Anathemas attend your beard!" exclaimed Yanaki, as soon as he discovered, by the tuft of hair on the top, that it had belonged to a Mussulman. "Och! if I had but every one of your heads in this manner, ye cursed race of Omar! I would make kabobs of them, and every cur in Constantinople should get fat for nothing. May ye all come to this end! May the vultures feed on your carcases! and may every Greek have the good fortune which has befallen me this day, of having one of your worthless skulls for his football!" Upon which, in his rage, he threw it down and kicked it from him; but, recollecting himself, he said, "But after all, what shall I do with it? If it is seen here, I am lost for ever: nobody will believe but what I have killed a Turk."

All of a sudden he cried out, in a sort of malicious ecstasy, "'Tis well I remembered—the Jew! the Jew!—a properer place for such a head was never thought or heard of; and there you shall go, thou vile remnant of a Mahomedan!"

Upon which he seized it, and, hiding it under his coat,

ran with it down the street to where the dead body of a Jew lay extended, with its head placed immediately between its legs.

In Turkey, when a Mahomedan is beheaded, his head is placed under his arm, by way of an honorable distinction from the Christian or Jew, who, when a similar misfortune befalls them, have theirs inserted between their legs, as close to the seat of dishonor as possible.

It was in that situation, then, that Yanaki placed the Turk's head, putting it as near, cheek by jowl, with the Jew's as the hurry of the case would allow. He had been able to effect this without being seen, because the day was still but little advanced, and no one stirring; and he returned to his shop, full of exultation at having been able to discharge his feelings of hatred against his oppressors, by placing one of their heads on the spot in nature, which, according to his estimation, was the most teeming with opprobrium.

The unfortunate sufferer on this occasion had been accused of stealing and putting to death a Mahomedan child (a ceremony in their religion which they have been known to practise both in Turkey and Persia), and which created such an extraordinary tumult among the mob of Constantinople, that, in order to appease it, he had been decapitated. His execution had taken place purposely before the door of a wealthy Greek, and the body was ordered to remain there three days before it was permitted to be carried away for interment. The expectation that the Greek would be induced to pay down a handsome sum, in order that this nuisance might be removed from his door, and save him from the ill luck which such an object is generally supposed to bring, made the officer intrusted with the execution prefer this spot to every other. But, careless of the consequences, the Greek shut up the

windows of his house, determined to deprive his oppressors of their expected perquisite; and so the dead Jew remained exposed his full time. Few excepting those of the true faith ventured to approach the spot, fearful that the Mahomedan authorities would, in their wanton propensities to heap insults upon the Giaours, oblige some one of them to carry the carcase to the place of burial; and thus the horrid and disgusting object was left abandoned to itself, and this had given an opportunity to the kabobchi, Yanaki, to dispose of the head in the manner above related, unseen and unmolested. But when, as the day advanced, and as the stir of the streets became more active, this additional head was discovered, the crowd which gathered about it became immense. It was immediately rumored that a miracle had been performed; for a dead Jew was to be seen with two heads. The extraordinary intelligence flew from mouth to mouth, until the whole city was in an uproar, and all were running to see the miracle. The Sanhedrim immediately pronounced that something extraordinary was about to happen to their persecuted race. Rabbins were to be seen running to and fro, and their whole community was now poured around the dead body, in expectation that he would perhaps arise, put on his heads, and deliver them from the gripe of their oppressors.

But as ill luck would have it for them, a Janissary, who had mixed in the crowd, and had taken a close survey of the supernumerary head, exclaimed, in a mixture of doubt and amazement, "Allah, Allah, il Allah! these are no infidels' heads. One is the head of our lord and master, the Aga of the Janissaries." Upon which, seeing more of his companions, he called them to him, and making known his discovery, they became violent with rage, and set off to communicate the intelligence to their Orta.

The news spread like wildfire throughout the whole of the corps of the Janissaries, and a most alarming tumult was immediately excited; for it seems that it was unknown in the capital that their chief, to whom they were devotedly attached, and one of their own selection, had been put to death.

"What!" said they, "is it not enough to deal thus treacherously with us, and deprive us of a chief to whom we are attached; but we must be treated with the greatest contempt that it is possible for men to receive? What! the head of our most noble Aga of the Janissaries to be placed upon the most ignoble part of a Jew! what are we come to? We alone are not insulted; the whole of Islam is insulted, degraded, debased. No. This is unheard of insolence, a stain never to be wiped off, without the extermination of the whole race. And what dog has done this deed? How did the head get there? Is it that dog of a Vizier's work, or have the Reis Effendi and those traitors of Frank ambassadors been at work?—*Wallah, Billah, Tallah!* by the holy Caaba, by the beard of Osman, and by the sword of Omar, we will be revenged!"

We must leave the tumult to rage for a short time; we must request the reader to imagine a scene, in which Jews are flying in all directions, hiding themselves with great precaution against enraged Turks, who, with expressions like those just mentioned in their mouths, are to be seen walking about in groups, armed to their teeth with pistols and cimeters, and vowing vengeance upon everything which came in their way. He must imagine a city of narrow streets and low houses, thronged with a numerous population, in dresses the most various in shape and the most lively in colors, all anxious, all talking, all agog as if something extraordinary was to happen; in the midst of whom I will leave him, to take a look into the interior of

the sultan's seraglio, and to inquire in what his eminency himself had been engaged since we last noticed him.

On the very same night of the tailor's attendance, the sultan had given a secret order for taking off the head of the aga of the Janissaries (the fomentor of all the disturbances which had lately taken place among his corps, and consequently their idol); and so anxious was he about its execution, that he had ordered it to be brought to him the moment it was off. The man intrusted with the execution, upon entering the room where he had been directed to bring the head, seeing some one seated, naturally took him for the sultan, and, without daring to look up, he immediately placed the burden at his feet, with the prostrations which we have already described as having been performed before the tailor. The sultan, who not a minute before had taken away the bundle containing the dervish's dress, had done so in the intention of deceiving his slave Mansouri himself—so desirous was he of being unknown in his new disguise even to him—and intended to have substituted another in its stead; but not calculating either upon the reception of the head, or upon Mansouri's immediate return to the tailor, he was himself completely puzzled how to act when he found the tailor was gone, led off by his slave. To have sent after them would have disconcerted his schemes, and therefore he felt himself obliged to await Mansouri's return, before he could get an explanation of what had happened; for he knew that they would not have gone away without the dress, and that dress he had then in his possession. In the meanwhile, anxious and impatient to know what had become of the expected head, he sent for the officer who was intrusted with the execution; and the astonishment of both may be imagined when an explanation took place.

"By my beard," exclaimed the sultan, having thought

awhile within himself; "by my beard, the tailor must have got the head!"

His impatience for Mansouri's return then became extreme. In vain he fretted, fumed, and cried, "Allah! Allah!" It did not make the slave return a minute the sooner, who, good man, would have gone quietly to rest had he not been called upon to appear before the sultan.

As soon as he was within hearing, he called out, "Ahi! Mansouri, run immediately to the tailor—he has got the head of the aga of the Janissaries instead of the dervish's dress—run, fetch it without loss of time, or something unfortunate will happen!" He then explained how this untoward event had occurred. Mansouri now, in his turn, felt himself greatly embarrassed; for he only knew the road to the tailor's stall, but was totally unacquainted with his dwelling-house. However, rather than excite his master's anxiety in a higher degree, he set off in quest of the tailor, and went straight to his stall, in the hopes of hearing from the neighbors where his house was. It was too early in the day for the opening of the Bezestan, and except a coffee-house that had just prepared for the reception of customers, where he applied and could gain no intelligence, he found himself completely at a stand-still. By the greatest good luck, he recollected Babadul had told him that he was the muezzin to the little mosque in the Fish Market, and thither he immediately bent his steps. The azan, or morning invitation to prayers, was now chanting forth from all the minarets, and he expected that he might catch the purloiner of the head in the very act of inviting the faithful to prayers.

As he approached the spot, he heard an old broken and tremulous voice, which he imagined might be Babadul's, breaking the stillness of the morning by all the energy of his lungs; and he was not mistaken, for as he stood under

the minaret, he perceived the old man walking round the gallery which encircles it, with his hand applied to the back of his ear, and with his mouth wide open, pouring out his whole throat in the execution of his office. As soon as the tailor saw Mansouri making signs to him, the profession of faith stuck in his throat; and between the fright of being brought to account for the head, and the words which he had to pronounce, it is said that he made so strange a jumble, that some of the stricter Mussulmans, his neighbors, who were paying attention to the call, professed themselves quite scandalized at his performance. He descended with all haste, and locking the door after him which leads up the winding staircase, he met Mansouri in the street. He did not wait to be questioned respecting the fate of the horrid object, but at once attacked the slave concerning the trick, as he called it, which had been put upon him.

"Are you a man," said he, "to treat a poor emir like me in the manner you have done, as if my house was a charnel-house? I suppose you will ask me the price of blood next?"

"Friend," said Mansouri, "what are you talking about? do not you see that it has been a mistake?"

"A mistake, indeed!" cried the tailor, "a mistake done on purpose to bring a poor man into trouble. One man laughs at my stupid beard, and makes me believe that I am to make a suit of clothes for him—another takes away the pattern—and a third substitutes a dead man's head for it. Allah! Allah! I have got into the hands of a pretty nest of rogues, a set of ill-begotten knaves!"

Upon which Mansouri placed his hand upon the tailor's mouth, and said, "Say no more, say no more; you are getting deeper into the dirt. Do you know whom you are abusing?"

"I know not, nor care not," answered Babadul; "all I know is, that whoever gives me a dead man's head for a suit of clothes can only be an infidel dog."

"Do you call God's vicegerent upon earth, you old demi-stitching, demi-praying fool, an infidel dog?" exclaimed Mansouri in a rage, which entirely made him forget the precaution he had hitherto maintained concerning his employer. "Are your vile lips to defile the name of him who is the *Alem penah*, the refuge of the world? What dirt are you eating, what ashes are you heaping on your head? Come, no more words; tell me where the dead man's head is, or I will take yours off in his stead."

Upon hearing this, the tailor stood with his mouth wide open, as if the doors of his understanding had just been unlocked.

"*Aman, aman*, mercy, mercy, O aga!" cried Babadul to Mansouri, "I was ignorant of what I was saying. Who would have thought it? Ass, fool, dolt, that I am, not to have known better. *Bismillah!* in the name of the Prophet, pray come to my house; your steps will be fortunate, and your slave's head will touch the stars."

"I am in a hurry, a great hurry," said Mansouri. "Where is the head, the head of the aga of the Janisseries?"

When the tailor heard whose head it had been, and recollected what he and his wife had done with it, his knees knocked under him with fear, and he began to exude from every pore.

"Where is it, indeed?" said he. "Oh! what has come upon us! Oh! what cursed *kismet* (fate) is this?"

"Where is it?" exclaimed the slave, again and again, "where is it? speak quick!"

The poor tailor was completely puzzled what to say,

and kept floundering from one answer to another until he was quite entangled as in a net.

"Have you burnt it?"

"No."

"Have you thrown it away?"

"No."

"Then, in the name of the Prophet, what have you done with it? Have you eat it?"

"No."

"Is it lying in your house?"

"No."

"Is it hiding in any other person's house?"

"No."

Then at last, quite out of patience, the slave Mansouri took Babadul by his beard, and shaking his head for him, exclaimed with a roar, "Then tell me, you old dotard! what is it doing?"

"It is baking," answered the tailor, half choked. "I have said it."

"Baking! did you say?" exclaimed the slave, in the greatest amazement; "what did you bake it for? Are you going to eat it?"

"True, I said; what would you have more?" answered Babadul, "it is now baking." And then he gave a full account of what he and his wife had done in the sad dilemma in which they had been placed.

"Show me the way to the baker's," said Mansouri; "at least we shall get it in its singed state, if we can get it in no other. Who ever thought of baking the head of the aga of the Janissaries? *Allah il Allah!*"

They then proceeded to the baker Hassan's, who was now about taking his bread from his oven. As soon as he became acquainted with their errand, he did not hesitate in telling all the circumstances attending the transmission

of the head from the pipkin to the barber's bracket; happy to have had an opportunity of exculpating himself of what might possibly have been brought up against him as a crime.

The three (Mansouri, the tailor, and the baker) then proceeded to the barber's, and inquired from him what he had done with the head of his earliest customer.

Kior Ali, after some hesitation, made great assurances that he looked upon this horrid object as a donation from Eblis himself, and consequently that he had thought himself justified in transferring it over to the Giaour Yanaki, who, he made no doubt, had already made his brother infidels partake of it in the shape of kabobs. Full of wonder and amazement, invoking the Prophet at each step, and uncertain as to the result of such unheard-of adventures, they then added the barber to their party, and proceeded to Yanaki's cook-shop.

The Greek, confounded at seeing so many of the true believers enter his house, had a sort of feeling that their business was not of roast meat, but that they were in search of meat of a less savory nature. As soon as the question had been put to him concerning the head, he stoutly denied having seen it, or knowing anything at all concerning it.

The barber showed the spot where he had placed it, and swore it upon the Koran.

Mansouri had undertaken the investigation of the point in question, when they discovered symptoms of the extraordinary agitation that prevailed in the city in consequence of the discovery which had been made of the double-headed Jew, and of the subsequent discovery that had produced such great sensation among the whole corps of Janissaries.

Mansouri, followed by the tailor, the baker, and the

barber, then proceeded to the spot where the dead Israelite was prostrate; and there, to their astonishment, they each recognised their morning visitor—the head so long sought after.

Yanaki, the Greek, in the meanwhile, conscious of what was likely to befall him, without loss of time gathered what money he had ready at hand, and fled the city.

"Where is the Greek?" said Mansouri, turning round to look for him, in the supposition that he had joined his party; "we must all go before the sultan."

"I dare say he is run off," said the barber. "I am not so blind but I can see that he it is who gifted the Jew with his additional head."

Mansouri now would have carried off the head; but, surrounded as it was by a band of enraged and armed soldiers, who vowed vengeance upon him who had deprived them of their chief, he thought it most prudent to withdraw. Leading with him his three witnesses, he at once proceeded to the presence of his master.

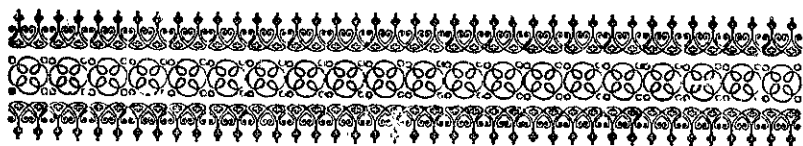
When Mansouri had informed the sultan of all that had happened, where he had found the head of the aga of the Janissaries, how it had got there, and of the tumult it had raised, the reader may better imagine than I can describe the state of the monarch's mind. To tell the story with all its particulars he felt would be derogatory to his dignity, for it was sure to cover him with ridicule; but at the same time to let the matter rest as it now stood was impossible, because the tumult would increase until there would be no means of quelling it, and the affair might terminate by depriving him of his crown, together with his life.

He remained in a state of indecision for some time, twisting up the ends of his mustachios, and muttering "Allah! Allah!" in low ejaculations, until at length he ordered the prime vizier and the müfti to his presence.

Alarmed by the abruptness, of the summons, these two great dignitaries arrived at the imperial gate in no enviable state of mind; but when the sultan had informed them of the tumult then raging in the capital, they resumed their usual tranquillity.

After some deliberation it was resolved, that the tailor, the baker, the barber, and the kabobchi, should appear before the tribunal of the müfti, accused of having entered into a conspiracy against the aga of the Janissaries, and stealing his head, for the purposes of baking, shaving, and roasting it, and that they should be condemned to pay the price of his blood; but as the kabobchi had been the immediate cause of the tumult by treating the head with such gross and unheard-of insult, and as he was a Greek and an infidel, it was further resolved that the müfti should issue a *fetwah*, authorizing his head to be cut off, and placed on the same odious spot where he had exposed that of the aga of the Janissaries.

It was then agreed between the sultan and his grand vizier, that, in order to appease the Janissaries, a new aga should be appointed who was agreeable to them, and that the deceased should be buried with becoming distinction. All this (except killing the Greek, who had fled) was done, and tranquillity again restored to the city. But it must further be added, to the honor of the sultan, that he not only paid every expense which the tailor, the baker, and the barber were condemned to incur, but also gave them each a handsome reward, for the difficulties into which they had so unfortunately been thrown.



The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing.

CLEMATIS Cottage, in the suburbs of a little market-town, which we, for many and good reasons, shall call Brackenbury, acknowledging it to be an alias for its real name, had been vacant many months. The Brackenbury Journal profited thereby; for every week there appeared in its front page an advertisement headed "Delightful Abode" in capital letters, and assuring anybody and everybody who wished to enjoy life in a cottage at a "low figure," that Clematis Cottage was the *ne plus ultra* of small convenient houses. It was pleasantly situated in its own grounds, consisting of a quarter of an acre laid out in the most scientific manner. It was detached from all other houses, but was conveniently situated near to an inn, where good accommodation was offered to man and beast, and where there was a good ordinary provided every Sunday at two o'clock. Moreover, it had the most desirable of all desirables, a pump of excellent water.

The Brackenburyans in general, like the landlord of Clematis Cottage in particular, were surprised that no one answered this enticing advertisement. Was the world blind? or was the circulation of the Brackenbury Journal

too limited? The owner of the desirable premises thought it was possible; so, without apologizing to the editor, he spent "seven bob," as he called seven shillings, on an advertisement in the "Times."

The first advertisement brought several applicants, but as the owner of the cottage, Mr. Punks, asked the extravagant rent of forty pounds a year, nobody would take it. Mr. Punks then sent to the Times a "pious" advertisement, to see if better luck would attend that plan. The pious advertisement appeared, and Punks read it to his wife, as follows.

"TO PIOUS PEOPLE.—In Brackenbury the pure Word is preached. A seat in the Ebenezer Chapel may be procured, and a comfortable cottage, within five minutes' walk of it, rented at a moderate price, by applying to Percival Punks, deacon of the said chapel."

"What do you think of that, marm?" asked Punks of his wife.

"No go," said the lady. "Seven shillings thrown away."

"You'll see, marm, you'll see," said Punks. "Keep an eye on the shop. I'll return the paper and be off to the railway."

"I think there may be something in it, after all," said Mrs. Punks, musingly. "There is nothing like gammon in this world. How would Spiffen & Co. have avoided bankruptcy if they had not sold three-shilling blankets for five shillings each for the use of the poor slaves in the West Indies? We never did much ourselves till we gave up—that is, pretended to give up—slave-grown sugars. Punks, you are right for once. Gammon for ever!"

So much was the mind of the groceress engaged in spe-

culating on the result of her husband's ingenuity, that she inadvertently committed many grievous errors during the day. She supplied her customers with common congou at three-and-nine for the best gunpowder at six-and-three, and substituted coarse lump at ten-and-a-half, for best loaf at thirteen-and-a-farthing—all her errors were fortunately on the right side for her.

While his wife was giving way to this profitable state of mental aberration, Punks was walking up and down the platform of the Brackenbury station, waiting the arrival of the down trains. He eagerly inspected every one that got out, but without success. He knew all the arrivals to be inhabitants of the town or its neighborhood, and was aware that all of them were suited with houses.

At last the five o'clock train arrived at twenty-five minutes and a half past that hour. From a first-class carriage alighted a middle-aged gentleman, who was followed by a middle-aged lady. They were both of them modestly attired in dark suits, plainly made up, but of the best materials. As the gentleman drew out his silk-handkerchief from his pocket, he drew out with it sundry bits of printed paper, which fluttered about the platform in all directions.

Punks picked up one that fell at his feet, and saw that it was a religious tract.

"That's my man," said Punks. "I'm off home to receive him; has he brought any luggage, I wonder?"

He saw two very large portmanteaus extracted from the luggage-van, and deposited at the feet of the pious pair, and ran off home.

"All right," said Punks, as he entered his back parlor. "They'll be here in a minute."

"Who'll be here in a minute?" inquired Mrs. Punks.

"My new tenants—as nice a pair of pious, middle-aged

ones as you ever set eyes on. Give me a clean cravat and my best coat," said Punks.

"Have you told them the rent?" asked his wife.

"I haven't spoke to them," said Punks, undressing himself as far as his coat and neckcloth went.

"How do you know, then, that they are coming about the cottage?" asked his wife.

"By instinct—but you'll see. Shall I do? Do I look like a deacon, eh?" said Punks.

"Comb your hair down, straighten and tuck in your shirt-collar—there, that will do. Bless me, here are a gentleman and lady, nice, solid-looking people, crossing the road to our door," said Mrs. Punks.

"Show them in here," said Punks, sitting down before a monthly Missionaries' Magazine, and pretending to be deep in its contents.

"If you can spare the time, my dear," said Mrs. Punks, "a lady and gentleman wish to speak to you."

"I am busy, very busy in spiritual matters, but if they cannot call to-morrow or next week, I will lay aside my occupations, and hear what they have to say," said Punks in awfully solemn tones.

"They are come about the cottage, my dear," said Mrs. Punks, still holding the little parlor door in her hand, and having her applicants close to her elbow.

"Cottage?—what cottage?" said Punks.

"Clematis Cottage, I suppose," replied his wife.

"Dear, dear, oh, dear!" groaned Punks, "the number of applications that I have had for that sweet little spot! really it is very tiresome—but admit them."

The gentleman and lady entered the little back-parlor, and took the chairs to which Punks pointed.

"I am here," said the gentleman, "in consequence of an—"

"Advertisement in the Times, you would say. I am really very sorry you did not make an earlier application," said Punks.

"Why, I came down the moment I read it in the papers," said the man.

"Four trains in before you came," said Punks. "Not less than forty or fifty applicants for Clematis Cottage in each of them."

"Is it let then?" inquired the lady.

"Why, not exactly let, marm; references of respectability required, you know, and all that sort of thing—but the beauty and conveniency of the spot, and——"

"We do not care for them, sir," said the gentleman, solemnly. "Its approximation to a place of worship, where the pure word can be heard, was our chief inducement to come down and visit it."

"The rent is really very moderate," said Punks, "and the water remarkably salubrious."

"Could we see the premises?" asked the lady.

"Undoubtedly, marm; wearied as I am with walking over it so often to-day, I will show it to you myself," said Punks.

"Perhaps you would allow us to deposit our trunks in your warehouse," said the gentleman. "If the cottage should suit us, and you are inclined to accept us as your tenants, we should much like to take possession of it at once."

"But furniture, my dear sir?"

"You have tradesmen—upholsterers in Brackenbury, I presume."

"Lots," said Punks.

"And of the right way of thinking?" asked the lady.

"Independents to the back-bone, who submit to have their goods seized rather than pay a church-rate," said Punks.

"Worthy men," said the gentleman; "lead on, sir."

Punks led the way, and made many pious remarks as they walked along. He was delighted at the reception which his remarks met with from his hearers, and after expatiating on the merits of the preacher at Ebenezer, which he pointed out to them as he passed it, he proceeded to launch out in praise of the cottage to let.

"There's a room for a hymn, marm," said he, letting them into the little front-parlor. "There's a something holy in the very echo!"

"Nice little place enough," said the lady, "and the floor very clean considering the number of people that have inspected it, and that there is no door-mats and a very bad scraper."

"A-humph!" coughed Punks, for he did not know what to say, and so pretended that he did not hear the remark.

"A very retired and very pleasant spot, suited to sober meditation. What say you, Martha? will it do?" said the gentleman.

"It wants a deal of repair," said the lady.

"Consider the rent, marm! only sixty pounds a year, and within five minutes' walk of Ebenezer, where the pure word is preached, and a seat secured," said Punks.

"Say fifty," said the gentleman.

Punks shook his head negatively.

"That is too much by twenty pounds," said the lady.

"Let us look a little further."

"Make it guineas and it's yours," said Punks, "provided the references are satisfactory."

The gentleman and lady talked together for a few minutes, during which Punks was trying to appear cool and unconcerned, though in reality he was in a state of nervous agitation, difficult to be disguised.

"We think it very highly rented," said the gentleman, "but as money is no object to us——"

"I wish I had stuck to sixty," said Punks to himself.

"And in consideration of the blessed advantages attached to it——"

"Pump of splendid water!" said Punks aloud.

"And of obtaining immediate possession of it, we will close with you. Here is my card."

"Ahem!—Mr. Jabez Worthington—good name," said Punks. "Alderbury—respectable place. Name your friend."

"The firm, sir, of which I am senior partner; Worthington, Dubs, and Trumps—general agents—call there and ask for Trumps, and if he don't satisfy you of my respectability, nobody else can do it," said Mr. Worthington.

"That'll do—up by train to-morrow. Meanwhile, what will you do?" said Punks.

"Put up at the inn," said Mrs. Worthington.

"No, no; good accommodations for man and horse, but not for a respectable married couple. Our first floor is now to let, and is unoccupied. You shall have it till the cottage is furnished. Ten shillings a day, maid and cooking included, won't hurt you," said Punks, always on the lookout for a chance.

"We are deeply indebted to you, sir," said Mrs. Worthington.

"Now, marm, now, sir, we will return and put you in possession of your snug little apartments," said Punks, as he locked the door of Clematis Cottage, put the key in his pocket, and led the way to his shop.

As the rooms were quite ready, Mr. and Mrs. Worthington walked into them at once, and desired that their luggage—merely the few things that they had brought down with them for a change or two—might be carried upstairs.

The heavy porter and shop-boy were set to work to effect their removal, but the trunks were so heavy, they could scarcely accomplish their task.

"Supper, marm?" said Punks, his civility greatly increased by the report of the weight of the trunks.

"A little tea, if you please," said Mr. Worthington. "We trust you have family devotions and will allow us to join in them."

"Delightful people!" said Punks to his wife. "But I wish I had held out for sixty. I have no doubt they would have given it, they appear to be so very rich, and so—so—simple."

"Seen their money? got any trinkets, rings, watches, or jewels, and that sort of things?" said Mrs. Punks.

"Why, really, when you come to ask—no," said Punks; "but they look like it, eh? don't they?"

"I'll take up the tea-things myself," said Mrs. Punks, looking very mysteriously. Her husband sat deeply and anxiously involved in thought till her return.

"Well—how? what do you think?"

"All right," said Mrs. Punks, smoothing her black silk apron. "The man has got a gold repeater as large as a cheese-plate, and the woman a pretty little Geneva fastened to a long gold chain, and her hands are positively covered with rings."

Punks rubbed his hands with delight, and sent the porter out to the expounder of the Ebenezer, and begged him to come down to be introduced to the new occupant of Clematis Cottage, who would doubtless be a liberal contributor to the chapel, and sundry charities attached thereto.

It is needless to say the call was obeyed. The evening was passed in a most orderly manner. The pastor was delighted with the new addition to his flock, and Punks was so taken with the sobriety of their manners, and their atten-

tion to the exercises of the evening, that he had made up his mind not to go to town to question their referee, but to be content with their evident respectability.

Mrs. Punks, however, was a cautious woman, and insisted upon the interview with Trumps; she, moreover, bade him ask a few questions about the respectability of the firm in general; "for," as she observed, "piety is all very well, but pay is better."

Punks was annoyed at her suspicions, and took a little hot rum-and-water with the pastor to quiet his nerves.

Punks was up early and off to London by the first train, and at ten o'clock presented himself at the place of reference.

"Mr. Trumps at home?" said Punks.

"I am Mr. Trumps, sir, pray walk in. Now what can we do for you?" said a sleek man, throwing open an overgrown ledger, clad in parchment, with green cuffs and collar.

"I am referred to you, sir, for the respectability and the responsibility of Mr. Worthington," said Punks.

"Eh? oh, I know—Clematis Cottage—how does my respected friend like it?" asked Trumps.

"So much that he has hired it," said Punks; "that is, if references are all right."

"Right, sir? Isn't he at the head of this firm, sir? Don't take my word for his respectability—go upon Change—inquire in Mark-lane—ask at the India-House—merely whisper his name at Lloyd's, that's all. Worthington respectable and responsible? it's a d—d deal too good!" said Trumps, as he laughed triumphantly.

"He seems to be a pious man, and punctual in his payments," said Punks, "and his wife is—"

"An angel, sir!—not fit to live upon this earth, sir. Go to Clapham and ask—but you need not ask—there is

not a benefaction board attached to any chapel or infant school, that does not bear upon its black surface the name of Dorothea Worthington, engraved in gold characters, with a magnificent donation attached to it," said Trumps.

"Dorothea? I thought he called her Martha," said Punks.

"For brevity's sake, sir, merely for brevity's sake," replied Trumps. "You are a lucky man, Mr. What's-your-name."

"You think I'm safe, then?" asked Punks.

"Shall I give you a check for a twelvemonth's rent in advance?" said Trumps, opening a desk, and taking out a long, slim book.

"Oh, dear, no; no occasion for that," said Punks.

"Well, my dear sir, can I do anything more for you? Sorry to hurry you, but business, you know, must be attended to. Good bye—remember me to Worthington and his angelic wife," said Trumps, as he bowed Punks out of his office.

As Punks returned home in a third-class carriage, there was one thing that rather puzzled him—how was it for so old a firm—a firm that had existed ever since the waiter at the coffee-house had administered to the comforts of its customers—the furniture of the office should be so remarkably new? He had almost made up his mind to return and ask the question, when the idea occurred to him that the old was worn out by excessive use, and had just been replaced.

"Well, my dear, is it all right?" whispered Mrs. Punks to her husband, when he had gained the little back parlor.

"Right, marm? yes, I should think it was, too—a great deal more than right. We are highly favored, marm," said Punks; "two such angelic people are not to be found every day, I can tell you."

"Tell me all about them," said the groceress.

Punks tried to do so, but, to his own surprise, was obliged to draw largely upon his inventive faculties; for, when he summed up in his brain all the evidence he had collected, it only amounted to this—that Worthington was a partner in a general agent's office, and that his wife was an angel, as far as being a liberal patroness to the chapels and charities at Clapham went—upon the *ipse dixit* of the junior partner, Mr. Trumps. This was a pretty strong peg, however, to hang a story upon, and Punks availed himself of it. His imagination was fertile, and Mrs. Punks was satisfied; especially when she heard that Trumps had tendered a cheque for a twelvemonth's rent in advance; though she could not help calling her husband a fool for not having taken it.

"You are quite satisfied, I hope, Mr. Punks?" said Mrs. Worthington, as he entered the front drawing-room.

"More than satisfied, marm; delighted to have such worthy people as my tenants," replied Punks, quite overjoyed; for he saw a purse, a large, green, netted purse, lying on the table, filled full of sovereigns.

"Then we can take possession and furnish the cottage immediately," said Mr. Worthington.

"We had better remain here, my love, until the house is fit to receive us," said Mrs. Worthington.

"Oh! by all means. In the meanwhile, Mr. Punks will have the goodness, perhaps, to introduce me to some respectable and pious tradesmen in Brackenbury, who will put the place in order for us?" said Worthington.

"Too happy, sir, too happy," said Punks.

"You will take care, sir, not to introduce me to any tradesman of the wrong way of thinking," said Mr. Worthington sternly.

"Trust me for that—we hang together like—"

"Trust! sir? I don't know the meaning of the word, as I told you before. I pay for everything in ready money or by

bill at two months, which is just the same," said Mr. Worthington, as he put his hands into his breeches-pockets, and rattled sundry coins about.

"Just the same," said Punks, "if it's duly honored."

"*Shall* I pay you in advance, sir?" asked Mrs. Worthington, angrily, and proceeded to open the green netted purse. "If you have a doubt—"

"Oh! dear me, marm, no—excuse me, pray excuse me, if I have offended you. I really beg pardon," said Punks, in very humble tones.

"It is granted, sir," said the lady; "but I must confess that I was very much hurt to think that it was possible for a Worthington to dishonor a bill."

"Say no more about it, my dear. Come with me, and Mr. Punks will kindly introduce us to some *good* tradespeople," said Worthington.

"And perhaps he will have the goodness to show us over the British school and the Infant school? I am anxious to add my mite to the contributions of the charitably-disposed," said Mrs. Worthington, as she dropped the heavy purse into her reticule.

"Angelic woman!" said Punks, just loudly enough to enable the lady to hear him, as he led the way through the private passage into the town.

The schools were duly inspected. The pious pair put down their names as annual subscribers of £20 each, and gave the heads of each department a sovereign, to be spent in tea and buns for their scholars.

"What charming people! quite an acquisition to Brackenbury!" exclaimed the pious ladies and gentlemen who visited the schools in the course of the morning.

The report of the benevolent characters of the new tenants of Clematis Cottage was spread like wild-fire, and before they reached the upholsterer's, to whom Punks intro-

duced them, that individual was longing to have their custom. He shook Punks by the hand, whispered something about a *doshure*, and undertook to furnish the cottage within two days.

"You will do it well, sir, and reasonably. Make a fair profit out of me, but don't impose upon me. I shall examine your bill rigidly, for I pay for everything in ready money, or by bill at two months," said Mr. Worthington, and so he said to the ironmonger, the silversmith, the wine-merchant, and all other tradesmen, to whom he gave most liberal orders.

In the course of a week Clematis Cottage was elegantly furnished. Its cellars were well stored, its larder supplied, and the new tenants, who had won golden opinions of everybody of their own way of thinking, were only waiting to decide which of the services of plate, sent in to them for inspection and approval, they should purchase. It was a delicate question, and Worthington and his wife resolved, as they told Mr. Punks, not to rely on their own judgment in so momentous a matter, but to ask a few friends to a tea-party, and submit the different services to their inspection, and take their opinions upon them.

On the afternoon of the Saturday—the day on which the tea-party was invited—Worthington and his lady, who had been visiting the poor, and liberally supplying them with tracts, walked into Punks's shop. Punks and his wife were already dressed for the party, and Mrs. Worthington paid the groceress many compliments on the very becoming neatness of her dress. They were, of course, asked into the little back-parlor, but Worthington declined the invitation, under the plea that they must hurry home to be ready to receive their friends.

"By the by," said Worthington, "have you any cash in the house, Mr. Punks?"

Punks smirked, and confessed he had.

"Then I will trouble you, sir," said Worthington, very sternly, "for change for that check, 54*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*, on Coutts and Co. It is crossed regularly, as you will see."

"Our outlay has been enormous—so many little things that one never dreams of—I have not a sovereign left out of fifty or sixty—I forget exactly which—that I put in my purse when I came down here," said Mrs. Worthington; "really our three or four thousand a year, at this rate, will never do. We shall be ruined."

"Oh, dear no, marm; not by no means—it's only the first outlay. When you are settled down in Clematis Cottage, you'll live for a mere nothing—there's the money, sir; five, four, nine, ten," said Punks; "you'll find it all right."

"Excuse me, sir; but I am particular in money matters—I make it a rule to count the change if it's only for a sixpence," said Mr. Worthington.

"And very proper, too," said Mrs. Punks.

"It is quite right, sir: you'll excuse my very great particularity—I know you will—you are a man of business, Mr. Punks, and as such, will give me credit for not meaning to offend you."

Punks put the cheque on Coutts into his japanned box, and bowed most obsequiously.

"If you are ready to walk to the cottage, sir, allow me to offer my arm to Mrs. Punks, and do you take care of my good lady," said Worthington.

"My dear sir, ready in a minute," said Punks, as he popped into the parlor, and sought his best hat.

Happy Punks! happy Mrs. Punks! There they were, arm-in-arm, in the High-street of Brackenbury, with the wealthy, charitable, pious tenants of the Clematis Cottage. Punks enjoyed it amazingly, but thought Mr. Worthington walked very much too fast. He wanted to prolong his triumph.

The tea—Punks' best gunpowder at six-and-ten—was

excellent; the toast—battered with purest fresh at fifteen-and-a-half from Punks's shop, was duly appreciated, and a heartier meal was never made. Mrs. Worthington was so very kind and attentive, and Worthington's conversation was so instructive, that hours passed like minutes, and it was getting late when the silversmith ventured to allude to the object of their meeting.

"Really, my worthy brethren, your society has proved so agreeable—"

"Fascinating, my love."

"Don't interrupt me, Mrs. W.—so very agreeable, that I had forgotten all about the plate. Have you brought it with you?" said Mr. Worthington.

"Excuse me, sir, worthy sir, but it was so heavy that it took two porters to carry it," said the silversmith. "Allow me to display it."

The table was speedily cleared of the tea-things, and for more than an hour and a half the party were busily engaged deciding between the merits of the Queen's pattern, the Albert pattern, the Cottage pattern, and a great many other patterns besides, including the fiddle pattern, which Worthington seemed inclined to purchase because it was less showy than the others.

Mrs. Worthington was all for the Queen's pattern, in which she was seconded by all the party, for the silversmith had given them a secret hint, that it was the most expensive, and by far the most profitable to himself.

"Set them all aside, my dear, for a while," said Worthington. "Let us have a sandwich, and try our friend Hutton's champagne."

"You'll find it a superior article, rely upon it," said Mr. Hutton.

"Which shall we try first—the Moët or the Ruinard?" said Mr. Worthington.

"Try both," said Hutton, thinking that the sooner both cases were emptied, the better it would be for himself.

The party were all totallers, but somehow or another, in the excitement of the moment, they forgot that they had taken the pledge. Pop, pop, pop, went cork after cork, and everybody said that both were so excellent, that they could not decide between the rival makers. Pop, pop, pop, again, without coming to any decision.

"Well, well," said Worthington, "I'll keep both cases; but you must throw off ten shillings, ready money, recollect, or bill at two months, which is just as good."

"Can't, indeed I can't," said Hutton; "it's put in at the very lowest figure."

"You may as well taste the Port, and the Madeira, and the Sherry, and the Claret," said Mrs. Worthington.

"I think we had better, Mrs. W., my dear, we shall never get together such another committee of taste."

Pop went the corks, sip, sip, sip, first of one, and then of another sort. Louder grew the tongues of the differing judges. Devilled biscuits and strong cheese were introduced, more bottles were opened, and before the clock struck ten, the four wax candles—Punks's best at three-and-nine—were multiplied into eight, and Mrs. Punks felt so queer that she was obliged to retire.

"Hark!" said Worthington, "I hear the sound of wheels. It's Trumps with the pictures."

All the party went out to see the van, in which a most valuable little collection of pictures—real originals of the best masters—had been conveyed, for it was not safe to bring them down by rail, "they were so very careless."

"You won't unpack them to-night?" said Trumps.

"Impossible," said Worthington, "put the van into the yard and lock the gates. James shall sit up all night and watch it."

"T—t—time to go," stammered out the silversmith.

"Q—q—q—uite," said Punks. "Good night, respected friends."

"But the plate?" said Mrs. Worthington.

"I cannot think of letting our friend risk the removal of it to-night," said her husband. "Let Mary take it carefully up stairs into our room, and do you see it safely locked up in our cupboard."

"I will take it up myself," said the lady.

"Ve—ve—very much 'bliged to you, marm; go—good night," said the worthy tradesman.

"I wish you all good night, and thank you for your company. We meet at the chapel to-morrow, of course," said Worthington.

And so they did, at three services, during the performance of which the decorous conduct of the Worthingtons, and the junior partner, Trumps, made a deep impression on all the worshippers in the Ebenezer chapel. The plate was sent round, too, for some colonial mission, and no one dropped gold into it but the occupiers of Clematis Cottage and their junior partner.

"A real blessing to the place," was the unanimous judgment of the good people of Brackenbury.

"Bless my soul! what can that be!" said Punks to the groceress, about twelve o'clock on the Sunday night. "It's very like a stage-coach; only they are all dead and buried."

"It's wheels, that's certain. It must be the fire-engine—do jump out of bed and see what it is," said Mrs. Punks.

Punks rose reluctantly, for his head still ached, from having taken too much of Hutton's samples. He drew aside the blind, opened the window, and caught sight of a covered van being driven at a rapid rate on the road towards London. Two males and a female sat on the box, and as they passed within a couple of yards of his head, Punks

heard a voice—a well known voice—say, "Go it, Trumps, there's the spoon of a grocer."

You might have knocked Punks down with a feather. He closed the window, drew the curtains, and flung himself into bed, where he lay groaning deeply, and muttering, "Done—clean done—five, four, ten and nine—sheer cash—groceries—hams, oh, Lord! Responsible for introductions—poor Hutton's champagne! Six services of plate—off by first train in the morning."

As soon as it was light Punks was off without explaining further to his anxious wife. Before he went down to the station he ran to Clematis Cottage and peeped in at the window. Not a vestige of furniture was to be seen.

"Sure it was so—catch them in town," said Punks, as he trotted to the early train.

* * * * *

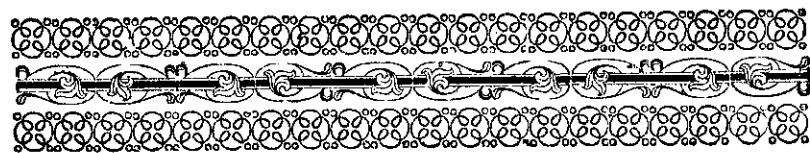
It so happened that Mr. Hutton, the wine-merchant of Brackenbury, had occasion to visit London the same day. He arrived about noon, and as he was walking along Cheapside, he saw a crowd collected. He ran to see the meaning of it; and to his surprise, beheld his friend, the Deacon of the Ebenezer chapel, grasping "the real blessing to the town" by his collar, and shouting for a policeman.

"Are you mad, Punks?" said he; "you are apprehending the worthiest, most liberal—"

"No, I ain't," screamed Punks, "I am apprehending a Swindler—a Wolf in Sheep's clothing, and I'll hang him if I can."

"But you can't, my fine fellow, it's only a simple contract debt after all," said Worthington, alias Slinking Tom.

He was not hanged; merely sent out to over-colonize Van Diemen's Land, and the Brackenburyans had a hearty laugh at the owner of Clematis Cottage and his pious friends.



Elkanah Smithers, Jun.

I SHALL never forget my first journey from Limerick to Dublin. A day-coach had been established, which was considered a marvel of celerity. It left Swinburne's hotel early in the morning, and contrived to accomplish half of the journey that day, arriving late in the evening at Mountrath, where the travellers slept, whence, starting next morning, after an early breakfast, it entered the metropolis by the light of the old oil-lamps, upon the second day. You may yet see the old roadside inn a little way outside the town of Mountrath—a large high house, retired a short way from the road, having a spacious sweep of gravelled space before it, and a multitude of windows; but, alas! it is now falling fast into decay; and one never sees the bustling face of the white-aproned waiter standing at the door, or hears the crack of the postillion's whip as he leads out his posters to horse a gentleman's travelling-carriage.

Well, all that is past and gone. On the second day of our journey, we had all assembled drowsily in the parlor, which smelled villanously of the preceding night's supper, and had sat down to our hurried breakfast. By the time

we had half-finished our meal, a car drove up to the door, and in a few moments after a gentleman entered in a large drab travelling-coat, with half a dozen capes, and a huge red shawl wound around his neck. He deposited a travelling-case leisurely on the sideboard, and then looked keenly around him. The survey did not seem to give him much gratification. The eggs had all disappeared, and the cold beef was in a very dilapidated condition. However, he sat down, took off his coat and shawl, and addressed himself to the cold meat like a hungry man. The waiter made his appearance.

"Just five minutes more, gentlemen, the horses are putting to."

The traveller looked up quietly. He was not a man to be put out of his way. He ordered some eggs, and desired the waiter to make fresh tea.

"Are you going by the coach, sir?" inquired the attendant.

"Yes, certainly," was the reply, in an English accent (he was a traveller from a London house), "but I must have my breakfast first; so be quick, will you?"

The waiter left the room, and immediately after we heard the fellow telling the guard to be expeditious; an exhortation to which that worthy responded by a clamorous blast of his horn that made us all start from our seats, and hurry out of the room, leaving the English gentleman alone to finish his breakfast, which, to do him justice, he seemed by no means disposed to neglect. The waiter, meantime, brought in the tea, and retired; but was speedily summoned back by a vigorous ringing of the bell.

"A spoon, please," said the gentleman.

The waiter advanced to the table to procure the article, but, to his astonishment, there was not a spoon to be seen; nay, even those which had been in the cups had all disappeared.

"Blessed Virgin!" ejaculated the dismayed attendant, "what's become of all the spoons!"

"That's just what I want to know, you blockhead," said the other.

"Two dozen and a half—real silver," cried Tom.

"I want only one," said the gentleman. "Haven't you a spoon in your establishment, my man?"

Tom made no reply, but rushed directly out of the room, and running up to the coachman, cried out, "Stop, Dempsey, for the love of heaven!"

"All right!" says Dempsey, with a twirl of his whip, gathering up the reins, and preparing to start—for we had all taken our places.

"'Tisn't all right, I tell you," cried Tom, "where are the spoons?"

"What spoons? Arrah! don't be bothering us, man: and we five minutes behind time. Joey, hold that off-leader's head, till she goes on a bit."

By this time the master of the inn had come out to learn what all the hubbub was about. Tom, half-blubbering, poor fellow, made him acquainted with the fact, that all his silver spoons had vanished. The landlord cried out "robbery!" the housemaids screamed out "murder!" and a variety of other exclamations, too dreadful to contemplate. When silence was restored, the inn-keeper insisted on stopping the coach till he ascertained if the report of Tom was true. Ere many moments he returned, as pale as a ghost, and said—

"Gentlemen, I'm sorry to trouble you; but I must beg you'll come down, till a search is made for my property. Tom, here, will swear that there was a spoon in every teacup this morning as usual—won't you, Tom?"

"Bedad, I'll take my Bible-oath of that same, sure enough," replied Tom; "and sure I didn't swallow them."

The passengers all indignantly refused to submit to the search proposed by the landlord. An old lady inside went off in hysterics, when the inn-keeper opened the door, and proposed to turn her pockets inside out. There was an officer with a wooden leg on the box-seat, who swore, in the most awful manner, that he would run the first man through the body that attempted to lay a hand on him—by the way, he hadn't a sword, but he forgot that in his fury. There was a justice of the peace for the county, who protested that he would commit the host for contempt; and a Dublin attorney in the back-seat intimated his determination to indict Tom, who had laid hold of his leg, for an assault; and, moreover, to commence an action against his master for defamation. As I was but a youngster then, and the weakest of the party, the landlord chucked me down in a twinkling, and hauled me into the parlor, half dead with fright; and thereupon the rest of the passengers, including the wooden-legged captain, scrambled down, and followed, determined to make common cause and protect me from insult with their lives, if necessary. And now we were all again in the breakfast-room, clamoring and remonstrating, while, to add to the din, the guard kept up a continual brattle with his horn. All this time the English gentleman was steadily prosecuting his work upon the eggs and toast, with a cup of tea before him, which he was leisurely sipping, quite at his ease like.

"What the deuce is the matter!" said he, looking up, "can't you let a man take his breakfast in comfort?"

"The plate!" said the master.

"The silver spoons!" cried the butler.

"Robbery!" shouted the mistress.

"Murder!" &c., screamed the housemaids.

"Search every one," demanded the host; "come, let us

begin with this young chap," diving his hand into my breeches pocket.

"I think," said the English gentleman, coolly, "'twould be as well first to search the premises. Is the waiter long in your service?"

"Fifteen years last Shrovetide, and I defy any man to lay as much as the big of his nail to my charge."

By this time the English gentleman had finished his breakfast, and, wiping his mouth most deliberately, he commenced to search the room. He opened every drawer of the sideboard, then he looked under the table, then behind the window-shutters, but all in vain. After that he stopped a moment to reflect, when a bright thought seemed to cross his mind, and he raised the lid of one of the teapots, but with as little success as before; nevertheless, he continued his examination of the teapots, and when he came to the last, what do you think, but he thrust in his hand, and drew out first one spoon, and then another, till he laid a number of them on the table. Tom rushed up and began to count—"Two, four, six," and so on, till at length he exclaimed—

"May I never see glory, but they're all right, every one. The Lord between us and harm, but this bangs all that ever I seen!"

"I'll tell you what, my man," said the gentleman, looking sternly at the astonished waiter, "I strongly suspect you have been playing tricks upon your master. A nice haul you'd have had of it when the company had gone away! I don't like the look of the fellow, I tell you," he continued, addressing himself to the host; "and if it wasn't for the fortunate circumstances of my coming in a little late and wanting a spoon, you would have lost your property, sir. You may count it a lucky day that I came to your house."

The landlord was struck dumb with amazement; even the mistress hadn't a word to say, though she looked wick-

edly at poor Tom, and the housemaids began to cry and bless themselves.

"Gentlemen," proceeded the Englishman, "I hope you will overlook the insult you have received; as, after all, the landlord is not to be blamed; and if he will insist on this blackguard waiter making an ample apology, I will take upon me to say for you all, that you will not take any proceedings."

All cheerfully expressed their assent to the proposition except the attorney, who still muttered something about assault and defamation, which so terrified Tom that he most humbly entreated pardon of the whole company, though he still protested that he was innocent of the crime laid to his charge.

"Gammon!" said the gentleman; "but as you have made proper submission, and nothing has been lost, I shall make it a further condition with your master, that he won't turn you adrift on the world with a thief's character, but give you an opportunity of reforming. Keep a sharp eye on him, however, sir, I advise you. And now, gentlemen, I think we'd better be moving."

We all hurried out and took our places, the English gentleman getting up on the seat behind the coachman. Dempsey "threw the silk" into the horses; the guard blew an impatient blast on his horn, and off we went at a slapping pace, the host bowing humbly to us until we were out of sight.

"I'm driving on this road these ten years," said Dempsey, when he slackened his pace up a hill; "and I never knew such a thing as that happen before."

"Very likely," said the Englishman, quietly, "and never will again."

"I always thought Tom Reilly was as honest a fellow, man and boy, as any in the parish."

"I make no doubt he is," replied the other; "he has a very honest countenance."

"I thought, sir," said the captain, "you said you didn't like his look?"

"Maybe I did say so," was the reply.

"And pray, sir, do you still think 'twas he hid the spoons?"

"Not a bit of it."

"Then who the d—I did?"

"I did. Do you think I'm green enough to travel so cold a morning as this without having a comfortable breakfast?"

"Well," said Dempsey, "that's the knowingest trick I ever heard of in my life."

"Not bad," replied the gentleman, with great *sang-froid*, "but it won't do to be repeated."

When we arrived at Portarlinton, the gentleman—who, by the way, turned out to be a very pleasant fellow, and up to all sorts of life—got off the coach, and ordered his travelling-case to be taken into the inn.

"Do you stop here, sir?" asked the coachman.

"Yes, sir, for the present. I have a little business to do here as well as at Mountrath."

The gentleman having given the usual gratuity to the guard and coachman, and also a slip of paper to Dempsey, which he directed him to give to the host at Mountrath, passed into the inn; the coach drove on, and I never saw him again.

Dempsey having pocketed the shilling, looked at the paper with some curiosity, in which, to say the truth, we all shared.

"There's no harm in reading it, as it is open," said the Captain, taking it from Dempsey.

They were a few lines, written in pencil, on the leaf of a

pocket-book, and the Captain read them out—I remember them to this day:—

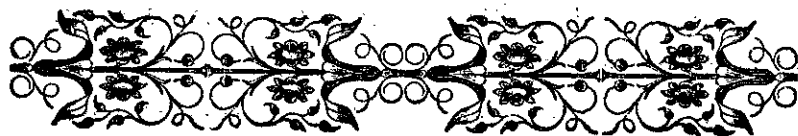
"This is to certify that Tom Reilly put nothing into the teapot this morning except hot water and sloe-leaves, and that the other ingredients, the spoons, were added by me, for the purpose of giving the composition some strength. I further certify that the aforesaid spoons are capital for making 'stir.'

"Given under my hand,

"ELKANAH SMITHERS, Jun."

You may be sure we all enjoyed this finish to the joke, and Dempsey forwarded the paper by the down-coach, that poor Tom Reilly's character might be cleared with the least possible delay. Tom was fully reinstated in the confidence of his employers; but the landlady had got such a fright that she determined her silver spoons should never again be placed at the mercy of any traveller. Accordingly, she transferred them to the private part of the establishment, substituting for them in the public room a set of very neat pewter articles—there was no German silver, or alбата, or such things in those days—which, when cleaned, looked nearly as well as silver. Many a time I stirred my tea at breakfast with one of them, and thought of "Elkanah Smithers, jun."





Infatuation.

ONE summer's evening two gentlemen were seated at a well-spread dessert table in an aristocratic quarter of West-London. He at its head, its master, was a fine, stately man, wearing in his countenance, in its expression and form of feature, the impress of true nobility—nature's nobility, not that of the peerage, for in reality he was only a merchant, though one of the first class. His lady wife—*she* was the daughter of a peer—had just quit-
ted the room, and left them to themselves. They were the heads of the well known City firm, "Grubb and Howard." Mr. Howard had walked up from the City at this evening hour to confer upon a matter, which had come to his knowledge, with his senior partner—senior in authority, but his junior in years; a private engagement having brought Mr. Grubb away from the City at mid-day.

"Did you draw a cheque on Saturday morning, before leaving home, in favor of self, and get it cashed?" began James Howard, as Mr. Grubb returned to his seat, from closing the door after Lady Adela. "At Glyn's."

The merchant threw his thoughts back to Saturday morning. The reminiscence was unpleasant. For a scene

had taken place with his wife, painful to him, disgraceful to her. He had drawn no cheque.

"No," he answered.

"A cheque for £500 in favor of self?" continued Mr. Howard, slowly sipping his port wine.

"I don't draw at Glyn's in favor of self," interrupted the merchant, "only at my private banker's. You know that, Howard, as well as I do."

"Just so. Therefore, upon the fact coming to our notice this afternoon that such a cheque had been drawn and paid, I stepped over to Glyn's and made inquiries."

"Well?"

"Well, there it was, safe enough: a cheque purporting to be drawn and signed by you."

"Charles Grubb?"

"No; the firm signature, 'Grubb and Howard.' And a very good imitation it is. But if it is your writing, your hand was nervous when you wrote it, rendering the letters less decided than usual."

"Who presented it?" inquired Mr. Grubb.

"Mr. Cleveland. And he received the money."

"Cleveland!" uttered Mr. Grubb, in the most astonished tone. "There is some mystery about this."

"So it seemed to me," answered the junior partner. "Cleveland's out of town, you said, to-day."

"Went down yesterday to Brighton, to his father's. Will be home in the morning. But how did he procure the cheque? Who drew it?" resumed the puzzled merchant. "Where's the money?"

"It was Saturday morning that you left the cheque-book at home and sent Cleveland for it, if you remember."

"Ah, to be sure it was," echoed the merchant, quickly.

"A long while he was gone."

"And during this period, between ten and half-past

eleven, the cheque was presented and cashed. I thought he was of improvident habits, but never suspected he was one to help himself——"

"He *cannot* have helped himself in this sort of way," interrupted Mr. Grubb earnestly. "Cleveland is a wild, random species of young fellow, and has his faults, but he is certainly not one to descend to guilt of this nature."

"He is reckless in his expenditure, and is never out of debt—as I hear," urged James Howard.

"Very likely. I don't doubt he is of the fast genus. But that does not prove he would defraud us. The thing's impossible, Howard."

"He presented the cheque and received the money," dryly remarked Mr. Howard. "What has he done with it?"

"But no madman would go to work in this barefaced way," replied his more generous-minded partner, "bringing immediate detection and punishment down upon his head."

"Suppose you inquire what clothes he took with him," suggested Mr. Howard. "My impression is, that he's off. The Brighton tale may have been a blind."

Mr. Grubb rose and rang the bell, staggered nearly out of his senses; and, until it was answered, not another word was spoken. Each gentleman was busy with his own thoughts.

"Richard," said the master, "when Mr. Cleveland left for Brighton yesterday morning, did he take much luggage with him?"

"I don't think he took any, sir, unless it was his small portmanteau."

"Did you happen to hear him say whether he contemplated making a longer stay than usual?"

"I did not hear him say anything, sir. But Mr. Cleveland is back."

"Back!" echoed Mr. Howard, surprised into the interference.

"He came back a few minutes ago, sir."

"Is he in now?" asked Mr. Grubb.

"No, sir; he went out again almost directly. The cab waited for him. He is gone to dine at the Army and Navy."

"Then no elucidation can now take place till morning," observed Mr. Grubb, as the servant withdrew. "When he goes out on these dining bouts he is never home till late, sometimes not at all. But rely upon it, Howard, this matter will be cleared up. Cleveland is no forger."

"Hope it may," sarcastically uttered the junior partner.

The merchant was seated next morning at his breakfast alone, for the Lady Adela never condescended to breakfast with her husband, and Charles Cleveland had not made his appearance.

"Does Mr. Cleveland know I am at breakfast?" he inquired of the servant.

"Mr. Cleveland left word—I beg your pardon, sir, I forgot to mention it—that he was gone out to breakfast with his brother, Captain Cleveland, who sails to-day for India."

Twelve o'clock was heard striking by St. Paul's, in the City premises of Messrs. Grubb and Howard, and no Charles Cleveland had made his appearance. Both partners, with a gentleman from Glyn's, were assembled in a private room, the latter gentleman and Mr. Howard fully persuaded that the delinquent had embarked for India with his brother, or some other place not speedily accessible to officers of justice. But ere the clock had well finished striking Charley himself came in, bustling and out of breath.

"I beg your pardon, sir, for being so late," he panted, addressing himself to Mr. Grubb, "especially after my holiday of yesterday. I went early this morning to Woolwich, and on board my brother's ship, intending to be up by business hours, but, what with one delay and another, I was unable to get back till now."

"Take a seat, Mr. Cleveland," was the reply. "We have a few questions to put to you."

Charles glanced round. In his hurry, he had seen no one but Mr. Grubb. His eye now fell on the banker: he knew him well; and knew that the time was come when he would have need of all his presence of mind and his energies.

"You presented a cheque for £500 at Glyn's on Saturday morning, and received the amount in notes," began Mr. Grubb. "From whom did you get that cheque?"

No reply.

"Purporting to be drawn and signed by me," continued Mr. Grubb. "I ask from whom you received it?"

"I decline to answer," he said at length, speaking with hesitation, in spite of his resolve for firmness.

"Do you deny having presented the cheque?"

"No. I do not deny that."

"Do you deny having received the money for it?" questioned the banker.

"Nor that either. I acknowledge to have received £500. It would be folly to deny it," he continued, in a sort of calm desperation, "since the bank could prove the contrary."

"But did you know what you were laying yourself open to?" asked Mr. Grubb, evidently in a maze of astonishment.

"I know now, sir."

"Will you refund the money?" interposed Mr. Howard. "Out of consideration for your family, connected, as it is, with that of the head of our firm, we are willing to——"

"I cannot refund it, and I must decline to answer any more questions," interrupted Mr. Cleveland, fast relapsing into agitation.

Mr. Howard stepped into the next room, and soon a policeman was added to the group.

"It is our duty to give this gentleman into custody for forgery," said James Howard, pointing at Charles Cleve-

land, who was standing side by side with Mr. Grubb: but the policeman, mistaking the direction, laid his arm on that of the head of the firm.

"Not me," said the merchant, with a slight smile.

"Why, officer, what are you thinking of?" cried the banker, indignantly. "Don't you know this gentleman yet—Mr. Grubb? You are a City policeman."

"No offence," deprecated the policeman, transferring his attention to Mr. Charles. "I'm sure I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought the gentleman pointed to you. And so many, where you'd least expect it, get into trouble now, that if they handed over to us a duke, we should just take him, and make no bones about it. Is the charge to be gone into to-day?"

"Without any delay," peremptorily uttered Mr. Howard.

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Charles Cleveland, turning to Mr. Grubb, in a high state of excitement, "will you look over this one error? My father will replace the money—I am sure he will, rather than suffer this public disgrace to fall upon the family. Do not force the shame upon him."

Mr. Grubb drew him aside from the rest, and spoke to him in private. "If I afford you the opportunity, will you tell me the circumstances of the case?" he asked, "for I own to you that your conduct appears to me perfectly incomprehensible. There is some mystery in the affair, which I do not fathom. It may be better for you to confide in me."

"I cannot," returned Cleveland.

"What if I tell you that, in spite of appearances, I do not myself believe you guilty?"

A bright, eager flush, a glance of *understanding*, illumined for a moment Charley's face. It seemed to say that just, honorable natures know and trust in each other's

innocence, no matter what may be the signs of guilt. But the transient expression faded away to sadness.

"I can explain nothing," he said; "I can only thank you, sir, for this proof of confidence, and implore your clemency on the ground of compassion alone."

"Then there is no more to be said. Policeman," added the merchant, walking forward, "do your duty."

What a commotion arose in all the clubs! Charles Cleveland in Newgate, on a charge of forgery! Charley Cleveland the popular—Charley Cleveland the grandson of an earl gathered to his fathers, and nephew of the one who stood in his shoes—Charley Cleveland, the out-and-out good fellow, who was wont to scare the blue devils away from everybody—Charley Cleveland who, in defiance of his improvidence and his shallow pocket, was known to be of the nicest honor amongst the honorable!

"The thing's preposterous altogether," stuttered John Cust. "If Charley had drawn the money, he would have had the money, and I know that on Saturday afternoon he had not a rap, for he borrowed three sovs. of me to take him down to Brighton, where he went to try and knock some tin out of his governor."

"Which he did," added Lord Deerhum. "A ten-pounder."

"And paid me back the three, on the Monday night, when he came to his brother's spread at the Rag and Famish. Gammon! Charley has not been making free with Old Grubb's name."

"But he acknowledges to having drawn the money," squeaked Booby Charteries. "That's proved."

"You may take that in yourself, Booby. We don't."

"But the Lord Mayor——"

"Lord Mayor be hanged! If he swears, till he's black in the face, that Charley had it, I know he didn't. There."

"Let's cut down to Newgate, and have a smoke with him," returned Booby Charteries; "it may cheer the fellow up under the present alarming state of things."

"As if they'd admit us inside Newgate, or a smoke either!" uttered John Cust. "There's only one thing more difficult than getting in, and that is, if you are in, getting out again. Newgate's no go, Booby."

"I propose that we have a throw which of us shall go and punch Old Grubb's head, for making the charge," proposed Lord Deerhum. "It would do these city plodders good, to be taught what it is to insult our order, especially a popular chap like Charley."

The Honorable Mr. Cleveland came up from Brighton to find his son lying in Newgate on a charge of forgery. At the examination, Charles had attempted no defence, stating to the magistrate that he had none to make; so he was committed for trial, there and then. His father, who obtained an order to visit him in Newgate, found him, even in that short period, greatly changed. His dress was neglected, his hair unkempt, and his face haggard. Charley the fastidious!

Mr. Cleveland was overcome beyond control, and sobbed aloud. He was a venerable-looking man of sixty years, and had always been a fond father. Charley was not so much affected.

"Why did you not kill me when you last came down, Charles!" he moaned. "Better have put me out of this world of pain than bring this misery upon me. Oh, my boy! my boy! you were your mother's favorite; how can you so have disgraced her memory?"

"I would I had been out of the world rather than be the curse to you I have proved," writhed Charley, wishing Newgate would yawn asunder and engulf him. "Oh, don't—father, don't!" he implored, as Mr. Cleveland's sighs

echoed through the cell. "If it will be any consolation to know it, I will vow to you that I am not guilty," he added, the sight of his father's affliction momentarily outweighing his precaution. "By all your care of me, by your present grief, by the memory of my dead mother, I swear to you I am not guilty."

Mr. Cleveland looked up, and his heart leaped within him. He knew Charles was speaking truth.

"Then what is this I hear, about your declining to make a defence?"

Charles hung his head and relapsed into prudence again.

"My boy, answer me. How came you to accept—as it were—the charge?"

"For your private comfort I have said this, dear father, but it must remain between us as if it had not been spoken. The world must still, and always, believe me guilty."

"But why?—why? What mystery is this?"

"Do not ask me, sir. Believe that you have not a son more free from the guilt of this crime than I am. Nevertheless, I must pay the penalty, for I cannot defend myself."

Mr. Cleveland could get nothing more out of Charles. From Newgate he went to Mr. Grubb's counting-house.

"You are not more pained at this affair than I am," said the latter, closing the door of his private room, "and certainly not more astonished."

"Oh, Mr. Grubb," cried the old man, "could you not have hushed this wretched disgrace up, for the family's sake?"

"I would have hushed it up. I asked Charles, in this very room, to acknowledge the truth to me privately. Had he done so, even though it was to avow his guilt, I should not have proceeded. But he would not say a word, and told me he would not."

"Will you state the particulars to me?" resumed Mr.

Cleveland. "I asked them of him, but he would not give them."

"It occurred on Saturday morning. When I reached the City, I found I had not got my cheque-book, and sent Charles home to look for it. He was a long while gone, but brought it when he came. During the period of his absence, one of the cheques was abstracted, filled up for £500, and——"

"Filled up by whom?"

"Charles presented it, and received the money. That is all we know with certainty; but of course there is only one deduction to be drawn, as to who filled it in."

"Was it his hand-writing?"

"It was an imitation of mine."

"Mr. Grubb," cried the agitated father, "appearances are against him—were never more strongly against any one—but, before Heaven, I believe him innocent."

The merchant did not reply.

"He has assured me of his innocence, by the memory of his dead mother; and innocent I know he is, though he stated in the same breath he should avow it to no one else, but submit to the penalty of the crime, just as if he had committed it. There is one point—if Charles drew this money for himself, what did he do with it? On that very afternoon he had to borrow money to bring him down to Brighton. John Cust lent it to him."

"It is very singular," mused Mr. Grubb.

"Can he have been made the innocent instrument of another? Can he have been imposed upon by any one?"

"Not likely," replied Mr. Grubb. "Were that the case, what would be his objection to declare the truth?"

Nevertheless, the words haunted the merchant. *Can he have been made the innocent instrument of another?* An idea had been given to him—a painful idea; and, do what

he would, he could not drive it away. It intruded itself into his business; it followed him home to dinner; and it worried him at his club in the evening, and drove him back home again before ten o'clock. He had determined to speak a word with Lady Adela.

"Her ladyship is out, sir," said the servant.

"Inquire where she is gone?"

"To Lady Sanely's," was the answer.

The merchant suppressed a groan, drew his hand across his perplexed forehead, and sat on, in his solitary drawing-room. Presently he again rang the bell.

"Send Wilson here." And the butler appeared in answer to the summons.

"Wilson—shut the door. You know of course of this business about Mr. Cleveland, for it is all over London I believe by this time. Did you see Mr. Cleveland on Saturday morning, when he came for the cheque-book?"

"Yes, sir. I was at the door, talking to a friend who had called, when Mr. Cleveland ran in, and went up to the drawing-room to Lady Adela."

"Well, what next?"

"After that, sir, I was still at the door—it could not have been above two or three minutes—when he came down again. He seemed in a desperate hurry, and called out to a cab which was going by, and went away in it, at a great rate."

"He came back again?"

"Yes, sir, but not directly. I should think it might have been three-quarters of an hour; perhaps more, for I did not take special note of the time. I was cleaning the hall-lamp then, and when the door was opened to him, I saw it was the same cab."

"Did he go into the breakfast-room?"

"Not at once, sir. He went up to the drawing-room

for a minute, first, and when he came down to the breakfast-room, her ladyship came with him. After that he got into the cab again, and it galloped away. Taking both times together, he was not in the house five minutes."

"Not long enough to——" Mr. Grubb checked himself, and remained silent.

"Not long enough to have drawn a false cheque, sir, when the handwriting has to be studied—as we have been saying below," said the butler, following too closely his master's thoughts. "But perhaps he had got it done beforehand. We would sooner have suspected almost any one than him, till this came out. It shows, sir, how one may be deceived in persons."

Lady Adela was home at twelve o'clock, earlier than she usually came from Lady Sanely's. She was going up-stairs to her chamber, when Mr. Grubb stopped her.

"This is a shocking business about Cleveland, Lady Adela."

"Yes," she answered, throwing herself into a chair. "I hope your revenge is sated now. You had a paltry spite against him, and you have cast him into Newgate to gratify it; ruined his prospects, and brought disgrace upon his family, and on my sister Mary."

He did not reply: he was accustomed to bear her unjust accusations. "Lady Adela," he said, dropping his voice to a whisper, "were you wholly ignorant of this business? *Who drew the cheque?*"

She started up from her chair, and fixed her eyes defiantly upon him.

"Adela, my wife," he whispered, going forward, and laying his hands upon her shoulders, in his earnestness, "if you had anything to do with this, if Cleveland was not the guilty party, acknowledge it now. Confide in me for once. I will avert consequences from him, and suspicion

from you. The secret shall be buried in my breast, and I will never revert to it."

Her lovely features had grown white, and her haughty eyes fell before his; but presently she raised them, flashing with indignation. "How dare you offer me this insult?" she shrieked. "Is it your design to bring a charge of felony against me, as you have against him—to send me for trial at the Central Criminal Court?"

"Do not meet my words in this cruel way, Adela. I am asking you a solemn question, and there is One above who will hear and register your answer. Were you the principal in this transaction, and was Cleveland but your agent? Do not fear to trust me—*your husband*—you shall have my free forgiveness now, beforehand, my shelter, my protection. Only tell me the truth, as you wish it to be well with us both in after life."

Again she cowered before his gaze. What made her—she, so bold and defiant? Again she recovered herself, and threw a full amount of flashing scorn into her answer.

"You ought to be ashamed of your question. I had nothing to do with it; what could I have had? None but a mean, suspicion-seeking spirit could imagine such a thing."

"This is all you can say to me—your definitive answer?"

"Definitive enough," she retorted with a screaming, nervous laugh. "And now you have had your say, Mr. Grubb, listen to me. Never speak on the subject to me again, if you would keep the semblance of peace between us. My feelings have been dangerously roused against you, for your barbarous injustice to Charles Cleveland."

As she spoke, she left the room, leaving him to *his* feelings. Few can imagine them—torn, outraged, thrown back upon him. But she had lulled his doubts against her

self. "It must have been Cleveland's own doing, and no other's," he mentally concluded; "what strange mania could have come over him?"

The most able counsel in the land were engaged to defend Charles Cleveland, but that gentleman provoked them very considerably. The old saying, "Tell your whole case to your lawyer and your doctor," is essential advice, but Charles would tell nothing, neither truth nor falsehood. In vain Serjeant Mowham protested, with tears in his eyes (a stock of which, so the bar affirmed, he kept in readiness), that he was working in the dark, that without some clue or hint to go upon, he could make no defence that had a chance of success, even if he told all the *untruths* that ever serjeant's tongue gave utterance to. The prisoner was immovable; the lawyers were in despair.

One day, the Earl of Oakton had a slice of luck. He had backed a certain horse at a provincial race meeting, and the horse won. Amongst other moneys that changed hands in London, on the settling day, was a £50 note. An hour after the Earl received it, he made his way into his drawing-room, in haste, where sat his daughters, Grace, and Mary Cleveland, the latter, with her husband and infant, having been staying in town, at the earl's, since the outbreak of the unfortunate business.

"Mary," cried the earl, "what were the numbers of the notes paid over to Charles Cleveland by Glyn's?"

"Mr. Cleveland has them, I believe," answered Lady Mary. "But the thing has given me by far too much worry, papa, for me to retain the numbers in my head."

"I have them," interrupted Lady Grace Chenevix. "I copied them the other day. There was no knowing, I thought, but they might prove useful."

"Quite right, Gracie, girl," said the earl. "Let's see

them. "3,0,2,5,5," continued Lord Oakton, reading one of the numbers which Lady Grace laid before him. "I thought so. One of these notes has just been paid to me, Mary, by young Waterware."

"Where did he get it?" eagerly inquired Lady Grace Chenevix.

"I did not ask him. I thought I'd first ascertain whether I was right in my suspicions. I'll get it out of him by-and-by."

"At once, at once, sir," rejoined Lady Mary.

"No impatience, Mary. Where the deuce am I to pick up Waterware, at this time of day? I might as well look for a needle in a bottle of hay. To-night I shall know where to find him."

Chance, however, favored the earl. In strolling up St. James's street, not long afterwards, he met Lord Waterware.

"I say, Waterware," he began, linking his arm in that of the younger peer, "where did you get that fifty-pound note you paid me over this morning?"

"Where did I get it! Let's see. Oh, from Nile. He was owing me a hundred, and he stumped up yesterday. That fifty, two twenties, and a ten. Why? It's not forged, I suppose," cried the young nobleman, with a yawn.

"Not exactly. Wish I had a handful of them. Good morning! I'm going on to Nile's."

Colonel Nile was at home, in his chambers. A middle-aged man and a bachelor, essentially a "man about town." Possessing very little income of his own, he yet contrived to live luxuriously.

"The fifty-pound note I paid over to Waterware," repeated Colonel Nile, cautiously, and somewhat surprised at the question. "Why do you want to know where I got it?"

"Because it is one of the notes that Charley Cleveland's

in quod for; the first that has been traced. You must give me the information, Nile, or I shall apply for it publicly."

"Oh, I have no objection in the world," cried the Colonel, determined to afford all that was in his power, and so wash his hands of any unpleasantness that might turn up. "I received it at Lady Sanely's loo-table, from—egad! from your own daughter, Lady Adela."

"From Lady Adela?" echoed the surprised nobleman.

"From Lady Adela, and nobody else," repeated Colonel Nile. "She paid another fifty to the old Dowager Beck, the same evening."

"What was the number of that?" inquired Lord Oakton.

"How should I know?" retorted the Colonel. "It is not my business to pry into notes which don't concern me."

The Earl of Oakton proceeded straight to Lady Beck's; and, with much trouble and persuasion, she was induced to exhibit the note spoken of by Col. Nile, which was still in her possession. The old dowager was verging on her dotage, and could not, at first, be convinced but that the earl was going to take law proceedings against her, for winning money of his daughter. The earl soothed her, copied the number by stealth, went home, and compared it with Lady Grace's pocket-book. *It was another of the notes.*

"What do you think of it, Grace?" cried the earl, in perplexity. "Can Cleveland have been owing money to Adela?"

"I should imagine not," replied Lady Grace.

"It wears a singular appearance," mused the earl. "To tell you the truth, Grace, I don't like the fact of these notes being traced to Adela. It looks—after the rumor of that absurd flirtation they carried on—almost as if she and Cleveland had gone snacks in the spoil. What now, Gracie? Are you going to fly?"

For Lady Grace Chenevix had bounded from her chair

in sudden agitation, her arms working as she paced up and down the room. "Sir! father! the thing has become clear to me. That I should not have suspected it before? knowing what I did know."

"Child!" cried the earl, gazing at her in amazement, "what ever is the matter?"

"Adela did this. I see it all. Charles Cleveland was only her instrument, and, in his infatuated attachment, he has taken the guilt on himself, to shield her. Well may he have asserted his innocence to his father! Well may his conduct have appeared to us all so incomprehensible!"

"Why, Grace, you are mad!" gasped the earl. "Accuse your sister of—of—forgery. Do you reflect on the meaning of your words?"

"Father, do not look so stern at me. I know I am right. I assure you it is as if some power of might had torn scales from my eyes, for I see it perfectly clear. Adela wanted money for play; she had been drawn in, far deeper than you suspected, sir, at Lady Sanely's gaming-table. It was Mr. Grubb's intention to refuse her funds—"

"How do you know?"

"I do know it, sir, never mind how. No doubt he did refuse her, and she, when his cheque-book fell into her hands—"

"Don't continue, Grace," sharply interposed Lord Oakton; "you make my blood run cold. You must prove what you assert, or retract it. If—it—*is* proved," the earl drew a long breath—"Cleveland must be extricated. What a thundering fool the fellow must be!"

"Let me have time to think," said Lady Grace. "Extricated of course he must be, but without exposing *her*. Don't say yet, sir, even to Mary, that you have compared the numbers of the notes."

Lady Grace sought an interview with Mr. Grubb. She

went to his house that evening, but she found he was gone to his club, and her sister to the Opera. So Grace dismissed her carriage, went up to the drawing-room, and wrote a word to Mr. Grubb, asking him to come home. The thought crossed her, that perhaps it was not quite the thing to do, but Lady Grace Chenevix was not one to stand upon ceremony.

He returned at once, full of bustle and curiosity. "Anything the matter, Grace? Anything amiss with Adela? She's not ill?"

"She is at the Opera, I hear; very well, no doubt." And then she imparted her suspicions—just an allusion to them—that her poor sister was the culprit.

"Grace," he whispered, "I don't mind telling you that the same fear haunted me, and I taxed her with it. She indignantly denied it."

"Two of the notes have been traced," murmured Lady Grace.

"Traced!"

"Paid away by Adela, at Lady Sanely's."

There was a dead silence. Lady Grace Chenevix did not raise her eyelids, for she felt keenly the pain of the avowal, and an ominous shade of despair overspread the merchant's face.

"Grace, Grace," he broke forth in anguish, "what is it you are saying?"

"One of them, for £50, came into my father's hands to-day, and he has traced it back to Adela. Another of them she paid the same evening to the Dowager Beck. What inference could I draw, Mr. Grubb, but that she—you know what I would say."

"Could she descend to be a party to such disgrace with Charles Cleveland?" he groaned.

"Charles was no party to it," cried Lady Grace, warm-

ly; "he was her instrument, nothing more. Whatever may be his follies, he is the soul of honor. And it is a sort of chivalrous sense of honor, depend upon it, which is causing him to shield her, now the matter is come out. What is to be done? Charles Cleveland must not stand before his country a felon."

"Heaven forbid—if he is indeed innocent. But, Grace—after Adela's solemn assertion that she had nothing to do with it, when I conjured her to tell me, her husband, the truth, and I would forgive and protect her, how is it possible to believe that she is guilty?"

Lady Grace answered by a gesture: her sister's assertions did not go for much with her. "I fear this passion for play has taken fatal possession of Adela," she observed, "and that she will stand at nothing to gratify it. You must see Charles Cleveland, and get the truth out of him."

"Better get it from Adela."

"If you can. I doubt it."

And Lady Grace had reason. When he spoke to his wife the following morning, telling her the notes had been traced to her, she haughtily waved her hands at him for silence, stopped her ears, and finally left his presence, declaring she would not re-enter it until he could drop all allusion to the subject.

With a half curse—he, so temperate a man!—Mr. Grubb started for Newgate, and from thence came back, and called at Lady Oakton's. The countess and her daughters were surrounded with visitors; Lady Mary Cleveland was exhibiting her baby to them. Mr. Grubb made a sign to Lady Grace, and she went with him to another room.

"Grace, what's to be done?" he said. "Adela will not hear a word, and I can make nothing of Charles Cleveland. Upon my mentioning Lady Adela—of course only in hints, I could not accuse my wife outright to him—he interrupted

me with a request that I would not introduce Lady Adela's name into so painful a matter; that he had brought the disgrace upon himself, and was prepared to pay for it. I don't know what to think. I cannot believe, if my wife were guilty, that Cleveland would take the penalty upon himself. Transportation for life is no light matter, Grace."

Lady Grace shuddered. "Do not let him suffer it," she said.

"I would rather cut off my right hand than punish a man unjustly, were he my greatest enemy. But unless I can get at the truth of this matter, and find proof that your view of it is correct, I shall have no plea, to my partner, to the public, or to my own conscience, for hushing it up; and the law must take its course."

"Alas! alas!" murmured Lady Grace.

"You seem to overlook my feelings in this affair, Grace," he whispered, a deep hue dyeing his cheeks. "That she must have had something to do with it, her paying away the notes proves; and to find the wife of your bosom thus in league with another—. You don't know what it is, Grace."

"I can imagine it," she answered, the tears standing in her eyes as she rose to bid him adieu. "Believe me, you have, and always have had, my deepest and truest sympathy; but Adela is my sister; what more can I say?"

Lady Grace sat on, alone. The murmur of gay voices came to her from the adjacent room, but she heeded it not. She leaned her head upon her hand, and debated with herself. It was imperative that the real facts of the case should be brought to light; for if Charles Cleveland were permitted to suffer the penalty of transportation, and it came out, later, that he was innocent, and her sister the guilty party, what a fearful position would be that of Lady Adela!

Could Charley not be brought to confess through stratagem? debated Lady Grace. Suppose they made believe that Adela, in order to save him, had declared the truth, *then* he might speak. It was surely a good idea. Grace weighed it, in all its bearings, and determined to carry it out. But to whom intrust so delicate a mission? Not to Mr. Cleveland, he would betray it all to Charles at the first sentence; not to Mr. Grubb, his high sense of honor would never let him assert that Lady Adela had confessed what she had not; not to Lady Mary, for her only idea of Newgate was that it was a place overflowing with infectious fevers, which she should inevitably bring home to baby. Who next? *Herself?* Yes, for Grace Chenevix felt that none were so fitted for the task as she was—she who had the subject so much at heart. So she made a confidante of her mother, and the day for the expedition was fixed.

Charles Cleveland sat on his iron bedstead, in his dreary cell, chewing the cud of his reflections, which came crowding one upon another. None of them were agreeable, as may be imagined, but pressing most keenly of all, was one sensation of deep, dark disappointment. Above the discomfort of his present position, above the sense of shame endured, above the dread of the hard, degrading life that loomed for him in the future, was the unkind neglect of the Lady Adela. She, for whom he was bearing this misery and disgrace, had never, by her presence, by letter, or by message, sought to convey a ray of sympathy to cheer him in his dungeon. It may be she was afraid, but it told not the less bitterly on the spirit of the prisoner.

A noise at his cell door, the heavy key was turning in the lock, and the prisoner looked up eagerly—a visit was such a break in his dreary day. Two ladies were entering, and his heart beat wildly—wildly; for in the form of one

he discerned a likeness to Lady Adela. *Had* she come to see him! and he had been so ungratefully blaming her! But the lady raised her veil, and he was recalled to his sober senses. It was only Grace Chenevix.

"So, Charles, an awful scrape you have brought yourself into, through your flirting nonsense with Adela!" began the Countess of Oakton.

"Now, mamma, dear mamma," implored Lady Grace, in a whisper, "if you interfere you will ruin all."

"Ruin all! much obliged to you, Grace. I think he has ruined himself," retorted the countess, in a shrill tone. "I wonder, Charles, you can look us in the face. If any one had told me I should ever walk through Newgate, surrounded by turnkeys! We came in a hack cab! I wouldn't have brought the servants here for the world."

"I shall ever feel grateful to you," began Charles.

"Oh, never mind about gratitude," unceremoniously interrupted Lady Oakton, "there's no time for it. Let us say what we have to say, Grace, and be gone. I am all in a tremor, lest those men with keys should come and lock me up. Of course, Charles, you know it has all come out."

Charles looked up sharply.

"Which is more luck than you could have expected," added the countess, while Lady Grace sat on thorns, unable to get a word in edgeways. "Of all brainless idiots, you have come out the first. If Adela chose (like a thoughtless, wicked girl as she is! though she is my daughter) to write her husband's name to a cheque, was that a reason why you should go hotheaded to work, and make believe you did it? Grubb is not your husband, and you have no right to his money. Things that the law will permit a wife to do with impunity, you might be run up to the drop for."

"Who has been saying this?" uttered the prisoner, in breathless bewilderment. "Surely not Lady Adela."

"Charles," interposed Lady Grace, and her quiet tones, after those of the countess, sounded like the lulling of a storm, "there is no necessity for further mystery, or for your continuing to assume the guilt; which, as my mother says, was an unwise step on your part——"

"I did not say unwise," sharply interrupted the countess; "call things by their right names, Lady Grace. It was insanity, and nobody but an idiot would have done it. That's what I said."

"The circumstances are known to us now," went on Lady Grace. "Poor Adela, at her wits' end for money, drew the cheque, and sent you to cash it. And then, terrified at what she had done, persuaded you to assume the guilt."

"She did not persuade me," retorted Charles, falling completely into the snare, and still anxious to excuse Lady Adela; "I volunteered to bear it; and I would do as much again."

"Charles, if you were present when she wrote the cheque—I did not inquire, and Adela did not say—you were doubly to blame. She, poor thing, was excited at the moment, and incapable of reflection, but you ought to have reasoned with her, and refused to aid in it—for her own sake."

"And of course I should," eagerly answered Mr. Charles, "had I known there was anything wrong about it. She brought me the cheque ready written——"

"When you went up from the city for the cheque-book, on the Saturday morning. Yes?"

"Yes. I declare I thought it was Mr. Grubb's writing, if ever I saw his writing in my life. I was not likely to think anything else, having no suspicion. And I knew nothing more about it till the Monday night, when I came up from Brighton—as I suppose Lady Adela has told you, if she has told you the rest."

"And then you undertook to shield her," interposed Lady Oakton, "and a glorious mess you have made of it between you. Grace, how you worry; you can speak when I have done. What *she* did would have been hushed up by Mr. Grubb, for all our sakes, but what you did was a different matter. And now the disgrace has been blazoned forth to every corner of the United Kingdom."

"And these are all the thanks I get," remarked Charles, striving to speak lightly.

"What others would you like?" questioned the countess; "a service of plate presented to you? You deserve it, I think, to have run your head into a noose for a married woman. And Adela, of all others, who cares for nobody on earth but her blessed self! Not she."

"My mother is right," said Lady Grace, "and it may be as well, Charles, that you should know it. Adela has never cared for you more than for another. If you have given undue love to her—which you ought not to have done—it has been thrown away. *I* tell it you."

He bit his dry and fevered lips with mortification—fevered for *her*—and the countess hurried Lady Grace away.

"A capital success we have met with, Gracie," she cried, when they got outside the stone walls, "but it's all thanks to me. I got it out of him nicely—like a green sea-gull as he is. But, Grace, my child"—and Lady Oakton's voice grew hushed and solemn—"what in the world will be done with Adela?"

What indeed! Lady Oakton soon knew.

That which the insults, the scorn of years, had failed to effect on Mr. Grubb's heart was now accomplished. From the hour of his enlightenment he was a changed man: his consideration for her had become contempt—his love hatred. Not with her did he enter into negotiations for

their SEPARATION, but with her parents. The merchant proposed to allow her a liberal maintenance, and the earl and countess agreed to receive her back in her maiden home. The scene which ensued between her and her husband, when the news of his fiat had burst startlingly upon her, was more humiliating to her than any she had hitherto held part in. For she was *kneeling* to him in her terror and distress, kneeling to supplicate his mercy. Lady Adela, so alive to the opinion of the world, would almost have preferred death, than that her husband should condemn her to a forced separation.

"I have been very wrong," she implored, the tears streaming down her cheeks; "I have not behaved as I ought from the time of our marriage; I acknowledge it. Forgive me what is past, and in future I will be all that a wife ought."

"Do not humiliate yourself by kneeling to me, Lady Adela,"—and his tone had no relenting in it. "I pray you rise."

"Not till you say you forgive me," was her rejoinder, clasping his knees, and laying her tearful face against them. "Do not let me kneel to you in vain—*my husband.*"

"Lady Adela, but a short while ago it was my turn to supplicate you. I told you I would protect, forgive, and shield you. I solemnly prayed you to trust in me—your husband—as *you wished it to be well with us in our future life.* Do you remember your answer?"

She moaned aloud—her only answer now.

"As you rejected me, so must I reject you."

"I will give up play—I will be all you wish—a man *may* not reject his wife," she wildly urged.

"He may—when he has sufficient reason. Look at all you have dealt to me. Few men would have borne with

you as I have done. I loved you with a true and lasting love: how have you repaid it to me?"

"Try me once again—a month—a week—let me still live on, your wife. I will indeed be all you wish. Only try me."

"It may not be," he coldly said. "My resolution has been deliberately taken, and I cannot change it on impulse."

"Later, then," she panted, "try me later. Oh! mercy! mercy!"

"Neither now nor later. My feelings were long, long outraged, and I bore with you; but, in this last fearful act, you have broken all allegiance, and thrown off my protection. Lady Adela, I shall never inhabit the same roof with you again."

She continued her distressing appeal—"Mercy! mercy!" But her once fond husband gently unwound the clasp of her arms, laid her on a sofa, and escaped from the room and the house. He did not enter it again until she had finally left it.

When the day of Charles Cleveland's trial came, there was no prosecutor, so he was discharged. No explanation had been given to Charley's friends in the fashionable world, but an understanding had somehow gone forth among them, coupled with a curious whisper about Lady Adela, that he was not guilty and had been wrongfully accused. They received him with a noisy welcome, each one contesting who should make the most of him.

But Charles Cleveland was a changed man. His confinement and reflections in Newgate had added years to his experience in life, and the heartless conduct of Lady Adela filled his soul with wrath and bitterness. For, heartless as she had been to him in prison, so she remained in the interview which he sought with her, after he came out of it.

"What name do you now give to that devoted chivalry of yours, Charles?" asked Lady Grace Chenevix, with a smile, when she was bidding him adieu, the day of his departure for Marseilles, a post in the civil service at Bombay having been obtained for him.

"INFATUATION," replied Mr. Charles, savagely.

"That was just it," said Lady Grace. "Take care of yourself for the future."

"If ever I get trapped by a woman again, all courtly smiles one day, when she wants her turn served, and careless neglect the next, like a confounded weathercock, I'll give you leave to transport me in earnest," was Charley's wrathful answer. "But God bless *you*, Grace," he added, changing his tone to one of deep feeling, "for I owe it to you, and not to her, that I am not now on my free passage to Norfolk Island."

And the Lady Adela? She is an unhappy woman, dragging on a discontented existence under her father's roof, wishing, how vainly, that she had not forfeited her married home. *We never know the value of a thing till we have lost it.* Strange to say, that feeling of admiration and esteem, which others felt for her husband, has now been awakened in her own breast, and she would forfeit half her remaining existence to be allowed to return to him and atone for days gone by. But she knows that this can never be; that they shall not be united on this side the grave; that when her husband threw her off, he threw her off for ever.



An Ordeal.

THE fire burnt cheerily, throwing a ruddy light over the walls of the little room, with its one or two prints in simple frames, its hanging book-shelf, and its ebony clock. The round table was drawn close to the fire, and on it the tea-things glistened, and the lamp stood ready for lighting. Agnes Ross sat with her feet on the fender, knitting by fire-light, expecting, not waiting—he was always too punctual for that—to hear her brother's step outside, and the familiar click of his key in the street-door, as he let himself in. It was a London lodging, in one of those quiet streets that appear like the very strongholds of dreariness and discomfort; but, for all that, it was a home, and looked like a home, too, to the orphaned brother and sister.

That was his step! Agnes rose quickly, set on the kettle, and lit the lamp. Then, with an air of careful pride, she took from the mantel-shelf a glass jar in which was a bouquet of glowing, beautiful, green-house flowers, rich with aromatic fragrance. It seemed strange on the table where she placed it, surrounded by the homely ware of the tea-service. The bunch of winter-violets, which she removed

to make room for the others, had been far more appropriate. But Agnes' face shone as she looked on her floral treasures, and then watched for her brother's expression as he saw them.

He did see them, as he came into the room. He paused—then shut the door—then smiled back in answer to his sister's delighted glance.

"Yes, Leonard. What do you think of this?"

She held them up, glass jar and all, for admiration. "Where do you think these came from?"

The young man did not answer at first. He took the flowers from her hand, looked at them, breathed in their fragrance for a minute, then put them down again. The flush of pleasure soon passed from his thoughtful face. He sat down, looking even grave.

"Who do you think brought them?" persisted Agnes, changing the form of question.

"I can guess," he answered. A very brief pause; then he added, "Miss Bellew has been to see you. She said she would. How do you like her?"

"Very, very much," cried Agnes, enthusiastically, "How beautiful she is, Leonard. You told me she was, but you did not say half enough. And so gentle, and kind, and sweet. I fancied she was proud."

"So she is," Leonard said quickly; "but with a pride too lofty to show itself to those below her in wealth and position." He moved to take from his sister's hands the kettle she was lifting. Tea-making engrossed her attention for a little while, but she soon returned to the former theme.

"She sat and talked; pleasant, friendly chat; for nearly an hour. I showed her my drawings, and yours, afterwards. She praised mine very much, but I think she would not venture to praise yours. I showed her our old house and the views all about, that you took."

"Little simpleton! To suppose every one as interested in the dear old place as ourselves."

"I am sure she was interested, Leonard. Of course, not as we are, but still very much. Is it likely she would not be, knowing you? Then I showed her your German drawings. She found out for herself that Swiss view hanging by the window, and liked it. Generally, I hate to hear people praise your drawings or yourself, even. But I would allow Miss Bellew to praise both."

"Gracious permission! Now, terrible autocrat, give me my tea. It is the bleakest of November nights, outside. In this cosy little nest we feel nothing of it. Cosy little nest; dear little bird in the nest."

But in spite of his gay, loving tone, he seemed more than usually tired this evening. The dark hair fell carelessly, even rudely, over his forehead—the calm forehead that his little sister was so proud of. She smoothed away the vagrant locks; her cool fingers were very sweet, welcome visitants to his hot brow.

"Does your head ache, Leonard?"

"A little."

"And I have been chattering away so thoughtlessly. Drink your tea, brother, and keep quiet. I will be still as a mouse."

"No need, Agnes. I am only tired; that's all. It has been rather a busy day. Mr. Bellew had some involved accounts from a Dresden house, which I had to go through, because I know German. And—it was more fatiguing than reading Schiller."

"Yes, indeed!" Agnes said seriously. She sat on her little chair; and, supporting her chin with her hand, gazed meditatively into the fire.

"But, for all that, it was pleasant enough," pursued

Leonard cheerfully—"pleasant to be able to render a special service to my master."

"Your master!" Scornfully curled the red lip. But the pride of even a good woman often flies nearer the ground than that of a good man. Leonard smiled.

"Do not disown the word, nor the fact, my birdie. It is no shame to be a servant—or a servant I should not be."

Agnès broke forth anew with earnestness, even to tears.

"Oh, Leonard! Don't be angry: I mean, don't be vexed with me for feeling—feeling it so hard that I should be the cause of all."

"The cause of all? Of what?"

"Of your being in this position. If it had not been for me, you would have gone to India, as your uncle wished; and you would have made your fortune, and come back to England while you were young; and you would have married and been happy."

She stopped at length her rapid, passionate utterance. Leonard then spoke gently.

"Happy! My little sister, what is it that you call happiness?"

"Oh, I know—I know, with you duty is always happiness."

"Not always; not often, I am afraid, to this restless, erring humanity which is so strong within all of us. But, Agnes, there was no war between duty and inclination in my case. If it had not been simply right to stay at home, and be a brother otherwise than in name to my sister, I might have done it from pure selfishness. Next spring, you know, when I lose my little sister, I may yet go to India."

"Oh, Leonard!"

"Oh, Agnes!" He laughed at her the pleasant laugh of one who loves too truly to be less than tender over the foibles of the beloved. "All this time, while you are elo-

quent and unreasonable, my tea is getting cold, and so is yours."

Agnes turned slowly round to the tea-table. Her face, in its intent thoughtfulness, looked like her brother's for the time, though she was a youthful-hearted woman of four-and-twenty, and he a man of thirty: old-looking for his years.

"But, for all that"—she again plunged into the forbidden subject—"I am not convinced, brother."

"Not convinced, of what?"

"That you would not have been happier, making your way abroad. It was such a prospect!"

"Spoken like a man of business. But life has other phases than commerce. I was never meant to be a homeless seeker for fortune. I crave more nourishment for heart and mind. As for riches and luxury, I want none of them. I never used to wish for them: I never will!"

His tone grew determined. Agnes looked up surprised, but more persuaded.

"And you are really happy here, and thus?"

"Happier than I could be anywhere else in the wide world," he answered, with a fervor that sent the color to his cheek, the light to his eyes. His sister looked up into his face, and was satisfied.

The table cleared, Agnes was soon at work. But before Leonard unclosed Shakspeare to finish *The Tempest*, commenced the previous evening, the girlish, busy tongue began again on the fruitful theme with which their evening talk had commenced.

"Brother, Miss Bellew invited me to go and see her."

"Did she? Very naturally."

"What sort of a house is it?"

"Their villa is a perfect palace of taste and luxury. You were never in such a grand house in your life, Agnes.

Mr. Bellew is one of our merchant princes, you know. He likes magnificence, and his house——"

"It is about Mr. Bellew I want to know, not his house. Is he a nice man?"

"*Nice* is such a young lady's word, I am afraid of venturing in its way. He is a handsome old man, to begin with. His face expresses the qualities I have always found in him—honor, integrity, straightforward truthfulness, perseverance, pride, and inflexible, inexorable will."

"I know what he is like, very well. Is Miss Bellew an only child?"

"She has a brother, a boy of fourteen; and two little sisters, born when her mother died."

"And she is a mother to them?"

"Almost," said Leonard, temperately. "She is very good—very loving and tender over them. Her mother left them in her charge. She fulfils it sacredly."

"And they all love her dearly?"

"I believe so: the little girls do, at least. Master Alfred is, I should think, rather difficult to deal with. His father has spoiled him ever since he was born."

"And neglects, or at least thinks little of his daughters?"

"Not so fast. Rosamond—Miss Bellew—is the very apple of her father's eye."

"Is she?" said Agnes, thoughtfully.

Leonard opened his book, and began turning over the pages.

"And her name is Rosamond," she pursued, still musing, her work lying idle in her lap. "*Rosa mundi*, Rose of the World."

"Even so," said Leonard, gently, "*Rose of the World*." He repeated the words softly, dreamily, as he turned over more pages, and finally settled his volume and himself for

reading. Then his voice became cadenced to a clear and equable music, as he began:

"There be some sports are painful; but their labor
Delight in them sets off."

A week afterwards, Agnes went to spend the day with Miss Bellew. It was looked forward to, thought about, counted upon. It proved one of those rare occasions when the anticipated pleasure falls even short of its reality. At least, so Agnes thought, when, after a long day that had seemed short, of talk and music, books and work, she and Miss Bellew and the children sat at evening in the drawing-room, with Mr. Bellew asleep in his arm-chair. The two little girls were at their sister's feet, absorbed in a fairy-tale. Master Alfred was equally well amused by some boyish piece of science which his father had brought him that evening. Rosamond and Agnes sat side by side on the sofa. The night was bleak—rain falling, and gusts of wind sobbing which reached their ears even in their curtained and cushioned splendor of ease.

"My brother will be here soon," said Agnes.

"Yes. It is a wild night for him to come so far."

"Oh! he does not mind wild weather. He even likes it. At home, he often used to go out in the midst of storm and wind, to help the fishermen to draw up their boats on the shore. Once he went into a little boat to save the people out of a wreck."

"Did he?"

A silence. Curiously enough, this theme of Leonard was a new one between the two girls, although to one of them, at least, of ever-present interest.

"You must have loved your home very much," said Miss Bellew presently.

"We did—especially Leonard. He looked as I never

saw him look before nor since, when we drove away from the gate of our house, and through the village. It was such a happy home. Perhaps, one day, we may yet have it again."

"You and your brother?"

"Yes; or Leonard, at least. I know he hopes for it, thinks of it, determines"—

But here Agnes stopped, suddenly conscious how unwittingly confidential she had become with her new friend. She looked up, and Rosamond's eyes met her own. Miss Bellew's was a face that looked too proud for a woman's, until she smiled or spoke; then the curves of her mouth relaxed into a graciousness that made her whole countenance radiant and beautiful. Now the face was softened into absolute sweetness. Agnes thought it so lovely at that moment, she could not choose but look at it; she could not choose but feel it familiar, and her confidence no longer seemed unnatural. Nevertheless, she paused.

"You are not afraid of talking to me?" said Rosamond, simply. "Tell me more of your old home. I know you must like to talk of it, and I like to listen."

And so Agnes went on talking, and Rosamond listened.

It was natural that the sister should insensibly slide back to the subject of her brother. Agnes found herself telling Miss Bellew of all the circumstances of their position. True, none needed to be kept secret, and most of them Rosamond might already have learned from her father. Perhaps she had. However that might be, she kept very still, while Agnes told her how the failure of a bank soon after their father's death had ruined them, and how at first Leonard had tried to support his mother and sister in their old home by teaching in the neighborhood.

"But our mother died; and, soon after, an old friend of my father's offered Leonard employment in translating,

if he would come and live in London. So we left the old place, and went to live in London lodgings."

"It must have been a sad change."

"In many respects it was. And then our rich uncle Fellows wrote to offer Leonard a share in some great Indian concern of his. He had been unfriendly with the family for years, but now he wrote. And when Leonard declined, he sent back an angry letter, renouncing all connexion with him for ever."

"Your brother declined?"

"Yes. Shall I tell you why? You guess—he would not leave me. We two were alone in the world then. I feel ungrateful sometimes."

She paused, blushing.

"Perhaps, when I am married, Leonard may go——"

"To India?"

"Yes. I often fancy he thinks of it. If it had not been for me, he might have made his fortune there by this time. His useless, troublesome sister, who now, after all, will leave him!" sighed Agnes, with a pensive look in her brown eyes.

"You are to be married, then? Soon?"

"In the spring, when his ship is expected home. He is a sailor," added she, with a girlish flush and a rapid glance at her companion.

"Is he? And will he have to go to sea again after you are married—to leave you?"

"No, indeed. I shall go with him wherever he goes. No need—no right—no reason that I should ever leave him when I am his wife!" cried Agnes. "That is the happiness!"

Again she paused with a bright blush. Again Rosamond's eyes perused her face with a kind of tender exultation in what she read there. Her lips parted, as if to speak,

but she checked the impulse, and sat mute; her head a little drooped, her hands lightly clasped upon her lap—musing, most likely.

Leonard's eyes first fell on that fair picture as he entered the room; for the door opened noiselessly—as all doors were educated to do in that house—and he stood before them before they were aware. Both the girls started; both blushed. Agnes smiled gladly on seeing her brother, Rosamond moved away to awaken her father.

Mr. Bellew became conversational. The children were summoned to bed, and tea-time arrived.

Rosamond presided over the tea-table. It was pleasant to see her at its duties, all the surrounding appointments being, after their several ways, in graceful, delicate, and refined harmony with herself. She said little, even to Agnes, who sat by her side. She appeared entirely intent on the office before her: only an occasional lighting up of the dark eyes, a radiant flow of color to the transparent cheek, betrayed that she listened to the animated discourse between the two gentlemen. Mr. Bellew liked talking with his clerk; he was too clever himself not to value intellect in another; and it was not the first agreeable evening he had owed to the society of Leonard Ross. The old gentleman was intelligent, cultivated, in a certain sense, and sagacious. All his most genial characteristics came out on such occasions. He paid studious little courtesies to Agnes; he was kind and friendly beyond kindness to Leonard. As he leaned back in his velvet chair, his fine head with its white hair, his clear blue eyes, his well-cut features, made a pleasant picture of flourishing old age. All the harsher points were lost, which sometimes made his hale countenance stern and hard of aspect, even to cruelty.

Agnes had thought of him even with affection; and of Rosamond her appreciation had been warm even to enthu-

siasm. "Had been," for things were changing now, and the joy of the time seemed slipping away from Leonard's sister. The graceful luxury of the surroundings satisfied her taste, attracted her fancy, as before. Rosamond sat fair and brilliant, like a star shining in the midst of a cloud, or a diamond set in snow—as Agnes had been thinking to herself. Leonard was there, too. All was warmth; glowing, generous, cordial warmth. Yet Agnes felt chilled, and was no longer at peace.

The evening went by, and the time of departure drew near. Rosamond took Agnes to her room. That exquisite little dressing-room had delighted Agnes a few hours before. The rose-pink hangings; the mirrors with their marble consoles; the statuettes, and pictures, and flowers, and porcelain; the birds in their cages; the jewels and trinkets; the rare and costly trifles tossed lavishly about—all this had pleased simple Agnes to see. Now, she marked the incongruity of her own homely bonnet and cloak as they lay on the embroidered couch. Also, for the first time, she noted the contrast between herself and her hostess as they were both reflected in one of the long glasses.

Rosamond took her hand.

"Let us be friends," she said, with a certain hesitating timidity, very unusual to Miss Bellew.

A little while before Agnes would have responded warmly, lovingly. Now, instinctively, she shrank back. But her next impulse forbade her to risk the chance of giving pain.

"I hope so," she answered, with gentleness.

Rosamond kissed her, and she returned the kiss.

Down the soft-carpeted staircase into the chastened glow of the drawing-room again, with its purple and its gold, and its grandeur that was lost in the refinement and grace that reigned over all. Good-night to the courtly, white-haired

gentleman who stood by the hearth; good-night to the queen of the palace—the fairy of the enchanted castle—the lily of the beautiful garden. Rosamond looked like all these as she gave her hand, first to Agnes, then to Leonard. He touched it; glanced, not looked into her face, and turned to answer some casual inquiry of Mr. Bellew. The bell rang, the servant waited; the brother and sister descended the staircase. At its foot they were arrested by Rosamond's voice.

"Stay, Miss Ross! Agnes! you have forgotten your flowers."

She came flying down to them, holding the beautiful camellias and geraniums clasped to her breast. Leonard stood nearest to her; and before his will could rise to control it, his impulse—passionate, imperious, overwhelming—had commanded him to stretch out his hand. He took the flowers. He looked at her; and, for a single instant, she looked at him.

There was no second good-night. Agnes twined her arm within her brother's. They were out in the cold, blank, silent night.

The brother and sister walked rapidly. The rain had ceased, but a damp mist hung over everything. The houses looked like great, gaunt shadows; the street-lamps flared with a sickly, lurid light; the park they had to cross was a dreary wilderness, haunted with strange shapes; for tree, and gate, and fence looked ghostly in the vaporous air. Agnes shivered; her brother drew her closer to his side.

"Are you cold?" he asked anxiously. They were the first words he had spoken since they left the house.

"No; not cold."

A pause.

"You have had a pleasant day?"

"It was very pleasant."

Another silence.

"How sweet these flowers are!"

Agnes caught them from his hand.

"I should like to throw them away!" she said, passionately.

Leonard gently reclaimed them, saying nothing. He did not inquire the reason of his sister's sudden emotion; although it had left her trembling, and, once or twice, a brief, strong sob escaped from her. He said nothing.

The narrow, dismal street was reached at last. They re-entered their home. The fire shone with a subdued glow; two or three books lay on the table, Agnes's work-basket, and the glass of flowers. Leonard lit the lamp, his sister sat on the little sofa, and he took up a letter which had arrived in their absence. But he only handled it mechanically; looked at it with eyes whose vision seemed introverted. A strange expression was on his face; such as even his sister had never seen there before. It was not the look she had expected—had dreaded to see. That she could have interpreted; but this was in a language of which she held no key. He took up the glowing flowers he had brought with him, and regarded them long with deep, thoughtful eyes. Agnes sprang to him.

"Oh! put them away—put them away!"

He looked into her face. Her pleading, anguished look forced down the calm front with which he strove to meet it. So he only took her in his arms, and gently pressed her head against his shoulder, blinding the entreating eyes that saw too much. Presently, in a quiet voice, he said,—

"Yes, Agnes. I will put them away."

In a changed tone, presently, he added:

"You are tired, and it is late. We will not sit up longer."

"O brother, brother! you are cruel to me."

"Am I? Do I pain you—have I pained you, my poor birdie?"

"Is it no pain to see you suffering; to know you miserable; and to be told no more?" she cried, with the vehemence of her quick, impatient nature.

He did not answer.

"I thought I knew my brother's heart," she went on, "even as he knew mine. But I was wrong—wrong. From the time we were little children, I thought we had shared every trouble, every difficulty, every trial. I was proud, glad to think it. But you have been in sorrow, and I never knew; you are unhappy now, and you try to put me off with vague words."

"Agnes! You are not right in this reproach. The confidence you claim ought not to have been yours. Simple honesty would have held me dumb, if other feelings had been insufficient. I had no right to indulge in the luxury of sympathy. I will not have it now. I do not need it. Miserable I have not been: for I have done no wrong. No, sister, nor will I do wrong,"—he pushed her gently from him,—his color rose, his voice took a new tone,—"*although I love her! I love her,*" he said, "*with all my strength; with all the yearning of my soul; although I am the one who loves her and will love the truest—deepest—best; although all the world love her too.*"

He stopped abruptly, seated himself, and shaded his face with his hand.

"You have heard," he said, almost sternly; "you have your wish now. You know your brother's heart. If I hid it from you before it was not from shame. I am not ashamed of loving Rosamond Bellew. I will carry my love for her, with my hope for heaven, to the grave; pure and spotless, God helping me. And the life he gave me shall not be less worthy, even if it be less happy, because of the love."

"Oh, brother, brother!" Agnes sobbed, clinging round his neck, "I cannot bear it; I, that am so happy, to see you suffer."

"My child, I know it is hard," he said, tenderly; "God bless you for the love that makes it so."

"Every day, every time you see her, that you go there"——

"I know. Therefore, when my little bird leaves me for her own happy nest next spring, I shall go."

"Where?"

"Abroad somewhere. I shall easily settle where. In the meantime, I shall not go there again." His glance unconsciously caught the flowers that lay near him for a single instant. He rose resolutely.

"Now, remember, no word henceforward." He kissed her fondly, then led her gently, but irresistibly, to the door.

"You must go to bed now. Good-night, sister."

"Good-night, brother." But she lingered yet a few minutes—then she went.

Left alone, Leonard Ross stood beside the fire-place, leaning his head against the high mantelpiece. His hands clasped themselves together very tightly; the one instinctive, unconscious demonstration of rending pain.

It was a new pain, and one so mingled with sweetness that it defied him to put it away. For a brief space he had tasted of a joy most exquisite;—for once at least his life had risen to full tide, and joy had crowned it with a crest of light. There is no man who loves, and sees for the first time the answering electric look, which at a flash shows him a new world radiant and glorious; into which he alone may enter; over which he alone holds sovereignty—there is no man, beholding this, but would feel the rapture of the new joy. Leonard had tasted of the ecstasy; now came the

recoil. The gate of the dream-land had closed upon him, and he stood in the cold, grey, outside world again.

In that grey reality, truths now made themselves harshly felt. That he was not alone in this love, that it was requited, soon ceased to be a thought of sweetness; it aggravated to torture, it lashed even to fierceness. For the first time the cry of his soul was, "It is more than I can bear."

Such strife, such struggle it is for no earthly hand to record. Let no man be ashamed if, in his calmer latter days, he look back to some such episode in his early life. Over it, be sure, angel eyes have watched with divine compassion for the suffering, divine exultation in the victory.

In the morning Agnes came down, with looks well tutored into cheerfulness. Her brother stood by the window, an open letter in his hand. He was very pale, she thought to herself. He kissed her as usual, then held her hand still.

"Agnes," said he, in a low voice, "I have only now just opened this letter."

"It was here last night. Oh, Leonard, no bad news?"

"Uncle Fellows is dead."

"Dead—Uncle Fellows!" A sudden flash of thought made her heart beat quickly, almost to suffocation. She looked up in her brother's face.

"There is no will, and I am the heir-at-law."

* * * * *

A fortnight had gone by. What a new-hued time was this! What a wondrous world revolved within the circle of the old one! New life—new air—new warmth, light, and lustre—although the days were shortening towards the year's end, and sullen clouds hid constantly the vault of heaven, and sunshine came not through, and earth grew cold in the shadow.

Leonard Ross was betrothed to Rosamond Bellew. Her

father was surprised, at first:—acute perceptions do not always accompany a shrewd intellect, and the merchant might have gone on not seeing that which was before his eyes, to the end of his days. He was surprised, and at first scarcely pleased, perhaps. His clerk suddenly transformed into a millionaire was an idea that he could not at once get accustomed to. That the millionaire should become his son-in-law was more easy of acceptance. Still it was all very strange. He was confounded, too, by his daughter's frank, almost proud, avowal of her love for Leonard. Of course, no objections could be urged: he gave his consent. But it was some time before he grew easy under the new state of things. It was curious; puzzling; perplexing, he thought, that Leonard Ross should be a rich man—able to marry his daughter.

To Rosamond and Leonard it never seemed strange or new. They were very happy. That golden fortnight had held for them riches enough to dower many a long life. Existence is more evenly balanced than we think. Perhaps we all drink nectar sometimes; only to some it comes drop by drop, sweetening the daily draught; while others quaff it from the full goblet in one draught, and live, thereafter, on the remembered glory.

At the fortnight's end Leonard was to go down to Blishford, the large town near which his property lay, and where his uncle had died, to take possession of the estate, and to arrange various legal matters in connexion, not only with it, but with his approaching marriage. Two weddings would take place early in the spring. Agnes was to be claimed by her sailor lover, who would then return from the West Indies, and Rosamond and Leonard were to be married at the same time. The fond dream of many, many years was to be realized; and the birthplace of Leonard was to be the dear home to which he would take

his bride. He described it to her again and again, and sketched faithful vignettes of well remembered places on stray scraps of paper, all of which she kept and treasured as the costliest works of art. She listened, never tired—asking question upon question with the persistency of an interest that never could be exhausted, for it arose out of a depth of tenderness that could never be fathomed.

But—at the fortnight's end, Leonard was to go. The time came, and he went. Only for a week—a week would suffice for everything, and he was to be back at Christmas-time. It was scarcely like a parting, Rosamond said; although her lip quivered like a grieved child's, and her eyes shone through large tears she tried hard to conceal.

Nevertheless, whether at first or at last, separation brings with it the inevitable penalty of suffering, and love will not be constrained into submission. So Rosamond ran into her little fairy bower and could not be won thence, even by Agnes; who, it had been planned, was to stay with her during Leonard's absence, and who would fain have soothed the passionate grief away.

Meanwhile Leonard pursued his journey; thoughts, memories, and hopes, thronging his brain: new feelings and old, stirring at his heart. Verily, there can be few things

"Sweeter than the dream,
Dreamed by a happy man."

Great resolves mixed themselves with those happy hopes; ardent yearnings for the future, yearnings in which self was the beginning but not the end of aspiration.

So he went on his way—through the long railway journey, to the great, looming, London-like town near which was his destination. Business, now, grows thick upon him—we may leave him for awhile:

We may leave him sitting in the old oak-panelled par-

lor, with its quaint furniture, its massive chairs and table, and carved bureau; the room that had been his uncle's study, and where, as the grave housekeeper informs him, her master transacted all his business. Large and various must that business have been. The management of the huge property, which chiefly consisted of houses in Blishford, was only part of it. He still kept up his connexion with the merchant's house in Calcutta wherein he had originally made his fortune; he had large speculations afloat, grand schemes, even at the very time of his death—when paralysis cut short in one instant all the old man's hopes and ambitions for ever. Leonard, during the days he passed in that old house, thought often with much marvelling as to the manner of man his unknown uncle had been. He asked many questions of the demure housekeeper.

"He was a hard gentleman, sir, though I say it. Many a time, in the bad winters, with fever about, and half Blishford a'most driven to famine, he's been begged of for money to help the poor; and he, out of all his wealth, would never give a fraction. And his poor tenants in some o' them miserable courts and places—where a body hardly likes to go, they're so foul and wretched—if in the worst of times they were backward with their rent, it fared sorely with them."

Leonard heard and mused within himself, gravely and sadly, for a long time, as he pursued his task of examining the papers, letters, deeds, and memoranda, which had been kept for the heir's arrival, with the lawyer's seal affixed upon the locks of the drawers which held them.

So, in the old oak-panelled parlor, with the bronze lamp shedding a flickering light on the carved bureau, and the thoughtful face bent over it, with the firelight glowing in the wide grate, and the polished walls shining with a dark resplendence,—we leave him until to-morrow.

A wintry night in the outskirts of London, snow on the ground; deep already, and deepening at every moment. The air is thick with large flakes that fall noiseless on road and pavement, on house roof and church steeple, on pillared porch and garden wall. It was bitterly cold. The snow that had fallen was not soft, but frozen into a cruel hardness. Footsteps left hardly any imprint in it, and the track of wheels and horses' hoofs that the day's traffic had left had been long since effaced, and no new vehicles came down the quiet district to renew them. Houses, houses, houses on all sides, but jealously closed; only a hall lamp shining at rare intervals through a fanlight. No cheerful glow came through crimson curtains, a generous contingent from some warm cosy nest to the bleak, bare, outside night. All without is silent, blank, chill. What is it *within* one of these "handsome houses, where the wealthy" City men and merchants dwell? For this is a suburb of "first-class villa residences."

Through the blinding snow, through the relentless biting cold, a gentleman who, having newly emerged from a neighboring omnibus, afforded a black relief to the unmitigated pallor of surrounding things, dashed on, very quickly and determinedly. His color was fast changing, however, first to iron grey, then to pepper and salt, and finally to salt by itself. He reached his destination, rang at the bell, as he entered by a wide gate into what, under its white masquerade dress, seemed to be a garden and shrubberies: then sprang up some steps, knocked loudly at a door whose massive oak and awful knobs even the snow had respected, and shook himself free from the cloudy flakes that covered him. One more look out into the forbidding night; one more instinctive shiver and shrinking from the rude gust that came, with snow for its ally, right in his face. Then the door flew open and he stepped in. The massive portal

closed behind him. Where was the harsh night gone? What had become of the incarnate dreariness? the black vault above? the lurid desolation of the world below?

Here was a wide hall, well lit by two swinging lamps of painted glass, that looked like ripe summer fruits hanging from a garden wall; pictures rich and warm in color; and one or two statues. A fair white Welcome stood on one side, holding out her hands and smiling with her lip, her eyes, her brow, with every curve of her gracious face and figure; and a Peace, not needing to smile, her look was so serene, with her arms folded purely over the book she held to her breast, and her olive-wreath changed for one of Christmas holly, red-berried, shining-leaved, that another hand than the sculptor's had placed there. Evergreens decked the walls, the picture-frames, the lamps;—and the fragrance of bay-leaves scented the warm air. The newly-arrived guest looked round; as if with dazzled eyes, he passed his hand across his brow, while the servant relieved him of his hat and his cloak. And now, sound begins to add itself to the other accompaniments of the scene; a warm happy murmur of voices, through which, presently, a light, tremulous, girlish laugh is embroidered like a silver thread on crimson. And then some cunning hand evokes a passionate flood of sound from the pianoforte; it rises, it sinks, and swells, and rises again, and falls in tiny crystal droplets, and then ceases. For the dining-room door has been opened, and our sometime wayfarer in the snow has entered.

A large room, glowing warmly with crimson, and opening into a smaller one, beyond which again the faint light of a pendant lamp reveals a tiny conservatory. They are seated round the blazing fire in the first room, all but the one who stands by the piano—her white fingers yet poised over the ivory keys. A hale, handsome old man, two little girls nestling on the hearth-rug, very fairy princesses, of blue

eyes, golden hair, and dainty apparel; an older boy poring over a book, and bright-faced Agnes Ross, her look alert and flashing, her whole countenance radiant and happy, seated on the sofa, the other place on which has been just vacated by Rosamond.

O happiest Rosamond! She looked up and saw the figure standing in the doorway.

"Leonard! Oh, I knew it was you."

They gathered round him: his sister, with a fond embrace; the children, in much demonstrative glee; even slow-moving Mr. Bellew rose from his chair, and met him with outstretched hand.

"The train was late," he observed, as he seated himself. "Delayed one hour by the great snows." Agnes made Leonard take her place. He sat beside Rosamond on the sofa, and then his sister attacked him volubly with inquiries as to how he travelled? was he tired? had he dined? But, the questions answered, he leaned back, glad to be silent, perhaps. The picture was complete. Laughing children, the sweep of soft, rich drapery, the pearl-like light of lamps, the cordial sound of the flaming fire, and the sweet, luscious odors that stole in from the neighboring flowers: luxurious allurements and gratifications for the senses, refined and subtle as the tastes they wooed and won—all were here.

Leonard again passed his hand over his brow.

"Dearest, you are tired," whispered Rosamond, bending close to him in sweet, sudden anxiety. Her hand timidly touched his shoulder. He took it in his own, and looked at it; the fair, soft, little hand, the delicate wrist, well guarded by its outer sleeve of purple silk, and within that, drooping frills of finest lace, and a shining bracelet of gold, thickly set with emeralds, clasped about it, and ever and anon slipping up the round arm. Fair little hand!

Leonard looked at it; then at her sweet face, where a

faint flush was gathering and fading, and then glowing again, like sunrays upon snow. Then he looked round the room, and finally his gaze rested full on the face of Mr. Bellew, his host, and future father-in-law. No sign of weariness in Leonard now. There was even more than usual energy and vigor in his face; he rose erect in his seat, still holding the little hand in his, still gazing at the old merchant's placid, well-favored countenance.

"It is a bitter night outside," Leonard said. "It will be a hard winter."

"Hard winter, truly," observed Mr. Bellew. "My horses fell three times this morning. At last I had to get out and walk a street's length to the counting-house. Have you had any adventures, Leonard?"

"Not of that kind," replied he, the faintest smile quivering at his mouth.

"No. But we look for something more stirring from you, you have been away ten days; in that romantic manufacturing district too. How did you leave Blishford?"

"Cleaner than it had ever been in its life, I think, for the snow fell even faster than the dirt."

"All business satisfactorily settled?" Mr. Bellew asked, *en passant*.

"The business is settled."

"Come, come; you needn't blush, Rosamond!" said Mr. Bellew, who seemed genial even to jocularly on this occasion. "So much of the preliminaries over, then. Well—well—well. Miss Agnes, shall I give you this hand-screen."

The old gentleman bent forward, always studiously polite to his fair guest. It was curious to watch his grave face relax into a smile of stately, Grandisonian courtesy, while all the time the shrewd eyes shone, the inflexible mouth was firm and hard.

"Papa, papa!" cried one little fairy, who tumbled round

on the hearth-rug—a tiny bundle of azure silk and lace—with a rosy face beaming up in eager inquiry, “is it true, papa, is Rosamond to be married soon?”

“And will she go away?” chimed in the other, “and won’t she be our very own any more?”

Rosamond rose. She might be excused for seeking her work from a table in the inner room, pending the answer to these inquiries. But Leonard followed her—Leonard drew her yet further away—into the little conservatory, at one side of which Rosamond was accustomed to sit and read or write or work. Her little desk was there now; her chair stood beside it, and a white vase with a single crimson rose in it. She took this last in her hand, and examined it with great attention.

“It is for you,” she said, softly. “I have watched it budding day after day, and this very morning it opened. It knew you were coming, you see. I had taught it to know.”

“Shall we sit here awhile?” said Leonard. “I like this place. It is pleasant to be here.”

“And remember,” said she, “you have everything to tell me.”

He started. She smiled up at him, in the very overflowing of contentment.

“Oh, I have so much to hear!” she went on, gaily; “the history of ten days, the full, true, and particular history. You know it is of no use to attempt to satisfy me with less. So begin, do begin.”

She sat down and he took his place beside her. Such a serene, sweet face was drooped from his gaze, such quivering happiness played about the rosy mouth. There was a brief silence: they could hear the children’s voices in the other room, and Agnes’s vivacious tones clear above the rest.

“She is telling them a story,” said Rosamond, “and I am going to hear my own special story—am I not?”

Leonard’s voice, steadfast and sustained, vibrated on the murmur of distant sound with special distinctness.

“Yes, darling, you should be told.”

Something in the tone of his voice, an indefinite, indescribable something, smote Rosamond’s quick sense. The shy happiness faded from her face; she looked up with a swift, appealing glance—a sort of helpless deprecation of ill.

“Leonard! What is it?”

“I will tell you all, my Rosamond. My Rosamond,” he repeated fondly, with a quiet smile, that insensibly smoothed away, for the moment, the trouble in her face. He held her hand close, and began.

“You are to see me, then, going through that wonderful town, at once so rich and so squalid—so magnificent and so miserable, with its thousands upon thousands of inhabitants, mostly poor—many of them destitute—some even despairing. Through the dark, dismal streets, where all the falling snow was polluted by smoke and filth, and even through the frost the air was heavy and impure. Past miserable dwellings—hovels, where people seemed festering, not living; where I saw gaunt figures moving about with wretched faces, ashen-hued—with glaring eyes, and sunken, hollow cheeks. I saw their hungry, fierce looks as they passed me by—these creatures that want, and disease, and ignorance together seemed to have left scarcely human. Rosamond, my heart swelled as I saw them, and knew that the avarice and cold-heartedness of my uncle had helped to make them so. I thought that, in the days to come, life should hold better things for them, that I would repair the injuries—right the injustice that he had done.”

"Ah—your uncle's property was in those miserable streets."

"Chiefly. I planned great benefactions, I imagined gigantic schemes of improvement. In my mind I looked on the same places, and the people in them, ten years hence. I thought how we would work together to help them—minds and bodies."

"And we will—we will!" cried Rosamond, with unconscious apprehension giving poignance to her tone.

"Ay, love, if it please God." He stopped a little after those lowly-uttered words. Then he resumed.

"From thoughts, dreams, plans like these, I went back to Woolthorpe, the old house where my uncle lived his latter years, and died. I went back, thinking of those poor souls' misery, which I was to alleviate through my great happiness. That was last night, darling. Last night, at this time, I was thinking to myself of this night's joy of return." He went on more rapidly. "And I set to work, tying up papers, arranging the deeds and parchments with which the old bureau was full, and which the lawyers and I had been busy over for many days. I had just finished; I was closing one of the small inner drawers, which slightly resisted the effort. I pressed it harder, and touched some secret spring, it seems, and a side drawer sprang open."

"How strange!" said Rosamond.

"A paper lay there, carefully folded, not very long since written. I saw my uncle's bold signature at the bottom of the page. I think I knew what it was before I opened it and read." He paused an instant and drew breath. "It was my uncle's will, which they had vainly sought, and could not find."

"Yes—but—I do not understand." She faltered, for she saw in his face ample interpretation of all the rest.

"It was a will in his own handwriting, dated a very few

weeks before his death. A will, by which he leaves all his property in the charge of trustees for the benefit of charities in Blishford, and elsewhere; but especially to found institutions, hospitals, and asylums in that wretched town. You see, Rosamond, my schemes were anticipated. Remorse came to the poor old man, and a yearning to do something by his death that might alleviate the wretchedness he had helped to increase during his life! God knows the secrets of his heart; it was not all hard."

"But *you*?"

"I and Agnes are mentioned in the will—five hundred pounds are left to each of us. Also inclosed with it was a letter to his former partner in Calcutta, recommending me to him. It was always his wish that I should go there."

"Leonard! don't speak in that manner! Leonard! Leonard!" She turned upon him her pale, agonized face. She caught his arm feebly, looking round with an imploring, searching look. "Wait a little; I cannot, cannot understand yet."

"Rosamond!"

"No, no," she cried hastily, "don't try to tell me."

He put his arm round her, but, in the action, his calmness fled from him. He leaned his head down on his hands; he hid his face. One sudden, passionate groan escaped him. Then was silence, through which they could hear Mr. Bellow's voice, grave, deliberate, and decided, and the children's musical treble blending with it. Twice Rosamond tried to speak, but the words died away, unuttered. A strange, almost fierce look, unnatural to see on her girlish face, quivered about every feature. At last she whispered:

"Will this separate us? Do you mean that?"

"Do I mean it?"

"Because," she went on hurriedly, but still in a whisper,

"if it is done, it will be done by you. There is no one else to do it; no one—no one else who could"— She stopped.

Leonard looked up. With her two little hands she clasped his brow so that he could not look at her. And the mutinous, half-frenzied look still grew, and grew.

"It is not right, it cannot be right," she said mechanically. "God could never intend"—

"Hush! Let us look steadily at our fate; let us meet it, since it must be met, submissively."

"What is our fate to be, then?" she asked, abruptly; "it is for you to decide."

He did not understand her meaning, though he thought he did.

"No, Rosamond, it is for neither you nor me to decide. It is already fixed."

"Does any one know of—of this will besides you?" she said, quickly.

"No one. The person who must first be informed lives in London. I shall go to him to-morrow."

"No!" she said, imperatively, and paused. "No," she said again, imploringly, frightened at Leonard's silence.

"Rosamond!"

"We—we could do all he wished," she whispered, while a burning spot rose on each cheek, "even as you planned before, before you found—. It would be no wrong done to any human being. Leonard, Leonard!"

He drew her closely to him, and kissed her forehead, with a sad, tender pain expressed in his look.

"Leonard! Oh, speak to me!"

"Wait. Think a little."

"Think!" She broke from his arms, and looked up in his face in cold reproach. "Can *you* think of what is the issue of all this? Do you love me less entirely, then, than

I love you? Anything, everything, is to me better, nobler, truer than that we should part. *We!* It is not one little month since we first learned to say that word. I had known it and uttered it in my heart long, long before. I knew you must love me by the strength of my own love. I knew we were one. Heaven made us so.—Yet you would part us! You could bear to do it!"

"I could bear to do it," Leonard repeated slowly, looking at her, "*because* we are one."

She stretched out her arms in a sort of helpless, passionate appeal. Her hand touched the crimson rose, smiling in gorgeous fulness and completeness from its crystal vase. She looked at it for a minute, then—her face changed. The dilated eyes softened, the fiery spot faded from her cheek. The frantic passion was dying out. The first instinct of rebellion was yielding to the truer, purer, woman-nature. She bent her head down into her hands.

"We were so happy, so happy. God pity us!" she said, and the tears came plenteously and tenderly. And Leonard, in his soul, cried, "God help us, strengthen us!" For he needed both help and strength. In a little while she knelt closely beside him, her head leaning on his breast, weeping out the passion that had burned so fiercely as to convulse the delicate frame wherein it flamed. Presently when Leonard spoke, his low voice seemed gradually to still the sobs. She looked up—with the old sweet look, that for him her face had always worn. It almost struck down his courage to see it. With a flash came the thought of the coming life, life without *her*. What that meant to him, only his own heart could tell. For a brief space he wrestled with that heart. It was mutinous, it resisted the crushing fate that loomed heavy and dark before it. All the strong passion of his man's nature roused itself, and rebelled against the suffering. It fought fiercely, it struggled with

desperate strength. It cried out against the weary years ; the desolate cruel time that was coming. How often do we recoil thus from *the time that is coming!* Why do we not remember that we live in eternity, and so be patient ?

Some such thought came to Leonard, and helped to still the tumult. And Rosamond did not guess what had passed during those moments that he remained so still,—shading his face with his hand. She did not know all the meaning of the uplifted look with which he turned to her again. And he only said :

“Rosamond, my Rosamond ! We will have courage.” Then they heard the children calling them.

“I will not go back, in there,” Rosamond said faintly. She laid her hand on the side door that led into the corridor. But suddenly, she remembered—what it would be when next she saw him, and she shrank back with a low cry.

He bent over her. He folded her in his arms. As a mother that yearns to her child, with a tenderness as pure, a sorrow as sacred, Leonard held his betrothed closely strained to his heart. Again he said, and with a kind of stern resolve, as to himself :

“We will have courage !”

Then he let her go.

Two months more, and Leonard Ross was on his way to India. He only waited for his sister's marriage. Then he went. There is little need to relate the history of those two months. For Rosamond they held much strife, struggle, and passionate but impotent resistance. It was Leonard who had to teach her what he, alas ! needed all his strength of manhood to recognise with submission ; that in patience and power of endurance lay their hope, and not in rebellious strivings against the inevitable. That it was inevitable they both felt, Leonard from the first, and Rosamond later ; there was no possibility of tampering with the circumstances before

them, unless by a dereliction from that straight path of truth and honor which had ever been the roadway of Leonard's life.

So they parted. Parted, knowing in how full, and deep, and wide a sense of parting. Agnes, married to her sailor-lover, would be wandering about the world for years to come,—that link of possible communication was broken. And Mr. Bellew, in the midst of his bland courtesy, contrived to take his measures decisively and surely. Very soon after the disclosure of what he called “the truly extraordinary circumstances of the case,” he removed his household to an estate of his in Cornwall. He laid down no stringent rules, he impressed no stern commands ; but with the quiet, cruel, cold shrewdness which ever went hand in hand with his indomitable will, he insured the absolute and entire cessation of all intercourse between his daughter and her lover. Rosamond, high-spirited and resolute as she was, could not combat with the experience and gentlemanly scheming that her father employed when he chose. Leonard was almost equally at fault ; for, though he knew the character he had to cope with, it was only with the theoretical knowledge that the penetration of a good man has into the nature of a worldly and designing one.

Mr. Bellew gained credit for much magnanimity in permitting Leonard to write once, once only, before he left England. The letter was written, but it never reached her. She saw that the ship had sailed in which she knew he was to go. She even heard of his embarkation from poor Agnes, bridal Agnes ; torn between conflicting joy and grief, the union with her lover, and the parting with her brother.

After that a blank. The grave itself, it seemed, could not have divided them more surely.

In the solitude of the wild sea-shore, with her little

sisters for her companions, Rosamond learned acquaintance with the face of her sorrow. There the quiet capacity to endure, grew and waxed stronger upon the ashes of the fiery emotions which had at first spent her strength. Leonard had said, in almost the last words his voice had borne to her:

"Have no fear. We can bear it."

Nevertheless, there were seasons of exquisite pain—of ineffable weariness and desolation, when the face of Consolation was hid from her, and the presence of Peace was no longer with her. Seasons of doubt, of self-upbraidings, when she could fain have called herself traitress to the great truth of her life; and in bitterness and scorn looked on the submission which she had learned so hardly. But one doubt never came to her—the cruellest, the worst pang was spared. Next to her trust in Heaven was her faith in Leonard. After all, she who loves thus is happy.

Meanwhile, there came many suitors to Miss Bellew, and even when her youthful radiance had faded, as it did fade sooner than it should have done, many came. And her father chafed wrathfully at the whimsical obstinacy of woman-nature, but nodded his head wisely the while, saying, "In time—in time!"

At length, one strange, wonderful day, there came to Rosamond a letter. Leonard wrote, openly and with no attempt at disguise—it was singular that, so sent, the letter ever reached her. But it came—she had it, this absolute, tangible, visible thought from him to her. Only a few words—but there could be no more to Rosamond than they held for her. He said—"Tell Mr. Bellew I have written. I do not seek to deceive him, as you know, my Rosamond. But I must write, I will write. Something must go from me that your eyes will look on, that your heart will receive. Soul to soul we are together, but while we live otherwise than in the soul, we crave for more, and

the humanity is strong within me, and cries loudly." Little more than this—but it was enough. It lit her life for many, many months. Moreover, she wrote back openly, as he had done, and never knew that Mr. Bellew, grown more cautious and acute for his former negligence, did not suffer the letter to go. More than once in the years that followed, letters were intercepted by the watchful, inexorable old man. Rosamond never knew—never suspected.

So the years went on. The two little girls grew up, and, one after the other, the elder sister saw them leave her. Her brother was at the head of the great mercantile house of Bellew, and at last the old merchant retired with his eldest daughter to an estate he had lately purchased, and which he had settled on Rosamond. There the old man lingered out his remaining days, and there he died, nine years after Leonard Ross left England for India.

Then Rosamond was alone. She lived a very quiet, solitary life, only different from what it had been before her father's death, inasmuch as her close and devoted attention to him being remitted, she had more time to give to the charities and other beautiful and womanly duties with which her life was lustrous. The Lady of the Manor was like a good angel to the poor, the ignorant, and the suffering around her. The appearance of the tall, slender figure, with its gentle, gliding dignity of movement, and the drooped face, so sweet, and pale, and thoughtful, was a signal of help and consolation to many an aching heart in the village and about the country where she lived.

Thus it was one day early in January, such a day as comes sometimes in mid-winter like a thought of childhood to an old man; telling wondrous tidings of the far-away spring that is,—though we see it—and that will surely come to us again. It was evening, and the sun was near to his setting; great purple clouds hung about him, and fragments

of them, as of a rent robe, were scattered over the clear sky. The wide landscape seemed to tremble in the amber light that was shed across it from the west; the leafless branches of the trees were traced, intensely black, against the golden horizon, while groves of dark and heavy-foliaged firs opposed their rounded masses of shadow to the lustrous heaven, and would not draw in any of the radiance with which the world was overflowing.

Nestling among the abrupt hills and wild breaks of moorland, lay the park and manor-house where Rosamond Bellew lived. The greensward sloped to a broad stream that flowed through the domain; beyond it rose woods, purpling in the distance. Crowning the hill, nearer, was a grove of pines, tall, column-like, and with a "whushing" music, as of distant waves, ever murmuring about their crests. Great trees stood grandly about the park—benign oaks, lofty beeches, and cedars, with a mystery in their low-spreading branches, and their eternal depth of shade. Joyous with aerial beauty the birches looked, grouped on a slope near the grey old mansion, like girls who longed but were ashamed to run. They were divided by an invisible fence from the dainty garden beneath the windows of the lady's special sitting-room. Behind these birches the radiance of the sunset grew and faded every evening now, and Rosamond always stood at her window to watch it.

She stood there now—a tall, grey-clad woman; no longer young, either in face, in figure, or in movement; but fair still, and gracious to behold, with a look which had in it some kinship to the clear, cold, and pure serenity of the winter evening. So she stood, her hands clasped lightly together, shining white upon the dusky, cloud-like folds of her robe, watching the sunset and thinking—thinking—thinking.

Not fifty miles from that quiet English valley flows the

sea, and its waves break stormily outside the harbor into which the ships come, many in a day, from every part of the world, bringing hundreds home. Who shall say that it is a miserable world, when one day can hold so much of happiness as those simple words express—*coming home*?

There is one ship just coming in, and the passengers crowd on the after-deck; some already straining their eyes to catch the first sight of a beloved familiar face on the shore; some lounging, careless, too used to wanderings to feel much of the sacred joy of return; some curiously gazing about them, new to the scene, and their perceptions keenly aroused to everything around. But one or two stand apart, with eyes that look outward but see inwardly, and thoughts that are trembling, deep, deep down underneath the outside unrippled calm of aspect—thoughts that none may guess at, and only One knows are there.

The erect figure of a man stands out a little aloof from the rest. He is watching the sun sink below an English horizon—watching the soft clouds hovering over an English landscape. His dark hair—you may see silver streaks in it, though he is not old—is tossed by the wind about his brow over his face. He loved to feel it—to recognise the old familiar breath on his cheek, for it is part of the home he has lost so long, but now has found again. Ten years he has been a stranger in a strange land, but now—he is coming home.

You who have never left it, never know rapture like the heart-leap to these words. Your eyes do not see the glorified beauty which *his* drink in with every common sight, so long unseen till now. The cries of the sailors among the rigging of the many ships around—the familiar shouts on shore—the clanging of bells, the simplest, most accustomed sounds, come on his ears with a very anguish of remembrance. He had never forgotten them. But between the two verges

of remembrance and oblivion dwells the actuality which is beyond and above both, in which there is no degree—it is—complete and full and satisfying.

Our traveller stood so silent, that a fellow-passenger addressed him twice before he heard. But then he turned round neither vexedly nor impatiently.

"Yes; it is a lovely evening for our landing," he said, smiling.

"May I ask," for these two had been companions during the long voyage, and one, at least, was much interested in the other, "do you go direct to your own home to-night?"

"No. I have no abode in England. It is a wide home that I am coming to. But—it is home."

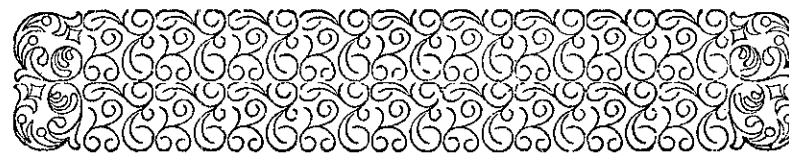
"Let us then stay at the same inn to-night."

"Many thanks; but I am going on further at once. I start immediately on landing."

He smiled again—a courteous, genial smile to his companion; a very strange, wistful, half-eager, half-restrained smile to himself. Involuntarily his eyes seemed to seek the sunset again. Glowing, golden, ambient, shone the sky, and the water in which it was reflected. Far away, on shore, he could see woods and fields and rising hills. Perhaps, even dimly, he could catch the cloudy outline of one of those hills behind which Rosamond Bellew was even then watching the last rays fading behind the birch-trees, and thinking—thinking.

And perhaps it may be that thought can leap to thought more quickly, more surely, than glance responds to glance, or word to word. Who can tell?

But thus it was that Leonard Ross came home.



A Royal Whim.

WE are about to tell our readers a very strange event that occurred in the reign of William I., of Prussia, father of the great Frederick, and a man generally disliked, on account of his rough and frequently tyrannical manner, but who was really one of the best regents of his fatherland, as he alone (and to this his son afterwards bore testimony) was the real founder of its future greatness.

This extraordinary man, who should be judged by the customs of the age in which he lived, in order to prove him extraordinary both in his errors and his virtues, had one passion which far outweighed all others—namely, love for the chase. We remember reading in his historian, Förster, that within one year he killed upwards of three thousand partridges with his own gun, without taking the other game into account, in which the queen was the greatest sufferer, as she had to find him, according to a marriage contract, in powder and shot gratis. When there was nothing for him to shoot in his own forests, he never declined the invitations of the landed gentry to pay them a visit.

Thus it happened that—it might be about the year

1720—the rich landed proprietor, Von W——, sent his majesty an invitation to a wolf hunt, with the humble request that he would bring his most illustrious consort with him, as the nobleman's wife had formerly belonged to her majesty's suite.

On a fine September day, then, the king and queen, with several officers and ladies of the bedchamber, as well as the court fool, Baron von Gündling, arrived at the nobleman's ancestral château. On the very next day the chase commenced, and Von Gündling, who found as little pleasure in the sports of the field as the king did in the arts and sciences, took a solitary walk in the meadows, and lay down to read in the long grass.

But before we hear what happened further, we must first give our readers a description of this strange man. He was, as we have already remarked, the king's fool, and had received all imaginable titles and honors, in order to afford his majesty and the court still greater sport. In fact, his Excellency, the Supreme Master of the Ceremonies, Privy Councillor, and President of the Academy of Arts, Baron von Gündling, acquired such arrogance through his titles, that nothing could be more comical than the contrast between these dignities and the indignities he had to suffer daily, even from the youngest lieutenants. His excellency on such occasions would grow very angry—the very thing his tormentors wished—and would lay a protest before the king against a man of his rank being so treated, which naturally increased the general laughter. Through such scenes, which were in that day considered remarkably comical, our fool had become a necessity for the king and court. Besides, we may add that he was a walking lexicon, and had to give all possible explanations in the daily meetings of the so-termed “tabaks collegien.” His pe-dantry, in fact, was the best thing about him; as for wit,

he possessed as little as a mule, but, to make up for it, he could be as vicious and obstinate as that amiable animal.

The Baron von Gündling, then, lay at full length in the grass, in his peculiar dress, the chief ornament of it being an immense, full-bottomed wig, and in such a position that only the locks of his peruke could be seen as he moved from side to side. A gentleman, who arrived rather late for the chase, happened to notice it, and taking it for some strange animal, fired point-blank at the wig, but very fortunately missed it. His excellency sprang up immediately, in the highest indignation, and cried out,

“You vagabond rascal, how dare you——?”

The gentleman, however, when he perceived that the strange animal must necessarily belong to the royal suite, did not wait to reply, but ran off at full speed to the neighboring forest. The baron, however, was not satisfied with this, but, as he saw a man ploughing at a short distance from him, he called out, in his arrogant manner—

“Come hither, man!”

The reply he received was,

“I have no time or inclination to do so; but if you'll speak civilly I may.”

His excellency was not accustomed to such an answer; he therefore walked towards the impudent ploughman, with upraised stick, and was about to apply it to his back, when he noticed that it was the clergyman of the village, whom he had seen the preceding evening at the nobleman's château. The baron, therefore, lowered his stick, and contented himself by punishing the clergyman with his tongue.

“How can he be such an impertinent ass! Does he not know who I am?”

“Oh, yes! he's the king's fool.”

His excellency trembled with rage, and raised his stick

again; but on measuring the sturdy pastor from head to foot, and seeing no help near, he let it fall for the second time, and merely uttered the threat—

"Just wait, my fine fellow. I'll tell the king you pretend to be a pastor, and yet go out ploughing."

The clergyman replied, quite calmly,

"My gracious master will probably remember that Cincinnatus ploughed too, and he was a dictator, while I am only a poor village pastor."

"Yes," the baron said, after inspecting his coarse and peasant-like dress; "but when Cincinnatus ploughed he did not look like a common peasant."

"I am certain he did not look like a fool," the clergyman replied, as he drove his oxen on.

This was too much for the baron, and he rushed away. Towards a peasant he saw approaching, vowing vengeance on the impudent pastor, whom he determined to ruin on the first opportunity.

He was very glad, then, to find in the peasant a most determined enemy to the clergyman, who complained bitterly of his sternness, and of the fact of his compelling him to make up a quarrel he had carried on very successfully with his wife for several weeks.

Our fool was clever enough to see that this anecdote would not be of any service to him in trying to injure the pastor with the king; he therefore answered, most pathetically,

"But the pastor was perfectly in the right; that could do you no harm."

"Well, that's very true," the peasant replied, "especially as he's getting old, and can't carry on as he used; but I'm sure when his son soon takes his place—a fellow like a church steeple—he'll break all our bones for us. For that reason, if the matter was left to me, I wouldn't choose

him for our clergyman; for if the patron is to beat us on workdays, and the pastor play the same game on Sundays, when will our backs find time to get well?"

Gündling now listened attentively, and his plan was soon formed, when he learned that the pastor's son would return from Halle in a few days, to preach his trial sermon on the next Sunday, as the patron had promised him his father's living. He therefore quitted the peasant with a mocking smile, and made some pretext for visiting the sexton, to make further inquiries into the matter. The latter confirmed the story, and gave his opinion, that the young master must be at least six feet two inches in height, and as straight as a poplar tree.

"Wait!" Gündling murmured between his teeth, as soon as he again reached the street; "we will put a blue coat on the young fellow, and that will annoy that vagabond preacher." He therefore returned to the château, where he looked up a captain of his acquaintance, whom he took on one side, with the hurried question,

"How many fellows have you already got?"

To understand this question, our reader must know, that the king, at every review, requested each commander of a company to present his new recruits to him. If the poor gentleman had less than three he fell into partial disgrace; and so each captain, about review time, which was close at hand, tried to procure a few young men, by any method, legal or illegal, but especially those particularly tall, for the king had a peculiar delight in such soldiers.

"Woe is me! I've but one," the officer replied, "and he's only a journeyman tailor."

"Well, then," Gündling replied, "you can get a journeyman clergyman of six feet two."

"Well, that's no tremendous height, but still it's better than nothing."

The captain then requested an explanation, and both discussed the measures by which to get hold of the clergyman's son. They soon agreed that the officer should feign illness when the king departed. Gündling would remain with him as company; a few soldiers would be secretly procured from a neighboring town, and the young candidate taken *volens volens* by the ears, and transported to the next garrison.

In the meanwhile, the king and his suite followed the chase on the next day, with their usual ardor. It so happened, that two ladies in attendance on the queen, tortured by *ennui*, followed the windings of the stream, which led them from the nobleman's garden into the open fields. One of them, Wilhelmine von B——, was a young and charming creature, and was evidently attempting to cheer her companion, who was silent, and not nearly so charming. In consequence there was a deal of laughing, which might have been heard at some distance off, and might have led to the conclusion that the old, though still ever new, story of marriage and love was being discussed by the ladies. They had gradually wandered some quarter of a mile from the village, when a wolf, probably disturbed by the beaters, and which they at first took for a dog, ran towards them, regarding them with a look which they interpreted, "This little darling I'll make my breakfast off, and the other little darling I'll leave on that bed of forget-me-nots till supper time."

The poor girls had not in the least expected such a bridegroom, and stood petrified with fear as soon as they recognised the animal, for they possibly did not know that a wolf, in the summer or autumn, would attack nobody, and that the Isegrim who fascinated their eyes was, probably, as much afraid of them as they were of him. The silent young lady sobbed out a masculine name—we pre-

sume that of her lover—while the charming one, after recovering from her first terror, looked round on all sides for assistance.

Suddenly a carriage made its appearance from a branch road, drawn by two horses, in which a young and handsome man was sitting. Both ladies cried out together in joyful surprise, when they perceived this unexpected assistance, and the wolf immediately ran off, and took up his station some distance from them. "You have saved us from death," the charming Wilhelmine said, as she approached the young man, who immediately ordered the coachman to stop, and leaped from the carriage. After begging, in the style of French gallantry, to have his doubts cleared up as to whether he looked upon nymphs or hamadryads, or actual mortals, and all possible explanations had been furnished him, he presented himself to the ladies as the son of the old pastor, and just arrived from Halle, in order to act as curate to his father. The young man, whom we will call Carl, then invited the ladies to take seats in his vehicle, and thus return to the château.

The ladies quickly accepted this invitation, and Carl had the pleasure of lifting them into the lofty carriage, in which he also took his seat, exactly opposite the fair Wilhelmine, who, however, was cruel enough, for some time, to look every way but at him. At length, when he began to speak of Halle, where he had been several years "Famulus" at the house of Freylinghausen, she turned her eyes with pleasure towards him, for she was well acquainted with this poet, and became so eloquent that her companion blushed, nudged her repeatedly, and at length whispered in her ear, "Ah, mon Dieu! he's not a nobleman." Wilhelmine, however, paid no attention to her, and as the young man was very well read, and recited several of Freylinghausen's newest poems, the time passed so quickly,

that they stopped before the rectory almost without perceiving it. Here all the family assembled round the carriage, and wished to embrace their dear relative; but this he declined, and first presented his fair companions, who were immediately invited into the rectory, which the silent one at first declined, but the other immediately accepted.

After the first stormy salutation the old clergyman clasped his hands, and commenced the hymn, "Praise God for all his gifts!" in which the whole family joined; among them our friend Carl, with such a splendid tenor voice, that the young lady could not refrain from saying, after the hymn was ended—

"If you would do me a real favor, you would sing me that song of Freylinghausen's which you recited to us on our road here."

This request was so flattering, that Carl could not refuse to comply with it. He therefore sang, as solo, the song, "My heart should feel contented," without the least idea that, in a very short time, not merely all his consolation, but all his good fortune, would originate from this song.

The charming Wilhelmine was highly delighted when he had finished the song; and the two ladies took their leave, on the earnest persuasion of the silent one of the two. Carl politely accompanied them to the neighboring gate of the château, where they parted with mutual compliments.

The young man felt, for the first day or two, as if he had lost something necessary to his existence; but as the difference of rank between himself and a lady of the royal suite appeared to him an insurmountable obstacle, he soon forgot the strange adventure, in which he was materially assisted by the composition of his trial sermon, which he was to preach the next Sunday before his patron and the

congregation. In the meanwhile, however, the king and his suite had returned to Berlin, while Gündling and the captain remained behind to carry out their treacherous scheme. The captain pretended to be suffering from a frightful attack of gout, and had secretly ordered a corporal and six men to come on the ensuing Sunday night from the neighboring garrison of G——n, as he had learned that their kind host intended to pay a visit at a gentleman's house some thirty miles off, as soon as the candidate's sermon was ended, and would not return for a week. During that time they expected to have the young recruit so securely hidden away, that any reclamation would be unavailing; and besides, the king's adjutant, who attended to all military affairs, was the captain's cousin. Gündling, after his usual fashion, rubbed his stomach with both hands, as he thought of the pastor's terrible despair at the loss of his beloved son.

As soon as the anxiously desired Sunday arrived both gentlemen went to the over-crowded church; the captain, as he hypocritically told his host, to return thanks for his sudden and fortunate recovery, but in truth to have a nearer look at his young recruit, whose height he was delighted with, and paid Gündling repeated compliments for his discrimination. The poor young man gained complete approbation from his patron and the whole parish, and even Gündling, after the service was over, approached the pastor, and treacherously praised his good fortune in having such a son. We must say, that the captain, to his credit, was not guilty of such hypocrisy in this case.

At a late hour in the evening, which was both stormy and cold, the sound of arms and a loud knocking was heard at the door of the parsonage. The door was at length opened by the unfortunate Carl, with the words,

"Who are you, and what do you want, at this unreasonable hour of the night?"

"We want you!" the captain exclaimed, as he sprang forward, and seized the young man by the arm. "You must come with us, and change your black coat for a blue one."

We may easily imagine the terror of the wretched man, who, only partly dressed, was standing speechless before them, when his old father, who had heard this conversation, rushed out of bed, and interposed between them. He, too, was unable at first to speak through terror, when he perceived in the moonlight the soldiers, and among them Gündling, who burst into a loud laugh on seeing the father's agony. This insult restored the old man to consciousness, and crying, "You villanous Judas!" he rushed with clenched fists at the baron. Carl, however, interposed; but as the old man could not be calmed, and the confusion and cries had become general, for the mother and sisters had joined them, the young man repeatedly begged to be allowed to speak; and when he gained permission he addressed the following question to his father:

"Do you believe that our Heavenly Father is aware of my fate, or not?"

At this all were silent; but when the question was repeated, the old man replied:

"Why do you ask such a question? How should he, who knows everything, not be aware of your fate?"

"Well, then," the son calmly replied, "if you believe that, you must not forget that 'all things work together for good to those who love God.' I love him, and willingly yield to my fate; and will only dress myself, and then be ready to follow the captain."

"No!" the latter replied, "you must come directly. *Allons—march!*"

All ran after the unfortunate man, crying to him, and striving to retain him, but in vain. Father, mother, and sisters were driven back by the butt-ends of the muskets.

"He will not be frozen," the captain cried, "before getting out of the village, and then he'll put on his accoutrements."

We will not attempt to give any description of the condition of the sorrowing family, as a soldier's life in that day was not merely the most disgraceful, but also the most wretched, on earth; and many a father, had the choice been left him, would sooner have seen his son in his coffin than in the colored coat.

The unhappy father waited in vain for a letter from his son from one week—from one month to another. The captain had taken all necessary precautions to cut off every opportunity for communication. No one knew what had become of him, and although it was so very difficult, on this very account, to claim him, still both pastor and patron attempted it, though, as may be easily imagined, in vain. After repeated petitions to his royal majesty, they at length received a very harsh reply from the minister of war himself: that they made a most insane request in asking them to look for a recruit in the ranks of the whole Prussian army, when no one, not even themselves, knew where he was; and he must be getting on well, or else he would have written to them.

Two years thus elapsed, without the disconsolate father, who had long before received a young curate to assist him, hearing the least news about his son, and therefore supposed that he had died through the cold on that frightful evening, or at the halberts.

At length, when the second year had just ended, he received a message from the neighboring town, to say that his son was in good health, and intended to visit him that

same evening, in company with the lady of the Dean of P——. When their joy at this unexpected news, which appeared to the old man almost fabulous, was moderated, and a thousand questions asked of the messenger, no one could certainly furnish any explanation as to his strange companion; but this was their least anxiety. "The dean's lady," the old mother gave it as her opinion, "will soon be tired of us." And long before evening the whole family set out to welcome their Joseph, as the old man called him. They had just arrived at the cross-road we have already visited, when a carriage drove up, out of the window of which a charming little white hand was stretched, and a silvery voice uttered the words, "Yes, yes, dear Carl, here it was that you saved me from the wolf." At the moment he looked out he recognised his parents. A cry of joy burst from him, which was echoed by the whole family. The coachman was bidden to stop, the lady and gentleman sprang out, and it was some time before the old father could say, "Now then tell us all, you wicked boy; you caused us much grief by not writing a single word."

"I could not, I dared not," Carl replied. "The captain made me pledge my honor that I would not send you any news of my place of abode. If I kept my word he promised to give me my liberty at the end of three years."

"And the worthy captain set you free at the expiration of two," his father remarked.

"Not he," Carl replied. "Death alone could have saved me from his clutches. I owe my liberty to our glorious king."

"Tell us—tell us how," all cried; "let the carriage drive home."

"Yes," the patron cried, who had come to share in the general joy, "send the carriage away. I must know all about it. We will take our seats on this bank."

All—among them the dean's lady, to whom no one had yet paid any attention—seated themselves on the grassy couch, and kept their eyes fixed on the young man, who wiped away his tears, and then commenced thus:

"How badly I fared, and how grieved I was, at not being able to send any news to my dear parents and sisters I need not tell you. My only trust was in God; for had I not had him to support me, I should have acted like a hundred others—either deserted, or put an end to my life. But my faith, which daily found nourishment in the beautiful text with which I quitted you on that night of terror, 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,' supported me in all my necessities.

"Thus it happened that, just fourteen days ago, I stood as sentinel in the grand corridor of the royal palace at Berlin. I was thinking, as usual, of home, and as I felt very low-spirited, and besides, fancied the neighboring apartments unoccupied, I commenced singing that sweet song of Freylinghausen, 'My heart should feel contented;' when I was singing the third verse a door opened, to my great embarrassment, and I saw this lady's head."

"Ah! the dean's lady," the old pastor said, as he bowed to her. "Now I am beginning to see more clearly into matters." And he straightway poured forth a multitude of apologies, for not having noticed her before, through his immoderate joy at his son's return.

"But, father," the son inquired, "do you not recognise the lady?"

The old man, however, and his wife, had long forgotten the features. One of Carl's sisters at length said:

"That must be the young lady, if I am not mistaken, whom you saved from the wolf?"

"Certainly," Carl replied; "and at this very spot where we are now sitting so happily together."

But as all began crying, "Proceed, proceed with your story," he continued it in the following fashion:

"As soon as I saw the head I was in great fear, and ceased singing. The lady, however, came very kindly towards me, measured me from head to foot, and at length said:

"I could scarce believe my ears when I heard that voice, but my eyes cannot deceive me. Surely you are the son of the clergyman of H—, who saved me from the wolf two years ago?"

"I am that unhappy man," I said to her; and then proceeded to tell her what a frightful revenge Gündling had taken. Her eyes filled with tears, and she seemed to me like an angel sent from on high to comfort me.

"You saved me from a wolf," she exclaimed; "and I will now do as much for you?" and then hurried back into the room. I stood there with a beating heart, till a page approached me with the words:

"Sentinel, as soon as you are released from duty you must go through that door, and present yourself to her majesty the queen."

"I need not say with what anxiety I waited for the hour.

"At length I was relieved, and trembling, I entered the queen's apartments. She asked my history very graciously, and when I had finished it, she added:

"I can do nothing for you, my son, but I will beg the general to see that you are on duty here to-morrow morning between eleven and twelve, the hour at which the king pays me a visit. Then sing, with your clear voice that pleased me so much, any verse you like of his majesty's favorite hymn, 'Who puts his trust in God alone.' I will then see what more I can do for you."

"With these words her majesty dismissed me, and

without the door I met this lady, who whispered to me, 'Courage, courage; I trust all will be well.'

"As I expected, I was placed on duty before the queen's apartments the next morning, at eleven o'clock. As soon as I heard voices within I commenced singing a verse of the hymn that had been commanded. However, I expected in vain to be summoned again. The hour passed, and I fancied that no attention had been paid to me; and I despaired, for I did not dare sing another verse."

"And yet," the young lady here interrupted the narrator, "all proper attention had been paid to your hymn, and I may be permitted to give an account of it, as Carl has already become my dear husband."

Another cry of astonishment was here raised. "What! what! your husband?" all exclaimed. "I fancied you were a dean's wife," the old pastor remarked. "I never heard of such a thing," the patron murmured, for he knew the lady was of very old family, and both he and the pastor seemed scarce to know whether they were awake or dreaming.

"You must then hear my story," the young lady remarked, with a smile:

"The voice delighted both of their majesties greatly, and as soon as I perceived this I began saying everything I could in favor of the young man without, till the king laughed, and said:

"Why, she must be in love with the fellow."

"I felt that I blushed at this remark, but still answered boldly:

"Yes, your majesty, for he saved me, two years ago, from a frightful wolf."

"Diable!" the king added. "You are of a very old family, and might get a lieutenant, as far as I know."

"Here the queen interposed, and begged his majesty,

who was in very good humor that day, not to torment me further. I had opened my whole heart to her, and was determined on having this grenadier, or no one else, for my husband. 'I must beg your majesty to remember,' the queen continued, 'how carefully this good girl attended to our child in its last illness.'

"'Well,' the king remarked, 'we'll see. The captain praises the fellow; but still she cannot, by any possibility, marry a simple curate. Well, as I said, we'll see. I'll examine the fellow myself; but *apropos*, suppose he will not have *you*?'"

"I did not know what answer to make to this inquiry, save by letting my eyes sink on the ground; but the queen came to my assistance, by saying, 'Your majesty will be best fitted to arrange that matter.'

"'Well, that's very true,' the king replied. 'We'll see, then; the fellow will not be such a fool as to refuse.' And with these words his majesty left the room, apparently in deep thought.

"That is the end of my story," the young lady said, "and my husband must proceed with his now."

Carl therefore continued:

"I naturally believed that I had been quite unnoticed, especially as nothing of the slightest importance occurred during the remainder of the day that might nourish my hopes.

"The next morning, however, at parade, the king cried out, after he had finished all other affairs:

"'Where is the fellow who stood as sentry yesterday morning, between eleven and twelve, at the queen's door?—let him step out of the ranks.'

"With a beating heart I obeyed this order, on which his majesty, without moving a feature, first measured me from head to foot, and then said, 'Two under officers here,

take the fellow's coat off!' I could fancy nothing else than that I was going to be tied up to the halberts for my unseasonable singing, and therefore began tremulously, 'I implore your majesty, with all submission——' but the king interrupted me: 'Don't argue—take his waistcoat off!' The under officers did what they were commanded, and the king, in the same tone, and without moving a feature, said, 'Now his gaiters!'

"I now fancied I was going to be impaled at the least, and entreated, in my fear, 'I beg your majesty, on my knees, to be merciful to a poor fellow;' but the same answer was given me—'Don't argue.'

"As I stood there, in my shirt sleeves, the king ordered, 'Now bring that black chest hither to the front.'

"I was now certain of death, when I saw this chest brought up, in which I fancied an executioner's sword, at the very least, was contained. I clasped my hands, and commended my soul to God, when the king, before whom the chest had been deposited, cried out to me, 'Now look in, and see how that suits you.'

"As soon as I raised the lid, I saw, not a sword, or any instrument of torture, but a black clerical dress, and the bands laid on the top of it. This change in my feelings almost took my senses away, but the king's voice again aroused me. 'Now, dress yourself immediately, and listen to what I say. Bring four drums here, and lay a dozen side-arms across them, so that he cannot tumble through. The grenadier shall preach us a sermon, for I must first examine him, and see if he has learned anything. If he sits firm in the saddle, as the saying is, he can keep the black stuff, and all it contains; but if he's a stupid ass, I'll make him put the coatee on again. Now, then, up on the drums; you need not give it us long, but it must be good.'

"Assuredly," the young man continued, "I should have

talked nothing but nonsense, through the agitated nature of my feelings, and the fact that such a terrible alternative was offered me, but, to my great good fortune, during the whole duration of my wretched servitude, I had daily thought of my favorite text, and determined I would preach on it the very first Sunday after my release. In fact, from continually thinking on the subject, I had the whole discourse long before ready in my mind. I therefore boldly mounted the drums, and began immediately with the words:—"St. Paul says, in Rom. viii. 28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God;" after which I gave a detailed account of my own misfortunes, which worked together for good by the confirmation of my faith, and then made a universal and particular application of it.

"I had noticed that the king, who stood close before me, and never once took his eyes off me, could not keep the tears from pouring down his cheeks; and I had scarce uttered the word 'Amen,' when he said to me, 'Now come down from your pulpit; you can keep the black coat, and all it contains. You had better inspect the pockets, and see what you have got in them.'

"During my discourse, I had noticed that one of them seemed heavier than the other. I therefore put my hand into that one first, and who could picture my astonishment, when I drew out a gold *tabatière*, filled with ducats. I was silently regarding it, when the king said, 'That is a present from my wife; but now look, and see whether there is anything in the other pocket;' and not yet able to utter a word through surprise, I drew out my appointment as dean, signed by the king's own hand."

"How is that possible? Such a thing was never heard of," the old pastor exclaimed, as he raised his hands to heaven. "My son a dean! A candidate and private in

the Grenadiers a dean! Yes! now I understand why you sent to tell us you would visit us in company with the dean's lady. But not to ask your poor old father to the wedding—as if you were ashamed of him—that's unpardonable."

"Did I know anything about my marriage?" the son continued: "but listen further."

"I naturally tried, after all these fabulous events, to murmur out my thanks, but was interrupted by the king, who said, 'Now come up to the palace; you can eat your soup with us, and the regimental chaplain must accompany you.'

"Giddy with the thought of all that had happened, I followed with the chaplain, who was hardly less astonished than I was, the king and his suite to the palace, and as soon as we had entered the audience-room, where all the court was assembled together with his majesty and this young lady, the king advanced, and asked me,

"Who does he think he has to thank for all this?"

"I answered, with a low bow,

"Besides God, my most gracious king, and his most illustrious consort."

"To which his majesty remarked,

"There he's right; but look ye here, this young and charming woman did the most for him. Has he nothing to say to her? She is not proud, and I know not married. What does he think of her? He's now a dean, and has his pocket full of ducats. Will he try his luck, and fancy he is all alone with her?"

"Half with joy and hope, I raised my eyes, and looked at the poor girl, who was blushing and trembling before me, and who could not raise her eyes from the ground.

"All were silent, though at intervals a slight sound of laughter could be heard in the room. In spite of all my

good fortune, I was even more embarrassed than I had been an hour before when forced to mount the drums; but I collected myself, and in a few moments said,

"His majesty the king, to whom I owe all my good fortune, has inspired me with the courage to ask you, before this great assembly, whether you will accompany me in my wanderings on the troubled path of life, as the angel Raphael formerly guided the youthful Tobias?"

"She immediately gave me her hand, silent and trembling, which I pressed with ardor to my lips, and her majesty had scarcely bidden God to bless us, when the king added,

"Regimental chaplain, come hither and marry them. Afterwards we'll have our dinner; but I must get them off my hands to-day."

"The chaplain, with a deep bow, remarked,

"It is impossible, your majesty; the young couple have not been asked in church."

"Nonsense!" the king objected; "I asked them myself long ago. Come, and marry them as quickly as you can, for I am hungry. Next Sunday you can ask them in church as many times as you like."

"Although the chaplain urged various reasons, all was of no avail. The marriage took place that very hour, and my parents can now see why it was impossible for me to invite them."

"I really must be dreaming," the old pastor now said; "why it is stranger than any story in the 'Arabian Nights!' A grenadier made a dean! But what did the members of the consistory say to it? I cannot imagine."

"They kept me so long," the young man replied, "or I should have come to share my joy with you eight days ago. I had scarcely announced myself, and handed in my diploma, with a request to be ordained, when the gentle-

men, as may be easily conceived, declared the whole affair impossible, and sought to demonstrate this to his majesty in a long petition. The king returned it with these words, written with his own hand, on the margin:

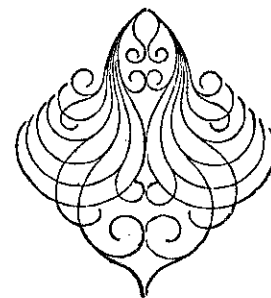
"I have examined him myself. If he does not understand Latin I can afford to keep some one who does. I do not understand Latin myself."

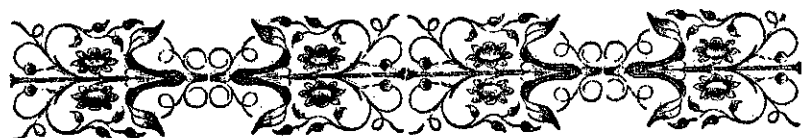
"FREDERICK WILLIAM."

"As they did not dare to trouble the king again in the matter, they proceeded to ordain me, after an examination, to which I voluntarily submitted."

The young man thus ended his story, and our kind readers can easily imagine the rest. We need only remark, that our hero made an excellent dean, and for many years held the living of P——.

In conclusion, we are bound to state, that the above anecdote is historically true, and that we have merely repeated the family tradition. Still we thought it better to refrain from giving the real names, as the descendants of our illustrious grenadier might not desire the story to be publicly known in connexion with themselves.





A Story of Sweden.

CHISTINA of Sweden, only child and successor to Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, and right arm, as he was called, of the Protestant Faith, ascended the throne of her ancestors at a very early age. She was a woman of considerable talents, but more remarkable for energy of character, and an indomitable will; qualities which she inherited from her father, and which her position, as the uncontrolled head of an almost absolute monarchy, nursed into more than masculine strength. Her wilfulness always displayed itself in a rash, though sometimes in a generous way; and in one of her fits of the latter kind, ere she advanced far in life, she formally resigned her crown, for the good, as she imagined, of her people. The sacrifice was soon repented of, but too late for retrieval, and she spent her latter days in retirement. It was this extraordinary woman's leading wish, when on the throne, to be compared to Elizabeth of England, and she imitated that princess even in her cold-hearted and unworthy coquetries. Hereby hangs the tale we have now to tell.

The young queen of Sweden gave a magnificent fête or masquerade in her palace at Stockholm. This fête had a

peculiar character, and one which doubled its splendor and attractions, while exhibiting, at the same time, the ruling foible of the heroine of the north. Christina wished, for one night, to have the pleasure of openly and expressly bearing the character of the English princess, and to resuscitate around her all that was brilliant and distinguished at the court of her model. For this purpose she had given orders that her own courtiers should assume for the time the characters of the various men of note in Elizabeth's reign, and, in particular cases, she conferred on individuals the honor of assigning to them the parts they were to play. This was rather a delicate point, it must be remembered; for such parts as those of Essex and Leicester had a significance attached to them which could not escape remark. Any old statesman might play Burleigh, as easily as is done in Mr. Puff's famous drama; but no common man durst assume the character of either of the two noblemen before mentioned. A modest aspirant for royal favor, however, might venture on the garb of a Raleigh, and more than one young courtier did appear in the guise of Sir Walter on this brilliant evening. The Swedish queen was delighted with the result of her project. A strict etiquette had been established for the regulation of costume, and in order to give a better rule of guidance in this particular, Christina had been at the pains to send for portraits of all the principal personages to be represented. Thus the verisimilitude of the scene was perfect.

Among the individuals who attracted most interest on this occasion, by their appearance and manners, were a young cavalier and an elegant woman, who kept much beside one another during the evening. They were both distinguished for the high-bred ease and grace of their movements, and this circumstance alone, independently of the language in which they spoke to each other, might have

served to mark them as foreigners. They were both, indeed, from France. They seemed to be on the most confidential terms; but there was one notable point of discrepancy apparent between them. The lady seemed willing and even desirous to show herself openly in the crowd, whereas her companion evidently sought to keep himself as much as possible out of the common eye, and, in particular, to avoid the notice of the queen, as she moved from place to place in the splendid assembly. Ultimately the young cavalier appeared to succeed in bending his companion to his wishes on this subject, and the pair retired to the recess of one of the lofty windows, where they commenced an animated conversation, though in low tones. Young and light-hearted, and possessing the spirited temperament of their common country, with a full share of its turn for raillery, they scanned from their secluded nook the whole of the vast assembly, and subjected every one who caught their eyes to a witty but good-humored review.

"Ah," said the lady, "look at that little Leicester; what think you of him?"

"Poor fellow! he does not see that the queen wished to make a caricature of him, by putting him into such a garb!" said the gentleman in return.

"Lord Burleigh's representative," continued the lady, "has got the *wig* at least—but nothing more."

"And see," rejoined her companion, "how Sir Christopher Hatton bears himself? The English cavalier, it is said, could dance well, but his personator is pleased to make himself a walking-minuet."

In such a style did the cavalier and the lady chat for one another's amusement in the window recess. At last, the lady, with an appearance of nonchalance, but with a tone of voice that betrayed some deeper interest in the

matter, said to her companion:—"Apropos—the queen herself—how do you like her?"

"The queen!" replied the cavalier in a low voice, casting around him a troubled glance.

"Yes," continued the lady; "do you think she resembles Elizabeth of England?"

"Between *us*—just as much as *Madame Laura resembles Maria Theresa of France!*" was the youth's answer.

As the last words left his lips, he grew deadly pale. His companion alone seemed to enjoy the remark. "Admirable!" cried she, and signalized her sense of the joke which was conveyed to her by the words, by a hearty laugh.

But her mirth received a sudden check, as her eye fell on the personage who now stood in front of her and her companion.

"Who is this *Madame Laura*?" said the Queen Christina, for it was she herself who now appeared before the cavalier and the lady, having overheard all that had passed.

At this question the cavalier, previously much agitated, was compelled to lean on the window. But he recovered himself sufficiently to reply, though with an altered and faltering voice, to the queen's interrogatory: "Madame Laura, please your majesty, is a Parisian lady, who has the honor to resemble the Queen of France—both in dignity of manners and beauty."

Christina looked on the speaker with an air of doubt and indecision. "Count d'Harcourt," said she after a pause, biting her lips at the same time, "this is a trait of French gallantry for which the Queen of Sweden may thank you at some future period."

Nodding slightly and haughtily to the count's fair com-

panion, Christina then turned away, and with majestic step moved to a spot where a band of courtiers were at the card-table. Meanwhile the whisper passed from tongue to tongue: "the queen has spoken *particularly* to the young Frenchman; his fortune is made."

The object of their remarks, on the other hand, was at that moment muttering to himself: "I am ruined—lost!" And taking leave of his former companion, almost without a word on either side, the Count d'Harcourt left the assembly.

Christina, after speaking as has been related, went directly to the ambassador of France, whom she drew aside from the crowd. "I have a favor to ask of your excellency," said she, "under the seal of secrecy."

"Your majesty has but to speak," said the diplomatist gravely, "and I shall be proud to obey you to the utmost of my power."

"I assure you," returned the queen, "your power will not be severely taxed at present. It is but a trifle—a bagatelle—that I am interested about just now; but I think you are the only person who can gratify my wish. I desire but to know who and what a certain Parisian lady is, who bears the name of *Madame Laura*?"

"Madame Laura—Madame Laura!" rejoined the ambassador, turning his eyes on the ground.

"Yes, Madame Laura," said the queen impatiently; "does your excellency know her?"

Upon the diplomatist avouching that he never in his life had heard of such a lady, Christina tapped the ground restlessly with her foot, and appeared annoyed.

"Then your excellency," said she, at length, with an imperious voice, "will have the goodness to favor me by finding out the lady. Let an express set out for Paris this night, and return without a moment's delay, with full

details respecting the position and character of this Madame Laura."

The ambassador bowed respectfully, and retired to give immediate orders to a courier to proceed on this extraordinary mission.

It has been said that the Queen of Sweden imitated, or at least resembled, Elizabeth in her fashion of coquetting with some favored noble of her court. The personage on whom, at the date of our story, the favor of Christina seemed to have fallen, was that young Frenchman, who, exiled for political reasons from his own country, had come to Sweden in the hope of obtaining military service. The queen received him with peculiar marks of distinction, gave him a commission in her life-guards, and conducted herself towards him, altogether, in such a manner as would have given even a very modest man reason to believe himself an object of marked regard. To a young man of twenty-five, bold and ambitious, such a conviction was likely to be flattering and seductive. We cannot say that it was not so in the case of Count d'Harcourt, but whatever might be his dreams of ambition, his affections had lighted on another object than the sovereign of Sweden. This was the Baroness Helena of Steinberg, a young and beautiful countrywoman of his own, and the widow of a deceased Swedish noble. The baroness returned D'Harcourt's passion warmly, and the jealous eye of love soon advised her of the potent rival with whom she had to combat for his affection. On the occasion of the masked-ball, Christina had herself deigned to suggest the character of Essex to the young Count d'Harcourt. The baroness, when informed of the circumstance, saw its full significance, and was bold enough to venture on answering the hint of the queen by a covert allusion of the same practical kind. Finding a portrait of Lady Sydney, widow of Sir Philip, whom Essex had pri-

vately made his countess, the baroness had assumed the character of that lady at the risk of giving offence. Hence the unwillingness of D'Harcourt to attract attention at the masquerade, the baroness being then his companion. Well would it have been for the young noble had he been equally cautious with regard to his speech! But, in reality, the costume of Christina, which had called from him the mysterious remark about Madame Laura, was somewhat ridiculous. The numberless frills of Elizabeth's usual dress, with all its other stiff and stately points, were very much out of place on the restless, careless, and petulant queen of Sweden. Perhaps she was partly suspicious of this on reflection, and the more galling was the idea of being an object of ridicule to the man she favored, and, above all, to her rival in his regard.

The impatient queen received an answer from Paris in eight days, so actively did the courier fulfil the orders given. "Madame Laura," said the document which he brought, "is a court-lady who has become *mad*. Her mania consists in a belief that she is queen of France, and in her endeavoring to rival the real sovereign, Maria Theresa, in all her dresses and decorations. The poor woman passes her life in this sole occupation. The queen never assumes a habit, which is not seen immediately afterwards on Madame Laura. As she is as inoffensive as ridiculous, nobody meddles with her, and she is everywhere known in Paris by the name of the *queen's caricature*." This despatch had additional details of the same kind, and concluded by exhibiting a portraiture of poor Madame Laura, dressed as Maria Theresa, and looking inexpressibly ridiculous.

The rage of the queen of Sweden knew no bounds. She had conceived that there was some little point about D'Harcourt's comparison somewhat unfavorable, but to find

that she had been compared altogether to a vain and ridiculous madwoman—she, the heroine and pride of the north—she, who had almost allowed the author of this gross insult to know that she loved him—she, to be an object of contempt to this strange youth and his Lady Sydney, the woman for whom he seemed to reject herself—such a thought was torturing to the heart of the proud and wilful princess. "Wretches!" she exclaimed, "this is the comparison ye would have had me to believe a compliment!"

Filled with such emotions, the queen again chanced to look at the detailed account of Madame Laura. "Innocent as the madness of the lady really is," said one part of the paper, "she is an austere sovereign, and by no means inclined to admit clemency among the royal virtues. She speaks ever of executing justice." The passage tallied with the state of the queen's mind. "Yes," cried she, "if I am ridiculous, like her, I will be similar to her in all things." Then she set herself to discover a fit chastisement for D'Harcourt. None appeared to her sufficiently heavy, sharp, or sudden. In this temper passed the day on which she received this galling document from Paris.

Sleep, or the calm of night, brought a change over her feelings. She arose with an altered mind from her couch, and in place of an order for his confinement in a dungeon, she sent to D'Harcourt, on that morning, the brevet of the additional rank of lieutenant-colonel.

The count, who had been preparing himself for leaving Stockholm, was surprised and confounded on receiving this intelligence. He was the more so, as he had not the least doubt but that the queen must have discovered the secret of his allusion to Madame Laura from some of the Frenchmen about the court. The conduct of Christina thus appeared to him in a most magnanimous light, and a light very dangerous to his fidelity to the Baroness de Steinberg.

Still more was this the case when, after the lapse of but a few months, he was raised to the rank of colonel, and, subsequently, on the occasion of his performance of a gallant action, was honored with the rank of general, and the key of chamberlain of the household. He was induced also to become a naturalized Swede, as a step to future greatness.

All eyes were now turned upon the rising young Frenchman, and it was thought that the partnership, if not a higher honor, was within his grasp. He was in a trying position. He was charmed with the queen's generosity of heart, and believed that she must love him, though nothing but her kindly actions, and it may be her looks, had indicated it hitherto; and he had never dared to enter on such a subject. Indeed, dazzled as he was by the prospect of personal favor from a young, powerful, and not unlovely princess, D'Harcourt still felt his heart to be with the Baroness de Steinberg. His fidelity to the latter and his ambition came at length to a direct trial—a struggle of superiority. The Baroness de Steinberg had seen, with mingled feelings of pain and pleasure, the elevation of her lover, but the sense of pain predominated. She saw that ambition was estranging him from her. One day, accordingly, she wrote to him, announcing her intention to leave Stockholm that evening; but plainly indicating, that if he yet loved her enough to retain her, she would not go. At the same moment, almost, the count received a letter from the queen, desiring his immediate presence at a private consultation with her council. This was equivalent to an announcement of a new honor awaiting him. The count was deeply agitated by this dilemma, but ambition, or what he would fain have called *duty*, gained the day. He neglected the invitation of the baroness, and went to the palace, seals and portfolios dancing before his mind's eye by the way.

The queen was seated in council when he was announced. All smiled upon the favorite; but Christina signified her wish for the whole to retire, and D'Harcourt was left alone with her. She was pale, and he was also agitated. It seemed to him as if the moment was come when a crown was to fall on his head. After a pause, the queen lifted a portfolio, stamped with her royal arms, the symbol of supreme if not royal power, and holding it out, said: "Do you desire to see it?"

The smile of the queen made the intoxicated young noble interpret this into: "Do you love me?" and he fell on his knees, exclaiming in answer: "Yes, I love you as much as I reverence and admire you!"

He continued in this strain for a short time, when the queen interrupted him—and what an interruption!

"Enough!" cried she, in a tone that froze the blood in the count's heart—a tone resembling that of a player who casts aside a mask he has worn for a time. The dismayed count would have risen, but she imperiously signed to him to remain. "At length," continued she, in a tone of concentrated bitterness—"at length I see you *there*—and the hour of my revenge is come!" D'Harcourt fell back, with his head upon a *fauteuil*, dumb and motionless. "Yes," resumed Christina, "I knew that you *loved* me, but I wished to hear you declare it, as I can now say, as a *woman*, what I might long since have said as a *queen*, that I—scorn and despise you!"

A groan was all the reply of the deceived and unfortunate count.

"Yes, I have raised you," continued the queen, "only for the enjoyment of this hour. Elizabeth raised the Earl of Essex step by step to place and honor. So have I done by you. But there is a further step. If I cannot be Elizabeth, as Madame Laura, whom I resemble so much, and who

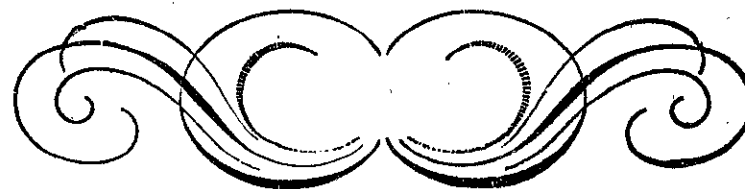
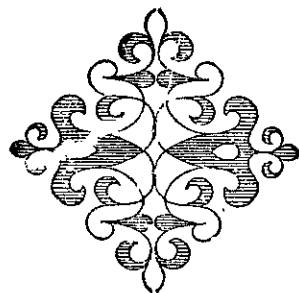
is equally cruel as mad, I may fairly finish the similitude. You remember the end of Essex?"

"Death!" exclaimed the agitated count, involuntarily.

"Yes, death on the scaffold," said the queen. "I have taken care to naturalize you in Sweden, and you are at my discretion. But I will conclude this affair in a manner more worthy of Madame Laura, and consequently of me," added Christina, bitterly. As she spoke, she summoned the counsellors to re-enter. "This man," said she to them, "is insane. Let him be conveyed to the *madhouse*!"

Dumb with horror, the Count d'Harcourt was taken from the royal presence.

Insanity really attacked the unhappy man. But from the tenderness of one woman he found a partial remedy for the cruelty of another. On hearing of his doom, which was mitigated in time, the Baroness de Steinberg, forgetful of all her wrongs, flew back to Stockholm. Her future days were dedicated to the solacement of the broken-spirited Count d'Harcourt.



Major O'Shaughnessy's Adventure on the Duke's Moors.

MAJOR O'SHAUGHNESSY was of ancient Milesian origin; his descent was as irreproachable as his honor; his rank was taken from a militia regiment, the South Cork, in which he had served with distinction, and acquired that profound knowledge of men and manners for which throughout life he was so remarkable. Six feet high, broad-shouldered, and of athletic frame, the major was a bold rider, and an unerring shot. His stud was the admiration of the whole county, and he had a breed of bull-terriers not to be matched in Ireland. There were few men of his time whom he was not able to walk down, still fewer whom he could not drive under the table; generous, brave, and hospitable, even to a fault. Every description of field sport was a pleasant pastime to him—he delighted and excelled in them all. But the darling passion of his life was grouse-shooting.

It came to pass, one fine evening towards the end of autumn, that the major, who, accompanied by his friend, Tom Wildman, had been making a tour of the Highlands,

arrived at the village of D——. It was their intention to have proceeded some miles further, but a brief deliberation with the driver having satisfied them that the accommodations which the place afforded were tolerably comfortable, they agreed to halt for the night, and bivouacked at the Cat and Bagpipes, a hostelry which stood at the further extremity of the village. The scenery was such as Scotland alone can produce in perfection—hills, blooming with purple heather, rose in gentle undulations on every side; a fine stream, now foaming over rocks, now eddying into deep still pools, swept along in its course to the sea, which might be descried sparkling in the distance. The hamlet, consisting of a few scattered houses, lay snugly sheltered in a quiet nook; the hills by which it was environed forming, as it were, the base of a continuous range of lofty mountains, that sloped westward. To those who look with a painter's or a poet's eye upon the beauties of nature, it would have been difficult to present a landscape more interesting, or more abounding in varied charms, than that upon which the travellers gazed as they wandered forth to loiter away the tedious half hour preceding dinner. But the major cared little for scenery, however picturesque, nor, to his shame be it spoken, was he a lover of the fine arts in the very least; so as his eye roved abroad over the wide expanse of purple heather, the low stunted coppice-wood, and the patches of corn land jotted about at intervals like the squares of a chess-board, his whole soul was filled with quite another admiration, intense enough after its kind, which will be best explained by the following exclamation, that burst as it were involuntarily from his lips:

"By Jove, Tom! what splendid shooting there must be on those hills!"

"Likely enough," replied his companion, who was not

a man of many words, but uncommonly fond of fly-fishing (in which he was an adept), of smoking tobacco, and other amusements suited to a contemplative nature.

"Fine river, too—eh, Tom? Look at the tail of that pool; if there's a salmon in all Scotland, he's there, waiting for his dinner, as we are."

"Claret-colored body, pheasant's wing, red hackle underneath—that's the color would 'tickle his fancy.'"

"Here's the color for us, Tom!" the major said, as, after the lapse of some short time, which the pair spent in lounging upon the bridge, he observed a waiter signalling to them from the door of the village inn.

Nothing could have been better than the dinner which they found awaiting their return; delicious salmon that an hour ago had been swimming in the silver lustre of his prime; delicate mountain mutton, washed down by amber ale, which it was a pleasure to look at as well as to drink, formed a repast to which both did ample justice. The major felt supremely happy and comfortable; and, as he lighted a cigar, said to his companion—

"Suppose, Tom, we have up the landlord, and ask if it's possible, for love or money, to get a day over those mountains?"

"With all my heart," replied Tom Wildman, who was addressing himself to the manufacture of a bowl of punch.

The proprietor of the Cat and Bagpipes, being summoned accordingly, soon made his appearance, and a few minutes sufficed to satisfy the major that the object of his aspirations was one, apparently, impossible of attainment. The mountains, it appeared, belonged to the Duke of B——; they were the best preserved in the kingdom, no one ever drawing trigger upon them except his grace, and such intimate friends as were occasionally partakers of the ducal hospitality. The keeper, a certain Sandy Mac-

pherson, was of tried integrity—the terror of all poachers, cockney tourists, and trespassers of every kind; money could not bribe, nor menace, even followed up by assault and battery, dismay him; he had refused with scorn ten golden guineas, offered by a sporting gent from London, and had thrashed, single-handed, three Oxford undergraduates, who had tried to force a passage through a certain portion of the dominions intrusted to his care.

"It don't look very promising, eh, major?" Tom Wildman said, when the door had closed upon the departed host.

"Not very; nothing could be more unsatisfactory: so we shall have to fall back upon the salmon, if we remain here a day or two; and we will, Tom, for I know your heart is set upon trying your favorite claret body with the red hackle."

The quaint old Izaak Walton himself could scarcely have desired a more propitious day for the exercise of his gentle craft than that which succeeded. Tom Wildman having screwed together his rod, issued forth, accompanied by his friend with a landing net. Passing over the bridge, they strolled leisurely along the river's side, in the direction of a mountain glen at no great distance, with the intention of fishing downwards to the bridge, in the first instance, before they proceeded to investigate that portion of deeper water which flowed between the village and the sea.

They had not proceeded very far upon their voyage of discovery, when a nice, snug house, standing in a quiet, out-of-the-way spot, among the hills, was descried at a little distance. It had the appearance of one of those old-fashioned comfortable farm-houses seldom seen out of Scotland; a tract of highly cultivated ground lay behind it, skirted by a belt of Scotch firs, which seemed to thrive like hardy denizens of these mountain solitudes. While our

friends were engaged in making these observations, a man was seen rapidly descending a long stubble field, which sloped from the house down to the river's side.

"I shouldn't at all wonder, now, Tom, if this were the redoubtable keeper himself; there's something sporting in his trim, ain't there?" said the major.

And so there was, nor would it be easy to find a better specimen of his class than he who was now approaching them. Sandy Macpherson, for the major was right in his conjecture, looked the very *beau-ideal* of a gamekeeper; his figure was tall, but active and sinewy; the well proportioned limbs, and light springy step, were those of a man used to breast the mountain sides; a face, bronzed by exposure to the sun and wind, was lighted up by eyes twinkling with shrewdness and intelligence; huge red whiskers met underneath his chin, almost covering his neck, which was unconfined by any kerchief; his attire consisted of a velveteen jacket with gaiters and leggins, and his head was covered by a Scotch bonnet. A glance from the major, which took in all these outward signs, convinced him that any one who calculated upon taking the smallest advantage of Sandy, would, as the saying is, have to get up early in the morning.

"Fine day, gentlemen," said he whom we have just described.

"Beautiful," replied Tom Wildman.

"Ye hae leave in writin' from the duke to come on these grounds, otherwise my orders is verra strict," the keeper said, in a civil tone.

"We have no leave whatever, nor did we know the river was preserved," replied Tom Wildman.

"Nae mair it is, until ye come upon the heather. His grace doesna fash himsel' about the fishes, but he's unco particular for fear o' the birds bein' disturbed."

"Well, we must turn back again, that's all; and perhaps you'll be good enough, for I suppose you are the duke's keeper, to show us whereabouts is the boundary, which we shall take care not to pass for the future."

The honest keeper pointed to a turn in the river, where the moorland terminated, and was about to take his departure, when the fisherman requested to have the benefit of his advice as to what flies were best suited for the river, and whether his favorite claret-colored body would be likely to please the taste of the trout. This produced an inspection of the book of flies, as well as a discussion upon the various topics connected with the art. The piscatorial opinions of the keeper were listened to with the utmost respect and deference by the two sportsmen, who made themselves in short so agreeable to their new acquaintance, that when they parted, it was upon the condition he would look in when the day's sport had concluded, and inspect some fishing gear of a novel construction.

The river did not belie the expectations its appearance had created—the trout rose merrily. The fisherman filled his creel; evening came; and as the major, with his friend, sat after dinner in the little parlor, speculating if the keeper would make his appearance, a knock was heard at the door, and the subject of their contemplations entered the apartment. Tom Wildman insisted upon his taking a chair, filled him a huge bumper of punch out of the bowl which steamed upon the table, and opened his repository of flies, while the Major was not behindhand in civility, and requested their guest to pronounce an opinion upon a new box of choice cigars. The punch was good; the tobacco was better; what Scotchman, what mortal man, could long withstand the combination of their genial influences? so, by imperceptible degrees, the reserve of Mr.

Macpherson thawed away, he was quite at his ease, and grew not only communicative, but loquacious, and as he swallowed tumbler after tumbler of the inspiring liquor, he launched forth into praises of the nobleman, his master, his own dogs, guns, and all the paraphernalia appertaining to his calling.

The major, with that intuitive sagacity for which, in common with his countrymen, he was eminently remarkable, arranged at once within his own mind a plan of operations which he fondly trusted would lead to success; he saw with how shrewd a gentleman he had to deal, and although Mr. Macpherson was, to all outward appearance, perfectly off his guard, and thoroughly warmed by the generous influences to which he was exposed, the major could at times detect a shrewd glance, which looking quite through him, showed an intelligence which all the liquor in the world could neither cloud nor baffle; he affected therefore a total and entire ignorance of all matters relating to field sports, hinted delicately that he delighted in picturesque scenery, and occasionally occupied his leisure hours by taking rough sketches, while he carried the landing-net for his piscatorial companion.

"Gran' views are verra weel in their way, verra weel, but heh, sirs, to my mind there's nae sic sight in natur', as to see twa weel broke setters on a pack o' grouse!" and as he spake the keeper's features glowed with the enthusiasm of his calling.

"I have seen a bull terrier worry a rat, but I can't say I liked it much," replied the major, with an effrontery which did credit to his powers of face.

"Worry a rot! dang it, mon—beg pardon, sir—but dang it, is that a' ye ken? ye dinna think we kill' grouse by catchin' them, and worryin' them like stots!"

"What's the use of dogs, then, what do you do with

them?" the major said, lighting a fresh cigar, and smiling with the apparent guilelessness of an infant.

Sandy Macpherson thus addressed, looked first at Tom Wildman as if to see what he thought of his friend's lamentable ignorance, but that gentleman's countenance affording no index whatever as to the nature of his cogitations, he turned then to the major, who regarded him with an air of innocent surprise most comical to behold. The worthy keeper could control himself no longer, and gave vent to his feelings in a burst of laughter, so sudden, loud, and continuous, that the glasses danced upon the table.

"What amuses you, my friend?" the major said.

"Hech, sir, to think o' a gentleman come to your years an' never heerd tell o' settin' a grouse; I canna believe it," and Sandy laughed till the tears stood in his eyes.

"It would make a pretty picture, I suppose."

"Pictur', sir, hech!"

But the result of the dialogue may be told in a few words. The ignorance assumed by the major was so admirably acted, that the suspicions of Mr. Macpherson began gradually to die away, in proportion as he warmed under the genial influences of the punch and cigars. Thus it came to pass, when the deepening shadows warned him it was time to bend his steps homewards, he gave his hosts to understand that, having occasion on the following morning to procure some grouse to send up to London, he would be extremely happy if the major could make it convenient to take a walk along with him, in order that he might have an opportunity of satisfying himself by personal observation, that grouse were killed in a scientific and sportsman-like fashion, and not, as he supposed, worried "like rots."

That night the major slept but little; his brain, fertile in expedients, was occupied in revolving by what means it was possible for him to attain his wished-for object. He at

length hit upon a device, so extraordinary, that it was little wonder the keeper looked at him from head to foot with genuine amazement, when they met on the following morning, for never in his experience had he seen a gentleman similarly attired for an excursion on the moors. In a blue dress coat with gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, fawn colored jean unmentionables, spotless white stockings, and shoes of varnished leather, had the major carefully arrayed himself—a well brushed white hat was stuck jauntily on his head; in one hand he bore a French cane with a gold top, in the other a small sketch-book.

"Ye dinna mean to say ye're for travellin' the moors in sic a dress as yon?" Mr. Macpherson said, when his astonishment had sufficiently subsided to enable him to speak.

"Why, as I told you yesterday evening, I don't know much about these matters, and the fact is, I've always been accustomed to hear of grouse-shooting as an amusement, partaken in by noblemen and great people, so I thought a man should dress for it, as if he were going to a ball."

"Weel a weel, ha'e a care o' the quaighs, that's all, ye'll be in the de'il's ain pickle afore ye're mony hours older. I wadna gi'e a siller saxpence for the hail claes on yer back when ye come hame at e'en, that's sure at any rate," replied the keeper. But the major, who would willingly have bought success at a much higher rate than the price of a suit of clothes, was quite prepared for the trifling sacrifice, so they went on their way rejoicing; the keeper's boy, a red-legged young Celt, with a huge creel strapped on his back, casting many an admiring glance at the gorgeous apparel of the strange gentleman, about whose legs Flora, the red setter, kept sniffing, as if she greatly desired a taste of their quality for her morning's meal, her master muttering to himself:

"A weel, I ha'e seen some strange sights in my day, but de'il tak me if ever I saw a chiel come out to walk the moors in dancin' shoon afore."

A stiffish walk of some miles over the heather, which by no means added to the brilliancy of the major's costume, brought the party to a beautiful mountain glen, round which lay a wide expanse of ground, broken into undulating little knolls, which the experienced eye of the major saw at a glance was splendid feeding ground for birds. Nor was he deceived; the dogs had not been very long uncoupled, when it was manifest they were on game.

"Ho, Don! steady! ha'e a care, good dowieg," whispered the keeper, as Don, throwing back his fine head, began to proceed with more caution; the crafty major, repressing as well as he could his admiration, said, in an alarmed tone,

"Why, what's the matter with the animal? he has got his tail as stiff as a poker; he ain't going mad, I hope? If you think so, shoot him! for heaven's sake, Sandy, shoot him at once."

"Wheest!" replied the keeper, opening his eyes with amazement, and cocking both barrels. "Look at Flora there, may be she's mad too."

The training of the dogs was perfect. Flora lay motionless behind the setter, who now stood stock-still, every hair on his back bristling up like porcupines' quills; the red-legged attendant had lain down on the heather, whence the top of his head alone was visible.

"Noo, then! keep a wee bit behind me, or them fine colors o' yours will do mischief; I can see the old birds glancin' through the heather," whispered Mr. Macpherson, adding softly, "Go on, Don; go on, good dowieg!"

The setter, at his master's bidding, crept quietly forwards, and up at their very feet sprang a magnificent pack

of grouse, the old cock leading the van, and crowing lustily—whirr! whirr! whirr! the major thought they would never stop.

Sandy Macpherson's brown barrels glanced for an instant in the sun, flash! down went the old cock with a heavy "thud" on the heather, a whole shower of his feathers floating in the morning air. Pop! and over went a brace of his companions, a wave of the keeper's hand, and motionless as stones lay the dogs, while their master proceeded to load.

Much as Major O'Shaughnessy had admired the training of the dogs, as displayed in their first performance, their subsequent conduct was beyond all praise, and he confessed to himself that anything more perfect than their pointing, or than the shooting of their master, he had never seen. The flat tract of ground had abundance of game—each single bird, as it got up, was knocked over with a precision that never erred; but it was in disposing of a pack that the keeper's coolness and steadiness of hand were displayed to the greatest advantage; he never threw away a shot, but singled out the old cock, picked him off with his first barrel, reserving the second to intercept the flight of any unlucky straggler who lingered behind his fellows. Not a word was spoken—the dogs and master understood each other perfectly. When the brown barrels were raised and fired, up went his hand, and down went the setters, never attempting to stir until he had reloaded. Then the click of the hammer, as he cocked his piece, was sufficient signal for them; they understood it at once, and went off quartering their ground as before. By the time the long flat tract of heather had been thoroughly beaten, the spoils being collected by the red-legged urchin, were found to amount to twelve brace.

"Weel, sir, what do you think o' grouse shooting?"

nice sport, ain't it?" inquired the keeper, depositing himself at full length beside the major, and laying his gun down on the heather.

"Uncommonly interesting, but by no means comfortable," replied the major, casting a rueful glance at his nether man, which had suffered not a little. The varnished shoes were rent in twain, the white stockings and nice jean pantaloons were plastered with mud, and the whole aspect of his companion so miserable, that the compassion of Sandy Macpherson overpowered his more risible indications. The roughest day will, however, wear to a close. After some further shooting, the keeper declared the sport to be over; he had enough, he thought, for his purpose. The spoils being counted were found to amount to twenty-five brace of magnificent grouse, and the party prepared to bend their steps homewards.

"Ha'e ye e'er tried a shot yer ainsel, noo?" inquired Mr. Macpherson, with some interest, as they were descending a steep brae.

"Yes, of course I have," replied the major, boldly.

"Birds?" inquired the keeper.

"Yes; birds, certainly."

"Paitrich, maybe; or pheasant; a cock pheasant's a braw easy shot!"

"'Twas at a cock-robin I fired," replied the major, with cool effrontery, "and by Jove I missed him into the bargain."

"Like to try your chance, sir, on a grouse now? he's a bigger mark," said the keeper, with a hearty chuckle.

"If I could only catch him sitting, and get near enough, I'd pepper him, by Jove I would!" the major said.

"That would be just clean murder, outright; if ye'd only let him up, and take time, and hold the gun straight, ye couldna miss him."

"Gad, I think I'd like to try, any how," replied the major.

"Verra weel, and so ye shall when we're down this hill; I'll let Don awa' by himsel'; he'll nae be lang afore he finds ye a bird. Dang it, sir, I would like just to see ye tumble an auld cock for the fun o' the thing," said Sandy Macpherson.

The party had not proceeded very far over the flat ground which lay at the foot of the hill they had just traversed, when the red setter, released from his four-footed companion, dropped slowly on the brow of a gentle eminence.

"Noo," whispered the keeper, "here'll be a braw chance—stan' yer ground quietly until I load; will ye ha'e the twa barrels? I think the ane will be enough."

"Wouldn't I have a better chance with the two?" inquired the major, shuddering nervously, as if he had been seized with a fit of the ague.

Sandy Macpherson smiled grimly as he loaded his favorite brown barrels, put on the caps, cocked the piece, and handed it to the trembling gentleman at his side.

There probably never was an erring mortal more sorely tried than the major at this moment; the whole enthusiasm of his sporting nature was astir within him, as he felt the gun in his hand, the heather under his foot, and saw the fine setter motionless as a rock before him. How I could astonish Sandy, if the pack be a strong one, he thought to himself; but no, I'll play the game out, it has cost me trouble enough already; he advanced a few steps, and up got a tremendous pack of grouse, all round him.

"Lord save us!" shouted the major, as if terrified out of his senses.

"Noo, man! noo! noo's the time; dang it they'll be awa'," said Sandy.

The major shut his teeth, and having previously closed his eyes, pointed the muzzle to the firmament, pulled both triggers simultaneously, and dropped on his nether end on the heather, as if he had been shot himself, while Sandy burst in a guffaw of laughter, that made the echoes ring.

"How many's down?" inquired the sportsman.

"Nane but yer ain sel'; the de'il a feather ha'e ye touched; there gaes the auld cock crawin', as if he was daft; he's laughin', an' nae wonder," the keeper said.

In a word, the acting of the crafty old campaigner was so good, that he thoroughly deluded his companion into the belief he was as ignorant of the mysteries of grouse-shooting as if he had been a shopman's apprentice, and never off the flags of London; so, after dinner, which Mr. Macpherson had been persuaded to remain and partake of, at the Cat and Bagpipes, when the punch had circulated pretty freely, the conversation turned of course upon the exploits of the morning, which the Scotchman narrated with great humor. The major took occasion to insinuate, that the fault lay not so much in his shooting as in the gun, which had kicked him so tremendously, he said, that he was unable to hold it straight!

This was too great a trial of the keeper's patience, who, of course, stoutly maintained the reputation of his favorite brown Bess, asserting, with a force of logic which was difficult to overcome, that when he could kill with the piece himself, it could not be her fault if, in other hands, a like result did not follow.

"Ah, Sandy, you cannot persuade me of that! A gun that kicks, hurts a fellow's shoulder, and knocks him down, can never be a good gun, say what you will," persisted the major.

"Whatna piece is there that wunna kick if a chiel pu' baith triggers thegither? and as for knocking a mon

doon, why, that's the fault o' the mon—no' o' the gun," said Sandy.

"Well, well, when I go home again, I'll take lessons. I'll be able to shoot grouse as well as you, Sandy, before I die."

"Na, na, sir! some folks would ne'er ken the knack; ye're a gey stout-built gentleman to look at, but ye ha'e na nerves, nane whatever," replied the keeper, shaking his head.

"If I had been only by myself, with no one to look on, I could have shot him, I'm sure I could," said the major, as if asserting an abstract proposition, the truth of which was indisputable.

"Shot wha; no the auld cock, surely?" inquired Mr. Macpherson.

"Yes, the old cock; I'd have done for him."

"Na, ye wouldna shoot a haystack."

"I'm blessed if I couldn't," interrupted the major.

"I'm d—d if you could," shouted the keeper, slapping his huge hand upon the table, until the glasses danced.

The major smiled a smile which was peculiar to him, such a smile as might have played over the Great Captain's iron visage when he saw the decisive moment had come, and he said,

"I'll bet you ten guineas I do it."

"What! shoot a grouse?" inquired the keeper, eagerly.

"Shoot a grouse—one, two, three, aye, four of them," shouted the major, thumping, in his turn, the table with his fist.

"Sittin', if Dick'll put salt on their tails," replied Sandy, with a grin of contempt.

"No, flying."

"Hoot awa', mon, ye wadna do't in a twalmonth. Ye needna fash yersel' to stake yer money."

"Ten guineas I do!" thundered the major, flinging, as he spoke, the coin on the table.

"Ten pun', four grouse, flyin', and a' in the ane day; done, sir, I'll tak' ye up," said Mr. Macpherson, clutching the tempter's hand.

"Done," replied the major, returning the pressure. "But I must go out quietly by myself; you'll have to lend me a dog too; you see I have learned something by the morning's lesson; my friend here will, I have no doubt, stand the loan of an old gun he carries about with him."

"Dowg!" said the keeper, musingly, "I dinna ken how we'll manage about that; I wadna trust the dowgs we had in the morn to any ither than my ain sel'; but stap, I ha'e it; there's an auld pointer ayont, a gey good beast he was in his day; ye shall ha'e him, an' Dick too, if ye like, to carry hame the birds," he added with a grin.

"Lots of powder and shot, too—eh, Sandy?"

"A sack fu', if your honor pleases. I'll tell ye how we'll manage—on Saturday morn I'm goin' to a fair, a gey piece off; you can just slip quietly out up the glen; you ken whar you met me—I'll ha'e Dick wi' the auld pointer waiting for you there; but, for the Lord's sake, sir, it must na be tauld to a living cre'tur. If it came to the duke's ken I'd lose my place."

The major having given a solemn pledge of secrecy, Sandy Macpherson took his departure, not a little elated at the prospect of winning ten guineas, and perfectly satisfied that there was no danger whatever, except, perhaps, to Sancho, the old pointer.

Saturday morning came in due course, and a finer autumn day never dawned; there had been a slight frost during the night, but the air, though bracing, was not so keen, and a gentle breeze swept the heather, as Major O'Shaughnessy, determined to be in good time, drew near

to the keeper's lodge; when, who should come full upon him but that functionary himself, jogging along on a Highland shelty.

"Gude mornin', ye'll ha'e a braw day any how; but, Lord save us, wha's this!" and the countenance of Mr. Macpherson, as his eye fell upon the major, underwent a considerable alteration; and well it might, for a man of another fashion than the over-dressed blundering companion of his former excursion stood before him now. The major, who had calculated that the keeper would have taken his departure for the fair long before his own arrival at the lodge, had arrayed himself in the accurate sporting costume he usually wore when equipped for the moors—a loose, single-breasted jacket of brown tweed, dark grey linen trousers, and well greased brogues, formed his apparel; a silver dog-whistle hung suspended from his button-hole; a light "wide-awake" covered his head, and poised upon his shoulder was an old Joe Manton, which had evidently seen service: upon the whole there was a certain something in the air and carriage which caused an uneasy sensation about the keeper's heart. The travelling artist looked like a man who could do mischief; but there was no help for it now, so Sandy Macpherson took his departure, consoling himself with the reflection, that even if the major could, by any possibility, kill a grouse, Sancho was about the last dog in the world likely to facilitate such an operation. He was an old pepper and salt colored pointer, with a remarkably short tail, dull bleared eyes, which looked as if he slept a great deal more than was good for him; he was lame into the bargain; and, upon the whole, as unlikely looking an animal to be of use, except for "cat's meat," as any the major had ever seen. But he was not the man to be deterred by difficulties; so having pulled out a handful of bright new shillings, brought with him for the

purpose, he showed them to the young Celt at his side, and promising to reward him richly for every pack of grouse to which he introduced him, Major O'Shaughnessy trudged cheerfully on, resolving that if whipcord could enlighten Sancho as to the responsibilities of his situation, he should have it in abundance.

A smart walk of a couple of miles brought the party to a beautiful range of quiet hills, whose sides were covered nearly half way up with heather-green—pasture land lay along the top—no trace of human habitation, save an old dismantled sheep-fold, was in sight, and the occasional tinkling of a sheep bell in the distance, was the only sound that broke the silence. Far as the eye could reach lay a wide expanse of heather, the tops and brooms of which waved to and fro in a fresh westerly breeze, affording abundant promise that the task of finding birds would be one of easy performance.

"Here be the ground, sir, that maister always brings the quality folks to; there's a sight o' grouse along them hills," the red-legged boy said.

"Very well, then, Dick, you may let the old dog go."

Away accordingly scampered Sancho, evidently in a state of high excitement, his stump of a tail wriggling to and fro, and his whole deportment affording abundant proof that he knew perfectly well where he was. In his more juvenile days, he had upon the same stage probably acquitted himself with credit; but to do anything with credit, except eat, drink, and bite beggars, was an exploit with which Sancho had long ceased to be familiar; so on he went, poking and snuffing among the heather, until he sprang a fine pack of grouse, and then his conduct was indecorous in the extreme; for not content with nearly capturing the old cock, he began to bark like a terrier, and chased each bird in succession as it rose from the heather,

with an agility which could scarcely have been expected in a dog of his years.

"Ho! I'll cure you of that presently, my boy," the major said, as he knocked over a brace of birds, right and left.

Sancho, by the aid of the young Celt, was soon caught, and a flagellation inflicted which astonished him, as well as some sheep grazing in the distance, whom the howls of the unlucky culprit sent scampering off across the hills.

The dog, released, rolled himself on the heather, and trotted off gay as a lark, as if his faculties had been refreshed by the discipline he had undergone.

"By Jove, he's on birds again!" said the major.

"Deed, an he just is; ye had best keep close up to him," whispered the boy.

"Have a care there!" roared the major, whose mouth the words had hardly escaped, when up got another pack. Bang! bang! right into the middle of them went both barrels, and a shower of feathers descended upon Sancho, who behaved, if possible, worse than before, for seizing upon one of the fallen birds, he proceeded very deliberately to tear it to pieces.

"Catch him, Dick! get hold of the bird, or the brute will eat it, feathers and all!"

Sancho was caught, this time not without difficulty, and a second flogging liberally administered, which seemed to recall the dog to some of his senses, for he went on rather more cautiously than before, no great way, indeed, before it was evident there was something more in the wind, for after a short time he came to a very tolerable point. Up got a fine hare; off went Sancho, the major's gun just touched his shoulder and over went pussy, crunkling out a full length in the heather. At the same moment, started by the noise, another pack of grouse rose, into which the

contents of the major's second barrel went with fell precision.

"Now, Dick! be alive, pick up the birds, look sharp; at this rate you'll be rich before night," said the major, reloading as quickly as he could.

The place was literally alive with game. The coolness and precision of the sportsman made amends for the obstinate perversity of the dog. The major's blood was up, he scarcely missed a shot, and the red-legged boy was staggering with the weight he carried, long before the day was over. Alas! could the deceived and deeply injured Sandy Macpherson have only known what devastation was going on among his grouse he could scarcely have been so hard upon the grazier, with whom he was chaffering about the price of a heifer; nor, his bargain being concluded, would he have jogged home with that cheerful expression his countenance wore when he alighted from his sheltie, towards nightfall, at the door of the Cat and Bagpipes.

"Ha'e ye the ten pun' ready for me?" he inquired, with a pleasant smile, as he opened the door of the parlor, where the major was seated at dinner.

"No, Sandy, but you have brought it from the fair for me, I hope," replied the major, laughing.

"Na, na, de'il a bit, that winna do; ye couldna shoot a grouse if yer life depended on it—ye ha'e nae nerves."

"Take a chair, Sandy, you must stay to dinner; but before you sit down just lift that cloth, on the side-board; you'll see something there that'll give you an appetite for the mutton."

The poor keeper did as he was bid, and a sight was indeed revealed to his astonished gaze which for many a long day he bitterly remembered. There, ranged in due order, were about forty brace of the duke's finest grouse, not to mention several hares, and sundry head of black

game. Confusion, horror, surprise, and wrath struggled for a moment in his countenance, and seemed to deprive him of all power of utterance.

"Hech, sirs! I'm a ruined man, that's all," he said at last, with an execration we need not stay to mention.

"Deuce a bit, Sandy; keep your own counsel, and I'll keep mine, you may be certain of that."

"An' with that auld dowg, that I thocht didna ken a grouse frae a gander. An' my ten pun' into the bargain. Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" groaned the unhappy keeper, wiping the perspiration off his forehead.

"Never mind that, Sandy, I can afford to let you off the bet; the day's sport is worth the money, and more too," and the major, as he spoke, slipped a few sovereigns into the keeper's hand.

"Aweel! aweel! wha'd ha'e thocht it, wi' that auld deaf pointer. De'il tak' me but if ever I see a chiel on the mountains again wi' a blue body coat an' dancing shoon, I'll slip the dowgs at him, dang me if I don't!"

"Never mind; Sandho is no great things of a dog, but his master is a right honest fellow, and a staunch sportsman into the bargain. Scotchman as you are, you cannot be expected to be a match for a man who has hunted with the 'Faugh a Ballaghs.' But if ever you come to Ireland, Sandy, you shall be right welcome at Badger Hall."



A Cock-Fight in the Havana.

ONE bright morning in the month of December, a few years ago, the *Ohio* lay swinging to-and-fro, under the guns of the Moro Castle, in the harbor of Havana.

Rising and falling on the breast of the billow, like a beautiful thing of life, with her tall masts tapering to the sky, her half-clewed sails hanging gracefully in the sun, and her bristling port-holes showing a row of teeth almost as formidable as the castle itself, she was a thing both to be admired and to be feared.

The beautiful quarter-deck shone like a well-polished table; the brass mountings of "long Tom," a respectable sixty-four pounder, glistened like gold, when contrasted with his black muzzle; and beneath the belaying-pins lay sundry well-tarred ropes, coiled up like snakes preparing for a spring.

A slight breeze rippled the water, gently wafting to leeward the smoke which issued from the cigars of a few officers, who, dressed in the gay uniform of our navy, sat discussing the merits of the combatants in a certain cock-fight, which was to take place on the island that day, and

to which they were to be conveyed in the captain's gig, which had been ordered to be got ready for that purpose. It was a bright Sunday morning, the day generally chosen by the Creoles for their exhibitions of bull-fights, cock-fights, and similar rational amusements, and great anxiety was manifested on this occasion to witness the sport, in consequence of the enormous bets which had been staked by the Spaniards and Creoles upon their favorites, and because it was so arranged that the field was open to competitors of all classes.

Symptoms of impatience were becoming evident in the countenances of the officers at the non-appearance of the gig, when they observed a knot of sailors congregated around the capstan, and in a few minutes, "Will Glover," the boatswain, a fine specimen of an American sailor, approached them, and touching his cap, requested permission to take them ashore in the yawl instead of the gig.

The request occasioned some surprise, as it was rather an unusual one, and the captain was upon the point of refusing, when the first lieutenant whispered in his ear:

"There is a lurking devil in Will's eye, which shows that there is mischief in the wind; so let's see what it is about."

The quick-witted boatswain, however, had seen the impending refusal, and before it had time to leave the captain's lips, he had told him "that the boys had brought out in the vessel a great fighting-bird, which they wanted to match against the best game-cock on the island, being desirous of proving the superiority of the Americans in chickens, as well as in everything else."

"Besides," continued he, "these yellow devils win our money all the time with their marked cards and loaded dice, and we are burning to have our revenge."

"But what kind of a bird have you got there?" said the

captain; "you cannot hope to fight one of the half-bred game-cocks which we have at home against the splendid birds which these Creoles devote their whole time to breeding and training, and which are perhaps unequalled in the world."

"Never mind that, captain," answered Will; "we have a bird here that is known all over the United States, and which has never been whipped yet, although he has had worse enemies to encounter than these bilious-looking Spaniards."

"Well, I do not know what mischief you are after," replied the captain, good-naturedly; "but if you will give your word on behalf of these men, that you will behave yourselves properly while on shore, and not taste a drop of liquor, you may go."

Will touched his cap again, and in a minute disappeared down the hatch, while the officers stood wondering at the implicit reliance which he seemed to have in the powers of his bird, yet at the same time confiding fully in the well known shrewdness of the fellow, which they had often seen put to the test.

The yawl was soon lowered, a dozen sailors sprang into it, and swinging round to the gangway, sat silently waiting for the officers; but a knowing smile might have been seen playing about each man's face, which broke into a cheer, as the sturdy boatswain appeared on the monkey-rail with his precious bird in a sack, and seizing the painter, swung himself lightly into the boat.

By this time the officers had become as much interested in the proceedings as the men, and as soon as they were seated, demanded to see the contents of the bag.

But Will assured them that the bird would fight so much better if kept in the dark until the hour of combat, and pleaded so earnestly against taking him out, that they at

last yielded the point, and contented themselves with listening to an interesting but entirely fabulous history of "The Unknown," which the boatswain related with a seriousness that would have done credit to a funeral sermon.

As they approached the shore, he concluded by saying:

"I have good reason for wishing to preserve my bird's secret until the last moment, and although you will discover it the moment it is pitted, I hope your honors will keep your thoughts to yourselves, and not betray us. We have raised all the money we could on the ship, and have got a good purse to put against the best cock that ever crowed in the Havana, and if your honors would like to do a little betting, you can do it with perfect safety on this bird, or my name's not Will Glover; for their picayune chickens will stand no more chance with him than one of these fellows themselves would with me, and I never saw any three of them yet that I couldn't whip in a free fight."

Having finished this modest assertion, his eye glanced slightly at his powerful frame, as if to say, "judge for yourselves;" and indeed it required little judgment to perceive that if the bird resembled his master, he would prove a formidable antagonist; for Will's clear blue eye, broad forehead, and bright, handsome countenance gave promise of more than ordinary intelligence and resolution, while his thick, brawny neck and huge arms looked perfectly capable of performing in a "free fight," even more than had just been claimed for them.

In a few minutes, the party had landed and separated, the officers having gone to a livery-stable to procure a conveyance, and the stalwart form of the boatswain could be seen rolling up the street, at the head of a body of men, whose appearance was such as to render them little likely to receive interruption from the majority of peaceably-disposed citizens.

In about half an hour, they had reached the inclosure which contained the pit, and they soon found themselves in the midst of a motley assemblage, who were chattering and yelling in a manner worthy of the gallery of a third-rate theatre in the United States.

Women of every shade of color, from ebony to dirty white, were seated around the outer side of the wall, with tables or trays displaying oranges, bananas, sugar-cane, alligator-pears, mangoes, bell-apples, sapadilloes, and various other tropical fruits, while men and boys were seen parading about with every variety of that officious bird which always insists upon announcing the break of day, when nobody cares about hearing it.

The pit was surrounded by a large amphitheatre, capable of holding an immense number of persons, and there, seated upon benches, raised one above the other, sat the beauty and chivalry of the Havana. There

"Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell!"

but nevertheless old and young, rich and poor, seemed bent upon enjoying the sport, and the "soft eyes" above alluded to seemed quite willing to divide their favors equally between their cavaliers and the chickens.

Whenever a fine bird was exhibited and matched against another, the ladies were seen betting with as much vivacity as the men, although their stakes were more moderate than the immense sums which some of the old Dons displayed upon little tables around the edge of the ring, and which they won and lost with a *nonchalance* worthy of a better cause.

Glover and his companions, on entering the amphitheatre, took their seats near the door, and shortly after the

officers of the Ohio arrived, and obtaining places a short distance from the men, were soon engaged in making trifling bets with those around them, on such birds as happened to excite their admiration.

Gallant birds they certainly were, and worthy of all admiration; but unless history is to be disbelieved, they were guilty of most extraordinary anachronisms.

Time, place, and facts were utterly disregarded in the scenes there enacted, and the very dead were brought from their graves to fight for the amusement of the inconsiderate spectators.

Julius Cæsar was there picking a quarrel with the Duke of Wellington; Plutarch was strutting about with a large red comb in his head; Lord Byron, with bare legs and steel-spurs, was seen running away from Christopher Columbus; and Mark Antony was heard pronouncing an extremely tautological oration over the dead body of Don Quixote.

It is true that the eloquence of this Mr. Antony was not quite equal to that of another of the same name, who once began an address by making the unreasonable request that his "friends," as well as the "Romans and countrymen," would "lend him their ears;" but his style was certainly more terse and laconic, for his preface consisted of "cock-a," his story of "doodle," and the conclusion of "doo." Such brevity should certainly have ranked with the "veni, vidi, vici" of olden times, and the "*Sebastopol est pris*" of our day. But to return to our unfortunate bird, who had been covered all this time with sack-cloth, if not with ashes, and who had been kept entirely in the dark with regard to these proceedings. Various contests had taken place, many a gallant bird had fallen a victim to his bravery, and the interest of the audience was beginning to flag, when a Creole stepped into the ring, and offered to match a splendid bird

which he held under his arm, against anything that had wings, on the island.

No one answered, as the bird was the most celebrated one in the Havana, and the owner's efforts to find an antagonist seemed likely to prove futile.

Signor Amigo's black game-cock, "Satan," was known to every one in the town as having whipped the best birds the island had produced, and being still in his prime, no one cared about losing a fine bird by matching him against this "Cœur de Lion" of roosters. Incensed with the idea of winning neither money nor renown with his favorite bird, he at last offered to stake a hundred doubloons against fifty, and no one accepting his challenge, he was preparing to leave the ring, when our boatswain sprang up, and in very bad Spanish, a smattering of which he had acquired in his wanderings, asked him if he was willing to match him against a curious-looking bird which he had with him in a bag.

"Against anything that has wings is my challenge," proudly replied Amigo; "produce your bird, sir."

Without further parley, Will untied the bag, and produced, to the astonishment of the officers and the rest of the assembly, the most curious-looking specimen of the feathered tribe that had ever graced or disgraced a cock-pit.

It was a bird about the size of a large rooster, with no tail, no comb, and no steel gaffles. Comb it seems he never had had, and as for tail, if he had ever been blessed with such an appendage, the ruthless sailors must have "clipped it short and driven it in," for not a vestige of it remained; and to add to the disfigurement, he was smeared with a mixture of grease and blacking, until his original color had been entirely lost. A loud shout of derision arose from the spectators at the impudence of the Yankees, in offering so

miserable a creature as the antagonist of "Satan," the pride of the Havana, and as they doubtless thought, the hero of a Hemisphere.

But to the experienced eyes of the officers of the Ohio, the secret was now revealed, and beneath the grease and soot, in spite of the clipped wings and chipped feathers, they perceived the eye of an old bald eagle, and the terrible beak and claws, which the sailors had almost managed to conceal by covering them with feathers, taken from the chickens of some by-gone dinner.

The officers now regretted that they had permitted the men to come ashore, as they were fearful that the artifice, if discovered, might lead to blows; and the determined character of the men rendered them very dangerous when excited.

Matters, however, had now proceeded too far to be stopped, and they had to content themselves with relying on the prudence of Glover. Although they knew that he was a perfect devil when his blood was up, they still knew him to be a man of his word, and that he would not make a disturbance if he could help it; so hoping that their presence would have its influence with the audience, they drew still closer to the boatswain, and then quietly awaited the issue. But their fears were unnecessary; the sailors had no intention of getting into a fight, and as their chief object was to make up their losses by winning a pile of gold from the Habaneros, they quietly staked all the money they had among those around them, generally contriving to get heavy odds in their favor. Besides the money which the men had brought with them, Glover had collected on the ship about thirty doubloons, twenty-five of which he staked against the fifty of the Signor's, who had graciously condescended to reduce the amount of the bet one-half, in consideration of the poverty of "*Los Americanos*," and the

other five he had managed to place advantageously, at the rate of about one to three, among the audience, all of whom seemed anxious to have an opportunity of "turning an honest penny," by fleecing the ignorant Yankees.

Even the officers themselves at last caught the infection. Unable to resist the pressing offers of those around them, knowing the power of their champion, and feeling a gallant pride in sustaining the character of their national bird, they bet the last dollar they had with them, until the amount staked by officers and men exceeded a hundred doubloons, and the odds given by the Cubans had amounted to nearly three times this sum.

Before proceeding further, it was arranged that the birds were to be placed in the ring, and then both the Signor and Will were to retire, while the actual death of a bird was alone to decide the victory.

The birds were accordingly set down a few feet from each other, and amid the acclamations of the Habaneros, the instant that "Satan" touched the ground, he threw himself into an imposing attitude, and uttered a crow of defiance, which rang through the building, and was immediately answered by a dozen of his neighbors outside the walls. Black as a raven's wing, a more beautiful bird had never delighted the eyes of the Cubans. He wore on his neck a natural ruff, which looked like that once worn by Mary, Queen of Scots, while his blood-red comb looked still redder when contrasted with the jet-black hue of the rest of his body. His tail fell gracefully to the ground, and it was very evident to discriminating spectators that he would never "show the white feather," because he did not happen to possess any of that description.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo!" was all that he said, and then looking round to see who he could pick a fight with, he espied the American bird cuddled up in a heap, as if very

much annoyed at the embarrassing position in which he found himself placed.

But if astonishment was ever depicted on the brow of a chicken, it certainly was depicted upon "Satan's" at this moment. More than once he extended his long neck, as if to obtain a nearer view, and convince himself that he was not deceived, and then puffed out his breast, as if he considered it morally impossible that he, the descendant perhaps of a race that had crowed over Granada with Alhamar, or who possibly had even displayed their valor before Euric and his Goths, could be pitted against such a dirty specimen of the "canaille" as now stood before him. Had there been an aperture in the wall of the ring sufficiently large to have enabled him to stalk majestically away, it is probable that this scion of Granada would have declined the contest, in the same manner that we might suppose the "Chevalier Bayard" would have declined to sully his reputation by an encounter with a common prize-fighter; but there was no chance of escape, and conscious that both the nobility and democracy of Havana were awaiting his movements, he concluded to kill his antagonist at once, and extricate himself from the unpleasant predicament. He could not shout "a Bayard!" or "a Satan to the rescue!" for his voice was only adapted to saying that eternal "cock-a-doodle-doo," and he had no lance to couch; so instead, he lowered his head and tail to a level, in imitation of one, and then precipitated himself with unerring precision on his adversary, making the feathers fly, as he struck him a savage blow with his sharp steel gaffs.

Had Mr. Pickwick heard an insinuation against his courage; had a Yankee peddler been discovered in the act of selling honest nutmegs; had Macdonald surrendered at Wagram without a blow; had Napoleon's "Old Guard" deserted him at Waterloo; or had "Old Hickory" been

seen scampering away at New-Orleans; had anything in fact utterly impossible happened to anybody, anybody could not have been more completely thunder-struck than was our dilapidated old eagle at the impudence of this vicious chicken.

The few battles that the eagle had heretofore indulged in had always been conducted on the wing, and consisted merely in his pitching into somebody with a kind of flying artillery, so that he was about as much used to this kind of fighting as one of our city-brigade inspectors would be if he found himself dodging Camanche rifle-balls in a Mexican swamp. It would be natural to suppose that "his eagle eye now lighted up," and that the rash chicken would instantly have paid the penalty of his folly, but he did not do anything of the kind.

As the cock struck him, he slightly elevated his wings, as elderly gentlemen elevate their eye-brows when they hear of the mad freaks of younger members of the family, ducked his head like a goose entering a barn-door, twisted his neck into a most uncomfortable position, to take a bird's-eye view of the matter, and then calmly walking away from the irascible individual who had insulted him, drew himself into as spherical a position as possible, and waited to see what would happen next.

His curiosity upon this point, however, was destined to be very soon gratified, for "Satan," having once tasted blood, waived all difference of rank, and flew at him again like a fury.

Three times did the eagle receive these unwarrantable assaults without giving way to his temper, and although his feathers were flying about and the blood trickling down his breast, he still seemed indisposed to fight. Every time that "Satan" struck him, a yell of delight broke from the Cubans, and to them the fate of the nondescript seemed

inevitable; but Glover and his companions maintained an imperturbable silence, their only fear being that an unlucky blow of the spurs might reach a vital part before the eagle had awakened to a sense of his danger.

But the time had now arrived when America was to assert her majesty, and the Habaneros were to learn the danger of trifling with her eagle.

The last blow the gallant cock was ever to strike had been struck, and as the blood spurted from a deep wound made by the gaffs, the eagle, raising himself to his grandest height, extended a claw, and seizing the brave but doomed bird by the back, pinned him to the earth as if he had been nailed there.

For an instant he gazed upon his fallen enemy—

"With that stern pride which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel,"

and then—I blush to tell it—with his other claw, *deliberately pulled his head off!*

Do not smile, reader; it is a very serious thing to have one's head pulled off, even if one is a chicken; and when we take into consideration what a chivalrous chicken this was, that was so unceremoniously decapitated, and how contrary such a proceeding was to the usual courtesies of the cock-pit, the subject becomes a grave one. Such a foul innovation upon the rules of propriety was heretofore unknown among chickens; and although it is true that "Satan" had only received what he had so often dealt out to others—death—yet he had always killed his adversaries in a high-bred, chicken-like manner, and had never conceived the horrible idea of pinning his enemy to the ground, and then pulling his head out of its socket, as a dentist would pull a tooth.

O Cruikshank! why were you not in that vicinity then?

Why has not that picture been faithfully portrayed by your truthful but sarcastic pencil?

Collins might have written another ode on the passions there displayed, or John Bunyan filled another "Pilgrim's Progress" with personifications from that scene. Death was there in the form of a headless chicken; victory in the shape of a burly boatswain: malice in the sinister looks of the enraged Creoles; while dismay, chagrin, and vexation were faithfully represented by the discomfited Signor, as he stood with the body of the deceased in one hand and the head in the other, looking "first upon this picture and then upon that." But besides these beautiful images—to the disgrace of the waggish sailors—there was a sad transposition of an emblem that they were bound by every tie of duty to have preserved intact.

A modern poem, which has been made trite by its beauty, tells us that once upon a time Freedom

"From his mansion in the sun
Had called her eagle-bearer down,
And given to his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land."

and yet, without the slightest regard for all this, the said eagle had been tarred and feathered until "the majestic monarch of the cloud" had been converted into a creature which, instead of soaring to heaven as the presager of liberty, was running about a cock-pit, looking very much like an old school-girl in pantalettes with wide ruffles, or even more like one of those strong-minded females who pass their declining years in asserting "women's rights" and "higher laws," and who generally become "Bloomers" about the time they cease to bloom. Nevertheless, the girlish attire and innocent unconsciousness of the old eagle were not sufficient to appease the wrath of the backers of

"Satan;" and if they had been fallen angels themselves, they could not have looked more ready to avenge the death of his Satanic Majesty than they did to avenge the death of his namesake.

The cry of "unfair, unfair!" arose from all sides, and symptoms of a row were quite prevalent, when Glover sprang into the ring, and snatching up his bird, roared out with a voice of thunder, "that his comrades were willing to abide by the decision of the judge, and that they wanted nothing but what was right," adding, however, parenthetically and "*sotto voce*," that "if the judge did not know what right was, he would probably receive some instruction upon the subject before they left."

Fortunately, for the sake of peace, the matter was too plain a one to admit of much dispute. "Satan" had been fairly pitted against the nondescript, and if the nondescript preferred pulling his head off, to the more laborious method of killing him by spurring and pecking at him, he had a perfect right to do so.

Whether the judge had overheard the conclusion of Will's remarks; whether he had perceived a curious fat-looking pistol, with six holes in it, which the fellow had contrived to leave sticking out of his pocket; and whether either had any influence in bringing his mind to a just decision, are points which, like many other gentlemen on the bench, he reserved to himself; but his decision was certainly given promptly in favor of the American bird, and both officers and men immediately received from the stakeholders the full amount of the bets. Still, notwithstanding the favorable decision of the ermine, Cuba had now become to the sailors what England became to the regicides of the seventeenth century—quite a warm place of residence, or, to speak more plainly, "too hot to hold them."

The regicides had beheaded a king of England, and they

had only beheaded a king of the cock-pit; but the Cubans were as likely to avenge the one as the Stuarts had been to avenge the other, and therefore, like the man who was pitched out of a second-story window, they "concluded that it was time to leave."

Not that the tars were really pitched out, however; for although pitch and tar are almost synonymous terms, yet there is a kind of American tar which does not get often pitched about by anybody except old "Poseidon," the chap that carries a trident—an article, by the way, that reminds us either of a cow-stable or our grandmother's toasting-fork. And to this class our sailors belonged.

Had a due sense of propriety governed their actions, it is probable that we should have now seen them

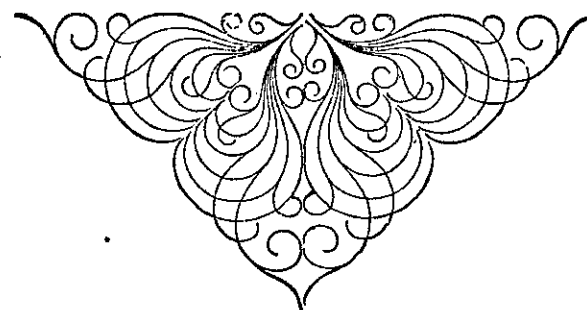
"Fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away;"

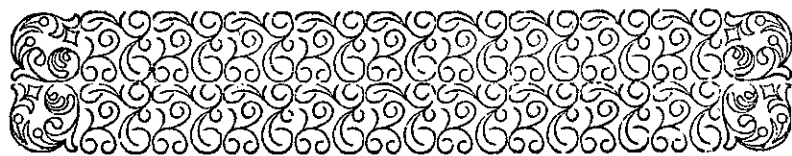
but they had kept quiet a marvellously long time for sailors; so waving their hats above their heads, they gave three tremendous cheers, which fairly shook the building, and then forming in line, marched out, straight through a crowd of men, who had collected at the door, as if for the purpose of impeding their exit, but who, when they found themselves in actual contact with the sturdy tars, concluded to let them strike a "bee line" in any direction they preferred.

The officers soon followed the men, and in a few minutes the yawl was bounding over the water, flying back to the ship like a gull to its nest.

Many a bottle was cracked to the health of the American bird in the cabin of the Ohio that night, and it is supposed that "brandy-smashes" to a considerable amount, to say nothing of "gin cock-tails," were consumed in the

forecastle at the same time, for the laudable purpose of assisting the sailors to sing the praises of their champion. History, with culpable negligence, has not transmitted to us the future fate of the bird; but if sailors ever die solvent, which is doubtful, or if they ever make wills, which is more so, depend upon it that as "Vogelweide, the Minnesinger," once did for the birds of Würzburg's towers, they will leave a considerable sum to be invested in government securities for the maintenance of that gallant old eagle.





Angelica Staggars.

BY AN OLD BACHELOR.

I'm not a sentimental man now. I have passed that state of existence long since, as a man whose whiskers have got bushy, while the hair on his crown has got thin, and whose eyes are surrounded by little nascent crows' feet, decidedly ought to have done. I confess that I prefer a good dinner to the most enchanting of balls, claret to polkas, and a jolly bacchanalian ditty to the pretty small talk of the most dainty damsel that ever floated through a quadrille in ringlets and clear muslin.

"Horrid wretch!" I hear some lady reader exclaim, as she peruses this confession, and prepares to throw down the book in disgust. Stay one moment, fair lady, I beseech you, and you shall have a little genuine sentimental reminiscence of my "days of auld lang syne"—and then—then you may throw down the book if you please, and call me a "horrid wretch" *if you can*.

What a pretty, little, gauzy, fairy-like creature was Angelica Staggars, when first I met her? The very recollection of her at this moment makes a faint vibration of my

heart perceptible to me, while *then* the sound of her name would startle me like the postman's rap at the street door. Bill Staggars (it isn't a pretty name, Staggars—but then, Angelica!) was a schoolfellow of mine. Schoolboys don't talk much about their sisters, because they get laughed at if they do: so that I knew little more than the bare fact that Staggars *had* a sister. In after years when we left school, and Staggars went into his father's counting-house in the city, and I into my father's office in Gray's Inn, the matter was different.

Staggars introduced me to his family. This consisted of his papa, a pompous old fellow who always wore a dress coat in the street as well as at home, and whose pendant watch-seals would certainly have drawn him under water, if he had ever had the misfortune to tumble overboard from a Margate steamer; of mamma, who was a lady of vast dimensions, with the usual superfluity of color in her cheeks and cap ribbons on her head; of a sister of Mr. Staggars, senior, who might have been agreeable if she had not given you the idea of being pinched everywhere—pinched in her waist, pinched in her nose, pinched in her mouth, and pinched in her views of things in general; and, lastly, of the daughter of the house—the divine Angelica herself.

How shall I describe Angelica as I first saw her one fine summer's day, about two o'clock in the afternoon, dressed in the most charming of muslin *negligée* dresses, reclining in a large easy-chair, and embroidering on a frame a pair of worsted slippers for her papa? How shall I ever give an accurate picture of her beautiful, light, golden hair, that literally glittered in the rays of the sunshine, that made their way through the half-drawn green venetian blinds of the window by which she sat, in the drawing-room of that delightful villa at Peckham, that looked out on to the smoothly shaven lawn, with the large washing basin of a fish-pond on it, containing ever so many shillings' worth of

gold and silver fish? I can't do it. I have let all my poetry run to seed, and I feel myself as incompetent to do justice to the charms of Angelica as a sign-painter would be to copy a Madonna of Raphael, or a street ballad screamer to sing the "stabat mater" of Rossini. I must give up the attempt: but cannot the reader help me out of the difficulty, by imagining something very fair, pink and white, very slight, very animated, and very ethereal-looking altogether? Of course he can;—then there is Angelica Staggers before his eyes directly.

From the moment I saw her I felt that my doom was fixed, and my heart *trans-fixed*. I admired, I loved, I adored her, and the very atmosphere that surrounded her (I don't mean the smell of roast duck that was steaming up from the kitchen) seemed to breathe of paradise. Accordingly, as a very natural consequence of this feeling of mine, I behaved very sheepishly—blushed and stammered, and tore off the buttons of my gloves, stuck my legs into absurd positions from not knowing what the deuce to do with them, stumbled over an ottoman as I took my leave, and to save my own fall caught at a china card-tray and smashed it—effecting my retreat at length in a state of tremor sufficient to have brought on a nervous fever.

My friend Staggers quizzed me:—

"Why, Jones, I never saw you so quiet. I always thought you such a devil of a fellow among the ladies. You've lost your tongue to-day: what is it?"

What is it! As if I were going to tell *him* what it was. Supposing I had told him that his sister was an angel, the fellow would have grinned and thought I was mad. Men never do believe in the divinity of their sisters; they are almost as incredulous as husbands touching their wives. The last man in the world I would select as the confidant of my love affairs would be the brother of my adored one.

I should know that he would annoy me by the most anti-romantic anecdotes of his sister's childhood, and tease her to death by frightful stories of myself. And so I invented excuses about being "out of sorts," and that sort of thing, to account for my unwonted taciturnity and embarrassment at this my first interview with Angelica Staggers.

I was soon a very frequent visitor at the Peckham Villa, and I had reason to suppose that I was a welcome one. The old gentleman was very civil; mamma was pressing in her invitations; the "maiden aunt" affable in the extreme; and Angelica always received me with a smile, that I valued at a higher price than California and Australia together could pay.

The Staggers family led a quiet life, with the exception of Bill, who haunted theatres and cider cellars, and harmonic meetings, and passed as disreputable an existence as a city clerk well could. I seldom met any one at the Peckham Villa but the family, and occasionally a Signor Fidilini, who was Angelica's music and singing master, and was sometimes invited to tea in the evening, that he might delight Papa Staggers by playing and singing duets with Angelica. I can't say I liked his doing so myself, and I always considered his double-bass growl spoiled the silvery notes of his pupil's voice; and then I had a great objection to seeing his jewelled fingers hopping about and jumping over Angelica's on the piano, in some of those musical firework pieces they played together. But he was a very quiet, gentlemanly fellow, and remarkably respectful in his manner to Angelica, so that there could be no real cause for jealousy—but!—the word seemed quite absurd to use in such a case.

My father pronounced me the idlest clerk he ever had. I am not sure that he was quite wrong, but he little suspected the cause. While I ought to have been drawing

abstracts of title, I was drawing fancy portraits of Angelica; while I should have been drawing brief-sheets, Angelica's form was engrossing my thoughts; instead of studying declarations at law, I was cogitating a declaration of my attachment. To plead well my own cause with herself and her father was the only sort of pleading I cared for; while the answer I might get to my suit was of ten thousand times more consequence in my eyes than all the answers in all the fusty old Chancery-suits in all the lawyers' offices in the world. As for reading, Moore and Byron supplied food to the mind that ought to have been intent on Coke and Blackstone. Apollo, God of Poetry, and Venus, deification of Love, answer truly!—is there a more wretched being, a more completely fish-out-of-water individual than a lawyer's clerk in love?

After long and painful watching, I became convinced, in spite of a lover's fears, that Angelica was not insensible to my attachment. The little bouquets I bought for her at Covent Garden Market were received with a look that thrilled through my very soul. (I hope that is a proper expression, but my poetry having grown rusty, as I before-mentioned, I am in some doubt about the matter.) There was, or I dreamt it, a gentle pressure of the hand as we met, and as we parted, that could *not* be accidental, and could *not* be that of mere friendship. There was a half timidity in the tone of her voice as she addressed me, different from the self-possession she displayed in conversation with others. In short, there were a thousand of those little signs, visible though indescribable, that Angelica Staggers knew that I loved her and was gratified by the fact.

Now most men would have thrown themselves at her feet and made their vows, in such a case; but I was doubtful whether that was the most safe course to pursue in order to secure the prize. It struck me that her father

was just one of those crusty old gentlemen that look on a young fellow as little better than a pickpocket, who dares to gain a daughter's affections without first asking her papa's permission to do so. On the other hand, I was quite aware that young ladies don't like to be asked of their papas before they are asked themselves; there is too much of the Mahometan and Continental style in such a proceeding to please our free-born island lasses. Still, I might get over that difficulty by explaining how hopeless I believed it to be to secure her father's consent at all, unless I got it *first*. I was right; and so I resolved to have an interview with Mr. Staggers, and explain my sentiments.

Did any one of my readers ever drive in tandem two horses that had never been broken to harness! Did he ever let off a blunderbuss that had been loaded for ten years? Did he ever walk through long grass notoriously full of venomous snakes? Did he ever ride a broken-kneed horse over stony ground? Did he ever take a cold shower-bath at Christmas? Did he ever propose the health of the ladies in the presence of the ladies themselves, and before he had at all "primed" himself? Did he ever walk across a narrow greasy plank placed across a chasm some hundreds of feet in depth? If he has done all or any of these feats, I can bear witness to the fact that he has had some experience of nervous work; but if he has never been back-parlored with a grave, pompous old father, of whom he is about to ask his daughter's hand, *then*, I say his experience of real, genuine, "nervous work" is but infantile after all. Making a declaration to the lady herself is nothing to it, though a little embarrassing too; but then you know that the fair one is in as much trepidation as yourself, and not watching you with a cold calculating eye, weighing your expressions, and drawing conclusions perhaps prejudicial to your reputation for sense or honesty. I declare that I would not go

through that ordeal again for the wealth of the Antipodes (that's the last new phrase): and, between ourselves, that is the very reason why I remain to this day a —;—but stop—I am anticipating.

I cannot give an account of my interview with Old Staggers, because, even half an hour after it was over, I had but a confused recollection of what took place at it. I only know that it haunted my dreams like a nightmare for nights after. I was eternally jumping up in my bed in a cold perspiration, with my hair half thrusting my night-cap off my head, in the midst of "explaining my intentions." However, a great point was gained—Mr. Staggers agreed to offer no opposition to the match, provided *my* father consented also.

"I shall call on him to-day, my young friend," he said: "so dine with us at Peckham at six, and you shall know the result. I don't *forbid* your going there earlier, if you feel inclined to do so."

This was handsome. I expressed my gratitude as well as I was able, and at once took a Peckham omnibus, and hastened to Angelica.

"Missus is out, sir; and so's Miss Staggers: but Miss Angelica's in the drawing-room, sir."

"Very well. I'll go there—you needn't show me up."

So saying, I sprang lightly upstairs, and was in the drawing-room in an instant. A sudden shriek—a short, quick, half-stifled one—met my ears as I entered, and I saw Signor Fidilini move his arm very hastily, as if it had been in far closer proximity to the waist of Angelica, who was at the piano, than I should have considered at all necessary in an ordinary music lesson.

"Oh dear, Mr. Jones! how you did startle me," cried Angelica, blushing terribly, as she rose to shake hands with me. "I didn't hear you coming at all, I assure you."

I didn't need that assurance, and I believe I said something of the sort.

"Mees Angelica so feared, dat I put out my arm to stop her fall off from the stool," said Fidilini; and he looked so perfectly truthful and unembarrassed as he spoke, that my dreadful suspicions began to be allayed.

"I feel quite nervous at this present moment," said Angelica. "Indeed, Signor, you must not ask me to take any more music lessons to-day."

Signor Fidilini bowed gracefully his assent, and I cast a delighted look at Angelica; for was she not getting rid of that tiresome music-master for *my* sake? Fidilini packed up his german-sausage roll of music, and, bidding us good-day, bowed himself out of the room.

We were alone! We looked uncomfortable, and we felt so—I am sure of it in her case as well as my own.

"Angelica!" I exclaimed.

She started, and looked surprised.

"Angelica, I love you—you know it: but you do not know *how* deeply and *how* devotedly," &c. &c. I suppose it is quite unnecessary for me to give the remainder of the declaration, because no one can be ignorant of the usual form of the words in these cases. It is as "stereotyped" as an Admiralty Secretary's letters—but I suppose it means a little more, or what a deal of fibbing lovers must be guilty of when they come to the grand scene of the domestic drama of "love!"

Angelica hung her head, and blushed, and panted. I felt she was mine, and I seized her hand and began to cover it with kisses, when she snatched it from me in such haste, that her diamond and pearl ring scratched my finger. I was amazed!

"Mr. Jones, I can listen no more. I assure you I *must* listen no more."

"Why so? Your father will not oppose my wishes, for—"

"It is not *that*, sir: it is that I cannot reciprocate the attachment you profess for me."

"Oh! do not say so—do not—"

"If you have any generosity in your heart, Mr. Jones, you will cease this strain at once. You have mistaken my feelings altogether."

"It's that cursed Fidilini!" I cried in a rage, forgetting my good breeding.

"I beg, sir, that you will not use such language in my presence, especially with reference to a gentleman for whom I entertain a feeling of—"

"Love," I said, with a stupidly indignant laugh, and an attempt at an air of tragedy. "But I care not. I will shoot him within twenty-four hours, or he shall shoot me;" and I started to my feet with a thorough determination to call out Fidilini without an hour's delay.

"For heaven's sake, don't speak so," cried Angelica. "There will be murder; I know he'll fight, and you might kill—"

"Thank you; I might kill *him*—yes: you don't seem to have any fears lest he should kill *me*. However, he shall have a chance," and I strode towards the door.

"Stay," cried Angelica: and she seized my arm: "stay, you shall have my secret, and *then* I throw myself on your generosity. He is *my husband*!"

"Fidilini?—the devil!" I exclaimed.

"We are privately married," said Angelica, "but for the present do not let—"

Here we were interrupted by the arrival of Mrs. and Miss Staggars, who entered the room, to our great discomfiture. Angelica, with an appealing look towards me, hurriedly left the room.

If ever a poor wretch felt himself in an uncomfortable position, I did at that moment, and during the rest of that evening. Mr. Staggars brought home a city friend with him, obviously to avoid a *tête-à-tête* with me after dinner, but he took care to inform me, in a whisper, that his negotiations with my father had failed. I dare say he was very much surprised at the cool indifference with which I received this piece of information, for he little knew how worthless were the consents of the papas in the present instance.

Of all the artful little hussies that ever lived, decidedly that girl is the most complete! thought I, as I watched the quiet and composed manner in which Angelica behaved during dinner, and the evening which followed. She played and sang as freely as ever, and even expressed her sorrow that Signor Fidilini was not present, that she might sing one of her papa's favorite duets. If he *had been* present, I believe I should have strangled the fellow against all resistance.

How I passed that night, I won't say, but I did not sleep.

Next morning I was at the office as usual, and really trying to work hard to keep my thoughts from dwelling on Angelica. About ten o'clock my father rushed into the room where I was seated at the desk, in company with Mr. Staggars.

"Villain!" cried Staggars, to me,

"You young scoundrel!" screamed my father.

I was really alarmed, for I thought that both those respectable elderly gentlemen must have gone mad. I stared, in open-mouthed astonishment.

"Where's my daughter?" bawled Staggars.

"Answer, sir!" shouted my father, as I looked, if possible, still more surprised.

"I don't know," I replied.

"You lie, sir," cried Staggars.

"You are quibbling, sir," added my father; "we don't ask where she is at this very moment; you know *what* we mean."

"Is she married?" said Staggars: "answer that."

"Really, I—"

"Answer plainly, sir, and without shuffling," cried my father.

"I *believe* she is," I answered.

"Believe! why, you young villain, when you *know* whether you have married her or not, how dare you talk about what you *believe*?"

"I marry her! *I'm* not married to her!" I cried, in surprise.

"What the —— does all this mean?" exclaimed my father, losing all patience. "Miss Staggars has run off from her father's house—with *you*, it's suspected."

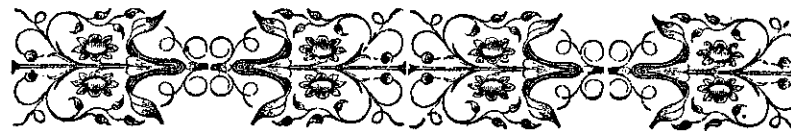
"Indeed!" I exclaimed, interrupting him; "then I suppose I may tell the truth; no doubt she has gone with her husband, Fidilini."

Never shall I forget old Staggars' rage and surprise when he heard my simple story; nor his savage indignation when my father (thinking only of his own son being out of a mess) exclaimed:—

"I'm deuced glad of it."

* * * * *

I am going to the christening of Madame Fidilini's seventh child to-morrow. They like an old bachelor for a godfather sometimes because he has no other children than god-children to provide for. Grandpapa Staggars will be there, and so will grandmamma and grand-aunt; and the latter will be very attentive to me, but she's more pinched than ever, and looks like a dried herring in figure and complexion. I shall dine with old Staggars afterwards, and he has some superb claret, much better stuff than—well, never mind, I have done!



The Fall of the Janissaries.

"Who is this that cheapens pistols, when he rather needs a coat of mail?"

On hearing these words, pronounced in a low, significant tone, the handsome young soldier turned quickly, and beheld near him two female figures shrouded in dark-blue mantles, and long yashmaks, or veils of white muslin. One of them, however, chanced to be in the very act of adjusting her veil, and thus allowed the yuzbashi, or captain—for such his scarlet pelisse, and the golden star embroidered on his jacket, bespoke him—to catch a glimpse of a youthful face of ravishing beauty. The eyes were fixed on the ground, and a deep blush suffused the rounded cheeks. In another instant the veil was replaced, and the two muffled figures moved on and mingled with the throng, leaving the soldier in a state of extreme astonishment and perplexity.

The principal bazaar of Constantinople presented that day, as usual, a scene of great brilliancy and animation. The numerous arcades, with rows of shops on either hand, were crowded by people of all classes and every race of the East. Grave Turks, in flowing robes and turbans of various hues, shuffled slowly along, followed by slaves who carried

their masters' purchases; Persian and Arab traders, Bedouin chiefs, Armenian merchants, Greek islanders, Arnauts from Albania, Mangrebihs from Northern Africa, Toorkomans, Khoords, Tartars, and now and then a Frank of some western nation, all added, by their varied costumes, to the picturesque liveliness of the shifting panorama. Women, whose large languishing eyes were alone visible from within the muffled folds of their vestments, flitted incessantly from shop to shop, displaying quite as much fondness as their western sisters for the delightful trouble of bargaining. Rich young Osmanlis, mounted on handsome steeds, with splendid housings of velvet and gold, rode slowly along in the central avenues; and an araba, or carriage, like a huge cage, all lattice-work and gilding, occasionally stopped to allow one or two shrouded figures to issue forth and join the moving throng.

One customary element of variety, however, was wanting, the absence of which excited no little remark. Very few of the Janissaries—whose crimson pelisses, white turbans, red shawl-girdles, and silver-mounted weapons, usually made a conspicuous appearance, as they swaggered through the crowd—were now to be seen. The cause of their absence was no secret. This was the 14th of June, 1825, a year and a day memorable in the annals of the Ottoman empire. On the previous day the grand-vizier Selim Mehmed Pasha, and the celebrated Aga Pasha Hussein, commander of the forces, had assembled the Janissaries in their great square—called the Etmeidan, or "Place of Meat," because they there received their daily rations of soup—and had announced to them the new regulations to which they would be required thenceforth to submit. These regulations, which affected not merely their organization, but also their pay and perquisites, their dress and their weapons, were all of a nature to be highly distasteful to

the members of that lawless and intractable corps. The precautions of the sultan and his ministers, who had previously gained over or put out of the way many of the leading and most dangerous characters, prevented any open expressions of feeling. The Janissaries listened in sullen silence, and retired quietly to their kisas, or barracks, when the ceremony was over. The grand-vizier beheld this apparent submission with great satisfaction, and congratulated his fellow-minister on the easy success of their master's favorite project. But the aga pasha, better acquainted with the character of his old comrades, shook his head and said, "It will not be done without much blood."

This day, the 14th, was appointed for the first drilling of the new companies which were to be drawn from each orta, or regiment of Janissaries, and placed under Egyptian officers of the army of Mehemet Ali. Those of the corps who were not in the companies were collected either in the Etmeidan, or in their barracks, anxiously discussing the nature and probable effect of the new regulations, and the course to be pursued by the body at the present crisis. Thus it was that very few of them made their appearance that day in the bazaar; and their place was but poorly supplied by the soldiers of the regular troops—the seymeus (infantry), tobjees (artillery), bostanjees (seraglio-guard), and galionjees (marines), who were present in considerable numbers, and in their ungraceful summer uniforms of white cotton jacket and trousers, with the red cloth fez or scull-cap, and leathern belt, made anything but a pleasing appearance in the eyes of the Mussulman beholders. Their officers, however, in their embroidered jackets, and the scarlet mantles which they were allowed to retain, were seen to more advantage. Of this number was the young soldier who has been already mentioned, and who was at once known by his uniform to be a captain of the corps of gun-

ners. Nor did those who were familiar with the various races of the East fail to perceive in the tall and well-set figure, the bold military bearing, the keen blue eye, chestnut locks, and classically-moulded head and features, the marks which denoted his Circassian or Georgian blood.

"Who is this that buys a bridle when he more requires a spur?"

The voice was the same that had before struck his ear; and on turning, he again beheld the lovely face, over which the yashmak was just falling. This time the large dark eyes were fixed on him for a moment with an expression of timid anxiety. The soldier stood and gazed at the retreating forms with still greater astonishment than before. The women were evidently of the higher class; and the words which had been uttered seemed to imply some knowledge of and interest in him. Yet he had been but four months in Constantinople, and of that time the greater part had been spent in his barracks at Tophana, out of which he had hardly an acquaintance. If it were a mere frolic of two laughter-loving damsels making their sport of the foreign soldier, why did she who partially unveiled her face assume an expression so little akin to mirthfulness? And why did her companion, who he felt assured was the one that had spoken, keep her countenance carefully concealed?

While pondering upon this mystery, and pretending to be absorbed in the examination of some Farangee shawls, which were displayed upon the stall of an Armenian merchant, he caught sight of two muffled figures, whose approach caused his heart to beat with a kind of instinctive presentiment. This time his hand was slightly touched, and a soft voice murmured beside his ear, "To-night before the mosque of Raghil Pasha." The figures passed slowly on, and the soldier followed at a little distance, until he saw them enter a carriage, which immediately drove away. The

young man, however, easily kept it in sight, until it passed out of the gate of the bazaar. Here a number of Jew porters were seated, waiting to offer their services to any one who might seem to require them. Dropping a coin into the hand of one of them, he said, "Tell me, Jew, know you whose carriage it was that just now passed the gate?"

"Truly, effendi," replied the Jew, "I know it well, for it is one often seen in the bazaar. It is the araba of the Chorbajee Osman, of the seventeenth orta."

"Osman, a chorbajee* of Janissaries," said the soldier to himself, as he drew his mantle about him, and moved slowly away. "I have heard of him as a favorite leader among his comrades, and a violent partisan of the old institutions. But how can I have become known to any in his harem? There is some mystery, and I will not renounce the adventure until I know more. At all events, there can be no harm in spending an hour or two before the mosque of Raghil Pasha."

Thus meditating, the young man was proceeding in the direction of the Etmeidan, when he encountered a brother officer, who was hastening rapidly towards the port. "How, Soujouk Saduk," said the latter, "are you not for Tophana? have you not heard the news?"

"What! Have the Janissaries risen?"

"Not yet," replied the other: "but the Etmeidan is all in commotion. An Egyptian officer has struck one of his men in his company, and all the rest have thrown down their arms and torn off their new uniforms. The ortas are assembling; and there will be burning and bloodshed if something is not quickly done to appease them. I am going to inform the tobjee-bashi."†

* An officer answering nearly to our colonel; the word, however, means literally, "master of rations," or soup distributor.

† Chief or general of the artillery.

"I will wait and learn more," returned Saduk, "and will follow you in a few hours."

With these words he took leave of his companion, and directed his course through the most unfrequented streets leading towards the mosque of Raghil Pasha, which was beyond the barracks of the Janissaries. It was now sunset, and he made a wide circuit, in order to allow the night to close in before he reached the place of rendezvous. The few persons whom he met on his way hurried by with looks expressive of fear and agitation. He could not doubt that some calamitous event was apprehended; and knowing that an outbreak of the Janissaries was almost always preceded or accompanied by extensive conflagrations, he easily understood the anxiety of the citizens.

On reaching the mosque, he took post in an obscure angle within its shadow, and remained there motionless for two or three hours. At length, just as he was about to quit the spot, with the conviction that he had been the subject of a very annoying practical jest, a veiled female figure hastily approached the mosque, and, after a moment's hesitation, came towards him. Uncovering her face sufficiently to let him perceive that she was an Abyssinian slave, the woman inquired, "Are you the yuzbashi who buys pistols and bridles, as though he were still a rider on the hills of Atteghai?"

"I am he whom you seek," replied the young man, much surprised at the latter part of the question.

"Then," continued the negress, "I am sent to bid you follow me to the presence of a daughter of Atteghai."

Atteghai is the name which the natives of Circassia give to their country. Saduk at once concluded that some female of his nation, the slave or perhaps the wife of the Chorbajee Osman, desired to speak with him, for the purpose of making inquiries respecting the friends whom she

had left in her native land. With this idea, and excited by the hope of once more seeing the face of the beautiful young houri whom he had met that morning, he bade the messenger lead on without delay. The negress obeyed, and after a walk of some length, through several narrow by-streets, she stopped before a small postern door. Opening this with a key, she introduced him into a low dark passage, and producing a small lantern from beneath her mantle, directed him to move forward as noiselessly as possible. In this way they passed through several rooms, and at length the slave, drawing aside a curtain, said, "Enter, effendi, for the mistress awaits you."

Saduk advanced and found himself in a small apartment, furnished in a costly and luxurious style. A divan of crimson velvet encircled three sides of it; on this, and on the Persian carpet, were heaped numerous cushions, covered with red cloth and morocco. The ceiling was painted in fresco; and from the centre hung a lustre of four lights, which illuminated the apartment. A veiled figure was seated at the upper end of the room, and a voice—the same that he had heard in the bazaar—said in Turkish, "*Khosk geldin, Cherkess*"—"You are welcome, Circassian.")

Before he could reply, the veil was drawn aside, and the soldier beheld, to his astonishment, what he would have said was the same face that he had seen in the bazaar, but with the addition of fifteen or sixteen years to its age. The features and expression were the same. The eyes were as large, dark, and languishing; but the sparkle of youth was gone. The cheek was as beautiful in its outline, but without the glow and smoothness of early years. Was it possible that his momentary glimpse could have so much deceived him?

As he stood thus embarrassed, the lady, who seemed

rather to enjoy his perplexity, said with a smile, in the Circassian tongue, "Sit, my friend, while I speak a few words on a subject near to my heart. You are a son of Atteghai, of the family of Soujouk, and the tribe of Natukaitsa. This I have heard from those who have made inquiries respecting you."

"It is true, lady," replied the young man, "however you have learned it."

"I, too, am a child of Atteghai," continued his hostess, "of the tribe of Shegakeh. Yours is a great tribe, and a noble family, but mine is obscure and poor. Yet perchance you may have known the Dar Khaldeer of Malskoy?"

"Unhappily," replied the young man, "I know too little of my native land. When I was a boy of fifteen, the Muscov* and Cossacks crossed the Kouban, and ravaged all the neighboring valleys. The Natukaitsa assembled, and drove them back over the river; but my father and my elder brother were killed in the battle, and I was wounded, and taken prisoner. They carried me with them to Tscherkask, where my wound was healed, and afterwards I was sent to the military college to receive the education of a Russian officer, in the expectation that I would do them good service in the war against my own country. Seven years I remained in the college and in the Russian army, and at length I was sent to fight against my brethren of Atteghai. But I laughed at the beards of the Muscov, and escaped, and fled to the army of my own people, and fought among them until our enemies were driven once more from the land. But when I returned home, my heart was heavy, for there were none to welcome me. My mother and my brothers were dead, and our uncles had taken or sold our property; so, rather than make ill-blood

* Muscovites, or Russians proper.

and dissension in the family, I said to myself—"I understand the science and the discipline of the Franks: I will go to Stamboul, and offer myself to the sultan, to serve in his new army. Perhaps I may find favor, and rise to honor, as many others of my countrymen have done." So I came hither four months ago, and presented myself before the padishah; and when he heard my story, and especially that I knew the art of founding cannon, he was greatly pleased, and made me a yuzbashi at once. This is my history, hanoum;* and thus it is that I know so little of my country, and cannot inform you respecting your friends, for which misfortune I am greatly grieved."

"So be it," said the fair Circassian, with a sigh: "they are under the protection of Allah. If it be their fate to be well and prosperous, they will be so; and if not, who can alter it?" With this philosophic reflection her disappointment seemed to be assuaged, for she proceeded in a different tone: "Tell me, my young friend, did you see my daughter's face in the bazaar when I bade her put aside her yashmak? And did she please you?"

"Was she your daughter?" asked the young man. "Truly she is a houri—the loveliest of maidens. I have never seen her equal. Happy will be the man who shall possess such a light of his harem!"

"Can you not guess, my friend," asked the lady with a smile, "what a mother means when she allows her daughter to uncover her face before a man?"

"Is it for me that you intend this happiness?" asked the youth, at once astonished and delighted. Then, as the thought of his situation occurred to him, he continued in a despondent tone, "But, alas! what can I say to the chor-bajee? What shall I offer as the dowry of his daughter?"

* Lady.

—I, a poor yuzbashi, with nothing but my mantle and my sabre?"

"You are rich in the favor of the sultan," replied the lady. "Think you not that all these matters are known in the harems of Stamboul as well as in your barracks at Tophana? You have the knowledge of Frank arts of war, which the sultan prizes above everything else. In a year you will be a bin-bashi (a colonel of artillery); in five years you will be a bey; in ten years, inshallah—please God—a pasha. I will answer for it, that when your messenger comes to the chorbajee, he will send back words pleasant to your heart. Even now, you can do more to win his friendship than if you could offer him the dowry of a pasha's daughter. You know that the evil advisers who surround the sultan, and pervert his mind, have persuaded him to take away the ancient privileges of the Janissaries, and alter their laws and customs, which were established by the great and wise Sultan Urkham, and the holy dervish Hadji Bectash. But the Janissaries are strong, and will maintain their rights in spite of traitors and evil counsellors; and when they meet in their ortas, with their camp-kettles borne before them, and require the restitution of their old laws and privileges, and demand the heads of their enemies, be assured that they will obtain both the one and the other. Whether they will prevail without much fighting and bloodshed, is another matter. Allah only knows. But this, dear Saduk, is what I would teach you, that you may know how to win the favor of the chorbajee. Of all the troops of the nizam djedid, there are none which are not as dust, as bosh (nothing) in the eyes of the Janissaries, save only the artillery. Most of these, as you know, were formerly Janissaries, or friends of the Janissaries, and will be loath to fight against them. It is their officers alone who are strangers and enemies to the Janissaries. If now there could be

found one officer of the tobjees—one yuzbashi—who, in the hour of conflict, would say to his men, 'Do not fire upon your brethren, the children of Hadji Bectash,' they would all obey at the word, and the victory would be secure to the good cause without more blood. Surely, Saduk, dear friend, child of Atteghai," she said, bending forward, and looking imploringly into his darkened face, "you will not fire upon my husband—upon the father of my daughter Shereen."

"This is a snare!" exclaimed the soldier, rising hastily from his seat, and gathering his mantle about him. "What dust is this that you would have me eat? Shall I dishonor my father's grave? Shall I break my oath to the sultan for a handsome face? Is this becoming the daughter of Atteghai, to mislead her countryman to disgrace and ruin? Know that for seven years I have carried my life in the hollow of my hand, ready to throw it away at the first warning; but my faith I have kept secure, holding it a thousand times dearer to me than life. This is the law of Atteghai. Have you never heard the history of Mehemet Gherrai, my ancestor, how he gave himself up to death to redeem his word? Farewell, hanoum; I truly believe that your daughter knows nothing of this deception, else she would have been with you. For her sake, and the sake of our common blood, I pardon you this evil design, and may hereafter do you good."

So saying, before the dame could recover from her confusion, he hastily thrust aside the curtains which concealed the entrance to the room, and seizing the slave by the arm, drew his poniard, and bade her show him the way to the door. The terrified negress obeyed without hesitation, and Saduk presently found himself in the street. Taking, as near as he could judge, the direction of the port, he hurried forward until he reached the aqueduct of Valens. Here,

while he stood concealed in the shadow of an arch, he heard the tramp of a body of men approaching, and presently about a hundred soldiers in the Janissary uniform, completely armed, passed at a rapid pace within a few feet of him. From the course which they pursued, he had no doubt that their object was to surprise their aga, who was especially obnoxious to them, from the part which he had taken in favor of the new regulations. This, then, was the commencement of the insurrection. As soon as they were out of hearing, he turned and hurried in another direction towards the Ayazmah landing. On arriving, he roused a boatman from his slumbers, and bade him row as rapidly as possible to Tophana. Twenty minutes brought them thither; and the young man hastened directly to the quarters of his commander, the tobjee-bashi. The latter had directed his slaves to awaken him on the arrival of any important intelligence, and Saduk was quickly ordered before him. When the commander heard his statement, he said, "You bring great news, yuzbashi. This must go directly to the padishah. We will proceed to Beshiktash together in the caique which brought you hither. Beybars," he continued, turning to his orderly in waiting, "tell Kara Jehennem to make sure that his gun-carriages are in good order, and that his men are staunch. I foresee," he added, "a day of bloody work, in which we tobjees shall have to bear the heaviest share."

So saying, he proceeded with Saduk to the landing, and put off in the caique for Beshiktash. They were half an hour in reaching the palace, where they found that the sultan, as became a sovereign whose empire was trembling in the balance, had been up all night, engaged in close consultation with his ministers. The grand-vizier, the mufti, the aga pasha, the Janissary aga, the capudan pasha, and other great officers of state, were present in the council. The tobjee-bashi was admitted at once, and Saduk was

presently summoned to the council-chamber. He found the sultan sitting on a pile of cushions at the upper end of the apartment, while his ministers stood near him on either hand. Mahmoud's dark-blue eyes glittered with vindictive pleasure, and his naturally sallow cheek was flushed with joyful excitement. "Ha!" he exclaimed, as Saduk approached, and made his military obeisance, "it is the Cherkess who has brought the good news. You have done well, yuzbashi: it shall not be forgotten. At what hour did you see these dogs of Sheitan, and how many were there of them?"

"Asylum of the world!" replied the Circassian, "it was shortly after midnight, when your servant saw about a hundred of the rebels, on their way seemingly to the dwelling of his lordship the aga."

"The curs! the miscreants!" exclaimed Mahmoud. "You did well, aga, to remove your harem in time, for nothing will be sacred to these wretches. You are all witnesses, pashas, that it is they who have begun the conflict, and not I. This day shall decide who is to govern henceforth in Stamboul—the sultan or the Janissaries. If it be these dogs, I will retire to Asia, and leave the city and the western empire to them. But wherever I am, there I will be king. Come, pashas, now that the work is commenced, our place is in the city. Let every one perform his part, according to the plan which we have sanctioned."

With these words the council broke up. The sultan and his principal ministers proceeded immediately to the seraglio, and walked from thence in solemn procession to the imperial mosque of Sultan Ahmed, near the ancient Hippodrome. Here a ceremony of great importance took place. The Sandjak Shereef, or sacred standard of Islam—made, it is said, of the apparel of the Prophet, and only produced on the most momentous occasions—was brought

out from the treasury, in which it had lain for fifty years, and set up on the pulpit. Standing beneath it, the mufti and the ulemas—the three heads of the Mahomedan faith—pronounced a solemn anathema upon the rebels, and devoted the whole body of the Janissaries to destruction. The news of this proceeding quickly spread through the city, and produced a decisive effect. The mass of the population had previously been wavering between their devotion to their sovereign and their ancient sympathies for the rebellious troops. But when the influences of religion were enlisted in favor of the former, there was no longer any hesitation; the great majority of the citizens came forth in a tumultuous throng, and swelled the number of the forces which were advancing from all sides against the insurgents.

The latter, after sacking the palaces of the Janissary aga and the grand-vizier, and making an ineffectual assault upon the seraglio, had retired to their square, the Etmeidan; and there having inverted their camp-kettles, according to their usual custom when in a state of revolt, they appointed a deputation to lay before the sultan their demands—namely, the restoration of all their ancient privileges, and the death of the four ministers whom they considered their chief enemies. But while thus engaged, they neglected, with unaccountable infatuation, to take any precaution against the approach of the various corps of regular troops which were gradually occupying every avenue leading to the Etmeidan. Thus, when the Janissaries received the positive refusal of their demands, together with the alternative of submission or instant destruction, they found themselves hemmed in on all sides by the hated troops of the nizam djedid. A sense of their dangerous position then first seized upon them, and they made a furious and simultaneous effort to break down the living barrier which

inclosed them, with the intention of spreading themselves through the city, and setting fire to it in every quarter.

The principal rush was directed towards a narrow street, occupied by a body of flying artillery, with two guns loaded with grape. The leader of this body was an officer noted for his great size and strength, his swarthy and forbidding countenance, and his relentless determination, all of which traits had procured him the appellation, by which he was usually known, of Kara Jehennem, or the "Black Infernal." It was supposed that the dread and respect which the tobjees entertained for him would serve to counteract their well known sympathies for their former comrades. Thus far the expectation had been fulfilled; for the men had fought with vigor in repelling the attack of the Janissaries upon the seraglio. But now, when the mighty mass came rolling towards them, calling on the sacred names of the Prophet and Hadji Bectash, and shouting to the gunners the watchwords of their ancient fellowship, the hearts of the latter failed them, and they drew suddenly back from their guns, carrying their officers with them. In another moment the pieces would have been in possession of the insurgents. It was the crisis, if not of the Ottoman empire, at least of the reign of Mahmoud. Kara Jehennem, who stood in front of his troops, with his yataghan in one hand and a pistol in the other, when he found himself thus left alone by their retreat, took his resolution with the unhesitating boldness of his character. He shook his sabre, with a terrible imprecation, at his recreant soldiers, and then, springing to one of the guns, fired his pistol over the priming. The Janissaries were close upon the piece when it was discharged, and the effect of the grape upon their dense column was tremendous. The whole mass recoiled in confusion, which the discharge of the second gun, by another hand, turned to a headlong flight.

"*Aferin, Cherless!*"—"Well done, Circassian!"—exclaimed Kara Jehennem; "that shot has made you a colonel. Come on, dogs, cowards, sons of burnt fathers!" he shouted to the tobjees. "Your guns to-day, or the bowstring to-morrow."

The gunners needed no further menace to make them return to their duty, and the guns were quickly manned and brought forward to take part in the deadly shower of grape and musketry which was now pouring, with fearful effect, upon the rebels in the Etmeidan. Presently a cry was raised among the latter, "To the kisas—to the barracks!" The barracks of the Janissaries adjoined the Etmeidan, and the revolted troops, now taking refuge in them, defended themselves there with desperate resolution. The aga pasha sent to inquire of the sultan if he should endeavor once more to make terms with the insurgents before proceeding to the last extremity. The answer was brief and decisive—"Set fire to the kisas!"

The stern command was unhesitatingly obeyed. In a few moments the barracks were enveloped in flames; but not even the prospect of the dreadful and inevitable death which awaited them could induce the Janissaries to sue for the mercy which they had before rejected, and which they probably felt would now be refused them. They fought on, with the fury of despair, until the greater number were buried in the burning ruins. A portion of them sallied forth, and attempted to cut their way through the line of their enemies. In the conflict which ensued, Kara Jehennem fell with a bullet through his hip. "Die, dog!" shouted an old chorbajee, rushing towards him with uplifted yataghan; "down to Jehennem, where you belong!"

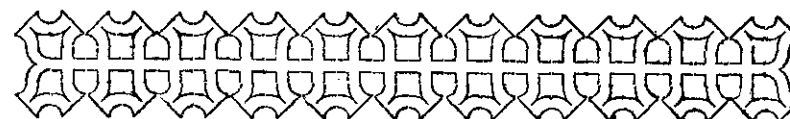
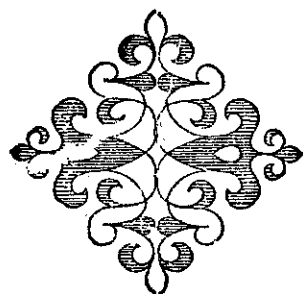
"Not yet, uncle Osman," replied the "Black Infernal;" and raising himself on his left elbow, he fired his pistol at

the Janissary, saying, "Take that, old friend, for your good wishes."

The chorbajee stopped suddenly, and struck his hand to his side; then springing like a tiger upon the ranks of the tobjees, he cut down two men by successive blows of his yataghan, and fled swiftly up the street towards the mosque of Raghil Pasha, closely pursued by a party of the soldiers. All resistance was now at an end, but the work of destruction did not cease. Every Janissary who was found within the walls of Stamboul, whether concerned in the late revolt or not, was put to death without mercy. The bowstring and the Bosphorus completed what the cannon and the sabre had begun; and within twenty-four hours, that formidable body, which for four centuries and a half had been by turns the bulwark and the scourge of the Ottoman empire, was utterly annihilated. Its very name was made accursed, and a heavy penalty denounced upon any one who should utter it. Twenty thousand men are supposed to have perished in consummating this brief but sanguinary revolution, for such its objects and its consequences entitle it to be called.

During the conflict, Saduk had distinguished himself both by his courage and presence of mind. But he felt no disposition to take part in the massacre which followed, and was about to withdraw from the scene, when a sudden recollection flashed upon him, and caused an immediate change of purpose. Collecting a few of his men, he hastened towards the dwelling of the Chorbajee Osman, which he had no difficulty in discovering. He arrived just in time. The old Janissary, mortally wounded by the pistol-shot of Kara Jehennem, had fled to the privacy of his harem to die. In ordinary times, even the executioners of the law do not venture to violate this sacred refuge; but the solemn anathema pronounced upon the rebels removed all scruples of

this nature, and Osman's pursuers had just broken into the apartment, where the affrighted women were clustered in speechless horror about the dying man. Saduk's appearance saved him from the last indignity of the bowstring, and preserved the females from insult. In gratitude for this service, the old chorbajee, by a will pronounced upon the spot, as the Moslem law allows, bequeathed to the young man all his wealth, on condition that he continued to extend his protection to Shereen and her mother. This condition being anything but an onerous one, the trust was promptly accepted by the youthful soldier. The will, it is true, as made by a rebel who had forfeited his property by his guilt, would have been of no avail but for the favor of the sultan, who not only confirmed it, but also bestowed upon the Circassian the rank which Kara Jehennem had promised him. Shereen, it is hardly necessary to add, became the wife of the fortunate adventurer; and her mother, with the third of her late husband's ample fortune, was able to fulfil a long-cherished vision, of returning in splendid state to the land of her nativity.



Leaves from the Diary of a Law Clerk.

THE reader must not expect any artistic finish or coloring in such brief transcripts as I can furnish of by-gone passages in my clerkly experience. Law-writers and romance-writers are very distinct classes of penmen, and I am consequently quite aware that these sketches have no other claim to attention than that they are genuine excerpts,—writ large,—from a journal in which the incidents of the day were faithfully noted down at the time of their occurrence. Their accuracy, therefore, does not depend upon memory, which certainly I do not find to be as virile and tenacious at seventy as it was at seventeen. No one will feel surprised that I should, in my vocation, have turned over several startling leaves in the darker chapters of our social history; and some of these, I have thought, may prove even more interesting to a numerous class of minds, when plainly and unpretendingly set forth, than if tricked out in the showy varnish and false jewels of romance and fanciful invention.

On the evening previous to the day, Mr. —, —suppose, for convenience sake, we call him Mr. Prince, he was one in many respects,—on the evening, then, previous to the

day Mr. Prince, a barrister, whose clerk I had been for about three years, intended setting out for the second time on the Western Circuit, a somewhat unusual circumstance, or rather couple of circumstances, occurred. I must premise that Mr. Prince had at the previous assize made a great hit at Salisbury, by a successful objection to an indictment framed under 30th Geo. 2, which charged a respectably-connected young man with stealing a sum of money in bank notes. Mr. Prince contended that bank notes were not "moneys, wares, goods, or merchandise," within the meaning of the statute, an opinion in which the judge, Mr. Baron Thompson, after much argumentation, coincided, and the prisoner was acquitted and discharged. This hugely astonished the horticultural mind of Wiltshire: a lawyer who could prove a bank note, then a legal tender, not to be money, was universally admitted to be a match, and something to spare, for any big-wig on the circuit, and a full share of briefs would, it was pretty certain, thenceforth fall to Mr. Prince's share.

And now, to return to the circumstances I was speaking of. I was waiting at chambers in the Temple on the evening in question for Mr. Prince, when who should bustle in but old Dodsley, the attorney, of Chancery Lane. Many persons must still remember old Dodsley, or at all events his powdered pig-tail, gold eye-glass, tasseled hessian boots, and everlasting pepper-and-salt pants. This visit surprised me, for the spruce and consequential antique had not hitherto patronized us, we not having as yet, I supposed, a sufficient relish of age about us to suit his taste.

"Mr. Prince," he said, "of course goes the Western Circuit? To be sure, to be sure. Is he retained in the Salisbury case of the King on the prosecution of Gilbert against Somers?"

I knew perfectly well he was not, but of course I replied

that I would look, and passed my finger slowly and deliberately down the page of an entry-book. "No, he is not," I said, on reaching the foot of the leaf.

"Then here is a retainer for the defence." Dodsley placed a one pound note and a shilling on the table, and, as soon as I had made the usual entry, added, "I am acting in this matter for Cotes, of Salisbury, who, as the case is of some importance, will deliver the brief, handsomely marked, I believe, and with a good fee to clerk, at Winchester; good-by!"

A quarter of an hour afterwards, the great Mr. Pendergast, solicitor, of Basinghall Street, ascended the stairs, and presented himself. He had a brief in his hand, marked "Fifty Guineas." This I saw at a glance: indeed, of all the characters on the back of a brief, the figures,—the fee,—by some magnetic attraction or influence, invariably caught my eye first.

"Mr. Prince proceeds on the Western Circuit?"

"Certainly."

"And is not, I conclude, retained in the Crown case against Somers for larceny?"

"The deuce! well, this *is* odd!" I exclaimed. "Mr. Dodsley left a retainer for the defence not above ten minutes ago."

"You don't say so!" rejoined Mr. Pendergast, peevishly; "dear me, dear me; how unfortunate! The prosecutrix is anxious above all things to secure Mr. Prince's services, and now—dear me! This is a kind of business not at all in our line; nor indeed in that of the respectable Devizes firm who have taken the unusual course of sending the brief to London, although relating only to a simple matter of larceny;—dear me, how unfortunate! and the fee, you see, is heavy."

"Surprisingly so, indeed! The prosecutrix must be

wonderfully anxious to secure a conviction," I replied with as much *nonchalance* as I could assume, confoundedly vexed as I was. It was not at all likely, for all old Dodsley had hinted, that the brief in defence of a prisoner committed for larceny would be marked at a tenth of fifty guineas: however, there was no help for it, and after emitting one or two additional "dear mes!" away went Mr. Pendergast with brief, fifty guineas, and no doubt proportionately handsome clerk's fee, in his pocket. I was terribly put out, much more so than Mr. Prince, when he came in and heard of what had happened, although fifty guineas were fifty guineas with him at that time. "I have seen something of the case," he said, "in the newspapers; it has curious features. The prisoner is a female of great personal attractions, it seems. We must console ourselves," he added with jocose familiarity, "it is something to be the chosen champion of beauty in distress." To which remark I perceive the word "Fudge," in large capitals, appended in my diary. "Humbug" would have been more forcible, but that expressive word had not then been imported into the English vocabulary, or it would, I doubt not, have been used.

Mr. Prince of course travelled by post-chaise with a learned brother, and I reached Winchester by coach, just as the sheriff's trumpets proclaimed the arrival of my lords the judges in that ancient city. Our Wiltshire fame had not yet reached Winchester, and although the criminal business of the assize was heavy, very few cases were confided to Mr. Prince. Cotes arrived on the second day, with the brief in the Salisbury case, marked, I was astonished to find, "Twenty Guineas," and the old fellow behaved, moreover, very well to me. Mr. Prince was in court, and I had full leisure to run over the matter, and a very strange, out-of-the-way, perplexing business, as set forth in Mr. Cotes's instruction to counsel, it appeared to be. Divested of sur-

plusage, of which the brief contained an abundant quantity, the affair stood about thus:—Mr. Hurdley, a wealthy person, who had resided many years at Hurdley Villa (then so called, but now, I hear, bearing another appellation, and not very distant, by-the-by, from Bowood, the Marquis of Lansdowne's country seat), had died three or four months previously intestate, and Hurdley Villa was now inhabited by a Mrs. Gilbert, the deceased's sister-in-law, and her son, Charles Gilbert, the heir-at-law, but who yet wanted some ten months of his majority. The day before his death Mr. Hurdley despatched James Dakin, an aged and confidential servant, to bring home one Emily Somers from Brighton, where he, Mr. Hurdley, had placed her some fourteen years previously in a first-rate school. He told the mistress of the establishment, a Mrs. Ryland, that the child, then about five years old, was the orphan daughter of a distant relative, a statement discredited as she grew up by the evidence of her features, described as presenting a beautiful and feminine but still surprisingly accurate reflex of those of Mr. Hurdley. This remarkable resemblance not only gave rise to calumnious rumors, but appeared greatly to impress Mr. Hurdley himself, at the last and only interview he ever had with the young girl since he consigned her to Mrs. Ryland's care. This was about six months before he died, and on his return home he gave Mr. Cotes directions to prepare a new will, by which he bequeathed twenty thousand pounds to Emily Somers, and divided the residue, about double that amount, amongst his nephew, Charles Gilbert, and other more distant relatives. This will was drawn out and executed, but was subsequently destroyed under the following circumstances:—The instant Mrs. Gilbert heard of the serious illness of her wealthy brother-in-law, she hastened with her son to Hurdley Villa, and immediately set to work, tormenting the dying gentleman into

annulling his will. Wearied out at length, it seemed, by Mrs. Gilbert's importunities, he yielded the point, and the will was burnt in the presence of Cotes, the attorney, a medical gentleman of Devizes, Mrs. Gilbert, and the housekeeper, a Mrs. James. "You persist, Charlotte," said Mr. Hurdley, feebly addressing his sister-in-law, "that Emily Somers ought not to inherit under this will?" "I do, indeed, my dear Robert; you may be sure she will be sufficiently provided for without the necessity of your bequeathing her such an enormous sum as twenty thousand pounds." "Are the two letters I gave you sent to the post?" asked Mr. Hurdley of the housekeeper. The woman hesitated for a moment, and then said, "Oh yes, certainly; some time since." A strange expression, something like mockery or malice, Cotes thought flickered over the pale face of the dying man as he said, addressing the attorney, "Then I authorize and require you, sir, to burn that my last and only existing testament." This was done, and everybody except the medical gentleman left the room. Mrs. Gilbert vanished instantly her wish was accomplished, following sharply upon the heels of her housekeeper.

Mr. Hurdley died on the following day. He was already speechless, though still conscious, when Dakin returned from Brighton with Emily Somers, upon whom his fast-darkening eyes rested whilst yet a ray of light remained, with an intense expression of anxiety and tenderness. The wealth, I may here state, of which Mr. Hurdley died possessed, was almost entirely personal, Hurdley Villa and grounds being, indeed, the only reality, and was lodged in British securities. It was the intention, Mr. Cotes believed, of Mrs. Gilbert and her son, the instant the latter came of age and could legally do so, to dispose of those securities, and invest the produce in land: that time was, however, not yet arrived.

Matters went on smoothly enough at Hurdley Villa for some time after Mr. Hurdley's death; Mrs. Gilbert was exceedingly civil and kind to Emily Somers;—her son, from the first, something more; and it was soon apparent that he was becoming deeply attached to the gentle and graceful girl bequeathed to his mother's and his own generous care by her deceased protector. These advances, evidently at first encouraged by Mrs. Gilbert, were by no means favorably received,—why, will presently appear,—whereupon that lady worked herself into a violent rage, both with her son's folly and the intolerable airs and presumptions of Emily Somers, who had forthwith notice to quit Hurdley Villa, accompanied by an intimation that an annuity of fifty pounds a year would be settled on her. This scandalous injustice roused the spirit of the young girl, acquainted as she was with the burning of the will, and a violent altercation ensued between her and Mrs. Gilbert, in the course of which something was said or hinted that excited Mrs. Gilbert to downright frenzy, and she vowed the insolent, audacious minx should not sleep another night in the house. This scene occurred just after breakfast, and a chaise was ordered to be in readiness by two o'clock to convey Emily Somers to Devizes. About half-past twelve Mrs. Gilbert went out for an airing in the carriage, and was gone about an hour; her passion had by this time cooled down, and the servants thought, from the irresolute, half regretful expression of her countenance, that a conciliatory word from Miss Somers would have procured her permission to remain. That word was not spoken, and Mrs. Gilbert, with a stiff bow to the young lady, who was already equipped for departure, sailed grandly away to her dressing-room. In about ten minutes a terrible hurly-burly rang through the house: Mrs. Gilbert's diamond necklace and cross was declared to be missing from her jewel case, and a hurried search in all possible and

impossible places was immediately commenced. Miss Somers, distracted as she said by the noise and confusion, intimated that she should walk on and meet the chaise, which could not be far distant; and "as Mrs. Gilbert," she added with bitter emphasis, "insists that every trunk in the house shall be searched, I will send for mine to-morrow." So saying she left the apartment, and a minute afterwards the house. The post-chaise was not far off, and she had reached it, and seated herself, when a footman came running up with a request from Mrs. Gilbert that she would return immediately. Miss Somers declined doing so, and ordered the postillion to drive on. Seeing this, the footman, a powerful fellow, caught hold of the horses' heads, exclaiming, as he did so, "that it was a matter of robbery, and the young lady should return." The chaise was accordingly turned round, and the now terrified girl was in a manner forcibly taken back to Hurdley Villa. There it was proposed to search her. She vehemently protested against being subjected to such an indignity, but Mrs. Gilbert peremptorily insisted that she should, and a constable having been actually sent for, she, at length, reluctantly submitted. The search was fruitless, and Mrs. Gilbert, taking up the young lady's muff,—it was the month of January,—which was lying in a chair, tossed it contemptuously towards her, with an intimation that "she might now go!" The muff fell short, and dropped on the floor. A slight sound was heard. "Ha! what's that?" exclaimed Mrs. Gilbert. Quickly the muff was seized, felt, turned inside out, ripped, and the missing diamond necklace and cross were found carefully enveloped and concealed in the lining! Miss Somers fainted, and had only partially recovered when she found herself again in the chaise, and this time accompanied by a constable, who was conveying her to prison. The unfortunate young lady was ultimately committed for trial on the charge of stealing the jewels.

Miss Somers's refusal to entertain the suit of Mr. Charles Gilbert, and the large fee marked on the brief in defence, were explained by the fact that a Lieut. Horace Wyndham, of the artillery service, then serving in Ireland, had, when at Brighton, contracted an engagement with Emily Somers, fully sanctioned, Cotes believed, by the late Mr. Hurdley. This young officer remitted a considerable sum to the attorney, with directions that no expense should be spared; and further stated that he had applied for leave of absence, and should, the instant it was granted, hasten to Wiltshire.

This was the tangled web of circumstance which it was hoped the ingenuity of counsel might unravel, but *how*, Mr. Cotes, a well-meaning, plodding individual, but scarcely as bright as the north star, did not profess to understand. Mr. Prince took great interest in the matter, and he speedily came to the conclusion that it was highly desirable Miss Somers should be directly communicated with. The etiquette of the bar of course precluded Mr. Prince from himself visiting a prisoner, but I, though it was rather out of my line of service, might do so, by permission of Mr. Cotes. This was readily accorded, and the next day I and the attorney set off for Salisbury.

We had an interview with Miss Somers early on the following morning. All my clerkish bounce was thoroughly taken out of me by the appearance and demeanor of the young lady. There was a dignified serenity of grief imprinted on her fine pale countenance, a proud yet tempered scorn of the accusation and the accuser in her calm accents, so different from the half-swaggering, half-whining tone and manner I had been accustomed to in persons so situated, that my conviction of her perfect innocence was instantaneous and complete. She, however, threw no light upon the originating motive of the prosecution to which she was exposed, till, after refreshing my memory by a glance at the

notes Mr. Prince had written for my guidance, I asked her what it was she had said on the occasion of her quarrel with Mrs. Gilbert that had so exasperated that lady? "I merely ventured," she replied, "to hazard a hint suggested by an expression used by Mr. Hurdley in a letter to—to a gentleman I have reason to believe Mr. Cotes will see to-day or to-morrow, to the effect that I might after all prove to be the rightful heiress of the wealth so covetously grasped. It was a rash and a foolish remark," she added sadly, her momentarily crimsoned cheeks and sparkling eyes fading again to paleness and anxiety, "for which there was no tangible foundation, although Mrs. Gilbert must, it seems, have feared there might be."

This very partial lifting of the veil which concealed the secret promptings of the determined and rancorous prosecution directed against our interesting client, rendered me buoyantly hopeful of the result, and so I told Cotes on leaving the prison. He, however, remained like old Chancellor Eldon, permanently "doubtful," and moreover, stared like a conjuror, which he was not, when, after again consulting Mr. Prince's memoranda, I said he must let me have two subpoenas for service on Mrs. James and Mr. Dakin at Hurdley Villa.

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed; "what will be the use of calling them?"

"I don't know; a great deal of use, it may be; but at all events the subpoenas will give me an excuse for seeing them both, and that I must do as early as possible."

He made no further objection, and by eleven the next day I was at the hall door of Hurdley Villa, blandly requesting to speak with Mrs. James. I have always piqued myself upon not having the slightest odor of law or parchment about me, and I was only gratified, therefore, not surprised—ahem!—at overhearing the servant who an-

swered the door assure Mrs. James that the person inquiring for her "was quite the gentleman." This was, moreover, only a fair return for the compliment I had paid the damsel's blooming cheeks. I was immediately ushered into the housekeeper's room, where, as soon as the door was closed, I handed the astonished woman a strip of parchment and a shilling. She hopped back as if suddenly confronted by a serpent.

"A subpoena, Mrs. James," I said, "commanding you, in the name of our Sovereign Lord the King, to attend and give evidence on the trial of Emily Somers."

"I give evidence!" she replied, much flurried; "I know nothing of the matter; I wash my hands of the whole business."

"That will require, my dear lady, a very profuse and judicious use of soap and water, or the damned spots will not out, as the lady says in the play."

"Oh, don't bother me about the lady in the play," she retorted angrily. "I can give no evidence, I tell you, either for or against Miss Somers. I did not accuse her of stealing the necklace!"

"That I am sure, Mrs. James, you did not. You are, I know, too just and sensible a person to do anything at once so wicked and foolish, but you *must* tell the judge how it was the two letters—ha! you begin to perceive, do you, that more is known than you imagined."

"Letters—what letters?" she muttered with pale lips.

The words which had so startled her had been suggested by a surmise of Mr. Prince, and a remark which dropped from Miss Somers, implying that Lieutenant Wyndham had been expecting a promised explanation from Mr. Hurdley when the news reached him of that gentleman's death. The woman's tremor convinced me that I had struck the right trail, and I determined to follow it up boldly.

"I will tell you, Mrs. James," I replied, "but first, and for your own sake, ascertain that we are entirely alone." She looked into the passage, reclosed the door, and said with fast-increasing agitation, "Quite, quite alone; what *can* you mean?"

"This: the two letters intrusted to you by Mr. Hurdley, the day before his death, you had neglected to forward as you ought to have done."

"I—I meant no harm," she huskily gasped; "as I live and breathe I meant no harm!"

"I believe you; and it was *after* the will was burned that Mrs. Gilbert, who followed you out of the sick room, obtained possession of them."

She did not answer in words, and it was not necessary that she should; her scared looks did that sufficiently.

"Do you remember either of the addresses of the letters, Mrs. James," I presently continued, "or shall I refresh your memory? Was not the first syllable of one of the names Lieutenant Wyndham—"

"Ha!"

"Now don't make a noise, there's a good woman. To whom was the second letter addressed? Answer that question, or you will be in custody before ten minutes have passed; answer it truly, and you will not be in the slightest degree molested;—come, out with it!"

"The Reverend Mr. Ridgway, Yeovil, Somerset."

"Very good. And do you know anything about this Mr. Ridgway, whether he was related to, or in any way connected with, the late Mr. Hurdley?"

"As I hope for mercy, I do not."

"Very well: now pay attention to what I am about to say. Mrs. Gilbert must not be acquainted with what has passed between us."

"Oh, no, certainly not; on no account whatever," she

quickly replied. "She strictly forbade me to mention the circumstance."

"No doubt. As she is sure, however, to hear that I have been here, you had better admit that I have served you with a subpoena. Good day," I added, taking her hand, which was cold as ice,—“and remember—SILENCE! or it will go ill with you.”

"Come, George," I mentally exclaimed on emerging with exultant step from Hurdley Villa, "come, George,"—*my* name is George—"you are getting along in first-rate style, my boy; and there is nobody I wish half so well as I do you. I am heartily rejoiced at it. Old Dakin is at Devizes, it seems; well, I don't know that it's worth while waiting to see him, so I'll e'en be off again back at once."

The news I brought which, well managed, would in all probability lead to important results, put quite a varnish on old Cotes's mahogany phiz, and it was needed, for Lieutenant Wyndham, who had arrived at Salisbury shortly after I had left, had kept him in a state of terrible anxiety and harassment from the first moment he entered the office. He was a fine dashing young fellow, by Cotes's account, sudden and fiery as a rocket, and at first seriously purposed to send a bullet through young Gilbert's head, as the only fitting answer to the atrociously absurd accusation against Miss Somers. Convinced at last that ball practice, however sharp and well directed, would avail little against a "true bill" for felony, he bounced off to procure permission to visit the imprisoned lady. This could not be for the moment granted, "and," added Cotes, "he has been tearing in and out of the office for the last hour and a half like a furious maniac, threatening to write immediately to the Home Secretary, nay, the Prince Regent himself, I believe, and utterly smash every gaoler, sheriff, and magistrate in the county of Wilts;—oh, here he is again!"

The youthful soldier certainly was much excited and exasperated, but I found no difficulty in so far calming him that he listened with eager attention and interest to what I had to relate. "I cannot do better," he exclaimed, the instant I ceased speaking, "than start immediately for Yeovil, and ascertain what the Rev. Mr. Ridgway knows of Em—of Mr. Somers or Mr. Hurdley." We agreed that it was highly desirable he should do so, and in less than ten minutes he was off in a post-chaise from the "Antelope" for Yeovil.

The next day, Saturday, as I and Cotes were busy, about noon, drawing a fresh brief for counsel, a horseman, followed by a mounted groom, alighted in front of the attorney's house, and presently a small clerk threw open the office door and announced—"Mr. Gilbert!"

The appearance of this young gentleman was somewhat prepossessing, albeit he appeared to be suffering from illness of body or mind, perhaps of both; and there was a changing flush on his brow, a quick restlessness in his eyes, and a febrile tremor, as it were, in his whole aspect and manner, which, read by the light of what we knew and suspected, had a deep significance.

"You are the attorney for the defence, I understand, in"—he hesitatingly began,—“in the unfortunate affair of the diamond necklace?"

"I am," replied Mr. Cotes, "and what then?"

"Your clerk has served a subpoena upon Mrs. Gilbert's housekeeper; what may that mean?"

"A silly question, sir, you will pardon me for saying: we lawyers are not generally in the habit of making confidants of those opposed to us."

There was a silence for some time; Mr. Gilbert crossing his legs, tapped the toe of his boot with his riding-whip, and passed his right-hand fingers several times through

the thick brown locks that fell over his forehead, his irresolute, wavering glance all the while shifting from Cotes's face to mine and back again.

"Would it not be better," he at length said, "that this unhappy business were accommodated? There is a means—one," he added, flushing intensest scarlet, "whereby that desirable result may be accomplished. I must be frank with you, for I cannot otherwise communicate with the—prisoner; it is this,—if Miss Somers will accept my hand, the prosecution is at an end."

Cotes was about to speak, but I pinched him with such sudden force that he sprang to his feet instead, and the first attempted word broke into a shriek of pain.

"Is this proposition made with Mrs. Gilbert's consent?" I hastily interposed.

"Yes, certainly;—yes."

"Mrs. Gilbert consents, does she, that her son shall wed a fortuneless girl accused of the disgraceful crime of theft, her character unvindicated, her—"

"Stay, sir, a moment. I speak of course in confidence. If my proposal be accepted, I will say that I placed the necklace in the muff in jest, or as a present."

"Do you say, Mr. Gilbert," I exclaimed, "that it was you, *not your mother*, that placed the jewels in the lining of the muff?"

Ha! ha! That shaft, I saw, found the joint in his armor. He started fiercely to his feet. "What do you mean by that, fellow?"

"Precisely what I said, *sir*. Mr. Cotes," I added, "you can have nothing more to say to this person."

"Certainly not," snapped out the attorney, who was limping about the room, and rubbing one particular part of his left thigh with savage energy.

The young gentleman, finding that his *conciliatory* mis-

sion had missed fire, began to bully, but that failing also he went his way, muttering and threatening as he went. And I soon afterwards departed, after very humbly apologizing to Mr. Cotes for the extreme liberty I had taken with his still very painful leg.

On Monday, the day the Commission was opened at Salisbury, Lieutenant Wyndham brought us the Reverend Mr. Ridgway. What he had to say was this:—Mr. Hurdley had married privately, for fear of his father's displeasure, Emily Ridgway, the reverend gentleman's sister, at Bridgewater. The marriage was a most unhappy one; a causeless, morbid jealousy possessed the husband to such an extent that he believed, or affected to believe, that the child, a girl, baptized Emily, in giving birth to whom her mother died, was not his; but this child, so Mr. Hurdley wrote to the Reverend Mr. Ridgway, died at the age of four years.

The reader is now quite as wise as the wisest in the consultation held at Mr. Cotes's on the Tuesday morning, when it was known that the grand jury had returned a "true bill" against Emily Somers. The announcement that our case would probably be called on almost immediately, broke up the council, and away we all departed for the court, Mr. Prince, of course, who was in costume, walking up Catharine street with the gravity and decorum which so well becomes the law; I and the lieutenant walked faster.

"A queer fish," said the anxious and irate artillery officer, "that master of yours: he listened to everybody, it is true, but said nothing himself, nor did anything, for that matter, except rub his nose and forehead now and then."

"Never mind; wait till it is his cue to speak. I have no fear, unless, indeed, luck should run *very* contrary."

The small, inconvenient court was crowded to excess. Mr. Justice Rook presided, and the Earl of Pembroke, with,

if I mistake not, the present Earl Radnor, then Lord Folkestone, was on the bench. Immediately a trifling case was disposed of, Emily Somers was brought in and arraigned. A murmur of sympathy and sorrow ran through the crowd at the sad spectacle, in such a position, of one so young, so fair, so beloved,—aye, so beloved, as all could testify who witnessed the frightful emotion depicted in Lieutenant Wyndham's countenance when the prisoner was placed in the dock. It was a speechless agony, and so violent, that I and the Reverend Mr. Ridgway caught hold of his arms and endeavored to force him out of the court. He resisted desperately; a deep sob at last gave vent to the strangling emotion which convulsed him, and he became comparatively calm. The leading counsel for the prosecution,—there was a tremendous bar against us, as if that could avail!—opened the case very temperately, and the witnesses, previously at the request of Mr. Prince ordered out of court, were called *seriatim*. The first were servants, who merely proved the finding of the necklace, as before described, and Miss Somers's anxiety to be gone before the chaise arrived; they were not cross-examined. Charlotte Gilbert was next called. At the mention of this name the crowd undulated, so to speak; a wave seemed to pass over the sea of heads, and all eyes were eagerly, the great majority angrily, bent upon the person of a lady about fifty years of age, splendidly attired in satin mourning. She was a fine woman, and ordinarily, I should have supposed, of imperious, commanding aspect and presence, but not now: she had, it was clear to me, undertaken a task beyond her strength, and every fibre in my body pulsated with anticipated triumph.

She answered, however, the few questions put to her by the prosecuting counsel distinctly, though in a low tone, and without raising her eyes. The necklace produced was

hers, and she had seen it found in the prisoner's muff *et cetera*. Mr. Prince rose amidst the profoundest silence; "Will you have the kindness, Mrs. Gilbert, to look at me?" he said. The witness raised her eyes for a moment, but utterly unable to sustain his gaze, they were instantly cast down again.

"Well, never mind, we must excuse you; but listen, at all events. The letters addressed to Lieutenant Wyndham and the Rev. Mr. Ridgway, which you purloined the day before Mr. Hurdley died,—where are they?"

A faint bubbling scream, she vainly strove to entirely repress, broke from the quivering lips of the witness. "The letters!" she feebly gasped.

"Aye, the letters informing those gentlemen that Emily Somers was in truth Emily Hurdley, and the legitimate heiress to the writer's wealth."

There was no attempt to answer, and Mrs. Gilbert clutched tightly at the front of the witness-box. "Your witness is fainting," said Mr. Prince to the counsel for the prosecution; "has no one a smelling-bottle?" One was found, and the terrified woman appeared to partially revive. The cross-examination was resumed.

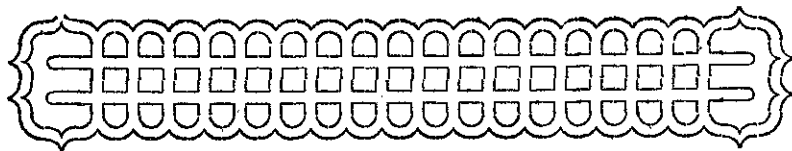
"When you placed the diamond necklace in the prisoner's muff, you—"

A piercing shriek interrupted Mr. Prince, and when we looked again towards the witness-box, it seemed empty,—Mrs. Gilbert had fallen, utterly insensible, on the floor. She was borne out of court, and Mr. Prince addressing the opposite side, said in his blandest tone, "You had better, perhaps, call another witness; the lady may presently recover." This was acceded to, and the name of Charles Gilbert was bawled out once—twice—thrice. The attorney for the prosecution left the court to seek for the unanswering Charles Gilbert. He had been gone a considerable

time, and the judge was becoming impatient, when he re-entered, looking very pale and agitated. "My lord," he said, "the prosecution is abandoned! Mrs. Gilbert and her son have driven off in their carriage."

The tempestuous hubbub that followed this announcement, the exclamations in a contrary sense,—maledictions on the prosecutrix, congratulations of the accused,—could not be for some time repressed. At length order was restored, a *quasi* explanation ensued between counsel, and Mr. Justice Rooke, turning towards the jury, said, "I conclude that after what we have just witnessed and heard, there can be no doubt of what your verdict will be." An acquittal was instantly pronounced by acclamation; the triumphant shouts of the audience were renewed, and I could just distinguish through tears that almost blinded me, Emily Somers carried off in the rapturous embrace of Lieutenant Wyndham.

"You and Mr. Cotes," said Mr. Prince, as soon as I could listen to him, "must instantly follow to Hurdley Villa; there is important work to be done yet." There was, no doubt, but it was easily performed. Utterly panic-stricken, bargaining only for personal safety, Mrs. Gilbert and her son gave us all the information, acquired by them from the purloined explanatory letters, which was necessary to establish the legitimacy of Emily Somers,—properly Emily Hurdley; and a joyous triumphant *finale* concluded the at-one-time menacing and troubled drama I have, I fear, very imperfectly depicted.



The Golden Guillotine.

I PASSED part of the year 1824, and nearly the whole of 1825, in France. I was then more than a boy, though not quite a man—that is, I was able to observe everything, without having attained the full power of reasoning upon what I saw. Above all, my memory was more retentive than it has ever been since, for I have remarked that the pictures drawn upon the retina of the mind do not become fastened by after processes. As they first impinge, so they remain, all the more distinctly and permanently from having been traced upon a delicate and virgin surface. Youth employs itself little with the images it stores within its memory. They are kept for after use—a use that wears them out.

One over-clouded afternoon, having just had my fencing lesson, and finding it quite impossible to remain within doors any longer without getting hopelessly into the blue devils, I sallied forth into the street of Tours (the town in which we then resided), without any very definite idea of the next thing to be done. There were two ways, of course, to choose between—one to the left, up the Faubourg, past the

Fabrique de Passementerie, the *Pension*, and the ancient stone, on which was inscribed the record of some ancient inundation of the Loire, "*jusqu'ici*," stopped by the visible interposition of St. Anthony. But, then, in that direction lay the *abattoir*, and the bare idea of a sanguine gush from within the archway and down the kennel whilst I was traversing its brink, was enough to decide me. I turned to the right.

This led me to the more ancient parts of the town, and the congenial vicinity of the great Cathedral of St. Gatien. The echoes of the deep bells swept over the roofs of the houses, and chimed in with the sombre tone of my contemplations. At a particular break in this ridge of roofs, I caught a sight of the massive towers, staring over ominously upon me from the region of tempest, while two or three ravens seemed to be blown out of them ever and anon by the gusts, slowly and perseveringly returning with each lull to the shelter of the ragged tracery near their summits, and forcibly reminding me of those evil thoughts which, when expelled, return again and again to find shelter in some rent of our ruined organization. It was not without a certain sensation of awe that I found myself thus under the archiepiscopal shadow, for I had learned thus early to succumb to the genius of great structures, and to suffer myself to be bestridden by these dark embodiments of mediæval influences.

Suddenly I observed indications of the avenue coming to an end. Grass started greenly between the stones, and the street appeared untrodden by man or beast. A few steps further, and a heavy gate stood opposite me, under the skeletons of large timber trees, barring all further advance. I now cast about me for some means of exit, other than by retracing my steps, which somehow or other conveyed to me a sense of humiliation; and I did contrive to make out

at the right a low archway, through which a paved alley sharply descended, I knew not whither, but apparently a public thoroughfare. Down this, after a moment's hesitation, I plunged, and found myself, as soon as I had emerged into the light at the rear of the buildings, in a deserted plot, which seemed to stretch away in one direction, comfortless and grass-grown, nearly to the inner face of the town walls.

Long as I had resided in Tours, I had never seen or heard of this place. Where was I?—what was it? I determined to find out. Besides, it was sheltered from the wind, which was getting keener every moment, as the short day began to close in. I knew not what it was that urged me on, but I felt a forward impulse, and followed the path for some distance, until a slight bend removed altogether from my view both the buildings I had left behind, and the distant town wall, and brought me to the foot of an ancient terrace.

The solitude was impressive. The storm, which roared among the leafless great trees on the terrace overhead, as through the cordage of a ship, could not get down to where I was, except in an occasional gust and eddy, striking a bare branch against a bare stone, as if bent on killing what the winter had robbed; and the soft, moist black loam about me I could fancy to partake of the genius of the place, and derive its richness from accumulated relics of mortality.

Here I paused, marvelling at the Cyclopean proportions of the stones of which the terrace wall was composed. Surely, said I, they were giants who fashioned and put together these huge masses! But what is this? Why, the terrace looks as if it was undermined?

This exclamation was forced from me by my coming suddenly upon a breach, similar to what the waves sometimes make in a sea-wall—that is, the lower courses for some

distance appeared to have been removed outwards, the upper remaining hanging together by their own weight, so as to give a cavelike appearance to the aperture.

I had not time, however, to speculate upon the cause of what I saw, for at that instant I perceived, just within the shadow of the opening, the figure of a man kneeling. There is always something startling in stumbling upon the hidden devotions of another. If you add to this, in the stranger's appearance, a stern melancholy of countenance spread over the rigid prominence of protruding bones, scarcely covered by the sallow flesh, and the peculiar expression of eyes, the balls of which seemed, instead of swelling outwards, to hollow inwards, as you look into a rock crystal, some idea of my first sensations may be realized. I felt my heart throb, and drew a step back, in hopes I had not been observed; but the stranger, without turning his eyes in the direction in which I stood, bent towards the sound, and held up one hand, with a motion which seemed to warn me not to go, as well as not to advance.

I obeyed, as if under the spell of a mesmerizer, and stood there for three or four minutes, during which the great bells of the cathedral came down upon us ever and anon, like puffs of smoke. They were, I now for the first time remarked, tolling solemnly—a mournful peal. Presently they ceased; and then the stranger rose, and came out into the entrance of the grotto, towards me. I bowed respectfully, and, in such French as I could muster, apologized for having intruded, however unconsciously, upon his devotions. I now saw that that peculiar expressionless look I had at first remarked could give place to a more searching one. He drew his eyes, as it were, to a focus by an instantaneous effort, and set them burning upon me like a lens; then again retracted them within himself and said, calmly, and almost mournfully—

"The archbishop died an hour ago. I had a prayer to say for his soul as well as the rest. They prayed before the High Altar—I before Heaven. Where should I pray but *here*?"

"You knew him, perhaps?" I rejoined, scarcely knowing what to say.

"I have known many people, young man. It is not for that alone I knelt under this ruin. But come, sit down here; you, I see, are a stranger—so am I, though a Frenchman. We have thus a bond between us. You are young—I am old. That, too, is a bond. You are guiltless of the last century. Sit down—we can have a word with each other."

The quiet self-possession with which he addressed me, an utter stranger, surprised me. I could only account for it as the result of that one intense, concentrated gaze, by which I fancied he had satisfied himself as to my character. But such a man, so nervous, energetic, and decided, must be of no common stamp. Indeed, young and inexperienced as I was, I scarcely needed more than a moment to read thus much.

Whatever it was—whether fear or confidence, or the youthful love of adventure that prevailed with me, I made no demur, but seated myself beside him upon one of the blocks of stone.

"Let us know each other a little better," said he, "and we shall be more at our ease. I ask no particulars of *you*. I will not hear them; for you are too young to be master of your own secrets. All I required, I have discovered. *You are English*. Had I not been satisfied of this, do not suppose you would have been sitting *here, now*!"

"Well. I am."

"Enough. My name you may set down as Jean François Lenoir. I have seen many strange things in my day,

young man. Aye, and picked up odd relics from the past, as a man who digs in the bed of a stream will come upon coins, and potsherds, and bones. Here is one, now, so out-of-the-way, that I always carry it about me."

So saying, he held up before me a small gold ornament, apparently designed for the neck; but which, to my inexpressible horror, I perceived at once to be fashioned into the shape of a *guillotine*! I started up—and he rose too; but, instead of entering into an explanation, he stepped over to me, and taking my hand, led me to the light at the entrance of the grotto, then, holding the ornament so as to exhibit the reverse side, bid me read the inscription there written. It was this—

La tête tombe, le cœur reste.

As I read, he looked me steadily in the face; and, as soon as I had pronounced the words, he led me back to my seat, and, placing himself once more beside me, said:—

"Now, I have given you the key to my history. Harken unto it, for it contains instruction:—

On the 20th of October, in the year 1793, I was conducted a prisoner to the Palace of the Luxembourg. They had accused me of the crimes of being rich, noble, and a royalist. My estates having been forfeited, I had been arrested in the provinces, and was now brought up, along with several prisoners of inferior rank, to Paris. As the gate of the Luxembourg closed after me, I resigned all hope of liberation, except by one exit—the scaffold; and secretly determined to seek, if I could, the most solitary recesses of the prison, there to remain shut up with my own thoughts until my time should arrive for removal to the Conciergerie, and execution. I trusted to what ready money I had the command of for the means of obtaining this indulgence—for the

time had now come when the system of *rapiotage* had been organized, under which every one of the better class was robbed on entering the prison-gate.

The first person I saw, amidst the crowd who thronged round the wicket, anxious to catch a glimpse of their fellow-sufferers, was Pierre Levasseur, a travelling companion of mine in former years, and afterwards an occasional associate, until something incompatible in our positions in society (for he had not the *cent années*), and then the stormy scenes of the Revolution, had parted us, and I lost sight of him. He embraced me with the utmost demonstrations of affection, and, taking me by the hand, led me a little apart, and told me that having been some time an inmate of the prison, he could be of great service in introducing me to its customs as well as to its inhabitants, and preventing me making mistakes which might compromise me.

"But," said I, "I have determined to make no acquaintances here. I have friends enough for the rest of my life, I am sure. If I want to make a last confidence, you are here, my dear Levasseur, and will shrive me."

"Unless," replied he with a laugh, "*I* have first to make a confession to *you*, which, in the order of our arrest, is the most likely thing."

"And how came you here?" I inquired, suddenly recollecting that he had never appeared to me a very warm royalist, but, on the contrary, avowed himself, when I parted from him two years before, rather inclined to the popular side.

"Oh, we must not forestall our revelations! We should be at the mercy of each other, you know, if we became confidants *here* until compelled by necessity. Enough for me to say, in a whisper, that Robespierre fancied my linen was finer than his, and, as we employed the same *blanchisseuse*, he thought, I presume, that the best way of

reducing my fabric to the texture of his own, was to transfer my *lingerie* to the *laveuses* of Luxembourg."

"The same extravagant *drôle* as ever!" I exclaimed, recognising the *esprit railleur* I had so often observed and rebuked. "Take care that your nonsense does not get you into a scrape. I am told that there are eyes and ears busy hereabouts"—

"Hush! I know it; but I know, too, that the best way of disarming suspicion, is to be frank, careless, and jovial. Do you think, now," continued he, lowering his voice to a distinct whisper, at the same time putting his mouth so close to my ear, that he had to lift up my hair for the purpose—"do you think that you could form any guess amongst the persons about us, as to that character we are all so much in dread of—the *agent of the police*?"

"I don't know," replied I, venturing a stealthy look round me, which I instantly withdrew, adding—"Is it safe to scrutinize people? You confirm my suspicions as to our being watched."

"Scarcely safe, I believe," he replied; "but they *have* a few marks, nevertheless. For instance, when you see a man sitting gloomily apart, avoiding much converse with the prisoners, and noticing neither the motions nor the conversation of the groups which pass him by, you may be pretty sure that that man is a spy of Fouquier's. Upon such a fellow as me, now, they have an uncommonly sharp eye; but I laugh at them, and they can make nothing of me. Whatever evidence exists against me outside, they shall add nothing to it *here*, I promise you. You must act as I do, my dear friend. Come into society (for we have our society here); address every one, get all you can out of them; make your own observations in silence, and if you want to pass remarks, come to me. Ten to one, my superior knowledge of character, gained here at the foot of

the scaffold, which strips off all masks, will stand you in stead. And now, remember, there is a select reunion this very evening in the Salle des Pleurs, as we have named it. A few of the better order, as it used to be called—you know what that means—meet there, so I will direct (request, I beg his pardon) my peculiar little turnkey to summons you to that apartment at the usual hour, and there you will meet me, and some others of the *missing aristocracy* of France !”

I was amazed at the levity of Levasseur under such circumstances ; still, I was young myself, naturally high-spirited, and was greatly re-assured by meeting an old acquaintance where I had so little expected it ; so, after a moment's hesitation, I abandoned my original design, and surrendered myself to my friend's invitation.

As soon as we had separated, however, my mind relapsed into despondency. The execution of Marie Antoinette had taken place only a few days before. When I first heard of it, my soul had boiled over with vengeance, but by this time its effect was only to aggravate and deepen my dejection. Besides, the terrible reality of my situation forced itself upon me through every chink of my senses. It was now that I felt, for the first time, the iron of captivity enter into my soul. Pallid and emaciated faces peered spectrally into mine, as if they envied me the flush of health I had borne in among them from the world without, and could not communicate. A confused wrangling, consequent on overcrowded accommodation, incessantly met my ears ; a contention in which every loftier feeling proper to man as a member of society, gives way to the one grovelling instinct of self, degrading his high humanity down to the level of the brutes. The forced intermixture of ranks and grades, previously dissociated by a natural arrangement assented to on both sides, displayed its effects in fierce and humili-

ating collisions, in which the great social drama of the Revolution was enacted on a small and mean scale under my eyes. I might easily enter into detail. Here and there a group lay apart, unconscious, apparently, of the terrible tumult around. The messenger of death had come to these—had taken one, or two, or more away to the Conciergerie, never to be heard of more. I saw one man, who seemed to be the survivor of a family ; for even the wretches expecting their own fate, pitied him. He sat still, in a ray of sunshine, a thing which the full blaze of day was powerless to resuscitate.—But why torture you with all this ? It is past—and here am I.

Evening came, and, instead of the turnkey, appeared Levasseur himself. He suspected I might make excuses, or be unable to muster my spirits, and determined, he said, to use his own influence. I saw it was useless to resist ; so I rose from my seat, leaned on his arm, and passed along the corridor to the Salle des Pleurs.

I entered ; and found myself in an ill-lighted but spacious hall, furnished with some rude chairs, tables, and benches, in which were already assembled probably more than one hundred persons. It was at once perceptible that here, though a prisoner, I was in elevated society. The eye of one accustomed to mix with the world detects, almost at a glance, and under any disguise, the grade of the company it surveys. Besides, mine was not wanting in quickness, and at that time, though uninstructed as yet, possessed in full vigor those natural powers it learned afterwards to turn to better account. I saw that, in spite of those dim lamps, and iron bars, and rude benches, I stood amongst the nobility of France, and like a true aristocrat, my heart and courage instantly bounded within me. I felt that amidst the convulsion of society it was still permitted me to associate with the ancient blood of an ancient

kingdom, and I scarcely cared even though I were to suffer the penalty of having its current flowing through my veins, so I were permitted to the last to enjoy the exquisite privileges its participation afforded me.

"But, M. Lenoir," interrupted I, "you had not previously informed me of your being noble?"

"Nor had I intended to do so," replied he, after a moment's pause, drawing a long breath, as the strain was taken off his memory; "you have made an unconscious discovery amidst my revelations. Few older families existed even then—none exist now within the kingdom—than the Vicomtes de Martigny, of which I was the sole representative."

"De Martigny!" cried I. "Why, they belonged to this very province!"

"To this spot, almost," he replied. "Their estates were bounded on two sides by the walls of Tours, and extended across to the lordship of Montbazou. But what of that? They are gone; and he who might have transmitted them, he, too, will go; and with him, the last claimant who could have recovered them. I stand here, the sole survivor of my race!"

I looked with a degree of reverence upon this solitary representative of a long line of nobles, many anecdotes relating to whom I had heard during my residence in Tours, and who were always spoken of as the *Grands Seigneurs* of the district.

"Let me ask a question," said I, "arising out of your disclosures. How comes it that you live alone, under an assumed name, and yet remain *here*, where you are likely to be most easily recognised?"

"You will understand the reason before I have done. My immediate object in living as I do, and in renouncing my proper title, is to elude the curiosity and the kindness

of those who have nothing to discover which I would not keep concealed, and can offer no consolation that could repair the past."

I entered the Hall of Tears (as with a ghastly conceit they named their place of meeting), and was recognised by more than one of the personages assembled there. Woe was imprinted on the visages of many of these; a reckless hilarity lighted up the countenances of a few of the younger men, but most of them retained their ordinary cheerfulness and vivacity unimpaired and unexaggerated; and all, without exception, appeared to preserve the lofty and chivalrous demeanor which might be deemed hereditary in their families, and had, at all events, become a second nature. For me to have appeared otherwise than myself in such a society, would have been derogatory to my pretensions—so in a few moments I fell in with the spirit of the assemblage, and, shutting my eyes to the gloomy accessories, strove to imagine myself once more in one of the *salons* of the Faubourg St. Germaine.

What struck me as most singular, though in keeping with the name of this hall, was, that many of the ladies wore as ornaments, either on their heads, round their necks, or on their bosoms, pieces of jewellery significant in their forms of the horrors that surrounded and awaited them. One exhibited a chain and padlock bracelet, another a dagger through her hair, and a third a skull and cross-bones as a brooch. A shudder ran through me as I observed this grim pleasantry associated with death; and though I learned at last to look upon these emblems with indifference—nay, with something less than indifference, as you shall hear—yet it took some time to reconcile me to the fashion.

Levasseur stuck close to my elbow, and watched the effect of what I witnessed, as it depicted itself upon my countenance. He gave me credit more than once for my

steadiness of nerve under circumstances so trying and so novel, and at the same time satisfied my curiosity, every now and then, by recounting anecdotes and incidents relating to the more remarkable of the personages who approached and receded from us.

"There: do you see that reserved, downcast-looking body, with the tonsure of a monk only half overgrown by the locks of a *sans-culotte*? He seems to think that society is a mistake, now that it is likely to lose *him* so soon. That is the *cidevant* Abbé Fauchet, who will probably remove his gravity from hence to the Conciergerie in a day or two. He figures, you know, among the Girondin worthies who seem so indignant that their turn should come at last for the guillotine."

"What! a Girondin?" exclaimed I; "are they actually in the room?"

"To be sure. The noblesse admits them on the score of their youth and approaching dissolution. See, here we have another of them, for they are gregarious. He is hobbling up on his crutches to cheer up Fauchet. That is Sillery; a jolly dog to the last."

"Where is Vergniaud?" I whispered, unable to repress the interest I felt in the theme of all tongues.

"We must go further up the room to reach him," replied Levasseur. "He and Ducos have contrived to excite pretty nearly as violent a *fureur* amongst the *grandes dames* as they formerly did *chez les dames de la halle*; and never can manage to get, even in prison, a moment's peace, or what *they* would call peace; that is, solitude."

I could scarcely refrain from a smile at this wild travesty of the classic sentiment, and advanced into the hall until I reached the circle, in the midst of which stood Vergniaud, Ducos, and Fonfrède. For a moment I could not help feeling a flush of triumph at seeing these firebrands themselves

the victims of their own exterminating frenzy. The next, I stood spell-bound like the rest, listening to such a flow of eloquence from the lips of the principal speaker as no experience of my life had ever prepared me for. It was not the excited extravagance of mere declamation you so often listen to, full of florid luxuriance upon a dead level, like a tropical forest. Vergniaud spoke like a philosopher and a man of the world as well as an orator. Every exalted theme he discussed by turns; and when the poetic youth, Ducos, illustrating the subject Vergniaud had last touched upon—namely, the miseries of France and the unhappy dangers into which young and gifted spirits had been drawn by their patriotism—uttered, with the fervor of a martyr, that fine sentiment of Corneille's—

La plus douce esperance est de perdre l'espoir,

the eye of the speaker bent upon him with an expression of sympathizing affection, which seemed to go to the hearts of the listening group around, and certainly disarmed mine for the moment of some of its prejudices.

"Come, come," cried Levasseur, jogging my elbow, "it will not do to have you embrace the Gironde *contre cœur*. Were Madame Roland here to-night, indeed, there might be some excuse for you. She, alas! has taken a most extraordinary and unaccountable aversion to me, do you know; and, when I appear here, seldom honors us with her presence. But see, away goes Vergniaud turning on his heel, and after him sails that most aristocratic provincial neighbor of yours, the Marquise de la Cour Cheverny, in a flood of ancestral tears. Young Montmorenci follows her, with a vinaigrette and heart at her service. Ah! you see, Vicompte, they cannot bar the Faubourg out, after all!"

Here Levasseur laughed softly, with the discreet hilarity of an *habitué* of these prison festivities.

"Levasseur! Levasseur! be serious, I entreat of you. This is not the place for such levity!"

My remonstrance was prompted by the entrance of two persons.

One of them was an elderly lady, the other a young one. As soon as they had entered, an ecclesiastic, of dignified demeanor, whose face I did not see at the time, but who seemed to have been expecting them, moved over towards them, as if to afford them the protection their sex and unprotected condition had need of in such an assemblage as this.

They were dressed differently from the rest of the company, who most of them contrived still to adorn themselves in what might be called, by courtesy, the fashion of the day, even as far as paint, patches, and powder, to say nothing of the ominous jewellery they wore. A sepulchral simplicity marked these ladies. The elder wore a plain grey robe, and a plain cap covering her grey locks. The younger was in spotless white, with an extraordinary weight of what is called black hair, but which in northern nations is more frequently dark brown, drawn away from her brow, and falling in shadows of lustrous intricacy upon her neck and shoulders. It would be a vain task to describe her face. At the time, I could not have even made the attempt; and if I afterwards knew her marble complexion and Grecian features by heart, it was in that moment but a wonderful and radiant embodiment of loveliness that I saw, penetrating without definite outlines the tissues of my imagination. At the instant she entered, a rich voice from amongst the company was just giving the minor *motif* of the then favorite aria by Glück, "*Che farò*;" and that form, to my excited fancy, seemed to start

out of the melody, as if born of grief and loneliness; so that when the strain ended, I expected to see her, too, vanish with the song, and leave memory like an echo ringing in my heart. It was not till the sounds had been lost in the deepening hum of voices that I could utter—

"My friend—who—what are these?"

"I knew you would be on wires as soon as Alphonsine entered," exclaimed my companion, without fully answering my question. "She has turned our heads here already, and must, if she has a fair trial, soften the heart even of the great Rhadamanthus of the Hotel de Ville."

I felt this levity to be more than out of place—to be revolting. Still, I must not, I knew, judge the unhappy throng around me by the rules of a world from which they were, most of them, for ever shut out. Accordingly, I contented myself with repeating my question.

"These are aunt and niece," replied he. "Noble and all that—the St. Lucs. The elder lady's husband, Alphonsine's uncle, has already had his last promenade upon the fatal cart. These two are charged with 'complicité,' and when their turns come will, no doubt, follow in procession, unless they have better success than Custine's daughter. Meanwhile, let us make the most of them. They lend salt to our '*pleurs*,' and do all that mortals—or immortals—can to reconcile us to iron bars and stone walls. You must not be known not to know them. Come along, the archbishop must give place for this once."

So saying, and without affording me time to collect my thoughts, he dragged me by the arm up to the ladies, who seemed already to have gathered a respectful and sympathizing circle about them. He made his obeisance with a deferential courtesy, strangely contrasted—to me, who had just heard the remarks he had made—with his true sentiments; and was proceeding to introduce me, when just at

that moment I caught a glimpse of the clergyman that had at first joined them, and, to my surprise, discovered him to be the archbishop of the province to which I belonged, the excellent and loyal M. de Montblanc. Our mutual recognition was at once pleasurable and painful. I threw myself at his feet, and the excellent prelate shed tears over my youthful captivity. When I raised myself up, I observed the eyes of the younger of the two ladies resting upon me with a mournful expression, and turning towards Levasseur, saw upon his countenance the last traces of a smile, which he had not intended to have left lingering there so long. As it was, he took my hand, and gallantly kneeling before the two ladies, presented with an extravagance of gesture, looking very like a caricature of the *ancien régime*, Citoyen le Vicomte de Martigny!

The archbishop seized my other hand, and without seeming to notice the overstrained acting of my companion, spoke my name over again, adding some words of delicate commendation—dictated, I felt, more by his kindness, and the interest he had evinced in my family, than by any deserts of mine.

I look back with astonishment at the intensity of the glow which I felt pervading my whole soul—at the magnificence of the conflagration kindled within me by the consciousness felt at the instant and in its full energy, that now, at the portals of the grave, as it were, I had for the first time met with the fulfilment of my destiny, the substance of that shadow of love my whole previous life had been one vain pursuit of. It is possible, young man, that no human being in a less desperate emergency could have all the aspirations of his nature so completely and instantaneously embodied before him. Life was condensed, as we believed, from years into hours. The world was compressed within the boundaries of our prison. Our career was to be accomplished in

a few actions, for which we scarcely had time. Our destiny was cooped up in a few fierce feelings, crowding to rend their barriers within our breasts. I received the image before me into my heart as a revelation from heaven—a great light, which I only knew to be light, too dazzling for me to look at. It passed in, blinding me on its way. I could scarcely say what it was I worshipped.

This powerful heart-stroke carried with it the reciprocating conviction which alone could make the sensation endurable. I felt that the shock was mutual—that the electric current of passion could not rend one bosom so completely, without a corresponding rift in the other. To have doubted this would have been death. And, as after knowledge showed me that these subtle influences, while they transcend reason, act in strict conformity with it, so now, in very truth, I had divined aright in the midst of my bewilderment. Oh, mighty force of one master passion! Terrific and fatal power, which lightens and blasts at the same moment, according to what inscrutable law are thy thunderbolts turned loose amongst mankind! To what end was it, mighty Creator! if not to vindicate thy superseded worship, that the swift and merciful axe cut off the authors of our woes, while upon us was wreaked the slow vengeance which has cast *her* bones *here*, and still binds *me* fast to life, like a malefactor chained to the oar which strains without liberating him!

The wretched man, as he alluded to the fate of the woman appearing to be thus idolized, had seized my arm, and when he shrieked the word "*here*," pointed with his skinny finger to the ground at our feet—which caused me to start up—but the next moment set me upon endeavoring, in the midst of my excitement, to form some conjecture as to the cause of his haunting this spot, coupling what he had now uttered with some expressions used previously. I

immediately perceived, however, that there was not enough revealed as yet to justify any plausible surmise, so I turned once more in the attitude of anxious attention towards the exhausted narrator, on whose forehead big drops of sweat stood out.

Let us hasten on, my son. Hasten as I may, I cannot make my relations as rapidly as time flew. Nearly four months had gone over our heads as prisoners in the Luxembourg, and still, though the Angel of Death entered those gloomy dungeons day after day, laying his fingers of blood upon victim after victim right and left of us, upon our shoulders his touch had not yet descended. We had survived, as it seemed to us, whole generations of mankind. From the young and gifted Girondins, and the regicide Orleans, to the very turnkeys themselves, all had been swept off to the guillotine, and new victims and new gaolers were still brought in to pass their probation for the scaffold. The festivities which we had affected to make a microcosm of the precincts of our prison-house, had died with the projectors of them. To us, and with new comers, it became flat and wearisome, this attempt to re-enact gaieties which only reminded us of our losses. In the Conciergerie, it is true, those who had been brought so far on their way to the grave still made wild sport of their last hours, in the dead of each night rehearsing the ghastly tragedy they were to perform on the morrow. Suppressed laughter floated through the empty corridors, and troubled the sleep of the conscience-ridden gaolers, making them lie closer, as they half believed that the ghosts of headless tenants were rejoicing at the ample repasts preparing for the tomb they had descended into. But here we had neither hope nor despair enough for such things. Life for us had become a dream—a sepulchral shadow, under which silence alone flourished. The discipline having become stricter, we could

not, indeed, have indulged in all the relaxations once open to us; but the stringency of their rules was an unnecessary severity. Our spirits had descended to the level of their requisitions before ever they had been devised.

A question, I know, by this time suggests itself to you—how did all this act upon the feelings and affections of two individuals thrown together as spectators of such horrors! A curious speculation, no doubt. It was the fire mighty to separate the gold from the dross. We bore the test. Happiness hovered over us both like a commiserating angel, not quite daring to alight upon us, but without once winging its way out of sight. To me no period of life, before or since, has equalled that in felicity. For her, I believe, I may answer with equal confidence. If the chamber of life was dark and vaulted, there was a window through which each could look into a world, and deem it its own. The barriers which shut out heaven and earth, had left to us our eyes, and left us together. Into these luminaries we looked for light, and saw in them perspectives, heights, depths, distances, glories, sufficient for the amplest aspirations of two beings like us joined, fused now, in the furnace of adversity, into one. We had sworn upon a token I had given her—one devised in accordance with the spirit of the strange and half-sepulchral world we lived in—the token I have already exhibited to you—to be true to each other until divided by its stroke. The vow was intended to strengthen our hearts, and fortify them against the worst fate we apprehended—though not the worst that awaited us. I had no hope, no wish, no thought, beyond where I was. She pastured upon my looks; and though her paleness had become mortal, her flush hectic, and the gleam of her eyes meteoric, nothing boded that she was not blessed, and might not be immortal in her present condition.

The demeanor of Levasseur during the period we have

come to, was puzzling. He made friends and intimates on all sides, and succeeded, by his appearance of sympathy and the pliancy of his character, in gaining the confidence of those most opposed to each other in station and opinion. He was always occupied, if not in the large common apartments, in the more secluded parts of the palace; and the very turnkeys appeared to exhibit towards him a deference which they refused to more exalted personages. As fresh arrests took place, the new comers found in him a ready and instant sympathizer, and when at last the summons of death came (for such everybody felt the removal to the Conciergerie to be), he took leave of the departing wretches with every demonstration of commiseration, frequently remarking to us how bitter a drop it was in the cup of his captivity that so many of those with whom he had formed the closest intimacy, were amongst the number thus selected for sacrifice. It became a common topic, indeed, with the survivors, this ill-omened peculiarity respecting him; and we should have been more ready, perhaps, under some superstitious feeling, to dissociate ourselves from his society, but for the dread that was uppermost with us all of having it supposed, by any withdrawal from each other, that we might be classed with those retiring and morose individuals whom he had himself taught us to suspect of being implicated with the police in their system of *espionage*.

Alphonsine alone manifested a reserve towards Levasseur. I could not comprehend this; and occasionally rallied him about it. He turned off the subject with a laugh; and only redoubled his assiduities in his usual sarcastic style, which won upon so many and amused all. As for me, I kept nothing from him—my heart was as open as the sun to his gaze.

The 10th of February, 1794, *was the day fixed upon for our flight—yes, that was a thing arranged.* Her aunt

Madame de St. Luc, and the archbishop were to accompany us. Levasseur was to remain; but told us he had reason to calculate upon following us ere long. It is unnecessary to tell you how all this was brought about. Our names seemed to have been forgotten in the vast number of later arrests, and day after day they had come, without placing us upon the list of the proscribed. What interest was made for us, it is as little needful that you should hear; you may believe it was powerful—and that it was woman's. With that one woman rested the generosity of the action—with the man whom she influenced, the treachery, if treachery it must be deemed. I am not called upon to tell you wonders unconnected with my own history; but I might well excite your astonishment. Well, let it pass. Had my distempered and gangrened fancy contented itself with accepting the manna from the hand of Providence, without thrusting its own miserable devices between Heaven and its bounty, we might—but who knows? "*Ceux qui ont avancé que tout est bien, ont dit une sottise; il fallait dire que tout est aux mieux.*"

A fierce hilarity buoyed up my spirits as the day approached. I had difficulty in keeping this under control in the presence of my fellow-prisoners. Alphonsine did not share it. On the contrary, she was grave and pensive, and wept occasionally. She said she had a foreboding that she should never be as happy elsewhere as she had been within the walls of the Luxembourg. It was arranged that we should make our way to Tours, where the archbishop possessed the means of concealing us until better times. We were to be married as soon as we arrived there; or, if this plan should not succeed, so soon as he could procure the material means of solemnizing that sacrament.

Why was Alphonsine sad?—My mind was feverishly active. The times were wild. Our plan was desperate. Was she TRUE? *Shall I try her?* It was the suggestion

of an instant. Another moment had decided me to put her to the proof. "She would leave happiness in the prison," were her words. Who was remaining behind? Why, of our intimates, only Levasseur. Infernal thought! How had this never occurred to me before? Nothing more likely. He was ever of our party. He would not speak of her. True, she avoided him in my presence, and his very attentions were tinged with something of bitterness. But what of that? The thing was—not plain, perhaps, but probable—*probable*. I will test him to the quick. *He shall aid me in the business himself!*

I was sitting in the depth of a window, with my back to the light, leaning against iron bars, pondering these things. Levasseur entered;—I sprang up, and laid a hand upon each of his shoulders—

"Levasseur, *mon garçon*, we are off, if all succeeds, to-night, you know."

"Well! Yes, you are."

"You are sorry, infernally sorry—eh?"

"Yes; it will make a difference to me for a time."

"Oh, I know. Suppose we enliven the scene, to keep up our spirits?"

"Enliven the scene! How?"

"Take a lesson from the Conciergerie; enact a drama, or something of the sort."

"I don't understand you, De Martigny. Don't let the people see you so *ébloui*, or they will suspect something."

"Women are not always what they look."

"Sometimes they are better."

"Sometimes, Levasseur, sometimes. Old Madame de St. Luc, for instance. Eh?"

"Quite as good, at all events."

"Can we be sure of *any* of them?"

"*You* can, I suppose. For myself, I have seen too much of the world to be anything but a sceptic on such points."

"Then you do not entirely believe in Alphonsine?"

"Ha, ha! I knew what all this was coming to. A discreet question to put to a friend!"

"That is the point. I want to try her."

"Try her!" he exclaimed, disengaging himself from my grasp. "How is that to be done?"

"Oh, easily. Parbleu! it will be such a famous preparation for the journey! Now, *you* can help me in this."

Fool that I was! I might have seen in the sudden introversion of his eyes, so well remembered afterwards, what that man's soul was made of. They drew back, as it were, deep beneath his brows, and glowed with a flickering, suspicious gleam, which he could neither control nor conceal.

All this I laid at the instant to a distrust of his own powers of assisting me, or, at most, to a momentary unwillingness to implicate himself in any new difficulty or adventure. I gave him time to recover, and lost for ever the golden opportunity of unmasking him.

"Yes! you can help me. The postern towards the gardens will be opened this night at twelve o'clock by an unknown agent. An outer gate will likewise be unguarded. We have the password. Disguises and places of concealment are prepared. A guide awaits us. I have till midnight to put Alphonsine to the proof. If I let that hour pass I shall never know her—*never*, Levasseur. Her heart I feel to be my own. Look at me, Levasseur. You know we need not put her *affection* to the test; but she may not be proof against terror. Muffle yourself in a disguise; touch her on the shoulder, Levasseur, as she passes

to her cell; say she must come to the Conciergerie; that if she utters an exclamation or arouses her friends, all must accompany her; that she must, therefore, be silent, and *acquiesce*. Then tell her that her only chance of evading the horrible fate yawning before her, is by revealing what she knows *concerning me*—what are my sentiments on public affairs—what intrigues I am party to—and, generally, what secrets I have to divulge. Let this go on, until her inmost heart is probed; *and then, and not till then*, release her. The trial will be a sharp and terrible one, but it will be final and complete."

Levasseur hesitated, meditated,—and undertook the task. As for me, I felt a wild elation, agonizing as if my own trial had been at hand, and compounded of I know not what of distrust, excitement, alarm, recklessness, passion, and revenge. Utter confusion was in my breast.

The scene was fixed for eleven o'clock, after the turn-keys had gone their rounds, and when the galleries were deserted. Young man, I had my own plan within the other. Do not suppose I believed that I should have satisfied myself by leaving the trial in Levasseur's hands. No; I had not informed him of the interior secret, which was, *that I should be myself a concealed witness of the seizure and examination of Alphonsine*.

In the shadow of an arched niche some of the prisoners had set up a crucifix of overgrown proportions, before which, in passing to and from their cells, they might stop to offer a hurried prayer. Behind this crucifix the darkness was complete, and, as it was close to the place arranged for the arrest, I ensconced myself there. The only ray, indeed, which reached the spot, struggled from a coarse lamp, hung at a considerable distance in an angle, where it was contrived to throw its feeble light down two diverging galleries. As the moment approached, I trembled all over; the joints

of my knees refused their office, my trepidation being increased by the apprehension that my very nervousness might betray my concealment, and frustrate my scheme. Listening for every sound, I heard at a distance the rumbling of the fatal cart, usually arriving at this unobserved hour from the Conciergerie for those wretches who were next to undergo examination before the revolutionary tribunal. Presently it came into the yard, and stopped; and then my ear, rendered acute by the silence and the morbid disturbance of my nerves, became conscious of sounds from distant cells, mumbled whispers of plotting fellow-prisoners, agonized ejaculations of solitary prayer, the moaning hum of disturbed sleep; nay, I even fancied I could catch ever and anon the more remote clank of a chain, as some unhappy wretch in the vaults beneath the palace turned himself round in the darkness. From without, there came to my ear now and then, as if borne upon a breeze, the hushed thunder of the great city, like the premonitory voices of a volcano whose long inactivity is about to have its term at last. By-and-by, an owl blundered against the stonework of the window at the end of the passage and startled me. I had scarcely recovered from this, when I heard a stealthy step approach, and, a little further removed, a light but firm foot-fall following the same direction.

The stealthy step drew near, stopped close to me, and I could see the outlines of a figure cloaking itself. Scarcely had it time to draw aside when the other came up; and the first, which I had no difficulty in recognising as Levasseur's, suddenly emerged into the middle of the passage, and confronted the advancing figure. A faint shriek issued from the lips of Alphonsine—for it was she; but she immediately recovered herself, and demanded with firmness who barred her passage.

"One," said Levasseur, disguising his voice with consi-

derable skill, "who has your life and death in his hands. Follow me."

"Not unless forced to do so," said Alphonsine, in a low, agitated whisper. "I know you not—and am passing to my cell."

"But I know you; and am come to offer you better lodgings—at the Conciergerie. Come, citoyenne, we allow of no leave-takings, and you will not want many changes of raiment. Come along with me, and come quietly—do you hear? The quieter the better, for others as well as yourself."

"Oh, my God! must I go—alone?"

"Certainly not, mademoiselle. You can have all your friends along with you. You have only to rouse them up by uproar, a struggle, shrieks, or the like, to place me under the disagreeable necessity of forming a gang of the whole family party, and taking you off together in the tumbril which is waiting for us down below in the court."

"Hush! I'm silent. Don't breathe a word. If I must go, God's will be done. One prayer before this crucifix, and I am ready."

"What! And you make so little of it! Do you know whither I am to conduct you?"

"I know it well. To ignominy, torture, and death. Alone, unfriended, and unheard of, shall the unhappy Alphonsine endure the most terrible of fates. To endure it she will be torn from all that her life holds dear, from those for whom she would suffer a thousand deaths. I know it well. But—breathe not a word; they sleep sound. I will make my prayer with silent lips—then let me depart."

So saying, she was about to throw herself down at the foot of the cross behind which I stood, when Levasseur, casting off his disguise, seized her in his arms, and exclaimed, in a voice hoarse with suppressed emotion—

"No, Alphonsine; not for this am I come. Let the

divinity of reason within your own heart be favorable, and plead for me. I have much to reveal—of myself and others. Listen to me, who can speak and answer; and turn from that image, before which you might pour forth your supplications for ever without response or succor. Who, think you, has sent me here, to accost and confront you in this lonely cloister? You dare not answer, though I understand your misgivings. The loved, trusted, faultless De Martigny!"

A faint exclamation burst from the lips of the girl as she drew back from his embrace.

"Aye, De Martigny. He believes you false; he does not understand you—he never understood you. Selfish even in his predilections, he now seeks to test you in this cruel manner, as much, perhaps, to seek evidence against you, and a plausible excuse for—shall I say?—deserting you!"

Alphonsine gave signs of faintness, and supported herself against the masonry of the wall. It was too dark for me to see her face, though she was close to me, but I could hear the heart beat.

"Or, perhaps," continued he, relaxing the strain when it appeared too violent, "it is only levity; though methinks it is a cruel game to play. You are going to run away with him this night—at least so you think. Perhaps he thinks so, too. Is it to happiness you are going? Just reflect upon this scheme. Suppose it never went further. Is it for this man—the man who devised all this torture—is *he* the one for whom you are prepared to risk so much? I see you pause—you reflect. You have need to do so—far greater need than you imagine. Hearken! do you know *me*? Have you ever heard for what crime I was thrust in here, or why I have not followed Vergniaud, Madame Roland, and the rest to the guillotine? Ask Fouquier-Tinville who I am. Put the same question to Danton—to Robespierre.

Dost thou suppose the rulers of the destinies of France are not represented within these walls? or only represented by gaolers or turnkeys? I have thy life—*your lives*—in my hand. A turn in this way, and you are safe—a turn in the other, and you are under the bloody axe. He has betrayed you—*be mine!*”

“*Yours?*” feebly ejaculated Alphonsine, scarcely able to stand, or utter the word.

“Yes—mine. Reassure yourself. Your ridiculous plot I have taken the means of frustrating. It never had a chance of succeeding. Should the attempt be made, and fail, you are all swept to execution. Let it drop. Nothing will happen to your aunt and friends—in short, to *him*. They will remain here as before; and when peace is proclaimed, they will be free. A short time—a *very* short time—will show you what stuff *he* is made of. Come with me. You know that long before this fickle fool appeared amongst us, I was devoted to you. I have never ceased to be at your feet. Yes; through the whole humiliation of this hated rival's courtship, never for an instant did I relinquish my claim upon the heart of Alphonsine. Let her now understand constancy, and reward it.”

“Reward it, sir?”

“Oh, yes, yes, yes! I have earned something; your reason must tell you so. Come then, fairest, dearest Alphonsine! A word from me is our passport beyond these gloomy walls, into safety and happiness.”

“Begone!” she exclaimed, in a hollow voice, hoarse with indignation, spurning him from her with a gesture I judged to be a blow.

He staggered back towards the crucifix—and *me*—I heard, or rather felt, his breast heave with rage.

“Miserable woman!” he muttered; “think you that the supercilious caprice of a court can find here an appro-

priate field of action? Do you nourish the delusion that heroism, as you may name it, will in these gloomy cloisters preserve the victim an hour from the Barrière du Trone? Humble yourself, woman! not to this stump of idolatry here, but at Levasseur's feet, and implore him not to drag you through the streets by the hair of your head to the guillotine!”

“Villain! in this hour of anguish and horror, I tell thee that I despise thee more than I hate the sanguinary gang whose spy thou boastest to be. And here I, Alphonsine de St. Luc, knowing I am to die, yet stand prouder, and purer, and more joyful at heart, before the effigy of my crucified Saviour, as the affianced bride of that Charles de Martigny whom thou falsely malignest, than thy masters ever did at the shrine of the Reason their deeds have outraged, and in the face of a heaven that sickens at the blood they have spilt!”

“Call, then, upon thy God, or upon Charles de Martigny, which thou pleasest, for all other help is in vain.”

“Oh, Charles! oh, God!” cried Alphonsine, as she sprang forward, with the intention, it was evident, of embracing the crucifix. Levasseur threw himself between it and her—and at the same instant my hands were round his throat with so deadly a gripe that he was at once deprived of all power either to utter or to resist. There I held him paralysed—and was about to call Alphonsine by name, when the continuing immobility and rigidity of the figure I clutched, shot a sudden conviction into my mind—and I was silent. Agitation, and darkness, and meditated crime, make a man susceptible of any extravagant impression. Circumstances afterwards gave strong corroboration to the judgment formed at that instant. *I was satisfied that Levasseur believed himself to have been seized by the figure on the cross!*

Had I addressed Alphonsine, indeed, my words would have fallen upon unhearing ears. She had dropped senseless to the floor.

I now ventured to glance round at Levasseur's face. There was light enough to show that it was swollen, livid. The eyeballs stared and were bloodshot; the tongue protruded; blood trickled from the nose. I had no weapon, but I raised him up by main strength, without relaxing my grasp, and dashed him upon the stone floor at the foot of the crucifix; and where I cast him he lay, irredeemable now—in my fury I exulted to think—even by Him, whose emblem hung above him. I then took the fainting form of Alphonsine in my arms, and bore it to Madame de St. Luc's cell.

We escaped. Why need I dwell on these things? Paris, the faubourgs, the villages, floated off behind us, like a misty and lamp-lit dream. We scarcely knew more than that the breath of heaven fanned our burning temples. If at times a recollection of what we had left came upon the horizon of our imagination like a spectral chase, it only urged us the more madly forward in our flight, and forced the breeze more revivingly against our brows.

We turned our faces southwards. As long as it was night, we kept the highroad; and so long we were able to avail ourselves of a conveyance. But when daylight appeared this had to be relinquished, and then the fields and farm-houses afforded us tracks and a shelter. The simplest things, emblems of the country and of freedom, drew tears from our eyes. Our feelings had all been intensified in proportion to the paucity of objects we had to exercise them upon; and now the sight of a peasant driving his team in the fallow, a milk-maid returning home with her pail; nay, even the kine ruminating in the pasture, the very trees and grass waving in the breeze, kindled irrepressible emotions

within our hearts. On the way I made full confession to the heroic creature of my cruel suspicions, of my employment of Levasseur, of my own counter-plan—of all that to her was still inexplicable. I made no attempt at extenuation. I could only confess myself utterly unworthy of *her*, and acknowledge that my bitterest punishment was to learn how faultless was the object I had presumed to suspect of a taint of earthly corruption. She wept as I recounted these things, received my explanations with a heavenly tenderness, smiled sadly at my doubts—and forgave me. We were too new to life, and too uncertain of its lasting, to waste time upon anything but the great love that possessed us.

We had to trust ourselves to numerous individuals. It was a slender chance of our reaching Tours unbetrayed. Terror reigned around; and when occasionally we were constrained to ask for shelter in some remote and humble homestead, even where it was afforded, paleness and trembling seized upon the inmates, and we were dismissed with furtive haste, leaving dread and disquiet behind us, as if a crime had been committed upon the premises.

Besides, I could not help experiencing a sort of boding apprehension, coupling itself with the revelations of the wretch Levasseur. Suppose him dead, had his agents already received instructions to act, and were we to be the victims of posthumous malignity? It was plain that he had had his reason for not having us swept away in the usual course to the Conciergerie. Perhaps he judged that he should have a freer stage for the accomplishment of his iniquitous designs outside the prison walls. It was easy to understand his hints as to seeing us soon again. Now the question arose on the supposition that he was dead, should we change our course at once? I did not hesitate to decide against doing so. We had a plan laid, the only one

which afforded rational grounds of hope, but which might have been thwarted by the machinations of a traitor. He being dead we had so much the better chance of success, since under no circumstances could his emissaries act without communicating with him—these not being times for men to compromise themselves without the warrant of influential instigators. But suppose him alive—I would not allow myself to speculate upon this alternative at all. The thing, I insisted, was impossible. Nevertheless, prudence constrained us so far to deviate from our plan, as to make Tours only a first halting-place, with the design of penetrating at once further into the west, where we should be more out of the reach of pursuit.

We arrived here safely. The archbishop had made his plans previously, and contrived matters so, that a passage leading from the palace underground was open for us; and the secret oratory which existed in the spot where we now stand, received the weary party of fugitives on the night of their arrival. Then for the first time since our departure from the prison were we able to collect our thoughts, and devise means for our ultimate safety.

Our plans were as follows: We were to remain where we were for the night, and the next day the archbishop and I, after ascertaining as well as we could the state of public feeling in Tours, were to proceed down the river to the retired hamlet of Luynes, and there engage one of the flat-bottomed boats that ply on the river, which was to be ready for us—that is, for Alphonsine, her aunt, and myself—to embark on the same night, and follow the current of the Loire in the direction of La Vendée, where we believed we should find friends, and were likely to obtain an asylum. But before we set out upon our voyage, the exemplary prelate, who had thus far been our guide, protector, and friend, was to perform for us a last service, and within this

apartment unite my adored Alphonsine and me in the holy bond of wedlock.

Look about you, young man. Does this look like an asylum of refuge—a bridal chamber! Behold these gigantic blocks, dislocated as if by an arm still more gigantic, and ask yourself whether an ordinary frenzy, even of destruction, could have wrought the ruin you see!

The next morning arose, serene and bright. As Alphonsine and I ascended from the apartments beneath into the secluded gardens of the Archevêché, and for the first time looked upon the enchantment of heaven and earth in freedom and together, we felt our souls overpowered, and stood long in speechlessness under the open sky, unable to do more than silently inhale an atmosphere of happiness almost too rare for our subdued spirits. I then turned towards Alphonsine, and perceived the tears coursing down her marble cheeks.

“Oh! my well beloved,” cried I; “give this day at least to smiles, and let the current of our destiny, if it must form to itself a channel of tears, flow round the tranquil island of this present happiness, even though it meet to-morrow, to unite the past and the future in one stream of sorrow!”

I could not adopt another tone, though I felt how impossible it was for such language to establish confidence within her breast. We had gone through too much—our fortunes had been of too eventful and too terrible a cast, to make the idea of security anything but a mockery. It was better to be true than to be cheerful, and in a minute my tears mixed with hers.

“In a few days, perhaps, Alphonsine, we may feel that there is a life before us. I admit that as yet we cannot reckon upon an hour.”

“Yes, Charles, until then we have only to hope the

best, and be prepared for the worst. Your gift is yet upon my bosom"—here she showed me the golden guillotine suspended from her neck. "As long as I wear this I am reminded that I belong half to death, half to life. Only when we are safe will I remove it from its present place, and preserve it as a relic of dangers—and pleasures—that are past."

So saying, she replaced it in the folds of her dress next her heart, and a smile, the last I ever saw her wear, dawned upon her pallid countenance. If I imprinted a kiss upon those lips, and drew that form to my breast, it was with so largely mingled a sense of foreboding, and so evasive and unrealized a throb of joy, that it became a question with me, in after years, whether the bliss of that instant did not belong to the domain of dreams, and deserve a place among the other aspirations after which a heart destined to misfortune feebly flutters out of the shadow of a doom it cannot escape.

The first buds of spring tipped the fruit trees of the garden. A hundred birds sported from branch to branch, and the frosty dew of the morning yet hung upon the early flowers. We could not but feel all this. These simple things, of all other things, went most to our hearts. We fell upon our knees, and prayed there under the open sky.

And there I quitted her. Oh, God! can I go on? The archbishop and I found the town in a state of fierce excitement. Recent arrivals from Paris had still further inflamed the revolutionary zeal of the inhabitants, whose vicinity to the seat of the Vendean war had rendered them from the first ardent partisans of the Montagne. Riotous parties paraded the streets, armed with weapons, carrying fire-brands, and shouting their wild *carmañoles*, and all business was suspended. It was with difficulty, even under the

favor of our disguise, that we evaded these bands, and made our way across the bridge, to the right bank, towards St. Cyr and Luynes. At last, however, we reached the hamlet; and my companion's former knowledge of the inhabitants enabled us to bribe an old boatman, whom he remembered to have been less imbued with the new ideas than his neighbors, to drop the party down during the night below Saumur, where we could put ourselves at once in communication with certain Seigneurs of the Bocage, in whom we knew we should find staunch friends. Having settled this matter to our satisfaction, we turned our steps towards Tours again, my heart in a glow of anticipation, and even the good archbishop elated with the near prospect of our speedy deliverance. For himself, he refused to accompany us. He trusted to some faithful friends, and a knowledge of the hiding-places about his own palace, and preferred awaiting a turn of affairs, which it was his fixed opinion would speedily arrive.

It was evening before we drew near the city; but long before we reached the barriers, the shouts of the mob were audible, and to our alarm we heard the tocsin ringing from the great Abbey of St. Martin. We hastened our steps, only to discover on entering the town that a dreadful scene of havoc and devastation was going forward. Above the shouts of the mob screams arose, as if from victims of their barbarity; and now and then there shot up a lurid glare towards the sky, which betokened too plainly that the ravages of fire were to be added that night to those of violence and plunder. Advancing in an easterly direction, we discovered that the ancient Abbey Church of St. Martin, the pride of central France, from whence the tocsin had been sounding, was the principal object of the fury of the mob, probably for that very reason. It was in flames before we arrived there, and we met many wretches escaping with the

sacred vessels and ornaments, their share of the spoil. Hurrying our steps towards the Cathedral, we found the mob less numerous and violent in that direction, and, although St. Julien was on fire, it was evident that the set of the raging tide was towards St. Martin, and that the quarters in our neighborhood were emptying themselves of their population, to swell the main flood thereabouts. This process appeared to me, I remember, even in that hurried and anxious moment, to go forward according to an organized system, and as if under the guidance of certain recognised leaders; for I repeatedly heard the words *à droit, à gauche*, given at the head of the gangs, by voices which they seemed instructed to obey.

The precincts of the palace were completely deserted. Not a sound was to be heard but the distant hubbub of the rioters, and occasionally the crash of a roof or tower of one of the burning edifices. When this occurred, we were further notified of the catastrophe by the sudden leap of the towers of the Cathedral out of the darkness, as they were smitten by the red-hot glow from behind us.

With trembling joy we believed all safe; and stealing cautiously up, descended into the concealed passage leading to our hiding-place. Traversing it as quickly as we could in the pitchy darkness, we both of us stopped simultaneously. It was—it must be—a dream. We rubbed our eyes. Where we had left the chamber we emerged into this open cavern, into which the lurid sky darted its dull glances, and the cries we had left found their way with the vapors and exhalations of the night.

Nobody was there. Nothing was to be seen but ruin. Not a vestige. Not a piece of furniture. Not an article of clothing. Nothing but these huge fragments scattered about, and the desperate marks of wedges and crowbars, and other mechanical means of aiding human fury.

Like lightning, Levasseur darted across my mind. "He is alive!" I shrieked, dashing my hands up towards heaven. The next moment I had fled out through the aperture into the darkness, leaving the archbishop motionless where he had first become aware of the catastrophe.

For weeks my existence is a dream. I believe I was mad. Levelled with the beasts, I acquired the keen scent and sagacity of these tribes, when instinct draws them after their prey. I remember myself at Saumur, at Angers in the forests of Brittany, subsisting upon roots. The slot of my enemy lay towards Nantes. There Carrier was multiplying his human sacrifices. Blood was too slow in flowing. The river offered more speedy execution, and a roomier grave. Shoals of victims choked the channels of the Loire, and turned its waters into putridity. There were people about, here and there, who could afford some inklings. Kennelling as I did with the wolves, with them I made nightly descents upon habitual places and the abodes of men. As these bore away lambs and other weaklings of the flock, so I fragments of intelligence, whispers, hearsays, eaves-droppings, and vague surmises of the bloodshot stranger, who was urging some females westward. I saw whither all this was tending. Hope had left my bosom; I scarcely cared to accomplish a rescue; and dared not think upon anything but revenge. To enter Nantes was certain death, and death would frustrate all *my* objects, and crown *his* with triumph—so I reserved myself to the consummation.

I joined the remnant of the Vendéans, wandering houselessly through Brittany, and prowling about since the battle of Savenay in bands of fifties and hundreds, with every man's hand against them. For such I was a fit companion. They armed me; I clasped my sword like a friend who was to do me a service. Thenceforth it was my closest companion.

Daring as were these Chouans, they found in me one whom they could not hope to rival. The gang I led gained a name for its desperate audacity, and carried terror even to the gates of Nantes, within which unhappy town likewise that fearful presence now stalked abroad in visible shape, and daily devoured its victims wholesale. The river, which had flowed past the walls ever since they were built, bearing blessings on its bosom and reflecting heaven on its surface, now yawned like a judgment close at hand, and into its depths continually travelled the youth and bravery and beauty and virtue and loyalty of Nantes. We, when we were caught, were shot; but it was not easy to catch us—and we generally obtained more than life for life.

It was the spring equinox. Carrier's *noyades* went on; it was now whole ship-loads of victims that he sent down the stream, to be sunk bodily at its mouth, where he believed the ocean would do the rest, and rid him of further trouble. But ocean itself began to show symptoms of refusing to dispose of more dead than lay to its own account. It had enough to answer for already. Renouncing complicity in these deeds of earth, it at last took advantage of a mighty west wind and cast the unburied mass of mortality at the mouth of the stream that had rejected it. The whole population flocked down to discover and reclaim its dead. What it found it had to dispute with the ospreys and vultures, and the loathsome familiarity of wild beasts, which struggled between the legs of the human throng, in the absorbing fascination of such a banquet.

And like a fascinated wild beast there am I. The storm howls across the bleak sands, carrying the grains along like a mist, mingled with the surf and foam-flakes. And the blast, as it howls, bears other sounds upon it—shrieks of sea-mews, and of mothers and daughters of stranded corpses, croakings of quarrelling ravens, and the imprecations

tions of desperate outlaws, who dispute the bones of a comrade. There I stand, looking seawards, for I know that ocean has an account to render up to me, and that it will fulfil its trust. And it is without shuddering, therefore, that I find at my feet a thing of human outline, having mark and token which may be recognised, such as a ribbon with a golden ornament attached, and on the ornament the words inscribed—

La tête tombe, le cœur reste.

Yes, boy, I am prepared for all that; and with my sword I dig a hole in the sand, high up, above the reach of the tides, and there I cover up that human remnant, after placing the ornament in my bosom; then, having taken the bearings, I plunge into the woods again, and whet my blunted sword against the first smooth stone I find.

One object was left me in life. It wore a definite aspect; but the means of obtaining it were difficult and circuitous. For many a month I herded with the Chouans of Bretagne; a wild, irregular banditti. The gang I led hovered closer to the enemy than the rest of our adherents, and addicted themselves less to plunder. Something which might be called strategy marked our movements, and the information we acquired from prisoners was frequently of considerable service to the cause of the royalists in communication with Puisaye and the British government.

Since the discovery of the body, my character had undergone a change. I was no longer the reckless madman who inspired respect only by his personal daring. My mind now controlled without impeding the impetuosity of my animal nature. In particular, a certain tact and subtlety I evinced in the examination of prisoners and deserters, caused that department at last to be left exclusively to me; and it was during this period that I perfected and brought

to the condition of a system, that theory of the investigation of character which I put in practice on my first encountering you.

Ever and anon, I was able to glean some intelligence respecting my enemy. He was near me. When Carrier was superseded at Nantes, he was for a time in disgrace as his friend; but soon associated himself with Hoche, and distinguished himself, one deserter informed me, by the sanguinary zeal he showed in prosecuting the design of his chief, which consisted, as in La Vendée, in hemming in the remnants of the insurgents by a narrowing *cordon*, out of which they had no possible escape, and within which, unless some sudden blow was struck, they must be all finally enveloped and taken. With a counter-instinct to mine, he, too, I felt, knew that the man he had wronged was here, and that he must be got rid of to make life safe. This was what infused such uncompromising ferocity into his conduct, and gave his acts so sanguinary a complexion, as to call more than once for a reprimand and rebuke from his chief. It was a single combat between us; we, both of us strengthened the ranks of two opposing armies, and advanced the causes of royalty and republicanism respectively, only in order that we, the centre of our war and of our world, might meet at last and terminate the struggle with the existence of one or both of us.

You know how events hurried on. How an amnesty was offered to us if we would lay down our arms. Lay down our arms! I grasped my sword, and laughed, till the forest rang again. How Carrier came to the guillotine—he was not my quarry; I let him die without a thought. How treachery appeared among us—and symptoms of disaffection. We held together, for war was my game. To the meeting at La Mabilaye I repaired; for, believing that Hoche was to be there, I calculated on *his* accompanying

him. I know not why it was, but Hoche declined coming, and we did not meet. *Tout était aux mieux*. How we were organized into regular companies of chasseurs under Stofflet, and manœuvred as a regular army, notwithstanding the nominal truce; how the British squadron hove in sight, and the white cockade was mounted on every cap, and long and reiterated shouts of *Vive le roi!* rent the air, and rang through the forests of Brittany. All this is history; so is the result. My part alone of these deeds and disasters is necessary to be told.

The emigrant army landed from the English fleet at Quiberon. The noblest blood of France was there assembled; and I found myself once more associated with the Polignacs, and the Clermont-Tonnerres, and the Coudés, and the D'Orsays. I was assigned the command I most coveted, however, that of my own Chouans, whom I knew, and who knew me. Had all known themselves and each other as we did, the expedition might have turned out differently.

I soon saw that things were going wrong; I had become lynx-eyed. There was no concentration, no organized system. There was no prince of the house of Bourbon around whom to rally. Puisaye and D'Hervilly quarrelled. Instead of an instantaneous advance, as urged by Tinténiac and me, days were wasted in consultations and disputes, which came to nothing. I soon saw that we were to be victims—but I was determined to *achieve my object*.

The republican armies closed round us. Desperately we confronted them; but individual valor could not make amends for the want of unity of plan. Hoche drove us in from point to point; and at length, having taken St. Barbe, shut us up in the narrow peninsula of Quiberon, whence we must either escape to the British fleet, or die without hope of quarter.

As the republican front closed with us, I became, from

day to day, more intimately acquainted with Levasseur's movements. Every prisoner had something to tell. His bloodthirsty ferocity had gained him celebrity amongst them. I knew his division, his quarters, his assigned place on each day's march—nay, his very uniform, and the color of his horse. I kept myself so thoroughly in the secret of the man's movements, that whenever we should meet in open field, I should be able without difficulty to mark him out, and have him before me in the thickest confusion of battle.

The night of the 20th of July, 1795, fell dark and tempestuous. The waves rolled in with fury upon the narrow strip of sand we yet retained upon the shore of France. Our only barrier against the enemy was Fort Penthièvre, which stood, a darker mass, against the dark sky. I lay upon the sand, with my sword—my inseparable companion—in my grasp. Suddenly, a shout was heard above the roar of the waters. I started up—but could see nothing. It proceeded from the direction of the fort, and I knew that a surprise was at least attempted, if it had not succeeded. A moment's agony passed across my brow, like the glow of a fierce fire. This was the only contingency I had *not* foreseen; my enemy and I might be close to each other *in the darkness* without coming into contact.

My worst suspicions were the best founded. Fort Penthièvre had been surprised and taken—we were now at the mercy of the republican army. All those within reach of me rose along with me, and obeying the word of command, placed themselves in order, and rushed upon the advancing enemy. The collision was tremendous. Hoche's guns had already begun to play, and in a few minutes the English squadron, which had been obliged to keep out to sea in consequence of the tempest, announced their presence by the roar of their artillery. From the first I saw that resistance was hopeless; and that escape was almost equally so.

D'Hervilly was mortally wounded; Sombreuil, who succeeded him, was a stranger to the place, and lost his presence of mind. It was a hopeless carnage, and my men fell around me in heaps. Nevertheless, I assumed the command which others were unable to exercise, and contrived for some time to protect the masses of emigrants who, with their wives and children, were rushing into the water to embark on board the English boats. It must have been calm; for while engaged in this arduous duty, I took advantage of every cannon shot fired close to me, to survey the opposite ranks in search of Levasseur. In so dark a night, the flash of the discharge from a piece of ordnance throws an intense glare for a considerable space; and as I had habituated my eyes to take in numerous objects distinctly at a sudden glance, I was now, after one or two of these momentary surveys, able to ascertain with tolerable accuracy the order of the hostile column, and where I ought to look for him. I found that in order to confront him, I must move to the right, or as close to the edge of the sea as possible. This was difficult, in the face of the enemy; but finding that Sombreuil had just come up to the point I defended with a fresh body of emigrants, I drew my exhausted men off for a moment, and moving round a small sandy eminence, threw them once more upon the hostile army, almost within the surf of the shoreward waves.

The result was as I had anticipated. Certain signs gave evidence of Levasseur's vicinity. I recognised the uniform of his corps, and at last had the inexpressible satisfaction of hearing his voice, above the roar of the waves, urging on his men.

By this time matters had drawn to a conclusion. The two armies were mingled together in the darkness. The few boats which had succeeded in gaining the shore, had either sunk or were sheering off overloaded with fugitives.

In all directions cries were heard of "quarter! quarter!" a boon which in some instances was accorded by the soldiers, as the despairing emigrants or Chouans laid down their arms; though in most these wretches were cut down without mercy. From the sea, the frightful confusion was added to by the broadsides of the British fleet poured in upon the shore, and sweeping off friend and foe in indiscriminate slaughter. I had almost given up the hope of surviving to fulfil my mission, when a sudden flash discovered Levasseur within five yards of me, a little advanced before his men, in the act of pointing a gun at a boat which had just quitted the shore, filled with women and children.

I might have rushed forward and cut him down. I do not know why I did not do so. I walked up to him, and laid my hand upon his shoulder, uttering in his ear the word "Levasseur!" He started up from the stooping posture, and in an instant drew a pistol from his belt, and fired. Had he not been disconcerted, he must have killed me; as it was, the ball grazed my ribs. He drew back, aghast.

"Coward!" cried I; "draw your sword, I shall wait until you can defend yourself."

We could see each other, now we were so close, by the gleaming of the cannonade. Even at that desperate moment, I was startled as I suddenly became conscious that a change had taken place in his appearance. *His black hair had grown white.* The confirmation of an original surmise flashed across my mind. He must have existed for a greater or less period of time under the belief that, at the moment of his mortal sin, he had fallen into the hands of the LIVING GOD.

"Why should we fight?" he now exclaimed, in a subdued voice. "She is dead, long ago."

"And buried!" cried I, holding up to his eyes the Golden Guillotine.

"God! Whence has that come?"

"From the depths of the ocean, in which thy bones shall whiten ere long. Thoughtest thou that thou wert to escape the Avenger of Blood, because thou hadst placed a mill-stone round the neck of thy secret, and sunk it in the sea?"

"De Martigny, thou wast my rival—thou soughtest to strangle me—was it not so?"

With death staring him in the face, he was yearning to extract some expression which should relieve him once for all from the remnants of the horrible suspicion which had once haunted him. I saw that; and at the same time felt myself growing weak from loss of blood; yet, so much was I still overpowered with the thought of the fiery tortures the wretch must have gone through to turn the stony blackness of his locks into silver in the time, that I could not bring myself to sabre him, and have done with him.

Nor had I need. He had just observed my growing faintness, and was planting his feet to commence the combat in which the chances began to show in his favor, when a ball from an English line-of-battle ship ploughed the sand over both of us, and in its *ricochet* tore Levasseur's right arm from its socket, laying the ribs of the same side bare to the waist. We fell together—he in the agonies of death, I from the shock and previous loss of blood. I had strength left to dip my finger in the pool of gore between us—whether in his or mine I know not, or both mingled together—and write upon his forehead the single word—ALPHONSINE. This I did that the devils might know what to do with him.

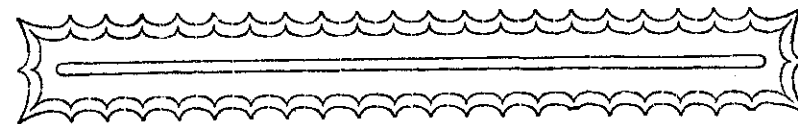
Our men, on both sides, had missed us, and as the action now confined itself to another quarter, they had drawn off to lend their aid at that point. I was left alone with the dying man; and witnessed the blackness of his brow fade

into the spectral pallor of death, upon which the gory letters came out like faint writing held against a fire.

The object of my life was accomplished ; dizziness came over me. I believed that I died.

I recovered my consciousness on board of a British man-of-war. It was not for some days afterwards that I discovered how I had been saved. An officer who, taking advantage of the darkness, had pushed boldly on shore in a boat just after the termination of the action, in the hope of saving somebody, and who saw me lying wounded and motionless, but with some signs of life about me, had, at the risk of his own, cutlass in hand, rescued me from two republican soldiers who were just about to knock me on the head and plunder me, and borne me aboard Admiral Warren's squadron.

Young man, little more remains to be said. When, years afterwards, royalty had been restored to France, I repaired to the lonely beach at the mouth of the Loire, and had the bones of all that had once made life dear reverently removed to this sacred precinct, where, with the consent of the archbishop, they were buried privately, and a certain number of masses appointed to be said for the soul of the departed. Over this grave I posted myself a sentinel for life. Here I pass my days—often my nights. The venerable archbishop would have solaced my watchings by his presence over and over again, but I withstood him. I preferred performing this duty alone. Nevertheless, when he died, I was smitten to the heart, as you saw—for I had lost my last friend.



Edward Drysdale.

ABOUT the year 1798, James Bradshaw and William Drysdale, both invalided masters of the Royal Navy, cast anchor for the remainder of their lives at about twelve miles' distance from Exeter, on the London road. Bradshaw named his domicile, an old-fashioned straggling building, Rodney Place, in honor of the admiral in whose great victory he had fought. Drysdale's smaller and snugger dwelling, about half a mile away from Rodney Place, was called Poplar Cottage, and about midway between them stood the Hunter's Inn, a roadside public-house, kept by one Thomas Burnham, a stout-hearted, jolly-bellied individual, the comeliness of whose rubicund figure-head was considerably damaged by the loss of an eye, of which, however, it is right to say, the extinguished light appeared to have been transferred in undiminished intensity to its fiery, piercing fellow. The retired masters, who had long known each other, were intimate as brothers, notwithstanding that Bradshaw was much the richest of the two, having contrived to pick up a considerable amount of prize money, in addition to a rather

large sum inherited from his father. Neither did the difference of circumstances oppose, in Bradshaw's opinion, the slightest obstacle to the union of his niece and heiress, Rachel Elford, with Edward Drysdale, his fellow veteran's only surviving offspring. The precedent condition, however, was, that Edward should attain permanent rank in the Royal Navy, and with this view a midshipman's warrant was obtained in '99 for the young man, then in his eighteenth year, and he was despatched to sea.

The naval profession proved to be, unfortunately, one for which Edward Drysdale was altogether unfitted by temperament and bent of mind, and sad consequences followed. He had been at sea about eighteen months, when news reached England of a desperate, but successful, cutting-out affair by the boats of the frigate to which he belonged. His name was not mentioned in the official report—but that could hardly have been hoped for—neither was it in the list of killed and wounded. A map of the coast where the fight took place was procured; the battle was fought over and over again by the two veterans, and they were still indulging in these pleasures of the imagination, in the parlor of the "Hunter's Inn," when the landlord entered with a Plymouth paper in his hand, upon one paragraph in which his single orb of vision glared with fiery indignation. It was an extract from a letter written by one of the frigate's officers, plainly intimating that Midshipman Drysdale had shown the white feather in the late brush with the enemy, and would be sent home by the first opportunity. The stroke of a dagger could have been nothing compared with the sharp agony which such an announcement inflicted on the young man's father, and Bradshaw was for a few moments equally thunder-stricken. But he quickly rallied. William Drysdale's son a coward! Pooh! the thing was out of nature—impossible; and very

hearty were his maledictions, savagely echoed by Burnham, with whom young Drysdale was a great favorite, of the lying lubber that wrote the letter, and the newspaper rascals that printed it.

Alas! it was but too true! On the third evening after the appearance of the alarming paragraph the two mariners were sitting in the porch of Poplar Cottage, separated only by a flower garden from the main road, conversing upon the sad and constantly recurring topic, when the coach from London came in sight. A youthful figure, in naval uniform, on the box-seat, instantly riveted their attention, as it did that of Rachel Elford, who was standing in the little garden, apparently absorbed till that moment by the shrubs and flowers. The coach rapidly drew near, stopped, and Edward Drysdale alighted from it. The two seamen, instead of waiting for his approach, hastily arose from their seats and went into the cottage, as much perhaps to avoid the humiliating though compassionate glances of the outside passengers, as from any other motive. The young man was deadly pale, and seemed to have hardly sufficient strength to move back the light wicket-gate which admitted to the garden. He held by it till the coach had passed on, and then turned with a beseeching, half-reproachful look towards Rachel. She, poor girl, was as much agitated as himself, and appeared to be eagerly scanning his countenance, as if hopeful of reading there a contradiction of the dishonoring rumor that had got abroad. In answer to his mute appeal, she stepped quickly towards him, clasped his proffered hand in both hers, and with a faint and trembling voice ejaculated—

"Dear, dear Edward! It is not true—I am sure it is not, that you—that you——"

"That I, Rachel, have been dismissed the naval service, as unfit to serve his majesty, is quite true," rejoined

Edward Drysdale, slowly, and with partially recovered calm—"quite true."

The young woman shrank indignantly from him; fire glanced in her suffused eyes, and her light, elegant figure appeared to grow and dilate with irrepressible scorn, as this avowal fell upon her ear. "A coward!" she vehemently exclaimed; "you that—but no," she added, giving away again to grief and tenderness, as she looked upon the fine, intelligent countenance of her lover, "it cannot be; there must be some error—some mistake. It is impossible!"

"There *is* error and mistake, Rachel; but the world will never, I fear, admit so much. But come, let us in; you will go with me!"

We will not follow them till the first outburst of angry excitement is past; till the father's passionate, heart-broken reproaches have subsided to a more patient, subdued, faintly-hopeful sorrow, and Rachel's wavering faith in the manhood of her betrothed has regained something of its old firmness. Entering then, we shall find that only Mr. Bradshaw has remained obstinately and contemptuously deaf to what the young man has falteringly urged in vindication of his behavior in the unhappy affair which led to his dismissal from the service. He had, it appeared, suddenly fainted at the sight of the hideous carnage in which, for the first time in his life, he found himself involved.

"You have a letter, you say, from Captain Otway," said Mr. Drysdale, partially raising his head from his hands, in which it had been buried whilst his son was speaking. "Where is it? Give it to Rachel; I cannot see the words."

The note was directed to Mr. Drysdale, whom Captain Otway personally knew, and was no doubt kindly intended to soften the blow, the return of his son under such cir-

cumstances must inflict. Although deciding that Edward Drysdale was unfit for the naval profession, he did not think that the failure of the young man's physical nerve, in one of the most murderous encounters that had occurred during the war, was attributable to deficiency of true courage; and as a proof that it was not, Captain Otway mentioned that the young man had jumped overboard during half a gale of wind, and when night was falling, and saved, at much peril to himself, a seaman's life. This was the substance of the note. As soon as Rachel ceased reading, Mr. Drysdale looked deprecatingly in his friend's face, and murmured, "You hear?"

"Yes, William Drysdale, I do. I never doubted that your son was a good swimmer, no more than I do that coward means coward, and that all the letters in the alphabet cannot spell it to mean anything else. Come, Rachel," added the grim, unreasoning, iron-tempered veteran, "let us be gone. And God bless, and if it be possible comfort ye, old friend. Good-bye! No, thank ye, young sir!" he continued, with renewed fierceness, as Edward Drysdale snatched at his hand. "That hand was once grasped by Rodney, in some such another business as the letter speaks of, when its owner did *not* faint! It must not be touched by you!"

The elder Drysdale took not long afterwards to his bed. He had been ailing for some time; but no question that mortification at his son's failure in the profession to which he had with so much pride devoted him, helped to weaken the springs of life, and accelerate his end, which took place about six months after Edward's return home. The father and son had become entirely reconciled with each other, and almost the last accents which faltered from the lips of the dying seaman, were a prayer to Bradshaw to forget and forgive what had passed, and renew his sanction to the

marriage of Edward and his niece. The stern man was inexorable; and his pitiless reply was, that he would a thousand times rather follow Rachel to her grave.

The constancy of the young people was not, however, to be subdued, and something more than a year after Mr. Drysdale's death they married; their present resources, the rents—about one hundred and twenty pounds per annum—of a number of small tenements at Exeter. They removed to within three miles of that city, and dwelt there in sufficiency and peace, for about five years, when the exigencies of a fast increasing family induced them to dispose, not very advantageously, of their cottage property, and embark the proceeds in a showy speculation, promising, of course, immense results, and really ending, in the brief space of six months, in their utter ruin. Edward Drysdale found himself, in lieu of his golden hopes, worth about two hundred pounds less than nothing. The usual consequences followed. An undefended suit-at-law speedily reached the stage at which execution might be issued, and unless a considerable sum of money could be instantly raised, his furniture would be seized under a *fi. fa.*, and sacrificed to no purpose.

One only possible expedient remained—that of once more endeavoring to soften the obduracy of Mr. Bradshaw. This it was finally determined to attempt, and Mr. and Mrs. Drysdale set off, by a London morning coach, upon the well-nigh hopeless speculation. They alighted at the Hunter's Inn, where Drysdale remained, whilst his wife proceeded alone to Rodney Place. Thomas Burnham was friendly and good-natured as ever. The old mariner, he told Drysdale, was visibly failing, and his chief amusement seemed to be scraping together and hoarding up money. James Berry, a broken-down tailor, and a chap, according to Burnham, who knew how many beans made five as well

as any man in Devonshire, had been for some time valet, gardener, and general factotum at Rodney Place, and appeared to exercise great influence over Mr. Bradshaw. The only other person in the establishment was the old cook, Margery Deans, who, never otherwise since he had known her than desperately hard of hearing, was now become deaf as a stone. Drysdale, it was afterwards remembered, listened to all this with eager attention, and was especially inquisitive and talkative respecting Mr. Bradshaw's hoarding propensities, and the solitary, unprotected state in which he lived.

Mrs. Drysdale was long gone; but the tremulous hopes which her protracted stay called feebly forth, vanished at the sight of her pale, tearful, yet resolved aspect. "It is useless, Edward," she murmured, with her arms cast lovingly about her husband's neck, and looking in his face with far more lavish expression of affection than when, with orange-blossoms in her hair, she stood a newly-consecrated wife beside him; "it is useless to expect relief from my uncle, save upon the heartless, impossible condition you know of. But let us home. God's heaven is still above our heads, though clouds and darkness rest between. We will trust in Him, Edward, and fear not."

So brave a woman should have been matched with a stout-hearted man; but this, unhappily, was not the case. Edward Drysdale was utterly despondent, and he listened, as his wife was afterwards fain to admit to herself and others, with impatient reluctance to all she said as they journeyed homewards, save when the condition of help spoken of, namely, that she should abandon her husband, and take up her abode with her children at Rodney Place, was discussed—by her indignantly. Once, also, when she mentioned that the old will in her favor was not yet destroyed, but would be, her uncle threatened, if she did

not soon return, a bright, almost fiery expression seemed to leap from his usually mild, reflective eyes, and partially dissipate the thick gloom which mantled his features.

This occurred on a winter's day in early March, and the evening up to seven o'clock had passed gloomily away with the Drysdale, when all at once the husband, starting from a profound reverie, said he would take a walk as far as Exeter, see the attorney in the suit against him, and, if possible, gain a little time for the arrangement of the debt. His wife acquiesced, though with small hope of any favorable result, and the strangely abstracted man left the house.

Ten o'clock, the hour by which Edward Drysdale had promised to return, chimed from a dial on the mantel-piece. Mrs. Drysdale trimmed the fire, lit the candles, which for economy's sake she had extinguished, and had their frugal supper laid. He came not. Eleven o'clock! What could be detaining him so late? Twelve!—half-past twelve! Rachel Drysdale was just about to bid the servant-maid, who was sitting up in the kitchen, go to bed, when the sound of carriage-wheels going *towards* Exeter stopped at the door. It was a *return* post-chaise, and brought Edward Drysdale. He staggered, as if intoxicated, into the kitchen, reached down a half-bottle of brandy from a cupboard, and took it to the post-boy, who immediately drove off. Anne Moody, the servant-girl, was greatly startled by her master's appearance; he looked, she afterwards stated, more the color of a whited wall, than of flesh and blood, and shook and "cowered," as if he had the ague. Mrs. Drysdale came into the kitchen, and stood gazing at her husband, in a white, dumb kind of way (I am transcribing literally from the girl's statement), till the outer door was fastened, when they both went up stairs into a front sitting-room. Curiosity induced Anne Moody

to follow, and she heard, just as the door closed upon them, Mrs. Drysdale say, "You have not been to Exeter, I am sure." This was said in a nervous, shaking voice, and her master replied, in the same tone, "No; I changed my mind," or words to that effect. Then there was a quick whispering for a minute or two, interrupted by a half stifled cry or scream from Mrs. Drysdale. A sort of hubbub of words followed, which the girl, a very intelligent person of her class by-the-by, could not hear, or at least could not make out, till Mr. Drysdale said, in a louder, slower way, "You, Rachel—the children are provided for; but, O God! at what a dreadful price!" Anne Moody, fearful of detection, did not wait to hear more, but crept stealthily up stairs to bed, as her mistress had ordered her to do, when she left the kitchen. On the following morning the girl found her master and mistress both up, the kitchen and parlor fires lit, and breakfast nearly over. Mr. Drysdale said he was in a hurry to get to Exeter, and they had not thought it worth while to call her at unseasonable hours. Both husband and wife looked wild and haggard, and this, Moody, when she looked into their bed-chamber, was not at all surprised at, as it was clear that neither of them had retired to rest. One thing and the other, especially kissing and fondling the children over and over again, detained Mr. Drysdale till half-past eight o'clock, and then, just as he was leaving the house, three men confronted him! A constable of the name of Parsons, James Berry, Mr. Bradshaw's servant, and Burnham, the landlord of the Hunter's Inn. They came to arrest him on a charge of burglary and murder! Mr. Bradshaw had been found, early in the morning, cruelly stabbed to death beside his plundered strong-box!

I must pass lightly over the harrowing scenes which followed—the tumultuous agony of the wife, and the

despairing asseverations of the husband, impossible to be implicitly believed in even by that wife, for the criminating evidence was overwhelming. Drysdale had been seen skulking about Rodney Place till very late, by both Burnham and Berry. In the room through which he must have passed in going and returning from the scene of his frightful crime his hat had been found; and it was now discovered that he, Drysdale, had taken away and worn home one of Berry's—no doubt from hurry and inadvertence. In addition to all this, a considerable sum of money in gold and silver, inclosed in a canvas bag, well known to have belonged to the deceased, was found upon his person! It appeared probable that the aim of the assassin had been only robbery in the first instance, for the corpse of the unfortunate victim was found clothed only in a night-dress. The fair inference therefore seemed to be, that the robber, disturbed at his plunder by the wakeful old seaman, had been compelled, perhaps reluctantly, to add the dreadful crime of murder to that which he had originally contemplated. The outcry through the country was terrific, and as Edward Drysdale, by the advice of Mr. Sims, the attorney, who subsequently instructed Mr. Prince, reserved his defence, there appeared to be nothing of a feather's weight to oppose against the tremendous mass of circumstance arrayed against the prisoner.

And when, upon the arrival of the king's commission at Exeter, Mr. Prince received a very full and carefully drawn brief in defence—a specious, but almost wholly unsupported story of the prisoner's, appeared all that could be relied upon in rebuttal of the evidence for the crown. According to Edward Drysdale, he merely sought Mr. Bradshaw upon the evening in question for the purpose of concluding with that gentleman an arrangement for the separation of himself from his wife and children, and their

domiciliation at Rodney Place. It was further averred, that he was received with greater civility than he expected; that the interview was a long one, during which he, Drysdale, had seen nobody but Mr. Bradshaw, although he believed the aged and deaf cook was in the kitchen; that he had arranged that Mrs. Drysdale and his children should be early on the morrow with her uncle, and that he had received the money found upon his person and at his house from the deceased's own hands, in order to pay the debt and costs in the suit wherein execution was about to be levied on his furniture, and that the residue was to be applied to his, the prisoner's own use; that the expressions deposed to by Anne Moody, and his own and Mrs. Drysdale's emotion after his return home, which had told so heavily against him in the examinations before the magistrates, were perfectly reconcilable with this statement—as, indeed, they were—and did not, therefore, bear the frightful meaning that had been attached to them. With respect to the change of hats, that might easily have happened, because his hat had been left on entering in the hall-passage, and in his hurry in coming out by the same way, he had no doubt mistaken Berry's for his own; but he solemnly denied having been in the room, or near the part of the house, where his hat was alleged to have been found.

This was the gist of the explanation; but, unfortunately, it was not sustained by any receivable testimony in any material particular. True, Mrs. Drysdale, whom everybody fully believed, declared that this account exactly coincided with what her husband told her immediately on arriving home in the post-chaise—but what of that? It was not what story the prisoner had told, nor how many times he had told it, that could avail, especially against the heavy improbabilities that weighed upon his, at first view,

plausible statement. How was it that, knowing Mr. Bradshaw's almost insane dislike of himself, he did not counsel his wife to make terms with her uncle, preparatory to her returning to Rodney Place? And was it at all likely that Mr. Bradshaw, whose implacable humor Mrs. Drysdale had experienced on the very day previous to the murder, should have so suddenly softened towards the man he so thoroughly hated and despised? I trow not. And the first consultation on the case wore a wretchedly dismal aspect, till the hawk eye of Mr. Prince lit on an assertion of Thomas Burnham's, that he had gone to Mr. Bradshaw's house upon some particular business at a quarter-past twelve on the night of the murder, and had seen the deceased alive at that time, who had answered him, as he frequently did, from his bedroom window. "Rodney Place," said Mr. Prince, "is nine miles from Drysdale's residence. I understood you to say, Mr. Sims, that Mrs. Drysdale declares her husband was at home at twenty minutes to one?"

"Certainly she does; but the wife's evidence, you are aware, cannot avail the husband."

"True; but the servant girl! the driver of the post-chaise! This is a vital point, and must be cleared up without delay."

I and Williams, Sims' clerk, set off instantly to see Mrs. Drysdale, who had not left her room since her husband's apprehension. She was confident it was barely so late as twenty minutes to one when the post-chaise drove up to the door. Her evidence was, however, legally inadmissible, and our hopes rested on Anne Moody, who was immediately called in. Her answer was exasperating. She had been asleep in the kitchen, and could not positively say whether it was twelve, one, or two o'clock when her master reached home. There was still a chance left—that

of the post-chaise driver. He did not, we found, reach Exeter, a distance of three miles only from Mr. Drysdale's, till a quarter to three o'clock, and was then much the worse for liquor. So much for our chance of proving an *alibi*.

There was one circumstance perpetually harped upon by our bright one-eyed friend of the Hunter's Inn—Cyclops, I and Williams called him. What had become of a large sum, in notes, paid, it was well known, to Mr. Bradshaw three or four days before his death? What also of a ruby ring, and some unset precious stones he had brought from abroad, and which he had always estimated, rightly or wrongly, at so high a price? Drysdale's house and garden had been turned inside out, but nothing had been found, and so for that matter had Rodney Place, and its two remaining inmates had been examined with the like ill success. Burnham, who was excessively dissatisfied with the progress of affairs, swore there was an infernal mystery somewhere, and that he shouldn't sleep till he had ferreted it out. That was his business. Ours was to make the best of the wretched materials at our disposal; but the result we all expected followed. The foregone conclusion of the jury that were empanelled in the case was just about to be formally recorded in a verdict of guilty, when a note was handed across to Mr. Sims. One Mr. Jay, a timber merchant, who had heard the evidence of the postillion, desired to be examined. This the judge at once assented to, and Mr. Jay deposed, that having left Exeter in his gig upon pressing business, at about two o'clock on the morning of the murder, he had observed a post-chaise at the edge of a pond about a mile and a half out of the city, where the jaded horses had been, he supposed, drinking. They were standing still, and the post-boy, who was inside, and had reins to drive with passed through the front windows, was

fast asleep—a drunken sleep, it seemed—and he, Mr. Jay, had to bawl for some time, and strike the chaise with his whip, before he could awake the man, who at last, with a growl and a curse, drove on. He believed, but would not like to positively swear, that the postillion he had heard examined was that man. This testimony, strongly suggestive as it was, his lordship opined did not materially affect the case; the jury concurred, and a verdict of guilty was pronounced and recorded amidst the death-like silence of a hushed and anxious auditory.

The unfortunate convict staggered visibly beneath the blow, fully expected as it must have been, and a terrible spasm convulsed his features, and shook his frame. It passed away; and his bearing and speech, when asked what he had to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced according to law, was not without a certain calm dignity and power, whilst his tones, tremulous it is true, were silvery and unassuming as a child's.

"I cannot blame the gentlemen of the jury," he said. "Their fatal verdict is, I am sure, 'as conscientious as God and myself know it to be erroneous—false! Circumstances are, I feel, strangely arrayed against me; and it has been my fate through life to be always harshly judged, save only by one whose truth and affection have shed over my chequered existence the only happiness it has ever known. I observed, too, the telling sneer of the prosecuting counsel, connecting the circumstances under which I left the navy with the *cowardice* of the deed of which I stand here accused—convicted, I suppose I should say. I forgive that gentleman his cruel sneer as freely as I do you, gentlemen of the jury, your mistaken verdict—you, my lord, the death sentence you are about to pronounce. The manner in which I hope to pass through the brief, but dark and bitter passage lying betwixt me and the grave, will, I trust, be a

sufficient answer to the taunt of cowardice; and the future vindication of my innocence, not for my own, but my wife and children's sake, I confidently leave to him into whose hands I shall soon, untimely, render up my spirit. This is all I have to say."

The prisoner's calm, simple, unhurried words produced a marvellous effect upon the court and auditory. The judge, Chief Baron Macdonald, a conscientious and somewhat nervous man, paused in the act of assuming the black-cap, and presently said, rather hastily, "Let the prisoner be removed; I will pass sentence to-morrow." The court then immediately adjourned.

I was miserably depressed in spirits, which the cold, sleety weather that greeted us on emerging from the hot and crowded court considerably increased. I was thinking—excuse the seeming pathos—I was only a clerk, and used to such tragedies; I was thinking, I say, that a glass of brandy-and-water might not be amiss, when whom should I rudely jostle against but Cyclops, *alias* Thomas Burnham. He was going the same way as myself, in prodigious haste, his eye bright and flaming as a live coal, and his whole manner denoting intense excitement. "Is that you?" he broke out. "Come along, then, and quick, for the love of God! I've missed Sims and his clerk, but you'll do as well, perhaps better." I had no power, if I had the inclination, to refuse, for the enthusiastic man seized me by the arm, and hurried me along, at a tremendous rate, towards the outskirts of the city. "This is the place," he exclaimed, as he burst into a tavern parlor, where two trunks had been deposited. "He's not come yet," Burnham went on, "but the coach is to call for him here. He thinks to be off for London this very night."

"Whom are you talking of? Who's off to London to-night?"

"James Berry, if he's clever enough! Look there!"

"I see; 'James Berry, passenger, London.' These, then, are his trunks, I suppose?"

"Right, my boy; but there is nothing of importance in *them*. Sly, steady-going Margery has well ascertained that. You know Margery—but hush! here he comes."

Berry—it was he—could not repress a nervous start, as he unexpectedly encountered Burnham's burly person and fierce glare.

"You here!" he stammered, as he mechanically took a chair by the fire. "Who would have thought it!"

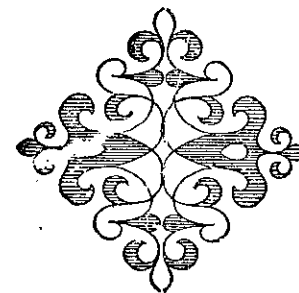
"Not you, Jim, I'm sure; it must be, therefore, an unexpected pleasure. I've come to have a smoke and a bit of chat with you, Berry—there isn't a riper berry than you are in the kingdom—before you go to London, Jim—do you mark?—before you go to London. Ha, ha! ho, ho! But, zounds! how pale and shaky you're looking, and before this rousing fire, too! D—n thee, villain!" shouted Burnham, jumping suddenly up from his chair, and dashing his pipe to fragments on the floor. "I can't play with thee any longer. Tell me—when did the devil teach thee to stuff coat collars with the spoils of murdered men, eh?"

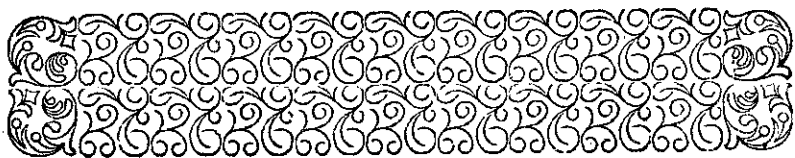
A yell of dismay escaped Berry, and he made a desperate rush to get past Burnham—but in vain. The fierce publican caught him by the throat, and held him by a grip of steel. "You're caught, scoundrel! nicked, trapped, found out, and by whom, think you? Why, by deaf, paralytic Margery, whose old eyes have never wearied in watching you from the hour you slew and robbed her good old master till to-day, when you dreamed yourself alone, and she discovered the mystery of the coat collar."

"Let me go!" gasped the miscreant, down whose pallid cheeks big drops of agony were streaming. "Take all, and let me go."

A fierce imprecation, followed by a blow, replied to the despairing felon. A constable, attracted by the increasing uproar, soon arrived; the thick coat collar was ripped, and in it were found a considerable sum in Exeter notes, the ruby ring, and other valuables well known to have belonged to Mr. Bradshaw. Berry was quickly lodged in gaol. A true bill was returned the next day by the grand jury before noon, and by the time the clock struck four, the murderer was, on his own confession, convicted of the foul crime of which a perfectly innocent man had been, not many hours before, pronounced guilty! A great lesson this was felt to be at the time in Exeter, and in the western country generally. A lesson of the watchfulness of providence over innocent lives; of rebuke to the self-sufficing infallibility of men, however organized or empanelled; and of patience under unmerited obloquy and slander.

Edward Drysdale was, I need hardly say, liberated by the king's pardon—pardon for an uncommitted offence; and he, and his true-hearted wife, the heiress of her uncle, are still living, I believe, in competence, content, and harmony.





The Story of the Unfinished Picture.

A GERMAN ARTIST'S TALE, BY CHARLES HOOTON, Esq.

WEIGEL was an intimate acquaintance of mine, —a good painter, and had commenced his career promisingly. Calculating on a fortune not yet made and a reputation that still had to take root, although it put forth strongly, he married a handsome girl of poor and obscure parentage, and found himself involved in all the cares of a young family almost before he was three-and-twenty. Fortune seemed to abandon him almost from the very day of his wedding, and from hard experience he soon found that he had begun the world too soon. But he was ambitious to an excess, and frequently used to say to his acquaintance that he could willingly lay down his life, only to become an artist that the world would never forget. Nay, I have often heard him say he was in the nightly habit of invoking the aid, in prayers, of either good spirits or bad (he cared not which), whichever, if such existed, would come first to assist him in the attainment of a painter's success and immortality. "What matters," said he, "even if a man *could* give away his immortality in the

uncertain hereafter, for a certain immortality here, though he should go so far as to do it? 'Twould be but an exchange of equivalents."

Thus he used to think and talk, and every day getting poorer and poorer as the demands of his family increased, and his own unwearied exertions failed to meet with reward:—a state of things, I fear, which went far to induce his peculiar belief. I have often seen him in a fearful burst of passionate excitement when his wife and family and himself were in want of the most ordinary necessities, cast some fine unsold picture into the fire and swear most solemnly and deeply, that if there were a devil, and if he himself had a soul worth the devil's purchase, he would sell it him in bonds of fire and blood, if the price would but redeem their present misery, and find all that he most loved on earth in even as much food for their wants as God could find for the wild wolf and the raven, without toil, without the chance of an immortality to risk, without heart or intellect to feel privation as he felt it, even should it come upon them. He would then turn suddenly to me and exclaim, "Now, Zeitter, if these idle tales were true, why does this Evil One not come? Why not take me at my word? for he must know that in this I am no liar."

At that time he occupied two small rooms on the upper story of a large old house in Heidelberg, the door of the outer one of which opened upon a common staircase and passage, in which he usually paced up and down with a large pipe in his mouth during several hours in the gloom of an evening, for the sake of fresher air and exercise, and perhaps also to dissipate, if possible, his miserable reflections. He also used to do the same at any time of the night when he could not sleep. He would rise in the dark from the side of his sleeping wife and children, fill his huge meerscham pipe, light a tinder to fire his tobacco, and

then stalk backwards and forwards in the blind passage with steps as noiseless as a ghost, and exactly as confident, calm, and unapprehensive as though in the summer sunshine of a public road. I do not say there was anything to be frightened at, but my imagination would never allow me exactly to fancy his particular taste in that respect.

[At this part of his story Zeitter charged his audience to mark particularly that he was not giving them opinions nor speculations.]

"I am speaking of facts and results," said he, "of things I have seen and heard, and therefore known; make of them what you can or will."

One morning I walked into his chambers just to chat about the news of the day—for there had been a terrible storm in the night, and a church spire rent from top to bottom by the lightning—when I found him intently engaged upon a new picture, a fact which somewhat surprised me by the waywardness of temper it displayed, as he had thrown down his pencils in vexation but the afternoon before, and vowed never to touch them again, but buy a spade, and go and earn his bread like Cain, by the sweat of his brow.

"Ah, Weigel," said I, "how is this? At it once more, as I knew you would be before another sun went round."

"Yes," he replied, "I took good advice last night."

I told him I was glad to hear it, for the arts would have had reason to deplore his wild resolution of yesterday, if he had adhered to it. I then asked him what friend had had the good fortune so to influence him?

"Why," he replied, "you know how it thundered between twelve and three o'clock? I could not sleep, so I got up, lit my pipe, and took my old walk in the passage. Crash came the thunder-claps on the roof, and the lightning flew about me like the blazes of a burning house. It might

have withered me to ashes, for what I cared, since I neither hoped here nor feared hereafter. I had nearly smoked my pipe out, when a man met me in the passage, and as is usual with the people here, just inquired how I was coming on. I told him my resolve, and added that I intended to keep it. He said as you say, that it would be a pity to see such a poetical soul as mine reduced to the necessity of spending time in common labor that any peasant hind might do as well or better, just for the sake of finding food and shelter for myself and family. I answered that that soul so constituted had been my curse, and swore the devil might have it if it were of any use to him, providing I could keep the bodies of those who were dependent on me from starvation worse than that of the beasts. He begged me not to speak rashly, but advised me to take heart and try once more. 'Go to your easel to-morrow,' said he, 'you will find a subject ready in your own room. I will make a bargain with you; you shall work upon it as long as you fancy you can improve it; if you finish it any time within one exact year—even a moment within—I will buy it of you at a price that will make your fortune, on condition that if you do not, at the expiration of that time, you take leave of your family and walk away into the forest with me when I call for you.' Done! said I, a bargain! And can you believe it, Zeitter, I fancied that I heard that word a bargain, a bargain, a bargain, repeated by twenty different echoes? We shook hands and parted. I filled my pipe again, and walked about till the storm was over."

I then, continued Zeitter, asked Weigel who the man was. He said that he could not tell, as he never troubled himself to look particularly either where he came from or whither he went. "And the subject that you were to find in your own room?" said I, glancing upon his new, clear canvas—"is this it?" "That is it," answered

he, "for though when I sat down I did not think what I was going to be about, yet half-unconsciously I began to draw that portrait. But the most odd thing about it is, that as I advanced with it, thinking I was sketching from fancy only, I happened to cast my eyes into the dark corner beside my easel, and there I saw the identical face looking through the gloom at me!"

"Exactly so," remarked Stretcher,—“and you saw it as well, no doubt?"

"Not so," answered Zeitter,—“but as I looked on my friend, I concluded that misery had made him mad."

"Pretty shrewd guess, that. Well, go on, old fellow. What sort of a picture was it?"

There was nothing but a rude outline then, but afterwards, as it seemed to grow towards perfection under his hands, it struck the spectator at first view as the highest conceivable manly beauty of an ethereal nature—a picture of a being whose very outward form was spiritual, yet heightened by a still deeper expression of remoter spirituality that made the heart quail as though standing before the presence of a very angel. But as you continued to gaze, that feeling grew imperceptibly into one of fear, you knew not how or why; and then again, and at last, into a sense of utter dread and horror; for the beauty seemed to become spiritually sinful, and what appeared to be an angel to the sight sank into the soul like the blighting presence of a demon. Never, continued Zeitter, shall I get that picture from before my eyes; for against it even Raffaele and Correggio were tame. After three months' incessant labor, I thought it was finished, for so it seemed to all eyes save Weigel's: but, on and on, he still worked as incessantly as before, for he said that the longer he went on, the more did his visionary model increase in beauty, and expression, and finish:—the labor of a lifetime was

before him—not of a year only; and even then he should drop into his grave and leave it still an "unfinished picture."

After six months' toil, he fell sick from anxiety and incessant application, but still persisted in his labor. He said that the work grew under his hands, for the further he proceeded, the more he had to do: a year seemed now but a day, and yet he had but six months left. Only six months to do all, or lose all. The consciousness of this pressed heavily upon him, and incited him to labor even when he almost required to be supported on his seat before his easel. At the end of three hundred and sixty days he was worn to a shadow, while the picture was wrought up to such a wonderful pitch of perfection that it seemed the living palpable reality, and he, the workman, only such a dim animated shade as human art and earthly colors might produce. Together they looked like spirit creating matter;—the invisible making the visible,—the supernatural and visionary giving form, and bulk, and substance to sensitive material. But what struck me as most singular was, that during the whole of this time he had never even once again alluded to the strange speculation which previously (as I described at the setting out) appeared to occupy so great a portion of his thoughts. He did so, at length, in the following manner:—

"Look what I have done, Zeitter, my friend. Behold this picture. Will it make a man immortal? But it is well you cannot see the original. I *know* that no man in this world may truly see him and live. That accursed, glorious, and yet hideous shadow! It has blasted me with poring upon. Night and day; day and night alike. Dream and reality, light and darkness; all have been alike to me; still the same unchangeably, until my eyes know no other object than that everlasting one. His look has become a part of my existence, and if I do not haste, make haste—I have but five days and some odd hours left,—I feel that he will swal-

low me up, body and soul! But I will be diligent; I will escape him yet; five days are a long time; and if I am in the hands of the Evil One—if, I say, all I have doubted be true, I'll finish in five days, five hours and a half, and cheat the devil of his prize at last."

I endeavored to persuade him that the picture was more than finished already,—that in pure plain truth the world possessed not such another; and that he had better so consider it himself, and lay his palette down for the close of labor. But he could not be convinced that it was finished. "Besides," said he, "*he* has not yet come to purchase it, the time is not yet up. One moment within the year, exactly, and he will be here. I know he will, for I feel him as it were even now creeping through my blood and along my bones," and he shivered in agony as the pencil fell from his hands, and his whole form sank almost as senseless as a corpse back in his antique chair.

In spite of even the daily conclusions of my own senses, that nothing more within the reach of the most consummate art could possibly be done to heighten the picture,—what actually *was* done day after day contradicted me, and showed again and again, that Weigel was right;—it was yet unfinished, because a higher perfection seemed still attainable, though attainable only because the eye constantly distinguished that he did it again.

Five days and five hours more were gone. The conclusion was at hand. Curious and anxious to know what it would be, I was alone by his side from the commencement of the last hour until all was over. I know not how to describe it, for my own excitement was such, that the circumstances, impressions, and feelings of that time seemed to whirl through my brain confusedly and indistinctly, like objects mingled together on the circumference of a revolving wheel. I knew a climax of some sort was at hand, and

one all the more impressive and fearful, because though so close, it was inscrutable, though involving beyond doubt the fate of a man of a most gifted and rare genius. Weigel hung his watch upon the easel above his picture, while his eye, with painful regularity, and an expression of intensity, that seemed to dilate the pupil much beyond its ordinary size, while it partially closed the lids and drew down the brows closely and rigidly—passed from the moving hands to the dark corner where his supernatural model was, and then to the picture:—only to return while touch was added to touch to the shadow again, to the picture, and then to the dial. His mouth was slightly opened in an indescribable expression of agony and fear, and whenever his pencil was not actually in contact with the palette or the painting, I observed it tremble in his grasp like a shivering reed.

"Five minutes more!" at length he gasped; "and the head grows more and more glorious, till this picture looks but a school-boy's sketch! Three minutes!—I shall never have done, never! One minute!—Ah!—not one—not half a one! Zeitter, Zeitter!—my friend!" he shrieked; "ah!—ah!—ah!—*the year is out*, and it is not done!"

The palette and pencils fell from his hands to the floor, and his head sank heavily upon his breast, as though bowed even in death before the idol of his art. I flew to seize and support him, for he was apparently insensible. At that moment his wife and a strange man, whom I had never seen before, entered the room. The former wept and cried like a woman frantic; but the latter looked coldly on, and placing his finger on Weigel's breast merely said solemnly, "He is better now." At that voice and touch the artist raised himself up, as though suddenly re-animated, and looked seriously, but confidently and calmly, in the face of the stranger. Not a word passed between them; but the latter turned towards Weigel's wife, and told her that at

a certain bank in the city, which he named, she would find payment for that picture to the amount of three thousand pounds.

"It will at least," said he, "save you and your family from want for life; and that is all your husband cares for."

"All!—all!" said Weigel; "and now for the forest!"

So saying he arose with the alacrity of a youth whose health and spirits the world has never broken; put on his cap, filled his pipe as though nothing had happened, and kissed his wife and children, after having extorted a promise from them to be happy *until he came back again*.

"I will see that they fulfil it!" murmured the stranger. "Come!—the moon is up and we must be there *by* midnight."

"May I not accompany you, Weigel?" I exclaimed.

"No!—not as you value your life;—and take heed, Zeitter, take heed, also, that you never come to me."

Nevertheless, I felt impelled to go along with them, and followed until we entered the shadows of the forest. Two black horses, or creatures that bore their resemblance, stood in the road.

"Mount!" cried the stranger, as he vaulted on to the back of one, and Weigel on the other; "DARKNESS is mine, and RUIN thine! Away, away!"

They swept the forest like a Winter's blast; bowing the trees as they passed, sweeping leaves away like a hurricane, and gathering a tempest of black hurrying clouds from the skies along the horizon towards which they fled. The moon sank like an opaque scarlet fire, and the hair of my head stood up as I returned home in darkness. Need I say that Weigel never came back again?

Here Herr Zeitter paused.

"And the picture,—did they take that too?" asked Sapio Green.

"The picture," replied Zeitter, "was sent for the next day by a strange old baron, who inhabited a castle hard by, and who said he had purchased it by commission. However that might be, his name was on the check for payment, and the bank discharged it out of his deposits. I anticipate your next question, but he was not the stranger; nor was any one like him known in that quarter of the country. Up to this day, however, it is believed that a figure like Weigel may be seen on moonlight nights still working away with his shadowy pencils upon the 'Unfinished Picture,' as it hangs in distinguished state in a room appropriated (with reference to works of art) to it alone."

