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OR.

THE FORGER'S FATE.

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CHARLEY HUNTER;

OR,

THE FORGER'S FATE.

CHAPTER I.—CLOUD AND SUNSHINE.

"One looked like Juno,
The other, dove-eyed, fragile and retiring,
Appear'd the type of modesty."—*Scrap Book.*

"I TELL you," said the queenly Julia Bowen, casting aside her bonnet with an air of recklessness mixed with determination, and throwing her heavy velvet cloak upon an ottoman, in one corner of a splendid apartment in a mansion on Twenty-third street, "I tell you he must be won—won at any sacrifice!"

The girl addressed was undressing her street toilet with perfect coolness and deliberation. She was the reverse of the other in appearance. Julia Bowen was a voluptuous, dark and imposing beauty, fully developed, and looking as if she was born to command either man or woman. Mary Schuyler was petite, girlish and fair skinned, and seemed modelled for dependence and obedience. Her mild blue eye, veiled by the deep fringe of the drooping lids, contrasted most strikingly with the imperious, glittering black eye of her companion. The latter expressed self-reliance and daring, the former diffidence and meekness.

"Must be won," said Mary in a low soft tone, "Must is a formidable word, Julia."

"For you, perhaps; for me it has no terrors. I repeat—he must be won."

"Do you love him, really? I begin to fear you do." Mary, as she uttered these words, modestly took a seat beside Julia.

"Love him!"

The imperious beauty started to her feet, as she scornfully gave vent to this exclamation, and then paced the floor with a hurried and uneven gait, baring her broad forehead with

her nervous hands, and breathing like a high-mettled racer about to contend with a spirited adversary.

"What else but love could move you so deeply?" quietly asked Mary. She betrayed no emotion, yet a close, a very close observer would have seen that although her eyelids drooped, a glance of deep and earnest inquiry was shot from beneath them.

"Would you know?" asked Julia, suddenly curbing her vehemence, and resuming her seat; "listen—there is but one other passion that can move us as deeply as Love, and that is HATE!"

"Why should you hate him? He has never done you an injury."

"He has! He has dared to pretend affection for me, and then treat me with indifference."

"Which," remarked Mary, with a demure smile, "should be met with indifference."

"I have tried that plan," said Julia quickly, "but it has proven ineffectual."

"Let him go. There are others that do love you. Encourage them."

"Never. That man shall not live who can say that Julia Bowen was rejected by him. If I do not bring him to my feet, he will have the power to say so, for I have manifested a preference in his favor so publicly that it has been the theme of gossip everywhere."

"But you say you did not feel that preference."

"The world thinks I did."

"Who cares for the world?" exclaimed Mary with an oily sigh.

"I do!—you do; yes, calmly as glides the current of your life, you care for the world and

its opinions. I—impulsive, ambitious, ay! vain! I care for naught else. This man—this Charles Hunter—is necessary to my happiness. I covet his wealth."

"Young Lester is devoted to you, and he is worth \$100,000."

"The principal of which he never touches," said Julia, with scorn.

"Yet, he lives like a gentleman."

"Like an elaborated machine kept in excellent order; rather," continued the proud beauty.

"I'm sure you would have all the elegant necessities of life, as his wife," urged the modest Mary.

"Necessaries!" cried Julia—"I have those now. I want more. I want gold enough to be profuse in my expenditures. I would have an abundance beyond the standard of mere necessity. Hunter is not only immensely rich, but he cares nothing for money. He gains it with the utmost ease, and he values it so little that the squandering of thousands would produce no impression on him. I would strive, Mary, above all my associates, over whose shillings it would be ecstasy for me to show dollars."

"As Mrs. Hunter, I readily admit you could do all this. Hunter is worth half a million, so men say."

"Ay! and at the rate he is amassing funds, will soon be a millionaire. Oh!" exclaimed the Juno-like Julia, as her face glowed with eager desire, "what could I not do with a million from which to replenish my exchequer!"

Mary stole another glance of fire without being perceived at her companion, and then said:

"I perfectly comprehend, now, that you must win him, as you said, at any sacrifice."

"And you shall aid me."

"Of what possible use can I be in such an affair?" interrogated Mary with an innocent air.

"You can be of great use to me in it," answered Julia, with a majestic nod, expressive of condescension.

"I would rather not be connected with it in any way whatever," said Mary with timidity.

"Not for my sake! fie! He regards you as a child, and treats you with the utmost confidence because he thinks you are simple and unsuspecting. It shall be your task to worm his secrets from him—to catch the tone and tenor of his thoughts—to weigh his motives, estimate his tastes, lay bare, for my benefit, his desires, aspirations, and innermost sentiments. With this material, I think, my skill will enable me to fashion a triumph."

"One would imagine to hear you talk, that I was a Richelieu, instead of an unsophisticated, unambitious girl, whom nobody torments with flattery, or persecutes with attentions," remarked Mary, after reflecting an instant upon the above address.

"You are a woman, and I never yet knew a woman who could not outwit even a minister of state when she tried."

"Well," said Mary, "I suppose I am to consider myself compelled to undertake this mission."

"If you please."

"Remember, I meddle myself in this love, or, more properly speaking, money adventure entirely at your suggestion."

"Of course I will remember it, and after we have succeeded—for I look upon success as a certainty—you shall be rewarded."

Mercy on us, do you think I sell my friendship, Julia?"

"I think that, like myself, you would not look upon a few golden additions to the contents of your purse as being unwelcome or burthensome. There, not another word! And now that this compact is settled I feel better. I am almost sorry that I sought the precincts of Wall street to see if I could lure him from his dingy den. *N'importe*, he will soon be here."

Her countenance became radiant and joyful at this thought, and so, we think, did Mary's; but the joy and radiance depicted on the face of the latter made but a momentary stay. Were they reflected from the face of Julia, or did they emanate from the heart of the meek and child-like Mary?

They separated, and each went to her private room. It was a private hotel they were in. What a world of intrigue is embodied in a private hotel in New York city!

Julia Bowen closed the door of her apartment, and then indulged in exultant gestures.

"Poor girl," she soliloquised, "how pliant and docile she is! How self-denying and how single-minded! She is just the ally I would have chosen from among a thousand. How fortunate that she came to live here, and how wise in me to cultivate her acquaintance."

Mary glided noiselessly into her chamber and sat down upon her bedside. There she remained in deep, but apparently placid thought, for about five minutes, and then she arose, drew out from beneath her pillow a miniature rosewood writing-desk, and was soon busied in penning a note. It was a school-girl style of calligraphy she indulged in; round, clear, and terribly suggestive of the copy-book. Once, while writing, she bit her under lip, and knitted her brow as if attacked by some sharp pang, but apart from this there was nothing to indicate that she was writing anything more important than an order for an assortment of worsted with which to finish her embroidery, or a set of new cambric handkerchiefs to carry to church.

We will leave Mary writing, while we once more visit the private apartment of Julia Bowen. She has a male visitor. He has just come in, and is reclining upon a lounge, with his feet upon a chair. He is dressed like a gentleman, if we except the large imitation diamond in his bosom, and the half dozen vulgar rings on his fingers. His moustache, dyed a blue black, has an omnibus-driver cut, and so has his hair. The countenance is suggestive of late hours, hard

drinking, pot-house squabbles, and morning "cocktails."

Before this man the bold Julia appears to hold herself a cheap being. She is now meeker than Mary appeared to be. He speaks:

"So you haven't managed him yet! What have you been about? Surely you've neglected business."

"Indeed I have not," responded Julia; "but he is unlike any man I ever before had to deal with. He appears to be full of passion, and yet I could almost swear he is as cold as ice."

"You ought to please his fancy, if anybody," said William Bristol, Esq., (that was his name,) as he eyed her with the air of a jockey; "he's fond of fine horses, and the man that loves dashing horse-flesh takes to such showy finery as you are as naturally as a duck takes to water."

"I have not impressed him to the extent you require as yet—but—"

"The old story," said Mr. Bristol, rising, and thrusting his hands deep into the pockets of his pantaloons; "you need not repeat it. I'm tired of hearing it. I want money."

"I dare say you do, but if I have not got it, how can I give it to you?"

"I once said that to you when I was verdant. Do you remember your reply?"

"I thought by-gones were to be by-gones," said Julia Bowen, cowering beneath his glance.

"So they were, on certain conditions. These must be fulfilled or else—"

"Enough, enough! spare me the pain of listening to threats. How are you situated for money?"

"I lost \$3000 last night, two-thirds of which I have not yet paid. It must be paid to-morrow or I will be constrained to leave the city. Can you borrow from this Ceresus?"

"I will try, but I anticipate defeat."

"Yet you have said he was generous."

"I cannot call his use of money generous exactly," said Julia, after a moment's reflection; "it is more deserving of the name of eccentricity. He is a riddle. I have heard that insanity runs in his family, but I place little reliance upon the rumor."

"Well, perhaps you can work upon his fears; tell him he has compromised you."

"He really appears to have no fear, and if I were to tell him that he would only laugh."

"All this is your business, not mine," said the man, with the appearance of having formed a sudden and a final resolve of importance. He continued: "You are playing me false I think, but that is your affair also. If you choose to take the consequences of deception towards me, I have no more to say. I shall call here at ten o'clock to-morrow morning for \$2000. Do you understand?"

The woman had thrown herself prostrate upon the floor, and was sobbing violently. He spurned her with his foot. As he did so a light silvery laugh struck his ear. There was a side door in the apartment, cut into the inner wall. The laugh appeared to have proceeded from that

vicinity. Bristol sprang towards it like a flash of lightning, and with one powerful pull threw the door open. Nobody could be seen in the little passage way that led to half a dozen other apartments, but a keen ear could have detected the rustle of thick dress goods, such as are worn by women.

Singular! The only female in that part of the house, in full promenade costume, at that moment, was Mary Schnyler, and her outer garments were made of rich *moire antique*.

Mr. Bristol shortly afterwards left the house. Just before him Mary had gone out—to the Post Office.

CHAPTER II.—A NOVEL CONSPIRACY.

"Get thee behind me, Satan."—*Scriptures*

We must leave our friends of the first chapter for a short time, while we pay a visit to the most fashionable as well as the largest hotel on Broadway, and bring forward persons who will figure conspicuously in this "strange, eventful history."

We will proceed without ceremony to one of the upper rooms of this grand hotel—a room furnished with exquisite taste in some respects, and most abominable vulgarity in others. Mixed with articles of *virtu* are stumps of cigars; hanging beside gems of pictures are coats and vests; and on the costly velvet tapestry which covers the floor have been placed three or four pairs of boots that have done their owner all the service he could reasonably require of them.

The regular occupant of this apartment is present. That is he, seated at that small table, in which there is a multiplicity of drawers, and the rich pearl and ivory inlaying work of which is almost wholly concealed by a pile of letters and notes of all the shapes and sizes imaginable.

Do you think him handsome?

Now, if you are a woman, or expect to grow to be a woman, you will answer "yes." All the ladies think him extremely handsome, albeit we men—out of mere pique and envy it may be—do not confess to a belief that he is "any great shakes" in the way of personal appearance; but look at him and don't fail to mark his elegant moustache and neat half whiskers. He is six feet tall, and is well formed—about as well formed as need be. His face is decidedly Hebraical. The "chosen people" could not, if they would, deny him a place among them. Those piercing black eyes, those massive jet ringlets which seem to be made of the finest, crispest and oiliest of silk; that good sized nose, a cross between the aquiline and Roman; that Bohemian gipsy-like complexion, all proclaim his faith and descent as unmistakably as if, (as in the days of old he would have done, had he lived,) he wore the yellow cap and crossed sleeve despotically liveried upon his race by certain Christian despots. He long ago abjured all religious belief, and we will,

therefore, call him merely a man of the world. Dr. Dasher Leon—that is the title by which the individual we are describing must be addressed—has “travelled.” He is known and noted in both hemispheres; but let that pass for the present. He has a winning way with him, whether at cards or in the prosecution of a love suit. Once he devoted himself to faro altogether, but now he engages exclusively in the pursuit of the fair. No, I am wrong. He makes them pursue him. But let me not travel “out of the record.” He has a companion to whom I wish to call attention; you have already heard of him. Behold Charles Hunter! A description of him is unnecessary. Let his deeds and conversation paint his portrait.

He sits with his feet elevated above his head—at no matter what angle—smoking a cigar. The smoke curls and floats away lazily in wreaths above and around him. In his left hand, which he is carelessly swinging, is a roll of bank notes. He is not about to make cigar-lighters of these notes, although he has often performed such feats, and obtained much admiration for them among the champagne-drinking representatives of young America.

At the precise moment when the apartment was revealed to your view, Hunter held up the rag money alluded to, so that the gas light fell directly upon it. Doctor Leon's eyes took the same direction.

“Is it a bargain?” asked Hunter, carelessly.

“How much did you say there is?” was the interrogative response of the Doctor.

“Only one thousand,” replied Hunter, without displaying any emotion.

“It is not enough,” remarked Leon with a sigh.

“I think it is,” said Hunter quietly.

“But you would alter your opinion if you would but reflect awhile.”

“Reflect! What should I reflect for? Let the unhappy reflect if they like; as for me, I have ostracised reflection from the day I first wore jacket and trousers, and I mean to die without having indulged in an hour's reflection.” Hunter spoke these words mechanically. They appeared to come only from his lips; the brain seemed to have had nothing to do with them.

“Psha!” exclaimed Leon with a gesture of impatience, “one always gets some such frivolous answer from you. If you don't reflect—and I swear I can hardly believe that you do—how in the name of Plutus can you make so much money? Can a man without thought, calculation, or caution realise a fortune in a week, as you do?”

For one single instant the face of the great and successful financier was covered by a fearful frown, and his fingers worked tremulously with the bank notes, and with the cigar he was smoking. Leon did not notice the change, which was gone almost as soon as it came; and then Hunter spoke:—

“That's a secret, my boy; as much of a secret as is the method by which you contrive to make such sad havoc among the feminines.

Ab! that word brings me back to our subject. Will you take the thousand, or shall I throw it into the grate?”

“You are a marvel!” ejaculated Leon, after gazing at him a few seconds with a peculiar expression. He shortly added, “I do believe that you would as soon cast that money into the fire as your used-up cigar, and yet nothing would induce you to lend it to me.”

“Lend! It's a bad word. It ought to be blotted from the vocabulary,” said Hunter, bringing his feet down upon the floor emphatically. “My dear fellow, steal or beg, but never borrow; give, squander, but never lend. But come, time's flying, and I want to be off. What say you—this is the last call, as an auctioneer would say—what say you to my proposition?”

“Repeat it,” said the handsome doctor, gloomily.

“You are to command the girl, Emma Peters, to submit herself and actions entirely to my control—”

“Entirely!”

“As entirely as she would to yours!” continued Hunter calmly, “for one year from this date. At the expiration of the year she will be free to go where and with whom it may please her.”

“But the proposition is so very absurd.”

“I know it. That is one of my chief reasons for making it.”

“And what explanation can I give her for urging an adventure so curious?”

“Any that your prolific fancy may hit upon—I'm not particular. Hatch one up at once, if you accept, so that I may keep it up with her.”

“I'll try.”

“Then you will take the thousand with the conditions annexed?”

“I must, for my treasury is empty.”

“There is the money, then,” said Hunter, tossing the notes upon the table. They were eagerly pocketed by the Doctor. “And now,” continued the former, “for the tale we are to tell.”

The Doctor ran his digits caressingly through his ringlets and peered wistfully at space. He crossed his legs and beat the d—'s tattoo upon the edge of the table. He buried his face in his palms, while his elbows bored holes almost into his knees. He got up and paced the floor. He whistled. But from all this exertion sprang no scheme—no plausible story, so he resumed his seat. Hunter did not evince impatience as men usually evince it. He was impatient, though, for he said, with a brusque and determined air,

“You may give me back those funds.”

“No!” cried Leon starting to his feet again, “I have it now. You are my guardian, you wish to test this girl's affection for me. You require to see if she can withstand the allurements of fashion—can pass the ordeal of a year's unlicensed conviviality in this gay metropolis without suffering blot or blemish. You are whimsical; this is your whim. Do you comprehend?”

“Perfectly.”

“Will it do?”

“If the girl is very verdant, yes; if at all up to the tricks of her sex or our own, no.”

“She is verdant, and she places the utmost dependence upon what I tell her.”

“I know that. Well, we'll try her with this flimsy and ridiculous plan.”

“But now what do you really mean to do with her?” urged Leon, a little tremulously.

“What do you think?”

“Ruin her?”

This was a question, not an assertion.

“You are right.”

“Then,” cried Leon hastily, “I'm cursed if—”

“There, there, don't splutter,” interrupted Hunter, “she won't be ruined in the way you imagine, by me. But ruin will be her portion nevertheless. Pay particular attention to what I am saying. She is very young, and as strange a creature as ever I saw. Her beauty is almost supernatural. I have seen numerous prettier maidens, but not one other possessing her style of beauty. It is unique, striking! I want her to be my companion everywhere—in my rides, my excursions, my visits to the opera, the theatre, the ball room, and the race course. This will produce talk. They will talk about her, about me. We shall flourish gloriously wherever gossip finds a patron. My vanity, my love of notoriety, will be gratified to a surfeit. ‘The rich broker and his latest prize,’ will be the current remark wherever we appear. I shall have the credit of a triumph without its infamy upon my conscience, and enjoy the pleasure of this young lady's company. The world will call her wanton, but for that piece of injustice the world will be responsible—not I. Do you comprehend?”

“Yes! y-e-es,” stammered the bewildered Doctor.

“Then I'm off. To-morrow night I will expect you at my bachelor rooms in Fourteenth street, with the victim of our novel conspiracy.”

So saying, Hunter seized his hat, and made his exit. He had gained the street before the handsome recipient of his money had recovered from a sudden fit of astonishment. Dr. Leon was not a man to be non-plused or astounded for any length of time. He had mastered his surprise just as a gentle knock assailed a panel of his door. At his request, (after he had hurriedly concealed his letters), the applicant for admission walked in. It was Emma Peters. She resided in the hotel, it appeared, and it further appeared that Dr. Leon had appointed an interview to take place between them immediately after the departure of his visitor.

She was of ordinary stature, but yet she looked larger than females of the ordinary size. She looked as juvenile as one of her age, (fourteen years and a half), should look, and yet the maturity of womanhood also found expression in her contour. In physique and manner she was at once like a child and a woman. Passion

shone from her dark, wondering, hazel eyes, and was displayed upon her full luscious lip; but there was at the same time an indication in the placidity of the face that it might be carefully guarded by purity. She still wore her light brown hair in school-girl plaits, but its heavy volume seemed to belong to a head that had borne twice her number of years.

Caressingly and confidently she took the seat indicated by him—his knee, and gently passed her arm around his neck. With a voice whose tones were strangely musical and persuasive, he told her the narrative decided upon by himself and Hunter. She listened with an air half of fright and half of resignation, and did not speak for full five minutes after he had concluded. Then, placing her disengaged hand upon her breast, and grasping convulsively at her silk dress, so that the sound made was like that of an infant's fingers scratching upon paper, she said:

“If this must be so, I will submit; but if you knew what torture I will endure in the performance of this dreadful task, you would not exact my obedience.”

Doctor Leon was a noble pleader in the court of Cupid. Words of love and syren-like persuasion glided from his lips as if coated with oil and honey, and ejected by steam power. “Only a year!” How eloquently he rung the changes upon that sentence! “It would soon pass away!” Yes, every year passes away soon enough. “And when it was passed would they not be each other's forever?” That settled the matter. She consented!

Tenderly he pressed his lips, as if inspired by gratitude as well as affection, to her delicate forehead. With a sigh of happiness her head settled upon his shoulder. And there they sat. What was busy in his heart then? We know what caused hers to throb so joyously.

And yet he was forty, and she fourteen! What a world this is!

CHAPTER III.—A STORM RISING.

“What is't ye do?”

“A deed without a name.”—*Macbeth*.

WHEN we left Mary Schuyler, she was on her way to the Post Office. She reached that great, shabby inn without delay, and deposited the note or letter we saw her write. But that did not seem to be the whole of her errand. She did not go away, but amused herself by reading the lists of advertised letters, beautifully pasted upon dirty boards that would scarcely be tolerated in an aristocratical pig-stye. Having exhausted this fund of time-killing sport, she returned to the outside of the covered passage, and scanned the passers-by on the street. She was not only an observer, but was the observed as well.

A small-sized but well-built man, with a clear, piercing eye, and a handsome but shrewd countenance, (slightly marked by varioloid), had watched her movements curiously from the

time she dropped her letter into the aperture appointed to receive it; indeed, he had not permitted himself to lose sight of her for an instant. Had he been a cat intent upon capturing a mouse, he could not have kept up a steadier or more accurate surveillance. It was easy to perceive that he was not a "man about town," in the common acceptance of that phrase. His movements generally, and his observant gestures in especial, gave no idea of the leisure libertine, or the *blase* sportsman. There was no love in his looks.

Mary was so busy with her reflections that she did not discover the careful attention with which this man favored her. About an hour after her first appearance at the Post Office a well-dressed lad turned into Nassau from Liberty street.

There was nothing in his appearance to cause one to look at him a second time, unless one happened to be a student of character on the plan of Lavater. Such a student would have at once regarded his face earnestly. It was dark, thin, and prepossessing. A young moustache, which had never been marred by the razor, gave an expression of manliness to the lower part of the face, but the smooth forehead and the curls that clustered around it indicated the boy. He was about twenty years of age—but care, the student would have seen, was gnawing at his heart.

Twenty years!

Glorious age! when the mind is like putty, ready to receive any impression, and likely to retain it unless a stronger one be made to its destruction! Beautiful age! when the ear believes all that it hears, and the eye confides fondly in the apparent truth of all that it sees. Age of reason and folly combined, age of verdancy and self-esteem, age of brass and soft sodder! how many hast thou wrecked beyond redemption.

John Legouve, the youth we have introduced, saw Mary the moment he turned towards the Post Office, and his dark thin face was immediately wreathed in smiles. Ah! dimity and crinoline will move a young man's risible faculties quicker than laughing gas!

He was the individual for whom Mary had been watching. How she blushed and trembled, and pursed her mouth demurely as he grasped both her hands, and volubly assured her that he "could not get away from the counting-house before." And how modestly she responded that "it did not make the slightest difference," it "had rather amused her to wait," and all that sort of thing.

"I would have come to the house," said he, as he motioned her to take his arm, which she did, while they moved at a slow pace towards Broadway; "but," he continued, "I have no wish to be placed in a false position, nor to place you in one. We are both too young to be misjudged."

Now that was spoken like a man of good judgment and extensive experience. John Legouve was not a man in years, but education,

associations of an exacting character, (intellectually speaking), and temperament, had given him a habit of thinking, and those who *think* earnestly and often become *aged* in conversation very soon.

To his remark about misjudgment Mary made no reply save by a little sigh, which fluttered so feebly from between her lips that one would have naturally supposed it was almost too modest to make itself known at all. The youth paused a while and then resumed:

"We have known each other so long, Mary, that I cannot but regard you as a sister. Yet you are *not* my sister, and people will not comprehend why I lavish a brother's affection upon you. It seems to me that this world is a very literal sort of place."

Mary sighed again. The youth stole a side-long glance at her and went on speaking.

"I have no desire to appear in anybody's eyes as your lover, Mary, and therefore I will not visit you at your residence. I should cut but a sorry figure as a suitor for a young lady's hand, would I not?"

Mary did not see why, at least she said so.

"Well, it makes no difference. You are now as you have been since we played together over the fields in our native village, as one of my own flesh and blood, and you have met with misfortune. It is my duty to help you out of your troubles, and, trust me, I will do so. Was my last letter satisfactory?"

"How can you ask such a question?" said Mary, with a reproachful accent.

"What do you mean?"

"How could a letter from you be otherwise than satisfactory to me?"

"Oh! Yes, but I meant to ask if the—the enclosure was all right—was sufficient."

"I tried to make it answer."

"Ah! I see. It was not enough. Well, I anticipated that, and have met you prepared to supply the deficiency."

"Oh! thanks! thanks!" exclaimed Mary with great animation.

"Turn into Rector street towards the North River, and I will give it to you."

Mary's countenance suddenly underwent a change. It was a reflex of the most poignant sorrow.

"I durst not take it!" she said.

"Afraid! for what reason?"

He made this inquiry with a look of mortal fear.

"You will involve yourself in difficulty!"

"No, no, no," he said hurriedly, "never fear me. I am prudent—careful. Come, don't stand here, but turn the corner."

She obeyed him.

"You must bear in mind," she said, after they had got out of Broadway, "that I have already been assisted by you to amounts beyond your income."

"But I had saved money for two years before you required any assistance, Mary. Don't forget that."

Money! It was the main subject with them

JULIA BOWEN AND MARY SCHUYLER. (See Page 3.)



all. Well, who does *not* talk of it, and strive to get it!

Mary had not forgotten that, she said.

"Very well, then," observed Legouve, as he glanced furtively around him and placed a small parcel in her not unwilling hand, "take this. It will pay off that crushing debt, in full, of which you spake at our last interview."

"Must I take it?"

Oh, how artlessly she asked that question! No wonder his large grey eyes, which at times looked as tenderly and as imploringly as those of a wounded deer at bay, filled with tears of honest affection as he answered:

"You *must* if you wish to preserve my friendship, and I only regret that it is so paltry a gift. Would that it were fifty times greater."

The transaction we have mentioned was observed by the man who had noticed Mary so vigilantly at the Post Office. He had followed them.

"God bless you, my dear brother," said Mary, putting away his gift into her *porte monnaie*, "the day will come, I hope, when I will be able to reciprocate your kindness. Should I ever get my property, now in dispute, or procure a rich husband, I will set you up in business."

Legouve grinned a ghastly smile. The word "husband" evidently did not sound very harmoniously to his brotherly ears. How is it that platonic love in extremely young people rarely brooks the interference of a thought about matrimony?

"Don't talk of business," he remarked after gulping down his chagrin by a violent effort; "you know I hate business; my ambition is to be an artist. One of these days I shall go to Italy and study. You know I paint very well already."

He drew from his breast-pocket a miniature in proof of his assertion. It was a fine likeness of Mary Schuyler. The mechanical part of the work was crude and unskilful, but the spirit of the face—the life, the expression—was there to perfection.

"Well, well, I did not mean to hurt your feelings," said Mary, gazing at the miniature with a strange and undefinable air, "but pray when did you paint that?"

"Since I last saw you."

"For me?"

"No."

The negative was delivered with so much abruptness that Mary was completely disconcerted. She paused irresolutely a short time, and then said she must go. But there she remained. Legouve inquired, moodily, if he should put her into an omnibus, to which she answered in the affirmative.

They started for Broadway again. Just before they arrived at the corner, Mary suddenly asked Legouve if he knew Charles Hunter, the financier.

"Yes," replied Legouve.

"Intimately?"

"Yes, again."

"Are you at all in his confidence?"

"Why do you ask these curious questions?" inquired Legouve, turning pale as ashes, and shaking like an aspen. Every joint quivered.

"Bless me, what's the matter?"

"A sudden spasm—I have been subject to these strange attacks lately. But what do you know of Hunter?"

"He visits our house."

"To see you?"

"No, by no means. To see Miss Bowen, whom you saw with me once."

Legouve breathed freely again.

"Are you Hunter's friend?" queried Mary, without giving him time to speak.

"I am. He has taken a fancy to me, and I am indebted to him for many courtesies and favors."

"Then you must bring about an interview between him and I," said Mary. She spoke modestly and quietly, and yet there was something irresistibly commanding in her tone and manner.

"To what end?"

"He is in danger."

"Indeed! Pray tell me at once what or who threatens him?"

"That I wish to make known to himself in private."

"Mary!"

"Oh, you shall be present, but not another soul must dream of my having anything to do with the affair."

"What a mystery this is! Mary, you used to abominate mysteries."

"But don't I tell you that there shall be no mystery so far as you are concerned. Come, I see one of our line of omnibuses approaching. Will you get him to see me?"

"Yes; but I must be present. Don't lose that from your mind."

"It is agreed. Ah, the omnibus has stopped. See him as soon as you can make it convenient, and write me at the Broadway post office."

"Not direct to your house?"

"Certainly not—for reasons. Good bye."

As she got into the vehicle, a man who had been talking with Mary's post office incognito took a seat by her side.

Legouve watched the omnibus until he could no longer see it, and then slowly sauntered up Broadway. He was about turning into Liberty street when the individual who had followed Mary tapped him on the shoulder.

"Well, sir!" said Legouve, with great hauteur.

"Step into this confectioner's shop, I wish to speak with you," replied the man persuasively.

"Sir!"

"Come, you need not be offended, and I will not detain you five minutes."

"But I do not know you."

"You will soon be relieved of that ignorance. Come."

The stranger led the way, and Legouve, mesmerized as it were, mechanically followed. The stranger led him to a dark corner in the back of

the shop, where brandy and pies were sold to clerks and merchants in need of "refreshment," and asked him to "take a drink."

"I never taste ardent spirits," said Legouve gently.

"Smoke?"

"Yes."

They procured cigars, and after they had puffed them an instant the stranger said:—

"Your name is John Legouve."

"It is, I'm not ashamed of it."

"You ought to be."

"How! This insult—"

"Shall be explained or atoned," said the stranger calmly. He proceeded, "You are the mail clerk of Baldown & Co."

"Yes sir," answered Legouve fiercely.

"Your salary is \$600 a year."

"What of it?"

"Not much—only you contrive to spend \$1500 per annum."

"What's that your business? Sir, this impertinence is altogether inexcusable. If I had the strength—"

"You would flog me," again interrupted the stranger; "but as you have not you must hear me out. You have plundered letters entrusted to your care—here is a list of them."

The youth turned the color of beeswax, and would have fallen to the floor had not the stranger held him by the arm.

"Rally! recover yourself," said the stranger. "I'm not going to expose you if you will promise amendment."

"I will! I do! Oh God, how have I been brought to this fearful depth of degradation!"

"By an artful woman!" replied the stranger.

"Now, hear me. You shall go unharmed if you promise to restore the money you have taken—you can get it from your father—and pledge me your word and honor never to transgress again."

The youth made a strong effort to appear at his ease.

"See me this evening, you are confounded, bewildered, now," said the stranger, "meet me at the—— theatre, (I know you go there,) and then you will be able to talk this matter over without fainting. There is my card."

The man gave him the bit of pasteboard, and quickly left the place.

Legouve looked at the inscription. It read, "John McMahon, Police Detective, Station, New York Post Office."

CHAPTER IV.—THE DIAMOND CROSS.

Gifts steal away the heart, and oft do ripen love into a fierce consuming flame, which burns the very heart out.—*Scrap-Book.*

When Charles Hunter left Doctor Lieon's hotel, he proceeded, as fast as his legs could carry him, to a famous house of public entertainment not far away, and on the same thoroughfare. The exterior of this grand resort had rather a com-

mon look. The edifice was low, and built in a very plain style. The interior was, however, rather comfortably furnished, and ornamented with some degree of good taste. The only fault visible inside was a want of cleanliness. The beverages were, however, in high repute, and drew together all the *connoisseurs* in Cogniac about town. Perhaps these unceasing visits were also attributable to certain transactions which took place every night in a dingy room "up stairs," where several tables with green cloth covers—tables not devoted to billiard purposes—were surrounded by crowds of expectant and avaricious looking gentry, who seemed to be remarkably busy with piles of cash, and bits of pasteboard covered with red and black devices.

Hunter did not go to this room, but to one next to it, in which sat, all alone, a sleepy, portwine-faced man, aged about fifty years, who appeared to be a cross between an old country servant and an old-fashioned New York night watchman.

Hunter tossed him a dollar, which seemed to operate precisely after the fashion of a galvanic shock.

"Bless me, Mr. Hunter, is that you?"

"Can't you see that it is?"

"Yes!"—here he arose and shook himself—

"do you want to go in?"

"I don't know. Is Harry here?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long is it since he arrived?"

"About half an hour."

"Tell him I am here."

The man entered the mysterious chamber we have already alluded to, and presently returned with a most remarkable-looking personage. Probably a more elaborately costumed man than Harry Eyelet was never seen in any part of the globe. He was perfection as to showy, dashy, flashy getting up. From the pearl-colored coat, which fitted like a glove over a figure that would have been a model of elegance but for a slight tendency to corpulence, down to his glorious bosom-frill, he was exquisite. And his diamonds, which flashed from fingers, breast, and were even interwoven with his watch-guard—they were but little more brilliant than his eyes. His teeth, white and glistening as pearls—but I will not pursue the description further. Suffice it to say, he was a man among thousands, and from among those thousands one's eye would have instinctively selected him as a target at which to aim the shaft of curiosity.

He greeted Hunter, warmly.

"Glad to see you, my boy."

What a manner his was! It was a mixture of dignity, affability, condescension, vulgarity and gentlemanly ease, so nicely compounded that it was impossible to tell which was the prevalent ingredient.

Hunter was his warm friend. He was eccentric himself, and liked eccentricities.

They left the place without exchanging any words worth being recorded, and were soon upon the pavement.

"Well, where have you been all the afternoon?" inquired Hunter.

"At the Countess's."

"What, she who has been the centre of attraction at the Prescott House?"

"Even she."

"How the deuce did you contrive to manage the introduction?"

"Gadso, she managed that."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; it's a fact, she saw me, and was struck. Of course it was easy for her to make my acquaintance. It was as easy for me to talk whole volumes of love to her. I gained my point—she placed me at the head of her list."

"And to-day you dined with her, you say."

"Exactly so. And about an hour ago she sent me a note in French, stating that she was pestered terribly by a couple of tradesmen who demanded payment for some goods with which they had furnished her, and requesting the loan, for a few days, of \$1000."

Hunter burst into a loud laugh.

"What are you laughing at?" inquired Eyelet with a disconcerted air.

"Why, at her mistake. She wouldn't believe that I was wealthy, although I can command a trifle in Wall street; and bit sharp at your elegant mountings, when you are positively poor."

"Charley! Charley, this is unkind."

"Not a bit of it; it's the plain truth between friends. But cheer up, lad, you shall have a check to send to her."

"Not for the world. She'd follow me to my grave. No, no, let her swindle somebody else, there are fools enough who will feel but too happy to feed her avarice."

"She is——"

"Never mind what she is," interrupted Eyelet nervously. "She is not worth talking about. But bear in mind that you will see somebody that is, presently."

"Ah! yes, the debutante. I had not forgotten her. Such a floral offering as I have had sent to the box office! 'Twill do your heart good to see it!"

"All right. I have my motives for placing you on intimate terms with her."

"And I mine for cultivating the intimacy. Ah, here we are."

They entered the—— theatre. The play was "Pizarro," the part of Elvira by a young lady, Miss Louisa Burgess, her third appearance on any stage.

The debutante did not appear to have made a flattering hit, peculiarly speaking. The house was not one quarter full, and the sparse audience looked as dull as the gas light, which was feeble and smoky.

"This is what we call a 'shy domus,'" said Harry.

Mr. Eyelet, be it known, acted occasionally, and now and then employed the slang of "the profession" in his conversation. A "shy domus," in English, a slim house.

"Shy enough," responded Hunter; "but let us be seated, the act is about to begin."

The act did begin and conclude. The new actress was a handsome woman—nay, imposing is the word, and played with considerable judgment. It was sufficiently apparent that she possessed a sound intellect and a very fair education. The "gods" did not appreciate her efforts however, and the act drop fell with scarcely a hand of applause to mark its descent.

"Now," said Harry, "now is the time to see her. Do accomplish our design at once. Come, I will put you behind the scenes. You will find her in the green-room."

They first went to the box office, where Hunter obtained the bouquet he had mentioned, and then groped their way through a narrow passage to a door which led upon the stage. Eyelet opened it, and in a moment more they were among the players. In the green-room they found the most of the characters assembled, some looking sulky, some fatigued, others inspired to mirth by something stronger than Croton water, and others like gaudy, painted statues.

Miss Louisa Burgess, to whom the excitements of the theatre were new, was all animation and suavity, notwithstanding the coldness of her audience, and her uncordial reception by the critics. She met Hunter and Eyelet with lady-like courtesy. Eyelet sauntered out of the room to talk to some of the ballet girls.

Miss Burgess signified her desire to have Mr. Hunter take a seat next to her. He was about to do so ere he discovered that there was not space enough on the form which was placed against the side of the room for his accommodation. Perceiving this, Miss Burgess addressed a pale, cadaverous and seedy looking-man who was crouching rather than sitting near her.

"Get up Jack, and let the gentleman be seated."

The poor, forlorn individual arose, and casting a look of reproach so earnest and so pitiful that it created pity in the hearts of all who saw it, shuffled out of the room.

Mr. Hunter was exceedingly complimentary in his remarks to the debutante. They chatted away most pleasantly, until the call boy popped his uncovered head in at the door and cried, "Everybody ready for the last act."

Then Miss Burgess gracefully excused herself and rose to leave. At this juncture Mr. Hunter, with an air of admirable gallantry, worthy of a knight errant of the olden time, presented her with the costly bouquet he had brought, and congratulated her upon the flattering prospect he was pleased to say was pictured before her.

She received the splendid gift as if she were used to such compliments, and yet her bosom heaved with more than ordinary emotion.

Her practised eye had discovered a gorgeous diamond cross nestling in the top of the flowers. A sob was heard at that instant close to the door of the green room.

That diamond cross!—remember it, reader, for it led more than one person to ruin.

As Hunter and Eyelet left the theatre by the back door, a dark attenuated male figure tottered before them, and checked their progress. The face was corpse-like in its hue, and the bloodless lips were drawn apart so that the grin might at the first glance have been mistaken for that of a skeleton. It was the man who had been turned out of his seat in the green room by Miss Burgess, who was not a Miss after all.

"Stay," he said hoarsely, "let me speak a few words with you, gentlemen."

"Is he mad?" inquired Hunter with an air of irresolution, "or has he been drinking?"

Eyelet looked at the figure a moment, and then replied:—

"I fear he is both mad and drunk. I know him."

"Induce him to step into some shop, if we are to speak with him."

"He'll not trouble us long," replied Eyelet, and then addressing the forlorn creature, he asked in a commiserating tone what was wanted.

"I wish to speak of her—of my wife," exclaimed the man supplicatingly.

"Wife! What have we to do with your wife, my good fellow?" inquired the puzzled Mr. Hunter.

"Oh, you have just left her."

"The actress?"

"The same," said the man with an abject look—"I saw you give her flowers and jewels. Do so no more, I beg."

"Why, it is only a fashionable custom to make such gifts," said Hunter soothingly.

"Flowers, yes; but not jewels, diamonds; oh no! you cannot deceive me."

"He is afraid you are in love with his wife," whispered Eyelet; "say that you were, but that since you have learned of her being married you dislike her."

Hunter did as he was directed. The poor man appeared to be greatly relieved by this intelligence, and subsided into a maudlin state most unpleasant to witness. Eyelet gave him some loose change and told him to "be off." The miserable creature took it and crept away with the air of a baffled felon.

Hunter and Eyelet had just reached the corner of Broadway when they heard a terrible screech, and the noise of many feet, in the vicinity from whence they had come. They turned back to ascertain the cause of the commotion and discovered that "Jack" had fallen in a fit.

Ah! that diamond cross! that diamond cross!

CHAPTER V.—MISCHANCE AND MISCHIEF.

Mischance and sorrow go along with you!
Heart's discontent, and sour affliction
Be playfellows to keep you company!
There's two of you; the devil make a third!
And threefold vengeance tend upon your steps.
King Henry VI.

"Stand aside," shouted a tall man wearing the uniform of the police, as Hunter and Eyelet

mingled with the crowd, "stand aside and give the man air."

As if they comprehended in full the importance of obeying this command, the bystanders gathered still more closely around the sufferer.

"Here, this won't do, you must stand aside," said the policeman elbowing his way through them.

"Dat's so, easy enuff," exclaimed a huge negress, following in the wake of the policeman.

"Throw some cold water on the poor wretch," cried Eyelet.

"I'm afraid that wouldn't agree with his constitution," said one of the crowd drily.

"Do something for him, can't ye?" cried Hunter, a cold shudder creeping over him.

"Why don't you do somethin' fur him?" inquired a bullet-headed fellow in a red shirt, at his elbow.

By this time the policeman and the negress had reached Jack's place, and were kneeling there, one on each side of him.

"Open his hands," cried the negress, at the same time seizing the one nearest herself, and motioning to the policeman to take the other. He followed her directions.

"Do you know him?" he inquired.

"Should tink I did, he belongs to my missus."

"Who is your mistress?"

"Dat's neider here or dere," answered the negress.

"He drinks, don't he?" pursued the policeman, not at all offended by the curtness of her reply.

"Dre'ful! dre'ful!" said the negress.

By this time they had forced open his hands, and he was giving signs of recovery.

"I thought so," said the policeman, and then turning to the crowd he asked, "Who'll get him a glass of brandy?"

"I will, if anybody'll pay for it," chorused a dozen voices.

"Dar's two gen'lmen about here dat ought to pay for it," said the negress. She directed general attention to Hunter and Eyelet.

"Oh! ah! yes, yes, I'll furnish the money," said Hunter confusedly, "there's a dollar."

The individual in the red shirt seized it.

"Get the best," said Hunter, "and keep the change."

"Don't get the best," cried the policeman emphatically; "he ain't used to it, and he won't feel it. Get some that'll scrape as it goes down; that's the stuff that'll fetch him to his pins. You bring it now," addressing red shirt, "or look out for yourself; I know you."

Red shirt started upon his errand.

In the meantime the negress had been very busy with the prostrate sufferer, smoothing his disordered apparel, brushing the hair back from his face, and feeling very particularly about his bosom, as if to ascertain whether his heart beat less unsteadily or not.

The red shirted messenger was soon back with the brandy. Jack swallowed it greedily,

and in a moment afterwards feebly asked where he was.

"In the arms of an M. P." shouted one who heard the question.

"No—in those of a nigger wench," exclaimed another derisively.

"Do you feel better now?" inquired the policeman of Jack.

"Yes."

"Well, can you get up and walk?"

"Yes, if you'll all stay by me," answered the poor creature with a look of intense fright; "I'm afraid to go alone."

"Why?"

"Because a little while ago, I saw a devil, dressed up in diamonds."

"Got the delicious trimmings," said one.

"Blue monkeys after him," ventured another.

"The man with the poker's chasing him," said red shirt.

The policeman and the negress helped Jack to his feet.

"Where do you live," inquired the "star."

"In the air," answered the man vacantly.

"You know," said the policeman, addressing the negress; "why don't you tell?"

"Whar does he live?" said the negress. "He doesn't live nowhere."

"I thought you said he belonged to your mistress."

"Well, he don't live wid her no how."

"Convey him where he'll be well taken care of," said Eyelet, "and we'll pay the expense."

"Bless your soul!" responded the policeman, "they would not receive him into a decent place."

"That's true enough," remarked Hunter, "and yet it is a pity. He was once a gentleman."

"Had you not better take him home, then, for you seem to know him well?" said the policeman.

"Oh, no!" ejaculated Hunter, with a shudder.

"He's welkim to my room, and I'll make him a bed on the flure," said an old Irishwoman, whose nose looked as if it was often warmed by something else than her pipe.

"You will?" cried Hunter, warmly.

"If I'm paid for me trouble."

"Well, my good woman—" began Hunter, but the policeman interrupted him.

"Don't give yourself any uneasiness concerning that woman," he said; "she's the most notorious vagabond in this neighborhood."

"Take him to the hospital," suggested Eyelet.

The policeman shook his head, and said,

"They never receive delirium tremens cases in the city hospital."

"What will you do with him then, for its plain that he is quite helpless."

"Perhaps you know where he lives?"

The policeman addressed Eyelet, who colored deeply.

"Me! Oh, no! I only knew him about town, when he had not got so low."

"Well, I must call a cart or something, and take him to the station-house."

Eyelet sent for a cab, which stood at the next corner. Into this the poor sufferer was placed, the policeman mounting the box with the driver. The individual with the red shirt got inside to take care of the helpless vagabond. He seemed to be as tender-hearted as anybody, notwithstanding his rough exterior. The negress had disappeared.

"What shall we do?" inquired Hunter of Eyelet, as the cab drove slowly off.

"I don't know, I'm sure," answered that person; "I hate to leave him alone without a friend near in case of an emergency."

Hunter felt a shiver creep over his frame. He knew that "an emergency" meant death.

"Suppose we go to the station house?"

"Agreed. It's as little as we can do."

"Why, for the matter of that, the fellow has no direct or special claim upon our sympathies."

"I don't know about that," said Eyelet uneasily. "I think he has—upon mine."

"Explain. There's something very curious in all this."

"I'll tell you by and by; it's a brief and not an uncommon history, but you shall understand it."

They now followed the cab in silence. It soon halted opposite the door of the station house, which was in one of the lower wards. Jack was lifted out and taken before the captain—a handsome gentleman, in plain clothes, who appeared qualified for a more exalted station.

The captain heard the policeman's statement, and then for the first time scanned the persons of Hunter and Eyelet. He recognised them instantly. Indeed, he manifested the most intimate degree of acquaintanceship with them. Eyelet hurriedly stepped behind the desk, and whispered a few words to the captain.

"Ah!" said the official, in an undertone, "what a pity! I have known dozens to be ruined by the same combination of terrible causes."

The captain made a minute in his book, and raised his head apparently with the intention of putting a question to the afflicted being before him. But that intention, if he had it, was suddenly put to flight by the expression of Jack's face. It was fearfully distorted. The mouth was stretched wide open, and a mixture of blood and froth was issuing therefrom in a copious current. The eyeballs were strained from their sockets as if they would burst. His arms were gyrating wildly, and the fingers worked as if endeavoring to grasp something of importance that could only be caught with great difficulty.

"He'll have another fit!" exclaimed Hunter.

"Where is your physician?" inquired Eyelet of the captain.

"He'll be here shortly," answered the latter, "but I imagine he can do little."

"Can't we do something to avert the fit?" asked Hunter.

"Not the fit he is to suffer with," replied the captain, who was very familiar with such scenes.

"Why not?"

"It must have its way. It will be a fortnight before that man recovers his senses. He is a maniac."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Hunter.

"Heartrending!" cried, Eyelet.

Just then Jack seized the railing that surrounded the desk, and with a loud cry like that of a wounded wild beast, wrenched it, as if it were paper, from its solid fastenings.

"Take hold of him! secure him!" cried the captain to a squad of officers in the back part of the room.

"Touch me not," yelled Jack, now endowed with the strength of insanity, "touch me not, or you die."

Several of the policemen rushed upon him, despite his fury and his menaces, and in a moment his limbs were secured in such a way as to be incapable of doing harm. Jack fought desperately, and almost continually cried out that they were demons. Now he would beg them to kill him, and anon he would implore them, in the most abject phrase, to spare his life. Hunter frankly acknowledged that he had never before witnessed an event so awe-inspiring and so terrific.

After a great deal of soothing and coaxing, Jack was reduced to a condition of comparative quiet. While he was in this state the doctor of the station came in and administered a powerful dose of morphine. A short time afterwards Jack recognized Hunter and Eyelet, who seemed bound to the place by a sort of horrible fascination. The sight of them set him to raving again. The curses he launched upon them were frightful and numerous.

"I once saw a gambler on a Mississippi steamboat cut his throat in consequence of having lost his last dollar," said Eyelet, "and I thought that was the worst sight I could ever witness; but this transcends it."

"Let us go," said Hunter.

"No you don't," screamed Jack, who heard the remark, "no you don't until you give me back my peace of mind—my counting-house—my property—my wife. Oh, yes, give me my wife. Why is she away from her husband? Why has she forsaken me for such butterflies as you are."

"Be quiet, my good fellow," said Hunter caressingly, "and you shall have money."

"Money for dishonor! Avaunt, fiends, avaunt!"

"He will die," said Eyelet.

"Most likely," responded the captain; "the attack is tremendous."

Here Jack made an effort to jump at Hunter and Eyelet; but was restrained by the policemen, who threw him upon a broad shelf, or "bunk" as it is called, and prevented him from tearing himself to pieces.

"Money—they offer me money," shrieked

Jack—"psha, I've got that which is worth money—diamonds, diamonds, diamonds; dy'e hear that?"

"What can he mean?" muttered Hunter.

"He's thinking of the cross," whispered Eyelet.

So was somebody else. The negress who had aided Jack in the street, had been watching the scene from without through the door, over which glimmered a faint light. As Jack cried "diamonds" she for an instant laughed diabolically, and held up the diamond cross that Hunter had given to Miss Burgess. Lucky for her, perhaps, that nobody saw this movement. The next instant the cross was thrust into her stocking.

About that time the actress, aided by the scene-shifters and the "property man," was hunting the stage of the theatre industriously, to find the piece of jewelry so strangely transferred that night from hand to hand.

Had the negress—who was her servant—stolen it, or had Jack?

He could not have told, had he been asked, for just after he had spoken of the diamonds and his wife a blood vessel burst, and he fell back limp and ghastly, crimsoned with his own life current.

CHAPTER VI.—FAST IN THE TOILS.

Like madness is the glory of this life,

We make ourselves fools, to disport ourselves;
And spend our flatteries to drink those men,
Upon whose age we void it up again
With poisonous spite and envy.—*Timon of Athens.*

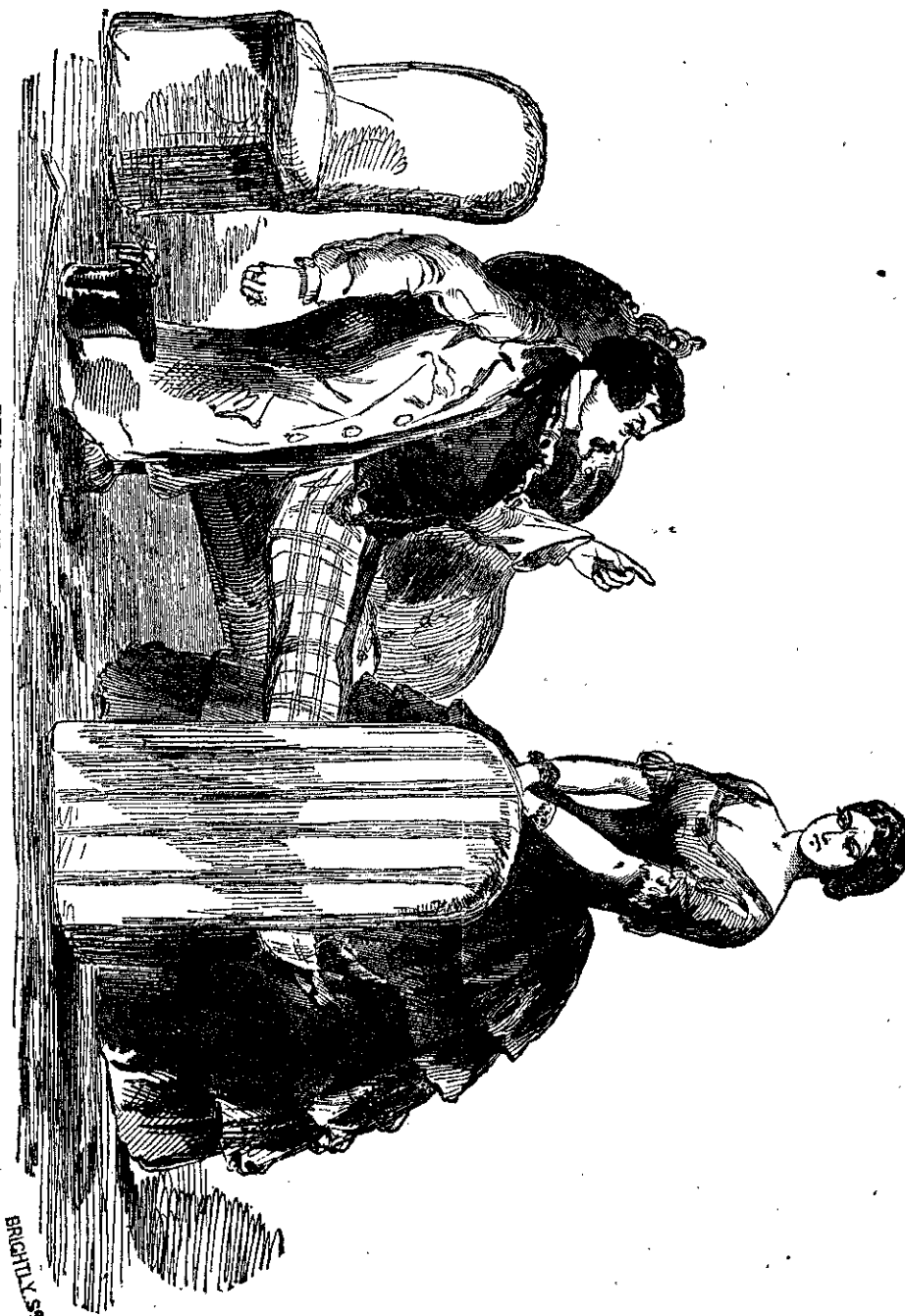
In our first chapter Mr. William Bristol was introduced. I do not suppose that he made many friends, or won much admiration; but in the narration of facts we are not always permitted to choose who shall, or whoshall not, be spoken of.

When Bristol left the house in which he had his brief and energetic interview with Julia Bowen—an interview the precise meaning of which will be developed in due course of time—he was in no mood for jesting. He was disappointed—sadly disappointed. He was ill at ease, too, for he felt positive that some person had overheard every word of his conversation with the bold and beautiful woman who feared him and him alone.

The reader has already guessed, I presume, at the real character of Julia Bowen. The city contains thousands of women exactly like her—women who dress and live elegantly, assume, as far as they are able, the manners of that style of female called a lady, reside in fine houses, mix with people who are really respectable, and carry on schemes of vice and fraud the terrible consequences of which are not directly seen always, but are indirectly felt, and felt severely, by all classes of our population.

The most of these females are in league with men like Mr. William Bristol—men for whom they cannot feel the smallest iota of respect,

BILL BRISTOL AND JULIA BOWEN. (See Page 4.)



BRISTOL'S

and whom, paradoxically enough, they love, and crouch before like the veriest slaves. These folk are vampires, deriving their lives and their sustenance, as they do, from the vitalising qualities and important substances of others. The rich and the silly are the victims they seek, and woe to the thin-skinned evil doer, with a character to lose, who happens to fall into their power.

Mr. Bristol sauntered, with a sullen air, along Hudson street, smoking a cigar, and looking furtively from beneath his eyelids around and about him. Reaching St. John's Park, at one corner of which stood a personage with drab unmentionables, a green coat, a plaid vest, a white hat, and a military moustache of the hue of yellow ochre, he halted. The gentleman whose exterior we have faintly described, and who was known as "Corky Jim" among his intimates, approached him. His gait was very peculiar—something between that of a sailor and that of a duck.

"Well!"

This was said to Bristol in a tone implying any quantity of important interrogation.

"Nix," ejaculated Mr. Bristol without a change of countenance.

"Thunder!"

"D——" I leave the reader to imagine the word.

Corky Jim pulled his hat over his brow and whistled.

Bristol simply said "Come," and walked away. The other slowly journeyed after him. They soon reached a very short and narrow street—so short and narrow that it deserved only the title of a lane. It was shadowed by the spire of St. John's church. They entered a little frame house, before which was an infinitesimal patch of ground. The owners called that patch of earth a front yard. Well, it was not much more than a yard—in extent. A great many erring feet had travelled that little bit of gravel, which made it loom up large—in the mind's eye.

The two ruffians, for such they were, notwithstanding their good clothes and white hands, seated themselves in a small, plainly furnished apartment, and then eyed each other with doleful countenances.

"It's no use," said Bristol, at last; "I shall have to cut that woman's acquaintance, or her throat."

"Let her slide—them's my sentiments," said Jim, with emphasis.

"I think she's *playing dog* on me," resumed Bristol, with an expression of ferocity.

"Shouldn't wonder."

"It'll be a bad job for her, that's all." Here he ground his teeth with energy.

"What does she promise now?"

"Only to do the best she can."

"That won't suit us."

"Not much."

"What does she say about Hunter?"

"That she can't manage him."

"Bah!"

Bristol's looks echoed the "Bah!" if his lips did not.

"I tell you what," said Jim, with a slightly lively countenance; "it's ridiculous to trust to her any longer. This man's throwing away his money everywhere, and it is time that we had some of it. He can't last long, you know."

Bristol nodded as if to say that he *did* know so.

"And," continued Jim, with an increased show of fervor, "when he does cave in it will make a terrible smash and noise."

Bristol nodded again, and lit a fresh cigar.

"Haden't we better be on hand, then, with our old game. I don't think he could resist that," ventured Jim.

"I don't like our old game. It's a black-guard system at the best," said Bristol.

"You're a great fellow for being genteel," remarked Jim, with a contemptuous look.

"What do you make by it?"

"I keep my liberty," replied Bristol.

"Keep it, then, and pay your debts with it."

"My debts!" exclaimed Bristol, starting up, and clenching his hands, "curse them! curse them!"

"Get rid of them, I say."

"Enough; I will. Now state your plan with regard to this man explicitly."

"Well, sit down. There now; I'll tell you; but it must be in my own way. You remember what Clark and Baggett's confidential book-keeper told me four weeks ago, after I had let him win a cool five hundred?"

"Yes."

"I've found out that it's every word true. Hunter is a swindler."

"So are all Wall street men," said Bristol, savagely.

"No, they're not. There are just as good men in Wall street as in any other street in this city," said Jim confidentially.

Bristol laughed incredulously.

"It's so," continued Jim; "why, even among us there can be found some good fellows."

Bristol laughed with a more incredulous air than before. It was evident that he was a cynic on some points.

"Well, no matter," resumed Jim, nursing one of his legs, and looking wise, "all we want to be sure of is that Hunter is a rascal."

"You say you are sure of it."

"Are you?"

"Of course I am."

"Then is it not perfectly fair to bleed him, without getting women to humbug him out of his money?"

"Fair, but not safe."

"Gammon! He would not dare to split upon us."

"But the plan—the plan!" cried Bristol, impatiently.

"I told you I must explain it in my own way," responded Jim; "but here it is. I'll put on the right sort of costume, call on him, and pretend to be a merchant from Chicago,

hard up. I want some paper 'done'—d'ye see? He don't know me, and says he can't oblige. Clark and Baggett's book-keeper recommends me and I show him the notes. He refuses again, and then I tell him, in a quiet way, that the book-keeper is a particular friend of mine, and has placed me in possession of all his—the book-keeper's—secrets."

"What effect will that produce?" inquired Bristol, with a sardonic grin.

"He'll do the notes."

"Which you'll have to raise the money on. The plan is ridiculous. Too much labor is involved in it."

"Perhaps you can invent a better one," said Jim, sneeringly.

"A much better one."

"Out with it."

"I'll do that early in the morning. You and I must be at his house before nine o'clock."

"His house?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Enough, I'm your man. I know you'll do nothing rash, and so I'll give you my promise and consent blindfold."

The next morning they were at Hunter's house, half an hour before the clock struck nine. They were seated in the front basement. Hunter presently made his appearance, wearing a costly Chinese robe for a dressing-gown.

"Gentlemen, I have hurried down stairs in obedience to your strangely imperative message. What is it you wish to see me about?"

"You had better close that door, Mr. Hunter," said Bristol, who could speak very much like a gentleman when he chose, "for it is best to keep one's business from the ears of servants."

"Right," said Hunter, shutting up the door, and seating himself at a large desk in one corner of the apartment. It was evident he did not like the appearance of his visitors, for he gently, and, as he thought, unperceived, pulled a side drawer about two inches out: a revolver lay at the bottom.

"We want to negotiate a small loan," said Bristol, whose quick eye had detected the drawer and the pistol movement.

"What are your securities, first?"

"Good enough for the amount."

"How heavy is that?"

"A mere trifle—only \$5000," answered Bristol, coolly.

"Too trifling," said Hunter; "you had better try some of the small lenders."

"No; we have made up our minds to consummate this little transaction with you," said Bristol, "that is, if we can by any method persuade you to oblige us."

"We were advised to come here by Clark and Baggett's confidential book-keeper," said Jim, who tried to assume a polite tone and bearing, but signally failed.

Hunter slightly changed countenance at this intelligence; but he maintained his dignity, and merely said,

"He is a very good man, but rather simple-

minded. I much prefer that you should consult somebody else in this affair."

"We can't," said Bristol.

"We won't," said Jim.

"Gentlemen, these are strange words. What do they mean?"

"That we want the money," said Bristol, relapsing into his ordinary tone and manner.

"On good security, mind you," remarked Jim, with an impudent leer.

"Really, this is the most singular conduct I ever observed," remarked Hunter, indignantly; "leave my house."

"Be cautious," said Bristol, "and be calm. Listen. We are very much in want of money. You have plenty. You squander it—shamefully—upon dogs, horses, birds, women, and gewgaws. The sum we ask for you have been known to throw away in an hour, throw it away, sir, after a fashion that induces some men to believe you are crazy. I think you are sane. How do you get this money? How—"

"This is beyond endurance!" exclaimed Hunter, plunging his hand into the drawer.

"Don't take out that pistol."

Bristol uttered these words in a tone so impressive that Hunter did not move.

"We did not come here to rob you," continued Bristol, "but to confer with you. I repeat my last question. How do you get this money?"

"As other men in my business get it," was the reply.

"Perhaps," said Bristol.

"What are you driving at?" cried Hunter, now very much alarmed.

"We know you make paper," said Bristol, quietly.

Hunter trembled violently; once or twice he attempted to speak, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and no sound issued from his quivering lips.

"We have the facts from Clark and Baggett's book-keeper," remarked Jim blandly.

Hunter partially recovered his equanimity after a moment's pause. Once he raised the pistol from the drawer, with the muzzle towards his own head, but he suddenly dropped it, and sat staring as if petrified at the companions so curiously forced upon his notice.

"This need not disturb you, Mr. Hunter," said Bristol, with a touch of pity in his voice; "we shall take no advantage of the knowledge we possess other than that we have specified. I'm sure the loss of \$5,000 will not distress you."

"Why what a simpleton I am to sit here and listen to your rascally insults," said Hunter, who had now resumed his recklessness. "For the while indignation paralysed me. Begone."

"Pray, keep your temper, and be reasonable," said Bristol.

"Villains!"

"Easy, easy, now," remarked Jim; "we're no saints, and ain't got a great deal of patience."

"Reflect, Mr. Hunter," urged Bristol, with provoking effrontery.

Mr. Hunter was reflecting, and he was convinced in a moment that Bristol and Jim really knew something that endangered his safety. He therefore determined to change his tactics.

"I do not know," he said, "what Clark and Baggett's man may have told you. Perhaps he is altogether to blame for this remarkable event. If he has related falsehoods to you, he is much to blame."

"He has related no falsehoods," said Jim, stoutly.

"You are fairly caught, Mr. Hunter," remarked Bristol, "and had better give us your cheque."

"And if I refuse?"

"You won't."

"Well, then, I do."

"All right," said Bristol, coolly, as he picked up his hat, "in less than an hour Wall street will be in a state of excitement, and the whole town shall be made acquainted with your practices."

"Stay," cried Hunter, wiping the perspiration from his face with his handkerchief, "stay."

"Well, what have you to propose?"

"I have known solvent banks to be ruined by false reports. A man's credit may be blasted in a day by the flimsiest concoction in the shape of an accusation. I will give you this money that you speak of, but merely as a business man who looks upon the outlay as one of profit. Although I am perfectly conscious of having done nothing that implies the slightest want of integrity on my part, yet your baseless calumnies, just at this time, would take a quarter of a million out of my pocket. You see—I give you this money upon compulsion. I am innocent, perfectly innocent, of all dishonesty, and with this protestation—which comes from the very depths of my soul—I draw you my cheque."

"Humbug," said Jim.

"Very plausible," observed Bristol, placing his hat down and preparing to put on his gloves, "but we are men of the world. And I have seen—have seen Mr. Hunter—"

"What have you seen?" interrupted the financier, with a sudden start.

"Enough to prove a good deal."

"To prove a good deal? To prove what?"

"That—well, I don't wish to say it."

"Speak it! Relieve me of my agony—my suspense."

"If you will have it, then—to prove you a forger!"

The cheque was drawn forthwith.

Oh, poor indeed, are ye who transgress the laws of honesty, though ye roll in gold!

As Bristol and Corky Jim walked homewards, they conversed very freely concerning Julia Bowen. They finally determined to dispose of her "for good," as Corky Jim said. We shall show how she was disposed of as to her connection with Bristol in another part of our story.

How sometimes nature will betray its folly, Its tenderness, and make itself a pastime To harden bosoms.—*Winter's Tale*.

What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just, And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel, Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

King Henry VI. Part 2.

EMMA PETERS, as we have seen, did not like the curious arrangement made concerning herself by Dr. Licon with our finance-hunting hero. Had she been a woman she would have laughed at the stupid and ridiculous scheme; but she was a child, and the only womanly trait about her was her heart.

Now upon his influence over that heart, and upon its morbid weakness in his favor, he relied for the successful completion of his projects in the way of getting Hunter "under his thumb," as he expressed himself. But that heart—let me not anticipate.

Emma was, away from Licon, quite girlish in her manner. The atmosphere of the school-room, from whence she had but recently emerged, still lingered around her. When, therefore, Licon dismissed her on the evening we left them together, from his apartment she went into the public parlor. Her spirits were much depressed, and she hoped that something would be presented to her notice that would distract her mind from the sorrows that burdened it.

She was fated to meet that night with two remarkable adventures.

She had been seated in the parlor but about ten minutes when a fine-looking youth entered and threw himself carelessly, and with an air of ennui, upon a lounge next to the one upon which she was sitting. His appearance was exceedingly prepossessing, and it at once made an impression upon Emma. When their eyes met it seemed as if a magnetic connection had been instantaneously established between them. Emma smiled, she could not help it. The youth bowed. In another moment—all etiquette disregarded, all cold formality thrown aside—they were engaged in conversation. The reader will be kind enough not to forget that Emma was only fourteen years of age; her companion only nineteen.

"I think I have met you before, Miss," he observed.

His voice was soft, and its tones were harmonious. Emma noted these peculiarities with pleasure.

"Perhaps. I am from Philadelphia."

"And so am I."

"I was born there."

"So was I. May I be so bold as to ask your name?"

She told it.

"Mine is Thomas Leaycroft—you may have heard of my family, one of the oldest in Pennsylvania."

"I attended Monsieur B——'s academy,"

said Emma, "and took my French lessons in the same class with a Miss Clara Leaycroft."

"My sister!" exclaimed the youth with an exhibition of extreme delight. "You will surely place me upon your list of acquaintances for her sake, for if she were here she would introduce me."

He was placed upon her list of acquaintances. They would have both been spared many sorrows had she declined to grant the favor.

In half an hour they were as unrestrained in their parlor intercourse as if they had known each other from early infancy.

"What brings you to this city—pleasure?" inquired Thomas.

Emma's eyes filled with tears, and her bosom heaved with wild emotion.

"Pardon me," he resumed, when he saw her agitation; "I have been rude—very rude. What right had I to ask such an impertinent question? Forgive me."

"I have nothing to forgive," said Emma, unconsciously holding out her hand towards him. The hand was taken respectfully—and retained. Truly,

—"there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's Young Dream."

"I came here," pursued the youth, delighted by the knowledge that he had not offended, "to complete my studies. I am being educated for the medical profession. One of New York's most eminent physicians is my father's most intimate friends and it is through him that I am to receive my diploma."

He spoke these words while his face was beaming with joy, and still retained the small hand of his fair interlocutor. At this moment, Doctor Licon entered. He scarcely deigned to notice the boy that was talking to his darling, but approaching her, said:

"Emma, it is getting to be very late; you had better retire."

As if this was a "royal edict," and he knew it would not be disobeyed, he left the parlor without uttering another word.

"Excuse me, but is that your father?" inquired Leaycroft.

"Father—no, no, not my father!"

How strangely the term sounded! How harshly it grated upon the ears! What an odious comparison it suggested!

"Your guardian, perhaps?"

"Ye—ye—yes." The atrocious untruth almost choked her.

"Then you must obey him, I suppose; shall I bid you a good evening?"

"Oh!" said Emma, blushing with shame and vexation, "I do not consider myself bound to obey him in all things. It is only half-past ten o'clock. I shall sit up an hour yet."

"Then I need not go?"

"Consult your own pleasure as to that."

He did, and he remained. Young man, don't you think you would have "done likewise?"

An hour elapsed. The young lovers knew not that five minutes had fled. Young lovers!

you exclaim. Yes, young lovers! The right man had come for Emma Peters, and the adventurer and scoundrel Doctor Licon was supplanted; the false love that he had galvanised by his rascally acts into the breast of a child had vanished, and he was now looked upon—so sudden and complete are the mutations wrought by Cupid—with unfeigned disgust. Emma began to think him odious. It only needed a trifle to make her hate him, and she had not to wait for it.

He again entered the parlor, this time with anger depicted in every lineament of his countenance.

"Still here!" he cried.

"I am."

"Who's this?" he inquired, looking savagely at Leaycroft.

"An old friend."

This was the second monstrous falsehood Emma had uttered that evening.

"A Philadelphian?"

"Yes."

"You should have known better than to have encouraged this intimacy," he said to her, in a low tone, between his clenched teeth.

"I shall not make a nun of myself, Mr. Licon," said Emma bursting into tears.

"Licon! Licon!" exclaimed the youth, starting to his feet. "Oho! I thought this was not the first time I had had the pleasure of seeing you, sir. But I have heard more than I have seen of you. Answer me candidly, Miss Peters; is this really your guardian?"

"No."

"I thought not."

"Young man," said Licon, fiercely, but in a suppressed tone, "if it were not for attracting attention—and see, the other people in the room are beginning to notice us attentively—I would teach you a lesson in good manners."

"Wait one moment, Dr. Licon," said Leaycroft, rising; "and you wait too, if you please, Miss Peters. I have something very important to present to your notice. Only one moment."

He ran out to the hall way and hailed a waiter.

"Go," said he, "to room No. 83, and ask Mr. George Smith to step into this parlor."

"What has Mr. George Smith to do with us?" asked Licon haughtily, but a good deal perplexed.

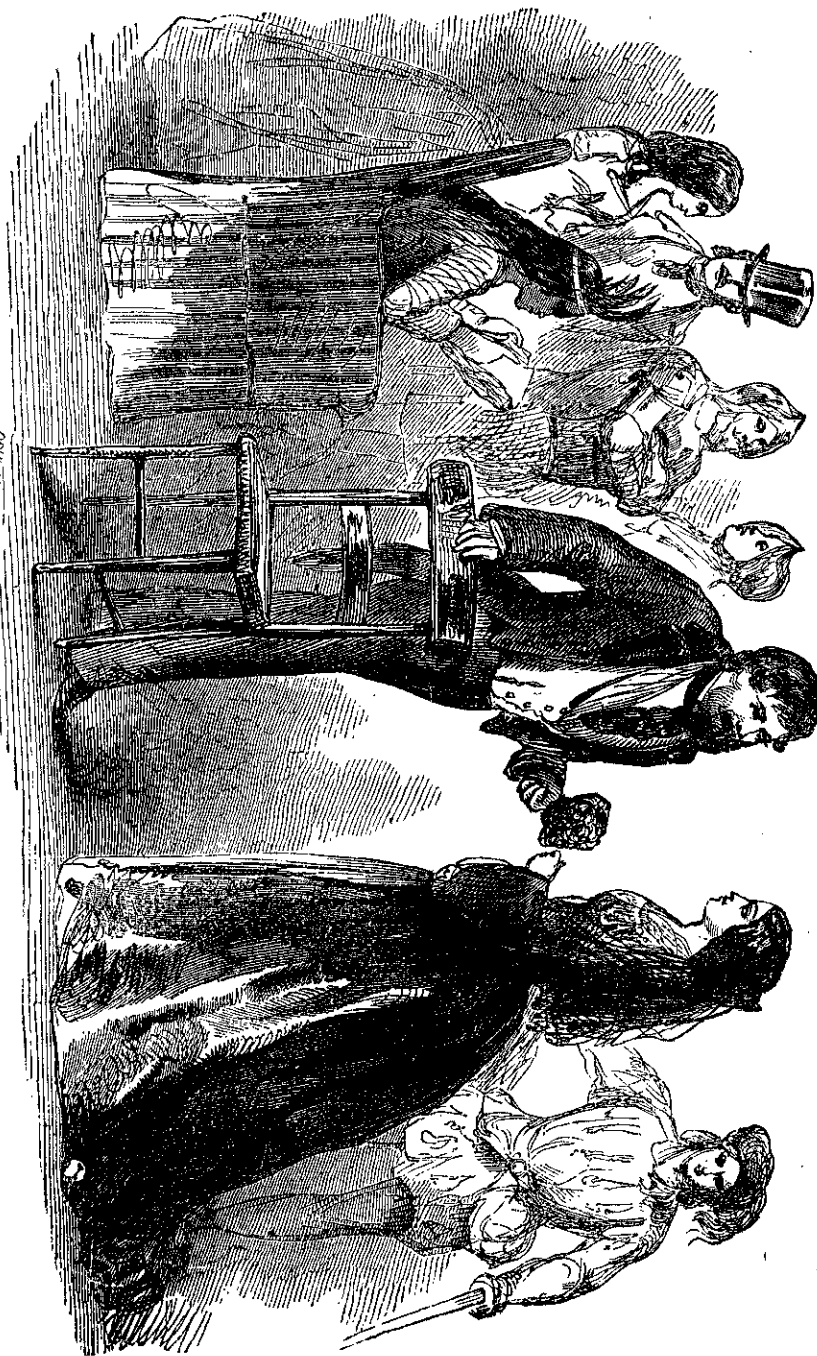
"With us," echoed Leaycroft, "perhaps he has nothing to do; but with you I believe he has a little business to settle."

"Here Mr. George Smith—a youth of great manly beauty, as muscular as a gymnast, and as rosy in the face as good health could make him—entered."

"You came to find him—there he is," said Seaycroft, pointing to Licon.

But from the instant the doctor had put eyes on Mr. George Smith he had trembled like a whipped spaniel. Emma had fainted. For one reason Leaycroft was glad of it. She had fallen into his arms—accidentally to be sure.

CHARLEY HUNTER AND THE ACTRESS. (See page 11.)



"Leaycroft," said the youth who was called Smith, "take care of my sister."

"Your sister. Good Heaven!"

"Do you promise?"

"I do."

"Doctor Leon," continued Smith, in a loud voice, "the excitement of seeing an old friend has overcome the girl. There are ladies here, and we had better leave her with them and Mr. Leaycroft. I have something to say to you in private. It is pressing, and must not be neglected."

"To-morrow," stammered Leon.

"Now."

There was no mistaking the look that accompanied that word. Doctor Leon, pale and shivering, tottered out of the parlor after Smith.

CHAPTER VIII.—BANK REBELLION.

Hell has no fury like a woman scorned.

The morning after Mr. Bristol and Corky Jim had made their successful foray upon Mr. Hunter's premises, the first-named individual, who had compromised with his honorable creditors, by paying them fifty per cent on account, sallied forth with a pocket full of rocks and a heart full of wickedness. The snow had fallen briskly from early bed-time of the previous night, and had made very good sleighing. It was about eleven o'clock, when Bristol, leaving Corky Jim with instructions to be "out at the Red House as soon as possible," bent his steps towards the private hotel in which Julia Bowen resided. He had dressed himself in his best, had mounted his shirt bosom with an extravagant diamond cluster, and altogether carried the appearance of a man-about-town in the highest tide of good luck.

On his way up town, he turned into Mercer street, and favored an extensive livery stable with a call.

"What's out this mornin', Bill?" said a short, ruddy-faced man, dressed in a blue cut-away coat, with brass buttons, a cashmere vest, and a pair of tight fitting drab unmentionables.

"Nothing, much, boss,"—the man was the proprietor of the stable—"only I want the best sleigh you've got, with a span of horses that'll take everything on the road down."

"Made a ten strike, eh?" asked the "boss" with a meaning wink.

"Rather."

"Glad of it. But, Bill, all the best sleighs and critters are out."

"None o' that; it won't do; you must accommodate me. Money is no object this hitch."

"Well, I'll do the best I can for you, but I wish you'd come a good deal earlier."

So saying the proprietor went into his stable, followed by Bristol. In a short time a very handsome sleigh, well furnished with buffalo robes, drawn by two magnificent bays, became the property, for the time being, of Mr. Bristol.

"When'll you be back?" asked the proprietor,

as Bristol took his seat in the vehicle, and began to finger the reins.

"Oh, some time to-night."

"Take good care of the horses."

"Never fear me. They shall come back in good condition, or I'll pay the damage."

"All right." And the proprietor, whistling the air of Villikens and his Dinah, retired into his little office, just on one side of the principal entrance to wait for another customer, while Bristol drove off. He soon drew up before the door of the private boarding-house, and hailing a boy to hold the horses, strode up the high stoop and rung the bell. That boded no good. Julia Bowen had furnished him with a latch key, with which he had been accustomed to let himself in, and so go to her room without troubling the domestics.

"Tell Miss Bowen that a gentleman wishes to see her on very particular business," said Bristol to the servant that answered his summons.

"Yes, sir. Please step into the front parlor, and I'll see if she's in."

"Oh, she expects me—she'll be in," said Bristol, with a slight touch of irony in his tone, as he entered the apartment specified.

The servant went upon his errand, and in another moment Julia stood in the room, trembling before the ruffian like an aspen.

"You haven't succeeded?" he said, after enjoying her confusion awhile.

"No, I have not, I am sorry to say; but why did you send for me to come here?"

"Because we are no longer confidential friends, and I did not wish to intrude upon your privacy."

"Why, Bristol! Really, if you knew how I have striven to meet your wishes, to accomplish your desires, you would not be so angry—indeed you wouldn't."

"I am not angry; on the contrary, I am in the most jovial mood imaginable."

"Don't talk and look so strangely. All that could be done, I have done, to make Hunter useful; but I have not been able to see him since you were here—"

"Not able to see him!" exclaimed Bristol, with an oath; "why, wasn't he in the city?"

"Yes, but—"

"Humbug! Well, I've seen him, and that is quite as good, and what's more, I've struck him for what I wanted."

"Oh! I'm so glad."

"You need not be—that is, if you love me."

"Why? What strange freak has got into your head now?" inquired the woman, with a terrified air.

"Why? I'll tell you. I now see that you are an useless incumbrance, and I've determined to have nothing more to do with you."

"Do you wish to carry this jest any further?" she asked, making, at the same time, a sickly endeavor to smile.

"It is not a jest," he answered coolly. "Hereafter you will please regard me as a speaking acquaintance only."

"Do you wish to kill me?"

"No, it wouldn't pay to do that. You have lied to me—you have deceived me—you are my enemy, and I wish to see you no more. You have my ambrotype. Give it to me."

Julia saw, from the expression of his face, that all this was earnest, and falling upon her knees, sobbed like a child. Ruffians are particularly fond of tyrannising over the helpless and the sorrowing, and Mr. Bristol was not slow to take advantage of her prostrate condition of mind and body to probe her heart to its innermost recesses. Still, she had the firmness to refuse to restore his picture to his possession.

"I'll die before I give it up," she said, through her sobs.

"Curse me if I don't have it, though," he cried, starting up and making a rush for the hall.

"Don't go to my room—don't, you will alarm the house!"

"Why should I care for that? Perhaps you have friends—particular friends—who will fight for you!"

He kept on his way, she clinging to him, until he arrived at the door of her room, where, seeing that she would not relax her hold, he turned and struck her with his fist between the eyes. She fell, stunned, but not insensible. By the time she had recovered, and regained her feet, the people in the house, alarmed by the noise, were gathering around the scene of violence.

Bristol had in the meantime seized the picture and come out from the room.

"What is the matter? What has happened?" asked the master of the house, as he held up his hands with astonishment.

Irritated beyond measure, stung to fury by the appearance of the alarmed people, he lost what little self-possession he had possessed, and cried out—

"That woman is a disreputable personage, and has no right to a residence in a house like this. She had my picture—given to her when I thought she was worthy of it—and I came to get it."

"A disreputable person!" cried the landlord.

"Yes," replied Bristol, who now saw that he must finish the work he had commenced, "she should not remain another hour under a roof like this."

"I'll inquire into this matter," said the landlord as he hurried down the stairs, "and if these charges prove true she shall go to-morrow morning."

"You see," said Bristol addressing her, and pretending to be full of regret and compassion, "had you acted wisely, and yielded possession of my property, this dreadful exposé would not have become necessary."

He began to descend the stairs, when she checked him by a look which went to his very soul. All trace of fear had vanished.

"Where are you going?" she inquired.

"Out to the Red House," he answered; "but what's that to you?"

"Considerable. I'll be there."

"Nonsense!"

With this one contemptuous word he left the house, and jumping into his sleigh, drove at a gallant pace for the Bloomingdale road.

That afternoon he was carousing with Corky Jim and half a dozen other kindred spirits at the house he had mentioned. The champagne—or what was sold for champagne—flowed freely: the ribald jest, and the lewd repartee, was alike banded from mouth to mouth with uproarious glee, and profane merriment had apparently reached its zenith. Presently the jingle of bells and the loud shouts of the loungers without announced a new arrival.

"Well, I'm blowed if that wasn't well done," cried one of the outside folk, so that Bristol and his companions heard plainly. "I never saw any one handle the reins better."

"Who's come up, I wonder?" exclaimed Jim, going to the window,

"Anybody we know?" asked Bristol, swallowing another bumper of Heidsieck.

"Can't say—it's a woman."

"A woman?"

"Yes, sir—alone."

"Stuff!"

"It's so—there, now she's getting out. Why, who do you think it is?"

"Can't guess."

"It's Julie."

"What!"

Bristol rushed to the window, and saw, plainly enough, Julia Bowen approaching from the shed under which her horses had found shelter.

"Well that's a go!" cried Jim, who had been made acquainted with the events that had transpired at the aristocratic boarding-house.

"I don't want to see her!" cried Bristol,

"tell her I'm not here."

"Oh see her—see her," said one of the fast gentlemen.

"Call her in, and let's have some fun," cried another.

"Fun! Bah! We have quarreled!" ejaculated Bristol.

"So much the better," exclaimed a third, who was sadly under the influence of his potations, "we'll make a ring and let you fight it out."

Julia suddenly made her appearance among them, and, without noticing any one else, walked decidedly up to Bristol with the air of a lioness.

"Bristol, that picture."

"Are you mad?"

"Perhaps so. I want that picture."

"How dare you commit an act like this?" he exclaimed.

"Thief! Brute! Cur!"

She spoke each syllable with the strongest emphasis, pausing a few seconds between each, and looking him intently in the eyes, as if to read his very thoughts and bid defiance to any action they might dictate.

"Do you know what you are saying?"

"Perfectly. I call you a thief, a brute, and

a cur. Do you know the meaning of those terms? Why do you not strike me as you did this forenoon?"

"I will, if you are not careful."

"Miserable villain! It would be your last blow. Poor, contemptible wretch, I love you no more, I fear you no longer. The bitter wrong you have heaped upon me, the cruel, uncalled-for and dreadful degradation you have put upon me, the pitiful level to which your cowardly words, uttered this day, have reduced me, have rendered me desperate. I am cast forth upon this world through you, to live shunned and abhorred. You share my fate, sir."

"I? I'll have nothing to do with you, I tell you."

"You shall."

"Ha! ha! ha! How will you make me?"

"Where you go I'll go. I'll follow you by day and by night. I'll share your company and your plunder, or I'll bring you to the State's Prison."

Bristol winced. He was satisfied that he had roused a wild beast, not coquetted with a lamb. His companions were so deeply surprised that they remained silent and inactive.

"Go away! go to the city, and I will follow, and talk to you quietly."

"The picture!"

"You shall not have it now. Psha! I am not verdant enough to stay here and multiply useless words."

So saying, Bristol made a sortie for the door, and gained it. The next moment he was outside of the house and inside of his sleigh. Julia and his companions sprang out after him. The woman, her feelings now worked up to the pitch of frenzy, ran like a maniac into the road, over which Bristol was driving as if he were engaged in a desperate race. He had seen Julia draw a revolver.

"Stop, Bristol, stop, or I'll fire!"

"Fire and be ——" he cried, as he lashed his horses fearfully.

She did fire. Well was it for Bristol that he dodged as he did, else the bullet had gone through his head.

She fired but once, for she saw it would be useless to repeat the shot. But she turned away, mentally resolving that he should yet feel the weight of her vengeance.

Hunter had one more enemy. From that day Julia Bowen was his most implacable and unscrupulous foe. He was the cause, unwilling, to be sure, of all the misfortune that had happened to her. He was the cause, and that was enough for her.

CHAPTER IX.—EVENTS MULTIPLYING.

Suspicion creeps along
With downward look and eye askance;
While caution onward moves
Watchful, yet fearless in her glance.—*Anon.*

When Mary Schuyler heard of the *fiasco* made by Julia Bowen at the boarding-house—for Mary happened to be out on business at that

time—she expressed great surprise and much sorrow. She returned to her own apartment to recover the shock her feelings had sustained. They had been sadly shocked—by a letter from young Legouve, and by another letter without a signature, written in strange characters, and couched in curious language. The epistle from Legouve was incoherent. He rambled on in a sort of rhapsody about "unforeseen misfortune," "ruin staring him in the face," his "friendship for her undying," &c., and then he spoke bitterly of Hunter, coupling with that name fierce invectives, and mysterious hints about "Satan in broadcloth," and "wolves in sheep's clothing." He entreated her to forego her determination to warn the financier of the danger of which she had spoken, and concluded by saying that he had been compelled, by cruel circumstances, which would be placed in a proper light before her at the proper time, to fly the country.

The anonymous letter puzzled her more than did Legouve's. It read thus—

MISS SCHUYLER: You are known to me for just what you are worth. You may pass current for gold coin in certain places and among certain people, but I know your exact value, and can stamp you as base metal whenever I see proper. In brief, *you are under police surveillance*. Every step you take is watched, every word you utter reaches my ears, every line you write is scanned by my eye. I have no wish to ruin you, however. I only ask you to pause in your remarkable career—to reflect upon the course you have pursued towards a person who merits your warmest regard—to reform your habits altogether. If you accede to my request you may escape the terrors of a public trial, if you do not, nothing can shield you from the legal vengeance suspended over your head by

ONE IN AUTHORITY.

Legouve had met McMahon, the policeman, according to appointment, at the theatre. That individual told him that he had seen his employers and told them all.

"Then I am lost!" exclaimed Legouve despairingly.

"Not so; say rather you are saved."

"You are ironical!"

"No; I speak in sober seriousness. You are saved if you will do as they require."

"What is it they wish me to do?" inquired the young man gloomily.

"They wish you to leave New York."

"Willingly; but how?"

"Perfectly aware that you have not acted dishonestly upon any genuine criminal impulse of your own, and feeling assured from developments which I have made to them, that if you are spared exposure you will repent and become again a good member of society, they stipulate that you shall go to Europe, and——"

"To Europe!"

"Yes, where you will study for an artist."

"Ah! yes, they are aware that my tastes lie in that direction."

"You are to sail without delay."

"My father——"

"You may write to him and frame what tale you please to account for your abrupt departure, but you must not write or speak the intelligence to anybody else."

"There is one other."

"Not even to your adopted sister must the news be conveyed," said McMahon, in a tone of great severity.

Legouve was somewhat startled by this communication, but his senses were in a whirl, and he did not allow it to dwell upon his mind at that moment.

"How much money have you?" inquired McMahon, after a pause.

"Only about two hundred dollars."

"Can you get any more—honestly?"

"I think I can."

"How much?"

"Perhaps a hundred."

"Good. I will place two hundred more in your hands, making five hundred in all. It will be advanced by your late employers. Your money will support you until you get a paying occupation."

"Where am I to go?"

"You will make the best trip you can to Italy. Before you go you will execute a bond, which must be legally recognised by your father, to pay back, as soon as you are able, the money you have stolen——"

"Sir!"

"——Stolen, I repeat it, from the letters entrusted to your charge."

"Oh, fearful predicament! Well, this is certainly a humane arrangement."

"Ay! that it is. Have I not acted humanely by you? I could have nabbed you several weeks since."

"Why did you not? You have neglected your duty."

"No—there you are mistaken. I wished to detect your accomplice."

"I have none."

"Yes you have. I know who it is, too."

"You are sadly at fault. I assure you, I have no accomplice."

"Poor boy, you have, but do not know it."

"You speak in riddles, but I will not try to guess them. When am I to go in exile—tell me the precise time."

"This is Thursday—on Saturday."

"So be it," said the youth, turning away to hide the scalding tears that blinded and a most suffocated him.

He at once sent his father a long explanatory document, carefully concealing his delinquencies, but giving a plausible reason for his sudden journey. The letter to Mary was written under the supervision of McMahon.

In the meantime, Hunter, with whom Legouve had had several delicate transactions, hastened to the book-keeper who had conferred with Corky Jim. That worthy was a little bald-headed, withered old gentleman, with a parson-like air, who rejoiced in the name of William Bodley.

"I had been drinking—I own it," said Bodley, in explanation of his imprudence to Hunter.

"Why should a man like you go to places where drink is abundant?" said Hunter, petulantly.

"I went to win a little money," answered Bodley, who was a strange mixture of rascality and verlaney.

"Gambling, too, at your age."

"Why not? At my age a man cannot earn much money legitimately, Mr. Hunter."

"Nonsense. He can earn as much as his wants demand."

"I have not always been poor," responded Bodley, with a gleam of memory's delight in his sunken eyes; "I still have tastes above my income—tastes acquired by early habit, and to be forgotten only in the grave. I should not have been concerned with you had I not wanted more than my salary."

"I wish the devil had seized me before I became fool enough to trust you with any of my secrets," said Hunter, with a savage expression of face. "Some men declare me to be insane; I can see a host of doctors to swear it. Suppose I were to kill you, and then plead a sudden paroxysm of madness as my excuse, don't you think I would be acquitted?"

"Kill me! you are joking."

"Certainly I am," said Hunter, suddenly changing his manner. "But you have almost killed me. You have placed leeches on me. These fellows, one of whom you say must have drugged you, will never permit me to rest while I have a dollar. Their calls for hush money will be ceaseless. Do you perceive the dreadful position in which you have placed me?"

"Indeed, indeed. I wish I had been dead, ere I had done this thing," whined Bodley, as he wrung his withered hands, "what can I do to atone for my inadvertence?"

"Destroy what proofs you hold of my indiscretion."

"That would leave me exposed to all the danger," said Bodley, looking up cunningly, and smiling a smile indicative of shrewdness.

"But I will take good care that nobody shall have a chance to punish you." The paper will be taken up and destroyed."

"When that is done, we shall both be saved," said Bodley, still maintaining his look of cunning.

"Saved! Yes, from the legal consequences. But, if these ruffians should expose me, what would the business consequences be? I would be driven out of Wall street—out of society."

"Not, if as men say, you are worth half a million."

"Men say many things that have no foundation in truth," remarked Hunter, grinding his teeth, and breathing hard.

"Ah! well," said old Bodley, "it's a sad affair, this; but I don't think we can improve its aspect any. You had better feed these blood-suckers for a little while——"

"Suppose their demands become exorbitant."

"They will not stick to them—they will take what they can get. I know them."

"Curse me if I don't think you are in league with them," cried Hunter, furiously.

The interview, be it remembered, was held in a little cobwebbed room off the main office of a large banking-house.

Old Bodley, when Hunter uttered these words, appeared to be "struck," as the saying is, by a brilliant idea.

"Suppose I am, Mr. Hunter, suppose I am," he said, elevating his little body to a position as nearly upright as he could, and looking as bold as he dared.

"Then I will crush you, body and soul!" exclaimed Hunter, raising his fist menacingly.

"Don't strike me!" said Bodley, with an air half fearful and half tantalizing. "Don't strike me—the handle of the door is turning; somebody is coming in."

CHAPTER X.—FLOGGING AND FLEEING.

Be bold, but not too bold.—*Old Play.*

Surely the pleasure is as great,
In being cheated as to cheat.—*Butler.*

When Smith (whom we shall now call Peters) and Lieon left the apartment of the hotel and reached the hall-way without, Lieon demurred to proceeding any further.

"You will come with me," said Peters, in a low tone, "or take the consequences."

"What will they be?" asked Lieon tremulously.

"Utter ruin to yourself—downright, immediate ruin."

"Where are we to go?"

"To my room. Come."

Lieon, whose cowardly nature would not permit him to resist with firmness, doggedly followed. When they gained the interior of the room Peters locked the door and pointed to a chair. The doctor listlessly dropped upon it, and Peters took a seat directly before him.

"Answer me one question before we proceed further," said Peters, looking him steadily in the eye; "is she still worthy of being called my sister?"

"She is, she is."

"Look at me without flinching, that I may see if you are speaking the truth."

"I am, I am; I swear it."

There was something in the tone and manner of Lieon that vouched sufficiently for his veracity. Peters was satisfied, and said with a deep sigh—

"I believe you. It is your great good fortune that I do. Now go on. Tell me by what devilish arts you contrived to lure this child from home, friends and comfort."

"I love her," cried Lieon, "love her madly, and she loves me."

"Loves you! She does not know what love is."

"Ask her."

"Folly. I have heard how you advertised for a companion for your daughter, who was about to make a tour of Europe with yourself. I know that my giddy sister was bound up in a romantic desire to visit the old country, and that, partly in jest, partly in earnest, and with that reckless disregard of what might be the result, so characteristic of persons of her age—aye! of people of my age even—she replied to the lying announcement. By the most skilful diplomacy you obtained several interviews with her, and finally induced her to come to this city. How have you managed to keep her here? to prevent her from writing to us?"

Lieon shivered with fright. He knew the truth would be told by the girl, and so he made a virtue of necessity, and informed Peters that she had written to her family, but that he had destroyed the letters. Peters made a movement as if he would spring at his throat, but he restrained himself from doing violence in that style by a rapid and powerful effort of his reasoning faculties.

"I know I am much to blame," ventured Lieon deprecatingly, "but I loved her."

"Pray, Doctor Lieon, how many females, old and young, have you loved in your time?"

"None but her, really!"

"Balderdash!"

Peters rose from his chair and took off his coat, after uttering the contemptuous expression I have recorded. Lieon watched him with terror.

"Now," said Peters, after turning up his linen wristbands, "take off your coat."

"For what?"

"That you will soon learn."

"But surely——"

"Off with your garment, or I shall cut it off."

"Cut it off!"

"Exactly. Do you see this?"

Peters threw open a travelling trunk and pointed to a long thin whip made of stout leather, and knotted several times at the smallest end.

"I do."

"Well," continued Peters, taking it up, and handling it with an eager air, something like that of a fencer when anxious to have a bout with a skilful adversary, "I am about to apply this to your person with all my might. If you do not remove your coat it will assuredly be ribboned, and you may not be able to get another immediately."

"I will alarm the inmates of the hotel," said Lieon, rising to his feet.

"You will not do any such thing," said Peters, "because if you did that, your infamous business would be exposed—your wife-advertising scheme would be dissipated, and your income suddenly checked and dispelled."

"I'll fight you like a man," cried Lieon in desperation.

"That you shall not do, inasmuch as your claims to be treated like a man are too shadowy to be recognized. No, you are a coward, a villain, a thief; worse than a dog. I am about

to treat you as I would a vicious dog, and you may consider yourself honored."

"This is too bad. I'll die before I submit."

"You'll die, assuredly you will, if you don't submit."

Peters spoke these words with a look full of terrible meaning. The doctor slowly removed his coat.

"Now, take hold of the back of that chair, and stand still as long as you can."

The doctor took hold of the chair with both hands.

Peters stepped away a couple of paces, and then began the work of flagellation. The doctor bore the whipping with considerable fortitude. Rats have courage when cornered. He did not cry out until the blood began to stream down upon his nether garments, and then, having sustained about forty lashes, he screamed like a maniac.

"What's the matter?" cried one of the waiters outside, trying to open the door.

"Nothing, nothing!" answered Peters, "only a gentleman with a tooth-ache."

The waiter withdrew. Lieon had fallen upon the chair in a swooning state. Peters regarded him, until he revived, with a look betokening satisfied vengeance.

"You have done with me, I hope," said the biped cur, as he felt his senses being restored to him.

"For the present. Put on your coat, and get to your own apartment as quickly as you can. Tell what story you please to account for your illness and your injuries—I shall not contradict it."

The doctor crawled from the place of his castigation as readily as his crippled condition would permit, and was soon locked into his own room.

Peters returned to the parlor. Let us leave him there with young Leaycroft and Emma for a short period, while we say a few words about poor Jack and the negress, who was known by the appellation of "Doxy."

Jack had been removed to the penitentiary hospital, and was mending slowly.

The day after his adventure in the station-house, Doxy, who had consoled her mistress as well as she knew how, for the loss of her jewelry, muffled herself in an old camel cloak, and a long, thick hood, and went to Orange street. After pacing for about a quarter of an hour on one block of this delightful thoroughfare, she suddenly crossed the street, and dodged into the basement of a little yellow board house, which appeared as if a strong gust of wind would shatter it to pieces.

In this basement, which was filled with second hand clothing of all imaginable sizes and fashions, was an old Jew, well known to the police, under the title of "Father Abraham," as a "fence," or receiver of stolen goods.

The venerable Israelite's face brightened up when he saw Doxy. She was, it appeared, no stranger to him.

"Vell, vot now, vot now!" he said eagerly,

as he opened a door in the miserable partition, and exhibited a little room in which was nothing, apparently, but a rickety school desk and a miserable stool. Doxy slipped into this room hastily, and he followed, closing the door with an air of great mystery.

"Hab you got much tin, Abe?" asked the negress.

"Not much—not much; but I can borrow, ye know."

"What do you tink ob dat?" and she showed him the diamond cross.

"Peautiful! peautiful! It looksh peautiful, but I guess itsh only pashte."

"I knows better dan dat. It's worth fourteen hundred dollars," said Doxy, grinning.

"Mercy upon us! vere did you get it?"

"Dat's tellin's, Mister Abe. How much will you give for it?"

"Let me examine it."

The Jew clutched it, and was instantly satisfied that he held a prize in his hand.

"Come, speak out; how much?"

"I'll give you two hundred, and run all the risk."

"Dere aint any risk about diamonds," said the negress, grinning; "you can unset 'em in five minutes."

"Vell, vell, vell—I'll give you three hundred."

"Not a cent less dan five, Mister Abe."

After much haggling and disputing, the Jew paid her four hundred dollars, and took the cross.

"Darn if I don't hab plenty o' lottery tickets now," muttered Doxy, as she strode through Orange street towards Chatham.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Jew, after the negress had gone, "a good job—a good job! A thousand dollars clear profit on the intrinsic value of the article. A thousand more for the information it gives me. Ah! dear, ah! dear, I have seen this cross before."

CHAPTER XI.—A LIFE HISTORY.

How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Makes ill deeds done.—*King John.*

In a mood bordering on genuine lunacy, Hunter, after being interrupted in his passionate interview with Bodley by the entrance of one of the members of the banking firm, dashed into the open air, and hastened to what he termed his bachelor lodgings in Fourteenth street. Here he went to an apartment which did not seem to have been entered for a month previously, and hastily wrote a note. Having sealed it he called an old negro who had met him in the lower hall, and said:

"Tim, can you walk fast?"

"Yes, sir, as fast as a horse can trot."

"You know Mr. Harry Eyelet, of course?"

"Know him? Guess dis chile could pick him out from ten thousand."

"Well, go to the Lafoy House on Broadway, he is there, up-stairs. Do you understand?"

Tim nodded in the affirmative.

"Don't fail to find him, and give him this note."

"Wait for an answer?"

"No; hurry back."

"All right, sir."

And Tim was soon on his journey.

"I hate to be alone just now," said Hunter, as he threw himself back in an easy chair, and rocked energetically to and fro, "and so I have sent for Harry, although I cannot tell what I particularly want with him. Why not take to my wife? Ah! no, that would never do. She has had trouble enough through my folly, let her not know of my guilt, or of any approximation to it. No, from my lips she never shall." He struggled manfully against his dark thoughts until he finally dispelled all outward appearance of them. By the time Harry and Tim arrived, he was the same spirited, reckless, prodigal Hunter, to the observer, that he maintained a reputation for being.

"What the deuce is the demand for me to day!" inquired Eyelet, placing his glossy hat, with a rueful countenance, upon the dusty table; "is there a horse race on foot, a grand match at pistol shooting to be seen to, or a pretty woman to be run down?"

"No," answered Hunter, "nothing of the sort. Tim, leave the room." Tim obeyed. "And now that we are alone," continued Hunter, "I'll frankly confess that I've got the blue devils."

"Whew! Try some champagne."

"That wouldn't touch my kind of blues," said Hunter, with a feeble attempt at a laugh.

"Why, what can have come over you?"

"I have been comparing my early years with those that have followed."

"Indeed! I never indulge in retrospections. It would give me the most decided dismals that were ever experienced."

"I have had a tolerably active and eventful life," said Hunter, with a sigh; "and if it should end now in unhappiness—oh! the thought unmans me."

"Give me a sketch of your history, and I will make marginal notes and comments," said Eyelet.

"Well, here goes. I suppose you know that I began life in a workshop."

"I have heard as much! So did I."

"Yes, I learned the trade of a cabinet-maker. Alas! I fear I am working at it now."

"How?"

"I think I am making a coffin for my own use."

"What a grave idea!"

"My father wanted me to stick to the practical branch of my business, but I declined—came to this city—joined with a friend, and opened a furniture warehouse. This was in 1846."

"Well, you made money, but not fast enough; eh?"

"No, we did not make money. In 1848 the firm failed."

"With pockets full?"

"Not so. I was moneyless."

"Your genius had not been developed. What next did you attempt?"

"I went into Wall street."

"Well."

"I opened an office, and tried to speculate."

"What in?"

"Anything that promised a good venture. I did not find any plans either popular or profitable; but eventually made a trifle by going into the cemeteries."

"How—not as a resurrectionist?"

"Oh, no! I laid out cemeteries, hoping that others would lay out their money in them, and have the bodies of their friends laid out in them."

"Ha! ha! ha! Come, that's not so bad."

"The cemeteries and other small schemes kept me afloat until 1852, when I made a dash for an enlarged capital."

"What was that?"

"Well, never mind what," said Hunter, with a change of countenance; "it would occupy too much time to tell you now; at some future day you may learn all the particulars."

"Go-ahead."

"With this capital I started two banks."

"The deuce! That is news to me."

"They had their day. They were banks of issue, not of redemption."

"Good again."

"Then I went to Maine, and secured the charter of a manufacturing company, upon which I tried to saddle a bank. You see I was always fond of banks."

"Did it thrive?"

"No. The New England banks united in a holy alliance against my new project, and it never culminated."

"What a pity! Well, as the talking man of the negro minstrels would say, 'What was the next thing on the programme?'"

"I then took a trip to California."

"I was there once myself."

"California did not pay. I could not dig, and somehow I was not active and shrewd enough for the financiers of that remarkable region. I received some valuable lessons—first-class instruction I assure you, and returned to this city determined to make a bold stroke for fame and fortune. You know what the result has been."

"Exactly what you came for—fame and fortune?"

"Yes, they call me one of the giants of Wall street."

"Is it that which causes you to look as solemn as an undertaker?"

"No."

"Is it because you live in a palace, eat dinners that would have delighted Apicius, have a host of carriages and horses, and are surrounded by satellites and slaves!—ay, slaves!—that you look so sad?"

"No," replied Hunter with an effort to cheer up; "perhaps it is the consequence of indigestion."

"It must be. How could a man who rains gold upon the Broadway shopkeepers—whose smile on 'Change is an omen of general good fortune, and whose power is as great in the salons of fashion as it is among the gold-seekers—how could such a man be really unhappy?"

"Ah, my dear friend, all is not gold that glitters."

Now, Eyelet was a man of the world. His perceptions were naturally keen, and a gentle hint went a great way with him. Give him the smallest clue and he could trace his way through the most intricate labyrinth. He saw, clearly enough, that Hunter was deeply moved—that he was affrighted both by something that *had* occurred, and something that *might* occur. His mind naturally glanced from Wall street to dishonesty. The glance is not uncommon. He did not wish to pry into any man's secrets, but as he moved in good society (his impudence achieving him introductions where modest merit failed to obtain a recognizing look,) and did not wish to be "cut," he wisely concluded to ascertain how far his intimacy with Hunter might then, or at any future period, compromise him. So putting on his most plausible face, he said:

"That last remark of yours has set me to thinking. All is not gold that glitters. I admit, upon reflection, that even you may have cause to be melancholy. Come, confide in me. Hang it, let's have no secrets. What has transpired to mar your complacency?"

"Would you believe it?" said Hunter, grabbing the bait eagerly, "I have been black-mailed!"

"By the papers? sending stocks up and down, eh?"

"No, no—not by the papers. Editors get credit for a great deal they do not accomplish in that line. No, by ruffians."

"A little amour ferreted out?"

"Worse."

"Let's have it. Come, make a clean breast."

"I suppose I may as well. Two rascals obtained hints from a maudlin old book-keeper that some of my note transactions were not precisely according to the old-fashioned method of doing business, and threatened, if I did not give them five thousand dollars, to accuse me of—I cannot speak the word."

"There is but one word that my lips would quiver at, under similar circumstances," said Eyelet, growing pale. Eyelet was not a miracle of courage.

"That is——"

"Murder," exclaimed Eyelet hastily.

"There is another."

"Not as bad, so out with it."

"Forgery!" cried Hunter with a gasp.

"Dreadful! Did you comply with their demands?"

"What else could I do?"

"Bid them go to Jericho, and if they did not take themselves off, send for a couple of policemen."

"I tried menaces, but they only made the matter worse."

"Then you are guilt—guilt——"

"No, not guilty; no, I swear to you I am not; but I thought the quietest way was the best. And then, you know, they say I am flighty sometimes—that I am, now and then, insane."

"What has that to do with the crime you speak of?" asked Eyelet rather bluntly.

"Not much. Yet, suppose in one of my non-lucid intervals I have committed some act that might be construed into a forgery, what then?"

"I cannot say! I cannot say!" remarked Eyelet thoughtfully.

"You do not think I would transgress the law with my senses healthy, do you?" inquired Hunter, with a most anxious air.

"No—certainly not," replied Eyelet without animation.

"I'm glad of that," said Hunter, his fears vanishing for the moment. "If anything unpleasant and uncomplimentary were to get in circulation about me, you would give it the cold shoulder and the deaf ear, would you not, Harry?"

"How can you ask such a question?" inquired Harry Eyelet reproachfully.

"I know I ought not to have insulted you by it, but pardon my anxiety to know that I shall retain your friendship. Now let us go in the pursuit of pleasure. I shall let business take care of itself for the rest of the day."

"By the way," said Eyelet, as he adjusted his hat to his well-formed curly head; "can you accommodate me with a loan of five hundred?"

"Double that if you require it."

"It won't come amiss."

"All right. You shall have it. There."

Hunter gave him the last sum named.

"I have to make use of this immediately," said Eyelet, "and will not be able to go with you until afterwards. Will you wait here for my return?"

"Yes; but for Heaven's sake don't be away long, or I shall have a relapse in the way of hypochondria."

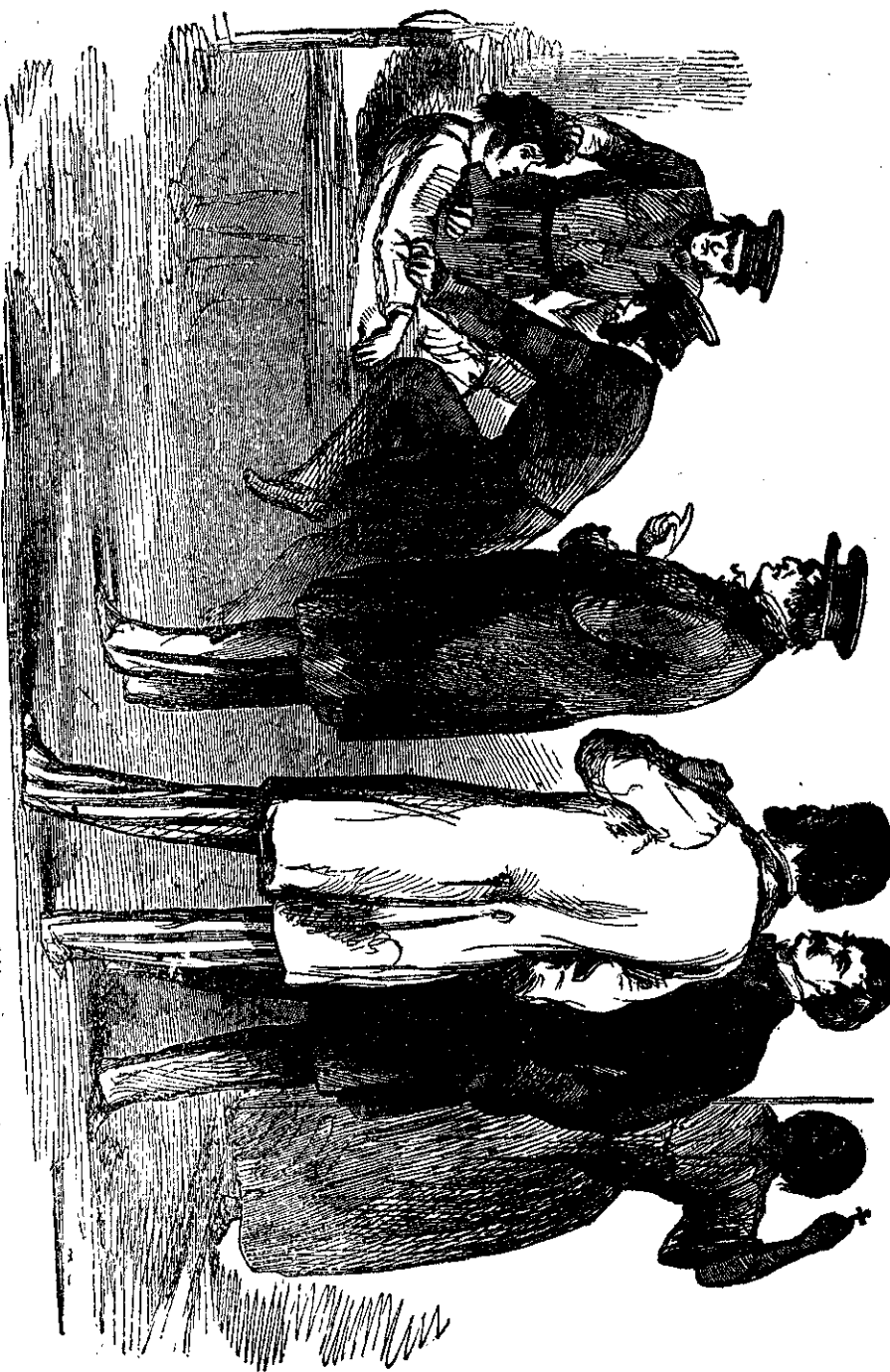
"I'll be back within an hour."

And with these words Harry Eyelet took his leave.

"Whew!" he soliloquised, as he hastened towards Broadway; "I foresee a grand smash—a regular wreck. I must be cautious, or else the ruins will fall upon me. Gently, yet firmly, I must withdraw from this association. Forgery! It's an ugly term. Ah! it won't do for me to have the remotest connection with it. I'm not regarded as immaculate, and I cannot bear any equivocal additions to my antecedents. Forgery and Insanity! Hum! hum! bad terms, bad terms! They don't dovetail at all."

Mr. Harry Eyelet returned to Hunter's bachelor-rooms according to promise, and thanked his good fortune that Doctor Leon, bandaged like a mummy, was there to prevent the con-

"JACK" AT THE STATION HOUSE. (See Page 14.)



templated pleasure jaunt. Lieon had been telling Hunter all about his encounter with young Peters. The information was not calculated to endow the great financier with any cheerfulness worth mentioning. He began to think that there was much truth in the proverb, that "misfortunes seldom come singly."

CHAPTER XII.—"DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES."

In the waters of the winding river
May be found oblivion.—*Anon.*

TERRIFIED by the attitude Julia Bowen had assumed towards him, and with a fearful remembrance of the many mysterious murders that had been perpetrated in New York by females who were never brought to human justice, Bristol did not stop lashing his horses for some time after he drove away from the Red House. He expected to see, every instant, the vehicle of the outraged woman close in his track. He might have excused himself the trouble of the expectation. Julia Bowen was the victim of her sex's physical weaknesses. After firing at Bristol, and putting up a silent vow before heaven that she would be revenged, she fainted. Her nerves had been overtaxed. The reaction was complete.

Corky Jim, when he saw her fall upon the snow, sprang forward to assist her, and two or three of his nonplussed companions followed him. Jim's first movement, after he reached her, was to grasp her revolver. To his amazement, it was fastened to her wrist by a small but very strong steel chain, which he could not break. They lifted her into her sleigh under the shed, and then procured some restoratives from the bar. In a few moments she had recovered consciousness, but she was very weak and otherwise miserable.

"Are ye goin' back to the city after Bill?" inquired Jim, as she feebly gathered up the reins.

"That is my affair," she answered, and then added, "Take good care that I do not come after you some of these days, Mr. Corky Jim. Don't meddle yourself between Bristol and myself, if you value your own peace and happiness."

"I don't fear you, and I shall do what I like," growled Jim with an air of mingled contempt and defiance.

"Very well, if you happen to like to busy yourself in my concerns it will be the worse for you. I know where to find the Black Prince."

Jim trembled. The Black Prince was the familiar title of one Theodore Cosgrove, who was deeply enamoured of Julia, and of whom, for good reasons, Jim stood in mortal dread. Cosgrove, he knew, would, for the slightest encouragement from Julia of his suit, perform any possible task that might be allotted to him. It was Jim's policy, therefore, to "haul in his horns," as the saying is, and he did so with as much plausibility and grace as might have been exhibited by the learned bear of a travelling menagerie.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" he finally asked.

"Yes," she replied, "you can get in, and drive me down to the corner of Nineteenth street and Third avenue. Then you can leave me. I wish to call upon a friend in the street I have mentioned."

Jim consented. He durst not refuse. But he maintained a dogged silence all the way down.

In the meantime Bristol pursued his road. After a while, the cold air and the exercise somewhat restored him to his self-possession. He became convinced that Julia was not following him. Where had she gone, then? What was she doing? What did she mean to do? These queries flashed across his mind in quick succession, and each one had its terrors.

"I never dreamed that she would turn on me!" he soliloquised. "I've often heard say that if one 'treads upon a worm it will turn'; but then a woman is not a worm. I imagined she loved me too well to do me an injury, no matter what I might do to her."

Ah! Mr. Bristol, you were a poor reader of some of the pages of the book of human nature. Go into the courts, civil and criminal, and you will find that the deadliest foes are those who once loved each other; that the most atrocious crimes committed upon life and property have been dictated by hatred, which had its root and nourishment in the most extravagant affection.

Bristol at length sought to drown his inquietude in alcoholic draughts. He stepped in at so many dram-shops, that by the time he reached the livery stable in Mercer Street, to which the horses had instinctively found their way, without much of his assistance, he was considerably under the influence of liquor.

"Been on a regular tear?" said the stable-owner, eyeing the horses with questioning glances.

"The animals have not been abused," said Bristol, "I drove them hard only a mile or two."

"They ain't so bad as I thought they might be!" muttered the other, as an ostler unharnessed them.

"Is it all right, boss?"

"Yes."

"Then I'm off."

Bristol took his leave very abruptly, and wandered about into various of his accustomed haunts, drinking with everybody, until about ten o'clock. The liquor did not intoxicate him after the usual fashion, but rather made him lugubrious and stupid. In this state he sought several old acquaintances, whom he had not seen for a long time, in Cherry street.

In order to give a clear idea of what follows, it is necessary to return to old Bodley and Charles Hunter. They had met in the lone mansion on Fourteenth street. Bodley had, it appeared, reflected upon the turn his affairs with Hunter had taken, and had concluded that it was better for him to conciliate the

great financier. The best method of doing this was, he made up his mind, to relieve Hunter from the delicate attentions of Corky Jim and William Bristol. Bodley had a step-son, who was one of the East-side-of-the-city ornaments. He had served two terms in the penitentiary, and had narrowly escaped conviction in a charge of burglary. Bodley seldom recognised him—only, in fact, when he had some motive to serve, some object to accomplish. The name of this scapegrace was Harvey Paul.

It was arranged, between Hunter and old Bodley, that Paul and his companions, who were desperadoes of the vilest kind, should, for a consideration, put Bristol and Jim out of the way. The latter were to be prevented from paying Hunter any more inconvenient visits—*how was Paul's business?* This was the subject of Hunter's and Bodley's conference in Fourteenth street. Paul had been promised a large reward in case he succeeded. A little golden stimulus had already been presented to him.

Now, when Bristol went to Bloomingdale he had been seen by Paul, and noted, or "spotted," as the cant phrase runs, as a fast man in funds. When Bristol was coming back, Paul, curious to say, had received instructions to "take care of him." As if predestined to fulfil their designs, he wandered, as has been already stated, off into the regions of the East River. Need we say that Paul and his associates, who had watched him carefully, contrive, to make his acquaintance. After a while he was induced to play at High, Low, Jack and the Game. The "smartest" rascal in the world will sometimes stray beyond his depth. Bristol looked upon his companions with supreme contempt. He regarded them as low fellows—so strange it is that there is not a blackguard in existence who does not find somebody still lower than himself (in his own estimation) to despise. He played cards with these two fellows for a couple of hours. He taught them, as he thought, a few new "tricks of the trade." He "stacked" his cards—pulled Jacks from the bottom of the pack, and indulged in all kinds of "advantages," as cheating doings are termed by the gamblers. They comprehended him perfectly, and allowed him to win their money. He did not fail to make a grand display of his own. All this transpired in the back room attached to a low groggery near the large temperance hotel erected for the accommodation of seamen.

Paul, at length, thought it necessary to bring things to a climax, so he invited all hands to take a little more fluid refreshment, and in the beverage allotted to Bristol contrived to mingle some nauseating drug. The consequence was that ten minutes after swallowing the draught Bristol was terribly sick at the stomach. His new-made friends deferentially took him into the street—they thought the air would do him good. It revived but did not cure him. His brain was excited—his pulse beat wildly—and fire seemed to be coursing through his veins.

Paul and Teddy Rowe, the former's especial

friend, agreed to remain with him until he felt able to go home by himself. The rest of the "boys," deploring the circumstance of their having remained away from home so late, shook hands with the two and left them together.

"Suppose," said Paul to Bristol, "we go down by the river. The breeze is fresher there than here."

"But it's deuced cold," responded Bristol.

"I'll lend you my pea-jacket," said Rowe affectionately.

"I don't wish to strip the coat from your back—I'd rather put another upon it," said Bristol, feeling flattered by the offer.

"That you may do hereafter," remarked Rowe, giving Paul a nudge. "Just now you stand in need of mine, and you shall have it."

Bristol was presently rigged in Rowe's heavy pea-jacket. It was tight for him, and it buttoned in such a way that he had very little use of his arms. The coat transaction was observed by a policeman who stood a short distance off, and whose close proximity did not appear to create the least disturbance in the breasts of the "river thieves," for by that appellation they were known to the authorities.

Ultimately the policeman stepped up to the two, and calling Paul a little distance away from his company, said:

"You are up to some mischief, eh?"

"Upon my word, no. This is one of our particular friends."

"He don't look like one, and, I never saw him around here before."

"Oh! he's been away—been on a whaling voyage."

The policeman glanced at Bristol's hands—they were near a street lamp—and merely said:

"His hands are not those of a sailor. He's a victim of yours."

"I tell you, no."

"Very well; as I have not seen you commit any overt act, I have no right to interfere with you, but I don't believe a word you say."

"I'm sorry—that's all," said Paul sullenly.

"Just oblige me," said the policeman, preparing to leave them, "by going off my beat if you mean to do anything foul. *So long as you are off my beat, I shall not bother myself about what you may do.*"

This may be taken, without a grain of allowance, as a specimen of police efficiency in this city.

Paul said, "All right," and whispered to his companion, while the policeman vanished around the corner.

"Come, now, let's try the river side," said Paul to Bristol; "you begin to look much better, and I am sure the finishing stroke will be gained by a trip to the docks."

Something inwardly told Bristol he was making a fool of himself, but his senses were yet partially in the bonds of the villainous distillations he had imbibed, and it was not without a great deal of difficulty that he was induced to visit a lumber yard near the docks.

Here he was placed in a sitting position upon a pile of boards, and beguiled of any suspicions he might have entertained of his company's honesty by the liveliest of conversation.

"By the way," said Rowe, at length, "I have a friend below here. Let's visit him."

"Below? where?" inquired Paul with well-dissimbled innocence.

"Off the next pier below, I mean," resumed Rowe. "He is the master of a schooner which lies in the slip."

"I don't want to go on board a schooner," said Bristol, "I'm sick enough now, and the roll of the vessel would make me sicker."

"Why, the vessel don't roll!" cried Rowe; "it's frozen in."

"Too much trouble to get on board," grumbled Bristol.

"Not at all," said Rowe, "I'll hail my friend, and he'll run out the gang plank."

Bristol still objected.

"He's got such a glorious berth there," urged Rowe, "as nice as the best French bedstead you ever roosted in. We can tuck you up in that and give you some of his imported Schiedam, and in a couple of hours you will be as fine as a fiddle."

Bristol was in a condition to be easily persuaded. His friends soon succeeded in obtaining his consent to go on board the supposed schooner, and in a quarter of an hour the three men stood on the end of a pier, the winter blast whistling about their ears with the greatest ferocity. Not a soul was stirring anywhere around. Had they been in a country graveyard they could not have been more lonely.

"Are you going to hail your friend?" inquired Bristol, impatiently.

"Yes," answered Rowe, "if it's time. He gets up precisely at three o'clock every morning. Look at your watch. If it isn't three, I'll wait."

After considerable difficulty, Bristol drew forth his watch, which was instantly grabbed by Rowe, who looked at it.

"It ain't the hour yet," said he, pocketing the valuable time-keeper.

"What do you mean by fobbing my watch?" asked Bristol, indignantly.

"Oh, I want it more than you do. I'll give it to you in the morning," said Rowe, coolly.

"And I'll take what money you may have," said Paul, quietly.

"Don't you wish you may get it?" asked Bristol, who looked upon the whole thing as a joke.

"I mean to have it," replied Paul, throwing off all disguise, "so fork over."

"Not while I can fight for it," said Bristol, suddenly yet thoroughly comprehending his position, and resolving to defend himself and his property with his utmost skill and strength.

"You can't fight much in that coat of mine," said Rowe, impudently.

"I'll take it off," was Bristol's remark.

He made the attempt to do so, when he received a heavy blow on the temple. He stag-

gered but did not fall. The brim of his hat had broken the force of the blow somewhat.

"Do you mean to murder me?" cried Bristol.

"Oh no," said Paul, striking him full upon the forehead with a slung shot; we don't do business in that way."

The last blow deprived Bristol of all thought and motion. In a very few minutes the practised hands of Rowe and Paul had filched every article worth anything from Bristol's person.

"Now we must get your coat," said Paul, after stowing away, in his own pockets, the plunder.

The helpless body was soon stripped of the coat.

"And now?" asked Rowe.

"He goes overboard."

"Why not let him lie here?"

"You know why, well enough. He is to be put out of the way."

"I don't like to do it. Let him lay here."

"And lose a thousand dollars?"

Rowe hesitated. Bristol began to move.

That decided him. He muttered,

"Dead men tell no tales," and then seized the unfortunate man.

Bristol struggled, and managed to cry once for help, but his cry met with no response but its own echo. They held him up from the ground.

"Now, a good plunge so that he will go under!" exclaimed Paul.

The next instant there was a crash!—the ice was loose—a splash!—a shriek, and then all was silent.

Bristol had plundered Hunter; he had, in his turn, been plundered, and of the self same spoil. Is it true that what is gained dishonestly never does the gainer any good service?

CHAPTER XIII.—MORE POLICE POWER.

Be of good cheer;

You are fallen into a princely hand, fear nothing: M. ke your full reference freely to my lord, Who is so full of grace, that it flows over On all that need. Let me report to him Your sweet dependency.—*Antony and Cleopatra.*

It is time a little attention were paid to Mary Schuyler. The reader will remember that she was extremely girlish and modest in her appearance and manner. Neither the appearance nor the manner was assumed. And yet, as may have been guessed, they did not in the slightest degree correspond with her character nor her nature. She was cunning, calculating, heartless, and unprincipled. She was cold too. No generous affection warmed the current of her blood. No ray of love penetrated the dark cavities of her chilly heart. No human being claimed her sympathies, she was self incarnate. Her frigid and firm temperament dictated the observance of the strictest propriety, and hence she was upheld by those who never sought to take other than a superficial view of her, or her

doings, as a model of excellence and virtue. How many Mary Schuylers there be in this world of ours! And how, in the estimation of the community, they are exalted above the unfortunate Julia Bowens. The Mary Schuylers are the serpents, who, coiled in security, bite unseen and unsuspected. The Julia Bowens are the wretches who do not know themselves, and who, in an evil hour, follow the promptings of their passionate impulses, and are for ever afterward the victims of acknowledged criminality. They practise vice in secret for but a short period.

Mary was sure that she had not been silly enough to render herself liable to a legal prosecution in any of her little transactions; hence the threat concerning a trial, contained in the anonymous letter aforesaid, did not disturb her. But that the writer of the epistle knew more about her affairs than she had imagined was known to any but herself, was too plain to be contradicted.

Quietly (although she was terrified) and methodically she proceeded to ascertain how she had come to receive that letter. First, she assured herself, as she thought, that Legouve was not in bad odor with his late employers; she had asked them herself, and they, for reasons known but to themselves and the detective McMahon, told her so. Finally, by turning over and over in her mind every circumstance that had occurred lately, she concluded that it was an acquaintance of Legouve's that had written to her. Then she recollected that she and the youth had been watched rather closely by a man at the Post Office. The event had not produced any effect at the time, but now it was exceedingly significant. She remembered that she had seen the man before, and at once determined to go down town and watch him!

Reaching the Post Office, she found it a very easy task to discover the person of whom she was in search. He resumed his vigilant observance of her movements, and ultimately approached her within speaking distance. She nodded slightly. He took the hint, and inclined his head towards the east side of the office. She demurely turned into Liberty street, east of Nassau, and he followed her. At William street she halted. McMahon came up with her.

"What is it you would learn of me?" she inquired, still preserving her modest deportment.

"What is it you wish from me?" asked the officer.

"You! Have you not been watching me?"

"That is a strange question."

"Did you not write a letter to me?"

"I cannot understand why you should put such a query."

"Are you not a spy upon my actions?"

"I am a policeman, miss, if that constitutes me a spy."

"I am on the right track then," said Mary, who saw that she must abandon girlishness, and at once play the part of the firm shrewd woman.

"Perhaps so. I can tell better when you in-

form me what track it is you seek," observed the policeman with a smile.

"You will find it your true policy to be frank and candid with me," said Mary, eyeing him steadfastly.

"I am frank and candid with everybody."

"What do you want of me?"

"Come out of the street and I will tell you," said McMahon, suddenly assuming a serious air.

They walked to the Fulton Ferry, and got on board a Brooklyn ferry boat. In the cabin, which contained but few people, they resumed their conversation.

"You are very anxious to know what I want of you," began McMahon, "presuming that I have watched you and written to you. I confess I have done both, and I have promised to tell you my purposes concerning you. Shall I go on?"

Mary whispered, "If you please."

"First, you must procure for me a list of Dr. Lieon's victims, dupes, or whatever you choose to call the weak-minded females he has swindled."

"This demand assumes that I understand all about Dr. Lieon's business."

"Exactly."

"I deny being in any secrets of a person bearing that name."

"You may deny, but the denial will not avail you. I have intercepted and copied your written communications to him, and his to you."

Mary bit her lips. It was evident she was very much shocked and astonished by this intelligence.

"Supposing I refuse to get you the list you require?" she said interrogatively.

"I must get it by some other method, that's all," replied McMahon, in his ordinary tone of voice.

"And what will be your revenge upon me?"

"Excuse me; when I play at cards I never show my hand," answered the detective.

"I know I am not liable to the law for anything I have done in all my life," ventured Mary Schuyler.

"Not to the law of the courts, it may be, although there be jurists who would make a dark case for you," said McMahon; "but to the law of public opinion—"

"Stop!" said Mary, with a slightly tremulous motion of her whole frame, "I do not wish to hear of that."

"If it should get abroad that you have accepted the entire proceeds of young Legouve's mail robberies, your reputation might be damaged."

"I never knew that he was a dishonest person!" cried Mary; "I do not know it now."

"That is false—excuse me, but it is my duty to speak plainly. You must have known that the money he gave you was not properly acquired. But let that pass. I admit that a guilty knowledge of his crimes could not be proven upon you. Still the attempt to place it at your door might have a bad effect—for you."

Mary displayed great emotion—for her. McMahon observed this with palpable satisfaction, and then proceeded:

"It could be shown, too, that on two occasions you have personated Doctor Lieon's daughter."

"It was done as a joke."

"A serious joke for those to whom you were introduced."

"Serious!"

"Yes. Do you remember Emma Peters? The doctor wrote to you about her yesterday."

"I see that you have me in your power. I will procure you the list, or catalogue, you require."

"Opposite each name," said McMahon, with business-like brevity, "you will be kind enough to write the amount of money received from its owner."

"If I can get it."

"You must."

Mary drew her breath convulsively.

"Well then, I will."

"Next, out of your savings in bank—"

"There," hastily interrupted Mary, "there you are at fault. I have no savings; I am indeed almost penniless."

"Excuse me again, but I know better. I have the number of your bank book. I never do things by halves, Miss Schuyler."

"You are a magician, I begin to think," remarked Mary.

"No, only a man who understands his business. But, as I was saying, out of your savings you must pay back every farthing of the money Legouve has given you."

"I do not know the amount."

"It is just the amount of his robberies."

"Who must I pay it to?"

"I will receive it."

"And keep it! Oh, no, I'm not quite so foolish as to be swindled in that way, even by a policeman, who may give me much trouble."

"You have a right to do as you please, Miss Schuyler."

"The right, yes; but you are taking a villainous advantage of secrets gained in a shameful manner, to deprive me of that right—to render it valueless and unserviceable, at least."

"You have almost ruined a poor youth who loves you madly. I am certain you have broken his heart. Do you deserve either compassion or mercy?"

Mary was silent.

"But we have crossed the river," continued McMahon. "I will go on shore. You can return to New York in this boat."

"When do you want that list?"

"In about a week I shall ask for it."

"And the money?"

"To-morrow."

McMahon left the boat. Mary, still hoping to elude his demands, and planning the means whereby they might be eluded, retained her seat in the cabin. The plans her mind favored were such as would have startled Manhattan

Island to its very centre had they been practically embraced and delineated.

CHAPTER XIV. THE ISRAELITE'S TRIUMPH.

Oh! that I were a god, to shout forth thunder
Upon these paltry, servile, abject drudges.
Small things make base men proud: this villain
here,

Being captain of a pinnace, threatens more
Than Bargulus, the strong Illyrian pirate.
Drones suck not eagles' blood, but rob bee-hives.
It is impossible that I should die
By such a lowly vassal as thyself.

King Henry VI., Part 2.

THE old Hebrew to whom Doxy sold the diamond cross did not rest, after securing possession of that jewel, until he crossed the East River and visited an aristocratical looking house, in the direction of the Peck-slip ferry road, about a mile from the ferry. This house stood, as it were, alone. I might give a minute description of its appearance and locality, but as it is at this moment inhabited by respectable people, I forbear.

Reaching this house the Jew, after taking a good view of its exterior, applied in the customary way for admission. He was compelled to repeat his knock several times before he could attract the attention of anybody within. At length a very showy young lady opened the hall door and requested to know his business.

"I wish to see your mother," said Abraham, with an insinuating air.

"You!" exclaimed the young lady, with a glance of contemptuous inquiry. "Have you not made a mistake? Have you not come to the wrong house?"

"No, no, my dear, disish de house, I knows it well enough."

"What is the name of the person you desire to see?"

"Emma Hemphead. Ish not that your mother's name, my dear?"

"It is."

"Well; be kind enough to tell her that Father Abraham would like to speak with her."

There was something in the confident twinkle of the old Jew's eyes that determined the showy young lady to be the bearer of his message. About five minutes after it was delivered, Mrs. Hemphead made her appearance. She was a somewhat peculiar looking woman; her hair and eyes were dark—almost dark enough to be called black—in figure she was a little above the medium height, and thin, excepting in the bust, which was particularly well developed. Her features were regular and pretty, when animated. When in repose, they wore a sinister and forbidding expression. Though of a nervous-bilious temperament, she appeared to be uncommonly self-possessed; a trifle might confuse and distress her, but for a great emergency she was to be trusted.

"What brings you here?" she inquired of Father Abraham, angrily.

"A little business, my good woman," he answered with a look intended to be greatly significant.

"I thought I had transacted all the business we should ever do together," said the woman, biting her lips, and otherwise betraying an angry feeling.

"One never knowsh, in this world, ven one's bishness is done," said the Jew, darting a keen and curious glance at her changing countenance.

"Well, what is this business?" she at length inquired.

"Hadn't ve better step inside?" he asked, insinuatingly.

"Oh, you may come in," she replied, affecting unconcern. "You can go into the back room, and I'll be there presently."

"Don't keep me waiting long, Mrs. Hemphead, because my time is precious," said the old man, as he waddled, or rather wriggled, towards the door of the apartment indicated; "it's worth a dollar a minute just at present."

The hint was not lost upon the female. She followed Abraham directly into the apartment, and closing the door, stood against it, so that it would be impossible for him to get out without her consent.

"Now, you old vagabond," she said, shaking her fist at him, "tell me how you dare come here to torment me again."

"Vell, Mrs. Hemphead," answered the old man with provoking coolness, "ash for daring to come, you knowsh I dare do a good deal. I never was afraid of you, my dear, and the man that ain't afraid of you could face Satan, my dear."

"Cease your impertinence, and come to business; that was your word, I believe."

"Yesh, and a very good vord it is, Mrs. H., ven you can make it pay."

"Why don't you come to the point?"

"I will come to it, I will. First tell me, my dear, what has become of Helen Marsh—that pretty girl you introduced to an opera singer about a year ago."

"I don't know; how should I?"

"I knowsh better!"

"What? Insulting!"

"I say I knowsh better," continued the old man in a severe tone; "you know well enough that he broke her heart, and that she pisened herself."

"Suppose I do?"

"You knowsh, too, that one of your daughters was present in the garret when she died, and took care of the few things she left behind. Don't contradict me; it won't be of any use."

"I believe Margaret did smooth her dying pillow," said Mrs. Hemphead, with an attempt to look tender-hearted.

"She did more!—she did more!" cried Father Abraham.

"What more? I thought I had heard of the full extent of her kindness."

"Ah, no. She took care of the poor thing's jewelry."

"'Tis false!" exclaimed the woman, again menacing him with her fist; "your insinuation is groundless."

"Don't get excited," said Abraham, who, when he was particularly earnest forgot his dialect, and spoke as plainly as anybody; "don't get excited. You are aware that I always make sure of charges of that kind before I speak them."

"At any rate, do me the justice of believing that I had no hand in the transaction."

"I can't! I can't!" exclaimed the Hebrew with a cold and sardonic grin.

"You won't, you mean."

"How can I? Margaret stole the jewelry and brought it to you."

"You old rascal —"

"Skip the hard words, madam. You sold it to Charles Hunter, who visited your house with an actor."

Mrs. Hemphead writhed, but the old man deliberately proceeded.

"A little eluc—the smallest in the world, my dear—enabled me to find all this out in an hour."

Mrs. Hemphead looked blue. Abraham went on, eyeing her with malicious satisfaction the while.

"You foolishly sold him that, and still more foolishly sold him—this!"

He held up the diamond cross as he spoke. The woman's frame seemed to have experienced a shock—a shock capable of shaking it to its innermost recesses. Had she run against and been imbedded in an iceberg, however, she could not have been colder than she appeared immediately afterwards.

"You are very good at tricks," said she, with a curl of scorn on her lip, "but not always successful with them. Do you imagine you can frighten me with an article which is only an imitation?"

The Jew chuckled. He was better "posted" in her affairs than she was prepared to understand.

"Don't flatter yourself that I cannot prove this article to be genuine," he said; "I know the fatal mark on the setting."

Mrs. Hemphead was again *hors du combat*.

"What do you require?" she gasped.

"Civil treatment first, and a thousand dollars to make me appreciate it," answered Abraham.

"Where am I to get a thousand dollars?" she asked with an air of bewilderment.

"I'm sure I don't know," replied the old man with an air of complacency perfectly charming.

"It is impossible!"

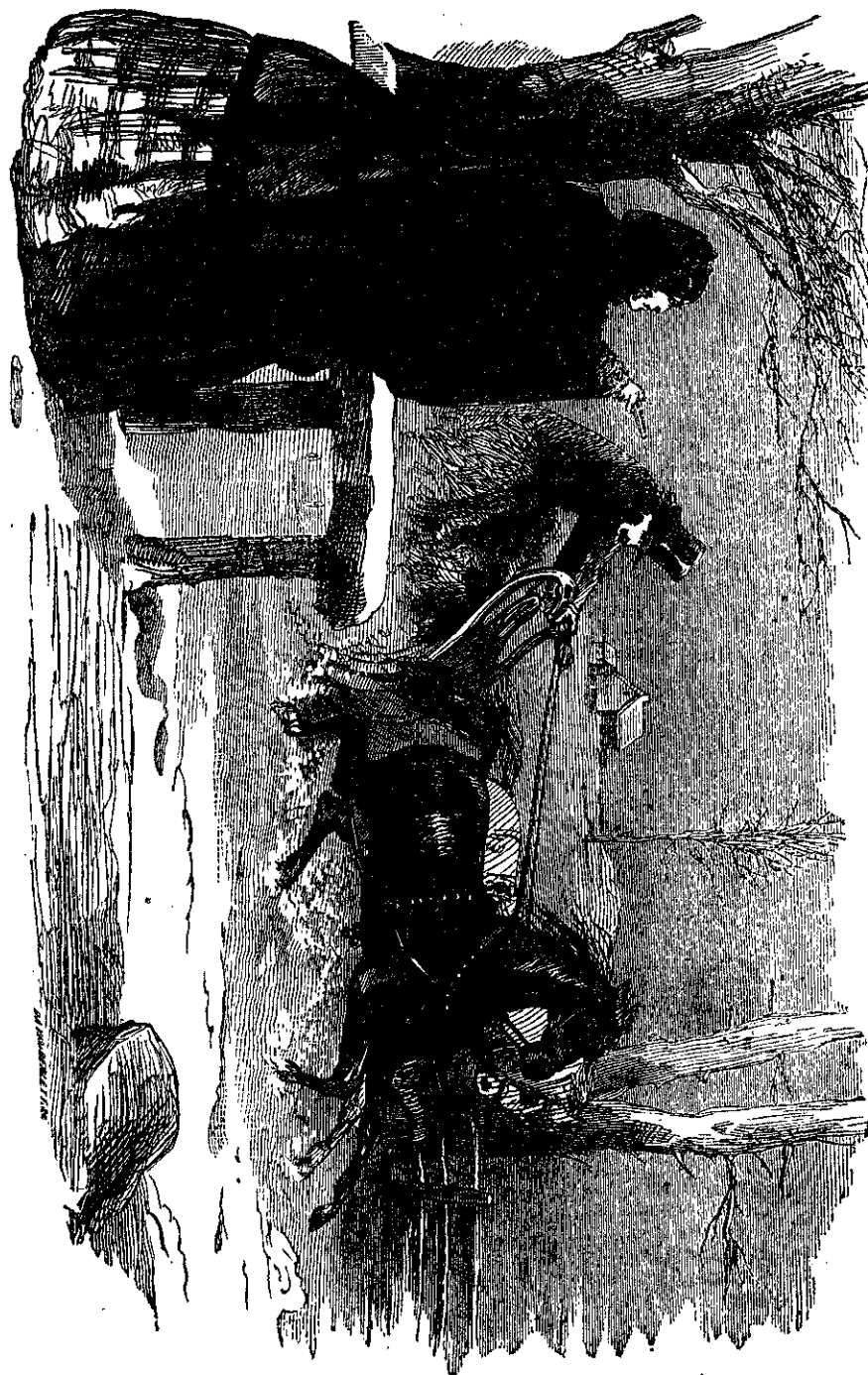
"You cannot humbug me in that way," said Abraham, with great docility.

"I have no moneyed friend—no source from whence to draw such a sum."

The Jew shook his head, and kept his seat.

"Let me see the cross—let me have it in my hands. How do I know that you are telling me the truth?"

BILL BRISTOL'S ADVENTURE WITH JULIA BOWEN. (See Page 22.)



The smile that spread across the bearded features of the venerable Israelite was sublime. The manner in which he deposited the precious cross into a pocket which appeared to be defended by a hecatomb of buttons, and a perfect labyrinth of outside skirts and lappels, was delicious.

"You might take a fancy to keep it," he said, satirically.

"How could I? You could take it from me!"

"That would make a noise. Besides, where's the use of my taking that trouble? No, no; give me a thousand dollars."

"And you'll leave me the cross?"

"Not exactly, my dear. Oh no—its too valuable for me to part with it at that price."

"You had better not keep it," ventured the female after a pause; "you understand that it is a most unlucky piece of property."

"For those that make a bad use of it, oh, yes!"

"For anybody."

"I'll run the risk."

"How much will you take for it out and out."

"I'll tell you some other time."

"Now, now, and I'll get the money if—if—"

"It costs somebody their life, eh? That was what you were going to say, I know."

"It may cost somebody his-life, indeed!" exclaimed the woman menacingly.

"It has; eh, my dear?"

"Why, oh, why did I yield to Hunter's importunities, and my desire for money, and let him have that article?" she said, half to herself.

"It was a silly act—the silliest I ever knew you to commit, my dear."

"He promised to have them reset," she resumed.

"Ah, I know two of the stones!" exclaimed the Jew. "One is checked, or slightly flawed, by the point of a dirk. I should know that mark if I saw the stone set in the crown of England, my dear. The stone is the biggest one of the lot."

After making every endeavor to evade the demand, Mrs. Hemphead was at length compelled to procure the sum claimed by Abraham, in gold. He would not take anything else.

"Good day, my dear," he said with the most provoking effrontery, as he was leaving the house, "good day, and pleasant dreams to you to-night."

"When I see you again I hope you will tell me the price of that cross!" she said, as he reached the stoop.

"Perhaps."

This was all the words he uttered as he shuffled down the stone steps.

Mrs. Hemphead watched him until he was out of sight, and then, returning to the room in which she had talked with him, threw herself upon a bed which was there, and literally tore her hair out by the roots.

Miss Burgess, the actress, was in sore distress

about the cross aforesaid. She had been to see her husband about it, but he was not sane enough to give her any satisfaction. He was getting better, however, and she hoped that his restoration to reason would be synonymous with her resumption of the ownership of the unlucky gems!

CHAPTER XV.—THE CELL AND THE SALON.

I must not dip, how'er I wish,
My spoon, or finger, in the dish.

Nursery Rhyme.

OLD BODLEY was terribly alarmed when his stepson told him that Mr. William Bristol's "affairs were settled." Knowing how little was the dependence to be placed upon his word—being well aware, in fact, that the stepson aforesaid would swear away the lives of a regiment for one-tenth part of the sum of \$1,000—he did not take for granted the tale that was told him.

"There's his tucker," said Harvey Paul, displaying Bristol's watch, "and his money, bar-rin' twenty-five that I gave Rowe, my partner, to ease his conscience; there's his handkerchief and his pocket-comb, his breast pin, his rings, a daguerreotype of a woman, and his tooth-pick. What more proof do you want that he's snug?"

"That's proof that you robbed him."

"You want to see the body, perhaps."

Old Bodley quaked with terror. He did not want to see anything of the sort. Paul told him the particulars of Bristol's "taking off" for the fifth time, and described the pier from which he had been thrown, and its locality, with the utmost precision.

"I'll send somebody to look," at length returned Bodley.

"Do just as ye like," responded Paul gruffly, "but if that somebody gets dogged and nabbed you and I'll be in a tight place I'm thinkin'. The police don't meddle with us much when we're a doin' anything, but after something's done they're cursed smart and busy."

"Well, I can't take your word, that's flat. Now what am I to do under the circumstances?"

"Will ye believe Teddy Rowe?"

"His veracity is not worth any more than your own."

"Ah, very well," said Paul, with a strange scowl, and buttoning up his coat with an air of great determination; "we must get the money by foul means, if it wont come by fair. The work's done, and we want the pay. As the preacher on Blackwell's Island says, 'The laborer's worthy of his hire.'"

"If I could be sure that you are not humbugging me," urged Bodley; "but you know you would rather tell a falsehood than not, and for a large sum of money what monstrous lie would you not hatch up!"

"I tell you, dad, the job's been put through, certain. But one thing induced me to do it, for I never before did worse than take what somebody else paid for."

"What was that one thing?" asked old Bodley with great curiosity.

"I wanted to get out of the city, and go to some place where people don't know me. I hoped to turn honest."

"Bah! Honesty isn't in you."

"I mean to try to put it in me, anyhow," said Paul, earnestly; "so hand over that money—the wages of sin you know—and I'm off for the South."

"You must wait a week," said Bodley, after a moment's reflection. "If during that time we hear nothing of this Bristol we shall conclude he has—has—has left the city, and then reward you for frightening him away. And mind you, if you are really going South I'll do something for you; give you a letter or two that will get you into respectable business."

"I want a good fat berth, dad; good wages, and nothing much to do. I'd like to be a nigger overseer."

"Well, well, call on me in a week, and we'll see what can be done."

"I s'pose it's fair enough," said Paul, as he prepared to leave his less rough but equally depraved companion; "but mind that the *brads* are forthcoming then, or look out for squalls."

"Mercy upon me!" exclaimed old Bodley, taking up his well-brushed and almost napless hat, "this is a dreadful piece of business. In trying to avoid exposure on the score of one crime I am afraid I have courted the disgrace and penalty of another, and that more infamous and heinous."

He went, as fast as his little shrivelled pedals would enable him, to Hunter's residence, and found that gentlemen preparing to bow out from his business apartment the clergyman of one of the richest of our palatial churches.

"Anything that I can do towards the success of the concert, Mr. Velvetgown, will be done cheerfully," said Hunter, as the clergyman waddled towards his carriage.

The clergyman bowed patronisingly, tumbled into his vehicle, and was driven away.

"In communication with the church?" inquired Bodley, not knowing whether to admire the financier's hypocrisy, or be disgusted by it.

"Yes," said Hunter, "the ladies of our church are about to get up an amateur concert for the benefit of the poor, and I have promised to take fifty dollars' worth of tickets."

Bodley smiled grimly at the difference between the object of the last visitor and his own.

"Now, then," he said, throwing himself upon a lounge near Hunter's desk, "I will call your attention to a few sinful matters. Bristol is no more."

"Killed!"

"I didn't say that. I don't know whether he is or not. He'll never trouble you again—that I am assured."

"He will if he's alive."

"Good Heavens! Mr. Hunter, why do you wish to raise questions as to his death or his life?"

"Because, when I *insanely* consented that you should adopt measures to have him put out of

the way I neglected to state that his existence must be held sacred. If he has been deprived of that his blood rests upon your skirts, not upon mine."

"Why, in the name of all that is sacred, did you not distinctly say that you did not care what the means employed to rid you of him might be?"

"I don't recollect of having said that, or even the substance of it," rejoined Hunter, with a calm expression of face.

Bodley held up both hands, and elevated his eyebrows until they almost touched his hair. He was a picture of profound astonishment.

"You certainly manifested the utmost disregard of what might be done!" he cried, as soon as he could master his surprise.

"I meant if he was coaxed to leave the country, or bullied to do so, or something of that sort."

"Well," said Bodley, with deliberate accent, after a pause, "it does not make any difference now what you *meant*. You wanted to be rid of his persecutions, and you instructed me to devise a method by which that riddance could be gained. He is out of the way, I verily believe."

"Where? How?" The perspiration on Hunter's forehead was beaded.

"I think," continued Bodley, with the same deliberation, "I think that he is at the bottom of the East River."

"Good God!" exclaimed Hunter, springing from his seat, and standing aghast.

"I know it is horrible; yet reflect upon what he would have brought us to?"

"But a fellow creature's life—his *life*! (it seemed as if he could not place too much stress upon the word) should have been held sacred."

"I did not take it, nor did I tell anybody to deprive him of it."

Hunter sat down and leaned his forehead upon the desk. Dark thoughts were busy in his brain; sad foreboding knocked for entrance into his heart; terrible visions flitted before his mind's eye. He saw, in spite of his golden surroundings, a future of torture, of remorse, of shame. Oh, how vividly did the conviction glare upon him, that once the foot is firmly planted in the pathway of guilt, the mental strength of a Solomon is required to plan the method whereby to withdraw it.

Bodley was also busy with his reflections, but they were not of the same character as Hunter's. The old book-keeper had very little conscientiousness. He regarded the perpetration of wrong as an affair of no great account, if it could be concealed. He was thinking how to escape the fate of an accomplice should Paul have really committed the crime he had confessed, and it should be discovered.

The week which Paul was to spend before he could get pay for the offence he had done had only elapsed one-third, when he was suddenly apprised of the presence of an enemy, while sauntering through Pike street, by a heavy grasp being affixed to the collar of his coat. He

turned to see who was the author of the grasp, and beheld a very stout, red-faced, genteelly-dressed person at his elbow.

"What d'ye mean, say?" cried Paul, attempting to free himself from the grasp with a jerk.

"Make no fuss; you're my prisoner."

"Where's your star?" asked Paul, looking very incredulous.

"Don't trouble yourself about the star; there's my warrant," said the stout man quietly.

"What's it for?"

"Can't you read?"

"Not lawyer's writin'."

"Come down to the Chief's office; you'll hear all the news there."

Paul went along meekly. He had scrutinized his captor rather closely, and discovered that he was one of the most formidable of the old corps of police officers; men who would have had the perpetrators of the Bond street murder safely locked in cells by this time, had they been permitted to associate under their ancient organization. Arrived at the Chief's office a memorandum was made of his arrest, and he was then introduced to a private room, where, who should be standing, with handcuffs on, but Teddy Rowe. Teddy had been arrested about an hour previously, and had been indiscreet enough to resist the officer.

"These are two of the most desperate of our river thieves," said the Chief, who had followed Paul and his captor into the room. The Chief addressed an official who was engaged by the city to prosecute criminals of more than ordinary daring and importance.

"What is the charge agin me?" inquired Paul, still unabashed.

"Oh, only highway robbery," answered the Chief, in an off-hand manner.

"I never did it!" exclaimed Paul, with indignation.

"I guess you did," said the chief. "Come now, Paul, own up. Save the country the trouble and expense of a trial, and you'll get off easier."

Paul placed the end of one of his thumbs to his nose, and allowed his fingers to gyrate in the air in the most playful style.

"It makes no difference," said the Chief, after looking sternly at him for an instant, "we have an abundance of proof."

"Not agin me," said Paul, with insolent bravado.

"Nor me either," exclaimed Rowe, who was reassured by his partner's confident deportment.

The Chief nodded to the officer who had brought in Rowe. The officer left the room, and in less than one minute returned; but not alone. With him, scarcely able to stand upright, and almost as pale as the paper on which I write—his clothes torn, muddled, and otherwise befouled; his cheeks sunken, and his eyes bloodshot—came William Bristol. Directly over his right eyebrow was a huge black patch,

around the edges of which were signs of a fearful bruise.

Paul, upon seeing the man he had thought was dead, uttered a shout of astonishment. Rowe, being an older offender, did not cry out, but his emotions were too violent to be concealed entirely.

"Don't you think he can send you up?" asked the Chief, as soon as Bristol had been assisted to a chair.

"I don't know him," said Paul.

"Never saw him in my life," said Rowe.

"You are sure these are the men," remarked the Chief, interrogatively.

Bristol gave an affirmative inclination of the head.

"No mistake?"

"None."

Bristol's voice uttering that one word sounded like the cawing of a crow.

"Search them!" said the Chief.

In a very short time everything upon them that was of the least use in value, was in the possession of the officers. The lining of their garments were ripped, and even their caps were submitted to the same vigorous and rigorous inspection. Not a speck of anything belonging to Bristol was found upon them.

Upon being so informed, the Chief said, "I am not at all disappointed. They are too shrewd to keep their plunder in their pockets. But the search at their houses may not turn out to be so ineffectual."

The rascals looked ruefully at each other when they heard these words. Both gave up the struggle for freedom at once. They were taken before a magistrate and committed to await the action of the Grand Jury.

That night they slept in separate cells in the Centre street building, facetiously termed "The Halls of Justice" by some, but more appropriately stigmatised, by the majority of the community, as "The Tombs."

Bristol had been completely sobered by the immersion to which Paul and Rowe had treated him. The blow he had received was a severe one, but not so severe as had been intended. In half an hour Bristol, who had fallen in very shallow water, with his head resting on a mass of frozen offal and broken hoops, had recovered his wits. After screaming until he was again almost unconscious, he was heard by a watchman on board a brig which lay off the pier, and fished out. It was a day before he could tell exactly what had happened to him; when he did tell, he begged those on board to send for the officer who afterwards captured Paul. To him he related everything, not excepting his interview, and the reason for it, with Charles Hunter, one of the giants of Wall street.

Unfortunate Bristol! his bath gave him a rheumatism from which he never recovered, and which rendered him physically an imbecile. The first night of Paul's and Rowe's stay in the Tombs, Hunter—one of the instigators of the crime which placed them there—was dancing, we will not say how gaily, in a house,

or mansion, in the town's most aristocratical and exclusive *quartier*. High-bred dames and damsels trod the mazes of the dance with him. Gentle girls, who had been cradled in luxury, and were taught to hold themselves as the chosen ones of the earth, hung upon "the eloquent honey of his words." Men of wealth, education, and exalted station considered themselves but too happy to applaud his satires, eulogise his taste, and express their admiration of his talents. He was one of the magnets to which the opulent and distinguished crowd was mainly attracted. What a contrast. The instigator pinnacled, among the best of the land, as an idol—the mere instruments caged like wild beasts, with boards to sleep on, and garbage for provender. **FORGERY** was hand-in-hand with **FASHION** then, as it will be, too often, again.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE HUNTER HUNTED.

This speedy, quick appearance argues proof
Of your accustomed diligence to me;
Now, ye familiar spirits that are cull'd
Out of the powerful regions under earth,
Help me this once.—*Shakespeare.*

MR. GEORGE PETERS had flogged Dr. Lieon remorselessly when you and I last parted company with him. His next task was to get a full and particular history of that worthy's conduct towards Emma since she fled from her home. And by his straightforward and manly method of questioning, and inspired by the encouraging smiles of young Leaycroft, she gave a methodical answer to every interrogation. She did not conceal her infatuation for the adventurer, or hide the fact that he had borrowed her three years' savings, two hundred dollars in gold. With a heart lacerated by self-reproach, and a spirit acutely wounded, she also recounted the curious details of the plan the doctor had unfolded with reference to her transfer for a year to the protection of Hunter.

"The villain! What could have been his motive?" exclaimed George, addressing Leaycroft, who was present.

"The motive is perfectly plain, I think," replied Leaycroft, betraying the most intense anger.

"Hunter's, do you mean?"

"His, and this Dr. Lieon's too," cried Leaycroft fiercely.

"Explain!"

The lads withdrew to a corner of the apartment, and held a whispered conference. Emma watched them with fearful anxiety. She saw that they were both unduly excited, and she feared they might be precipitated, by their rash impulses, into danger from which they might not escape uninjured. At length they returned to her, with pale countenances, which wore an unusual expression of firmness.

"Did you ever see this Hunter?" asked George, as he took one of her hands in both of his, and looked straight into her eyes.

"Once."

"Can you describe him?"

"No—not well."

"What need of that?" interposed Leaycroft, with a meaning glance at George.

"It is as well to have a description!" answered George.

"According to what little I have heard concerning him, he is as well known as the City Hall," said Leaycroft.

"You are certain you cannot describe him?" said George, turning again to Emma.

"I can describe nothing; all I can tell about him is that he is a showy gentleman," responded Emma.

"Very well," said George sententiously, "we'll pay our respects to this showy gentleman."

"Oh, George, what now?" sobbed Emma, as she seized him by the arm.

"Nothing."

"Your eye gives a different answer."

"The language of my eye shall never belie that of my tongue. I mean to settle with Hunter as I have already settled with Lieon."

"Consider; he is stronger than you—cooler—is surrounded by friends. You are headstrong, reckless, and a stranger. Oh, George, you will be killed."

Leaycroft smiled. She saw the smile, and immediately transferred her supplications to him. He was deeply concerned by her words, but he was chivalric, and he sacrificed his individual feelings to the promise he had given his friend. When Emma had concluded her remarks he bowed respectfully, and said,

"Under any other circumstances, Miss Emma, the expression of your wishes would be equivalent to a command. As it is, I am entirely at the disposal of my friend—your brother."

"Oh, let us go home; let us leave this hateful city. Do not remain here another hour," she cried in accents of grief.

"Home," said George bitterly; "why should you wish to return there. It is no longer the home you once dwelt in. Your mother is in the deepest affliction, and your father has taken to his bed."

"Through me! through me!" exclaimed the poor girl piteously.

"Yes, you say the truth," uttered George in sorrowful tones; and then, resuming his former energetic manner, he cried, "You know him; his indomitable pride, his fierce hatred of those who have endeavored to injure him. Unless I can assure him that the rascals who have brought this last shame upon him have been humiliated like offending curs, and by me—by his natural representative—I will not seek the shelter of his roof; I will not look upon his face."

"But why seek this Hunter—he did not offer the insult to me, but to the doctor's companion—dupe," exclaimed Emma.

"Let us seek Wall street," said George to

Leaycroft, not heeding her words, "I must have an interview with this man."

Leaycroft signified his readiness to go.

"It is now noon," said George to Emma, as he placed his hand upon the knob of the door; "if matters progress according to my wishes and designs, we will take the half-past four o'clock train for our native city. Have your baggage ready."

With these words he strode out at the door followed by Leaycroft. It was in vain that Emma shed her tears plentifully, and called after them with a voice rendered discordant by emotion; they passed forth from the hotel as if they heard her not—knew her not.

In a short time they had reached Wall street, not, however, before George Peters had possessed himself, at a shop near Maiden lane, of a heavy riding whip. The cowardice with which he had excoriated the cuticle of the advertising doctor he had laid aside. It was a trophy he did not wish to damage by a second use.

They inquired at Hunter's office for its nightly occupant. He was "out," but might be found, the attendant thought, in some of the adjacent dens devoted to monetary transactions. Into these stingy and dusty holes young Peters and Leaycroft went, getting word of Hunter in every place, but failing to get a view of him. At length a seedy gentleman in one of the offices—(seedy personages are always to be found hanging around premises devoted to purposes of money)—suggested that the great financier might be found at the Merchants' Exchange. Peters thanked him for the suggestion, and without any delay went with Leaycroft to that busy mart where millions of dollars change hands diurnally.

Here they threaded and urged their way through the various crowds, pushing their inquiries for the person they sought with eagerness and industry. Hunter seemed to be ubiquitous, for everybody whom they asked about him declared to have seen him "just that minute." After spending half an hour in the building without coming in contact with him, they concluded to depart and continue the pursuit elsewhere. As they passed out, a number of well-dressed, substantial-looking men—say about a dozen—ascended the steps and halted before one of the principal entrances. One, who was the centre of attraction, and to whom all the rest were talking volubly, caught George's eye. Instinct told him that that was the man he was looking for.

"There he is," said George to his friend, as he pointed at the man in question; "keep close as a witness, while I speak to him."

George forthwith approached the little crowd, which seemed very earnest about something not understandable with parties "outside," and in his loudest tones said,

"I wish to speak with Mr. Hunter."

The magnet in the little crowd caught the words above the noise made by the people that surrounded him, and instantly bent his gaze upon the intruder. George was convinced that

he had found the great financier at last. Hunter, seeing that he was a stranger, nodded slightly, pointed to the men who were talking to him, and paid no further attention to the new comer.

"Excuse me," said George Peters, breaking as gently as possible through the charmed circle of "bulls" and "bears," and getting quite close to Hunter, "excuse me, but my business with you admits of no delay."

"What is it? what is it?" inquired Hunter hurriedly, "every moment is worth much to me at present."

"So it is to me," said George Stanley, "therefore, you must give me your attention at once."

"Some bank has failed!" muttered one of the bystanders.

"Stock collapsed," said another.

"The deuce to pay somewhere," said a third.

"Speak at once, then," said Hunter, "and to the point."

"I will, you are a scoundrel."

"Sir!"

There was a general movement by the astonished hearers, which left a wide space between themselves and Hunter, and Peters.

"You are evidently mistaken in the person," began Hunter—"I never saw you to my knowledge, I do not know you."

"But I know you, Mr. Charles Hunter, and I repeat that you are a scoundrel."

"This young man is excited—perhaps by wine," said Hunter, addressing his friends and acquaintances.

"There, Mr. Hunter, you have evidently mistaken the person. I never tasted one drop of intoxicating beverage in my life."

"Pray tell me, then, if you are sober and serious, what I have done to merit your insults?" observed Hunter, preserving his temper wonderfully.

"You have attempted to ruin my sister!" exclaimed George Peters.

"Whew!" ejaculated a smooth-faced old broker as he shuffled off. "Depraved man! I'll leave."

"An affair of the heart," exclaimed another, dodging into the building as fast as possible.

"Your sister! How did I procure her acquaintance?" inquired Hunter, who still believed that the young man had mistaken him for somebody else.

"She is a child—a mere child," cried Peters, "and you bargained for her ruin with a wretch called Doctor Lieon."

Hunter turned pale. He knew, at once, the ground upon which he stood.

"I will explain," commenced Hunter, but George interrupted him with a blow with the whip across the shoulders. One would have supposed that Hunter, a much larger man, could defend himself. He appeared, however, to be paralyzed by fear. He did succeed in getting a revolver from his pocket, but he held it with the butt towards his adversary, and that only for an instant; for George struck it from his hand with the whip. Satisfied, after

he had administered about a dozen severe blows, with the disgrace he had inflicted upon Hunter, George picked up his hat, which had fallen during the excitement, and walked off. He was collared by a policeman at the next corner.

"You must go with me!" said the official.

"Let him off," whispered an old man, who appeared to know everybody in that region, "let him off—he only did what was right."

"Is that so?" queried the policeman, in an undertone.

"Fact," whispered Old Bodley, for it was he, "and I know him."

The policeman relaxed his hold. George perfectly comprehended the movement, and quick as lightning took himself out of the way, followed by Leaycroft.

Hunter's destiny truly appeared to be growing dusky.

That afternoon George and Emma Peters, with Leaycroft, went to Philadelphia. They were not fated to remain there long.

CHAPTER XVII.—TIME WORKS WONDERS.

When occupied we life enjoy,
In idleness we're dead.
Mind is a fire which we destroy,
Unless by fuel it is fed.—*French Proverb.*

Two weeks have fled since any and all of the events I have narrated were made manifest. McMahon (whose value and efficiency as a member of our detective police force cannot be too highly lauded,) has procured a tolerably faithful list of the names of Doctor Lieon's victims. Mary Schuyler has resumed her acquaintance, so abruptly interrupted, with Julia Bowen; Bristol has been installed in a comfortable room, in the City Hospital; old Bodley has been driven almost frantic by an agglomeration of troubles which he did not anticipate; Rowe and Paul have been notified daily that their trial would take place "to-morrow," without observing a realization of that notification; poor Jack Burgess has recovered from his severe attack of *delirium tremens*, and is a sworn tectotaller; and Doxy has withdrawn her services from Miss Burgess, the actress, ostensibly because that female wanted her to go to Buffalo, (where Miss Burgess had an engagement,) but in reality to spend the money she had received from Father Abraham—and to spend it, too, in a style becoming a "lady of color."

Doxy was an excellent housewife, and could also give advice in affairs of the heart and of commerce—could preach a very good sermon illustrative of a Bible text—could read a splendid lecture on domestic economy, and could repeat "wise sayings" and ancient proverbs by the yard. But she lacked one important quality—she could not comprehend the value of money. She knew that to have it was good, but she did not understand that to keep it was of service. When she received any amount of the needful worth mentioning, her

first thought was of spending it. Had she no reason for purchasing even a pin, she would nevertheless hasten to get rid of every farthing.

The four hundred dollars the diamond cross had brought her was about all gone. She had devoted a quarter of it to the purchase of lottery policies. For the one hundred dollars so expended she had gotten two "lists," the one of twelve dollars, and the other seventeen—balance in favor of the policy vender, seventy-one dollars. Yet Doxy, like the majority of her race, believed the game to be "perfectly fair and honorable." Two hundred dollars she had parted for dress, and such dress! It was gay—yea, the gayest of the gay! Sky blue and crimson, cherry color and yellow, purple and cream color, all were jumbled together in one suit. She out-founced the flouciest Dinah in the South; she almost out-ribboned the young lady who attended the ball of a certain "Guard" in this city lately in a dress made of seven hundred yards of ribbon. And as for feathers and artificial flowers, they "stuck out" all over her head.

Fancy this figure meeting Harry Eyelet on Broadway, at fashionable promenade time, and bringing him to a full stop by standing directly in front of him and shouting out,

"Say, you, I want to spoke wid ye."

Poor Eyelet. He would have fallen through the sidewalk willingly; but as there was no convenient opening he was obliged to stand still.

"Why don't yer say suffin?" cried Doxy, after waiting to hear him give her some greeting.

"Go away," gasped the elegant man about town. It was all he could utter at the moment.

"Go 'way ye'self," cried the indignant Doxy, bridling up, and giving her rainbow colored garments an extra flaunt. "I've got a message from ole missus for you."

"Ah!" Harry gasped again. His strength was decreasing. The eyes of everybody were fixed upon him, and all animated nature within view seemed to be laughing at him.

"Missus wants yer to come up to Buff'lo," said Doxy, perfectly unconscious of having acted improperly.

"Yes, yes, I will, I will," said Eyelet, hastily. That, he thought, would send her off contented. But, no!

"Dar's Jack, too; he's out. Dey sent him off de island a day or two ago, and he wants to see you."

"Oh, ah—Jack; yes, yes; I'll attend to him," articulated the bewildered exquisite.

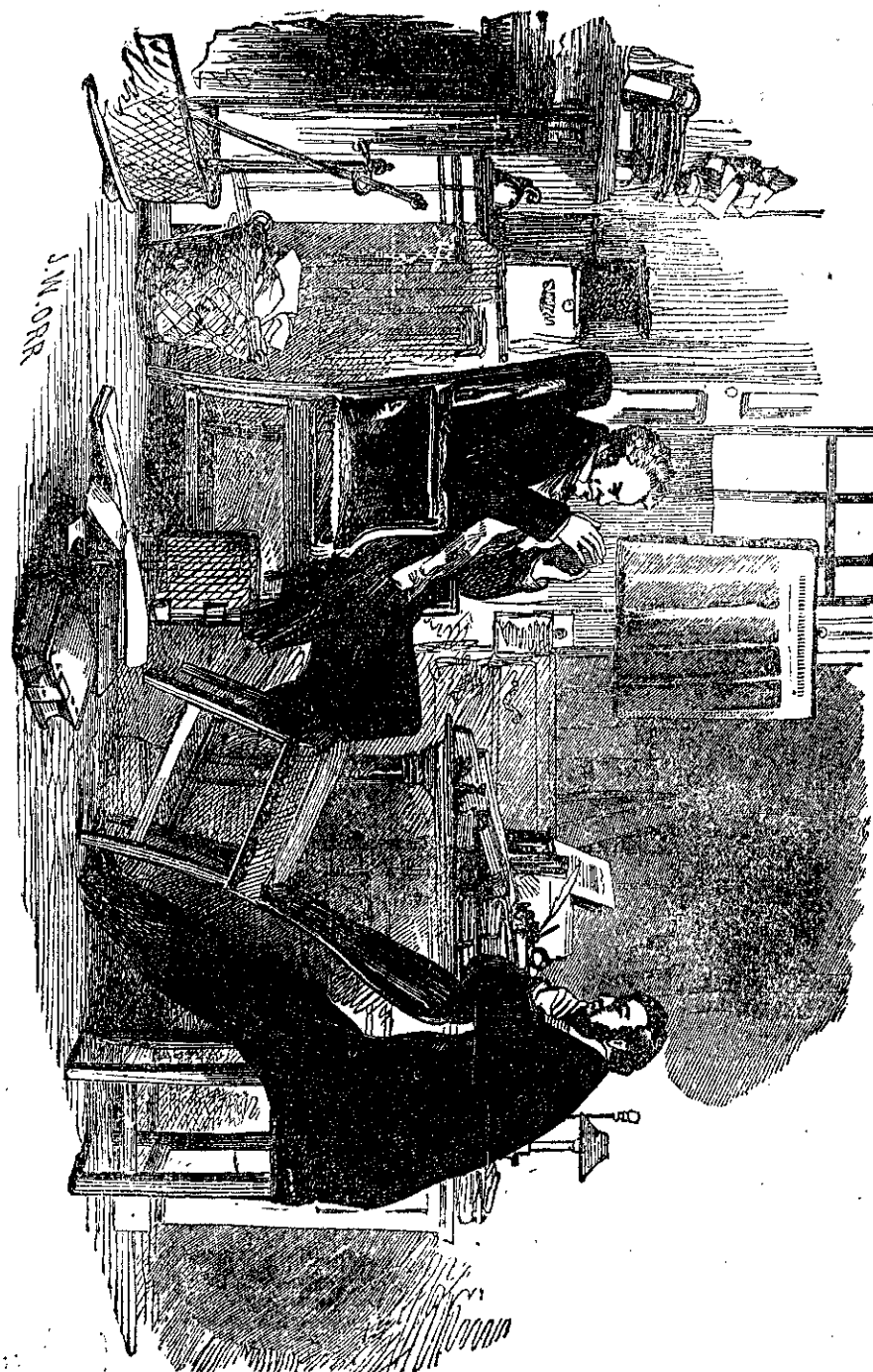
"He's down in Bayard street, No. —, jil above de p'int," continued Doxy.

"Oh, dear, of course he shall see me."

"I don't care wedder yer writes to missus or not; she only wants to know 'bout dat Mr. Hunter; but yer must go and see Jack, he says, for ole 'quaintance sake."

"Tell Jack to go to blazes," yelled Eyelet, tormented beyond the limits of forbearance,

CHARLEY HUNTER'S INTERVIEW WITH THE BOOKKEEPER. (See Page 22.)



and determined to put an end to the conference.

"Humph! Mighty fine!" said Doxy, presenting the appearance of an angered turkey. "puttin' on airs wid me. Look a hea, bossy, don't try to come dat over me. I knows you like a book. You're no great 'count anyhow."

Eyelet walked off at a rapid pace, but Doxy could walk as fast as he, and she kept at his side while he went the distance of a couple of squares, talking all kinds of imaginable nonsense, and attracting as much notice as if she had been Tom Thumb or the veritable Irish Giant. To avoid further notoriety Eyelet wheeled abruptly into Lispenard street, and soon gained Church street. Here he halted and begged his unwelcome companion to leave him.

"What do yer 'spose I want ob you?" inquired the incensed Doxy. "Does yer tink I's in lub wid yer? No, *sir*! But I likes Jack, and I know he's got suffin' important to tell yer, and wants to be sure—sartin sure—you'll go and talk to him."

"Something important? What is it?" asked Harry, eagerly. He was not ashamed to be seen conversing with a colored person in Church street. Whites frequently hold conversations with blacks in that vicinity.

"Suffin' 'bout ole times," replied Doxy. Harry Eyelet evidently disliked this information very much. After a brief pause, during which Doxy kept her eye upon him with a strange expression, he said:

"I don't see what will be the use of my going to see Jack. You know he is either drunk or crazy all the time, and cannot understand what is said to him."

"Well, bossy, he ain't neider drunk or crazy now. He's taken de plodge."

"The pledge!"

"Yes, *sir-ee*!"

"He has done that fifty times before, to my knowledge."

"Yes, but dis time he keeps it."

"Are you sure?"

"As sure as dars a nose on dis chile's face."

There *was* a nose on Doxy's countenance; in fact, it embraced material enough for half a dozen noses.

"Then I must call upon him, sure enough," said Eyelet, with a perturbed air.

"Dat's all right. You've got de direction?" Eyelet made sure of it, by asking her again where Jack could be found, and writing it down upon his ivory tablets.

"Good bye," he said, after finishing his writing, "and remember, the next time you want to see me, to leave a message at the bar of the Lafoy House."

"Wish I'd know dat afore. I had a mons'ous deal 'o trubble to ketch you dis time."

So saying, Doxy strode away down Church street. As she reached Chambers she hesitated a moment, and then turned toward the North River, muttering:

"I'll find that Hunter to-night, I knows whar he'll be."

Eyelet did not postpone his visit to Jack. He went at once to the place where he was. A description of that place is unnecessary. It would be a description of every old rookery in the city.

Eyelet found Jack in a wretched bed-room. The poor man was scarcely able to walk, but his mind had recovered something of its original tone, and he seemed calm, thoughtful, and once more intelligent. I must not forget to say that although the furniture of the wretched room indicated extreme poverty, everything was scrupulously clean.

"Well, Jack," said Eyelet, seating himself with some trepidation upon a rickety chair, "I am glad to see you yourself once again—*a la* Richard III., eh?"

"Myself!" Jack, as he uttered this word, broke into a low bitter laugh that made Eyelet's flesh crawl.

"Yes," resumed the latter, "you were somebody else the last time I saw you."

"That is past," said Burgess sternly; "let us talk no farther about it for the present."

"What *shall* we talk of, then?" inquired Eyelet, with seriousness.

"Of what occurred *ten years ago*!" answered Burgess in a severe tone.

"You've a taste for antiquarian researches," remarked Eyelet, trying a faint laugh.

"I'm in no mood for jesting, Harry Eyelet. Ten years since you became my friend. I was pursuing a respectable and reputable business. I was young, gay, fond of pleasure, and inclined to be social to excess. You were introduced to my young wife,"—here Burgess paused, and pressed his hands to his chest as if acute pain rested there—"and was allowed to enjoy my hospitalities."

"All this is old, Jack, and needs no repetition."

"How did you repay me for my friendship?"

"I—I—don't exactly understand you."

"You do not like to answer. I will answer for you. You planted thoughts in my wife's mind that ripened into wickedness. You pampered her vanity; you fed her desire for notoriety by giving her lessons in theatricals and procuring her opportunities to act in private theatres. You slowly but surely infected me with the infatuation of gaming. You induced me to get intoxicated upon wine."

"You mistake! you mistake!"

"No, 'tis you that mistake!"

"All is needless, Jack. What's passed cannot be recalled."

"It may be atoned."

"How?"

"Let me finish my pleasant reminiscences, and then you shall learn how. The results of my association with you were unhappy domestic relations, disgraceful habits, a ruined business—*pauperism*!"

"Hard words! hard words!"

"But true; true as gospel."

Burgess paused an instant—he was much fatigued—and then resumed:

"I have now resolved to sever all connection with my wife. I have determined to reform."

Eyelet looked up with a glance of irony.

"Ayl reform!" continued Burgess, noticing the expression of his interlocutor's eye, "and re-establish myself in my own and the world's good opinion."

"I'll aid you to the best of my abilities," cried Eyelet, with an affectation of earnestness that quite astonished himself.

"That's coming to the point," said Burgess, "that is what I wished you to do, and so I sought this interview."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, you ruined me. You must now raise me."

"How?"

"My system is terribly shattered. I want a year's rest. I have no money. You will pay my board in a first-class hotel, for I am determined to be a gentleman in every respect, and at the end of the year furnish me with capital upon which I may commence a small business."

"Why, confound it, man!" cried Eyelet, seizing his hat, "I am as penniless almost as you are."

"Eyelet, I have told you my will. Remember, I have you in my power."

CHAPTER XVIII.—MURDER AND SUICIDE.

Death, having preyed upon the outward parts, leaves them insensible; and his siege is won against the ruin, the which he pricks and wounds with many legions of strange fantasies.

Shakespeare.

JULIA BOWEN, from the moment of her exposure, sunk rapidly, deeper and deeper into the abyss of degradation. She became the companion of the ruffian with whose castigations she had menaced Corky Jim, took to drink, and rendered herself vile in practice and to the sight. It was not that she loved vice in its broad and unequivocal garb—it was not that her natural depravity made her delight in the most vulgar associations, and in the most squalid places of abandonment—that her downfall was accelerated. But she had fallen from the appearance of respectability, and with that appearance vanished every hope of happiness.

When Bristol's mishap was related to her—when she was told that he was lying at the point of death, and that even if he lived to be discharged from the hospital, he would be a burthen to himself and to society—ay, even to society's dogs—she was terribly exultant. Words cannot adequately picture the fierceness of her joy.

"Let him rot!" she exclaimed; "he is not fit to live."

Against Bristol's partner, Corky Jim, she conceived and nourished a hatred as deadly as Prussic acid. She connected him with her mischance at the fashionable private hotel, and no argument would disabuse her mind of this strong

impression. We talk of men's pursuing thirst for vengeance!—it is intense enough, Heaven knows, but it is nothing to the concentrated ferocity that sometimes finds a place in the heart of a woman without character. She determined to put him "out of the way"—of late years that has been the phrase used by females to express murder—and then—but I will not anticipate. Providence had snatched Bristol from her vengeance, and she wanted another victim upon whom to sate it.

The reader may have guessed from the contents of the first part of our story, that Mary Schuyler disliked Julia Bowen strongly. The guess, if indulged in, was correct. The dislike was the result of the interference of Julia in Mary's quiet plans for the ensnaring of Charles Hunter. Mary had removed herself to another house—a quiet little place in Franklin street, near West Broadway, where she was wont to receive Julia whenever that individual chose to give her a call. Julia's last visit was made under peculiar circumstances. She was in want of food. The money she should have expended for provisions she had purchased stimulus with. She had swallowed enough to make her wild, and increase her natural recklessness two-fold; but only when she talked would a casual observer have noticed anything unusual. Mary remarked her condition the moment she entered the apartment and took a seat.

"What now?" asked Mary quietly.

"Everything! I am distracted."

"Anything at home?"—Mary placed a very strong accent upon that word—"to disturb you?"

"There is nothing at home—no man, no food."

"Will you eat?"

"No. I was hungry when I started to come here, but my appetite is gone."

"You want rest."

"Rest. I shall never rest until I am in my coffin."

"Don't talk such nonsense."

"Hark ye, Mary; I have a rare scheme in my brain, and will execute it if I can."

"What is it?"

"It may not be safe to tell it."

"Not safe! Surely you forget you are conversing with me!"

"No, I don't," said the excited woman, the maddening beverages she had imbibed asserting their influence more and more; "no—I know you are trustworthy, but this plan is curious—so out of the ordinary way—so devilish—that I imagine it would startle you into a notion that it was your duty to betray it."

"Have no fear on that score. I can keep a secret for a dear friend, no matter what may be its character."

"I doubt; I doubt," muttered Julia, showing plainly that her intention to conceal her "plan" was very easy to be overcome.

"Doubt; doubt me! your sister!"

"I was always urged never to make a confident of a woman!"

"No great compliment to yourself," ventured Mary.

"That is indeed true. Well, I will trust you," she said, after a brief period of hesitation.

Mary drew near to listen attentively.

"You know," began the excited woman, "I hate that fellow who was constantly with Bristol."

Mary nodded an affirmative.

"I cannot," continued Julia, "bear to die while he lives."

Mary began to grow very interested.

"And," went on Julia, "I have resolved to kill him."

Not a nerve of Mary's quivered. Killing such a man, she thought, was a public benefaction.

"Don't it frighten you to hear me say so?" inquired Julia, looking at her companion with an eye like that of a maniac.

"Not in the least."

"That's good—that's good. Now, how do you think I'm going to do it?"

"I cannot even suppose."

"You know he made Bristol expose me?"

"Of course I do. Everybody knows that."

"Then he deserves punishment, don't he?"

"Undoubtedly."

"At my hands?"

"At yours, unquestionably."

"Now, see: he likes drink."

"I believe he does."

"I'll give him some."

"Poison?" inquired Mary in a whisper.

"That is it: poison."

"He'll detect it."

Julia gave a look of fire as she answered, "Not as I will prepare it."

"Consider the danger. Suppose you be detected?"

"That will not make the slightest difference to me," said Julia, with a bold, coarse laugh.

"Not the certainty of being hanged?"

"They don't hang women," remarked Julia with a leer.

"But a prison."

"One lives quietly, and without care, in a prison."

"You would get a life sentence."

"I am willing to serve the balance of my life in prison."

"When will you execute this deed of justice?" asked Mary, urging her on in her horrible project as well as she knew how.

"This very day."

And with this understanding these females parted.

Julia Bowen proceeded straightway to the little house I have before described, near St. John's Park, and there she was readily admitted to see Corky Jim, who was alone.

"It's a sad business, that of Bill's," said Jim, after they had conversed a while upon other and different topics.

"Sad! yes, but it was all through his cruel treatment of me."

"I begin to think it was," remarked Jim, whose fear of the Black Prince's knuckles was ever paramount.

"I told him he'd repent it. But, be candid Jim, didn't you tell him to play me that trick?"

"I didn't know of it till after he'd done it," said Jim with great earnestness.

"Sure?"

"Sure; on the honor of a man."

"Enough. We'll never speak of the subject again."

Jim expressed his gratification at hearing this.

"Well, Jim," said Julia, a moment afterwards, "I'm thirsty. Haven't you got something good here?"

"Ah! you speak out, and act like a woman now-a-days. What a pity you wasn't always so. What'll you have?"

"Let me see. Brandy? No. Porter? Yes, I'll have some porter."

"Got a dozen in that closet," said Jim, and he forthwith procured a couple of bottles of said porter, and two tin drinking cups. These were soon filled. Unperceived by him (for she had called his attention to something in a corner of the room), Julia sprinkled arsenic in his porter. There was enough to kill twenty strong men.

"Now," said Jim, with vulgar vivacity, as he took up his cup, "here's to the old grudge."

It was his favorite toast, yet he scarcely knew the meaning of it. In Julia's ear it sounded with terrible import.

"Here's hoping we may never quarrel again," said Julia, draining her cup of its contents.

Jim delightedly emptied the death-laden vessel in his hand.

"Oh! thunder!" he exclaimed, as he dropped the cup, "there's something in the porter. How is yours?"

"Capital," said Julia, without wincing.

"What the deuce could have got into it?" he cried, making a wry face, and expectorating freely.

"The brewer may have put something into it, or the bottler. It is nothing worth giving yourself trouble about, I guess."

Jim tried to think so; but as he speedily felt worse, he soon became thoroughly alarmed. Julia watched his agonies with the most perfect satisfaction, while at the same time she pretended to feel sorely troubled by his misfortune and his sufferings.

In the course of half an hour, Jim was prostrate upon the floor, groaning in agony, and imploring Julia to go after a doctor?

"Ah!" she cried, standing over him with an exultant air, "do you see what a wreck I am? You said a while ago, that I was a changed woman. I have you to thank for the change—and, oh! what an awful change it is."

"You are mistaken; I tell you I had nothing to do with it. For God's sake go for a doctor."

"A doctor could not save you."

"Could not save me. What do you mean?"

"I mean that you are dying."

"How! Oh! spare me. Tell me why I suffer so!"

"You are poisoned."

Jim uttered a shriek of despair.

"I thought so all along."

"You thought right. I have served you as people serve rats. You are poisoned in your hole."

"Go for a doctor and I'll forgive you."

"No."

"Will never say a word about the poisoning?"

"No."

"Oh, what, what shall I do?" groaned the helpless ruffian.

"Say your prayers."

"I can't—I can't. Oh! this is frightful. Save me, do save me."

Julia smiled grimly. He was rapidly approaching dissolution. In ten minutes afterwards, amid a torrent of oaths, the unfortunate rascal expired. Julia deliberately spurned the body with her foot, and then, pulling forth a pill from a tiny box, she muttered what was intended to be a prayer. This over, she swallowed the pill, and seated herself calmly in a chair. She had taken strychnine. We need not describe her dying throes. It is enough to say, that two days subsequently, the bodies of Jim and Julia were discovered by the neighbors. A hasty investigation as to the cause of their decease was made by a coroner, and the jury came to the conclusion that they had both committed suicide. And under the caption of "EXTRAORDINARY DOUBLE SUICIDE," the newspapers chronicled the event, adding to the record any quantity of speculations, all of which were as far removed from the truth as China is from the United States.

CHAPTER XIX.—PORTENTS OF A CLIMAX.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies.—*Francis.*

CHARLES HUNTER was a grand illustration of the miraculous power of money. He was notorious for the practice of many vices. To be sure these vices were fashionable. To keep fast horses and drive, or cause them to be driven, to death, for the sake of winning wagers, is accounted no dishonor. To have a mistress in nearly every street, and among all classes of the community, is regarded pretty much as the Mormons regard one's having a plurality of wives. It is all right if you can take care of them. To purchase dogs at one hundred dollars a head, and board them at an expense that would pay for the food and shelter of a dozen poor families, entitles him who does it to many an extravagant encomium. Hunter not only had all these things to answer for, but he had been, as the reader knows, publicly disgraced—flogged by a boy, and for a shameful and most degrading

cause. But money (I don't pretend to despise it) covers more sins than charity. It makes people deaf, dumb, and blind to the faults of its possessor. Therefore, we find Hunter flourishing as steadily and as luminously as ever, notwithstanding the publicity that had been given to his affairs in what is termed "the best society." It is so much the custom to abuse the Fifth avenue and its adjacencies in tales and dramas that I will refrain from adopting the general habit. Let the Fifth avenue "slide," as a famous statesman once said of the Union. In order to bring my story near to its end, I must have a scene from it, however.

There is a gorgeous dwelling. Everything about it is of the most costly description. It embraces a chapel, a small theatre, and a ball-room. The latter is quite brilliant with gas-light, but that is rivalled in brilliancy by the gems that flash in its rays, and the eyes that there sparkle under the influences of music, wines, and the dance. The owner of this modern palace is a parvenu—uneducated and ill-mannered; but he is as "rich as Cræsus." The manner in which he made this fortune was creditable neither to his head nor his heart; but that does not prevent the sycophants and toadies in "the best society" from helping him to get rid of it.

This *soirée* is a sample of all that he gives. It exhibits a strange mixture of somebodies and nobodies. There are editors, actors, lawyers, tradesmen, men-about-town, loafers, swindlers, vulgarians, and quite a number of really respectable and refined people, all circulating together. Charles Hunter is one of the congregation. Let us pay particular attention to him.

On one side of the gaudy and rubbishy saloon, quite a wall-flower, stood no less a person than Father Abraham. But how different in appearance from the little dirty keeper of the shabby old shop in Orange street. He was dressed with considerable good taste, and at no small cost. His beard was black—thanks to Dr. Gouraud—and a neat-fitting wig, also black, surmounted his cranium. He appeared to have no eyes but for Hunter and two dashing women that followed him. These females were Mrs. Hemphreid and her daughter Augusta. In the course of the night, Hunter succeeded in accomplishing a design that had been uppermost in his mind from the commencement of the festival. He separated the mother and daughter, and accompanied the latter to a distant angle of the apartment. A friendly—or shall I say unfriendly—pillar hid them from the gaze of the throng, but it also sheltered, *from the view of the financier*, though not from that of Augusta, the little Israelite.

"Now, Augusta," said Hunter, "now, while your mother's never-resting vision is not fixed upon us, tell me what you have heard."

"Much that concerns you, and much that needs an explanation; yet I scarce have time to give even a passing allusion to it."

"Meet me to-morrow, then."

"That I durst not."

"Phsaw; time was that you would dare anything to please me."

"That time has not yet passed; but I am controlled in such a style, that it is useless for me to attempt to do as I please. But if what I have heard be true, this must be our last interview."

"Indeed!"

"Therefore," pursued the young woman, "if you value my friendship, my acquaintance, my love, you will answer, and answer truly what I shall ask."

"Father Abraham nearly flattened himself against the pillar, and gave her a glance of the most intense meaning.

"I will," said Hunter, "I will."

"Is it true that you are in reality poor?—that your expected wealth exists only in the shape of fraudulent paper?"

"Augusta, I do love you sincerely, and I can refuse you nothing. Do not press these questions, I beg of you."

"I must, there is no alternative."

The Jew chuckled. He understood her meaning.

"Well, Augusta, I am rich—I swear it."

"But may not your riches be taken from you with but a moment's warning?"

"I am, of course, liable to lose some, but not all—no, no, not all."

"Speak to the point—for mother is looking carefully to find us—are you engaged in any transactions that might be termed criminal?"

Hunter gazed at her a moment like a man who had received a mortal stab, his face was dreadfully contorted, and he wiped his brow nervously with his cambrie handkerchief, as he replied in a hollow tone:

"God help me—I am."

The Jew nodded to Augusta, as much as to say "that will do," and she forthwith darted across the room to where her mother stood, leaving Hunter transfixed with astonishment.

"Good evening, Mr. Hunter, said Father Abraham, going round the pillar and betraying no uncouth accent, "good evening. This is a beautiful sight."

"Yes," replied Hunter with a vacant stare.

"Perhaps you don't recollect me!" said the Jew with a questioning accent.

"Haven't the pleasure—suppose I have been introduced, though."

"Ay! a good while ago, we were made acquainted by Mrs. Hemphreid."

"All right, how are you?" Hunter was quite incoherent.

"Quite well. But you look ill."

"Hem! yes. Oh, I know why. I've got a spell."

"A spell?"

"Yes—here."

Hunter tapped his forehead with his right fore-finger.

"Oh! your head aches," said the Jew; "well, let us take a stroll outside; the air will do you good. I believe a headache is one of your family's failings."

"A family failing!" exclaimed Hunter, who began to prick up his ears; "*something* troubles our heads—something strange, which makes us do odd things, and robs us of our memories."

"Have you memory sound enough to remember old Bodley?"

"Remember him—certainly," replied Hunter with surprise.

"He has a step-son named Harvey Paul," resumed Father Abraham.

"Has he?"

"Don't you know?"

"I have heard so."

"Paul is now in the Tombs."

"What is that to me?"

"He has made certain disclosures to me, and the old man, Bodley, who is under obligations to me, has confirmed their truth."

Hunter was much agitated, but he stammered forth with a tolerable show of assurance,

"This rignarole is of no interest to me."

"Yes, it is. Added to Paul's story is another, of which Paul knows nothing. It is about certain notes, the ostensible signers of which never wrote their names upon them."

Hunter looked faint.

"Ah! look ye, your malady grows worse. Hadn't we better step outside?"

"No, sir," cried Hunter with a strong effort.

"Very well. It is unfortunate for you. Stay here."

With these words Father Abraham moved away.

"My carriage," groaned Hunter to Eyelet, who had just come up beside him, "I am very ill. Oblige me by sending out a message for my carriage."

"Egad, you look as if you had been sick a year. I'll find a servant to seek for your vehicle."

"If you please. In the mean time I'll make my adieux to a few particular friends."

It was almost immediately noised about that Hunter was going. The news created quite an excitement. Men and women wondered why the great Hunter, who was always the last to leave a scene of that kind, was about to depart. The women were greatly depressed by the intelligence, and the men were also affected to sadness. The host, a large, light complexioned man who looked exactly like a thriving butcher in his Sunday clothing, ran up to the prince of financiers and exclaimed:

"Going? It ain't possible! What's the reason. Has anything gone wrong? Don't you like the company? Is the wine bad?"

"I am quite unwell," gasped Hunter; "that is the only reason I have hastened my departure."

"Your carriage is at the door, my dear fellow," said Eyelet, who had just returned from the ante-room.

"Thanks! thanks! Make my compliments to Mrs. Hemphreid and daughter, will you?"

"Certainly. There they are—a short distance away."

Eyelet went to them and expressed Hunter's excuses.

"I must see him!" exclaimed Mrs. Hemphead.

"Why did he not come to me?"

"He's so very ill," remarked Eyelet, apologetically.

"I can't help that, see him I must. His welfare is imperilled."

"Eyelet thought she alluded to his sudden disposition."

"He cannot have left the house yet," he remarked.

"I will speak with him," said Mrs. Hemphead, directing her steps toward the place of egress.

"You had better not," said Father Abraham, insinuatingly; "it would look exceedingly curious, and provoke remark. There would be a scene perhaps, and scenes are quite *de trop* on an occasion like this."

"You remonstrate in vain, sir," cried Mrs. Hemphead.—"Unless I see him now he may be ruined. You know what I mean."

"Perfectly," responded the Jew; "and therefore I advise you, as you value your own safety, to stay where you are, and let Hunter's affairs take their own course."

"I will not desert him!" exclaimed Mrs. Hemphead, making another movement toward the door.

"You shall," whispered the Jew, as he placed himself close at her side.

"Shall?"

"By this token, you shall."

He drew from his fob, by a handsome guard, not a watch, but the diamond cross. The woman quailed. The Jew resumed.

"Go to your daughter, and keep quiet. A false step on your part, or an indiscreet remark, will do you great harm. Remember, ten words spoken by me would send you where Hunter is going."

Mrs. Hemphead, her countenance expressive of both rage and despair, rejoined her daughter, to whom Eyelet had been paying his delicate attentions.

The Jew slipped out of the room without attracting notice, and was soon at the hall-door.

Hunter's carriage stood in front of it, and around the vehicle stood about twenty persons. They looked quite dismal, and were silent, until Father Abraham made his appearance. One, a portly man, with an air of great firmness, when he saw the Jew, opened the carriage door, and said:

"We have waited for you."

"Not long," observed Abraham as he entered the carriage.

The stout man followed him. Hunter was inside, lying upon the cushions in a state of prostration amounting almost to insensibility.

The coachman was ordered to drive down to Centre street, by a person with a harsh voice and forbidding appearance. As the carriage rolled away, it was observed by those who stood near, that on the box beside the driver was a policeman.

Pretty soon a queer rumor found its way into

the ball-room. People said that Charles Hunter had been arrested on charges of FORGERY.

CHAPTER XX.—THE BANISHED ADVENTURER.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.—*Shakespeare.*

"WHAT of Legouve?" I think I hear the reader ask. He found his way to London, and there, with scarcely any aid from anybody, obtained employment as a painter of cheap landscapes. His crude pictures, illustrative of American scenery, found a quick sale in the small shops, and brought him a ready and by no means insignificant income. His quiet and modest demeanor, and his unflagging industry, soon obtained him several friends who had it in their power to advance his interests and did not neglect them.

Mary Schuyler paid over the amount of his defalcations, and he was once more on easy terms with his former employers. McMahon, whom he had at first denounced in his heart as his cruellest enemy, proved to be his best benefactor. Legouve was not the first who had been saved from ruin by harsh and prompt measures. What appears to be mercy, is often destruction to those for whose benefit it is exercised.

The policeman did more than preserve the young plunderer of the mails from loss of hope, character, position and liberty—he preserved him from the pangs of unsatisfied and unrequited love. He not only sent him a full, true and particular account of Mary Schuyler's heartlessness, but he forwarded to him copies of her letters to Dr. Lion, and of that gentleman's epistles to her, and in conjunction with these, he despatched a duplicate of the list of Lion's victims. Legouve was extremely sensitive, and all sensitive persons are fastidious. These documents, together with McMahon's own disclosures, were sufficient to dispel the amorous lunacy under which he had been laboring, and make him heart-whole. He banished Mary Schuyler from his mind, or rather, he only thought of her with contempt and disgust. It was the destruction of the first bright vision of his manhood. This left him a trifle cautious, distrustful and suspicious, and a little cynical withal; but it only solidified his character instead of spoiling it.

And now to take up the brief history of the list of Dr. Lion's dupes. It exhibited the startling fact that women of the highest standing in society—of wealth, beauty and education—are as silly in affairs of love as the ignorant and inexperienced poor girl of fifteen. Among the dupes of this curly-headed adventurer, were females moving in an excellent social sphere. Some of them were in the possession of every faculty for increasing their happiness in every possible legitimate style. From these females it was pretty conclusively proven that

"DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES." (See Page 23.)



the doctor had received, in the shape of loans, over fifteen thousand dollars in less than a year.

With Mary Schuyler's list in his pocket, McMahon sought the adventurer in the great Broadway hotel.

Dr. Lieon was in his room. The bandages young Peters had rendered it necessary for him to wear were still visible. He was not well of his hurts by any means; and yet his impudence and presumption were predominating features of his conduct and manners.

McMahon introduced himself, bluntly, as a member of the New York police force. Lieon was used to visits from personages of this stamp, and did not betray any fear. On the contrary he evinced some anger and much petulance, as he exclaimed, interrogatively,

"What brings you here?"

"Business," exclaimed McMahon.

"What style of business?"

"That you will understand in a few moments. In the meantime you will oblige me by keeping perfectly cool. A show of temper is particularly unpleasant to me."

"What the deuce do you mean by assuming this tone towards me," cried Lieon, with a scowl of indignation. "Have you a warrant for my arrest?"

"No."

"I thought that nothing else would have made you so insulting."

McMahon smiled. Dr. Lieon continued,

"I see through the object of your visit now. You, too, have obtained what you think is very important knowledge, and want me to fee you, so that you may keep quiet."

"You are mistaken once more," said McMahon.

"Indeed?"

"Fact, upon my word. No, doctor, I do not wish to black-mail you; I never do business in that way. I merely came to do you a favor."

"My dear fellow; ten thousand apologies for my rudeness, and a million of thanks."

"Keep them, keep them," interrupted McMahon; "what I term a favor may be estimated in another light by you."

The doctor was glum again. He said:

"You are a parable maker. Pray tell me what you are after?"

"I came here to urge you to leave New York by the first steamer for Europe."

"Well, that's cool!"

"Perhaps it is, perhaps it is not. I could arrest you; but I do not choose to do that unless you compel me. I think I can benefit the community to a greater extent by constraining you to fly the country."

"Why should I fly the country, my brilliant-minded knight of the star?"

"Because you are a libertine, a swindler, and a thief," answered McMahon, without the quiver of a nerve.

"Very well, sir, very well; this is brave talk to a crippled man. But if I am what you say, why do you hesitate about arresting me?"

"I told you why. I do not think that the

State should be put to the expense of feeding, clothing and lodging such a rascal."

"Nonsense—that is not your motive for your so-called leniency."

"It is not my only motive."

"Please name the other or others," ventured the doctor, with a satirical cast of countenance.

"I do not wish to involve women by name in your disgrace."

"That's not original—I've heard that before," remarked Lieon, with an insolent and defiant air.

"Perhaps that is original," said McMahon, handing him a copy of the list I have alluded to.

The doctor looked at the document superciliously at first, but he soon began to regard it with wonder and surprise. He finally determined to try what the Mississippians more expressively than elegantly denominate "the bluff game," upon the policeman. Tossing the list carelessly upon the table, he said, with as much nonchalance as he could summon to his assistance,

"I suppose, now, you think that is a very terrible piece of paper in my view."

"No; I do not think anything rascally and infamous can terrify you."

"You fancy that I ought to implore you to give me your word that you will never expose its contents."

McMahon was silent.

"Let me assure you," continued the doctor, after having waited in vain for the detective to speak, "that somebody has dreadfully imposed upon you. There is no more connection between myself and the parties named in that catalogue than there is between the great Mogul of Tartary and the King of the Sandwich Islands."

"Doctor Lieon," said McMahon, with a smile which was sublime, "you are a clever fellow, no doubt, among silly and depraved women. Pray do not imagine that the weapons you employ against their weaknesses will have the smallest effect upon me."

"I tell you that the paper I have just thrown upon the table is a delusion—a weak invention of the enemy—or, in the words of the modern classics, it is a *sell*."

"Drop folly, and be serious, Doctor Lieon. You are the *solid* individual, not I."

"As you please. Be as obstinate as you like; it does not matter to me."

"Do you know Mary Schuyler?" inquired McMahon abruptly.

"I do," answered the startled adventurer, with a thrill of fear.

"That list is the result of her work," said the detective. Do you call it a *sell* now?"

"She a traitress!" cried the doctor excitedly, "I'll not believe it."

"I don't wish you to believe it. I make it a point to do justice even to bad people, and I will therefore do her the credit to say that she did not voluntarily betray your business secrets."

"Not voluntarily! How then?"

"She was compelled to betray them."

"I do not understand you."
"I had her in a tight place. Do you understand now?"

"No—not clearly. She is not a subject for police compulsion."

"Do not be sure of that."

"I never knew that she was engaged in anything."

"Worse than your affairs," interrupted McMahon; and, after a pause, he continued. "Well, Mrs. Schuyler is mixed up in a robbery. She had either to expose you, or stand a chance of going to Sing Sing."

"But the clue to her association with me—"

"Was obtained after a fashion that I shall not describe," said McMahon sternly.

"You say you do not want money from me?" remarked Leon, after pondering over these events an instant.

"Most decidedly I say so."

"Why do you wish me to leave New York?"

"To save foolish females from being debauched and plundered. My plan, when I get hold of a culprit, is to banish him or her, and so afford opportunities for reformation."

"You should have been made a parson," said Leon, with a sneer.

"I wish I were good enough to be a parson," responded McMahon; but that has nothing to do with this business. You must quit New York without delay. If not—"

"You will arrest me," hastily interposed the adventurer.

"That depends upon circumstances. One course I will certainly adopt."

"Will you please inform me what that will be?"

"I will inform every brother, husband, father, and lover of the females whose names are in Miss Schuyler's list, of the vile conduct you have exercised towards them; and if your life is spared, will afterwards consider as to the propriety of taking you before a magistrate."

"You are a singular man. Come, I will propose what you say you had no idea of exacting. Name the sum of money that will purchase that list and your silence."

"One million of dollars."

"You jest, of course."

"No, I am in earnest. Give me a million, and you need have no fear of anything I can say or do."

Leon saw that bribery was not to be accomplished, and so he gave up the battle. McMahon, satisfied that he had accomplished his object, left the hotel. On the following Wednesday, the dashing and fascinating swindler of women sailed for the classic regions of the Rhine. Here some of his dupes unwisely exposed his rascalities—and themselves. The rascal is still in the Old World, but declares that, if he escapes hanging, he will return to this continent to resume his amorous and avaricious avocations.

On the day that he sailed Teddy Rowe and Harvey Paul were sent to the State Prison, each for five years. They did not depart for their

new residence, however, until they had exposed to one of the court officials, old Bodley and Hunter as to their complicity in the outrage perpetrated upon Bristol. That complicity was afterwards cited by learned lawyers and physicians, as an evidence of Hunter's insanity!

CHAPTER XXI.—A PLOT IN A CELL.

I do proclaim
One honest man—mistake me not—but one;
No more, I pray—and he is a steward.

Timon of Athens.

OLD BODLEY, to whose indiscreet communications to Corky Jim in a gambling-house the first clue to Hunter's curious delinquencies was to be traced, had promised Harvey Paul that he should be saved from Sing Sing. This promise he had renewed from day to day with variations. First he said he would intercede with the judge, upon whom he could bring to bear powerful influences. Then he declared he would bribe the keepers at the Tombs to let him escape. Finally he deluded the unfortunate ruffian into a firm conviction that Hunter would operate upon the Governor—a parson, if all we hear be true, who was easily induced to let a criminal loose upon society, by the exercise of the pardoning power.

These representations were made by Bodley in order to keep the ruffian's tongue quiet. Once in the State Prison, Paul, Bodley knew, would have little chance to impeach the conduct of others. But, alas! for human calculations, that diamond cross was presented to Miss Burgess, was stolen by her husband, filched from him by Doxy, and was so conveyed into the keeping of the Jew, Father Abraham.

Now, Mrs. Hemphhead's husband, a man of dissolute habits and some wealth, had died in a mysterious and unexpected manner. He was a vain man, and was very fond of making a show. This diamond cross had been made for his wearing, and to his order. He was found dead in his room, his body cut and gashed in several places, and his blood splashed and scattered over the bed and furniture. He had been out on a tour of dissipation the night he was killed, and must have met his death immediately after entering the house. It was hard to tell whether he had been robbed or not, as few beside himself knew how much money he was in the habit of carrying on his person. At all events the murderer or murderers had overlooked the cross, which he always wore pinned upon the side collar of his vest, or else had left it behind to blind the public as to their real motive, which might not, after all, have been plunder. Nothing was discovered by the authorities that in any manner sufficiently implicated anybody in the murder. The mutilated corpse was buried, and the estate was quietly passed over to the widow. Father Abraham had been slightly acquainted with the murdered man, and was around the house a great deal during the inquest and the preparations for the funeral. He had his own suspicions concerning the perpetrators

THE FORGER'S FATE.

of the bloody deed, and he played upon the widow's feelings in such a way that they were soon confirmed. She was a woman of intrigue. Father Abraham was positive that she had employed one of her paramours to accomplish the slaughter. He had always been anxious to gain possession of the cross, in order to test the effect it would have upon the woman; but after striving for some time in vain to get it, had given up the pursuit in despair. Chance favored him. He obtained the costly trinket, as the reader already knows.

The man was a biped ferret. Nothing could turn him from his scent. He was unscrupulous, indefatigable, iron-nerved, and capable of performing a wondrous amount of mental and bodily labor without taking any rest. From Doxy he ascertained that Hunter had given the cross to Miss Burgess. Father Abraham knew old Bodley, and was aware that that fine old gentleman was in the financier's confidence. Through Bodley he discovered that Hunter had procured the important article from Mrs. Hemphhead. In making these inquiries he naturally enough stumbled over bits and scraps of information not connected with it. These fragmentary items formed, in the cunning Israelite's mind, a nucleus for intelligence that really meant something. He soon despoiled Bodley of the secret of Hunter's great success and fortune; he furthermore gained a knowledge of his amours and smaller offences; of his connection with Doctor Leon; (the cowhiding affair helped to open his eyes to that,) and of his position generally. Bodley hated Hunter without knowing it, and so exposed his crimes and vices. Father Abraham hated Mrs. Hemphhead. He believed her guilty of shedding human blood, and a Jew abhors and never forgives a murderer. Setting to work with a hearty good will, he soon made himself the master of proofs of Hunter's numerous and gigantic forgeries—forgeries covering millions! He turned an honest penny, and deprived Mrs. Hemphhead and her oldest daughter of their chief monied reliance, by exposing these proofs to the astonished gaze of certain parties whose names Hunter had feloniously made use of.

The parties so fraudulently experimented upon at once sent for one of the shrewdest of the old police force, and laid the facts before him. He advised an immediate arrest; one so sudden, and in such an unusual place for an arrest, that the criminal would have no time to conceal or destroy evidences necessary to convict him, or dispose of the bulk of his ill-gotten accumulations for his own benefit.

He was arrested and conveyed to the Tombs. Of course his incarceration was related, with full particulars, to the occupant of every cell. There was a general rejoicing in the Tombs on that occasion. The little villains, (no allusion to our contemporary of the *Daily Times*), were in great glee at the capture and discomfiture of a great villain. He was the greatest villain of them all. It is astonishing to note how ferociously the small fry rascal gloats over the ill-

fortune of the bigger scoundrel. Had Hunter been tried an hour after his incarceration by a jury of his fellow prisoners, he would have been convicted in a few moments, and, if possible, sentenced to the severest punishment allowed by law.

Of course the arrival of Hunter at the Halls of Justice upset all Paul's liberty—as founded upon old Bodley's falsehoods. Then came the result the old book-keeper had endeavored to avert. Paul "split" upon Hunter and Bodley to the keeper of his corridor. The keeper conveyed the news to higher officials, and they visited the ruffians and extracted all the requisite intelligence. Having used them to their full desire, they sent them off to serve the State. Old Bodley was followed (in police slang "piped") wherever he went afterwards. The *exposé* was not used against Hunter. There was enough to decide his fate as a felon without it.

The morning subsequent to Hunter's sudden downfall, he sent for Harry Eyelet. But that elegant gentleman denied all knowledge of Hunter, and precipitately fled to Buffalo, where he became the travelling agent of Miss Burgess. Jack Burgess, as we shall continue to call him, knew of this arrangement, but made no objection to it. Eyelet had once cheated a gentleman in a gaming-house of eight thousand dollars, and Burgess knew all the particulars of the infamous transaction, and could relate them to the victim. This was the power he held over the superb man-about-town, and this power impelled that brilliant genius to accede to Burgess's demands, and pay his board in a first-rate hotel.

Hunter sent hither and thither for his various friends. These were people upon whom he had lavished his gold unsparingly. Not one of them owned to the tiniest spark of affection for him. The females—and they were many—to whom he had been as liberal as if he were a prince, refused to go near him, and some of them went so far in their exhibition of ingratitude as to repudiate his acquaintance altogether. In the teeth of that world which had seen them riding with him behind his tandem teams, they asseverated that they had only seen him once or twice, and did not consider themselves as his acquaintances. All seemed to desert him by common consent.

The sycophants that had crouched before him now bruted his disgrace with gusto in every quarter of the city. His former slaves and parasites now clamored for his speedy immolation. Men with a share of his frauds in their pockets hoped, and said they hoped "this monster would not escape the full measure of justice."

What an unsubstantial fabric is that friendship which has nothing but a golden cement to hold it together! How evil doors will be abandoned even by evil doers! How society stands aghast, and shiveringly and boldly runs away from a great rascal after he is exposed. Touch one's white kids to moral leprosy!—oh, no,

no!—one don't rent a pew in Grace church to indulge in any such dirty luxury!

By the way, one man, who stood daily on the Custom-house steps, *did* mourn over Hunter's difficulties, and he did wish for the Wall street giant's release. Do you want to know why? Hunter used to buy dogs from him, and pay good prices for them, too.

"Do you know," said the dog-fancier to one of his intimates, "do you know that Hunter gave me thirty-six dollars for a pup no bigger than a kitten! Hope he'll get out? Well, I do indeed."

Poor dog-fancier; he was much more human than the women and the male sycophants.

At last the caged financier was compelled to call in the assistance of his relatives. It was not his desire to involve them in his disgrace, but he was constrained to have sympathy and aid, and they were the only ones to whom he could look with confidence for either. Their first movement was judicial and judicious. They sent for the cleverest lawyer in the great metropolis—one whose talents enabled him to lead judges by the nose, and do almost what he pleased with juries. The lawyer went to the cell, which had been carpeted and otherwise made endurable, and seated himself affectionately between Hunter and his father. They stated the charges. The lawyer already knew of them.

"What can you do for us?" anxiously inquired the father, after the statement had been elaborately made.

"I cannot tell as yet."

"Your fee shall be large."

"It is a case demanding extraordinary hard work, and conferring responsibilities of the greatest weight," said the lawyer. "I would not undertake it for an ordinary recompense."

"Name the sum that will be sufficient," cried the agonized parent.

"Ten thousand dollars," responded the man of law with solemn emphasis.

"It shall be paid," exclaimed the father, and the payment was soon made.

"Now, then," said the lawyer, upon his return with the money, or rather its equivalent, in his pocket, "you must place the utmost confidence in me, or I cannot defend you. Are these charges true or false?"

Hunter hesitated about making a reply, his whole frame trembled, and his lips quivered like jelly.

"You must conceal nothing from me," resumed the lawyer; "the slightest fact hidden from me may destroy my whole theory of defence, and ruin you."

"Must I expose myself so thoroughly?" asked the suffering culprit with a groan of anguish.

"You must, or despair of any assistance from me."

"Oh, this is a bitter draught; would that it would pass from my lips!" exclaimed the unfortunate financier.

"Are these charges all true, or in part, or are they entirely unfounded in fact?"

"They are true! they are true, and even more could be brought against me."

"Unfortunate!" cried the lawyer, forgetting for the moment his professional imperturbability.

"Unfortunate! Do you mean to say that you cannot procure his acquittal?"

The father was on his knees, sobbing like a whipped child.

"I mean to say that it would be useless to combat these charges in the old way," said the lawyer.

"Could we not impeach the witnesses? impugn their motives? prove a conspiracy?" ventured the father.

The lawyer laughed dryly and noiselessly.

"Is there no hope of wiping this stain from my wretched son's honor?"

The lawyer laughed again. Both the Hunters noticed the laugh and despaired.

"Gentlemen," said the lawyer, after he had indulged in thought, deep thought, for five minutes, "if we went into court, entered a plea of not guilty, and attempted to show we did not perpetrate these forgeries, the jury would convict without leaving their seats."

"What can be done, then?" asked the father, wringing his hands and looking up pitifully.

"You have been a very eccentric man, have you not?" inquired the lawyer abruptly of Charles Hunter.

"Yes."

"Was he," went on the lawyer, turning to the father, "was he strange in his conduct when young?—different from other boys?"

"Yes, yes," eagerly answered the old man, and appearing to see a ray of salvation before him.

"Can you get creditable witnesses to swear to that?" asked the lawyer with a brightening countenance.

"Most assuredly!"

"Have you ever done anything very extraordinary?—anything that people of ordinary minds would denounce as curious—particularly ominous and unaccountable?"

"Yes, many things of that kind!" replied the forger, his face beginning to resume its ordinary fair-weather expression.

"Go to work, both of you," resumed the lawyer, "and call to mind every one of these singular events and circumstances. Do not let one escape your memories. Set them all down, day and date and place; and place against them the names and residences of persons who were cognizant of them, and whom we may cite to give testimony. Let none of these be your enemies. Invent anything that can be in the slightest degree made to appear as an actual occurrence."

"What do you intend to accomplish?" asked the forger, tremblingly.

"Your acquittal."

"Thank God," exclaimed the father, fervently.

"And that, too," went on the lawyer, "in the face of your plea of *guilty*."

"I plead *GUILTY*!" exclaimed the horrified financier.

"Even so."

"I cannot."

"You must."

"Then my fate will be a felon's without a doubt."

"Not so."

"Explain your design!" said the father imploringly.

"Listen. In days gone by, no person was considered insane who did not rave and scream, and become the inmate of an asylum. Old-fashioned insanity was hard to simulate. But this is an age of spiritualism, and clairvoyance, and all sorts of mental sciences, and the multitude can be argued into a strong doubt upon the most ridiculous subjects. We must invent and prove a new style of insanity. Modern insanity shall be made to appear more terrific in reality than the insanity of our ancestors. Ours shall be the insanity of the morals."

"I see! I see!"

"Would any sane man commit such forgeries as are placed to your account?" continued the lawyer. "No, sir. No man would commit such bold and patent offences if he could help it!"

"I think not! I know not!" cried the poor father.

"Enough. Remember Mr. Charles Hunter is *INSANE*—has been *insane* all his life!"

The lawyer soon left the cell.

"What do you think of that case?" inquired the head keeper of the lawyer, as the latter passed through the little office at the prison entrance.

"Think of it! Why, the man's mind is unsound. Any child can see that."

"I'll be hanged if I don't think that's so," muttered the keeper to himself.

And before night, a great number of people had been induced to think so.

It was a novel plea; but did it avail? We shall see.

CHAPTER XXII.—DISPOSED OF.

Do good by stealth, and ne'er proclaim thy deeds
In the broad streets or from the housetops.

Scrap Book.

FATHER ABRAHAM, as soon as Hunter was caged, paid another visit to Mrs. Hemphhead. The shrewd Isrealite went armed at every point against foul play. Seated in the back parlor, with the reluctant woman on a chair opposite, he commenced his budget of torment.

"They say, my dear, that you will be an important witness in the case of Hunter," he began.

"I? I know nothing about his transactions except what the papers have told me."

"The District Attorney thinks otherwise, my dear."

"Then he has been misled by malicious tale-bearers and gossips," said the woman spitefully, with a look of much meaning at Father Abraham.

"You needn't look so hard at me," said the Jew, "I didn't tell him anything about you."

"It puzzles me to guess who did!"

"Why, my dear, he knows all about Hunter, and your magnificent daughter too," resumed the old man—"in fact, they say half the gay ladies in New York, Brooklyn and Williamsburg will be summoned to testify."

Mrs. Hemphhead turned as pale as marble.

"You had better leave home before you get a subpoena," continued Father Abraham.

"If I thought there was any serious amount of truth in what you say, I don't know but I would take a trip to the country."

"Well, you have it as cheap as I got it," said the Jew carelessly.

"Humph! after all they may put me on the stand," said the woman, with a sudden assumption of courage, "I should only have the pleasure of answering that I knew nothing about the forgeries."

"It isn't about the forgeries, my dear, they would be likely to question you."

"No."

"No, my dear. They intend to admit the forgeries, but they intend to make out that Hunter committed them while he was crazy."

Mrs. Hemphhead laughed heartily, in despite of her perplexities.

"Funny, isn't it?" said Abraham with a low, dry chuckle, which a doctor would have termed a "hacking cough."

"Intensely funny."

"Yes," resumed the Jew; "and to get at the bottom of that plea, they will ask all kinds of funny questions. They will make you narrate every circumstance that ever transpired between you."

"I can regulate memory to please myself," said the woman.

"Is your daughter so skilful?" inquired the old man insinuatingly.

"Oh, she can take care of herself and her secrets," was the reply.

"It's a pity everybody don't know enough to keep their secrets well," remarked the Jew with emphasis.

Mrs. Hemphhead trembled; she knew the import of that remark too well.

"In an examination like that," went on Father Abraham, "they don't spare a person's antecedents. They might ask you some awkward—very awkward questions; might allude to past sorrows, open histories now a sealed book, dig even the dead from his grave."

Mrs. Hemphhead uttered a slight scream.

"Why, what's the matter?" queried the old man with a look of extreme astonishment.

"You know what the matter is, old man," exclaimed the woman rising, and proceeding to pace the apartment.

"Bless me, you're as mysterious as a diplomatist."

"No, I'm as plain to be read as A B C," cried the woman excitedly.

"Sit down, sit down! and be easy, my dear."

"How can I be easy when you make me uneasy," almost screamed the woman.

"I make you uneasy—here's a go!"

"Ever since my poor, dear husband died——"

"Died—was murdered, you mean."

"Was m—mur—murdered, then, if you will have me say so, you have been full of blind hints and innuendos. Did you kill him?"

"No," answered the Jew very quietly; "did you?"

"As God is my judge, I did not."

"I do not suppose you inflicted the wounds; but did you not procure somebody else to butcher him?"

"How dare you ask such a question?"

"I'm one of the most daring old men in the world," was the Israelite's reply.

"Take care your daring does not betray you to speedy judgment and a mysterious end," said the woman, with the look of a tigress.

"If anybody judges and executes me, Mrs. Hemphhead, in the style you so kindly allude to, you will speedily follow me to the land of shadows."

"In the name of wonder what do your strange words signify?"

"That I know you—I can read your thoughts concerning me—have read them at former interviews. Should you take a fancy to call in any of your own or your daughter's paramours to slaughter me, I would give them a hard fight. I am as wary as a fox, and as strong and active as the one-half of the puppies that call themselves men now-a-days; and I believe I could cripple one or two assailants with a couple of revolvers."

He drew aside his coat skirts and exhibited the butts of the ugly articles he mentioned. Mrs. Hemphhead gazed upon him wonderingly.

"If, however," he continued, "I happened to be overpowered, and placed out of the way, a package which I have left in the hands of my lawyer—and I've got a good lawyer by the way—would be opened."

"What then?" asked Mrs. Hemphhead with a sneer.

"Officers will be sent at once in search of you. That package contains a very precise narrative of my suspicions concerning your husband's death, and it also points out the ways in which you *might* have me disposed of, with other little matters that would send you to the gallows, Mrs. Hemphhead. Every time I intend to come here, I make a note of the intention in the package with day, date, hour, and other convenient memoranda. You had better pray for my safety, my dear, for your own depends upon it."

"You are worse than Lucifer himself."

"Now, my dear Emma, let's stop our mutual flatteries and come to business. While I retain possession of that diamond cross, with its curious marks on stone and setting, you are in a state of alarm bordering on despair."

I own it. Not that I admit your cruel suspicions to be correct; but you are so skillful, and so devilish, that you might contrive to con-

coct, with its aid, a most desperate case against me."

"To be frank with you, madam, that is all I could do."

"I never harmed you; why should you continue to hold the power even to do that?"

"Because I like to hold power over those who are vile and wanton."

"Sir! old man! beware!"

"Beware yourself."

"You are a good specimen of those who denominate *me* vile and wanton," said the woman bitterly, "you who trade in the very dregs and lees of vice; you to whom the savage house-breaker and the desperate highway robber bring their plunder; you who grow rich on the lowest and bloodiest depredations."

"Pshaw! woman, you do not understand your subject. I receive stolen property, it is true, but the prices I give for it are not large enough to tempt any one to rob. I have restored more stolen property to its owners than ever I kept, and I have trapped more thieves into the power of the authorities than ever I have assisted. We all have different ways of reaching the one end. I do not believe that those who are hardened in their guilt, and who have sucked vice from their mother's breast, can be reformed by moral suasion. I have no faith in making such people good by kindness. That is something they cannot comprehend or appreciate. Clever men say that I am wrong—I think the error lies on their side. Even upon you, who have never known want, and into whose mind the blessed rays of education have abundantly penetrated, moral lessons and moral arguments would be used in vain. You will never do right except upon compulsion."

"And do you propose to *compel* me to change my ways?" asked the woman with an ironical expression of face.

"I propose to try."

"Well, this is amusing."

"You'll find it better than that, I trust."

"Let me hear your plan."

"Will you listen patiently?"

"If I can."

"First tell me, what would you give to know that that diamond cross would never be used in any manner to your disgrace?"

"What would I *give*? Ah! there spoke the Jew!"

"Not half so contemptible as you, who pride yourself upon being a Christian, make yourself to get money. The Hebrew, madam, will not murder for money; no, not even for revenge."

"Nonsense."

"Every dollar of a Jew's hoard goes to some good purpose—to feed, clothe, educate or relieve somebody of his own blood and faith," said Father Abraham, with warmth. "It is not spent in idle show. It is not wasted in debauchery. It is not used to pamper vanity, or to crush his less fortunate neighbors."

"Oh, Jews are saints of course!"

"No, they are sinners; but they do not covet money more than the Christian. You

"FORGERY AND FASHION." CHARLES HUNTER AT THE ARISTOCRATIC BALL. (See Pages 35 and 36.)



have not answered my question," said Father Abraham, abruptly.

"What, as to the cross?"

"Yes."

"To be sure that unlucky article would never appear to my detriment," said the woman deliberately, after five minutes' reflection. "I would give almost all that I am worth."

"At that price we will immediately close the bargain," cried Father Abraham.

"But—but—" began Mrs. Hemphead.

"Stop a moment," interrupted the Israelite, "until you learn my plan. You possess about ten thousand dollars' worth of real estate. You have a little money. The real estate you shall convey to me."

"To you?"

"But not for my use. With the money you have you shall retire to the town of Hudson, on the North River; it is not far from Sing Sing, and there with your daughter, live in a condition of peace and retirement, and in obedience to the rules laid down by a female relative of mine who belongs to the town."

"This must be a dream."

"It is reality, I assure you. The property shall merely be in my keeping, and under my management, and whatever interest it may pay will be handed over to you for your support. You must drop your present name, and all your acquaintances, and you must cease all intrigue. At my death the property will pass into the trust of others, still for your benefit. Accede to this proposition, and the diamond cross will remain a thing of oblivion, to be subjected to a resurrection only when you have transgressed the laws of society, or committed an act unworthy of a respectable woman and a Christian mother. I do not seek to appropriate one cent, or one cent's worth, of yours to my own use or benefit."

"What really is your motive?"

"To cripple you in your vicious course. To protect the world against your wickedness. Your compliance with my wishes will insure you peace and plenty. You will sleep without fear, and live without disgrace. Give me the answer. It needs no reflection. I have no more time to lose now. Speak—yes or no!"

There was a great struggle in that woman's heart. It lasted but a few moments. The agitated features calmed down into a strong and decided expression, and the answer came in a voice that did not tremble. It was "Yes!"

CHAPTER XXIII.—CONCLUSION.

All's well that ends well.

THE trial of Charles Hunter took place. Bets as to its result were as plentiful as they are generally upon that of a grand horse race. The majority of the people, used to the lax administration of justice in this city, and familiarized to the many triumphs of dollars in the worst of causes, predicted the forger's acquittal. It was

a strange and exciting trial. The novelty of the plea at first startled the public. But its ridiculousness was soon so apparent that it formed the subject of every degree of satire. Notwithstanding the nearly superhuman effort made by Hunter's counsel to establish his new style of insanity—despite the evidence given in support of his theory by our cleverest physicians—the defence fell to the ground. It had made a giant leap. It went over and beyond the point it was designed to reach. It was like the "vaulting ambition" Shakespeare speaks of. The jury, at the outset bewildered, finally became disgusted. They retired to deliberate. Their deliberations were soon perfected.

Oh, how Hunter's heart beat when that awful question was put by the clerk of the court to the foreman of that jury: "What say you, gentlemen, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?"

"GUILTY."

The iron pierced the culprit's soul then for the first time. Who shall paint the sufferings of his family? Not I—they are sacred.

From the wreck of his ill-gotten gains he had saved about one hundred thousand dollars' worth of jewelry. Upon this capital we presume he means to commence life again, should he ever regain his liberty.

Two days after receiving his sentence to serve four years and ten months in the State's Prison he was on his way to his drear abode. The river thieves were only six weeks in advance of him. Old Bodley contrived to escape to New Orleans, where he is dragging out a miserable existence as an assistant in an auction shop.

Hunter, with a heart crumbling to ashes, preserved his reckless demeanor to the last. He went from the Tombs to the Hudson River Railroad cars in a carriage, and smoked cigars until he arrived at the prison portals.

Not ten people mourned his fate.

Among those who witnessed his ignominious departure was Doxy.

"Talk about niggers," she muttered, as she saw the policeman hand him into the cars; "some niggers wouldn't hold up dar head like dat if dey was goin' to de Sing Sing quarries. I'd rather be a nigger dan white trash like dat, anyhow."

* * * * *

There is a great difference in crime. I mean that the same kind of crime may wear a thousand different aspects. "Theft is theft the world over," exclaims the reader. So it is; but is there no distinction between that theft conceived and executed at the promptings of hunger, and that perpetrated at the dictates of avarice, or the mere love of the act? Stealing a loaf of bread to save one's self from death by starvation is a crime—so is stealing fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in stocks and bonds, merely to be able to cut a dash in the world of fashion. Yet society punishes the loaf-thief much more harshly than it does the other fellow; it degrades and locks him up, seeming to think that he deserves an extra scourging for

being poor enough to be compelled to pilfer in such a petty way. Your loaf-thief has no alternative, if he be detected, but death or the penitentiary. Your dealer in stocks and bonds, not his, most generally closes his accounts with the public by taking a trip to Europe, and remaining at the German watering-places, or in the small towns of Italy, until the excitement caused by his little indiscretions has "blown over," when he returns, compromises with the law and his victims, and retires into private life upon a competency. Such swindlers never arrive at happiness though. People who think they do, and feel a secret desire to follow their example, are mistaken. In fact, crime of any character bears a deadly sting with it. It would be rash and impolitic to commit those acts called criminal, even if there were no codes to prescribe and mete out punishment for them. There is the poison of misery and wretchedness in every wrong perpetrated, and there seems to be the atmosphere of moral death hanging around every great evil doer. Crime has a magnetic influence which imperceptibly asserts its ruinous sway over all who are directly or indirectly brought within its blighting sphere. Sailors throw cats overboard because tradition assigns ill-luck to every vessel with a specimen of the feline race on board. To us this appears ridiculous, but well-educated navigators will declare that cats are unlucky fellow-voyagers, albeit a reason why cannot be dug from out any mass of philosophy to which it was ever my fate to listen.

I believe that a man like Charles Hunter, does incalculable injury to all around him. His thriftless and otherwise loose habits—his reckless expenditure—his unblushing association with the weakest of the weaker sex—his unsubstantial maxims—his vile and unscrupulous pandering to the asperity and vanity of his acquaintances—all these faults, begotten by innate depravity, and fostered into practice by means seized from the pockets of his neighbors, corrupted scores of persons to whom he never spoke. As has been shown in this hurried tale—but together in the midst of other urgent

literary duties—every person with whom he had intimate relations was either wicked and unhappy, or likely to become so. And these characters are not the offspring of fancy. Harvey Paul and Teddy Rowe were scoundrels, but until the gold of the forger tempted them they had not contemplated or attempted murder. Julia Bowen was bad enough, but a desire to obtain the forger's wealth, so temptingly displayed, drove Bristol to break faith with her, and led to her suicide and a homicide as well. It was to the example set by the forger that young Legouve owed his easy capture by Mary Schuyler, and his fall into the abyss of felony; and it was to the false glare and glitter of Hunter's possessions, and the intense and liberal happiness with which they appeared to endow him, that Mary owed her rapid decline in the scale of morals. Doctor Leon found a supporter and comforter in the rascally financier. Miss Burgess could attribute her melancholy position as a dishonored wife, and an unsuccessful candidate for public respect, to the pernicious counsels of evil men of Hunter's class. The man spread ruin in some shape wherever he went. Even his costly gifts, which, easily obtained, were carelessly guarded, made robbers of the domestics living with the parties basking (as they thought) in his favor. One plausible, gilded, fashionable villain, like Charles Hunter—and let no snobbish wearer of a dyed moustache, whose father sold candles for a livelihood and a fortune, fancy we allude to his poor mindless circle when we speak of "fashionables"—does more damage in a community of miscellanies than fifty ruffian burglars, or a whole alley-brood of garotters.

The barbarous Turks reverence the man who, unmistakably insane, deserves their reverential pity. They esteem him to be the favorite of God. But they are not barbarous enough to ascribe a desire to plunder by system, and squander luxuriously, to a mental disease. They set it down to the right causes—a lack of principle and a corrupt nature; and they usually nail the thief's ears to his own door-posts, or if he have none, to somebody else's.

MARGARET DUNBAR.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AMONG the unexplained mysteries of city life, none are more appalling than those we often find dimly hinted at in the newspapers, in paragraphs like the following:

"Yesterday evening, the body of an unknown man, entirely divested of clothing, was found floating in the North River, Pier No. —. His hair was dark, and he appeared to be about thirty years of age. There was no mark upon him to indicate that he came to his death by violence, save indeed an abrasion of the skin on the right temple, evidently the result of contact with some object floating in the river. The coroner investigated the matter thoroughly; and the jury returned a verdict that the body of the unknown had been thrown into the river by resurrectionists. It was, after the inquest, properly interred in Potter's Field."

Such paragraphs, badly worded, and as terse as you call upon a waiter for another plate of muffins, or as the sentence of death pronounced in a criminal court by a judge anxious for his dinner, frequently appear in the papers.

What do they mean?

There is something infinitely horrible in the manner in which the history of the unknown deed is thus dispatched in ten brief lines, ending with,—“verdict of coroner's jury, thrown into the river by resurrectionists,” and “properly interred in Potter's Field.”

The above paragraph appeared in most of the city papers not many years ago, say some time in the summer of 1852. What did it mean?

Did it embody the real story of the unknown's fate?

Was he, indeed, nothing more than the abandoned prey of resurrectionists, thrown by them into the river, or was he the victim of some unknown murderer? Paragraphs like the above often appear in the papers; let us take this single one, and probe the mystery which it hides.

On a dreary winter night in 1848—49,

there was the light of a happy hearth-side playing about a home in Broome-street, half-way between Broadway and the North River. A two-storied house, built of dark red stone, stands a little apart from the street, from which it is separated by the fragment of a garden.

The garden is now buried in snow, and the wind whirls the flakes against the windows, through whose closely-drawn curtains a softened ray streams out upon the desolate night. Look through the window-curtains, and you will behold a scene which contrasts pleasantly with the storm and darkness of the drear winter evening.

A mother, whose dark hairs are veined with the silver threads of fifty years, sits in a rocking-chair near the fire, her hands folded, and her eyes fixed upon the daughter, the only child, who stands near her. The daughter, dressed in plain black, is a girl of some seventeen years, a little above the medium height, with a rounded form, clear complexion and luxuriant brown hair. Her eyes—dark hazel and very large—express a noble, a passionate and stainless soul. By no means perfectly beautiful, she is yet a woman whose roundly developed form, rich brown hair, and face lighted by eyes that shine clearly and steadily, would at once enchain your gaze, whether you first met her among the crowds of the sidewalk, or in the quietude of the parlor.

And while her mother's gaze is fixed upon her, in all the warmth of a mother's love, her gaze is centered upon the young man by her side, whose hand she holds with both hers—a man in the prime of young manhood, with bold features, a bronzed complexion, dark hair, scattered carelessly over his forehead, and blue eyes, full of hope and life. He is neatly

and plainly clad in black, and a black cravat tied loosely gives you a glimpse of his muscular throat.

"But you may die!" are the first words which we hear from the lips of the young girl. "My heart trembles, Harry, as I think of the ten thousand dangers before you."

"Die?" There's no such word in my dictionary!" cries the young man in a frank, joyous voice. "Is there mother? The fevers on the Isthmus—the wild life in California—the odd sort of people I will meet in the mines—none of these things frighten me. I will go through all these things unscathed, and within a year from to-night come back rich. Do you hear me, Margaret?"

Now, although the young man called the gray-haired woman mother, she was not his mother, only to be his mother-in-law. Margaret was his betrothed wife. He was about to leave the quiet routine of his life as a house-carpenter, and make one bold effort for fortune in California.

"But why need you go?" said Margaret sadly. "Why not remain? Your wages are good; and, with what I can make by the needle, there is no doubt but that we can make our home happy. Think of what agonies of suspense I will suffer in the year of your absence."

"Remain!" echoed Harry, patting his hand lightly upon her brown hair. "Remain! Drive a jack-plane and pay rent all my life? Walk these streets all my days the slave of two masters—'boss' and landlord—when there is a fortune for me in California? Believe me, Margaret, for your sake more than mine, I'll do no such foolish thing. Don't you think I'm right, mother?"

"There is a Providence in California, as well as in this city," was the mother's reply; "and though I dread the thought of your going, still I think it best for us all. You will come back with a competence."

"Certainly I will," cried Harry; "and then, Margaret, darling, we will be married."

The young girl made no reply at first; but, placing her hand on his shoulder, looked up silently into his face, her cheeks all aglow, and her eyes all clear and bright.

"Living, I will be true to you, Harry, —and if you —you die, I will be true to

your memory!" So low was the tone in which she spoke, that the mother did not hear it, but the lover heard it with his ears and heart; and, silently pressing the hand of his betrothed, surveyed her with his frank, earnest gaze.

A very beautiful picture—that simple home, with its unostentatious furniture, and cheerful hearthside flame, whose light falls upon the faces of the mother, the betrothed husband and wife—a picture which it may be well for us to look upon long and yearningly, for it may never in their lives be seen again. That night passed away, and the next day and the day after. Henry Morgan, with Margaret always by his side, made every preparation for his California enterprise. At length the day came; the steamer was to leave near sunset, and Henry, with Margaret on his arm, walked forth in Broadway an hour before the time of his departure.

How many vows were exchanged—how many hopes and fears of the future, rose to the lips in low-spoken words, as they hurried through the ever-strolling, never resting current of Broadway!

His trunks were all aboard; his ticket in his pocket; he had bidden "good-by" to the mother; nothing remained but to say the same to the good, beautiful girl, who clung to his arm, and looked up into his face.

He often said,—"Only a year—I will come back rich!" but, somehow, he could not say "Good-by!"

The bronzed face of the carpenter manifested a strange mingling of emotion and of the effort to hide it; and, at last, an idea seemed to strike him, which, he thought, would relieve him from many difficulties.

He led Margaret from the glare and tumult of Broadway into a retired street, and up the steps of a two-story house and rung the bell; and was ushered into a dimly-lighted parlor. Before Margaret could ask the meaning of this movement, a grave gentleman appeared in the parlor, very short in stature, mild in face, and very decided in the whiteness of his cravat.

"What do you wish with me?"—in a bland, kind voice—"Ah!" glancing at the face of Harry, who blushed a little, and at Margaret's, which was scarlet as a summer rose,—"Ah! I see how it is!"

"Marry us, if you please," said Harry—"right away—I've got to start for California in half an hour."

"But Harry—" Margaret began; but Harry put his hand on her pretty lips, and the clergyman, after the proper preliminary questions, went through the ceremony, and presently pronounced them husband and wife.

The thing was done so quickly that Margaret and Harry, who had always looked upon it as a matter requiring much time and many words, could scarce believe their senses.

But, in that dimly-lighted parlor, where a few weak rays of sunlight came through the faded blinds, Harry saw the face of the blooming girl beside him, whose mingled tears and blushes looked like the mingled bloom and dew of some ungathered rose—took her to his arms, pressed his kiss upon her lips and cheek, and with a muttered "Good-by, Margaret! I'll be back in a year—rich—rich,"—hurried from the room. Hurried away from the room and house, like a thief, leaving his young wife, weeping on the sofa, with the kind old clergyman by her side; hurried down the narrow street, his hat drawn low upon his forehead, and did not look behind him until he stood upon the steamer's deck. (As a matter of historical justice, it may be as well to record the fact that, before leaving the room, he slipped a ten-dollar gold piece into the preacher's hand.)

And as the steamer went down the Bay, which, in the smile of the setting sun, showed all its "white caps" topped with flashes of bright gold, Harry sadly paced the deck, his hands deep in his pockets, and his eyes turned yearningly over his shoulder toward New-York, which distance and shadow soon gathered in their embrace.

As the last gleam of sunset, trembling on fast-fading Trinity spire, met his backward gaze, while, through the Narrows, the ocean opened, bleak and vast and cold before him, Harry dashed the tears from his eyes with the knuckles of his his sun-burnt hand, and gave some utterance to his feelings in these words,—"Bad papers, this! Marry a young wife, and then quit for Californy! Bad papers! Never mind; in a year I'll come back from Californy, and come back rich!"

And as the steamer went forth gallantly into the cold black night, Harry gazed earnestly through the gathering darkness toward New-York, but did not see the woman who, clasping the Battery railing with both hands, followed the progress of her husband with heaving bosom and expanded eyes, glittering through their fears.

She waited there until the cold night, domed with countless stars, gathered round her, and then turned sadly homeward, murmuring oftentimes her husband's words,—"Never mind! In a year I'll come back from Californy, and come back rich!"

Well! a year, a long, long year passed, and Henry Morgan did not come back from California rich. In fact, did not come back at all.

In his place appeared a line among the California news of the *New-York Tub*, (a paper devoted to the adroitly mingled worship of Good Lord! and Good Devil!)—a line which said a good deal in a few words,—"Died in the mines, August 29, 1849, Henry Morgan, Carpenter, from New-York."

Need we tell the agony of one woman who read this line, and who, in the depth of her despair, clung to the hope that, like most things which appeared in the *New-York Tub*—"reliable news" to-day, and "infamous fabrications" to-morrow—it would turn out a baseless falsehood?

For a year she clung to this hope, but Henry Morgan did not appear. Another weary year!—every hour spent in the anguish of suspense, and every item of California news devoured with straining eyes—still no word of Henry Morgan.

1851 followed '49 and '50, and a returned Californian, very much the color of gamboge in face, and with much coin of the same color in pocket, brought word of Henry Morgan. He had seen him on the fatal day, August 29, 1849, propped up against a tree, friendless and uncared for, a beautiful landscape all about him, but the ashy color of death upon his face. Satisfied that the man was beyond all need or hope of help, the returned Californian had left him there to die. And that was the last of poor Henry Morgan!

Time passed on, and it was November in 1852.

As night set in upon the town—a

dreary night, full of winter, and of the aroma of election in hand-bills—a steamer, just arrived from the Isthmus, lay puffing and blowing, like an exhausted whale, at a certain pier on the North River.

Among the many wretches who crawled from the "Calcutta black-holes," which, by a strong flight of speech, are called "berths," was one who came eagerly on deck and hurried ashore as soon as the steamer was made fast to the pier.

He left his dingy trunks (which had escaped the robbers of the Isthmus, perchance, to fall into the hands of the "gold-dust Peters" of Broadway) aboard, and made the best of his way up a dark street toward the great thoroughfare.

As he passes through the light of an occasional lamp you can look at him.

At first sight, he strikes with a vivid impression of general and confirmed "hairiness." Tall, broad-shouldered, clad in an old coat which might have been worn in the ark, underneath which appeared a shirt of dingiest red, with boots reaching half-way to his waist, he was as hairy as any ten reformers. Long locks of dark-brown hair, innocent of Phalon, swept his shoulders, and were blown to and fro beneath his slouched hat by the sharp November wind; and a beard as huge as a lion's mane, and as black—as black—as the candidate of any political party which you don't like—hid his throat and a portion of his brawny chest.

He was evidently a strong man, somewhat reduced and thinned by the Isthmus fever.

That glimpse of his face, which his copious hair and beard permitted to be visible, was as yellow as a guinea, and his dark blue eyes, although bright and glittering, had something of the "gold-piece" hue about each pupil. Whoever this man was who now plunged into the crowd of Broadway, like a bit of savage life suddenly planted in the midst of city civilization, one thing is certain, his own mother would not have known him.

"There's the Park," he muttered, gazing about him, and much jostled by the crowd, "and there's Stewart's, and this is Broadway, and I'm in town again! I have come back from Californy, and come back rich!"

And, placing his hand beneath his rough coat, he touched a massive gold chain, worth some hundreds of dollars and curiously formed of pure ore, to which was attached a gold watch which he had purchased in San Francisco for two hundred dollars. Then he felt the gold pieces which filled his capacious pocket.

"All safe! and then a snug fortune in the trunks aboard the steamer is safe too—and—I *am* in town, and *rich*! And—and—if—" here was the hard point to get over—"if I only find the folks alive and well!"

And so, urged by that ugly "if!" he made the best of his way through Broadway, and then turned off into Broome-street, and did not pause until he stood in front of a two-story house, which stood a little apart from the street.

Through its curtained parlor windows lights were cheerfully shining.

The Californian went through the little garden, and up the steps, and rang the bell. He was a strong man, but he trembled like a leaf, as he stood in the dark, awaiting an answer. It seemed an age until the door opened; but, at last, the door did open, and a face appeared. Alas! it was a strange face—that of a robust servant girl.

"Does Mrs. Dunbar live here?" faltered the Californian.

"Faith, she does not. It is Mistress Smith who lives here,"—and she made great eyes as she beheld, by the light which she carried, the uncouth, quite barbarian exterior of the stranger.

"She used to live here; she occupied the rooms on the lower floor—a widow; her daughter was a seamstress," faltered the Californian.

"How long since?"

"Well—well—" hesitated he, "about three years since."

"Three years! Faith, a great many things may happen in three years! Mrs. Smith moved here two years ago, and I've lived with her ever since." And after another fearful look at the barbarous exterior of the Californian, she shut the door in his face.

The man went sadly down the steps, muttering gloomily,—"*Very bad papers! What if they should all be dead?*"

It was a thought hard to look at with any calmness; and the Californian tried

FATHER ABRAHAM ACCUSING MRS. HENSTAD OF HER HUSBAND'S MURDER. (See Page 49.)



to banish it and choke it down, as he retraced his steps toward Broadway. It then occurred to him, that it would be a judicious thing, before proceeding further in his search, to remove some of the hair and beard which made a wilderness of his face.

Full of this idea, the Californian proceeded to a fashionable barber shop, (called a saloon,) where, by the light of gas shining into any number of mirrors, and over countless bottles of hair oil, about a dozen gentlemen who spoke bad English and wore white aprons, were doing all sorts of things to all sorts of people's heads.

There was a red-headed man being carefully dyed into black; a man of fifty, with gray whiskers and bald head, being elaborately transformed into a young man of twenty-five, with neat black whiskers and soft, curling, brown hair; and a youth of nineteen, with an innocent face and long hair, being scientifically curled for a fancy ball. The Californian dropped into a chair, and submitted his hair and beard to the scissors and razors of an august person of French origin.

This accomplished, he rose and surveyed himself in a glass, and hair and beard having been brought down to the limits of city civilization, the Californian recognized in the mirror, with evident delight, the face of Henry Morgan—a face very sallow and gold-colored, but still the face of our old friend, Henry Morgan.

"Well, Harry, you do look something like yourself! A white shirt collar, and a suit of black cloth, will set you up. And?"—here, Harry's attention was suddenly arrested by a paper which fluttered to his feet. It was a letter which had fallen from the hands of a person near him; Harry took it up, in order to hand it to the person, when his eye was arrested by its superscription,—*"Margaret Dunbar."*

"What!" he said, before taking time for a second thought, "what do you know about Margaret Dunbar!" and confronted the individual who had dropped the letter.

This individual merits a passing glance.

He was (to speak in general terms) one of those mysterious, well-dressed people whom you meet every day in Broadway and who are mysterious be-

cause no one can tell where all those fine clothes, eye-glasses, and gold chains, come from.

To speak more specifically he was a man of about thirty-five years, above the medium height, with a well-knit form, clad in dark broadcloth; a gold chain strayed over his red velvet vest, and on his faultless shirt-bosom shone a very brilliant diamond pin. As to his face, with its short hair and whiskers, black as jet and well oiled, it struck you at first sight. The cheek-bones were a little too high, the nose too sharp, the chin too pointed, and the lips too thin; the keen eyes, glittering under a broad, low forehead, and poorly defined eyebrows, were altogether too small; and yet it was a healthy, ruddy face, with a sort of robust manliness in every line of it.

"What do you know of Margaret Dunbar?" said Morgan, holding the letter.

The individual smiled, disclosing teeth whose whiteness was quite sepulchral. "And may I ask what in the deuce do you know about Margaret Dunbar?" he said very pleasantly, as the stranger drew over his shoulders a cloak richly lined with velvet.

CHAPTER XXV.

"AND," said the strange gentleman, as he drew his velvet-lined cloak over his shoulders,—*"And what in the deuce do you know about Margaret Dunbar?"*

To which Harry, somewhat taken aback by the cool manner of the gentleman, replied, after a little hesitation,—*"Know about her?"* Why, God bless you! she is my wife!"

And drawing the individual a little aside, near a mirror which reflected their widely different faces, he told him, in his frank, honest way, the whole story: how he had loved Margaret—married her an hour before his departure for California—been delayed there by circumstances, over which he had no control, three years instead of simply one—how he had come back rich, with money enough to make Margaret comfortable all her days—and—

"The fact is, here I am, a little yellow, and a little broken down, but with the rocks, you see? And I can't find

my wife! God help me! she is not dead, is she?"

The frank manner of Harry evidently gave the well-dressed stranger a favorable impression of him, which perhaps was not lessened by the story of the trunks, (packed with gold dust,) aboard the steamer, to say nothing of a glimpse of the heavy gold chain which encircled Harry's sunburnt throat. He showed his white teeth in a pleasant smile.

"Sit down, Mr. Morgan!" and he pointed to a sofa near the mirror. "I've often heard Margaret speak of you. And the fact is, I am her cousin. My name is Burke, Stanley Burke. Now you certainly have heard Margaret speak of me?"

Harry was not quite sure that he had, but still there was a floating impression upon his mind about one Stanley Burke, a member of a wealthy branch of the Dunbar family. Yes! he was sure that he had heard Margaret speak of him a hundred times.

"Yes, I have heard her speak of you—and—" his voice was thick, his blue eyes moistened with something that was very like a tear—"and she is not dead, is she?"

How he bent forward, and looked Stanley Burke in the face, on his eagerness to hear his reply! That gentleman suffered the velvet-lined cloak to drop a little from his shoulders, as he replied,—"Dead! bless you, no! It was only yesterday morning I saw her, alive and well, and —"

Harry did not like to ask the question which rose to his lips, "She is not married, is she?" it choked him only to think of it. So he blunted forth another question,—"A rumor came home that I was dead, I believe. Margaret never believed it, eh?"

"She wears black for you now," was the response of Stanley Burke. "The poor girl will be mad to see you; in fact, unless properly prepared for the intelligence, it will drive her mad to know that you are alive—mad with joy, you understand?"

Harry leaned back upon the sofa like a man suddenly overcome by irreparable calamity, or overwhelming joy. For a moment he was dim of sight; all sorts of ringing sounds were in his ears. The memory of three years of hard adventure

in California, in which he had seen starvation, death, and crime, in their ugliest shapes; the consciousness that he had come back rich, all faded away before the thought, "Margaret is living! Margaret is true to me!"

And as soon as he recovered his speech he did a very bad thing; he gave some vent to his feelings in an oath, which properly looked into was not so much of an oath as a prayer.

And then he talked with Stanley Burke for at least an hour, and the manner of the well-dressed gentleman quite won his confidence. It seemed as though they had been acquainted for years.

Margaret had removed from Broome-street, and was living with her mother further up town. The death of a distant relative, who had made Margaret his heir, placed them in very comfortable circumstances. She was no longer forced to strain her eyes, all day and late at night, at her needle. She was sad and melancholy about Harry's death, but still young and blooming, and with a faint hope in her heart that he would yet return. Such was the story of Mr. Alfred Stanley, which he told in many words, and in the blindest manner, with every kind of display of his white teeth, and a steady twinkle of his small glittering eyes.

"And this letter, which by chance dropped from my hand,"—he quietly held the letter before Harry's eyes,—"*is one which I wrote to her about a year ago, giving her some hope of your return. The fact is, I had heard some favorable news. But, before I could send it to her, I met her in person, and so there was no use of giving it to her. I threw it in my trunk; and to-day it must have been taken by me from the same trunk, with some legal papers which I wished to examine. I did not know it was about me until it dropped from my pocket. It has turned out quite a lucky circumstance, for it has been the means of bringing you and me together. Would you like to look at it?*"

"Not to-night—not to-night," replied Harry. "First of all I want to see Margaret. You will take me at once to her residence?"

It would have been better for Harry—much better—had he looked into that letter!

"The fact is, Margaret and her mother

are out of town on a visit to a relative who lives near Tarrytown," replied Stanley Burke, quietly depositing the letter in his pocket-book; "but," he continued as he observed Harry's down-fallen countenance, "they'll be back to-morrow. I can prepare them for your appearance. By George! an idea strikes me. Why not go up there to-night with your traps and trunks, so as to be on hand at the time of their return. You see, I'm not often in town, but when I am, Mrs. Dunbar gives me a spare room, which you and I can occupy to-night. I have a night-key which will let us in."

And the well-dressed man, looking at Harry all the while, passed his hand over his spotless shirt-bosom, through his well-oiled whiskers and short-cut hair, a pleasant smile, meantime, lighting up his masked face.

It was a good idea—capital! Harry thought so, and lost no time in carrying it out.

They went forth from the saloon together, Harry in barbarian garb, leaning on the arm of the well-dressed man, who, as they hurried along Broadway and down the street which led to the steamer, kept up a continual flow of talk about Margaret, telling a thousand anecdotes about her which quite won Harry's heart.

Arrived at the pier where, in the gloomy night and under the leaden sky, the steamer lay, Mr. Burke procured a carriage, had Harry's luggage brought ashore, one huge trunk lashed on behind, one fixed on the box, and a plethoric carpet bag put on the front seat inside; after which, the driver being perched on his seat, over the topmost trunk, Harry and Stanley Burke entered, and the carriage rolled away.

As they sat side by side on the back seat, Stanley Burke, his face lighted up by an occasional lamp gleam, talked pleasantly and in his easy way about Margaret, and Harry, his heart beating quickly under his coarse coat, hung on his every word.

"Decidedly, Stanley Burke is a good fellow!" thought Harry. "and if he wants helping along, I'm his man!"

Here the carriage stopped, in a dark part of a street which, near the head of Broadway, branched off toward the East River, in front of a four-storied dwelling,

which stood silent and dark in the shadow, its windows closed from sidewalk to roof.

"A grand kind of building!" muttered Harry as they descended from the carriage.

"The home of Margaret," replied Stanley Burke. "The lower floor is, as you see, occupied as a store; Margaret and her mother have the rest of it to themselves. My room is in the back part of it, on the third floor."

And opening the side door with a night-key, Stanley Burke directed the driver to unlash the trunks, and bring them into the dark entry, which, being done, Burke left Harry and the driver alone in the dark entry, while he went up stairs to get a light.

He presently returned, holding the light above his head, as he came down the stairway, his usual bland smile playing over his face. And he held the light while the driver, (a pock-marked Hibernian, who blew hard, and swore much in a low voice,) assisted by Harry, carried the trunks, one at a time, up three pair of stairs, into the back room. Trunks and carpet-bag being safely deposited there, and the driver paid and dismissed, Harry and Burke sat down in the room, and looked on each other's faces by the light of the candle.

It was a very comfortable place. A moderate fire simmered in an air-tight wood stove. The sofa on which they sat was covered with red velvet. An elegant French bedstead stood in one corner, near a mahogany article of furniture, which did not look precisely like a book-case, nor yet like a bureau, but seemed a combination of both. The walls, covered with subdued colored paper, were ornamented with a few choice pictures, in slight gilt frames—pictures very warm, Gallic and oriental.

It was altogether an elegant yet cozy apartment.

Resting one arm on the arm of the sofa, and seated in an attitude which did justice to his fine apparel and muscular frame, Stanley Burke quietly watched his rough friend, who was gazing about him with expanded eyes.

"A quiet little place, which Aunt Dunbar is kind enough to let me have, in one corner of her house. Don't you think so?" said Mr. Burke.

"Snug as a bug in a rug," was the unclassical response of Harry.

"Here you can remain quietly with me, and to-morrow morning you will see Margaret. Ah! I had quite forgotten!" continued Mr. Stanley Burke, as he rose and assumed his cloak, hat and gloves. "I have an engagement which will only keep me for an hour. You must excuse me for that time, my dear Morgan. When I come back, we'll have a nice little supper from the restaurant in Broadway. Until then, amuse yourself with books and papers on the table."

"O don't mind me," replied Harry; "I can put in the time quite comfortably. Have you got such a thing as a good Havana cigar?"

Burke showed his white teeth in a pleasant smile as he presented his cigar case. "A present from a particular friend in Havana."

And as Harry lighted the fragrant cigar, and stretched himself, red shirt, coarse coat and all, on the velvet sofa, Mr. Stanley Burke regarded him with a quiet smile, and then, with the words,—"Back in an hour, Morgan," left the room.

There was no light to shine upon him, or to show the peculiar expression of his face, as he went down the dark staircase.

"In the house where Margaret lives!" ejaculated Harry, as he watched the white smoke-wreaths floating to the ceiling. "Pretty good luck, this, after all your adventures, Harry!"

And Harry fell into a pleasant reverie, in which he saw the form of Margaret clad in mourning, her face not so blooming as of old, but still beautiful in its pallor, framed in a black bonnet, appear almost visibly amid the smoke-wreaths which went up from his cigar. "How glad she'll be to see me!" And his heart, at the thought, beat all the quicker under his coarse coat.

All at once a new idea seemed to strike him.

"Why not go out, and buy some decent clothes? I can be back before Burke returns. I should like to shake hands with a decent coat and clean shirt, once more." Burke had left his night-key, or a duplicate, on the table. Harry secured this key, put on his slouched hat, and went quietly down the dark stairway and from the house. In less than

a quarter of an hour he found himself in Canal-street, in front of one of those stores which, in flaming signs and pictorial handbills, offer to furnish "Cheap Shirts" to a benighted world. The "Only original shirt store, on the cheap system, in the world!" was the startling announcement which appeared in the window, in big letters, revealed by the dazzling gas-light. After a careful survey of the contents of the window, Harry resolved to enter and make a purchase; and enter he did. Better, much better for Harry, had he looked at the letter which Burke had held before his eyes; but a thousand times better for him had he never put a foot in the Canal-street shirt store.

CHAPTER XXVI

HARRY entered the store, and as he crossed the threshold—before he had time to scan the sharp features of the proprietor, who stood quietly leaning over the glass case on the counter—there passed by him a young woman, poorly dressed, her face hidden by a thick green veil. Her faded garments brushed him, as he entered; and, ere he could look around, she had passed through the door and disappeared.

What was it about the young woman which, even as her garments brushed against him, filled him with a sudden and inexplicable interest? The gas-light shone fully upon her, but did not disclose her features—did Harry obtain a glimpse of her countenance through the thickly covered veil?

"Shirts, sir?" smirked the bland proprietor, who was a little man, with sharp nose and gold spectacles. "Shirts of all sizes, patterns and prices—returned from California, I presume, sir?"

"Who was that young lady?" asked Harry, keeping one eye upon the shirt man, and the other upon the door.

"Don't know her name—works for me—just paid her off—pay well here, sir, four shillings for two shirts—here they are—best quality—take a look at them!"

Harry did not reply to the gentleman, but, turning on his heel, left the store, and anxiously gazed up and down Canal-street.

He caught a glimpse of the summer

bonnet which the young woman wore, about a hundred yards away, in the direction of the North River. At once he hurried after her, determined to track her footsteps and follow her to her home.

Now, as Harry was a sound, honest man, he could have had no improper intentions in this pursuit, but was evidently prompted by an indefinable impulse, or a wild delusion. Why need we describe in detail the wild chase which she led him?

She entered one of the red cars which run on West Broadway, Hudson-street, and the Eighth avenue; Harry followed her, but could not get a seat near her. She sat in an opposite corner, out of the light and in the shadow, her veil still closely drawn over her face. The car went on its way; the conductor, a slim person, filled with a due sense of the awful responsibility of his situation, bristled along collecting fares, letting fat gentlemen out, and nervous ladies in; and now and then shaking up a drunken man, who fell asleep and snored like a trombone. The car went on its way up Hudson-street, and into the remote regions of the Eighth avenue, where the night is made musical by the combined bark of a thousand dogs; and still Harry, very nervous and impatient, could not obtain a sight of the unknown woman's face.

At last the passengers were reduced to two, Harry and the young woman, who sat with closed veil and folded hands, opposite him.

"I wonder if she never intends to get out, or if she is going on to the North Pole?" grumbled Harry to himself, when the woman in the straw bonnet rose, rang the bell, and, in a moment, hurried from the car.

Harry at once followed her, and found himself in that peculiar region which is not above Seventieth-street, nor below Thirtieth; where it is, precisely any one's business.

It is a region extending from the Hudson River, broken surface old-fashioned seats vainly endeavor to position against flimsy tures, of all sizes, from barn, and built not so fit to comfort or architect the purpose of extrac

amount of rent from the neediest sort of tenants.

By day this region rings with the ceaseless thunder of blasted rocks; by night, it alarms the distant Jersey shore with the rich, deep notes of an army of dogs, whose numbers cannot possibly be told. Gazing over its varied surface, from the height of the reservoir, you are struck with the singular panorama which it presents. Bogus palaces, truck gardens, fine old country seats, perched upon the rocks, wide streets that are by turns miracles of dust and mud: it looks like the sketch of a city done very hastily by an artist who is anxious to do his work in the least possible time.

It is from this region that, near the break of day, emerge those mysterious men who walk between the shafts of a two-wheeled cart, a harnessed dog on either hand, and a patient woman pushing in the rear. Mysterious men, whose apparition startles belated downtowners (unfamiliar with the upper region) and gives rise to the query—"Where in the mischief do they live?"

Descending from the car, Harry followed the unknown woman into a neighboring grocery, whose lighted windows looked quite cheerful in the surrounding darkness.

The grocery was one of those kept by taciturn persons of Teutonic descent, who speak strong German, and very imperfect English, never count the half cent on the shilling in making change, and sell everything—everything—from a glass of dubious ardent spirit worth of coal store, if

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her "shopping" in the Teutonic grocery!

A pound of coffee, a pound of sugar, an armful of firewood, a loaf of bread, these were her purchases. O softly clad and fashionable dames! and yet perchance that poor girl who gathered in her arms those sticks of firewood, had blood as precious in her veins as that which gives its glow to your own lovely face!

Her purchases made, she—firewood, coffee and sugar in her arms—left the store without glancing at Harry. But Harry, who felt an unusual emotion about his heart as she passed him, followed her from the store, and then along a dark street which led to the Hudson River, displaying on either hand, under the dull, heavy night, a large proportion of building lots to a very small number of houses.

Along this dreary street, where the mud was rich and thick, and of the first quality, Harry Morgan followed the young woman, who once or twice stopped and looked back, as though conscious that she was followed. Harry, however, kept in the shadow, and cautiously lingered in her footsteps.

At length she turned from the street into an open field, from whose distant extremity a feeble ray struggled from the window of a miserable tenement. Along a footpath, soft with mud, and winding among piles of timber and broken rocks, the young woman hurried rapidly, until she came to the narrow door of which stood alone in the darkness, and which she lingered for a moment before she disappeared.

and disappeared into a second room, and all was dark.

Certainly Harry's heart thumped and thumped again, as leaning against the window-sill he waited for her reappearance.

After a pause she came again, and light in hand, knelt before the stove and proceeded to make a fire. In doing this, she lifted her veil and laid her bonnet on a chair. The candle on the floor shone upward into her face.

"O my God!" was the ejaculation which came from Harry's heart as he leaned against the window-sill, trembling in every limb as that face was revealed to him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

O my God!" cried Harry, who at the sight of that face grew suddenly weak as a child; "it's Margaret!" The woman who knelt before the stove, her face revealed by the upcast light of the candle, had seen twenty years of life. Her brown hair relieved a pale countenance, lighted by large hazel eyes. There was great loveliness and much suffering conjoined in every line of that countenance—deep suffering, that does not relieve itself in tears or wild ejaculations, but seats itself at the heart, and slowly gnaws the life away.

Poor Margaret! when we saw you last, you were so blooming on lip and cheek; there was such joyousness in your eyes—not a pulse of your young bosom but swelled with the inspiration of hope and love—and now, so sorrow-stricken and heart-broken, with the fever of an irreparable calamity burning in your large beautiful eyes! It's a world of change, Margaret—of sad, terrible change—of friendships that betray with a kiss—of loves that are bought and sold like merchandize in the market—of hopes that are nourished long years, and that ripen to only to be gathered by the death—physical death, killing that unutterable moral death—suffices the soul; a world, with no one in the dawn of manhood, seeing, as with the light of the future, would have the courage to face the hour.



And if, since last we saw you, Margaret, you have sinned; if the pure blossom of your virgin soul has been trampled into the mire of temptation and crime, why, God be merciful to you, and may you rather be dealt with by His justice than by the tenderest mercy of man!

On the window-sill Harry leaned, stricken into child-like weakness by that sight.

"And so Burke lied to me," he muttered. "But he spoke so smooth and fair, I could not help believe him! This is livin' on your means, is it? A half a dollar, a pound o' sugar and coffee, an' a home like this! Such means and such livin'!"

Again Harry laid his face against the window-pane, with a faint hope that it might not be his Margaret whom he saw thus reduced to the lowest stage of destitution—but no! His eyes did not deceive him. That pale woman, kneeling on the naked floor, was his Margaret—his wife!

"But I'll make it all right yet; for every day of want that you have suffered, you shall have a thousand of peace and comfort, and——"

Harry went from the window, put his hand upon the door, and entered the miserable room, pausing a short space from the threshold, so that the candle-light lit up his sunburnt face.

Margaret raised her eyes with a nervous movement of surprise, and then her eyes expanded, her face grew paler, and with a wild scream she stretched forth her arms. God help me! It is his ghost!" And fell forward upon her face like a dead woman.

Henry knelt on the floor beside her, and took her to his bosom tenderly with his toil-hardened hands, pushing her unloosened hair aside from her face, and more than once pressing his lips to her cold forehead and colder lips. All the while the light which shone upward upon his face showed every feature working, spasm-like, as though the man could not speak, to tell in words the emotions which swelled his chest.

"I am back again, and rich—rich do you hear me, Margaret?" he said, again and again, holding her in his arms, and gazing upon her face with all the tenderness of a rude-looking but kind-hearted nurse soothing a sick child.

"Rich! rich! Not so rich as Astor, but rich enough for both of us!"

Alas! brave Harry! there are some evils which gold, holy and beautiful as it is—gold, so devoutly worshipped everywhere, cannot cure!

It was a long time before her cheek glowed with the color of life again; and a long time even after she unclosed her eyes, and saw his face and heard his voice, that she could realize that it was her husband who held her in his arms.

"God help me! Harry, it is you, indeed!" was her first exclamation, as she surveyed that honest face, which was changed, in some respect, but still glowed with old love for her. "I've thought you as dead so long—seen you dead awake and in my dreams so long, that—" tears came to her relief and she bent her head and wept upon his breast; wept, as though every fibre of her heart was breaking, and put her arms convulsively about his neck, as if she were drowning in some dark river, and in his arms was her only hope of life.

At length she rose, and glancing rapidly (with a singular look, which did not escape Harry,) first at the door which led out in the dark night, and then at the door, which opened into the second room, she sat down and motioned Harry to take a seat beside her. Her eyes were downcast, and she picked at the ends of her shawl in an absent way.

"Why do I find you here, Margaret," said Harry, "in such poverty?" The name of Stanley Burke, and the story which Stanley had told him, rose to his lips; but he thought he would not mention either, until Margaret spoke of her cousin. "And mother, how is she?"

"Hush! She is very sick there," and Margaret pointed nervously to the door of the next room. "She is sleeping for the first time in a long while. Do not speak loud, Harry,"—how odd the old name sounded from her lips!—"do not speak loud!" And a shudder, like an ague-chill pervaded her frame.

"But why, Margaret, darling? Oh! how often I've thought of you in the rain and heat and cold, in the mines and on the sea, and when they left me, as they thought, dyin' at the foot of the tree, I saw your face and heard your voice, even in my fever. Oh! Margaret! you can never know how dear to me you've been!

Why do I find you and mother in such a miserable place as this?"

She looked up into his face, long and eagerly, as though the sight of it was life to her. "It is a long story, Harry, and to-night is not the time to tell it; and to-morrow I will tell you all!"

"But you must leave this place to-night; you shall not sleep another night under such a miserable roof."

"You forget that mother is very sick, and cannot be moved; to-morrow, Harry, will be time enough."

And they talked together of the past and future, Harry gazing earnestly upon his wife, and she now looking up in his face, and now casting that nervous glance from one door to the other.

How his heart rolled forth in his pictures of the future! And how often, after a yearning gaze in his face, she would turn her face away from the light, as if to hide its sudden pallor, and the quick, involuntary quivering of the lips.

"Leave me, Harry, to-night," she said at last, "mother is very ill, and I am worn with work and watching. To-morrow I will tell you how we came to live in this miserable place. Yes," she said with a singular brightening of her gaze—"to-morrow we will talk of our future life!"

And she rose from her chair, and Harry rose, but it was not until he had taken her once more to his bosom, pillowed her head upon his shoulder, and pressed upon her lips a kiss—we will not assert decisively that there was only one kiss—which seemed to bear with it a whole lifetime of hope and love, condensed into a single moment, that Harry could be induced to think of leaving her.

At last he stood ready to depart. "To-morrow! early to-morrow!" he said. "To-morrow!" echoed Margaret; and, after another kiss, she watched the form of Harry as he moved to the door—oh! the strange, mad intensity of her gaze! At the door, Harry paused and looked back. Margaret stood like a statue in the centre of the room, and while her face had grown paler, her eyes were all the brighter.

"Harry!" the name came from her lips in a thick and broken voice, and she bounded to his arms and hung there, sobbing and trembling on his breast. "Now, now," she said, "and to-morrow—

to-morrow!" The words died on her lips, and she wrung Harry's hands within her own as she followed him over the threshold.

"Good-night! to-morrow, darling!" She heard his voice, even after the shadows of the night had taken his form from her sight. And she stood in the doorway a long time, looking after him, as though her gaze could pierce the darkness round her.

As for Harry, he went on his way, muttering, "And now, Mr. Stanley Burke, I guess you and I will have a talk together." These trunks aint safe in your clutches. By Jove! why did not I think of mentionin' the matter to Margaret? And with the thought of Stanley Burke's falsehood, and the consciousness that Margaret was still the Margaret of other days, occupying his mind by turns, he went on his way. But the words which he uttered, as he thought, to the air alone, were overheard by a listener whose form was hid by the shadows around the path.

Turning from the door, Margaret closed it, and approached the light. A sudden change had come over her. Her face, pale enough before, was now livid and ashy. She trembled in every limb. As she took up the candle and went towards the next room, you could see the light shake and quiver, as if in sympathy with the terror which pervaded her frame. She entered that room, and gazed around it with a look that was nervous, wild, almost mad—a small chamber, miserably furnished, with a bed in one corner. There was no one there; the face of the mother did not meet the rays of the candle. No mother there. For, alas! the mother of Margaret had been in her grave two years.

Margaret advanced to the bed, and held the light over the patched coverlet, and drew that coverlet gently from the pillow. Upon that pillow rested a babe, who, perchance, had seen three months of life; and its rosy face was touched by a smile as it slept all calmly and gently there.

"O my God!" burst from the heart of Margaret, as she fell weeping on the pillow beside the child—her child! "O my God! why did I not tell him all?"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Let us leave Margaret for a little while, and return to Stanley Burke.

When that gentleman left Harry in his room, and went down the dark stairway, there was no light to reveal the peculiar expression of his face; but, as he passed along Broadway, walking rapidly through its crowd, his velvet-lined cloak dangling from one shoulder, and brought under his left arm, the gas-light shone fully upon him, and in spite of the shadow of his down-drawn hat, lit up his visage, and showed the peculiar look in palpable hideousness.

The tightly compressed lips, the small eyes glittering beneath the knit brows, the expanded nostrils, and broad, low forehead, covered with sudden wrinkles, all revealed the singular agitation which now moved the man.

And now and then the gentleman would smile—such a smile! It lit up his high cheek-bones into a flush, gave a fiercer twinkle to his small eyes, and showed his white teeth in ghastlier whiteness—(Burke, like Dickens' Carker, had white teeth, but he was totally a different man from Carker, and we didn't steal the teeth from Dickens)—and even suffused his broad low forehead with its sinister glow.

What was the man thinking about?

Why had he inveigled Harry Morgan to his room?

Why filled the honest mechanic with the falsehood that Margaret and her mother lived in the house of which his room was a part?

Had he designs upon Harry, and if he had designs upon Harry and his well-filled trunks, how did he intend to carry them out?

Grave questions and full of meaning; but, as we cannot look into the heart of Stanley Burke, and note clearly the emotions that grapple there, it is not possible to answer them. The truth is, Stanley, having seen Harry and his trunks safely lodged in his room, had come forth to take the fresh air, and to think.

It might have frightened you to have seen his thoughts, could they have taken palpable shape. And while he goes up Broadway, unconscious of the crowd through which he passes, now scowling and now smiling, now twirling his gold-

en chain, and now drawing his cloak closer round him, let us take a glimpse at the real character of Stanley Burke.

He was a character. It is a great mistake to suppose that there are no savages but those who go naked and paint their faces, and eat their slain. Broad-cloth drapes many a savage, fiercer and more completely infernal than any that ever sat down to a cannibal feast in the wilds of Van Dieman's Land.

The externals of a gentleman, fine apparel, the graces of education, may mask the real nature of such a savage, but still, at heart, he is more remorseless—more completely defiant of all the ties which bind man to man and humanity to God than his tattooed brother of the war-club and jungle.

Stanley Burke was a man of the world in the intensest form.

To live well, to gratify all his appetites, without one effort of honest work, of hand or brain, and without coming within the reach of the iron hand of the law, was the religion of his life.

For years he had made money, and much of it, in various ways, and always kept up a good appearance, and yet somehow, he was always in want of money. To say that he was a gambler would but poorly describe him.

All men of the world are gamblers, in some sense or other—at faro, in stocks, in trade, in their own reputation, or in the reputation of other people—but the mere gambler at cards is the smallest of his tribe; he only injures and affects a very silly and limited class.

The man is dangerous who, to the character of a gambler—a lottery broker of chance and huckster of destiny—adds other qualities, which mask and ornament his real nature. Stanley Burke was such a man.

For years he had lived well, appeared in elegant plumage, kept the company of that genteel class who, polluted with the moral assassination of womanhood, are yet received with the best society—but where the means came from, was a secret known only to a few.

Stanley had gambled at faro and at bank-stock. He had lived by turns in all the large cities of the Union. Now, he was (or seemed to be) a cotton broker in New-Orleans; now, a fancy stock man in Wall-street; now, a planter in

Charleston; now, a commission merchant in Cincinnati; now, a gentleman of leisure in Washington; but he always made money, and was always in want of money.

He had seen every phase of the savage life, which is but poorly hidden by the glittering tinsel-cloak of large city civilization, and that life had taken possession of him, and moulded him in every fibre.

It was this man who now walked Broadway—*thinking*—and Henry Morgan and his well-filled trunks were the matters which occupied his thoughts. Thus occupied he reached Union-square, and, pausing for a moment, looked up to the leaden sky.

"It may be a good plan"—he muttered, as if speaking of some secret purpose—"and it may not! Anyhow, the opportunity is golden, and I must not let it slip. And I must decide upon it anyhow, before I return to my room and confront Morgan."

And he smiled, and his small dark eyes emitted a light that was not pleasant to look upon, as he—for the moment forgetting his usual composed demeanor—raised his clenched hand to the darkened sky.

"To my room—the plan is good; or, if it won't do, I must and can find a better—to my room, and confront Morgan."

He little deemed that Morgan was no longer in his room, but far away in a far different apartment.

Return we to the miserable home of Margaret, where she bends over her babe, her tears moistening the pillow on which it rests.

"My God!" was the exclamation, often repeated—wrung from a heart torn by its agony—"My God! Why did I not tell him all?"

And, rising, she held the candle over the face of the babe, and looked at it, with a look most strange to see upon a woman's face—remorseless hate and yearning love were in her straining eyes. A part of her being—the blossom of her life—it slumbered there, and yet it was the external symbol of a fact, which, but to think upon, made her existence a hell.

Sad mother! Innocent child! There is a blot upon your life, mother, which cannot be washed away—a future before you, child, that has no ray of hope upon its darkened brow.

Margaret went into the next room, placed the candle on the table, and sat down in the chair, where Harry had lately sat, and folding her hands on her knees—her foot moving nervously all the while—gazed at the blank wall with great glaring eyes. But she did not see the wall—the word "to-morrow!" seemed painted on the air, even as it was stamped upon her brain—"to-morrow!"

She saw, or seemed to see, this word quivering there in letters of fire; and it held her gaze, or if she turned her eyes away, it was still before her.

"To-morrow! How shall I meet him! How shall I tell him all! How tell him that the woman he loves—his wife—who promised to be true to him while living and to his memory when dead—who, to-night, saw him start up as if from the grave, and hang upon his breast as in other days—that she is—"

Her lips could not speak the word, but she put both hands over her eyes at the very thought.

And the light of the candle fell upon the bare department, and upon the woman, who sat trembling there, the very embodiment of hopeless misery.

All at once the door opens, and a form appears on the threshold. It is Harry come back! Margaret starts up at the thought; but, when she sees the face of the intruder, sits down again, and crouches against the wall, as though he were some savage animal.

"Well, wife! you see I've come!"

It was Mr. Stanley Burke who spoke.

"Wife!" she echoed, and crouched closer to the wall. "Yesterday I found you out, and told you I'd come to see you to-night," continued the gentleman, dropping into a chair. "D—n the place, how cold it is!" and he drew his velvet-lined cloak closer around his shoulders. "You don't seem glad to see me? Here's a sweet, dear huzzy of a wife, who runs away from a husband, hides herself from him for six months or more, and when he finds her out and comes to see her, meets him with the look of an enraged cat that would like to bite, but—is afraid!"

Margaret made no reply, but crouching closer to the wall, looked at him over her shoulder; her eyes alone seemed living in her face.

Don't be surprised at Stanley's rough

language. The man who can bow the lowest on Broadway, and show his teeth in the blandest manner, is very often the same man who, within four walls, insults, taunts—sometimes beats—a defenceless woman.

Do not believe all that you see in Broadway, or at the opera, or at a pleasant social party; behind all these, there is a dark background of homes whose secrets would appall you, whose miseries would strike you dumb.

"There we were, the very models of perfection," continued Stanley, shutting one eye, as he gazed upon her with an insolent leer, "man and wife in our two rooms; how we loved each other! As if our happiness was not complete, a pledge of our love, (that, I believe, is the true novel style,) was about to appear, when you must run away and hide, and plunge yourself up to the neck in misery and shirt-making. How is shirt-making, pet?"

No reply from Margaret. Crouching even closer to the wall, her face turned over her shoulder, she looked at him with that corpse-like face and those great glaring eyes.

"If you don't like me, why did you marry me?" he said, as insolently as you can imagine a smoothly-dressed brutal man to speak. Without changing her position, Margaret replied. She did not start, and call down thunders, and burst into those torrents of epithets and adjectives with which some lady-novelists make lurid their pages; for she was not the kind of woman you find in some specimens of lady-literature, but a real woman! much tried, deeply suffering—may be, somewhat fallen—but still a woman and not a tornado in petticoats.

Margaret replied in a low voice, so low that it scarcely rose above a whisper. "I was upon a sick bed. Mother was dead, and the expenses of her funeral exhausted all my store of money. I was sick, and friendless, and penniless."

"Did the thought of that dead lover of yours make you sick?" brutally interrupted Stanley.

But, without changing her position, or noticing his remark, Margaret went on. "You appeared. You were kind to me. You know I wouldn't say it, if it wasn't true, but you *were* kind to me. You supplied me with money, procured a

nurse to watch over me while I was wild with fever. I thought you did all this because we were cousins; I didn't know when a man like you treats a woman kindly he always does it with a purpose; he is kind, that he may pollute, betray, and—sell!

"Well! why did you marry me?" again interrupted Stanley, with a wicked light in his eye.

"I recovered, and was grateful. Need I tell you how the thousand attentions with which you surrounded me deceived me as to your real character?"

"Yes, I remember," and Stanley laughed. "I used to sit by you praising your dead lover, the defunct carpenter. It's a sure way to touch a woman's heart."

She went on. "Alone in the world—friendless—all that I loved in the grave—in an evil hour, telling you that I could not give you love, simply esteem, I consented to become your wife. I might find a thousand excuses for this—might say that long-indulged grief and sickness had weakened my will and dimmed my perception—but I make no excuse. I married you. There is no excuse for me. And I bear the suffering which that marriage has cost me as my just due. The truth is, that I cannot suffer too much for it."

Her eyes dropped; a single tear rolled down her colorless cheek. And she shuddered as she had shuddered every time Burke alluded to her lover, Harry Morgan.

"Why did you run away from me?" asked Stanley, the same devil's look in his eye.

She looked at him as though he were a reptile which she did not know whether to despise most or fear, and her pale face grew scarlet. "Don't ask me, Stanley. You know why I left you. And you know that rather than be near you, or have you in my sight for an hour, I would—I would—" She had no word to express the loathing which flashed from her eyes. Stanley, whose face during this strange interview was unusually flushed—whose eye shone with even an unusual wickedness—replied:

"Well, pet! like me or not, you must live with me. The law you know gives a husband a very decided power over an unruly wife. You must live with me. You cannot hide yourself where I won't

And you. And to-morrow I'll come to bring you from this wretched place to a very comfortable home. You'll think better of it, darling." And he rose, drawing the velvet-lined cloak closer about him, and advanced a step toward her. There was a certain wildness in his manner which she had never seen before.

O how she longed to say a word which would humble all his schemes into dust! "Harry lives! I am not your wife, even if I never can be wife to him! You have no power over me in law!"

The words were on her lips, but she did not utter them.

"How's the baby, Maggy, dear?" and he advanced a step nearer. "Think of it! It was only yesterday that I first beheld the face of my only child! And"—rapidly advancing, he seized her in his arms, and put his kiss upon her lips, ere she had the most remote idea of his intentions. Struggling in his embrace, as though his very touch was pestilence, she tried to avoid his kisses, by burying her head upon his hated bosom, but his strong arm held her in a clutch that was like that of death to the pale, quivering woman.

"Here's an affectionate wife" he laughed, and released her. She sank into the chair, pale and panting for breath, her hair (loosened in the struggle) streaming over her shoulders.

Then with a laugh, and a look of taunting insolence, he said,—"To-morrow, pet! you remember! To-morrow!" and showing his white teeth he moved to the door. "To-morrow I will come and bring you. Good-night, pet!" he laughed again, opened the door, and was gone.

She breathed freer, like one suddenly taken from a plague-infected room into open air.

"To-morrow!" she echoed; "little does he know of to-morrow!"

As she spoke, her eye was attracted by something on the floor. It glittered in the light. She took it up—it was a gold chain—and had fallen from the neck of Stanley in the late struggle. It was not the gold chain he usually wore, but a gold chain curiously formed of pure ore; the chain which she had seen glittering not an hour before around the neck of Harry Morgan.

There was something in the sight of

it which seemed to paralyze Margaret in every limb, and deprive her for the moment of the power of speech. Her eyes were riveted to the chain, and she remembered that, even as Stanley held her in his arms, there was a livid bruise upon his right hand.

CHAPTER XXIX.

We left Margaret, gazing in dumb horror upon the gold chain, which was curiously fashioned of links of pure ore.

It was late on the next afternoon that Stanley Burke, picking his way amid the rocks and timbers which obstructed the winding path, again stood before the door of her miserable home.

As Stanley came along, with an even stride, and cloak drawn gracefully over his shoulder, you might see that he was dressed with his usual nicety; his hat was of the glossiest, his shirt-collar of the whitest, and he stepped carefully along the miry path, to avoid soiling his well-polished boots with mud. A well-dressed gentleman taking a walk in the rural districts to collect his rents, or to take a mouthful of fresh air, was (or seemed to be) Mr. Stanley Burke.

He smiled often, revealing his ivory teeth, and yet his face was a little haggard, his eyes feverish in their restless twinkle, as though he had not slept well on the previous night.

At the door of Margaret's miserable home he paused and looked around.

A November sun, shining over a bank of dreary, leaden clouds, that were piled up in the west, over the Hudson heights—crowned with farm-house or country seat, appearing among leafless trees—gave its light to a cheerless, wintry scene, in the midst of which the Hudson rolled and glittered with a broad belt of sunshine on its waves.

Stanley's eye was not much taken by the grand, sullen beauty of the scene; it simply traversed the space between him and the river—an open space, broken with rocks, bounded on the north by a deserted country-seat, and on the south by a cluster of leafless trees, which rose bare and bleak against the river and the sky. Stanley's glance was quick, searching and nervous, as his eye traversed this space, but no spoken word betrayed the real nature of his thoughts.

"Well, and now for my pet!"

He pushed open the door, and entered the bleak room, over whose naked floor the declining sunshine redly fell.

An oath burst from his lips. The room, at all times bare enough, was now without stove, table, chair or furniture of any kind. Stanley hurried into the next room, and pushed open the closed shutters. The bed had disappeared; it was completely stripped of the miserable furniture which it had held yesterday.

"Escaped, by —!" cried Stanley Burke; and then followed a torrent of curses; and then Stanley stood silent in the centre of the room, buried in thought.

Where had Margaret gone?

Could Harry Morgan have taken her from this miserable place?

It was after a long pause that Stanley walked cautiously up and down the deserted rooms, carefully peering into every nook and corner.

"It is not here," he said at length. "I must have dropped it in some other place." And presently went slowly from the house.

You may watch him as he goes; and, as his shadow is thrown long and black over the rocks, you may notice that his head is turned over his shoulder toward the river, until he is out of sight.

The next three were busy weeks with Mr. Burke.

He searched for Margaret in every nook and corner of New-York, and of the adjacent cities, but in vain.

By a fortunate speculation, he came into possession of a considerable sum of money; paid off some debts; removed from his single apartment to an elegantly furnished mansion farther up town; appeared often in Wall-street, seeming like a man possessed in every fibre with the insatiate devil of stock speculation; and once or twice gave "splendid" evening parties to a select number of friends at his new residence.

Could he have discovered Margaret's retreat, he could have been quite at ease.

And as to Harry Morgan. Where was Harry Morgan? Stanley never met him in his walks. But New-York is a large city, and you can easily lose sight of a man there.

Of course, while the three weeks passed away, many things took place, such as

murders, suicides, robberies, coroner's inquests, of which Stanley, engaged in business or pleasure, could take no cognizance.

He had scarcely time to read the papers.

There was an item which caught his eye as he sat one evening in a cushioned chair of the very saloon in which he had first met Harry Morgan; an item which appeared in the closely printed columns of a western paper. And while the barber (one of those gentlemen who speak imperfect English and wear white aprons) was oiling his hair and whiskers, Stanley read:

"Among the victims of this explosion (the paragraph treated of a steamboat explosion on the Ohio River) was one whose case excites universal sympathy. A young woman dressed in deep mourning, and bearing her babe in her arms, was driven by the flames into the river, and notwithstanding the efforts of a gallant Kentuckian to save her, was drowned. Her body floated ashore, with the dead babe still clutched in the dead mother's arms. From some letters which were found about her person, it appears that her name was Margaret Burke, or Margaret Dunbar; and that, at the time of the accident, she was on her way from New-York to St. Louis."

Stanley was a man of iron nerves, but the paper dropped from his hand. He rose hastily from the chair, and went into a part of the saloon where the gas-light did not shine so brightly. As he stood arranging his cravat before a mirror, he was startled by the sudden palor of his face.

"D—n her, she's gone, anyhow! But what was she doing west? What put it into her head to go to St. Louis?"

Hastily assuming his hat and cloak, he left the saloon, and hurried homeward, muttering oftentimes,—"Well! she is out of the way, anyhow!"

A few days after this, Stanley gave a supper to a few select friends, whom he assembled in a cozy back room of his new residence.

Supper being over, and the cloth removed, the wine was brought in, and from his place at the head of the board Stanley gazed over the faces of his guests, who numbered nine in all.

There was a merchant and a lawyer, both staid in aspect, three gentlemen of leisure, dressed in the last agony of fashion, who had known Stanley for years and had been with him perchance in many a nice enterprise; two real-estate men, from whom he had lately purchased property, and paid them cash; and

three other persons, well dressed, and having a rich flavor of Wall-street in every word and action.

You can see nine such men at any time in Broadway, and it is not worth while to describe them in detail. The room in which they were seated was a pleasant place, warmed by a bright coal fire; just the place for nine men, who feel comfortable, to chat quietly and enjoy their champagne.

"Well, gentlemen," said Stanley, filling his glass—a solitary servant stood near his shoulder—"As I am telling you, I contemplate a southern trip. My estates in Charleston, (into which, as I have told you, I have lately come by the death of my uncle,) need looking after. Possibly, I may go as far south as New-Orleans—"

"Well! here's success to you wherever you go!" interrupted one of the gentlemen of leisure, and drained his glass, the rest of the company chorusing the sentiment.

"And when I come back!"—continued Stanley, holding a brimming glass of champagne before his eyes—"And when I come back—"

His sentence was broken by the abrupt opening of the door. And to the great astonishment of the company a lady entered—a lady very pale in face and clad in black, as if in mourning for a dead husband. The sight, which simply astonished the company, paralyzed Stanley Burke.

"By—! my wife!" he ejaculated, and made a movement as if about to rise from his chair, but fell back again. And a silence like death prevailed as the lady advanced, and, resting her hand upon the back of a chair, stood like a ghost, in her dark apparel and pale face, in the centre of that festive scene.

"I wish to speak with you—alone, Mr. Burke!" said the lady in a low voice. And as she spoke, over the dark dress which she wore—upon her bosom, whose heavings were perceptible—a gold chain, curiously fashioned, of the pure ore, glittered in the light. Stanley's gaze was riveted to that chain. But he made a desperate effort to recover his composure.

"My wife, Mrs. Burke, gentlemen," he said, rising from his chair, and scarcely aware of the words which fell from his

lips. "My wife, Mrs. Burke, gentlemen—" and his face was white and scarlet by turns.

The lady, without changing her position, said in a calm, even voice, "Mr. Burke, I wish to speak with you alone," and the gold chain, as she spoke, glittered into light with every throb of her bosom.

In a confused way, Stanley begged the gentlemen to excuse him for a few moments; and then followed the lady from the supper room down stairs into the parlor, where a solitary lamp was burning. It was not until he stood in that parlor, whose glaring furniture, rich carpet, massive mirrors, luxurious sofas—all had a gloomy look in the dim light—that Stanley could recover even a portion of his usual presence of mind.

Margaret, whom he had thought of as dead—dead with her dead babe still clutched in her arms—now stood before him, living, yet still looking very much like a dead woman. Her black dress made her face seem even more unnaturally pale, and her eyes shone with a steady, clear, yet feverish light. It was Margaret, but she was indeed sadly changed.

She did not take a seat, but confronted Stanley, who, for once in his life terribly agitated, could not take his gaze from her face.

"I thought you were dead!"—hesitated Stanley. "The fact is, I saw it in the papers—"

"The papers told only a part of the truth," replied Margaret. "As you see, I am not dead, but living. I have just arrived from the West. I wish to say a few words to you. The papers, as you know, tell a great many falsehoods, but sometimes tell hard truths, although in a mysterious shape. Now, can you tell me, what truth there is in this paragraph?"

And she placed in Stanley's hands a newspaper which contained the paragraph with which we commenced this sketch, and which we now quote again:

"Yesterday evening, the body of an unknown man, entirely divested of clothing, was found floating in the North River, Pier No. . . . His hair was dark, and he appeared to be about thirty years of age. There was no mark upon him to indicate that he came to his death by violence, save, indeed, an abrasion of the skin on the right temple, evidently the result of contact with some object floating in the river. The coroner investigated the matter

thoroughly; and the jury returned a verdict that the body of the unknown had been thrown into the river by resurrectionists. It was, after the inquest, properly interred in Potter's Field."

Stanley took the paper, glanced over the paragraph—his hand shook a little—but all at once his gaze recovered its usual steadiness.

"Well, Madam! what of this?" he said, quite calmly, handing back the paper with a gleam of the old wickedness in his look. "That paragraph may be true, or may not be true. I know nothing about it."

Margaret with her eyes fixed on him, replied, "But the dead man of whom the paragraph speaks—do you know anything about him? The 'abrasion of the skin on the right temple' not the result of contact with some object floating in the river, but the result of a blow from a slung-shot or loaded cane wielded by an assassin's hand—do you know anything about that?"

As she spoke Margaret advanced, and Stanley fell back a single step. Stanley was pale, but the malignity of the master fiend burned in his eyes. His hand was clenched; he grated his teeth.

"And," said Margaret, as, with that pale face and lifted finger, she advanced yet nearer to the enraged but shrinking man—"And do you know anything about the assassin himself—the assassin who followed his victim, when that victim, mistaking his way in the darkness, wandered towards the river, followed him even to the water's edge, and in the dark crept close to him, and without warning struck him one strong and fatal blow?—the assassin who, when he found his victim dead at his feet, rifled him of everything that was valuable, made his clothes into a bundle, to which he attached a heavy stone, and then flung clothes and corpse into the river?"

Stanley retreated another step, but did not reply; his clenched hands and eyes, lit with infernal light, looked as though he was about to spring upon and throttle the woman before him.

"The assassin who, with the atmosphere of murder all about him, and the livid mark which the murdered man, in one brief struggle for his life, had printed on his hand, came to the home of his victim's wife, and dared to pollute her with his kiss, and, as she struggled in his grasp, dropped on the floor a gold

chain which he had rifled from the dead. This"—her eyes flashed, and she lifted the chain which hung upon her breast. "This gold chain! Do you know anything of this, assassin? Or do you know anything of a poor laboring man who chanced to be wandering on the river shore at the fatal hour; who came upon the murderer as he was engaged in rifling the dead; who, even in the dim light of that autumn night, saw the body hurled into the river, himself all the while very near, but unperceived—and who silently traced the murderer to my home; and then, through the city, to the murderer's own residence, where he charged him with the crime, and was, by a large sum of gold, induced to swear that, on the morrow, he would leave New-York for ever? Do you know anything of this witness, sir?"

The rage which had convulsed Stanley Burke for the last five minutes now broke forth in words. A man of greater muscular power, he now advanced upon her with clenched hands, and his small eyes flashing, and expanding in their sockets.

"You are not a woman, but a devil!" he said in a low voice. "You have seen this man—this Hoffman—but I'll yet foil you—even if I have to—!" His look alone completed the sentence. There was murder in his eyes. He sprang upon the brave, pale woman, with all the ferocity of his brutal nature—but a strong arm intervened, and a form as muscular as his own, was suddenly interposed between him and Margaret.

"I took your money, but there was blood upon it, and as soon as a few little matters are settled, you can have it back. Don't strike that gal! You struck a man once, not long ago, behind his back—strike me to the face, now, if you dare!"

It was a rough but manly face, and the speaker was the "poor laboring man," of whom Margaret had spoken rudely clad in work-day apparel, but with a muscular frame, hands hardened and knotted by labor, and a sunburnt face, overspread with wrinkles, the result not of time, but of hard work. At sight of him, Stanley staggered back; and, in his surprise, suffered these words to escape him: "I thought you were in St. Louis—in the West—anywhere but

in New-York! How came you back? You swore to me —"

But Margaret, leaning her hand on the arm of Hoffman, now spoke. "When I fled from my miserable home, I sought refuge with a poor woman in the neighborhood. Her husband had left that morning for the West. And it was from this woman that I wrung the secret of the husband's departure, which he had told her the moment before he left, torn as he was by conflicting emotions. I need not tell you that she was the wife of *this witness*; nor relate how, with my child in my arms, and with means derived from the sale of a portion of this gold chain, I followed him—found him, and induced him to return. And now, I am here; my only purpose—she spoke with a changing countenance and violent effort—"to consign to justice the man who is at the same time the murderer of my husband and the father of my child."

The strong excitement which had upheld Margaret for the last half hour now broke down all at once, and overcome by the violence of her emotions—saw her anguish—she dropped immediately to the floor.

Hoffman, the rude working man, caught her up and bore her to the sofa, and in that moment Stanley Burke hurried to the door, opened it, and closed it, crossed the threshold, and locked the door after him. Then seizing his hat and cloak, which hung upon a rack in the hall, he—with a face corrugated and livid with despair—went with an uneven step from the house, purchased with his ill-got gold, into the cold, bleak wintry night. What emotions filled the breast; what purposes thronged the brain of this bad, desperate man, as he thus hurried forth, no mortal man can ever certainly know.

Had he given up the battle as lost, irrevocably lost, or was there yet some new game to be played, some new crime to be committed, in order to patch up the bloody record of the past? Or had the brain of the strong, bad, cunning man, been bewildered by the apparitions which had started up suddenly on his path?

No pen can picture, no mortal can know, the thoughts of this man as he went forth alone into the night.

Meanwhile, his guests up stairs much wondered at his long absence.

"Strange!" cried one. "Odd!" another. "Queer!" a third. And then they drank, and there was a long pause followed by another chorus of ejaculations, and another round of champagne.

"Strange! odd! queer!" but still the host did not return. The guests waited for him deep into the night, and sacrificed themselves in the effort to exhaust his champagne; and at last, very much exhausted, and in some degree drunk—no Stanley Burke appearing—they hurried on their cloaks and overcoats, and went on their various ways surlily home.

Meanwhile, what of Margaret? Awakening from her swoon, and discovering that Burke had indeed left the house, she took the arm of Hoffman, and went with him to the humble home of himself and wife; and fevered and sleepless upon a miserable bed—her child, which was also Stanley's child, sleeping beside her—this woman, the real owner of Henry Morgan's wealth—of Stanley Burke's grand house—muttered in her half-delirious dreams the words "to-morrow! to-morrow!"

The night passed on, and passed away, and yet Stanley Burke had not returned to his mansion. But a morning paper had this brief item:

"At a late hour last night, a person respectably dressed, in attempting to spring upon one of the Jersey City ferry-boats, just as it was leaving the bridge, missed the boat and fell into the river. The night was dark and stormy, and the efforts made to save him were unavailing. He was not rescued from the waves until the 'spark of life had fled.' His body was taken charge of by coroner ———. We were not able to obtain the name of the unfortunate man. He was dressed in black, and wore a Spanish cloak, lined with velvet; and a gold watch and diamond pin, together with a pocket-book, containing bank-notes and gold to the amount of \$500, were found upon his person. The body will no doubt to-day be recognized and handed over to his friends."

And that was the last of Stanley Burke.

For it was Stanley Burke who, by accident or with the idea of self-murder, had met his death in the river which only a month before had received the body of his victim.

Here our sketch comes to a close.

Who buried the unfortunate man? who came into possession of his estate? (in reality the estate of Morgan) what became of Margaret? are matters upon which it is not well to speak plainly, as the most important events which are de-

tailed in this narrative of recent occurrence.

—On some sunny day when Broadway is thronged with a current of fashion, youth and beauty, (and, for that matter, rags, old age and ugliness too,) when the sky is full of spring, and the spire of old Trinity rises clearly into the cloudless blue, you may note among the crowd of faces a woman who is dressed in mourning; that face, framed in a dark bonnet,

wears yet upon its colorless cheek, and in its large feverish eyes, some traces of early loveliness, but it is stamped with the inevitable prophecy of a death by consumption, of a broken heart, of an untimely grave.

Alas!—would we might conclude with some words of good cheer! but the truth affords us only this,—Alas! poor Margaret Dunbar!

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