

THE GLENNS;

A FAMILY HISTORY.

BY

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'The bad man's cunning still prepares the way  
For its own outwitting.'—COLERIDGE.

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## P R E F A C E .

I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done,  
Than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching.  
MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE outline of the following story, when sketched, was designed to illustrate certain mental and moral laws by which characteristics are transmitted from parent to offspring—and thus to show *how* “the sins of the father are visited upon the children, even unto the third and fourth generation.” The physical laws were not included in the design, except as their results contribute to the mental and moral development—because such an inquiry belongs more properly to a scientific treatise, and could not be embodied in a fiction without impairing its interest.

The design has been, I fear, but indifferently executed; but in this statement of it is intimated my opinion of what the novelist's vocation is: to instruct and improve men by pointing to the sources of evil, and so to preserve consistency in his characters with their fates as not to violate the rule, that virtue shall have its reward and transgression its punishment.

‘The proper study of mankind is man.’

and in order that we may the better understand what we see—and thus be able to vindicate the justice of God's government—human character should be studied and displayed, not only in the individual, but also in its various relations, responsibilities, and penalties, of parent and child, husband and wife, and brother

and sister. This is a wide field of inquiry—too wide to be covered by one work, or even by a series of works as long as one man's life; but it is peculiarly the province of the writer of fiction and of biography, even more than of the historian. For— notwithstanding the many powerful essays, written of late years by some of the best minds in the world, to prove that history should occupy itself with the details of character, and the domestic relations of the people of whom it treats—I must still cling to the belief, that it is properly but a chronicle of events and their *political* causes; and that the domestic manners, customs and relations of men, must, in the nature of things, be left to the biographer, the novelist, and the dramatist.

To that department of the inquiry above indicated, which comprises the penalties growing out of the relation of parent and child, the following story is primarily devoted; and if the subject be but feebly illustrated, the failure must be ascribed rather to want of power in the author, than to a too low estimate of its importance.

The secondary purposes of the story are two-fold: *first*, an exemplification of the much-abused, though often fearfully vindicated, circumstantial evidence; and *second*, the exhibition of certain phases of south-western frontier life. When first appropriated, these were designed to be the subjects of two books—one the sequel of the other; but, on reflecting that I had but recently published a work, the primary purpose of which was to illustrate the former, I thought it better to condense the two into one, as they are here published. A more extended and complete picture of western life, I have reserved for a future work.

The ideas entertained by most writers of fiction concerning western life and manners, if we may judge by their delineations, are, to say the least of it, somewhat crude; and, indeed, it is no easy task to present a faithful picture of a society compounded of so many and so various elements. In order to avoid the difficulty, and perhaps for want of a sufficient knowledge of the subject, a large majority of those who have written so-

called 'Western Stories,' have contented themselves with depicting only the salient characters—men of violence, law-breakers and exiles from peaceful communities, who have been driven forth upon the frontiers by the fear of legal penalties. Even these—extravagantly lawless as they certainly are—have been exaggerated beyond all truth and nature: so that from this class of books, the only idea one can get of western society is, that it is a collection of outlaws remarkable only for their violent deeds and murderous spirit.

Now, this is by no means a true account of the matter.

That there are many lawless men in the west is undeniable; and that there are some whose lawlessness is exaggerated and romantic, is also true. But to attempt a picture of western life, by drawing only such men, is as absurd as it would be to describe a den of house-breakers and thieves, and call it a picture of *New York society*. It is even more absurd; because in New York, as in every other large city, classes of this sort may be found, whose social relations, (if they have any,) are with each other alone, and who may therefore be viewed as one phase of city life. But the outlaws on the frontiers of the west and southwest, caricatured by the stories referred to, have no such distinct existence—do not properly present an *aspect of society*, at all. Individuals, of whose characters violence and blood are naturally predicable, may be found in almost every rank and station in life; and this fact alone is sufficient to show the improbability, or rather impossibility of these delineations.

Where communities have not yet subsided to an organized level, men of quick passions and ready hands are unfortunately too common—sometimes, those who assume the responsibility of executing the laws and preserving the peace, are themselves the first to be guilty of flagrant violations. And there are, doubtless, places where such infractions are not, and many where they cannot be, punished. When, in times past, the people have taken the law into their own hands, either occasionally, or upon a regular system of defence, the leaders of the

police forces have too often been the very men against whom they should have been directed; and almost invariably, corps of "Regulators," from being the defenders, have come to be the oppressors of the peaceful citizen. And moreover, fugitives from justice, and those whom their example and conversation have corrupted—with the impatient, fiery temper produced by education and mode of life—are sometimes very prominent in the history of frontier communities. But a book, which should depict such characters *only*, would give but a partial and incomplete account of the society, of which they in fact form but an inconsiderable division. Yet, that they furnish the staple of most "Western Stories," is as undeniable as that all such pictures are absurd caricatures.

A New York journalist, who properly reprobates the libels of which we speak, in noticing a recent work on western manners, has the following true remark: "Quite enough of the horrid and romantic may be found, ready made to the author's hand, without his indulging in such ridiculously stupid and outrageously improbable fictions, as many have done, who, knowing nothing of the ground, sit quietly in their chimney corners, and deluge a credulous world with a careless stream of senseless trash—enjoying the pseudonyms of 'Western Stories,' at only twenty-five cents per copy." And though it may possibly be true, that the extravagance of the characters depicted—as compared with the aspects of human nature in older communities—may lead eastern people sometimes to mistake a true story for a false, it is unquestionable that the thing has been lamentably overdone. But the error is easily traced to its source. In contemplating the racy and projecting points of western life, writers are led to forget that there are other men, besides the outlaws whom they paint, and other pursuits, besides horse-stealing and throat-cutting, which in reality contribute not a little to both the elements and developments of western society.

That men may retreat to the solitudes and romantic adventures of a lately-peopled, or thinly-peopled, frontier, from causes

independent of either social or legal necessity, seems utterly to have been forgotten; that restlessness, enterprising spirit, or reverses of fortune and the hope of retrieving them, may have led even peaceful citizens to emigrate westward, is not remembered; and but few have entertained the supposition that such men, actuated by such motives, may make good citizens, or lay the foundation of a permanent community, even though surrounded by, and mingling with, men of a very different stamp. Yet peddlars of clocks and tinware, hunting-parties in broad-cloth and high-heeled boots, bloody-minded Indian-fighters, thirsting for scalps, or organized bands of robbers and cut-throats, are not the principal, or even the most "respectable," characters to be met west of the Mississippi. In some places they have built churches, and now and then the voice of prayer, exhortation and praise may be heard ascending from among the primeval solitudes. Courts of Law—feeble, indeed, in the first years of their establishment, but waxing stronger as the citizen gradually awakes to the importance of securing his rights—extend occasionally to the very borders of the wilderness. Marrying and giving in marriage—rearing and educating children—tilling the ground—buying and selling—making and executing laws—electing officers, determining controversies, punishing criminals—helping the needy, visiting the sick, burying the dead, educating the orphan, and exercising all the charities and amenities of life—these things are a part of the practice and history of western men, as well as cutting throats, stealing horses, shooting Indians, and circumventing each other. All this is common-place, it is true, and does not "tell" so well in a story as the more violent and romantic phases of the same society. But if such things are not delineated, their existence should at least be remembered and recognised; and a picture of western life and manners should not be so painted as utterly to preclude everything natural, civilized or tame.

Doubtless, we must expect that in works of fiction, the most prominent characteristics of the society portrayed, will receive the first and greatest attention. I only complain that they have

been so depicted as to exclude even the supposition of less obtrusive but equally important aspects. And accordingly, in the following story—where it relates peculiarly to south-western life—I have endeavored, while seizing some of these salient points of local manners, to keep in view the fact that the characters indicated are only the more remarkable; and that the great body of the population, even at that comparatively early period, was made up of very different sorts of people. Yet—even with this caution—the reader must not conclude that San Antonio de Bexar was, at that period, anything like a fair specimen of our western towns. Many causes, fresh in the memory of every one, had concurred to make it a peculiarly wild and lawless place. It was so as late as 1846—as will be recollected by all who were there during the gathering of General Wool's column in that year—when the police of this able disciplinarian probably preserved better order than had ever been known there before.

All who are acquainted with western scenes and manners will, I think, perceive that this is in every part a western story; for I have endeavored to delineate only such scenes and characters as have from time to time come under my own observation in the western country. Whether faithfully drawn or not, they are, at all events, *not exaggerated*.

I do not make these remarks with a view of disarming criticism; for I know my own interests too well to desire to escape it. Nor do I wish to avoid a fair trial by a just standard, upon the question whether I have drawn my characters truthfully. But I wish it to be remembered, that what would be *natural* in the older States of our Union, may be very *unnatural* beyond the Mississippi; and since I have not attempted to delineate character as developed in the East, it is but fair that I should be judged by the social laws of the western country. Nor must I be understood to claim, that I have made no mistake in reference to this code: I only ask that the "*lex fori*" may not be substituted for the "*lex loci*."

As to the position I have assumed in relation to circumstan-

tial evidence, I feel that I need say nothing. A system so frequently and so fearfully vindicated—resting so immediately upon the course of human events and the progress of God's providence—needs no bolstering beyond a simple reference to facts.

And, in conclusion, I can only hope that my pictures of western society will not be misunderstood; or the lessons I have endeavored to teach be perverted or neglected. And if any one should disagree with my *positions*—(the *story* I must, of course, abandon to the mercy of the reader)—I beg to refer him to Pope—who, whether a poet or not, was certainly a philosopher:—

"Tis with our judgments as our watches: none  
Go just alike, yet each believes his own."

NEW YORK, *March*, 1851.

# BOOK FIRST.

## CHAPTER I.

How complicate, how wonderful, is man!—Young.

FAMILY resemblances are among the most capricious phenomena of human nature. Between every two of each family in the world, there is a striking resemblance in some one or two particulars—some likeness which *may* exist between persons not related by blood or marriage; but which is most frequently found among the members of the same family, and is therefore referable to consanguinity. A peculiar feature of the face—a singular outline of form—the shape of a hand or a tone of the voice—may mark the common origin; and either one of these or other like characteristics may always be observed.

We have said these signs are capricious, and by this we mean, that they depend upon causes which we cannot trace. A family now living may have been marked for many generations, by the peculiar form of the nose or hand; the children of those now with us may not have it—nay, they may be noted for a totally different mark, say the shape of the foot, or a cast of the eye. The first point of ancient family likeness shall be sunk for many generations—appearing in none—marking none, until it shall be almost forgotten. And then at some remote future period—like the fabled river that runs under the sea—it shall reappear among the posterity of those who had it not, distinguishing each in the absence of those marks which distinguish the families of those now living. And in the remote and forgotten past, there probably lived many generations whose affinity was determined by the same peculiarities—the shape of the foot, or the cast of an eye—which are now reappearing, after having been sunk for centuries. These things, physiolo-

gists may tell us, depend upon accident—a convenient word, including millions of phenomena, as completely within the course of nature as birth and death—which are fortuitous only for the reason that their causes are beyond our knowledge.

The human race is distinguished from every other by tokens which are unmistakeable—general limits (corresponding in generality with the extent of the class circumscribed), confine and protect the domain of intelligence. Between nations and subordinate divisions of mankind, there are similar lines of separation—lines which time, climate, diet, and mixture of blood cannot wholly obliterate. The high cheek bones and sandy hair of the Scotchman will reappear, after many generations of mixed blood, under the burning sun and on the parched plains of the tropics. The glassy, black skin of the negro will stand for centuries among the red men of the North; and the thick lips and flattened nose will be found when the amount of African blood is so small as not to tinge the skin. Upon the Jew there rests a curse of fearful import, and wander as he may, to the north or the south, the remarkable physiognomy of the scattered people is never changed. And it would seem that a similar law governs all other lineage; for in the motliest assemblage, one skilled in national appearance, will be able unerringly to select all who have Scotch, Irish, Spanish, German, or Eastern blood. Among families, too, even where frequent intermarriages with others have obscured the distinction, the prevailing characteristics of blood will always be seen. No lapse of time, no change of climate, no reverse of fortune, and no succession of crosses, can wholly obliterate it or produce the slightest inconsistency with the originally appointed peculiarities of the race. These causes may modify, or even temporarily conceal, the marks; but in some future generation, when the posterity has almost forgotten its lineage, the reappearance of the ancient badge of blood may remind them of their fathers; and they may learn from dim tradition or accidental record that their remote progenitors were, for many ages, remarkable for the same thing which now so strangely reappears. The characters of race, written with invisible ink upon the page of family history, are brought into contact with the test that brings them out, and the lineage is again revived and proven.

Around subordinate divisions lines are thus drawn, which, like those about the aggregate race, are commensurate with the space enclosed. And if we knew nothing of individuals, but were acquainted with these facts, we should reason from them to the conclusion, that this law obtains quite as distinctly in

the separation of units; and what reflection would anticipate, observation confirms; that contrary to all mathematical principles, the same lines are both parallel and divergent; or, more intelligibly, that, though the limits which bound races and families necessarily enclose many individuals within each subdivision, yet those individuals are alike only in reference to those extreme lines; and that within these enclosures there are yet other divisions, each covering one individual and no more. The only reason, then, why we cannot read a man's whole character in every action he performs, is because our acquaintance with the language of human action is not sufficiently thorough, and not because he does not exhibit all he *is* in everything he *does*. For if those things which pertain to the man as an individual, belong to him exclusively, it follows—since effects vary only as their causes differ—that all his actions must be consistent with but one nature, and that, his individual composition. It follows also that “inconsistency,” when applied to human action, is a word, like “accident” and others of a kindred character, which has no meaning, except such as we attach to it through ignorance of the subject to which it is applied. Were our knowledge of human character and of the springs of human action complete, the idea of inconsistency, with many other groundless notions, would be exploded, and men would be viewed as they are—incapable of doing anything not perfectly consistent with, and inferable from, any other action which they may or can do.

Men are, then, alike and yet unlike—similar and yet totally different—alike in general classes, and entirely unlike in units; and the family resemblances, of which we spoke in the beginning, are the points of similitude in generals. No family is without them, and yet no two members of the same family ever were otherwise than totally and, so to speak, infinitely different. But—though beneath the surface all families are alike in their dissimilarity—we occasionally see one in which the likeness and the difference are so combined as to be equally perceptible: not to be mistaken at a glance, and giving, in the first moment of acquaintance, a complete family history. Those persons who are most alike in generals are often least alike in details, as if Nature meant to compensate herself for partial monotony with increased variety. A striking physical resemblance is therefore no ground for inferring mental or moral likeness; but, upon the principle just stated, rather the reverse. If you put into two vessels of equal size a solution of ten drugs in equal parts, the contents of each vessel will be precisely like those of the other:

then throw into one of them a single drop of another drug, or a single additional drop of any one, and the whole compound will be changed. The two, originally alike, are now totally different, there is not a single point of resemblance between them, except in the general characteristic that they are both liquid. So among men, and particularly among members of the same family: alike in ten points, one of them may have an eleventh which, pervading and mingling with the others, changes the whole character, and makes them totally unlike. And this is perceptible, too, at a glance, however great the physical resemblance, however little we know of the persons observed. One may go as a stranger into a family whose likeness to each other physically is very obvious, and though he may not know precisely what the difference is, he will be at once convinced that there are no two among them all in the least alike.

Every one can recall such examples. We remember one now; and it is of this one that we are about to write.

So far as history informs us, the Glenn family never had a daughter among the many births of a progeny by no means scanty. They have been the sons of sons for many generations; and, notwithstanding mixture of blood, the Glenn form and the Glenn face have never been absent in a single generation. They have been uniformly tall, invariably handsome. All have been distinguished for more than ordinary intellectual power, but none has ever risen above a private station. This fact may be accounted for by the circumstance that they have almost all inherited wealth, and, excepting one, all have at some period of their lives, been spendthrifts. Abram Glenn, the exception,—at the opening of our story approaching threescore years in age—was the eldest of three brothers. The two younger, Arthur and George, were twins, born some months after the death of their father. By the decease of their mother, which occurred but a few years after, the three boys were made orphans when Abram, the eldest, was not twelve years of age. But, young as he was, he had already been placed by his mother in the mercantile house of a friend, whose chief excellences were stern integrity and unswerving constancy to his business. In his society Abram had, perhaps, corrected what slight tendency he might have had to prodigality or indolence, before he reached the age of eighteen—the period of his majority, as fixed by the will of his father. In his twentieth year he was admitted as a partner of an old and respectable firm—a step which his diligence encouraged, quite as much as his share of his father's estate—and soon afterwards was

appointed guardian of his younger brothers. Abram had as much worldly wisdom and as much natural discretion as usually falls to the lot of a man so young; but for some reason—perhaps the family recklessness and proclivity to scatter worldly goods—his guardianship apparently did little for his wards. For five years had not elapsed, after the day upon which they attained their majority, and assumed the management of their own affairs, before both had been married, each had spent the last dollar of his inheritance, and both had “gone to that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns.” Each left one son in infancy, and of these children, also, Abram was appointed guardian. The mother of Henry (the younger of the nephews), and the widow of Arthur, survived her husband scarcely two years. The widow of George (the mother of James, the elder of the children,) was married again within twelve months: closing a dashing widowhood with an imprudent and mercenary marriage.

Richard Shelton, her second husband,—of whom we shall have more to say hereafter—was the son of another family who had emigrated to the West at about the same time with the Glenns, and, like them, had acquired wealth by the rise of real estate. A worn-out Virginia plantation had been sold for enough to purchase large tracts of the rich lands of the Mississippi valley, and the tide of emigration flowing in had raised its value several hundred per centum. Richard's father, however,—a bluff Virginian of the genuine stamp, half cavalier, half backwoodsman,—had only lived long enough to know that he was fast growing rich; and when he died, he left his son that most easily squandered of all possessions, a landed estate. Richard was recalled by the event from an Eastern college, where he was about closing a career in which he had gained distinction for many other things besides the talents and habits of a student. He was, in fact, what is called “a wild young man,” and at once launched into the tempting dissipations, and perhaps vices, which are so easily yielded to by young men in his position. These habits grew upon him, until he became enamored of a Miss Eversham, the only sister of a man to whom we will introduce the reader anon. Her family were the very essence of exclusiveness, but at that time, unfortunately, very poor. Shelton was rich, for as yet his dissipations had not impaired his inheritance, and they were soon married. It was, however, a marriage of affection as well as convenience, and Miss Eversham, though somewhat haughty and extravagant, was a very lovely woman.

Though the match was well assorted in many respects, unluckily neither possessed the qualities which the other needed in a partner. Both were social, careless of money, thoughtless of the future, and fond of display. A few years wore on, and she sickened and died; and scarcely was she buried ere Shelton discovered that, besides being a widower with a young child, he was almost penniless, and without the resource of business or profession. He had nothing but his dexterity upon which to depend. Reasonably well educated, accomplished and thoroughly versed in human nature, he felt that he had no reason to despair; but, unfortunately, his confidence was not based upon a manly self-reliance or firm integrity of purpose. The nature of his life at college—afar from all the wholesome and restraining influences of home—might perhaps have impaired his principles, and, at the best, had taught him unconsciously to rely for success upon adroitness and management, rather than upon honor and truth. He had always been extremely popular in society, where no one ever considered him depraved by dissipation or corrupted by bad habits. This social position he was unwilling to lose; and yet the expenses growing out of it were far beyond his means. The absence of more honorable sources of supply, and perhaps the want of moral courage to use them, had they been present, led him to the gaming table; and, in its turn, this, though understood to be pursued only for amusement, gradually undermined his respectability. Had it been known that his fortune was consumed, and that he was depending in a great measure upon chance for his subsistence, he would at once have been excluded from society; and it was the knowledge of this fact, with perhaps the consciousness that his pursuits and situation were unworthy of his character, which made him desperate and reckless.

His fortunes stood thus when George Glenn died, and his widow almost directly afterwards threw off her half-worn weeds and reappeared in society. She gave out that her husband had made a settlement upon her before their marriage, of twelve hundred a year, and the story was accidentally strengthened by misconstrued words that had fallen from Abram. It was still very generally believed that Shelton was wealthy; and he was yet in great request among all who prize good-fellowship above good morals, and a welcome guest at the houses of many who forgave his irregularities for the sake of his talents. He was a widower, she was a widow—each had the reputation of moderate wealth—neither had anything *but* the reputation. Shelton

was determined to rescue himself from equivocal paths, even at the risk of domestic misery. She was determined to have another wealthy husband at the same risk. Identity of design brought them together—each courted the other—and of course they “married in haste to repent at leisure.” But a short time sufficed to discover the poverty of both; but each had the good sense to feel the justice of the punishment. Shelton consoled himself with the thought that at least he had a comely wife; and she, upon reflection, was content, since at all events she had a husband. This was better than could have been expected. But residence there was no longer to be thought of—the mask must soon be stripped from both. Without delay they made their preparations for departure.

But a difficulty arose in the outset of their arrangements; the child of her former marriage must be either taken with her or provided for before they left the place; and Shelton told her rather roughly, that “he had married her and not her child.” In truth, however, could she get the boy once off her hands, she was as little inclined to burden her new husband as herself; and she agreed with him that his little Margaret, (scarcely so old as her boy,) would be quite trouble enough for one so little maternally inclined as she. It was, therefore, with but moderate show of regret, and perhaps still less real sorrow, that she acceded to Abram’s request that she would leave the child with him—palliating her want of natural affection to others by the consideration that Abram, who was a confirmed and wealthy bachelor, would doubtless amply provide for him. Soon after this unnatural transfer, she went away with her husband, none knew and few cared to enquire whither.

Abram, we said, was a confirmed bachelor.

Now the Glenns were never noted for celibacy, but rather the reverse; and the singularity in this case was rendered more remarkable by the fact that he was rich; for it would seem to be as hard for “a rich man” to go through the world unmarried, as it is, according to Scripture, for him “to enter the kingdom of Heaven.” He must be utterly insensible to female charms: to a dislike of matrimony, he must add rare sagacity in detecting wiles and avoiding “man-traps” of every conceivable kind; or, he must early meet with some experience which acidifies and turns his stomach against everything of the sort. This last was Abram’s case. A few years before the death of his brothers, he had met with a young lady of great personal attractions and of corresponding poverty, of whom he had become enamored after the manner of all the Glenns—desperately and impa-

tiently. He was disappointed; how, the reader will learn hereafter. He had at once and forever abandoned all thought of love or marriage, and was, as we have said, at the period of Mrs. George Glenn's second union, a confirmed bachelor.

In a merely worldly view, the reasoning of the last mentioned lady, that her son would probably be better cared for by his uncle than by her new husband and herself, was not far from correct. For no father ever watched more carefully or guarded more scrupulously the education of his son, than did Abram that of both his nephews. His want of experience and solitary habits may, in a measure, have unfitted him for the task of guide and protector; but so far as his knowledge and ability extended, no parent could exceed him in zeal and vigilance. If he erred culpably in anything, it was in allowing both his wards a rather free command of money. He thought, and very correctly, that denying them could but produce one of two results, it would either lower their standard of self-respect, thus doing their characters an irreparable injury, by the comparison they would not fail to make between their own stinted allowance and the more liberal supply of their companions—or it would tempt them to equivocal and perhaps criminal means of obtaining that which their boyish feelings represented as indispensable. In either event their characters would be seriously, perhaps permanently injured, and in the one case probably as vitally as in the other. He knew the pride of the race, and he was too sensible a man not to know that what would ruin a boy of one temperament, would only develope and improve one of another. He had never fallen into the stupid, pedagogical mistake—founded upon the astonishing wisdom of the truism, that "boys are boys"—that all children must be subjected alike to the same discipline. He was accordingly sensible that refusing his wards the means of gratifying their harmless, boyish wants, would so touch their pride and heat their naturally warm blood, that they might be hurried into faults for which years of repentance could not atone.

In all this he was perfectly right; but he did not reflect that the very same natures upon which these results were predicable, might, by having the means of unlimited indulgence at command, be led into errors of another sort, scarcely less pernicious. He erred in not stopping at the medium between the two extremes—where they would have enough to prevent them being humbled in the presence of their companions, and yet not enough to lead them to excess. But it was not in Abram Glenn's nature to stint any one; neither was he of that class

of cent-per-cent dealers, who, owing you a dollar, will endeavor to discharge the debt with a five-franc piece. What he owed he paid punctually and in full—what he gave, was given freely, and with no ungenerous or hesitating hand.

He erred likewise, perhaps quite as seriously, in not varying his government according to the character of each of his wards. For, though in some respects alike, no two boys were ever more nearly each other's opposites. Each partook liberally of the characteristics of his mother. Henry was calm, gentle and docile, except when ruffled by imposition or roused by insult. At such times the hot blood of the family showed itself, and while the paroxysm continued, nothing could govern him. He was passionate by nature, but this trait was accompanied and qualified by a remarkably clear judgment and a quick sense of justice. His attacks of passion though violent were generally evanescent, usually ending in hearty repentance and sincere atonement. He would sternly withstand encroachment upon his rights, even in the smallest affairs, and in his resistance no one was more doggedly resolute. His sense of justice, as we shall see hereafter, sometimes made him exacting to those who had wronged him; and his demands were not unfrequently out of proportion to the injury done. Yet, if in passion he wronged another, not a single step would he go beyond what his judgment pointed to as adequate reparation. This might have been called an inconsistency in his character; but could we explore the recesses where lie hidden the springs of human action, we should doubtless find that the very same cause which prompts unreasonable exaction from others, also incites resistance to their exorbitant demands. As might be expected in such a character, he was warm and steady in his attachments, and if not equally warm quite as steady and perfectly decided in his resentments and dislikes. He could not very easily forgive an injury, without proper acknowledgment and reparation from the wrong-doer, for the very same reason for which he could not lightly forget a benefit or forsake a friend. He was liberal and generous though not ostentatious or profuse in his social intercourse, simple, straight-forward, and void of pretension in his manners, and open, engaging and entertaining in his discourse. Added to these traits of character, (properly so classed,) he possessed a brilliant though perhaps not very profound intellect; and at the age of twenty-four, when our immediate concern with him commences, his intellect was developed by every advantage which flows from a complete education and extensive intercourse with good society. He had been bred to the law—

a profession which enforces more rigid reflection and more rapid perception than all others. This discipline had in some degree corrected his tendency to diffuseness, but still his talents and habits of thought were rather those of the declaimer than the debater—(the word *logician* is not in the legal vocabulary.) With a fine voice, a handsome figure, and an open, manly countenance, (adding immensely, as these things do, to the power of oratory or conversation,) he was well fitted to make his way at the bar and in society.

In the latter sphere he was assisted no little by the consideration, that as equal heir with his Cousin James of his uncle's estate, he would probably inherit some fifty or sixty thousand dollars. The only wonder was how, with his pleasing manners and engaging appearance, heightened as they both were by his expectations, he had lived to the age of twenty-four in single blessedness. Perhaps a partial explanation might be found in the hale appearance and erect carriage of the uncle, upon whose demise only the aforesaid money was to come. Perhaps distance instead of "lending enchantment to the view," in this, rather dimmed the splendor of his expectations. Be this as it may, at the age of twenty-four he was still unmarried, though, as we shall see anon, at least on the road which leads to another condition.

In pursuance of the mistaken system which had led the guardian-uncle to avoid even the appearance of a distinction between his wards, Abram had also bred James, who was nearly two years Henry's elder, to the law. In many respects we have said, he was like his cousin. In form and face they were, so far as physical feature and outline go, almost counterparts. But even the most superficial observer could not have overlooked the fact that James possessed a character as nearly the opposite of his cousin's, as human character could be. His temper was haughty, intractable and stubborn; his anger was easily kindled, and his resentments never died except in revenge. What his cousin would exact as a reparation due to justice, he would seek, and by fair means or foul obtain, as a vengeance. He never forgave an injury, not because of the warmth of his passions merely, for he could desert a friend as coldly in the hour of need, and laugh him to scorn as heartlessly as the veriest Round-head. His selfishness was intense, and his pride in due proportion. In his boyhood he was remarkable for the daring and hardihood of his exploits, and the perfect unscrupulousness he exhibited whenever obstacles to his wishes were to be surmounted. Gifted with both physical and moral courage in an

eminent degree, the almost total want of conscientiousness, (a trait inherited from his mother,) made it a dangerous endowment. A fierce temper accompanying it, there was scarcely anything which he would not dare.

Notwithstanding these dangerous qualities, his open-handed generosity, or rather prodigality, in matters of money, a free, dashing spirit, and the ability to make himself extremely agreeable to almost any one, had, at the period of which we have spoken, rendered him a great favorite, in the very same circle where his gentler cousin was also admired. His unlimited command of money, (while the temptations in its train had destroyed what little conscience he ever possessed,) had drawn around him many such friends as always buzz about one who has money and spends it freely. He was, moreover, an equal heir-expectant with his Cousin Henry, of all his uncle's moderately large estate, and probably had his faults been far more glaring than his adroitness and plausibility allowed them to appear, he would still have been received *ad eundem*, by all who bowed down before the shrine of Mammon. Like his cousin he was still unmarried, although nearly two years older; and for this perhaps the same reason may be given which we assigned for the bachelorship of the former, with also this other, that, notwithstanding his expectations, the marriageable could not but argue badly of an union with one of so violent a character. Not that there were wanting many, both mothers and daughters, who would gladly have taken "him for better or for worse." Far from it! There were not a few who would willingly have embraced a proposition from him, just as they would have accepted Satan, could he have exhibited title deeds to a fair landed estate in the lower world, and agreed to live "in good style," in the upper air of Fashion.

Still James remained single, though his twenty-sixth birthday was past and he was rapidly rising at the bar—nay! though Uncle Abram had of late exhibited unfailing signs of declining health! Many persons, having the same knowledge of James as the reader now has, would have assigned as one reason for his celibacy, that he was hunting a fortune, on the ground that one of his selfish character would of course seek wealth with his wife. But it was not so. It far oftener happens that men of his temperament marry and get no portion but beauty—for beauty, being physical, is what attracts them most forcibly.

We shall see hereafter its influence over James.

## CHAPTER II.

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,  
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow,  
An age of poverty.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

To lose hope, care not for the coming thing.—FESTUS.

WE have said that Abram Glenn had been disappointed in early life. He had been enamored of a face and form of no ordinary loveliness. Miss Grant had beauty, but unluckily she had little else to justify Abram's attachment. In those days the young merchant was not so wealthy as he afterwards became, and accordingly Miss Grant married Mr. Vincent, a man some ten years Abram's senior, and forty or fifty thousand dollars his superior. Whether this was a thorough sale of herself for so much money, or was prompted by attachment to Vincent, we presume not to say; we shall see hereafter what Abram thought of it, and in the mean time let us hope for the best. She was a giddy, thoughtless girl, who, having been raised in the lap of luxury, had been reduced to the strait of poverty. In her composition there was nothing decidedly good, and probably not much that was absolutely bad. Her character, if she had any, was negative, and almost the only clear notions she had ever acquired, were of the advantages of having plenty of money. Whatever she might have been, if properly trained, as it was she was susceptible of few higher or nobler impulses than those which actuated the devotees of fashion. Mr. Vincent was a weak, uxorious husband, as fond of display as his wife, and possessed of no higher ambition than a desire to see her better dressed and more fashionable than any one in her circle. Immediately after their marriage she launched into the expensive stream of fashion, and was borne upon the current buoyantly by the large fortune of her husband.

Home, except for the reception of "company," was no place for her. The endless round of dissipation in which she lived, left her own fireside gloomy and deserted. The lapse of a year or two began to open Mr. Vincent's eyes, but he was too weak, indeed it was too late to effect a change. He found his fortune rapidly melting away, but he had not the energy to grasp it back.

It would be cruel, he thought, to check a light-hearted woman in the only course which could satisfy her nature; and, patiently and indolently, he allowed his ruin to come upon him.

They lived childless for three years, but at the end of that period a daughter was born to them. Now to this event Mr. Vincent had looked forward, with the hope that the new duties and new relations thus imposed would recall his wife to her home, and at last domesticate her by his side; and for a few months it seemed that his hopes were about to be realized. During that time, nothing could tempt her from home; she was so wholly wrapped up in her child, that her husband began to repent his unreasonable wishes, and to fear that a change so sudden and so radical might injuriously affect her health. But had his penetration been equal to his fondness, he would have seen that her interest in the child was of the species exhibited by little girls in a new doll—continuing only so long as the novelty might last, and fading with the lapse of time. For the first three or four months she would hardly allow the child to leave her arms; the nurse provided months before had nothing to do and was discharged. Her silks and satins, her ball dresses and street costumes lay untouched in their well-filled drawers; plain chintz wrappers and loose dressing-gowns usurped the place of fashionable walking-dresses and party outfits. When her former friends called upon her, she always had an apology to make for her *dishabille*; and, to enforce it, she generally brought "the baby" into the parlor, if it happened to be awake, to show her visitors the justification of her seclusion.

If "the baby" was asleep, no one was allowed to speak except in a whisper, on pain of instant banishment; the piano was closed, the guitar was tabooed, boots were interdicted, and the bell was muffled. If Mr. Vincent wished to enjoy a quiet cigar, he must go out of the house, lest the smoke might hurt "the baby"—and, lest the street-door might disturb its slumbers, he must make his *exit* by the back way, and reach the street by the garden-gate. The Doctor was scarcely ever out of the house; not because "the baby" was ill—for indeed it was most alarmingly healthy—but because she was "afraid it *might be* taken with some dreadful disease, and no doctor near." If coal was to be placed in the grate, either Mr. Vincent must put it in lump by lump with his fingers, or "Thomas" must come in on tiptoe, leaving his boots below, lest the noise should disturb "the baby." Mr. Vincent might lie in one posture until he was full of aches "from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot," he must not move or turn over—for fear of waking

"the baby." And yet he must not take a bed in another part of the house, because "the baby" might be attacked by the croup, or might cry to have some one walk up and down the floor with it in his arms, and then he would not be within call. In short, when "the baby" slept the whole house was under a spell, whose enchantment consisted in profound silence and unbroken stillness, and all who came within the magic circle were at once laid under its influence.

On the other hand, when "the baby" was awake, the household was equally subject to the tyranny which seemed to be a condition of its existence. If Mr. Vincent's watch-chain attracted its attention, the watch must come from the pocket and be delivered over, at the imminent risk and to the frequent smashing of crystals and face. If "the baby" cried for the porcelain vases on the mantel, or the little Sevres card-baskets on the table, they were immediately on the floor or in the "crib" beside it, and were, soon afterwards, in many pieces. If it wanted "papa's" papers, either they must be forthwith given up, or both baby and mother would concur in raising a domestic storm. If an important paper, or anything else of peculiar value was missed, when inquiry was made for it, the chances were twenty to one that it had been given to "the baby,"—and on all such occasions, Mr. Vincent's chagrin or vexation was treated with merited indifference. If, as often happened, after obtaining everything within its mother's reach, and breaking everything that could be broken, "the baby" still cried immoderately and annoyingly, it was quite as much as Mr. Vincent's life was worth to express the least vexation or impatience. He might be roused from a sound sleep, and forced to get up in the cold ten times in a night for something for "the baby," and yet a murmur or a natural wish expressed to know the necessity for all these things, was high treason to the household sovereignty. The lawful master of the premises had sunk, like a deposed monarch, to utter insignificance, and become the lowest servant of the young usurper. The mother was the Grand Vizier of the little Sultana, and in her name ruled every one, herself included, with an iron rod. There was no law but the will and pleasure of the despot, and no appeal from her determinations. And this was the woman whom Abram Glenn had loved!

But after a time—fortunately for the peace of all concerned—the novelty began to wear off. The fact that "the dear little thing," so strangely come into the world, had fingers and toes and eyes and mouth like other people, began to be less surprising: by degrees, less enchanting. In the music of its tiny

voice occasionally mingled a note of discord, and in its extravagant demands for everything which caught its eye, even its mother could now and then faintly discern something rather inadmissible, and most especially when it wished to rumple some of her own neglected finery. Now and then she would become dimly conscious that the fond exhibition of her "pretty darling" to her fashionable acquaintance, slightly bored them; and she could even see—astounding penetration!—that "the baby's" desire to handle lace caps and carefully arranged jewelry and collars, annoyed the ladies, as its tendency to disarrange shirt bosoms alarmed the gentlemen. First the bell was disenthralled; then her lady visitors were sometimes invited to the piano, and the gentlemen to thrum the monotonous guitar, and at last she even yielded to the earnest solicitations of both, and now and then consented, herself, to play and sing. And, finally, the long-neglected fashions began again to share her attention; invitations and cards were scrutinized more closely, and not, as before, thrown aside unnoticed. About this time she suddenly discovered that she needed the nurse, who had been sent away,—that she had neglected her friends too long,—that her health was suffering from her seclusion,—that it was "a bore to be confined at home forever,"—that "a woman in her position owed something to society,"—and, in short, she was satiated with the novelty of "the baby," and was pining for her ancient dissipations. And now, peace began to reappear; the nurse was brought back, and with her the little dragon vanished to a remote wing of the house,—Mr. Vincent might smoke a cigar without retreating through the garden-gate,—the morning calls began to be returned,—the dresses were drawn from their receptacles,—and Mrs. Vincent reappeared in the scenes of her former triumphs.

At the end of five years Mr. Vincent found himself a bankrupt: a consummation he had had the sagacity to foresee, though not the energy to avert. It was with no little trouble—and perhaps at the the expense of some tortuous conveyancing—that he saved from the wreck of his estate enough to support himself and his small family in a style extremely modest. Even this would have been stripped away from him, had it not been for a composition which he succeeded in making with some generous creditors, the chief of whom was Abram Glenn,—for they pitied his weakness, though not his misfortunes. His wife was, perhaps, imperfectly conscious that she had not been wholly without agency in producing the catastrophe, and, for nearly a year after their removal from their

former elegant residence to a modest cottage, she was almost as much secluded as she had been in the first months of her daughter's life.

What were the secrets of that domestic circle, we will not undertake to say: how many tears of vain repentance, how many sighs of weak repining that year knew, we cannot estimate. Nor can we tell how much or how little peace was found within the lines where dwelt the consciousness of many follies and the petulance of disappointed frivolity, where not even the recollection of a well-spent hour could come to alleviate the bitterness of altered fortunes. During that year but few of her ancient friends could recollect her, except to "patronize" and pity her: she drank to the dregs the cup commended to her lips by her own folly. And though at the end of that period she mingled again among those by whom she had been deserted, it was with a wofully altered mein. Her step had grown heavy and her voice was deeper,—the joy had faded from her eye and the grace had left her form. Her unfailing good nature had vanished, too, and many of those who had not been blown away by the blasts of misfortune, were now estranged by her petulant and unequal temper. Her home was as little a *home* as ever—perhaps, if possible, even less—and had it not been for the modesty of her establishment, and the attention necessary to be paid to her child, probably her foot would have been but transiently within its threshold. Abroad, she met little but insulting coldness or pity, still more offensive, and at home there was only that which constantly reminded her of the change in her fortunes.

Four miserable, comfortless years rolled away. The constant efforts to regain her old position in society, and the signal failure of all her attempts, told fearfully upon her health, as they had already ruined her temper. She chafed and repined at her lot as impatiently as if she had not brought it upon herself. She believed that the loss of her wealth was the sole cause of her diminished consideration, and, while she courted society, she despised it. But she forgot the loss of her cheerfulness, the change in her temper, the flight of her good nature, and the dulness of her spirits,—she never dreamed that she was not so fascinating as when the smiles of fortune rested on her, and she blamed others for not seeing charms which one look at her glass might have told her were gone forever. Sickness came in the train of disappointment, and poverty was accompanied by discontent.

In the eleventh year of her marriage she gave up the struggle.

She came home one night from a ball, heated and out of humor, and laid aside her finery without speaking a word. She had met with even more neglect than she had of late been accustomed to experience, and it seemed to have given the finishing blow to her failing spirit. Her husband endeavored to soothe her evident depression, but she turned away from him in silence. He inquired anxiously about her health, and in his voice there thrilled a tone of by-gone tenderness; but it called up no answering expression from his stricken wife. She was carefully folding and laying away a skirt of white satin with its overdress of pink tarleton—her only remaining party attire—and she answered briefly, "she was well." Having softly closed the drawer in which the dress was deposited, she went into the next room where her daughter, a child of seven years, was sleeping. Bending over the couch, her mother gently kissed her forehead, and disposing the bed-clothes carefully around the slumbering child, she returned to her own room with a quiet, noiseless step. Her husband watched her uneasily as, with a look of exhaustion, she threw herself upon her pillow. He made several attempts to cheer her, but she turned her face to the wall and seemed to sleep. From that bed she never arose: when she left that room it was to be carried to the churchyard. Her physician could discover no disease, no fever seemed to be consuming her, no vital function had lost its power; but the iron had entered into her soul, and the flame of life went out.

The spectacle of a funeral brought many around her grave; many who had known her in her days of pride, but had forgotten her in poverty, until recalled to the past by the announcement of her death. Mr. Vincent held his little daughter by the hand as they lowered her mother to her final resting-place; and Abram Glenn bent his eyes upon the coffin, though a tear obscured his sight, while recollections of his boyhood's love came floating up from by-gone years. The clouds fell in upon the coffin as the cold and careless trampled on the margin of the grave, and the sound came chill and hollow on the ear. They turned away and left her alone, the most of all who stood around forgetting her before they reached their homes. The widowed father and the motherless daughter went weeping back to their desolate fireside; and they mourned for her who was gone as truly as if she had been all that a wife and a mother can be. And Abram Glenn, the lover of her youth—the mantle of mourning descended upon his spirit, the shadow of death fell across his path, and the gloom sank into his heart forever!

Time rolled on, and Mr. Vincent's morbid habits of solitude and bitterness became confirmed and hardened. Even when he was married his youth had long been passed, and now years pressed heavily upon him, and disappointment and repining were thickening the frosts upon his brow. He was never a strong-minded man, and his reverses had weakened him more than ever. As he had but one pleasure, so he had but one hope left, and these were centred in a single object. Having once possessed wealth and then lost it, he had an exalted idea of its value. He was growing old too rapidly to leave him the hope of retrieving his fortunes by his own exertions, even if he had had the energy to make the effort. He felt that his weakness had deprived his daughter of an inheritance, and his only hope in life was that he might be able to discharge the debt thus due to her. This might have been a laudable ambition, had it prompted him to go forth into the world, and by energy and industry to grasp back from the hands of cupidity what folly had lost; but it was not so. He sat moping at home, or walked feebly and repiningly among the haunts of his former life, a broken, disappointed man. He looked anxiously forward to the period when his daughter should grow to woman's estate; for he believed that, if he could secure to her a husband whose wealth and social position would compensate her for the lost fortune of her inheritance, he would fully acquit himself of obligation.

With this view, he denied himself every dispensable gratification, raked together every disposable dollar of his broken fortune, and lavished it upon her education. She had every advantage which wealth could have procured her,—she was educated and reared as if to inherit millions,—was taught to look upon wealth as the source of all good,—learned to think that poverty was a disgrace and riches alone respectable, and was even encouraged in comparing the scanty furnishing of her own modest home with the splendid appointments and trappings which her young companions delighted in exhibiting to her envious view. As early as the age of ten years these pernicious teachings began to show themselves in her character and behavior. She would inquire concerning those who came within her knowledge, "Is he rich?"—"Has he money?" and always, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, you might have observed a wondering look of mysterious interest in her eyes, as they followed the subject of her childish inquiries.

All this did not indicate anything mercenary in the child's heart; for, like her companions, she had her boy-lovers, about

whose expectations or possessions she never inquired or thought. But to tell her that a man was wealthy excited in her mind much the same sort of interest as that which she would have felt, had she been told that the same man was a great traveler, and could speak twenty languages. It was a wonder to her how he could have acquired so much, and wonder is near akin to admiration. She was quick and intelligent, also, and she had observed that her father always spoke respectfully of a man who was announced wealthy, and always slightly of those who were poor. He particularly contemned those who, like himself, had once been rich but now were poor; whether, in his self-abasement, he believed that all who had met the same reverses must have committed the same follies and were, therefore, equally contemptible with himself, or whether this aversion was attributable to some other cause, we cannot say; but, at all events, he made a decided difference between the rich and the poor, and Fanny had observed it; and without knowing the reason why, but blindly receiving the opinions and expressions of her father, she respected the one and despised the other.

Before her mother's death, the weak repinings of that lady had not been without effect upon her daughter; and her frequent references to the present poverty and former affluence of her position pointed but too plainly to the source of her discontent. The importance of wealth was, therefore, one of the first ideas which entered the young girl's mind, and the tendency to overrate its advantages grew with her growth and strengthened with her strength. She had, moreover, inherited some of the lighter traits of her mother's character, though in a degree softened and less dangerous. The circumstances of her early years had combined to keep them down until the growth of more substantial qualities had, in a measure, overshadowed them. Still, she was giddy, capricious, and fond of display; and though she probably reflected more at twelve years old than her mother had done during her whole life, her moments of serious thought were brief and fragmentary. She had inherited, among other things, a warm, hasty temper; and this the indulgence of her father had done little to correct. Her acquaintance called her fickle; and she was certainly wayward; but those who knew her best believed that her apparent levity was, in a great measure, high spirits, and that beneath that veil was concealed a warm, earnest heart.

Excepting these equivocal traits she was, at the age of seventeen, when we first introduce her personally, in all

respects a lovely girl. Rather above the medium height, she was proportionably slender. Inheriting all the grace and ease which had so eminently distinguished her mother in her younger years, she possessed a face even superior to that which had so enamored her father. Large brown eyes looked out from beneath a gracefully pencilled brow with a deep, tender and fascinating light; and their long, dark lashes hung over them, half veiling their beauty, but adding depth to their expression. Above these rose a brow of the purest white, retreating slightly from the perpendicular, and terminated by a mass of wavy, light-brown hair; and this, arranged in plaits or curling loosely down, set off a neck and shoulders as white and smooth as her marble brow. Her mouth was small, and full of those even, brilliant teeth, which give so much expression to a beautiful face. Red, full and rather pouting lips, a small round chin, smooth, faintly-tinted cheeks, and an exquisitely chiselled, rather aquiline nose, completed a face equalled in fascination by none within her circle. Small, thin, but not emaciated hands, round limbs and beautifully shaped and well arched feet, made up the outline of a figure perfectly in keeping with her face. To add to her attractions, she always dressed in perfect taste, not gaudily nor with an affectation of expensiveness, but plainly and chastely.

With all these personal attractions, she possessed a clear, well trained and sparkling intellect—a mind neither profound nor very firm, but brilliant and acute. With fresh, natural manners—not unformed, but unrestrained—and, while not crossed by imposition or ruffled by intrusion, the most unfailing good nature, she was in appearance all that heart could desire.

### CHAPTER III.

An affectioned ass that cons state without book and utters it by great swarths.  
TWELFTH NIGHT.

For love, thou knowest, is full of jealousy.—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

What! gone without a word.—IDEM.

THE little inland city (as it now is) where the characters of this story lived, is connected with the neighboring country on the west by two roads. One of these pursues its course directly westward for about a mile, which is as far as we shall have occasion to follow it. At that distance it crosses a gentle eminence, or rather a gradual rise in the ground, and after sending off a by-road towards the south, itself bends away in that direction,—still, however, verging westward through a beautiful agricultural country, among green fields and scattered groves and smooth pasture lands. The eminence thus crossed slopes gently away in every direction, and is covered on the northern side by a stately growth of oak and elm and walnut. In the midst of a group of these and directly upon the highest point of the eminence stood, and yet stands, a large stone house with a broad, majestic front, enormous windows, and a flight of huge stone steps leading to a wide door in the centre. The main building is of three stories, resting upon a massive foundation raised several feet above the ground. Its elevation thus gives it a peculiarly lofty air, while two wings flanking it on each side, built of the same material and retreating a little, in some measure relieve the repulsive aspect of the hard, square front. A light wooden cornice, utterly out of keeping with the character of the edifice, was, when erected, the special admiration of all the builders in the country, while the small, stone palisadoes (perhaps, since the architect was a religious man, intended as a compliance with the direction given in the twenty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, for "parapets") surmounted the wall, like gravestones out of place, and delighted all the lovers of the ornamental. Yellow Venetian blinds hung

inside and always partially closed, gave to the place that mysterious air of privacy which those who never "enter in" are pleased to see in the residences of the rich. A broad gate opened from the road upon a gravelled walk of equal width, and along this you passed between two rows of shrubbery, brought promiscuously from the frozen and the torrid zones. So far from terminating with the walk, these rows of tender plants were continued in large stone pots quite up the stately steps, and only terminated at the door. The ground on each side of the walk was laid out with a precision most mathematical; and some of the graduated ranks of little flower-beds reminded one most forcibly of the military invention at drill-*rendezvous* to teach awkward recruits the regulation step. Here was a little square enclosed by well-shaved sod, and here a tiny circle of the same description; and when you saw one of these or any other figure on the right, you might be sure that, turning to the left, you would find a corresponding ornament of the same shape and dimensions, bearing precisely the same relation to everything around. In every circle stood a vase, and in every square a cedar; while, standing in accurately measured stations, were growing lilacs, pines, juniper, laburnums and palms. Had it not been for the noble old elms and oaks, which towered where, centuries before, their seeds had been wafted by the winds of Heaven, spreading their strong arms up towards the sky, one might have supposed that Nature had brought forth twin garden-plots, and placed them side by side as contrasts to the glorious variety of her usual works.

Around the house in both directions ran other gravelled walks, each describing half a circle, whose centre would probably have been found exactly in the centre of the building. On every side there was the same appearance of angles, circles and squares—perfectly straight lines, parallel rows and corresponding spaces. The eye was fatigued by this mathematical monotony far more than it would have been by a bare unbroken surface of sand. It was a positive relief to turn from all this misdirected taste to the sweep of the hill as, covered and crowned by the growth of a thousand years, it stretched away in the majesty of its original variety. The green sward, dotted here and there by wild flowers; the aged trees whose gnarled roots pressed up the sod, or rose in many arching bends above the ground; the strong limbs bearing up their burthen of luxuriance and gently waving in the wind; the long, dim vistas between these monarchs of the forest, broken by the young and graceful saplings, growing beneath the elder patriarchs like

children under the protection of their parents;—all these diversified features of a wooded landscape, combined to form a scene of rare and tranquil beauty. Through the skirts of this forest, and near the foot of the slope, flowed a narrow rivulet, whose sparkling waters reflected, in multiplied and fragmentary images, the deep green foliage above; while the silvery sound of its playful waters mingled pleasantly with the murmuring of the wind among the trees. With the wood terminated the lands of Mr. Eversham, the owner of the house above described; and between him and others ran the second road mentioned in the beginning of this description.

This road, starting from nearly the same point, ran almost parallel with the first for half a mile. It then gradually diverged, assuming a more northerly direction, until opposite or in the rear of Mr. Eversham's house, the two were a little more than half a mile apart. This was a far more quiet road than the other, leading to no place of great importance, and was bordered for a mile or more by neat and tasteful cottages, summer retreats from the heated air and dusty precincts of the town. It was a retired, green lane, indeed, except where it touched the unenclosed lands of Mr. Eversham, and even there, upon the northern side, it was bordered by flower-surrounded cottages, lovely in their peaceful look, and almost concealed by vines and shrubs and trees. It is with one of these cottages, which stood about one hundred yards from where the little stream above described flowed sparkingly across the road, that we have most concern. And here we may say that we have not been thus particular in this description for nothing; on the contrary, we beg the reader, if he has not the locality well fixed in his memory, to turn back and read again, for reasons which he will hereafter understand.

This cottage, then, which stood a little off the road, embowered among trees and vines and creeping plants, was a plain white frame building, one story in height, with green Venetian blinds. It was approached from the little gate by a clean, sanded walk; and you entered through a light verandah, over which eglantines and honeysuckles were tastefully festooned. Around the narrow grounds were planted various kinds of trees, not placed as if to fill up every space and keep the air and sunshine out, but growing up in profusion, as if cast by Nature on the genial soil. The choicest flowers were scattered round in carefully-weeded beds, and the beds themselves were evidently made only for the flowers to grow in, and not as things of primary importance. Specimens of everything beautiful or

ornamental which the climate could afford were here collected; and over and about all here hung an atmosphere of tasteful elegance. Peace seemed to dwell among the flowers, and repose was beckoning you from every side. It is to this quiet retreat that we now invite the reader.

It was a still afternoon in the latter part of May. It was Sunday, too, and the Sabbath stillness which always hung around the scene, was now more quiet and serene than ever. There was hardly wind enough to stir a leaf; and at the cottage window could be heard the many voices of the twittering birds upon the trees across the road. The notes of each were answered from the foliage round the house; and from among the creepers on the green verandah came an echo, sound for sound. A mocking-bird was sitting on the perch within its cage, and, with its head a little bent towards the trees, was pouring forth its own deceptive imitations of the little songsters who were free. Immediately beneath the cage stood Fanny Vincent; and as she raised on tiptoe and extended her arm to draw aside some bending vines which hung around the wires, from the gate you might have seen a form unmatched for round and graceful contour, unequalled for lithe and graceful proportions. The piquant little foot and ankle thus revealed seemed fit to typify her figure, and the fingers which gently drew aside the vines were not less delicately perfect than the tendrils they were busy in removing. Her upturned face revealed its chiselled features charmingly; and her small and well-shaped head, from which hung back upon her sculptured shoulders a mass of rich brown hair, was supported by a neck and throat as white as alabaster. Her eyes were sparkling with their native gayety, and her rosy lips were parted in unconscious pleasure. Altogether, hers was a figure upon which the passer would have longed to stop and gaze; and on his memory, as he passed, a single glance would have impressed an image not speedily to fade.

While she stood thus unconscious of all observation, a young man — of three or four and twenty — walked quietly along the road and, pausing, placed his hand upon the gate as if to enter; but his glance fell upon the *tableau* before him and he stood motionless for several minutes, his fine figure bent slightly forward and his speaking features eloquent of admiration. He was somewhat above the medium height, erect and graceful as a young cedar. His face combined the gentle with the manly, though from his dark blue eyes there beamed a spirit quick, passionate and generous. His hair was of light auburn, as if,

in his boyhood, it might even have approached the flaxen, and, worn rather longer than was then the *mode*, it betrayed a tendency to curl in masses on his neck. There may have been a little vanity in this — for it was as fine a suit of hair as even that before him; and there is no feature of physical beauty of which a larger number of both sexes are vain than handsome hair. However this may have been with Henry Glenn, he was certainly not thinking of it now; he had not a thought or feeling for aught but the magic beauty of the form before him. He gazed thus motionless until Fanny, the tendrils now arranged, turned, without observing him, to walk away; and, as she did so, the graceful, airy motion of her floating figure made him reluctant to disturb the spell by speaking. But before she vanished he laid his hand upon the latch and spoke:

"Fanny!" he said, in a tone of not-to-be-mistaken tenderness. She turned quickly towards him, and his voice had called the blood in glowing blushes to her cheeks.

"What! you here!" she exclaimed in a voice as clear and ringing as a silver bell; "I did not hear you come to the gate."

"I have been standing here for some minutes," he said, as she stepped down upon the walk and moved slowly towards him.

"Watching me, were you?" she said, laughing gaily. "Do you think me handsome? Come, now, tell me the truth."

"Handsome is not the word," said he, with a look which attested his sincerity.

"What *is* the word, then? Come, confess: I'll have no secrets kept from me!" She raised her finger with a gesture of playful imperiousness; but, before he could answer, she changed her tone and resumed: "Come in — I ought to have said so sooner."

"No," he replied; "I came to ask you whether you would not walk with me this beautiful afternoon; so, go in and get a sun-bonnet, and let us walk over to the old trysting-tree."

"It is very improper," she answered, "for a young lady to go a-maying with a young gentleman on a Sunday, all alone." Yet, as she spoke, her clear, glad laugh rang merrily among the trees, and echoed beyond the road. "But," she resumed with mock solemnity, "I will go with you *this* time, if you will never ask me to do so again."

"Agreed," said he; "and I will make the same pledge every Sunday till —"

"Till when?" she demanded, with a look which could only be denominated quizzical.

"Till the time," he answered, "when there will no longer be any impropriety in our being alone in any place at any time."

"And, pray, when will that be?" she asked, with a flash in her soft, brown eye, which manifested that her question was superfluous.

"When we are married," said he.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with a well-acted start, as if suddenly enlightened. She laughed as pleasantly as if that time had come already; and tripped cheerfully away to get her bonnet.

"Now," said she, coming out with a little orange-colored sun-bonnet, its hue contrasting with the lilac of her dress, as she threw it carelessly over her head, "we must not be gone more than an hour, father says; for Mr. Eversham is coming over to take tea with us, and you know I must be back in time."

"Why should you go back to meet him?" asked Henry quickly, as they crossed the road and entered the wood.

"I hardly know," she replied. "But father says he wants me to be at home when he comes; and that is reason enough. You know Mr. Eversham is a man of great wealth, and withal a gentleman; and such a man father would not like to treat otherwise than politely."

"Right enough," said Henry; "but suppose Mr. Eversham were only a gentleman and not wealthy, how then?"

"Even then," she replied, "he could not refuse to treat him politely; but you know he would not be entitled to so much consideration."

"Why so?" he asked.

"I do not know that I can tell you precisely why—"

"So I supposed," he laughingly interrupted.

"But," she continued, "you know the world acts very much upon the principle of respecting men in proportion to their power to do good—"

"And," he again interrupted, "not in proportion to the amount they actually do."

"Perhaps so," she replied. "But so far as I know, Mr. Eversham is a very good man, and certainly he is a very rich one. Besides, father respects him very highly, and of course I must treat him well."

"So far as respecting him because he is a very good man," said Henry, "I will go with you very cordially; and, of course, rich or poor, you are bound to treat him politely in your own house. But if he had the wealth of Cræsus, and were not what you say he is, he would only deserve the greater reprobation,

because he has more than ordinary power to do good and fails to do it."

"One would think you a poor man," Fanny answered, laughing, "to hear you speak thus."

"And so I am," said he; "but it is not for that reason that I protest against the worship of mammon!"

"You do not think," she said in manifest surprise, "that paying a proper respect to the gifts that God has given, is a worship of mammon?"

"If God has given them as the reward of virtue," he replied, "certainly not; though, even then, the respect should be given to the virtue and not to its reward. All I mean by what I say, is, that wealth is neither respectable nor the reverse, except with reference to the manner of its use."

"And I think," said she, with some emphasis, "that wealth is always to be respected, since it cannot but be given for a good purpose."

"The same might be said of poverty," said he.

"Well, well," she rejoined a little impatiently, "all the wealth in the world is not worth a single harsh thought or unkind word between us; so let us dismiss the subject, and speak of something else."

"With all my heart," said Henry cordially; and the slight asperity which had appeared in his manner during this conversation vanished. "I have no idea that Mr. Eversham or any other rich man can affect our happiness, and nothing else is worth a thought."

"At all events we will not quarrel about him, will we?" she said, turning to him with her wonted mixture of affection and levity.

"No, nor about any one else." As he spoke, he drew her arm gently within his; she leaned lightly and gracefully upon him, and they walked on for some minutes in silence. No one who had seen them thus, side by side, could have doubted that the air of satisfied affection visible in their attitude and movements was the result of a love as deep as it was warm; and even the coldest heart could not but have been touched by the confidence and contentment of two spirits, thus infinitely trustful of each other. None could have augured anything but happiness for them in the future, and all would have said that the ends of Heaven were answered when they met and loved. They followed for some distance the course of the little ravine through which the rivulet was running, sparkling with glimpses of the sunlight which came dropping through the leaves.

Turning then to the left, and ascending the gradual slope which was covered by large trees, without speaking a word, and as, by previous arrangement, they approached the foot of an elm of great size, whose stately trunk rose nearly fifty feet into the air before it put forth a single branch. At that height the strong limbs shot forth adventurously, and interweaving their luxuriant foliage with the verdant drapery of surrounding trees, a canopy of leaves was formed through which the sky was never seen. Nor could the sun, except in straggling rays, pierce through the screen; and here for hours one might stand protected from the heaviest rain. Around its base the sod was elevated by the wreathing of the hidden roots; and here and there upon the little hillock they arched above the sward, presenting many a pleasant seat or pillow for the wanderer in the wood.

It was beneath this tree that Henry Glenn and Fanny Vincent had been plighted—upon a sunny autumn evening, when the shadows were lengthening and the birds were flying home to rest. Whenever since that time they had walked together in the wood, their steps had naturally tended to that spot, and many a quiet afternoon had they lingered near there, gathering the bright flowers,

‘That strew the green lap of the new-come Spring.’

or talking, forgetful of all else, with hope founded upon love, of their happy prospects. They were now at the well-remembered shrine once more.

“I am almost afraid to sit down in the old place, Henry,” said Fanny, pausing with her foot upon the bend of a root, which was so arched as to present a support to one sitting below it.

“Why so?” asked Henry.

“We may forget to return home in time for tea,” she answered.

“Are you afraid of losing Mr. Eversham’s starched compliments?”

“No,” she said, seating herself a little pettishly; “but I think I shall not forget *this* time.”

“What is there to remind you *this* time more than at another?” he asked.

“Your jealousy, I think, will not allow me to forget,” she replied; and the waywardness of her nature was audible in her voice.

“Jealousy!” exclaimed Henry with a blush of offended pride.

“Yes, jealousy,” she pursued. “You do not wish me even

to be polite to Mr. Eversham; and I can see no other reason for such a feeling than a groundless jealousy!”

“If I know my own heart, Fanny,” said he, gravely, “you are mistaken.”

“But, Henry,” she persisted, “you do *not* know your own heart. You misconstrue my motive in wishing to return home at the time when my father desires it; you think, I dare say, that it is a desire to meet Mr. Eversham, and to get away from you.”

“Indeed, Fanny, you mistake me!” he exclaimed earnestly, rising from his recumbent position, and seating himself beside her. But she turned her head away.

“You doubt me—I know you do,” she said; “and since there is no other reason for it, it must be because you feel your own truth giving way.”

This accusation astounded him: it was so unexpected and so groundless. He had not a word to say; he sat gazing into her averted face in pained silence.

“I may be wrong, Henry,” she said, after a pause, slowly turning towards him; “but you know this is not the first time you have spoken to me in this way about Mr. Eversham, and I get tired of it.”

“Because, Fanny, this is not the first time he has come between us. It is not even the second, nor the third. But almost every time I have walked out here for two months, I have either found Mr. Eversham with you, or have stayed till he arrived.”

“Yes,” she said quickly, “and you have always left me as soon as he came, as if you did not wish to see him with me.”

“True; because I thought that your father looked upon me coldly at all times, and that his coldness has increased since Mr. Eversham became a frequent visitor. I sometimes even thought that *your* manner changed, upon his entrance, more than was necessary. At all events, his presence and your father’s coldness made me uncomfortable, and I left accordingly.”

“It was all jealousy, Henry; you never had reason to think anything of the sort.”

As she spoke she rose, as if offended, from her seat and walked a few steps from him. Here she stopped and plucked a common flower which, at another time, would not have attracted a glance, and stood with her back to Henry, slowly picking it to pieces in silence. For several minutes he remained in the same posture, with his eyes fixed mournfully upon her as she stood a few yards from him, apparently unconscious of his

presence. He was about to rise and go to her, when she suddenly turned and exclaimed —

“How fortunate that I got up!”

“Why fortunate?” he asked.

“Here are father and Mr. Eversham coming down the path. They would have come directly upon us unawares.”

“And you consider it fortunate that we were not seen so close together?” he asked somewhat bitterly.

Her only answer to this was a look of reproach, which, had he been less engrossed by unpleasant suspicions, would have satisfied him that he had done her injustice. But he either did not understand the look, or did not feel disposed to notice it; and, before he could speak again, she advanced to meet the gentlemen who were approaching from the direction of Mr. Eversham's house. Henry knew they had not seen him, and he was unwilling, especially at the present moment, to meet them. He rose hastily from the ground, walked rapidly down the hill, jumped across the little rivulet, and plunged into the tangled undergrowth on the other side. When Fanny turned to look for him, he was gone; nor could he be anywhere seen, though she gazed anxiously down the ravine and in every direction through the wood. She was surprised and hurt; and, though she could not feel wholly blameless, she felt that she had not given him cause for thus abruptly leaving her. She tried to attribute it to his unwillingness to meet Mr. Eversham; but even on that supposition she was not without blame. She began, then, to accuse herself of having wilfully offended him; and, in proportion as she blamed herself, she excused him. This, however, did not last long. She soon returned to the belief that he had been causelessly offended; that he doubted her truth without ground; that he had shown a hard, dictatorial disposition. In her turn she became displeased with him; and, proudly raising her head, she walked home between her father and Mr. Eversham, talking and laughing with the latter as pleasantly as if his presence had recalled her wandering spirits.

Near the road there was a thicket of hazel-bushes, and in this, discovering that he could not cross the road without being seen, Henry paused to let them pass. The exercise of walking a few hundred yards had brought back his usual equanimity, and he had begun to think that he had acted hastily and foolishly. It was, however, too late now to repair the wrong; and as he stood penitently and patiently awaiting his opportunity to escape unobserved, they turned from the ravine and passed within a

few feet of him. The excitement of offended pride was beaming in Fanny's animated face, and her voice was as free and clear as it ever was to him. She was looking into Mr. Eversham's face, and laughing playfully at some compliment of his; and from his concealment Henry could see in her countenance the expression which he took for interest. His heart sank within him.

“I was right to leave her as I did,” he thought. Waiting till they had all crossed the road and entered the house, he came slowly from the wood, and taking the direction which led from the town, walked swiftly away.

Who was this Mr. Eversham?

Two families—the Evershams and Mortimers—had been the undisputed aristocracy of the neighborhood for several generations. They had, of course, intermarried, and thirty years before the period of our story, the tangled cousinhood was quite inexplicable. Death, however, soon made all things plain; for, in the course of twenty years, he had carried off nearly every branch of both the ancient stocks. The family property of the Mortimers, which had been a little scattered, was drawn again into a smaller space; and, by some strange caprice of the ruthless skeleton, one old woman alone was spared to inherit all the wide-spread lands. She was, moreover, a widow, sour and proud, and rich and forty. It so happened about the same period that the race of Evershams was likewise nearly extinct; but, unluckily, the family estates had not accumulated as they had done in the kindred line. The only female representative of the family had been married, as we have related, to a Mr. Shelton and had died young, leaving a daughter; and her brother, the only scion of the stock at that time known to be alive, was the same gentleman (Mortimer Eversham, Esq., as he was styled,) whom we introduce to the reader some twenty years after the time to which we now refer. At that time he was poor and proud and handsome: the widow, Mrs. Mortimer, was rich and proud and fair. She was captivated by his fine person, his blooming youth and aristocratic blood: he was attracted by the extent of her property and the prospect of outliving her. None of the Mortimers had been long lived, and all the Evershams had lived to three score. He thus might calculate upon surviving her at least a quarter of a century; and he accordingly offered himself upon the altar. He was twenty-three and she was forty, if not more; she could not expect another offer of so young and unexceptionable a husband; and, therefore, he was at once accepted, and they were married.

He waited patiently for her to die ; but, though a false alarm or two occurred within the first ten years, at the end of twice that time he found himself apparently as far from widowhood as ever. He was growing old, she was already so ; but still she refused to take her departure. The last five years of their life had been passed in continual broils, and Mr. Eversham paid dear for his venality. She accused him of wishing her dead, in order that he might enjoy her property, which, years before, he had succeeded in converting to his own use ; and he scarcely took the trouble to deny the charge. Twenty years disparity in age and three hundred thousand dollars' difference in property, and the advantage in both respects on the side of the wife ! What better could have been expected ?

But Death at last had pity on them both and took her from him, after the best part of his life had been wasted on an old, ill-tempered woman. But he got the property at last ; and at the opening of our story, having been two years a widower, he was, at the age of forty-five, seeking a better matrimonial fate.

He was a man of distinguished appearance and unexceptionable character. His manners were rather more youthful than his years ; and with the help of his large property, accumulated by a life of seclusion and economy, would have prevented a greater age than his appearing in the least repulsive. His desire again to tie the silken knot was therefore far from absurd ; for there were not within the circle where he moved a dozen ladies who would have hesitated to accept his earliest demonstration. Indeed, he could have married almost any of them, maids or widows, and especially the latter ; but with the usual perverseness of both sexes, he turned from the fruit that would fall from the tree "without shaking," to almost the only one he knew who was unwilling to accept him. He instinctively desired to "shake the tree" himself. He desired to marry Fanny Vincent, in the first place, because she was the most beautiful girl he knew ; and, in the second, perhaps for the same reason for which Mrs. Mortimer had married him, on account of her youth. His advances, though cautious and stately, had been well received by Fanny's father, and, he believed, by her likewise. But the truth was that she had never conceived the idea that he had any such designs. She saw him frequently at her father's house and received him politely ; she knew that he was wealthy,—and we have seen what her education on this point had been. She treated him deferentially, not only on account of his personal respectability, but also by reason of his possessions ; and it was this deference which he was in danger

of mistaking for a warmer feeling. And yet there was little, if any, of the coxcomb in his composition. He was grave, dignified, and even pompous, notwithstanding a certain youthful grace of manner, which twenty years of married life had not frightened off of him ; but he could not be called vain or presuming. He was a man of excellent sense ; but, unluckily, his judgment was not so clear in matrimonial as in other things. He accordingly believed that he had inspired a tender interest in Fanny's breast, when, in fact, her deference to him as a man of wealth was only a part of her education.

On the other hand, Mr. Vincent, if not absolutely deceived into the same belief, was sufficiently blinded by his own wishes, and perhaps by Fanny's manner, to hope that, ere long, his wealthy neighbor might be his son-in-law. It was a consummation to which he had looked forward for many years : his daughter the wife of a man who could restore her all the advantages lost by the ruin of her father ! It was his first and highest—nay, his only—ambition for himself and for her. He understood and had approved the relation in which Fanny stood to Henry Glenn, and had been led to acquiesce in the arrangement chiefly by the consideration that Henry was the heir-expectant of a good estate. He had done so, reluctantly, however, because the property was in expectancy and not in possession ; and when this new suitor made his appearance, with wealth, not only in his own hands, but also ten times larger than Henry's could ever be, he felt disposed at once to violate the former treaty, and enter into a new compact. This he had not as yet formally done, but, by every means in his power, except candidly telling him so, he had endeavored to make Henry understand that his feelings were changed. Henry had observed his coolness, and referred it to the proper cause. It had made him uncomfortable, and, at times, almost petulant ; but he endeavored to hide the truth even from himself, and still continued to visit the house, because it would cost him too great an effort to remain away. This state of things had produced its natural effect upon both him and Fanny ; he had delayed the explanation so long, that when it came it could not fail to produce sore feelings, if not an absolute explosion.

We have seen what was the result ; and now let us follow the father and daughter, with their guest, into the cottage, where the three were seated in a neat little parlor. The furniture of the room was plain and modest ; the floor was covered by a fine, though well-worn carpet, and the narrow windows opened down to the floor.

Mr. Eversham was talking to Fanny in the same tone and manner which Henry had observed in the wood, while Mr. Vincent seated himself, and slowly turned over the leaves of a large family Bible that lay upon the end of the piano. In this attitude, the ravages of time and misfortune were but too plainly visible. All his features were much sharpened, and about the mouth could be observed a querulous imbecility, not such as proceeds from the fading of the mental faculties, but that produced by habitual repining. His cheeks were pale and hollow, his nose, though finely cut, was hard and angular in outline, and his eyes, originally expressive, looked dry and faded. The skin upon his forehead was smooth and void of wrinkles, but its color was that faint bronze tint produced upon the cheeks by long weeping. His hair was thin and gray—about the temples almost white—and his overhanging eyebrows were grizzled and uneven. The hand with which he turned the leaves was thin and white, and every cord was thoroughly defined as in the act of grasping. When he stood or walked, his form was a little bent; about the shoulders you saw a sort of stoop, such as is produced by carrying burdens; and in his bearing, though his step was firm and well assured, there was an air of weakness, sometimes seen in those who have wasted years in dissipation. His voice was sharp and destitute of music, and through every sound which he articulated there ran an undertone of impotent complaining.

He appeared to be reading; and yet a close observer might have seen that the conversation between his daughter and his guest had for him more interest than the pages of the book. At intervals he looked up furtively, or turned his head to one side, more clearly to catch some remark of Mr. Eversham or the reply of Fanny, and as they seemed to grow more confidential and moved towards the window, a well-pleased smile flitted over his face, as if he saw a promise that his hopes were about to be realized. He gazed at the destined pair for a few moments as they stood beside each other at the window, and then closing the book (it had long been too dark to read), he softly left the room.

They remained silent for a few minutes after being left alone, and then he took her hand in his and addressed her in a low, earnest voice. Some one opened the door and placed a lighted candle on the table; he ceased speaking until it was closed again, but still retained her hand. She made an effort to withdraw it, but he entreated her to allow it to remain until he had spoken.

"I cannot permit it, Mr. Eversham," she said, earnestly; "I can listen just as well without it: pray, let it go!" As she spoke, she placed her other hand on his, endeavoring to loosen his grasp, and looked imploringly up into his face.

She did not see a figure which was passing at that moment, nor was she conscious of the quick glance that Henry Glenn threw upon her as he passed. Though she succeeded in disengaging herself almost immediately, it was not until he had hurried on and was out of view. He had walked far into the country, and was returning home calmer and more reasonable, when, on casting his eyes to the window within which stood all that was most dear to him, he saw her hand in his,—he saw her eyes turned up with, as he thought, a look of confidence and affection! He allowed himself but one glance—one was quite enough!—and then hurried away, to return no more.

How Mr. Eversham said what he had to say does not concern us; it is sufficient that he offered his hand and was rejected.

"I do not wish to give you pain, Mr. Eversham," said Fanny; "but I must beg you to say no more."

"I will not press you now," he replied, after a long pause; "but you must not consider my suit withdrawn."

She was silent. Her deference for his character, his wealth, and his superior years, combined to keep her so. She knew, moreover, that a peremptory refusal now would mortally offend her father, and she hoped that she had said enough to relieve herself of further embarrassment, by inducing him in future to avoid the subject. Vain hope! He soon afterwards took his leave; and as he walked away, he thought how soon—how *very* soon—she would be his!

## CHAPTER IV.

Put money in thy purse—put but money in thy purse.—OTHELLO.

There is no vice so simple, but assumes  
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

The deed you undertake is damnable.—RICHARD III.

There's something in me that reproves my fault.—TWELFTH NIGHT.

As soon as Eversham was gone, Mr. Vincent entered the room, and, drawing Fanny to a sofa, sat down beside her. She knew from his nervous and fluttered manner that he had something to say of more than ordinary importance, and she therefore waited in silence. This did not last long, however; for Mr. Vincent was one of these weak, timid men, who must either speak upon the spur or not at all.

"Fanny," he commenced, "you are approaching an age at which it is well to begin to think of marriage."

"You know I have thought of it, father," she replied quietly: "we have conversed on the subject more than once."

"True, true," he rejoined hurriedly; "but it is time we should begin to act as well as to talk."

"How do you mean?" she asked, looking at him inquiringly.

"I mean," he answered, still more hastily, "that you should make up your mind definitely what you are going to do."

"Is there anything you wish me to do, father?"

"No—or, rather, yes—that is," he said confusedly, "I mean, I wish you to please yourself—and will be very glad if you please me, too."

"If I please you, father," she said, "I shall certainly please myself; and, in any event, I shall do nothing for my own gratification which shall displease you."

"Will you not, indeed?" he exclaimed eagerly. "Will you take care to please me, too? Promise me that you will think of my wishes before you act, Fanny?"

"Willingly," she said, placing her hand in his; "willingly, and more: I will promise you not to do anything averse to them—at least knowingly.

"Bless you!" he exclaimed, kissing her fondly; "you are the best of daughters!"

"Good fathers make good daughters," she said, returning his caress. "But you must not let me err through ignorance: I must know what your wishes are before I can observe them."

"True, true," he replied, "you shall know them very soon."

"But father," she pursued, "I ought to know them now, for you have just said that it is time for action. And, if your opinion be correct, delay might be dangerous."

"I know, I know," he said; "but, before I explain, I want to know what *your* wishes are."

"I have but one," she hastily replied, "—to please you."

He drew her close to him and kissed her again, as if to gain time to collect his thoughts.

"Yes," he then said; "but you have some particular wish—you have some special desire—in a word, your affections are fixed upon some one in particular? Is it not so?"

"If it be so," she replied quickly, "and if I loved ten times more than I do or can, I would never marry against your wish."

"But," said he, "that is only a negative pledge, my daughter; you said awhile ago that you would *do* whatever I wished."

"So I did," said she, "and so I will; but I know you will not ask me to do anything that I ought not to do."

"Certainly not," said he, "certainly not—not for the world! But answer me a question: what is the relation existing between you and Henry Glenn now?"

"The same that has existed for several months," she replied, "and you know what that is."

"Yes, I suppose so," said he, hesitatingly. "And what do you intend to do?"

"What do you wish me to do?" she asked quickly.

"Nothing that would do violence to your feelings," he said; "but —"

"But what, father?"

"Do you not think," he continued, "that you could form a more eligible connection?"

"You allude to Mr. Eversham?" she asked.

"Yes," said he. "He is evidently inclined—that is, he has hinted to me—at least I have reason to believe, that he wishes to make you his wife. And," he hurried on as if afraid of interruption, "I think him a more eligible match for you, in all respects, than Henry Glenn. He is wealthy; indeed, he is

very rich ; he is of very high family, is thoroughly a gentleman, has fine manners, an amiable temper, and an unexceptionable character."

"But, father, he is so much older than I am."

"O!" said he, encouraged by her docility, "age is nothing. And, besides, he is not so *very* old: he is scarcely more than forty, and that is just the prime of life. A man of his age and *wealth*, Fanny, is far better calculated to make you happy than a stripling like Henry Glenn. He has experience enough of life to understand what is due from him as a husband, and wealth enough to answer every requirement, to supply your wants in the amplest manner, to secure you the respect and envy of all your circle, and to restore you to the social position to which you were born and for which you are fitted. Your fancy may be taken by Henry Glenn more forcibly than by him: that is natural, because Henry is younger. But, my daughter, a mere fancy is not a sufficient foundation upon which to build for life. Henry is all you can wish in a lover, no doubt; but you know the family temper of all the Glenns—you have even observed it in Henry. They are irascible, fiery and vindictive; they never forgive a fault, and have no consideration for even the most natural weaknesses. They are all jealous and suspicious; and though Henry may not appear so much so now, yet, when years have somewhat cooled his devotion, you will find the family temper showing itself in him as it has done in all the others."

The old man did not know how powerful an ally he had to his reasonings in Fanny's recollections of that afternoon,—he was not aware how much of this very "family temper" Henry had exhibited within a very few hours. But he observed that his daughter's countenance changed when he mentioned it; he saw that he had made an impression, and, though ignorant of the cause, talked on with great rapidity and earnestness. Fanny made no reply—knowing, indeed, that it would be useless—and occupied with thoughts whose bitterness her father did not suspect. She was silenced, but not convinced; and when, after repeating every argument over and over again, laying especial stress upon Eversham's wealth and the social position it promised, he finally left her, she buried her face in her hands and burst into tears. He had not directly expressed a wish that she should give Henry up; but she saw very plainly whither his arguments tended; she felt that he would exact a more literal compliance than she had intended to promise. She was confused, too, by the coincidence of Henry's actions a few

hours before with the view her father took of his character, and though she knew that view was harsh and unwarranted, it yet distressed her exceedingly. She was uncertain, moreover, what were Henry's feelings, when she would see him again, or how they would meet. Sorrows seemed to be thickening upon her fast; and when, after a long time given to tears, she took a candle from the piano and retired, her eyes were red and her step infirm and uncertain. Could Henry have seen her then, or could he have known what was passing through her mind, all doubt would at once have been dispelled. But upon his pillow, as upon hers, that night witnessed little sleep. Agitation and uncertainty made the slumbers of each fragmentary and brief; and the morrow arose upon two hearts loaded with affliction, which, but the day before, had been as light as the morning air and as gay as the early sunshine.

One of the follies of Mr. Vincent was, as we have intimated, to deprive himself of many necessary things, in order to give his daughter advantages above her fortunes; and, as an instance, he had always contrived to keep a maid whose chief employment was attendance upon Fanny. It was by this girl, Maria Bates by name, that, after a brief and troubled sleep, Fanny was awakened on the morning following; and, as she is by no means an unimportant character in our story we must ask the reader to pause for a description.

Her figure was short and rather full, but withal well-formed and comely. Her face was round and, perhaps, a little too highly colored for delicacy or beauty; but its features were regular and symmetrical, and its expression was in no small degree improved by the vivacity of a large blue eye. This animation was abated, however, by a downward look; and sometimes, when she raised her head, there was a furtive cast in her glance which detracted no little from the pleasant expression of her face. There was, moreover, in her gait and movements a stealthy sort of quietness, and in her voice a subdued tone as of deference,—not the humility of a gentle nature, but the repressed softness of compelled but rebellious respect. She moved about the room without the least noise, not because she feared to disturb others only, but as if she had entered clandestinely through the window, and was afraid of detection. She seldom looked steadily at any one without first casting a glance about her to discover whether she was watched. If the eyes of the object of her scrutiny were turned away, her gaze rested upon him furtively and watchfully; and, at the first sign of consciousness, her unconcerned or deferential manner was

reassumed. On the morning in question, when she entered the room her eye sought first the bedside; and, finding Fanny asleep, she gazed for many minutes at her feverish and troubled face, as if she would fathom the depth of her dreams. She closed the door, however, and busied herself in noiselessly arranging the disordered room.

But her movements, stealthy as they were, disturbed Fanny's already broken sleep. She raised herself upon her arm and looked around the room:

"What hour is it, Maria?" she asked.

"Eight o'clock, Miss," replied the maid, in that deferential tone. "I did not intend to disturb you."

"I will get up, I think," said Fanny.

"Perhaps, Miss, you had better take your breakfast in bed," said the obsequious Maria; "you do not look as if you had had sleep enough."

"I believe I have not," said Fanny, "but still I will get up. I could not sleep more if I should try."

"Has anything happened to make you feel badly, Miss Fanny?" inquired the maid, in a tone the most tenderly deprecating and sympathetic imaginable.

"Nothing of any consequence," said Fanny, simply, as she stood in her snowy night-clothes before the mirror, and arranged the disordered masses of her rich brown hair.

"If I could do anything to serve you, Miss——" hesitatingly and respectfully suggested the maid.

"You would do it I know, Maria," said her mistress, throwing the masses of hair back upon her smooth white shoulders, and flushing with a sudden thought: "But there is nothing you can do for me now, unless——" she hesitated.

"Anything at all, Miss Fanny, that I can do——"

"Unless," continued Fanny, "you could carry a note for me to—to a gentleman in town. I cannot trust any one else, and indeed I do not know whether I should send it at all——"

"I can get it to him if you wish it, Miss," said the maid, a little too eagerly, one might have thought. "My brother William, you know, lives with Mr. Eversham. I can take it over to him, and I am sure he will deliver it faithfully."

"I do not think I will send it to-day, on reflection," said Fanny: "I will wait and see——"

"Is it to Mr. Henry Glenn?" asked the maid, softly.

"Yes," said Fanny. "But I think I will wait—till to-morrow at all events—and then, Maria, I will be glad if you will——"

"Oh! I'll do it, Miss," said the maid. "Never fear me, nor Billy either—you can trust *me* I am sure; and I will let Billy believe the note is from myself, or——"

"Better tell him the truth," said Fanny, quickly; "if you cannot trust him sufficiently for that, better not trust him at all."

"Of course, Miss," hastily replied Maria; "but I thought you would not like to let any one know but me. Billy can be trusted as safely as I can; and if you wish, Miss, I will go over to-day and prepare him for his errand. I want to see him to-day, any how."

"You can go and see him," said Fanny, "but perhaps you had better say nothing definite to him till to-morrow. I may not want him, you know."

"Very well, Miss," replied the maid; "I will just tell him that I may want him to go into town to-morrow."

It was so arranged. Fanny finished her toilet with the help of the assiduous Maria, and passed out to breakfast. The maid opened the windows of the chamber to let the air in, dusted and re-arranged the furniture, placing each article softly where it should lie, hastily shook up and smoothed the bed, and left the room. Soon afterwards she issued from the front gate, and crossing the road, entered the wood near the place where Fanny and Mr. Eversham had come out on the evening before. She walked rapidly along the ravine we have before described, gradually ascending the slope, and plunging deeper into the wood. She passed the tree at whose base Fanny and Henry had reclined, and turning to the right, that is, westwardly, entered a maze of thickets which surrounded the head of the ravine. Passing directly through the skirts of one of these, she found herself in a little open space, covered with the greenest grass, and quite concealed by the undergrowth of hazel-bushes and green briars.

The May morning sun was shining cheerily down over the top of a lofty elm, and the shadows of the highest leaves were dancing merrily upon the deep-green sward within the little covert. What little dew had been permitted by the trees to fall within was already dried up; and the birds were even at that early hour beginning to leave off their songs and seek the shade. The vibrations of the leaves and swinging of the limbs were momentarily becoming less, as the beams of the rising sun enchain the quiet breeze. The hum of bees and insects in the sunshine was growing louder, and the many-colored flies were flashing in the rays and buzzing round the flowers. High

over all was arched the calm blue sky of opening summer, visible in grand serenity between the stately trees; while larger birds of firmer wing were sailing in sublime and graceful circles far up within the depths of the ethereal.

But Maria Bates, if at any time a lover of the beauties of nature, was not in the mood to pause upon them on that bright May morning. She was bent upon a purpose touching her far more nearly than the glory of the golden sun, or the loveliness of the green earth; she was hastening to meet one whom she loved far more than all things else in earth or heaven—far more than father or mother, or duty, or honor, or virtue. She drew aside the bushes, and found the little area, as she had expected, already tenanted. James Glenn stepped forward and received her in his arms; and as he stooped to kiss her, she threw back her head and allowed her bonnet to fall off, revealing a far from uncomely face, flushed and radiant with pleasure and excitement. There was nothing stealthy in her manner now—the most unclouded confidence, the sincerest trust and most unaffected pleasure were visible in all her features, and in every movement. It was evident that a higher, though perhaps not holier, passion had repressed the treacherous envy of her nature; or that the pressure of a sterner spirit was upon her, requiring and receiving every thought and all devotion.

James's countenance might not be so expressive; indeed, one might have observed a slight curl of scorn upon his haughty lip as he took the humble girl to his arms. But she did not see this; for James was an able dissembler, and was assisted in dissimulation now by an intensely sensual nature. He caressed her as if there had been no disparity between their stations—as if it was not a degradation to them both—and drew her to his bosom with as much apparent fondness as if he had loved her with a pure affection.

She did not remain there, however, as long as she could have wished, or as he seemed to desire. Gently disengaging herself, she wiped away the tears she had paid as a tribute to her erring love, and taking up her bonnet, hurriedly said:

“I cannot stay with you long this morning, James; I must hurry on to Mr. Eversham's.”

“To Eversham's? For what purpose?” said he, sharply; and the suspicious glance of his eye showed the jealousy of his nature. He in fact cared very little for this lowly girl—perhaps, apart from his sensual and selfish purposes, not at all; but he was of that unreasonably exacting nature, which, when it deigns to waste a thought upon an object, however humble,

cannot endure that another shall even think of it. Had she not been Fanny Vincent's maid, she would never probably have received a look from him, because she could not have served him. But James had long loved Fanny, though with little hope; for notwithstanding the violence of his passions somewhat blinded him, he was far too clear-sighted to overlook her attachment to his cousin. Baffled, or rather hopeless, in any direct means of obtaining her hand, he was none the less resolved to have it; and with the industry characteristic of evil, he applied himself to the spreading of his nets. To penetrate the secrets of the household, by establishing between himself and Maria an intrigue which would give him power over her, was, for one of his skill, the work of a very short time. This was the spring of their connection; but had this been withdrawn, it is probable that, having once interested himself in her, he would still have manifested the same jealousy of any action which he did not understand. It was that feeling which caused his uneasy start and quick demand.

“Miss Fanny,” said Maria in reply, “wants my brother to carry a note to your Cousin Henry, and I am going over to see him this morning, because I cannot go in the evening.”

“You were not going to do so without telling me?” said James.

“O, no!” she replied. “I came here first on purpose, because I thought you would like to know it. But, James, what do you care about it? You question me so closely about Fanny and all her doings, that I sometimes think ——”

“What?” said James sternly, as she hesitated to go on.

“I know you love me, James,” she continued, “because you tell me you do; and if you did not ——”

“I would not come here to meet you so often,” he interrupted.

“Yes,” she continued; “but ——”

“But what?” he asked again, still more coldly.

“I sometimes think,” she said beginning to sob, “that you only meet me to talk about Fanny,—you will never talk about ourselves,—you will never tell me when ——” she broke down in a torrent of tears, and shrank before his cold, hard eye, as if she would sink into the ground.

“Maria,” said he, taking her hand in his and placing the other calmly upon her shoulder, “Maria,”—and in his voice there was a determined sternness which made her tremble,—“you have said this quite often enough. It is not the first time you have spoken to me in this way; but it must be the last. I have told you, over and over again, what my feelings are, and

what are my purposes: I will now repeat them once more, and, *remember*, for the last time. I will not endure to be accused of falsehood, Maria ——”

“Oh, James!” she exclaimed, “I did not mean that, indeed.”

“Then, Maria,” said he, suddenly changing his tone and drawing her closer to him; with well-feigned tenderness, “let us think no more of it. Kiss me, and let us have done with it.”

She threw her arms about his neck with a fondness which, lowly as was its source, flattered his vanity; and, smiling complacently, he continued:

“You know I have told you, Maria, that Fanny’s mother was a love of my Uncle Abram. She married Vincent after discarding him; but the scornful manner in which she treated him did not cure him of his folly, he loved her very footsteps until the day of her death, and now he dotes over her memory with the weakness of age. I have seen him sit and gaze at Fanny—who, I am told, resembles her mother in her younger years—by the hour; and, if he had any excuse for it, I believe he would leave her all his wealth, in preference to either Henry or me. At all events, I am sure that if Henry should marry her—thus giving him the excuse he wants—he would give him all he has to give, and cut me off with a paltry legacy of a few dollars. And, Maria, all my expectations—indeed,” he continued more rapidly, placing his arm fondly around her, “the wealth which is to enable us to live happily together, which is to lift you to a high rank in society—is to come from this very uncle. As it now stands, Henry and I will share equally; and this will make us both wealthy,—at least, it will keep us from want. If Henry should not marry Fanny, I think I would even get the larger portion of my uncle’s money,—indeed, I could use *all* of it in doing the things which I wish to do for your benefit, Maria.”

The poison was too sweet not at once to be taken: she looked up into his face with a smile of confiding openness, of which you would have thought her features were not capable.

“Now I repeat,” he continued, “if I should allow Henry to marry Fanny, the probability is that I should be cut off almost entirely from participation in my uncle’s estate; and I am therefore determined that he shall not do it. It is your interest, Maria, as well as mine, for your fortunes depend upon mine. It is for this purpose that I want information about Fanny’s feelings and actions,—and in this view, Maria, you ought to be

willing to assist me without hesitation, and, above all, without doubting me.”

“I will never speak so again, James,” she said earnestly. “You shall command me in all things; indeed I have something to tell, now.”

She detailed what she had observed on that morning and the day before,—Henry’s going away with Fanny and her return without him,—Mr. Eversham’s visit,—and, finally, Fanny’s evident depression, and the traces of tears on her face.

“They have quarrelled,” thought James; “and this note is to recall him. I must have that note, Maria,” he said aloud.

“I will tell William to give it to you,” she replied.

It was so arranged, and they parted.

It might be questioned how much of all he had told the poor girl, James himself believed, it was so skilful a mixture of truth and falsehood. So far as his uncle’s feelings were concerned, he was not far wrong: Abram *had* loved Fanny’s mother, and he still cherished her memory. James knew this, and, whatever may have been the stronger probability, he was sincere in the belief that Henry’s marriage with Fanny would divert a large portion of his uncle’s estate from himself. And this was another and a stronger reason for his own anxiety to secure her hand. Love, cupidity and fear combined, every motive that could influence a man like him, concurred to spur him on. Probably, then, the only direct falsehood in the whole story was that part which referred to the victim of his villainy to whom he spoke. James was never prodigal of unmixed falsehood. He was too dexterous in coloring the truth; and he knew that lies, like drugs, if given pure might be rejected from the stomach, but, being “sugar-coated” with a little truth, were more palatable and not less efficient.

Nor must it be supposed that he was so thoroughly a villain as this side-view of his character would seem to indicate. It was only in the pursuit of objects, in the possession of which his passions became interested, that he would resort to tortuous or sinister paths. The very violence of his nature, even unassisted by a glimmering of honor which was still alive in his breast, prompted him rather to open, than to concealed, courses; and, probably, had he always consulted his feelings alone, he would oftener and more willingly have resorted to the power of the strong hand, or to the force of open conflict. But he had, besides “combativeness,” that other faculty, by phrenologists denominated “destructiveness,”—and, whether it be situated as mapped upon the skull or not, this is certainly a very distinct

trait from the first. The consequence of this combination was a certain ruthlessness, entirely independent of a greater or less degree of conscientiousness, and tending, still more than the want of that faculty, to blind its possessor to the plainest distinctions of right and wrong. He was, moreover, intensely selfish and very sensual. Like his mother, he could never understand how any one else could have rights or interests paramount to his; and when he came in contact with others, he was not only warmed by competition of interest and effort, but he was also exasperated by what he viewed as the presumption of his adversary in daring to assert claims opposed to his. In his efforts, therefore, to circumvent or overcome another, he had not only the excitement of the conflict and ambition to succeed, but he felt, also, like an injured man,—as if his opponent were endeavoring to encroach upon him, and he were standing virtuously and bravely in defence of his rights. He even congratulated himself, and bestowed upon his firmness his own approbation, and was, for this reason, infinitely more dangerous than if he had been merely depraved.

These characteristics were, as we have hinted, hereditary—having been derived from a selfish and unscrupulous mother—in whom they had, however, not been so dominant, because she was destitute of the firmness and force of character which James inherited from his father.

These last traits, also hereditary, had combined with those transmitted by his mother, and added violence to all his feelings. Had his education and circumstances been different, he might have been a mere desperado, though not devoid of honorable and manly impulses. As it was, he was forced by the necessity of his position to resort to left-handed and cunning means to compass his ends, instead of going straight forward to seize them by force. Although in those passages of his life which most concern our story, his honorable impulses were seldom exhibited, they were far from dormant. For when not blinded by his selfishness, or when satiated with success, misgivings and self-accusings frequently manifested in the privacy of his chamber that he was not thoroughly hardened. In his schemes against his cousin's happiness he was not seldom visited by self-reproach; and while alone, he more than once resolved to repair the injury done, and abandon the conspiracy. These promises, it is true, were never kept; his selfish and ruthless nature always got the better of his virtuous resolution as soon as he mingled again with the crowds among whom his schemes were formed: but they were, nevertheless, indications that his

soul was not wholly corrupt, or his character altogether lost to honor and conscience.

We make this explanation here, because, in the hurry of the marching history, we may not find time to pause upon the hours or moments of virtuous misgiving; and wish the reader to understand in advance the character we are endeavoring to depict. It is that of a man whose tendencies were rather those of the outlaw than of the tamer villain—of one whose boldness had been reduced to cunning by the exigencies of his position, rather than of one originally inclined to crooked courses—of one whose nature prompted him always to depend upon his own arm, without regard to law, rather than of him whose chief aim is to compass his ends without violating legal enactments.

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## CHAPTER V.

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

I will be correspondent to command  
And do my spiriting gently.—TEMPEST.

I thank you, gentle uncle.—RICHARD III.

ABOUT an hour before noon on the following day, James Glenn sat reading in a neatly furnished sitting-room at the back of his office. He had been there for several hours, and was evidently becoming impatient, for at intervals of but a few minutes he laid down his book and walked to the front door, gazing anxiously up and down the street, and then slowly returning to his seat. He had passed between the rooms in this way perhaps a score of times, and was endeavoring once more to fix his attention upon his book, when the light which streamed in at the front door was darkened by the entrance of a lad of about fourteen or fifteen years. A sharp but comprehensive glance around the room, and a quick, unhesitating step towards the back room, indicated his decided character as plainly as his physiognomy. Rather tall for his age, he was thin and pale

and his face was far older in appearance than his form. His large blue eye, in spite of a rather stealthy look, was firm and decided; while the lines about the mouth added materially to the expression. A straight, sharp-cut nose, its ridge forming rather too nearly a right angle with the level of his face, was surmounted by a projecting brow of remarkable roundness; and beneath was an obstinate, straight upper lip. A full, round chin and throat, hardly in keeping with the thinness of his figure, completed a countenance remarkable for its expression of mingled obstinacy, passion, and cunning. He wore a plain suit of gray, neatly and jauntily put on, and his linen was of spotless whiteness. Altogether, he was a handsome lad, bearing a strong resemblance to his sister, Maria Bates, but apparently more reliable.

He advanced without hesitation, and stopped before James. The latter looked up as if surprised at his entrance; but the half-smile that flickered about the boy's mouth, seemed to indicate that he understood the acting.

"Well, Billy," said James, cordially, "what can I do for you this morning?"

"Nothing, sir," said the boy, carelessly. "I have a note that my sister told me to give you, from Miss Vincent."

"Can you read writing?" asked James, as he took the letter.

"Not much, sir," Billy answered. "Mr. Eversham says that is a part of my education which has been very much neglected."

"Has he ever attempted to remedy the neglect?" James asked.

"Never, sir," said Billy, smiling; "but he says there is time enough."

"Did Maria tell you this was from Miss Vincent?" he asked, after a pause.

"No; I knew it, because, so far as I know, Maria cannot write."

James smiled, and thrusting his hand into his pocket drew out a handful of small silver, and gave it to the boy.

"You have done well," he said, "to bring it without delay; I see it was written this morning. I give you this now, and every time you do me a service you may calculate upon a reward quite as liberal. And mind," he added significantly, retaining the boy's hand as he extended it for the money, "you are not to mention to any one but Maria that you have ever

spoken to me. If you do, I will reward you in a very different way. Will you remember?"

"I will, if I don't forget," said Billy, smiling.

"Well," said James, sharply, "you'll not forget, I think."

"Not as long as the change lasts," said the boy, jingling it in his hand.

"The change will last, said James, "as long as you serve me faithfully, and no longer."

"And am I to serve you only till it gives out?" asked the boy.

"It will be your own loss, Billy," said James, confidentially, "if you cease to serve me at all. We will be the best of friends, for I know I can trust you."

"I will not betray you, sir," said Billy, drawing himself up, "unless you wrong me first."

James saw that he had touched the right cord, though his implied threat had nearly roused the boy's rebellious temper.

"I do not fear it, my young friend," said James. "And now at what hour can you come to me this evening?"

"I can get away from home about five o'clock, sir."

"Come at that hour then," said James. "I may not have anything for you to do; but perhaps I shall want you to carry the answer to this letter."

Billy smiled intelligently, and carelessly bowing, turned away and left the room.

"I wonder if Maria can have told him," James muttered, as he turned over the note and read the superscription. "He evidently knows there is something wrong; but I must attach him to myself. He's a shrewd fellow. Humph!"

His reflections were cut short by the contents of the letter, which he had opened, and was now deliberately reading. It was addressed to "MR. HENRY GLENN," and ran as follows:

"You left me so abruptly on Sunday, Henry, that I am afraid something I said seriously offended you. Yet I recollect nothing that could justly have done so, though I have racked my brain until I am really nervous. As for Mr. Eversham, from him you have nothing to fear—I have never entertained for him a deeper feeling than belongs to his age and station. When I advanced to meet him on Sunday, I did so only because I knew he was coming to our house to spend the evening, and because I knew my father wished me to treat him as he deserves.

"I am afraid, Henry, you are growing jealous, and I know you have no good reason for such a feeling. You have yourself

told me that jealousy should be guarded against, as the source and origin of almost every other evil that can come between those who love; and you must forgive me if I apply your precepts to yourself. I will not deny that you are more nearly right in regard to my father's feelings than I supposed you were; and my belief that you did him injustice, may have made me a little petulant. Since that time he has enlightened me; but I know his affection too well to doubt that, on learning how distasteful his desires are to me, he will for my sake give them up. If you desire it, Henry, I will let him know at once. When he spoke to me, your 'inexplicable language and bearing on Sunday had so cruelly embarrassed me, that I knew not what to say. And even now I am at a loss how to write, what to say, and how to say it.

"Sometimes I think you do not wish longer to occupy the place in my heart which you know is yours; and in connection with this, one torturing thought occurs to me now: Do you recollect once saying to me that when an engagement becomes irksome to a gentleman, and he wishes to terminate it, it is still his duty to wait and give the lady an opportunity of taking the initiative? And that he must even delay his action until he has fully and fairly tried her temper, without success? Sometimes I almost think you were endeavoring to exasperate me into a breach of our engagement—that you were '*trying my temper*,' as you said. I do not fully believe this, Henry; if I did, I should gratify you before the day were an hour older; but even to imagine the possibility of such a thing makes me unhappy. I shall feel so, until I see you, and hear from your own lips, the assurance that I am wrong to fancy it. If, however, you cannot give me such assurance—if you really wish to terminate our engagement, Henry, and are only restrained from doing so yourself by some extravagant punctilio, I do not wish to see you—your silence will be quite a sufficient hint—it shall terminate at once. If you love me, Henry—if I am doing you injustice by exhibiting temper without cause, you must forgive it. Just think of my position, and I know you will do so—I know you will hasten to me, especially when I say *come*, and assure you that you will find me, as in all the pleasant days gone by,

YOUR FANNY."

"P.S.—On reading this over, I have reason to fear that I have exhibited too much temper. But if I have, and you love me, I know you will forgive me in consideration of my embarrassed position; if you do *not* love me, even this curt language

will be found too tender, and your forgiveness will be of little consequence. But I cannot believe it! I know you *must* love me! I will not believe otherwise, except from your own lips! Come to me then, dear Henry, this evening, if you cannot sooner, and send me an answer to this announcing your coming and assuring me that my thoughts are foolish. And yet—remember—if you do not love me, send me *no* answer. I would rather infer it from your actions, than read it in your writing or hear it from your lips. I shall await the return of my messenger at the foot of the OLD ELM—and with how much anxiety, (if you love me,) you can imagine. How different will be my feelings to those I have so often known in the same place! Can you not come yourself with the messenger?

F."

"He will hardly be there, I think," muttered James, as he finished reading this characteristic letter. "I will take care of that; at all events, for a few days to come; and then I have the game in my own hands. I will have her yet! And, instead of losing my inheritance to my cousin, let us see if I get not the larger share of the old fellow's money! He hasn't more than enough for one man anyhow. A moderate fortune will not bear division; it makes one poor, by elevating him above a mere competence, without making him rich. I must have the whole of it, and this is the best way to get it. If I can only keep my jealous cousin away for a few days, she will act upon her suspicion decisively, and then—let her resist me if she can!"

Such were James' thoughts, as he slowly doubled up Fanny's letter, and revolved its propable consequences. He at once understood the allusions of the letter; for he could readily comprehend a nature which, (like his own,) was easily betrayed into jealousy; and he decided, without a moment's hesitation, to seize upon the advantage thus given. He was vain enough to think that, if he could secure his cousin's absence for a short time, Fanny must infallibly yield to his attractions. He only differed from most men of his stamp, in the fact that his confidence in his own personal advantages was not wholly without foundation. He had, as we have seen, no desire to injure his cousin, except as Henry might stand in his way; he was moved by selfishness, not by any resentment for injury, or even by a wholly depraved heart. To him, the interests of James Glenn were all-important; and the rights or feelings of any other person were not worth a thought.

After reflecting for a few minutes, he placed the letter in a

drawer beside him. Locking it carefully, and placing the key in his pocket, he went out and walked away down the crowded street.

About the same hour, in an office of similar dimensions and appointments, sat James' cousin Henry. He was paler than he had been two days before, and his face looked haggard and care-worn. But the stern compression about the white lips and the determined energy with which he applied himself to the writing before him, showed that, whatever might be the cause of his depression, he was resolved not to yield to it. He stopped from time to time, and leaning back took a book from the well-filled case behind him; after consulting its pages for a few moments, he again addressed himself to his task. Occasionally indeed, his pen halted in its course, and his eyes wandered to the ceiling or rested listlessly and absently upon the floor; but this was not permitted to last; with a sigh, which spoke too plainly of a heavy heart, he forcibly recalled his wandering attention. His writing, always clear, firm, and well rounded, was now stubborn and positive in its lines; and when his pen came down with a lengthened letter, no extra curve or graceful circle marked its close—a square, heavy dash suddenly cut off, was all his burthened hand afforded.

He had been working thus since an early breakfast without once rising from his seat; but, excepting in the increased angularity of his hand, he exhibited no signs of weariness. The sheets, written from top to bottom and bottom to top, alternately, lay piled before him with the utmost precision, for when he looked up, if the corner of a sheet projected from the rest, he pushed it carefully and neatly in; his mind was so strung to effort that its power included attention to even minute particulars. He had just finished a sheet, and was placing it thus thoughtfully upon the others, when the door was opened by a tall, middle-aged man, who entered without ceremony.

He could not have been more than fifty; and yet the thin, fine hair, visible beneath his well-brushed hat, was white as snow. His erect carriage, however—though assisted by a stout cane with a large gold head—seemed to indicate an age much less advanced. His face bore marks of many cares, and the wrinkles on his forehead spoke of sorrows quite as plainly as of years. The lines about his mouth were not numerous; and, save the few gray hairs among his arching eyebrows, round his eyes there was nothing that pointed to a late hour on the dial of his life. The eye itself was as piercing as ever; but, in its penetration there was nothing harsh or suspicious. Rigid

justice, perhaps, but in a much higher degree, the kindest, most considerate benevolence, beamed out in its mild, though steady glance. It was one of those dark blue eyes which so frequently preserve their power of vision to the very gates of the world of spirits. In his younger years Abram Glenn had been an eminently handsome man, remarkable alike for manly grace of form and classic mould of feature; and though years and cares had somewhat sharpened both, detracting by imperceptible degrees from each, he was even at fifty a man after whom one would have paused in the street to gaze.

Henry rose as he entered, and gave him a chair.

"Why did you not come up on Sunday night?" the old man asked. "It is the first time you have failed for twelve months."

"You ought to forgive me then, uncle," said Henry, smiling faintly.

"Good works are no excuse for bad, my boy," said his uncle kindly. "But you do not look well: were you kept away by sickness?"

"I was not very well," said Henry evasively, "and I thought James would be pleasanter company for you. He told me he was going up."

"But he did not come," said Abram, a little sharply: "Indeed, he scarcely ever comes, now. I am afraid he is becoming dissipated."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Henry, eagerly. "I think he reads a great deal, of late; at all events, I know he is much alone."

"That is no very good sign," said Abram; "young men should not be too much alone. James is so much like his father, that I do not like to trust him."

"He is older than I am," said Henry, "and, I suspect, has more discretion. I do not think he is in danger of contracting profligate habits."

"It is right enough for you to defend him," said Abram, after a pause, in which it was plain that he was not convinced. "But you have not answered my question: have you been unwell?"

"Very slightly," said his nephew, "and I am now well again."

"Your face is a very false index, then, Henry," said Abram; "for you look as if you had been sick a fortnight. And, my boy," he continued kindly, drawing his chair closer to Henry, "this is not the first time I have observed it, though it is more perceptible now than I have ever seen it before. I did not

come here, Henry, to pry into secrets which you do not feel disposed to tell me voluntarily; but I did come to give you a little advice, which I know you will receive kindly as it is given. Close the door—I have much to say.”

Henry rose, and obeyed without speaking.

“I have been making inquiries for several weeks, Henry,” he continued, “about both you and James; and it is the result of these inquiries which leads me to think James is doing badly and that you, Henry, are doing *worse*. I do not mean in the same way,” he added quickly, as Henry started: “far from it! James is wasting his time and health, and frittering away his character in idle and culpable dissipations; and *you*, Henry, are wasting your life, squandering the best feelings of your nature upon an unworthy object, laying up misery and loneliness and self-abasement for your age. You have been engaged to marry Miss Vincent, as you told me—perhaps you are so situated now; and it is for this reason that I think you are doing even worse than James—for yourself, I mean. James may reform—I hope he will—I intend to speak to him to-day, and if he does, his dissipation will leave but a slight sting in his memory. But yours, Henry—” the old man laid his hand upon Henry’s arm, and his eyes filled with tears—“yours will sink into your heart like lead,—the memory will haunt you even to the grave,—sleep will give you no exemption,—no employment will alleviate your bitterness,—memory will unfit you for society,—happiness will flee from you as from one infected,—curses will fill your mind instead of blessings,—and you will be a poor, forlorn, solitary, miserable man! I know this but too well, Henry: I speak from experience! I know the blood of this syren too well; I feel it now, tingling to my very finger-ends! I played around the flame too long, and was scorched. And it is from such a fate that I would save you. I want to tell you how it was: will you listen?”

The old man’s voice was weak as a child’s, and his hand trembled with emotion. His eye glittered and glistened through his tears, and his nostrils were distended with excitement. Henry had never seen him so much moved; he was silenced by astonishment. A sympathy, upon the origin of which he could not reflect, filled his own eyes with tears and choked his utterance. He could only bow his head in acquiescence; and the old man went on:—

“This girl’s mother was as beautiful as her daughter—nay, even more beautiful,—but she resembled her in everything: in face, in form, in voice, in spirit—in *everything*, mind. I

was then a young man like you, Henry; perhaps wealthier, but with no greater expectations. I loved that woman with all the fire of a passionate nature, and she loved me in return with all the firmness that her character knew. She loved me, I say, loved me quite as warmly as her daughter can love you, Henry—quite as warmly. We were engaged to be married when she met Vincent, who could offer her greater wealth and a higher social rank than I could promise. She was as giddy and vain as she was beautiful; I knew it, then, though I loved her none the less. She was dazzled by the prospect of boundless wealth, and flattered by the preference of a man who was the centre of attraction to all the young ladies in his circle. Her father seconded her mercenary ambition with all his power. She soon began to exhibit impatience of my assiduity; her temper changed; she became captious, exacting and inconsiderate. If I spoke to her about Vincent, she declared me jealous; and if I pressed the matter, she left me in anger. But why need I detail each step of an alienation which soon became complete? I loved her more desperately than ever. Had I at once given her up when I perceived the first signs of estrangement, I could have done so without a struggle. But the conflict entangled me, I grasped more and more wildly at what I felt gliding away; and when she finally married Vincent, scarcely deigning to inform me of her decision, it wrung my heart infinitely more than it could have done had I felt no suspense.”

She married him, then; and I believe she repented it most bitterly. But repentance in earthly things can never make atonement; for by its very nature it comes too late. I was left alone with my own thoughts; I have been alone ever since; and, my son, you know what it has made me! I do not wish you, Henry, to be withered in this way; and it is to save you from such a fate that I am now talking to you.

“I told you I had been making inquiries; and the information I have gained satisfies me that you are treading the same path which I have trodden so unhappily. Fanny Vincent may be all you think she is; but I appeal to you now, Henry, whether I am not right when I say she is treating you precisely as her mother treated me, and for a similar purpose.”

Henry could make no reply. He felt too forcibly the coincidence.

“I knew it was so,” his uncle continued. “Mr. Eversham is your rival, and, Henry, he will be successful. The levity of the mother has descended to the daughter; and if you do not at once save yourself, by profiting by my experience, you may

be tortured months upon months, the victim of her caprices, and at last be cast aside as no longer of value. Take my advice now, Henry, while it is yet time; prevent an endless sorrow from seating itself in your heart, by casting it out while you can!

"I cannot stay with you longer now; but come up to the 'Glen' this evening, and we will talk further about it. I must see James before I return home, so I had better make haste. Think of what I have said, and do not fail to come up early."

The old man lingered a few moments as if he wished to say more. But his words had evidently sunk into Henry's heart, and without disturbing his reflections he departed. Henry leaned his head upon his hand and thought long and painfully. "He must be right," he thought; "and yet——" but the doubt was checked by a recollection, and his resolution was taken.

## CHAPTER VI.

But there, where I had garnered up my heart,  
To be discarded thence!—OTHELLO.

We'll put the matter to the present push.—HAMLET.

So prosper I, as I swear perfect love.—RICHARD III.

That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,  
If with that tongue he cannot win a woman.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

FANNY had gone out in the morning with Maria to wait in the wood until the latter should go to Mr. Eversham's, dispatch her brother with the note, and receive the answer. It would probably require more than an hour to do this; and with the purpose of spending the time patiently, she brought a book with her, and endeavored to read. But one page was quite as much as she could conquer; so, closing the book, she rose from the root of the old elm where she had been sitting, and walked uneasily up and down the path. The time hung very heavily upon her spirits—for the uncertainty of her position, the doubt which distracted her, and her uneasiness as to what would pro-

bably be the result of the step she had taken, made her anxious and impatient.

That she loved Henry there could be no question; but it was equally certain that she felt estranged and resentful for the harshness of his bearing. She thought correctly, that his conduct had not been kind, and she was half inclined to believe that his affection was cooling—that he had only seized upon Eversham's attentions as a pretext for jealousy—that he wished the bonds between them broken. When she thought of Eversham, she could not avoid a comparison between his assiduous and considerate manner, and Henry's exacting and impatient spirit; perhaps she even permitted herself to think how much greater promise of happiness there would be with the tranquil temper of the former, than in the jealous nature of the latter. But she dismissed the thought, as a treason to her lover; and resuming her seat again, addressed herself to the book.

She had not read long, however, before she heard a quick footstep approaching, and on looking up perceived Maria. Her eye sought the maid's hand for a letter, but it was not there!

"She has it concealed somewhere," thought her mistress.

But Maria came near, holding up both hands to signify that she had no answer.

"He told Billy to come back at five o'clock," she said, with a blush, which, however, Fanny did not observe.

"I will not come here again," said Fanny. "You may go over in the evening, Maria, and see what answer he gets."

She turned away with a quivering lip, and walked slowly towards her home. Her heart was sinking fast. "Had he loved me," she thought, "he would have sent me one line at least. But I will wait—a little longer." Her step was heavy, as it had been two days before along the same path; but now, as then, when she emerged from the wood her bearing changed; she raised her head, and her eye flashed with the fire of wounded pride. "Let him have it so, then," she said, almost aloud, "if he *will* have it! And yet he evidently intends to answer something; I will wait till to-morrow at all events." She entered the house, and, without speaking to any one, sought her own apartment, and locked the door behind her.

She passed the most of the day alone—how occupied we cannot tell. But a spirit wayward as hers could not fail to waver between the most opposite passions. How many times Henry's letters and notes—even the most trivial of which were carefully preserved and religiously guarded—were that day read and cast aside; how many times the little tokens of his

affection were alternately pressed to her heart and thrown indignantly from her; how many tears of wounded affection were that day shed, or how many resolutions to give him up were taken, we cannot know. When she came forth, a few minutes before sunset, her eyes were red with weeping, but her face was composed and her step firm. She sat down to the piano, and began to sing a low plaintive song; but her eyes filled with tears, and her voice began to choke. She hastily rose and walked to the front gate.

Maria was just emerging from the wood. She had been to Mr Eversham's to see her brother. As she slowly approached, Fanny's eyes again sought the answer in her hand. *It was not there!*

"He says your note did not require an answer," said Maria as she came up to the gate.

"He is right," said Fanny; but a deadly pallor overspread her face, and her lips were livid with emotion. She turned away, and without another word entered the house. Again she sat down to the instrument; but this time she finished the song; and though her voice was a little tremulous at first, when she closed it was round and full.

As the last note of the air died away, a knock was heard at the door, and a moment afterwards James Glenn entered. He was a little embarrassed as he walked towards her; but this did not prevent his looking keenly at her face, as she turned and rose to receive him. The signs of recent agitation could not escape one so well prepared to see them; nor was he blind to the expression of wounded pride which sparkled in her eyes and hardened her manner. "Women are like the balls of our school days," he reasoned—"never so easily caught as upon the rebound."\* And with his accustomed promptitude, he was here now to put his theory in practice. He expected to be treated with more cordiality than ever before, and he was not disappointed. "Many a wife has been won in this way," he thought; "for within the first three days after a disappointment, a woman is more susceptible to new attractions and new attentions, than at any other time. Making love to her then, seems like a more delicate kind of sympathy; and her feeling of loneliness makes her value it more highly than it deserves." Whether his reasoning was true or false in the general, on this occasion it was perfectly correct; it was a relief to Fanny to see even him; she thought, indeed, that it was very kind in

\* This axiom I have heard used in conversation, and have an indistinct recollection of having seen it in print; but where I cannot now recall.

him to call at such a time. She received him, therefore, with real pleasure; though she did not like him, and at another time would not have been pleased with his coming. His presence relieved her from her own thoughts, gave her other things to think of; and the current once turned, her spirits were soon apparently as high as if it had been Henry, and not James, who sat beside her. This did not perfectly deceive James, though his vanity prompted him loudly to ascribe her gaiety to pleasure in his society. He knew that a great part of it was attributable to a revulsion not very flattering to him; but he was glad to find her as she was, because in this mood he could best prosecute his suit. He had, not more than an hour before, taken a step which committed him thoroughly; he was bound to pursue the path, which it was too late to retrace. Half his purposes were already answered; all that was now necessary was to secure the ground he had gained—to insure the complete separation of Fanny and his cousin—and he would then have leisure to prosecute his plans to their consummation. He commenced a conversation in light tones upon indifferent topics; and I believe I have already said his conversational powers were remarkably good. His natural bitterness, however, tinged everything he said; the most unmerciful satire was as common to his lips as it was to his thoughts. But in Fanny's present mood nothing could have pleased her better. She laughed heartily at his severe sketches of characters around them, and joined him with a will, in characterizing friends and enemies alike. She looked a little grave when he attacked any one whose wealth or high social position she had been taught to venerate; but the gall of his remarks was too congenial to her present temper to be long resisted; and in less than half an hour, she even united with him in a laugh of bitter ridicule, at the expense of Mr. Eversham. He was too dexterous to venture upon this at first, but he finally came to it, when he saw by repeated experiments that she would bear it. He discovered that he was in the right vein, and pushed on with ever-increasing brilliancy. He spared neither age, sex, nor station—showing his caustic bitterness on all alike.

For example—speaking of a young lady about whom, at another time, Fanny would not have listened to a word, but of whom James designed presently to say more—"Miss Rayburn's most commendable trait," said he, "is her economy—derived, through her father, from 'the land of steady habits.'"

"Wherein, for instance?" asked Fanny, laughing.

"In large companies, for example," said James. "You

usually see her wearing but one glove, the other being carefully lodged under her belt; and if she wears the right-hand glove this evening, probably the next time you see her, she will have the left hand covered, and the other glove respited to do duty on some future occasion. However," he added, as if suddenly recollecting, "I ought not to say anything to disparage her, for she may soon be my relative."

"How? Your relative?" said Fanny, suddenly growing serious.

"I mean my Cousin Henry's wife," he replied, carelessly. "I do not know much about it, except what my Uncle Abram has told me,—for Henry never trusts me with a secret."

"What has your uncle told you?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

James affected not to observe her emotion, and went on:

"Perhaps I ought to say nothing about it——"

"You must——" Fanny interrupted him, but checked herself, and, by a great effort, recovered her self-command.

—— "because," James continued, without seeming to observe the earnest tone in which she had spoken, "my uncle may not have meant it to be spoken of, though he certainly gave me no such injunction, and—at all events, it will do no harm to tell you."

"None in the world," she said: "it may do very great good."

He gazed at her as if surprised, but continued:

"After all, I have not much to tell you; though I inferred from what my uncle said, that Henry had consulted him about the matter,—I suppose, because he was our guardian, and because Henry's expectations are all dependent upon him. He gave Henry some such advice as is embraced in the old proverbial couplet:

"'Tis good to be merry and wise, 'tis good to be honest and true —  
'Tis good to be off with the old love before you are on with the new."

Though I am at a loss to conjecture who the 'old love' was, unless it was yourself, which I hope it was not."

"Why do you hope so?" she asked.

"Because," said he, plainly and at once, "if you were his former love, and really loved him, I fear you are doomed to a disappointment, from which I would save you if I could. And if you did *not* love him, you must have been insincere, and that would have been a disappointment to *me*."

"But why a disappointment to *you*?" she asked calmly.

"Because," said he, lowering his voice, "I have always con-

sidered you as true as you are beautiful; and to be disenchanted of a dream so happy would be too much!"

She gazed full in his face for more than a minute.

"Can you believe me?" he asked softly.

"But," said she, without altering her posture, "you have not told me how your cousin took his uncle's advice."

"That," said James, "he did not tell me; but I inferred from what he said that it was already done,—that Henry was already 'off with the old love.'"

"So he is," said Fanny, still gazing absently at him,

"My conjecture was correct, then?" said James.

But she did not answer, and he went on:

"If I had known this, I would not have mentioned it for worlds: you will forgive me?"

"You have done me a service, not an injury," she said; "and I am grateful to you beyond expression."

"Such a service scarcely deserves gratitude, I fear," said he, feelingly. "But if I do not require forgiveness for that, I do on another account."

"For what?" she asked, still without moving.

"For daring at such a time," said he, in a voice still lower, "to use expressions that must grate so harshly upon your ears—for presuming to speak of my own feelings, which, however intense, ought not now to be intruded upon you."

"I fear you are but too certain of your forgiveness," she said, "else you would never have asked it."

"I ask it in good faith, believe me, dear Miss Vincent!" he exclaimed, earnestly. "For I know how inappropriate are such words to your present feelings. Indeed, I am sensible that my very presence must at such a time be irksome—and for that also I must demand to be forgiven."

He rose as he spoke, and walked towards the door.

"I could very readily forgive both offences," said Fanny, rising also, "if they were such; which they are not."

"I ought not to stay longer now," said James, turning towards her, "and yet I cannot reconcile myself to going without saying more. I am unwilling to leave you without assuring you that my words were not the mere expression of an ordinary gallantry; believe me, I am above such folly. I desire to leave with you the certainty that I would not speak lightly upon such a subject; that if I should pour forth the most ardent expressions of love, I should be but following the dictates of a heart which is wholly yours—and forever! And," he rapidly continued, attempting to take her hand, which, however, she

drew back, "the only reason why I do not do so, is because I feel how cruel, how selfish, it would be to press you upon such a subject, at such a time! This, at least, you must forgive me for saying—if you can find in your heart one spark of kindness for me—if even years of devotion can make you love me—let me conjure you to believe that a truer heart you can never find than that which I would now offer! Will you forgive me for speaking thus? Will you believe that I am sincere—and think of me when I am gone?"

"I am not fit to answer you now," she said, in a tone almost of reproach. "I would not even speak on the subject; but you must not conclude——"

"I will conclude nothing," he interrupted, eagerly. "I wish only to be understood."

"Well, well," said she, impatiently and faintly, for she felt her strength giving way, "some other time, not, not!"

He pressed her hand passionately, opened the door, and was gone. She sank exhausted upon the sofa, and sobbed violently, with her face buried in the cushion. Had he seen her then, even James would have felt remorse; but she was alone—how utterly alone no one knew but herself! James walked complacently along the quiet road, and was soon within the precincts of the town.

"It is all safe now," he thought, as he entered his office, and throwing off his coat, drew on a dressing-gown. "Henry will receive his dismissal to-morrow, I think, and then she is mine—Eversham to the contrary, notwithstanding. Uncle Abram will be set right, and his displeasure on account of my dissipations will vanish. Henry must have told him—no one else could; but I can afford to forgive him, for I shall be fully avenged."

Already he was counting with certainty upon his success—already he was considering himself the possessor of the bulk of his uncle's wealth. Yet he had no bitterness in his heart against his cousin, whom he suspected of having caused the severe admonition he had that day received. He was moved by selfishness almost alone—his heart had not room even for enmity.

James was no vulgar villain, who dares everything with a mere scoundrel's hardihood. His training had not been adapted to his nature, and had consequently further vitiated a character originally far from amiable. He had inherited from his mother an intense selfishness; but he had also received from his father—in addition to the traits we have already mentioned, what

she never had—a certain refinement of mind, which, with appropriate discipline, might in a measure have counteracted his lower tendencies. Like her, he was a voluptuary in the worst sense of the word—eager in the pursuit of his own pleasure, and totally regardless of everything that lay in his way. His free command of money while at college had enabled him to develop all his tastes, almost without limit. Morley could procure him gratifications of every sort, excepting those best calculated to curb his unfortunate propensities; and the possession of the means encouraged their use. His vanity assisted the process of corruption, and his turbulent spirit rejected all restraints. The habit of instant gratification grew upon him until it became almost a necessity. The gnawing of passion, and his impatience of control, spurred him to seek his ends by tortuous, when they were unattainable by direct means. Time had rolled on in this sort of life, until the sparks of good which lay smouldering in his character were almost extinguished, and he became the mere creature of his own selfishness. His tastes, natural and acquired, were expensive; and it was to gratify them that he desired wealth. His uncle's was a fortune quite sufficient, he thought, if undivided; but half of it would only aggravate the evil; it would give him the inclination without the ability to live the life that pleased his fancy. He was therefore resolved to secure the whole of it if possible, or at least more than an equal share; and he sincerely believed that a union with Fanny Vincent, besides gratifying his love, would secure that end.

It is frequently said that men exhibit, in the pursuit of trivial or evil objects, talents and energies which, used for honorable purposes, would secure them eminent success; and it is often lamented that great abilities should be thus wasted or debased. But all to whom this is a source of sorrow may dry their tears, for they are mourning without a cause. We are not authorized to infer from the fact that a man shows great acuteness in one department of human effort, that he would be equally remarkable in another; for the same ingredient in the composition of his character which fits him for the one, may unfit him for the other. Our intellectual philosophy is not, and perhaps never can be, so perfect as to enable us to weigh with precision the exact influence which any propensity may exercise upon the strength and direction of the whole mind; but we do know that every faculty and passion which a man possesses goes to make up a total whose manifestations are the external lines of his character; and, if we were right in the theory with which

we commenced this narrative, the withdrawal or diminution of any one of these constituents would entirely change the man. The tendency to evil, then, which we so much lament in some men, may be the very force which gives them the energy and ingenuity they exhibit in its pursuit—if they had it not, or if it were overcome, they might be very common men—and at the very best, we should be disappointed in our expectations of great good or great success to follow their change of life. Those who have been much about “houses of correction for youthful offenders,” are familiar with this truth; for hundreds of instances are daily occurring, where boys who have exhibited great energy and ability in the prosecution of evil, have become mere dolts upon the repression of their vicious tendencies; because it was precisely in these vicious tendencies, that their energy and ability consisted.

It is unquestionable, that men who have exhibited great intellectual power in the prosecution of evil, have sometimes reformed their lives and displayed *equal* ability in the pursuit of good; but he who reasons correctly upon human character—that is, argues from what we do and can know, by analogy to that which we cannot fathom—in all these cases will conclude, that the tendencies to good and to evil were originally equal, and that accident of education gave the first development. Or it may be, that the very life of crime and violence which preceded the reformation, has served to give tone and temper to energies afterwards so efficient for good. In none of these cases can it be said with any probability of truth, that the organization whose talents have been wasted on evil objects, has been reclaimed by altering the direction of those *same* talents. Without the capacity for virtue in at least an equal degree with the tendency to vice, a reformation involves the necessity for a total subversion of the intellectual powers—imbecility or even insanity would invariably follow such reclamation. Gunpowder may be deprived of its explosive quality by mingling water with it: it is thus incapable of doing harm; but you have attained that end only by depriving it of its energy, rendering it also incapable of good. And so it is with the human mind: a change in its nature—or a forced suspension of its natural manifestations, which amounts to the same thing—involves the destruction of its force. And it may always be safely decided, that if the energy continues no change has taken place—just as, if after you had cast water on the gunpowder it should still explode, you would correctly infer that the moisture had not acted upon the composition sufficiently to change its character.

## CHAPTER VII.

— Our doubts are traitors,  
And make us lose the good we oft might win.—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.  
Let's take the instant by the forward top.—ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.  
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs.—RICHARD II.  
Strong reasons make strong actions.—KING JOHN.

ON the morning after his cousin's visit to Fanny, of which he of course knew nothing, Henry was sitting as usual in the front room of his office. He was alone, looking even more haggard than on the day before. As then he was endeavoring to force his mind to pursue its ordinary course of thought. Papers and books were scattered about the table by which he sat, and a pen lay loosely between his fingers. Once or twice he put it to the paper; and drawing his chair closer, with the air of a man who is determined to perform an unwelcome task, he succeeded at each effort in tracing two or three lines, in broken, unsteady characters. But this was the extent of his success; after each effort he paused and seemed lost in thought. At last he threw down the pen, making a large blot in the very middle of his paper, and, pushing his chair impatiently back, rose and went out. He was gone but a few moments, and was followed on his return by a man carrying a basket, in which were about a dozen bottles of wine. The man set them on the table in the back room and went away without speaking. At the same moment James Glenn entered.

“You do not seem well this morning,” said he, as he advanced, and without ceremony took a seat. “You look pale and exhausted; what is the matter?”

“Only a little nervousness, I believe,” Henry answered. “I have been trying to write for an hour, but my hand is so unsteady that I cannot do it. I have just ordered,” he continued, rising and passing into the other room, “a dozen of sherry, which I hope will make my nerves firmer. Will you not join me?”

As he spoke, he drew the cork from one of the bottles, and with a trembling hand poured almost half its contents into a heavy cut-glass tumbler.

"Come," he said, "pour for yourself—you know how."

"You are nervous, indeed," said James, as without waiting for him, Henry raised the glass with a trembling hand to his lips, and drank the wine at a draught. "And you are evidently not drinking for the taste, but the effect."

"I have been so much harassed of late," said Henry, "that I have hardly slept one-tenth of my usual time; and loss of sleep shatters the nerves terribly."

"I am somewhat nervous this morning myself," James observed, sipping the wine, and holding it between his eye and the light with the air of a *connoisseur*, "but this wine will correct that admirably. It is too early to drink much—but your prescription is a judicious one. Do you feel that it relieves you?"

"Very slightly," said Henry, "though the quantity I took would usually half intoxicate me?"

"The most of its strength," said James, "is expended in supplying the nervous force, exhausted by loss of sleep. Perhaps another glass might make the nerves firm. Shall I pour for you?"

Without waiting for an answer, he drew the cork of another bottle, and pouring a glass nearly full, handed it to Henry.

"Drink off and fill up," said Henry.

"No, I will only fill up," James replied, suiting the action to the word: "I am not so exhausted as you are."

They both drank slowly, and then returned to the front room. Henry, being unaccustomed to such indulgence, was already flushed by the wine; and though not exactly intoxicated, James could see that it had the effect he expected. His eye was brighter, and his lips, which a few minutes before had been pale and almost ashy, were now full and red. His nostrils were dilated, denoting quickened circulation; and as he laid his hand carelessly on the table, James could see the blue veins distend, and grow as if suddenly injected.

"You must have been very nervous indeed," said James, looking at the crooked and unsteady writing on the table.

"I was," said Henry, "and have had enough to make me so."

"Something out of the usual course must have occurred," James suggested, "to have affected you in this way."

"Nothing very unusual," said Henry. "I have been betrayed—that's all—and that certainly is not so uncommon!"

"Not very," James replied. "But can I be of any service to you? Or is it a matter of which you would rather not speak?"

"It is no very pleasant topic," Henry said; "but you will understand my feelings—read that note!"

As he spoke he opened a drawer in the table, and taking out a note which James at once recognized, handed it to him with an averted face.

"Shall I open it?" said James.

"Certainly: read it."

James opened it, and slowly read as follows:

"*Mr. H. Glenn:* After what has passed, justice both to you and to myself, requires that I at once terminate our engagement. You will therefore understand that from this day it is at an end in form, as I fear it has been in substance for a long time. My reasons for coming to this resolution I must leave to your imagination, satisfied as I am that, since you understand my feelings so well, you cannot fail to divine them.

"Your letters, and the few personal ornaments which I have been foolish enough to wear for your sake, I do not entrust to the hand that bears this, because I hold them in trust for you, as your property, and do not consider myself authorized to part with them, except to an agent chosen by yourself. If you will send my miniature and letters, you will receive yours in return. After that, if we should ever meet, I trust it will be with no enmity; for, I assure you, I have no cause to feel any. I now feel free, and to say that I am grateful would but feebly express what fills my heart. I can only hope that you are equally happy.

"FANNY VINCENT.

"Wednesday Morning, 8th."

"That's cool, upon my honor!" exclaimed James, looking again curiously over a letter which he had carefully perused before Henry ever saw it. "She underscores three very significant words. What do you take her meaning to be in emphasizing the word 'send'?"

"That she does not wish to see me in person," said Henry.

"But what has induced her to take this step? Can you, as she says, imagine her reasons?"

"She has sold herself to Eversham," said Henry roughly.

"And in the beginning here," said James, "I suppose she refers to some knowledge you had gained of the fact? Or does she leave it thus vague in order to create the impression that at all events she thinks herself justified?"

"God knows what she means!" said Henry: "I neither know nor care. It is sufficient for me that I have treated her well and that she has treated me shamefully, for a shameful purpose. She has wished to marry this widower for some time; and had I not been a fool, I might have seen it."

James rose suddenly from his chair with a flushed face, and crushed the letter in his hand.

"I will see to that!" he muttered between his teeth, striding impatiently from one end of the room to the other.

"What interest have you in the matter?" suddenly asked Henry, flushing in his turn, as if in anger.

"None under Heaven!" replied James recovering himself, "apart from my indignation at the treatment you have received; for I think, with you, that it is shameful. Except, however," he added, reseating himself, "that I have no reason to love this Eversham at the best; and to see him thus undermining one so near to me as you are, looks almost like following up old injuries with new insults."

"I do not think he is so blameable as she is," said Henry; "few men would resist such a temptation."

"You are right, I believe," James replied, after a moment's thought, "and I was too hasty. But, Henry, when I see an act like this, I cannot avoid feeling indignant."

"Every man of honor feels in the same way," said Henry.

"Yes; and the manner in which she insults you at the close of this precious document shows that the result has been of her own seeking. She '*hopes*' you may be equally '*happy*,' when the very fact of her underscoring '*hopes*' shows that she did not believe it; and, besides, if she had hoped so, she would not have exulted over her '*freedom*' as she does!"

"Let me have it!" said Henry; and taking it angrily, he tore it into a hundred little pieces, and threw them in an excited manner on the floor. James sat looking complacently on. It was a consummation he devoutly wished; indeed, he had once almost taken the resolution to tear it himself, under cover of ungovernable indignation. He would have done so had he dared; for the underscoring of the words, which gave the letter such significant meaning, *was the work of his own hand!* Fanny had written it with the feeling of wounded pride strong upon her. She thought she was only doing what Henry wished; and she was anxious to conceal, from him of all the world, the fact that his indifference touched her heart. This feeling had dictated the closing lines of her letter; but to give them significance by emphasizing even one word, had never

entered her mind. She desired only to write such a letter as would answer her purpose of terminating their engagement, and and at the same time would enable her to bury in her own heart the bitter grief which she would not have revealed for worlds. The letter had been taken to James, and by him opened. With the devilish cunning which distinguished him, he had only drawn four dashes with his pen, leaving every word as it was written, and yet deepening immensely, if not totally changing, the meaning of the whole letter. This done, he had resealed it and sent it on to its destination. He was, therefore, not sorry that it was destroyed; and he was the better pleased that Henry had torn it under an impression which could never be removed by referring to it again.

A pause of some minutes ensued, which was broken by James:

"Have you sent her the miniature and letters?" he asked.

"Not yet," Henry answered; "but I will to-day or, to-morrow."

"And whom have you chosen for the '*agent*' she speaks of?"

"No one, as yet. Indeed, I am at a loss whom to select. I want to find some one willing to do me such a service, upon whose secrecy I can depend. For, to have my private feelings the familiar topic of indifferent people, would be an aggravation which I could not endure."

"It would be an aggravation, indeed!" said James. "But are you willing to trust me?"

"I will be very glad to do so, if you will undertake the commission," eagerly replied Henry.

"Undertake it? Certainly," said James, "and be as secret as the grave! I know how publicity would affect you."

"I would rather trust you than any one else," said Henry, "because you are near to me, and would feel more deeply interested in saving my feelings. I will get the things together to-day and give them to you this evening. You can then take them to her at your own convenience."

"Is there anything you would wish me to say to her? For if there is nothing special I would rather just make the exchange and come away."

"No, nothing," said Henry, "not a word more than is necessary."

"You can think of it, however," James suggested; "perhaps something may occur to you that you may wish said. There may be some mistake—some misunderstanding—"

"No!" said Henry decidedly, interrupting him, "she has

chosen this course deliberately, fully understanding her position. I do not wish to be compromised by even hinting the possibility of a mistake."

"I will avoid that, you may be sure," said James; "I only made the inquiry that I might understand my commission, and take no false step."

"I do not fear any such thing," said Henry rising, and, with an unsteady step, walking into the other room. "Let us finish this bottle."

As he spoke, he poured its contents into two glasses, and handing one to James, put the other to his lips and drank it off. James followed his example, and setting the glass down, turned to leave the room.

"You will come in again this evening, James?" said Henry, drawing aside the curtains and sinking upon the couch.

"Yes," James replied, "and in the meantime you had better try to get some rest. You look flushed and fatigued."

But Henry was asleep almost before the sentence was finished; fatigue and wakefulness, assisted by the wine he had taken, doing their office quickly. James gazed smilingly at him for a few moments, cast his eyes at the disordered bottles on the table, took one of them and set it on a chair beside the bed, overturned several others, and placing a glass with a little wine in the bottom on the chair beside the bottle, he turned and left the office. His object in thus disordering the room the reader will understand, when we tell him that James had just time to cross the street and turn into a retail store, when his Uncle Abram came round the corner above, and entered the office. James saw him through a window, before which he stationed himself, talking indifferently to the "dealer in fancy dry goods," but closely watching the opposite door.

As soon as Abram had entered, James issued from the shop and followed him. As he sauntered idly in, his uncle was standing, with intense displeasure in his expressive face, at the door of the back-room, casting his eyes sharply from one object to another, and listening to the heavy breathing of the sleeper before him. He turned as he heard James' footfall on the floor. The latter started as if he had not expected to see him, and his bearing immediately became more alert.

"You are in early, uncle," said he, as if surprised.

"Earlier than I was expected, it would seem," said Abram, in a tone which satisfied his nephew that his stratagem had been successful.

"How so?" James asked, innocently. "Ah!" he added,

hastily, as Abram stepped aside and pointed to the disordered array. "What! Wine? This was not intended for your eye, uncle."

"I suppose not," said Abram, bitterly. "I suppose not."

James took the bottle from the chair and held it over the glass—it was empty! He set it carelessly on the table, and lifted the others upright; re-arranging it thus, within a minute he had the room in the same order it had displayed when Henry fell asleep.

"It is of no use, James," said Abram, as he watched him until he supposed he understood his motive. "Better let him put it to rights himself, since its disorder is a consequence of his own vicious habits."

"But some one may come in," said James, deprecatingly; "and for the sake of the name, if not for Henry's, I would rather not have the room seen in such disarray."

He opened a low press, as he spoke, and set the bottles and glasses away. He then drew the curtains gently around the couch and closed the window.

"You are right, James," said his uncle kindly; "though he does not deserve your consideration."

"But, Uncle Abram," urged James in a low voice, "any one may be overcome thus occasionally, and I do not believe this is a habit with Henry."

"To drink to intoxication during business hours, without company, *alone*, and then, leaving his office in this condition, to fall into a plethoric sleep, is a little too much for even your powers of excuse, James!"

"But, uncle—"

"I want to hear no more about it, James!"

"Shall I wake him, then?"

"No, let him sleep it off! Come; let us close the door, and at least save him from publicity."

They passed out together, and Abram closed the door. Without speaking to his nephew, he turned away towards 'the Glen.'

"I thought the old codger would be down this morning," thought James, "though he nearly came too soon!"

Henry had failed to keep his appointment with his uncle on the night before, and James knew it. When Henry fell asleep, therefore, James—knowing that Abram would be down to ascertain the reason of his nephew's non-appearance—suddenly conceived and promptly acted upon the thought, to disgrace Henry in eyes, to which, as recent events had shown, he was

growing too dear. Uncle Abram scarcely ever came down so early by an hour; and it was only his anxiety about Henry, consequent upon their conversation of the preceding day, that so nearly made him too early for James' purposes.

"I must be in luck," thought James; "I just 'saved my distance,' notwithstanding the old fellow's unusual early rising; and—" his mind wandered back to the interview of the night before. He thought of the manner in which Fanny had received him—of the successful expression of his feelings—of the impression he must have made of his delicacy and disinterestedness. And looking to the future—thinking of the fate in store for him—he raised his head, and with a smiling face, walked slowly away down the street.

What were his precise plans, or whether he yet had defined them even to himself, we cannot say. Probably his object in offering himself as Henry's friend and agent, was to possess himself completely of his cousin's affairs, and secure ground, from which he would be able to operate in any direction that might become necessary. By undertaking this negotiation, also, he would be the better assured that his plans would not be deranged, or his stratagems discovered, by any intercourse between the estranged lovers, unknown to, or not directed by, himself. It is probable, likewise, that he did not intend to offer the exchange of letters which Fanny had requested, unless he found it necessary to exasperate her still more, and thus the better prepare her to listen to his own addresses. It was one of his maxims, never to decide upon his course, until he had examined every circumstance which was likely to have any bearing upon his action; and accordingly, when he received the letters from Henry at the appointed time, and prepared to visit Fanny, he had not definitely resolved to offer them, or not to offer them—preferring to see her first, and trust to his own quickness of perception and presence of mind, to suggest the course most expedient.

Henry had no messages to send, and he left him, despondent but relieved—for he felt that, though it was a step which sundered them forever, it was at least a decision, a solution, though a painful one, of the difficulties which surrounded him.

"Just give them to her," said Henry, "and receive mine in return: I have not a word further to say."

## CHAPTER VIII.

ROD. I will hear further reason for this.

IAGO. And you shall be satisfied.—OTHELLO.

Tell me what more thou knowest.—LEAR.

Thou hast said enough.—RICHARD II.

Out of my sight! Thou dost infect mine eyes.—RICHARD III.

How, with mine honor, may I give him that

Which I have given to you.—TWELFTH NIGHT.

FANNY VINCENT was not a faultless heroine, perhaps—excepting for the purposes of this history—not a heroine at all. Had she been without perceptible fault, no man, whether like or unlike Henry Glenn, could ever have loved her. Moral perfection is always insipid when it is not monstrous; and a woman whose character lies upon the dead level of either uniform excellence or the opposite can never excite an emotion of personal interest in the breast of man. The faults of human nature are to its virtues what the setting is to the jewel; as the gold enhances the lustre and makes available the beauty of the gem, the failings of men heighten the glory of their good deeds and, by furnishing a measure of their excellence, give force to their example and efficacy to their goodness. It is thus that the absence of evil becomes an evil in itself; and though we can never fathom the infinite philosophy which controls its ministry to good, we can still understand that stagnation, even in perfection, would be a great moral, as it is a great physical, curse. The agitation of evil is as necessary to the great moral ocean, as is the tossing of the waters by the winds of heaven to the material deep: and both are ordained for similar purposes of purification.

Men do not reason upon these things in taking their impressions; but from a dead flat, in human character as in all other things, they shrink with instinctive dislike. And thus, we say, had Fanny Vincent been faultless, she never could have won the love of any true man. She was not so, however; she had passions ill-regulated, feelings falsely biased, and sentiments

distorted by injudicious training and unfortunate social and domestic position. The admiration given her had not quite turned her head, for her character was balanced by a fund of strong native sense, but it had given her an exaggerated estimate of her own deserving, and of the obligations of the other sex.

Most women consider a man little better than a barbarian, if he fails to surrender at discretion to any of the blandishments of "the sex;" and yet, if their charms happen to be used a little unwarrantably, and the captive chances to be sacrificed to his gallantry, their verdict is unanimous,—that he has only received what he deserved, for yielding to that which they would have pronounced him a savage for resisting.

Fanny was one of this peculiar way of thinking. She believed that her own rights had been unjustifiably invaded, and that treason had been committed against the sovereignty of "the sex." What was mainly a wound to her personal feelings was deepened by this consideration, and what would otherwise have been only sorrow, became also indignation. She was more unhappy, too, because she was not certain that she had not acted more hastily than the occasion warranted. She believed it still possible that an explanation might be made,—that some unfortunate mistake had caused the estrangement between herself and Henry,—and that she had taken, without proper deliberation, a step that was not to be retraced. Her mind was, therefore, in that unsettled state upon which is predicable any extreme, according to the first impulse given. Should Henry come into her presence with his arms extended, she might rush into them with extravagant confidence; or, should any one assure her that he no longer loved her, and that she had acted wisely in discarding him, she might, for the time, erase his image utterly from her heart, and cast herself without hesitation upon the breast of him who gave her the assurance.

It was, therefore, not wholly without prospect of success that James prosecuted his suit, for it lay in his power to be before any other man in giving her this assurance, and no one could be less inclined to withhold it from any scruples of honor. When, accordingly, after he had received the package of letters from Henry, he entered the room where she was, it was with a resolution to watch closely the manifestations of her feelings, and, without regard to the rights or interests of any one but himself, to say and do whatever he found most conducive to his success.

Fanny was standing at a window, leaning with one arm upon

the sash, and gazing abstractedly out upon the little garden, where her father and Eversham were pacing slowly up and down a sanded walk. Her eyes—red and feverish, perhaps with tears, or it might be from not weeping—were fixed upon a rose-bush waving gently in the evening wind, and were only raised when, at intervals, the forms of the gentlemen passed between it and the window. Then, with a strange expression of mingled interest and aversion, they would rest for a moment upon the figure of Eversham, who was unconscious of the scrutiny, and as he vanished among the trees, they fell again upon the waving bush, while an impatient curl upon her lip or a half-angry flush, seemed to indicate that her thoughts in that connection were anything but pleasant. To this unquiet look gradually succeeded one of deep sadness, of self-reproach it may be, until again broken by the return of the two gentlemen, who walked very slowly; and then, with a start, came back the sudden flush and disdainful curl.

James could not help observing this expression—half interest, half scorn—as he entered the room after knocking unheeded for a long time, and it at once startled him into watchfulness. He glanced out at the other window and saw Eversham and Vincent.

"Humph!" he said, loud enough to attract her attention.

She turned suddenly round, and he advanced towards her.

"Good evening," he said. "I knocked several times, and receiving no answer, supposed you might be temporarily absent —"

"In mind, I was," she said with a faint smile.

"But," continued James, "I was unwilling to return without discharging my commission, and so took the liberty of entering unbidden."

"No apology is necessary," she said, hastily. "Did you say you had a commission to perform?"

"I wish I could say you have misunderstood me," said he, mournfully; "but I cannot say so."

"If it is as serious as your countenance seems to indicate," said she, with a melancholy attempt to smile, "the sooner it is executed the better."

"Perhaps I overrate its importance," said James; "but it certainly is not pleasant either for you or me."

"It concerns us both, then?" she said inquiringly.

"It affects you directly," he replied, "and me only through my interest in you. Were my feelings towards you less warm, I should have less difficulty in executing it."

"Tell me what it is, and let me help you," said Fanny, with another sorry smile.

"If I could do so," he said "the difficulty would be already overcome. But unfortunately before telling you, I shall be compelled to touch upon subjects which I fear may not be pleasant to you—to ask questions which, without explanation, would seem impertinent. But you will forgive me, I trust, when I tell you that worlds would not tempt me wantonly to wound the slightest of your sensibilities."

"I hope it is so," she said, a little reservedly—adding, after a pause, "and I believe it. But can you not give me a hint of it before you ask these formidable questions, so that I may know how to answer them?"

"I can tell you thus much," said he, after a minute's thought; "the message I have to deliver is from my cousin Henry."

Although this was precisely what she had expected, she turned ashy pale at the mention of Henry's name, and trembled so violently that she was obliged to sink into a chair. She motioned James to another, and in a low, faint voice, said—

"Pardon my rudeness: I had forgotten to invite you to a seat. You must think me very weak," she continued, after a pause, during which James sat looking at her with an interest far from unreal; "but my nerves have been a little shaken recently, and —"

"I know what you would say," James interposed, observing her hesitate; "I know what your feelings are, and am not surprised that the mention of that name should so affect you."

She looked suddenly up at him, and her eyes began to kindle as with rising anger. Whatever she might think of Henry's treatment to herself, she felt indignant the moment a stranger insinuated a censure. But James went on—

"I know nothing," said he, a little hurriedly, "of the history of your relation to him, and I do not wish to inquire into it further than you are willing to allow me. I have undertaken an unpleasant duty, which only the pleasure of approaching you induced me not to decline. But, even for the sake of doing what I have promised to do, I will not ask a question without your permission."

"I cannot prevent you asking," said she, looking keenly at him, "though I may answer or not, as I please."

"Certainly," said James; "I have no right to expect more from you than you are perfectly willing to give—nor, if I am right in my conjecture, has my cousin Henry."

"What is your conjecture?" she asked quietly.

"That his conduct was such as to leave you no alternative but to discard him without delay; and that the impression he makes upon the minds of his friends is not perfectly consistent with truth."

"What impression does he make?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

"Pardon me," said James, shrinking back as if he had unconsciously gone too far, "I do not know that I ought to tell you."

"But you *must*!" she said, leaning forward and looking into his eyes as if she would tear the secret from his heart.

"I can refuse *you* nothing!" he said, as if vexed at his own weakness; "and for that reason ought not to have mentioned it."

"But having mentioned it," she persisted, without changing her attitude, "you must go on and tell me all."

"Will you not let me choose what I shall tell you?" he asked, "because 'all' may include something unpleasant—and nothing but your own command would induce me to wound your feelings."

"All, all! Tell me *all*!" she said impatiently.

"Indeed, there is not much to tell —"

"Keep back nothing!" she interrupted, almost fiercely. "I *will* know distinctly what impression he dares to make!"

"Be calm," said James soothingly, "I will tell you anything you ask, and do anything you wish. Perhaps I was wrong to say Henry *makes* the impression —"

"Do not attempt to excuse him!" she exclaimed. "Tell me simply the facts!"

"Well," said James, as if at last resolved, "the facts are these: All his friends have received the impression that, though the overt act which terminated your engagement came from you, yet he had purposely so acted as to force you to it; and I have myself heard him say, rather significantly, and in connection with this matter, that when a gentleman desires such a consummation, it is his duty first to give the lady an opportunity of bringing it about."

"Very proper indeed!" she said slowly. Her head drooped to her breast, and the blood rushed to her face, suffusing it with almost a crimson hue, but the next moment it retreated to her heart, and left her pale as death. Her lips were compressed firmly together, till they were even ashier than her cheeks; but her teeth were slightly open, denoting more of scorn than anger. She rose from her chair, and laid her feverish hand on James'

shoulder, slightly stooping, and looking into his eyes with a steady, withering gaze of stone.

"If you have told me the truth," said she, in a deep whisper, "this cousin of yours is worse than a murderer! If you have told me a falsehood, God may forgive you, but I will not!"

"I ought not to have told you," said James, taking her hand, and leading her away from the window. "Nothing but your own command could have induced me so to wound you."

"Why should you care!" she exclaimed, almost rudely. "Is not this man your cousin? And what am I to you?" She snatched her hand away from him, and throwing herself into a chair, motioned him sharply to another.

"What are you to *me*?" he said abruptly, but earnestly. "All! all! All that I aspire to, all that I desire, all that I *love*!"

"What!" she exclaimed, with a sneering, sardonic laugh, "another Glenn lover! Another!"

"Even so!" said James, throwing himself upon an ottoman at her feet, and repossessing himself of her hand. "Even so! and my Glenn blood humbles me now to the dust!"

"Another! Another!" she repeated, still gazing absently at him.

"Yes! Yes!" he said impetuously. "But oh! different, far different to the last! A lover indeed! One who looks to you for all that he hopes and wishes—for all he expects to be or to have—who loves you better than himself, better than his life, better than his God! One whom you can trust in prosperity, in adversity, through every change of fate or years! One who will love you through life, unto the very gates of death—and then will go with you to that unknown land, which would, which *could*, be only a desert without your presence! Fanny, let me compensate you for the wrong that has been done you! Let me show you what the love of a true heart can be! Let my truth outweigh the falsehood of others—let my devotion give you peace, and love, and happiness! Go with me away, away to some far off land, where all shall be novel and full of new associations—where nothing shall remind us of the falsehood we have left behind us—where there shall be no incident to our lives but what is pleasant, and where no breeze shall blow but will add to our bliss! Would not such a fate be happy? Will you not consent—now, now, while I swear the vows that shall never be broken?"

"You go too fast!" said she curtly. "You forget that I have just been outraged beyond bearing. This is not a fit

time for such language, even if it were proper to be used at any time."

"Forgive me," said he, more temperately. "But to a love like mine all times and seasons are alike; for there is never a moment that it does not burn; it may be smothered and suppressed for a time, as it has been by unwillingness to trespass upon what I deemed the right of another. But now the pressure has been removed, and you must forgive me if it leap up with a fierceness proportioned to the length and sternness of its confinement."

"I fear your language is too figurative for sincerity," said she, withdrawing her hand from his grasp and pushing her chair slightly back. "But, however sincere you may be, this is not a proper time to urge me in this way; and I may as well say now, in order to save myself further annoyance—"

"Annoyance!" he exclaimed, starting from his seat.

"—that it will be fruitless," she continued, without noticing his exclamation, "to renew the subject at any future time. I am partially engaged to another already, and before the end of the summer will be married."

"What!" he exclaimed, grasping her by the arm. "*What!*"

"I shall be married," she repeated, "before the end of summer."

"May I ask," said James, recovering himself, and speaking in a tone of suppressed sorrow, "whose happiness it is that constitutes my misery?"

"You may ask," said she, giving him a hard, relentless smile, "but you will probably get no answer."

"You are avenging yourself upon me," he said suddenly, "for a wrong done you by another."

"It gives me no small pleasure," she replied, frankly, "in my present state of mind, to have some one to torture, certainly."

"If it gives you pleasure," said James, bowing his head as if in submission, "I can endure it patiently."

"This is *too* much!" said Fanny impatiently. "Let me be understood at once—for I feel that the indulgence of such a passion is not only unamiable, but criminal. If you really love me, it will be much better for us to part at once; for I can never love you. This ought to be sufficient; but I will tell you further: as I estimate my obligations, it would be improper for me to listen again to such language. Probably before to-morrow night my hand will be pledged to another; and, I

think, when I can seriously contemplate this in connection with one man, the time has passed for listening to any other."

James stepped hastily to the window, cast his eyes out among the trees where Eversham and her father were still walking in the dusky shadows. He then turned his eyes significantly upon her, as if to fathom her secret with a look.

"I see what you mean," said she, "but must leave you to time and your own penetration."

"You are to be his second wife, then?" sneered James.

"Whether it be so or not," she answered, with a kindling eye and a raised voice, "I will not endure insult!"

"I see," said James, with teeth almost closed. "The woman discarded by a soulless *roué*, is about to throw herself into the arms of a marrowless widower!"

"This is *too* brutal!" she exclaimed, springing to the door, and throwing it open. "I will not endure it—begone!"

He had missed his mark—his policy was overacted, and he saw it. He attempted to take her hand, and was even about to sink to his knee before her. But it was too late.

"Begone!" she repeated. "Away! I will not endure your presence for a moment!"

James rose to his feet with a look which told the bitterness in his heart; and passing out without a word, saw her close the door scornfully behind him. Her eyes flashed and her lips curled with intense anger, as she walked firmly across the room, and seated herself at the piano.

"My God!" she exclaimed, as if from the fulness of her heart. "This is too, *too* much! To be spurned by one and insulted by another, of the same family too!"

She leaned her head upon her hands, which rested upon the rack of the instrument, and sobbed violently for some minutes. When she raised her head, her eyes were redder and more swollen, but there were no traces of tears—these had all been shed many hours before. Her face was calm, too, though very sad; and when she touched the keys, the answering notes were sweet and soft. The storm of passion had passed away, but the succeeding calm was as sad as death.

She was still at the instrument, when the door was opened, and Eversham and her father entered—the former with the stately tread and self-satisfied bearing which distinguished him, and the latter with the obsequious manner which he always showed to a man of wealth.

"Pray, continue," said Eversham, as Fanny rose from her seat. "Do not let us disturb you."

"I am tired," she answered simply, and crossing the room took a seat at the front window.

"Why, Fanny," said her father, "I have not heard the instrument five minutes!"

"I am tired, nevertheless," said she, and turned her eyes towards the road, where they became fixed. She seemed totally unconscious of the presence of any one—gazing intently into the depths of the darkening forest opposite, and drumming softly upon the glass with her fingers. A few words were spoken in a low tone between Eversham and her father, and then the latter quietly left the room. The former rose and approached the place where Fanny stood; and though she could not have heard his noiseless motions, she stepped aside as he came up without looking round, and made room for him beside her. She ceased drumming, too, and her eyes fell to the ground under the window, as if she were listening for some expected sound. She had not heard her father go out, and yet she knew he was gone; she had not heard Eversham approaching her, and yet she knew that he was doing so. We are often thus placed in circumstances when we know what is about to happen; and we act upon the foresight almost without thinking.

Eversham took her hand from the sash where it was resting, and with a gallantry rather awkward carried it to his lips. She looked up into his face, upon which were shining the last rays of the waning twilight, as if to inquire what he meant—or rather to await what she knew was coming. She neither spoke nor withdrew her hand, but stood in silent expectation.

"Miss Frances," he commenced—

"My name is Fanny, not Frances," she interrupted, calmly.

"Well," said he, blushing scarlet, "Miss Fanny, then. You recollect that a few days ago, in this very spot, I told you—"

"I remember it," she interrupted again.

"Then I need not repeat it," said he—

"Not if it be any trouble," she interposed.

"Trouble!" he exclaimed, with more vivacity than he had yet exhibited. "On the contrary, the highest pleasure!"

"Repeat it, then, by all means," said she.

"Can I hope that if I do, it will be received favorably,—that you will not refuse to listen?—"

"Try me," said she, curtly.

"I am endeavoring to do so, Fanny," said he, almost in despair, "but you seem to be in such a humor as to forbid it."

"You might possibly find that, for your purposes, the most favorable humor I could be in," she said, without looking up.

"God grant it!" he exclaimed, fervently. "God grant that I may call this hand mine! Will you not let it be so?"

"I am not God," said she.

"No," said he; "but it rests with you to make one of his creatures the happiest of men, to exert one of the highest powers He has given to a human being, to lift a man to the highest pinnacle of earthly blessedness!"

"What man?" asked Fanny.

"The man who now holds your hand—myself."

"How can I make *you* the happiest of men?"

"By giving me this hand—by——"

"You have it already in your own," said she, smiling.

"Yes; but to keep—to be my own, with her to whom it belongs, forever!" he exclaimed desperately, as if "driven to the wall."

"In other words," said Fanny, coolly, "you wish to marry me. Am I right?"

"Yes; to be mine, now and——"

"Your wife, you mean," said she. "Why not speak plainly. I hate figures and exaggerations of every kind."

"I will speak plainly, then," said he. "Will you be my wife?"

"*I will*," said she firmly, with her voice a little raised.

"Then——" He attempted to clasp her in his arms, but she sprang suddenly away.

"Hold!" she exclaimed. "If I am to be your wife, you shall respect me. There will be time enough, God knows, for such things, when they shall have become unavoidable. In the meantime, I insist upon being treated as if we were mere everyday friends. I will permit no liberty, even to you!"

"As you please," said Eversham; "so you only promise to be mine, I am content."

"That I have already promised," she replied; "and, now, I would rather be left alone."

"I will leave you immediately," he said. "Will you not allow me——" attempting to kiss her.

"No, sir!" she said firmly. "There will be enough—quite enough—of that hereafter. This," she continued, extending her hand, "this is yours—be satisfied with it. Good night!"

He took the hand and, carrying it to his lips, turned to the door and was gone. On the verandah he met Mr. Vincent.

"What news?" asked the latter.

"Good!" said Eversham. "She has consented."

"Give me your hand!" exclaimed the delighted father: and the two shook hands warmly. "Has she fixed the time?"

"No," replied Eversham; "I would not urge her to-night. I will leave that to you: only, let it be soon."

"I will see to it. Good night."

Eversham went his way almost as much delighted as on that night, some four years before, when Mrs. Bates entered his study and announced that the first Mrs. Eversham had just departed, "cursing the whole world, and her husband in particular." The future father-in-law entered the house and sought his "fortunate daughter." He found her lying at full length upon a sofa, her face buried in her hands, sobbing as if her heart was bursting with grief.

"My daughter! My dear daughter!" he exclaimed in astonishment. "What is this?"

She did not seem to heed him, but gradually grew calm. After some minutes, spent in entreaties by him, and in silence on her part, she rose and wiped her eyes.

"You must not be surprised, father," she said faintly, "to see me thus: I have just promised to be Mr. Eversham's wife—'his *second* wife,' as James Glenn said."

"I know it, my dear," said he. "But surely that is no reason for grief."

"That is past now," said Fanny, rising and crossing the room two or three times, "and I do not wish to be questioned about it. Let it be sufficient that I have promised to marry him. That promise I will fulfil; and," she added a little bitterly, "since that is what both you and he wish, you ought to be content without urging me further."

"I do not urge you my daughter," said he deprecatingly. "Mr. Eversham told me as he left, that no time had been fixed, and I only came in to ascertain your wishes."

"I will fix that to-morrow. I must be alone, now."

She took up a candle as she spoke, and slowly left the room. Her father walked pensively up and down the floor several times, and then followed her. His wishes were gratified; but it was not without misgivings that he thought of the future.

## BOOK SECOND.

### CHAPTER I.

For now I stand as one upon a rock  
 Environed with a wilderness of sea.—TITUS ANDRONICUS.  
 Here are a few of the unpleasant words  
 That ever blotted paper.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE sacrifice was determined upon; it only remained that the victim should prepare herself for immolation and appoint a day for the offering. Resentment, pride, and wounded vanity, had done their work—love was forgotten, hope cast away, and truth disregarded. A step—the most important in a temporal, perhaps in an eternal, sense, that can be taken—was decided upon under the influence of disappointment and passion; a pure, though wayward heart, was to be given into keeping where it could find nothing for which it longed—where its life could be but one long death, and all that was good and pure must be ground out of it by the endless pressure of remorse.

But the victim had chosen her own fate; and though within an hour after her pledge was given she began to feel misgiving, as if she had chosen rashly, she yet determined to pursue the path of her choice. She had staked her life, and love, and all her prospects—and with a courage derived from despair, she resolved to “stand the hazard of the die.”

On reaching her chamber, she set the candle down and walked to the window. Before her, sleeping in the moonlight, lay the wood within whose shadows she had heard and repeated the first words of love—within which also had occurred the first estrangement between herself and him she loved. The night was calm and still—no wind was sighing through the trees, no waving bush nor rustling branch disturbed the quiet; and as she threw up the sash and leaned upon the sill,

she could hear the tinkling of the little streamlet as it ran across the road and glistened in the moonlight. She bent her head to listen, for in her loneliness the quiet was oppressive, and even the voice of the tiny brook relieved the solitude. But this was soon forgotten—for she remembered whence the glittering waters came. In fancy she followed the path along its banks, and climbed again the smooth green slope on which the ancient elm was growing; and for a moment she allowed herself to think how happy she had been—how happy she might be again—with Henry at its foot. But sternly she dismissed the thought; for just beyond that wood—nay, at the foot of the same path—lay her future home. There as a loveless wife, ill-mated with a man of thrice her age, she must spend the weary years—perhaps impatiently awaiting his decease as *he* had waited the departure of its former mistress!

“Can this be so?” she asked herself. “Have I consented that my life shall be a long imprisonment, and this glorious world a dungeon?”

But other thoughts succeeded, good and bad. And if visions of the wealth he was to give contributed to reconcile her to her fate, let us not remember it against her; for she gazed upward to the jeweled sky, so calmly shining down, and, as compensation for the woes of Time, looked forward to the treasures of Eternity. Her face, beautiful and holy in its sorrow, grew composed, though not less sad: for it was Death on which she built her hopes.

She turned away from the window, and walked pensively to and fro across the room. Her arms were folded gently on her breast and her eyes were fixed upon the floor. No sound broke in upon the stillness of the midnight—no form was moving near, except the lonely, stricken girl,—she and her shadow in the mirror walking pensive, side by side, with even pace and equal quiet in the dusky room. At last she paused before the table, on which stood a rosewood writing case, almost the only relic of her parents' wealth. She threw open the lid and, as she did so, cast her eyes upon the mirror opposite. She was startled to see how pale and thin, yet stern and firm, she looked; for the lineaments of her face grew darker in the lamplight, and the firmness of her look was deepened into sternness. She gazed at the reflected figure in the midnight stillness, as it stood and, in return, regarded her reproachfully, until a sort of nervous, indefinable dread took possession of her mind, such as sometimes seized even the firmest when, in the haunted loneliness of the night, the fancy gives significance and shape to unremembered

objects. But the next moment she closed the case, and, with a sort of defiant sneer upon her face, walked steadily up to the very front of the mirror, as if in desperation to seek the thing she dreaded. But it was not from shadows that the dangers to her peace were coming; she curled her lip in scorn at the reflection of herself, and turning with a contemptuous gesture, again approached the table. She stood a moment with her back turned towards the mirror; but she could not avoid looking over her shoulder: she walked quietly around the table and took her stand again directly opposite.

She opened the writing-case and took out a package of letters. Drawing a chair to the table, and disposing the lamp so as to throw the light upon them, she seated herself and began to read. Letter after letter and line after line she read, and laid successively on the table. Beginning with the first note, making in formal terms some common-place appointment, through the gradually increasing warmth of casual letters, to the significant personalities of a recognized though not acknowledged lover, she traced the progress of the correspondence. At last, she came to the first written after their explanation, full, for several pages, of the warmest expressions of devotion and radiant with anticipations of a happy future. On this she dwelt for a long time, reading and re-reading, as if to engrave upon her heart each word of love. Her eyes were filled with tears, but they did not fall; her eyes became dim, and the letters danced upon the page; she wiped away the moisture, read it slowly once again and, with a heavy sigh, returned it to the table with the others. She read no more, but covering her face with her hands, leaned her forehead, hot and throbbing, on a book which lay beside them. It was a present from Henry, but she thought not of that; remorse and wounded pride were busy at her heart. Here Maria found her in the morning,—not sleeping, but unconscious of the hours and careless of all else.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the evening, on the day following James' unlucky visit, the cousins were again together. Henry sat quietly awaiting James' pleasure, with the air of a man who had nothing to expect, and was therefore careless of what might come. He asked no questions, expressed no anxiety, felt no impatience. His countenance was cold and calm, his feelings not excited, his manner undisturbed. Indeed, in this respect, he contrasted favorably with his cousin; for the latter, though perhaps not agitated, was somewhat disquieted; and recent passion, only smothered, not subdued, had left its traces on his features. His

manner was unsettled, too, and whatever he grasped, his fingers closed around it until the blood retreated from their joints. His dress, usually neat and well arranged, was carelessly put on, and evidently neglected; while a hard, cold glitter in his eye, generally so calm and bland, denoted whence the disarray proceeded. Yet his self-possession was not lost; and he was now about to execute a plan, which he had formed in the better hours of the night before—a plan which would require both courage and dexterity. He threw himself uneasily into a chair as he entered, and removing his hat, thrust back his hair impatiently from his forehead.

"You slept at 'the Glen' last night, I believe," said he. "How is Uncle Abram?"

"He is well," said Henry simply. "He went home but an hour ago."

"Did he dine in town?" asked James, a little startled.

"Yes, with me, at the 'American.'"

James reflected for a moment with his eyes bent upon the floor. He had hoped that this would not come about so soon again; but dismissing the thoughts of the future, he thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out a paper. It was a note which had been given to him but an hour before by Billy Bates, and was addressed to Henry in the hand of Fanny.

"You must have been at dinner when I called," he said. "Here is a note which I should have delivered sooner. Read it, and I will then give you an account of my visit."

Henry took it calmly in his hand, and after examining the address, opened it, and read as follows:—

"MR. H. GLENN: I have written you one note requesting the return of my letters, but have not yet received them. I write now to repeat the request. Will you be good enough to send them to me immediately? *I am so situated*, that it would be improper to leave them outstanding.

Respectfully, F. VINCENT."

The underscoring was again James's; giving the phrase a significance which the writer never intended.

"You did not offer the exchange?" said Henry, looking up.

"No," said James—"the reason I will give you directly. What does she say?"

Henry handed him the note in silence, and James read it as carefully as if he had not thoroughly conned it less than two hours before.

"*'I am so situated,'*" he repeated, "that it would be im-

proper to leave them outstanding.' Do you know the meaning of that?"

"I might guess," said Henry. "What interpretation can you give?"

"That, being about to marry another," James answered, "it would be improper to leave such letters in the hands of a former lover. I can see no other reason for underscoring this phrase?"

Henry rose from his chair, and walked several times across the room; while James betook himself again to the note.

"This is what I suspected," said Henry at last, stopping in front of James, and taking the note to read again. "Did you see or hear anything to confirm you in this explanation?"

"Yes," replied James. "When I entered the room, she was so absorbed in watching Eversham from the window—(he was walking in the garden with her father)—that she did not observe my entrance. And afterwards—I suppose in order that I might tell you—she made me understand that she is to be married to him within a very short time. Her mode of communicating the information—the insolent triumph of her look and tone—made me angry. I resolved, then, that I would not give her the letters until I saw you again. I was unwilling to assist so much heartlessness even so little as that."

"Did she tell you distinctly that she was engaged to Eversham?" asked Henry, halting before James, and crushing the note in his hand.

"Yes," replied his cousin; "and when in my anger I hinted at the infamy of becoming the second wife of a man thrice her age for the sake of his wealth, she only laughed at me."

"You did right in coming away," said Henry.

"But," continued James, "this is not the only reason I had for not giving them to her. She told me she was anxious to get her letters, and even had the assurance to consult me as to the propriety of sending to you for them. I answered simply, that I would take a note to you if she wished; and she went out to write it, while I remained in the parlor. She had been gone but a few minutes when I heard her returning along the hall. Near the door she was stopped by, I think, Maria Bates, and between them ensued a whispered consultation, of which I accidentally, though not unwillingly, overheard two or three sentences. They spoke so low, however, that I heard nothing very distinctly, and perhaps ought not to have mentioned that I heard *anything* in that manner. But I could not avoid getting the impression—whether I heard correctly or not—that you were only to receive enough of your letters to induce you

to surrender the whole of her's. What the remainder were to be retained for you must conjecture—possibly to amuse herself and her husband during some of the dull hours of which their married life gives such excellent promise!"

"That is too infamous!" exclaimed Henry. "Heavens! how could I be so much deceived!" He threw himself into his chair, and covered his face with his hands. But by a strong effort he recovered his self-command.

"Advise me," he said, in a voice husky with grief and passion; "what shall I do?"

"Keep her letters by all means for the present," James answered. "So long as you retain them, she will not dare to expose yours."

"I will do so," said Henry. "Let her keep mine if she will, and either amuse her purchaser with their perusal, or ensure her own unquietness by exciting the dotard's jealousy!"

"The latter is the more likely of the two," said James, "if she ever shows them to him. But that she will not dare to do."

"She will always have a skeleton in her house then," said Henry, "and will live in constant fear of his detecting the secret."

"No very enviable life to look forward to," said James, with a devilish smile, which was, however, scarcely more than a reflection of that upon the face of his cousin.

"She has made her own bed—let her lie down upon it," said Henry. "I shall do nothing more."

"What shall I do with the letters?" James asked.

"I will call for them some time, or when you think of it bring them with you here."

It was so arranged, and James left him.

James's immediate object in this cautiously told falsehood, was to excite his cousin, and thus induce him to retain the letters. What his ulterior designs were, will more fully appear hereafter. It was not without some twinges of conscience that he reflected upon his course, as he gained the privacy of his office, and rested his head upon his hand. Once or twice he was almost resolved to return to Henry and repair the wrong. But to the intense selfishness of his nature—which alone would probably have prevented his yielding to the impulse—was now added another over-mastering passion. He had reflected upon the means of securing Fanny's hand—a possession which his recent repulse had only made him more determined to obtain; and the end in view required, as he thought,

this course. To the fierce love he had conceived, was now added the force of wounded vanity, and, a motive still stronger, the ambition to overcome an obstacle, the natural feeling of opposition. Combined, these were too much for any virtuous impulse that could visit one of his selfish character; his ruthless determination returned with increased power.

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## CHAPTER II.

And visions, as poetic eyes avow,  
Hang on each leaf and cling to every bough.—  
Rouse yourself! and the weak wanton, Cupid,  
Shall from your neck unloose his amorous fold,  
And, like a dew-drop from the lion's mane,  
Be shook to air.—TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

SEVERAL weeks passed away, during which nothing occurred materially to affect the course of our story. Fanny's approaching marriage with Eversham had become known, through some of those undiscoverable channels which always convey such information; and when questioned, she had not taken the trouble to contradict it. Workmen were even busy about "The Mansion," as Eversham's residence was called, and the proprietor spent most of his time at Mr. Vincent's. Although even here he saw but little of his future bride—she improving the few days of liberty yet remaining to her, by denying herself to him as to all others—there was still a pleasure to his doting mind in being in the same house with her. And although, when they unavoidably met, she treated him with a coldness and *hauteur* which would have alienated any younger man, he still as eagerly sought these brief interviews as if he had been received with marked affection. The approaching alliance was the staple of conversation in all the circles of the place; and many a one, regardless of age, of circumstances, of every antecedent, would have flown to meet a fate which was to Fanny worse than death. She was the talk, the wonder, and the envy of all the neighborhood; and none imagined even the possibility of her shrinking from a bridegroom so wealthy

and distinguished; none, with perhaps two exceptions. Her father could not avoid seeing her dejection, though for a week or two he was so elated by the consummation of his wishes, that he could think of nothing else; and, when at last it forced itself upon him, he obstinately endeavored to close his eyes against the knowledge. James Glenn was the other exception. He was far too penetrating to be deceived into the idea that she had engaged herself to Eversham because she loved him. That step was to him only a confirmation of his theory, that "women are most easily caught on the rebound;" and he only cursed his fate that he had not been in the way, instead of Eversham, when the "rebound" took place. Through Maria Bates, too, whom he did not relinquish, he had means of watching Fanny's private life; and though Maria did not understand the force of what she told him, James was not so dull. He knew that Fanny was unhappy; and was certain that the source of her disquiet was to be found in a step taken rashly, under the influence of resentment and wounded pride. As for Eversham, he never dreamed that any woman could be otherwise than delighted with his alliance; and had he known what had induced Fanny to betroth herself to him; had he even been able to fathom the depths of an outraged love, he would still have thought it strange that any "mere feeling" could influence a man into which wealth and high position had been already thrown. Nor would his anxiety for the alliance have been at all diminished; for he was of that class of men who strive to cheat themselves and others into the belief that they are youthful yet, even when the shadows from the vale of Death are falling at their feet, and the damp currents that blow upon them from the grave have already chilled their blood.

Affairs were in this posture about six weeks after Fanny's luckless betrothment, when we again take up the story.

We have already directed the attention of the reader to a gentle elevation, over which the road passes, about one mile west from the centre of the little city where these scenes are laid. It is not large enough to be called a hill, and too large and too gradual in its rise to merit the name of knoll. It is only a swell in the ground, pushing itself and the surrounding lands some two hundred feet above the general level of the country, and after the manner of our western scenery, sloping gradually away in all directions to the plain. At the foot of its southern slope, down which you go through green lanes and waving meadows, runs a shallow stream; and on the banks of

this, extending two or three hundred yards up the slope, is growing a wood, composed of oak, and elm and hickory trees, the largest of which stand on the outskirts, dotting the land before you enter the forest, and preceding it like the officers upon parade before a regiment of infantry.

Beneath these the sward is smooth and green, encumbered by no undergrowth, and only broken here and there by the gnarled roots of the giant oaks, whose convolutions are pushed above the sod. Between the meadows and the stream, a little nearer to the latter, where sometimes in the freshets the water touches its foundations, stood, and yet stands, an old but well-preserved brick house. Around it some twenty acres were enclosed in grounds, on which had then been spent but little time and labor. But to compensate for this neglect, the natural beauty of the rolling landscape was covered by primeval trees, and broken here and there into small ravines, within which sunlight scarcely ever penetrated; while on the higher ground the stately forest, with its brood of younger trees, rose clearly from the level sward, and opened through its mazes many a vista, green and peaceful. The southern bank of the little river rises boldly almost from its margin, leaving scarcely space enough for the winding rustic fence, which marks now, as at that time, the boundary of the grounds; and, drooping over the rocks and hiding like a curtain the sand and pebbles on its rain-washed surface, are growing vines and scented briars. Here grow the largest blackberries, the finest raspberries and most luscious grapes; and here, during all the summer months, resort the young people of the town to gather fruit, to luxuriate within the deep shade, to exchange tokens and whisper words, the sweeter for being spoken in the woods. Always open to these pleasure parties, and often entered by them, is the mansion—for so, by its dimensions and appointments, does it deserve to be named. It is a large quadrangular building, two stories high, with very large windows, a tall portico leading to a wide hall door in the centre, and a flat roof surrounded by low parapets of stone. The bricks were once painted of a slate color, but now upon the front but little of this is seen; for, growing under each window and on both sides of the door, are many varieties of climbing flowers and creeping vines, trained along the wall and even running over the parapet above, until the whole front presents a surface of unbroken green. Between the house and the wide front gate, which is reached by a broad gravelled walk, stand the native forest trees, thinned out, yet left in sufficient number to form a screen beneath whose foliage the hall door

is visible from the road which winds along three hundred yards in front.

In all the open spaces, though not in profusion or extravagance, are growing roses and laburnums; while, in the places where the larger trees have been uprooted, willows and catalpas have been planted. Along the front extends a row of maples, set some thirty years ago, and though not nearly so tall as the surrounding forest, now grown to stately trees. Their rich green foliage contrasts most pleasantly with the deeper colors of the oaks and walnuts, and blends harmoniously with the elms and hickories.

Such is "The Glen" now, and such, with few changes, has it been for twenty years. This is not a very long period, it is true; but it should be borne in mind that we are writing of a scene in one of the Western States; and, whatever it may be in older countries, here a period of twenty years is a very large segment of the circle which we name existence. At the end of that time, scarcely anything remains as it was in the beginning, and it is only in such places as we have described that its lapse leaves aught to recognize. The child grows up to manhood and the man goes down to childhood; the open prairies are enclosed, and new plantations grow to ancient places; green mounds are raised above the dead, and merry children gather flowers from the dead, unmindful of the dwellers underneath; the hum of busy life invades the peaceful solitude of wastes primeval, and the waves of immigration break upon the shores of rivers which have run in haunted silence from the morning of creation. And all in twenty years!

Such, then, was "The Glen"—the residence of "Uncle Abram"—on a pleasant afternoon in still September. The sun was two or three hours past the meridian, and the shadows of the trees were slowly creeping towards the east. Long lines of sunlight streamed along the open vistas of the wood, or slanted in among the trees and gilded bright the inmost leaves; while now and then some prematurely withered leaf was loosened by the quiet wind and, whirling slowly, sought the ground. The waters of the rivulet were sparkling where the sunlight touched them, and from its crystal surface was reflected back the foliage that overhung its tide, or dancing, broken by the ripples, every leaf was multiplied to many. A quiet breeze was blowing, but only making vocal in its sighs the early autumn stillness, and wafting on its fluttering wings a perfume sweeter than of spring. It was one of those "soft, shadowy days" which come upon the spirit like a memory,—when a melancholy,

light as the haze which hangs upon the atmosphere, delicious as the air of Paradise, descends upon us like a veil, and makes us

"Joy to breathe the groves, romantic and alone."

Upon the sward, near the foot of a large oak, James Glenn was reclining. He was a little paler than when we last saw him, and the sternness round his mouth was more perceptible; while from his eye, even in repose, with the ebb and flow of thought came flashing now and then the fire of unextinguished passion. He held a book in his hand, but it was evident that he had read but little, for his finger held it open at the first page and his eye wandered from it to the front gate, as if expecting some one who was long in coming. He had walked out from town an hour before to seek his cousin, who was now in conversation with his uncle but a few paces from him. They were walking slowly to and fro beneath a row of trees, and Uncle Abram was speaking earnestly.

"My son," said he, (using a phrase which he employed only when he was thoroughly in earnest) "it is time that you were casting off this melancholy: it is feeling utterly wasted, to brood over so small a loss. Life has too many noble sources of enjoyment to be sacrificed so lightly. It is quite true that you have been betrayed; but, instead of encouraging despondency, you should feel glad that something intervened—no matter what—to save you from such a fate as union with a woman so light and false. You have lost what you deemed a treasure; but, in fact, you have only escaped a curse."

"It is not so much the loss of her, uncle, that I regret—for God knows, that is rather a gain! It is the poverty of feeling it entails upon me—the loss of faith, and the melancholy lesson of suspicion I have learned, that I am grieving for."

"A hard lesson indeed!" said Uncle Abram. "But one which you must have learned at some time, had you not acquired it now. Faith in man's truth, even though it be without foundation, is a blessed thing; and its loss a misfortune greater than the privation of wealth. But, Henry, one experience should not be taken as the rule. Time was, when I thought as you now think. Yes," he continued after a pause, "this girl's mother was as well beloved, as beautiful, and as false, as she; and her treachery darkened the whole earth to me, as it is now darkened to you. For years I believed nothing in the world—I had no faith in men—I thought all were venal, false, and hollow. I even forgot God's justice, and no longer believed in retribution. But, Henry,"—the old man's voice trembled with

emotion, as he raised his hand and placed it on the shoulder of his nephew—"when I stood beside that woman's grave—where with her were interred the hopes and fears, the ambition and the disappointment, of a miserable life—when I looked back upon the ten or twelve years preceding, and remembered how falsehood and vanity had brought sorrow and an early grave, I recognized the Hand of Wisdom and Eternal Justice; and when she was lowered into the tomb, I buried with her all my bitterness. With my faith in God, came back my confidence in man; and Henry, since that day I have been a happier as well as a better man! Faith should not be lightly given up; for in the years before you, even though you should be doomed like me to live a life of solitude, it will give strength to your spirit, and comfort to your heart."

"If we could only keep it——"

"We can—we can!" the uncle earnestly broke in. "The will *has* power to command belief. The mind will yield to resolute determination; and the sternness, that frowns away a doubt, will give the soul a force that nothing else can impart! You have strength of will enough—withdraw your mind from gloomy thoughts, bend the power of an earnest purpose to the task, and trust me, Henry, you will succeed."

"I will try," said Henry; "but——"

"But you doubt of your success," his uncle interrupted; "and to drive away that doubt is the very first step in the process! Dismiss it resolutely, keep your mind employed, and time alone will bring relief."

"I will try," he repeated. "I have thought of travelling for a few months, perhaps new scenes and faces might assist me in regaining what I have lost."

"Not at all," said Abram quickly; "not at all! One who travels to forget, will be always conscious of his purpose, and every change of scene will only be a new memento of that from which he flies. No, no. Sit resolutely down to conquer; do not attempt to fly from your misfortunes, for their sources are inherent in your mind—you would carry them with you, wherever you might go; and the vacancy of travel would only give them time and opportunity to flow. Bury yourself in the law, there is no employment in which one can so perfectly conceal himself from everything external; spend a year or two thus, and if you do not come out victor, the case is hopeless."

"A year or two!" Henry exclaimed.

"It seems a long probation, I know," said Abram. "But is it not better to devote even so long a time as that, in driving

out a demon, so that you may possess your soul in quiet for the rest of life, than to give it up to him till he seat himself within, and there remain forever? And, besides, time seems much longer in the prospect than in retrospect. Two years will fleet over like a summer cloud; and, ere you have taken cognizance of its passage, it will be down on the horizon. How like yesterday appears two years ago! And yet between the day which seems scarcely gone, and the day now passing over us, lie a thousand thoughts, the memory of numberless events, and untold myriads of changes! You are no more to-day the man you were two years ago, than you will be two years hence the man you are to-day. And in these changes is there found no hope to one so young as you? Believe me, Henry, this cannot last—a life *cannot* be given to regret; and sorrows are like all other earthly things: they come and go and are forgotten. They may temper and subdue the spirit—they may leave a shadow on the heart—but on the whole we never can be sure that their effects have not been beneficial.”

Henry made no reply; he was silenced, if not convinced. Abram seemed absorbed in recollections which, perhaps, disproved his theory; for his eyes were bent upon the ground, and memory was busy among the images this conversation had evoked. They walked to and fro in silence for some minutes, when their attention was attracted by the opening and closing of the gate at the end of the walk. At the same moment James, whose eyes had for a long time been fixed in that direction, rose from his recumbent posture, and closing his book, walked slowly forward. A few steps from the gate he met Billy Bates, who carried a letter in his hand.

“You have been a long time coming, Billy,” said James.

“You told me to give you time to get here, and I did so,” said the boy, briefly.

“Yes, and to have gone back again, too, had I been so disposed. But never mind, you are in time. He is yonder, under that row of oaks; go and give it to him, and then wait outside the gate.”

“Why not inside?” asked Billy.

“Because I do not wish it,” said James, sternly.

The boy looked at him inquiringly; not in fear, for Billy was by no means timid, and, besides, he knew his power; but archly and even derisively, as if to show how absurd he thought it in James to assume this lofty bearing with him. He made no reply, however, but did as he was directed, walking quietly up to Henry, and handing him the letter.

“Here’s a letter for you, sir,” said he, “from my sister Maria.”

Had Henry looked at the boy, he would have seen a flickering smile upon his face, which told plainly as words could have done, that he penetrated the disguise, and was not unwilling to show it. But Henry was too much agitated to observe anything, except the writing of Fanny Vincent. Uncle Abram turned away, not wishing to intrude his presence then, and, leaving Henry alone, Billy returned to James, who was still lingering near the gate.

“Wait here, now,” said James, “until I come back.”

“Shall I go out, or stay inside, sir?” asked the boy, with another of those derisive looks.

“Do as you please,” said James; “only don’t leave till I return.” He hurried away as he spoke, and the boy stretched himself luxuriously upon the grass, and gazed into the tree-tops with the vacant look of careless, youthful enjoyment.

As James approached the place where Henry was still standing, he slackened his pace and bent his eyes upon the ground, as if absorbed in thought. The crushing of the gravel under his feet, however, attracted his cousin’s attention.

“James!” said Henry. “I want to advise with you a little. Will you walk a few steps with me?”

“Another letter I see,” said James, joining him and walking by his side down the slope towards the rivulet.

“Yes,” Henry said, handing it to him; “read it.”

James took the open paper and read as follows:

“*Mr. Henry Glenn*: Early in the morning of the day after to-morrow, I shall be the wife of another. Letters of mine can, therefore, be of no value to you; and it would be improper in me longer to retain yours. I have written to you more than once asking an exchange, but without success. I now make a final effort, and hope that no *unworthy motive* may be allowed to influence your action. I will send yours the moment you signify your willingness to give mine in return; and I hope you will do so before to-morrow night.

Respectfully, F. VINCENT.”

“*Tuesday, Sept. 15.*”

“Umph!” said James, as he finished reading a document which he had, however, anxiously perused two hours before. “She is becoming anxious—for her time is growing short. Why does she not send your letters to you at once? Why

wait till you signify your willingness to exchange? It seems to me like a threat—if you keep hers, she will keep yours.”

“Did you observe the first sentence?” Henry asked.

“Yes—I suspected that before, from the repairs of Ever-sham’s house being so hurried; the workmen are to finish this evening. Let us sit down here,” he continued, seating himself upon the bank of the stream. “What do you intend to do?”

“That is what I want to advise with you about,” said Henry. “I have been guided by your counsel so much in this affair, that I feel incompetent to move without it.”

It was true; James had been so constantly by his side for several weeks, had entered so completely into his feelings, and apparently so thoroughly sympathized with his perplexity, that he had been rendered indispensable in almost every step. James knew this well, and was resolved to use his power. He now leaned his head upon his hand as if in thought, though his course was decided before he left the town.

“It is an affair of some delicacy,” he said at last, raising his head, and speaking as if arguing the question in his own mind. “But, after all, you have been so scandalously treated, that it is not difficult to decide how far you would be warranted in listening to the suggestions of resentment.”

“I have been scandalously treated, it is true,” said Henry. “but revenge is not in my power, if I desired it.”

“No,” said James—“at least, not complete revenge. And if it were, it would involve more injury to her than you would wish to do.”

“It would, indeed!” said Henry.

“But,” continued James, “it seems to me that in anything you do, you should be careful to place yourself in a proper light—to avoid a false position.”

“That is what I wish to do,” said Henry.

“Precisely,” continued James; “and if you sent her these letters, without attaching any conditions or in any way committing her, it would look like a tacit acknowledgment, that she has a right to demand them unconditionally. Now, in my view, she has no such right.”

“None in the world,” assented Henry, eagerly.

“She could have it only in circumstances which do not exist,” rejoined the elder. “In justice to yourself, therefore, you should not act in such a manner as to admit it.”

“Certainly not,” said Henry. “But if I am to give her these letters at all, I do not see how I am to avoid it.”

“If you could avoid it, then,” said James, “you would be willing to give them to her—would you?”

“Yes,” Henry replied. “I want to be cut loose from her.”

“That is what I would by all means advise,” said James, more sincerely perhaps than he himself supposed. “And if we could invent some plan which could preclude the supposition of this right, it would be the best thing you could do.”

“It would be the first step towards following the advice of Uncle Abram, too,” said Henry; “but how to compass the end, is more than I can see—at least, without compromising myself more than I am willing to do.”

“It is her, whom you wish to compromise, if any one, and not yourself,” said James.

“I do not wish to compromise even her,” said Henry.

“No,” James assented. “But you must make her commit herself in such a manner as to avoid being yourself committed. Now, for example, if you could make her meet you, somewhere away from home, and make the exchange in person, without witnesses, the object would be gained. Besides not committing yourself, this course would be some little satisfaction to your feelings——”

“In what way?”

“——by showing that, however lightly she may esteem you, you still have some power over her motions.”

“That would be ‘some satisfaction’ indeed!” said Henry, bitterly.

“At all events,” returned James, “it would prevent her triumphing afterwards, by entertaining her husband and her friends with an account of how completely she had tamed you, and how quietly you submitted to anything she chose to dictate.”

This was James’s master-stroke; and he accompanied it with every look and tone which was calculated to rouse a spirit as fiery as he knew his cousin’s to be. Henry sprang to his feet, and walked rapidly to and fro along the sand.

“That she shall not do, by Heaven!” he exclaimed; while all the passion of his race was visible in his face and bearing.

“You are right,” said James. “Give no woman an opportunity to gloat over the feelings she has outraged. Now let me tell you how you can avoid this.”

“Go on,” said Henry, resuming his seat; “I will do it.”

“Well,” said James; “write her an answer now—there is not much time to lose—promising her the letters on condition that she will meet you at night in the wood between the road;

tell her if she will come there—say to-morrow night—and bring your letters, etc., with her, you will then exchange. Tell her, moreover, that if she refuses, she shall not have them at all; and my word for it, she will come. You will thus avoid committing yourself, and at the same time will compromise her so thoroughly, even if she comes not alone, as of course she will not, as to secure her silence forever after.”

“But——” Henry commenced—

“And,” James continued, rapidly, “if the youthful husband to whom she has bargained herself should ever ask her any questions about her former relation to you, she will be silent, instead of sneering at her past ‘flirtations,’ as she will certainly do, unless you close her mouth in some such way.”

“I will write it now,” said Henry, rising; “come.”

James did not delay him, and in five minutes he was seated in Uncle Abram’s library, writing, while James walked slowly and thoughtfully up and down the floor.

“How will this do?” said Henry, holding up a note hastily written. James took it and read:

“*Miss F. Vincent*: I have just received your note requesting the letters; which you have asked before. I have concluded to give them to you; but attach this condition, upon which *alone* you can have them: Meet me to-morrow (Wednesday) at ten o’clock at night, at the ‘Old Elm,’ which you may possibly remember; bring my letters, etc., with you, and I will make the exchange you desire. If you do not think proper to comply, I can only say that I must retain them now and forever.

H. GLENN.”

“*Tuesday, P.M.*”

“Admirable!” said James. “Just the thing!”

“Do you know,” said Henry, “it looks to me like a conspiracy against the girl?”

“When you make up your mind,” said James, coldly, “that you are the aggressor in this affair, and that *you* have sold *her*, your scruples will be well grounded. In the meantime, I would not sacrifice anything more than she has thought proper to filch from you.”

“How will I get it to her?” said Henry, turning to the table and folding the letter.

“I will see to that,” said James. “The boy that brought the note is playing in the wood out by the gate. Fold it and I will take it to him.”

A glance of suspicion came from Henry’s eyes, as if he thought to detect something hidden. Although he would follow implicitly any advice James might give, when asked, he would have rebelled at once against any attempt at dictation or interference. James saw the look, and read its import without difficulty.

“He asked permission,” said he, carelessly, “to gather berries inside, and I gave it to him.”

Henry folded the note, addressed it to Fanny, and handed it to James, who at once walked out with it.

“Here, Billy,” said he, as he approached the boy, who was lying precisely where he had left him, “take this note immediately to your sister. And—stay a moment—here is something for you.” He drew some pieces of silver from his pocket as he spoke, and extended his hand. The boy took them without a word, but with a look whose cunning intelligence startled his employer. James was about to take back the note, in fear that his stratagem might fail through the boy’s treachery; but Billy sprang away and eluded his grasp.

“If I gave the note back, said he, “I would have to return the money too—and I want that.”

“Deliver it, then,” said James. “Don’t let me catch you in any treachery.”

He raised his finger threateningly as he spoke; but the boy flourished his hand in the air, sprang over the fence, and ran away.

“He knows too much altogether,” muttered James; “but money will keep him true, if fear will not.”

He turned and walked thoughtfully back to the house. How much self-accusing was mingled with his reflections we cannot stop to say; for before he reached the door he had dismissed it all with the self-deceptive thought, “It is too late to retreat!”

## CHAPTER III.

Virtue is bold and goodness never fearful.—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

In that same place thou hast appointed me.

To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.—MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Well, we may meet again.—RICHARD II.

"You have been very slow, Billy," said Maria Bates, as she met her brother just issuing from Mr. Eversham's enclosure.

"Have I?" said he, carelessly. "Well, I may be slow, but very sure. Look here!" He held up the note as he spoke, and Maria extended her hand to receive it.

"Not so fast!" said Billy, drawing it back. "I have something to talk to you about first, and I'll give it to you afterwards."

"Pshaw!" said Maria. "Give it to me; Miss Fanny has been waiting a long time. I'll come back and talk to you, if you want me."

"Let Miss Fanny wait a little longer," said her brother, coolly. "I'll not give you this till I get through talking."

"Billy! Billy!" she remonstrated. "Come, that's a good brother, give it to me, and I'll just go and give it to Fanny, and come back immediately. Come, be a good boy, now, Billy."

"It's no use coaxing," said the boy; "you may as well sit down here till I get ready to give it to you; if you don't I'll tear it into a hundred pieces!" He took it between his fingers, as if to suit the action to the word.

"Stop! For God's sake, don't tear it! I'll listen to you—only be quick and let me go."

"You'll answer all my questions, too, won't you?" said Billy. "For I want *you* to talk, too."

"Yes, yes—all that I can," she answered, glancing suspiciously at him. "Be quick!"

"Well," he commenced, settling himself, and so disposing his hands as not to expose the note to be snatched from him;

"the servants over at the house say that you are in the habit of meeting James Glenn in this wood every day; and they say you come here for no good——"

"Nonsense!" Maria interrupted, blushing scarlet. "Give me the letter, and let me go."

"Wait a moment!" said her brother, thrusting it into his pocket. "You don't get this till you tell me all about—what you meet him for, and what you and he are doing. I am determined to know before I'll do another thing for either of you!"

"Nonsense!" Maria repeated.

"No nonsense about it," said Billy. "I want to know it all."

"All? what, Billy? I don't know what you mean."

"I know better," said he positively. "I know you meet him often, for I have watched you myself; and I ask you what it means?"

"You have watched us!" she exclaimed, in terror.

"Yes, often. Now don't deny it—but tell me what it means."

"We only consult about Miss Fanny and Henry Glenn," said she, in a low voice, covering her face with her hands.

"I know that," said Billy, quickly; "but that's not all. What do you call him 'dear James' for, and what do you hang on his neck for, and why does he kiss you, and all that? Tell me now."

"Brother," said she, reproachfully, "are you mean enough to listen?"

"You've no right to object to it," said he, doggedly. "You taught me to do it yourself."

She covered her face with her apron, and began to sob.

"Don't cry," said Billy, coming a little closer, "don't cry. I don't care about it—and I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. But," he continued, drawing back again as she raised her head, "I must know all about it—and right off, too."

"Give me the letter, and let me go," said she, angrily.

"When you tell me—not before," Billy quietly replied.

"Well, give it to me first, and then I will tell you."

"If you won't trust me, I'll not trust you," said Billy.

"Well, tell me what you want to know then," said she, sharply.

"I want to know what you meet James Glenn so often for, and why you are so sweet on each other; tell me."

"We are going to be married," said Maria, scarcely above a whisper, and covered her face again. "Now give it to me."

"Are you such a cursed fool as that!" he exclaimed. "Maria! You and James Glenn! James Glenn and *you!*" He sprang up as he spoke, and placing his foot against her shoulder, gave her a violent push, while his expressive face corresponded with the contemptuousness of the gesture.

"Billy," she said, looking angrily up. "How dare you touch me?"

"You ought to be kicked by every fool in the world," said he. "To be married! and to James Glenn! Lord! *Lord!* what a fool!"

"William Bates!" said she, rising from the ground and sobbing violently, "give me the letter, and hush! Give it to me!"

"You are too big a fool to carry it right, if I did," said he. "You're just as likely to give it to Eversham as Miss Vincent,—and a stupider thing than *that* couldn't be done,—except to believe James Glenn."

"Billy, you know nothing about it. Give me the note!"

"Know nothing about it—do I? Don't know that James Glenn, *your* James Glenn, has been wanting to marry Fanny Vincent for years, and that she wouldn't have him, but wanted his cousin, Henry? Don't I know that all this blow-up between her and Henry has been caused by James? Don't I know that he has been using me and you—*you*, his wife that is to be!—as his tools to cause it? Don't I know that he only wants to marry her himself, and that he has now got some devilish plan on foot to break up the marriage with Mr. Eversham? Know nothing about it, indeed! And you, you silly fool! you think it is you—*you*, Maria Bates, his tool and his—"

"Brother!" she screamed, seizing him by the arm and shaking him violently. "Brother, hush!"

"Maria!" called Fanny, who, having become impatient of the delay, was now coming along the path; "Maria, what does all this mean?"

"Stay here," said Billy, recovering himself, "and quit crying. Nothing, Miss," he continued, advancing towards Fanny, "only I have a letter for you, and Maria was trying to make me give it to her, when I was told to deliver it to you myself."

"You might have given it to her just as well," said Fanny, taking it from him with a trembling hand.

"Yes, Miss," said Billy humbly, "but Mr. Glenn charged me to deliver it with my own hand."

"Very well," said Fanny, turning away without observing the searching look upon his face. She walked a few steps down the path and was tearing the letter nervously open, when her feet were suddenly arrested by Billy.

"Miss Vincent," said he rapidly, "Mr. Eversham is coming up the path."

She turned suspiciously upon him; but at the same moment her eye caught the form of her future husband slowly approaching; turning hastily aside, she plunged into the thicket and disappeared. Billy ran back to his sister, who was sobbing at the foot of a tree, and he led her away from the path. In less than a minute the way was as clear for the passage of the future bridegroom, as if he had carried pestilence wherever he went. He walked quietly and unconsciously along the opening wood, while within a few steps of him his bride-expectant was reading a letter which was to have a greater influence over his fate than all other letters ever written.

Fanny seated herself on the root of a tree, and first casting a disturbed glance about her to see that she was entirely alone, again opened the letter and read it through. She then turned back and read it once more, attentively and slowly. Her color went and came as rapidly as light upon a stormy sky. Unconsciously she crushed the paper in her hands: her head drooped forward, and her eyes were bent on vacancy.

"It is impossible!" was her first thought. "To meet him again and stir up the feelings I have striven to repress, and when I am so soon to be ——— but what right has *he* to govern my movements now? I am not his yet! I will not stay away on *his* account."

She thought long and earnestly, though far from calmly; for reflection was warped by feeling, and pride rebelled against the thought of duty to one she did not love. Other objections arose: the time, the place, the spirit in which the meeting was demanded; and, strange as it may seem, this last consideration gave her more embarrassment and pain than any other. The words of coldness from one on whose affection she had staked her all, were harder to be borne than the prospect of a life of misery. But an undefined desire once more to meet and speak to him, the thought that this must be her last opportunity of doing so, the near approach of her marriage, and her jealousy of control, even when chosen by herself, combined to outweigh this objection, and, unfortunately, all others.

"And, besides," she thought, with a sophistry involving almost conscious self-deception, "the harder the conditions he attaches

the greater is the necessity for making this exchange, for one who would give them to me only on this consideration would not scruple—but, no! I will not wrong him thus. Who knows but that the same desire that is urging me to assent—the desire to meet again—may have dictated this letter?”

The thought may have been an infidelity to him who held her pledge, so soon to be redeemed; but she thought not of this,—nay, she cared not for it, if she did. At the worst, she would but see him for a moment, to receive her letters, give him his, and then to part forever.

“I will see him, as he wishes,” she said aloud; and rising, she carefully folded the letter, and walked away towards home.

#### CHAPTER IV.

These are the limbs of the plot.—HENRY VIII.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing  
And the first motion, all the interim is  
Like a phantasma or a hideous dream,—MACBETH.

Sleep has seized me wholly.—CYMBELINE.

Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once.—MACBETH.

It was the evening of the day before that appointed for Fanny's marriage. The ceremony was to be performed at eight o'clock in the morning, and directly afterwards “the happy pair” were to set out upon a bridal tour of several months' duration. Before sunset, therefore, on Wednesday evening, everything was in readiness. The flutter which had for some weeks enlivened the one fashionable mantua-maker's shop afforded by the town, had at last subsided. The bridal dress, the travelling dress and bonnet, the misty bridal veil, the orange blossoms, the jewelry engraved anew, the travelling scarf to match the dress,—all the hundred ornaments, in short, to deck the victim for the sacrifice,—had been sent home early in the day, and were now displayed in careful order to the best advantage by the nimble fingers of Maria, in the chamber to be occupied on that night by Fanny as a maiden for the last time.

Piles of linen lay upon the chairs; an open wardrobe displayed its empty shelves, from which the contents had been transferred in part to the recesses of a trunk, whose lid was thrown back against the toilet table. Upon the last, surrounded by numerous smaller articles of female wear, all snowy white and folded carefully, lay a package of letters; and around them, tied as if not to be opened again, was wrapped a broad blue ribbon. Between this and the letters were secured a miniature case, a slender chain, a plain gold ring and a set of ivory tablets, silver mounted. Had the face of the first been upward, one might have recognized the features; but it was turned downward, and the only index to their destination was the name of Henry Glenn engraved upon a little silver plate upon the tablets. The mistress of these things, “the happy bride,” sat motionless and careless at the window; and her eyes, dimmed by tears and red with weeping, were bent upon the wood beyond which lay her future home. Maria moved about the room with noiseless steps. Her eyes, too, were red with weeping; but whether for her approaching separation from her mistress, as she asserted, may be doubted.

The jewelry and tinsel of the bridal outfit, usually so interesting to a woman, seemed to have no charms for her; for not an exclamation issued from her lips while handling them, and not an article was displayed before her mistress with a word of admiration. She seemed to sympathize completely with the indifference of Fanny; and when she finished packing the trunk, leaving out only what was to be worn as wedding finery, she sat calmly down at another window, and looked gloomily out upon the waning sunlight.

The shadows of the trees were lengthening across the road, and only the tallest in the wood were gilded by the light. The stillness of the summer evening reigned over all the scene; and on the quiet air came floating from the forest the closing notes of birds, commingled with the sighing of the falling breeze. The sun approached his setting, and his level beams shone in between the trunks and branches, gilding here and there a leaf, and casting shadows multiplied, and bringing out the particles of dust that hung like haze above the road. The taller trees and steeples in the town were shining brightly, while beneath all lay in shade; and round them whirled in graceful evolutions feathered denizens, whose homes were built among the highest beams and rafters. The sun went down, the haze along the road became invisible, the leaves resumed their darker hues, the aisles and vistas of the wood lay in unbroken shadow, and the

night began to trench upon the waning day. The perfumes of the breeze were mingled with the dampness of the evening, and Darkness came creeping from the East to claim succession to the Light. The promised bride still leaned upon the window, but her fancies were not of joys to come; the future claimed no place, for memories of the past came floating up from by-gone time, and consciousness of present desolation hung like a pall between her heart and everything to come.

And he to whom her hand was given—where was he?

The windows of a spacious room were open, and the evening light streamed in on costly furniture and noiseless carpets. It was the bridal chamber, on whose decorations and appointments the bridegroom-expectant had displayed the fulness of his wealth, and all the gorgeousness of his rather meretricious taste. In length the room was more than twice its width; but across the northern end a curtain of white satin was suspended from the ceiling, thus cutting off a recess, within which stood the bridal bed. The curtain was held back by silver bands, and formed a snowy arch, beneath which could be seen the low bedstead; while above it, like a silken tent, a canopy of white satin, with a silver thread, was looped with cords of blue and white. The covering of the bed was of the same material, and the rich, deep lace upon the pillows swept the floor. The high window beyond was curtained with a double drapery of blue and white, and flanked on one side by a richly-inlaid toilet. On the other, stood a wardrobe, half concealed by the drapery of the bed.

At the other end of the apartment stood a deeply-cushioned sofa. On each side a splendid mirror reached from floor to ceiling, and each repeating the repeated images of both, within the depths of either were infinitely multiplied the objects both reflected; and through them all you looked along an endless suite of rooms, diminishing in the distance, as if seen through a telescope reversed. Beside one of these stood a piano-forte of highly polished satin wood, and near it a bronze music-stand. There were Gothic chairs of curling walnut, low, luxurious ottomans, light book shelves of bronze, filled with elaborately bound books—of their contents probably their proprietor knew nothing. A frail, but graceful table was covered with portfolios of engravings—the walls were hung with costly paintings in gilt frames—and every place was crowded with antique Severes vases, and casts of statuary, *en petite*, of Parian marble.

Such was the bridal chamber; and he whose wealth had created its elegance was now reviewing, with the fondness of

impatient expectation, all its rich appointments. Apparently he found nothing amiss, for with a well-satisfied smile he threw himself upon the sofa, and gazing down the gorgeous vista, gave himself to pleasant fancies. His reverie was broken by a timid knock, and a suit of stately black was deposited by our acquaintance, Billy Bates, upon an ottoman before his master; with them he left also a sealed note, and bowing reverentially, passed out. The morrow's bridegroom rose as the door was closed, and having turned the key, proceeded to examine his wedding suit.

"Bradley must be in want of money," he thought, as he took up the paper which lay upon the coat, "to send his bill with the work—to me. Sealed, too," he added, as he turned it over. He was about to break the seal, but his impatience got the better of his curiosity: he threw it aside, and proceeded to array himself, with all the gusto of a youth of twenty.

It grew dark while he was divesting himself of his usual garments—night-fall occurring at that season about eight of the clock. He ordered lights, and having locked the door again, disposed them so as to exhibit his figure to the best advantage in the mirrors. He opened each article with a lingering, curious scrutiny, excusable in a man of his age only when about to take unto himself a wife who might be his daughter. No seam, no button-hole, no stitching, whether useful or merely ornamental, escaped examination; each part was scrutinized as closely as if the happy event of the coming day depended on the tailor's skill. The glossy cloth, its grain and quality, came in for its share also; and he dwelt with special satisfaction on the satin facing of the skirts and cuffs. The lustrous surface of the satin vest he gently and tenderly manipulated. And the pantaloons of shining black, he held close to the light, and turned them round and round; he buttoned the broad straps, and having satisfied himself about the strength of the elaborate lacing on the waistband, hung them carefully upon a chair, and proceeded to prepare himself for decoration. This he soon accomplished; for never was a boy more eager to array himself in his virgin broadcloth, than was Mr. Eversham to see himself reflected in his matrimonial garments.

'Behold the angular, though stately figure disarrayed! And lo! the childish pleasure of his time-marked features as the ceremony of enrobing is commenced! It was dressing for the marriage, without the flutter and excitement of the crisis! A pair of highly-polished boots were painfully drawn on—almost the only severe labor from which one's wealth cannot exempt

him—and then a rigid scrutiny of their fit. Next came the pantaloons—of the very finest cassimere, glossy black, and fashionably cut. He turned himself about before the glass, thrust his hands into the pockets, corrected a slight tendency in one of the straps to hang upon the boot-heel, and inwardly commended Bradley's skill. It was a great point gained. Then came the vest, which he drew on with fear and trembling; but having buttoned it, and drawn the lacing, apprehension vanished. Placing his hands complacently about the region of the stomach, and gently rubbing them up and down, like him who has just finished a good dinner, he again approved the artist's skill.

And now the crowning triumph—*chef d'oeuvre* of the "cloth-professor"—the wedding coat! If he trembled when he drew the lacings of the vest, in so much that his fingers could with difficulty tie them at the proper tension, *now* his nerves were absolutely shaken! Most carefully he drew it on—most anxiously he pulled the skirts, and pressed the wrinkling cloth in at the shoulder—most tenderly he settled it by jerking smartly the lappets! He buttoned it—one button cautiously—and again drew down the skirts. He smoothed the sleeves, and pulled the cuffs, and pinched the corners—and having done all that a good-natured, anxious man could do, to help the "set," he at last referred himself to the final test of every garment, male or female, the looking-glass. It was a perfect fit! Even the round shoulders were concealed, and not a solitary wrinkle defaced the shining surface of the back!

And now he stood between the mirrors arrayed in all the elegance of matrimonial costume—reduplicated *ad libitum* by the multiplied reflections—and ranging down the vista stood an endless row of visionary Evershams, decreasing in the distance and vanishing in a point. And then he thought—alas! that human expectations are so vain!—that this long line of images might but be typical of that other line, commencing with himself and reaching through a distant future—the posterity whose root was in himself—his posterity—and *hers*. To-morrow, then, will be the day, he thought, from which the lineage of my house will date—to-morrow she is mine! Aye—**TO-MORROW!** He turned away at last and commenced walking pensively and slowly up and down the floor.

Had he known the contents of the little note which lay upon the table, past which he walked at every turn, his thoughts would not have been so calm. He had forgotten it; and though habitually a very prudent man, at such a time even he would not think much of bills. He walked tranquilly, then,

for half an hour, until the images evoked by his position had all passed through his mind. He at last recalled his thoughts, and was about to begin disrobing, when in turning, his eye fell on the note. He took it carelessly up and mechanically broke the seal. It was not a bill, as he had supposed! He walked hastily to the light and read with a face as pale as death—

"*M. Eversham, Esq.*: I have this moment learned that you are to-morrow to marry a young lady whose heart you doubtless expect to receive with her hand. You will, therefore, be surprised when I tell you that the lady is in the habit of secretly meeting a young gentleman of our town, at times and places incompatible with her faith to you. In confirmation of this charge, I have to give you the information following: If you will go to-night, at ten o'clock, to the neighborhood of the largest elm in the path that leads from your residence to that of the lady, you will find her with the person to whom I refer, in circumstances of whose propriety you, holding her pledge, must judge. I know that she has made an appointment to that effect, and doubt not,—since she is so soon to be a wife, when fewer opportunities for intrigue will be afforded her—that she will be punctual to the time and place. If you have any doubts, you can easily remove them by going to the spot and witnessing their interview; and since you may not know him in the darkness, I may as well inform you that the man she is to meet is *one Henry Glenn*. Take my advice: go, and believe me.

"A FRIEND.

"*Wednesday, P. M.*"

"My God!" he exclaimed, dashing the paper down and looking at his watch, "and it lacks but twenty minutes of the time now!" He rang the bell violently, and when it was answered by Billy Bates, sharply demanded:

"Who brought this note?"

"The paper I left with the clothes? It was handed in with them by Mr. Bradley's man," answered Billy, simply.

"Well, never mind now," said Eversham hastily. "Come closer: do you know where Henry Glenn's office is?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, starting in surprise.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the same evening,—indeed, during the whole time consumed in Mr. Eversham's childish raptures,—a company of five young men was assembled in the back-room of Henry Glenn's

office. The front door was closed and the blinds of the windows were drawn; for the company were engaged in amusements, which they did not care that every passer on the street should see. Several wine-bottles were set out on a stand, and a table was drawn into the middle of the floor, and cleared of everything but a pack of cards and two or three candles. Three of the young men—a student-at-law and two merchant's clerks—having drawn their chairs around the table, were emptying their purses on the cloth beside them. James Glenn was running over the cards, separating the lower from the higher, while Henry busied himself setting out as many glasses as he had guests.

"What are you doing?" asked one of them of James.

"Making a Eucre pack," he answered. "What do you want to play?"

"That will exclude one of us from the game," said another, Mr. Letton, one of the clerks; "leave them all in, and let us play brag for an hour or two."

"I care nothing about playing for the present," said James; "Henry has an appointment to-night, and when he leaves us I will take his place."

"That will not do," said the law student. "I would rather you would play now; and, besides, I prefer a game of chance for my amusement."

"You want your revenge," said James, smiling.

"Yes," replied the other. "That is the only inducement I have to play."

"Sit down, James," said Henry, "and I will join you for an hour or two; there is no need of excluding any one."

As he spoke, he drew a cloak from his wardrobe, and taking a pistol from the shelf, went into the front room, whither James followed him.

"Your appointment must be a dangerous one," said Letton, "since you both disguise yourself and go armed."

"O, no!" said Henry, from the other room. "I go armed for the same reason for which I wear my cloak: because it is night and the air may be cold."

"You take a pistol, then," said the other, laughing, "to light a fire in case of emergency."

"Had I not better take these fellows away," said James, in a low voice, "before it is time for you to go? They may take a notion to follow and watch you."

"Either take them away," said Henry, "before I start, or keep them here while I am gone, no difference which."

"I'll take them away," said James; and having so arranged it, he passed back to the other room and, followed by Henry, took his seat at the table. The preliminaries being settled, a deal was made, and the game commenced.

They played on for nearly half-an-hour, the gambling spirit gradually taking possession of their faces, and the conversation finally subsiding into casual remarks about the game. The cards passed rapidly around, and the money changed hands from one to another as fickle fortune varied. James played coolly, like a practiced gamester, calmly awaiting his opportunities, and betraying neither chagrin when he lost nor triumph in success. Henry was absent and indifferent, exhibiting as much calmness as his cousin, though evidently from a different cause; while the other three leaned over the table eagerly and watched each card as it fell, with eyes sharpened by the spirit of cupidity. When the course of the play brought him in contact with any of them, James gazed half-sneeringly into their eyes and plainly read their thoughts, while he concealed his own behind a veil which none of them could penetrate. The consequence was what might have been foreseen: James won steadily and surely while his cousin rapidly lost. Several times, indeed, within the space of time we have mentioned, the latter rose and resorted to a drawer in the table, on which stood the wine and glasses, returning from each visit with more money. He did not keep it long at any time; and when he brought the fourth new handful to the table, and lost it almost as soon as he had taken his seat, he sprang up impatiently again, betraying the only feeling he had exhibited since the game began.

"You must have a Fortunatus' purse in that drawer," said Billings, the law student.

"He will need something of the kind if he draws as rapidly for half an hour more," said James, coolly. "We are getting too near the gambling standard, gentlemen," he continued, raking towards him a handful of money which he had just won, and rising from the table. "I move we diversify the amusement a little."

"I second the motion with all my heart," said Letton.

"Pass my hand then," said James, "and I will pour for you all." As he spoke, he drew a little paper from his pocket, and breaking one corner, knocked a few grains of light powder into one of the glasses. Replacing it in his pocket, he poured the wine upon it, and filled the other glasses pure. Setting them on the table, the three guests helped themselves without ceremony, and he then gave the other glass to Henry.

"Deal me a hand now," said he, as he filled another glass for himself, and resumed his seat.

The game went on again in silence; even the time which had been before consumed in brief remarks, being now devoted to the wine. They sipped between the deals, and each before he raised his cards put his goblet to his lips, and took enough to last him through the play. Henry drank more slowly than the rest, for he was absorbed by thoughts foreign either to the amusement or the wine. James glanced quietly at him several times; and in his eye a close observer might have seen a shade of anxiety. He, however, withdrew the look almost immediately, and again addressed himself to the play. Henry did not lose so rapidly; for owing either to some turn in the fortune of the game, or to a slightly perceptible sedative effect, which followed the first few sips of wine, he did not play so rashly. After half an hour thus spent, James saw the goblets about to be exhausted. Putting his own to his lips, he emptied it at once, and rising from the table, filled it up.

"Shall I pour for you all again?" he said, taking their glasses. "Pass my hand for a moment, then."

Once more he drew the paper from his pocket, and knocked a little of the powder into Henry's glass. Again he set them back upon the table, and resumed his seat.

"That wine has made me drowsy," said Henry.

"Take some more," said James; and added in a whisper, "you will be wide enough awake an hour hence."

"How late is it?" asked Henry, in the same tone.

"Nine o'clock," James answered. "Come, gentlemen," he continued aloud, "we will play rapidly for half an hour, and then leave Henry to keep his appointment."

"Let us drink out and fill up once more, then," said Letton, "and afterwards attend to the game."

They all drank but Henry, who merely touched his glass and set it down again. James rose and filled the other goblets, watching Henry narrowly the while, and even betraying a sort of nervousness to have him drain the cup. He could not prevail upon him to do so, however, and with an air whose chagrin was but ill-concealed, he sat down. Once more the game was resumed, though now the interest flagged; for each began to feel the effects of the wine he had taken. Henry especially became dull and silent, complaining from time to time of drowsiness, of which James well knew the cause. At last, taking his glass hastily up, he drained it to the bottom; and rising from the table, threw himself upon the couch.

"That's a hint for us to be gone," said Letton, in a low voice.

"I suspect you are right," said James, drawing out his watch with a trembling hand. "It is nearly half-past nine, and at ten I know he has an appointment."

"Let us go then; I can get my revenge some other time," said Billings, rising from the table, followed by the others.

"Whenever you wish it," said James, hastily walking into the front room, and taking the key from the lock. They all stepped out upon the pavement, James drawing the door gently to, and walking off in a different direction from the others. He walked very slowly, until the footsteps of his companions died away in the distance, and then turning hastily about, went swiftly back and re-entered the office. Henry was sleeping heavily upon the bed with all his clothes on, just as he had left him. James looked closely at him for a few moments, and listened attentively to his stertorous breathing. Apparently satisfied with the scrutiny, he filled a goblet with wine, and hurriedly drank it off. He then opened the drawer from which Henry had taken the money, and seizing a package of letters, passed back into the front room. He paused before the table, and blew one of the candles out; but after reflecting for a moment, relighted it and set it down.

"Better leave them burning," he muttered. But it was not so. Thus does cunning overreach itself.

He passed on, and throwing Henry's cloak over his shoulders, took up the pistol which lay upon the table, and taking the key inside, stepped out. It was a spring lock, which bolted with closing. He drew the door to, and satisfying himself by pushing that it was fastened, walked swiftly away.

## CHAPTER V.

Dark night, that from the eye his functions takes,  
 The ear more quick of apprehension makes.—MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.  
 Look to thyself! Thou art in jeopardy!—KING JOHN.  
 Who comes so fast in silence of the night?—MERCHANT OF VENICE.  
 Nay, he is dead.—RICHARD III.

THE three young gentlemen who left the office at the same time with James, passed down the street together until they came to the front of a large hotel. Here one of them entered, leaving Letton and Billings standing at the door.

"Fanny Vincent is to be married to-morrow, I believe," said the former.

"Yes," said Billings; "and a nice arrangement she is making of it!"

"She is getting a wealthy husband, at all events," said the other, "and has a fair prospect of being a rich young widow."

"In which case," rejoined Billings, "your chances and mine will be increased by one."

"I do not know," said Letton, doubtfully. "If the prize is to be drawn, I think Henry Glenn will hold the ticket."

"Perhaps so. And, by-the-bye, would you like to see some fun—or do you want to go to bed?"

"Very little good sport would be enough to keep me awake," said Letton; "but how can it be had?"

"You must be as secret as the grave," said Billings, cautiously drawing him aside. "James told me this evening that Henry had an engagement to-night of a very peculiar kind; and though he did not explain, I think I know what it is." He whispered a few words in the other's ear.

"Oh, no!" said Letton, aloud; "surely not, when she is to be married to Eversham early in the morning!"

"I may be mistaken," said Billings; "but I still think I am right. At any rate, it will not cost much to find out. It is a fine night, and a walk will do us no harm."

"Here he comes now!" whispered Letton, suddenly, as a figure in a cloak approached and passed them.

"Do you see?" said Billings. He has turned down the road, and I have no doubt is going to meet her."

"But where? Do you know the place?"

"Not with certainty," said the law student. "But I suspect we will find them near Mr. Vincent's. She would not venture far, certainly."

"Let us get some brandy and follow him, then," said Letton. "It will not hurt us, if we do not see what we look for."

"Not at all," said Billings; and they passed into the brightly illuminated bar and called for the brandy.

"It only wants ten minutes of the time now," said Letton, as he set his glass down and looked at the clock over the bar.

"We will see them in the midst of their interview then," said the other. "Come, let us go."

In the meantime, the wood to which we have so often referred, lay in the shadows of the night, impenetrable to the rays which came straggling from the stars. There was no wind, and if the leaves rustled at all, it was only in that weird, unearthly way in which they sometimes whisper in the stillness, when we perceive no cause for motion. In the more open spaces you might look up and see the sky, as in its depths were shining faintly forth the little points of light; but these seemed far away—much farther through the foliage than when seen from the open land—and the blue of the firmament was deepened by the darkness round the spot from which you looked. The dew lay on the leaves, and here and there, in the angle of the light, a drop was sparkling like a diamond. Along the road the night was not so deep; and when the eyes became accustomed to the darkness, forms could be distinguished almost as far as in the moonlight. The row of cottages, embowered among trees and shrubbery, were quiet as the country; for their occupants were frugal people; late hours and revels were never known among them; and although it was scarcely ten o'clock, not more than three of all in the windows in the row yet showed a light. There was none in any window of Mr. Vincent's house, though one might have expected to see them at even a later hour. The candle in Fanny's room had been extinguished, however, scarcely more than five minutes; and any one who might have looked through the open sash as Fanny blew it out, would have seen that it was not for the purpose of retiring that she did so. She was still dressed, and in her hand she held the plain bonnet which we saw her

wear upon the first occasion of her introduction. With it she held also a light scarf, its color of the plainest green and gold, changeable and flashing in the lamp-light, and adding another shade of ashy paleness to her face. She leaned upon the sill of the open window, and inclined her head to listen. A footfall on the road, indistinct at first, but rapidly becoming audible, sounded lonely in the stillness of the summer night. She listened for a few moments, and then hastily throwing the scarf over her shoulders, put on her bonnet, and with a cautious step walked out. She trembled as she laid her hand upon the gate, and in a guarded voice called "Maria!" The maid came from among the shrubbery equipped with bonnet and shawl, and Fanny opened the gate without speaking. They passed out and crossed the road. Entering the wood on the margin of the little stream so often mentioned, they followed its course into the thickening passages of the brushwood, and came out on the winding path to Eversham's.

About ten minutes before this the morrow's bridegroom had rushed down the same path, arrayed in marriage costume, and was now pacing to and fro impatiently beneath the spreading foliage of "the elm." From time to time he paused to listen; but hitherto he had heard nothing but the rustling of the leaves and the quick beating of his own excited heart. He continued his walk for a space which seemed to him at least an hour, when suddenly he heard the breaking of a twig beneath a footfall. He rapidly advanced in that direction, and stopped again to listen; some one was stealthily approaching through the wood, and at the distance of a few yards down the path he could distinctly hear two female voices. His first impulse was to rush towards them and violently upbraid Fanny with her perfidy; but he changed his purpose. He remembered that as yet he had no proof that she was here for any improper object; and besides, their tones were so guarded that he could not be certain she was there. The possibility that he might expose himself to some stranger crossed his agitated mind; and from this he recoiled with all the horror of a shy, proud man. He was still hesitating, when the footstep on his right became more audible; and it seemed from its direction that the stranger was about to pass between him and the place appointed for the meeting. This decided him; he hurried back beyond "the elm," and concealed himself in a little thicket but a few yards from its base.

He had scarcely done so, when a figure in a cloak stepped cautiously within the little open space, and halting, seemed to

listen. A female figure next approached; and Eversham, his eyes now accustomed to the darkness, found no difficulty in recognizing Fanny, while beyond he could even see Maria, who remained some twenty yards behind. As Fanny came nearer, the man in the cloak walked rapidly towards her, and making a gesture of caution, whispered:

"Be careful—we are watched!"

She halted suddenly, and seemed about to fly; but the other approached her, and taking her hand carried it to his lips. She snatched it angrily away and stepped back.

"Give me the letters," she said. "Would you expose me thus? Here are yours—give me mine and let me go!"

She extended a package as she spoke, and received another in return. At the same moment she glanced hastily by him, and exclaimed:

"Beware! some one will strike you!" She turned away and ran with all her speed down the path. The cloaked figure sprang hastily aside, and seemed about to retreat through the wood. But Eversham grasped his cloak.

"Stop, sir!" he exclaimed, in a voice of intense passion. "You shall not leave this spot till you account to me!"

"Unhand me, sir!" said the other, in low, deep tones. "Unhand me, or I will kill you on the spot!"

Meantime, Billings and Letton had reached the spot where Fanny and Maria entered the wood.

"She went in about here, I think," said the former; "let us follow up the path and see what will come of it."

They followed the stream for some distance, and then turning with the path, soon came out upon the more open ground.

"They must be up in this direction," said Letton.

"Hush!" exclaimed Billings; "I hear voices."

"That is Eversham!" the other said.

"There is trouble there!" said Billings; "let us go up. What's this? Miss Vincent, as I live, and Maria Bates!" he continued, as they hurried past without perceiving them, and disappeared among the trees.

At the same moment the report of a pistol broke the stillness of the night. A deep groan and a heavy fall succeeded. Both the young men hurriedly rushed up to the spot. They found Mr. Eversham stretched at full length upon the ground, groaning faintly, and heard footseps rapidly retreating towards the town.

"My God!" exclaimed Letton. "He has murdered him."

"And left his cloak as evidence against him," said Billings, as he took it up and at once recognized it as Henry Glenn's.

"Let us pursue him," suggested Letton.

"Nonsense," answered his cooler companion. "We know who he is without that. Let us attend to Mr. Eversham."

"Are you badly hurt?" he continued, leaning over the prostrate man and endeavoring to lift him to a sitting posture.

"I am murdered!" gasped Eversham, with difficulty: while the gurgling, wheezing sound made by his failing breath, indicated the locality of his wound.

"Who did it?" Billings asked.

"Henry Glenn," said Eversham.

"We knew that," said the other to his companion; "but it is better to have a dying declaration. Did you have any quarrel?" he continued, still supporting the wounded man. "Did you strike him?"

"No," Eversham answered faintly. "No; it was wholly unprovoked."

This, as the reader is aware, was not literally true; nor, indeed, could he be certain that he had seen Henry Glenn at all. And yet, his "dying declaration" of the fact would have as much weight in a court of justice as a positive oath given by a witness who has seen that to which he deposes. That is an erroneous theory, which is built upon the assumption that men who are about to enter another world will speak nothing but truth during the short remainder of their sojourn in this. Deliberate malice may be, and often is, the feeling uppermost in the heart of a dying man,—aye, of a man dying calmly in his bed! And if this be so,—as numberless instances prove,—how much more dangerous is it to trust the declarations of one who dies by violence, with the passions of the conflict, or the feelings which led him into strife, yet hot within him! Unfortunately, too, it is chiefly the declarations of those who die thus which are repeated in our courts.

Men have not always a proper sense of the awful change which is approaching, nor are they invariably very deeply impressed with the fear of retribution in the world to come. If scoffers die impenitent, if wicked men depart for eternity with lies upon their lips and curses on their tongues when they have no pressing motive to deception, when no excited passion yet urges them to falsehood, upon what principle of logic is it that we conclude that men whose passions are aroused by strife, and rendered more vindictive by defeat, will be influenced in their "dying declarations" only by considerations of eternal

truth and certain retribution? It is a false assumption,—one of the miserable shifts to which men have been reduced to meet a difficulty in its nature insurmountable.

I do not wish to be understood as objecting to the admission in any case, or even in *all* cases, of the testimony denominated "dying declarations." But I mean, first, that men who might be mistaken when swearing positively to a fact, in the full possession of all their faculties, with no disturbing cause, may not be quite infallible when excited by passion or agitated by approaching dissolution; second, that a dead witness can never be cross-examined, and the most valuable test of truth being thus lost, it may be impossible to ascertain upon what evidence or circumstance he based his declaration; third, that revenge and hatred, being in many characters the predominant passions, may be worked up to intensity by the consciousness of waning life or the fear of losing their gratification, that conscience and the fear of punishment may thus be laid asleep, and a wilfully false declaration be the consequence; and fourth, that if the declarant himself may be mistaken or may speak falsely, how much more probable is it that the witness who repeats the declaration may, in the agitation of such a moment, have misunderstood or misinterpreted! I say, therefore, and for many other reasons which will readily suggest themselves, that such testimony should be received with the greatest caution, and that hanging a man upon such evidence alone, would be sacrificing a human life to a mere abstraction. For such is the notion that a dying man will not utter a falsehood, an idea inconsistent with hundreds of well-authenticated facts, unsupported by sound reason, and excessively dangerous in its application to the administration of justice.

As we shall have occasion to return to this scene, we will pass over the further proceedings of Billings and Letton, contenting ourselves with announcing that within fifteen minutes after they took Eversham home, and laid him in his marriage garments on the couch within the gorgeous bridal chamber, *he was dead!*

## CHAPTER VI.

Look! as I blow this feather from my face,  
 And as the air blows it to me again,  
 Obeying to my wind when I blow,  
 And yielding to another when it blows,  
 Commanded always by the greater gust:  
 Such is the likeness of your common men.

HENRY VI.

A FEW years ago, in many of the more notorious Western towns, the killing of a man was not viewed as a crime of any great magnitude; and though the laws were sometimes vindicated with exemplary severity, the large majority of homicides were suffered to escape upon the convenient plea of self-defence. This was especially so when the testimony indicated a personal conflict, in which both parties had been active; and before the primitive judicial tribunals, it made but little difference how the strife had been provoked. It seemed to be a recognized principle of law, that when a man was once engaged in a fight, he was justified in killing his adversary; and juries (when the case was not finally disposed of by some examining magistrate, the friend of the accused,) gave themselves very little trouble to inquire whether the quarrel had not been sought for the very purpose of committing the crime. The life of a man in those times was not considered very valuable; and it must be acknowledged that in many cases there was truth in the judgment. To counterbalance this facility, when one of those high-handed communities became convinced that a crime had been committed in cold blood, nothing could exceed the promptness and severity with which they punished the criminal. Drum-head courts martial and a platoon of muskets were but tardy instruments of vengeance, compared to the celerity of a Regulator corps; for generally within ten minutes after the malefactor fell into their hands, he was swinging in the air upon the nearest tree. The country was infested by gangs of outlaws, whom no courts but these impromptu ones could reach; and though the assumption

by private men of the duties of judicial and ministerial officers had its dangers, it was sometimes a question of strength between the honest and the abandoned, when prompt and efficient punishment, however inflicted, became a condition of the community's existence.

The frequency of these things, in the course of time reduced the standard of public morals; the oftener men were punished by the hand of violence, the less was justice valued; the Regulator corps fell into the hands of the men whom they were designed to punish; and, since the courts of law had in many places almost resigned their functions in favor of self-constituted judges, crime took possession of the highways unmolested, and human life became the subject of a game of chance.

These things have now passed away, or emigrated further West; and even in the worst times, they were literally true only in certain localities—in river towns and frontier settlements, where scoundrels “most do congregate.” Such things would now be tolerated in the West, no more than in the East. And even then, there were many places—indeed the larger number—where the law was administered as conscientiously as it ever was—places whose citizens were quiet, law-abiding men, where robbery and murder were unknown, and where a great crime produced as much excitement and indignation among all classes of men, as is now produced in any Eastern city. This excitement, among even these people, may sometimes have caused sudden outbursts and lawless deeds of retribution; but then there was nothing of the thirst for blood, which too often distinguished the action of men in other places, driven to desperation by associated bands of villains. All was calm, and stern, and quiet: even an extra-judicial execution was conducted “decently and in order”—as if the executioners felt, as in many cases they did feel, that they were engaged in a painful but necessary duty. Years rolled by, the country filled up with a better population, the “settlements” became towns, and the towns grew to cities; the banded villains were driven out, and men subsided again to quiet citizens, feeling that at last they could trust the administration of the law to the legal courts; and now, no country in the world can show more quiet, orderly, and peaceful communities, than the Western States. Men here do not exhibit, it is true, the mawkish sentiment which leads the quasi-philanthropic to pamper the convicted criminal, and devote all their benevolence to his comfort and reformation; while in the same street hundreds are starving for bread, and morally dying for the very aliment thus

wasted on the hardened and ungrateful. If men have labor to bestow, they do not seek the stony places to expend it; and if seed are to be planted, it is deposited upon a grateful soil, and not cast wilfully upon a desert, whose dry and sandy waste no watering can make fruitful. To some extent in every place, men accused of crime are villainously treated; while all charity and kindness are reserved for him whom the courts have pronounced guilty. The law which presumes a man innocent until he is proven to be guilty, is too apt to be a dead-letter precept everywhere. But the very lawless state which years ago marked the tone of Western communities, now that it has passed away, has left behind a charity found nowhere else; and in no place can a man secure his rights, and especially the right to be heard before he is condemned, more perfectly than in a Western town.

The little city where these scenes are laid had been, even in the wildest times, one of the most quiet. No atrocious crimes had ever marked its annals—no great criminals had ever met their fate within its precincts. But few of the more lawless class of men had ever “settled” in the neighborhood, and even these had soon departed, seeking localities more congenial to their tastes. Not even a corps of Regulators had been organized among the peaceful citizens; the laws had been suffered uninterruptedly to take their course. With the lapse of years the quiet had increased, the town grew into importance, a thicker population filled the country round—a class of people, even better than the original, came in—the older families gradually threw off the roughness which Western people even here could not avoid contracting—refinement and education took possession of their children—new institutions sprang up—and with the increasing business of the place, was gradually introduced a tone in no way inferior to that which marks the towns of older countries.

A long period of unbroken quiet brought its usual train of blessings—among which, far from the least, was a salutary horror of all great crime as something monstrous, predicable only of the most abandoned natures. Accounts came to them by the mail, (the telegraph was not then introduced,) from other places of such things; and had you listened to their comments you might have supposed, what indeed was the truth, that no man there had ever been so near to such atrocities as even in the place where they were committed. Little groups assembled at the corners, and in counting rooms, to hear the reading of the papers; and grave remarks, and shaking heads,

and lengthened faces, indicated the solemnity with which they viewed transgression. Each mail was ransacked with avidity for something further on the subject, and newspapers were looked for with increased anxiety as long as anything was unexplained.

If, then, occurrences whose scenes were at a distance always broke the calm, it may be readily imagined how much excitement was produced among these peaceful townsmen, by such an event as the death by violence of one of their own citizens. Had the victim been only a common man—that is, a poor man—the community would still have been startled from its propriety. But human nature there was the same as in all other places, and the agitation was enhanced by the consideration that the deceased had been a man of wealth, occupying, by reason of his possessions, a high position among his neighbors. He had been not only a man of great respectability, but had been murdered “under circumstances,” as the newspapers have it, “of peculiar painfulness.” But the impression made by his death will be more clearly seen in the following announcement which appeared in an evening paper on the following day:—

“WILFUL MURDER.”—Last night, about the hour of ten o'clock, Mortimer Eversham, Esq., one of our wealthiest and most esteemed citizens, was mysteriously murdered in the wood between his premises and the North-west road. The facts—which we state with a reservation, in order not to forestall the action of the legal tribunals—seem to be about these. *This morning* Mr. Eversham was to have been married to Miss F—V— (we suppress the young lady's name, from obvious motives of delicacy to the feelings of her friends), and this engagement was subsequent to one of a similar character, which she had formed with a young man, whose name we also suppress. Certain letters had passed between them during the continuance of the engagement, and these, after its termination, the young man refused to deliver up—piqued and angry, it would seem, at the exercise by the young lady of an undoubted right to break off a connection which, on her meeting Mr. Eversham, had become distasteful to her. She was willing to make almost any sacrifice (compatible with modesty) to rescue her letters from the hands of one who had shown himself so capable of abusing the trust; and under the influence of this feeling she was induced to accede to certain conditions—hard though they were—upon which alone he would deliver them up. She accordingly repaired (*with her maid*) to the wood bat

a few yards from her father's door, to keep an appointment made for this purpose.

"In the meantime, Mr. Eversham had received a mysterious note, advising him of the intended meeting; and very naturally wished to be present at any assignation of which he did not know the purport. He hastened thither and attempted to unmask the young man (as is supposed, from an altercation overheard by two gentlemen, who happened to be walking in the wood), when the other drew a pistol and shot him, the ball passing very near his heart, and causing his death in about half an hour.

"The dying man was carried home by the two gentlemen before mentioned, and to them was given his dying declaration, identifying the murderer, and explaining the circumstances. A coroner's jury was immediately summoned; and after hearing the testimony, they returned a verdict of '*wilful murder*' against *Henry Glenn*, the young man spoken of above, and a lawyer of rising fame at our bar. He is a nephew and one of the heirs of *Abram Glenn, Esq.*, an old, wealthy, and much respected citizen of this place, whose heart must be almost broken by this painful occurrence.

"The unfortunate young man, the victim of ill-governed passions, has been arrested; indeed, he made no efforts to escape, being apparently stupefied by the enormity of his guilt.

"A deed of this character, perpetrated in our midst, the victim one of our most respectable citizens, is calculated to evoke serious reflections, and calls for rigid investigation, in order that justice may be vindicated, and the guilty punished.

"*Later.*—Since the foregoing was in type, we have heard several other particulars of this most distressing occurrence.

"The letter informing Mr. Eversham of the approaching meeting has been recognized, although attempted to be disguised as the handwriting of *Henry Glenn*, the accused; thus leaving no doubt of the fact that the whole was a preconcerted plan to entrap and murder him, because of his innocent interference with the murderer's plans.

"On the spot where the crime was committed the package of letters, given to *Glenn* by *Miss V*—, has been found, with a pistol identified as his, and known to have been in his possession one hour before the murder. His cloak, which was seen in his office at the same time, we omitted to mention was found there also—all having been dropped in the struggle with *Mr. Eversham*, and not recovered by reason of the rapid advance of *Messrs. Billings and Letton*.

"*Mr. Eversham*, when the mysterious note reached him, was fitting and trying on the suit intended for the ceremony of the morning, which had just been sent home by the accomplished draper, *L. T. Bradley, Esq.*; and when found dying by *Billings and Letton*, he was dressed in that suit, not having had time to change it. What a commentary upon human hopes and expectations! 'In the midst of life we are in death!'"

This account, as the reader will perceive, was like most newspaper accounts of such things, sufficiently near the truth to avoid direct contradiction, and yet far enough from it to produce a very false impression. The fear of forestalling the action of the judicial tribunals, of which every newspaper editor has so lively a sense, usually lasts through the first paragraph only; and in nine cases out of ten, public opinion is manufactured by *ex parte* statements, and quasi impartial accounts. Where guilt is known to exist, the proofs are generally damning against the first man suspected; and in too many cases impartial investigation in the legal courts is insufficient to counteract the prejudice thus formed; in cases too, where, without this prejudice, innocence would appear as clear as noonday.

In the case before us, however, there was not so much injury done as usually follows such unauthorized accounts; for most of the readers of the paper had already settled upon the conviction that *Henry Glenn* must be, and that no one else could be, the guilty man. Those who knew him best were loth to believe him capable of such an act; but when the note which had led *Eversham* to his death was recognized as the writing, although disguised, of *Henry* himself, even their faith gave way. His acknowledgment that he had made the appointment to meet *Fanny*, strengthened the conviction, while his denial that he had redeemed it was more than counterbalanced by her positive statement made before the coroner, that she had met him and received her letters from his own hand. Her testimony was corroborated also by *Billings and Letton*, who both deposed that they had seen him going in that direction but a few minutes before the murder. The cloak, the pistol, and the letters above all, were proofs which at once convinced even the most skeptical. Indeed, there was but one person in all the town who expressed an adverse opinion. A large number of persons were in the hall of *Eversham's* house, gathered in by the alarm, even at the late hour at which the jury was assembled. They were discussing the probabilities of the affair, all without an exception settling upon *Henry Glenn* as the perpe-

trator of the deed; when a small voice was heard upon the staircase—

*"I don't believe he did it!"*

It was Billy Bates; but when he was sought for to be questioned by the coroner, he was not to be found, and no more was thought of it.

"After the rendering of the verdict 'wilful murder' against Henry, he was arrested without delay. It was very near day-break when the officers went to the door of his apartment, within which the lights were still burning, though faint and low. A knock, several times repeated, brought no answer; and the door was finally forced. Henry was found lying upon his bed with all his clothes on, and in a sleep from which they found it difficult to rouse him.

"Come," said the officer, roughly shaking him, "it's no use to 'play possum' now; you are as wide awake as any of us. Get up!"

Henry at last opened his eyes, and gazed absently about him. He seemed to be bewildered and unable to divine what the interruption meant.

"Is it ten o'clock?" he asked.

"It is somewhat after ten, I think," said the officer, with a coarse laugh.

"He is confused by his guilt," said one of the bystanders.

"He has been drinking to drown thought," said another, pointing to the bottles and glasses still on the table.

"And has succeeded tolerably well it seems," said the first, as Henry stood gazing with a perplexed air from one to another.

"Come," said the officer, "we have no time to wait. You must go with me."

"Whither?" Henry asked.

"To prison," answered the other. "Come—don't detain us."

"To prison!" exclaimed Henry, now fairly awake. "Of what am I accused?"

"How ignorant!" sneered the officer, giving no further attention to his question, and attempting to lead him out.

"Hold!" said Henry, in a voice now loud and stern. "Hands off, sir! Not a step will I move from this spot till I know of what I am accused, and by what authority you attempt to take me!"

"That's reasonable, any how," said the officer, cringing, as such men always do, before genuine resolution. "You are

accused of murder, sir," he continued in a tone much moderated, "and I arrest you by virtue of this warrant."

"Stop, sir!" said Abram Glenn, striding in and pushing the crowd sternly aside. "I'll not interfere with the discharge of your duty, McLoud; but before you arrest this young man, leave me alone with him for five minutes."

"I do not know——" commenced McLoud.

"I know," interrupted Abram; and as he spoke he took him by the arm and led him out of the room. Pushing the crowd after him, he shut and bolted the door, remaining alone with his nephew.

"Now, Henry," said he calmly, taking his hand and seating him upon the bed, "tell me at once all about this affair."

"For God's sake, uncle, tell me first what affair it is! I am as ignorant as a child!" exclaimed the nephew.

"Have no concealment with me, Henry," said Abram, "I must know how it happened that I may understand your defence."

"My defence, uncle?" Against what charge am I to be defended? Nobody has told me a word!"

"Where were you at ten o'clock?" asked Abram.

"What is the time now?" said Henry.

"Five o'clock in the morning," Abram answered.

"Then I was here, and asleep," said Henry.

"Did you not have an appointment to——"

"Yes," Henry interposed; "but I fell asleep and have just been awakened. I did not keep the appointment."

"You did not go there at all!" exclaimed his uncle.

"I did not," said Henry, "unless in my sleep, and I am not a somnambulist, certainly."

"You know nothing of what happened there; then?"

"No; what did happen? Did she go?"

"She went; and so did Mr. Eversham," said Abram; "while there the latter was killed, and you are accused of the deed.—Why did you not go?"

Henry covered his face with his hands and his chest heaved with excitement.

"Killed!" he exclaimed. "Dead?"

"Yes, dead," his uncle answered; "and you are accused of killing him."

"I have not been out of the office since sunset," said Henry. "Sleep overcame me early in the evening, and I knew nothing until I was aroused by McLoud."

"You did not hear this crowd enter, then?"

"I heard nothing till McLoud shook me."

"Did you intend to keep this appointment?"

"Most certainly," said Henry, "and had made every preparation to do so. I have the letters here ——" he stepped to the drawer and put his hand in.

"They are gone!" he exclaimed. There was no mistaking his look of unfeigned surprise. Abram was convinced at once of his innocence.

"Who was here with you in the evening?" he asked.

Henry named them. "And, now that I reflect," he added, "I must have fallen asleep while they were here, for I do not recollect their going away."

"You must have been drinking a good deal of wine," said Abram, approaching the table.

"Not much," said Henry; "at most, not enough to produce intoxication."

"It might cause drowsiness, nevertheless," said Abram.

"It did," said Henry, "even before I lay down."

Abram stepped to the door and opened it without a word. The officer, who had been knocking against it during this conference, now entered, followed by the crowd, who almost filled the room.

"Let no man touch a single article here," said Abram, in a loud voice.

"We are not thieves," muttered several.

"Very little better, some of you, I think," said Abram.

"Is Dr. Holcomb present?" he continued. "I saw him not long since."

"Yes," said a quiet-looking old gentleman, stepping forward into the light.

"Will you be good enough, Doctor," said Abram, "to take charge of those bottles and glasses? Your testimony as to their contents may be important."

The Doctor did as he was directed; Henry submitted to the arrest, and the whole party left the apartment.

## CHAPTER VII.

Masterless passion sways us to the mood  
Of what it likes or loathes.—MACBETH.

There is much that hath no merit but its truth  
And no excuse but nature.—PEPUS.

My lord, here are letters for you.—HENRY IV.

WHEN several phenomena have been traced directly to a common origin, there is a strong inclination among inquirers to refer all kindred effects to the same cause; but whether this is attributable to logical induction, or is the result of a too hasty generalization, may safely be questioned. There is, without doubt, in the character of every individual some ruling principle of action, upon whose operation in one case we may safely predicate his action in another; but it would not be logical to expect of another man, even though he be generally ruled by the same principle, like action in like circumstances. For the very same motives, with precisely equal force, operating in an exactly similar manner, and producing a course of action with the same *animus*, may, by reason of the difference between the men intellectually and morally, lead one man on one path, and another man on a very different path. *All* the character—every ingredient which goes to make up what we call character—operates under every set of circumstances with precisely the same force which marks its action under another, and it is only because all are not equally strong in the organization, that each does not contribute equally to the result. It is no doubt true that a man may, at one time, be more completely under the influence of a certain motive than at another time; and those who examine this subject superficially, will hence conclude that the power of the motive varies at various times. But it is not so, as can be negatively proven. For, if it were so, all mental and moral philosophy would be at an end, until we could so estimate the power of each motive, as to determine with accu-

racy its exact pressure, at all times, upon every individual. There would be no calculating upon men in any circumstances; for their action would depend upon accidents and states of mind and feeling, of which in the nature of things, we could know absolutely nothing.

Those philosophers, then, who infer, from the relation of one effect to its cause, a like relation of another phenomenon, though not ascertained, to the same cause, are nearer to the truth than such as hold that each action has its own separate motive, to which can be traced only that effect. The traits of human character are of different heights in different individuals, and stand, like a crowd of men, some towering a head and shoulders above others, and some apparently crouching to the ground. A level canopy, impressible and horizontal, descending upon such a crowd, is indented by the taller first and by the tallest most—while an uneven canopy, let down in like manner, may be most impressed by the shortest man. But the strength of each is equal to itself in every case: the shorter man is no stronger in the latter instance than in the former, nor is the taller man less powerful because he makes less impression, or is not so clearly seen. The course of one's action in a given case, is like the flat surface thus lowered upon the uneven crowd, to be indented first by the highest motive; but if prejudice or passion have broken the plain, it may touch the lowest principle of action first. And this explains the reason why the same man acts so differently at different times, though apparently in similar circumstances.

Besides the peculiar ingredients which go to make up individual character, there are undoubtedly general principles which apply to all the race in common, though not in a common degree. Thus, every one is selfish, but some are more so than others; all are credulous and prone to delusion or self-deception, though one may be very much while another is very little so; every member of the human family has a distinct religious sense, though it is so repressed in many as to appear quite dead; all men are social, though some are morose and solitary, and so on throughout the race, and notwithstanding a hundred general characteristics. And it is because of this that we say—those who reason from the individual to the race, are nearer to the truth, though still distant, than those who isolate each human being, and refuse to recognize general principles. Foremost, and most respectable, among the former are those who refer all human acts to considerations of self; and it is with the view of giving an exemplification of this universal principle, that we

have written what the reader, (if he reads it at all,) will consider rather an ill-timed speculation.

Fanny was grieved for Eversham, as every kind heart must be, for one thus cut off in the midst of his days, and sent unprepared to try the "dread unknown." But she was not nearly so much so as she would have been, had he not been her betrothed. The reader will understand without explanation. There is often a curious mingling of joy and grief in our hearts, when we are even at a loss to know which predominates. And so it was with Fanny. Under the influence of wounded pride, she had hastily betrothed herself; but when her resentment had cooled, and she recognized the folly of her course, she saw no escape from her pledge, and deliberately resolved to abide the issue. In doing so, she took a melancholy pleasure in dwelling, in fancy, upon the thousand sources of unhappiness by which she was to be compassed round; it even pleased her heart to think that, if she could not be happy with him whom she loved, at least she would but exist with another. In this, and in a thousand other ways, she had schooled herself to look upon the approaching sacrifice, if not with pleasure, at least with calmness. And until the catastrophe which freed her from her bonds, she was unconscious of the degree of distaste with which she viewed a relation to be thus established. The revulsion from despondency to hope—the resilient bound of her spirits—at once opened her eyes, and she reproached herself with triumphing at the death of a fellow-being. She was, however, unjust; it was not his death for which she rejoiced, the feeling was that which followed the lifting of a burthen from her heart, relieving it of a weight, whose absence alone was a joy. Yet this could not last, for there was a source of grief which lay behind her sacrifice to Eversham—the estrangement which had brought that sacrifice about—and it was now re-opened with redoubled force. She had unconsciously viewed Eversham, while he lived, as one who stood between her and her love; and when it was announced that he was gone, it seemed at first that there was nothing to forbid her rushing into Henry's arms. The veil was lifted for a moment, and the light shone in, only to leave her heart darker than ever when it was withdrawn. She suddenly remembered their estrangement—even now, when she was no longer pledged, she was forbidden to speak! When she recalled his contemptuous treatment, even the removal of Eversham, relief as it had seemed, became a new misfortune—for it deprived her of a refuge! She no longer thought of him as one who was dragging her violently to a hated altar—she

forgot her defiance—she remembered his kindness, and sorrowed for him sincerely. But her sorrow was quite as much relief; if he could still have claimed her hand she would have felt no regret; she grieved for his death not only because he had been cut off by violence in the prime of life, but also because his death threw her back upon her own devices.

She had testified before the coroner that it was Henry whom she had met in the wood, and the inference was unavoidable that Eversham had fallen by his hand. But in all her reflections upon that subject, strange as it may appear, she had never thought of Henry as a criminal; and though she regretted Eversham's death, it had never occurred to her that she ought to blame him by whose hand he had fallen.

What grieved her most, or at least as much as aught else, was the publicity necessarily given to her name, the license which all possessed to canvass her most private feelings and affairs. A sensitive mind always shrinks from such publicity; and there is no stronger evidence of indelicacy than a fondness for notoriety. The rule is equally applicable to both sexes, with a difference, though not in degree. Modest merit has always been the theme of praise, and even at the risk of appearing trite, we must join in the commendation. But that which is properly called merit in man, is duty in woman; and though one of the stronger sex may possess claims upon our admiration without being in the least diffident, the weaker is always worthless without modesty. That which in a man would be abtruseness, would in a woman be indecency; and a want of severe delicacy, which in the former might be excusable, would in the latter be intolerable.

Female character is one of the many things which may be injured without being assailed; and a common, licensed use of a woman's name by the vulgar, though no offence be imputed to her, must stain her reputation, if she has any to be stained. If she has none worth preserving, she may seek notoriety with impunity; but if she has the delicacy which belongs to her sex, she will shrink from giving any one license to speak of her otherwise than in the most commonplace manner. The vulgar and unlady-like vanity which covets the wonder or admiration of the mob, exists only in the minds of such as are fit to be the companions of those whose approbation they seek; and the soul which can be satisfied with, or even can endure, publicity like this, deserves nothing higher or nobler than the *vivats* of the rabble. All *outré* things in woman are merely affectations, so long as their possessors can retain their title to be classed among

*true* women; but it is an ordinance of creation, that everything shall tend towards consistency; and the constant practice of anything offensive to delicacy, will ultimately produce an immodesty which will render the habit appropriate or in character.

Fanny then was grieved, in addition to her sorrow for the death of Eversham, that anything should have occurred to make her name common upon the tongues of vulgar people; for she shrank from notoriety with the delicacy which we ascribe to all true women. She felt humbled, lost a part of her self-respect, became dissatisfied with those around her, and secluded herself from her most intimate friends. Her father became alarmed, and urged her to return the numerous visits which were thrust upon her, in greater numbers than ever before. But she understood the motives which prompted most of them, and became suspicious of the rest; she steadily refused to go out, confined herself almost entirely to her room, and finally denied herself to those who called upon her. The neighborhood in which she had been born, in which all her life had been spent, became distasteful to her; she longed for nothing so much as to fly from the scenes of her childhood, and in some strange place to be at rest. She, however, knew this was impossible; and in despondency betook herself to solitude.

One evening, about four weeks after the death of Eversham, she was as usually sitting in her chamber, listlessly turning over the leaves of her portfolio, and arranging for the hundredth time the drawings it contained, when her father entered with an open letter in his hand. She did not look up, and thus did not perceive the smile of satisfaction which played upon his face, nor the erect and exultant mein which marked his gait for the first time for several years. But he soon drew her attention.

"Fanny," said he, drawing a chair up beside her, and placing his arm round her waist, "has not all this trouble and talk made you discontented?"

"It has rendered distasteful," said she, "all the things I previously liked; and in that sense has made me discontented."

"Even your home has lost its charm," said he.

"No," she replied. "On the contrary, home is the only place where I am even partially satisfied; but perhaps it is so only because it is a refuge from a society which I can no longer endure."

"I suspected something of the sort," said her father, with a

sigh of relief; "and I have felt in the same way myself. I am sure your loss must affect you even more sensibly."

"It is not so much that," said she, quickly; "for I doubt whether I have not rather gained than lost——"

"What!" he interrupted. "Gained?"

"Even so," said she, calmly. "And it is therefore not that for which I need a refuge. I am convinced that I could never have been happy with Mr. Eversham, and I doubt whether I would have lived with him twelve months."

"You astonish me!" said he.

"I suppose so," she rejoined, coolly. "Nevertheless, it is true that I do not grieve for his death because it is a loss to me, except as I am deprived of a refuge from things, if possible, more distasteful. No one can grieve more sincerely than I do for his death—but not on my own account; for I repeat, I lost nothing, but rather gained by the event."

Her father withdrew his arm and gazed into her face.

"I see you do not understand me," she continued.

"I do not, indeed!" said he.

"You think if I consider myself a gainer, I should be better contented with my lot; and were this the only circumstance to annoy me, I would be so. But it is not," she continued, rising and walking rapidly to and fro across the room; "I cannot go outside the door without seeing that I am the subject of the remarks and comments of all the people I meet; my name is as common among all circles as if I were a murderess; I am dragged from the privacy in which I should live, into the glare of scandal, and my character and actions are the staple of gossip among all the idle and malicious. I am not secure from intrusion even at home. Scores of people, whose feet were never before inside the threshold, are thronging here, moved by an impertinent curiosity; and I know with what relish they expatiate upon all they see, and relate a hundred things they have not seen. I know there is not a tea-table, nor a social party, within twenty miles of this spot, where the conversation is made up of aught else but my actions and my affairs. While this lasts—and God knows when it will end!—I cannot breathe in peace; I cannot bear it with patience, and yet I see no escape. I must endure it as best I may, until Providence shall release me!"

She threw herself impatiently into her chair again, and pushing the portfolio back, leaned her head upon her hand. Her father gazed upon her in silence. These were feelings of which he had had no suspicion, which, indeed, he was not so consti-

tuted as to anticipate. New ideas came glimmering into his mind; and though he had entered the room for the purpose of proposing that they leave the neighborhood, he now, for the first time, began to think that she would consent without hesitation. He had almost forgotten the letter which he still held in his hand; but these thoughts reminded him of it again.

"Would you like to leave the place, then, for a time?" he asked.

"Forever!" she said quickly, raising her eyes eagerly. "Is it possible to do so?"

"Would you go willingly, if it were?" he pursued.

"Willingly!" she exclaimed. "I would start to-morrow,—I would start now, this moment!—and be glad, happy, to think that I would never see the place or one of its citizens again!"

"I was afraid you would not consent," said he.

"Only tell me we can go," she said.

"Well," he began, "you have often heard me speak of my brother, Martin, who left home some twenty years ago?"

Fanny assented.

"We heard of him in the South-west occasionally for several years; and even after the beginning of the Texan revolution, a few letters from him,—some by me and others by his wife's brother. After the battle of San Jacinto, however, no further tidings came from him; and as we knew he was in Houston's army, we supposed he had fallen there. It is now several years since that event, and although I sometimes thought we might hear of Martin again, I had at last abandoned all hope. Just now, however, I received this letter; and it is the news which it contains that induces me to talk to you about leaving this country and emigrating to Texas."

"Anywhere," said Fanny, taking the letter. "Rather than stay here, even go there!"

"It is not so lawless a country as it has been," urged Mr. Vincent; "even before the revolution the laws had begun to be administered and the population was looking forward to a place among law-abiding States. Now, it is as safe a place of residence as the most, and even safer than many, of the States."

"I perceive you are determined to find it all it should be," said Fanny, still holding the letter unopened. "But I am glad to see it, because it indicates that you have determined to reside there."

"That depends upon you," he said. "But read the letter."

She opened it and read as follows:

"MR. VINCENT: *Dear Sir*,—I have to announce to you that your brother, Martin R. Vincent, late of Austin, in this republic, died in this city ten days ago, of the yellow fever. He was on his way to the States when he was attacked by the disease, and his last moments regretted nothing so much as that he was unable to see you once more before he died.

"He was seized at his death of a large amount of real estate, (besides personal property) all of which he has bequeathed to you and to your children (if any). His wife died some years ago, and his only remaining child was killed by the Camanches in the year 1840. If you have any children, therefore, they are his heirs, according to a will which is now in my possession, duly executed and authenticated. If you have but one child, it is the sole heir to the whole property, excepting one plantation on the Brazos Bottom, which is yours for the term of your life. This is the most valuable single piece of property devised, netting, I presume, an income of eight thousand dollars per annum. If you have no children, the property is yours in fee simple; and in any case, you are appointed joint executor with myself,—a trust which I have accepted to be held only until your arrival in this country.

"A large part of the real estate lies in and around San Antonio de Bexar; and every acre of it is increasing in value at the rate of twenty per cent yearly. Properly managed, it might be made to produce thirty thousand per annum; and that portion which lies near Castroville can be sold to the colony or leased on advantageous terms, say, so as to yield ten thousand a-year for twenty years. Several tenements in San Antonio are included in the bequest; and though now of little value they are rapidly enhancing. One of them, occupied, as I think, as a gaming house, is rented to two men (Ellis and Hartner) at seven hundred a-year. The whole property, if well managed, ought to yield, while the sales of lands to emigrants continue, at least sixty thousand, and after that, at the lowest, forty thousand per annum. You will see the importance of your presence in Texas without delay.

"Please advise me at your earliest convenience; and on your arrival, I shall be happy to render you any service in the power of  
of "Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient and humble servant,

"THOMAS G. JOHNSTONE, *Attorney*.

"Galveston, Texas, July 30, 1843."

"You are sure there is no mistake about this, father?" said Fanny, when she had finished reading the letter.

"How can there be any mistake, my child?" demanded her father earnestly, as if not liking the supposition. "Martin was there,—this is his name,—I am his brother,—you are my daughter,—and are possessed of at least fifty thousand dollars per annum! How can there be any mistake?"

"Would to God the letter had come two months sooner!" she exclaimed. "A violent death and a great crime would have been saved, had it been so!"

"How so?" asked her father,

"You would not then have urged me to this marriage," she said.

"And, you think, Henry Glenn would not then have been a murderer?" said Mr. Vincent.

Fanny rose from her chair. "Father," said she, "Henry Glenn's name I do not wish to hear. He may have killed Eversham; I have no doubt he did; but that he is a murderer I deny. You think differently: let us therefore avoid the discussion. Let us rather prepare to leave the place, and when we are clear of it, let us forget the persons and events which have made it distasteful. At all events, I wish to hear you speak of Henry Glenn *no more*."

She bent her deep eye full upon him, and though he was strengthened and elated by the tidings of his wealth, he cowered before it, as if it were above him—as it was.

"Well, well, my daughter," he said; "let us say no more. You will go to Texas with me, of course; and as I do not wish to return, that is all I desire. We will forget these people."

He extended his arms as he spoke, and his daughter threw herself into them sobbing violently. Suppressed emotion had at last found vent; the fountain of feeling was broken up, and a flood of tears relieved the fever of her heart. Her father did not attempt to soothe her; but pressing her to his bosom, his own eyes were filled with tears, and compassion for her drove out the sordid feelings which had taken possession of his heart. By degrees she grew calm; tears had refreshed her soul, as the rain waters the desert in summer; and when she looked up a smile played about her lips, and though faint it was clear—the sign of returning peace.

"When can we go, father?" she asked.

"We must stay till after this trial," he answered: "we are both recognized as witnesses. But after that we will be free to depart as soon as we desire."

"We cannot go before, then?" she said.

"No; even if we could, I am not ready. When we leave

this place, I do not wish to return; and in four weeks I can so arrange my affairs that there will be no necessity for doing so. Before the end of that time, also, the trial will take place, and we can go then without delay."

"Let us be ready, then," said she. And she rose and commenced her preparations, as if she had been expecting to start on the morrow.

\* \* \* \* \*

Four weeks had passed away since Henry's arrest, and during more than half the time, he had been closely confined. He had, however, at the end of that period, been brought by a writ of *Habeas Corpus* before the Circuit Judge, and admitted to bail. The Judge was an old lawyer, who had spent more than twenty years of his life at the bar, and had thus acquired the insight into men's motives and actions, which to the uninitiated often appears like intuition. He saw that there was some mystery about the affair; and although but little progress had been made by Henry's friends, in the attempt to show that he had not kept his appointment with Fanny, enough was proven to throw doubt upon the matter in the mind of the Judge; the prisoner was consequently released on heavy bonds, which were at once filed by Uncle Abram. What it was, which justified this doubt, will appear in the course of the narrative, even if the reader has not already anticipated it.

He was now at liberty, and with the strength of a healthy mind, set earnestly about preparing his defence. His own suspicions, and those of Uncle Abram, naturally rested upon James; but no evidence transpired to strengthen the conviction, except the testimony of the physician, who took charge of the wine and glasses at the request of Uncle Abram. And even among the few who believed Henry innocent, this was considered evidence as strong against Billings and Letton as against James. No one had as yet remembered that it was James who poured the wine for all the gentlemen present; and if they had, James was so popular among all who knew the parties, that but little weight would have been given to the circumstance. Henry himself did not at first suspect James. He knew that the suspicions of Billings had been aroused by his preparations to meet his appointment; and he thought it probable that he and Letton had gone to the place where the meeting was to take place, and then by some accident had met, quarrelled with, and killed Mr. Eversham. It would seem strange that he should entertain this supposition for a moment. But it was suggested by James, and it must be remembered that James had possessed his unlimited

confidence. This, however, did not last long; the more he reflected upon it, the more improbable it appeared; and after the examination before the Judge, he became convinced that James had himself been the perpetrator of the deed. Yet he was not convinced that it had been premeditated. He believed that his having been suddenly overcome by a narcotic, accidentally in his glass, had first suggested to his cousin the possibility of personating him—that he had accordingly gone, with no other intention than to meet Fanny and make the exchange—that when he arrived there, Mr. Eversham had attacked him, and been killed in the affray. It will be seen that this hypothesis left out of the account the note received by Eversham, which had really produced the catastrophe; but it must be remembered again, that James' influence over Henry had been acquired and strengthened, under circumstances which made him feel grateful for advice and sympathy, and that therefore he had given complete confidence in return. The circumstance of the note he did not attempt to explain, or if he thought of it at all, his uncle's explanation was that which was received—that James had written the note for the purpose of exciting Eversham's jealousy, and preventing a marriage which was distasteful to James as well as to Henry; and that the other events had followed as related.

Upon this supposition it was impossible that Henry should feel much resentment towards James for the dangerous position in which he was placed. It had been with a strange mixture of regret and pleasure that he had heard of Eversham's death, for his first thought was of Fanny. If the future bridegroom was murdered, the marriage could not be consummated; and the thought almost reconciled him to the false accusation against himself. He often weighed in his own mind the question whether it was not better that he should rest under the imputation of a crime, than that Fanny should have married Eversham; and though at each recurrence the thought was dismissed as ungenerous and selfish, it returned again and again. His feelings were indeed of the same character with those of Fanny; but he had not an equal justification.

For a few days after Henry's arrest, James had exhibited a perturbation which was fortunately attributed to anxiety about his cousin's position. He was ruthless and unscrupulous by nature; but he was not sufficiently inured to crime—he was not far enough below the impulses of honor—to preserve his self-possession without faltering; and the consciousness of murder was a feeling of whose force he as yet knew little. A few

days sufficed, however, to enable him to regain his composure; and though he wore an anxious, haggard look, but few thought of ascribing it to the proper cause. He became nervous again when Henry was released on bail; but this, too, soon wore off; and though Henry's coldness disturbed him sometimes, it nerved him also, by furnishing him a reason for resentment, not the less powerful because without foundation. He never went to "*The Glen*," because Henry was never absent from there; and though there was no outbreak between them, the little intercourse they had was distant and distrustful.

This long explanation may seem tedious; but it is given to hasten the flow of our story, to bring us at once to the day of Henry's trial, and at the same time to display the posture of affairs when it commenced.

## CHAPTER VIII.

It doth appear you are a worthy judge.—*MERCHANT OF VENICE.*

Bring in the evidence:

Thou robed man of justice, take thy place.—*LEAR.*

Good sir, I do in friendship counsel you  
To leave this place.—*AS YOU LIKE IT.*

INDEPENDENTLY of any speculations about the propriety or expediency of capital punishment, a trial at bar, where the issue is life or death to the accused, is one of the most astounding spectacles to be seen in a civilized land. It may be an arrogant assumption in society to claim the right to take human life; but if it be so, it is equally so to pretend that an individual may do so without blame in self-defence; for it is only this which justifies capital punishment. That this justification should be clearly established, is both law and sound reason—two things, by-the-bye, which, notwithstanding the boast of my Lord Coke, are not always identical. To establish this defence in the case of society, it must be assumed that he who commits murder thereby renders himself dangerous to social order; and though this will probably not be denied, even by those who

wish to reform our criminal codes in this particular, the trial of the question is, we repeat, a solemn spectacle. Its frequency has rendered men familiar with it, and thus has been depreciated the solemnity with which it is viewed. Among no class of men is this indifference more widely diffused than among those who should feel the heaviest responsibility—the officers of our courts. Of these, perhaps, the lawyers are most callous, though honorable exceptions are everywhere to be found. The nature of their occupation is such as to give them a catholic indifference to its consequences; and though they put forth in every cause an intellectual power proportioned to its importance, it is usually the earnestness of a man playing for another a game in which he has himself no stake. To counteract this tendency in some degree, they generally have professional pride, or the spirit of opposition, so constantly exhibited in courts of law. And in nine cases out of ten, where a lawyer shows great chagrin and disappointment on account of a failure, it is more his own reputation than the loss of his client for which he mourns.

There is a class of lawyers the reverse of this, who thoroughly identify themselves with the interests of their clients, and feel a defeat more keenly than even those whose rights or demands have been denied. These are far more earnest than the other class; and since earnestness always gives a degree of power, they *may* be better lawyers. But where one merges his individuality into that of his client, he is apt to see with his client's eyes; he may be blinded by prejudice, misled by opposition, and finally overcome by the cooler head and better governed tongue of an adversary who has no feeling in the contest but professional pride. What he gains in zeal may be lost in excitement; for perfect freedom from agitation is a "condition precedent" to professional success.

The best embodiment of self-possession among the lawyers on the circuit when this trial was to take place, was a Mr. Leigh. With but few of the powers of an advocate—possessing, except in conversation, hardly average fluency—having no proclivity to declamation, exhibiting but little imagination, and never displaying anything like fancy—not more than ordinarily captivating in personal appearance, with a voice dry and unmusical, and a manner rather stiff than graceful, he was still the most successful among all the men of ability on his circuit. In the West a lawyer *must* have some decided talent in order to even a moderate degree of success. There is but little "office business," and no routine of papers requiring accurate

knowledge and exact habits, legal counsel produces no part of his income, and gives him no reputation. If therefore he has any character among those from whom the supplies of lawyers are drawn, the inference is fair that he has more than merely formal or mechanical skill. Leigh's reputation was deservedly very high; not for any ornamental or meritorious qualities he possessed, as we have said, but for talents far different and much more valuable. He had a clear, acute, and practical intellect; beneath an exterior apparently not very alert, lay powers of observation which nothing could escape; and movements which seemed slow, and sometimes even indolent, were the results of the most comprehensive reflection and deepest foresight. Not a word could be uttered by a witness or by his adversary of which he did not at once see the bearing, and not an action was detailed in the evidence of which he could not forthwith divine the motive. His watchfulness was as singular as his quick perception, and his persistence in following a thread of testimony was as firm and unswerving as the course of a star. He never forgot anything; he could double upon his own track infinitely, and yet never lose his way; he seemed to have a "second sight" for all perjuries; the relations of detached facts were as plain to him as if all the links were laid before him; and every side and aspect of any given fact seemed to be presented at once. This was all the result of quick perception and accurate reflection. But in addition to these he had another talent, without which he would have been at the bar only a common man—the power to make others see things as plainly as he saw them, the faculty of grouping in such a manner as, in one glance, to present an intelligible view not only of the facts, but of his own combinations and inferences. He was not a logician, it is true—but few lawyers are; but he was for legal purposes far stronger than any logician could be—an accurate observer and a subtle reasoner. The first article of his creed was, "Nothing is hidden;" the second, "Nothing is improbable;" and the third, "The mind which commands itself commands all others." The principles which governed his action were threefold also: first, "Never set out on the road till you know whither it will lead you;" second, "Never conclude that testimony is true because it is given under oath;" and, third, "While all is not lost, all may be gained." He acted upon these principles with the most perfect consistency—pursued all his objects with indomitable perseverance, and preserved, amid irritations and distractions, complete self-possession. He never identified himself with his client; he had no feeling in common

with him; he took his interests under his protection, and watched over them with sleepless vigilance. But for all purposes of feeling, he seemed to be a being of another order, above and beyond all emotion, exultation, or disappointment. When he took a man's cause to manage, it was for the time *his cause*: the client had nothing to do with it; he controlled client, cause, witnesses, and often courts and juries too. His mind was of that hard nature, which must always make an impression where it touches, and his pertinacity alone sometimes won for him what all else would have lost. Added to these gifts, which fitted him for a lawyer best, but extremely well for anything to which he might have turned, he possessed accurate and profound knowledge of the law; and rapid application and a ready memory enabled him to use his learning to the very best advantage.

Such was the man employed to defend Henry Glenn.

When Uncle Abram went to his office, two days after Henry's arrest, he found him walking quietly to and fro across the room, holding a bundle of papers grasped tight between his fingers.

"Good morning," said he, stopping and setting out a chair. "Sit down—you look fatigued."

"I have had a long walk," said Abram, seating himself. "I came in this morning to retain you for my nephew, Henry."

"That's a bad affair," said Leigh.

"It is, indeed!" rejoined Abram. "But with your assistance I do not despair of clearing it up."

"You think him innocent then?" said the lawyer.

"Yes; though I admit the circumstances are very strong."

"I thought the evidence was positive," said Leigh.

"It is," replied Abram. "But I think it rests upon a mistake—"

"It must be so, if he is innocent," interrupted Leigh. "But give me an outline of your reasons for thinking so."

Abram detailed the evidence, and added the circumstances upon which his doubts were founded.

"Pretty strong," muttered the lawyer, gazing vacantly on the floor, as if seeking some escape from the inference of Henry's guilt. "But the evidence against him is not circumstantial, and in that we have an advantage."

"Most persons think that a disadvantage," remarked Abram.

"Most persons are wrong," replied Leigh. "Witnesses who swear positively may be either perjured or mistaken; but a chain of circumstances, well established, cannot lie. It is only

negligence, or ignorance or haste which can make it dangerous."

"Some further conversation ensued, when Abram asked:

"Is there anything else you will want of me now?"

"Yes," said Leigh; "a thousand dollars and a list of witnesses."

Abram paid the money and gave him the names, with a brief note of what each would depose.

"Now," said Leigh, as he placed the bills in his pocket, "our first movement must be to get him released on bail. We must resort to the *habeas corpus*; and even if we should fail, we will at least gain an advantage in knowing precisely what the evidence is."

"Can you give me no encouragement to hope for an acquittal," asked Abram.

"I can only say, never despair," Leigh answered; and Abram left him.

A few days after this the case had been heard by virtue of the process mentioned by Leigh, and, as the reader knows, Henry had been released, though under heavy bonds. Thus the matter rested for several weeks, Henry confining himself almost exclusively to 'The Glen,' and leaving, as Leigh required, all preparation for the trial to his counsel. When the latter wanted any information, which was only twice during the interval we have spoken of, he rode out to Abram's place and held a short, abrupt consultation with his client; and from these meetings he always went away without giving the faintest intimation of his intentions, or allowing himself to be questioned on the subject.

"I am retained," he would say, when Henry's anxiety overcame the reserve which Leigh had imposed, "to manage your defence; let me conduct it, and if I do not bring you safely through, question me afterwards about the reason."

He seemed to be as jealous of the interference of his client as he would have been of any one else. He might have another reason, also, the fear that his combinations might be deranged by interference. He had a trusty agent "sounding" all who were known to be witnesses, and seeking diligently for more. His line of defence was laid down; and he had sufficient confidence in its safety to stake the issue on its result. Affairs were in this posture when the semi-annual term of the court commenced. On the first day of the term, the grand jury returned "a true bill" against Henry, and the following Thursday was appointed for the trial.

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It is not my purpose, whatever infiction the reader may dread, here to give a detailed account of a jury trial. It will be necessary, however, to follow the course of this investigation, as briefly as possible, in order to the clear understanding of the object of this part of the narrative; and since there are but few of any class—and, certainly, no *lovers of fiction*—who do not feel an interest in the proceedings of legal courts, I have little fear of being considered tedious.

In our more refined age and country, court houses are filled to overflowing whenever there is to be a trial for slander, *crim. con.*, or murder, by the same spirit which carried the ancient Romans to the amphitheatre to witness the brutal exhibitions of gladiators and *other* wild beasts, and at this day crowds the bull-fight assemblages of Spain. In some countries a like interest is manifested in suits for the breach of promises to marry; but in the West such things are almost entirely unknown, either because the men are more faithful, or because the women are less anxious to enter "the holy state." When such suits are commenced—which sometimes happens—damages are seldom awarded—Western courts and juries generally acting upon the belief that a woman who has not delicacy enough to prevent her entering a court for such a purpose, would not have made the defendant a good wife, and therefore deserves no compensation for her failure. They think, moreover—and the composition of society justifies the belief—that a woman to whom *one* offer of marriage is so important, can certainly have had but few, and must, *therefore*, be manifestly unfit for matrimony.

Suits for slander are nearly in the same category—the only damages usually given being to friendless women—courts and juries in these cases believing that a reputation must be desperately diseased when it requires a suit at law to cure it. Men whose characters have been assailed—if they have anything worth defending—usually disregard the breath of calumny; and at most do not betray distrust of their own standing by seeking the help of a jury to endorse it. They, however, sometimes obtain satisfaction at the end of a horsewhip, and, not unfrequently of a more dangerous weapon. The fact that a man is plaintiff in a suit for slander is considered a proof—and in society constituted like that of the West, no very mean proof, either,—that he has no character worth preserving. It is on account of the racy expositions—racy to the depraved tastes which assemble the crowds in our court-houses—that a slander suit never fails to overrun the benches; and a man of ordinary self-respect is unwilling to undergo such gloating dissection.

With women the case is different; for even if the natural sense of propriety and manliness among the lawyers will not protect them—which it generally will—the courts will interfere. But among all who have reputations worth defending few will resort to a court, excepting such as have neither father nor brother, nor other relative or friend to seek and obtain summary redress. The fair presumption is, therefore, against the merit of any woman's petition, in all cases excepting such as these; and the humiliating exposures so often made in the legitimate course of defence and inquiry fully justify the rule.

If an ordinary trial for murder, where both the victim and the accused are below the medium social level, will always collect a crowd, how much more intense is the interest where both parties have occupied high positions! Such was the case now. Mr. Eversham had been the wealthiest man in the neighborhood, while Henry Glenn was a lawyer of rising fame, and one of the heirs of a man, whose wealth was only inferior to that of the deceased. The consequence, both in the common affairs of the town, and in the interest centering at the court-house, was what might have been foreseen. The old-fashioned room was filled to overflowing on the morning set for the trial, long before the hour to which the court had adjourned. Outside the bar there was not a square foot vacant—even the aisles and passages were full. Now and then, one more adventurous than others, some young man with mustachios and a good opinion of himself, or some ex-magistrate, with the flesh and air of judgment yet upon him, would invade the sacred precinct by leaping or climbing the substantial railing. But such intrusions were at once repelled by two or three low-browed constables, armed with the majesty of the law, and the adventurers were forthwith ignominiously ejected, retreating among the steaming crowd to hide their confusion and salve their wounded vanity by muttered curses. Indeed, the bar was a great temptation; it looked so airy, cool and roomy; and the lawyers sat with airs so jaunty or preoccupied, with feet thrown up above their heads upon the desks, or leaning over endless papers, with their hats drawn down across their brows, or pens going noisily and rapidly along the foolscap! And then the younger members of the bar, briefless but not less important in their airs, enjoying keenly the envious looks and longing eyes of those whose baser occupations (ostensible) confined them to the sweat and jam of a court-house crowd! Now and then a member of the panel sprang carelessly over the railing and took his seat within the envied precincts, when first would come a rush of constables to thrust him

out and then a declaration of his office by the sheriff or from himself, causing a precipitate retreat of the vigilant officials, each repeating to the impatient crowd outside the announcement which had saved the rash intruder from extrusion. Occasionally a lawyer elbowed his way firmly, though slowly, through the press and, disdaining the more plebeian mode of climbing, entered by the gate, apparently unconscious that a single person occupied the room besides himself. Here and there, along the railing could be seen men beckoning to the lawers within,—upon which ensued short whispered consultation, amounting only to some empty question or inane remark from the layman and a pompous smile from the barrister, but gratifying the vanity of both by causing the more modest crowd to think that they were deep in the discussion of some cause important to them both.

Occasionally there was a stir and labored swaying of the crowd about the door; and at each movement of the kind it was expected that the Judge would enter. But for the last half hour there had been flowing in a stream of ladies, passing by the bar, and taking seats upon the highest benches—and this would move the crowd, as vessels cleave the water, when nothing else but the approach of the Judge or of some other officer could have made the least impression. At last, however, just as the hour-hand of the large round clock above the bench was pointing to the X upon the dial, a shuffling of feet and bustling of sycophants about the door, announced the arrival of the functionary whose presence was indispensable and so impatiently expected. The constables, *pro tem.* deputies, now joined by the Sheriff with his real deputy, rushed simultaneously forward, when they saw the white head of the Judge slowly advancing through the sea of hats; and crying most vociferously—"Clear this gangway! Stand back!" &c. &c., at last succeeded in opening a way, which would have been opened far sooner and much more respectfully, if all the officers had been in the bottom of the sea. The Judge passed quietly within the gate, which was ostentatiously held back by the Sheriff, and ascended the bench. As he did so, he nodded slightly to the Sheriff, and that officer proclaimed the Court "open pursuant to adjournment." All the hats in the room were removed at once, the lawyers settled themselves in their seats, the murmuring among the crowd gradually ceased, and silence assumed dominion. The record of the preceding day was read, some objections, mostly captious and unmeaning, were made to the manner in which the orders were entered, and then the "hour for motions" commenced.

These were, however, speedily despatched, even the lawyers partaking of the interest in the coming trial, and postponing their dull arguments to the following day.

"The first case this morning," said the Judge, "is 'The People vs. Henry Glenn:' is it ready for trial?"

Both the parties answered, "All ready." The accused came forward from one of the more retired seats, and took his place beside Leigh. He was pale and thin, but no marks of agitation or apprehension were observable in his demeanor. He did not look round upon the crowd, and paid no attention to the process of empanneling the jury. Leigh managed the whole matter without once consulting with him—even replying, "Not Guilty, Sir," to the question put by the Judge before the calling commenced, "What is the plea?" The jury was empaneled with less delay than is usual on such occasions—the lawyers generally giving in this process a foretaste of the coming contest, by captious objections and tedious preliminary examinations. The twelve having answered to their names, a short man with a little black eye and very bushy whiskers, rose to "open the case for the People."

He made a very fair statement of the evidence, laying great stress upon two points only—the dying declaration of Eversham, and the testimony of Fanny Vincent. After summing up the remainder of the testimony rather briefly, he expressed surprise that the accused had made no confession.

"For," said he, "if the rencontre between him and Eversham had been accidental, (as it will doubtless be the object of the defence to show that it was,) a confession in time would have mitigated the enormity of the crime, and might have shown circumstances sufficient to have prevented an indictment for murder. The want of such a confession renders the inference unavoidable that the meeting was premeditated, and consequently that the killing was the result of "malice prepense"—a necessary circumstance to establish the offence for which this indictment has been found. Mr. Glenn is himself a lawyer of no mean ability, and must have been fully aware of the effect of such a confession; and I think, in all candor and fairness, this jury must presume, that if it would have benefitted him, he would have made it."

After some further remarks, which we need not repeat, he sat down, and Leigh rose for the defence:\*

\* In the State where these scenes are laid—as in all other Western States where I have attended the courts—it is the practice of the counsel for the defence to make his opening statement immediately after that of the

"It is not often, gentlemen," said he, "in the power of the accused to prove a negative, and the law, therefore, properly devolves the *onus probandi* upon the prosecution. In this cause, however, having a kind regard to the State's attorney, and being unwilling to put him to unnecessary trouble, we will not expect him to prove the affirmative of this issue; we distinctly notify him that we design to prove the negative. But since that negative also involves an affirmative which we mean to establish in like manner, and which we intend shall come upon the prosecution with a little surprise, we are not disposed by explaining it now to possess them of our defence. You, gentlemen, must therefore be content with the declaration that the prisoner at the bar is not guilty, and that we can and will establish his innocence. That *some one* is guilty is unquestionable; and that we know who is, will not long remain in doubt. If, therefore, the real perpetrator of this crime is now in the court-house, I advise him to decamp forthwith."

"Mr. Leigh," said the judge, as the lawyer sat down, if this address is made in good faith, and you really know who committed this crime, it is your duty, as a good citizen, to denounce him, and to prevent, rather than advise, his escape."

"If your Honor please," said Leigh rising again, "I see that the court believes in the innocence of my client; and this is only what was to have been expected from its known acumen and just views of evidence. But your Honor must recollect that we stand here in the attitude of defence—not as State prosecutors—and that consequently our only *duty* in the premises is, to show to the satisfaction of court and jury, that we are not guilty. When we shall have indicated where the guilt rests, it will be the duty of the officers of the law to arrest the criminal. In the meantime, my client is a prisoner, and I appear as defendant's counsel, not as a sheriff's officer."

"Go on with the case," said the judge tartly. "He was at a loss to divine whether all this was merely said to make a good impression at the outset, or whether it was in good faith. After reflection he was disposed to suspect the former; and his tartness was not a little increased by the effect which he plainly saw had been produced upon both spectators and jury, by his apparent belief in the innocence of the prisoner at the bar."

Charles Billings, John Letton, James McLoud, Doctor

prosecution, and before a witness is sworn on either side. It would seem unnecessary to make this explanation; and I only do it because another book, in which a jury trial is part of the plot, has been criticised on this ground.

Browning, Basil Devore, and Phineas Hart, were called, and all sworn together as witnesses. The same list from which these were called, contained also the name of James Glenn; but it was passed over by the attorney at James's own request—the lawyer giving him credit for a delicacy which he was very far from possessing. He now sat in a retired corner of the court-room, watching the proceedings with an interest which few understood. During the short colloquy between Leigh and the Judge, the eyes of the former had rested for a moment, probably accidentally, upon James; but the lawyer was not much startled to find that the latter flushed to a deep crimson, and turned his face away uneasily, as if to avoid a glance which he felt too searching. Leigh carelessly withdrew his eyes, and gave his attention to the State's witnesses.

*Charles Billings* was called to the stand—which in a western court-house usually means, not a raised platform to be occupied by the witness, but some convenient place upon the floor, varying according to the positions of the lawyers and the taste of the witness. We will not follow the course of questions and answers, but give at once the substance of the testimony, as briefly as possible. The first question, however, we must repeat: "Where were you, and how engaged, about the hour of ten, P.M., on the 17th of June last past?"

He deposed, in reply, the events with which the reader is acquainted, up to the point where he and Letton carried Eversham home. "We had asked him before we took him up," he continued, "who did the deed, and he replied, Henry Glenn. When we had carried him in and sent for assistance, it occurred to me that we should not trust wholly to memory; and finding pen and ink in the room, we questioned him again, and I wrote his replies upon a paper which I have here, and both Letton and I signed it."

He here read the paper, which declared distinctly that the deceased had been killed by Henry Glenn—that he had been warned of the approaching meeting by a note (which was attached to the declaration, and attested by Billings and Letton), and that the shot from which he died had been given without any attack upon Glenn by Eversham.

"The note," continued Billings, in answer to another question, "I think is in the writing of Henry Glenn. I am familiar with his hand, and have been for several years. I have no doubt, though it is a little disguised, that he wrote it."

"Tell the jury now, Mr. Billings," said the State's attorney, "what caused you and Mr. Letton to be there at that hour."

"We had been in Henry Glenn's office," he answered, "and had seen and heard that he had an appointment at that hour. We saw him get out a cloak and a pistol—the same here shown in court, and found by us on the ground where Eversham fell—and when we came away, in order to give him an opportunity to redeem his appointment, we stopped for a moment in front of the "Union Hotel." While there, Henry came by, and without speaking to us, passed on in the direction of Mr. Vincent's. I had heard something said about his relation to Miss Vincent, and suspected his destination; and I suggested that we be witnesses to the interview. We accordingly followed him at some distance, not with the purpose of interrupting him, but to satisfy a curiosity as to whether, under the circumstances, she would meet him."

On the cross-examination, Leigh put but three questions:

"Who else was in Henry Glenn's office with you?"

"James Glenn and Basil Devore were there also."

"You were all playing cards and drinking wine; who poured out the wine for you?"

He reflected for a few moments, and then replied:

"James Glenn, I think; yes, James Glenn."

"Can you swear positively that it was Henry Glenn who passed you and Letton at the Union Hotel?"

James looked suddenly up, and anxiously awaited the answer.

"I took it to be Henry," said Billings, argumentatively, "and I am acquainted with his appearance very intimately."

*John Letton* was next called, and corroborated the testimony of Billings in every particular, answering the cross-questions in the same manner. When he retired the lawyers began to cast significant glances one to another, plainly considering the cause lost—some even censuring Leigh for allowing the leading witnesses to escape without rigid examination. Leigh observed this, and smiled, but said nothing.

*James McLoud* was called, and deposed to the condition in which he had found Henry when he went to arrest him—his exclamations and bewildered manner, the appearance of the room, etc.

Leigh cross-examined him with more rigor, but elicited nothing of importance except the following answer:

"We found it very hard indeed to arouse him, and even when he got up he seemed for some minutes to find great diffi-

culty in commanding his faculties. He looked around upon the crowd vacantly as if bewildered, and not quite awake; and it was least ten minutes before I succeeded in making him understand what I wanted."

*Doctor Browning* was next introduced, and deposed that he had examined the wound by which Eversham came to his death; and that such a wound would have been produced by the pistol brought into court, *if the muzzle had been very near the body*. Eversham was dead before he arrived at the house; but he had then examined the note here shown, and had no doubt that it was written by Henry Glenn.

Leigh was evidently growing more and more in earnest; and a good many people began to give him credit for "knowing what he was about."

"You say, Doctor," said he, holding up the pistol, "that this weapon would make such a wound as that was, if held very near the body. Now, would it make such a wound *unless* so held?"

"No, sir, it would not," he answered, without hesitation.

"Well," said he, "now eschew Greek and scientific terms, and tell us in plain English what must have been the posture of Mr. Eversham when that wound was received."

"The left arm," said the Doctor, "must have been elevated considerably above the horizontal, and the left side turned towards the person who gave the shot."

"Was the attitude such as a man would assume in grasping another by the collar or throat?"

"Precisely, sir." And he went on to explain—not exactly eschewing scientific terms, nor using very pure English—no doctor ever does either on such occasions—but on the whole making his meaning tolerably plain.

"Then, Doctor," said Leigh, "if I understand you, you mean to testify that this wound was received when the muzzle of the pistol was very near Eversham's body, and that he was in the position of a man engaged in a personal struggle?"

"Precisely, sir; there can be no mistake about it."

"I will not mislead the attorney for the People," said Leigh.

"This is not our defence: it is a suggestion made for the benefit of another person, the real perpetrator of this crime." As he spoke he cast a rapid glance at James, and again saw him flush to the very temples. But he again withdrew his eyes, and calmly went on with the examination.

*Phineas Hart* was called. "I am, and was at the time of this affair," said he, "in the employment of Mr. Bradley. I

took a suit of clothes, by Mr. Bradley's directions, to Mr. Eversham's house, on the night of his death. On the outskirts of town I was accosted by a young man, who handed me a note, and requested me to leave it at Mr. Eversham's. I took it and delivered it with the clothes. I think the young man who handed me the note was the prisoner at the bar; but I cannot swear positively, because he was disguised, and it was getting dusk."

"How was he disguised?" asked Leigh, on cross-examination.

"He wore a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, which fell over his face, with a cloak—that cloak lying there, I think I can say positively—which he drew up over his mouth and chin."

As this answer was given, a young man leaned over the railing and spoke to Leigh in an eager whisper.

"I know," said Leigh. "Stay about here: I will call you if we want you."

Phineas was suffered to retire without further question.

"We have but two more witnesses," said the State's attorney, rising and looking out among the crowd, "Fanny Vincent and Maria Bates. Are they in court?"

A movement took place among the crowd, and Fanny and Maria were seen slowly following a sheriff's officer, who had great difficulty in opening the way. Fanny was pale and trembling,—even her former appearance on two occasions to give her testimony, having failed to steel her nerves against the shrinking which every delicate female must feel on appearing in a place so public. As she entered the bar, however, she summoned all her firmness, and throwing back her veil, walked to the clerk's desk without much hesitation. The silence in the court attested the interest with which her testimony was awaited; and when, having been sworn, she came forward and took the chair offered her, every ear was inclined towards her, as if to lose no syllable.

"Miss Vincent," commenced the State's attorney, in a subdued tone, "will you tell the jury, as briefly as possible, where you were on the night of the seventeenth of June last, at ten o'clock, whom you met, and what took place?"

She was silent for several minutes, as if collecting her strength and recalling the scene. But in reality, a struggle was going on in her mind between love and truth. She was fully apprised of the effect likely to be produced by her words. She felt that the life of one whom she yet loved above all earthly beings, depended upon what she might say; and though, in the

contemplation of this scene, she had reasoned down these feelings, repelled the temptation and resolved to speak only the truth, the appalling consciousness came back upon her now with redoubled force. During the pause not a foot was moved, not a head was turned: the silence was so deep that the buzzing of the flies upon the window, and the rustling of the leaves without, could be distinctly heard. At last the struggle was over, truth had gained the victory, and in a low, trembling, though clear voice, she answered:

"I was in the wood in front of my father's house. I went there with Maria Bates, to meet Henry Glenn."

She stopped, and for a minute or more the same silence.

"Well?" said the attorney, encouragingly.

"I went at his request to receive from him some letters of mine which he refused to give me, except upon that condition."

She stopped again — still the same silence.

"Well?" again said the attorney in the same tone.

"I got the letters," she continued, "and gave him his in return."

"From whom did you receive them?" asked the attorney.

"From Henry Glenn," she answered, after a long pause.

James, who had stolen forward and taken a seat directly behind her, drew a deep breath, and went slowly back to his former position. Fanny covered her face with her hands, and the attorney waited in respectful silence.

"What happened then?" he asked, after a pause.

"He whispered to me —" she commenced.

"Who whispered to you?" he interrupted gently.

"Henry Glenn," she answered.

"Well, what did he say?"

"He told me we were watched, and enjoined silence. He then gave me the letters and took his. While he was doing so, I saw Mr. Eversham approaching and cried out. He turned, and I ran away as fast as I could, with Maria."

"Did you hear anything while you were going away?"

"I heard the report of a pistol or gun, before we had reached the road. It was in that direction, but I do not know that it was there."

"Did you see any one else near that place?"

"No one but Mr. Eversham,—and I did not know him till he spoke, just as I turned away."

"You can produce the note from Mr. Glenn making this appointment, I suppose?" said the attorney.

"No, sir; I gave it back with the others."

"Ah! yes! I had forgotten," said he. "You can take the witness, Mr. Leigh."

"I have only one question to ask," said Leigh, coolly, "and that is more for the benefit of another than of my client. It is this: You say, Miss Vincent, that you recognized Mr. Eversham by his voice; tell the jury, if you please, what he said?"

"He ordered Mr. Glenn to stop and account to him," said Fanny. "I heard voices afterwards, but was too far off to hear distinctly what they said."

Leigh mused a moment. "On reflection," he said, raising his head, "I will ask one other question. 'Will you look at this note'—handing her the note received by Eversham—" and tell me whether you think it was written by Henry Glenn?"

"It looks a little like his hand," she replied, examining it, "but *I do not think he wrote it*. It looks more like the writing of his cousin, James."

James started as if a cannon had been fired at his ear; but immediately settled back into his seat, and assumed an amused smile, as if the supposition were perfectly absurd.

"I will not press this investigation further," said Leigh, and Fanny was suffered to retire. A movement took place among the crowd, as each individual shifted his position, and the knowing ones exchanged significant glances and sapient nods. Leigh's reputation was very high, both among by-standers and lawyers; and usually any course he might take, however capricious, was at once construed to be deep policy. How much more curious then were the speculations about the course of his defence, when even the dullest among all present could see some significance in the mystery he maintained!

"He knows what he's about," said a sallow-faced fellow, with a white linen coat and slip-shod feet.

"Trust *him*," replied his neighbor, who ceased fanning a very red face with a yellow straw hat, to listen to this wise remark.

"Leigh'll fix this murder on somebody else yet," said a tall, stoop-shouldered man, with a well-shaved face, a shirt not quite so clean, and no vest at all.

"Or perhaps make it out no murder," added his interlocutor—a sickly-looking man, who carried both an umbrella and a cane.

"*Maria Bates!*" called the State's attorney; and with a subdued, half-demure and half-impudent manner, she slid forward, and took the seat recently vacated by her mistress. Her testimony did not amount to much—merely corroborating the

statements of Fanny, and repeating a little more clearly the words spoken by Eversham. Leigh gazed keenly at her, until her face was crimson with embarrassment, and then suffered her to retire without other cross-examination.

"We will rest here," said the State's attorney.

"Perhaps, then," said Leigh, "the court had better adjourn for dinner."

The judge thought this a good suggestion, and the court adjourned.

Before the hour for resuming the investigation had arrived, Fanny, her father and Maria, were in the stage-coach, riding with the usual speed of such conveyances, three miles per hour, to the nearest river town. They would not even wait to hear the result of the trial; but taking a boat on the same evening, embarked for New Orleans, *en route* for Galveston and San Antonio de Bexar.

## CHAPTER IX.

You know the law; your exposition  
Hath been most sound.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

A wise judge by the craft of the law was never seduced from its purpose.  
SOUTHEY.

How poor an instrument  
May do a noble deed.—ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.  
The justice and the truth o' the question carries  
The due o' the verdict with it.—SHAKESPEARE.

"Mr. VINCENT and his daughter have left us," said Leigh to Henry, as they resumed their places in court after a recess of an hour.

"Did you want to use them in the defence?" asked Henry.

"Oh, no!" said the lawyer, "but I had hoped the young lady would remain to discover her mistake. One of your enemies, it would seem, has discovered it, and acted accordingly."

"Who?" asked his client.

"Your Cousin James. He has absconded."

Henry made no reply, and Leigh continued:

"A warrant was issued against him, of which he must have got information in some way."

"Upon whose affidavit was it issued?" Henry asked. But Leigh was busy with his papers and did not answer. At the same moment the sheriff mumbled a proclamation to open the court "pursuant to adjournment."

"Go on, Mr. Leigh," said the judge, and the crowd settled at once into silent attention.

"Abram Glenn," called Leigh, and he appeared and was sworn.

"Mr. Glenn," said Leigh, when he had advanced from the clerk's desk, "were you present when Henry Glenn was arrested?"

"I was," Abram answered; "at least I entered the room while the officer was still there."

"Tell the jury then, if you please, how he acted and talked."

Objection was made by the State's attorney; but the court ruled that the question was allowable, in order to rebut testimony introduced for the people.

"He seemed very much bewildered," said Abram, when the point had been settled, "as if under the influence of some drug—"

"Or of wine," suggested the State's attorney.

"Yes—*drugged* wine," hinted Leigh.

"He seemed at a loss," continued Abram, "to understand his position. His eyes were very dull and glassy, and his lips were thin and ashy. A sort of drowsiness seemed almost to overcome him, insomuch that a considerable time elapsed before I could completely recall him. He talked incoherently, and said—"

"It is not allowable," said the court, interfering on the appeal of the State's attorney, "to repeat what he said: the furthest that this court can go, without violating the rule, is to permit testimony as to his manner and appearance when arrested."

"And that manner," said Leigh, "includes the *characteristics* of his speech though not his *words*?"

"Precisely, sir," said the court, and Abram continued,

"He talked incoherently at first, and it was only after a great apparent effort, that he succeeded in commanding his faculties. I cannot better describe his whole manner and appearance than by saying, as at first, that they were those of

a man very recently, and even yet, under the influence of some narcotic drug."

"Did you see then," said Leigh, "any evidence of his having taken such?"

"I did," said Abraham, and "and not being myself a chemist, I gave it in charge to Doctor Holcomb."

"You may take the witness," said Leigh.

"I do not wish to cross-examine him," said the State's attorney, and Abram gave place to *Doctor Holcomb*.

"Were you present, doctor," asked Leigh, "when Henry Glenn was arrested?"

"Not when first arrested," said the doctor, "I entered the office but a few moments before he was taken away."

"Ah!" said Leigh. "He had then recovered himself?"

"Partially, sir," the doctor replied. "There were still the appearances of which Mr. Glenn spoke, about his eyes and mouth, and there was yet some incoherence in his manner, together with an uncertain, broken tone in his voice, which I have observed in those who have taken a good deal of opium."

"Detail what took place and what you saw then," said Leigh.

"I saw nothing," said Holcomb, except a disordered room, bottles and glasses scattered about the table, a pack of cards and some silver, looking as if there had been gaming. Mr. Abraham Glenn gave me the bottles and glasses in charge to examine, and I immediately went away with them. At the same time, I believe the crowd dispersed."

"You have examined the wine and glasses?" asked Leigh.

"Yes; and found nothing unusual in any except one of the glasses. In that I found a considerable quantity of the *acetate of morphine*, dissolved in a little wine left in the bottom of the glass."

"What are the properties of that drug?"

"It is a very powerful narcotic," the doctor answered; "the addition of the acetic acid making the morphine (which is the base of the preparation) even more potent."

"How much wine, charged with that drug in an equal degree, would be required to enforce sleep against a man's will?"

"That depends very much upon the temperament, habit, and frame of mind, when taken; under ordinary circumstances, half a glass would produce sleep in spite of any effort to resist it."

"Have you any means of ascertaining how long this drug had been in that wine?"

"Approximately, sir," answered the doctor; and I have, in addition to the usual chemical knowledge on the subject, made several experiments with that view. It must have been in it about six hours—perhaps a little longer."

"How long after the drug is put in, will it be before the wine possesses powers sufficient to enforce sleep?"

"That, also, depends upon circumstances," answered the witness. "In this wine less than a minute would suffice, though it would be several hours before it could be held in perfect solution."

"One more question, and I have done: Were Henry Glenn's manner and appearance those of a man under the influence of such a narcotic?"

"Very plainly so, sir," said the doctor; "though, evidently, some hours' sleep had partially dissipated the effect."

"The doctor was, amid profound silence, indicating the most wrapt attention, delivered over to cross-examination."

"Doctor," insinuatingly commenced the State's attorney, "are not the inferences to be drawn from chemical tests uncertain and unsafe?"

"Very far from it," said the doctor, "There is no science more exact than chemistry."

"Not even mathematics," suggested the attorney.

"Not even mathematics," affirmed the witness. "The demonstrations of chemistry are as positive as those of geometry; and the evidence of a chemical test is equal to any number of credible witnesses swearing to the fact."

"You can stand aside," said the discomfited attorney.

"Your science is soon exhausted," said Leigh, with a smile.

"Call your next witness," said the judge impatiently.

"We wish to swear the clerk of this court," said Leigh; and a bustle about the bar indicated the surprise produced by the words.

"Mr. White," said Leigh, when he had been sworn by the judge, and taken his stand, "where do you live?"

"I live on the western road, sir, about half way between this place and Mr. Eversham's residence."

"Where were you just before dark on the seventeenth of June last?"

"I was at home, sir."

"Tell the jury what you saw there, which bears on this case."

"I was standing just within my front gate," the clerk said, "I suppose hidden by the branches of the trees, when Phineas

Hart passed with a large bundle on his arm. A moment afterwards another man followed, and calling Phineas, gave him a note and turned back. I caught a view of his face as he went by, and I moreover knew his voice. *It was James Glenn.*

The State's attorney started to his feet in surprise; but immediately sat down again, conscious that his emotion might tell against the prosecution. The crowd pressed forward, until the railing around the bar cracked with their weight, and the face of several short men became purple with the pressure. The deputies and constables raised a prodigious "row," and the business of the court was interrupted for full five minutes.

"Go on, Mr. White," said Leigh, "the storm is abated, I believe."

"Mr. Glenn—James Glenn, I mean"—continued the witness, "had some papers belonging to my office, upon which I wanted to issue process; but I did not think of this until he had passed. Supposing I could overtake him, I started out, but did not see him again until just as he entered his office. I knocked at the door several times before I gained admittance; when I entered he gave me the papers and I left him. The cloak he had worn was lying on a chair; I am pretty sure it was the cloak shown here in court."

"Look at this note now," said Leigh, handing him that received by Eversham, "and tell the jury of whose writing it is."

"I have examined it before," said White, "I think it is James Glenn's. It is somewhat disguised, but I am very familiar with both his hand and the prisoner's, and I am certain it is James's."

"Do you wish to cross-examine?" Leigh asked of the State's attorney.

"Yes, sir," roughly answered the latter, rising to his feet.

"You are becoming excited," said his adversary, smiling.

The attorney made no reply, but proceeded to a rigid cross-examination, during which it became evident that he considered this the turning point of the case. He plied the witness with tortuous and yet incoherent questionings for more than half an hour; but with no success. The clerk was too positive even to admit a doubt that he was mistaken; and the conflict tended only to show more conclusively the truth of the testimony. The perspiration collected in great drops upon the attorney's brow, and the witness constantly resorted to his handkerchief from the same cause. Both were as much heated and fatigued as if they had been engaged in a physical, instead of a mental struggle.

"You had better save your strength, Conlin," said Leigh at last, quietly watching the effort to invalidate White's convictions, "we have two other witnesses to prove the same facts."

"Bring them on, then," said the attorney, with the air of a man who awaited a personal attack.

White was told to stand aside, and Leigh paused to allow the impression he had made time to take form and distinctness on the minds of the jury. He called two other witnesses and slowly examined them, bringing out answers corroborating the testimony of White as to the identity of James and the writing of the note. He then quietly turned them over to the State's attorney.

The latter, however, grown wiser since his desperate struggle with the former witness, contented himself with asking one question to each—

"Were you present at Eversham's death?—or were you so near as to know positively that it was not Henry Glenn who killed him?"

To this, both witnesses returned a negative answer.

"After all, said the State's attorney, "this only proves that there were two engaged in the murder instead of only one."

"If that was so," said Leigh, "what motive had James for imitating the hand-writing of Henry?"

"That is an argument for the jury," said the State's attorney.

"It was for them that I intended it," answered Leigh coolly.

"Proceed, gentleman," said the judge sharply, "the time has not come for the argument."

Leigh now called a young man to him,—a student in his office, whose keen eye and close-shut mouth indicated the shrewdness which had made him a fit agent for seeking testimony,—and sent him out of court. So much interest attached to his motions, that throughout a somewhat protracted absence, the crowd did not shift their places, and even the judge forgot to urge the necessity for haste. The stillness of expectation reigned in the house for the space of ten minutes; when all eyes were turned towards the door, and the student was seen returning, followed by *William Bates*. As the latter was sworn, and turned away from the clerk's desk, he threw a quick glance around the room, and appeared to be disappointed when he did not find the object of his search. He did not seem to notice or care for the crowd,—was not the least agitated or embarrassed by the intense gaze directed at his motions,—seemed, indeed, not to know, young and inexperienced as he was, that he was the central point of interest to an immense concourse of men.

His eye ranged slowly over the rows of faces among the bystanders, and, without resting upon any one, turned to the bar with the same scrutiny.

"The man you are looking for is not here," said Leigh.

"Where is he?" asked Billy quickly. "Has he escaped?"

"We will know presently," said Leigh. "In the meantime take your place here and answer my questions."

"I want to know where he is; you promised me ——"

"What is this delay about?" asked the judge sternly. "Let the witness take the stand, and if he knows anything, tell it."

"All in good time, if it please your Honor, said Leigh. "Stand here, Billy," he continued to the witness, "and tell the jury what you know about the death of Mr. Eversham."

"I know nothing about it," said Billy, "except that *Henry* Glenn did not kill him, and I believe that *James* Glenn did."

"Tell only what you know!" thundered the State's attorney.

"Begin at the beginning," said Leigh, "and tell not only what you know, but also your reasons for believing as you do."

"My reasons for believing that James Glenn killed him are what I know," said Billy. "I was employed by my sister Maria to carry several notes from Miss Vincent to James Glenn; but I can read writing and I know that all those notes were intended for Henry Glenn. James opened them (I know, because I watched him), and paid me for my services, threatening me with punishment if I did not always deliver them to him. James wanted to marry Miss Vincent: I know this, because I heard him propose to her: and at the same time he persuaded my sister that it was *she*, whom he was going to marry. I know this, because I watched and overheard them, when they met. Still, I delivered the notes to James, as Maria told me to do, intending to expose him whenever I could convince her that he was deceiving her. But before I could do so, he had succeeded in separating his cousin and Miss Vincent, and in killing Mr. Eversham."

"Take up the story now," said Leigh, "on the day before the murder, and tell it a little more coherently."

"Well," resumed the boy, "about noon on that day I got a note for Henry which I took into town and gave to James as usual. He went into another room and read it, and when he came out, gave it to me again and told me to take it to his cousin who was at 'The Glen.' He directed me, at the same time, to wait long enough to allow him to reach there, and then

come after him. I did so. Henry received the note, and he and James walked away together. I followed them, and overheard James persuading Henry to force Miss Vincent to commit herself, by meeting him in the wood at night for the purpose of receiving the letters she wanted. When Henry agreed to do so, they walked back to the house, and I returned to the place where James had ordered me to wait. I had been there only a few minutes when he brought me the note making the appointment in the wood, where Miss Vincent met him, and Mr. Eversham was killed."

"Tell us now," said Leigh, when the witness paused, "as briefly as possible, what took place on the night of the murder."

Billy drew a deep breath, as if collecting himself for an effort; and the crowd leaned forward with increasing interest.

"About dusk," said the boy, "Mr. Eversham's clothes were brought by Phineas Hart, with the note here in Court. I laid them before him and left him alone. On going out, I ran with all my might to town, and entering the alley in the rear of Henry Glenn's office, placed myself where I could see what was going on in the back room. Five gentlemen were playing cards around a table. A few moments after I got so fixed as to see in, over the curtain, James Glenn got up and poured out some wine. As he did so, he drew a small paper from his pocket and shook some powder out of it into one of the glasses. This glass he left for the last, and gave it to Henry. Henry drank it in part, and they then went on with the game. I waited a long time, expecting to see some effect follow Henry's drinking; but it occurred to me that I might be wanted at home. I was about to get down, when James got up again and did the same thing, again giving the drugged wine to Henry. I then got down and ran home.

"Well," said Leigh, as he paused again, "what happened then?"

"I got home," Billy continued, "just in time to answer a summons from Mr. Eversham. He seemed very much excited, and asked me sharply who brought the note. I told him how it came there—by the same man who brought the clothes; and he then asked me if I knew where Henry Glenn's office was. I told him I did. He ordered me to go to it and watch Henry, bringing him an account of his motions. I set out without delay and ran back to the place I had left only a few minutes before. When I looked in again, the gentlemen were all gone but Henry Glenn, and he was lying on the bed, apparently sound

asleep. While I gazed in, I heard a noise in the front room, and a moment afterwards, James Glenn came in, and looked stealthily at Henry. Apparently satisfied with the scrutiny, he walked across the room and took out of a drawer a bundle of letters or papers, and put them in his pocket. He then blew out one of the candles, but, after a minute's reflection, lighted it again, and went out. I got down and ran across an open lot to the street that leads out the north-west road. Here I secreted myself, and a minute afterwards James Glenn came past me, with Henry's cloak on. I know it was James, for I saw his face distinctly as he passed very near me."

"Is this the cloak?" asked Leigh, holding it up.

"It is," answered Billy; "and," he continued, now needing no prompting, "I knew where he was going. But I went immediately back to the window I had left, to see what had become of Henry. He was lying just where James had left him, still as death. I watched him for an hour, as it appeared to me, and then getting down, went home as fast as I could. When I entered the house Mr. Eversham was dead, and several men were there waiting, as they said, for the coroner. And this is all I know about the matter."

"Quite sufficient, I think," said Leigh. "Is it not so, Mr. State's attorney?"

"Sufficient, if true," said the attorney. "Are you through?"

"Yes; go on."

A long cross-examination ensued, during which the State's attorney resorted to every art and stratagem known to skillful lawyers, to confuse the witness or make him retract some part of his testimony. It was all in vain, however. Billy had told the plain truth, and no tortuous questioning could entice or drive him from the path. The lawyer then changed his tactics, and endeavored to affect his credibility, by bringing prominently before the jury Billy's angry feeling towards James Glenn, growing out of James's seduction of his sister. But he failed in this also; as the averted faces and listless looks of the jury soon convinced him.

"I hate him very much," said Billy, "and would like to see him brought to justice. But he has committed crimes enough, without my attempting to fix upon him anything of which he is not guilty. What I have said is the plain, simple truth."

"Are you satisfied?" said Leigh, smiling quietly, as the attorney finally desisted in despair.

"Have you any more witnesses?" asked the latter, without deigning a direct reply.

"We have more," answered Leigh, "but I think these will do."

"Go on with the argument then," said the judge.

"Perhaps the prosecution have some rebutting testimony," said Leigh.

"No, sir," said the State's attorney; "and unless it is insisted upon, I do not wish to argue the case at all."

"Let the jury take it without argument then," said Leigh.

"Let an officer be sworn," said the judge.

"I think it will not be necessary, sir," said one of the jurymen, rising and addressing the court. "We have already consulted among ourselves, and are ready to give our verdict without leaving the box."

A paper was handed up in silence. The judge read it in the most imperturbable manner, made an entry in his docket, and then looked at the jury. A silence as of death reigned throughout the house, as at a sign from the sheriff the jury rose to their feet.

"You say, gentlemen," said the judge, slowly, "that the prisoner is NOT GUILTY, in manner and form as charged in the indictment. Is that your verdict?"

They bowed and took their seats. The crowd drew a deep breath together, and an irrepressible murmur filled the house. Henry's hand was clasped in that of his uncle, and followed by a large portion of the crowd, the two left the court-house.

## CHAPTER X.

I stood by the level  
Of a full-charged confederacy, and give thanks  
To you that choked it.—HENRY VIII.

I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the  
twenty to follow mine own teaching.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Farewell! I will omit no opportunity  
That may convey my greeting.—ROMEO AND JULIET.

"You see now," said Leigh, as he joined Henry and his uncle on their way to The Glen, "the propriety of my remark

that men were mistaken when they supposed it a disadvantage to us that the evidence was positive and not circumstantial?"

"I see very dimly," said Abram in reply; "though even to my obtuse legal perception it was plain that the circumstantial evidence sustained the defence."

"Not only that!" rejoined Leigh, eagerly. "It not only supported the defence, but utterly demolished the case of the prosecution—and it might have done the first without accomplishing the second. For it not unfrequently happens in our courts that two hypotheses, each supported by irrefragible testimony, and each equally true, are yet apparently contradictory, beyond all discoverable means of reconciliation. Witnesses often swear positively and honestly, nay, *truthfully*, to precisely opposite states of facts; and courts and juries are sometimes sorely puzzled how to reconcile or choose between the warring statements."

"And how *do* they choose at last?" asked Uncle Abram.

"When the key is not discovered which unlocks the difficulty," Leigh replied, "they sometimes decide it by a figurative tossing of coppers; that is, by a blind appeal to chance. When the key is discovered, it frequently reconciles the conflicting hypotheses, and manifests how the assumptions, 'it is so,' and 'it is otherwise,' are perfectly harmonious. I have known cases, have been engaged in trials, where this sort of contradiction pervaded the evidence of two score witnesses, equally divided and equally honest. And at last, after hours and even days have been consumed in tedious inquiry, it has sometimes come out accidentally—by *lapsus linguæ*, as it might be—of some witness, in the shape of a circumstance apparently immaterial—so viewed by the witness, and for that reason suppressed or forgotten. Witnesses of the sort called 'knowing' often do such things; and were it not for the science of evidence—as exact a science, by-the-by, as mathematics—much harm would ensue."

"You are a well-known advocate of the system," said Abram, "and I shall say nothing to question the justice of your convictions. But you are greatly in the minority, as you are aware."

"True," said Leigh, quickly, "and I am sorry for it—not, however, because I would not maintain my opinion against a congress of wiseacres, who might reject the course of nature and the known order of events, and pin their faith to the oaths of ignorance, mistake, presumption, and perjury! I regret it, because many a villain goes unwhipt of justice on account of

a maudlin tenderness men have about circumstantial evidence, or what they deem such, and because many an innocent man suffers unmerited penalties from this blind confidence in positive swearing.

"Strictly speaking," he continued, observing that neither of his companions was inclined to controvert the point, "both kinds of testimony are necessary to the existence of either—the circumstances must be related by a witness under oath, who must depose positively, and there must be some circumstance or fact—for the words are synonymous—to support the oath. But circumstantial evidence, properly so called, is a conclusion, inferred from one or more facts, consistent with each other, and with *this* conclusion *alone*. It can be aptly illustrated thus: Take a block of wood of a given form, and saw it through and through in as many directions as you please, making of it many pieces of various shapes and sizes. Throw them disordered in a pile, and then attempt to rearrange them. Get them all back into form and fitness, *except one*. If, then, you find a space which this one piece exactly fits, and which no other piece will fit; if, moreover, this block will fit no other place, and any transposition would derange the whole, I think your inference would be irresistible, that *this* block came out of *this* place, and that the form which you have given the whole is that originally possessed by the detached pieces. Now, in the application, this last block is the final fact proven; and so perfect, so consistent with the order of things is the system of circumstantial evidence, that a precisely parallel case very frequently occurs. Fact after fact is established and laid against others without as yet being shown to connect itself with any; the whole series is finally formed, and when you come to the last remaining fact, and discover that the form you have given the assembled circumstances is the only form in which they will consist together—that the last is like all the others, exactly fitted to its place, and not fitted for any other place—your conviction will be as firm, that this is the only proper form, as if it had been sworn to by a hundred unprejudiced men. It will be more so; for if the hundred unprejudiced men came to you and swore that the separate blocks were properly placed in some other order, you might suspend your judgment, but you would ask for the demonstration; and failing that, you would recur to your own previous inference. The witnesses might be mistaken, or they might be deceiving you for their own purposes; but the course of nature, the fixed and known order of events, can have no such purposes, and cannot be mistaken.

"A man may accuse you of murder, and swear that he saw you commit the deed; but if you can prove that you are physically incapable of committing it in the manner which he describes; that he could not have seen you from his alleged position, or because he was in another place; or that the murdered man was seen alive and well after the time stated, you at once convince every reasonable man that you are innocent, and that the accuser is either malicious or mistaken. Yet this evidence is circumstantial—that is, it is not immediate but inferential, is based upon other facts whose operation and effect are known.

"Thus, in the case which has just been so happily terminated, it was positively sworn by several witnesses that you, Henry, were the person who had the interview with Miss Vincent, and Eversham's dying declaration was distinctly that you were the man who gave him the wound of which he died. Now, this was what any one would call positive testimony. We showed by the statements of the boy, Bates, not that it was not you, precisely, for he was not present to see the man who committed the crime, but that you were in your own office asleep at the time when the affray took place. Here comes in the order of nature; it is an acknowledged fact that a man cannot be in two places at once; consequently you were not in the wood north of Eversham's house, and incontrovertibly, therefore, (though inferentially or circumstantially) you did not commit the murder. Again, the man who *did* commit the murder wore a certain cloak, as was proven by the prosecution. Now, we established the fact that James wore that cloak, circumstantially, therefore, James committed the crime—a perfect syllogism! And once more, we prove that a certain quantity of the *acetate of morphine* will produce certain results if taken into the stomach; we prove that its effects would incapacitate a man to commit this act; we prove that you took that quantity at that time; circumstantially, therefore, it is proven that you were incapacitated for the commission of the crime—a double syllogism! And once again: we prove that a certain form and character of wound can be received only when the muscles around it are in a certain relative position; we establish the fact that this wound is such an injury, consequently Eversham must have been in this attitude when shot. That attitude indicates a personal struggle; inferentially, therefore, his declaration that there was no quarrel, that the deed was done in cold blood, is not true! In short, throughout the investigation, the circumstantial has

overcome and demolished the positive evidence; and it is to the strength of the former, alone, that you owe your freedom."

"Well," said Uncle Abram, when the flow of Leigh's logic came to a sort of pause, "you will have no trouble in convincing Henry and me, whatever you might have done with the jury. But here is your 'Bachelor's Hall,' will you not accompany us to 'The Glen,' and spend the evening there?"

"I fear you must excuse me for this evening," replied Leigh, "I have some knotty cases for to-morrow, and must make my preparations to-night."

"I shall not see you again, then," said Henry, speaking for the first time since they had left the court-house. "I shall start on a tour of some length to-morrow, and do not know when I shall return. But," taking Leigh's extended hand, "I shall not soon forget the zeal and ability you have shown in my behalf, and I hope——"

"Pooh! nonsense!" interrupted Leigh. "I knew you were innocent from the first moment in which I examined the evidence; and at all events, the discharge of plain duty deserves nothing in the shape of praise or gratitude. I am only sorry that in your defence I was compelled to disgrace your cousin.

"Let us not speak of him," said Abram. "The faults of the parents are transmitted to the offspring; and in his case, it is too easy to refer all this misery to the traits inherited from his wilful and selfish mother."

"Ill-governed passions and constitutional selfishness make much work for the courts," said Leigh; and with this remark they parted—Leigh entering the door of his bachelor establishment, and Abram and Henry pursuing their way to "The Glen."

"Your letters and bills I will prepare to-night," said Abram. "Have you decided upon the direction of your journey?"

"I think I will go first to New Orleans," Henry answered, and thence into Texas."

"But the Vincents," suggested Abram, looking doubtfully at him.

"Never fear," said Henry quickly, "I hope these occurrences have not totally destroyed my manliness——"

"I do not fear that!" interrupted his uncle. "But you may meet them in that country—and I, of all men, know the temptation and misery of such a meeting, even when you are best fortified by just resentment."

"There will be no risk of my meeting them, I think," said

Henry, "and if I should, the pain of the meeting will only confirm me."

"There is one point in the late trial," said Abram, after walking some distance in silence, "of which I believe you have not thought: William Bates' testimony makes it probable that James widened the breach between you and Fanny by altering her letters. Now, may it not be that the whole difficulty was a misunderstanding?"

"That could not justify her engagement to Eversham," said Henry.

"No; but it may explain it," urged the uncle.

"An explanation can be of little avail now," Henry answered. "I already judge her as favorably as may be; perhaps, for her credit it were better that I receive no further light on the subject."

"Proper resentment is by no means to be foregone," said his uncle, "but we should be first quite sure that our judgment is not too severe."

"Severity is usually but another name for truth," said Henry; "and no presumption in favor of open treachery should ever be admitted."

"True," said Abram, and he became silent. Severe judgment was too congenial to his nature, to allow of his combating it with much zeal. And though he had several times thought that a full explanation might clear up all that was dark in this affair, he was yet inclined both by nature and the circumstances, to agree with Henry in a harsh construction of Fanny's motives. He, therefore, pressed him no further on the subject, and soon afterwards they entered the gate of "The Glen."

"Have any measures been taken to arrest James?" asked Henry, when they were seated in the library.

"No," answered Abram. "It was found useless: he had relays of horses ready between here and the river; as a precaution, I suppose, against discovery. Leigh's clerk had let fall some hints which alarmed him, and the course of the defence decided him upon flight."

"He must have reached the river then in time to intercept the morning packet," said Henry.

"Yes, and is by this time beyond pursuit. You may meet him in Texas, too; but I know I need not warn you against any intercourse with him."

"He has as many reasons for avoiding me," said Henry, "as

I have to shun him. But is not his mother somewhere in Texas?"

"I have heard so," said Abram. "Shelton, the man she married, was an officer in the Republican army, but what has become of him since I do not know."

"Who was he, and what was his history?" asked Henry. "It seems to me I have heard he was a relative of Mortimer Eversham. Was it so?"

"His first wife," said Abram, "was Eversham's sister. She died a few months before his union with James' mother. He inherited considerable wealth, but it was all dissipated before his first marriage. The property he received by his wife he sold and wasted in the same way, so that when he married your uncle's widow, he was reduced to very discreditable shifts for a support. James was then not five years old, and Shelton was unwilling to be burthened with him. He had, besides, a daughter by his first wife, only twelve months old at the time of his marriage, and that child he at once took from its nurse, and with it left the country. Since that, as I said, we have heard but little of him; though I believe he is still living in Texas."

"That child, then," said Henry, "is Eversham's only heir."

"If living," said Abram; "but I have never heard whether it lived or died. Indeed, the probability is that it is long since dead."

"Leigh has administered, I believe," said Henry.

"Yes; he was the only creditor to any considerable amount, and took out his letters at the request of the others. He has advertised for Shelton and his heirs for some time, but as yet to no purpose."

He was interrupted by the opening of the door.

"A boy—Mr. Eversham's boy, Billy Bates—wants to see Mr. Henry," said a servant, looking in.

"Send him here," said Henry; and a few moments afterwards Billy entered, looking round him in the most self-possessed manner, and then advancing towards Henry with a step perfectly assured. In spite, however, of his wonted bearing, the two gentlemen could not but see that he was altered. The look of freedom had settled into one of determination, and the mischievous cunning of his eyes had now a steady purpose. He advanced without hesitation towards Henry, and not waiting to be addressed, asked, in a free, open voice, whether he was rightly informed that Henry was about to go towards the South?

"Yes, my boy," said Henry, kindly, "I shall start early to-morrow morning. In what can I serve you there?"

"In nothing," said Billy, "either there or here, except in allowing me to go with you."

"To go with me!" exclaimed Henry, in surprise. "Why, what do you want to go with me for?"

"I want to go South," said Billy, briefly.

"And why do you wish to go with me?" asked Henry.

"Because I have never travelled," said the boy, "and I may not be able to get on alone."

"In what capacity do you propose to go, my boy?" asked Uncle Abram, interrupting him.

"In any at all," said Billy, "so I get to go. I have an object in going and the means are not material."

"Your principles are not likely to be in your way, at all events," said Abram. But the boy turned his face to Henry, inquiringly, without making any reply. Henry bent his eyes to the floor in thought.

"You may, perhaps, be of service to me," said he, raising his head, after a pause of some moments. "But it will not last longer than our journey to New Orleans. And if I should leave you adrift there you might come to some harm."

"Never fear," said Billy, "I can make my way if you will take me there."

"What can you do?" asked Henry.

"Anything at all," said the boy. "Take care of baggage, hire horses, pay stage fare, black boots, carry letters—anything at all, so you only take me along."

"And what is your object in going?" asked Abram.

"That I do not choose to tell," said he, calmly.

"Suppose I take you," said Henry, "have you no bargain to make about wages?"

"None, sir," said the boy. "I will leave that to you."

"In the positive certainty," said Abram, "that he will get more from your generosity than he would have the conscience to ask."

"I have sixty dollars laid up," said Billy, exhibiting a purse, which he seemed to think was bottomless, "and for the present I care nothing about wages."

"Very well," said Henry. "You shall go with me. But, mind, our connection continues only so long as you please me; and, at the longest, only to New Orleans."

"Unless," said Billy, quietly, "I can give you good reasons for continuing it longer."

"If you do that," said Henry, smiling faintly, "of course it will extend beyond New Orleans."

"If I choose," said Billy.

"Very well," Henry rejoined, amused at the boy's independence, "you had better be making your preparations, for I shall set out early to-morrow morning."

"I am quite ready," the boy replied, "and will be with you by day-break."

With this he turned away and left the room.

About sunrise on the morrow a horn was heard, mellow in the morning stillness, sounding from the gate. It had been preceded by a tremendous rattling of wheels and chains down the hill, and a very sudden halt, accompanied by all the usual sounds of a stage-coach making an early start. Henry's baggage was already at the gate in charge of Billy Bates, and with his assistance it was shipped without delay. Soon afterwards, Henry himself was visible in company with Uncle Abram, walking—much to the discontent of the copper-nosed driver—very slowly down the path.

They reached the gate in good time, though not much hastened by the objurgation of the self-important functionary. Then they pressed each other's hands in silence. Henry sprang into the coach—"Take care of yourself, my boy," said Abram, and away dashed the horses, apparently determined to recover lost time. One or two hundred yards, however, reduced them to a more sober pace, and in ten minutes they were jogging along as quietly as hearts could wish.

END OF BOOK SECOND.

## BOOK THIRD.

### CHAPTER I.

"I do love these ancient ruins;  
We never tread upon them, but we set  
Our foot upon some reverend history."—DUCHESS OF MALBY.

"The sun begins to gild the western sky."—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

"I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,  
A stage, where every man must play a part."—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

IN the eastern part of the ancient city of San Antonio de Bexar, in Western Texas, stand the ruins of an old fortress, known in Texan story as the Alamo. It was originally a religious house, built by the Jesuit missionaries about one hundred years ago; but, in the chequered life led by those adventurous men, it was probably often a place of security against the treachery of the aborigines. The immense ruins, occupying a space more than five hundred feet square, attest the nobility of the structure; and the thickness of the walls yet standing, in spite of the action of wind and storm, and in defiance of the destructive hand of man, manifests the wealth and labor expended in its erection. The beauty of the workmanship, the elaborate plan, the remains of costly decoration, and the scientific disposition of its defences, all remind us of the taste and magnificence of a race that has passed away. The main courtyard, originally surrounded on the inside by the stables and offices of the establishment, has a front of more than five hundred feet extending along the left bank of the river San Antonio; on the south side was the great gateway, on the north an unbroken wall, two hundred and thirty feet long, and apparently of great height, and on the east stand the cloisters, a heavy oblong building, three hundred by thirty feet, and two stories high. In the rear of this are two smaller courtyards,

surrounded in like manner, and probably once the private gardens of the monks. Through the width of the more southern of these, and in the rear of the cloisters, runs a massive corridor, still entire; and through this lay the private passage of the priests from the cloisters to the church. This last was built in an angle made by the several courtyards, outside of the walls, probably for the purpose of assembling their parishioners for worship, without the risk which would have attended their admission within the walls.

"It was a massive building of stone, one hundred and twenty by fifty feet, built in the form of a cross, and surmounted by a heavy dome. The north-west angle, which formed a part of the southern wall of the gardens, is filled up, between the transept and the lower end of the nave, by several small rooms used for religious purposes, and through these ran the private passage mentioned above. The whole building was entire until after the battle of San Jacinto, when it was blown up by General Filisola, in impotent anger, on being ordered by Santa Anna to evacuate the country. Considerations of policy may, perhaps, have assisted his Vandal spirit; for, but a short time before, a small band of desperate men had thrown themselves into the church and defended it with a fury which cost the lives of many hundred Mexicans. In this band were Travis, Milam, Bowie, and Crockett, with others of reckless spirit, broken fortunes, and desperate courage; and many are the stories, fast becoming mere traditions, told in San Antonio, of the seven days' slaughter of that terrible flight—of the acts of individual prowess and the fearful deaths of these remarkable men.

Milam fell (according to these traditions,) in the city, whither he had ventured in disguise upon some mission of gallantry; and the window is still shown where he stood when the bullet of the assassin reached his heart. Crockett stood alone at the low door which opens into the gardens, (through which the Mexicans gained admittance,) and with pistol and knife fought hand to hand in the darkened vault, until he fell pierced by an hundred wounds. He died so obscurely, and the faith in his prowess was so firm, that for years it was believed he had not fallen. And many were the wild stories floating throughout the West of his miserable fate among the mountains of Mexico, where, it was believed, he was toiling in the silver mines for the enemies whom he had so gloriously fought. But these legends were only the fond imaginings of a people who had been attached to his bold, free spirit while living—the struggles

of memory against oblivion! Bowie was the last of the devoted band; wounded, unable to rise, he lay with his pistols and his knife—that terrible weapon to which his own name is given—in an upper room in the north-west angle of the church. He and Crockett were the last survivors of the besieged; and before the latter went below to sell his life so dearly, he placed these arms beside his friend, and embracing him bade him farewell. Here, wounded, weakened, and alone, he waited the approach of those from whom he could receive no mercy. An hour passed away; while directly beneath him he could hear the din of battle, when Crockett did to death each man of hardihood enough to thrust himself through the narrow opening. It was a deadly struggle—five thousand men against one single man! At last the masonry was torn away, the crowd rushed in, Crockett was trampled and mangled, and the soldiers searched the building for those who had so long defended it. They were all dead but one! And that one lay alone, wounded, but resolute to sell the little remnant of his life as dearly as his friend had done. They rushed into the small dark room where he lay; the foremost were shot down with an aim unerring; they recoiled, but again rushed forward; Bowie's pistols were empty, but he held his knife with a grasp nerved by desperation and approaching death. Seven of his assailants lay dead upon the floor before their eyes were sufficiently accustomed to the darkened light, to see by whom they were met. They fell back in alarm; but no further sound was heard; they cautiously advanced, and found a single man, *dead*; but no new wound had been given him; the violence of his own efforts had ended his life.

Such are the traditions told of these men—lawless and desperate in life, terrible even in death—and of this character are most of the stories which compose the history of the city of San Antonio.

It is a beautiful place: still, quiet, dreamy; peopled by an indolent, pleasure-loving race; full of hazy memories, its history a romance, its existence almost a dream! In the heart of as lovely a country as the sunlight gilds, on the banks of the sweetest river in the south-west, afar from the din of the busy world, with a climate balmier than that of Italy; ancient ruins, famous in song and story; waving prairies, where the Indian lives in freedom; deep forests, whose enchanted silence is broken only by the rushing of clear streams; tradition, romance, poetry, religion, barbarism, self-exile, civilization and decay, love, peace, hatred, war: such are the elements of its existence.

It is an old Spanish city; and with the phrase how many peaceful fancies, dim and shadowy as an autumn evening, rise upon the mind,—imagination which, in England, are evoked by the mention of those pleasant, dreamy places, known as "little cathedral cities." When founded, or by whom, it is impossible, even at this distance of time, to ascertain with any certainty. It was a place of some importance seventy years ago—at least as far back as 1784—probably of more importance then than now. For by an inscription upon some old bells at the Mission of San José, six miles below the town, we learn that they were cast here in that year. Their weight, and the words of the inscription alike preclude the supposition that they were transported hither after having been cast elsewhere. At this day no such thing as a foundry, or indeed a manufactory of other description, is to be found in the city. In one place, near the river bank, a large pile of what appears to be iron cinders and small pieces of broken castings, seems to attest that something of the kind once existed there; but the building, if there ever was such, has long since disappeared. The numerous large churches in its vicinity indicate that the population was once very considerable in places where now, excepting an occasional lonely pile of stones, or winding aqueduct—a noble monument of industry and science—no vestige of human habitation can be found. The population has vanished; and the numerous sieges and sackings which the city has undergone, by the various parties at war at different periods, and the spirit of Vandalism which has characterised them all, have obliterated every means of ascertaining even the commonest facts in relation to the history of the country. The public records have all been destroyed or carried away. A few of them still remain in the Palacio or Hall of Justice in the city of Mopclova in Coahuila, where the writer saw them in December, 1846; but they are in so torn and fragmentary a condition, that scarcely any fact can be gleaned from them without infinite research and complete acquaintance with the history from other sources. Private manuscripts have been burnt or destroyed, as were many by the garrison of the Alamo in 1836, when they wadded their guns with parchments and built watch-fires with valuable books; libraries, scanty as they were, but even more precious on that account, have been consumed or suffered to moulder away,—as was that of the Mission of San José, where neglect and ignorance, and rain and wind have made large numbers of books totally illegible: while in the same room—striking monument of piety and ignorance!—a waxen image of the Virgin, dressed

in tawdry silks has been preserved with watchful devotion for fifty years! Inscriptions have been defaced, apparently for no other purpose than destruction of the carving around them; in short, every means of knowledge, except the dim recollections of old, doting, and in most cases, ignorant and stupid men and women, has been utterly destroyed.

Most of this barbarism is attributable to the Mexican armies in their many marauding expeditions, undertaken professedly to reconquer a rebellious province, but really to plunder and destroy. The most of the enormities were perpetrated by the motley hordes brought over the Rio Grande by Santa Anna in 1836, when that general became a prisoner at San Jacinto, and in order to save his life stipulated with Houston to evacuate the country and recognize its independence. This agreement was not fulfilled to the letter, as probably Houston did not expect it to be; nor did any law of nations, or of good morals, require that it should be. It was a promise extorted under *duress*; when, so far as Santa Anna knew, this was the only escape from death. Sacrificing his life, however, under the circumstances, even if he had refused to comply with the conditions, would have been a disgrace to the Texans, which no lapse of time could have wiped out. Santa Anna's lieutenant, who commanded in San Antonio, obeyed his order to retire beyond the Rio Grande—a movement on his part which ought to have cashiered him, knowing as he must have known, or whether he knew or not, that an order from a prisoner could not bind him. But he evacuated the place, doing before he went all the injury he was able to do in the city, and especially ruining the old fortress-church known as the Alamo. This was the last time that a Mexican force ever entered the city, excepting the expedition of General Woll in September, 1842. The Texans had received information that a force was being collected in or about Presidio del Rio Grande, for the purpose of invading their country; and with characteristic promptness they despatched several of their best and most reliable scouts to reconnoitre, giving them orders to return with a full report. The scouts were gone two or three weeks, and returned with the report that there was no force in process of organization, and no appearance of any intention to invade the country. The Texans had, however, hardly begun to felicitate themselves upon their safety, when the alarm was given that Woll's column was entering the suburbs of the city, and that his advance guard had already taken up a position on the opposite side of the river! So sudden and complete was the surprise, that the District Court then

in session had not time to adjourn, but were all taken prisoners, including judge, jury, lawyers, clerks and clients! Woll had collected his force in the face of the *reconnaissance*, crossed thence into Texas, and opening an entirely new road one hundred and eighty miles in length, entered the city simultaneously with the spies sent to watch him! And having secured his plunder and his prisoners, he made a rapid and successful retreat across the border!

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The sun was declining towards the horizon on a pleasant evening late in September; the stately ruins of the Alamo were bathed in the mellow light of that glorious season; when a young man, mounted upon a horse of great power and beauty, rode slowly out from among the low trees above the ruin, and carefully picked his way across the wet ground on the east of the church. He was closely followed by a boy of about seventeen years, whom the reader would straightway have recognized as his acquaintance Billy Bates. The year which had elapsed since he had set out on his travels had produced in his appearance even more than the usual amount of change which that period brings to one of his age; but the quick-glancing eye and expressive mouth were still the same. The texture of his clothes, and a certain jauntiness with which they were worn, indicated that the change was only development; and though both the expression of his features and the staidness of his bearing manifested more earnestness than formerly distinguished him, both seemed to be merely another stage in the same progress. In his companion the change was more perceptible; but with him also it was but the deepening of lines already drawn. His eye was not so bright as formerly, but it was steadier; and the expression of his mouth, though not so pleasant, was firmer. His bearing was that of a man well acquainted with the world, assured of his own position, and having therefore no inclination to attack the position of others. His complexion was somewhat embrowned by exposure to the sun, and his whiskers and moustache, though black, were reddened by the same cause.

As he crossed the last of the clear little currents, he turned his horse to the right, and looking up at the crumbling walls, rode slowly round them, and stopped in front of the broken church. While gazing at the desolate pile, and endeavoring to decipher the inscription above the entrance, he became aware of the presence of other persons in the building, and leaned forward to look in. A tall, finely-formed man was standing in

the nave of the church, looking up at a young girl who stood upon a pile of rubbish several feet above him. He was dressed plainly, but neatly, and though quite middle aged, evidently paid close attention to his personal appearance. He was tall, as we have said, being quite six feet high, and the graceful outline of his form was in perfect keeping. A clear though brown complexion, dark flashing eye, aquiline nose, rather thin lips, and a high though narrow forehead, were the principal features of his countenance. A certain recklessness might now and then be observed in its expression; and at all times, sudden outbreaks of a fiery temper would not have been inconsistent with its characteristics. Excepting these things, his whole appearance and bearing were those of a highly educated and accomplished gentleman. His daughter—for such was the lady who stood above him—was a feminine counterpart—tall, elegantly shaped, with one of those faces to which, by common consent, men apply the epithet *fine*. There was more fire than tenderness in her eye, more command than affection in the mouth. Her complexion was a pale olive, with the faintest tinge of red in the cheeks; her nose was high, though not so aquiline as her father's, and her forehead almost too high for perfect beauty. Her dark hair, now uncovered, was braided and carried back in heavy plaits beneath her ears, and fastened with a silver comb; and as the yellow sunlight, shining through the wide door, bathed in its liquid flood, a thousand flashing rays of gold reflected from its glossy folds, and changed with every motion of her head. Around her neck she wore a massive chain of gold, and on her finger flashed a single jewelled ring, the only sign of vanity about her. For well she knew the matchless hand itself could need no ornament. A loose plain dress of the purest white, confined at the neck and waist by silken cords drawn through a hem, hung in rich and graceful folds about the sweeping outlines of her figure; and a low, crimson velvet slipper, with golden clasps, served only to keep her small, exquisitely formed feet from the ground. She wore no stockings; and from the place where Henry Glenn was sitting he could see the blue veins trace themselves beneath the polished surface of the faintly-tinted skin. She had in her hand a light *reboso* or mantilla of changeable silk, and in the other a slender fishing-rod, which, resting near her father's feet, partially supported her.

As Henry rode up to the door, both turned suddenly towards him, and the gentleman advanced to answer his inquiries. As he approached, Henry observed that he was armed in the fash-

ion of all men of that country: the handle of a revolving pistol displayed itself in his belt, and on the other side it was balanced by a knife whose hilt was equally open to observation. The lady was also armed, though not so formidably; the red morocco scabbard of a light two-edged dagger was supported by the chain before mentioned, and thrust beneath a silken cord around her waist; and the jewelled hilt was visible, convenient to the grasp. Notwithstanding his formidable appearance, however, the man advanced courteously to the door, and politely asked Henry to repeat his question.

"Can you direct me to the best place of entertainment in the city?" Henry repeated.

"I can do little else here," said the other, eyeing him narrowly, "than tell you the name of the hostess. But if you will alight and remain with us for a few minutes, we shall be returning, and can guide you to the house."

"I will employ the time, then," said Henry, springing to the ground and handing the reins to Billy, "in looking over these ruins. They are those of the Alamo, are they not?"

"Yes," answered the other, and, turning to his daughter, "Mag," said he, "you can keep a look out over the wall, while I walk round the ruins with this gentleman." The young woman made no reply, but walked further up the pile of rubbish, and taking her stand on its highest point, near the top of the wall, directed her gaze along the Seguin road, towards the east. Henry gazed at her with some interest, until recalled by the voice of his *cicerone*; when he followed him out of the church through a low door, which led into an oblong room with one small window. She who was addressed as Mag, gazed after him as he turned away with an eager and yet abstracted look of great interest.

"How very like!" she exclaimed in a low tone, as he disappeared. And for several minutes she gave but little heed to the object of her outlook,—gazing absently into the waters beneath her, and sighing, as if unconscious of all the world, except the images of her fancy.

"We are waiting for a messenger with letters," said Henry's companion, in explanation, as he stopped and looked round the little room in which they stood.

"Somewhere near this spot, according to the tradition," he continued, "Colonel Crockett fell, fighting alone against hopeless odds. His companions were nearly all killed above; and with them died as much courage as ever fell to the lot of an equal number of men."

"Their courage partook largely of recklessness, I think," said Henry.

"That is true of all the men engaged in the Texan revolution," said the other, "from Sam Houston down. They were for the most part men of broken fortunes,—many of them had 'left their country for their country's good' and their own safety; and I fear but few of them entered that contest with any very burning love for liberty, except such as grew out of a lawless impatience of restraint, or any very high appreciation of the glory of their cause."

"The cause ennobled their efforts, at all events," said Henry, "whatever were their motives."

"True," said the other, leaning pensively upon a window sill; "they paid dearly for their temerity, and if the noblest daring can atone for error, they should be forgiven. The world is just, after all; and though dead and gone, they are yet alive in the memories of all men forever. Massacred in cold blood, shot like so many dogs, by sections and platoons, they almost all exhibited in the hour of death, a fortitude nobler than mere dogged recklessness, a stern philosophy higher than that of vulgar despair."

"It was a noble struggle," he continued, after a pause, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, "and to him who can see its significance, a pregnant passage in the history of the world. It was but the prolongation of a contest commenced many hundreds of years ago. Two races of men, at war even before the time of Philip's Armada, upon this continent always at war, met in the wilds of the western world, years after the cessation of all hostility on the other side of the ocean; to enact the sequel to a drama long since closed. Upon the one side, whatever may have been the motive of the champions, were arrayed progress and emancipation and enlightenment, and to the fortunes of the other clung establishments and forms and fetters; and it thus became an epitome of the grand struggle between liberty and slavery—a struggle which has been going on, with more or less violence, almost since the dawn of creation,—which is going on now, and which will continue, until every vestige of despotism shall be swept from the face of the earth."

"You think, then," said Henry, surprised to meet so much thoughtfulness and enthusiasm in a place like that, "that the motives of men are of no consequence, if only their efforts tend, however unintentionally, to good results?"

"It is ordained," continued his companion, not so much in reply, as in continuation of what he had been saying, "that

darkness shall give place to light, barbarism to civilization, despotism to freedom. The champions of liberty never have failed and never will fail. A temporary defeat to them is no failure,—nay, we know (if we would but remember it) that God's providence does not allow their failure. What seems a defeat may be, *must* be, a long stride forward, eventually a great victory. The Ruler of the world advances the great cause in His own way and in his own time. From the moment when He spoke the words, "Let there be light," the rays have been penetrating into darkness; and whatever may be men's motives, if they open the way for it, they are true soldiers of the light. No man, who does not doubt the guiding hand, when he views the course of human events, can question the justice of any conflict, which promises to dissipate the cloud, to spread the benefits of civilization, or to extend the limits of free institutions. It is not only not wrong, but it is a *duty* which every nation, holding the torch of Christianity and civilization, *must* fulfill, to diffuse its light, to bear it aloft, and let its rays shine over all the earth."

"You seem to be surprised," he added, observing Henry looking at him in some wonder, "that a man whom you meet in such a place as this should express such sentiments. But I have an enthusiasm on this subject—unfortunately the only subject upon which I can be said to be warm—and I believe with Byron,

'That freedom's battle, oft begun,  
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,  
Though baffled oft, is ever won.'

I cannot claim any great merit for it, however, for when I entered the armies of Texas, I was as little imbued with the true spirit of freedom, as any man in the world. But let us go through this door.

They passed out accordingly, and after spending some minutes in looking at the ruins, crossed the main court-yard and seated themselves upon a stone bench at the foot of an old elm. It was overgrown by moss and ivy, and had probably been placed there by the monks, for rest and meditation.

"It is a strange sensation, which one experiences in walking over ruins," said he who had hitherto borne the burden of the conversation, "melancholy yet soothing, mournful but pleasant. In the words of the poet I quoted awhile ago,

'There is given  
Unto the things of earth which time hath bent,  
A spirit's feeling; and when he hath lent

His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power  
And magic in the ruined battlement.

Doubtless it is attributable to the subdued tone of the spirit in such scenes; but I have often thought that nature is more quiet, that the sounds are softer, the winds lower, even the sunlight mellow, about a ruin, than in any other place. Certain it is that the associations are more suggestive and thoughtful; that our minds are attuned to melancholy, by the sight of decay, and that even inanimate objects assume a sort of dreamy existence to our minds, as if they were conscious of the influence of memory and association. I could lie here and dream for a day, and listen to the wind among the boughs, and shape in words the legends whispered among the rustling leaves. But," he added suddenly rising and casting aside all his thoughtfulness, "I must return to the church, and we will then go over to Mrs. Burnham's. By the bye, are you a married man?"

"No," Henry answered smiling; "why do you ask?"

"Because," said the other, "our hostess is on the look out for a fresh young husband; and if you have no fancy for a rather ancient widow, you must keep your guard. Never having tried it, she believes that matrimony is a state much to be coveted, and will go any length to be initiated."

"I thought you called her a widow," said Henry.

"So I did," said the other, "and so she is—by courtesy. She has a daughter whom she compels to call her "aunt," and yet for fear some one may suspect the relationship, she graciously and sometimes tearfully acknowledges, that she has once been led to the altar by 'a beloved husband, now in Heaven.' Like all women of her class, she acknowledges a misfortune, to avoid the suspicion of a fault. She treats the world as the timid schoolboy treats the tyrant of the playground—hastening to give him part of his apple to prevent his claiming all."

"If I may judge from what you say," said Henry, "her stratagem has not been successful."

"Not altogether," the other replied. "But whatever her character may be, she keeps a good house, and makes it the interest of every gentleman who chances to drift upon the frontier to stop with her. Here we are," he added, as they turned the corner of the large ruin and came in sight of the church door, where Billy Bates, having moved a little aside, was still holding the horses. "I see our messenger has arrived."

He pointed as he spoke to another horse tied within the

nave; and as they advanced Henry could see the figure of a man standing with the lady on the pile of rubbish where he had left her. He thought the form familiar to him; but before he had time to make much observation, his companion stepped within the door, and after speaking a few words to his daughter, returned and asked Henry to walk with him in search of Mrs. Burnham's hotel. They passed out upon a little triangular *plaza*, and took their way down the river towards a dilapidated trestle bridge, which spans the river beneath a double row of stately elms.

"Do you expect to stay long among us?" asked Henry's companion.

"That depends upon the sources of amusement and the flow of my humor," he replied, "and as the latter is somewhat dependent upon the former, probably you can guess as nearly as I can myself."

"The sources of amusement here," said the other, "are not very numerous, though sufficiently exciting; being chiefly fighting Indians, visiting fandangoes, and playing *monte*. If you are disposed to indulge in the last, the house just opposite us is constantly thronged with votaries. But if you will take the advice of an old stager, you will bend the knee to the fickle goddess, in her San Antonio temples, as seldom as may be."

The house to which he pointed was a low stone building covering considerable space, and surrounded on three sides by gardens which extended to the water's edge. They were inclosed, and separated from similar grounds, by a high stone wall, over which were hanging the luxuriant foliage of numerous acacias. The walks, which had once been gravelled, were overgrown by weeds and grass, and along their edges were thickets of young saplings, interwoven with vines and tall weeds—presenting an unpleasant contrast to the neat and trim appearance of the neighboring grounds. The house itself seemed neglected, and a broken shutter hanging upon one hinge, indicated the progress of decay; while the deep, green moss, enveloping the broken corner, told of the repentant efforts of time to cover up his own ravages.

"I know but little about gaming," said Henry, after scanning the building and grounds, "but I am here to make the most of all the resources for amusement that I can command."

"You have no objection to being a spectator, then, if I understand you," said the other, eyeing him as he had done throughout the conversation, "or even a moderate participator."

"None," said Henry, carelessly, "provided it afford amusement; and that I doubt not I shall find in its novelty."

"While it lasts, doubtless," said his companion, "though that will probably not be long. Nothing overcomes novelty faster than losing money; but fortunately for those who live by the weakness of others, infatuation soon replaces it."

"I have nothing to apprehend on that score," said Henry.

"Well," said the elder, "if you wish it, I will be your *cicerone* among the moral, as I have just been among the physical, ruins; and if you find not quite as much food for reflection there, as on the broken stones of the Alamo, you are no philosopher. The conquests of time are rapid enough, even in the calmest pursuits; but gamblers spur their steeds with bloody rowels, and gallop through their lives, as if their best enjoyment were to waste them. Do you know what Sheridan—no bad judge, by the bye—says of female gamblers?"

'A night of fretful passion may consume  
All that thou hast of beauty's gentle bloom;  
And one distempered hour of sordid fear,  
Print on thy brow the wrinkles of a year.'

Gamblers soon lose their enjoyment of all other things, and having exhausted variety, spend their life in turning

'The old sands in the failing glass of time.'

"You never indulge in such amusements, then?" said Henry.

"O! yes I do, often!" replied his companion. "We have no other resource here—unless, indeed, we trade horses or cut each other's throats—amusements about equally respectable."

"And," said Henry, "I suppose equally common."

"Common enough, certainly. But where there are so many whose throats are only fit for cutting, it is not often much lamented, and still more seldom punished. There are, however, some respectable people here—though what induces them to come, God knows! For example, in that neat house, next to the Monte rendezvous, lives a man of considerable age, who only arrived, bringing a daughter scarcely eighteen, some two or three weeks ago. Having lived to a good age in some law-abiding community, he has come to spend his declining years among the wildest people in the West."

"I know what you are thinking," he added, observing Henry looking inquiringly at him. "You think it strange that a re-

spectable man like me should live among such people. But here we are at Mother Burnham's—you must, however, avoid calling her so to her face. Call me *Shelton*—what shall I name you?"

"Glenn," said Henry.

"Humph!" muttered Shelton as he led the way around the corner. "I thought I had seen some face like it."

## CHAPTER II.

"I do nothing doubt, you have store of thieves."—CYMBELINE.

"I will remember this most grave adieu."—FESTUS.

"Oh! the dear pleasures of the velvet plain!  
The painted tablets dealt and dealt again!"—COWPER.

"Look to thyself! thou art in jeopardy."—KING JOAN.

THE house, in front of which Henry found himself, was an old stone building, long and narrow, one story high, with a flat roof and low parapet walls. The unglazed windows were protected by strong vertical wooden bars, and heavy shutters—the latter, like the doors, looking as if made to withstand all ordinary attack from without. A wide paved passage through the centre led to an enclosed courtyard, and on each side were doors opening into the public rooms of the house. In one of these, as they passed the door, followed by Billy leading the horses, Henry could see a long table set out in preparation for the evening meal; and in the other was assembled as motley a crowd as can be found anywhere in the world.

Outlaws, the perpetrators of every crime provided for in the criminal code, fugitives from justice, and ruffling it among the company as if their misdemeanors gave them a patent of nobility. Horse-jockeys, (many of whom had probably "traded" once too often in the States, and found it convenient to ride "over the border,") were here exercising their talent for blustering, or chuckling over dishonest stratagems to defraud some gull of his property. Blacklegs with calf-skin boots, white hands, gold chains, and rings of French paste, knocked the

dust from their cassimere pants with dainty riding-rods, cleaned their nails with shining Bowie knives, discussed the last successful cheat, or laid subtle plans to catch some unsophisticated adventurer. Indian traders, bearing to the savages the means of pampering their most barbarous propensities, and counting in anticipation the gains of robbery and cunning. Rangers, lawless, blood-thirsty and desperate, gloating over the last cold-blooded massacre, or looking forward to a murdering, plundering foray across the Rio Grande. Mexicans, with their sneaking, hound-like pace and look, paying court to every blustering scoundrel, plotting an assassination or a theft, or pandering to the jaded appetites of heartless debauchees. And mingled in this goodly moral Salmagundi, too, were many better men—travelers for pastime, parties of merry hunters for the prairies, soured and misanthropical self-exiles from organized society, Chihuahua traders, shrewd, intelligent and honest, (as honesty goes on that frontier,) officers of the new Republic, engaged in the almost hopeless task of introducing rule and order, and peaceful citizens, no doubt regretting heartily the folly which brought them here, and equally anxious to propitiate the legal officer and the lawless ruffian. All these were there, and many more; *not*.

‘The scum  
That rises upmost, when the nation boils;’

but the drift and weeds and foam, cast forward on the beach by the rolling waves of immigration.

Henry cast but one glance into the room as he passed the door, and proceeded to the courtyard.

“You will soon know what it is to be a stranger in such a place as this,” said his companion. “Twenty of that crowd will be in the yard in five minutes; the gamblers will see in you a new gull and will come to “take your measure;” the horsejockeys will strive to cheat you of your horses, and, failing that, will form a plan to steal them from you; the rangers are not so modest—they will probably proceed to the second mode of getting possession without delay; and you will be a lucky man, if they do not cut your throat into the bargain. The Mexicans will hope to pick your pocket, or cut your saddle-bags or your throat; and, failing in those attempts, will endeavor to get your money by selling you a spavined horse, a modest niece, or a virtuous daughter. The devices of the others you must guard against yourself, for here they come, a notable crew,—

) ‘Thieves of renown and pilferers of fame,’

men unmatched in the wide world for ‘intrepidity of face,’ and innocence of honesty or shame. The only chance of safety among such men is neither to give nor take offence, give no true answers, and let no man stand behind you.”

“I am not very quarrelsome,” said Henry, “but will still remember your advice.” A tall, stoop-shouldered fellow, in coarse blue jeans and broad-brimmed hat, presented himself as Henry spoke, and was immediately known as Mrs. Burnham’s factotum—the sole male representative of the sovereignty of the house—a kind of cross between landlord and ostler. He took no notice of Henry, however, other than a very hard stare, but directed Billy to follow him with the horses.

“That’s a nice piece of horse-flesh you have there, stranger,” observed a broad-shouldered fellow, arrayed in a buckskin hunting-shirt, and pantaloons of the same material, with rows of quarter dollars along the outside seams. He wore also a pair of heavy silver spurs, and the hilt of a formidable bowie-knife, gold mounted and richly chased, protruded from his bosom.

“Well—yes—rather,” said Henry, as if hesitating to endorse the qualities of his steed. “Would you like to buy?”

“What may be the value of the bay?” asked the other, evidently somewhat cooled by Henry’s readiness to sell.

“I am not much skilled in horse-flesh,” said Henry, “but I should think he might be sold for one hundred and fifty dollars.”

“Not so much as that, I assure you,” said the jocky, earnestly, with the air of one who knew what he was saying. “However, I will look at him, and make you an offer.”

“I wish you would,” said Henry, naively; “for in truth—”

“What were you going on to say?” asked the other, seeing him stop suddenly, as if he had been about to betray himself.

“Nothing—nothing—you must judge for yourself,” Henry replied, and the other walked away towards the house, apparently having no immediate curiosity.

“You have no need of my advice, I see,” said Shelton, as he and Henry followed the horses through a door in the wall. “I dare swear now, there is not a better horse in San Antonio, or one less deserving of the suspicion you have just given Tom Hartner, than the bay you have been riding.”

“He is a good horse beyond doubt,” said Henry. “I should be sorry to part with him; and if I have understood you, the

only way for a peaceable man to retain his property here, is to make these gentry believe it is not worth the taking."

"I see you are in no danger," repeated Shelton. "You have just overreached the sharpest trader and keenest robber in San Antonio."

"Who is he," asked Henry, "that you praise him so highly?"

"His name is Hartner," answered Shelton. "He is the leader of the most lawless band of desperadoes on this frontier—outlaws and murderers, cattle-lifters, rangers, and highway robbers—men who live by violence, and ought to die by the cord. Their operations are carried on chiefly upon the other bank of the Rio Grande; but even this immediate neighborhood does not entirely escape. They are mere marauders, who use the hatred every Texan feels for a Mexican, as a cloak for their bloody, ravenous propensities. They are cowards, too, every one of them; they attack only the weak and spare neither age nor sex, and of course have no true courage:

'For Fear and Cruelty were ever twins.'

"They seem to be tolerated notwithstanding their villainies," said Henry.

"Tolerated? They are honored, sir!" exclaimed Shelton. "The people of the frontier must be at the mercy of some one, they think, and as a choice of evils take these rangers, because they are a terror to the Mexicans and savages. There is another reason; these men in most 'settlements' compose the majority of the population, and are of course omnipotent. But here is the stable," he added, breaking off and entering a somewhat ruinous building of *adobes* or unburnt brick, which had evidently once been used as a residence by some family now extinct. Henry followed him in, and examined the provision made for his horses; while Shelton talked aside to the factotum in jeans.

"Ben," said he, in a low voice, "this gentleman is an old friend of mine, and his property must be as safe as if it belonged to me. I will therefore hold you responsible for these horses; I have, you know, five hundred dollars of yours in my hands; and if anything should happen to them, such as so often does in this stable, that money shall pay for it. So look out for them and yourself."

"I will put them in the other stable," said Ben, and forthwith set about doing so.

"Let us go back to the house now," said Shelton, coming forward again.

"Where is the boy?" asked Henry of Ben.

"He started off at a run towards the river, as soon as I got the horses in the stable," answered the nondescript.

"He must have got a view of Blanca's daughter bathing in the river," said Shelton, "and wants a better sight. The river is full by this hour—as goodly a sight of plashing nymphs as heart could wish."

"Henry was not perfectly satisfied with this explanation of Billy's absence; but he had seen so much of his shrewdness and ability to take care of himself, that he felt little apprehension for his safety, more particularly since he knew he had nothing about him to tempt the cupidity of any outlaw. Contenting himself, therefore, with directing that he should be cared for when he should return, he followed Shelton towards the house. As they re-entered the court, they were met by the hostess of the "Bexar Hotel," Mrs. Burnham.

"Now," said Shelton, "hold your own, and you shall be crowned king of all shrewd fellows, able diplomatists, and good masters of fence!"

Mrs. Burnham must have been at least thirty-five years old; but by the judicious use of gay colors and cosmetics, she succeeded in appearing eight or ten years younger. A slender, well-formed person, a neat foot and ankle coquettishly displayed; small hands full of rings, a white round neck and throat liberally uncovered; a rather pretty face, with a small red mouth, white teeth, and a sparkling black eye, composed the inventory of her charms. These were accompanied by a sprightly manner, a musical voice, and the most catholic disregard of all prudish maxims. According to her social catechism, the "chief end" of every man was to get married and make one or more women happy; the consequence was, that the first object of her life was to find the husband fated to be hers; and if a diligent search was a discharge of duty in the premises, a failure to discover him could not be counted as a fault in her. She needed a protector, as she once told Shelton, and the happiness she had experienced with her husband "now in heaven," had given her a favorable opinion of all mankind. He had been older than herself, she said, and had not died much before his time; which fact might account both for the moderation of her grief, and the decided preference she gave to young men. No one in San Antonio knew aught further of her history, except from some unguarded words and actions of a mysterious visitor she once had—a middle-aged man, of sober manners, to whom a strong resemblance was discovered in her daughter. But

scandal is a dainty dish to even frontier people; and charity and manliness alike forbid that we should attack the character of "a lone woman."

She approached Henry with a pleasant smile, and extending her hand, rather unexpectedly, as Shelton introduced him, warmly welcomed him to San Antonio, and pressed his fingers cordially in hers.

"You seem to have had a long ride, sir," said she, in her pleasant voice.

"Not longer than I would willingly take to arrive at night in such quarters as these," said Henry.

"We will take the best care of you in our power," she answered, with a gratified smile. "Walk in—I am about to set supper, and after that, Major," she continued, addressing Shelton. "You must bring your friend to the east room; we will have some music. Bring Miss Margaret, too."

"I am sorry to say Mr. Glenn and I have already made an engagement for the evening," answered Shelton. "But I will certainly bring him on the first opportunity."

"He will stay among us some days, I hope?" she said, with a look of disappointment.

"Some weeks probably," said Henry.

"Then let us see you in the family often," she rejoined. "Major Shelton has the *entree*, and can pilot you." She disappeared as she spoke, entering the private precincts of the building with a light, youthful step, while Shelton guided Henry towards the public room.

"A little music," said Shelton, as they went, "when *she* uses the phrase, means some fiddling and dancing, more high play, and a great deal of equivocal flirtation. Mrs. Burnham is not

'Fair to no purpose, artful to no end;'

for even her amusements are profitable; and the nets she spreads for a husband gather also the dowry she is to bring him. Being full partner in the 'stiffest' Monte Bank in the city, she is a living example of the law of compensations, on which the world proceeds; the money lost to the bank by her intended, she will return to him as a marriage portion."

"And the loser will get interest upon the loan," said Henry, "in the shape of a very pretty woman."

"Yes," said Shelton, "and it will be *interest* alone; for there is certainly no *principle* in her."

They entered the public room as he spoke, where the same

crowd, somewhat augmented, was still assembled, waiting impatiently, for the evening meal. Henry was introduced to several men and formed an acquaintance with others, without the formality of an introduction. Soon after his entrance, the tall fellow in jeans announced supper, and a simultaneous rush took place across the passage-way. When the confusion had in some measure subsided, Henry found himself seated beside Shelton near the head of the table, and in the immediate neighborhood of Mrs. Burnham. The latter occupied a high-backed chair at the upper end, apparently more for the purpose of seeing her guests than to partake with them of the good things on the table. She had no plate before her and ate nothing, except a small piece of bread, which she slowly crumbled with her fingers. Every one was expected to help himself to what was before him; and the cups were occasionally refilled with strong coffee (the only beverage there) by a yellow Mexican boy, who went and came continually between the guests and a little table in the corner. Ben, of the stooping shoulders, worked industriously at the bottom of the table, in carving into pieces of respectable dimensions, a huge beef-steak, brought to the table hot with fire and pepper. There were the usual noises of such a place: the jingling of knives and forks, the rattling of plates, and the cross purposes of a conversation carried on by twenty men at once.

"Where is Margaret?" asked Mrs. Burnham of Shelton.

"I left her with Van at the Alamo," said Shelton, "and I suppose they have gone to the Mission."

"Van is back, then," said the hostess. "Does he bring any news?"

"Nothing of any consequence, I believe," Shelton answered; "though I did not talk with him long."

Mrs. Burnham next turned her attention to Henry, but as her blandishments have nothing to do with the progress of our story, otherwise than as they show the vanity of character to be met in such a place, we cannot stay to detail them. The supper passed off, as such meals do, with the rapid consumption of a large quantity of coarse viands, unceremoniously bolted down the throats of hungry men, and the hurried start of each individual, or of each little party, as they finished their portions, for their places of evening rendezvous. Within fifteen minutes from the announcement of supper, it had been bodily consumed, and the chairs and benches were standing round the table, in the confusion of hasty departure and in melancholy emptiness.

"In most countries," said Shelton, as he and Henry emerged

from the house on their way to the monte room, and walked lightly along, unmindful of a light rain which now began to fall, "or, at least, in those where living is reduced to a ritual,

'The turnpike road to people's hearts  
Lies through their mouths.'

but here, eating is looked upon as a necessary sacrifice of time; and even when men are hungry, they are never disposed to

'Protract the feast  
To dull satiety.'

They bolt whatever is set before them, till their hunger is appeased; and though they do this ravenously enough, within five minutes not one of them can tell you what he has been eating. They are all men of action; and whoever muddles his brain or distracts his attention by immoderate feasting, had better stay where such things are no disadvantage."

"It requires all one's time and attention, here, then," said Henry, "to avoid being overreached by his companions?"

"Yes," replied Shelton. "Life on this frontier is an endless contest between wit, courage and unscrupulousness. In such a conflict, as you may well believe, integrity and conscience have but little chance; and, in the words of Iago,

'—honesty's a fool  
And loses that it works for.'

Quick observation, rapid decision and a ready hand, are the only talents that are valued."

"Not a very desirable residence, from your account," said Henry.

"That's altogether a matter of taste," replied the other. "A few years' residence here attaches one to it wonderfully. Even women become enamored of its lawlessness and wild excitement. I have a daughter whom nothing would induce to go to the States,—unless, indeed, she should fall in love with some peaceable man. Then, of course, she would go whithersoever he might lead; for love, you know, is the 'prince of all petticoats,' against whose sovereignty no woman ever yet rebelled."

"The beautiful girl I saw in the Alamo?" asked Henry.

"Yes," said Shelton; and then added, as if thinking aloud, "She is beautiful, and deserves a better fate."

A silence of some minutes succeeded, during which no sound

was heard but the falling of the rain, fast increasing in violence, and the roaring of the river which they were gradually approaching. An occasional flash of lightning illuminated the way for a moment, and showed them a glimpse of the comfortless mud houses, the wet streets, or, now and then, a solitary foot passenger hurrying along with his *serape* drawn close across his face, and his hand upon his weapons. It was by this light, when they had nearly reached their destination, that Henry thought he saw some one standing under a wall, as if in waiting, and his impression was distrust that it was none other than Billy Bates. He stopped suddenly and called out; but no answer was returned, and when the next flash enabled him to see the wall, the watcher had retreated.

"This is strange!" Henry exclaimed, at the same time starting in pursuit. But he was recalled by Shelton.

"You must have been mistaken," said the latter; "your boy is at the hotel before this hour, and if he is not, it will do you no good to follow him, for he evidently desires to avoid you."

"Who lives in this house?" Henry asked.

"The old gentlemen of whom I spoke this evening on the other side of the river," Shelton replied. "His name I have not heard. The next house is the Monte Bank."

"Strange that Billy should be here," said Henry.

"You must have been mistaken," repeated Shelton. "Let us go on."

"And now," he continued, as Henry followed him towards a low stone building, from which no light proceeded, except through a small crack in a heavy window shutter, "remember the maxim of safety: neither give nor take offence, return no true answers, and let no man stand behind you."

"I think I shall have no trouble," said Henry; and as he spoke his companion pushed open a wide door, and they entered a paved passage-way, dimly lighted by a stone lamp, and having two doors leading from it. Through one of these a light streamed from a room evidently, by the noise, full of people.

"Is it your intention to play?" said Shelton, stopping.

"What is your advice?" asked Henry.

"That you remain a spectator," said the other; "or if you wish to have some interest in the play, put one or two hundred dollars with an equal amount of mine and let me play for both."

Henry acquiesced without hesitation, and drawing forth a

pocket-book well filled with bills, counted out the amount. As he did so, a sinister-looking fellow, heavily armed, entered the hall, and casting a quick glance at the tempting display of the wallet, looked keenly at its owner and passed in.

"You show too much money for such a place as this," said Shelton. "A display like that might cost your life, especially when seen by such men as he who just entered."

"Who is he?" Henry asked.

"Hartner's lieutenant, and a deeper villain than Hartner himself—which is high praise to his wickedness. You must watch him; and above all remember the last clause of my advice."

With this they entered the room, and were in the midst of the sounds, which they had before but faintly heard. The buzzing of many voices, talking in several languages, was only broken by the clink of silver, the ringing of gold, and the rustling sound of shuffling cards. A large table stood across one corner of the room, and around it were gathered a dozen men or more, each holding *rouleaus* of gold and silver, or rolls of crumpled bank notes in his hands, and watching with eyes sharpened by cupidity, the progress of the shuffling and dealing. Behind the table sat two men—the banker and his *croupier*—of whom the latter received and paid out the money, counted the cards to see that none were abstracted, and exercised a general supervision of the game; the other shuffled and dealt. A little box of highly polished oak sat on the bench between them, into which the money was thrown, or from which it was taken, according as the bank won or lost. Across the opposite corner of the room extended a narrow pine counter, and behind this stood a young man, dealing out various kinds of liquors from bottles of all shapes, colors and sizes. Segars, too, were in request, and almost every man in the room held one between his teeth; more than half of the players, however, puffed lustily without producing the least smoke—having in their absorption either forgotten to light their segars, or unconsciously allowed them to be extinguished.

Shelton and Henry, having honored the primitive bar, according to the custom of the house, and each taken a segar, advanced to the table; and, while the other stood looking on, the former engaged at once in the play. The Mexican game of Monte is played in the following manner: After the pack has been shuffled and cut, two cards are taken from the bottom and laid face upward, side by side. When the dealing commences, these are opposed in such a manner that the one which

comes first is the winning card, and he who bets upon it is of course the winner. Two other cards are taken, generally before the betting commences, in like manner from the top, and likewise laid out—the conditions of the game being the same. After the bets are made, the pack is turned bottom upward and the deal commences. It is obvious that the chances are equal; there being three others of each card laid out yet in the pack. If one or more of these three can be abstracted, the chances are of course against that card—there being three of its opposing number or rank against two, or one, or none. There are other rules immaterial to our purpose; but as our object is to show the characters of men, and not the modes of playing gambling-games, we will not detail them.

Shelton commenced playing moderately and indifferently, putting down a few dollars when he lost, or carelessly taking them up when he won. Meantime he kept his eyes fixed upon the *croupier*, who was diligently paying and receiving money, and alternately counting the two packs with which they were playing. He was apparently so absorbed in this employment, that he did not look up for some time after Shelton had come to the table. Then, however, turning the pack he had been counting bottom-upward on the table, he placed his finger carelessly upon a "queen" there displayed, and cast a quick, furtive glance at Shelton. The latter gave him the least perceptible of nods, the pack was immediately turned over again, handed to the dealer, shuffled and dealt. The *croupier* counted the other pack, going through the same motions, and handing it to the banker in like manner. This telegraphing attracted no attention, and the game proceeded as before, while Shelton gradually became more and more interested in the play.

"Come 'tap' my bank,\* Major," said the banker, "you are in luck and might break me."

"It is early yet," said the Major, "and I do not know whether I am 'in luck' or not. I'll tap it directly, however. How much have you in bank?"

"About five thousand dollars," said the man, as he laid out a 'queen' and a 'king' as opposing cards.

"Have you indeed so much?" said Shelton, as if in surprise, "that is worth trying for, certainly."

"Tap it, Major," said Tom Hartner, who had just come in.

\* "Tapping is done in this wise: the better turns a card face downward, and thus agrees to pay, if he lose, whatever amount there may be in bank—and of course to take the bank if he win.

"How is the weather, Tom?" asked Shelton; "clearing away?"

"Bright moonlight," said Hartner; and as he spoke, Henry tired of the monotony of the game, turned away and going out into the hall, opened the door, which he knew must lead into the garden, and stepped out.

"Come, Major," said the banker, "we are waiting for you."

"Tap it, tap it," urged two or three. "Tap it on the 'queen.'"

"I like men better than women, I believe," said Shelton, "I will take the 'king.'" He took the card he had named, as he spoke, and turned it upon its face. As he did so, he cast a look at the *croupier* so darkly threatening, that stouter hearts than his might have trembled under its meaning. The cowering *employé* had, however, not deceived him. He knew, as well as if the deal had already been made, what the result would be, and sat in silent though agitated expectation. Some one bet one hundred dollars on the 'queen,' the two top cards were taken off and the deal commenced.

"I shall not be broken, at all events, Major," said the banker. "I shall have one hundred dollars, even if you win."

"And if he loses, I shall have two hundred," said the other better.

"And I ten thousand," rejoined the banker, coolly.

"One hundred or ten thousand, then," said Shelton. "Deal away."

"*Four, six, ace, knave, seven, five, four, six, KING!*" "You have won, Major; here is the bank, and this hundred is mine," coolly said the banker, handing over the box. "Put in a hundred with me, Tom," he continued to Hartner, "and let us open another bank."

"Let me count these cards, Major," said the *croupier*, "before you take the bank."

"See if the 'kings' and 'queens' are all there," said the banker; "the rest are not material."

"All right," said the *croupier*, showing four of each; but three of the 'queens,' let it be understood, he had *just put in*, having had them ready concealed in his sleeve. The Major had therefore been betting on a certainty, since there were three kings in the pack, and not a single 'queen.'

Hartner without hesitation acceded to the banker's proposition; a new bank was formed, though not so heavy as the former, and the game again commenced.

In the meantime, Henry had passed out into the garden, and was slowly pacing up and down its neglected walks. The clouds, from which the rain had been descending, had broken partially away, and were now lying piled in heavy masses along the eastern horizon. The moon, as if just risen from a cloudy couch, was shining clear and bright, though now and then a fragment of the storm came hastening by, was pervaded for a moment by her light, and then merged into the general mass beyond. The cragged outline, slowly receding towards the east, was clearly cut against the sky, while, flashing through the gloom beneath, incessant noiseless lightning, branched like a tree of molten fire with many thousand boughs. In the west, where another storm was rising, low rumbling thunder could be heard, and floating mists and rolls of whitened cloud were fast encroaching on the clear meridian. The stillness was profound; the leaves hung laden with pearly rain drops, and gems seemed strewed among the grass and hung on every blade. Night,

——— 'in her starry shade  
Of dim and solitary loveliness,'

had calmly glided in between the fragments of the storm, and her reign, though brief, was more beautiful and touching than when

'No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,  
Breaks the serene heaven.'

Henry walked pensively along the alleys, and threaded, without aim or purpose, the various winding walks, now gazing into the clear sparkling water, now bending his head to the ground, and anon turning his face to the sky, where the open blue was fast decreasing, as the clouds encroached and swallowed star by star. Once he stopped, and leaning full of thought against a tree, forgot the time, the place, and all things but his own unpleasant memories. He was suddenly recalled by hearing a noise, as if some one were softly stealing on him. He turned suddenly, and the sound ceased. He gazed into the thicket from whence he thought the noise proceeded, but could discover nothing. He was satisfied that he had been mistaken; but his thoughts had been disturbed, and crossing the lower part of the garden, he approached the wall dividing it from that which he had noticed in the evening, and walked slowly towards the house. A stone bench placed against the wall attracted his attention; the graceful beauty of the clustering vines about it, and the quiet, still repose of its position, tempted him to seat

himself. He had remained thus for ten or fifteen minutes, gazing pensively upon the stars, when suddenly something white fluttered past his face, and fell upon the ground before him. He started and picked it up; and as he did so, heard a hasty whisper from the wall above.

"Hasten to the light and read it!" said the voice. "Haste!"

He looked up but could see nothing; the word "haste" was again repeated, however, and without seeking further to fathom the mystery, he walked rapidly to the house. He heard a muttered curse as he walked away; but was more intent upon the writing, which he found was traced upon a card, than upon aught else. He entered the room where the play was still going on, though not so noisy, and approached a light which sat upon the rude counter. Holding the card close to it, he read, hastily and unevenly written as if traced in the dark, the following words:

"Beware!—a man follows you with a naked knife!"

The words themselves were startling enough; but their purport was entirely forgotten, for the writing, he was almost certain, was in the hand of Fanny Vincent! He gazed upon the well-remembered characters, absorbed in recollections of no happy tone, until his abstraction was observed by Shelton, who had left the *monte* table, and was standing on one side of the room, calmly watching the movements of the motley crowd about him.

"What now?" said he, approaching Henry. "You stand as, according to Milton, Adam stood, when he heard of 'the fatal trespass done by Eve'—

'Speechless he stood, and pale'—

And it will not surprise me to find that some one of Eve's daughters is the mover of this emotion too. What is it?"

"Come with me into the garden," said Henry; and they both passed out in silence.

"The garden is not a very safe place just now," said Shelton. "However, we need only pass through it."

Henry hastened to explain.

"You were just in time," said the voice from the wall; and at the same moment a man was seen to spring out of the garden on the other side, and heard walking rapidly away.

Henry ran to the wall and called out; but if he used the right name, its owner did not stop to be questioned. The glimpse of white drapery, as she disappeared within the house, was all he could discover.

### CHAPTER III.

I never knew so young a body with so old a head.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Haste is needful in a desperate case.—HENRY VI.

The waters in their brilliant path have seen  
The desperate strife.—MRS. ELLET.

Remnants of things that have passed away,  
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay.—SIEGE OF CORINTH.

FOR more than a year Henry had schooled himself against all thought of his unfortunate attachment; and though the effort had made him melancholy and unsocial, he had succeeded in securing tranquillity. But with the sound of a voice which he deemed hers, came back the long-resisted flood, and overflowed his heart with a tenderness which had only accumulated behind the stern barrier set against its flow. He stood where he had last seen her fluttering dress, as if rooted to the spot,—full of recollections, even indulging hopes. Shelton's voice recalled him, and the airy castles he was building crumbled to the dust.

"Did you recognize the voice?" asked his companion.

"I thought I did," said Henry; "but I must have been mistaken. She would not have retreated so suddenly."

"Perhaps she did know you," remarked Shelton. "And at all events, lovers do not like witnesses."

"Lovers!" said Henry, recalled by the word. "No, no!" And with a bitter, painful smile, he turned away. At the same moment, Billy Bates stepped suddenly out from among a thicket of briars and shrubs, and rapidly advanced to meet him.

"What brings you here?" demanded Henry.

"I came here to warn you of danger," said the boy coolly. "There are five or six men skulking about the upper end of the garden; and I overheard enough to know that they are seeking this gentleman and you."

"Well," said Henry impatiently, "what does that signify."

"It signifies," said the boy, lowering his voice, "that you have each enough money to make you worth murdering and robbing: and they are therefore about to do both."

"Did you say they are seeking us now?" asked Shelton.

"Yes," answered Billy.

"I did not think they would be so impatient," said the Major; "though I knew they designed to waylay us in the street. Where are they now, my boy?"

"In the upper end of the garden," said Billy, "unless they have already approached you by the alleys."

"Hist!" said the Major, suddenly, holding up his finger and bending his ear towards the ground. He listened profoundly for a few moments, and then raising his head, examined his arms and loosened them to his grasp.

"You have your arms, of course?" said he to Henry.

"Yes," replied the other, in a whisper; "what say you? Can you hear them?"

"They are slowly approaching us on both sides," said Shelton; "but it has grown so dark, I cannot see them."

"How many of them are there, Billy?"

"Six, at least," the boy answered: "perhaps seven."

"They are too many for us," said Shelton. "We must retreat. Is the house closed, my boy?"

"Yes, and the men are all gone but these."

"This is the only way, then," said the Major. "Follow me as silently as possible; if we encounter them, we must fight it out as we best can."

All Shelton's levity was gone, and in its stead there distinguished his movements, a cool, firm promptitude, which showed that beneath the cynical coating of his character, lay a fund of true, manly courage.

Henry followed him as quietly as possible, and behind him came Billy, as cool, perhaps, as either of his companions. They walked slowly and cautiously towards the river, whose roar became more and more audible. Shelton stopped from time to time to listen; and could occasionally hear the breaking of a twig or the rustle of a bush, as their enemies approached with stealthy steps. After pausing thus two or three times, they found themselves within a broken gateway, opening upon a broad flat stone, which was now partially submerged by the rising waters. They could hear nothing but the roar of the torrent,—the rain having swollen it two or three feet, and the velocity of the current being increased in proportion. Nor

could they see anything in the dense blackness, except the dark outline of the opposite shore, and the occasional flash of a ripple on the lime-charged waters. The cloud had finally spread over the whole heavens, and the falling of a few drops of rain, with one or two peals of rumbling thunder, announced the near approach of the storm.

"There should be a boat here," said Shelton, stepping into the water, and feeling in the darkness for its chain.

"We must take water, then," said Henry.

"Yes; or remain and fight. Ah! here is the chain. Just loosen it, while I keep her from floating off; and be quick, too, for our friends must be approaching."

Henry did as he directed, and with Billy stepped into the frail craft while Shelton held her to the bank. The Major followed them without delay, giving her a shove as he did so. He then seized a stout pole which lay in the bottom and, placing it against the rocks, pushed off with all his strength. This operation was unavoidably noisy; and as they reached the middle of the river, a flash of lightning, the precursor of the storm, enabled them to see a group of men rush into the open gateway.

"A fair good-night to you, gentlemen!" shouted the Major, with a laugh of derision. Several pistol shots were fired at random without effect, and then above the roar of the current our friends could hear the word 'bridge' shouted in a loud, clear voice. At the same moment the whole group set off at a swift run down the bank of the river.

"It is to be a trial of speed," said the Major, coolly, "and, if they can reach the bridge ahead of us, a trial of strength."

"We can pass under, I suppose?" said Henry.

"I am not so sure of it," returned the Major. "The upper side is broken, and, since the rain, must swing very near the water's edge. At all events, it is low enough to give them a great advantage, since, to pass under at all, we must lie down in the bottom."

"Then, of course, we must fight," said Henry.

"Can't we land?" asked the boy, looking at the eastern shore.

"Not if we had a dozen oars," said Shelton. "This current runs at the rate of ten miles an hour."

"Well, we can beat them in a fair fight," said Billy; "for they'll be blown by the run, and we'll be fresh."

"Well calculated, my lad!" laughed Shelton, recklessly: "I'll swear there's 'game' in you!"

During this hurried consultation, they had been whirled along with fearful velocity by the foaming current; and when Shelton expressed his confidence in Billy's courage, they had already made half the distance of the bridge. The flashes of lightning, momentarily increasing in frequency and intensity, revealed the banks rushing past them with dizzy speed; and the frightful pitching and whirling of the boat evinced still more sensibly the fury of the torrent. Their enemies had taken the lead before the boat was fairly in the current, and were now much nearer the bridge than their intended victims. But every moment the speed of the boat increased, as the furious waters seized its keel and dashed it madly forward; and though the distance was much shorter by land, it was an even chance which first reached the trestle in the current. They approached a bend, where the force of the current dashed the water in foam across the rocks, and their speed sensibly diminished. The party on the bank saw their advantage, and a shout announced their triumph. But the boat only touched the rocks, and, swinging round, caught the strength of the waters and shot off again with redoubled velocity.

"Handle your firearms," commanded Shelton, calmly. "I'll keep her bow down stream. When we are within twenty feet, fire in their faces and fall down in the bottom of the boat!"

"You think they will beat us?" said Henry.

"It's a close race. Look!" exclaimed the Major, as a flash of lightning revealed the bridge scarcely more than one hundred yards before them, and their competitors in the race fast nearing its western extremity. "Be firm now: ten seconds will decide the race!"

Another flash of lightning, succeeded by a crash of thunder as if the heavens were rent, blinded even the keenest vision. The rain dashed down in sheets until the river was covered with a frying foam; the rush of the torrent round the trestles of the bridge became more audible, and the boiling waters almost leaped across the gunwale of the boat. Another and another flash, succeeded by tremendous peals of thunder, lit up the watery landscape lighter than the sun, and left it darker than the night. Only a few yards lay between them and the bridge, and their pursuers were already on the western end.

"Steady now, steady!" Shelton said, while with his pole he guided the boat towards the highest place.

"Down! down!" he shouted, and threw himself upon the bottom.

Several lariats fell like snakes upon the water, but they

missed their aim. A roaring sound above as well as below, a dash among the eddying waters, a rush at lightning speed past two or three piers, and the little craft shot out with undiminished speed into the river below the bridge!

"We beat them by a length!" laughed Shelton, springing to his feet and resuming his pole.

"One of them slipped into the water," said Billy.

"Dead, for a ducat!" said the Major, attempting to bring to.

"Is not that a man?" exclaimed Henry suddenly, as something passed him, borne swiftly by the current.

"I have him!" said Billy; and at the next moment a flash showed the quick-sighted boy, with his fingers firmly tangled in the hair of a man who was evidently insensible.

"Hold tight, my lad!" said Shelton, casting loose from the willow by which he had checked the boat, and rapidly making his way to Billy's side. With the assistance of his companions he soon drew the rescued man within the gunwale, and stretched him on the bottom.

"Jack Burrel, by all that's good!" he exclaimed, and at the same moment Henry recognized the features of the *croupier* by whose assistance Shelton had broken the Monte Bank! "The miserable puppy!" continued the Major; "I've a notion to throw him overboard again!"

"That would never do, Major!" said Henry. "Let us endeavor to resuscitate him."

"We can't do that without shelter; this rain would drown him if the river had not. However," he added, "here, my boy, hold him across your knee——"

"Breakers ahead!" shouted Billy.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Major; "we are close upon the 'Footway!' And the scoundrels may be there before us!" He sprang to his feet, letting the drowned man fall heavily down, and seizing the pole again, gave his orders rapidly and promptly.

"Lie low now, and draw your knives to cut away *lareats*! Let the ingrate alone—your own lives are more in danger than his! The devils are there sure enough!" He sheered the boat, as he spoke, into a current which was hollow like a trough, so fearful was the velocity of its concentrated torrent. Immediately before them, glittering as the lightning played upon its foam, was the "Footway," where immense rocks almost dam the current quite across the river, thus forming a giant bridge. Between these rocks, which are in no place more than ten feet apart, the water runs at all times with terrible velocity; but particularly

was it furious when our friends approached it. The heavy rains had swollen the river above, and the whole flood was coming down as if over a broken dam, roaring through the rocks and narrow passages, and leaping wildly up against the barriers, or rushing over them in foaming torrents. The widest *chutes*—those alone through which the boat could pass—were bridged with heavy, broad planks, thrown from rock to rock; and upon that which spanned the current on which they floated, they could see their pursuers. The shortness of the way by land, and the delay caused by the saving of Burrel, had enabled them to outstrip the boat. Two or three had *lareats* in their hands, and by the incessant flashes of lightning our friends could see their preparations to cast them.

"Lie down!" Shelton ordered. "Your knives are of no avail!"

He sheered the boat a little, placing her directly in the *chute*, gave her a tremendous push forward, and threw down his pole. As he did so, he drew a revolving pistol, and casting himself into the bottom of the boat, fired four barrels in quick succession at the men upon the bridge. Seizing a firm hold on the ribs of the boat with one hand, he received upon the other the *lareats* which were cast at that moment, and grasped them firmly on his powerful arm. The boat rushed madly beneath the feet of the assailants—the ropes ran rapidly under with her—the men above braced themselves to bring up their prey—but it was in vain! Shelton's prodigious strength and the force of the boat jerked them over—a plash of two or three men falling into the torrent, and one or two cries of agony, mingled with the pealing thunder and the roaring flood! Shelton sprang to his feet and cast loose the *lareats*, the boat shot down the sloping current, whirled once or twice in a foaming eddy, and then dashed away with a speed but slightly diminished by the momentary pause.

"There will be a chance," said the Major, resuming his pole, and with it his sneering, cynical manner, "to ascertain whether those fellows are like our friend Burrel here, 'born to be hung;' for if they are not drowned now, the gallows is not to be cheated!"

"Can we not pick some of them up?" asked Henry.

"If you'll stop the boat we will try," the other answered, with a smile.

This was obviously impossible; and though the lightning enabled them to see two or three heads dashing along with the

current among the foam, and then suddenly disappearing, they could do nothing to assist them.

"They were not 'born to be hung,'" said Shelton, coolly, after watching them until the last went down; and then turning round, calmly resumed his steering, repeating as he did so a couplet from Tam O'Shanter, slightly altered to his purpose:

"This night, a child might understand,  
The Deil has business on his hand."

Having passed the ford below the Footway, they continued to drift in silence, but with diminished speed, until beyond the city limits, when Henry suggested that they land and return to the hotel.

"We can scarcely do that with safety to-night, after what has occurred," said Shelton. "Our best course now will be to go on to San José, which is scarcely four miles from us, and may be reached in less than an hour. We will find my daughter and some friends there, and can get dry clothes and a comfortable bed."

"Henry was unwilling to leave even temporarily a place in which he had recently had so much reason for wishing to remain; but comforting himself with the reflection that only a few hours would elapse before his return, he yielded to the representations of Shelton, and continued in silence to drift with the stream. He had left home, as the reader knows, determined to avoid a meeting with Fanny, even if fate should bring his footsteps within her neighborhood. But though twelve months had elapsed, during which he had schooled himself thoroughly to this purpose, the mere sound of her voice sufficed to change the whole current of his thoughts, to make him not only forego, but even forget his long-formed resolution. Let him not be thought fickle or undecided in this either; for in truth no one could be more firm or resolute. In his reflections he had found reason to suspect that he had been deceived; and he could not avoid believing that Fanny had been unfairly dealt with; of this he had determined to satisfy himself; and now that an opportunity seemed offered, he resolved at once to improve it. Billy Bates sat apparently intent only upon holding the head of Burrel, who was now reviving; but though he said nothing, it was plain, from his disappointed look when it was decided that they should go on, that he would much rather have returned to the city.

The storm abated as suddenly as it had begun; the wind

subsided so rapidly, that they could almost fix the moment when it ceased to blow; the clouds rolled away towards the east, and, drawn back like a curtain, left the moon sailing in serene majesty among the twinkling stars. An occasional flash of pale lightning, followed by low distant thunder, marked the retreating footsteps of the tempest; the rain-drops hanging in the moonlight on the trees, sparkled like diamonds in their "emerald crowns." The river rushed with diminished speed between high banks, along which were growing low trees; the branches, hanging in the water, gently rose and fell upon the ripples; and on the surface of the current the moon and stars were dancing fairy-like and merrily. The little boat, but slightly guided by the pole, swept with the waters round each point, or swiftly shot along the arrowy reaches from bend to bend. Now and then the twittering note or prolonged whoop of a night bird could be heard; or mingling with the mellow stillness of the scene, the distant howling of a watch-dog floated on the air. A quiet wind arose and came abroad, and sighed among the glittering leaves, or whispered on the sparkling waters, and made the stillness musical.

' Look how the floor of heaven  
Is thickly inlaid with patines of bright gold,'

said Shelton, casting his eyes thoughtfully upward, and breaking a silence of many minutes. "Shakspeare says there is not one of all that myriad,

' But in his motion, like an angel sings;'

and in a night like this, when the storm has thoroughly refreshed the earth and purified the atmosphere, I often think I can hear their harmony."

Henry was too much absorbed by his own reflections to make an immediate reply; and, when he roused himself, surprise, to hear a man who had so recently exhibited his aptitude and indifference to violence and blood, expressing such a sentiment, still kept him silent. They proceeded as before, for some minutes, when the stillness was again broken by Shelton.

"I am sorry those poor devils were drowned," said he; "because some of them were capable of better things, and their errors were as much the fault of the state of society in which they lived, as of their own natures."

"No state of society," said Henry, "however rude, can justify robbery and murder."

"Perhaps not; but those men were punished for the intention

only," said the other. "True, it was necessary, in order to defeat their purpose; but if it could have been avoided, I would rather not have drowned them."

"Of course," said Henry.

"However," continued the elder, raising his head and looking round, "I am not the man to regret an act of necessity. We have probably saved other men's lives as well as our own; for, God knows, murder was common enough among those fellows."

"This man is reviving," said Henry suddenly.

"Let his head hang down," said Shelton. "We will be at San José after a while, and there we can do more for him. That is the 'Mission of Conception,'" he added, pointing through an opening in the trees towards a large building, partly in ruins, which lay in the moonlight, a short distance from the river.

"It is one of the series of establishments, similar in construction to the Alamo, and probably intended for the same purposes. There are four of them, built at intervals of one league,—this is the first, and the next is San José, whither we are bound. There are two others below, 'San Juan' and 'La Espada,' but the finest of them all, and the best preserved, is San José. They have, however, all been suffered to go to decay for about ten years; and, in a climate like this, ten years make very great ravages. They were all built by the same men about the same period, and are a startling commentary on the decay and ruin of this country. All of them, except Conception, are yet inhabited; but instead of the proud race of military monks of former days, their occupants are now miserable Mexican *rancheras*. Excepting the rooms actually occupied,—and, in some cases, these too—they are used as stables and *cavalladas*, in which are herded cattle and hogs. Swallows and bats inhabit the greater part of them all, and, from present appearances, their reign will not soon be disturbed. Would you not like to visit and examine them?"

"If I remain in the neighborhood long enough," said Henry, "I should like it exceedingly."

"I will continue my character of *cicerone*, then," said Shelton.

They held on their way thus for nearly half an hour,—abruptly turning two or three sharp points, but the greater part of the time rushing with the current, with no deviation from a straight line other than an occasional slight bend. At the end of that time Shelton changed his position to the bow of the boat, and gradually sheered her in towards the right bank.

"Stand by, now," said he, "to swing on to the trees when I give the word: and take care that you are not dragged into the water."

Their speed began gradually to slacken, as they left the current, and the boat passed beneath the low branches, many of which dipped in the rising waters.

"Now!" said Shelton suddenly, "seize and hold fast!" And as Henry obeyed the order, the other gave the boat a sudden shove with his pole, and she shot up to the shore.

"Help Burrel out, my lad," he continued, as he fastened the skiff to a root, and held her broadside against the bank.

The half-drowned man received Billy's assistance in silence; and passing through the heavy timber for a few rods, they all suddenly found themselves in front of a massive building of immense extent, surrounded by ruins covering a space still greater. The main building was yet entire, containing room enough to accommodate a regiment of soldiers. It was built, like all these establishments, in the form of a cross; but one of the angles was, as usual, filled by suites of rooms, cloisters, refectories, libraries and chapels; and in the rear, the building was extended for a hundred feet or more, and divided in like manner. Only one turret or belfry had been finished—over the western arm of the cross—but so far from detracting from the appearance of the whole, this incongruity but added to the solemn interest of such a building, standing solitary in the moonlight in the midst of a scene so wild. The lofty front was highly decorated; sundry figures of the cross were worked into the panels of the massive door and small grated windows,—and apostles, saints and angels, cut in stone, were standing among vines and trees and flowers, and allegorical and religious emblems. Seen by daylight, they were blackened and disfigured by the wind and rain; but now the moon shone slanting on the front, and cast her silvery mantle over every weather-stain and broken ornament. The ragged outline of the ruin, the air of desolation and decay, the melancholy loneliness, were relieved and mellowed by the same softening agent; and the silence of the place, which would otherwise have been oppressive, seemed but the quiet breathing of the sleeping genius of the solitude.

They all stopped as they entered the enclosure, and gazed in silence at the scene before them; and though to Shelton it was quite familiar, there was always food for thought to one of his reflective nature, in a scene so calm, subdued and peaceful.

"How tranquil this is!" said he, in a low voice. "Do you

recollect Manfred's apostrophe to the moon, in speaking of an hour spent among the ruins of the Coliseum?—

'And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon  
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
Which softened down the hoar austerity  
Of rugged desolation, and filled up  
As 'twere, the gaps of centuries:  
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
And making that which was not, till the place  
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
With silent worship of the great of old!

Is it not a perfect description of this scene?"

Henry was about to reply, when, on casting his eyes to the turret, he perceived two persons standing in it; and at the same moment a clear, soft voice broke on the air from above.

"Father, are you there?" It was Shelton's daughter, Margaret.

"Yes," said her father, in a tone which at once decided the terms upon which they lived. "Don't be alarmed; whom have you with you?"

The reply was a single word: "Van."

"So I supposed," said her father, drily; but, without further remark, he led the way around the building, and ushered his guests up a broad flight of stone steps upon a heavy corridor. Opening a door, the first to which he came, he entered; and striking a light, revealed a small bed-chamber in which, after providing dry clothes for them, with a few words of ordinary politeness, he left Henry and Billy. Telling Burrel to follow him, he left our friends to their much needed repose. Henry threw himself upon the low bed, leaving Billy to take the other, and thus ended his first day in San Antonio.

## CHAPTER IV.

If I may counsel you, some day or two  
Your highness shall repose you at the tower.—RICHARD III.

I cannot, nor I will not, yield to you.—IDEM.

I am not made of stone,  
But penetrable to your kind entreaties.—IDEM.

Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful.—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

AFTER the fatigues of the day and night, Henry slept soundly and well: so well, indeed, that he did not hear Billy, who rose and left the room about daybreak. The sun was streaming in at the little square window when he awoke, and the cool morning air, which blew through the half open door, had already begun to feel the influence of the advancing day. He immediately arose—even before he had fully recalled the chain of events which had brought him there—and having hurriedly thrown on his clothes, stepped out upon the stone-paved corridor, and gazed admiringly upon the peaceful scene before him. A large extent of ruins, enclosed by a broken, crumbling wall, and overgrown by moss and vines, lay immediately around; while beyond were thickets and groves, and stately, solitary trees, among which, old and grey and rugged, but still beautiful, were here and there visible piles of stones or roofless walls and single columns. The morning breeze was blowing as yet but gently, and the quiet waving of the leaves and branches, and the mellow sunlight streaming through the aisles and vistas of the forest, gave life and spirit to the stillness. Not a living thing was anywhere in sight, and not a human voice or footstep broke the calm. The rushing sound of the river, which had already fallen to its usual volume, was only faintly audible: alternately swelling and subsiding on the ear, and harmonizing with the whispering wind. Filled with the thoughts which such a scene inspires, Henry stood gazing abstractedly upon the landscape, unconscious of a light, though firm footstep, approaching him along the corridor

“Good morning, sir,” was spoken in a female voice, whose melody and character he recognized at once. “You have slept late, and in a less hospitable mansion might have lost your breakfast.”

There was a calm, free, dignified tone and manner in the greeting, which gave a better index to her character than any long description could convey. That the speaker was the daughter of Shelton, it needed no family record to declare; and that she possessed, with the qualities derived from him, a strong womanly heart and mind was equally plain. She was dressed in a flowing robe of white, and round her waist was tied a crimson sash, whose silken fringes almost swept the ground. Her hair was drawn back in heavy plaits and confined by a richly-chased and ornamented comb of silver. Around her neck was hung the chain of gold, which Henry had seen on the evening before; and at its end was still the jewelled dagger, but partially concealed beneath the sash. Blue velvet slippers, trimmed with silver, graced her well-formed feet, and on her beautiful white hand, Henry could see the single priceless ring. She wore no other ornament, except a blue and white silver band across her forehead; and this simplicity imparted to her lofty bearing, a dignity which no profusion of gold and jewels could have given.

“That would be scarcely fair,” said Henry in reply, “since my late rising is only the consequence of fatigues incurred in coming here.”

“The penalty is remitted,” she replied smiling. “You were out in the storm and had something of an adventure, also, I believe?”

“An attempt to rob us,” said Henry, “which unfortunately ended in the death of two or three of our assailants.”

“My father told me,” she said, looking thoughtfully down, “Such attempts are but too common here; and, what is worse, they always end in bloodshed.”

“Where there is no law to obey,” said Henry, “men cannot be expected to be very peaceable.”

“True,” she replied. “But I came to call you to your forfeited breakfast. Your name is Glenn, I believe?”

“Yes,” he answered, as he followed her down the stairs, “Henry Glenn.”

“You are the nephew of the late George Glenn, then,” said she; “can you tell me what has become of your Cousin James?”

“I cannot,” Henry replied; “though I supposed he was

somewhere on this frontier. His mother is your step-mother, is she not?"

"She was," said Margaret. "She died about two years ago."

She had conducted him during this conversation to the lower corridor, and along the length of it to a door, before which she stopped to make the reply just given. She now pushed it open, and ushered him into a small room where preparations were made for his refreshment. He took the seat to which she pointed him, opposite to that taken by herself, and received from her a cup of strong coffee. Helping himself from the ample store upon the table, while she sat quietly looking at him, his fast was soon broken.

"My father directed me to say," she remarked, as she rose from the table, "that you had better remain at the Mission for a few days; and, for to-day, you are on my hands for entertainment. What can I do to amuse you?"

"Why does he wish me to remain here?" asked Henry.

"Because," said she, "he thinks it unsafe for you to go elsewhere. He told me to say further, that since the only inducement you can have to return immediately to the city, is to make inquiries about the person from whom you last night received a timely warning, he will himself make those inquiries, and inform you of the result on his return this evening."

"He is gone to the city himself, then?" said Henry.

"Yes, and took your boy with him, for the purpose of sending down your horses and baggage."

"Is it safer then for him than for me," asked Henry.

"The scenes of last night lead you to doubt it, I suppose," she said. "But he is well protected to-day; as indeed he would have been yesterday, had his friends known his situation. Captain Caldwell is in the city with a score or two of his Rangers."

"Well," said Henry, seating himself upon a stone bench to which she led him, at the lower end of the corridor, "I suppose I must avail myself of your hospitality—though I would willingly take all the risk of returning forthwith to the city."

"You would incur more peril than even an interview with the lady would repay," said she with a smile.

Henry started suddenly and looked up, as if his thoughts had been unexpectedly fathomed.

"Don't be alarmed," she added; "I have no desire to probe your wounds—for that would be but doubtful hospitality. I'll give you a sedative which everybody uses here"—she rose and

entering a room, re-appeared with a handful of segars—"and if that does not soothe you, I must take you to the river on a fishing excursion. Do not be so polite as to refuse them," she continued, as Henry hesitated, "for I bring them as much for my own enjoyment as yours."

"You have adopted the fashion of the Mexican women then?"

"Not quite," said she; "I am fond of the perfume, but would rather use the mouth of some one else as a censer."

There was a loftiness in her tone and manner, which, in a man, would have been resented as an assumption of superiority, but which, in her, was only an index to the womanly pride and purity of her character. It was more conspicuous, too, on account of the circumstances by which she was surrounded; and the view of her character in that place excited the same wonder which we would feel in finding a garden flower on a wild prairie. There was refinement without formality, freedom without boldness, and pride without haughtiness. The curl of her beautiful lip, and the quick glance of her dark eye, indicated the capacity for high excitement; while the decided tones of her voice and the firmness of her bearing, pointed to a deep, earnest spirit, fiery in its resentment of a wrong, and steadfast in the pursuit of right. Tenderness of feeling was not wanting—else had she been far from the woman we have painted—but the clear lines of a lofty character enclosed and governed it; while a sort of reserve, produced by frequent contact with the elements of a society, with whose corruption she held no sympathy—lay between it and the light. Henry, for a short time, felt a little uneasy under her quiet manner, but the congeniality between his character and hers, soon made itself felt—not *that* congeniality (in reality opposition) which produces love, but that which lays the only firm foundation for a friendship: coincidence of lofty sentiments and strong feelings—and a few minutes conversation put them both at their ease. Henry took the segar she urged upon him, and lighting it at a little censer full of coals, which she had also brought out, commenced smoking. His companion entered the house again, and, after a few moments' absence, re-appeared with a small stand, on which were pencils, pens, paper, and drawing instruments. This she placed where the sun would not be likely to reach her for some hours, and seated herself beside it.

"I have several times attempted to draw this landscape," she said, "but always without success. I will try again now,

unless you want me to amuse you in some other way. Shall I bring you a book, or would you rather talk to me?"

"I would rather hear you talk to me," said Henry.

"You had better reserve your compliments till after dinner," said she, calmly; "for we are likely to spend most of the day together, and if you begin too early, you may exhaust yourself before night."

"I spoke rather from indolence than gallantry," said Henry, smiling quietly; "though I might sincerely repeat what I said in the sense in which you seem to have taken it."

"That is to say," she replied, "that it was my vanity and not your gallantry, which inferred the flattering meaning. Fairly shot! I see an encounter of wits would be no safe pastime with you."

"And I see you are for taking the chances," he rejoined.

"By no means!" said she, quickly, arranging her paper and pencils. "I am all for peace, and even the shadow of strife always frightens me."

"I took you for a thorough heroine," said Henry, smiling, and pointing to the dagger she wore at her girdle.

"I wear that for ornament—and defence," she said. "I have never had to use it for the latter purpose, and hope I never shall; but this is a wild country, wilder than when it was inhabited by the savages alone, and it is better to be always prepared. It would seem too much for ornament, and not enough for defence; but the former depends upon the taste, and the latter upon one's courage."

As Henry gazed upon the beautiful figure before him, he thought, not incorrectly, that neither of the qualities she had named could be wanting in her character; but he made no further remark at the moment, and both relapsed into silence.

This continued for fifteen or twenty minutes, during which Margaret occupied herself completely with her drawing, in which, by-the-bye, she was not very proficient, and Henry calmly continued his smoking—gazing now at the lovely woman before him, now at the quiet scene beyond the ruins, and anon at the curling wreaths of thin blue smoke, as it floated gracefully and slowly away upon the gentle morning breeze. At the end of the time we have indicated, his attention was suddenly attracted by a low, but shrill whistle, like the note of a young bird, repeated at short intervals four or five times, and apparently coming from the grove immediately south of the Mission. His companion looked suddenly up as the first note struck her ear; but meeting the eye of Henry, she resumed the

pencil which she had dropped, and recommenced her drawing. Without attempting to pry into what did not concern him, he could still not avoid seeing a flush come to her forehead at each repetition of the sound. She seemed distressed that he should have observed her emotion, and with the purpose of relieving her, he made some indifferent remark about the ruins which he saw she was then sketching. To this she answered in a rather agitated manner; and a moment or two afterwards, as the signal (for such he now saw it was) was repeated again, she rose from the table, and hurriedly asking him to excuse her for a few minutes, passed down stairs and disappeared. He saw there was some mystery; but was too thoroughly a gentleman to attempt to explain it. He continued therefore to examine the sketches which she had given him as she hastened away, for some time; when, on coming to one which seemed an unfinished drawing of the scene before him, he looked up and began to compare it with the view. As he cast his eyes round towards the west, he saw a figure, whom he took for Margaret, slowly crossing an open vista in the trees, probably unconscious that she was in sight of the mission. Beside her was the same man whom Henry had seen with her at the Alamo on the preceding evening, and though the distance was near a quarter of a mile, he again thought he had seen the form before. They passed into the grove too quickly, however, to admit a clear sight of him; and recollecting that it did not concern him, he turned away, and continued to examine the drawing.

He was not mistaken in supposing the female figure that of his hostess. She passed rapidly through the lower rooms of the Mission, and issuing from the southern end by a break in the wall, hurried away in the direction of the signal. Rapidly threading the mazes of the forest for one or two hundred yards, she came suddenly upon a little open space, where the ground sloped gradually towards the river, and the sun was excluded by the luxuriant foliage of a large acacia. At the foot of this stood a young man, apparently about seven-and-twenty, considerably above the medium height, elegantly formed, and possessing dark, handsome features. Brown hair, a very black eye, a little sinister in its expression, a straight nose and clear complexion, with a handsome mouth and very white teeth, were the principal features of his physiognomy. Intensely black moustachios and whiskers, their sable hue setting off the whiteness of his teeth, giving them indeed a rather fierce expression, decorated his upper lip and chin. A short rifle was leaning against the tree beside him, and his broad hat was hanging on

a branch above his head, the absence of the latter revealing his luxuriant hair, carefully arranged, and a high, white, and intellectual forehead. He wore also a bowie-knife and a revolving pistol; and like that of the lady who approached him, his waist was bound by a crimson sash, the tassels of which reached to his knee. It confined a graceful hunting-shirt of green and gold; and over his shoulder was thrown in sweeping lines a fine *serape* of corresponding colors. His neatly-fitting boots were ornamented by heavy silver spurs, and a curiously-wrought chain of the same material was thrown across his shoulder, and supported at his side a silver-mounted powder flask. The horse he had ridden—a clean limbed, powerful mustang—was feeding on the sweet grass at a little distance from him, and the trappings were in keeping with the costliness of the rider's costume.

As Margaret entered the little area, he stepped briskly forward, as if to receive her in his arms; but she drew back, and simply extended her hand. He took it with a rather disappointed look, and carried it to his lips.

"I am sorry to see you here, John," were the first words she spoke, "when my father is in danger among those ruffians in the city."

"He is perfectly safe, Margaret," said the other, leading her to the foot of the tree. "Caldwell is with him with a dozen of his men; and when that is so, how could I forego this opportunity of meeting you alone?"

"I know you love me——" she commenced.

"You never could doubt it!" he interrupted; "though you have not always treated me with the confidence I have a right to expect." As he spoke he attempted to place his arm about her waist; but she moved slightly away from him, and intercepting his hand, prevented his doing so.

"And now again!" he exclaimed, angrily withdrawing his hand, and gazing upon her with an eye full of reproach. "How am I to believe you love me, when you treat me with so much suspicion?"

"You mistake me, John," she said, earnestly; "indeed you do! It is not suspicion that makes me treat you thus—very far from it! But you know how I am situated—you know how necessary it is that I should be prudent; and you ought not to expect me to allow the smallest liberty, even to yourself. Were we living in a place peopled by a better society—were my own position less equivocal, and yours more defined, I could not deny you any confidence or freedom consistent with modesty

and prudence. But here, John, as I have told you again and again, you must be governed by the rule I have adopted."

"A very proper rule!" cried he, bitterly; "very proper indeed!" And he rose and walked towards his horse, as if to leave her. She gazed at him for a few moments in evident pain, though it seemed that the pride of her spirit would induce her to let him go. But as usual, love gained the mastery, the struggle was over in a moment, and with a voice in which its power was evident, she called—

"John, you will not leave me thus?"

He stopped as her voice reached him, and turning slowly round, walked back to her side, and looked coldly down into her upturned eyes.

"I would not leave you for worlds, Margaret," he said at last, "if I could stay with you and be happy."

"And why can you not?" she asked, in a low voice.

"Because when with you I meet only distrust," he said, impetuously, "and I would rather be absent, when I can imagine you kind and affectionate, than present to find you cold and suspicious."

"Indeed, I am not cold or suspicious, John!" she said, warmly, and extended her hand. He took it, and seating himself again by her side, with but little resistance placed his arm about her waist, and drew her warmly to his side.

"Why not treat me so always?" he whispered, while a glance, as much of triumph as of love, flashed from his dark eyes.

"I would, John," she said, trembling, "if I could do so with safety."

"Safety!" he exclaimed, drawing her more closely and forcibly pressing his lips to hers. "Do you doubt your safety now?"

She only murmured a hesitating negative; and after an ineffectual struggle to free herself, allowed her head to lie quietly on his shoulder, and received, though reluctantly, the caresses which he showered upon her without intermission. She, however, soon recovered herself—an end to which the ardor of his caresses contributed almost as much as her sense of propriety—and gradually withdrawing herself from his embrace, covered her face with her hands, and sobbed with contending emotions. He attempted to draw her back; but she again intercepted his hand and firmly said:

"John, this must not be repeated. If I am to be your wife, I must go to you more pure than I *could* be, did I permit it

again. Even now I feel——" She was about to say "degraded," but she hesitated.

"Feel what?" said he, again attempting to renew his embrace.

"Hold!" said she, quickly. "You will make me angry. I cannot permit it—you ought not to expect it! If our lips are to meet again, it must be after the law has sanctioned our union."

An almost imperceptible sneer curled his lips as he replied—

"The law of love is the law of God—it has sanctioned it already."

"That sanction," said she, now wholly recovered, "must be given in form as well as in substance. It may be unmaidenly and bold in me to ask when it shall be; and yet I have a right to know. I am tired of the life I have lived so long, and I have become far more so since I have known you. I am unwilling to remain in San Antonio longer than is absolutely necessary. When may I calculate upon leaving it?"

"The business that brought me here——" he commenced.

"You have told me that many times," she interrupted, rather impatiently. "I do not wish to inquire into your private affairs, further than you are willing to tell me without inquiry; but it seems to me this business has kept you unreasonably long."

"It has indeed!" said he. "But I think in the course of one month I shall be able to finish it."

"Then at the end of one month," said she, looking up—

"We will be married," he said; "shall it not be so?"

"If you wish it," she assented.

"You cannot doubt that!" he exclaimed, again placing his arm about her waist. She submitted to the caress he gave her, but immediately afterwards disengaged herself and said—

"Now remember, that is to be the last until——"

"Until I can claim it as a right," he said, smiling, "which I do now."

Her caught her suddenly as he spoke, and held her firmly in his arms, kissing her again and again.

"This is positively too much!" she exclaimed, spring to her feet, with eyes flashing fire.

"Take your dagger and kill me," said he, smilingly, opening his bosom. "I am all yours, and you have a right to do with me as you please."

What woman could withstand an appeal like that? Her look softened at once; and as he rose to his feet and extended

his arms, she suffered him to press her to his bosom as warmly as he wished. He was too good a tactician, however, to risk his advantage, by pressing it too far and too rapidly.

"Do you not believe me now?" he whispered.

"I never doubted you," she answered. "But," she added, slowly withdrawing as he reluctantly permitted, "I must now return to the Mission. Will you not go and spend the day with me?"

"You have some one else there," said John. "Who is he?"

"His name is Glenn, a nephew of my late stepmother, and a very pleasant, though rather taciturn, young man."

"What is he doing here?" asked the other, with a look which indicated no friendly feeling to the subject of his inquiry.

"I know nothing of him, except what I have told you," Margaret replied, "and that he came here, as you know, about midnight, when you and I were in the turret."

"I do not care to meet him, I believe," said 'Van;' and with another attempted embrace, which, however, she resisted, and after making another appointment for the evening, when it was expected Henry would be gone to the city, they parted. Van mounted his horse, and making a considerable circuit to avoid the Mission, galloped along the banks of the river, crossed the ford near Conception, and rode on towards the city. Margaret watched him until he disappeared behind the ruins, and then with a slow, pensive step, took her way back to the Mission.

## CHAPTER V.

I never knew so young a body with so old a head.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

I follow him to serve my turn.—OTHELLO.

To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
And I'll request your presence.—MACBETH.

No sooner had Billy Bates issued, as we have related, from the room in which he had passed the night with Henry, than he was accosted by Margaret, and taken at once to breakfast. When he had finished the agreeable employment of filling a by no means dainty stomach, he was met by the Major, who commanded him to mount and ride with him to San Antonio. Now Billy was not too eagerly inclined to obedience, even in his most amiable moments; and it is therefore probable that rebellion would forthwith have ensued, had not the order jumped precisely with his humor. Indeed, the alacrity with which he set about his preparations, and the anxiety he showed to be in the saddle, might have advertised a duller person than Major Shelton, that his command was only an expression of the young man's wishes. And, though the Major knew nothing of the motives which induced the wish, he had seen enough of Billy's movements on the night before to satisfy him that the boy had thoughts and designs of his own, connected in some way with persons in the city. He, however, made no remark upon the subject, contenting himself with the accession of respect which this discovery gave him for his young companion, and mounted his horse in silence. Billy was not slow in following his example; and seated upon a wiry "mustang," he was soon capering jauntily beside the Major, on his way to the city.

The elder eyed the boy from time to time as they pursued their way, and seemed to be forming an estimate of his character. He, however, said nothing until they had almost reached the ford near Conception; when—probably more in continua-

tion of his scrutiny than for information, for the reader is aware that he already knew who Henry was—he suddenly addressed him with the question—

"Who is your master?"

"One William Bates," said the boy, quickly.

"I am to understand then," rejoined the Major, with a smile, "that you are your own master?"

"Exactly," the boy replied, drawing himself up in the stirrups, as if in conscious dignity. "I accompany Mr. Glenn, it is true; but I follow him only as long as he rides on the path I wish to pursue."

"You are a very independent young man," said the Major, "and I doubt not quite as shrewd as you are independent."

"Pretty well, I thank you," said Billy, with a sort of leer, expressing quite as much shrewdness as the Major had prognosticated.

"You are a good horseman, too," remarked the Major.

"Only tolerable," said Billy. But, as if to belie his own words, at the same moment he drew his reign tight, and sticking his heels into the horse's flanks, made him bound suddenly from the ground, as if taking a ditch with a flying leap.

"Pretty well done," said the Major patronizingly, as he rode cautiously down the still-slippery bank into the river, where Billy's feats of horsemanship were quite out of place. "I doubt not you are quite equal to 'young Harry,' or 'Old Harry' either, for that matter, and are fully prepared

'To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,  
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.'

But you have not yet told me who this Mr. Glenn is."

"Why don't you inquire of himself?" said Billy.

"I have not had time to do that yet," answered the Major, smiling at the boy's caution. "And, besides, you know a man's account of himself is never so complete and reliable, as that given by an intelligent and impartial witness, like yourself."

"May be so," said Billy, looking cunningly at the Major, though still somewhat mollified by the flattery. "But I'll make a bargain with you: I'll tell you all about Henry Glenn—at least all that I know—if you will do the same about the man who was in the belfry with Miss Margaret last night when we landed—I think she called him Van."

"Agreed," said Shelton laughing; "for I suspect my story will be a great deal shorter than yours."

"That depends," said Billy significantly, "upon how far back you know his history. But I will tell you my story first."

He then proceeded, as they rode past the Mission of Conception, to relate such portions of Henry's history as he thought proper, until the death of Eversham.

"Mortimer Eversham!" exclaimed Shelton. "Is he dead?"

"He was shot as I tell you," said Billy.

"Had any one claimed the estate when you left?"

"No one," said Billy. "Eversham had no children, and as far as I know, he had no relative alive. I did hear something of a niece—the daughter of her sister I think——"

"Who was the sole heir?" interrupted Shelton.

"Yes. But it was not known to any one there whether she was alive. She was brought to this country by her father when she was a child, and——"

"And is yet alive," said Shelton, suddenly drawing his rein and turning as if to return to the Mission. A moment's reflection, however, changed his purpose; and striking his spurs into the horse's flanks, he rode on at Billy's side.

"You bring me good news, my lad," said he calmly. "But continue your story."

"There is very little more to tell," said the boy. "Henry Glenn left home soon after his acquittal, and since that time we have been travelling in the southern States, the West Indies, and this country. He is now thinking about returning home, and I think I shall go with him, unless he starts too soon."

"What is this Eversham estate worth?" asked Shelton.

"Fifteen or twenty thousand a year I have heard," said Billy.

"Hump!" said his companion, relapsing into thought, and riding some distance in silence. The youth eyed him for a time as if endeavoring to fathom the depth of interest he seemed to take in Eversham's estate. Billy, as the reader knows, was a shrewd boy naturally, and the view he had had of the world, with Henry Glenn, had by no means dulled his perceptions. It was not long, therefore, before he arrived at a conclusion near the truth, and the discovery, for reasons best known to himself, whetted not a little his curiosity to hear the history Shelton had agreed to tell him. He waited, however, without manifesting his anxiety, until it seemed that his companion had forgotten his promise.

"I have finished my story," he said then, "and yet you have not begun yours."

"What do you want to know?" asked Shelton.

"All you know about this 'Van,' said Billy.

"You deserve a better compensation than that," said the Major, "for the good news you have brought me; for I really know but little about him. Perhaps you know more yourself."

"Perhaps I do," said Billy, returning Shelton's sharp glance with interest. "But you promised to tell me what *you* know."

"Well," said the Major with a smile. "His name is John Van Eaton—he comes from New York—is a young man of some wealth and good family—came to this frontier in search of adventure—has been kept here by various causes for nearly a year—and is now thinking about going home."

"All of which I suppose you have from himself," said Billy.

"Yes," answered Shelton. "What more can you tell me?"

"Nothing," said Billy. "I thought I had seen him before, but I must have been mistaken."

As he spoke he drew his rein suddenly upon the brink of a little stream which crossed the road, and pressing his heels against his horse's flanks, made him spring over it. Shelton looked smilingly at him, fully aware of the purpose for which he was fretting his horse into an uneasy prancing pace; and though he knew from these signs and the boy's manner, that questioning would be in vain, he longed to seek some further information. While he was revolving the means of approaching the subject to some purpose, they turned a point of the low timber and found themselves in the south-eastern suburb of the city. Inwardly resolving to question him again at another time, he abandoned the purpose for the present, and minding his horse's pace, rode briskly along between the river and a row of mean, mud houses, which lined the street upon his right. Having reached the western bank of the river, by crossing the trestle bridge before mentioned, he turned sharply to the right, and rode over the ground traversed by the men in pursuit of him on the preceeding night. Billy continued up the Alameda into the city, and made the best of his way to the "Bexar Hotel." Shelton had directed him to take Glenn's horses and return forthwith to the Mission; but we have intimated before that Billy was not overfond of obedience, except when it lay in his own chosen path; and accordingly, as this command of the Major did not suit his purposes, instead of obeying it, he stabled his horse as hastily as possible, and, avoiding observation by a circuitous route around the hotel,

started at a rapid walk for that part of the city just sought by the Major himself.

As he reached the street upon which stood the scenes of his last night's watching—for Henry was not mistaken when he supposed he saw Billy under the wall—he slackened his pace and walked leisurely along towards the *monte* room. When he came to the last street he had to cross before reaching it, however, he halted and gazed at the house on the opposite corner, alternately watching the door, the window, and a little gate in the high wall. Several persons passed, eying him somewhat suspiciously: interested, perhaps, by the intentness of his watching. Some stopped to observe him, and one even questioned him about his singular employment. Finding this somewhat uncomfortable, and probably convinced that nothing but inconvenience to himself could result from this mode of examination, he shook off the inquisitive passenger and, turning down the cross street, approached the little gate. This he opened without hesitation, and entering, found himself in the trim and well-kept garden, which had attracted Henry's notice on the evening before. Closing the gate behind him and looking cautiously about, he slowly advanced towards the house—pausing, from time to time, and turning his ear in that direction to listen. The crying of a young child attracted his attention to the corner room; and as his eyes fell to the ground, an expression of rage and hatred sat upon his features, such as, it is to be hoped, seldom darkens a face so young. As if decided by the sound, he turned from the path, and crossing an open grass-plot, rapidly approached the door through which the crying was heard. He stopped again on the threshold, while a low plaintive voice, singing a lullaby, came floating through the door, and mingling with the harsher notes of the screaming child. He waited but to hear one strain, and then without hesitation stepped into the room.

A young woman, though faded and careworn, not much beyond twenty, and still retaining a portion of her early bloom, was walking up and down the floor, endeavoring by her singing to quiet the cries of the child she bore in her arms. It was not more than six or eight months old; and it was evident from her assiduity that its nurse was also its mother. Billy recognized her at once; but without moving further than his first step within had taken him, he folded his arms upon his breast and gazed upon her with a look whose rage was distorted by contempt. A very devil seemed to have been born within him; but this was

only the culminating point of the hatred he had always cherished.

"William! My brother!" she exclaimed, as she observed him, eagerly springing forward.

"Keep back!" said he fiercely; and the youthful tones of his voice contrasted strangely with the sternness of his manner. She shrank from him in fear, and, recalled by the direction of his gaze, drew her child suddenly to his breast, and endeavored to hide a crimson blush by bending her head to its face.

"Whose child is that?" demanded her brother. But she gave him no answer.

"Whose child is it, I ask you?" he repeated more violently. "Tell me," he added, stepping forward as if to take it from her. "Tell me, or I will beat out its brains against the wall!"

She shuddered and, clasping the child closer, retreated towards a door which led to another part of the building. But Billy placed himself before her and drew a heavy knife from his breast.

"Brother!" she almost screamed, as she recoiled from the shining blade. "I'll tell you! I'll tell you all about it! O! put away that knife! Do put it away!"

"Whose child is it, I say?" shouted Billy again, seizing her by the arm, and elevating the knife above the child. The latter, quieted by the clamor, gazed wonderingly with its large dark eyes at its frightened mother and the furious boy.

"It is James Glenn's—Oh, put away the knife!" implored Maria, as she endeavored to shield the child with her hands.

"And you married him, did you?"

She was silent.

"Fool!" he exclaimed in that low, half-broken tone, which expresses the very *acme* of contempt; and from this he heaped upon her, in a voice furious with passion, the most opprobrious epithets our vocabulary affords. He seemed on the very point of thrusting his knife either to the heart of the innocent child or in the breast of its unhappy mother, when the door was hastily opened and, pale with excitement, her eyes flashing the fire of intense anger, Fanny Vincent entered! She sprang to Maria's side, and with a grasp confirmed by rage, seized Billy by the wrist with one hand, and dashed the back of the other into his distorted mouth.

"Unhand her, sir!" she commanded, with an imperiousness which unclosed Billy's grasp at once. "Here, sir," she continued, leading him unresisting to the door, and hurrying him, stupified by the suddenness of her interference, and quelled by

the sternness of her manner, towards the gate by which he had entered. Without giving him a moment's pause, she threw it angrily open and thrust him out.

"Begone!" she exclaimed, as she held the gate back for a moment, to give him a look of mingled anger and disgust. "Begone! and never dare to put your unnatural foot within this door again!"

She closed the door sharply in his face.

"The heartless young villain!" she exclaimed, as with heightened color and flashing eyes she walked rapidly back to the house.

Billy's ejection had been so sudden and overpowering, that for several minutes after he found himself in the street, he could scarcely realize the scene that had just been enacted. He still held the knife in a threatening attitude, and the same furious expression, though gradually giving way to astonishment, marked his excited features. He slowly recovered himself, and replacing his knife in his bosom, turned away, muttering curses against James Glenn, and forming plans of vengeance. Billy's was one of those smouldering tempers so often combined with cunning, which, like fire concealed by ashes, never manifests its existence until raked over by some new provocation, or fed by new fuel; but, unlike that fire, it never ceased to burn when the blaze was no longer visible. Such tempers cherish a wrong until they enter the grave; and, with them, vengeance is the very first of duties. Had James Glenn been near, and known the deadly spirit of the youth, his own ruthless nature would have prompted him to a *coup de main*; for he would have seen at once that he could never be safe while the boy lived. James, however, was not there; and Billy smoothed his brow and concealed his knife. Having done so, he took his way quietly back to the hotel.

"Oh, Miss Fanny!" sobbed Maria, as her young mistress re-entered the room, where she was still pacing up and down the floor, endeavoring to quiet the renewed cries of the child; but her agitation prevented further utterance, and her voice choked even in the attempt to sing it asleep. She drew it passionately to her breast, and walked with hurried, uncertain steps from one corner of the room to the other. She had sinned, but she was now bitterly atoning it; and though, with the instinct of her sex, Fanny had been inclined to condemn her, the repentance and distress of the culprit had touched her heart; and her pity was not a little assisted by the active manner in which she had, but a moment before, interfered in her favor.

"Let me take the child, Maria," said she, approaching her; "and do you stop crying, and go and bathe your face. I will see that you are protected from such intrusion hereafter."

Maria hesitated a moment, as if doubtful whether she ought to entrust her charge to another; but gazing into Fanny's face, she observed the compassion, whose presence no woman fails to detect, and with a grateful look, though in silence, she yielded. Fanny took the child in her arms, and using those arts which are natural to her sex, soon pacified its cries, and laid it upon the bed in a deep sleep. She gazed for a few moments on its lovely face, to see that its slumbers were unbroken, and then turning away, disappeared through the inner door.

She was thinner than when we saw her last, and her face wore the paleness of mental suffering. Her eye was not so bright nor her step so elastic; but a corresponding change in her character, so far from detracting from its loveliness, had only added to its force; and the resiliency belonging to all proud natures, had enabled her to regain, after the agitations and griefs of former days, a cheerfulness far more desirable than the levity of mere animal spirits. In the train of misfortune and change had come reflection, and following this dignity, composure, and a more just estimate of life and its objects. She was now possessed of wealth, the desire for which had formerly been so prominent in her character; and with the opportunity, she had gained the disposition calmly to compare its advantages with what she might have lost, indeed was willing to give up, for its possession. "The circumstances of her early life, the course of her education, perhaps a constitutional bias, had led her to over-value all that comes with money. She had been taught, almost literally, that nothing was worth striving for but luxurious ease and high social position; and that these could only be procured by wealth. That wealth she now possessed; and, perhaps, as much because of the exaggeration of these lessons, as from any want of realization in the opulence itself, the possession was a disappointment. She soon learned—a lesson known to but few who are not rich—that one may be at the same moment very wealthy and very miserable; and that there were other, and better, and higher, and nobler ends in life than the ease brought by money, or the social position which is a consequence of its possession.

With the discovery that wealth was unsatisfying, came back memories of what would have been amply sufficient for her happiness. She had never heard of the circumstances under

which Henry Glenn had been acquitted, or of the events which followed the trial; but of the acquittal itself she had heard, and (from Maria) she had learned in Galveston that James Glenn was in Texas. In reviewing her own actions, and the course of events which had estranged her from Henry, by the light of a better nature she had sometimes thought his actions susceptible of explanation upon another supposition than that he did not love her; and the pleasure which the thought gave her sufficiently attested his interest in her heart. James's baseness towards Maria had opened her eyes to his unscrupulous nature, more fully than had been done by her discovery of his designs upon herself; and though she was at a loss to connect him with the transactions, she could not help believing that her misfortunes and Henry's estrangement were in some manner attributable to him. Henry had been acquitted of the murder of Eversham she knew; the inference was that he had found means to prove his innocence: if he had been falsely accused in that, why might she not have been mistaken in other things? In a word, she had reasoned herself into the belief that Henry was innocent, wronged, and still loved her; and that if she could see him once more, all would be explained, and both would be again happy. The appearance of Billy Bates, who had borne so prominent a part in the mystery and misfortunes which had ended so unhappily, renewed all these thoughts; and when, after quieting Maria's child, she retired from the room, it was to seek her own chamber, which overlooked the garden, and there, leaning upon the sill of the bay-window, and gazing out upon the goodly scene of river, rocks and ruins, to indulge once more a dream which had of late become the leading vision of her fancy.

A few minutes before she took her station there, Major Shelton had ridden along the river bank in the rear of the garden, and passing through the gate out of which he had escaped on the night preceding, had piquetted his horse in a thicket near by. He was pacing quietly up and down one of the neglected walks, and halting from time to time to gaze towards the house, now closed and silent, or to look thoughtfully over the wall into the clear water, as it rushed merrily sparkling past the gravelly bank. He was evidently waiting for some one; for at each successive look he cast towards the house, increasing impatience was visible in his face. But it was plain, also, that he had more serious thoughts than those which pertained to his appointment; for he relapsed at short intervals into deep reflection—indulging memory, perhaps, or imagination, or more pro-

bably both, in mingled retrospection and anticipation. He was reviewing his life, and forming plans for its reformation. But he was unaccustomed to any but rapid and decisive thought; the shades of past errors, as they slowly rose before his fancy, chafed him into consciousness; and, at each recollection of himself, he turned sharply to the house and looked eagerly at its still closed doors. At last, when his patience was well nigh exhausted, and he had made a stride towards his horse with the intention of riding off, he heard the door creak upon its hinges, and on turning again, beheld the man for whom he had been waiting. It was Burrel, whom he had saved from drowning, and whom he had on that morning started from the Mission at the same time at which he had himself set out. The man approached him with a downcast look, which perhaps expressed more shame for his failure than repentance for his crime.

"You have been very slow, Jack," said Shelton, as the man came near, "I have been waiting quite an hour."

"I had to leave my horse at the hotel," said Burrel, humbly, "and walk from thence here."

"Well, no matter," said the Major. "I appointed a meeting here in order to gain time for reflection; and, luckily perhaps for you, I have heard news which has wholly changed my purpose."

Burrel looked inquiringly at him, but said nothing.

"The news does not concern you," continued Shelton; "and on the subject of our appointment I have but a few words to say. I agreed to give you one thousand dollars to take out the 'queens' from Ellis's cards; you thought this a good bargain then; but when you found the bank and my purse so much larger than you expected, you concluded you would fare better by dividing with others both my money and that of Ellis."

Burrel attempted to speak, but Shelton stopped him, and continued:

"Now I might at the least refuse to give you your wages; for your attempt on my life wipes out all obligations. But even your villainy shall not make me break my word; and as I intend to restore to Ellis all I won of him by that trick, I shall have to pay you out of my own pocket. Here is the money; take it, fool; don't affect any ridiculous scruples with *me*; for I know your very heart leaps to get possession of it."

"And now," he continued, as Burrel humbly took the money, "to-night I intend to deal *monte* myself; and as it will be the last time I shall play, I want to see all those with whom I have

heretofore been associated at my table. I shall deal at the Mission—will you come?"

Burrel assented, and after a few words, whose humor manifested his contempt, Shelton mounted his horse and rode away into the city.

## CHAPTER VI.

The sun begins to gild the western sky.—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

I will hear further reason for this.—OTHELLO.

I'll have her, but I will not keep her long.—RICHARD III.

The time 'twixt six and now,

Must by us both be spent most preciously.—TEMPEST.

HENRY had occupied himself during the day in wandering about the ruins, exploring the recesses of the forest, and in sitting listlessly upon the bank of the river. Margaret had forgotten her engagement to take him on a fishing excursion; indeed, he had seen but little of her after her return from the rendezvous of the morning. The Major had arrived a little after noon, and was busy from that time in preparations for his guests. He had given a general invitation in the city to such of his associates as he met, and had then hastened home to apprise his daughter of their, or rather her, change of fortune. The reader is already aware that she was sole heiress of Eversham's estate, being the daughter of his only sister; and though this sudden accession of wealth could not have failed to affect any one, it gave her even more satisfaction than might have been expected. Yet it was not the wealth itself which gave her so much pleasure—far from it. She had long been weary and disgusted with the life she led; and she disliked it especially on account of her father. She saw him growing day by day more attached to companions and pursuits which were inimical to honor and happiness; and she longed for the means to rescue him. He had led a floating, uncertain life, as far back as she could remember; and even within her recollection, she could observe the gradual deepening of the traits which made

him reckless and eccentric. Whatever truth, therefore, there may have been in Shelton's general remark, that even women become attached to the life of a frontier town like San Antonio, his daughter was certainly an exception. The Major, though he loved her with a genuine parental affection, in reality knew but little about her—a circumstance accounted for (if ignorance of a child in the parent needs any explanation) by the careless nature of his habits. So far, then, from being unwilling to leave the scenes of such society, it was in fact the first desire of her heart; and it was with spirits more elated than the Major expected that she received his communication. Here were the means of escape from the disgusting contact of black-legs and plunderers, who made up the body of her father's associates; and above all, here were the means of rescuing him from a life which could only be precarious while it continued, and would probably have a violent end.

Her father desired her to assist in his preparations; and though they were principally arrangements to receive such men as we have indicated, it was for the last time, and she obeyed him with an alacrity which he did not fully understand.

Henry left her about sunset, giving the finishing touches to these preparations, and taking a cigar, strolled up the spiral stairway which ascends in the south-west angle of the building, to the massive, square belfry. From this he looked out upon one of the loveliest of those quiet scenes so often met in prairie lands. Looking over the tops of the trees in his immediate vicinity, he could see the level or slightly undulating country, stretching away in the distance, bounded only by the haze which hung upon the far horizon. A waving prairie, with here and there a strip of timber venturing out upon its waste, or a solitary grove gathered together, as it were with the instinct of companionship in a lonely place, lay green and lovely in the evening sunlight. Towards the north a broad belt of timber, enclosing in its winding precincts the noble San Antonio, extended as far as the eye could reach, broken only at the city, whose single tower (that of the church of San Fernando,) shone pure and white against the living green beyond. Here and there, where the timber was thin or low, or where a straight reach opened a vista, could be caught a glimpse of the white water of the river; and along its banks, adding to the loneliness of the scene, were standing many piles of crumbling ruins. Two or three sparkling streams came winding like silvery serpents through the grass; and along their banks were standing tenantless ranches, with broken enclosures and neg-

lected fields; or solitary trees, like travellers halting, bewildered, in a desert. Towards the west, the undulating prairie was bounded by the heavy timber along the Medina; and behind this, with his blood-red face clearly defined in the mellow haze, the autumn sun was slowly sinking away. There was not a sign of wind upon the landscape, excepting here and there a little eddy in the grass, waving spirally the graceful blades, and dying out into the general calm. The sky was cloudless, and of that deep, holy blue, seen in a southern clime, fading, however, towards the horizon into a faint green, and terminated by a band of deepening orange. There was no sound, except the murmuring of the river, rising soft and low among the trees, and losing, as it came to be diffused upon the upper air, all traces of its origin.

Henry sat upon the parapet and gazed in silence out upon the lovely scene; and trooping through his mind came all the melancholy fancies which the time and place were fitted to inspire. It scarcely need be said that his reflections were personal to himself and to one other; or that they partook of the subdued and pensive spirit of the view around him. The profound stillness—the air of repose—the deep solitude—though he had forgotten all, mingled with and tinged his every thought.

He was aroused from his reverie by the noise of two or three horsemen riding into the court below; and at the same moment he heard a light footstep ascending the stair.

"You have chosen a good retreat," said Margaret, as she perceived him on entering the belfry.

"The company below," said Henry, "I suppose, will soon be past climbing even into bed, much less this stairway."

"No," Margaret replied; "drunkenness is not at all common among them; indeed sobriety is almost their only virtue."

"And," rejoined Henry, recalling what Shelton had told him, "even that ceases to be a virtue, when it is only practised in order to keep a clear head for villainous thoughts."

"Sobriety is to be commended," said she, "whatever be its motive; though there is certainly truth in what you say."

"What does your father mean," asked Henry, as they strolled out upon the roof and across to the eastern side of the building, "by saying that he meets these men to-night for the last time?"

"He means simply what he says," she replied. "In three days we shall leave San Antonio for the States."

"You have heard some news from thence?"

"Yes—news which *you* might have told us, had you been so

disposed. At all events, no man knows it better than you do."

"You mean the death of your uncle, and your succession to his estate? I might have told you, it is true; but my connection with that affair was not such as to make me fond of speaking of it."

"We had heard of it before, though but partially, said she; and yesterday when we first saw you, were waiting the return of a messenger who had undertaken to go to Seguin for us. He arrived while you and father were exploring the ruins."

"And what news did he bring?" asked her companion.

"Not anything decisive," she replied. "The gentleman whom he saw had heard of my uncle's marriage, but not of his death, though he had been there within a few weeks; and the inference was that the whole story was a mistake."

"The informant," said Henry, "either never was in the place, or else grossly deceived your messenger, without any conceivable motive. Or, perhaps, the messenger himself——"

"That supposition is not admissible," said she quickly.

"If I knew what interest he might have in keeping you here, I could form a better opinion," said Henry; for vague, undefined suspicions began to enter his mind.

"It is not necessary that you should form any opinion at all," said she, somewhat sharply, turning away and gazing, as she spoke, along the road, which was fast fading in the twilight. While she looked, a party of five or six horsemen issued from the shadows a few hundred yards in front and rode towards the great gateway. One of them, whom Henry thought he recognized as Margaret's companion of the morning, fell gradually behind; and, as his comrades entered the court-yard, turned sharply off to the left, and disappeared in the direction of the river. A few minutes elapsed, during which the noise of arrival in the court gradually subsided, and Margaret walked a little apart from him, towards the southern end of the building. As the guests entered the rooms and silence reigned again, Henry suddenly heard the same bird-call which had summoned Margaret in the morning, repeated four or five times in the thicket to the east of the Mission. As the sound reached her ear Margaret turned towards him.

"Do you intend to remain here during the evening?" she asked.

"What do you advise?"

"It will perhaps be better," she answered, "to show yourself for a time, at least, in the room with the company. Some of

them know you are here, and your absence might be misconstrued."

"You will not be visible, I suppose?" said he.

"I have no taste for such company," she replied, as she walked towards the belfry, "and therefore always avoid it."

"You will not be invisible to me?" he asked. "I can find you after I shall have paid my respects to the company?"

"You are one of the guests of the house," she replied, "and I fear must be included in the same category."

"Do you apply the rule——" He stopped, conscious that he was about to commit an impropriety. But she "took him up."

"I apply the rule to all," she said, with some emphasis, "with such limitations and exceptions as I think proper to make."

The call from the thicket was repeated again as she spoke, and, without further remark, she disappeared down the stairway.

The shades of evening were rapidly closing in; the view became more limited, and the woods darkened to a mere undefined shadow on the horizon. As the light faded out in the west, a faint glimmering became visible in the east; and soon the yellow moon, moving slowly like a heavy-laden argosy, rose from the horizon, and, growing paler as the sunlight disappeared, sailed proudly up the diamond-studded heavens, until 'the pale deluge' floated wide upon the peaceful scene, and 'the whole air was whitened'

\*  
'with a boundless tide  
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.'

Henry walked pensively up and down the roof, or leaned over the battlements, and gazed out upon the lovely scene. The stillness was occasionally broken by the noise of a new party of revellers, their loud voices and ringing footsteps. But these became gradually fewer, and finally they ceased. All had arrived and entered; and the scene without was left to the undisturbed dominion of silence,—broken only now and then by the impatient stamping of a picketed horse, or a loud laugh, mellowed as it rose, from the rooms below. This ceased as the interest of the play deepened; and then the low whispering of the gentle night-wind could be heard, or the ghost-like rustling of the leaves; while, to the music of the night, the murmuring of the ever-flowing river played a quiet bass, subdued and low.

Henry was unwilling to leave a scene so lovely for the crowd

which he knew awaited him below; and even when, urged by the lapse of more than an hour, he stepped into the belfry, intending to go down, he lingered still: so little was his mind attuned to aught but meditation. At last, however, a laugh louder than usual recalled his wandering thoughts; and turning with a sigh he slowly descended and sought the room where the guests were assembled.

In the mean time, Margaret had run hastily down the stairway and, passing round the front of the Mission, sought the wood which grew between it and the river. Climbing the piles of rubbish which had once been a wall, she descended for a short distance to the edge of an old canal, and turned down its grassy bank. A few steps brought her to the foot of a large, old tree; and here, as she expected, she was received by her lover. He at once drew her to him and passionately kissed her: a proceeding which she resisted, though but faintly. It would be vain to repeat their conversation, could we even do so literally; let it be sufficient that it was such as lovers' conversations usually are, except that Van Eaton's manner was more encroaching, and his expressions more sophisticated, than was entirely consonant with genuine love. This Margaret did not realize; though she several times checked his freedom, and once even threatened to leave him. Warm protestations and a certain laughing manner, which made her ashamed of taking him too seriously, always overcame her resolution, and, too well pleased to let a slight thing part them, she remained with him nearly an hour. She told him of the sudden change of fortune to herself, certain that the news would be welcome to him as to her—since he had several times hinted pecuniary difficulties as a reason for delaying their marriage. He received the communication in silence and without surprise,—a manner as unexpected to Margaret as insane joy could have been. It never occurred to her, however, that he had known of the circumstances for a long time, and that he had an interest in keeping the knowledge from those best entitled to it. Indeed, she gave the subject no thought,—satisfied, as every truly loving woman is, that her lover had reasons, good and sufficient as well as honorable, for everything he did. And besides, after her communication of her father's resolution, to set out in a few days for the States, she observed even more warmth in his manner, more fondness in his bearing; and this alone was enough to disarm suspicion, had any entered her mind. The near approach of their separation, he said, was all that affected him in the matter; for he loved her equally, rich or poor. And even that would not be

very serious, for in a month or two he would be at liberty to follow her, and then they would be married.

She silently assented, and suffered him to draw her closer to his bosom, where, however, she remained but a few moments.

"Come," said she, raising her head and disengaging herself, "you must go into the house—your absence will be observed."

"You will see me again after a while?" he asked.

"Perhaps so," she answered, endeavoring to escape from him.

"But you must go."

"Not till you promise to see me again, when I have blessed these fellows with my presence long enough," he said, retaining his hold upon her.

"Well, well," she said, "I will think about it. If any opportunity should offer, perhaps I will."

"That will never do," said he, laughing. "Promise me."

"I promise," she said at last; "but you are really too unreasonable."

"I am unreasonably fond of being with you," said he. "But you must remember how soon we are to be separated. Where and at what hour shall I see you?"

"In the belfry at nine o'clock—there, that will do. You must go—indeed you must—I'll not meet you——"

He stifled her utterance with a warm caress, and at last, bidding her adieu for an hour or two, turned up the canal and disappeared. She was unwilling, in her state of mind, to return to the house,—knowing what company she could not avoid meeting, and perhaps, finding in the stillness and beauty of the night, a spirit more in unison with her feelings. She crossed the canal and, approaching the river bank, seated herself upon a pile of crumbling stone, where the shadows of the thicket and the close underbrush would hide her completely from the view of any chance passenger. Resting her head upon her hand she fell into thought, pleasant and deep; and so motionless was her posture, that one might have stood quite near her, and thought her form but a part of the grey and mossy ruin.

Her lover entered the house, and cautiously approached the door through which the light was shining, and within which many men were engaged in such amusements as were in vogue among them. The principal point of interest was a table at which Shelton sat, "dealing monte," with Burrel for his *croupier*; and around him were grouped the most of the company. Among them were Henry Glenn and Tom Hartner, with Ellis the banker, to whom Shelton had restored the money won of him on the night before, and who was now losing it again with

almost equal rapidity. Neither Henry nor Hartner was playing, though both looked on with the interest which always accompanies such appeals to chance. The Ranger, however, did not seem so much interested as usual. He turned at short intervals to survey the crowd around him, and seemed disappointed at each examination, as if he failed to find some one for whom he was looking. He turned thus soon after Van Eaton approached the door; and seeing his eyes bent upon him, he nodded slightly and, soon afterwards, turned from the table and strolled leisurely out. On the corridor the two worthies met, and without speaking, walked down to the court-yard and passed round the front of the Mission. Taking the same path followed by Margaret an hour before, they crossed the broken wall, and followed the course of the little canal almost to the river. Margaret heard them coming, and would have moved; but perceiving that they were on the opposite side of the canal, though only a few feet from her, and unwilling to betray her presence to such men as she supposed them, she sat still. They approached still closer, till they were only concealed from her view by the willows which grew along the margin of the water.

"We are far enough, certainly," said Hartner, halting suddenly where Margaret could have touched him with one of the willow wands.

"It is a very fit place, too," answered Van, whose voice Margaret immediately recognized, as she had that of his companion. "I have held another conference in this neighborhood to-night, which might have come to something, had I not been forced to seek you."

"A conference with Margaret, I suppose," said Hartner. "When are you to be married? Not soon, I hope?"

"Not if I can secure her without," coolly replied the other; "and that I think I can soon do. I have already taken the outworks, and shall prosecute the siege vigorously."

"What is there about her so attractive?" asked the Ranger. "I've seen many a prettier girl than she, on this frontier."

"You measure beauty by complaisance, I think, Tom," said Van; "and, to say the truth, it is not a very bad standard. But, you know, most things in this world are valued in proportion to the difficulty of their attainment: and I have had a devil of a time in pursuit of this girl."

"And do you think you will succeed at last?" asked the Ranger.

"If she remains three days in this neighborhood, and does

not smoke my designs, I have not a doubt of it," said Van. "But we forget the object of our meeting."

Every syllable of this atrocious conversation had fallen distinctly and crushingly upon the ears of Margaret! Every word entered like iron into her soul; and without strength to move, bereft even of the power of utterance, she sat as motionless as the ruins which supported her! She was all ear—no other sense was active—she could neither see nor feel—she could only hear! All love was crushed out of her heart, and in its stead came a burning thirst for revenge! But even of this she was not conscious—she knew nothing except what she heard!

"Your men are here I see," continued Van.

"Six of them are," said Hartner; "the most resolute of the band. But you know I never move in an affair of this sort without first knowing a why and a wherefore. Tell me then candidly and fully the reasons why you want to dispose of this—what is his name?"

"Glenn—Henry Glenn," answered the other.

"Well, go on now, and tell my all about it."

"He is in my way," said Van; "is not that sufficient between friends?"

"No," Hartner answered. "I never go blindfold into anything; and unless I know precisely, and from the beginning, all the circumstances, you must give up my assistance. What I do in this matter, I do as the captain of a company of Regulators, the conservators of the peace of the frontier; and though I am not very scrupulous about reasons, etc., I must always know what I am doing."

"Well," said Van, after a pause, as if yielding reluctantly to the demand, and recalling the circumstances to be detailed; "we have not much time to lose, and I suppose the shortest way is to tell you the whole story."

Hartner nodded without speaking, and Van continued—

"You have seen the young girl who has lately come with her father to reside in the house next to Ellis's Bank?" The ranger nodded again. "Well," continued Van, "that girl was once engaged to be married to a cousin of mine, and that cousin is no other than this Henry Glenn."

"Your name is Glenn then, and not Van Eaton," said Hartner, quietly.

"Yes," said James, for he it was. "A sort of rivalry grew up between him and me, in which I got the better in this: I obtained from the messenger letters which were passing be-

tween them, and by retaining some and delivering others, with such alterations and emendations as were best, I succeeded in wholly estranging them. I thought I was now safe; but imagine my mortification when I found that I had only deprived him of the prize to throw it into the arms of another—an old peacock, who was uncle to Mag Shelton.

"That was a good joke, to say the least," laughed Hartner.

"There was very little joking in the matter, as you will presently see," said James. "I could not stand that, but immediately set about rebuilding my house. I will not detail the whole story; let it suffice that I formed a plan by which I was to rid myself of both rivals at once—to put one absolutely out of the way, and to ruin the prospects of the other by having him accused (at least) of the deed. Time rolled on, and the day set for the marriage had almost arrived, before I could bring my artillery to bear. At last, however, on the night before the day appointed, I got Henry to arrange a meeting with her, and then apprized her bridegroom-expectant of the appointment. My object was to bring him, at the moment of his death, to the place where it could be proven that Henry was. I then so managed as to insure that Henry should not be there—failing in the very nick of time, after sundry persons had been witnesses to his preparations."

"And you went in his place," suggested Hartner, as James paused.

"About that we will say nothing," James replied, significantly. "It was enough that there was *somebody* there in his stead—that the bridegroom, that was to be, was true to time and place—that an affray took place, and that the bridegroom was killed."

He paused for a few moments, and then went on more rapidly.

"The next day Henry was arrested upon the verdict of a coroner's jury, for murder; various witnesses appeared against him, among whom was the young lady herself, who supposed it was Henry whom she had met. There was, however, a leak somewhere; and before the end of the trial I discovered that he must be acquitted, and, in a word, that I had better be off while I might. I came to this country—Henry was acquitted—and about the same time the Vincents, father and daughter, came here also. They are now in San Antonio, and this cousin of mine is here after her."

"What brought them to Texas?" asked Hartner.

"The death of some relative who died very rich; they came here to take possession of his property."

"And it is that property that you want," said Hartner.

"In part," said James, "though I wanted the girl before she had the property. For that matter, the death of her uncle has made Mag Shelton rich in her own right——"

"But," said Hartner, laughing, "it would not be convenient for you to go the States after her property."

"Precisely," said James. "Nor do I wish *her* to go until——"

"And so forth," said Hartner, laughing, as James hesitated. "Well, now, do you think you can get the girl if this man is put out of the way?"

"I am certain of it," said James. "There is some slight dissatisfaction with me now, on account of a little affair which occurred some months ago; but if Henry is once out of the way that can be easily smoothed over."

"Well," said Hartner, after a pause, "suppose then my men 'lynch' him; so that he will no longer be in your way, whatever plunder they get from him is theirs; now what advantage am I to derive from the affair?"

"He has two fine horses," answered James, "which will fall to your lot——"

"You forget," interrupted Hartner. "One of those horses is to be claimed and sworn to by Barton, and will of course fall to him as his property."

"You have so arranged it then?" said James. "Well, then the other will be yours, besides whatever amount of money you may find among his baggage; and as soon as I have secured the girl I will pay you ten thousand dollars."

"But suppose you fail in getting her?" said Hartner.

"But I tell you I shall *not* fail, said James, impatiently. "If I cannot get her by fair means, I can use force, can't I?"

"Certainly," said Hartner, laughing. "If you are resolved to have her, willing or not, you will certainly succeed."

"I am resolved," said James, firmly.

"Well," said Hartner, "let us set about it immediately."

The hopeful pair walked away, leaving Margaret almost stupefied by what she had heard. But the necessity for instant action forced her to summon back her thoughts. She slowly raised her head and painfully rose to her feet. Her knees trembled as she stood up, and the perspiration stood in sparkling drops upon her forehead. But there was a fierce gleam in her eye, and a firm, stern expression on her compressed lips,

which told more plainly still of the conflict within. She threw out her hands as if to feel her way, and her steps were tottering and uncertain. She paused, and stamped impatiently upon the ground, and set her teeth hard against each other. The effort of will brought back her strength, and she walked firmly and hastily towards the house. She had gone but a few paces, however, and was about to cross the canal, when her progress was suddenly stopped by some one stepping out from the thicket, and placing himself directly before her. It was Billy Bates.

"So! you have been listening too, have you?" he said, sneeringly. "I thought I was the only one here, who had sense enough to expect evil to come from the Devil!"

"Have you heard what these men have said?" she asked, at once resolving to use him in compassing her meditated vengeance.

"Every word of it," said Billy.

"And will you assist me in my revenge?" she demanded.

"Will *you* assist *me*?" asked Billy.

"Have you anything to revenge upon James Glenn?"

"I have," returned he in a low voice.

"Then you are my brother," she said eagerly. "Let us go to the house and be avenged at once!"

"Stop!" exclaimed the boy, as she grasped his arm and started rapidly off. "You promised to meet him in the belfry at nine o'clock; if you will just show me the way to it, and put Henry Glen in some place where he will be safe from these cut-throats, you shall have a vengeance that shall satisfy you perfectly."

"Will you bring him there to me," she asked.

"I will," answered Billy, "if you will show me the way."

"Come, then," she said, retaining her hold of his arm as if fearful of losing him, and hurrying toward the Mission. She took him to the foot of the stairway and pointed up it; then turning led him to the door of the room where the guests were assembled.

"Send Henry to me immediately," she said, and pushed him in.

Billy was not long in obeying her direction. He sought Henry out and whispered to him that Margaret was waiting at the door. He passed out without speaking, and followed her to the foot of the often-mentioned stairway. Taking him up about half way, she hastily explained the reasons of her

action, and touching a spring swung back a narrow door and hurried him in.

"Stay there now," she said, "till I call you out." She closed the door and hastily ascended to the belfry. Henry found himself in a little gallery overlooking the nave of the church, from which there was no escape; whose existence, indeed, would not have been suspected even on close examination. Here we must leave him.

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## CHAPTER VII.

"Bring in the evidence."—LEAR.

"It's nine o'clock."—RICHARD III.

"Ten masts at each make not the altitude,  
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell."—LEAR.

"So, good night unto you all."—MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

A GREAT commotion arose in one end of the room; evidently something either had happened, or was about to happen. The crowd were collecting about a small man, with pale blue eyes, a very thin nose, and enormous mouth, and were assisting him to work himself into a passion. Shelton gathered up his cards and money and came forward.

"What is all this," he demanded.

"Barton says he lost a horse a few days ago from the Brazos Bottom, and found him to-night in your refectory stable."

"What horse is it?" the Major asked, turning to Barton.

"Dark bay, sixteen hands high, black mane and tail, and one forefoot white," Barton answered glibly, pulling nervously at the lappets of his buckskin hunting-shirt, and seeking the face of every one but Shelton.

"Which forefoot is white?" the Major demanded quickly.

The man hesitated, and Shelton smiled in his face; but he made a desperate effort and answered, "The near one."

"You are willing to be sworn of course?" said the Major.

"Of course! of course!" was echoed from half a dozen voices.

"Señor Martinez," who had been an *Alcalde* in the days of Mexican supremacy, and even yet executed some of his functions, when permitted or required by the people, was now called; and a brisk little man in a light *poncho* answered with alacrity to the summons.

The detection of a horse-thief among these men, a large part of whose property was of this kind, was of more consequence than the apprehension of a murderer and the news that a neighbor's horse had been stolen always created a greater excitement, than the announcement that the neighbor himself had been waylaid and shot. Accordingly, when it was said that a theft had been committed, that the offender had been traced and his booty discovered, the interest at once overcame even that of gaming; and when it was whispered that the young stranger was the malefactor, it increased in depth most rapidly. For this announcement was no small relief to all the gentry there assembled; because so long as the thief was unknown, no one could be sure that the crime would not be fixed upon some one of his nearest friends. Against a stranger all could unite; and accordingly when Señor Martinez advanced to administer the oath to Barton, the crowd gathered still closer, the clamor ceased, and the interest became breathless. Barton swore to the statement he had made, describing the horse as he had done to Shelton, and saying that he had just discovered him among the horses in the "Refectory stable."

"What does all this mean, Van?" asked Shelton in a low tone of James, who stood aloof, taking no part in the excitement, but encouraging it by an occasional well-considered word.

"You are as wise as I am," said James with a shrug. "Hartner says a crime has been committed, which it is his duty to punish, and you hear what Barton says."

"No man who knows Barton believes that he ever owned such a horse," said the Major, positively.

"Then it promises to be somewhat to his advantage, that he is a stranger to most of the company," said James, smiling and turning away, too intent upon the proceeding, to listen further even to the Major.

"And that villain wants—nay, expects—to marry Mag!" thought Shelton, looking after him with no equivocal expression of contempt.

"Tom," he said, as Hartner approached him after listening to Barton's oath, "the horse that Barton claims belongs to a friend of mine, for whose honesty I can vouch; and," he con-

tinued, raising his voice, "he has sworn to a certain description. Now, let the company remain here while you and I go to examine the horse, taking Barton with us to point him out. For," he added in a lower voice, "if my memory serves me, he has made a mistake about the white foot."

Hartner assented, though coldly; but before they left the room he turned suddenly and said—

"It is but proper, Major, that I should require the presence of your friend also, in order that he may not escape the punishment due him, if we find him guilty."

"Certainly," said Shelton. "He is here—or, at least, was here but a few moments ago."

"He is not now, however," said Hartner, with a sneer. "Come, let us search for him first. Regulators!" he shouted, "the bird has flown! Let every true man assist in the pursuit! Major, this speaks little for his innocence."

A great tumult again arose among the company, nearly all of whom rushed at once, with clashing cries and discordant counsels, upon the corridor. A cry was raised, "Look to the horses!" and like a flock of sheep, moved by a common impulse, the crowd rushed down stairs and out to the stables and thickets.

"He has not left the house, Tom," said James, whispering to Hartner as he walked past him; and, taking the hint, in five minutes the Regulator captain had the whole Mission surrounded and guarded. Those who had gone to the stables, finding their horses safe, came back one by one, each in a high state of excitement, and all anxious to assist in the apprehension of the fugitive. Each reported himself at once to Hartner, the recognized captain, and was without delay assigned to some portion of the duty. A systematic search was soon organized and commenced; the crowd rushing first to the rooms occupied by the family, then spreading themselves over the deserted portions of the building; and rushing tumultuously into the body of the church, clamoring loudly for the fugitive. Hartner placed a guard, by James's advice, at several doors, and himself stood at the foot of the staircase, having learned that Henry had been seen to go in that direction. James took a station near him, watching the progress of the search, and apparently waiting for some announcement. While he stood thus, with his hat drawn over his brow and his arms folded in a *serape*, he suddenly felt the corner of the latter pulled by some one who stood close beside him.

"You have forgotten me, haven't you?" said Billy Bates, as James turned suddenly upon him.

"O, no!" said James. "I knew you were here, and wanted to have seen you. Where have you been?"

"I have been in the city," said Billy, "until about an hour ago. Do you want to see me now?"

"Yes," said James. "Come a little this way."

Billy followed him a few steps from Hartner, and made a movement to go further; but James stopped him.

"This is far enough," said he. "And now I want to know whether you are willing to serve me for a good reward."

"Did I ever betray you?" asked Billy.

"Not so far as I know," said James; "and if you are disposed to be equally faithful now, I will make your fortune."

"I will stand by you to the death," said the boy significantly. James thought he detected a tone of irony in his voice, and remembered some passages of yore; but, though the moon was shining brightly in the east, the shade where they stood was too deep to allow of very close scrutiny.

"Well," said he, after a pause, "I will trust you as I have always done." He paused again, as if doubtful of the step he was about to take. "Did you come to San Antonio with Henry?" he then asked.

"Yes," said Billy; "but I shall follow him no further."

"You brought his horses down for him," said James.

"His horses!" said Billy. "I thought one of them belonged to Barton."

"So it does," said James, with a smile. "I suppose you can testify to it, can't you?"

"If necessary," said Billy. "But I would rather serve you in some other way."

Again James thought he recognized the irony of former times; but without remarking upon it, he replied:

"Well, go now up that staircase to the roof, and seek out Henry, if he is there, and then return to me."

"What shall I say to him?" asked Billy.

"Anything at all," said James. "My object is to ascertain that he is there. Go, and be back as soon as possible."

Billy obeyed without speaking, and passed up the stairway, while James returned to Hartner, and addressed him:

"That boy," said he, "is an acquaintance of mine, and will be of service to us in some of our operations."

Tom shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows.

"That boy," he said, "has the devil in him, I'll be sworn; and if you will take my advice, you'll not trust him."

"You are a quick judge of character, I know, Tom," said

James; "and you are not far wrong about Billy's. But I have had some experience of his usefulness, and can employ him to a good advantage."

"Very well," replied Hartner. "I suppose you know him best; but I still advise you to be careful."

"I never was anything else," James answered; and a moment afterwards, Billy reappeared at the bottom of the stair and beckoned James to him.

"He is up there, safe enough," he whispered.

"You saw him, then?"

"Yes: he is at the south end of the roof."

"Why, you had not time to go there!" exclaimed James.

"I did not want to go there," said Billy. "Miss Margaret told me it was he, and that he could not get down; I thought that was all you wanted to know."

"So it was," replied James. "And Margaret is up there, is she?"

"She is in the belfry," said the boy, "and told me to tell you that it is nine o'clock, and to send you up."

James passed in without speaking, and walked slowly up the stair, leaving Billy at the door below. As he reached the belfry he found Margaret standing on the eastern side of it, and sprang towards her to take her in his arms.

"Stand back, villain!" she commanded, in a low, stern voice; "unless you want to feel the point of this steel!" and as she spoke, the dagger she wore gleamed goldily in the moonlight.

"Margaret——"

"Silence, wretch!" she again commanded, and stood looking calmly into his blanched face, without speaking a word further.

"Margaret——" he again commenced, but she interrupted him.

"Silence, I say, and listen to me! I sent for you here to kill you; does your conscience tell you for what?"

James put his hand to a pistol at his belt.

"Never fear," she continued, observing the motion, and growing more calm. "You need not handle your arms—I would not stain my hand with the blood of such a miscreant!"

"You have changed your mind then?" said he, with a scoff.

"Changed my mind? Yes—I will not show you even so much mercy as to take your life!"

"One might suppose so," said James, with a sneer, which developed all the devilishness of his face. She looked at him with an expression of mingled hate and scorn, but made no other reply

"Is this all you wanted of me here?" he asked, after enduring her look until it made him uneasy and ashamed.

"This is all," she said, calmly. "I wished to see how contemptible a detected villain looks; and I have it to my perfect satisfaction before me. I am glad now that I did not kill you at the moment of meeting, for then I would have lost this most comical sight! How elegantly at ease you are! What a consolation it must be to one so abased to have 'a conscience void of all offence!' Don't you wish the earth would open and swallow you up, or the mountains fall down upon you, and bury you from the sight of man?"

"She laughed aloud, and pointed her finger at him in the moonlight; but in the laugh there was more scorn than merriment, and her hand trembled with emotion.

"Do you wish to drive me to violence?" he cried, furiously.

"Violence?" she said. "Violence? *You* use violence! Paltry, pitiful coward! *You*? I would as soon expect violence from a whipped hound! *Violence!*" And she laughed again in very scorn of the threat. He made a step towards her, and placed his hand upon his weapon.

"Back, sir!" she cried, fiercely; "I will drive it to the very core of your heart!" And as she spoke the steel again glimmered in the moonlight; she advanced her foot and raised her hand as if to strike. James was by no means a coward; but the high, stern spirit, conspired with his guilt to subdue him; and he shrank back with a half-shudder, as if the steel were already entering his flesh.

"Violence!" she exclaimed again. "Where is your violence now? Boaster! You threatened me with it to Hartner tonight; why does your heart fail you now? Is it because you have no pack of kindred robbers to help you against one woman? Go and get a company of Rangers to back you! Go and tell them that you wished to use violence upon a woman, and that she drove you like a cur from her presence! Begone, dog!" and she stamped her foot, as if it were in fact an intrusive cur to whom she was speaking.

"Margaret," said he, recovering himself by a great effort, "we will meet once more, and perhaps then your tone will be changed."

"She gave him no answer but a scornful look, and he turned to descend the stairway, endeavoring to appear unconcerned, but betraying in every movement conscious guilt and the humiliation of detection. As he was about to step down the trap

Billy Bates suddenly appeared above the opening, and taking him hastily by the arm, whispered ;

"Come a little this way," and led him to the other side of the belfry, overhanging the court-yard.

"Put your ear down lower," he said, and James stooped till his head was on a level with the boy's face. Billy still held him by the arm with his right hand ; and he now placed the left upon James's head, as if to draw his ear closer. He then braced his feet far apart, and putting his lips close to James's ear, hissed rather than said :

"She will not take *her* revenge—now see *mine* !"

At the same moment he exerted all his strength in one effort ; James lost his balance, shot forward, vainly endeavoring to seize Billy's arm, and with a loud cry of agony and terror, plunged headlong to the ground !

"See what it is to have spirit !" said the boy, turning to Margaret, with a smile as devilish as ever marked the features of his victim. Margaret sank almost fainting upon the parapet and covered her face with her hands. Billy dashed hastily down the stairs to the court below, where a prodigious clamor had arisen from the crowd around the crushed and quivering body. He passed them unobserved, and entered the room, now deserted, where a short time before the guests had been assembled.

The only men there who could lay any claim to calmness were Shelton and Hartner. All the rest stood clamoring to no purpose round James, and crying out without sense or concert for the blood of his murderer.

"How do you know he has been murdered at all ?" demanded Shelton, in a loud, stern voice. "It is more probable that he has fallen by accident. Let us carry him in and examine his injuries."

"Stand at that door, some of you," ordered Hartner, "and let no one pass without my order !"

Two or three sprang to the foot of the stairway, and drawing their arms, assumed the duty. James was lifted carefully from the ground, where hitherto no one had touched him, and borne within the house. Here it was immediately ascertained that he was not dead ; but a very slight examination was sufficient to satisfy all that he could live but a few minutes. He was terribly crushed by the fall ; and the only wonder in the matter was, that he had breathed long enough even to reach the ground. The crowd gathered close around him, silent and

anxious, while one who had some pretension to surgical skill examined his injuries.

"He cannot live an hour," said the impromptu surgeon, stepping back and closing his eyes after a short examination:

"Is he conscious ?" asked some one.

"No ; and never will be," said the surgeon. But even as he spoke, James opened his eyes and looked at the faces about him ; at first with a bewildered stare, and then gradually recovering his consciousness and recognizing each in his turn. As he did so, the crowd suddenly opened, and Margaret, pale as marble but calm and collected, stepped within the circle. The dying man closed his eyes as he saw her, and a shudder ran through his broken frame.

"She has murdered him," said one of the men to his neighbor in a whisper.

The words reached her ears, and she turned upon the speaker a look so scornful, so coldly contemptuous, and so fierce withal, that he shrank back in the crowd and walked away. She came still nearer to the dying man, and with folded arms stood gazing upon his ashy countenance. The crowd looked on in silence so deep, that James's difficult breathing could be plainly heard by those who were farthest away.

"We lose time," said Hartner at last, when this had continued for several minutes. "We must know, if possible, how this happened."

"Yes, yes, let us know," said several of the crowd.

Billy Bates now approached and looked cautiously through the crowd upon James. He wore a sort of scared, bewildered look, but even that could not repress the triumph of his face.

"Make way, here," said Hartner, attempting to push past Margaret. "Let me see if I cannot probe the matter."

"Stand back, sir !" she commanded, raising her arm before him, "and let him die in peace ! When you have answered me a few questions, I will answer yours,—for I witnessed the whole affair. *Back, I say.*"

Even Hartner, cold and determined as he was, shrank back before her imperious gesture. James opened his eyes again, and attempted to speak ; but his voice died away in a whisper, and no one but Billy Bates observed the effort. He smiled devilishly as he saw it, and his keen, sparkling eyes met those of his victim. James's face grew purple with rage, and he clenched his bloody hand as if to strike ; but the pain overcame all other feeling, the blood retreated from his face, his eyes lost their brilliancy and became fixed,—his mouth grew rigid,—his

jaw fell,—the lips drew back, disclosing the teeth,—the nostrils dilated,—the breathing stopped: *he was dead.*

"I want to ask you, sir," said Margaret to Hartner, "what was the purport of a conversation you had with the man calling himself John Van Eaton, on the river bank, about an hour ago?"

"That is nothing to the purpose," said Hartner, blushing, however, and glancing at her suspiciously and in alarm.

"Then I will detail it to this company, sir," she said. And omitting only the more atrocious references to herself, she gave to the astonished listeners a full report of all she had heard between James and Hartner.

"There were some designs upon myself confessed," she continued in an even, firm voice, "which I have not detailed here, but which determined me to seek for revenge. I sent for the man who lies here before you, with the purpose of killing him with my own hand; but when I remembered that he was my foster-brother, though a villain, and I saw before me the man I had loved, though my love had been outraged, my resolution was changed. I did not kill him; but God let's no such men escape; death overtook him in another, far more fearful form, before my very eyes."

She turned towards the body and saw that the spirit had departed. She covered her face with her hands and wept! The crowd opened for her in silence, and she passed out, seeking her own chamber, to mourn in silence over the blight of hopes too blindly cherished.

"He fell over the parapet by accident, then?" said some one.

"Whether he did or not," said Shelton, coming forward, "he certainly deserved his death."

"He deserved it before he ever came to San Antonio," said Billy Bates; "and he got it by the hand that was under most obligation to give it to him."

Shelton took him by the arm and led him away to one corner of the room. He was not long in getting a full account of the manner of James's death. He then returned thoughtfully to the group (now thinned by the departure of all the Regulators) around the corpse.

"I suppose, gentlemen," said he, "that most of you will return to-night to the city. Hartner and Barton, with their honest friends, are already gone; and I shall therefore probably see you no more: I set out to-morrow or on the day after for the States. I will at all events bid you farewell to-night. Let

us take together a parting glass; and as we have all been witnesses to-night of a catastrophe to which our course of life most forcibly tends, let us, like men who are not yet utterly lost, profit by the lesson."

Each man filled his glass and drank in silence. Each advanced and shook the Major's hand, cordially wishing him all good fortune; and each, as he did so, glanced at the motionless body and passed out. In ten minutes the sound of their horses' footsteps had died away in the distance, as they rode in silence along the river bank; and Shelton and the boy were left alone with the corpse.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,  
But when he died, his grave was dug as deep."—LARA:

"Absence, with all its pains,  
Is by this charming moment wiped away."—THOMSON.

THE lesson is almost finished; our history draws rapidly towards its close.

"Time at last sets all things even;" retribution is as certain as his progress; for the first condition of our being is, that punishment shall follow crime.

The law may be evaded for a time, and human enactments may remain a dead letter for ever; but God has the vindication of right in His own hand, and though the penalty be delayed, in *His* good time it will come. Whether in the silence of the night, when fear and remorse eat into the soul like a canker, or in the blaze of day, before a judicial tribunal, it is equally certain; for, though justice "bides her time," she never sleeps. Her logic allows no false reasoning; if man assumes the premises, the conclusion is hers, and the sequence is never broken. Such, then, is the moral of our story: transgression is not suffered to go unpunished; "the evil that men do lives after them," and the faults and follies of the parent entail a penalty upon the children.

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On the following morning, while the dew yet rested on the grass, and fading wreaths of mist were floating round the ruins, or lingering about the tree tops, a little procession issued from the Mission, and took its way along the wall towards the west. Besides the men who bore the rude coffin, there were but four persons present—Henry, Shelton, and Margaret, followed at a brief interval by Billy Bates, and preceded by the corpse. They were all silent and thoughtful, even more so than the living actually are while following the dead. Margaret walked a little apart, abstracted and pale, but quite composed. Her father gazed anxiously at her from time to time, turning his eyes, after each look, mournfully to the ground. He was busy with thoughts in which self-condemnation had no small share. Henry observed nothing but the path before him, and the rough coffin which he followed. Behind him came Billy, more steady than his wont, his eyes less cold and furtive; but no one could have detected in their look aught like remorse for the violent and lawless deed he had committed.

Following the dilapidated wall towards the west, they slowly approached a sheltered corner, where a pile of fresh earth pointed out a new-made grave; and passing under the thick foliage of a large elm, the men deposited their burthen on the ground. A slight bustle followed, and the coffin was lowered into the grave; a single plank was laid upon it, and then the hollow sound of falling clods broke solemnly upon the stillness. The earth was levelled slowly with the surface; a few heavy stones were taken from the ruin and piled upon the place: a rude cross was driven in the earth, and the burial was done. Margaret gazed for a few moments upon the spot with a heaving breast, and then folding her arms walked quietly away into the forest.

“And such is life!” said Shelton, leaning pensively against the tree, and looking upon the little pile of stones. “And such is death! Yesterday morning, he who now lies beneath these stones had as little thought of this, as we now have that to-morrow’s sun may shine upon an earth which we will see no more; and the hopes, and fears, and schemes which filled his brain but a single day ago, were as teeming as those which now lead us to calculate upon a life of many years! The web of our existence is woven with many threads; each is in some way connected with all others; and not a line or shade of coloring marks the life of one, but gives a form or hue to every

other. Independence is not known—responsibility compasses all about—we are answerable for each other as for ourselves. The sins of each are punished in his fellow-men, and the crimes and follies of the father “are visited upon the children.” He, whom we have just buried, was cut off in the very prime of life, and in the midst of his wickedness; but the faults which marred his character, descended to him from his parents. His father’s pride and his mother’s selfishness, were in him combined, and the impatient, fiery temper, which distinguished both, became in him a headlong recklessness. If he had had less intellect, his career would have been shorter; having a strong, bright mind, his want of conscience led him to forget that HONOR CAN NEVER WITH SAFETY BE FORGOTTEN; possessed of no ordinary courage, and a graceful, dextrous hand, he executed what his intellect had planned, with skill and power. The very best and highest qualities of his character were perverted by selfishness; and the wilfulness of his mother made him blind to the rights of others, and regardless of the claims of conscience. But we can forgive him now:

‘The reconciling grave  
Swallows distinction, first that made us foes.  
That all alike lie down in peace together.’

We have other things to think of too; death makes us thoughtful, but life calls us again to consciousness. Let us go back.”

He turned as he spoke, and followed by Henry and the boy, walked slowly to the house. Leaving them upon the corridor, he passed in and busied himself with his preparations for departure. Henry walked in silent thought up and down the floor, for nearly an hour, and Billy wandered away to the bank of the river, more pensive than he had hitherto been known. The mists of the morning gradually cleared away, and the sun shone out in the splendor of that pure clime. The blue haze of autumn, the Sabbath stillness, the peacefulness of solitude, the spirit of the ruin, all combined to produce that feeling, mingled of melancholy and of joy, which falls like a veil over all turbulent thought, in the time of the falling leaf. The soul is chastened and the heart runs over; for the fountains of love and the depths of memory are opened; and the waters come welling forth pure as a crystal spring. Henry felt the influence of the season and the place; regret was softened, sorrow was subdued; and as he cast a glance upon the quiet scene of loveliness around, all trouble was forgotten, and his spirit tasted peace.

Nearly an hour passed thus, when Shelton returned.

"Has Margaret come in?" he asked.

"I have not seen her," Henry answered.

"I think we had better go up to the city this morning," continued the Major, "and set out from thence to-morrow."

Margaret stepped upon the corridor as he spoke.

"Mr. Glenn," said she, calmly, "I have just ordered your horses to be saddled, and if you will ride with me, we will set out for the city immediately. I will wait for you, father, at Mrs. Burnham's."

"You are in great haste, Margaret," said her father, as Henry entered the house to make his preparations.

"Having been somewhat instrumental in James Glenn's punishment," she replied, "I hold myself in some measure bound to repair whatever injuries I know he has done. There is one in San Antonio whom he has deeply injured, in connection with his Cousin Henry, as I know from both parties; and having the power, I am under obligations to repair the wrong."

"If you undertake to right all the wrongs that may come under your observation," said her father, "your life will give you no leisure to prepare for Heaven. You are right now though, I believe; and here come your horses."

Henry reappeared at the same moment, and mounting together, they rode out of the court-yard, and took their way along the river bank. Having reached the other shore by the ford so often mentioned, passed the Mission of Conception, and crossed the little streams which come in here from the prairie, they were soon in sight of the dome of the church of San Fernando, and the taller houses of the city. Hitherto scarcely anything had been said by either—both seemed absorbed by thoughts which would not bear expression. But as they reached the skirt of the timber, and came in view of the upper part of the town, Margaret suddenly drew her rein, and motioned Henry to do the same.

"I have undertaken," she said, "to repair a wrong done to you and a Miss Vincent, whom I do not know. You have allowed me to do so without asking a question."

"You told me," said Henry, as she paused, "that you had heard a confession from the lips of my cousin, which possessed you of the whole history; and I was willing to trust the matter in your hands without inquiry."

"Very well," she rejoined. "But I am unwilling to proceed in it without knowing something further. I may be interfering

in an affair which neither party will thank me for meddling with.

"I can speak only for myself," said Henry. "You could lay me under no higher obligation."

"Did you come to San Antonio to meet her?"

"I did not know she was here," he replied. "But the moment I discovered it, I resolved to seek her and have an explanation."

"But as yet you know nothing of her feelings?"

"Nothing whatever," he answered. "That she loved me once, I have no doubt; but that I acted hastily, is almost equally certain; but more than a year has passed since I have spoken with her, or heard from her; so that I have not the remotest idea of what reception I shall meet."

"And by ascertaining this I shall do you a service?"

"The greatest that I could receive," he replied.

"The let us ride on." She struck her horse as she spoke, and led the way at a gallop through the suburb to the bridge. Crossing this she turned up the river, taking the same path followed by her father on the day before, and approached the lower end of the garden.

"We will leave our horses here," said she, springing to the ground before Henry could reach her. "Follow me into the garden, and stay there till I call you."

Henry was much excited, but commanding himself as well as he could, he obeyed Margaret's gesture to remain where he was, while she walked rapidly towards the house. Approaching the door, she tapped lightly with her riding-whip. The door was opened, a few words passed between her and Maria who admitted her, and she passed in.

There is nothing so agitating as suspense. Henry was already excited; and as minute after minute passed away, his emotion became more and more overmastering. Fears, fancies, apprehensions—some of them the most absurd—troubled, agitated, almost overpowered him. Feelings, long sternly repressed, now rebelled, mutinied, and seemed about to conquer. He walked hastily to the lower end of the garden, and endeavored to calm his heart by gazing into the depths of the water; but imagining that he heard a noise, he turned back and walked as rapidly to the place where Margaret had left him. He paused to listen, but could hear no sound, save the beating of his own heart. He turned impatiently and nervously aside, and threw himself upon a stone bench to recover his composure. He was not equal to the effort; he sprang up again and

strode back to the open alley. Margaret had been absent perhaps fifteen minutes—to him it seemed quite an hour. Anything, he thought, would be better than such suspense; he resolved to know the issue at once, and turning sharply about, he started at a swift walk towards the door.

It was opened as he approached, and Margaret appeared, beckoning him to enter. A little behind her stood Fanny, looking eagerly as if wishing to advance, yet timidly as if fearing a repulse. Henry crossed the threshold—she extended her hand—he took it in one of his, and gently placed the other about her waist—she fell upon his bosom and wept.

“I have wronged you too deeply!” she sobbed.

“No,” said Henry, “it is I who have wronged you!”

Their lips met, for the first time in their lives, and all was forgiven!

Margaret stood near them gazing quietly upon the reconciliation. Her eyes fell to the floor, and turning away, she left the room, and walked pensively down the garden. She left them to renew their vows, to re-unite their hearts, to be separated no more.

Let us imitate her example.

## CHAPTER IX.

May all to Athens back again repair,  
And think no more of this night's accidents,  
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

I wish you well, and so I take my leave.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE circle is complete—we have arrived at the point from whence we set out.

The winter was past and the spring; the long, sunny days of summer had come, and the trees were crowned with their richest foliage, and the fields were loaded with ripening grain.

It was a pleasant evening towards the close of “the leafy month of June.” The sun was setting at the end of a green

valley; his broad, red face was visible between the trees which closed the view, and his light came softened through the haze, and mingled with the deepening shadows.

At the front gate of the old Eversham place—where they now resided—were standing Shelton and his daughter. The father—reclaimed, or rather rescued by the power of parental affection—was gazing towards the east over the town where his youth had been spent, busy with the recollections which the scene inspired. His daughter—she whose noiseless influence had recalled him from the path of peril—was leaning over the low fence, tracing the lines of trembling light and closing shadow down the valley towards the west. In front of the gate the road turned southward, and wound along the slope, at the foot of which the view was terminated by the heavy timber; and within the edge of this were visible the enclosures of “The Glen.” Men were seen crossing the fields in various directions with the implements of husbandry upon their arms; and now and then a countryman came driving homeward from the town with the look and pace belonging to the close of day. The dust raised by the passing teams hung like a golden vapor on the air, and slowly settled back upon the road; and the fences and trees beyond looked dim and distant as if seen through a veil. The birds, with voices mute and noiseless wings, flew towards their nests—the cattle gathered round the bars and gates, and the perfume of their breath came floating sweet upon the evening air.

“This is a peaceful scene,” said Shelton, turning towards the valley. “I remember it as it was in my boyhood; I can recall it twenty years later, when I used to come here almost every evening to see your mother; and as it is now, so was it when I saw it, as I then thought, for the last time, twenty years ago—

‘Time, as he passes us, has a dove’s wing,  
Unsoiled and swift, and of a silken sound.’

There is in the life of every one a point, up to which he is always looking forward; but having once passed it, his glance reverts, and memory becomes his only active faculty. That point I have long ago passed; I have nothing more to anticipate, and it had been better for me had I spent my youth more profitably: that memory might not now be a pain rather than a pleasure.”

“You are melancholy, this evening, father,” said Margaret, going to his side and taking his arm. “You should go more into society, and occupy yourself less with gloomy reflections.”

Let us walk to 'The Glen' now: I saw Uncle Abram and Mr. Vincent go down about an hour ago."

"Did you not see Leigh with them?" asked her father.

"Yes," she replied; "but that need not prevent our going."

"Certainly not," said her father, opening the gate. "I would willingly go more into society," he continued as they walked across the road, "if I could prevail upon you to do the same. But so long as you seclude yourself, what little social inclination I have is more than counterbalanced by the reflection that I should leave you in a solitude, gloomy enough when I stay at home."

"I am better fitted for solitude than you are, father," said Margaret; "I can enjoy my life as well, perhaps better, alone, than in society. But I have been thinking for several weeks that our life has not been what it should be. We owe something to those who surround us, and something to ourselves; and the least we can do, is to keep up social relations with neighbors and friends."

"I suspect you have been lectured by Leigh and Abram Glenn," said her father with a smile; "they have both said nearly the same things to me, and I have been led to reflect in a similar way."

"You are so far right," said she, "that I have heard both of them say nearly identical things. But I have been brought to this conclusion as much by remembering a passage from your favorite, which you used to quote so often in San Antonio:

'Man in society is like a flow'r  
Blown in its native bed. 'Tis there alone  
His faculties, expanded in full bloom,  
Shine out, there only reach their proper sphere.'

"True," said he, laughing. "But you have forgotten what you used to reply from *your* favorite, when I urged you to go into company,

— 'society is no comfort  
To one not sociable.'

"But," said his daughter, eagerly, "you *are* 'sociable.' You are so by nature; no one so formed to shine in society could be otherwise!"

"Well, well," said he, laughing, "I will not controvert you, when you enforce your opinions with flattery."

"Flattery is one thing," said she, "and truth is another,"

"A lesson," added he, "which it would be well for all of your sex to understand."

"It is not women alone who are swayed by flattery," said his daughter. "I suspect that well-turned compliments, or demonstrations of respect, have quite as much weight with men."

"You are prompted as much by resentment for an attack upon your sex," said her father, "as by any conviction of the truth you state. It *is* a truth, however, as the observation of every one demonstrates —"

"And the *experience* of every one," interposed his daughter.

"True," he rejoined, "even in matters of feeling, which one would think should be influenced by deeper causes; I have no doubt that many a man has been flattered into love by observing the interest taken in him by the fair object of his attentions. It would be well if that interest were less often merely simulated."

The words seemed to recall some painful thought to Margaret. Making no reply, she bent her eyes upon the ground, and walked pensively along at the side of her father. After a brief interval of silence, however, she raised her head, and with the motion seemed to dismiss all unpleasant reflection. They were approaching the gate of 'The Glen,' just within which they could perceive a party of four or five persons standing under the trees or walking about among the shrubbery. One of them—the only female among them—detached herself from her companions as she perceived Margaret and her father, and approached the gate to welcome them. It was Fanny Vincent—now Fanny Glenn,—having been married to Henry almost a year. The pale, worn look which marked her face in San Antonio, was gone, and in its place had come back the serene, clear beauty of her girlhood; subdued, but deepened, by contentment, and chastened, like her character, by experience and lapse of time. Her step was slower, perhaps, but it was also firmer; and though her laugh might not be quite so light, it was far more placid and contented. Her spirit was no longer turbulent or hasty; and the consciousness of happiness beamed calmly from her eyes. Her destiny was at last fulfilled,—her life, though troubled for a season, like the river that runs painfully among the rocks for many leagues, had now emerged into the plain, and was flowing peacefully towards the ocean. The gentlemen whom she left were her husband, her father, Uncle Abram and Mr. Leigh—the family and the family-friend. It was indeed a family party, only needing those who were coming

down the slope to be complete; and one who had seen the pleased look of Fanny as she opened the gate and stood leaning against it, would have known that their approach was anything but unwelcome.

"You are just in time to complete the party," she said, as they came within reach of her voice. "I was wishing for you but a few moments ago, and Mr. Leigh and I would soon have walked up after you."

"You can walk back with us when we go," said Margaret, turning away at the same time to shake off a supposed twig, which *might* have caught upon her dress—but did not.

"I shall not allow you to leave us early enough for that. Come in—we will be just in time for tea."

She led the way, as she spoke, along the walk towards the little grove, where the gentlemen were standing. The cordial greeting of each to each showed the terms on which they stood; that unaffected tone of social intercourse which touches the familiar without abandoning the respectful—a tone which makes the circle where it prevails delightful to all its members. After a few minutes spent in this sort of converse, they were called to the house to tea; and after a short absence within, they returned again to the open air. Uncle Abram and Mr. Vincent, both apparently younger men than they had been two years before, seated themselves at the foot of a large oak, and, accompanied by Henry, resumed the discussion of some projected improvements to the place. Fanny and the Major stood near the door, enjoying the quiet scene before them, and Margaret and Leigh, who had been much together of late, walked away towards the gate and disappeared among the trees. It will be recollected that Leigh, in the absence of relatives and other creditors, had "administered upon" Eversham's estate—a trust which he had discharged with his accustomed ability and diligence. Attempts had been made by several persons to establish a right of inheritance to the property, on the ground of distant relationship; and that all these efforts had failed was mainly owing to the acuteness and fidelity of the administrator. Various advertisements had been inserted in the papers and other inquiries instituted for Shelton and his daughter, of whose existence Leigh had notice; and though the information had at last reached them, as we have seen, through a different channel, their ultimate appearance and proof of identity established the justice of Leigh's administration. The suits which had been instituted by the claimants were immediately dismissed, and within six

weeks after Margaret's appearance, Leigh settled his accounts and delivered up his trust.

During this period, and indeed ever since, he had been brought much in contact with the Sheltons, and had favorably impressed them with his talents, amiability and probity. His conversation of course partook of the nature of his profession; but extensive knowledge of the world and a highly disciplined intellect enabled him, notwithstanding this tendency, to interest, instruct and elevate all with whom he came in contact. Upon Margaret this influence was especially perceptible, and the state of mind in which she had returned to the place of her birth, was particularly favorable to the designs which Leigh soon conceived. It was one of James Glenn's maxims that "women are like balls, most easily caught on the rebound;" and though a part of the wisdom of a bad man, it was none the less wisdom. Margaret was eminently "on the rebound;" she had almost instantaneously ceased to love James Glenn; but the expulsion of his image had left a void, to be filled by the first who gave her the attention and kindness which was now a craving want. It was fortunate for her that in this crisis she did not meet another equally selfish and depraved, and that he who now began to insinuate himself into the vacant shrine, was honorable, manly and pure. She had endeavored not merely to remember James with indifference, but literally to forget him; and if she did not wholly succeed, it was owing more to the strength than to the weakness of her nature. Her strong desire to succeed assisted the interest which Leigh's character and conversation produced in him. Esteem followed respect, admiration came in the train of intimate acquaintance; and now it needed but a little light to show her that admiration had been succeeded by attachment.

It may seem unnatural that such a change should take place so soon, and that this revolution should be produced by a man of Leigh's age. But, if the reader will take the trouble to remember the years that must have elapsed since Shelton's first marriage, he will see that Margaret herself though young, had past the first bloom of youth; and, if he will consider, that while she was twenty-five, he was not yet forty, the incongruity will disappear. The attachment that had grown up between them in the past year, was not, indeed, of the burning kind which distinguishes the loves of early youth; but even this fact was attributable less to their age than to other circumstances. And though it might not be of the impatient, fiery sort, it was still less of the frail or evanescent. There had been no open demonstrations, either; and she was as yet

ignorant of the full force of her attachment. But when he drew her quietly aside, as now he often did, though no other word or action indicated his feelings, she knew by the stillness of her spirit that he held a key of no ordinary power. She encouraged the feeling too; at first as a refuge from more unpleasant thoughts, but finally for the pleasure it gave her, aside from all reflection. But Leigh, as yet, had made no declaration, and she never troubled herself with self-examination. She was pleased when he was beside her, she was especially contented when they were alone together; but further than this she never inquired. When, therefore, on the evening in question he gently led her away, she felt no unwillingness to go, and expected only their usual quiet, friendly intercourse.

"I like to be in the wood on such an evening as this," said Leigh, as they walked slowly up the avenue; "but I should not have enjoyed it half so much, if you had not come down."

"Then the pleasure lies in companionship," said she, "and not in the stillness or beauty of the evening."

"Yes; in the companionship whose enjoyment is enhanced by the incidents of time and scene. Persons attached to each other as thoroughly as are you and I, can feel, even if we do not estimate, the influence of peacefulness and beauty."

She turned and looked inquiringly into his face; his language was new to her; she did not understand it; and yet the sudden flush which reddened her cheeks and forehead betrayed to Leigh's quick eye her consciousness. Her eyes fell to the ground, and without making any reply she walked slowly on by his side. Leigh said no more for some minutes. They had reached the end of the avenue, and turned down to the right of the gate. They entered a grove of acacias, among which were growing laburnums and roses. Here he turned and looked back. They were entirely alone.

"Have we not gone far enough," said he.

"We will go back, if you wish," said she, turning to do so."

"No; I have something to say to you first," replied he, taking her hand and detaining her. Her face was again suffused; but she allowed him to retain the hand, and looked quietly into his face, waiting for him to speak.

"You perceive," he commenced, after a pause, "that I have taken our attachment for granted, and I think I have not done so without good reason. But if I had no other reason, I think I can see my justification in your eyes now. Am I mistaken?"

"I do not know precisely what you mean," said she.

"I mean this," said he; "our association has taught me to

love you, and to desire to make you mine; it may be my vanity which whispers that I am not indifferent to you, but I think I have better reason for believing so. At all events, my happiness depends upon your answer; for you must not conclude from my abrupt, unexcited manner, that it is a mere business matter. I have been for some time meditating this step: I have familiarized myself with the idea, and have persuaded myself that my advances would be met favorably. I have been made to believe so by your bearing towards me; I do not think I have been mistaken; and it is to be made certain that I now address you. Before you answer, I want to warn you again not to think I am cold because I speak calmly. It is not so—and if you will be mine, I will prove to you that my love is as warm and as firm as love can be. Have I been mistaken?"

She gazed at him for a few moments, as if still in doubt as to his meaning. Withdrawing her eyes then, she looked abstractedly upon the ground for several minutes. Finally, raising them again, she spoke;

"I suppose I understand you; you wish to make me your wife. But, before I can answer your question, I must ask you another; are you acquainted with my history? Are you aware that if I should receive your suit favorably, I can only give a heart which has once before been given?"

"I know it all," said Leigh eagerly, "and I love you only the more. I would much rather, for your sake, and for my own, if you are to be mine, that you had been made to suffer, than that you had inflicted suffering upon another. I was unwilling to risk as much as I *have* risked, until I knew that my hopes were not wrecked before they were formed; and —"

"And you inquired accordingly," she interrupted. "It is well; you know my history, and still wish me to be yours?"

"Even more than before!" he said warmly, endeavoring to draw her closer to him. "What is your answer?"

After a moment's reflection, she replied—

"You were not mistaken when you supposed me not indifferent as to what your feelings might be—stay!" she added, as he was about to inclose her with his arms; "hear me out. I have encouraged a partiality to you, being conscious of it all the time; but was not till this moment—perhaps am not now—aware of its full force. You must be content, therefore, if I take time for self-examination. I will not do you the injustice to think that you have spoken unadvisedly or hastily; and, it is because I do not doubt you, that I feel especially bound to take no step rashly. You know my history, and will thus under-

stand me when I say, that one so circumstanced ought to know her feelings thoroughly, before she dares to commit herself or another to any course whatever. I will be frank: I believe that the step you propose would secure my happiness; in the present it certainly would; but experience has taught me that I may be mistaken even in my own feelings; and I must therefore ask that you allow me time to reflect."

Leigh gazed at her while she spoke, with a look in which the warmth of an awakened attachment was far more conspicuous than it had been even during his declaration. His eyes continued thus bent upon her after she had ceased to speak; and it was not for some moments that he recalled his thoughts sufficiently to reply.

"I cannot question the prudence of this request," said he at last, in a tone of disappointment, "though it is very painful to me. I think you are more cautious than there is any necessity for being. But how long do wish me to wait? Not *long*, certainly."

"You may resume the subject when you feel disposed," said she, smiling, and withdrawing her hand—not, however, until Leigh had carried it fervently to his lips—"provided," she added, "it be not within ten days."

"Ten days, then, let it be," said he; "and then you will fix the day for our union."

"Perhaps—perhaps not," she replied, smiling again.

"I will not allow of a doubt," said he, gaily; and they returned to the group in front of the house.

Leigh was right. His knowledge of human nature had not failed him. He knew that Margaret loved him; and though that love might be sober and well-founded, he knew that it was all the better for that—that it promised a purer, a less troubled, happiness, than the unchastened affection of early youth. Leigh was a profound reasoner (though not a logician), and knowing Margaret's history, he was more willing to trust his happiness to her than to the first, blind love of any woman—just as men are safer at sea in a ship which has been tried by the storm and not broken, than with one to which the wind and the waves are new and untried. He would not have married a widow either. Let those who view life *as it is*, reconcile the apparent contradiction; for it is "apparent" only.

They were married early in the autumn of the same year, and are now living at the Eversham place, realizing to the fullest extent the happiness which Leigh prophesied. Margaret

though devoted to her husband and children, has re-entered society, where her beauty, talents, wealth and position have made her one of the first, as she is certainly one of the best, of its members. Her husband retired from the practice of his profession about a year after his marriage, and has been since that time engaged in writing a treatise upon the Law of Evidence, particularly that branch—something of a hobby with him, as the reader will recollect—which is entitled "Circumstantial." Whether it will ever be finished is doubtful; for within two or three years its author has been much drawn off into politics. It is hoped, however, that he may discover in time the sterility of the country into which his mind has migrated, and return, penitent and wiser, to the waving fields and sunny slopes of the law.

Henry and Fanny are living at "The Glen," which they have decorated and improved into a garden. The former still haunts the courts, though the most of his time is spent at home with his wife and children, of which last they have two. Fanny has lost none of her beauty by the lapse of time or the trials of married life; and though her manner is of course more matronly, her heart is as light, and her spirit as free as ever. Her husband, as we said, still pursues his profession, or rather his profession still pursues him; for though unwilling to relinquish it entirely, he gives it but little attention. Fanny and Uncle Abram have both repeatedly urged him to abandon it; but he says there are in this country but two resources for a retired lawyer, if he would avoid stagnation, and these are politics and literature. Having certainly no taste for the former, nor, as he thinks, any talents for the latter, he is obliged to cheat himself into the belief that he is avoiding idleness by attending upon the seats of justice. Uncle Abram says vanity has as much to do with this course as reason; that the love of triumph after gratified is a stronger incentive than the fear of indolence. Be this as it may, he is still at the bar, where he will probably remain until "nominated" for some political office, when he will of course cease to be a lawyer without becoming anything else.

Uncle Abram, as we have intimated, is yet resident at "The Glen;" and though some years have elapsed since we noted his appearance, he seems to be even a younger man than at the beginning of our story. Contentment has had its usual influence upon both him and Mr. Vincent, who is also an inmate of "The Glen." Though they are both past the middle age, neither seems to realize the fact; and if you could see them

when joined by Major Shelton (who resides with his daughter) on a pleasant summer evening, you would be at a loss to reconcile their youthful manners and hearty voices with their standing in the scale of years. A game of whist, of which they are all remarkably fond, filled up by Leigh or Henry, and occasionally by Margaret or Fanny, is their chief amusement in the winter; but when summer comes, and they are released by the returning sunshine, cards are exchanged for more robust amusements and the open air. In short, three more perfectly contented men do not exist. A better fate their friends could not have wished them.

There are but two other characters in our history for whom we shall be expected to account—Billy Bates and his sister. The former, when the Sheltons and Vincents came away, remained in San Antonio, a place whose motley population was well adapted to his reckless character. Here he remained until the column of General Wool set out from hence to Mexico, and that he accompanied to the seat of war. When the corps to which he was attached received their discharge, he chose to remain; and from some vague accounts lately received of him, we conclude that he is now among the gold-hunters of California. Maria returned with Fanny to her old home, confessed her faults, and was forgiven. Only a few months ago she was married to a substantial farmer of the neighborhood; and it is hoped, not without reason, that, chastened and made wiser and better by affliction, she will make him a good and dutiful wife.

*And so ends the Family History of "THE GLENNES."*

[Second Edition.]

## GRAHAME: or, YOUTH AND MANHOOD;

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