

CLIFTON:

A NOVEL.

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OR,



MODERN FASHION, POLITICS, AND MORALS.

A NOVEL.

BY

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## CLIFTON.

### CHAPTER I.

"Perhaps when time shall add a few  
Short months to thee, thou'lt love me too;  
And after that, through life's long way,  
Become my sure and cheering stay;  
Will't care for me and be my hold,  
When I am weak and old."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE light was faint and shadowy, as the shutters were closed for the purpose of excluding the glare of the sun. The recent discovery for the alleviation of pain was then unknown, and the agony which every mother has willingly suffered since the persuasive vice of Eve tempted Adam to his undoing, had exhausted the powers of the female. She lay as quiet as the dead, and nothing but a feeble pulse and a scarcely perceptible respiration indicated the continuance of vitality. The footsteps of her attendants fell softly upon the carpet, and their conversation was low and whispering.

"He is a brave boy, and I dare say will play his part in the world," said one of the matrons.

"Doubtless, Mrs. Spencer, for his father will give him every advantage. He is a stout lad, too; I wonder what colour his eyes are?" and with a curiosity pardonable in a midwife she peered through her spectacles at the sleeping infant.

"Don't forget to let it be extensively known, Mrs. Canfield, that the accouchement—I believe that is the fashionable term—was entirely successful, and that, too, without the aid of a *man*-midwife," and the female gave a scornful toss of the head, which had the effect of disarranging its well-adjusted gear.

"That I won't, you may be sure," responded Mrs. Canfield. "It is a burning shame that the legitimate business of our

sex should be appropriated by maudlin and fussy men. If they *will* usurp our duties, why let them don our petticoats at once."

"So say I, Mrs. Spencer, and I think those who are guilty of it should be seated at the loom and distaff, or placed at the flat-iron and wash-tub."

"But are not our sex to blame for submitting to it. In former times, you know, such a thing as the presence of a man was unknown, except, as I have read, when Queens were brought to bed, and then the nobility were stationed in the ante-room to prevent the prince from being exchanged. Yet they must have had strange feelings," she continued, musingly, "if they would swap their own flesh and blood."

A pause ensued, and Mrs. Canfield adjusted the covering upon the little stranger, while Mrs. Spencer took the waiter from the servant. It contained tea and delicious muffins, of which they partook with evident satisfaction. If anything, it had the effect of rendering them more loquacious, although the indignation which had been aroused by men-midwives was not in the slightest degree abated.

"I think, Mrs. Canfield, that an association should be formed at once, for the purpose of restoring to our injured sex the rights which they once enjoyed. For a moment reflect upon the number of worthy females who are deprived of employment, (and consequently of that sustenance which, I regret to say, it is not the custom of the times to extend gratuitously), by a set of prying, hush-a-hushy, effeminate doctors."

"A good idea, Mrs. Spencer. By acting in concert we might effect a reformation in public opinion. Without that union we can hope for nothing, and all our protes-

tations will prove powerless against the nods, winks, and owl-like gravity of our professional and hereditary foes."

"But can't we appeal to their magnanimity?"

"Pooh! place magnanimity in the scale against money, and the former would soon kick the beam. No; the medical fraternity are as much governed by the motto of 'every one for himself,' as any portion of the human family which it has been my lot to encounter. Take another cup; it will do you good, and there is plenty of it."

"It is grateful," and she inhaled its delicious aroma. "But, as you were saying, it would doubtless be a waste of our energies to appeal to their generosity. Cannot we rely upon their delicacy?"

"How can you ask such a question!" and she expressed her astonishment in ironical laughter. "I think you said *delicacy*! Why, they lose it before they have concluded one course of lectures; that is to say, those who ever witnessed the inside of a lecture-room; and they can either lance an arm, or become an accoucheur, without a blush mantling their cheeks."

"But will not remorse induce them to surrender the privileges which they have fraudulently obtained?"

"As much in the wrong as before. I tell you, their sensibilities are deadened, and they can amputate a quivering limb with as little hesitation as they could dissect a dead body."

"I thought as much; then we should appeal to them in vain."

"Utterly so."

"Our only resource is an appeal to the female sex."

"While we have just grounds for complaint against the medical fraternity," observed Mrs. Canfield, apologetically; "still we must frankly admit, that within their legitimate sphere, they are as useful as we are in ours. It is only when they transcend the bounds which nature has erected that there is an imperative necessity for reforms."

"Spoken with your usual judgment," remarked Mrs. Spencer, "and the reason why we demand a redress of our grievances should be distinctly set forth."

"In the first place, it must be demonstrated that nature revolts at the presence of a man-midwife, and only yields to that stern and remorseless custom, which crushes by its inexorable decrees the shrinking modesty of youth."

"But here lies the difficulty," Mrs. Canfield. "The ordeal is a fearful one, through

which every mother must pass, and the husband, as well as the wife, is ready to claim that professional skill which the medical fraternity have taken especial pains to make them believe they alone possess."

"That is so; but it must be our duty to make the community discard this vulgar error, and view the matter in its true aspect. That we can officiate with the same skill, and with far more tenderness, is undeniable, provided we have received the same instruction as a man. Indeed, there are females who have acquired the requisite amount of knowledge from experience alone. Let it once be known that we are as skilful as the other sex, and my word for it, the services of a man will never be called into requisition."

"You have stated the point correctly," observed Mrs. Spencer. "How do you propose to render them as skilful as the other sex?"

"I would found a College, in which any respectable female might obtain admission for the purpose of acquiring a thorough education; and not till then will our rights be guaranteed."

Mrs. Canfield announced her programme with so much energy that the infant startled from its slumbers, uttered a cry, and opening its little eyes, stared into the admiring countenances of the two matrons as if he thought very strange beings inhabited his new world.

"Give me my boy," said the young mother faintly, and she pressed it lovingly in her arms: "you may withdraw now, for a few minutes," she whispered, "Charles has returned."

After reminding her of the danger of over-exertion, they left the room. The door was immediately reopened, and a tall, finely-formed young man entered, and seating himself upon the bed, pressed his lips upon the pale cheek of his wife.

"You are a brave girl," he said, fondly.

"Do you think so?" and her eloquent eyes were raised to his own.

"Indeed I do. And we have such a noble little fellow too." He placed his finger as gently upon the cheek of the infant as though it might mar its symmetry.

"Do you still wish to call him Edward?"

"Certainly; unless you prefer some other name. His grandfather has always been so kind and affectionate."

"As you will. His name, then, shall be Edward Clifton. In this breathing world which he has just entered, may talents and ambition force him above the common level, and from that elevated platform where the few do congregate, may he aid good

men to counteract the machinations of the bad, and give a proper direction to those events that make up the cycle of human existence."

## CHAPTER II.

"Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid,  
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,  
The biscuit or confectionary plum,  
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed  
By thine own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;  
All this, and more endearing still than all,  
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no pall,  
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks  
That humour interposed too often makes."

COWPER.

LITTLE EDDY, as he termed himself, was seated upon his high chair at the breakfast table—an honour for which he was indebted to his grandma. It was premature, as he was only two years old; and yet his innocent prattle seemed to amuse them, although there was very little sense in a conversation which, upon one side, consisted in the enunciation of nouns, connected here and there by verbs. His cousin, a charming little girl ten years of age, with large, laughing eyes, and long, curling ringlets, was seated by his side. Julia was a great favourite with him, because she engaged in his infantile amusement.

Eddy gazed at her, and then at his mother, with much earnestness, as if he was endeavouring to ascertain why there was so much difference between the matured form of the latter, and the slight proportions of the former. Apparently, he could not solve the mystery, for he ejaculated, "Eddy eat brekta."

"Eddy casts affectionate glances at Julia," said his mother. This, at least, he understood, for suffering his eyes to fall, he said discontentedly, "Grandma Carry;" when seated upon her knees, he bashfully raised his eyes to his cousin's face, and murmured, "Oh, dear dude," and then he exhibited his stock of knowledge. "Grandma buy peaches," "Eddy shut eyes—dead," "Janus drive horse," "Tom milk cows," "white horse drink water," "go way ose," "Eddy beat Grandma."

After this burst of eloquence, his oratory abruptly terminated for want of language to express his ideas.

"I think he displays a remarkably quick apprehension for a child so young," observed his mother.

"Indeed I do," replied his grandma.

"He is a dear little fellow! How he remembers everything."

"I doubt if his precocity is a favourable indication," said his father.

"Why not, Charles?"

"Because I have observed that an early development of the intellectual powers, like a premature birth, is almost invariably attended by injurious consequences. The mind wears itself out, by its own intensity, before the brain has acquired sufficient strength and consistency."

"I hope not," replied Mrs. Clifton, despondingly, "for I have created for him a brilliant prospective, reaching far down the vista of time."

"Perhaps I ought not to dim the present by apprehending that the future may not be more bright; still, we must not expect too much from the lad, or the disappointment will be the more bitter."

"It is at least a great consolation that he is so bright, instead of being stupid," observed the grandmother.

"I agree with you, entirely; but still, if present happiness is purchased by future disappointment, do we not pay for it too dearly?"

"Charles, how can you apprehend anything so horrible?"

"For the reason which I suggested a moment since, and because the biography of illustrious men sustain it. Glance, for instance, at the boyhood of the four most remarkable men of the present day. Henry Clay was at first a mill-boy, of sufficient intelligence to deposit his bags safely with the miller. Subsequently, he performed the duties of a deputy-clerk very creditably. Thomas H. Benton was, for many years, regarded as an indifferent advocate, far from possessing an extraordinary amount of mental acumen. Daniel Webster, too idle for a farmer, dragged through four inglorious years at Dartmouth, only to teach school at Fireburg, register the deeds of the farmers of Maine, and hesitate between practising law and a \$1500 clerkship. John C. Calhoun was ignorant that he possessed any unusual amount of intellectual thought, until his metaphysical discussion with Professor Dwight, at Yale College. Perhaps, however, we apprehend too much danger, as, after all, Edward may not possess a particle more precocity than other children of his age. It is doubtless magnified by parental fondness, a consummation by no means remarkable."

Notwithstanding the indulgence of his grandmother—for all grandmothers are supposed to spoil children, if they do not—



little Edward was a generous, brave, though rather self-willed boy. Daunted by no peril, he often narrowly escaped breaking his neck, or drowning himself. And the imminence of the danger, instead of making him more cautious, only increased his recklessness. Fond of fun, without being cruel, he sought mirth, regardless of the consequences, provided it left no permanent impression upon the victim. And yet there were moments when he was sad and reflective. Seated beside a murmuring brook, heedless of the trout that nibbled at his bait, or reclining against a tree, with his fowling-piece lying across his knees, he would pass hours in deep thought. It was during these intervals that plans for future action were matured, which should gain for him those honours and distinctions that he had been induced to believe constitute the happiness of this earth.

When he was four years old, his cousin, Harry Dalton, called at his father's, for the purpose of inducing him to go in search of strawberries.

Gliding around the house, to the spot where Edward was playing, Henry expressed his wishes.

"Well, I will go and ask mamma."

"Oh, no, she will not let you go if you ask her."

"I shall certainly not go without her consent," said the child, stoutly.

"Mamma, I should like to go with Henry and get some strawberries for you."

"I am afraid, my child, you will meet with some accident. Henry is so careless."

"No, mamma, I won't, for he can't make me do anything I dislike."

"But you like to do so many things without persuading. But I will trust you this time, upon condition that you pass not into the woods beyond the mowing field."

Arriving at the boundary which separated the hay lot from the forbidden territory, they cast longing eyes into the deep shade, from which came forth the refreshing breeze that fanned their flushed cheeks. Looking backwards, to ascertain if their movements were observed, and finding that the vigilant eyes of Edward's mother were not upon them, they first mounted the fence, and, surprised to find that no personal injury resulted from this act of disobedience, Edward let himself down upon the other side. Gliding away through the grove, they seated themselves by a spring which burst from the hillside and trickled over the rocks into the valley beneath. After having quenched their thirst,

they took off their shoes and stockings, and bathed their feet in the babbling stream. The rays of the sun pierced the thick foliage, and fell tremulously upon the earth, as the leaves quivered in the air. Little Edward's attention was arrested by one of those rays of light, and he wondered how it was possible for the sun to dance about so, because his mother had told him it was stationary. After pondering a long time he advanced towards the spot, but the ray, falling upon his person, disappeared from the earth. Casting his eyes upwards, in search of it, a smile of satisfaction illuminated his face.

"It is the leaves that move and not the sun, after all, so mamma was right."

"What are you muttering about," said Henry, who was nearly asleep.

"Oh, nothing about you."

Having solved that problem, his thought turned upon the formation of the trees. It appeared very strange to him that when the trunk was so firm, that the branches should be nodding and bowing to each other. He reconciled it, however, by supposing that salutations were made by the branches as men and women incline their heads when they meet. He now began to feel hungry, but Henry was sleeping so well that he disliked to disturb him, and he therefore looked around in search of some amusement. His satisfaction was great when he discovered in the edge of the pasture, a favourite colt, just half his own age, that had been rendered very tame by his caresses. Casting a look at his motionless companion, he glided away towards his dumb favourite. The colt expressed its satisfaction by rubbing his head against the little fellow. For a long time Edward had sincerely desired to mount "his horse," but his solicitations had been disregarded.

"Now I'll have a ride," he soliloquised. "But I've got no bridle. Never mind, Surwe (Surrey) won't kick. Let me put Mamma's strawberries into my pocket." He led the gentle colt to a stump, and, after several ineffectual attempts, he succeeded in ascending it. "Now, Surwe, be a good fellow; if you don't I won't never give you no more oats." Bounding in regular cavalier style, he was mounted. Surrey stood motionless at first, and then looking first upon one side and then upon the other, he frisked his long tail, and then walked forward a few yards. Alarmed at a burden to which he had never been accustomed, the colt flourished his heels in the air, and then darted away at the top of his speed. The little horseman clung to

his mane with great courage and spirit. At first he was alarmed, but as he managed to retain his seat, the novelty of his position and the rapidity of the motion made the blood dance joyously through his veins. The current of air produced by the celerity of their motion carried his hat sailing far behind them, and his silken locks fluttered in the wind.

The horse, now rendered almost frantic by fear, dashed along the slope of the hill, and skirting across the plain that intervened between the highland and the creek, made for the bridge which spanned it. The child was surrounded by perils. Even if the colt retained his feet, there was imminent danger of his being swerved from his course, and instead of crossing the bridge, he might madly attempt to bound over the stream. Indeed, if he crossed the bridge, the hazard was equally great, because in that event they would enter a lane, across which swung a five-barred gate. With the velocity of a hurricane, the mettled courser swept across the plain, his head turned in the direction of the bridge, which he had nearly gained, when a large Newfoundland dog darted suddenly from the shade of a tree at the flying steed. Thought is not quicker than Surrey wheeled towards the creek. The sudden deviation caused the boy to lose his balance, and he would have been precipitated with violence to the earth if his hand had grasped a bridle rein. Fortunately his fingers were twisted into the mane of the colt, and retaining his hold with desperate energy he dangled by its side. With a wild and angry snort Surrey darted for the bank of the creek which was ten feet above the water, and twice that distance from one side to the other. Bounding madly forward, the colt was for a moment suspended in the air; but the distance was too great. His fore feet lighted upon the top of the bank; his hind feet clung for an instant to the sides, when horse and rider rolled over into the deep and sluggish stream. Fortune again favoured the adventurous little horseman, for struggling in the creek they were separated. Scarcely had Edward reached the water, when the noble dog plunged in, and seizing his master by the coat, kept his head above the stream until assistance arrived from the house.

"Why did I let the child go!" said the mother, wringing her hands frantically as she saw him mounted upon the flying horse. The alarm overpowered her nervous system, and she fainted. When she was restored to consciousness, Edward was

standing beside her, taking strawberries from his dripping spencer.

"Here, dear mamma, don't look so pale! See! I have brought you berries, as I promised. Here, take them, they are all yours, every one," and he laid his wet locks upon a bosom which beat with tumultuous joy for his delivery.

### CHAPTER III.

"If in this world of breathing harm,  
There lurk one universal charm,  
One power, which, to no clime confined,  
Sways either sex and every mind;  
Which cheers the monarch on his throne,  
The slave beneath the torrid zone,  
The soldier rough, the lettered sage,  
And careless youth, and helpless age;  
And all that live, and breathe, and move,—  
'Tis the pure kiss of infant 'love.'"

MILFORD.

"Why do not pa and ma return?" inquired Edward of the housekeeper, "they have been gone so long."

"They will be at home in a few days now. You must not become impatient."

"Well, I don't think they will return before God comes down."

"Hush, you must not talk so."

"Well, won't God come down from the skies some day. The minister said so yesterday, but you didn't hear him, for you was asleep."

"How can you say so."

"Because your eyes were closed, and you nodded, and at last snored, until I pinched you."

"You were a saucy little fellow to do so."

"Then you must not make people stare at you. Mamma never lets me go to sleep, and the next time you do I shall stick this pin in you."

"Come, you may go out and play now."

And adjusting his hat, he sallied forth. Passing through the orchard, he met, upon the wayside, his little playmates, Harriet Salisbury, Charles Manley, and Kate Merton, who were out for a day's amusement in the raspberry field.

"Come, Eddy, won't you go with us," inquired Charles.

"I should like to do so, but Susan will be alarmed about me."

"See, I have a large basket full of nice cakes, with no one to help me eat them," said Harriet.

Still Edward declined to accompany them, until she continued half poutingly,

"I've got no bean to take care of me, and I shall be so lonely."

"If you will wait a minute I will tell Susan where I am going," and away he ran towards the house; and notwithstanding the protestations of the housekeeper, he soon joined his little companions. Crossing the road, they entered a large pasture that was thickly covered with raspberry bushes. Here they wandered about until they became tired and hungry, and having filled their baskets with the delicious fruit, they seated themselves in a small grove upon the bank of the river. The little girls exhibited their store upon the grass, and invited their companions to partake of the food.

After finishing their meal, they descended to the water's edge, and seating themselves upon the rocky shore, they bathed their hands in the grateful element.

"Let's bathe our feet," said Edward, "we shall not take cold."

"What, before you?" exclaimed Kate, a little maiden six years old.

"And why not?" said Charles; "are you not my little wife, and didn't I hear Harriet promise to be Eddy's a few minutes ago, when they thought I was not near them. And did you not walk about without any shoes last summer?"

"But we are larger girls now. But if you want us so much—"

The young gallants dexterously unlaced the boots from their tiny feet.

"Why, Harriet, how much longer your garter is than Kate's," said Edward, measuring them. Pondering upon the disparity, he suffered the longest one to fall from his hand into the water, when it was borne by the rapid current swiftly down the stream.

Without hesitating a moment, and before his design could be frustrated, Edward plunged into the water and attempted to regain the lost treasure. The water near the bank was shallow, scarcely reaching above his knees, and he dashed rapidly forward. Already had he approached the prize, when his foot slipped upon the rocks, and he was immersed in the water. Rising immediately, and heedless of the frantic cries to come back, he dashed onwards. The channel became deeper, and conscious that it would soon sink beyond his depth he made a desperate plunge, and seized the object of his pursuit. But his feet could no longer reach the bottom, and his horror-stricken companions saw him disappear from their sight. When he rose to the surface he was far down the stream, hurried impetuously forward by

the irresistible flood. "He will be drowned! he will be drowned!" wildly exclaimed Harriet, and the cheeks of all three were blanched with terror. He floated for a moment, and then again sunk from their view. At that instant, they saw through the trees the form of a man parting the bosom of the river with rapid and powerful strokes. Running along the bank, they clustered together at a point where they could witness his movements. He had reached the middle of the river, and was gazing anxiously around the spot where the child had vanished in the foaming stream. But he began to despair of ever beholding him again, when his dark hair emerged from the water several yards below. Dashing forward with incredible velocity, he seized the helpless boy as he was sinking for the last time, and bearing his unconscious burden to the shore, he laid him upon the ground. In his hand was still clasped an elastic white satin garter.

"He is dead, I am sure he is dead!" exclaimed Harriet, as she threw her white arms around his neck, and kissed his purple lips.

"I hope not," said Major Stroney; "your caresses are already restoring him to consciousness; though a few minutes more would have finished him."

"I am so glad! dear Eddy," and she wiped the water from his face and hair with her white frock, "you will live, won't you? If you do, I will give you the garter."

A pleased smile came over the face of the boy, as he gallantly pressed the satin to his lips.

"Egad, if she was developed, I would think it cheaply won, my chivalric young friend."

Several weeks had elapsed after the events transpired which we have just related, when Edward went to pass the day with Charles Manley. Having exhausted all the sources of amusement, they commenced "conjuring" up something new.

A vicious horse had for a long time infested the neighbourhood. There was no low spot in the fences that he had not managed to find out, and every tempting field had been visited. Charles was particularly enraged, because the brute had utterly destroyed a melon-patch upon a recent foray. In every other respect the horse was ill-natured; he would not work in harness, and only upon certain occasions was it safe to mount his back. It would be difficult to conceive a more unpopular beast than brown Oscar.

"Let's tie a basket to his tail," proposed Charles.

"So we will, but where can one be found?"

"Oh, I have it behind the barn," and he soon brought it.

They now laboured to attach the basket firmly to Oscar's tail, and at length they suffered it to fall upon his heels. He was slightly aroused from his sluggishness, and turning his head from one side to the other, he indolently kicked out with one foot. The basket was thrown upwards, and came down again upon his legs. Without starting forward, the indignant steed applied both heels to the basket with such force that it was hurled violently upon his back, from which it rebounded upon his haunches. Failing to relieve himself from the annoyance, and now thoroughly frightened, Oscar dashed furiously away, while at every bound the basket described a semicircle, the tail being the centripetal and the heels the centrifugal force. At first the lads, alarmed at their rashness, stood aloof, silently observing the motions of the horse; but as he bounded forward with a loud snort, they clapped their hands, and fairly shouted in the exuberance of their merriment, until long after the horse disappeared over the hill, with the basket still flying at his tail.

"What will your papa say?" inquired Edward.

"I never thought of him," responded Charles, with a look of anxiety.

Mr. Manley retreated stealthily from the shrubbery immediately in their rear, and with difficulty repressed his laughter until he was so far away that they could not hear him.

"The young rogues! 'Twas a good joke, though; but they will require curbing, or else they will become unmanageable. Egad, Clifton will laugh at his precocious son."

When Edward was thirteen years old, the propriety of sending him to the academy was seriously entertained by Mr. Clifton, although the necessity was a source of much uneasiness to his wife.

"He is surely large enough now. I have postponed the event too long already in deference to your wishes."

Assuming a look of resignation, she replied, "If you think so much depends upon his going to Andover, why, I must submit to the separation. Still, he is such a reckless boy, I fear he will become involved in some difficulty."

"Never fear but that he will protect

himself. With your permission he shall attend the first day of the next term, which commences on Monday."

"So soon! I will arrange his wardrobe, then. But where shall he board, Charles?"

"I shall try and induce Col. Florence to make him a member of his family. Mrs. Florence, you know, will be as kind as a mother to him, and he will there have playmates of his own age."

"And how often will he come home?"

"Once in three months; but as it is only forty miles hence, we will go and visit him occasionally."

It was decided, therefore, that Edward should leave the paternal roof for the first time. With that fondness for change which is a characteristic of childhood, he expressed the greatest readiness to attend the academy. It appeared so much like an emancipation from parental authority. The day previous to his departure he prepared to visit his favourite haunts. It was a cloudless morning in October; the atmosphere had that bracing and exhilarating power, which sends the blood coursing through the veins. As he emerged from the lawn, he encountered Harriet Salisbury, charmingly attired in a plaid silk dress and new straw hat.

"Where are you going, Harriet?"

"To see your mother."

"Before you pay a visit to her, come with me, I am going to visit some favourite spots before my departure."

The maiden hesitated, although it was apparent to the boy she would willingly accompany him if her own inclinations were consulted.

"Won't you come; recollect this will be the last walk we shall have together for a long time," and taking her hand, he led the unresisting girl along the bank of the creek in the direction of the high land.

"And you go to-morrow, Eddy; don't you feel unhappy at leaving us all?"

"I believe I do, the nearer the day approaches. I shall write though, and if I send you a letter, won't you answer it?"

"That I will, and I'll tell you all the news—who gets punished at school—how your colt comes on—who shoots the most squirrels at the hunt, and all about everything."

"There's a good, kind girl."

They sat down beneath a butternut, from the overhanging branches of which occasionally fell the yellow leaf and delicious nut.

The stage-horn blew shrilly at the door; that signal when friends are torn from each

other, scarcely less dreadful than the blast of the archangel's trumpet. The inmates of the dwelling were soon in motion, lights pierced the gloom of night, and Edward's trunk was seized by the driver and strapped upon the stage.

For a moment the little fellow was clasped to his mother's bosom, and their tears mingled together. "There, now go," she exclaimed wildly.

"Good bye, dear mamma!" and he paused at the door, and then hearing a sob, he rushed back and threw himself into her arms.

"I will not go, mamma, if it makes you feel so badly."

"Yes, you must, my child; I shall be more composed when you are gone, beside I will see you soon again."

"All ready, can't wait," shouted the coachman.

"God bless you, Edward, be a good boy." Taking his father's hand, the lad left the house.

"Good bye, Edward."

"Good bye, dear papa."

The door was closed, the driver cracked his whip, and the mettled horses dashed away, and in a moment nothing was heard but the rocking of the coach, and the trampling of feet as the sounds floated indistinctly upon the night air.

For a long time Edward wept bitterly. It was his first separation from his parents, and they had always treated him so tenderly that his heart was almost broken at being thus placed in a stage among strangers, and in total darkness to be borne from those he loved so dearly. Gradually, however, he dried up his tears, and no sound proclaimed his sadness, except a sob that would occasionally burst from his overcharged bosom.

Several hours elapsed before daylight began to steal athwart the sky. Gazing from the window, he watched the progress of light as it spread over the earth, bringing distinctly into view the highlands, and casting a mellow shade across the glens. At last the sun shed its rays upon the scene, brightening the tints of the autumnal leaves, and peering into secluded dells, or prying into the secrets of each hidden recess. Here and there the saucy red-squirrel leaped from one tree to another; the woodpecker uttered his shrill cry, and the whirr of the partridge was heard in the distance.

Turning his glance on his fellow-passengers, he saw, upon the middle seat with himself, two countrymen. On the first seat were a little girl, an elderly lady, and a gentleman, while behind him were two

enormous old men. At the moment his attention was attracted towards them, they were sleeping, as well as they could in such awkward positions. They all kept bowing their heads as if each was resolved not to be outdone in politeness by the others. Edward wondered if the countryman's hat would fall off, and if so, he calculated the probabilities of its coming in contact with the elderly lady's bonnet. If it tumbled off when her head inclined forward, then the collision would take place. Each time the head of the countryman sunk upon his bosom, it was raised with a jerk, and his hat inclined still farther forward. The catastrophe could not be much longer delayed, and Edward now anxiously waited to see, if in its descent, the hat was to crush the bonnet. For a moment the nods of the man became more rapid than those of the lady; but now their heads inclined together, when down came the large bell-crowned hat upon the frail covering of the lady's head.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Edward, unable to control his laughter. It was increased by the disconcerted looks of the countryman, and the spiteful glances of the matron, and when the little girl joined in the merriment, his sides shook until the tears coursed each other down his cheeks. The passengers, aroused from their slumbers, began to converse.

"Have we crossed the river yet?" inquired one of the fat men.

"No; we are just approaching it," responded the countryman, casting a furtive glance at the elderly lady, as if he would distract her attention from the bonnet, which seemed to claim her undivided attention.

"We cannot be far from the stand where we take breakfast!"

"About six miles."

"So far? I am hungry, ain't you, neighbour?"

"Very, we have had a long ride since supper, and plenty of jolting."

The stage had reached an eminence that commanded an extensive view of the adjacent country. A range of mountains bounded the horizon upon their left. It was covered by a dense growth of forest trees, and the variegated foliage of the maple and beech mingled with the eternal green of the hemlock and the pine. Along the base of the mountain wound the river, diminishing in the distance until its broad bosom was contracted into a silver thread. This glorious prospect was lit up by the bright rays of the morning

sun, here and there dimly shadowed by the vapour which ascended from the valley.

"Is it not beautiful?" exclaimed the maiden, turning her large blue eyes upon Edward. (Their mingled laughter was an introduction.)

"I am glad you think so," he replied, "for I have been admiring it this half hour."

The coachman took up his key bugle, and while the panting horses obtained a few moments' rest, he awakened the mountain echoes with his wild melody.

The stage rapidly descended the hill, and in half an hour the coachman drew the reins in front of a country inn. Edward assisted his little fellow-passenger to alight, and was rewarded for his gallantry by having assigned him a seat next hers at the breakfast-table.

"I am going to Andover to attend the female Institution," whispered the lass.

"Where are you going?"

"I am bound for the male school at the same place. Who are your companions?"

"Papa and my aunt. They go to see no harm comes to me."

"When do they return?"

"To-morrow."

"And where do you board?"

"Perhaps in the Institution; maybe somewhere else."

"I am glad you attend school at Andover," continued the lad, after a pause; "there will be some one there now with whom I am acquainted."

"But if I board at the Institution they will not let you speak to me."

"Then, if I was in your place, I would not go there."

"Oh! I must go wherever papa sends me—but there is the stage. Here, tie on my hat while I put on my gloves. You can see, can't you, without coming so close. Thank you. Come, they are all waiting for us. My name is Fanny Brenton; what is yours?"

"Edward Clifton."

At noon the passengers alighted at the village of Andover, and after dining at the hotel, Edward's baggage was removed to the residence of Col. Florence, whither he soon followed.

Pure from the unpractised eye—the overflow  
Of wakened passions, that but now impart  
A hope, a wish, a feeling yet unfelt,  
That mould in madness, or in mildness melt."

CLASON.

The next day Edward entered the Academy, and his desk was assigned him. His application became intense and in a few weeks he was at the head of his class. Courteous and polite to all, he soon was a favourite with nearly all the school. In the family of Col. Florence he soon felt perfectly at home. Mrs. Florence was, in childhood, the playmate of Mr. Clifton, and she manifested a mother's regard for his son. With Mary Florence, and her brother Frank, who were both about his own age, he soon became intimate, and the hours passed together in the social circle were rendered pleasant by music and conversation.

There was one boy, whose name was Charles Stanton, attending the school, who managed to render himself excessively odious, by his violent temper and insufferable disposition. His strength made him a formidable antagonist, and all his companions dreaded an encounter with him. From the first, Edward anticipated a collision, having witnessed a sneering expression upon his countenance, the morning he entered the Academy. Resolved to delay the quarrel as long as possible, he managed for several weeks to evade an introduction.

An arrangement was made between the principals of the male and female school, for an excursion to the falls in the river, about three-fourths of a mile from the village. At twelve o'clock, they had congregated upon the bank of the stream, where the river plunged into the chasm.

Edward saw Fanny Brenton among the girls, and advancing to her side expressed his satisfaction at the meeting. Holding out her hand frankly, she returned his pressure.

"I am very glad to see you," she said. "Why you have made no attempt to ascertain whether I was living or dead."

"You are too hard. I found you were boarding at the Institution, and supposed it was impossible to see you."

"In this world, you should never suppose the accomplishment of any object impossible, until you have made the attempt."

"A good motto, by Jove, and one that I will treasure in my memory for all time."

"It will never do either of you any good," muttered young Stanton as he passed. Fanny looked surprised, while Ed-

#### CHAPTER IV.

"The first caress of beauty, O, that glow!  
The first warm glow that mantles round the heart  
Of boyhood! when all's new—the first dear vow  
He ever breathed—the teardrops that first start,

ward, bounding forward, placed himself beside the scoffer, and with bent brow and flashing eye, he said, "I heard you indistinctly, sir, but I gathered from your language that you wished to insult a lady as well as myself."

"One who is even duller in comprehension than you, might easily have come to that conclusion."

"At your earliest convenience," replied our hero, his frame trembling with passion; "when we are not in the presence of the ladies, you will hold yourself accountable to me for this language."

"Oh, at any moment, young gentleman," responded the other, with perfect coolness.

"I hope you will not have a difficulty with that person on my account, Edward."

"Excuse me, Fanny, but do not let any reference to him mar our amusement, when we meet so rarely. Can I not see you oftener?"

"I do not see how it is possible, the regulations of the Institution are so strict. I shall beg papa to let me board at a private house next session, and then you may carry my books sometimes, perhaps."

After a delightful day the party returned to the village, where they arrived before night. Edward proceeded at once to a store, purchased a cowhide, and arming himself with a leaden-headed staff, sought the playgrounds attached to the Academy. Here he discovered Stanton, who was disputing in a loud and imperious voice, with one of his companions. "Well then," said the latter, "I will leave it to any of the boys to decide which of us is right."

"Very well, who will you select?" replied Stanton haughtily.

"Any one. Here is Clifton, let him be the arbiter."

"Never! Neither a knave nor a blockhead shall have aught to do in my affairs."

"Fie, for shame, Stanton!" exclaimed a dozen voices, and then profound silence reigned upon the green. The smaller lads grew pale and the larger ones held their breath. For a moment Clifton gazed upon his antagonist with the most intense scorn, and then walking deliberately forward, he struck him violently across the face with the cowhide. For a moment, blinded by passion and smarting under the effects of the blow, Stanton raved like a maniac, but recovering his self-possession, he unsheathed a knife, and, with a savage yell, darted towards his assailant. As he raised his arm to inflict a fatal stab, Edward's staff descended upon his wrist with such force, that his weapon was dashed from

his hand. Before Stanton could recover it, Clifton, in his headlong passion, hurled his cane with such force, that, coming in contact with the head of his foe, it prostrated him senseless upon the earth.

"Three cheers for the conqueror of the bully!" shouted a boy; and they were given with the wildest enthusiasm. Scarcely had the last huzza died away, when two of the teachers burst into the circle, and conveying the still insensible Stanton into the Academy, endeavoured to restore him to consciousness. For a long time their efforts were unavailing. He had received a severe contusion upon the temple, and his wrist was nearly dislocated. A physician was summoned, and after being bled copiously, he was aroused from the stupor, and conveyed to his lodgings.

Edward could hardly escape from his enthusiastic friends after the encounter. They rejoiced at his victory, because they admired him as much as they detested Stanton.

"But how came you armed?"

"Once before to-day he had grossly insulted not only me, but a young lady, who for the moment was under my protection, and I determined to chastise him for it."

"Right, you were perfectly right; so say we all."

"I am obliged to you for your approval. I hope for the future he will be more gentlemanly in his bearing. Good bye, boys."

"Good bye, Clifton."

Several weeks elapsed before Stanton was able to leave his room, and when he had sufficiently recovered, he abandoned the Institution and returned home.

From the moment of his conflict with Stanton, Edward became the idol of the school. No one apprehended that a want of physical prowess would subject him to personal wrong, for he had a protector in Edward Clifton. As just as he was brave, he was often appealed to by young men, even, to decide their controversies, and his judgment was conclusive.

Thus opened his career, brilliant as it was commendable.

It is a great mistake to suppose that for manhood is reserved the struggle for distinction, or the thirst for applause. In youth, the brain is tortured for the purpose of winning that approbation which sends the warm blood gushing from the heart. What skilful diplomacy is practised for the purpose of elevating the ambitious boy above his fellows? A man does not possess, at once, those powers which are destined to exercise authority over the

human race. They are illustrated, in a more modified form, it is true, in the career of the student: As much tact is sometimes displayed, by a lad in destroying a combination among his class-mates, as there is by the most consummate diplomat in dissolving a coalition.

## CHAPTER V.

"How the green night of leafy trees,  
Invites to dreams of careless ease,  
And cradles the contented soul!"  
HALLER.

"I see the anchored bark, with streamers gay,  
The beckoning pilot, and the ruffled tide."  
TASSO.

It was the month of June; in the Northern States the most delightful season of the year. There were two weeks vacation in the male and female Institutions of Andover, and the students were preparing to carry out the plans which they had formed for that brief period. Three years had elapsed since Edward commenced attending the school at Andover, and he was soon to enter college. He was now a large, fine-looking young man of sixteen, whose polished address, and frank manners made him a general favourite.

Clifton had formed a party of eight persons, four young gentlemen and an equal number of maidens, for the purpose of visiting a celebrated mountain, about twenty miles distant from Andover. An elderly lady, one of the matrons of the female Institution, whose austerity of manner rendered her an admirable chaperon, accompanied the party. A capacious oil-cloth tent, mattresses and bed-clothes for the ladies, and a sufficient amount of cooking utensils were packed up, while rifles and fishing-tackle were not forgotten. The services of an experienced cook, a waiter and a maid were secured, and having chartered a large coach, they started, one bright morning early in June, for Mount Vista.

The dew still glistened upon the grass, as four spirited horses, dashed along the road, now mounting hills, and anon descending with rapid steps through valleys, and along the water-courses.

Harriet Salisbury sat beside Clifton upon the front seat, Fanny Brenton occupied the middle seat, facing our hero, and between her and Charlotte Dennison was Frederic Maitland, upon the left of Harriet Salisbury was George French, while

the back seat was occupied by Dame Batchelor, Mary Holmes, and Duncan Kelborn. The attendants rode upon the outside with the driver. The coach was one of those easy, rocking establishments, for which New England is celebrated.

It would be difficult to select four more beautiful and charming girls, than were assembled together in that stage, or four gallants whose wit and originality could be surpassed. As the two front seats faced each other, Edward enjoyed the conversation of Harriet and Fanny Brenton.

These young ladies had passed through a wonderful transition since we first presented them to the reader. The form of Miss Brenton was now tall and graceful, her complexion brilliant, the contour of her neck swanlike, and her eyes, a heavenly blue. Harriet was a brunette, her round figure inclined to embonpoint, and the large black eyes could flash with fire or melt with tenderness. Mary Holmes had soft hazel eyes, and a large mass of auburn hair. The outlines of her form were full and flowing, and her colour went and came with the ever-varying emotions.

Carlie Dennison was scarcely above the medium height, her eyes were black and piercing, her luxuriant hair the colour of the raven's wing, and the rich blood each moment threatened to gush forth from her clear, transparent cheek. They were all sixteen years of age, and each one could claim those indispensable prerequisites to entitle the possessor to the appellation of lovely—beautiful eyes, melodious voice, pearly teeth, taper fingers, and Norman feet.

Ten miles of the distance was accomplished before eight o'clock, and five more would bring them to the head of the lake, upon the shores of which Mount Vista reared its lofty head.

"Shall we breakfast at this stand, ladies?" inquired Edward, as the horses were approaching the tavern, "or shall we continue to the Lake House?"

"Oh to the lake, by all means," exclaimed Fanny and Carlie. "What is your opinion, Mistress Batchelor?"

"I do not think it will be too long a ride for the ladies."

"Let us see the lake as soon as possible," said Mary.

"To the Lake House, then, driver."

There was now a long, though not abrupt ascent for two miles, along a range of hills covered with evergreen trees. As they were slowly ascending it, a bevy of pheasants ran across the road.

"Stop, coachman, a moment," and



Edward and Maitland leaped from the stage with their rifles. Descending the bank a few steps, they fired simultaneously into the forest, a flutter followed the echo of their pieces, and they soon returned with two birds.

"They are fat, although slightly out of season; go on, now, driver!"

As soon as they had reached the top of the hill they all alighted for the purpose of viewing the prospect.

"Is it not beautiful?" "Did you ever behold anything so charming," they exclaimed enthusiastically. It was indeed a glorious spectacle. Some three miles distant, and far beneath them was Lake —, a sheet of water thirty miles long, and varying from one to five miles wide. It was interspersed with beautiful islands, that thickly studded its bosom. Upon one shore could be seen country-seats and highly-cultivated farms, while upon the other, a range of hills extended along the shore of the lake, rising in the distance to the grandeur of mountains. No breeze ruffled the glassy surface of the lake, and it presented the appearance of a vast mirror, reflecting the sloping banks of one side, and the rough and lofty shores of the other. At their feet reposed the small village of Groton, with its hotel, store, and meeting-house.

"Do you see the highest peak in the distance, just whar the lake seems to stop?" inquired the coachman; "well, that ere is Mount Vista!"

"Indeed," said Harriet, "how do we get there?"

"Oh easily enough," responded Clifton. "We sail to its base in a barge, and then trust to our good limbs to place us upon its summit."

"An easy task, I should think," observed Fanny; "one could almost step from the lake to its utmost elevation."

"You would have to exchange those tiny gaiters for a pair of seven-mile boots, then," said George French, glancing at the small feet which were exposed by a short dress.

"Is it so far?"

"About three miles!"

"Who would have thought it?"

They were soon gliding down the declivity with a velocity that caused a suppressed scream to escape from Mary Holmes, and Mistress Batchelor to inquire if there really was no danger. The horses drew up at the hotel, and the merry party descended and were soon congregated in the grove upon the lake shore. Ere long they were summoned to the breakfast-table, and de-

spite the enthusiasm of the moment, they all made a hearty meal.

Preparations were now made for their departure. The cook purchased an abundant supply of luxuries, as well as necessities, and they were stored, together with the baggage, in the boat. The wind now blew off shore, and gave token of a pleasant sail, and at 10 o'clock the barge was unmoored, and the receding party were saluted by waving handkerchiefs from the shore.

"I am so delighted!" exclaimed Fanny Brenton, as, suffering her hand to fall upon the water, she gazed into its liquid depths.

"I knew you would be pleased with the scenery," replied Edward; "once before, I visited the spot, and was perfectly fascinated."

"Look, Harriet, you can see the fish far down in the water."

"It is your lakes that render the North so much more attractive than the South," observed Maitland, a Southron.

"Ah, is that the only reason why we should claim superiority?" said Miss Dennison, archly.

"In the presence of four such nymphs, who are fit representatives of Diana, Venus, Hebe, and Juno, it is extremely difficult to preserve my allegiance to the South. Nevertheless——"

"Well, proceed," said Fanny, as the maidens turned their bright glances upon him.

"Really, ladies, such a formidable battery makes me falter; yet I even must proceed. If you were at the South, you would be considered Southern ladies. I cannot say as much of many Northern females."

"In what consists the difference?" inquired Kelborn.

"As for personal beauty, I can discover none. Every portion of the Union can boast the possession of lovely women. I do not recollect ever passing through the smallest village without beholding a charming face and figure."

"Oh, any American will proclaim that fact," cried Clifton; "but it is of manners that we would hear you speak."

Now, fairly driven to the wall, Maitland continued: "I think the difference between ladies educated in the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States, is caused, not altogether by climate, but, to a certain degree, by local conventionalities. That climate is not without its influence, is apparent from the fiery impetuosity of races whose pulses throb beneath the rays of a tropical sun, compared with the calm judgments of those who are nurtured beneath

more temperate skies. But each segment of the confederacy possesses its own regulations, and when society conforms to them, every obligation is discharged. In France, young ladies are kept in the background until they are married, and then become candidates for admiration. In the United States, maidens alone claim universal fealty, and relinquish it for that of one individual, when they stand at the altar. At the South, there is simply greater latitude given to unmarried ladies than at the North. They do not transcend the bounds of propriety, but its limits are not so narrow and confined. Fashion does not lace them so tightly, and their movements possess more freedom and elasticity."

"A very good explanation," said Mistress Batchelor, sententiously.

"In no way are the characteristics of the rival sections better indicated," continued Maitland, "than in their laughter. A Southern girl yields to her merriment in joyous and unrestrained hilarity, while at the North mirth is confined, with but rare exceptions, to an affected smile, or a suppressed giggle."

The earnestness with which he expressed his opinions caused the laughter of the ladies to ring merrily upon the air.

"By Jove! that's worth hearing," exclaimed the Mississippian, bringing his hand down upon his thigh in real Tom Crock style.

"We may then infer that gentlemen become sooner acquainted with Southern than with Northern ladies," remarked Miss Salisbury.

"We sooner feel at ease in their presence. Where there is an absence of stiffness in the manners of a lady, a gentleman is relieved of that painful restraint, which is always embarrassing. Stiffness is rarely discoverable in a Southern girl, while it is often noticed in a Northerner. The one is not affected by what the other is forced to overcome."

"Admirable!" ejaculated Mistress Batchelor.

"What think you of our sex?" inquired French.

"The wealthy Southerner is not forced to devote his time to a calculation of dollars and cents, and can therefore employ his thoughts upon subjects more intellectual. His views are enlarged and liberal, and, in some instances, possessing the cultivation of the English peer, he maintains that unyielding opposition to unlawful encroachments which distinguished the feudal barons."

"What effect does slavery have upon their personal bearing?"

"Existing among an inferior race, they are not quite so amiable as certain persons I could name; but the code of honour keeps the unamiable within the bounds of courtesy. But I am exhausted with much talking. See, what an exquisite spot!"

The barge, in tacking, swept down in the direction of a small island, covered with trees in full bloom. From the shady bower floated towards them the perfume of the crab-apple, the plum, and the peach.

"Can we not land? I should so much like to explore it," eagerly observed Fanny Brenton.

"Certainly, if you all desire it," replied Edward. "We have ample time to gratify every wish."

"On the other side," remarked the boatman, "is the best place for landing, and we can easily make it with the oars."

In a few minutes the prow grated upon the pebbly beach, and they were walking amidst the thick foliage that shaded the earth. The damsels gracefully elevated their dresses, almost as decidedly as a New York lady of a rainy day, and half winding the ample drapery around their limbs, they soon arrived at the summit of the island. It was a large rock, which reared its bald head above the shrubbery, and gave them an extensive view of the surrounding scenery. The most prominent object was Mount Vista. It now began to lose the smooth exterior with which distance had clothed it, and to exhibit its rough outlines and yawning chasms. Blossoms of pink and white, mingling with the foliage of the maple and the deeper green of the hemlock, made the innumerable islands that rose from the undulating water appear like bouquets reposing upon the bosoms of youth and beauty.

"Did you ever behold anything so lovely?" exclaimed the enthusiastic Miss Salisbury.

"Never," said Kelborn, "it is unapproachable. Maitland, this would almost reconcile you to a life in the North."

"Undoubtedly, if I was always surrounded by such loveliness!" and he gallantly bowed to the ladies, while his eye rested for a moment upon the bewitching form of Carrie Dennison.

"If you have admired the prospect enough," said Mistress Batchelor, "we had better descend to the shade. The rays of the sun fall upon this rock with too much warmth."

"Let us rest a minute here;" and Fan-

ny Brenton reclined upon the flowering bed. Her companions were soon grouped around her, while the young men beat the island in search of game.

"Carlie, you have made a conquest of the Mississippian."

"How absurd! Why, I am but a school-girl."

"You are old enough to blush very red, notwithstanding."

"Hush! Batchelor will hear you, and then her sharp eyes will be always watching us."

"I think Harriet may congratulate herself upon captivating Mr. Clifton," observed Fanny, in a constrained voice.

"Ha! ha! ha!" merrily laughed Miss Salisbury; "with what mournful accents the charge is made. Relieve your mind, my dear Fan; we are only devoted—friends, that is all, I assure you."

"I do not see what reason you have for supposing that I am at all interested in the gentleman," quickly retorted the maiden.

"Oh! I make no such insinuations; however, a gallant beau rarely perils his life in chastising the calumniator of a female, without acquiring a lively interest in her future career."

"Pshaw! he was insulted himself in my presence; and, besides, his feelings were grossly outraged the same day, and before the assembled school."

"You seem to be perfectly apprised of the facts, and to express your feeling as though they were slightly enlisted in behalf of the gallant chevalier."

"If you will persist in misunderstanding me, let us change the subject"—and the warm blood flowed to her cheek, and threatened to burst through its slight barrier.

In a few minutes they were sailing through the archipelago, and an hour had not elapsed before the boat was moored in a brook that flowed into the lake from the base of Mount Vista.

"Now, ladies, you can seek for wild flowers, which abound here," said Clifton, "while we pitch the tent and prepare our meal, for air and exercise must have made you hungry."

French and Kelborn arranged their hooks and lines, and seating themselves upon a projecting rock, cast them into the lake. Maitland threw a rifle upon his shoulder, and plunged into the forest in pursuit of game, while Clifton sought a spot upon which to erect the tent. A few yards from the shore of the lake he discovered a small plain, densely covered with hemlock, spruce,

and "hardwood."\* It was bounded upon one side by an acclivity, from which burst forth a delicious fountain, while upon the other the mountain stream glided murmuring past. In front, glimpses of the lake were caught through the leaves, and behind, the lofty summit of Mount Vista was seen above the fleecy clouds which encircled its majestic brow.

A space sufficiently large was cleared of timber, the tent was soon erected, and the baggage transferred thither. The fishermen had fine sport, and in an hour landed a dozen speckled trout and two lunge, while Maitland brought in three pheasants and a fawn.

The ladies had scarcely returned from the mountain-side and arranged their flowers before they were summoned to dinner. A rustic table had been prepared from the bark of the spruce, and upon this the food was spread—venison, pheasants, trout, roast potatoes, bread, butter, and cheese, besides an abundance of delicacies which were selected by the ladies, afforded them a delicious repast. It was now four o'clock, the sun was yet high in the heavens, but they had determined to postpone the ascent until the following day. For the present, then, Fanny superintended the manufacture of rustic seats, for which there was great demand; Harriet accompanied Kelborn in search of flowers; and Carlie, Mary, French, and Maitland sought the shore, for the purpose of fishing. The oil-cloth tent possessed sufficient capacity to accommodate the ladies and their maid: it was made in a circular form, coming to a point at the top; at the ground it was a dozen feet in diameter. A portion of the canvass could be rolled up, and gave to the inmates a ready egress. Hemlock boughs were first placed upon the earth, and the mattresses were deposited upon them, and a couch was thus arranged fit for a queen to recline upon.

"Why do you first cover the earth with these boughs?" inquired Fanny.

"Because hemlock will prevent you from taking cold, which would, assuredly, be the case if you slept upon the ground."

"But I see no place for you, Mr. Edward; there is only just enough space for us ladies within the tent."

"Oh, we can throw ourselves under the trees; you see we have an abundant supply of boughs. If it rains moderately we have a cloth tent to protect us."

"But if it storms?"

"In twenty minutes we can tear spruce

\* So called as contradistinguished to evergreen trees.

bark enough from the trees to shield us from its fury."

"Do you really apprehend no danger from wild beasts? I begin to be alarmed as night approaches."

"Fear not; there are six good rifles to guard you, and our pallets will be so arranged as to encompass the pavilion."

"What do you think of this rustic seat? Is not my mechanical skill quite creditable?"

"Truly, you surprise me. If it was fashioning a doll, your proficiency would not be as astonishing; but although I have always given you credit for being sufficiently sharp, still your knowledge of edged tools is incomprehensible."

"Thank you, sir, for the implied compliment, yet my hand has not touched a single instrument."

"Of course not."

"Here come the anglers. What success, girls?"

"Why, I caught five, and hooked up another," replied Mary Holmes; "but I don't believe Carlie had a nibble. She appeared, though, not to pay the slightest attention to her line—did you, Carlie?"

"Yes I did; but, do you know, Mr. Maitland kept talking so much that he frightened the fish away."

"They must have been easily alarmed, for he conversed in very low tones, scarcely, indeed, above a whisper."

"Their nerves, then, must be affected by the vibration of indistinct sounds upon the water. At all events, if they could not hear, they could see, as the lake is transparent, and, I believe, all fish are blessed with sight."

"They are, when circumstances require it," observed Maitland. "It is a well-authenticated fact that fish are found without eyes, in the Mammoth Cave, where they are surrounded by eternal gloom."

They were all gathered around the tea-table. Long rustic benches had been made, so that every one was seated. The ladies alternately presided at the table. Harriet Salisbury now had that honour and responsibility.

"Did I understand you, Mr. Maitland," said Mistress Batchelor, "as expressing your approval of the so-called code of honour?"

"Certainly, Madame. I think a fatal mistake is committed when laws are passed to suppress duelling."

"Is it possible! and wherefore?"

"For more reasons than I can well enumerate. In the first place, the effect of duelling is to keep lawless and unprincipled men under a wholesome restraint."

"But how much unhappiness does one fatal encounter bring upon the family of the duellist!" observed Fanny Brenton.

"That is very true; but the same remark is applicable to every conflict of arms; and those persons who sanction aggressive, as well as defensive wars, forget that they are inconsistent in denouncing a single combat."

"But national wars are prosecuted to attain some general good," remarked Carlie Dennison.

"Sometimes, not always. Probably more than half the blood that has watered the battle-fields of the old world has been shed in the prosecution of unjust quarrels. But if defensive wars are waged for the accomplishment of some general good, it may be said of duelling, that it as often occurs for the punishment of some private wrong."

"That which may be excusable in a nation can hardly be pardoned in an individual," said French.

"And why not?" responded the Mississippian; "individuals compose nations, and I see not why, as a unit, I may not exercise those rights that the American people, as a mass, undoubtedly claim as a prerogative."

"But, Maitland," said Kelborn, "certain powers have been delegated by the people to the general and state governments. To the former, the right to declare war—to the latter, the redress of private grievances; and having transferred those powers, they are now beyond our control." "It is that of which I complain in the laws of duelling."

"Are not our laws sufficiently stringent," inquired Mistress Batchelor, "to prevent crime?"

"No; if they were written in blood, offences would be committed," said French.

"I admit," continued the Southron, "that our statutes are sufficiently severe in most instances, but there are cases affecting personal honour, where they are wholly inadequate."

"But when antagonists meet upon the field of honour, is not the culprit often victorious?" timidly inquired Mary Holmes.

"That is true; but the hazard will frequently keep him within the bounds of prudence."

"I have been informed," said Mistress Batchelor, "that a verbal insult will produce a challenge. Is it so?"

"Unquestionably," remarked Clifton; "and therein consists one of the chief excellencies of the code. Wrangling is

avoided, and to reflect upon one's honour, will produce an instant call to the field.

"But suppose one's honour is not altogether untarnished?" interposed French.

"So it injures not yourself," said Clifton, "let others assume the Quixotic task of assailing it."

"Would an imputation upon your veracity induce you to challenge a fellow-being?" inquired Mistress Batchelor.

"Certainly; far better do that than bandy words, which not only degrade yourself, but annoy others."

"But suppose a person who is not a gentleman insults you?"

"He could not."

"Would any one who is, be guilty of a mean act?" suggested Fanny Brenton.

"Of what is generally understood as a mean action, a gentleman could not be chargeable."

"Why are duels ever fought, then?"

"Misapprehension, violent anger, irresistible passion, will frequently cause resentment, and require atonement. No one can observe the amazing contrast in the personal bearing of gentlemen at the North and South without regretting that duelling is not sanctioned by public opinion. When last in one of the Northern cities, I attended a session of the court, and was astonished to hear epithets bandied by learned members of the bar, which would have disgraced a blackguard. 'Tis false,' and 'you lie,' passed as freely as the ordinary phrase, 'gentlemen of the jury.'"

"Such language is infamous," murmured Miss Dennison.

"Not only are such expressions heard at the bar," pursued the Mississippian, "but they are tolerated in the legislative halls, and dishonour those who utter them, as well as the constituency whom they represent."

"Let the injured person attack his foe on sight," said Kelborn.

"You have surrendered the argument," replied Clifton. "If you admit the right of personal combat, in any form, you concede all we ask. All I claim is the right to punish certain breaches of etiquette, with the strong arm. The only difference between us is this: the method you propose is much more objectionable than mine. You would assail your opponent, not only in the streets, where you would endanger the lives of innocent persons, but you might be guilty of attacking him with weapons in your hands at a time when he was unarmed. Besides, the certainty of witnessing the measurement of the ground—as if they were taking the

dimensions of your coffin—the steady elevation of a pistol until it comes in a line with your heart; the startling explosion, the tearing of flesh, and the crushing of bones, is far more appalling than the uncertain chances of a street fight, which, if it ever occurs, may be interrupted before blood is drawn."

"The objection you have made as to attacking him when he is unarmed can be obviated by sending your opponent word to prepare himself," observed French.

"Not at all, for then there will be a struggle for superiority of weapons, and the aggressor may triumph. No, no; the fairest method, and one the most satisfactory in its results, is to appoint a meeting for the antagonists, when no other person can be injured, and where, with similar weapons, they can fight it out. Until that is done, there is no immunity from insult; unless we sanction murderous encounters upon the public streets!"

The full moon now cast her beams along the water, and here and there, piercing the leafy bower, threw a pale and steady light upon the encampment. Not a breath of air rippled the bosom of the lake, and no sound disturbed the stillness of the night, save the murmur of the waterfall.

"Let us walk to the beach," proposed Maitland.

The ladies all declined except Carlie. They were too much fatigued.

"Will you not go too?" inquired Clifton of Fanny Brenton.

For a moment she hesitated; until her glance sought his dark eyes, and then, with a blush, she assented.

"Shall I not get your shawl? the night air may chill you," and adjusting it upon her graceful shoulders, they followed the retreating forms of Maitland and Carlie Dennison.

Seating themselves upon a rock which jutted into the lake, some distance from the Mississippian and his companion, they gazed upon the splendid scene before them.

"Is not this enchantment?" murmured Fanny.

"I am often apprehensive that it is so," replied Clifton, with a significant smile, as he surveyed her person.

"Nonsense! why will you talk so?"

"Because I feel thus," said her companion seriously.

"If you do, I may take effectual measures to convince you of my mortality," and she raised her open hand threateningly.

"I am willing to be thus undeceived," he turned his cheek submissively.

"What is that?" whispered the maiden anxiously. A momentary silence succeeded the plunge into the lake, and then an antlered denizen of the forest slowly emerged from the bushes which overhung the shore. Standing in the cooling element, he raised his noble head, and gazed half startled upon the wonders of his solitude. Fanny heard the stealthy tread of some person advancing through the forest, and, turning her head, she saw young Kelborn cautiously pushing his rifle through the clustering branches which intercepted his view. At once divining his intentions, she rose suddenly, and, waving her handkerchief, shouted to the deer. Alarmed at her musical voice, the animal bounded toward the land; but the leaden messenger sped too swiftly. The echo of the rifle had scarcely died away, when the lifeless form of the deer sank on the beach.

"Alas! I was too late. How could you have the heart to slay so beautiful a creature?"

"He deserved death, because he fled from you."

"Ah, the poor thing; he stood so trustingly, I cannot forgive you for killing him."

"If I had known you would take his death so much at heart, I would have suffered him to escape; you will survive it, though, Miss Fanny, and doubtless will partake of the venison to-morrow morning. Here, Sam, transfer the deer to your larder," and the light-hearted hunter sauntered along the shore.

"Shall we return to the encampment?" inquired Carlie.

"Certainly, if you wish it," and musing she adjusted her shawl, in doing which, she lost her balance, and would have been precipitated into the lake, but for the timely interposition of Maitland, who threw his arm around her waist, and drew her away. A suppressed shriek escaped her lips, and in her terror, she for a moment hid her face upon his shoulder, then quickly drawing back, she darted towards the tent, and throwing herself upon the couch, wept bitterly.

"Why what is the matter Carlie?" said Mistress Batchelor anxiously.

"Oh nothing," said the sobbing girl, "only I came very near falling into the water," and she thought, "What will he think of me?"

"Do not weep for that, now the danger is past, but you must be more careful in future."

"Indeed I will."

"Come, girls, it is time for us to retire," said the matron; "see, how well our couches are arranged."

"Good night, ladies! sleep without a care, for we will protect you."

"We doubt it not," said the pleasant voice of Fanny; "may you have pleasant dreams under your starry canopy."

A sentinel was stationed to guard the tent, who was to be relieved at midnight. All but Clifton threw themselves upon the boughs, and soon lost the sense of pleasure or of pain, in deep sleep. Seating himself at the foot of a lofty maple, with his rifle across his knees, he looked out upon the lake: a breeze began to agitate the water, and waves in miniature, laved the beach. The glittering myriads with which the blue vault of heaven was illuminated, each sent a ray of light from its far-off home, to cheer the guardian of innocence and youth.

Clifton caught the low and melodious notes of a female voice, as it sang:

"Sleeping, I dreamed, love,  
Dreamed love, of thee."

Did he recognise the voice? He thought so.

## CHAPTER VI.

"Up! lady fair, and braid thy hair,  
And rouse thee in the breezy air,  
The lulling stream, that soothed thy dream,  
Is dancing in the sunny beam;  
And hours so sweet, so bright, so gay,  
Will wait good fortune on its way."

JOANNA BAILLIE.

"Land of the forest and the rock—  
Of dark blue lake and mighty river—  
Of mountains reared aloft to mock  
The storm's career, the lightning's shock—  
My own green land for ever!"

WHITTIER.

THE sun was gilding the waters of the lake with his golden hues, when Fanny Brenton and Harriet Salisbury, emerged from the tent, as gay and happy as the lark. Kelborn and Maitland were fishing, and French was pursuing game, while Clifton was still slumbering upon his simple bed. As the damsels went trippingly along, they paused a moment, and gazed upon the sleeper. Fanny cast a half-tender glance upon him as she murmured, "Poor youth! you deprived yourself of sleep, to protect us from danger." They were soon performing their ablutions in the transparent waters of the lake.

At an early hour they were seated at the break-fast table.

"We have a toilsome journey before us, and must soon be on our way," remarked Clifton. "I am afraid the ladies will find it very fatiguing."

"Never fear but that we can perform it," replied Harriet. "Do you not recollect how often I used to tire you at play?"

"That was when we were children."

"Will you venture upon the ascent, Mrs. Batchelor?"

"I think not; if the ladies will promise to be careful, and not fall down the precipice."

"Of course we shall avoid such a horrible death."

"Well then, I will remain here with Polly and Samuel, and have your tea ready by the time you return."

Thomas was directed to take along some refreshments, and a large hatchet, while the young men each bore a rifle and a covering to protect the ladies from the mountain air.

The demeanour of Miss Dennison towards all except Maitland, was frank and cordial. Her brilliant conversation, and fascinating manners, inspired the gentlemen with the warmest admiration, and even the ladies were surprised at the exhibition of such extraordinary powers. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes sparkled with an unnatural fire. It was evident that some powerful emotion agitated her, which none but Maitland could divine. Grieved that he had been the innocent cause of her suffering, he endeavoured to soothe the maiden by his respectful bearing. His advances being indignantly repulsed, he drew haughtily away, and for the remainder of the ascent devoted himself assiduously to Mary Holmes. Angry at having offended the Mississippian without a cause, Carlie now relapsed into silence. About a mile from the encampment was a delicious spring, and here they paused to slake their thirst. Hitherto the acclivity had been easily surmounted, but now it became more rugged and precipitous, and it was with considerable difficulty that the maidens proceeded on their toilsome way.

"Ladies, you must allow us to assist you," said Edward, "or else your strength will be exhausted before we have advanced half way to the summit. Come, Fanny, take my arm."

"Very well; you will find me a heavy burden, though."

"It is said that every man has to bear a cross; I care not, so mine is not a cross lady," exclaimed Maitland, casting a

spiteful, though furtive glance at Miss Dennison.

"How now, Maitland! you have not become a grumbler?" said French.

"Not exactly, though I do not profess to have the patience of Job."

"That is because you do not possess Job's wife to test it," replied Kelborn, irreverently.

The mountain, thus far, was thickly covered with forest trees, but now they emerged from beneath this foliage and entered a growth of stunted spruce, from the bark of which they obtained a large supply of delicious gum.\*

"Oh, there is a prize! do get it for me, Mr. French," exclaimed Mary Holmes; "it looks like coral." It exhibited its blushing outlines twenty feet up the tree.

"What a request, Mary!" said Harriet. "Mr. George does not possess wings nor claws."

"I did not think of the distance; pray do not make the attempt," said the anxious girl. But her remonstrance came too late; already French had leaped into the branches of a beech which reared its trunk in close proximity to the straight, limbless spruce. They all watched his progress, as, passing out upon a projecting branch, he inserted his knife under the bark, and the gum fell to the earth. In performing this feat, the limb upon which he stood broke, and he was precipitated half way to the earth, when he was caught by the clustering branches. Shrieks escaped from the terrified girls.

"What is the matter with Mary?" The alarmed girl had fainted.

When she was restored to consciousness, French was standing beside her uninjured. Pressing her hand upon her temple, she murmured, "I am so glad he escaped."

"Really, friends," said Kelborn, "our excursion bids fair to be a romantic one. Already we have had a quarrel, a fall, and a faint. Allah be praised!"

"You deserve to be banished from the party," said Harriet.

"For what reason?"

"Because you are so unfeeling."

"Now that is a specimen of the world's judgment. If my nerves don't tremble naturally, I must make them. Everything must bend to conventionalities. If society declares that certain events must produce a sensation, you must open your mouth, and your face must express the utmost astonishment. If the incidents are suffi-

\* A concrete juice which exudes through the bark of Spruce trees, and by exposure to the air acquires the colour and consistency of resin.

ciently startling, you are bound to faint, ladies, while our knees must smite together like Belshazzar's."

"If such are the regulations of society, I am sure you pay them very little reverence," said Mary tartly.

"Well done, Mary; it is enough to disturb the placidity of even your temper," said Fanny.

The pedestrians entered the gulf, a narrow, winding, and abrupt ascent under the overhanging mountain. Their progress was slow, now climbing over rocks and anon grasping the shrubs, which tenaciously clung for existence to the crevices of the mountain. They at last reached the 'staircase,' an almost perpendicular ascent of forty steps. A rope had been attached to the rock, and with its support alone could the perilous summit be attained.

"If you are sufficiently rested, ladies," observed Clifton, "will you proceed?"

"You will make the ascent first, if you please, gentlemen," said Fanny, drawing back.

"You must be extremely cautious, then. Even we cannot gaze upwards, lest the overhanging mountain and flying clouds, should make us giddy and lightheaded."

"Perhaps, then, we had better precede you, for it would be terrible to lose our consciousness midway that staircase, without having any one to sustain us," said Miss Salisbury.

"Why not remain here, where we are perfectly safe?" inquired the timid Miss Holmes.

"You will lose the glorious sight for which we have struggled so long."

"Better that than our lives."

"It will never do to return without reaching the pinnacle. They would laugh at us," observed the spirited Carlie.

"Come, Mr. Kelborn, I will make the attempt, but you must follow my footsteps closely, so as to catch me if I fall."

"Come then, Mr. Clifton," said Fanny; "recollect, you are responsible if I am killed." They all mounted the staircase, and in a few minutes, were assembled upon the highest elevation of the mountain.

The view from the height was vast in extent. The lake was spread out at their feet, and far down, and only perceptible with a glass, was the solitary tent upon the shore. Over the lake, a champaign country, highly cultivated, extended as far as the eye could pierce the distance. Behind was an illimitable forest, without a single clearing to relieve the eternal gloom that pervaded the solitude. At the foot of the

mountain, upon their left, they discovered a small sheet of water, which appeared separated scarce half a mile from the lake, and not double that distance from the encampment.

"What a gem of a lake that is, nestling securely in the forest," said Harriet.

"Can't we explore it on our return?" inquired Carlie. "Do you know, that interests me more than every other object within the scope of my vision."

"We will examine that side of the mountain, before we start, to see if we can descend without danger," observed Clifton.

After the party had gazed upon the scenery, they partook of some refreshments. At that altitude the air was sufficiently cool to make shawls acceptable to the ladies. It was now three o'clock, and they prepared to return. Clifton had ascertained that the only practicable path down the mountain, was the one by which the ascent had been made.

"What a beautiful flower!" said Carlie, as she gazed over the precipice. "I must try and get it;" and advancing rapidly along the brow of the mountain, she descended the shelving rock towards the coveted blossom. "Come back, do come back!" exclaimed Mary Holmes. Fanny and Harriet clasped their hands in mortal fear. While Maitland muttered, "Rash girl, you will be lost!"

She succeeded in obtaining the object of her pursuit, but she had no sooner done so, than, raising her eyes, her cheek became deadly pale, and her head swam round, as she gazed with an irresistible impulse upon the yawning gulf at her feet.

"For God's sake, withdraw your glance!" shouted the Mississippian. "Look upward; here, this way, dear Miss Carlie!"

But thought, hearing, motion, were gone; her limbs relaxed, and her powerless form glided slowly down the polished rock, and disappeared from the sight of her terror-stricken companions. Without a moment's hesitation, Maitland darted along the verge of the rock, but inclining further to the left than the ill-fated girl had done, he approached a lower shelf in the mountain. Gaining this with much difficulty, he advanced along its narrow surface. Above him was the overhanging stone; below, away down as far as the sight could extend, was a frightful chasm, which made his brain reel as he gazed into its depths. He shouted her name; no answer came back. "I knew she would be lost—and such a death!"



Hastening onwards, he ascertained that the rock gradually widened, while the cliff above sloped nearly to the level of the platform.

He caught a glimpse of female attire, and uttered a shout of gladness, but the blood instantly retreated to his heart, and his paralysed limbs were rooted to the stone, as he saw the motionless form of the maiden lying upon the shelving rock, her head hanging over the chasm, and the blood flowing from a wound in her temple. A slight movement of the hand assured him that life was not extinct, and bounding forward, he raised the unconscious girl in his arms, and bore her rapidly along the platform towards the top of the mountain. Scarcely had he emerged from the ledge, when he was met by Edward and Kelborn, who were advancing to his assistance. The rapid motion and mountain air, restored Charlie to consciousness.

Opening her eyes, she looked for a moment at her preserver, as if her mind wandered, and then recalling the fearful peril through which she had passed, a shudder ran through her frame.

"The danger is now past, and you are safe," said the soothing voice of Maitland.

Turning upon him a grateful look, she slightly contracted the muscles of the rounded arm that still encircled his neck, and then raising her form from his shoulder, she threw herself, weeping, into the arms of Fanny Brenton.

At night, the party were all assembled again, around the supper-table. The adventures of the day were recounted to the matron, and they were all joyous and gay, except Charlie, and she was happy; but occasionally, there would pass across her countenance a sad and pensive expression. The near approach of death had momentarily checked the exuberance of her spirits.

Fatigued by the exertions of the day, they all retired early.

Two hearts were happy at the reconciliation which had taken place, above the yawning gulf of Mount Vista.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Hark, how the tempest crushes through the forest!  
The owls fly out in strange affright;  
The columns of the evergreen palaces  
Are split and shattered;

The roots creak, and stretch, and groan;  
And, ruinously overthrown,  
The trunks are crushed and shattered  
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress."  
GOETHE.

BEFORE they arose from the breakfast-table, the heavy clouds which had been gathering in the northwest, rolled towards the mountain, and the gleaming lightning was followed by peals of thunder that shook the earth. The atmosphere was close, almost suffocating. The lake slumbered as placidly as an infant reposing upon its mother's bosom. Profound silence reigned in the forest; but the calm was the precursor of the tempest. Far up the mountain, the wind first toyed with the leaves, and then violently severing the branches, rudely twisted them from their trunks, and whirled them through the air. The top of Mount Vista was enveloped in a black mantle, and from its folds the forked lightning darted athwart that portion of the sky which still preserved its ethereal blue. The storm swept down the descent. Large drops of rain first disfigured the glossy surface of the lake, and then the hurricane descended upon it with such fury, that the water was lashed into a white foam.

"You must all come into the tent," said Fanny, as she fearfully gazed upon the scene.

Scarcely had they congregated beneath its folds, when the lightning descended upon a lofty maple which grew on the shore. Its trunk was riven, and the fragments scattered along the beach. The crash which accompanied, rather than followed the electric fluid, was appalling, while the atmosphere was charged with sulphurous smoke.

The ladies concealed their faces, and the gentlemen gazed with serious countenances upon the progress of the storm. Even the gay and reckless Kelborn was subdued by its terrors. But the hurricane had gone past, and was now spending its fury upon the opposite shore of the lake.

"See!" exclaimed French, eagerly, "it has unroofed yonder mansion, and now it is playing with the trees in front of the white house, to the right. Look, it twists them off like reeds! Now it struggles with the dwelling. The glass—let me have the glass! By heavens, the inmates are flying! The house totters—it is a heap of ruins! See, the tempest now inclines to the left; it forces a passage through yonder grove. My God! it approaches the brick building. Surely that will resist it. No, no! 'tis awful! nothing but the foundation

remains." And he closed his eyes to shut out the terrible vision. When he looked again upon the scene, the tornado had swept over the table land which bounded the horizon in that direction.

"I never beheld anything so terrific," said Kelborn.

"In our southern latitudes," responded Maitland, "we often witness the progress of destructive hurricanes."

"Why are some localities so much oftener visited by tornadoes than others?" inquired Harriet Salisbury.

"I presume," said Maitland, "it is, to a certain degree, attributable to the configuration of the ground. I recollect one spot that was twice visited by hurricanes in ten years. The first time a court-house was prostrated, and some of the papers were picked up more than fifty miles distant. It was observable that the course of the storm was nearly the same in both instances."

"But I understand," said French, "that on the Western Prairies, where the wind has a fair sweep, they are never troubled with hurricanes."

"That is, doubtless, the reason *why* there are none," said Edward. "It is only where the wind can find obstacles to resist its progress, that its pent-up fury prostrates everything before it."

The sky was now overcast with clouds, and gave promise of a rainy day. Maitland and French donned their thick overcoats, and prepared to sally forth upon a fishing excursion. Kelborn and our hero preferred the society of the ladies.

"Oh ye slothful!" exclaimed the Mississippian, "would you leave the ladies to perish for want of food?"

"You like the storm, and the rocking of the boat upon the waves," said Kelborn, "better than the society of the softer sex; we do not."

The tender glance which Maitland bestowed upon Charlie Dennison, was a refutation of this charge.

"Let this protect you from the storm," said the lovely maiden, as she advanced to the door of the tent with a silken scarf in her hand.

"If you will adjust it."

"Stoop, then."

But he was obdurate, and raising herself upon her tiny feet, she wound the scarf around his neck, while her taper fingers played about his cheeks as she arranged its folds. He sought her glance, but it was withheld until the last knot was tied, and then, for an instant, she raised her soft and melting eyes to his own.

"And how do you purpose amusing yourselves, ladies?" inquired Clifton.

"I will show you," said Harriet; and she took from her bag a piece of embroidery. The others were also employed with needles.

"I can tell you how they would find amusement, even if their fingers were not employed," said Kelborn.

"How?" inquired Mary Holmes.

"In conversation. I never could divine how it was possible for your sex to while away so many hours in talking."

"Why, if we did not converse, we should be considered stupid," said Fanny.

"But what is there about half the conversation which serves to amuse ladies but stupidity?"

"What an impertinent man!" exclaimed Charlie.

"Now, let us see whether it is not the truth," continued Kelborn. "Two friends meet: it ought to be presumed that they feel some interest in the mental improvement of each other. What is the subject of the conversation? They talk thus:

"What a beautiful hat, Jane!"

"Do you think so? Well, would you believe it, I gave only ten dollars for it?"

"Impossible! And such a beauty! Where did you buy it—at Jones's?"

"No, indeed; I thought it was useless to pay such extravagant prices as they ask at Jones's. They think because they have got their names up that ladies will submit to extortions."

"Have you purchased yours yet, Serena?"

"No; I thought I would be in no haste. I prefer looking round until I can suit myself."

"How exquisite the silks are figured this season."

"I thought they were not as pretty as last."

"Oh! I think they are perfectly charming."

"Mrs. Flighty had one on yesterday, cut in the new style,—a point before and behind."

"What! both?"

"Certainly."

"Well, how fashions do change."

"Yes, indeed. My dress-maker informed me to-day that the full sleeve was to be substituted by a tight one."

"You don't tell me so! That will be horrible for persons with thin arms. What a fright poor Miss Smith will look like."

"And the necks of party dresses are to be worn exceedingly low."

"You don't say so!"

"Yes. Won't Miss Brown, with her scrawny neck, regret that?"

"By the way, did you see Mrs. Simpson in her new carriage this morning?"

"She is determined to create a sensation. Servants in livery."

"In livery?"

"In livery! Not only that, but a coat of arms."

"A coat of arms? Not a cooper's barrel?"

"No, indeed! catch them committing such a suicidal act as that."

Kelborn's auditors could no longer restrain their merriment, but gave vent to their feelings in peals of laughter.

"I am glad, ladies, that you recognise the fidelity of my portraiture."

"You have described the conversation between two friends; now let us hear one between two acquaintances," said Edward mischievously.

"Miss Ludlam calls upon Miss Thompson," said Kelborn. "Good morning, Miss Ludlam, I am glad to see you to-day."

"Thank you. I have owed you a call so long that I thought I would pay it, notwithstanding the weather is unpleasant."

"Yes, it is disagreeable out; but any weather is preferable to the intense heat of the last two weeks."

"How unseasonable the weather has been all the fall."

"Unaccountably so. I have not been able to recognise my favourite October."

"What an unfavourable day Miss Franklin had for her wedding yesterday."

"I do not know her. Were you present?"

"Yes; they were married in church. She had five bridesmaids, all dressed in white silk."

"Was the groom good-looking?"

"Not very; but he is rich."

"How was the bride dressed?"

"She had on a white satin dress, over which were three skirts of tulle, and she wore upon her head a white wreath and thread-lace veil."

"Was there any entertainment given?"

"No; they started immediately on the bridal tour?"

"Was not that odd?"

"Yes; but it is also cheap."

"Well, I think it looks better to give an entertainment to your acquaintances."

"Yes; such a one as we witnessed when Emma Green was married."

"What has become of Emma?"

"Why, you know it was said she married Mr. Sutherland because he was rich."

"He was old and ugly."

"She flourished for several months in the most extravagant style. Her diamonds were the most costly, her wardrobe the most luxurious, her carriage the most superb, her parties the most magnificent. A few weeks ago her husband failed for several millions."

"You surprise me."

"And now she is living in an obscure part of the country."

"I thought I never met her out."

"What a splendid house the Mercers are building."

"Was not their fortune made recently?"

"Yes; an advance in the price of city lots, which their ancestors had occupied as a tanning establishment, enabled the present generation to cut a figure."

"They say Frances Germaine is to be married to young Frasier; do you think it is possible?"

"I can hardly credit it, she is so frightfully plain, and he is so handsome and fascinating."

"But she is enormously rich."

"Is her fortune in her own possession?"

"Yes; her father died scarce one year ago."

"Well, that is a very different affair, with our young gallants, to a fortune in expectation."

"Is it true that Mrs. Blakeman and her husband have separated?"

"So I hear."

"For what cause?"

"He would attend the Club, and she, to revenge herself, would have beaux, until at last, they say—but it may be a malicious accusation—she compromised herself."

"Did you ever?"

"Good morning, Miss Thompson, I have several calls to make."

"Good morning; call soon again."

"Pray do not mention what I said about the cause of Mrs. Blakeman's separation, for, you know, it may turn out an unfounded suspicion after all. Good morning; come and see me soon."

"Now, ladies, I will leave it for you to decide if such a conversation is in the slightest degree calculated to improve the mental faculties," said Kelborn, "or whether it would not have been just as well for the parties if a single sentence had not been uttered. If so, Miss Fanny, silence should not always be construed into evidence of stupidity."

At ten o'clock the clouds lifted in the

west, and the rain ceased falling. Clifton proceeded to join the fishermen, and Kelborn, placing the lock of his rifle under his arm, to prevent the dripping leaves from dampening the powder, disappeared in the intricacies of the forest.

"What luck, boys?" inquired Edward, as the barge touched the beach for the purpose of taking him on board.

"Capital; we have caught a dozen lunge.\* Row back now, Sam, to the same spot, for I had some glorious nibbles."

The boat was anchored at the bow and stern, so that it gracefully dipped in the waves as they rolled past.

"This water is rather more transparent, Clifton," said the Mississippian, "than the liquid into which we immersed Tom Swift."

"How was that?" inquired French.

"I had nothing to do with that frolic," protested Edward.

"Didn't you, though? I never saw a person cling to a subject more energetically than you did to Swift."

"Let us have the story," said French.

"Last winter, Clifton, Kelborn, and myself, took a moonlight stroll to a farmhouse not far distant from Andover, for the purpose of obtaining some beer. Did you ever drink any beer?"

"What, that which is manufactured out of potatoes and then distilled into whiskey?"

"The same. I think the beer is delicious, and then I was anxious to understand the chemical process by which it was manufactured. We chanced to meet there a brawling fellow, somewhat noted for his insolence. That night Swift was particularly offensive, and, enraged by what he regarded as an insult offered him by Kelborn, he seized an axe and would have dashed out the brains of our classmate, but for the timely interference of Clifton."

"What punishment did you inflict upon the contumacious individual?" asked French.

"You shall see. Large beer-tubs were standing around, each one containing at least five hundred gallons. Swift was bound until his case was investigated. Edward officiated as judge, Kelborn prosecuted, and I defended. The proprietor of the establishment was the witness. Notwithstanding the ability with which, I trust, the defence was conducted, the culprit was found guilty of an assault with

\* A fish resembling the trout in flavour, though much larger in size.

intent to kill. The learned judge went into an elaborate examination of the different degrees of crime, and alluded to offences committed with malice prepense, as well as to those perpetrated in the heat of passion. "As to the defence urged with so much ability by counsel," (I quote the language of the judge, of course), "that the criminal was labouring under mental derangement, and therefore was an irresponsible being, it was adjudicated that, although he evidently exhibited specimens of that pugnacity which is often attributable to ardent spirits, still, his reason was not sufficiently dethroned to shield him from punishment." It was therefore decreed, that the unnatural excitement into which Mr. Swift had wrought himself should be alleviated by immersing him, the said Swift, head foremost, in a beer-tub, for a space of time to be decided during the progress of the operation."

French crammed his handkerchief into his mouth to avoid alarming the fish.

"We found it easier," continued Maitland, "to condemn the prisoner than to execute the sentence. It was counting too much upon his fondness for aquatic exercises, to suppose that he would voluntarily immerse himself in the frothy liquid, and it would be ungenerous to execute the judgment without releasing his limbs from their bonds. Swift was no sooner at liberty than he prepared to resist. Glancing around for some weapon, he found himself surrounded. By a simultaneous movement we seized him."

"Byes, let me alone! Stop it. I'll murder you!"

"The struggle was protracted and doubtful. Swift was a large and powerful man, and was now thoroughly sobered. He resisted the ignominious punishment with the fury of despair. But if he was obstinate, we were determined, and after making the circuit of the room, overturning buckets and smashing pails, we had him fast against the side of an enormous beer-tub. Grasping the hoops, he clung to them with desperate earnestness."

"Now, then, boys, *heave!*" exclaimed Kelborn.

"Quit it, byes," shouted Swift.

"Now we have him, one more lift!" His long legs were slowly elevated, and he sunk, head first, to the bottom of the beer-tub, from whence, after being churned up and down two or three times, he arose, puffing and snorting like a porpoise."

French had, for the last minute, been leaning his forehead upon the gunwale of the boat, but it did not avail him, and

throwing himself back, he fairly shouted with laughter.

"Take care, French," said the Mississippian, with imperturbable gravity, "you will frighten all the fish away."

"Then don't tell me any more such feats," said French, wiping the tears from his eyes.

The following morning they departed from the foot of Mount Vista, and sailing up the lake they arrived at the hotel in safety, from whence they returned to Andover.

The sum of human happiness or misery is computed by events, not time; and in the brief period which had elapsed since their departure from the village, the four maidens had stepped from the narrow sphere of girlhood into that commanding position where woman engrafs her gentle influence upon the rough nature of the sterner sex.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"I hate him, for he is a Christian;  
But more, for that, in low simplicity,  
He lends out money gratis, and brings down  
The rate of usance here with us in Venice."  
SHAKESPEARE.

EDWARD CLIFTON and his three friends had entered College, and as that Institution was also situated in the village, or rather city, of Andover, they were not separated from the young ladies, who were perfecting their knowledge of French, music, and painting.

Several months after their return from the excursion to the lake, Clifton entered Kelborn's room, where he found Maitland and French.

"Well met, my comrades, I am glad to see you all."

"Come in, then, and be seated. Here, try one of these cigars."

The blue vapour curled along the ceiling, and through the white ashes the fire brightened into a glowing heat, and then disappeared in a faint, shadowy light, as the grateful smoke was inhaled, or suffered to float in waving lines through the apartment.

"What think you now of your favourite system of intrusting the public money to the keeping of banks?" asked Edward.

"Why, are there any more suspensions?" inquired French.

"There is now scarcely a specie-paying bank in the country."

"Has the disaster become so general?"

"Yes, commercial affairs seem to be stricken with paralysis, failures are daily occurring, and some of the oldest firms are yielding to the pressure."

"That is one of the crises which sometimes occur, and can hardly be attributable to the deposit system," said French.

"I beg your pardon, it is the natural result of that very system, as avowed by its advocates."

"How so?"

"Why, the principal reason assigned, for depositing the public money with these pet banks, is to enable them to extend additional accommodations to commercial men. That is the reason assigned by the managers of banks, because it has an appearance of disinterestedness, and as all persons like to have money plenty, the argument is a powerful one. But the real cause is a desire to flood the country with paper rags, based upon the five or six millions of government money deposited in the vaults of these banks."

"But if the government loses nothing by the operation, surely you cannot object."

"Yes, but I do though. I deny that the general government has any right to favour pet institutions, or to establish a species of favouritism. I object to the principle. Besides, a blunder is committed in affording facilities for overtrading, which brings pain and disaster upon the whole community."

"Is it the fault of the government if people will overtrade?"

"Not if the government has had no agency in the transaction. If, on the contrary, it has not only offered inducements, but afforded facilities for overtrading, it has abandoned its legitimate sphere of operations."

"Do you avow your hostility to all banks, Clifton?"

"Unequivocally so, to all institutions now in operation in this country. I think it is the very worst feature that we have imported from Great Britain, and we shall regret the day when we engrafted it upon our republican institutions. Banks are chartered because people want more money, and in their eagerness they overlook the consequences. Private individuals are allowed to receive only seven per cent. interest in some states, in others only six. But to corporations the privilege is given of issuing three dollars in paper, sometimes more, for every dollar in specie deposited in their vaults. They are thus allowed to obtain three times as much

interest upon their capital, as private individuals. Not only that, but what is to prevent them from issuing five—ten times as much paper, as they have silver and gold in their vaults?"

"Will not the fear of suspension or failure deter them?" inquired Kelborn.

"Has it restrained them?" continued Edward earnestly. "Are not the suspensions throughout the Union, an answer to your question? What do they lose by the suspension? They have acquired a valuable consideration for their worthless paper, and the only sufferers are the unfortunate bill-holders, who are forced to sell the trash to brokers for one-fourth the sum which it cost them, and are then expected to shout for joy when more banks are chartered, to afford temporary relief,—and to involve them again in the same difficulty."

"If we are deprived of banks, there will be a frightful scarcity of money," said French.

"You surely do not expect to increase the substantial wealth of a country with bank paper? These matters will always regulate themselves. If money is scarce, small amounts will 'go a great way,' as the saying is. If money is plenty, it will require a large sum to purchase a very few articles."

"You cannot deny but that paper is vastly more convenient than silver to the traveller and merchant."

"That depends very much upon the credit it sustains in the commercial world. There are millions of bank paper at the North, which would prove utterly worthless south of Mason's and Dixon's line. No, no, instead of banks of discount and circulation, I would create banks of deposit, only."

"How is that?"

"If A. has a thousand dollars in specie let him deposit them in this bank, and obtain a certificate that he has there, subject to his order, the sum of one thousand dollars—no more, no less. That certificate made transferable would pass as so much money."

"I see how it is, gentlemen," said Maitland, lighting another cigar; "you will have to abandon your theories and your pet banks, and come out in favour of that good old institution—a national bank."

"That is far more objectionable than the other," said Clifton.

"Why that did not break or suspend, and its notes were current at par, sometimes at a premium, throughout the country."

"That it did not break or suspend, is probably owing to the credit and assistance of the general government: If that had been withdrawn, it unquestionably would have shared the fate of smaller institutions."

"Well, continue to give it the support and countenance of the general government."

"The objection to favouritism and overtrading will apply as forcibly, perhaps more so, to a national, than to state banks."

"What in the name of common sense, would you do with the funds of the general government, if you would intrust them neither to pet institutions, or a United States Bank?" said the Mississippian.

"I will tell you. It was not the intention of the framers of the Constitution, that the funds of the government should be intrusted to banking institutions; on the contrary, it was designed that the revenues of the country, should be kept under the management of officers, appointed by, and under the immediate control of the general government. Language could not be more definite than that employed in framing the Constitution. Every word was carefully considered, that it might define the meaning of the Convention. It was explicitly declared that a treasury should be established, and no money drawn therefrom, but in consequence of appropriations made by law. How can the revenues be taken from the treasury, for banking purposes, when the only legitimate use to which they can be applied, is to defray the expenses of the government, after appropriations have been made? That this was the intention of the framers of the Constitution, is apparent from the passage of the law of 1789, establishing the treasury department. After providing that the money should be received and kept in the treasury, and defining the mode in which it should be paid out, they enacted that no person appointed to office under that bill should, directly or indirectly, be concerned or interested in carrying on the business of trade or commerce, or purchase or dispose of any public securities of any state or of the United States."

"Then you advocate the ultra doctrine of one kind of currency for the people, and another for the government as well as the sub-treasury."

"A law which enforces the collection of the public dues in gold and silver, recognises the only constitutional currency. If the people have established banks which give them depreciated paper, it

surely is not the fault of the general government."

"Whatever may be your convictions upon the subject, you may rest assured of one thing, that the administration now in power will be defeated at the next election by an overwhelming majority," said Maitland.

"What causes will produce so fatal a result to a party which has held the reins so long?" inquired Edward.

"I think they are quite apparent. In the first place, excessive overtrading has produced general distress and embarrassment throughout the country; upon every breeze you can hear the cry of 'Change! change!' Even sagacious and able men declare that a new administration cannot make matters worse. Besides, the defalcations which have recently occurred, will bring odium upon the President and his cabinet, and in the hands of a popular stump speaker, will bring hosts of democrats into the whig ranks. Why, a celebrated Mississippi orator would electrify an audience with the materials which the present administration have placed in his power."

"If it is the intention of the Whig party to avail themselves of a temporary embarrassment, which their own policy has brought upon the country, it is not improbable that they may succeed. However, I have great confidence in the honesty and intelligence of the people."

"And I have none. They sustain republicanism in the abstract, because all aspirants for office find it is popular to laud it. But think you they would hesitate to stretch the Constitution of the United States if it was necessary to accomplish a favourite measure? Why you asserted a few minutes since, that gold and silver were the only constitutional currency, yet we have had two national banks chartered by the Congress of the United States, and another would have been legislated into existence, but for the obstinate determination of Old Hickory."

"That was because General Washington yielded to the advice of Alexander Hamilton, and to the financial embarrassments into which the country had been precipitated by the revolutionary struggle."

"But how do you account for the approval of the second bank, by President Madison?"

"We had just passed through the second contest with Great Britain, and the currency of the country was in a deplorable condition. Instead of letting the evil remedy

itself, Madison, who wanted firmness, yielded to the pressure."

"It is singular," pursued Maitland, "that the two national banks were sanctioned by members of the Constitutional Convention, and that it should have been left to the statesmen of the present day to arrest their career by the executive veto."

"I often hear allusions made," said Clifton, "to the fact that Washington and Madison were members of the Convention. Suppose they were, what then? The present generation are as fully apprised of the opinions of that eminent body of men as the two members from Virginia, and we have only to consult the papers prepared by Mr. Madison himself, to be convinced that the Convention, as a body, was utterly opposed to a paper currency. In the draft of a constitution submitted by Mr. Rutledge, there was a clause authorizing Congress to emit bills of credit, which was rejected by a vote of nine states against two. While the clause was under discussion, the propriety of establishing a paper currency was fully discussed, and almost universally condemned."

"And yet I cannot but express surprise at their extraordinary conversion."

"The President of the Convention did not have occasion to give his opinion as to the necessity of a paper currency, but Mr. Madison exhibited a leaning in that direction."

"James Madison!" exclaimed French.

"Unquestionably," replied Edward. "When the clause authorizing Congress to emit bills of credit was under discussion, Mr. Madison was opposed to striking it out, but thought it was sufficient to prohibit the making those bills a legal tender. He remarked that such a prohibition would remove the temptation to emit them with unjust purposes, and promissory notes in that shape might, in some emergencies, be best."

"Then he cannot be claimed as a convert, after all."

"Certainly not. But even if he could, how would it settle the question? All you can proclaim is the fact that two statesmen who happened to occupy the presidential chair when the country laboured under financial distress, signed national bank charters. If Thomas Jefferson, vastly the superior of either, had occupied their positions, neither of those banks would have had an existence."

"It is immaterial," said the Mississippian, "whether statesmen or politicians oppose banks; whenever the honest and

intelligent people are pinched for money, they will have them. The almighty dollar will become, directly or indirectly, a prominent principle in the dogmas of the two parties."

CHAPTER IX.

"What are these,  
So withered and so wild in their attire,  
That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth,  
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught  
That man may question?"

SHAKESPEARE.

How rapidly time passes when our progress at college satisfies exacting and ambitious parents. Mr. Clifton and his wife had watched with the greatest interest the rapid advancement which Edward had made since he first left the paternal roof. The thoughts of his mother, it is true, had been principally directed to the preservation of his health, and she was urgent in her requests that he should pay a proper regard to his clothing and diet. Their visits to Andover had been frequent, and he never ran out to welcome them without expecting a bountiful supply of cakes and preserves, which in due time were divided among his favourites.

"I can hardly realize that we have been one year at college, can you, Maitland?"

"That is because our moments of leisure are rendered so delightful by an agreeable circle of acquaintances."

"True, that has an influence upon imaginative young gentlemen, who, like yourself, are involved in the mysterious and inextricable mazes of love," observed Clifton.

"I do not think you can claim exemption from that charge yourself."

"I trust my attack has not been so palpable as thine. It is singular what an effect the preservation of a life has upon the romantic. We seem to invest the object with the rarest endowments, simply because we have been instrumental in prolonging an existence. This has been strikingly the case with yourself, ever since the lovely Carlie was borne in your arms from the yawning abyss of Mount Vista."

"Come, now, Clifton, acknowledge the fact; are you not slightly jealous because she blushes when I approach, and is impassive in your presence?"

"Ha! ha! that is so much like Shel-

don Myers, who congratulated himself that the whole world had not fallen in with 'his Nancy,' for then he might have had more difficulty in winning her."

"Come, Ned, that is too bad! You ought to be banished from the oaks, for comparing the beautiful Carlie Dennison, to a Miss Nancy."

"Of course! But seriously, I do not think Miss Carlie the equal, certainly not the superior, of Fanny Brenton, and here they both come, as if to afford us an opportunity of deciding."

General Dennison's stately grays swept along the banks of the river, and in the open barouche were seated Fanny and Carlie. As they approached the spot where the young gentlemen were standing with raised beavers, Miss Dennison ordered the coachman to stop. Maitland could not boast that his favourite had a richer bloom upon her cheek, than mantled beneath the brilliant complexion of Fanny Brenton. The countenances of both expressed undisguised pleasure.

"We are taking a drive this lovely afternoon," said Carlie; "here are two vacant seats, will you not occupy them?"

The horses dashed on with the merry party, winding along the stream for several miles, they at length ascended a lofty hill.

"Shall we visit the Cave?" inquired Maitland.

"Willingly," replied Fanny, "if it is not too late."

"But can we do so in thin dresses?" inquired her companion, as she cast a glance at the rich silks in which they were robed.

"Oh yes, the way is not intricate."

"Come, then. James, rest the horses here; we will soon return."

They diverged from the road, and entered a narrow way, which led over the acclivity. Maitland and Miss Dennison preceded their companions.

"Is he not fortunate to win the regard of such a girl?" whispered Fanny.

"Has he been so fortunate?"

"Do not tell him for the world. But I dare say, you are sufficiently skilled in the human heart to discover that Carlie is very much interested in the Southerner."

"I can hardly form an opinion of your sex, for to me, you are enigmas. Do you think Maitland reciprocates her attachment?"

"How is it possible for him not to do so?"

"Yes, it is doubtless so; see with what fondness he gazes into her upturned eyes; with what rapture he listens to her soft

accents; with what gentleness he guides her footsteps!"

"Really, Mr. Edward, you are more observant than I supposed; and your language is so poetical."

"It ought, for you always inspire me!"

The little hand trembled upon his arm, and a deeper crimson coloured her soft cheek. At that moment the tall and attenuated form of an aged female glided into the path before them. Her features were coarse and forbidding, and her brow contracted into a frown as she glowered upon them. Fanny shrunk from the woman, and the blood deserted her cheek as her eyes fell beneath the savage gaze.

"Ha! ha! ha!" shrieked, rather than laughed the hag; "and so you fear me do you? and well you may, for I can read your destinies, and mayhap control them, too."

"What want you, my good woman? Do you not see you alarm the lady?" said Edward.

"Frighten her, do I! There was a time," said the other, half sadly, "when Nell Oakland did not alarm the timid; but that day is long since past."

"Why Mistress Nell," exclaimed Carrie advancing towards her, "it has been an age since I saw you; where have you been wandering?"

"Far away, young lady. Hard has been my fate, since I was last at the Cave." For several moments she was lost in thought.

"And so this is an acquaintance of yours, Miss Dennison?"

"I knew her as a fortune-teller when I was a child. Have you lost your skill, Mistress Nell?"

"The future is more visible to me as I approach that dread ordeal, the tomb."

"You may tell my fortune now. You know I was afraid to have you do so before."

Surveying the countenance of the maiden, until her eager glance had scrutinized every feature, she uttered her prophecy.

"Your career is destined to be a happy one. Scarcely the shadow of a shade shall obscure the mirror of life, and the existence which thus far has been without a pang, will continue to its close, peaceful and joyous. The pathway of life will be smoothed ere long, by one worthy of you," and her eye fell upon the splendid form of the Mississippian.

"Come now, Fanny," said Carrie, anxious to divert attention from the con-

cluding part of the prophecy, "you must have your fortune told."

"Oh! no, no, I cannot; at least, not by her," said the maiden shuddering.

"And why not?" said Nell, sternly.

"But you shall hear it, whether you will or no. In your existence, pride shall have a fall, your cup of happiness shall be poisoned,—your fairest prospects blighted. Hope shall flatter, only to sink you still deeper in despair, and when ruin has fastened its fangs irretrievably upon you, then this prophesy will be fulfilled." The form of the hag trembled violently, and the foam gathered upon her lips. As she proceeded, Fanny elevated her form to its full height, and gazed with a compassionate smile upon the excited woman.

"Poor thing!" she said; "instead of a prophecy, you have uttered a malediction; you have mistaken your vocation, for where you threatened to unveil the future, you simply indulge in malicious denunciations; you are a bad woman; begone!" And with the air and dignity of a queen, she waved her away. Nell recoiled from before the calm look of the beautiful girl, like darkness before light, and parting the bushes which skirted the pathway, she disappeared.

"What a sorceress!" exclaimed Maitland.

"And yet I recollect her when she was good-looking, if not handsome," said Carrie, "she has changed wonderfully. Some early sorrow preying upon her mind, has embittered her feelings towards the youthful and happy."

"Why was her language so complimentary when addressing you, and her manner so savage when assailing me?"

"Doubtless it was owing to the recollection of some trifling act of kindness upon my part, years ago. Come, let us proceed to the Cave;" and she gathered up her skirts with both hands, so as to avoid entangling them in the sweet-briers that bordered the road.

The Cave was scarce one-fourth of a mile in extent, but the beautiful pillars which supported the lofty dome were ornamented with Stalactites, and in the pale and uncertain light which penetrated the cavern, they presented the appearance of solid silver.

In the interior of the cavern, the twilight softened every object upon which it fell, and tinged the shrubbery that surrounded the outlet of the Cave, with a deep, almost palpable green. From the extremity of the cavern a fountain burst from the rocks, and forming a small cas-

cade, vanished amid the pebbles which covered the earth. Tradition had gifted this water with magical powers. Not only were its properties medicinal, but whoever drank at the fountain would have their cherished hopes gratified.

"Here is an antidote, Miss Brenton," said Clifton, "for the imprecation of Nell Oakland."

"As little importance should be attached to the reputation of one, as to the denunciations of the other," replied Fanny.

"Why, Fan, you are neither superstitious nor romantic; you must be heartless."

"Perhaps so."

Taking the goblet from Clifton's hand, she quaffed its contents.

The sun had descended beneath the horizon, and the moon was casting her mild beams along the earth, when they entered the carriage. The air was balmy and fragrant. Playing with the ringlets which had escaped from Fanny's hat, it lingered upon her cheek, and then gliding on, revelled upon the neck and bosom of her lovely companion.

Miss Brenton leaned back in the carriage with folded arms, with one foot slightly elevated, and reposing upon a velvet ottoman. Carrie rested her cheek upon her ungloved hand, and looked pensively at the gathering shadows of night, as they pursued each other through the forest. All were too much agitated with their own emotions to interrupt the silence, until the mettled steeds had traversed several miles of the road homewards.

"Do you look forward with pleasure to the day when you will graduate, Mr. Maitland?" inquired Fanny.

"Why should I? Already I am blessed with as much happiness as ever falls to the lot of mortals."

"But then you will have obtained an education, and be exempt from restraint."

"I doubt if a diploma will make me a freeman," and he cast a rapid but significant glance at Carrie, who was still lost in a reverie.

"Of what advantage is the possession of knowledge?" asked Edward; "the simple process of acquiring that which has been discovered by others. There is a vast difference between the acquisition of knowledge and the possession of a creative power, which elicits new ideas."

"But if your ideas, although unknown to you, were promulgated centuries ago?"

"Then it is unfortunate for my reputation, that I was not born before the dark ages; not that I would possess more in-

trinsic merit, but I should possess the credit of originality, at least."

The carriage drew up at the residence of General Dennison.

"Will you not come in and take tea? No? Then you must call soon, gentlemen. Fanny is now my guest."

"What detained you so late, girls?" inquired Mrs. Dennison.

"We have visited the Cave."

"Who with, pray? not alone, I hope?"

"Ah, no; Mr. Maitland and Edward Clifton accompanied us."

"Indeed! where did you pick them up?"

"They were taking an afternoon walk."

"There was no previous arrangement, I trust?"

"How could you suppose so, ma?"

"Well, well, child! Did you pass a pleasant afternoon?"

"Delightful! we had an adventure, though, with Old Nell."

"Is it possible! But tea is ready. Why did not your companions come in? you invited them I suppose?"

"Yes, but they declined."

"Well, come. What of Nell?"

## CHAPTER X.

"But not alone in dreams like this,  
Breathed in the very hope of bliss,  
I loved: my love had been the same  
In hush'd despair, in open shame.  
I would have rather been a slave,  
In tears, in bondage, by his side,  
Than shared in all, if wanting him,  
This world had power to give beside!"

L. E. L.

"Yet, for the plague of human race,  
This devil has an angel's face."

CIDDER.

The long-looked-for day at length arrived, when Edward and his companions were to graduate. The town was thronged with the friends and relations of the senior class.

Among the ladies who were assembled as the guests of Carrie Dennison, were her companions in the excursion to Mount Vista.

"And so, Carrie, you are to be married in the fall?" said Fanny.

"I believe, Fan, that is to be my fate; the obstinate man will not postpone the event a moment longer."

"And you go with him to Mississippi?"

"Yes; he says he wants me to preside over his establishment. Me! Ha! ha!"

"He is the owner of many slaves, I be-



lieve. How will you like the management of that species of property, think you?"

"Oh, admirably. But you know I shall only pass my winters there. In the summer we shall travel. Fanny, you have not seen Edward Clifton in six months. What is the condition of your relations with him?"

"Not warlike, and yet not very amicable. At the present time we are both preserving a sort of armed neutrality."

"Why is this so? I anticipated, at one time, a match between you."

"Mr. Clifton is ambitious. A thirst for distinction absorbs every thought of his life."

"He does possess transcendent powers. Maitland says there is not his equal in college."

"I understand he will graduate with the highest honours."

"I think, Fanny, you construed intense application to his studies into coldness, and therefore treated him with too much haughtiness. Recollect, he is high-spirited as well as yourself. When you meet again, try and smooth that imperious brow of thine a little."

"On the contrary, I think the proper way to subdue the gentleman, is to treat him with indifference, and as that course is consonant with my feelings, I shall practise it."

"Have a care, my dear Fanny! Recollect, these quarrels are sometimes irreconcilable. Remember, the breach between Maitland and myself was healed in the very jaws of death."

"But how know I that Clifton loves me? He has never said so."

"There are a thousand tokens by which a discerning woman can divine the feelings of the other sex."

"Very well, Carlie; my feelings shall control me in this instance."

Miss Dennison shook her head reprovingly, and left the apartment.

A ball was given at the residence of General Dennison. The youth and beauty assembled at Andover thronged his capacious saloons, and at nine o'clock Clifton entered Maitland's room for the purpose of accompanying his friend to the scene of revelry.

"Ned, you are sad to-night," said the joyous Mississippian; "you, of all others, should be happy when your collegiate triumphs are lauded by every one."

"And yet, Fred, I doubt if you would exchange positions with me—eh?"

Maitland thought of Carlie Dennison, and expressed a decided negative.

"I am sad because I shall now be separated from those friends with whom I have passed so many pleasant hours at Andover."

"Clifton, what are your plans for the future?"

"Within six months I shall depart for the Southern States, in some one of which I shall cast my lot."

"I am glad you have delayed your departure so long, for I must have you at my wedding."

"Upon one condition,—that you will, previous to that event, pass several weeks with me at my father's."

"Very well, that is arranged."

"Who are to be present to-night at the General's?"

"All the people of note who reside in the village, besides the distinguished strangers who were down hither to attend the commencement."

"Has your fastidious taste discovered any young ladies of surpassing beauty?"

"None who can compare in loveliness with Carlie and Miss Brenton."

"By the way, Fred, how much Fanny has changed in the last three years. Her stately bearing is not half so attractive as the charming naïveté which she once possessed."

"You must recollect she is now nineteen years old, and a female at that age is quite as matured as a man at twenty-five."

"Indeed; well then, as Carlie and Fanny are as old as we are, they must be six years ahead of us in experience and maturity. Your bride will have a fair start, Fred; I hope she may retain it."

The young men entered the dwelling together. The more youthful portion of the company were engaged in dancing, and among them Edward recognised Fanny Brenton. He returned her haughty salutation with a bow still more stately, and passing on, sought the hand of Carlie Dennison for the next quadrille. It happened that French and Fanny were thus vis-à-vis. Turning her in the dance, he did not address a word to Miss Brenton, and when the quadrille was over he yielded his partner to Maitland, and sauntered through the rooms. Approaching a card-table, he saw Harriet Salisbury and Mary Holmes playing a game of whist with Kelborn and another gentleman. Harriet noticed his approach with a glad smile.

"Come, Mr. Clifton, sit down here and give me the benefit of your experience," and she drew the ample folds of her satin dress nearer to her person. Edward occupied the vacant seat upon the sofa, and watched the progress of the game. While

Kelborn was dealing, Clifton remarked: "Life is little better than a game at cards, Harriet."

"How so, pray?"

"We are obliged to play our part with whatever powers we are gifted by our own destiny, and the only difference consists in the stake for which we throw. In this busy world the ambition of thousands is scarcely elevated above a game of cards, while others, more restless, if not more wise, stake life, fortune, everything, upon the hazard of the die."

"Have a care, Ned," said Kelborn, "or you will view human existence with the fatal vision of a misanthropist."

"Oh, no; I have merely examined the hidden springs which control the human race, for the purpose of knowing myself."

"When do you return home?" inquired Harriet of Clifton.

"To-morrow."

"Will you not accompany me? Pa could not come, and sent the coachman with the carriage."

"With great pleasure. I will place my baggage upon the stage. At what hour will you start?"

"After breakfast; I suppose about nine o'clock. I will send the carriage to your lodgings for you."

"I shall consider it a great honour."

The game was decided as supper was announced, and Kelborn, claiming the fulfilment of an engagement with Miss Salisbury, Edward offered his arm to Mary Holmes, and they entered the supper-room. The table was loaded with every delicacy that could tempt the appetite of a gourmand.

"What shall I help you to, Mary?"

"Some oysters, if you please."

"And some champagne?"

"Will it give me vivacity?" said she archly; "you once fancied I was too sedate."

"Oh, that day has long since passed," and his glance dwelt for a moment admiringly upon the brilliant eyes and snow-white shoulders.

"They all tell me I have changed," responded the maiden as she sipped the sparkling wine.

"I wonder if Master George French had anything to do with the transition?"

"Hush!" said the maiden, shaking her taper finger threateningly; "how dare you be guilty of such audacity! But I have been informed that with your quiet, dignified manners you have the courage to say or do almost anything. Is it so?" and

she looked into the eyes of the student with a mirthful expression.

"Who could have given me such a shocking character?"

"Why, that is your 'general reputation in the neighbourhood,' to employ a phrase which I have heard my lawyer uncle make use of."

"Frightful! But tell me, Mary, how does George get on?"

"He don't get on at all," said the damsel innocently.

"It surely cannot be his fault."

"Certainly not; but I intend to take my own time."

"And flirt as long as you please, of course."

"Exactly so. I have the reputation, why should I not have the enjoyment?"

"Why, Mary, you ought to be killed."

"Indeed; you certainly will let me choose my own executioner."

"Unquestionably. Shall I tender my own services?"

"Thank you, no. That individual must not deserve the fatal punishment himself still more than I."

"Ha! ha!" laughed French, who had just approached them; "she had you there, Clifton."

The music again struck up, and waving her hand, Mary joined the dancers with George French.

Standing with folded arms, Edward surveyed the floating forms of the waltzers as they whirled past. Once he observed the eyes of Fanny Brenton fixed upon him with an expression of unutterable tenderness, but they were instantly withdrawn as she encountered his glance, and the pearly teeth impatiently pressed her ruby lips.

An hour later he prepared to depart, and searching for Carlie Dennison without success, he at last entered the library. Before him was a graceful form, leaning pensively against the casement. He was not certain, but he thought he heard a sob, and fearful that he had invaded a spot where anguish had claimed a sanctuary, he prepared to retreat. His movements were observed, however, and the lady startled from her recumbent attitude, turned round, and Clifton found himself in the presence of Fanny Brenton. The recollection of his meeting with her in the stage, their excursion to Mount Vista, the visit to the Cave, and the thousand incidents which had served to bind them together, now gushed upon his memory with overpowering force. Their eyes met, but the agitated girl could not restrain her emotion, and bursting into tears she wept

passionately for several moments. Edward advanced quickly to her side, and taking her hand, he encircled her flexible form with his arm.

"Dear, dear, Fanny!"

But the impetuous maiden no sooner heard the sound of his voice than she dashed the tears from her cheeks, and releasing herself from his embrace swept haughtily from the room.

The following day was raw and cold, but Edward found the carriage of Mr. Salisbury early at his door. Bidding adieu to his classmates, and exacting from Maitland a renewal of his promise to visit him in a few weeks, he was soon at the residence of General Dennison. There he found Harriet awaiting his arrival, surrounded by Carrie, Mary Holmes, and Kelborn. Edward looked in vain for Fanny; she did not make her appearance.

"Ned, I envy you this journey," said Kelborn, with a woeful countenance.

"Well done! who would have supposed that such an inveterate woman-hater as thou wert, would look so forlorn at the departure of a fair maiden."

"Alas! at that time I had not been led into temptation."

"Good-bye, girls! we meet again in a few months. Shall I not see you soon at my father's, Mr. Kelborn?"

"Tis my fate; I cannot prevent it if I would, and I would not if I could."

"Farewell, Mr. Clifton!" said Carrie.

"Have you no message for Fanny?"

"None. I shall take good care of Fred until we meet again. And a certain Mr. French will, in due time, be restored to his bonds, if indeed he can escape from them for a brief season."

"Now, Mr. Edward, no more of that, unless you would be victimized yourself."

"Egad, I know nothing that would be more pleasant."

"Adieu!" "Good-bye!" and the horses, becoming restive from the cold, gladly sped onwards. The windows of the carriage were closed, to exclude the piercing air. Clifton flung himself upon the front seat, and for several miles both were silent. Memory was reviewing the events which had transpired since they first trod the streets of Andover. When he bid a final adieu to the spot where an elevated platform in the staircase of life has been attained, our thoughts dwell upon the past, not the future.

As the horses slowly mounted a long hill which was raked by the north wind, the cold became more intense. Edward seated himself upon the back seat by the

side of his companion, and enveloped himself in the soft and delicious furs. But the silence was still unbroken, save by an occasional sigh. Were they caused by recollections of the past or dread of the future, or by emotions which the present sometimes elicits?

## CHAPTER XI.

"But hah! she sinks—that look so wild."

MOORE.

"But, image of myself, and dearer half;  
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep  
Affects me equally."

MILTON.

A FEW days after the arrival of Maitland at the residence of Mr. Clifton, Edward and himself mounted their horses, and, armed with light fowling-pieces, started for an extensive forest, which encompassed a beautiful sheet of water some ten miles distant. Having fastened their steeds to the branches of a beech, a short distance from the road, they entered the forest in different directions, after agreeing to meet at the foot of a lofty pine, which towered above the surrounding trees. In a few hours Clifton had killed three partridges and two gray squirrels, and at last, faint with hunger, he sought the place of meeting. The Mississippian had not arrived, and kindling a fire against the trunk of a fallen maple, he prepared to cook his game. This was soon accomplished, and the savoury fragrance of the viands mingled with the perfume of the woods. Upon such occasions he always carried with him bread and salt, and with the aid of these articles he made a delicious meal. Placing near the fire a bountiful supply for his companion, he reclined against the roots of the pine, and being much fatigued, soon fell into a profound sleep. How long he slumbered he knew not, but he was at length awakened by a heavy peal of thunder, and starting to his feet he discovered that rain was descending in torrents. He shouted Maitland's name, but the howling tempest only responded. He now prepared to return to the spot where they had tied their horses, but the increasing darkness rendered his progress slow and difficult. It was impossible to tell in what direction to proceed. The sun had descended beneath the trees, and heavy masses of clouds overhung the earth. It was only by the assistance of the continu-

ous flashes of lightning that Edward could make his way, and at length he was conscious of being hopelessly lost. He wandered on, not knowing in what direction he was proceeding, when his footsteps were arrested by a low wailing cry, as if uttered by a child in distress. Advancing towards the spot from whence the sound proceeded, he soon heard the dashing of waves upon the beach. In a few moments he stood upon the shore of the lake, and endeavoured, as the lightning gleamed upon the water, to discover the object of his solicitude. The tempest raged with the most fearful violence, and lashing the waves with a white foam, drove them madly upon the beach. For several minutes Clifton listened with the most painful anxiety, but no sound met his ear except the howling of the storm. At last he heard a shout for aid, but this time in the loud and distinct tones of a man. Glancing eagerly along the raging flood, he discovered a boat floating bottom-upwards, about a dozen rods from the shore. It was evident that whoever clung to the treacherous bark were in imminent danger of being driven by the gale against a perpendicular rock, which towered from the water to the distance of twenty feet.

No time was to be lost, and Edward instantly plunging into the lake, breasted the waves with a stout heart and a strong arm. The calls for assistance coming more and more faintly across the water, assured him that the sufferers were surrounded by extraordinary perils.

As he dashed alongside the boat the voice of a man exclaimed, "Thank God, you are saved!" Edward saw him sustaining the form of a young girl with great difficulty.

"Preserve the life of my sister, and heaven reward you!" said a faint voice.

"Courage, man!" replied Edward; "cling to the boat, and I will soon return."

Throwing one arm around the form of the unconscious young lady, Clifton soon reached the shore, and bore her to a place of safety. He was in the act of entering the water again, when his steps were arrested by a plunge into the lake, and during the next flash of lightning, he discovered the form of a man parting the waves with powerful strokes, in the direction of the sufferer.

"Tis Maitland, undoubtedly," thought Edward, and he directed his attention to the maiden. Enclosing her slight form in the coat which he had thrown off before entering the water, he rested her head upon his shoulder, and anxiously awaited her

restoration to consciousness. She had lost her hat while in the water, the comb had escaped from her hair, and in long and dishevelled tresses, it hung around her shoulders and extended nearly to her feet. Her countenance was pale, and a purple hue gathered upon her eyelids, and coloured her lips. In the centre of the cheek the warm blood soon began to return, and at length she opened her eyes of softest blue.

"Brother, we are saved!"

As she spoke she discovered teeth of the most brilliant whiteness, and her sweet breath played upon his cheeks.

"You are indeed preserved, and your brother also will soon be in safety. See, he is already near the shore."

The young girl discovering that she reposed in the arms of a stranger, at once regained her feet, while the pale hue of her complexion vanished before the blush which mantled her cheeks. Gazing for a moment upon her deliverer, and conscious how much she was indebted to him, she advanced, and extending her hand, expressed her thanks, with much grace and feeling, for the aid which he had rendered her.

In the mean time Maitland and the stranger reached the shore, and advanced towards them.

"You have saved our lives, gentlemen; for, without your assistance, we should have been inevitably lost."

"Speak of it no more," said Edward; "we only obeyed the prompting of humanity. But how came you in such a forlorn situation?"

"We left the hotel yonder, a few hours ago, for the purpose of taking a sail, when the sky became suddenly overcast with clouds, and a squall striking our frail bark, we were precipitated into the water."

"Twas unfortunate. But your sister, as well as yourself, should no longer be exposed to this storm, drenched as your garments are," said Clifton.

"You must accompany us, then, to the hotel. I can furnish you both with a change of apparel."

"You proceed with them," observed Maitland. "I will lead the horses; they are hard by."

They had all changed their garments, and were seated at the supper-table. The maiden had recovered from her alarm, and her face was radiant with smiles. Clifton thought he had never beheld so lovely a being.

"But how did it happen that you came so opportunely to our relief?" she inquired.

"We were hunting in the forest. I first

fell asleep, and then lost myself. Maitland lost himself too, I suppose, for he did not keep an appointment which he made with me."

"Then your misfortunes were the cause of our rescue?"

"Undoubtedly. It was merely accidental—perhaps I should say, providential—that I wandered in the direction of the lake. But whither did your peregrinations take you, Maitland?"

"What, mine? I am almost ashamed to say. I traversed hill and dale for miles, bagging game as I went. I thought it strange, that the sun which shone from the opposite side of the lake in the morning, should still continue to cast his rays directly across the water, until as he sunk beneath the tops of the trees, the lake was still between us. At last, reflecting upon the cause of this phenomenon, I ascertained that, whereas I was, in the morning, upon the northern shore of the lake, I was then upon the southern, and at the most moderate calculation, a distance of six miles from the place of rendezvous."

"Bravo! you would never do, for an Indian warrior."

Maitland and the stranger, who had introduced himself as Mr. Howard, withdrew for the purpose of smoking cigars; and Clifton accompanied Alice Howard to the parlour. Standing by the window, they looked out upon the water. The storm had abated, and the wind, which a few minutes before howled through the forest, and swept down the lake, now sighed through the leaves and fretted the surface of the water into little curling waves. The sky was unclouded, and the countless stars glittered in the firmament.

The maiden gazed thoughtfully upon the scene. Edward supposed she could scarcely number fifteen summers; her features were so child-like in their purity. Her forehead was high, her eyebrows dark and beautifully arched; her eyes, large, full and lustrous, caused the heart strings to quiver, with a strange happy sensation, whenever they dwelt upon a person who had elicited her regard.

"What a contrast," she observed, "between this lovely spot, and my own home in the city of Philadelphia."

"And are you so much pleased with these wilds?"

"Perfectly enchanted with their beauty. It is my first visit to the more northern States, and the objects which I have beheld, more than realize my anticipations."

"And what led you hither, so far from your residence? Surely, one so young,

could not have been attracted by the romantic scenery?"

"There is now a vacation at our school, and I accepted an invitation from my brother, to take a short excursion—which came near being a very long one," and a shudder ran through her frame.

"How long are we to be favoured with your presence?"

"Only for a few days; the holidays have nearly expired."

"And then you will return with anything but pleasant recollections of the rough treatment which you have received from our stormy elements."

"I have no reason to be grateful to them; but to you, sir, for generously rescuing me from their fury: I shall always deem myself under the greatest obligations."

"I pray you to forget them both. It would, to say the least of it, be ungallant to suffer one who had sought pleasure in our midst, to perish for want of assistance."

They separated for the night, and each sought a friendly couch. For several hours the slumber of Alice was restless, and disturbed. She thought they were again upon the lake; and dark masses of clouds, relieved here and there by white borders, rapidly mounted from the west. Vivid lightning darted from the base of the cloud, and shot its forked tongue into the blue ether above: while the thunder which burst over their heads, rolled heavily away, until in the distance it produced a concussion that shook the foundation of the earth. The wind, at first, came down the lake in faint blasts, but soon fell upon them with such force, that they were precipitated into the water; and then she experienced the horrible perception of suffocation and death. She started up with a shriek! "Thank heaven, 'twas only a dream!" and smoothing her pillow, she turned upon her right side and slumbered again. But her imagination still fluttered upon the confines of oblivion. She was traversing a romantic grove, where waterfalls soothed the senses; the breeze wafted the fragrance of a thousand flowers, when a tall and manly form approached; raising her eyes, she encountered the admiring glance of Edward Clifton. Together they wandered on, and she drank in his passionate declarations of love, until at length they seemed to enter the realms of poetry, and the language of her companion became blended with music and flowers. The ideas which flitted across her imagination became more and more indistinct;

and she at last sunk into a calm and grateful sleep.

## CHAPTER XII.

"There is a language by the Virgin made,  
Not read, but felt; not uttered, but betrayed,  
A mute communion, yet so wondrous sweet,  
Eyes must impart what tongues can ne'er repeat."

BARRETT.

"Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,  
And fondly broods with miser care;  
Time but the impression stronger makes,  
As streams their channels deeper wear"

BURNS.

CLIFTON and his friend mounted their horses early the next morning and returned home.

"Why, Edward, what could have detained you all night? I could not sleep, I was so anxious about you and Mr. Maitland."

"Oh, we passed the night at the lake!"

"The fact is," interposed the Mississippian, "Ned met with an adventure yesterday."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, he rescued a nymph from the lake."

"Is it possible; and who was she?"

"A Philadelphian; Miss Howard by name. He raved about her all night, and appeared struggling, for hours, with the waves; I should have slept soundly, if I had not been disturbed by his shouts and exclamations."

"That, Fred, was because you saved a man."

"What! were the lives of two persons in jeopardy?"

"Certainly; and I must say, Maitland's conduct was gallant, especially, after making the circuit of the lake; eh! Fred?"

"You must invite the strangers to accept our hospitality, Edward!"

"You need be under no apprehensions, Madam, of his being guilty of a breach of etiquette, especially in this particular instance."

"Was the lady so attractive?"

"I could not perceive it. She is quite a child; and how Edward could be fascinated by her ingenuous simplicity is a mystery to me."

"How do you know I was fascinated?"

"Because, no one would listen for an hour to her innocent prattle, unless he were so."

"Nonsense!"

The next day "a horseman might have been seen" approaching the Lake House. Dismounting, he cast the bridle to the hostler, and after giving instructions as to the care of his steed, he entered the parlour. In answer to his inquiry for Miss Howard, he was informed that she had started that morning for Philadelphia.

"But here is a letter for you, Mr. Clifton," said the proprietor of the hotel.

Breaking the seal, he discovered it was from Mr. Howard. The communication informed him that they had been summoned home by the dangerous illness of Mrs. Howard. The letter continued, "Accept the thanks of my sister and myself, for your generous conduct, and believe me when I say, we shall ever cherish, with the most grateful emotions, the recollections of one who has placed us under lasting obligations."

There was also a letter for Maitland. He wanted to ask if there was a communication from the young lady, but he hesitated, and then returned to the parlour. An hour later, he mounted his horse and returned homewards. He was indignant that she had departed without leaving a letter or even a message. He read again and again the note from her brother. He could not have said less, and might not with propriety have said more; and yet Edward was dissatisfied.

Several weeks now passed rapidly; Maitland's wedding had taken place, and Edward and Kelborn had made arrangements for an excursion to the West, prior to selecting a place of residence. Clifton separated from his father and mother with much pain, and Kelborn and himself started for New York and Philadelphia. Remaining in New York for a few days, they proceeded to the city of rectangular streets. Clifton had determined not to avail himself of the address which young Howard had given him, and proceeded without delay in perfecting those arrangements which it was necessary for him to make, before starting for the West. The night previous to his departure, he entered the theatre in Chestnut Street, to witness the histrionic powers of Charles Kean and Ellen Tree. The audience was large and brilliant. Taking a seat in the dress-circle, he soon found himself surrounded by beauty and fashion. In the crush of silks and satins, the air was perfumed; and the theatre was radiant with sparkling eyes, and glittering diamonds.

The curtain was rolled up, and the play of the "Gamester" commenced. His at-



tention was soon absorbed by the masterly delineation of character. As the curtain fell upon the third act, he saw an unusual commotion in one of the private boxes. All the opera-glasses in the dress-circle were turned in that direction, and in a few moments it was whispered that a young lady had fainted.

"I am not surprised," observed a maiden near Clifton. "I felt a sensation of suffocation myself, during that scene." Apparently the lady had recovered, for order was restored in the box. Before his eyes were withdrawn, Alice Howard drew back the curtain, and leaning forward gave him a gracious bow. A glad smile played upon her lips, and the pale hue of her countenance, vanished before the deep carnation which coloured her cheeks. He returned her salutation with a cold, almost haughty, inclination of the head.

"The cause of Miss Howard's swoon is now apparent," whispered a lady, gorgeously attired, to her companion. "This must be the gentleman who saved her from drowning;" and she gave him a more deliberate glance from her superb eyes. "Good-looking and distinguished, is he not?" The curtain again rolled up; but the play no longer arrested Edward's attention. His bosom was agitated by contending emotions. It was apparent, from her public recognition, that she was delighted to see him and he was not at all satisfied with himself for returning her bow and smile so haughtily. She was now leaning back upon the sofa, and occasionally turned her eyes upon Clifton, with a sad, anxious expression. And yet, with a perverse, stubborn obstinacy, which is sometimes as strange as it is uncontrollable, his brow still maintained its gloomy frown.

The crowd began to disperse, and Clifton endeavoured to make his egress from the theatre before Alice and her party, but the throng moved so slowly, that several minutes elapsed before he had gained the vestibule. There he saw Alice leaning upon the arm of an elderly gentleman, and looking eagerly among the audience, as they issued from the theatre. With a rapid step he was passing on, when quitting her companion, she advanced towards him, and laying her hand upon Clifton's arm, she said with a reproachful look, while the tears started to her eyes:

"You surely do not wish to avoid me?"

"I was forced to believe from your conduct since I last had the pleasure of seeing you, that it was a matter of the pro-

foundest indifference whether you ever saw me again."

"This is too cruel; but I know you cannot think so harshly of me!"

"Papa, this is Mr. Clifton, of whom you have heard William and myself speak so often."

"I am indeed glad to see you," said Mr. Howard; "we shall all be pleased to extend the hospitalities of our house to you while you remain in Philadelphia; will you not dine with us to-morrow?"

"It was my intention to leave the city to-morrow!"

"Oh, that will never do! Protract your visit. Shall it not be so?"

The request was so powerfully seconded by the eloquent eyes of the maiden, that Edward consented. As he handed Alice into the carriage, he felt her hand tremble as he involuntarily pressed it. As he returned to the hotel, a thrill of joy agitated his breast. He had been convinced that Alice was not the cold, impassive being he had supposed.

And what were the thoughts that produced a wild commotion in the maiden's heart? A brief extract from her journal will show.

"I have seen him, and how unexpectedly! when my eyes fell upon his countenance, agitated as my feelings were by the play, it is not remarkable that I fainted. But what did Papa think? what did the audience think? for I saw all eyes turned upon me when I recovered, and his among the number. I could not forbear bowing; yet, his response was so cold. And then he wished to shun me; for what reason? Ah, it was my departure from the Lake House without leaving a message, even, for him. It was unkind; I thought so, when it was too late! But the anguish which mother's illness produced; made me forget all; besides, I will explain it to him. And he dines here to-morrow; and if he should not become interested in me, for I am but a child! But then, if I was entirely indifferent to him, would he have noticed my conduct at the lake? No! no! I have heard it said, that we are only annoyed by the neglect of those for whom we entertain a high regard;" and with this idea floating in her imagination, she put away her journal, and was soon nestling in her soft, fragrant bed, dreaming of unexpected meetings, and happy reconciliations.

## CHAPTER XIII.

"Eat, speak, and move, under the influence of the most received star; and though the devil lead the measure, such are to be followed."—SHAKESPEARE.

"One only passion, unrevealed,  
With maiden pride the maid concealed,  
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—  
Oh, need I tell that passion's name?" SCOTT.

The hour arrived when Clifton was to meet the Howards, and entering a large and elegant dwelling in the most fashionable part of the city, he was ushered by a liveried servant into a parlour gorgeously furnished. He had scarcely surveyed the paintings by the old masters which decorated the walls, when the door opened, and Alice Howard advanced to meet him. She was simply attired in a silk plaid, with a lace cape over her shoulders. Her luxuriant hair, parted in the centre of the forehead, was drawn back so as to disclose her small and beautifully formed ears, and then wreathed into a French twist upon the back part of the head. She wore a solitary ring upon her taper finger, in the centre of which sparkled a magnificent diamond. Her tiny feet, Clifton did not fail to observe, were encased in well-fitting boots.

Advancing frankly to our hero, she extended her hand, and expressed the pleasure which his presence in the city gave her. He had responded to her welcome, when the door was opened, and Mr. and Mrs. Howard entered. After being introduced to the latter, dinner was announced.

"You must accompany Alice to the opera to-night, Mr. Clifton, if you have no other engagement," said Mr. Howard. "I have secured seats for you, my dear, near the Glendowers; you must introduce your friend to them. You will have the kindness to excuse myself and Mrs. Howard, and as it is within an hour of the time when the curtain rises, you can take a cup of tea with Alice before your departure."

Clifton and the young lady returned to the parlour.

"Your arrival in Philadelphia occasioned me much surprise."

"Yet I contemplated making a visit to the city long before I met you at the lake."

"You did not tell me so."

"I had not the pleasure of conversing with you then, more than an hour, as you may remember."

"Yes, we were summoned home by the illness of my mother, and I fear our hurried departure was the cause of my being considered ungrateful, if not unfeeling;" and she timidly raised her eyes to his face.

"That is all forgotten, now. You were not properly appreciated. Are you fond of music? I discover you have a remarkably fine piano."

"Oh, yes; I am devoted to it."

"Will you not sing for me? I am myself the slave of melody."

"I fear it will be an indifferent prelude to the opera of Lucrezia Borgia, which we shall hear to-night."

Seating herself at the instrument, she skilfully ran her fingers over the keys, and then sung, with a soft and melodious voice, those lines,

"Thou hast wounded the spirit that loved thee."

She did not wait to hear the expressions of delight which awaited the conclusion of the song, but darted up stairs for the opera cloak and hood.

"It is time to go now; the carriage is at the door. Here, you may hold my cloak and fan, while I put on my gloves. That will not detain me long," she continued, innocently; "as I find it impossible to purchase number sixes at any store in the city. I shall have to order some from Alexander's."

"Why that is a glove for a child."

"Well, you do not consider me anything more," and she smiled archly.

"If not, you are a precocious one."

"Come, now, I am ready."

He placed the ermine-trimmed opera-cloak upon her graceful shoulders, and they entered the carriage.

The spirited horses dashed along the gay streets, which were thronged with pedestrians. Clifton glanced at the shop windows, where the costliest fabrics were exhibited in the brilliant gas-light. His eyes then wandered to the people who crowded the side-walk. There the rags of squalid poverty touched the rich dress of the lady, and the labourer, in his coarse garb, hurried past the gentleman of leisure.

"Such is life!" muttered Clifton, as the carriage stopped in front of the theatre, for they did not boast of an opera-house.

"If you have no objection, Mr. Clifton, we will walk home, as the night is pleasant."

"Gladly."

"You need not return, then, Thomas."

"No, Miss."

In a moment they were in the midst of the crowd, and were softly conveyed on in the press of brocades. Clifton found himself surrounded by a bevy of beautiful women, splendidly robed. They were seat-

ed by the box-keeper, and Edward had scarcely time to observe that the audience were even more gorgeously attired than the preceding night, when the grand music of Lucrezia Borgia burst upon his ear. It was the first opera he had ever heard, and he listened to it as though his soul was absorbed by the melody.

The first act was over.

"How exquisitely Mrs. Overton is dressed to-night!" whispered Clara Glendower to Alice.

"The materials are expensive, but do you not think the dress is slightly too low in the neck?"

"Oh, no! not a shade below the new style, if, indeed, it comes quite up to it."

Clifton thought that *down* to it would be a more correct expression, but he did not say so.

"I am glad to see it is becoming fashionable to attend the opera without hats; it is vastly more comfortable."

"You may well say that, Alice, with your superb head of hair; but suppose you had no more than that horrid little twist of Miss Fenton's?"

"Could I not wear a braid?"

"But that looks so common; just observe the back of Miss McKiernan's head; is it not shocking?"

"They have a way, now, of twisting a roll of false hair into their own, so as, apparently, to increase the quantity."

"Yes, but the quality is not improved; besides, that does not enable them to coil the hair into so many circles. And then, how would a bride feel when she removed a large roll of false hair, and let the groom gaze upon her scanty locks?"

"Why what must they do?"

"Do nothing; only cultivate with the greatest possible care the covering which nature has placed upon their heads."

"Should not ladies, who like yourself and Miss Howard, have magnificent hair, be thankful for the blessing?"

"Of course we should." And the lady curved her aristocratic neck and suffered Edward to obtain a glance at the folds of jet black which ornamented her head.

The second act commenced, conversation was arrested, and a profound silence reigned among the audience, save when it was broken by the contact of kid gloves, as some high note was attained, and triumphant held, by the Prima Donna. The curtain fell a second time, amidst the most enthusiastic applause.

"Alice, let us visit the Drennans, in the private box yonder. You know them."

"Very well."

"Mr. Clifton, will you escort us?"

"Certainly, with great pleasure."

The graceful Philadelphian, raising her brocade, ostensibly for the purpose of keeping the dust from its hem, preceded Alice and Clifton along the aisle, until they had gained the balcony.

"I know you will like the Drennans," said Miss Glendower to Edward. "They are of the New York aristocracy."

"What is the date of their patent of respectability?"

"Oh, several generations back. They occupy a position many degrees above those very clever persons who, having recently acquired large fortunes, make a grand display, vainly supposing that silver mountings, and a liveried coachman, will be construed into evidence of either good breeding or refinement."

Miss Glendower tapped with her fan upon the door, and they were ushered into the box. Clifton was introduced to Miss Drennan and Mrs. Rutland, her sister. The married lady was a blond. Her dress was cut in the extreme of fashion, and disclosed her ivory shoulders and round throat.

"How are you pleased with the opera, Mr. Clifton?" she asked, resting her dimpled elbow upon the ottoman, and leaning graciously towards him.

"To my untutored ear the singing seems divine," he responded.

"The Prima Donna is in very good voice, although she occasionally sings falsely. The Tenor is frightful. How they can tolerate him I do not understand; I am certain a New York audience would not."

As Mrs. Rutland regarded the judgment of the Manhattanesse infallible in musical criticism, she considered the unfortunate wight who had attempted the part of Genaro, as effectually disposed of.

Miss Glendower curled her lip at this covert announcement of superiority, but she continued her conversation with Mr. Drennan. At length, turning to Mrs. Rutland, she observed, "You were in raptures with the Baritone who was engaged last winter at the New York Opera-House."

"Yes, he was a great favourite."

"Well, would you believe it? When I was in London last summer, he was considered a fourth-rate artist. How utterly deficient in musical taste they must be in that city!" and there was the slightest possible approach to a derisive smile upon the lip of the Philadelphian. But she had misjudged the estimation

which Mrs. Rutland placed upon the opinion of New Yorkers. No shade of surprise or chagrin was visible upon her countenance, and she replied, with a natural and slightly patronising tone of voice, "He will be better appreciated when he returns to Europe. We think him an artist of the highest rank. Have you attended the opera in New York, Mr. Clifton? No! You have been unfortunate. 'Tis such a dear, charming place! One never meets vulgar people there."

"I like the plan which has been adopted of securing boxes or sofas for the season," said Alice; "it appears more homelike, and then acquaintances can occupy contiguous seats."

"That would be hardly a fair distribution, provided your circle comprised the youth and beauty of the audience. It would exhibit the same want of harmony as placing the rarest flowers together in a bouquet, instead of distributing them artistically."

"There is another reason, Mr. Clifton," observed Mrs. Rutland; "ladies attend the opera in full dress, and, although they will bear close inspection, still the *tout ensemble* presents a grander appearance where space lends its enchantment."

"Do you observe Miss Sutherland and her beau?" inquired Miss Glendower.

"The lady with auburn locks and sparkling black eyes?"

"Yes. Is it not strange that such a superb creature should engage herself to such a snip?"

"But then she has been in society several years, and he is rich."

"I think the stock of beaux now on hand, are, without exception, the most forlorn creatures I ever saw," said Miss Drennan.

"That is emphatically the case with your New York beaux," replied Miss Glendower. "I saw an assemblage of them at a party last winter, and there was not one among them who would come up to Napoleon's standard for a dragoon. Every one would have been forced to join the infantry. The only evidence of manhood which I could discover was their dress, and a thin, downy mustache, scarcely more than you will see on the lip of an Italian woman."

"But they dance the polka gracefully."

"True; and they can do — nothing else!"

"Did you witness the tableaux at the Morton's, last week, Miss Howard?" inquired Mr. Drennan.

"No; I was unavoidably absent."

"Yonder sits the lady who personated Mary, Queen of Scots. Is she not a glorious creature?"

"Who is she? I never saw her before."

"Miss Ruthven, from Baltimore."

"How did she dress the character?"

"Faultlessly. If the queen possessed such expressive eyes, pouting lips, faultless bust, and flexible waist, it is not strange that a Douglass should have forgotten his duty and deserted his post."

"Why, brother, you are enraptured with the fair Baltimorean."

"And who is not? Observe the bloom upon her cheek; its hues are more exquisitely blended than the colours of the peach. Her arm is cast in nature's happiest mould; and see those eyes, half concealed by the drooping lids. She looks this way," and the gentleman bowed profoundly to the graceful inclination of the maiden.

"You know her, then?"

"Yes, I was introduced with many other gentlemen, but I feared she would forget me in the mass who were presented."

"You should not fail to remember that the language of admiration is not confined to the lips. Our sex can with unerring certainty read it in your eyes."

"Why should that make her recollect me?"

"You have not yet to learn, I hope, that admiration is grateful to a lady. Doubtless your Baltimorean discovered, with the power of intuition, that she had made an impression upon you, and therefore the countenance, as well as the name, of Mr. Drennan, was remembered; that is, if the name was not indistinctly muttered, according to the fashion of the times."

"And to that circumstance I am to attribute the bow?"

"Not exclusively, perhaps; your respectable features and really very fine person might have had some influence. Besides, I may be pardoned for saying, you are surrounded, my dear brother, by a party somewhat remarkable for their *distingué* appearance."

"Do listen to this young fellow in the adjoining box. If he has declared once, he has a dozen times, his preference for melo-dramas. The only distinctive ideas he seems to possess are connected with melo-dramas."

"You forget, Miss Glendower, that certain persons of mediocre intellect, having once conquered an idea, cling to it with the utmost tenacity, and constantly refer to it in set phrases. Your neighbour is one of a thousand."

"I know it; but still the simpleton annoys me. Doubtless he heard some person use the word, and having taken a fancy to it, he avails himself of every opportunity to articulate '*melo-drama*.' But the director has taken his seat; let us return."

The opera was over, and Alice and her companion were threading the streets in the direction of her home. Their progress was slow, for she was listening to the deep tones of his voice.

"This is the house," said she, as they ascended the white marble steps.

"What, so soon?"

"Will you not come in?"

"Not to-night." He almost regretted his refusal when he beheld the cheerful fire in the parlour-grate, and saw two large green velvet chairs reposing side by side, as if inviting a tête-à-tête.

"Shall I not see you to-morrow?"

"Certainly; I will call in the evening."

"Good-night, then." The door closed as he descended the steps, and he was shut out from the warm parlour, velvet chairs, and the lovely creature who had been his companion for so many hours.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

"Like clouds upon the midday sky,  
Which float in snowy wreaths away,  
And as they slowly mount on high,  
In airy forms their light display,  
Then, quickly fading one by one,  
Dissolve, and while we gaze are gone."  
HETIE HAREBELL.

"We part—for ever part—to-night!  
I knew, I knew, it could not last—  
'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly, but 'tis past."  
MOORE.

THE next morning Edward was accosted by young Drennan, who invited him into his parlour.

"How do you like the society of Philadelphia?" inquired Clifton.

"Very much, indeed. There is an unostentatious refinement here, which does not universally prevail in New York."

"And yet, is it not strange that there should be such a contrast in two cities separated by so short a distance?"

"Not at all. There are an infinite number of cosmopolitans in New York. It is a modern Babel. Dutch, English, Scotch, French, Italians, Mexicans, and Americans, are all congregated together; in fact, there is scarcely a country upon the globe that is without a representative. In a so-

ciety composed of such heterogeneous materials, you could not expect the prevalence of universal refinement."

"What is the position occupied by the foreign population?"

"Where they are permanently settled, it depends very much upon their wealth, or intellectual endowments. The same remark will, to a certain degree, apply to the traveller, though titles are, perhaps, the readiest passport to the saloons of a set who claim to be the leaders of the ton."

"Of what titles do you speak?"

"Counts, Barons, Chevaliers; anything under the rank of an Earl."

"And these subjects of a crowned head, upon the strength of a paltry title, obtain admission to the society of America's peerless daughters?"

"Nothing more common, my dear sir, than an alliance between the daughter of a wealthy parvenu and one of these titled, but poverty-stricken foreigners, who are generally as poor as church mice."

"Impossible!"

"True, I assure you. A match of that kind came off recently; the lovely, but ambitious bride, insisted upon a visit to Paris, for the purpose of being presented at Court. She was anxious to flourish in the blaze of royalty. It was rumoured, alas, that she was more indebted to the American Minister for a gracious reception, than to her titled but obscure husband."

"Did she remain abroad?"

"No; she preferred a moderate notoriety here, to oblivion there."

"What other objection have you to the society of your native city?"

"It is too frequently the case that persons who are forced to conceal a dishonourable origin, are elevated by the magical lever of wealth into the society of those who can boast a pure descent."

"Surely these unfortunates are not to blame for an event over which they have no control."

"No; but here lies the difficulty. If the guilty parents were assured that dishonour would be visited on their offspring, they would pause upon the threshold of crime; but as it is, if they possess wealth, the world seems to draw no distinction between the offshoots of guilt and the fruits of wedlock. As long as such a demoralizing state of society exists, vice and virtue are at par."

"Then you would have society exclude these contaminating beings from its circle?"

"Unquestionably. It is a hard case for the sufferer, yet it is not the only instance where the sins of the parent are visited upon the children for many generations. It is one of those events which are controlled by an unavoidable necessity, when the good of the many demand the punishment of the few. A hundred instances could be cited where a community immolates the few, to save the mass from a moral blight. What can be more contaminating than the association of a young lady with the child of dishonour? What are the impressions which will be made upon her plastic mind? Why, that a diversion from the path of virtue is not unpardonable, provided the culprit is wealthy."

"But the forbearance which you so much deprecate does not universally prevail in New York?"

"Oh, no. There is another circle in New York society which is far more exclusive; where the possession of a gaudy equipage is not considered an indication of refinement, or regarded as an introduction. There our sex are gentlemen, and the females are a realization of Bulwer's Katharine, in the '*Last of the Barons*.'"

"What is the social position assigned by that class to learning?"

"A very high one. Take, for instance, fifty names I could mention, belonging to the Historical Society—the rank which they hold is enviable."

"Then you have as many different circles as there are representatives of foreign nations?"

"Quite as many."

"Which takes the lead in giving tone and direction to fashions?"

"A half-dozen different sets aspire to that honour, each one avowing a superiority over the others."

"Then you have no clique so immeasurably pre-eminent above all the rest as to force obedience to its mandates?"

"Not at all. An individual will attach himself to that circle which presents the greatest attraction. One will join a faction which has acquired notoriety for its pompous exhibition of splendour; another prefers the society of persons who are distinguished for their polished elegance of manners. The freedom from restraint which characterizes the latitude of Paris, attracts others to its set; while science, music, literature, and the arts, are not without their votaries."

In the evening Edward was seated by the side of Alice. Tea was announced, and while they were at the table Mr.

Howard referred to the contemplated visit of Clifton to the Southern States. The abolition question was beginning to assume a threatening aspect at the North. There were daily accessions to the ranks of the party, and it already had acquired a commanding influence, by holding the balance of power between the two great political sections. The abolitionists had, with consummate skill, determined to force unscrupulous politicians into their ranks, by making concessions to their fatal doctrines the price of success. If the Democrats refused to comply with their demands, the Whigs were elevated to power. That appeared so hard to those who longed for the spoils, that they began to think it would be good policy to outbid their old adversaries. The cunning abolitionists put themselves up at auction, and with a grim smile witnessed the eagerness with which Whigs and Democrats tried to outbid each other. The unmistakable evidence of disgust that was visible upon their countenances as they entered the auction-room, was as laughable as the perplexity with which they would receive the announcement of some enormous bid by their rivals, followed by a hurried consultation as to the policy of making a still greater sacrifice. Principles were abandoned, and a disgraceful scramble for the spoils began to characterize the political contests in many of the Northern States.

"Are you really willing," said Mr. Howard, "to cast your fortunes among persons who buy and sell human beings?"

"I do not perceive the slightest objection to doing so. Waiving the question of morality, slavery exists, and probably will always prevail in the Southern States."

"But then you should not encourage its continuance, by residing among slaveholders."

"I am very far from believing that slavery is wrong in the abstract. Besides, the negroes are happier than the same race are here."

"The owners of these slaves may neglect to provide for them a sufficient amount of clothing and food."

"That is hardly probable. There are stringent laws in force, which compel the master to provide for the wants of his slave, even if he is not prompted to do so by interest, for any neglect might produce disease and death."

"Any one who will glance at the condition of the coloured race among us," said Miss Howard, with some timidity, "must come to the conclusion that they are an inferior race. They are not allowed to

ride. in the stages, they yield the side-walks to the whites, and in the performance of the most menial offices, they drag out a wretched existence."

"But, then, my daughter, they are free."

"What good does their freedom do them?" she replied, with animation. "Are they not slaves to idleness and want? does not the spectre of famine stare them in the face, and point, with its skeleton finger, to the sunken cheeks and ghastly forms of its victims?"

"There is no necessity for the suffering which you describe. Industry will enable all to obtain food."

"Ay, but they will *not* be industrious. There is the difficulty; they require a master to force them."

"This is the language of one who has not a just appreciation of the subject," replied Mr. Howard, gravely. "Our philanthropists have not devoted their attention so long to the condition of the slave without having obtained a knowledge of his real condition."

"Your philanthropists might have been more usefully employed at home," observed Edward. "There is a vast amount of religious cant, at the present day, which would pass current under the name of hypocrisy."

"In what respect, Mr. Clifton?"

"It is apparent in the outward garb of the Church. It is indicated by the exertions which each denomination makes to erect a temple of the Lord that shall surpass all others in magnificence, and it is carried even to the commission of fraud and deceit. Passing along one of the fashionable streets, the other day, I saw a church whose lofty dome pierced the skies. It was erected upon the corner of two thoroughfares. The end and side fronting the streets were of beautiful marble, while the other two, I discovered upon a close inspection, were of brick, but painted to imitate the marble."

"Papa, that is our church," said Alice, with an amused smile.

"Yes, and I opposed the arrangement, but without success; that, however, does not change the condition of the slave, where quivering limbs and piercing shrieks proclaim the supremacy of the lash."

"These are not unfrequently fancy sketches, portrayed for the purpose of exciting sympathy, or arousing indignation. Here again the law protects the slave, and the owner is not permitted to treat with inhumanity, that species of property, without a cause. There must, of course, be submission upon the part of the slave; that

necessarily results from the relation which exists between them; but the conduct of a master to his slave is controlled by a well-regulated public opinion."

"But you surely cannot justify the sale of members of the same family to different purchasers?"

"That is the strongest argument which the opponents of slavery are able to advance. Still, the anguish resulting from those sales cannot be more harrowing than the fruits of poverty that are daily witnessed in your populous city. Why is the mother induced to barter the future peace of her child for gold? Why will she absolutely torture the form of her infant until it presents the horrible appearance of dissolution? Why will the fallen descend step by step, into the dark abyss of woe, until they shiver upon the cold damp stones, where poisonous vapours hang upon their matted locks, and their eyes are opened to the ghastly realities of a living tomb? The gnawing, relentless craving for food. In the midst of plenty, starvation stalks abroad, because your philanthropists are attempting to alleviate the condition of the slave."

"You will remember, though, that our black population are free."

"Freedom without equality," said Alice.

"A negro cannot vote unless he has a property qualification, the white man can. Why this distinction, if you would establish the doctrine of equality? I have seen an aged coloured woman breasting the raging elements, with nothing to shield her head from the pitiless storm. An omnibus stops at her side, picks up a strong, healthy man, in the full vigour of life, and then rolls onward, regardless of the wistful glance which the poor old free negro casts after it. We never saw anything so cruel as that when we were at the South, papa. There the old negro would have been protected from the tempest."

"These are necessary regulations which society cannot avoid establishing, owing to the difference of colour. But all the facts which you have both adduced cannot justify the sale and transfer of human beings, and, at all hazards, the shackles should be stricken from the slave, and he should walk the earth a bondman no longer."

"It is not always," rejoined Clifton, "that freedom produces happiness. What is the condition of your paupers, who scarcely obtain a subsistence? Look at the objects of distress who sweep the crossings of the streets in New York, un-

protected from the pitiless storm. How often do the philanthropic citizens reward the labour which enables them to cross Broadway without soiling their opera boots? Look at the houseless beggars who throng the corners of the streets, exposing the forms of tender infants to the blasts of winter, for the purpose of exciting compassion. How often do your moral and sympathetic millionaires relieve the gnawings of hunger, as they sweep past? Visit the haunts of poverty and wretchedness, and gaze upon the hollow cheek and attenuated form, while starvation and crime have formed an alliance. Then tell me, if you can, with all these horrors staring you in the face, that slavery should be abolished at all hazards."

It was with unconcealed rage that Mr. Howard listened to this bold avowal of Clifton's sentiments, and rising abruptly, he left the room. Before closing the door, he cast a reproachful glance at his daughter, who apologized to their guest for the heat which her sire had exhibited.

The next day Edward received a visit from Mr. Howard, at the hotel.

"I hope you will not consider the request I am about to make an ungracious one, Mr. Clifton. It is quite natural that my daughter should feel for you the most grateful emotions, from the service which you rendered her. She is young, perhaps susceptible, and I now must appeal to your honour as a gentleman, not to pursue any course, before your departure, calculated to win her affections. She knows very little of the world, having mingled rarely in society, and four years must elapse before she will complete her education. Besides, there is an insurmountable objection to an alliance between yourself and Alice. You are about to settle in a slaveholding State, and my daughter shall never associate with persons who traffic in human flesh. I must at least request you not to speak of love to her before your departure, and to refrain from writing to her for six years."

"Although I have not avowed a preference for Miss Howard, yet I sincerely regret the announcement you have made. To relieve your anxiety, I will pledge my word, as you desire. It is unnecessary however, for if your daughter had inspired me with the most unshaken attachment, I would have considered it dishonourable to win her regard, before maturity had enabled her to draw a distinction between gratitude and love."

"Spoken like a gentleman, and a man of honour," said Mr. Howard, with much

cordiality. He mused for a few moments, and then, shaking his head, he muttered, "No, no, it will never do! what would the society think of me?"

"To prove that I appreciate the gallantry and generosity which saved my child, I beg your acceptance of this trifle," and he tendered to Edward a diamond ring of great value. Clifton drew himself up to his full height, and gazing sternly at the donor, he replied: "No, sir! I desire no reward for doing my duty, and I am still less inclined to barter my heart for a bauble."

He sought Alice for the purpose of obtaining a parting interview.

"Do you depart so suddenly?"

"To-morrow."

"And when do you return?"

"Perhaps never! When a young man once mingles with the crowd, in the eager strife for pre-eminence, it is impossible to tell whither the surges may bear him."

"I regret your determination," observed the maiden sadly; "I shall often think of you!"

"And shall I have a place in your memory?"

"Can you doubt it?" she responded with earnestness."

Clifton almost regretted the promise he had made her father, and conscious of the danger, he rose abruptly to take his leave. Surprised at the suddenness of a separation for which she was not prepared, Alice cast a startled and bewildered look at our hero, while her hand played convulsively with her bodice. For a minute after the door closed upon his receding form, she stood as though transfixed to the spot, and then heaving a sigh, which proclaimed the agony of her feelings, she threw herself upon the sofa, and wept long and bitterly.

## CHAPTER XV.

"The silent wilderness for me,  
Where never sound is heard,  
Save the rustling of the squirrel's foot,  
And the flitting wing of bird.  
Or its low and interrupted note,  
And the deer's quick, crackling tread,  
And the swaying of the forest boughs,  
As the wind moves over head."

PEARODY.

CLIFTON now proceeded to join Kelborn, who had returned several days before to New York. He soon made preparations for a hunting and fishing excursion to the



wilds of the West. Several months had elapsed before they arrived at Milwaukie, and were ready to plunge into the vast solitudes which stretched westward to the Mississippi River. In 1834, the place where they made their head-quarters, could only boast one white female; now it numbered more than ten thousand inhabitants. The rapidity with which the forests have disappeared along that portion of Lake Michigan is little less than magical. A life of hardship and adventure presents no terrors to the American borderer. Nothing is to him so fascinating as a frontier life. Instances are by no means rare of the frontiersman becoming disgusted with the restraints which society imposes, and although surrounded with the comforts and even elegancies of life, he renews his journey westward, until he treads once more the territory of his savage neighbours. This love of adventure is extending the area of freedom by opening new avenues for the rapidly increasing population of the United States.

Few of the denizens of a city have correct views of border life. With ideas too much shaped by events which occur within a narrow circle, and with thoughts too often bounded by brick walls, they are ignorant that life upon the frontiers is surrounded with hardships and perils; and yet, that, sprinkled with romantic incident and freshened by genuine hospitality, it rarely fails to expand the intellectual powers, and to spiritualize the human heart. The prominent features of society upon the border, which at once arrest the attention of travellers, are hospitality, patient industry, and dauntless courage.

Clifton resolved to postpone his visit to the South, until he had mingled with the population of what were then the territories of Wisconsin and Iowa, and enjoyed the exciting amusements of the chase. Game could be found in great abundance, from Lake Michigan to the Falls of St. Anthony, and to that point he resolved to direct his course. He had already formed the acquaintance of Frank Blount, a hardy Kentuckian, who willingly joined the party. They obtained the services of a coloured man as cook, and an Irishman fresh from the Emerald Isle, as a man-of-all-work. Each member of the party was mounted upon a steed. Kelborn, Clifton, and Blount, were each armed with the long Western rifle; in addition to which, the two former had swung to their shoulders, double-barrelled guns, while the latter carried at his saddle-bow, a weapon which very much resembled the formidable battle-axe of

the Crusaders. As neither Peter, the negro, nor Tom Sheridan, the Irishman, were skilled in the use of fire-arms, all the implements of death which were intrusted to their charge, were two long bowie-knives. It is true, that Peter appropriated the axe, with which he was accustomed, to obtain wood for their fires; but Tom, declaring he would rival the "nager" in the quality of their weapons, cut a formidable shillalah. Two pack-horses were also purchased; upon one was placed salt, sugar, coffee, tea, and a small supply of cooking utensils, while upon the other was mounted two tents, and the requisite number of blankets. The addition of five hounds made up the train. For bread and potatoes they intended to rely upon the white settlers, who were scattered through the territory.

It was a bright morning in the month of May, that our party took their departure from the thriving village of Milwaukie, and plunged into the forest which extended to the westward. The sky was unclouded, and the rays of the morning sun were mirrored in the dew-drops which hung upon the leaves. The hunters felt that bounding of the heart and thrilling rush of the blood through the veins, which an abundance of oxygen, never fails to produce.

"There is something peculiarly exhilarating," said Kelborn, "in the atmosphere of these forests."

"True," responded Clifton, "and it is always with much difficulty that I can restrain myself from giving utterance to a shout, whenever I am beneath its dark foliage."

"Well, we can enjoy it now even to a surfeit," replied Kelborn; "and many moons shall be numbered before I again emerge from its depths."

"It makes one sorrowful," interposed Blount, "to think that these 'ere woods will soon be destroyed by the white man, who divides his time in fighting with natur', the varmints, and the Ingins."

"That shows the necessity for enjoying these blessings while they last," said Edward. "There are millions of acres over which the savage and the beast of prey alone roam, so that for several years the hunter will find amusement, before his sport is arrested by civilization."

"Still the day will come, arter a while," rejoined Blount, "when the rifle will have to be laid aside; and where the bloody-minded Ingins roam in search of food, the white man will soon erect his log cabin, and improve his betterments."

"There is one abuse of the hunter's privilege, which most unquestionably calls for prompt attention. The buffalo, probably the most splendid race of animals of which this continent can boast, is fast disappearing before the ruthless onslaught of the sportsman. Hunted from a mere wanton thirst for blood, and not to satisfy the wants of man, it cannot be hoped that they will long wander over the vast prairies of the West."

"Doubtless you would prove no more scrupulous yourself," said Kelborn, "if a herd of buffaloes should cross your path. What say you, Kentuck?"

"There's truth for you," responded Blount. "He remain quiet in his saddle while a raging big bull-buffalo comes tearing along, for all the world like a rumpagus devil! It is unreasonable to expect it."

"Well, you will see," retorted Edward, "how often I shall raise my rifle against any denizens of the wilds, unless it be in self-defence, or to obtain a necessary supply of meat; and as at the present time our larder is well stocked, I shall content myself with the amusements which this magnificent forest affords."

On the third morning after their departure from Milwaukie, they heard an exclamation of surprise from Peter.

"Gor-a-massa! what dat yoner?"

The eyes of the party were quickly directed to the point indicated by the excited black. It was discovered that a herd of deer were in the act of passing over a hill which bounded the valley, about half a mile to their right. The view was not obscured by underbrush, and the advance of the hunters had been perceived by the deer, apparently, however, without creating any alarm. Blount and Kelborn at once determined to bring the game within reach of their rifles, and Clifton, notwithstanding the humane doctrines he had so recently advocated, interposed no objections to their plan. The Kentuckian, as the only experienced woodman of the party, assumed the leadership. Rapidly surveying the ground, he discovered that the hills which bounded the valley upon either side, about one hundred rods in front, were only separated by a few yards, the glen at that place being contracted to a narrow defile. He supposed, if they could succeed in "heading" the herd, that they would cross the low ground at this point, well knowing the animal preferred bounding along the ridges, in order to avoid the marshy soil, which was often found at the foot of the hills. He therefore directed Kelborn to take a "stand" upon the brow

of the hill, on the right, while Edward was requested to assume a position beyond the summit of the land on the left. Blount himself, calling the obedient hounds, retraced his footsteps one-fourth of a mile, and was soon lost from their view. Clifton mechanically sought the spot which the Kentuckian had pointed out, and tying his horse in a thick grove of small timber, he listlessly seated himself at the foot of a gigantic oak. How long he had remained in this position he knew not; and being well aware that it was one of the huntsman's rules never to desert a stand until requested to do so by the "driver," he suffered his thoughts to dwell upon the past, without caring for the present. His attention was at length arrested by the sound of a distant horn, as its shrill notes were echoed through the forest. Soon his ear caught the baying of the hounds, and he had scarcely risen to his feet, before he heard the sharp report of a rifle. Thoroughly aroused, he prepared to attack the game, when he saw an antlered denizen of the forest rapidly descending a spur of the hill, directly towards him. The buck was closely followed by the hounds, and in their midst rode the daring Kentuckian, upon his splendid black charger. The rapid bounds of the deer, and the horse, as they thundered along, and the "opening" of the dogs, proved too much for our hero's equanimity, and as they dashed past he discharged his rifle, but the game bounded on. Hurriedly mounting his steed, which could scarcely be controlled, so eager was he to follow the hounds, Edward joined in the pursuit. It was evident that Kelborn had desperately wounded the deer, as the leaves were stained with his blood; but still he held gallantly forward. The chase led over several hills, and at length approached the border of a narrow and rapid stream. The wounded buck at once plunged down the bank, and attempted to cross the river, but the current proved too strong, and after struggling unavailingly for several minutes, his head turned down the stream, and for a few moments he disappeared in the foaming rapids. The dogs had also entered the water, and, with desperate resolution, pursued the game. The hunters had arrived upon the bank in time to see the buck emerge, with great difficulty, upon a small island which divided the river, and stagger into the bushes which covered it. Without waiting to discover whether the hounds would drive the deer from the island, Kelborn determined to follow them. Disregarding the remonstrances of his com-

panions, he dismounted from his horse, and divesting himself of his coat, and laying aside his rifle, with no weapon but a bowie knife, he struck fearlessly out into the stream. It required all the exertion of which his great muscular power was capable, to prevent his being swept down the rapids. While Edward and the Kentuckian were anxiously watching his progress, they were startled by the yelping of the hounds, as though they were furiously assaulted.

"I like not these complaints of the critters," said Blount; "for although a buck will sometimes show grit when a bullet has reached a tender pint, still summit more than that deer, I fear me, makes Grundy—by the Lord! it is even as I said. See yonder," continued the excited hunter, "away down at the lower end of the island."

"I discover," replied Edward, "that the hounds have retreated into the river, but can see no reason for their doing so."

"Do you not observe the dark gray animal which lies ready for a spring upon the dogs, if they return?"

"True true!" quickly responded Edward; "but where is Kelborn? He is in danger from the catamount."

"Yonder he goes; one moment more and he will reach the head of the island, and it will be too late."

The two hunters now raised their voices in warning shouts, but the roar of the water prevented Kelborn from hearing what they uttered. Supposing from their gesticulations that they were pointing out the spot where the wounded buck was at bay, he at once entered the thicket in pursuit.

"The rash lad will be slaughtered by the wild cat," said the Kentuckian, earnestly. "See! the rumpagus varmint, after driving the cowardly hounds away, is returning to the deer. I allers did know that perfect reliance could only be placed upon a rael bull-dog."

The anxious spectators now believed that the contest which they apprehended, would be over before either of them could reach the island; nevertheless, Clifton resolved to fly to the rescue of his friend. It was impossible to carry any fire-arms, and he was forced to rely upon a similar weapon to the one Kelborn had in his possession. Before he had measured half the distance from the shore, Blount heard the screams of the wild-cat, and knew that she had attacked the adventurous hunter. Again nothing was heard but the

roar of the falls; but the next minute the Kentuckian perceived the thicket was violently agitated, and as it parted, he discovered Kelborn retreating, but defending himself with great desperation from the furious bounds of the savage beast. So rapid were the motions of the catamount, that she seemed constantly in the air. It was evident to the watchful Kentuckian, that both the combatants were wounded; still they fought with the utmost ferocity. Each time the beast alighted upon the person of Kelborn, she was shaken off, and although the reeking blade drank blood at every thrust, it failed to reach a vital part, while his flesh was lacerated by her claws. Blount saw, with emotions of horror, that the contest was becoming more and more unequal. At each bound, it was evident the exasperated beast was repulsed with more difficulty. Edward was several rods from the island, although struggling nobly to aid his friend before it was too late. Twice had Blount drawn his rifle to his shoulder, but the rapid movements of the foes rendered it impossible to fire with safety. Clifton at length placed his foot upon the rocky shore of the island, and was in the act of dashing forward to the relief of Kelborn, when he saw him stagger back with the wild cat clinging to his breast. Scarcely had he reached the earth, and before Clifton could advance a single step, he saw the beast spring wildly from her prostrate foe, and falling into the stream, was borne unresistingly down the flood. The next instant he heard the report of a rifle, and casting his eyes to the shore, he saw a thin cloud of smoke slowly curling through the trees at the spot where the Kentuckian stood, leaning upon his weapon.

Edward, leaning over the prostrate form of his friend, saw that he was severely injured. The skin upon his chest was furrowed by the claws of the wild-cat; his arms were torn and bloody; but the most dangerous wound was upon the left shoulder, the muscles of which were laid bare, and from whence the tide of life was rapidly flowing. He at once proceeded to staunch the blood as much as possible, with the limited means in his possession. Duncan bore his sufferings with commendable fortitude, and greatly aided his inexperienced friend by his suggestions. Blount, in the mean time, had summoned their attendants to the bank of the river, and proceeding a short distance up the stream, they succeeded in crossing it without difficulty. The Kentuckian discovered that the island was perfectly accessible

from that side of the river, and in a few minutes he joined his companions. The condition of Kelborn rendered it impossible to proceed any further, until he had recovered from his wounds, and Blount sought for a spot upon which their tents could be pitched. He discovered that the island was some twenty rods long, and about a dozen in width. In the centre was a dry and level spot, surrounded on three sides by high rocks, having an open space in front, leading to the shallow ford. The whole island was covered with a thick growth of fir, cedar, hemlock, and maple. Tom and Peter soon had the tents erected, and a comfortable bed of hemlock boughs prepared. Thither the wounded man was removed, and every effort was made to alleviate his sufferings. Tom was dispatched in search of a favourable spot for the horses to forage, while Peter prepared to dress the deer. The exercise had given them all an appetite, and they keenly relished the delicious steaks which Peter broiled over the coals. Blount requested Duncan to eat nothing more substantial than soup, which he prepared with much culinary skill from a portion of the venison. Tom returned, after a short absence, with the welcome intelligence that he had discovered a small prairie about one-third of a mile from the encampment. The horses were led to that point, and after being "hampered," were suffered to graze upon the luxuriant grass which covered the earth.

"Your experience as a hunter, Duncan," said Edward, "has commenced under circumstances calculated to give you an unfavourable opinion of the amusement."

"Most certainly," returned the other, "I cannot commend the reception which I have received upon the ground of its hospitality."

"It is what all count on receiving," observed Blount, "who prefer the freedom of nature to the annoyances of pestiferous cities."

"It surely is not often the hunter's fate to meet with so warm a reception as our friend received?" inquired Clifton.

"It is rather uncommon; still, I have had a right smart chance of scimmages with wild varmints, as well as with out-laying Ingins. It won't do to calkerlate upon the marcy of either when they are bent on mischief."

"At all events," said Duncan, "I am indebted to the skill which you have acquired in the forest for my life, as nothing but the contents of that unerring rifle pre-

vented the teeth of the catamount from inflicting a mortal wound!"

"I seed," replied the Kentuckian, "the game was well-nigh up with you—and as it was disarnable that the creter was more than ordinarily riled, I concluded it was time to let the peacemaker interfere. Still it was a splendiferous fight," continued the animated forester, as his eyes lit up at the recollection of the combat, "and one that gave me an *onaccountable* desire to take a few bouts myself, were it not that even sich risky devils are entitled to fair play. Hows'ever, you showed the real grit, and may I be teetotally shivered if I don't stand by you in all *emargencies* for the futer."

"I thank you, Blount, for your good opinion, as well as for your timely assistance, and I shall always be grateful to Clifton and yourself. With two such men, I shall not fear to encounter all the horrors which the wilderness may present."

While this conversation occurred in the tent, Peter and Tom were expressing their opinions of the fight.

"It's my judgment, misther Pather, that the baste could have been asily managed wid the shillaleh."

"No, no," responded his sable companion; "them sticks may do for one Irishman to crack anoder's head wid, but you'd better b'lieve a catamount aint gwine to pay no 'tention to them things; yah, yah, yah!"

"Divil a bit do ye know about the weapons, at all, at all. Yees can't expict a nager, whose skull is so thick that he can't *fule* the beauties of the shillalegh, to decide upon its mirits."

"You don't know notting at all 'bout dat hanimal, I tells you, if you sposhe he hab any fears ob your club! Kishmens am so igrant when dey come from todder side ob de water, dat gemblem of colour hab to larn dem all dey know."

"And be the powers, lattle would they be after larning from the likes of yez, whose skull is as thick as a dacent sized prather. Don't I tell yez that yon baste would have been asily kilt by any Irish lad who understands walding this darlint pace of furnitur."

The colloquy was terminated by the voice of the Kentuckian, who summoned the disputants to construct a foot-path across the ford. This was to be accomplished by felling an enormous oak over that part of the stream, the lower extremity of which was to rest upon the main land, and the top upon the island. Tom and Peter commenced the somewhat difficult task of

cutting down the tree, not, however, without a contemptuous allusion upon the part of the latter personage to the indifferent manner with which the Irishman wielded his axe, and a somewhat decided expression of opinion that "them paddy's hab only sense nuff to use the spade and shovel."

The oak that had for years towered in the wilderness, resisting storms and tempests, which had no other effect but to strengthen and enlarge its roots, now swayed to and fro, and at length came to the earth with a tremendous crash. After several limbs had been cut away, the trunk of the oak afforded an excellent bridge, over which the hunters could pass without difficulty.

The sun had now descended to the western horizon, and all further operations were postponed until the next day. Another excellent repast was served up by Peter. A stew was prepared out of venison; bread, and potatoes, seasoned with pepper and salt. Warm corn-meal cakes were made upon the griddle, while the savoury tea was properly "drawn." Over this delicious meal plans were made for the succeeding day. Edward and Peter were detailed to catch fish, while Blount was to exhibit his skill with the rifle. After these arrangements were made, the whole party retired to rest and slept soundly until morning.

The sun had scarcely risen before the sportsmen left the tent. Blount crossed the bridge, and advanced into the forest which skirted the river, while our hero and Peter descended the stream to the foot of the falls, and commenced angling with a fly-hook. Clifton was exceedingly gratified to find that the river was filled with an illimitable number of trout, the most beautiful and delicious of the finny tribe. The season was favourable for fishing with the fly-hook, and as the tempting but deceptive bait was thrown upon the water, it never failed to attract a shoal of the victims. When the sun had reached the meridian the anglers had filled their basket with trout. Returning to the camp, they found Blount already there, having bagged eight partridges, four wild turkeys, and half-a-dozen fox-squirrels.\* Peter's larder was therefore again well stocked. After having examined Duncan's wounds, which were found to be doing well, and partaken of a dinner which would have

\* This animal is somewhat larger than the common gray squirrel, and is yet to be found in the northern part of Illinois.

been acceptable to a gourmand, the Kentuckian informed the party that he had found a bee-tree about a mile from the island, and proposed that it should be cut down that afternoon. This proposition was gladly acceded to, and as no danger was apprehended from leaving Kelborn by himself, the rest of the hunters started in quest of the honey. The Kentuckian easily found the tree, which was a large and lofty hickory. The hollow through which the industrious little insects entered the body of the tree was about midway the trunk.

As usual, the task of felling the tree devolved upon Tom and Peter, for although Blount was more expert with the axe than the Irishman, he thought such menial duties unbecoming a forester. The hickory was soon prostrated by the vigorous blows of the two men, when the difficult and somewhat hazardous operation was to be performed of taking the honey from the tree. A fire was made of dried bark, and nearly all the heroic little insects were destroyed, while gallantly defending their treasures. Several of the bees, however, attacked Blount, whose swollen visage attested their powers. Peter did not escape with impunity, which called forth an expression of Tom's opinion that "it was not unreasonable the darlint little birds should not take ony fancy to sich an on-christian countenance as Pather's; though by the holy saint Patrick, he should think they would quickly retrace when they wanst come fernenst his ugly visage!"

When the hickory was sundered by the aid of wedges and a beetle, an immense quantity of honey was obtained. Receptacles had been already prepared from spruce bark, which was torn from that tree, and with a large store they returned to the camp. Peter now rejoiced over an abundance of everything his heart could desire, and bountifully regaled the hunters with broiled partridges, roasted turkeys, fried trout, and baked potatoes, with any quantity of delicious honey, coffee and tea. The only regrets he gave utterance to was the want of milk, and eggs to settle the coffee. No one who has not enjoyed the delights of a camp in the forest, can at all appreciate the "pleasures of the palate," when the appetite is rendered doubly keen by exercise, and a pure, bracing atmosphere, which contains plenty of oxygen gas.

The following morning, as Peter and Thomas Sheridan were passing through the woods in the direction of the little prairie, where the horses were feeding,

they saw running along before them a quadruped which is known by the appellation of pole-cat, but more commonly called a skunk. Tom was delighted at beholding the animal, and exclaimed:

"By the powers, Pather, yon is a baste we can surround, for he nather flies nor climbs up a tree, like a divil of a squirrel, and unliiss he can run across the bog faster than Tom Sheridan, we'll make him prisoner."

"Yah! yah! yah!" roared Peter, as he showed his ivory from ear to ear. "Mr. Eddard, him be delighted if you cotch dat speckuld feller."

"Here goes, then, Pather; you head the crater until I can cut meself a dacent shillalagh, whin I will be after making him fale its tender qualities."

"You aint gwine to struck it, is you?" quickly interposed the African, who feared an abrupt termination of the sport. "Him oncommon tender, and you will kill him wid dat stick. Dat's no way to do, no how. Can't you put you hat over him, and cotch de feller after dat fashion? Massa Eddard like to tame um."

"You have some sinse, afther all, Pather," said the now thoroughly excited Irishman. "Who would ha' thought a nager had so much rason. Yez 'ill see, now, how dacently Tom can do the work."

Sheridan made a dash at the skunk, but he found the animal possessed more agility than he supposed. After making several unsuccessful attempts to capture him, Tom discovered that his ebony companion was affording no assistance; and, turning to express his indignation, he saw Peter leaning against a tree, holding one hand to his side, and stuffing his coat-tail into his mouth with the other.

"What the divil do yez see to laugh at, you blathering spalpeen? Jist put your bog-trotters in motion, and turn the crather this way, or I'll make yez taste my shillalagh."

After another desperate effort, in which he displayed all his activity, Tom succeeded in thrusting his hat over the skunk; but the next instant he started back convulsively.

"Be *Jasus*! what is the matter with the baste?" exclaimed the indignant Irishman. "Patheer! Pather!" But Peter was in no condition to respond; and when Tom gazed round in search of the negro, he saw him rolling upon the earth, and making the forest echo with peal upon peal of the most boisterous merriment. The evolutions of the African partook of

all the characteristic extravagance of his race. At one moment he rested his weight upon his head, and dangled his feet in the air, and anon he rolled over and over again, ending in a somerset, while each moment he gave utterance to yells of delight.

"If that hathenish imp of the divil has not been playing a trick upon me!" exclaimed the enraged son of the Emerald Isle, as he rushed towards him, with the evident intention of inflicting personal chastisement. But aware of his danger, Peter started with all speed for the encampment, making the woods ring with laughter as he ran.

Hard upon his footsteps followed Tom, uttering imprecations as he went.

"I'll tach yez to thrifle with the falings of a gintleman, you black-ball—you spalpeen—you imp of darkness! Tell me again, will yez, to saze a crather whose brath is offensive to the nostrils!"

Thus the pursued and the pursuer entered the encampment, panting with fatigue, the negro still convulsed with merriment, and Tom overcome with passion.

"How is this, my men?" said Clifton; "wherefore this haste?"

"Hallo! Master Tom!" interrupted the Kentuckian. "You will keep the length of the peace-maker from me, if it is jist the same to you, until you git the parfume of the skunk from them clothes of yourn."

"Is it a *skunk* yez call him? Thin, by me sowl, it's a d—d uncivil way he has of his own. Sure, I was only trying to capture the divil in a quiet way, because Pather—bad luck to him—towld me Mr. Edward would be plased to tame the baste. And so, you seez, I put me hat gintly over him, whin all at once I felt sich a smell! But sorry a bit of comfort do I git from ony of yez. It may be mighty amusing to the rest, but I am afther thinking, if old Ireland's blessed saint had paid a visit to Ameriky, for the especial benefit of this same filthy animal, he would have desared the thanks of all true Irishmen. Holy Virgin! how the scent sticks to me."

It was fortunate for Sheridan that Kelborn's wounds were sufficiently severe to detain the party for several days at the island; thus giving him an opportunity of burying his clothes, until the scent could be partially removed.

"I'll forgive yez this onst, Pather, for the murdering insult yez put on me, but upon me sowl, I'll saze the earliest opportunity to cancel obligations."

"Werry well, Tom, you may make the most you can out of Pete, onny you must conduct the warfaré like a gemblem."

Several days after this challenge had been tendered and accepted, Peter was suffering with the toothache, and Tom informed him that he had been much afflicted in that way, but at last had found relief by chewing wild turnip; and pulling a piece from his pocket, he tendered it to the black. Without hesitation, Peter put the turnip in his mouth and commenced chewing it; but the next moment he exclaimed:

"Gor a massa, Tom! you have poisoned me!" A person affected with St. Vitus' dance never performed a greater number of evolutions than did the African; and at last, dashing for the river, he plunged his mouth into the water. This only added to his torture, and tears of agony coursed down his ebony cheeks, while Tom was giving vent to derisive laughter.

"Yez will urge a gentleman to capture a skunk, will yez, and play a trick on a Christian white man? Arrah! that'll ba the last prank yez 'ill play on Tom, I'll ba bound."

In a few weeks Duncan's wounds were sufficiently healed to enable him to mount his horse again, and the party resumed their progress towards the Falls of St. Anthony.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"Then the knife,—sharp let it be,—  
That from the foe's crown,  
Quick, with dexterous cuts but three,  
Skin and tuft brought down."  
SCHILLER.

PROCEEDING westward for two days, they had penetrated far into the interior of the wilderness. The surface of the land was undulating, and the soil exceedingly rich. The half-developed leaves gave the oak and hickory the appearance of being clothed in a demi toilette, and the air was perfumed by the blossoms which covered the trees. As far as the eye could penetrate the forest, it presented the appearance of a vast bouquet.

They had been traversing a plain for several miles, which, but for a few stunted trees here and there, would have been denominated a prairie. Diverging from the opening, they ascended a ridge that overlooked a stream upon their left. Suddenly their progress was arrested by a

war-whoop which issued from the dense thicket that bordered the river, and echoed through the woods. They listened anxiously for a minute, and then all eyes were turned upon the Kentuckian for an explanation. He uttered not a word, however, until the solitudes were again disturbed with the startling whoop.

"What does it mean, Blount?" inquired Kelborn.

"It would not be onaccountably strange," replied the forester, "if them bloodthirsty Chippewas wer practysing ther cruelties upon some misfortunate In-gin whose scalp they have sarcumented."

"Shall we not interfere," eagerly asked the other, "for the purpose of saving a human being from torture?"

"That mought be a dangerous business," observed Blount.

"The Ojibwas have dug up the hatchet, and are now on the war path," said Clifton; "at least, so I heard at the lake."

"And yet," continued the Kentuckian, musingly, and apparently not heeding the remark of the last speaker, "and yet I have often received sarvice from the Dacotahs, when even peacemaker could not save me. And if it should prove that the Panther had fallen into the hands of the risky devils! Ah! now I remember me, the lad observed he wer agoin' to visit these hunting-grounds this moon. I tells you what," continued he, with great earnestness, "I summit blieve the Ojibwas are now actively employed in infliction of justice; after the manner of red-skins, upon a young Dacotah chief, who once saved my scalp when it had been conkered by the Chippewas. If you are not afeared to take part in a risky scrimmage, we'll rescue the lad from their clutches."

"Agreed!" cried the two young men simultaneously; "we will aid you with pleasure."

"Egad! Clifton," continued Kelborn, "this looks like an adventure worth making a note of. I say, Blount, what shall we do? You are our captain in this affair, a position to which you are entitled from your experience in fighting Indians."

"I will not deny that I have had some practyse in that way," modestly responded the forester, "and the first order I must give is to presarve silence, or we may have the yelling varmint about us afore we are ready to receive 'em."

The Kentuckian now issued his orders, with all the dignity of a Brigadier. Tom and Peter were directed to lead the cavalry down the hill, in an opposite direction to the one from whence the war-whoop was

heard, and to conceal them in the thicket at its base. He then requested Edward and Kelborn to follow him, and the three hunters cautiously descended into the valley. After proceeding one-fourth of a mile along the border of the stream, and each moment hearing with more distinctness the tumult which prevailed in the encampment, they paused in the cover which a thicket afforded them, for the purpose of reconnoitering. Our adventurers now ascertained that the war-whoop had been uttered, as Blount supposed, by a party of eight Ojibwas, who were actually putting to the torture, a young chief who was clad in the panoply of a Dacotah. The prisoner was bound to a tree, and his tormentors were hurling at his head the national weapon of the Indian warrior. The countenance of the victim was calm, save when a contemptuous smile crossed his features, as a tomahawk pierced the bark of the tree some distance from his head. The precision with which one chief threw the fatal weapon, elicited shouts of approbation from the band. He was a tall and powerful savage, and each time he swung the glittering axe around his head, and hurled it from his brawny hand, it cut through the bark far into the oak, within half an inch of the Dacotah's temple. Having tested the bravery of the young chief, they piled up the wood which had been gathered for the purpose of subjecting his nerves to the dread ordeal of fire. The smoke curled through the leaves, at first black and dense, and then assuming a bluish tint, it revealed the blaze as it darted its fiery tongue along the dry branches. The Chippewas joined in the war-dance around the helpless prisoner, and as the fire flashed upwards with every blast of wind, they made the arches of the forest ring with their hellish laughter.

As our adventurers were in the act of discharging their rifles at the Ojibwas, the thicket was parted, and the graceful form of an Indian girl darted to the side of the Dacotah.

"Save him, oh save him!" she exclaimed, in the soft dialect of the tribe.

"Tis the Fawn, the affianced bride of Panther," whispered Blount.

The girl was thrust aside, and the war-dance continued.

"We must act at once," said Kelborn, "if we would save the youth from a terrible doom."

"It is a risky undertaking," replied Blount; "but it must be ventured. We must fire at once, and then close."

The word was given, and simultaneously

the three rifles were discharged, and before the echo died away, the hunters rushed upon the startled foe. Edward and Kelborn had each killed his man, while the ball from Blount's rifle had disabled two. Still they were opposed by four stalwart savages, who, recovering from their momentary alarm, and discovering that they still outnumbered their assailants, brandished their tomahawks, and uttering the war-whoop, advanced fiercely to the charge. In the mean time the flames were wreathing their fiery tongues around the form of the captive, and would have soon terminated his mortal career, had not the Fawn, seeing his perilous situation, darted forward, and with a knife which she took from her girdle, severed the cord which bound the young chief to the tree. The prisoner, snatching the weapon from her hand, sprung to the assistance of his deliverers. His presence was by no means inopportune. Blount and Kelborn were each engaged in a deadly conflict with a savage, while Edward was warding off with all the skill he possessed, the fierce attacks of two Chippewas. Uttering the war-cry of the Dacotahs, he advanced to the relief of the latter, and in a moment the combatants were equally divided.

Blount, long accustomed to Indian warfare, was the most formidable of the foes. Protecting himself from the rapid strokes of the tomahawk with his rifle, he wielded his ponderous battle-axe with such effect that the savage soon fell lifeless at his feet. Kelborn had not been so fortunate; the warrior whom he had encountered was of a gigantic frame. The Indian hurled his tomahawk, which grazed Kelborn's cheek. Poising his bowie-knife between his thumb and finger, a method of attack which practice had rendered skilful, he darted it full at the heart of the Chippewa. The savage was prepared, and leaped aside, the weapon struck a tree, and quivering there for a moment, it fell to the earth.

Uttering a yell of triumph, the Indian drew a knife from his belt and sprang upon his victim. The latter, aware of his perilous situation, immediately closed with his antagonist. Seizing the uplifted arm of his foe, they glared at each other with looks of ferocity. The pause was but for a moment, when each exerted his vast strength for the purpose of acquiring the mastery. Kelborn soon discovered that the muscles of the savage were too powerful to be long resisted? Before, however, he was entirely overcome, he saw the Indian girl spring eagerly for-



ward, and seizing his bowie-knife, quicker than thought she placed the hilt in his grasp. Scarcely had his hand clutched the trusty weapon, when he saw Tom Sheridan coming to the rescue, flourishing his favourite shillalah.

"Be the powers! I'll teach yez the virtues of this darlint bit of wood. Take that, and that," and each time the solid hickory descended with crushing effect upon the naked head of the savage, with whom Kelborn was contending.

"Whoop!" yelled the Irishman as he leaped into the air, and struck his heels twice together, "yez burn people, do yez? And is it the likes of ye that'll lay your black hands on a gentleman! Tom Sheridan will tache you better manners." The rescue was timely, for Clifton found himself opposed to a powerful savage, whose strength was greater than his own. Warding off his blows, he was yet borne back, and the chief grasping him by the throat, was in the act of driving his knife to the heart of his foe, when the Irishman, with another flourish of his shillalah struck the warrior a tremendous blow across the shoulders. Startled by an assault so unusual, the chief turned upon his new assailant.

"Come on, you spalpeen! here's the lad will be afther trimming your hide for yez; you son of darkness!" The chief gazed for an instant with evident disgust, upon his vivacious opponent, and then ejaculating the word "Hugh!" he attempted to drive his tomahawk into Sheridan's brain. But while the weapon was still in the air, the shillalah fell with such force, upon his arm that it dropped powerless at his side, and uttering an involuntary cry of pain, he turned to fly; but the Irishman was upon his footsteps, and before he could gain the shelter of the thicket, the hickory descended thrice upon the side of his head with such power, that the savage staggered like a drunken man, and the blood started from his severed ear.

"Lay your hand on a gentleman, will yez? A paddy will learn you better manners than that same!" Tom attempted to renew the assault, but was balked; in his eagerness to overtake the fugitive, he stumbled over the trunk of a fallen tree, and before he could regain his feet, the warrior had disappeared in the forest.

"Bad luck to you, you prevented me from surrounding the devil!"

The rest of the Chippewas were now hors de combat, the Dacotah having triumphed over his antagonist. The young chief returned thanks in the language of

the Dacotahs, which was known to the Kentuckian.

"Never mention it, lad. It is no more, arter all, than you have done for me afore now. As for my companions here, I believe they were anxious for a scrimmage any way; besides, I owe these varmints a grudge."

It was now mid-day, and returning to the spot where the horses had been concealed; the saddles were taken from them, and they were suffered to feed upon the grass, which covered the earth.

"How came you in the tiles of the Ojibwas, Panther?"

"Me hunt wid my party when dey make prisoner of Fawn, and me try to take her, when dey catch me too."

"You are not the first man who has got himself into a scrape by bein a leetle too fond of the fair sex," responded the forester; "but whar is the rest of your party?"

"Ober de river."

The conversation was interrupted by the noiseless approach of an Indian chief, from whose scanty attire the water still dripped. His chest heaved with quick respiration, proving that his progress had been rapid. The Panther cast an inquiring glance at the runner, but said nothing for a minute. At length he asked, in the dialect of his nation, what was the cause of his appearance.

"The cowardly Chippewas are upon our trail!"

"Their bodies are food for crows."

"No, they lie hid upon the other shore; they count so many," and he raised the thumbs and fingers of both hands twice.

"Where are our men concealed?"

"At the foot of yonder pine."

"How many scalps do we number?"

"So," and he raised the fingers and thumbs of both hands.

"The odds are too great: let me speak with the white chief," and he related the condition of the two parties to Blount, who had at that moment rejoined them. The forester listened attentively to the earnest language of the Dacotah, and after he concluded, he reflected for a moment, and then said: "I'll ask them. Do you see," continued he, addressing Clifton and Kelborn, "a party of rumpageous Ojibwas are outlaying yonder, for the purpose of circumventing the scalps of my friends, the Dacotahs. Shall we join the latter?"

"What think you, Edward? War exists between the United States and these Chippewas; will it be any harm to take a benefit on our own hook?"

"I suppose we may assist the Dacotahs,

who are at peace with our government, to defend themselves!"

"Whoop! spoken like a gallant gintleman, as ye are," exclaimed the Irishman, as he flourished his shillalah. "Pather, what do yez think of that, you ace of spades?" The two chiefs looked surprised at this outburst, and turning their eyes upon the person addressed by Sheridan, they recoiled a step, and uttered the customary exclamation "Hugh!"

"No wonder these half-clothed gintlemen are surprised with the likes of yez, Pather. They might be afther travelling a long time widout seeing sich a rum countenance. Wy didn't you take off yez hat to the chafes, and give them the binifit of seeing yez woolly head? Come up, man, and make your obasence."

The Indians surveyed the African in utter amazement, and it was several minutes before they could withdraw their eyes from his ebony face.

"Didn't I tell ye, Pather, that yez was born to create a sinsation?"

In the mean time it was decided that the horses should remain under the charge of Peter, and the rest of the party should cross the river. As they advanced towards the banks of the stream, they passed the scene of their recent encounter, and Clifton's blood curdled with horror, as he saw that three of the bodies were headless. He had no opportunity of demanding an explanation, as they were swiftly and in silence approaching the river. The Panther led them a short distance along the bank where an oak had fallen over the stream. As they entered the thicket, they were surrounded by a band of twenty Ojibwas, who, uttering the fearful war-whoop, sprang upon the little band. Success against such odds was hopeless, and the Kentuckian shouted, "Force a passage through the varmints!" All but Kelborn and Tom succeeded; the former was overpowered and bound by two savages; while the Irishman in attempting to defend himself with his shillalah, received a blow on the head with a tomahawk, which prostrated him to the earth.

"Quarter! enough!" shouted Tom, as the chief whom he had treated so roughly in the last encounter seized him by the hair, and drawing his knife, prepared to relieve him of his scalp. "Bad luck to yez, don't I tell ye I am satisfied?" The exasperated warrior drew the sharp blade half way around the head of his prisoner, when Sheridan sprang suddenly to his feet and exclaimed passionately, "And this is the game ye'll be after playing! strike

an inimy when he is down and cries enough! Let that tache you the customs of the ring," and he struck the Indian in the face with such violence, that he fell heavily to the earth, and before he could regain his feet, the shillalah descended upon his head, crushing through his skull far into the brain. In a moment he was again overcome, and his arms were lashed to his side. His prowess had elicited respect, and some healing leaves were applied to the wound upon his head, which was bleeding profusely; after which, it was bound with admirable skill.

"These Indians are not so bad, after all, Master Kelborn, barrin the tightness of their withs."

"You do not know them, Pat! We are probably spared now, to be tortured hereafter."

"Tortured! what does that mane?"

"I mean that we shall be burned, unless our companions rescue us."

"They surely would not be so ungentlemanly as to do that same."

"Oh, they are ingenious in the art of torturing."

Before Tom could reply to this comfortable assurance, a stalwart savage commanded silence.

The shades of night now overspread the earth, and the vigilance of the two bands was awakened to prevent a surprise. They were only separated by a belt of hemlock and cedar, which bordered the stream. The Chippewas changed their position, by receding a short distance from the bank, while the Dacotahs entered a dense thicket but a few rods from the river, indicated by the runner as the spot where the warriors were concealed. Sentinels were stationed by both parties, and the remainder threw themselves upon the earth, with their rifles resting upon their arms. The wind sighed mournfully through the branches of the pine. Thin, white clouds obscured the dim starlight, and inky darkness settled upon the forest. Duncan Kelborn lay in the midst of his enemies, with his arms slightly bound. Apparently his captors trusted to their sleepless vigils to prevent his escape or rescue. As the shadows of night stole through the dark evergreens, he reflected upon the chances of escaping. The Irishman was reclining by his side, with his arms also slightly bound, and Duncan, in a whisper, communicated his intentions to Sheridan. As it was necessary to postpone this movement until sleep had overpowered the faculties of the Ojibwas, they rested as well as they could in their con-

finer positions. The prospect of Indian tortures kept them both awake until long after midnight, when the forms around them presented that relaxed appearance which indicates deep slumber. The clouds had disappeared, and the light of a waning moon shed its soft beams through the interstices of the forest. With great difficulty Tom drew a knife from his pocket, and turning upon his side cut the thongs which bound Kelborn's arms, when the latter performed the same kind office for his liberator. Cautiously rising to their feet they ascertained that they were entirely surrounded by the dusky forms of the savages. Slowly advancing along the way which appeared least encumbered with underbrush, Duncan found himself standing by the body of a powerful Chippewa, whose sleep was disturbed by the breaking of a twig beneath the prisoner's feet. The savage turned upon his side, and for a moment Kelborn saw his dull, heavy eyes gazing into the gloom, with the uncertain look of half-awakened consciousness. But his eyes closed, and the fugitives, stepping over his body, vanished amid the evergreens. Duncan was at a loss what course to pursue. At the time their party was attacked he knew the Dakotahs were concealed at the foot of the pine, but he was ignorant of the direction it was necessary to take in order to join them. Their progress was necessarily slow, for they were still within the lines of the Ojibwa sentinels. Advancing then, through the copse of cedar and hemlock, their progress was arrested by the headless form of an Indian warrior, which lay in their path. A shudder ran through Duncan's frame as he looked upon the mutilated body of the dead. "What violence has provoked this terrible retribution?" were thoughts that crowded upon his mind, as his eyes glanced at the war-paint of the Chippewas. Passing by the cold and no longer suffering clay, they continued to retreat, when Duncan was startled by a heavy hand laid upon his shoulder. Looking up, he saw the countenance of the Kentuckian.

"And so you gave them the slip, did ye?" he whispered; "that was particularly well done. We have need of all our weapons, so thank fortin for't."

"Do you intend to attack the Ojibwas?"

"Sartin."

"Where is Clifton?"

"He is on the other side, with the Panther."

"And at a given signal you assail them at the same time?"

"Exactly; so now let us proceed."

Duncan retraced his steps, and again passed the stiffened form of the Chippewa. Blount, surrounded by Kelborn, Tom, and half-a-dozen savages, now stood within five yards of their slumbering foes.

In the mean time, Edward and the young chief of the band, by a circuitous route, approached the Ojibwas from the opposite direction. As they were silently threading their way through the thick underwood, Clifton placed his foot upon a substance which yielded to the pressure. Looking down, he saw the headless body of a Chippewa.

"Great God! what can this mean, Panther?"

The chief surveyed the fearful object with a cold and impassive glance, and shaking his head in doubt, passed onwards. After proceeding several rods further, the Panther's flexible form seemed rooted to the spot, as he glowered upon his unconscious enemies. The light of the moon pierced through the leaves, and fell upon the countenance of a Chippewa. Edward thought how calmly he slept when surrounded by such peril. Before he had withdrawn his glance he saw the rolling eyes of the savage searching the recesses of the forest. His nostrils were dilated, while the rigid muscles and quivering form denoted the most absorbing attention. Edward was in the act of directing the eyes of the Panther to the Chippewa, when the chirping of a squirrel was borne upon the night-air. The attention of Clifton had not been withdrawn from the Ojibwa. No sooner had the signal been given which brought a dozen rifles to the shoulders of the Dakotahs, than the Chippewa sprang to his feet and uttered a yell which made the arches of the forest ring with its appalling fierceness. In a moment the camp was in the wildest commotion. The Ojibwas, aroused from their sleep, seized their weapons, but, in the act of flying, they were met by a close and destructive fire from the Kentuckian and his companions. Wheeling on the instant, they turned to the left, when a flame bursting from the rifles of Panther and the rest of the band, scattered them in wild disorder. Each one attempted, separately, to break through the ambushment. Among the foremost in the pursuit, Clifton observed the tall and powerful form of the Kentuckian. Following upon his footsteps, he saw him engaged in a conflict with a gigantic Chippewa. The struggle was short and fierce, when the battle-axe of Blount descended upon the head of his foe, crush-

ing through skull and brain to the chin of the grim warrior.

The conflict was now only indicated by the occasional discharge of a rifle, and Edward was preparing to return to the pine, which he saw towering half a mile to his right, when he observed the thicket in front was furiously agitated. Muttered curses and the suppressed yell of an Indian indicated that the struggle was between a white man and a savage.

Advancing to the assistance of the former, he had not succeeded in parting the dense foliage, when he heard the concussion of a heavy body with the earth, and then a blow, succeeded by a sound like the dropping of rain. Retreating footfalls mingled with the convulsive throbs of the dying, reached his ears, and in a moment Edward stood by the body of a savage. His blood curdled with horror as he discovered that the head was severed from the trunk, and the blood was gushing from the quivering frame. The limbs contracted, the hands grasped a sapling in the violence of mortal agony, and when the suffering flesh rolled over, the limbs straightened, and the body became motionless.

"Who can thus mutilate the body of an enemy?" groaned Edward, as he gazed upon the cold, breathless form of the dead. "I will no longer assist those who can be guilty of such atrocity." Retracing his footsteps, he thought he saw the form of Blount gliding through the trees. The figure paused; an axe gleamed in the light of the moon, and then descended with a dull, heavy sound upon the earth. The next instant a round substance came whirling through the air, and falling at Clifton's feet, disclosed the hideous countenance of an Indian warrior, with the ghastly seal of death stamped upon it.

"Monster!" shouted the excited young man, "you deserve death yourself!" and Clifton raised his rifle until it covered the form of the Kentuckian. Not a muscle of the forester trembled, as he replied:

"Young man, you had best hear the provocation afore you pass judgment."

The weapon descended, and Blount, advancing, laid his hand upon Edward's shoulder and said, with a slow, but solemn enunciation, and in language of the purest Saxon.

"Come, sit you down upon this log, while I recount to you a tale of violence and blood. Years ago, my father, inspired with religious zeal, determined to disclose the truths of the Bible to the heathen. My mother, a pious Christian herself, resolved to accompany him, and as she

would not be separated from me, we all three started for the hunting grounds of the Chippewas. I was then fifteen years old. While my father was labouring with religious fervour in the cause of the tribe, my mother prepared the provisions, which I brought to the cabin. She instructed the females in the art of cooking, and taught them the blessings of Divine truth. We were thus leading a happy and useful life, when, returning one day, loaded with game, to supply our humble table, I saw the headless corpse of my mother upon the floor, with her hair dabbled in the blood." The respiration of the Kentuckian became difficult; he grasped at his throat, and for a moment his form shook as with the throes of dissolution. In a short time, however, the scalding tears poured down his cheeks, and his head fell upon his bosom.

"The dastardly Ojibwas committed the deed," continued the Kentuckian. "I swore upon the Bible which my mother so much prized, that one hundred headless savages should avenge her death. I learned from the weeping females who mourned her loss, that two warriors entered our cabin, maddened with fire-water, and when that dear mother said she could not supply them with more liquor, they brutally murdered her. In ten minutes I was upon their footsteps. They had retreated far into the forest, where at length, overcome with liquor, they sunk upon the earth in a state of stupefaction. In five minutes they were both bound and gagged. I was in no haste, for I had determined to postpone my vengeance until they were sober. At length their dull, heavy eyes began to observe my movements. I was piling around their forms, heaps of brush and logs. Upon reflection, I resolved to immolate them separately. One, the most demoniacal, I reserved as a witness of the other's sufferings. Dragging him to one side by the scalp-lock, I slightly elevated him against a log, so that he might have a full view of the sacrifice. By the time I had arranged the wood for the torch, the effects of the liquor had disappeared. They knew there was no hope of mercy, for they recognised me as the son of their victim. Their countenances turned a shade lighter as the blood retreated to their hearts; their spirits were not aroused by the war-dance and the torture; their lips quivered and their eyeballs glared. The small blaze expanded, and the smoke curled upwards, as the fiery element eat up the dry timber. I had taken the precaution to lash the savage to the roots of a

tree, and escape was hopeless. The flame stole along the quivering flesh, as the skin crisped and cracked beneath its fury. The terrible agony forced large drops of sweat from the forehead of the murderer, but the fire which now mounted to his breast, dried them up. The blood trickled from his cheeks, and one eye started from its socket. The dry piece of wood with which I had gagged him, now caught fire, and as the flame curled along its surface the lips were consumed, and the mouth presented the ghastly appearance of a skeleton. He was dead. The other savage was burnt in the same way, and then, overcome by the horrors of the scene, I fell senseless to the earth. When I recovered, the moon was shedding her rays upon the blackened corpses of the dead."

"Since that hour eighty Chippewas have fallen by my hand. When I have slain one hundred, my vengeance will be satisfied. Not till then. But see, daylight has returned, and the band are mustering with fresh scalps at their girdles."

## CHAPTER XVII.

"We have scotched the snake, not killed it."  
SHAKESPEARE.

"If a man do not erect, in this age, his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument, than the bell rings, and the widow weeps."  
SHAKESPEARE.

It was in the spring of 183— that Edward commenced the study of law, in one of the slave-holding States. He entered the office of a lawyer, who resided in a small provincial town. Bending all his energies to the task, he suffered nothing to divert his attention from it, until nearly the close of his probation, when he was invited to attend a caucus of the Democratic party. The question was argued whether Col. Johnson or Gov. Polk, ought to be nominated for the Vice-Presidency. The debate had been prolonged, as Edward thought, rather unnecessarily, when he rose to address the meeting. It was his first attempt, and his embarrassment was by no means diminished, when he discovered that all eyes were bent upon him. Murmuring voices were hushed, and profound silence pervaded the room. At first he stammered, but gradually recovering his self-possession, he expressed his opinions with a precision and fire, which elicited

the approbation of his auditors. After rapidly reviewing the political field, he reverted to the impolicy of striking from the ticket, the war-worn soldier, who had been elected to the Vice-Presidency in 1836. "If," pursued he, "you are resolved to support the present chief magistrate for re-election, what reason can you assign for dropping the name of Col. Johnson? If he is as worthy now as he was in 1836, will it not be a fatal, nay, *dishonourable* departure from the policy of the Democratic party, which rewards fidelity instead of betraying it? As for the Governor of Tennessee," continued the animated speaker, "he is a candidate for re-election in 1841; and whatever may be the political distinctions which hereafter are to be conferred upon him, let him first, *effectually* revolutionize the State, and when the principles of the Democratic party are thoroughly re-established, and a shout of triumph is raised throughout the hills and valleys of Tennessee, then reward Col. Polk." As the youthful speaker sat down, the applause was general and enthusiastic, and he heard murmuring inquiries of "Who is he?" "Whoever he may be, he expresses the correct view of the subject," and the capous so decided.

A week had scarcely elapsed before a committee waited upon him, for the purpose of obtaining his consent to address a mass meeting of the democracy of the county, which was to assemble in two weeks. Clifton, with much diffidence, accepted the invitation.

The society in the village was not by any means the most moral. I speak, of course, of that portion composed of males. Many of the most prominent citizens were devoted to hunting, fishing, gaming, and the most reckless and desperate amusements, and so far as they were concerned, Sunday afforded no barrier to their orgies. The leader of the band, Col. Fenton, had taken offence because Edward failed to accept an invitation to join it. The polite and dignified bearing of our hero had, thus far, however, prevented a collision. The event could not long be postponed, when Fenton was determined to produce a rupture.

The head quarters of himself and followers, who numbered about a dozen, was wherever they chose to assemble, and consequently few hotels or counting-rooms in the village were exempted from their weekly forays.

Edward had hitherto managed to avoid them, but a few days previous to the mass meeting, having occasion to examine some

political work, he entered the law office of one of his friends. He had closed the door and advanced into the room, when he discovered that it was already occupied by Fenton, and a portion of his satellites. Bowing courteously, he advanced to the book-case, and sought for the volume. "Yes," said Fenton, in a loud, imperious tone, "I cannot admire that modesty which will permit a beardless youth, and a stranger, to attempt the instruction of older and better-informed men than himself." A profound silence followed this declaration. Clifton, aware that a personal collision might ensue, was bent upon placing his adversary clearly in the wrong.

"I told you he could not be kicked into a fight!" audibly remarked a bully.

"Ay, 'tis evident he will show the white feather."

"To render my meaning perfectly apparent," resumed Fenton, with an insufferable tone and manner, "I will express it as my opinion that a Northern man, especially a *white-livered* one, like the individual who is now honouring us with his presence, is the last person who should possess sufficient audacity, to lecture well-informed and sensible men."

Edward had gradually faced the speaker, and, folding his arms across his chest, while the blood mounted to his cheek, and a glance of withering contempt shot across his features, he replied slowly and distinctly. "I possess neither the audacity, nor the mendacity, of the black-guard who has just addressed me. Nay, start not; you have sought a quarrel, and you shall now witness the end of it. It is he alone who deserves the appellation of *white-livered*, who, desirous of insulting an unoffending stranger, does not possess sufficient courage to do it, until he is surrounded by his minions, and then coward-like, he commits the outrage."

"Hell and furies!" exclaimed Fenton, stung to madness by the taunts of Clifton, "you leave not this room, until you have expiated this insult." And he flung himself against the door.

Clifton's eyes flashed intolerable fire as he exclaimed, "Fool and dotard!" Laying his powerful grasp upon Fenton's head, he clasped his hair, and twirling him suddenly round, with the other hand he seized his pantaloons, and dashing him headlong over the stove, he fell heavily beneath the desk, where he lay stunned and motionless. Fenton's comrades sprang to their feet, and loudly exclaimed, "Knock him down! trample upon him!" but as Edward seized a billet of wood, and held it aloft,

no one dared to attack him, and the uproar soon ceased.

"Now then," said he, in a loud, authoritative voice, "remove the carcass of that vagabond and when either of you are disposed wantonly to assail one who has never wronged you, invite me to be present; I will agree, in advance, to accept that invitation;" and turning upon his heel, he left the office.

The spirit of Fenton was effectually subdued. Whenever he was disposed to assume a domineering manner, it was only necessary to refer to his encounter with the "Northerner," and he was silenced. His followers, no longer held together by their leader, disbanded, Fenton disappeared, and the peaceful inhabitants of Sherwood, were no longer disturbed by their carousals.

The day for the meeting of the democracy at length arrived. At an early hour the streets were thronged with equestrians, footmen, and carriages, and at 12 o'clock, more than a thousand persons had congregated from the country. As our hero saw them pouring into the town, along every road which led to it, his feelings were agitated, and he was affected by that nervous excitement, which even the most accomplished orators can never evade. The court-house bell pealed merrily, summoning the speaker and the audience to the place of rendezvous. To the former, each stroke seemed to fall upon his heart-strings. Rousing himself, however, he threaded the streets in the direction of the multitude, recognising, as he went, with his accustomed courtesy, those persons whom he knew, or returning the salutations of those who beheld in him the orator of the day, and the defender of their principles. Entering a clerk's office until the meeting was organized, he walked to and fro, under the influence of that restless excitement, which it is impossible to control. He was about to address a large and promiscuous audience, composed of both parties, for he had observed among the crowd, some intelligent and influential whigs. Those who had heard his speech in the caucus, had prepared others to expect a brilliant display, while his encounter with Fenton, had already made him somewhat celebrated. He was conscious of being thoroughly prepared upon political questions, still, if he should unfortunately "blunder at the start," it would have a fatal influence upon his future career.

These thoughts flashed across his mind, when the door was opened and he was summoned to "take the stump." As he

passed into the court-room, a friend whispered, "Can you go through with it?" "I'll try!" was the brief response; and passing through the avenue of human beings he ascended the tribune. The court-house was literally crowded; standing-room could not be obtained, and even the windows were filled.

The questions which divided the two parties at that time, have now become obsolete. The Compromise bill, was then gradually running through the descending scale, to the revenue standard, and it was left to a later day, to renew the angry discussion, which preceded the adoption of that "treaty of peace and amity." The suspension of the banks, in 1837, had caused pecuniary embarrassment throughout the Union, and was made the pretext for an attempt to re-charter the United States Bank. The Democratic party, adhering, even during a period of gloom and disaster, to a long-cherished principle, advocated a divorce of the government from banks, by the establishment of a constitutional treasury, or a "sub-treasury," as it was designated at that time. The question of the currency, therefore, was the theme which the exigency of the times made it necessary for Edward to discuss.

It is not our intention to give more than a brief synopsis of the speech, which gave our hero, at once, the reputation of an orator, and a profound and able reasoner.

Rapidly glancing at the condition of the country, and referring to the sensitiveness with which every individual regarded the convulsions that affected his pecuniary resources, he proceeded:

"But, gentlemen, it should not be forgotten with what facility we overlook, in the prosperity of to-day, the disasters of yesterday. The memory is treacherous, unless there is something tangible to control it. If we see a tree blasted by lightning, or a forest leveled by a tornado, our memory brings the event freshly to our minds, whenever the eye rests upon the shivered trunk, or upturned roots. In pecuniary affairs it is otherwise. We either say money was never so plenty before, or what is much more common, it was never so scarce. Our opponents trace the widespread disasters which cripple commerce and trade, and deprive agriculture of its due reward, to the non-existence of a National Bank. Now, would you for a moment suppose that still greater distress and embarrassment pervaded the whole country during the career of the last Bank of the United States?"

The speaker paused, and profound silence reigned throughout the room.

"Never!" thundered an excited whig. "I demand the proof."

Clifton cast a withering look upon the person who had interrupted him, and without removing his gaze, he proceeded:

"If the gentleman had preserved silence for a moment, he would have avoided an exposure of his ignorance, and want of breeding. As it is, he has not only betrayed both, but what is of far more importance to the argument, he has proved that the whole question hinges upon this one proposition. If more general distress and embarrassment prevailed throughout the Union while the last National Bank was in successful operation, than at the present moment, would it not be the height of folly to look to that institution again for relief?"

"Ay! ay!" was the unanimous response from the democracy, while the whigs were silent.

"Now to the proof. In 1824, Mr. Clay made a speech—a copy of which I now hold in my hand—upon the tariff, in which he drew a frightful picture of the ruin and disaster which pervaded the whole country, declaring that the products of the farmer "were rotting in the barns and barnyards for want of a market." Now will the gentleman inform me if anything approaching the frightful features in this picture can be painted at the present time? The late Bank of the United States went into operation in 1817, and a sufficient length of time had elapsed, when Mr. Clay made his speech, to enable that institution to produce the financial revolutions which were the foundation of its successful career. This proposition brings me to another branch of the question. The scarcity of money produced a depression in the price of all articles which were in the market for sale. This scarcity it was easy for the National Bank, with its gigantic power, to produce. The endorsement of the government had rendered its paper more valuable, because more convenient, than gold and silver. In many operations, therefore, specie, as well as the notes of local banks, were exchanged for the bills of the United States Bank, and a premium given therefor. The gold and silver were exported, and an additional premium obtained, while the local bank paper, when amassed in sufficient quantities, was presented for redemption, and the specie was either withdrawn, or the bank was broken. The inevitable result was the creation of a vacuum in the

money market, which was supplied by the notes of the National Bank. All that was necessary, then, to create a panic, was for the bank to decline the purchase of commercial paper, and to demand payments of its debtors. Stocks, merchandise, and agricultural productions, fell enormously, and then the agents of the Bank made investments at prices which ruined the seller. Paper was now freely discounted, money became plenty, prices had an upward tendency, and a handsome profit was made by the bank upon its investments."

This ingenious view of the subject was received by a shout of approbation.

"As for the sub-treasury," said the speaker, when he directed his attention to that subject, "it simply provides that government officers shall collect and disburse the public funds, by an arrangement similar to that which is in operation in this State. If defalcations occur, when a penal clause is inserted in the bill,—which is extremely doubtful—it will be no more than your own local treasury is liable to. Indeed, it is a risk which no man who employs the services of an agent can avoid. Nevertheless, it should not be supposed that the defalcations of Swartwout and Price, occurred under the operations of an independent treasury, such as the Democratic party would establish, but under the act of 1789, which does not inflict a penalty sufficiently severe upon the defaulter."

"Fairly and strongly put," exclaimed the crowd.

"No inconsiderable amount of political capital has been made by the specious charge that we advocate one kind of a currency for the people, and another for the government. It is a triumphant reply to this assertion, that we advocate the collection and disbursement of the public funds in gold and silver, the only constitutional currency of the country. If unwise legislators have created a depreciated and worthless circulation for the people, the sin should not be laid at our doors. We recommend a sound circulating medium for all, that one established by the Constitution of the United States. It is no fault of ours if the Whig party clings, with a fatal devotion, to those rotten institutions which inundate the country with a rag currency."

And again the multitude swayed to and fro, and loudly applauded the speaker as he descended from the stand. His friends gathered around him and warmly praised

his effort, and even strangers shook his hand with fervour.

As the crowd dispersed, Col. Warner observed to Dr. Dinmore:

"It was a masterly refutation of the charges made by our opponents."

"Ay, a splendid effort; that young man must be sustained, if he settles among us. By the way, did you see how puzzled the whig aspirant looked? Egad, he became purple, blue, red, and white, by turns."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

"Oh! if thou lovest,  
And art a woman, hide thy love from him  
Whom thou dost worship; never let him know  
How dear he is; flit like a bird before him—  
Lead him from tree to tree, from flower to flower;  
But be not won, or thou mightst, like that bird,  
When caught and caged, be left to pine neglected,  
And perish in forgetfulness."

LONDON.

CLIFTON, after a brief period of intense study, was admitted as a member of the bar, and commenced the practice of the law. There was only one lawyer besides himself in the small village where he opened an office, and his arrival, therefore, was an event of considerable importance.

The day following, several young ladies met at the house of Judge Douglass.

"What is the personal appearance of the stranger?" inquired Emily Davidson.

"Rather prepossessing," responded Margaret Fisher, "though his brow is somewhat stern and his bearing haughty."

"The impression he made upon me," interposed the beautiful and piquant Miss Douglass, "was, I must confess, favourable. Perhaps, however, my opinion was somewhat influenced by gratitude."

"How so?" exclaimed her vivacious companions, with much eagerness; "surely some romantic adventure must be the cause of those blushes which mantle your cheek?"

"Nay, it surely was an affair of but slight importance," responded the damsel; "he only prevented my horse from plunging off the precipice yesterday, as I was dashing along the bank of the river. Any gentleman would have performed the same act, you know; but this Mr. Clifton happened to be present, and witnessing my perilous situation, rushed for-



ward, and, I believe I must confess, saved my life at great hazard to himself."

It was quite apparent to her auditors that Helen Douglass was more deeply affected by the frightful danger she had encountered the previous day, than she dared to disclose, for her cheek blanched before she concluded.

The introduction of Edward to the small but select circle of Stamford occurred under favourable circumstances. He had rescued the daughter of Judge Douglass from imminent peril, if not from sudden death. The next morning that gentleman called upon him.

"I have not only presented myself," said the Judge, "for the purpose of welcoming to our village a gentleman and a stranger, but also to express the deep obligations I am under to you as the preserver of my daughter's existence."

Clifton, to whom anything approaching a scene was excessively disagreeable, replied: "It is scarcely worth a second thought; it was simply my good fortune to be approaching Stamford, when my attention was arrested by a shriek, and, spurring my steed forward, I had only to extend my hand to arrest the frightened horse that Miss Douglass was riding."

"The obligations which myself and Helen are under to you will nevertheless long be remembered."

Edward bowed, and changed the subject.

"You have a charming village," said he, "and located in what appears to me to be a rich and highly cultivated country."

"'Tis true that it is the seat of much wealth and refinement, and its proximity to the capital of the State makes it a delightful locality for a residence."

"I observed," said our hero, "on my way hither, that political questions are the all-absorbing themes at the present time among your citizens."

"The election between our candidates for Governor has been contested thus far with more than ordinary energy, as you have doubtless observed."

"The system in practice at the South," observed Clifton, "is, I think, far preferable to that which more generally prevails at the North. Nothing can be fairer than these public discussions. Not only the political principles of the aspirants are disclosed, but their character for consistency is open for investigation."

"Whether for better or for worse," responded the Judge, "stumping is now universally practised by candidates for all

offices, not even excepting those who are desirous of being elected constables."

As the Judge rose to depart, he extended the hospitalities of his house to Edward, who promised to accept the invitation at an early day.

A month had not elapsed before our young lawyer was surrounded with clients, and his career promised to open with more than ordinary brilliancy. Thus far he had merely received those who had called upon him. Among the number was young Dr. Fielding, a gentleman just arrived at majority, whose brilliant wit and frank manners made him a general favourite, and Col. Freeman, the young lawyer, who had long been a citizen of the place. Both these individuals had welcomed Edward to Stamford with much cordiality, and with each he soon became a favourite. Clifton was a democrat and Freeman was a whig, still they rarely engaged even in a good-natured discussion upon questions which, sooner than all others, makes the blood throb hotly in the veins.

"And so," gaily exclaimed Fielding, as he entered Edward's office, "we are to have a party at the manor, to commemorate your gallantry in rescuing the accomplished heiress of that house."

"Indeed; and who are to honour the occasion with their presence?"

"The assemblage will be small, but wonderfully select. Foremost, will be the lion of the night, Edward Clifton, Esq., Attorney at Law, and Solicitor in Chancery. Emy Davidson, Mag Fisher, and Cora Monroe, besides, an invitation has been sent to the peerless Virginia Drayton, who is the belle of the metropolis. So you will have no difficulty in discovering that the party will be one of no ordinary brilliancy."

"And how is a bashful gentleman like myself to encounter, without embarrassment, not to say without danger, such a formidable array of youth and beauty?"

"Oh, the thing is easily enough managed," responded his vivacious companion. "I have never known the most cold-blooded bachelor (which, by the way, you are not), brought into close contact with rustling silks, whether plain or flounced, cut high in the neck or *à la Pompadour* (though the latter is more effective), where there are sparkling eyes, pearly teeth, rosy cheeks, and crushing satins, without having his spirits elevated. And then the *glorious* polka," continued he, enthusiastically, "and extatic waltz, when engaged in a room which is

thronged; where the contact, and the crush, is like the pressure of the flower when its sweetness is inhaled."

"I discover," said Clifton, with a smile, "you are not exclusively devoted to the healing art."

"As much so," retorted the other, "as you will be to Blackstone, or Kent's Commentaries, before you have mingled one year with the impulsive and warm-hearted girls of the South. Why, man, you have been literally frozen by your Northern dames. By the gods, during the time I was attending lectures at Philadelphia, I forgot almost how to feel among those cold, cautious damsels, and my blood did not regain its healthy action until I had been at home a month. But adieu! We shall meet, as Col. Polk says, 'at Philippi.'"

Adjoining Edward's office, was a stately mansion; the grounds belonging to its proprietor were overlooked by the window at which our hero sat. Casting his eyes over them, they encountered the earnest, yet timid glance of a girl some thirteen years of age. Her large, black, lustrous orbs fell before his inquiring look, and turning hastily, she retraced her steps along the graveled and winding way. Before vanishing amid the shrubbery, she cast a furtive glance at the young lawyer, and beholding his eyes still fixed upon her, Ellen Foster, with a strange thrill at her heartstrings, entered the mansion.

## CHAPTER XIX.

"On with the dance; let joy be unconfin'd;  
No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet,  
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet."  
BYRON.

At nine o'clock the company had assembled, and the "manor" was brilliantly illuminated. Some forty ladies, and about an equal number of gentlemen, comprised the assembled guests. When Edward entered, the floor was filled with dancers. The blaze of light, the enlivening music, and the array of beauty, for a moment arrested our hero's footsteps. The attention of the host was, at the time, attracted in another direction, and as Clifton paused, somewhat embarrassed, a beautiful nymph, with large, dark brown eyes, and a cheek, where the lily and the rose softly blended, advanced gracefully from amidst the dancers, and frankly extending her hand, introduced herself as Miss

Douglass. Leading him forward, she presented him to her mother, who was warm in her thanks for the assistance he had rendered her only child.

In a few minutes he was waltzing with Emily Davidson, whose sprightly manners, and sarcastic replies, seemed to amuse him exceedingly.

"And you have really determined to settle; I believe, that is the phrase in this barbarous region."

"If barbarous, it has at least all the splendour of Eastern barbarism; at all events, there are houris here who would rival the choicest beauties in the Sultan's harem."

"Indeed; perhaps you would like to possess his prerogative for the purpose of making a selection from among us." The tone with which she uttered this reply, was gradually lowered towards its close, so that it did not reach his ears, and he could only divine its tenor, from the warm blush which immediately suffused her cheek, and stealing along her brow, dyed even her beautifully formed ears with its roseate hue.

"Nay," pursued Edward; "I have become a warm admirer of your men, since my brief sojourn in the State. There is a generous, frank, and chivalric trait in the Southern character, which cannot fail of winning our regard; at the same time, a prompt demand for satisfaction, when an insult is offered, commands our respect. Of the females, I am not prepared, in this presence, to avow what is the extent of my admiration."

"Why don't you say *adoration* at once?" rather pertly inquired the damsel; "doubtless, it will amount to that anon; but the waltz is over, so I will relieve you," and nodding archly, she glided away.

Our hero now surveyed the company. Nearly all present were strangers to him. The ladies were beautifully, nay, many of them, splendidly robed. Point lace and flashing diamonds, abounded. The dresses, as was then the fashion, were cut exceedingly low in the neck, and displayed to the untutored gaze, not only the rounded shoulder, but not unfrequently revealed glimpses of undulating bosoms, which rose and fell with the calm and steady respiration, or swelled with the restlessness of uncontrollable emotion.

Edward sought the hand of Helen Douglass for the next quadrille.

He soon ascertained that his partner, with her childlike simplicity and vivacity, possessed more than an ordinary share of mental acumen, and it was with a vague

and modified feeling of interest, that he parted from her as supper was announced. As the guests returned from the dining-room to the parlour, a lady of commanding presence and dazzling beauty, entered the room, leaning upon the arm of an elderly gentleman.

"My dear dear Virginia!" exclaimed Helen Douglass; "how glad I am to see you; but wherefore are you so late?"

"It was occasioned by unforeseen circumstances," replied Miss Drayton. "Our carriage broke down about two miles hence, and we were delayed for several hours. But, you see, I was determined to be a spectator of your amusements, at least; for I did not pause to change my apparel, and trust to our long friendship for a palliation of this"—

"Say no more," interrupted Miss Douglass, "you will always be welcome, however attired. But come, you must require food." And the two friends proceeded to the supper-room.

Dr. Fielding, who had briefly exchanged salutations with Miss Drayton, now joined Clifton.

"I am not prepared to say," observed this personage, "that you have passed, thus far, through this scene, unscathed; but if so, you are not free from danger, unless you follow the example of Joseph, and fly before Miss Virginia returns."

"I never desert my colours; at all events, not before they are assailed, and as you are likely to be found in the vanguard, I am safe until so valiant and adroit a combatant is subdued or overthrown."

"Thank you. But here they come," said Fielding; "and if you deign to observe so much, you cannot fail to discover that the eyes of the belle are dwelling upon your splendid face and manly proportions."

There was a grandeur in the bearing of Miss Drayton which could not fail of arresting attention. Her figure was above the medium height, and was indebted to that fact, perhaps, for an exemption from the charge of being inclined too much to embonpoint. Her skin was dazzlingly white, and her large, expressive blue eyes, either flashed with the excitement of conversation, or languidly fell beneath a too ardent gaze. Her hair was auburn, almost golden, and her teeth glittered between her ruby lips like pearls.

"Come, Clifton, I will present you. It is your fate, and I perceive she desires it."

Fielding and Miss Douglass joined the dancers, and Edward rewarded, with a

pleased smile, the attempt of Miss Drayton to fascinate him. Seating themselves upon an ottoman, which was quite too small for three persons, and too large for one, he listened to her soft and sweetly modulated voice. He soon perceived that she possessed the half-studied, and not wholly artless, manner of a finished coquette. The devotional glance at the ceiling, and the downcast eyes, which suffered the long, dark lashes to rest upon the cheek, were not less gracefully managed than the movement of the lips, or the curve of her swan-like neck.

"I am glad you are so fond of music and flowers," observed the lady. "I do not know which claims the most of my affection, and having nothing else to love, (and here those liquid orbs were timidly raised to his own, but were instantly concealed by their silken fringe,) I am all devotion."

"Twere a pity," replied the gentleman, "that your affections could not be won by a living, breathing mortal, who would appreciate and return that priceless regard which is now bestowed upon inanimate objects."

"Perhaps I have not yet encountered the fortunate person whom destiny has selected to make me happy," archly replied the lady.

"That appears almost incredible, when you are surrounded by the youth and chivalry of the South. Doubtless you desire to make still greater additions to the list of victims who have been overpowered by your charms."

"How can you be so sarcastic!" said the lady, piqued at the readiness with which he had weighed her character. "Surely you do not consider me so heartless and unjust? If so, it is hardly worth the labour to undeceive you. So, adieu!"

The colour mounted to her cheeks as she swept from him; but turning on the instant, she plucked a rose from the flowers which she held, and gently opening its leaves with lips that rivaled the richness of its colour, she attached it to his coat, as she remarked:

"Come and see me often, while I remain in Stamford; at least I can minister to your love for flowers and music."

Edward expressed his grateful acknowledgments.

"She is indeed a bewitching creature," said he, *sotto voce*, as she vanished in the throng.

The hour was waning towards midnight, and our hero made his exit. Returning to the office, he trimmed his lamp,

and for several hours pored over his law books with an intensity of application, which is rewarded with professional distinction, or an early tomb.

As he closed the volume, and threw his glance in the direction of the large mansion, the beams of the full moon fell upon the soft and childlike countenance of a maiden, as she leaned from the casement, and gazed in the direction of his office.

"And is she to be my guardian angel?"

## CHAPTER XX.

"The purple morning left her crimson bed,  
And donned her robes of pure vermilion hue;  
Her amber locks she crowned with roses red,  
In Eden's flowery garden gathered new."

TASSO.

"But see the fading, many-coloured woods,  
Shade deepening over shade, the country round."

THOMSON.

A FEW evenings after the party, Edward entered the office of Col. Freeman.

"You are welcome hither," said the latter, frankly. "This is an honour I have for some time expected. Take this rocking chair. I hope you will not think it too luxurious for a lawyer."

"Certainly not; our profession is sufficiently laborious, even when we avail ourselves of any convenience."

"Try a cigar; I can recommend them as the best Havana."

"Thank you." And they were soon inhaling the delicious aroma, with their feet elevated as high as their heads.

"Are you apprised of the fact," inquired Freeman, "that you were elected, last night, a member of our debating society, and selected to discuss, at the next meeting, the question whether conscience is an innate principle, implanted in the mind by the Almighty, or is formed and governed by education?"

"This is the first intimation I have had of it. And pray, which view of so grave a subject am I requested to advocate?"

"As it is assumed a lawyer can make the worse appear the better cause; you are expected to negative the divine interposition."

"I am not certain but that upon this side lies the truth," observed Clifton.

"Such being the case, you have been rightly appropriated, and we shall see with what success you can combat the religious prejudices of this community."

"Who compose the audience?"

"All who choose to be present."

"And who decides the question?"

"The audience."

"Do females attend?"

"Whenever the attraction is sufficiently powerful; and as you are to discuss the question, I have no doubt the village will assemble *en masse*."

"I am much obliged to you for the flattering assurance."

"Indeed, I heard several ladies, including the accomplished Mrs. Broughton, and the Misses Drayton, Douglass, and Davidson, observe last night, that they should listen to your maiden effort."

"I shall consider myself highly honoured."

"Intense study, without any recreation," remarked Freeman, after a pause, "is not only disagreeable, but unprofitable; suppose we form a party of ladies and gentlemen for a fishing excursion?"

"Whither?"

"Oh, to the Glen, to be sure. You have never been there? No; well, then, with your permission, we will pay the Glen a visit next Saturday. Sunday you can investigate the religious subject which you are to debate Monday night, without profaning the Sabbath."

"Well arranged; and I shall be at your command."

"According to the custom of the country, you must escort a lady, and as you are a stranger, it is but fair that you should have your choice. After you have made it, I will request the co-operation of several young men."

"With such privileges, it is delightful to dwell in strange lands, and I shall regret the hour when I am naturalized."

It was on a bright morning in the month of October, that a joyous assemblage of equestrians left the village of Stamford, on a fishing excursion to the Glen. The party consisted of a dozen ladies and gentlemen; among the number were the Misses whom Freeman had designated, together with Maj. Fisher, Cora Monroe, Clifton, Freeman, Fielding, and a bachelor—Maj. Harden—who escorted Mrs. Broughton.

The Doctor rode by the side of Miss Drayton, Edward had selected Miss Douglass, and the remainder were paired to suit themselves.

The sky was unclouded, and the rays of the sun glittered through the smoky atmosphere, and lighted upon the leaf as it fluttered to the ground, with that golden brightness peculiar to a Southern autumn.

The gentle air scarcely rustled the varie-

gated foliage which yet remained upon the trees, while it wafted gratefully towards the pleasure-seekers, the balmy fragrance with which the forest was perfumed. The silence was profound, save when broken by the chattering of the squirrel, the whirr of the partridge, or the merry laughter of the equestrians. The Glen is a sheet of water, about six miles from the village. It is four miles in circumference, and surrounded by lofty hills. In the centre of the lake is an island containing some three acres of land, covered with forest trees. The surface of this island is diversified with hill and dale, and from a rocky portion of it a spring of cold and delicious water bursts forth, and winding along a miniature valley, mingles with the larger volume of the lake. The road for the last three miles wound along the acclivity of the mountain, and passing through a gorge, led to the margin of the lake. The pathway was scarcely wide enough for two horses to walk abreast; still, the steeds which the ladies bestrode might stumble; and besides, it was excessively awkward conversing so far apart. Clifton and his companion rode in the rear.

"Before I presume to take a position beside you, in this narrow way," said he, "I must beg you to direct me which side I am to ride? You know that is a debatable question."

"If debatable, are you not at liberty to take either side?" said the maiden, archly.

"Certainly, unless I am prohibited from taking my choice by a *retainer*."

"I do not perceive that there is any one to detain you," replied the lady, as she turned her laughing eyes along the path which they had just traversed.

"I regret that I gave you a choice of position," as soon as her cavalier was riding at her left, "this road is so very narrow; however, we are at the termination of our journey." And the party congregated upon the shore of the lake.

"Ah ha, Mr. Clifton! do you know you have committed an error in riding at the left side of Miss Douglass?" said Miss Drayton.

"That is a debatable question," said Mrs. Broughton (Helen Douglass looked at Edward and smiled), "and the opinion now prevails that a gentleman is in a position to render more instantaneous and effectual aid, by riding upon her left."

"There is this decided disadvantage," replied Miss Drayton, "in riding upon that side, if the road is narrow, as I am sure Helen must have found it"—and she

glanced at that lady with a bit of malice—"there is danger of your gallant becoming entangled in your habit, even if he does not come in contact with your person."

"That is true," said Mrs. Broughton, "and it is the only argument which can be advanced in support of your position. On the contrary, as the gentleman holds the bridle in his left hand, it is impossible for him, on the instant, either to sustain his companion in the saddle, or arrest the progress of her steed. And, what is of equal importance, when the cavalier rides at the left he protects her from harm while they are meeting or passing carriages; whereas, if he rode upon her right, he would force the one he is required to defend into a position of danger."

"Bravo! a triumphant speech!" exclaimed the gentlemen.

"After listening to powerful arguments from two highly intelligent and accomplished ladies, it is hereby decided, upon the shores of this crystal lake, that, for all time, the cavalier is to find his position—while mounted—nearest the heart of his lady fair. Is that your decision, gentlemen?" continued Freeman.

"Ay!"

"Carried unanimously."

"I am not surprised at your decision, gentlemen," tartly observed Virginia Drayton. "I believe, however, Col. Freeman, it is a well-settled principle of law, that an interested party shall be neither witness, judge, or juryman; so I shall appeal to an impartial tribunal."

"Faith, she has you there, brother," said Clifton; "but come, let us dismount; our horses are impatient." Resting their hands upon the shoulders of their companions, the females gracefully descended from their steeds.

"Here, Scipio, give these horses water and provender!" exclaimed Fielding to the African, who was mounted above a bag of corn and oats. "And you, Alfred, make ready the boat, and place your baskets in it."

His orders were obeyed with cheerfulness and alacrity, and in a few minutes the party were gliding swiftly across the bosom of the lake, in an elegant and commodious barge. Bounding like fawns upon the beach, the ladies proceeded across the island to the point of the fishing-ground, followed by all the gentlemen, except young Davidson, who took Scipio and the boat, and proceeded in quest of game. Lines and fish-hooks were soon prepared, and seating themselves upon the rocks that jutted into the lake, they proceeded,

in silence, to catch the bass and pickerel. The only sounds which awoke the profound solitude, were the half-suppressed exclamations of the ladies, as they landed a fish of more than ordinary size—the rippling of the water upon the beach, and the report of Davidson's rifle, as it echoed through the forest.

They had been so successful, that at length they began to converse in low tones; not sufficiently audible to be heard by more than a solitary listener, for they had separated into pairs; as a matter of course, for the exclusive object of having the hooks of the ladies baited by the gentlemen. Clifton was seated by the side of Miss Drayton, Helen Douglass had appropriated Freeman, Fielding was playing the agreeable to Mrs. Broughton, and the remainder of the company were satisfactorily arranged. Virginia Drayton suffered her buoy to float wherever it listed, and leaning back upon her elbow, with one tiny foot extended so as to rest upon a projection of the rock, she raised her glance to her companion's face, and remarked, with accents of extreme sweetness—

"How charming would be an existence upon a spot like this, with a being who could elicit the unfathomed depths of our affection. Fancy a cottage erected upon yonder plain, overlooking this silver lake, and within hearing of the murmuring rivulet that washes its base. Furnished with books, and instruments of music—with a companion who is all the most vivid fancy could desire, what Mahomedan could pant for a more blissful paradise?"

Her eye, lighted with more than earthly beauty, the enthusiasm of the moment sent the warm blood glowing to her cheek, and coursing along the blue veins which lined her temples; for she had, under the influence of the moment, thrown the thick clustering hair from her forehead.

Edward gazed upon the lovely being, who half reclined before him, with undisguised admiration.

"Happy indeed must be that individual, who can win the devotion of one, gifted with every attribute which can claim the homage of our sex."

"Even if the divinity be a *coquette*, as you once insinuated?" retorted the damsel, in whose eyes merriment had usurped the throne of pathos.

Clifton's look—half angry, half disconcerted, only served to increase her laughter, which first was low and musical, but now rang forth in loud and merry peals. All

eyes were turned upon them, to ascertain what could cause so sudden an interruption of the profoundest silence.

Edward bit his lip as he turned away, and muttered, "I'll be even with you yet;" and then bowing with as much blandness as if he had been neither betrayed into sentimentality or ill-humour, he remarked,

"This fair lady, was proving to me how easy is the transition from the sublime to the ridiculous, and rendered it so palpable, that, for a moment, I was surprised into astonishment."

Freeman and Miss Douglass had apparently been engaged at repartee. As they rose to join the group, he remarked,

"I beg your pardon, Miss Helen, but does not your boot require lacing?"

"No, but you do!" promptly responded the maiden.

"Fairly answered, by Jove!" shouted Fielding, who had overheard the reply. "But come! as master of ceremonies," continued he, "as well as your medical adviser, I suggest the propriety of a ramble through the sylvan shade. See! our Nimrod has returned with abundance of game, and leaving the coloured fraternity to prepare our repast, let us forth!"

Offering his arm to Virginia Drayton, they led the way to the spring. After quenching their thirst with the assistance of that southern household god, a gourd—they divided into small parties, and each threaded the forest as chance or fancy dictated. The island was covered with innumerable grape-vines, that wound high into the limbs of the trees. Delicious grapes, sweetened by the frost, were abundant, and gathering these as they strolled, the gay and happy party whiled away an hour joyously.

Suddenly they were all startled by a piercing shriek from Emy Davidson, and gathering quickly round her, they found the heroic girl was gazing in silence, but with a look of terror—with bloodless lips, and quivering frame, upon an enormous rattlesnake which had fastened its fangs in her dress. With extraordinary presence of mind, she remained perfectly quiet, as though convinced, that by struggling to free herself, she would only increase her danger. In the mean time, Harden had seized a piece of wood, which fortunately lay within his grasp, and soon succeeded in releasing the affrighted lady from her unpleasant situation, not, however, without relieving her of a portion of her dress.

"Oh! I am so glad I am freed!" ex-

claimed the damsel, as she burst into a flood of tears.

"You are a brave girl!" said the admiring Harden, "and few would display such heroic courage."

"But how did it happen," asked Clifton, "that the reptile struck without giving warning? I thought the victim always heard its rattles?"

"True," said Harden, "and this monster was not an exception. Apparently, he was aroused from his sleep by Miss Davidson stepping upon him, and the warning was so instantaneously followed by the attack, that she could not entirely escape."

The ladies shuddered, as the enormous fangs were disclosed, and warmly expressed their sympathy for the weeping girl, who now began to smile through her tears.

It was now two o'clock, and a call from their sable attendants summoned them to their repast. The fare would have tempted the appetite of an epicure. Broiled fish and partridge, roasted duck and potatoes, bread, tea, coffee, cake, oranges, champagne; and all in the greatest abundance, spread out upon a spotless table-cloth, with cushions from the barge, upon which the ladies reclined in the Oriental fashion. Why, it had the witchery of enchantment! And so it was regarded by the participants. In gay retort and sparkling repartee, they enjoyed the meal, and when it was over, long did the gentlemen recline at the feet of those beauteous girls.

Time passed; and as they returned across the water, the ladies sang "A life on the ocean wave," and with their pure soprano, was mingled the tenor of Fielding, and the baritone of Edward and Freeman. The shades of evening were stealing over the landscape, as the party dismounted at their homes.

## CHAPTER XXI.

"By the Apostle Paul, shadows to-night  
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,  
Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers  
Armed in proof, and led by shallow Richmond."  
SHAKESPEARE.

"He sees with other eyes than theirs; where they  
Behold a Sun, he spies a deity."  
YOUNG.

At an early hour, on Monday night, the capacious Presbyterian church was thronged with spectators. People had gathered

from a long distance in the country, attracted thither by the novelty of the question, selected for debate, as well as by the reputation of the speakers. The oratorical powers of Clifton had been heralded from the adjacent village of Sherwood, where he had delivered his political speech, and the eloquent and reverend pastor of the church had, at the earnest solicitations of his friends, accepted an invitation to join the debate.

The President of the society had assumed the chair, and the more youthful speakers had addressed him, when a large party of ladies entered the church together, and sweeping up the main aisle, seated themselves in the well-cushioned pew of Judge Douglass. As Clifton turned his glance in that direction, he saw among the number, his companions of the preceding Saturday, and answered with a bow their smile of recognition. The buzz of whispered conversation was hushed, as the clergyman rose to address the President.

It is not our purpose, to report the profound and skilful argument of the reverend gentleman, in attempting to demonstrate, what, indeed, is the popular belief, that conscience is an innate principle implanted in the human mind, by a beneficent Providence for the guidance and protection of frail mortality.

In the discussion of the subject, he employed all the resources which profound investigation and a powerful intellect placed at his command; and as he resumed his seat, a murmur of approbation, which would have swelled into a demonstration of applause, but for the sanctity of the clerical disputant, ran through the temple. "Mr. Clifton, closes the debate," said the President.

For a moment our hero was embarrassed, as he rose for the purpose of attempting to sever the splendid chain of argument which the divine had forged. He felt that the prejudices, if not the sympathies of the audience, were against him. Casting his eyes over the assemblage, they rested for a moment in that portion of the church occupied by Miss Douglass and her party. The countenance of that lady was slightly flushed with interest, while the expression upon the face of Miss Drayton was a little malicious. "I bet he will destroy the cobweb theories of the Doctor," whispered Mrs. Broughton to Virginia Drayton.

"So do I, but he shall not have the benefit of that opinion. He has already a due appreciation of his own powers."

"You say that, because you could not

deceive him; is it not so?" jestingly inquired the other.

"He may yet find that he is not immaculate!" said the belle, with a haughty curve of her superb neck.

Further conversation was prevented, as the full and well-modulated voice of the speaker pronounced, "Mr. President, it is with great diffidence, that I shall attempt to follow the eloquent gentleman, through the splendid effort which he has just concluded. I will frankly admit, that he has exhausted the argument upon that side of the question, and it remains for me to assail his reasoning, with such facts and theories as a much briefer investigation places at my command. At the outset, I must beg that portion of the audience who belong to the reverend gentleman's church, not to receive his assumptions with that implicit confidence which, no doubt, his religious opinions are entitled to, when promulgated from the sacred desk. If they do, so far as they are concerned, the question is already decided. The object of discussion is to evolve the truth; but if theories, advanced by one in whom, no doubt, great confidence is very justly placed, are received with the authority of dogmas, then the right of thought is utterly subverted, and the intelligent being becomes no better than a walking automaton."

This bold and not unskilful exordium, caused those to look upon the speaker approvingly, who were not strictly orthodox.

"Admirably well put!" whispered Fielding to Mrs. Broughton. Miss Drayton could not avoid a pleased smile, while Helen Douglass cast a furtive glance at her father, whose countenance was impassive. The divine turned uneasily in his chair, and bestowed upon Edward a more critical observation than he had hitherto deigned.

"It doubtless," resumed the speaker, "has not escaped your observation that the reverend gentleman has based his argument upon such fact and theories as have been elicited by the ancient and chosen people of God, or by the *enlightened* segment of the human family. I trust, Mr. President, that this idea will not be forgotten, for upon it hinges the discussion."

"The law of God, was clearly defined to our first parents. Before it was broken, they were apprised of the penalty which they so much dreaded. Hence the terror with which they were seized, after the fatal sin had been committed. The temp-

tation was simply more overpowering, than the dread of punishment. So, when the commandments of God were given to Moses on the Mount, they were as specific as an enlightened legislature can render a law upon the statute-book. When one of those commandments was violated, the culprit feared the penalty which was inflicted. And at the present day, although the doctrines of the Bible are as variously interpreted as there are different denominations—and I believe the church of which the gentleman is so distinguished an ornament, has not been able to preserve its unity,—still there can be no misunderstanding the reward which is bestowed upon virtue, and the punishment that is inflicted upon vice."

At this allusion to the secession of the Cumberland Presbyterians, and the evident uneasiness it caused the divine, the majority of the audience could scarcely suppress their merriment. Mrs. Broughton and Virginia Drayton, who were inclined to Episcopacy, did not disguise the pleasure which it gave them, while Freeman sententiously pronounced the word "centre."

"But the error which the gentleman commits, and it is a fatal one, as I conceive, is, in confounding *conscience*, with *knowledge*; or in other words, in assuming that to be an innate principle, which is merely the *perception of a fact*. I deny that there is a monitor within, which apprises the sinner of his fault, when he tramples upon the commandments of the Almighty, that is not equally sleepless, and even more vigilant, when he violates the municipal regulations of his country. The penalty in the one case may be more terrible, but the punishment in the other may be more instantaneous. If it is necessary to illustrate a proposition, which is in itself almost a demonstration, it is easily done. Take the highest crime known to the law—murder. Which excites most the criminal's fears, the dread of divine wrath, or the hangman's clutch? In the one case, his guilt is already known; in the other he is haunted by the apprehension of arrest and trial. Descend the list of offences against law and morals. It is the fear of *detection*, which stings the transgressor worse than the fangs of a scorpion. The fashionable swindler dreads exposure because he will lose caste; the slanderer, because he will be despised. The seducer flies, when vengeance is in pursuit; and the hypocrite, who has assumed the garb of Christianity, recklessly braves Divine indignation, yet



shrinks with tremulous limbs before the finger of scorn.

"It surely is unnecessary to multiply examples for the purpose of proving that an unprincipled individual who utterly disregards the doctrines of the Bible, will, nevertheless, ponder long before he violates a clause upon the statute-book; and that, too, when human justice, unlike Divine, is powerless over the soul.

"Thus far, Mr. President, I have confined my observations to that branch of the subject most favourable to the reverend gentleman. Indeed, to withhold the facts and deductions which can be drawn from that small segment of the human family, to whom the Bible is familiar, and his argument is wholly baseless. It would fall from its own weakness, without any assistance of mine.

"Cast your eyes, sir, over a map of the world, and see what a small portion of our race, since the banishment of our first parents from the Garden of Eden, have had the slightest knowledge of the word of God. Neither controlled by its precepts, nor curbed by the strong arm of the law, what frightful scenes of violence and wrong has it been the sad duty of the historian to record. I presume a divine so enlightened as the reverend gentleman espouses the doctrine of that portion of his church who believe that the heathen will be exempt from the dreadful punishment which is visited upon the transgressor who sins *understandingly*, if I may use the expression. Am I correct in the assumption?" inquired he, bowing courteously to his opponent, who responded in the affirmative. "Well, then, unless my reverend friend has what a merchant terms a *'variety'* of consciences, he must acknowledge himself worsted in the argument. He must have as many, at least, as there are classes of the human family. One sample must be a very stringent conscience, suitable for the enlightened; another, with not quite as much whalebone in it, just fitted for the civilized; the third, free and easy—quite an elastic affair—so that it may set gracefully upon the half-civilized; and the fourth exceedingly lax, possessing sufficient capacity to allow the barbarian to do exactly as he pleases—to bow to an idol, whether it is wood or stone, and to eat his human flesh fried, broiled, or in real cannibalistic style—*raw*?"

The laughter, which had been with difficulty suppressed for some time, could no longer be restrained. The merriest peals came from the pew of Judge Douglass. Helen, for a moment abashed at what she

regarded as an impropriety, cast a look at her father, who occupied the President's chair, and was horrified to see his fat sides shaking violently. Curious to witness what effect the unrestrained hilarity of his most influential elder, had upon the clergyman, she looked in that direction, and discovered he had good-naturedly joined in the merriment, which had become universal. Clifton alone preserved his gravity, and was coolly looking over his notes until order was restored.

"If," he continued, "the Christian who obeys the word of God, and the heathen to whom its precepts and commands are unknown, both enter the kingdom of heaven, that salvation can surely be traced to the possession of knowledge by the one, and the want of it by the other. The first is saved because he keeps the commandments of his Maker; the last, because Divine goodness is unwilling to punish a mortal who ignorantly sins. If I am correct in these deductions, conscience is *not* an innate principle of the human mind, but in an *enlightened* community has been confounded with *knowledge*. In barbarous countries, knowledge and conscience are both unknown.

"Can that which is so thoroughly established by incontestable facts, require the support of metaphysical reasoning? A child, when it first beholds the light of day, is devoid of reason, and without possessing the strength, has only the instincts of the brute. Its mind is a blank, but the germ of intelligence which Divine power has implanted in the mind, acquires strength as it expands, and is soon prepared to receive whatever impression *education* stamps upon it. Our religion is essentially controlled by *circumstances*. Place the infant of a Protestant mother among Catholics, and it believes in the infallibility of the Pope; among Mahomedans, it asserts the existence of one God and one prophet; among Pagans, and it bows to brazen images. Let that child grow to manhood within the borders of an enlightened community, and he feels the gentle influences of civilization. Rear him among cannibals, and he joins in their disgusting orgies. The human mind can acquire the polish of the courtier or the roughness of the peasant—the peaceful habits of the Quaker, or the uncontrollable ferocity of the mercenary soldier. The mechanic would grace a court, while no one could follow a plough with more skill than the belted earl. A shoemaker's hand grasps the sceptre as though 'twere born to it; while the prince waxes the

thread and plies the awl with as much alacrity as the most devoted pupil of St. Crispin. You, Mr. President, might have been a devout Mussulman, or a houseless Tartar; and my reverend friend might have kissed the Pope's toe with as much fervour as he now advocates the doctrine of predestination, or practically illustrate the Mormon idea that a multiplicity of wives is decidedly comfortable, instead of refusing altogether the joys which are said to flow from connubial bliss."

As Clifton resumed his seat, the audience were again convulsed with laughter by the grotesque illustrations of the speaker.

"I told you he would sweep away the clergyman's arguments," triumphantly remarked Mrs. Broughton.

"It was a happy effort," replied Miss Drayton. "I must be cautious; he possesses more irony than I gave him credit for. Perhaps some persons would call it wit."

The President summed up the arguments, and, to the surprise of Helen Douglass, he gave due credit to the strong points of Edward's speech.

It was decided that our hero had triumphed in the debate, and it was observed that the occupants of the cushioned pew voted with the majority.

While the society was selecting another question, Edward paid his devoirs to the ladies. Mrs. Broughton, extending her hand, which was a soft and beautiful one, received him with open pleasure; Helen Douglass with a slight timidity, and Miss Drayton with the utmost coolness.

"Do not trust to her manner of saluting you," observed Mrs. Broughton, archly; "for she was just as enthusiastic a moment ago, as the rest of us."

"Suppose you permit me to be the exclusive judge of the manner I shall assume in greeting a gentleman?" replied the other, with considerable asperity.

"The lady correctly defines her prerogative," interposed Clifton; "for if a gentleman can avoid one of your sex, when the pleasure which her society affords is not commensurate with the annoyance she inflicts, surely, the right to decide whom she will receive with frankness, or distrust, should not be withheld."

A momentary embarrassment succeeded, when Mrs. Broughton, with ready tact, changed the conversation, by introducing Edward to her husband.

The society now adjourned, and as they

proceeded from the church, Edward sauntered along with the party. Miss Drayton raised her skirts, and picked her way, precisely after the fashion of the city, when the side-walks are covered with mud. Her progress was slow, and as our hero was too gallant to leave her alone, he must forsooth linger behind, although he caught the glance of Helen Douglass, as she looked back for an instant, and then sped onwards.

The bearing of Miss Drayton was subdued, and she conversed with so soft, and sweetly modulated a voice, that he found his prejudices yielding before the irresistible power of her fascinations.

"You are a strange and inexplicable being!"

"Why so?" inquired the lady.

"Because, for one moment you are all gentleness, and exercise over those with whom you are brought in contact, a strange and unaccountable influence. The next instant, however, it is all swept away by a remorseless sarcasm. Why are you not always the same?"

"You would scarcely like me as well," said the maiden, raising her splendid eyes to his own. "I should soon be regarded as a good-natured, common-place, uninteresting girl, whom no one cared to trouble himself about. It is alone by sudden transitions, that we can obtain and preserve an influence over your fickle sex! You see, I am frank with you! Be equally so with me," said she, laying her hand confidently upon his arm; "do you not enjoy the society of that person more, who relieves you from ennui, than the diluted conversation of a love-sick, sentimental damsel, who cannot diverge the width of a hair, from the path which she daily pursues?"

"I admit it; still—if I may use a simile—one can tire of the placid moon, without becoming desperately enamoured of a fiery, but erratic comet."

"It is my misfortune," responded the lady, sadly, "always to give offence when I least desire it. I think a great mistake was committed when I was born. But here we are at the house. Will you not enter! No? Good night, then," and Clifton felt the pressure of her taper fingers, as her soft, white hand rested a moment in his own.

## CHAPTER XXII.

"For he was blithe as peace may be,  
Yet boisterous as victory."

TEGNER.

THE Presidential contest of 1840 was being fought. The democracy were making a dignified canvass. They fiercely denounced the tactics of the Whig party, as an appeal to the passions, instead of the judgments of the populace. It was unavailing; log cabins, hard cider, and coon skins, were the order of the day. It was madness to contend against the tide which was overwhelming the administration. The symbols of the Whig party did not cause the excitement that pervaded every city and hamlet throughout the confederacy; they were only evidences of its existence. At most, it did not surpass the demonstrations which characterized the elevation of General Jackson to the Presidential chair. Whenever enthusiasm arouses the dormant powers of only one party, the other may look for the hand writing upon the wall.

Too many persons like to go with the crowd, to make a reliance upon the justice of a cause any more available than a dignified discussion of principles.

There was a whig barbecue in Stamford. The village was crowded with ladies and gentlemen, men and women. Carriages, equestrians, and footmen, thronged every thoroughfare leading thither. The fairer portion of the assemblage wore charms,—gold log cabins, and coral cider-barrels, were visible everywhere. Coon-skins, and the living animal itself, were seen in the crowd. But the chief object of attraction, was an immense ball, scarcely less than twenty feet in diameter, elevated upon wheels, with the names of the States printed upon it. This ball was turned upon an axis, and the gaping crowd looked with admiration upon its revolutions.

"Will not these humbugs recoil upon the Whig party, and drive from their ranks, the sensible portion of it?" inquired an old Democrat, who watched the procession from Clifton's office.

"I think not," responded our hero. "Observe the crowd for a moment; the respectable part do not, it is true, participate in the orgies, nevertheless, they witness them with a pleasing smile."

"Yes," said Fielding; "look at old Judge Whiting, with what complacency he contemplates the revolutions of the ball. Hear those Joe Bunkers, how they twirl their hats, and shout, as they sur-

round the object of their idolatry. Ah ha, here comes a body of infantry, well drilled too. Altogether political, though; see the letters H. G. upon their knapsacks; they deploy with admirable precision. By the gods! there will be a difficulty. At each turn they approach nearer and nearer to the stalwart form of Col. Brown, who seems rooted to the spot, as he eyes them with implacable ferocity." But the Guards were discreet; there were too many of the unterrified democracy in the village.

The whigs seemed wild with enthusiasm. The humble occupant of a clerk's office was transformed into a hero and a statesman, with the string of his dwelling always upon the outside. It was a subject of remark, that persons who were deeply involved in debt were the most liberal in their subscriptions for partisan jubilees. The passage of the bankrupt-law, after the election of General Harrison, created the belief that there was a Masonic understanding during the canvass, that all debts should be cancelled.

The policy of Mr. Van Buren was assailed with the utmost ferocity. The defalcations of Swartwout and Price; the temporizing letters of the Secretary of the Treasury to Harris, were all paraded in the whig journals.

A few weeks after the whig barbecue, there was a mass meeting of the democracy in Stamford. The gathering was large, but there was no excitement, save what was created by the anticipated arrival of General Jackson. The Circuit Court was in session, and the whig lawyers sought to dampen the enthusiasm by jeering allusions to the "illustrious predecessor." At twelve o'clock the Ex-President, accompanied by Governor Carroll and Felix Grundy, entered the village, amid the joyous shouts of the multitude. The venerable hero, feeble and emaciated, took a chair in the parlour of the hotel. His frame was tremulous with age, yet there was still a fire in his eyes which awed his enemies, and caused the most reckless to approach the old warrior with a respectful bearing.

"Ah! my old friend!" he exclaimed, as he warmly grasped the hand of Major Yates, "I have not seen you before since the Florida campaign. What do I hear? Have you deserted your colours and turned whig? That will never do. We have overthrown one enemy, don't let us fight in opposing ranks in our old age. The tomb will soon claim us both; we must die with hearts true to the cause." The Major was visibly affected by the language

of his chief. "Never fear, gentlemen; Major Yates will be with us on the day of election." Another veteran claimed his attention. "Really, I cannot recall your name."

"Is it possible you have forgotten me, General?" said the old man, as a tear stole along his cheek. "Alas! that the day should ever come! Do you not recollect making your dinner of acorns, in the Creek war?"

"What! Corporal Ray! God bless you!" and the hero rose hastily, and with trembling hands embraced his humble follower. An electric thrill ran through the crowd. The commander held the subordinate at arms-length while he scanned his features. "It is Corporal Ray, but time has exerted his power upon you as well as me. Those were trials, Corporal, which tested the courage and patriotism of the soldiers!"

"Indeed they were, General! especially when our rations consisted of raw hides! But you shared in all our sufferings, you did! It was that alone which made us endure them."

"That was my duty, you know."

"But when the hides were all gone, General, some of them didn't fancy your substitute."

"What was that, Corporal?"

"Why, they thought that, although acorns were very good for hogs, they were rather poor fare for soldiers. They were determined to retreat, but you stopped them, you did! Egad, they didn't know that the old musket was empty; ha! ha!"

"We could neither of us go through another campaign like that, Corporal Ray."

"Sartin."

"But do you still answer to the name of Democrat?"

"Here!" responded the old man, as he raised his tall form with military quickness.

"I am glad to hear it, Corporal! I hope you will always remain true to your principles."

"Not only myself, General, but six sons and twenty grandsons vote the Democratic ticket, and a dozen daughters and granddaughters would vote the same way if they had the right."

"I am glad to hear it! If the ladies cannot vote, they can use their influence."

The General now retired to his room, quite exhausted by fatigue.

Major Yates was sadly puzzled between affection for his old commander, and zeal for the cause which he had recently espoused. As he was wending his way

through the square, he met the Circuit Judge and several whig lawyers.

"I suppose, now, since you have seen Old Hickory, you are prepared to vote for the Kinderhook candidate?" said the Judge.

"Of course he is!" replied one of the lawyers. "Has not the edict gone forth from the Hermitage that Matty Van shall be elected? and, notwithstanding his grinding oppressions, it must be obeyed."

"Perhaps you are wrong in your conclusions," hesitatingly interposed Major Yates.

"Certainly not," said another, "we always knew if General Jackson could once lay his eyes upon you, your right of thought would be gone! You never acted for yourself until you became a Whig. The hero of New Orleans does all the thinking for the Democrats—what little there is of it!"

"Come, gentlemen, wait until you see how I vote."

"Oh, we know that already! Your vote is good for the Oily Magician. You will swallow him, standing army and all!"

"Never!" shouted the Major, and the Judge winked at his companions as they proceeded to their lodgings. Such is the power of ridicule!

"I think, Judge, we are certain of the Major's vote."

"Not a doubt of it! He is proud, and dislikes to have it said he is controlled by the old General."

"And yet, he is no less a slave, for he is swerved from his principles by prejudice and sarcasm."

"All true; but we have nothing to do with that, you know. His vote and his influence is all we desire."

"Is his influence considerable?"

"Undoubtedly. He is a leading man in his neighbourhood, and now, when so many persons are ready to desert the democratic standard, his defection is of incalculable importance."

"It is singular that Clifton does not hold him to his allegiance; the Major has an exalted opinion of the Northerner."

"He could, if he would exert his influence; but he is quite as indifferent during this campaign, as Scott's 'Black Sluggard.'"

A feeling of apathy appeared to seize the ranks of the Democratic party. The Whigs, however, were active and enthusiastic. Many of them were disappointed because Mr. Clay did not receive the nomination, and in the anxiety of their

grief, hundreds declared they would not vote for General Harrison. But warmed by the excitement which everywhere prevailed, they at length rallied under the banner of "Tippecanoe."

These struggles always afford food for reflection. It is a matter of vital importance that the elective franchise should be regarded as a glorious privilege. The right to select our own officers, was purchased by the blood of our revolutionary sires. If its exercise is neglected, we lose all interest in the guardianship of a sacred trust. Every patriot should rejoice at the existence of political excitement, provided it does not trespass upon the boundaries of law and order. It indicates a healthy tone in public sentiment, and a cherished regard for the inalienable rights of the human family. It proves what is of far greater importance, that there is a due appreciation of the privileges which are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and a determination to maintain them at every hazard.

There is one amendment that could very properly be made to the Constitution of the United States. The candidates for President and Vice President should be voted for directly. The electoral college is unnecessary, and might become dangerous. Instances are not rare, of members of Congress, proving recreant to the trust reposed in them by their constituents. Elected as Anti-Bank candidates, their virtue often yielded to the power of that Institution, and when too late, political treachery was punished by political oblivion. Although the electoral colleges have hitherto faithfully executed their trust, still they are but men. In a Presidential contest, resulting in almost a drawn battle, the electors of a State might prove traitors, and by electing that aspirant who is entitled only to a minority of the electoral college, although he might have received a majority of votes in the aggregate, they would plunge the country into the horrors of civil war. No reason can be assigned for employing the agency of the electoral college. It is the aristocratic feature of the Constitution. It is without any practical good whatever, and might prove the destruction of the American Union. Let every voter deposit in the ballot-box, the names of the candidate for President and Vice President of the United States, and then no danger can be apprehended from fraud and treachery.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"Some men are born great; some achieve greatness; Some have greatness thrust upon them."

SHAKESPEARE.

"A shade is an omen, a dream is a sign."

LONDON.

A SPACE of thirty miles intervened between Stamford and Bergen, the capital of the adjacent county. The road thither, for a distance of ten miles, led through a rich and fertile region; it then diverged from the river, and, winding through the hills for a dozen miles, descended into the valley of Silver Creek, where elegant mansions and picturesque cottages attested the prosperity of the husbandman. Nothing could be more gloomy and desolate than the waste which extended between these two streams. The scanty soil was sparsely covered with stunted oak and black jack, and afforded a painful contrast to the majestic forest trees that here and there towered upon the water-courses. In certain localities, however, Nature had been more indulgent. There the trees had acquired a greater height, and entwining their ample limbs in closer embrace, cast an inviting shade upon the earth. Grape-vines, which are indigenous to the soil, sought these favoured spots, and clustering together, assisted in making the bower sufficiently attractive to tempt the wayfarer, when the sun rode high in the heavens, to rest himself beneath the umbrageous foliage.

On a bright morning, Freeman and Clifton mounted their steeds, and started for Bergen, for the purpose of attending the court, which was to be held there the following day.

"Let us get a drink of water at this spring," said the former.

"Whose residence is this?" inquired Edward.

"'Tis a plantation belonging to General Foster! Here, Pete," calling to a negro, who was lounging upon a log, "come here, you ace of spades, and help this gentleman and myself to some water!"

"Yah, yah! that I will Massa Ben," said the man cheerfully. "Shall I go ask Miss Ellen for a cup, or will you take de gourd?"

"Oh, the gourd will do. Stay! your young mistress is calling you."

As the African reached the balcony, a silver cup was extended towards him by a fair hand; the vines were for a moment parted, and both gentlemen raised their hats, and bowed to the graceful inclination of the young damsel.

"Massa Ben mussent sponse de cup is sent cause him want to drink."

"Why not, you black scoundrel?" raising his whip.

The negro leaped actively upon one side, "Yah, yah! cause him allers use gourd afore!"

"For whom was it sent, then?"

"Why, Massa Ben, you Jorrier, and ought to know, if it never sent to him afore, when he go alone, and it be sent now, when gemblem wid him, that it be sent for gemblem, and not for Massa Ben;" and elated with his logic, the slave remained a moment upon his head, with his heels dangling in the air, until receiving a smart cut from Freeman's whip, he turned a somerset, and burst forth into loud peals of laughter.

"Who is this little divinity?" inquired Clifton, after they had resumed their journey.

"She is the only daughter of a gentleman, who, once engaged in the mercantile business, has now retired with a large fortune. The young lady possesses superior endowments, and rare beauty, which, when fully developed, will render her one of the loveliest of her sex. By the way, as your office overlooks her father's grounds, you must have seen her before."

"I believe I have. But whither does the road now take us?" and they entered upon the drear and barren region which I have already described.

About midway of this waste, there is a curve in the road, forming an angle of about forty-five degrees. In the bend were the mouldering walls of what had once been a capacious dwelling. It was now almost entirely concealed from sight, by a dense thicket, which was rarely penetrated by the superstitious, who were kept aloof by traditions that connected tales of violence and death, with the dilapidated building.

As our travellers approached this spot, they saw before them, seated upon the trunk of a fallen tree, a hunter, who scanned their persons with a savage look. He remained seated, however, with his long rifle resting upon his knees. As they turned involuntary in their saddles, he retreated into the bushes, and was concealed from their view.

"I like not the appearance of that vagabond," observed Freeman; "he has too much the appearance of a brigand."

"What is the reputation of the neighborhood?"

"Why, bad enough! About three miles hence, and, I believe, in the direction

which he took, there are several families who live by theft, and if I am not greatly deceived, this fellow is one of the gang. At all events, I should not regard our position as perfectly safe, provided he bore a double-barrelled gun instead of a rifle, while we are within its range."

"But he has vanished in the forest," responded Edward.

"True, but it is not at all improbable that the thicket contains a blind, cut for the purpose of letting the bullet seek its victim, as well as to enable the murderer to scan the road in both directions."

At the close of the day, the travellers entered the village of Bergen, and alighted at the principal hotel. After directing the hostler how to groom their steeds, they entered the drawing-room, where they found most of the lawyers who attended the court, listening to the anecdotes of the merry Judge who presided over the circuit. With the latter, as well as with nearly all the fraternity, Clifton was acquainted! Freeman and himself, therefore, were received with that warmth and cordiality which marks the intercourse between members of the bar, at the South and West.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

"Hostess, clap to the doors, watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry?"

SHAKESPEARE.

THE next morning the court "met pursuant to adjournment." Jurors, witnesses, clients, and spectators, had gathered, in carriages and on horseback. The first day of court is always one of great interest in the interior, and to the disinterested observer, affords much amusement. The names of the jurors are written upon separate pieces of paper, and placed in a hat, from whence thirteen are withdrawn, by a child under ten years of age, and constitute the grand jury. This inquest, then, with open mouths, receive a charge from the court. Its constant repetition becomes irksome to the Judge, and conscious, perhaps, that they will more readily comprehend the isolated cases presented by the attorney-general, for their consideration, than a complicated charge, he frequently delegates his prerogative to some junior member of the bar.

While the court is empannelling the grand jury, clients eagerly gather round

their lawyers, and seizing them by a button-hole, they unconsciously lead them aside, and reiterate for the hundredth time, what they regard as the strong points of their case. Parties whose causes were made returnable to that term (but not to be tried until the next), sought the legal advice of some attorney, while the spectators, seated where the October sun yielded them its warmth, were engaged in the national amusement of whittling.

At night there was a social reunion of the judge and lawyers in one of the capacious apartments of the hotel.

"That was a fine charge of yours, Clarendon," said Judge Hawley, to a youthful lawyer, with jet-black hair and eyes, sallow complexion, and Italian cast of countenance.

"As good as they deserve," replied the other.

"Of the thirteen men upon the jury, I should judge that more than half are ignoramuses."

"Your opinion of our colabourers, is not very exalted," said Major Henderson.

"No!" replied Clarendon. "To illustrate their capacity. A few days ago, I submitted a case, for the decision of a justice of the peace, and after he had retained the papers under advisement a sufficient length of time, as I supposed, I called to ascertain his decision, when he gravely informed me that he had sat upon the case, all the leisure time he had, but that having a greater number of garments to cut than usual (he was a tailor), it was out of his power to do the case as much justice, as he could wish, unless he was allowed to set on the papers a few days longer. 'You see I am doing the cause full justice!' and raising himself up, he disclosed the papers in the case, arranged into a sort of a cushion, which I have no doubt he occupied with great fidelity."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared the company.

"Come, we must have more punch! Grayson will you attend to it?" said Morton. Grayson, opened the door, and cried out, "Landgod (irreverently), come here! Keep us supplied, if you please, with the genuine article, if your bar contains it?"

"Clarendon's story," said Henderson, "reminds me of a warrant issued a few days since, by a newly elected justice. A neighbour, believing that an axe which he missed, had been stolen, and suspecting who had taken it, applied to the justice for a search-warrant. That functionary could find no *form* authorizing a search for an axe, and made out a warrant permitting him to search for a turkey. In

reply to the protestation, that this was not at all what was wanted, he suggested that while searching for the turkey, they might find the axe."

"Bravo! he deserves to be placed upon the woolsack." Three cheers for the modern Lord Mansfield! Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

"But at all events, you will admit," said Grayson, "that the trial by jury, is the most effectual method of arriving at justice."

"Why so?" demanded Freeman.

"Because the jury are summoned by the sheriff, from the body of the county, and is generally composed of the most sober and intelligent men, who have every inducement to decide fairly between litigants."

"It is true," said "Freeman, that jurymen are summoned by the sheriff, but they are selected by the county court, the members whereof are very much inclined to appoint their especial favourites. Indeed, I have seen the most worthless vagabonds placed upon the jury list, twice out of three times in a year. One I recollect was forced to flee from the country for committing forgery."

"All this may be so," said Morton, "nevertheless, when the proper administration of the law depends so much upon those who may speedily have others sitting in judgment upon their own rights, we have every assurance that they will correctly discharge their duties."

"Especially," observed Stanton, an old chancery lawyer, "when they render average verdicts."

"What do you mean?" inquired Judge Hawley.

"A jury, not being able to decide upon the amount which ought to be rendered in favour of the plaintiff, agreed that each member should set down the sum which he thought proper, that the aggregate might be divided by the number of jurymen, and justice done between the parties."

"Bravo, little Bilious!" they all shouted! "Bilious has the floor," for they knew his irascible temper, and unconquerable aversion to juries, although he rarely became sufficiently mellow and excited to give expression to his opinion.

"Yes, gentlemen, I have practised long enough before juries to understand them perfectly. Talk you of their fairness? You know, if a jury is selected from the bystanders, without regard to the regular list, and they decide the cause the same day, they receive no pay, but if they are

detained until the next day, they each receive fifty cents. Well, I have known innumerable instances of a jury being forced to remain together all night in a small room, in the month of August, simply because one or more of the number were desirous of obtaining the fifty cents."

"Hurrah for Bilious!"

"Perhaps they could not agree," remarked Grayson.

"Bah! the assembling of the court in the morning was the signal for the rendition of the verdict."

"Clarendon, please supply the speaker with some punch, brandy, gin, or whatever he chooses. Bilious will now proceed."

"Prate you of their justice? why, in equity cases, a justice of the peace has jurisdiction only to the amount of \$50, while on notes it extends to \$500. Have you not separate courts, one of law and the other of equity, and do you trust a jury in the latter court? In the very tribunal where cases of justice and equity are decided, a jury is excluded. Why is this, if they can be trusted with so much confidence?"

"Is it not?" inquired Clarendon, "because a court of equity is not governed by arbitrary principles?"

"Not at all, my young friend; on the contrary, the court of chancery is just as much tied down, and controlled by precedents, as courts of law, and the only reason that can be assigned why the legislature is year after year, enlarging the jurisdiction of the chancery, at the expense of the common law court, is because the rights of litigants can be intrusted with more safety to a chancellor than to a jury."

"But you surely would not withhold the right of trial by jury, in criminal cases?" inquired Clifton.

"That is another question, which I will not discuss!" remarked him they called 'little Bilious,' as he resumed his seat.

The company now became exceeding merry, with the exception of Edward, who although not a temperance lecturer, chose, upon this occasion, to remain in a condition to observe one of those frolics, which the members of the bar sometimes indulged in, a few years ago. Anecdote followed anecdote, in rapid succession, while the glass went merrily round. Now each one, would mingle in the mêlée, and assail and defend himself, where all were his foes. Anon, some unfortunate wight was selected, upon whom the rest made a combined attack, and the sweat gather-

ing upon his forehead, and coursing down his cheeks, attested the power of that mental torture to which he was subjected. Opposing the onslaught with all the skill and patience which he could command, the writhing victim waited until some happy retort, or unexpected diversion, turned the warfare in another direction. No rudeness was exhibited, and the only weapons employed were wit and sarcasm.

"Did you ever hear the scene described which occurred at the last session of the court at Stamford, Col. Morton?" inquired Major Henderson.

"Never; let us hear it," replied that gentleman, who resided in another circuit.

"Our young friends, Freeman, Grayson, and Clarendon, were seated late at night in the office of the former, when Clifton entered, and with his serious manner informed them that a lady, evidently deranged, had taken possession of his office. Grayson returned with him, and entering the office with a cigar in his mouth, saw a female, elegantly attired, walking up and down the office with rapid strides. No sooner had he placed his feet upon the floor, than the maniac darted toward him, exclaiming, 'How dare you enter my presence with a cigar?' With a bound that deposited him in the mud, Grayson eluded her grasp, but did not cease his flight until he was safely ensconced in Freeman's office, where he expatiated upon the fiery impetuosity of the maniac.

"Come, gentlemen," said Clarendon, discontentedly, "we must not leave Clifton alone with this turbulent woman. Let us all go up."

"Scarcely had they congregated around the door, when the enraged female seized a chair, which she wielded with the strength of a man, and advanced furiously upon them. The three cavaliers commenced a simultaneous retreat, which, however, was not conducted with sufficient speed. They had not accomplished half the distance upon their return, when Freeman was grasped by the coat and twirled around so suddenly, that, losing his equilibrium, he was deposited upon his back in a pool of water. Clarendon suffered his hat to fall, and before he could recover it the crown was burst in by the excited female. Grayson, who had remained in the rear of the attacking party, managed to reach Freeman's office without being subjected to another assault, and closed and bolted the door as soon as the others succeeded in making their escape.



"Did you ever see such a swinecat?" whispered Clarendon, "see, she has utterly destroyed my beaver!"

"And what tremendous strength she possesses!" replied Freeman. "Her height is not less than that of an Amazon!"

"What will become of Clifton?" asked Grayson.

"I don't know," said Freeman; "these are times when the doctrine of self-preservation is omnipotent!"

"Besides," remarked Clarendon, "being exempt, by reason of her infirmity, from the ordinary punishment!"

Here he was interrupted by a violent effort to force the door.

"By the gods! she is after us!" said Grayson, in a whisper; "preserve silence, and she may think we have escaped. Is your window secured?" At this moment the maniac stealthily run her hand along the sash, and Clarendon, who was standing with his back in close proximity to it, raised himself upon his toes, and turning round with an agitated look, gazed upon the curtain. Again the door was violently shaken.

"If she succeeds in entering," said Grayson, "we must knock her down with a chair! I would rather encounter twenty men than one deranged woman!"

"Yes; but we have nothing to tie her with after she is down," replied Freeman, discontentedly.

"Here are my suspenders," quickly observed Clarendon.

"Can't we make our escape out of the back-window?"

"No; she will discover us, and then we have no protection, for you will remember she is exceedingly fleet of foot."

"Let us send for the constable! he is paid for encountering danger."

"Agreed! that is a good suggestion! but who shall go for him?" A pause succeeded. At length Freeman magnanimously replied—

"I will encounter the danger; but if I am seized you must come to the rescue."

"We'll do it!" and Freeman leaped from the back-window, and cut the air with rapid strides in the direction of the constable's office.

The attack upon the door now ceased, and the most profound silence ensued. Cautiously looking out through the window, they discovered the maniac walking calmly along between Clifton and Dr. Fielding, and the merry laughter of the trio rang clearly upon the night-air.

"We have been sold!" muttered Clarendon; "but let us see the end of it."

Fielding paused at the door of young Palmer's room, while Edward and the lady entered. "Here is a lady, Palmer, whom I found in the street. She is evidently a stranger, and quite ill; will you suffer her to remain until I can obtain medical assistance?" and closing the door, he vanished.

Palmer—the most particular and sensitive of men—was much confused at having a young damsel in his apartment, yet, touched with pity, asked her if she would not rest herself upon his sofa. As he was supporting her thither, Fielding entered the room, but immediately commenced apologizing for the untimely intrusion, when he was interrupted by Palmer, who passionately exclaimed, "Good God! man, don't make a d—d fool of yourself! Clifton will be back in a moment." Convulsed with laughter, Fielding remarked, "Here is Clifton, now, but in the act of passing your room." Rushing to the door, Palmer, now highly excited, inquired of Edward why he had not returned for the lady sooner.

"What lady?" replied he, "I have seen none."

Before the explosion occurred which would have followed this remark, footsteps were heard rapidly traversing the street, and Freeman and the constable approached them.

"Where is she?" eagerly inquired Freeman of Edward. "There! there she is! constable, seize her!"

The officer was about to advance, when a lad exclaimed, with evident terror, "Don't hurt her; she is Cousin William!"

This anecdote was frequently interrupted by laughter.

"It is two o'clock, A.M.," remarked the Judge, who was master of ceremonies, "and it is time to adjourn. We must first have a dance from Grayson and Col. Morton. Come, Henderson shall be the arbiter."

Clarendon took the violin, and after a brief prelude, commenced a "negro breakdown." The competitors presented the most striking contrast. Morton was a tall, slender person, about forty-five years of age, with only sufficient flesh upon his bones to redeem his form from the charge of emaciation. There was something inimically droll in his manner, as he took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and ran his long slender fingers through his hair.

Grayson, on the contrary, possessed an Herculean frame, and could scarcely weigh

less than two hundred and twenty-five pounds.

The dance commenced, and no one who has never witnessed the gyrations of a negro, can imagine the convolutions which the forms of Morton and Grayson were made to assume, and the applause was enthusiastic as they seated themselves, panting from the exertion.

"The Court will briefly refer to the merits of the performance which has just been given for our amusement," remarked Henderson. "The youthful vigour of Mr. Grayson inclined the Court to look favourably upon his feats, notwithstanding the science displayed by his veteran competitor. The Court would have been compelled so to adjudge, and was preparing to do so, when its opinion was changed; and I am now compelled to decide in favour of Col. Morton; a triumph for which he is indebted to the last flourish of his left foot."

"Bravo! a glorious decision! A second Daniel!" shouted all; and with uncertain steps they sought their several apartments.

## CHAPTER XXV.

"Is that a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling, as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?"  
SHAKESPEARE.

On the following night, Clifton was seated in his room, when Freeman entered, unceremoniously.

"I have to request of you the favour," he observed, "to assume the management of my causes during the term, as I have been summoned, unexpectedly, to Stamford."

"Certainly," said Edward; "but I regret that I shall be deprived of your company on my return."

"It is now impossible; you may remember that I was retained to defend Maxwell, whenever he was arrested. That event has now occurred, and my departure in the morning is unavoidable. But who was that?" he exclaimed, looking eagerly at the window.

"I saw no one."

"Unless an imaginary phantom crossed my vision, I beheld the forbidding counte-

nance of the hunter vanish in the gloom, as I spoke."

"Doubtless it proceeded from the excesses of last night."

"It may be so," replied the other, shaking his head. "But farewell; I start early."

"Good bye, Freeman! Do not let your thoughts dwell upon brigands, thickets, and mouldering dwellings."

The door closed upon the receding form of his friend.

"He is evidently disturbed. Can there be danger? If I thought so, I would accompany him," soliloquised our hero. "But no! it was only the phantom produced by wine, and a want of sleep."

As Freeman left Edward's room, a man stealthily retreated from the window, beneath which he had crouched, and with his dark and scowling countenance turned backwards, occasionally, to ascertain if he was pursued, he glided towards the forest which skirted the village. Apparently, he sought unsuccessfully for some object, for he uttered curses, smothered but deep. The sky was overcast with clouds, and the earth was shrouded in darkness, which served as a barrier to his vision.

"Where could I have left them?" he muttered; "it was certainly somewhere hereaway, and if these cursed clouds would lift, I could find them."

But the impenetrable gloom continued, and at length, seating himself in despair upon the earth, he exclaimed, "If this continues long, the game will escape me, for I must be at the stand before daylight, or else I may be seen, and the hounds of justice will be upon my footsteps!"

An hour of absolute torture to the robber now passed, when a breeze sprang up which lifted the clouds, and twinkling stars sparkled through the trees. Renewing the search, which now proved successful, he found his horse and rifle, and mounting the steed, he entered a narrow path, which at a distance of two miles terminated in the highway leading from Bergen to Stamford.

Freeman partook of an early breakfast, and started homeward. The clear skies and bracing air of autumn buoyed his spirits, and he wended his way onwards, with that hopeful confidence which is the heritage of youth. As he ascended the hill at the head of Silver Creek, and advancing into the waste, approached the spot so much dreaded by travellers, he paused for a moment, and considered the propriety of diverging from the road, when he reflected that if his companions were



apprised of the detour, it would afford them an opportunity of amusing themselves at his expense, and he proceeded steadily onwards. His spirited horse became restive, and betrayed an indisposition to pass the crumbling walls, when Freeman applied the spur to his flanks. Dashing forward with an affrighted snort, and shrinking upon the opposite side of the road, he had nearly passed the thicket, when from its hidden recess issued a bright flame, which was instantaneously followed by the sharp report of a rifle. Freeman, for a moment, bent to the saddle, and then rallying his energies, he grasped wildly at the reins for a fleeting instant, when his limbs relaxed, his head sunk upon his bosom, and he fell powerless to the earth. The ball had pierced his brain, and the soul of the generous young man was wending its way to the world of spirits. The robber emerged from the wood, and casting an anxious glance along the road, seized the body and dragging it into the bushes, upon the opposite side, proceeded to rifle the pockets. This accomplished, he left the body exposed to beasts of prey and the storms of heaven, and seizing his rifle, plunged into the hidden recesses of the forest.

The court had adjourned, and Edward was on his way to Stamford, musing upon the events of the week, and suffering his mind to erect castles in the air, when his attention was attracted by a large flock of buzzards, that, alarmed by his presence, started from the ground a short distance from the road, and were clumsily ascending through the trees, the branches of which often came in contact with their huge wings. Glancing around him, Clifton discovered that he was opposite the spot which had so strongly excited the suspicions of Freeman. With a vague and irrepressible thrill of terror, he recollected the apprehensions of his friend, and parting the shrubbery that bordered the highway, forced his unwilling horse in the direction of the spot from whence the birds had ascended, and gazed upon the object before him, horror-stricken and appalled. From the clothing, alone, did he recognise the body of Freeman, and the blood congealed in his veins as his sight turned upon the eyeless sockets, and fleshless face, which indicated that the buzzards had claimed their prey.

"Great God! is it thus that the mortal career of this honourable and gifted man is to terminate? But he shall be avenged! I'll follow upon the footsteps of his mur-

derer, until justice is satisfied; ay, fully, completely satisfied!"

Dismounting, Edward covered the body with bushes, so as to protect it from further desecration, and then putting spurs to his horse, he dashed furiously onwards. As he was passing the country residence of General Foster, a slave arrested his headlong speed, and informed him that his young mistress desired to see him. Turning the head of his panting horse in the direction of the balcony, he was accosted by the young girl.

"I trust you will pardon me for addressing a stranger to whom I have never been formally introduced (and her eyes fell for a moment), but my father, who is unavoidably absent, requested me to inform you that the horse of Mr. Freeman passed here this morning, without saddle or bridle upon him. He fears that some fatal accident may have happened to him!"

"Fatal indeed!" responded Edward, "for he has been murdered by a highwayman."

"Good heavens! can it be possible?" and her hitherto blushing cheek became suddenly pale.

"Tell General Foster, on his return, that the body of Freeman lies opposite the old dwelling, some five miles hence. You know its locality?"

"I do!" she replied, with a shudder.

"Let him despatch his servants to guard it, while I summon the coroner from Stamford, and place the officers of justice upon the track of the murderer." And bidding her adieu, he was at Stamford within the half hour.

The coroner was soon on the road, with Dr. Fielding and twelve others, while Clifton, with a constable, empowered to arrest all persons upon whom suspicion might fall, and half-a-dozen resolute men, were ready to start the next morning. At the time of the coroner's arrival night had set in; but they were prepared with torchlights, and he proceeded at once to empanel the jury. In the awful presence of the dead, the preparations were peculiarly solemn. Fielding ascertained that the ball entered the back part of the head, and traversing the brain, passed out through the forehead, causing almost instant death.

The jury were unable to form any conjecture as to who committed the fatal deed, and rendered a verdict accordingly. The remains were then removed to Stamford, for interment, where the melancholy procession arrived about midnight. A gloom was cast over the village by the sudden death of Freeman; for wherever he was known it was but to be admired.

Emy Davidson was passing the evening with Helen Douglass and Virginia Drayton. They were seated around the hickory fire which was blazing in the parlour, when Margaret Fisher rushed into the room with an affrighted countenance.

"Why, what is the matter, Mag?"

"The most terrible event has occurred which you can possibly conceive. The recollection of it makes my blood congeal with horror!"

"Speak out! do not keep us longer in suspense."

"Well, would you believe it? Col. Freeman has been murdered!"

"Impossible!" they all exclaimed, starting to their feet.

"Indeed, it is too true. Mr. Clifton found the body upon his return from court?"

"Is not this horrible, William?" said Miss Davidson to her brother, who now entered the room.

"Yes, but blood for blood! Freeman shall not go unavenged. I have come to bid you adieu, as I have joined Clifton's party, which leaves early to-morrow morning in search of the robber."

"Is Mr. Clifton so much interested?" inquired Miss Drayton.

"I never saw a person more agitated than he was, when he first dashed into the village, with his horse covered with foam. But now the coroner has taken his departure, and our party is arranged for to-morrow, he has quieted down into a calm and gloomy determination."

"'Tis strange," she responded, musingly, "that his feelings are so thoroughly aroused. His impulses must be warm and generous."

The day had scarcely dawned, when Edward and his party were in the saddle, and before the sun had ascended sufficiently high to dry up the dew which clustered upon the leaves, they had congregated around the old dwelling. Clifton briefly related the scene which occurred at the spot when himself and the unfortunate victim were on their way to Bergen, and expressed the conviction that the hunter was the individual who had committed the murder. It was important, therefore, in his opinion, that immediate and careful search should be made for his footsteps. Dismounting from their horses, they each descended to the task with the most untiring zeal.

"I have the patch of the ball, Mr. Clifton," triumphantly exclaimed young Davidson. They gathered around, and ascertained that it had been used for that pur-

pose, having been torn from an old cotton handkerchief.

"Preserve that," said Edward.

They were now interrupted by a shout from the thicket, and approaching it, they ascertained that Fleming, a celebrated hunter and trapper, had found the stand of the murderer.

"Do you see this?" he exclaimed; "he has cut the branches away, and removed the vines, so as to look up and down the road."

"'Tis strange," soliloquised Edward, "that Freeman should have suggested the probability of such an arrangement. This indeed bears the semblance of premonition. Are there any footsteps visible?" he inquired of Fleming.

"I can't see any yet; the ground appears too much trampled. Stay, this looks like one. Yes, here he has passed," he continued, eagerly, after a moment's examination of the earth. "Now let me measure this track; it may serve to identify the scoundrel." And he took the dimensions of a long and ill-shaped impression, which the desperado had made in the sand. Trusting in the experience of the trapper, the party now followed the trail. It descended the slope of the hill, and was lost upon its rocky surface. For a long time the search for it was unavailing, until young Davidson descended into the channel of a brook, and upon the soft earth again discovered it.

"What have we here?" he exclaimed. Stooping for a moment he raised a hat from the bed of the stream, whither it had been sunk.

"It is Freeman's!" exclaimed half a dozen voices.

"Another link in the chain of evidence which we are unfolding," muttered Edward.

The party now proceeded with great rapidity, and at the distance of three miles from the highway emerged from the forest into the open land. Pausing in the border of the wood, they discovered, about forty rods from them, a log house, the inmates of which were not yet stirring. After a brief consultation it was decided that Fleming and Clifton should proceed alone to the house. It was apprehended that a greater number would excite suspicion, and the proof of his guilt might be destroyed by the murderer, if, as they anticipated, he was within the dwelling. For the same reason the constable remained behind, as it was quite probable his person was known to the criminal.

Fleming had been appointed a deputy

for the occasion, and Edward decided to accompany him, for the purpose of identifying the hunter. Exchanging coats with one of the humble members of the party, for the purpose of quieting the apprehensions of the felon, and directing them to follow the valley which descended to the right of the house, and in close proximity to it, Clifton concluded his instructions: "You will scrupulously avoid exhibiting yourselves at points where you can be seen from the house. Recollect that the conviction; if not the arrest, of the demon depends upon our action. If you are seen approaching the dwelling, you may not only expose Fleming and myself to great personal danger, but you will enable the culprit to secrete or destroy every vestige of his guilt. If you can reach the low ground just beyond the house undiscovered, remain there until we have been separated half an hour, unless you discover we have been assailed, when you will, of course, come to our relief. If all remains quiet at the time I have indicated, gather quietly, but in a body, around the house. And now let all act with circumspection. It is unnecessary for me to add that we are engaged in an expedition of great difficulty, perhaps of positive danger."

Each member of the company was well armed, and, confident of their strength, they prepared to follow the directions of their leader.

Edward and Fleming, separating from their companions, and making a detour, approached the house from the opposite direction. Walking boldly up to the door, Fleming applied the back of his hand to it with a sharp rap.

"Who is there?" inquired a stern voice from within.

"Hunters," responded the trapper, "who find success in stalking deer don't keep out the cold."

"Come in, then," said the same harsh voice.

The bolt was withdrawn, and the massive oak door swung upon its hinges, and our adventurers found themselves beneath the low ceiling of a log cabin. The wooden slab which served for a window was still closed, and the apartment was but dimly illuminated by the fire that was fast kindling into a blaze upon the hearth. The blood oozed in Edward's veins, as he discovered by its flickering light that the room was tenanted by four stalwart and powerful men, and among the number he saw the scowling and forbidding visage of the hunter whom he had ob-

served upon the roadside. Quickly pressing Fleming's foot with his own, as a signal that the person whom they sought was before them, he seated himself by the fire.

"You are early upon the trail this morning, Mr. Fleming," observed one of the gang.

The person addressed manifested no surprise at being recognised.

"Oh, yes; you know that he who would compass the stag before he leaves his form for the bend in the river, must be early afoot."

A pause ensued, when Edward underwent the close examination of the ruffians.

"You must have been more fleet of foot than even you have reputation for, to come all the distance from Stamford this morning," said the other, suspiciously.

"That is true; but you must know we came part way upon our horses."

A few moments of silence again ensued, during which time the outlaws were attiring their persons.

"It is seldom," resumed the interrogator, "that you cross the ridge in search of game. I do not think I have seen you in five years before."

"Still we return to old haunts at last; I have been trapping for many a day upon the Hurricane."

"Do you ever search for human game?" inquired the brigand, significantly.

Fleming found it necessary to temporise still longer, so as to give the rest of the party time to arrive at the house.

"Nay, one who pays so little regard to the game laws as I do, may well leave man-catching to the officers of justice."

"And who is your companion?" inquired the savage-looking borderer, who had been scrutinizing Edward during the dialogue.

"He is a country pupil of mine, that I am learning to stalk the deer and snare the muskrat."

"For a countryman, he wears an elegant cravat, and his gold chain is rather costly, provided he came honestly by it."

Edward had unconsciously exposed these decorations to the gaze of the other. A momentary silence prevailed.

"I can tell you," continued the ogre fiercely, "who has thrust his neck into the merciless clutch of the bear, in attempting to act the part of a spy. It is Edward Clifton, the lawyer!"

As he uttered these startling words, the gang sprang to their feet with the utmost vehemence, and in an instant the cabin

was the scene of the wildest commotion. Our adventurers now prepared to defend themselves with the utmost desperation. The brigands, with horrible imprecations, rushed upon them. They were met by men, however, who were not easily overthrown. Fleming possessed an Herculean frame, every muscle of which was indurated by exercise, while Edward was gifted with great personal strength and activity. Their antagonists, on the contrary, although broad-shouldered and powerfully built, were slightly enervated by idle and dissipated lives. The odds, nevertheless, were great, and, if the attack upon our hero and his companion had been more cool and calculating, here would have ended this narrative. In their headlong passion, they did not seek the aid of firearms, but attempted to prostrate their foes by physical force. The foremost was met by a blow from Edward's pistol, which fell upon his forehead with such violence that it laid bare the skull, and prostrated the ruffian, insensible, upon the floor. While Fleming was contending with the most powerful of the band, the remaining two seized Edward, and, after a long but fierce struggle, bore him back against the wall, and one of them, drawing a knife, exclaimed, "Thus let your secret die with you!" Aiming a blow at his heart, the glittering blade was descending, when the door was burst furiously open, and five armed men rushed into the room.

"We are betrayed!" shouted the murderers; "but let us sell our lives dearly!"

The ruffian whom Clifton had knocked down now sprang to his feet, and, retreating together, they fought with the fury of despair. Fleming had effectually secured the one he was contending with, and, joining the rest of the party, he shouted,

"The tables are now turned, my merry men—down with the vagabonds!"

The assailed discharged several pistol-shots, and not without effect. A ball passed through the fleshy part of Edward's arm, and another entered young Davidson's leg. A blow from Fleming's clenched hand fell between the eyes of the murderer with such tremendous force, that it hurled him backwards, and his head coming violently in contact with the wall, he fell to the floor stiffened and motionless. The other desperadoes, borne down by superior numbers, were successively overcome and secured, and the victory was complete.

"Here, Fleming, as you are half a sur-

geon, examine Davidson's wound," said Edward.

"I think you are in the most danger, Edward," observed the young man, "if I may judge from the paleness of your countenance. Yes, by heavens! staunch this wound, Fleming, or it will soon let out the life-blood."

"Water!" said Edward, faintly.

His coat was torn off, and the crimson tide gushed afresh from a severe wound in the arm, above the elbow. Fleming applied rude bandages, and soon arrested the hemorrhage.

"Lead me to the open air. I shall soon be better; the loss of blood was greater than I supposed."

Fleming now examined Davidson's wound, but declared that extracting balls was beyond his skill. "You are in no danger, my young friend," he observed, "but you will require the aid of Dr. Fielding. Speaking of the devil, how surely he will appear. There he comes, as if especially sent by Providence, and with his carriage, too!"

"But too late, I fear," replied the Doctor, jovially, "to do aught but minister to the wounded."

"But how came you here, at all?" inquired Clifton.

"Why, you must know, several of your party are blessed with very warm female friends; and aware of the impetuosity of youth, they sent for me early this morning, for the purpose of despatching me upon your footsteps. I had ascertained you expected to meet the brigands somewhere in this neighbourhood, and summoning a body-guard of one magistrate, and half-a-dozen men, we took the lower mill-road, which, you know, is not half so long, and by dint of hard driving here we are, ready, my dear Davidson, to extract this ball, thus!" And the skilful surgeon, who, during his speech had been actively employed, deposited the ball upon the table.

"And now," he continued, after having examined and dressed Edward's arm rather more scientifically, "you and William must take my carriage, as fever might ensue if you rode on horseback so far."

The cabin was now searched. Upon the person of the one whom Edward suspected of having committed the murder, was found Freeman's watch, pocket-book, and the handkerchief from which the patch had been torn. To establish his guilt beyond a doubt, his shoe corresponded precisely with the measure which Fleming had taken of the track, where the hat of the murdered man had been found.

At noon the party entered the village of Stamford, which was thronged by people from the country, who had been attracted thither to learn the particulars of the tragedy. The entrance of the felon and his comrades, and the wounds of Edward and Davidson, had the effect of increasing the excitement, and as Clifton alighted at the hotel upon the square, the crowd thickened, and he could with difficulty reach his apartment. As the manner in which the prisoners were captured became known, three loud and enthusiastic cheers were given for "Edward Clifton and his gallant companions!"

## CHAPTER XXVI.

"Tis midnight hour; from flower to flower,  
The wayward zephyr floats along;  
Or lingers in the shady bower,  
To hear the night-bird's song."

It was several weeks after the events transpired which were related in the last chapter, before Edward called upon any of his female acquaintances. At length one evening, wearied by intense application to his studies, and somewhat depressed in spirits by the gloomy November weather, he rang the door-bell at the residence of Judge Douglass. In answer to his inquiry if the ladies were at home, the servant responded that his young mistress was ill, and Miss Drayton was making preparations to return to the capital the following day.

"Oh, come in! I am so glad to see you!" joyfully exclaimed that lady, as Clifton was closing the door. "How could you absent yourself for such an age?" and she came forward with a glad smile as she extended her hand.

"It is difficult for one who has been so often the recipient of your sarcasms, to believe that his absence is remarked!"

"You cannot think so, Mr. Clifton. At all events, if you do, I regret exceedingly that I have been so thoroughly misunderstood! Pray be seated. Take that chair near the fire. Recollect, you are still an invalid." He was forced to carry his arm in a sling.

"And how have you amused yourself for so many weeks?" he inquired.

"Indifferently well. At least, my thanks are scarcely due you for the aid which has been afforded me!" and her fair lips slightly curled, as her foot agitated the

spotless drapery, which was visible below the slightly elevated robe.

"It is doubtless a great misfortune that I have been prevented from enjoying more of your society; by which I am the sufferer, I beg you to remember, and not yourself!"

"It is not too late!" replied the maiden, gaily; "and if you do not intend to claim exemption from the fate which you were kind enough to say I inflicted upon my admirers; why, you must come and see me when you visit the city."

"I am truly obliged to you for the invitation, and as there is no one I would sooner be victimized by than your fair ladyship, I may yet yield you a moment's gratification, by suffering you to play upon my heartstrings, whatever amount of mental agony it causes me!"

The tone of sadness with which he concluded (caused more by a depression of spirits than by the theme), at once thrilled a tender chord in the breast of the lovely girl. Her countenance became agitated, and her bosom beat convulsively against the rich bodice which confined it. Bending forward, until those silken curls fell in a luxuriant mass upon his hand, she said, earnestly,

"Mr. Clifton, you must not think me a cold, heartless woman, who seeks to win the regard of your sex but to trifle with their sensibilities. Because I have occasionally passed a merry hour in listening to the protestations of professional gallants, do not, I implore you, deem me so heartless as to cause a man of honour one momentary pang!"

Warmed, in spite of himself, towards the beautiful enthusiast, Edward, gazing into those lustrous and passionate orbs, whose power he found more and more irresistible, was upon the point of yielding to the impetuosity of his feelings, when the door-bell rang, and Mrs. Broughton was announced.

"You perceive, I have been most unfortunate in thus interrupting a charming tête-à-tête! Unless my presence has broken the current of your thoughts, I will withdraw, like a spectre that sometimes flits across the mirror of life."

"Pray do nothing of the kind," laughingly responded Virginia Drayton. "In the first place, it would require a more vivid imagination than either Mr. Clifton or I possess, to transform your exquisite face and person into an apparition. Besides, his dignity would revolt at the idea of displaying so much weakness as a confidential tête-à-tête would imply."

"What an inexplicable mortal!" mentally exclaimed Edward.

"Well, then, I will carry out my intention of passing a few minutes with you, previous to your departure. Although I have limited the duration of my call, nevertheless I have brought my work." And she drew forth some portion of a female habit.

Mrs. Broughton was twenty-five years of age, and had been two years married to a gentleman nearly twice as old. It was a marriage of convenience. He sought a person, youthful and gay, to preside over his household; while she desired a splendid establishment. Both were gratified, and a union founded on esteem, had settled down upon the broad, though not always indestructible basis of affection. The lady possessed a greater share of personal attractions, than are usually bestowed upon her sex. Her form was of the medium height, but round and flexible. Her complexion was exceedingly fair, her eyes gray, yet indescribably beautiful, and expressive, while the full bosom and alabaster shoulders, were surmounted by an exquisitely moulded neck. The small Norman feet were formed from Nature's choicest pattern; and when she walked, it was as though "money was bet on her."

As the visitors rose to take leave, Miss Drayton invited them to visit her at her own residence. Edward could not fail to discover, what was perfectly natural, no doubt, that she urged her request much more strongly when addressing Miss Broughton, than himself. He sought to discover in her eyes some qualification of her easy self-possession, but they were cold and impassive. The dewy lips of the females met.

"A custom more honoured in the breach than the observance, particularly before me," discontentedly remarked Edward.

"There is no pleasing these grumblers," retorted Virginia, gaily; "so we must e'en do just as we please. One would think that they ought to consider themselves sufficiently honoured by having permission to take our hands—at parting?"

The adieus were spoken, and Clifton had closed the door, when Mrs. Broughton requested him to return for her crochet-bag. Entering the parlour, he discovered Miss Drayton reclining upon the sofa, with disordered dress, and her face concealed in her hands. Hearing his footsteps, she started passionately to her feet, and dashing away the tears that coursed down her

cheeks, she indignantly asked the cause of his intrusion.

"I trust Miss Drayton will deem me incapable of dishonourably attempting to obtain a knowledge of her secrets. I merely came as the messenger of Mrs. Broughton to obtain this bauble, and, having done so, I will no longer intrude upon your privacy."

Wounded at the implication upon his motives which her language implied, he turned haughtily away.

"Stay, do not let us part in anger; wear this as a support to your wounded arm?" and she tore from her zone, the ribbon that encircled it.

With a flushed cheek he withdrew from her radiant presence, into the impenetrable gloom of night.

The dreary months of winter were numbered with the past, and spring had again unlocked the frozen barrier which shielded the germ of vegetation from the frost. The season brought little change to our hero, save an accumulation of business, which had the effect of confining him more closely to his office. During the winter, his amusements consisted in a morning canter upon his gallant horse; and attendance upon the circuit court in four counties. As the warm air of spring unfolded the flowers, and caused the leaves and blossoms to shoot forth with a suddenness peculiar to a Southern climate, his feelings assumed their wonted healthfulness.

The grounds of General Foster were undergoing extensive and thorough repair, and as the back door of Edward's office opened into the garden, he was often requested by the proprietor, to make such suggestions as his taste might prompt.

At these conferences, Ellen Foster was not present, although Edward frequently saw her expanding and beautiful form within the precincts of the garden. Once she approached them unconsciously, but when sternly admonished of her fault, she retreated like a startled fawn. Grieved at being the cause of this unfeeling rebuke, he resolved not to enter the enclosure again. Several weeks now passed without his seeing the beautiful nymph. The harshness with which she was treated enlisted his sympathies, as he traced to that cause her pensive and thoughtful expression.

As he was seated one night at an open window, long after the town was locked in sleep, there came upon his ear sounds, indistinct and low, like the wailing of a person in deep distress. Keenly alive to

the unhappiness of others, he listened anxiously to ascertain from whence the sounds proceeded. Opening the door cautiously, he entered the grounds of General Foster, and advanced in the direction of the bower, which was situated near the centre of the enclosure. He ascertained that the moaning came from thence, but the thick foliage that clustered around prevented him from discovering who was the sufferer. Delicacy made him hesitate, for a moment, what course to pursue. What right had a stranger to intrude, when he had no power to relieve the anguish? He turned to depart, when a vehement burst of grief arrested his footsteps.

"Why was I born, or when in existence, oh! why did my own mother die, and leave me to the cruelty of a tyrannical step-mother? If she had lived, I should have been spared the agony of this horrible moment. To die by my own hand! It is frightful, yet not so terrible as a life, into which is crowded the most intense agony." A pause ensued, when the voice spoke with more determination. "Yes, better now than later; if I had one solitary friend to console me, it might be endured, but all are shut out, and I am now absolutely alone. This knife is now my only resource. God forgive me, and receive my soul."

The bright blade was descending in the direction of her heart, when her hand was arrested by Edward, who exclaimed:

"Rash girl, what would you do?"

Frightened by his sudden appearance, and overpowered by the intensity of her feelings, the unhappy girl fainted.

"I am too late; she will die! what can be done? No aid at hand! Yes, it must be so," and raising her form in his arms, he bore her into his office, and laying her upon the sofa, sprinkled water in her face.

"So young, so beautiful, and yet so unhappy! God of heaven! neither poverty nor wealth brings exemption from misery."

It was long before the maiden recovered from her swoon; and when at last the drooping lids were raised, and she gazed around the room, it was with a bewildered air, until her glance encountered the look of respectful sympathy which beamed from his eyes. Then her head reclined upon the cushion, and her overcharged heart found relief in a torrent of tears. Edward suffered her to weep undisturbed for several minutes, when he addressed her with a soothing voice.

"Indeed, you were wrong, young lady, to raise your hand against the life which God gave you."

"Perhaps I was," she sighed; "and now the temptation is passed, I am grateful for your interposition. But oh, sir, you can scarcely imagine the mental agony I am each day subjected to; it is enough to drive me distracted," and she raised her hands and clasped them passionately together.

"Do not suppose," said he; "that an idle curiosity prompts me to solicit your confidence. But if you will unburthen your heart to me, I can sympathize with, if I am unable to alleviate your sufferings."

The manner of Clifton had the effect of calming the agitated spirits of the young girl. Gazing with her large, piercing black eyes for a moment into his own, she confidently placed her hand in his, as she said, "I have found a friend at last; I know I cannot be mistaken, for I feel relief here," and she placed her hand upon her heart. "But I must go now, my absence may be discovered, and you know," said she innocently, "that I ought not to remain here. If you will meet me at the bower to-morrow night, two hours earlier than it is now, I will make you my confidant. You do not think it will be improper, do you?" and she placed her taper fingers upon his arm, and sought his glance with her expressive eyes.

Edward paused in deep thought. It would be a stain upon his honour, to expose that fair flower, who leaned upon him so trustingly, to the hazard of being surprised in his company; and yet how could he prevent a recurrence of the terrible fatality which threatened her existence, unless he was apprised of the secrets which preyed upon her mind?

"Yes," said he, "I will meet you; but once only, and as a brother might advise a sister, against a threatening danger. But how can you obtain admittance to-night?"

"Oh, easily; my maid is aware of my absence, and is now awaiting my return."

"She might have remained a long time at her post."

Ellen shuddered. "Good night; many, many thanks for your kindness. Do not forget our interview!"

"Doubt me not."

And he saw her lithe and graceful form slowly receding, with her head bent sadly upon her bosom, until the shadowy outlines were lost in the gloom.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

"And bright  
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,  
And all went merry as a marriage bell!"  
BYRON.

"Served too in hastier swell to show  
Short glimpses of a breast of snow."  
SCOTT.

"I AM glad, Mr. Clifton, you arrested the rash attempt upon my life," said Ellen, as they were seated in the arbour.

"Tis strange, that any one should wish to terminate a career, for which the future has so many bright promises."

"Where the present is embittered, hope affords no balm."

"You are surrounded by wealth, and near relations; what can cause you unhappiness?"

"Listen! My mother died when I was a child. She was the kindest and most affectionate being I ever beheld. Indeed, Mr. Clifton, I have never known what it was to be loved by any other person. My father married, two years ago, a young, hard-hearted, and unfeeling woman, the object of whose existence is to lacerate my feelings."

"Why do you not inform your father of her conduct?"

"I did, but only met with stern rebuke. My mother, who was as gentle as she was affectionate, once told me, when my father had left her in tears, that he had married her because she was an heiress, and after he had obtained her fortune, treated her with coldness and contempt. His aversion for his wife descended to her offspring, and he has always repulsed my affection."

"All this I could bear, if it was not for the opprobrium which is daily heaped upon the name of my angelic mother. That arouses me to desperation."

"Your fate is a hard one."

"Yes, but now I can bear it more cheerfully, since I have you to console me." And the maiden's eyelids drooped, until they half concealed her lustrous orbs.

"How can I see you? I have never been introduced to your step-mother, and you are too young to receive visitors?"

"Oh! they will not permit you to see me. Our interviews must be here!"

"If we are not discovered. Still, when spring and summer are gone, the cold winds of autumn will keep you from the arbour?"

"Never! though the storm may rage, my heart will be warm!"

There was no resisting the guileless maiden, and Edward consented to meet her, occasionally, in the bower.

"Do you know, Clifton?" said Dr. Fielding, "our party talk of nominating you to represent the county in the Legislature?"

"Impossible!"

"True, I assure you. I am a member of the county caucus, and you are a delegate to the congressional and senatorial convention, which assembles the same day at Bergen. On your return, you will undoubtedly be apprised of your nomination!"

"I am exceedingly obliged to my friends, and, Fielding, to yourself in particular, for this flattering assurance, but really, nothing could be more injurious than a compliance with your wishes."

"Why so?"

"It would interfere with my profession, be unjust to my clients, and entangle me irretrievably in politics!"

"As an offset, it will bring you in contact with the most prominent men in the state, and will enable you to pass a very pleasant winter in the metropolis."

"But the contact will be upon a warm platform, and the relaxation will distract my attention from legal investigation. Recollect the fate of the Carthaginians at Capua."

"Nothing is more common, than for lawyers to perform their duties in the legislative hall, and attend the sessions of the Supreme Court."

"They are generally men who have passed the heyday of youth, and are not tempted by the fascinations of the capital."

"Very well, you can decline the nomination, if you please, but I am inclined to think it will be made."

Clifton attended the convention at Bergen. A long-established favourite was nominated for re-election to Congress. For the office of senator, Edward was anxious to procure the position for his friend Harden, who was, however, unknown to the delegates from the other counties. The recommendation was so earnest, that he was selected. On his return, and before he had entered the village of Stamford, Edward was apprised of his own nomination for the county. The court met the following Monday. A large crowd assembled, and Clifton mounting the rostrum, with many thanks for the honour conferred upon him, declined the



nomination. Several months after, he attended the Supreme Court. While passing from the hotel to the hall of justice, he met Virginia Drayton.

A warm blush stole across the face of the lady, as she returned his salutation.

"What is the name of that really fine-looking gentleman, Virginia?"

"Mr. Edward Clifton; a person I picked up, a few months ago."

"Another victim?"

"Not exactly, but he is in a transition state."

The language which vanity prompted her to utter, was unfortunately overheard by the only person who had ever touched her heart.

Edward had followed her footsteps, for the purpose of ascertaining the number of her residence, and was in the act of pronouncing her name, when her ungracious words fell upon his ear. He retraced his steps on the instant.

It was a jam. The saloons were crowded with gay women and chivalrous men. The parlour, hall, and chambers, were thronged. Everywhere was that soft pressure, so enchanting to our sex, so graciously pardoned by theirs. It was the Governor's reception. These politicians have not grown gray in protracted conflicts, without acquiring a thorough knowledge of men. The Governor's salutations were as dissimilar as the characters who presented themselves. It was amusing to witness the versatility of his talents. For, a successful contact with a promiscuous multitude, is evidence of a high order of intellect. To one, his manner was frank, a sort of "give me a chew of tobacco," familiarity; to another, his greeting was deferential; a third, was welcomed with dignified courtesy. The democrats were received with congratulations, and the whigs with a modest allusion, "to the fortune of war."

"Governor, it will be our time next; so prepare yourself!"

"I am always ready, Col. Blanchard, to obey the voice of the people.—The Colonel takes the defeat of his party sorely, Judge?" said his excellency, as the whig leader mingled with the crowd.

"Yes, and it was an unexpected triumph, and mainly attributable to your own exertions."

"Thank you, Judge. How are you, Mack? Why, I have not seen you since that glorious barbecue at the cross-roads; you have been well, I hope? and the wife and little ones?"

"All well, Governor; and I reckon no one is more pleased at our triumph over

the Feds, than Mack Durkee. I allers told you 'twould be so?"

"True, Mack, I recollect; now, go on, yonder, you will find the table loaded with fare, equal to your barbecue."

Another party entered, in the midst of which was a tall and commanding form.

"General, I am most happy to see you. This is far more agreeable than our protracted contest upon the stump."

"It is doubtless, to you, Colonel, who proved the victor."

"Another time, you may be the host, and I the guest; these political revolutions sometimes go backwards, you know."

"Yes, I have just witnessed an illustration of your remark, Governor."

"Always severe. Let my wife condole with you; I believe she would have given her influence for you, if I had not been a candidate."

The crowd became more dense in the vicinity of these renowned competitors; but separated again, as the Governor's wife took the arm of his opponent.

"Your message was a capital document," said Senator —. "It is rarely that I have heard an executive communication so much lauded."

"Are there no complaints that it is too radical in its conclusions?"

"Some of the old conservatives object to it upon that account, but the progressive portion of the Legislature are in ecstasies."

"I am sure it will take with the people, especially the young men," continued the Governor; "enough attention has not been paid to that part of our population. They will exercise within a fourth of a century, a greater influence in this republic, than the combined power of wisdom and age. You must address yourself to them, if you would succeed in doubtful struggles. The great political lever is *enthusiasm*; once enlist it in your cause, and your triumph is certain. Youth alone is enthusiastic. For the future, I play to win the young men."

At this moment Edward presented himself. He was well known to the Governor.

"Mr. Clifton, this is an unexpected honour. When did you arrive in town?"

"Yesterday; and hearing you had a public reception to-night, I took the liberty of paying my respects."

"You are thrice welcome. I heard of your refusal to accept a seat in the Legislature. Perhaps you were right, yet your ultimate career must be the political arena. You have too many elements of success

to devote a lifetime to the drudgery of the law."

Edward bowed. The compliment was gratifying, but he was annoyed that His Excellency had observed the skill with which the shaft had been launched. He was advancing into the room, when the Governor arrested his steps, and calling to his side a graceful maiden, he said—

"Blanche, this is my friend. He is a stranger in the city, and unknown to our guests. Mr. Clifton, my niece. Don't turn her head, she is yet a school-girl."

She raised a pair of laughing eyes to Edward's face, for the purpose of convincing him that there was no danger, and taking his arm, they were borne by the gay throng into the interior of the Executive mansion.

"Am I to keep you out of danger by appropriating you to myself, or shall I lead you into harm's way by introducing you to some fair lady?" said the merry girl.

"I think I am in as much peril now as I can resist."

"Oh!" putting her hand upon her mouth, "what did uncle tell you?"

"He ought to have told me that I was in more danger than his niece."

"You are incorrigible!" replied the laughing girl.

"At all events, I am satisfied with my fate, and in that respect resemble certain persons we read of, who hug the chains which enslave them."

"The literal translation whereof reads thus: Mr. Clifton will accept the protection of Miss Blanche for at least fifteen minutes, or until some more attractive damsel crosses his path. You see I understand human nature, if I am a school-girl."

They entered the room occupied by the dancers. Conspicuous among them, Edward discovered Miss Drayton; she was waltzing with a young and dashing member of the Governor's staff. Their looks met. The recognition of the lady was cordial, Edward's frigid. He was soon whirling the flexible form of his partner around the room. In the throng there were, unavoidably, many collisions, but they had thrice traversed the apartment without accident, when the pressure in one corner became so close that the brocade skirts of a dark-eyed lady partly encircled the form of our hero. With a graceful self-possession she released him, and he found himself in the presence of Ellen Foster's step-mother. He bowed low, in acknowledgment of her—

"I beg your pardon, sir."

Before they could resume the waltz, and while Clifton's arm encircled the waist of his partner, she observed—

"What! you two reside in the same village, and not acquainted? That will never do. Mrs. Foster, allow me to present my protégé, Mr. Clifton."

"You know, Blanche, I have not mingled in society, lately, owing to the death of a near relative."

"Ah, that accounts for it."

"When did you leave Stamford, Mr. Clifton?"

"Day before yesterday."

"Do you know if our family were all well?"

"I saw General Foster within the hour of my departure, and he assured me they were all in perfect health."

Mrs. Foster was splendidly dressed. Her robe was made of the costliest brocade silk. Upon her head she wore a tiara of diamonds, which scarcely surpassed in beauty the luxuriant folds of her jet-black hair.

"While our partners are conversing, let us take a turn," said the gentleman to Blanche.

"Why I shall leave him in the very jaws of temptation."

"Never fear; he is safe with me."

Edward thought it was strange that such a lovely woman could be so cruel. Her complexion was exceedingly fair, her eyes, as black as night, had no "lurking devil in them." Her shoulders were as white as Parian marble, and the round, full form, had all the flexibility of youth. He looked for the cloven foot, but his glance fell upon small pedestals trimly encased in satin slippers.

"Tis very strange!" he mentally exclaimed. "I will know more of her."

"Our partners have deserted us. Will you be the substitute of Miss Blanche for this polka?"

"With pleasure."

As they wound through the fairy maze, her eloquent eyes were raised for fleeting moments to his own, and her fragrant breath played upon his cheek. Away they sped, as sparkling eyes, glittering diamonds, fluttering dresses, flying feet, and pliant limbs floated past. At first his partner moved with ease, scarce resting her taper fingers upon his arm, while his hand barely touched her waist. But as they proceeded she claimed more support. His arm, tightening upon her zone, drew the yielding form nearer to his person, the tiny hand was elevated to his shoulder, and her respiration became more rapid, as



the warm blood tinged her cheek with a rich bloom, while the drooping lids half concealed the languishing, but expressive black eyes. As the music ceased, Virginia Drayton advanced, and grasped Mrs. Foster's hand with much cordiality. Edward bowed to his partner, and joined Blanche.

"What is the matter with Miss Drayton?" she inquired. "Is she struck with your appearance as a stranger, or have you quarrelled?"

"Why do you ask the question?"

"Because I have noticed her eyes fixed upon you, with a painful earnestness, for the last half hour."

"You imagined such was the case."

"No, but I did not; even now, as you left her, a warm blush which mantled her cheek was succeeded by a deathlike pallor. Look for yourself."

Clifton turned his eyes to the centre of the room, but the forms of Miss Drayton and Mrs. Foster were no longer visible.

"You must seek the fair dame, and make an apology."

"The search would be bootless; besides, I have no apology to make."

"Let us proceed, then, to the supper-table. I must confess myself most unromantically hungry; are not you?"

As they edged their way through the crowd, she whispered—

"This would all be very nice, if there were not so many common people present."

"Why, you little aristocrat, have not common people votes?"

"Certainly; but you know there are as many among the whigs as in the ranks of the democracy. So they neutralize each other."

"What shall I help you to?"

"A bit of partridge. I should think others were blessed with appetites as well as ourselves, from the appearance of these tables. Would you believe it, Mr. Clifton, they were loaded down before the guests arrived. I am afraid the Governor's hospitality will be questioned. These whigs are a prying set of fellows. If they can take an inventory of the President's gold spoons, why may they not report the state of the Governor's larder? But I beg your pardon; perhaps you are a whig," said she, innocently.

"Not I; as far from it as your uncle is from parsimony. See! the tables are covered again."

"Well done, uncle! they have not caught you unprepared this time."

"Will you do me the honour of taking wine with me?"

"Mother don't approve of school-girls indulging in strong drink."

"Not champagne?"

"Ha! ha! that reminds me of a class-mate who was told not to be tempted by the powers of darkness. She naively inquired, 'What, not by the Prince of darkness?'"

They returned to the parlour. The enlivening strains of music had already called the dancers to the floor.

As Edward was leaving the festive scene, he met Virginia Drayton. Anxiety was imprinted upon her countenance, and as he was passing her with a haughty bow, she said, in a voice which trembled with the excess of her emotion—

"Why is your conduct so cruel and ungenerous?"

"No one can answer that question more readily than Miss Drayton?"

"If I have done aught to give you offence, I regret it exceedingly."

"Your language is not susceptible of explanation."

She drew her form up in all the majesty of its commanding proportions, and her eyes flashed with intolerable fire, as Edward turned on his heel and withdrew.

A few evenings after the Governor's reception, our hero called upon Mrs. Foster. She frankly held out her hand, and invited him to take a seat beside her upon the sofa. Her appearance was youthful, for she scarcely numbered twenty-three years. There was a winning softness and indescribable grace in her manner, totally inconsistent with the remorseless character which Ellen had portrayed.

"I have just received a letter from General Foster," she observed, "informing me that business engagements will prevent him from coming for me before the last day of next week. I am anxious to return day after to-morrow."

"I shall start for Stamford that day, myself, and if I can be of service, I hope you will command me."

"Oh! thank you! By what conveyance did you come to the city?"

"On horseback."

"If you will take a seat in our carriage, and let my footman ride your horse, I shall consider it a great favour."

"Certainly; with much pleasure!"

"Now that is arranged, what did you think of the persons whom you met at the Governor's?"

"I observed very few, and those were agreeable."

"Especially the fair Blanche?"

"Is she not piquant?"

"Yes; she is a great favourite of mine. Then, she waltzes so gracefully!"

"Not so well as you do!"

"Do you think not? It makes my feet sore here," and she touched the instep. Edward had never seen anything so beautifully shaped, except Alice Howard's.

As he rose to take his leave, she observed, "Do not forget that we start early the day after to-morrow."

"I shall be prepared."

As he wended his way to the hotel, he resolved to fathom her character, and, if possible, to acquire an influence over her which should ameliorate the condition of her unhappy step-daughter.

The following night he was invited to attend a meeting of the Democratic members of the Legislature, at the mansion of the Governor. The assemblage was informally organized by the appointment of an aged Senator as Chairman. The question under consideration was the prospects of the party at the next Presidential election.

"I attribute the cause of our defeat in 1840," said the Speaker of the House, "to the cold and phlegmatic temperament of Mr. Van Buren. It is useless to disguise the fact, that the influence of General Jackson elected him in 1836. He has always been a dead weight upon our party. There are no elements about the man to create enthusiasm, and he is most popular with persons who have never seen him. A selfish man will always become odious, because his enemies will assail, and he has no admirers to defend him. Our candidate in 1840 had no supporters who would sacrifice for his advancement what General Jackson's would for him. He never made a favourable impression upon them. They left his presence assured of the overwhelming selfishness of the man. A Northern editor, who had sacrificed large sums for him in the canvass of 1836, called upon the President. He was shown into the parlour, and congratulated himself upon having a private interview with the Executive. Mr. Van Buren entered, and throwing himself into an easy chair, seemed more interested in contemplating a well-fitting boot than in making a favourable impression upon his supporter. No one likes to be treated with indifference, and the editor left the White House, thoroughly despising its occupant. In selecting a candidate for the next conflict, let us choose one who is personally popular. It is the personal bearing of Mr. Clay which renders him the terror of the democracy. Thousands of devoted hearts

rally around the gallant leader, and nothing but his principles excludes him from the Presidential chair."

"There is undoubtedly much force in the remarks of my friend," observed a gray-headed Senator, "but there were other elements which contributed to our defeat. The feelings of our people were aroused in behalf of the Canadian patriots, and thousands were indignant at the proclamation of Mr. Van Buren. In the northern tier of States, it lost him the support of entire masses. It is absolute folly to suppose that resistance can be offered, with impunity, to the participation of the Americans in the struggles of contiguous States for freedom and independence. While the Northern States were expressing their interest in the Canadian struggle, ten thousand rifles were grasped for the purpose of driving the Mexican invader from the soil of Texas. These facts must not be overlooked. The sympathies of our population will always be excited in the cause of a people struggling to free themselves from oppression. This ingredient will enter into every Presidential contest until the continent is brought under the protection of the stars and stripes. Shrewd politicians float on the current; they do not attempt to resist it."

After he had resumed his seat, there was a pause, when Edward rose to address the chairman. "While I admit," he observed, "that the personal bearing of Mr. Van Buren, as well as his proclamation, contributed largely to his disgraceful defeat, still, there were other causes which operated more powerfully. The rag-currency with which the country was flooded by worthless institutions, had brought ruin to the hearthstones of thousands. A general bankruptcy pervaded the whole land, and a shout was raised for a change of administration. In vain our stump-speakers explained the causes of the wide-spread disaster; they were answered, 'Our condition cannot be worse!' It was the almighty dollar which decided the Presidential contest of 1840. There were accessories other than those referred to by the two gentlemen. A leading principle of the Democratic party, since it was organized by Mr. Jefferson, has been the acquisition of territory. Upon that question the two great factions have been divided. The cold reception which the cabinet of Mr. Van Buren gave to the application of Texas for admission into the Union, gave umbrage to the progressive democracy. He did not keep pace with public opinion, and no laggard can arrest the attention of

our enthusiastic population. They will have more land. It is useless to resist the impulse; it will prostrate everything that opposes it. Every contiguous acre of land will be annexed until the continent is ours. The democratic columns are filled with ardent progressionists, who will be driven into the Whig ranks if this portion of the Democratic creed is abandoned. The very boldness of the policy, and its manifest tendency to enlarge the area of freedom, wins to its support thousands of restless spirits, who despise the timid and conservative principles of the Whig party.

"The programme of the last campaign displayed the most stupid ignorance of human nature. It must be discarded hereafter. We entered the political arena, openly proclaiming that no appeal was to be made to the enthusiasm of the voters. We were determined to rely upon the justice of our cause. Nothing could have been more fatal than this announcement. There are always enough men to turn the scale in a Presidential election, who regard it as a kind of jubilee. They like to rally beneath partisan banners. Excitement has more effect upon them than an appeal to their judgments. There was another radical defect in our tactics. We have hitherto nominated very respectable, but superannuated old men upon the electoral ticket, under the erroneous impression that their names would make converts of our opponents. This is a fatal mistake. We want active, vigorous men, who will mount the stump, and for half a year's campaign proclaim the dogmas of the Democratic party. We want no more hackneyed politicians who have outlived enthusiasm. Let us have ardent, impetuous, hopeful young men, who can inspire hope in others; men with warm imaginations and generous impulses; then, victory will certainly crown our efforts!"

As Edward concluded, there was a warm demonstration of applause. The Governor, who had entered the room as he commenced, now advanced, and said, as he cordially shook his hand,

"You have taken a correct view of the case, and I thank you for so ably expressing opinions which I have long entertained. Your speech to-night," he continued, in a low tone, "will place you upon the electoral ticket."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"I loved him as a young genius loves,  
When its own mild and radiant heaven  
Of stormy thought burns with the light,  
The love, the life, by passion given.  
I loved him, too, as woman loves—  
Reckless of sorrow, sin, or scorn:  
Life had no evil destiny  
That, with him, I could not have borne."

LONDON.

It was a bright morning in October—that most delightful of all the months of the year—when General Foster's carriage left the metropolis. His fair wife and Edward Clifton were its sole occupants. A heavy frost was fast disappearing before the sun's rays, but its blight was indicated by the falling leaves, which descended in continuous masses to the earth. The sap—that life-blood of the trees—was congealed, and the forest appeared in undress. The uninterrupted descent of the variegated foliage alone disturbed the profound stillness which reigned in the wood.

The spirited horses had traversed a score of miles, and were now ascending a range of hills which led to the highlands between the metropolis and Stamford.

"What could be more charming than a scene like this?" said the lady, as she threw herself back in the carriage, after a long survey of the valley through which they had just passed.

"Nothing, I am sure," responded Edward, "especially with a companion who can appreciate its beauties."

"That is true," she sighed: "Unfortunately, the General has no eye for Nature's loveliness."

"Pardon me, madam, I think you do him injustice; in the choice of a companion he has exhibited a decided appreciation of the beauties of Nature."

"You are very complimentary, Mr. Clifton," replied the lady in a reserved tone; but Edward saw, nevertheless, a pleased expression steal, like a flitting shadow, across her countenance.

"No, if you please; I am simply just."

"Do you see that lofty peak, where the opening trees give us a view of the mountain range?"

"What, the cone separated from us scarce one-fourth of a mile?"

"Yes. The summit of that rock affords a magnificent prospect of the surrounding country."

"Have we not sufficient time to examine it?"

"If it would afford you pleasure. We may as well let the horses rest here as anywhere else. Alfred, take them from

the carriage, and then carry this basket to the top of the mount."

Gracefully tripping along the path, Mrs. Foster led the way to the base of the cone. The ascent was steep, and the summit would have been inaccessible but for the rude steps which had been cut in the earth and rocks. With the assistance of her companion, she was soon reclining upon the moss-covered stone which formed the apex of the mound. At their feet yawned a precipice that appeared of illimitable depth. Far down, the tops of the loftiest pine and cypress mingling together, appeared like the smooth outlines of the most delicate shrubbery. On their right, the brow of the mountain jutted boldly into the blue ether, or receded into the thick, stunted trees, which bristled like coarse hair upon its front. Before them was spread out ten thousand acres of arable land, checked by fences, traversed by thoroughfares, and dotted here and there with elegant mansions or rustic cottages. Edward gazed upon the scene with looks of admiration. As he turned his glance to Mrs. Foster, her eyes were fixed upon his countenance, as if she was observing the effect of the prospect upon him.

"It is grand, is it not?" she inquired.

"I have rarely seen it equalled."

"If it has not taken away your appetite, suppose we have a lunch."

"I see no materials, unless you possess the power that multiplied the five loaves and two fishes."

"Why, Mr. Clifton, you ought to be anathematized!"

"My allusion is surely not profane, when reference is made to a divinity."

"I see you are incurable," replied the lady, with a shake of her head, sufficiently decisive to cause a mass of curls to play upon her cheek.

"Alas! madam, I fear it is so."

"Enough. Open that basket, if you please," and her eyebrows were contracted into a slight frown. The lips, however, qualified the stern expression of her forehead.

"How well you have provided for our journey."

"I did it to avoid stopping at a country tavern, which is my abhorrence."

"Cold chicken, ham, partridge, bread, cake, champagne. It should have been my care to provide all this."

"But, man-like, you thought only of the present."

"You will pardon me, if that is all I think of now."

They returned to the carriage, and as the atmosphere became more chilly the top was raised, and the windows were closed. Edward could scarcely believe the gifted and gentle being at his side was ever transformed into a domestic tyrant. Her blooming cheek rested upon one hand, while the fingers of the other toyed with her hair, now running through the mass of curls, and anon pressing a ringlet to her rosy mouth.

"It shall be my duty to unmask you," he mentally exclaimed; "this fair exterior shall not deceive me."

"How do you like a married life?" he inquired.

She shrugged her pretty shoulders. "Indifferently well. I think a girl is foolish to wed before she is twenty-five. It is hard to surrender all the attentions which are bestowed upon a maiden, and to settle down into the sober matron."

"But following the customs of the French, the married ladies of the metropolis receive more attention than the girls; at least I thought so."

"Even there, the social regulations of Paris are not received without condemnation, and their importation into Stamford would cause a rebellion."

"Yes, small places are censorious."

"I have a kind and affectionate husband, however, to console me for the change of life."

"Is he the only member of your family?"

"No, I have a step-daughter."

"She must contribute largely to your amusement."

"She does."

Edward saw a sarcastic smile play upon her lips, but it quickly faded into a sad and pensive expression.

As the gloom of night usurped the power of day, they entered the village of Stamford. Before Clifton bade her adieu, she invited him to call and see her often. Proceeding to his office, his name was softly pronounced, and, casting his eyes, upwards to the balcony, he beheld for a moment the joyous countenance of Ellen, as she kissed her hand, before she disappeared.

When she entered the bower, where he had been for some time awaiting her, the maiden was sobbing violently.

"Ellen, what can have troubled you?"

"Oh, Mr. Clifton, I am so unhappy! The only exemption from misery which I have for months known, was during her absence; but now she has returned, and more vindictive than ever." And then

she wept as though her heart would break.

"Do not distress yourself so much," he said, in a soothing voice, as he took her hand. "I think in less than six months I shall be able to shield you from her violence."

"I shall be so thankful. You do not know how much I have missed you," she said, as she smiled through her tears. "I should have been very unhappy, if I had not formed the acquaintance of Mr. Davidson."

"Indeed, so you have a beau, have you?"

"Not that. No, I have only seen him four times."

"Lasting impressions can be made upon susceptible hearts in less than four interviews. But he is a noble fellow."

"I am glad you think so, Mr. Clifton. He is so kind, and I am so grateful, because I have never been treated kindly by any persons except you and Mr. Davidson."

"I see how it is; we shall have a marriage in about four years."

"Oh, no; I am only fourteen."

"And will you not be eighteen then?"

"But Mr. Davidson has not talked of love to me."

"He would be an impetuous fellow, if he did, thus early. But I dare say his eyes expressed it."

"I don't know, for I did not look at him."

"You will not care to meet me here again, now?"

"That is unkind," she said, reproachfully; "were you not my earliest friend?"

"Adieu, then."

"Good bye." And she put her arm around his neck and half embraced him, before she bounded along the gravelled walk which led towards the mansion.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

"When last we met, I swore our next encounter  
Should be the unsparing strife of life and death!"  
OSHELENCHLAGER.

"Cowards die many times before their deaths;  
The valiant never taste of death but once.  
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,  
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;  
Seeing that death, a necessary end,  
Will come when it will come."  
SHAKESPEARE.

GENERAL HARRISON did not long survive

his elevation to the Presidency. His successor failed to win the confidence of the Whig party, and the fierce denunciations of its great leader, were levelled at his head. Posterity will form an impartial judgment, as to the merits of the quarrel between John Tyler, and the voters who elected him. He was accused of having opened negotiations for the annexation of Texas, for the purpose of prolonging his political power. Steps had been taken by the democrats, whigs, and Tyler men, to hold conventions for the purpose of opening the campaign of 1844.

"How are you, Clifton? I am glad to see you," said Clarendon, as he entered Edward's office, accompanied by Dr. Fielding.

"The happiness is mutual. Sit down. It is long since I had the pleasure of seeing you. Fielding, how is your health?"

"Excellent."

"Tis surprising, Clifton, how these physicians always keep in good health, and yet they never take any of their own pills. How do you account for it?"

"Exercise in the open air, and a consciousness of doing good, are undoubtedly the principal causes."

"You are far too charitable. They strikingly illustrate the follies of human nature. The fear of death makes us seek the aid of a physician, with something of that desperate confidence which the Catholic exhibits when claiming the intercession of the priest, and with just as slight a prospect of success."

"So far as honesty is exhibited by the two professions," retorted Fielding, "I think honours are easy. There is one thing I can say of ours, however. No fee is sufficiently large, to induce us to sell our opinions to the first ragamuffin who chances to bid for them."

"If you do not sell your opinions, you adhere to them, right or wrong, with dogmatical obstinacy, even if it causes the death of your patients."

"Come, gentlemen, you are getting heated. That is wrong, among friends; let us change the subject," said Clifton. The eyes of his companions flashed fire, but with an effort, they controlled their feelings.

"Who will your party nominate for the Presidency, Clarendon?"

"Harry of the West, and by acclamation."

"But if he opposes the annexation of Texas?"

"He will not be so blind as to do that."

"I am not so certain. The National

Intelligencer and Louisville Journal are openly denouncing the movement. Would they do this without the sanction of Mr. Clay? Come in, Judge Douglass. Mr. Senator Harden, you are welcome."

"You are correct, Mr. Clifton. Henry Clay must oppose the annexation of Texas," observed Judge Douglass.

"He will be driven to it by two considerations. That portion of the Whig party, at the North tainted with abolitionism, will require it. If the question becomes popular, John Tyler will claim the fruits, so that opposition is Mr. Clay's only recourse."

"Who will be your candidate, Clifton?"

"The chances are in favour of Mr. Van Buren."

"The opinion he last expressed upon the subject, was adverse to annexation."

"That was several years ago."

"You will find," said the Judge, "he does not keep pace with the desire for more land, which influences the Democratic party?"

"He will be cast overboard then," said Harden, promptly.

"It is barely possible," interposed Edward, "that he will array himself against the measure. The Washington Globe, edited by his friend Blair, is advocating the movement with great power."

"And then he has the example of General Jackson, to urge him onwards," said the Senator.

"But the opposing influences are equally powerful," replied the Judge. "A large majority of Northern politicians have taken a stand against the acquisition; he is in their midst, and more likely to be controlled by sectional prejudices, which are constantly whispered in his ear, than by the distant mutterings of public sentiment."

"Whatever course the politicians may have taken, in a moment of resentment," observed our hero, "the acquisition of contiguous territory, has become a part of the Democratic faith. The rank and file of the party, North and South, are committed to it, unalterably. The annexation of Texas will become popular throughout the Union."

"If that is the case, what will you do with its projector, President Tyler?"

"We shall have nothing to do with him," said Fielding; "we never deal in cast off-furniture."

"By the way, Judge," remarked Harden, "it is curious how fiercely your party assail the man whom you so recently elevated to the presidency of the senate?"

"Not at all. He richly deserved it from the voters whom he had betrayed?"

"I must be excused for dissenting from your conclusions. John Tyler has always been opposed to the measures which Mr. Clay urged upon him with so much perseverance."

"But did he not shed tears because Mr. Clay was not nominated, instead of General Harrison?" responded the Judge, warmly.

"I discover, you are as sensitive as the rest of the whigs, upon the subject. But let us treat it with coolness and good-nature. The sole pretext for the remorseless attack upon the President of the United States, is the shedding of tears at Harrisburg. That Mr. Tyler admired Mr. Clay, as much as he despised Martin Van Buren, is undeniable. But if the President is to be denounced for urging the nomination of the Kentuckian at Harrisburg, with a perfect knowledge of his principles, is not the great statesman just as culpable for advocating the election of Captain Tyler, with his opinions recorded in the journals of the Senate?"

"Well put, by Jove!" exclaimed Fielding.

"But he was bound in honour to carry out the principles of the party that elected him."

"I deny the proposition *in toto*. He was not called upon, by honour or duty, to abandon those principles which he had, over and over again, declared to be essential to the prosperity of the American confederacy. He would have been a traitor, doubly damned, if he had bartered his opinions to subserve the purposes of Henry Clay. No, sir!" exclaimed Harden, becoming excited himself. "I can tell you the cause of the onslaught, which for rancour has no parallel in the history of political warfare. John Tyler was not satisfied with being an *accidental* President. He was playing for the succession. This interfered with the programme of the Western orator. John Tyler must be headed, at all hazards, and hence bank charters, fiscal agencies, and a whole brood of wild and destructive measures, were hurried through Congress, and presented to the executive, with a perfect assurance that he would exercise the veto power. When he had verified their mental predictions, the cry of traitor was raised in the Senate, it was echoed in the House of Representatives, and found a response wherever a Clay man could be found. Harry of the West has attained his object. Captain Tyler is prostrate and powerless."

"If we have treated him so ungraciously, why do not the democracy rally around him? They are expert in winning sympathy?"

"I can tell you, Mr. Clarendon. The democracy are not in the habit of selecting their candidates from the ranks of their opponents!"

"But, according to your own statement, John Tyler is more of a democrat than a whig?"

"He has nevertheless been damned with knowledge of you. Besides, his approval of the bankrupt law, is an insurmountable barrier to our support!"

"But suppose, Mr. Harden, Van Buren opposes the annexation of Texas. What course will your party adopt?"

"They will verify the doctrine, that we adhere to principles, not men!"

"And select some other candidate?"

"Assuredly!"

"What will the whigs do, if Mr. Clay unites with his hereditary foe, in attempting to crush John Tyler and the Texas movement together?"

"They will turn their backs upon a long-cherished favourite," replied Clarendon.

"I predict that they will truckle to the imperious dictator," observed Fielding.

"Your uncourteous reference to the whig party is quite as unwarrantable as the fling at Henry Clay," replied the impetuous Clarendon.

He had met a person, unfortunately, as fiery as himself. The countenance of Fielding grew pale, and his lips quivered as he exclaimed.

"The annunciation of a truth may sometimes prove unpalatable, but cannot be regarded as discourteous?"

"There was no foundation for your ungentlemanly insinuations," exclaimed Clarendon passionately. "It was both false and gratuitous."

"That is sufficient, sir!" said Fielding, as with a powerful effort he controlled his indignation. "Gentlemen, good night!" and he left the office.

"Come, Clarendon," said Judge Douglass, "you were too quick. You ought to apologize."

"Never! I have heard these rude allusions to the Whig party and its great leader often enough. I will suffer it no more!"

"You will have to fight half the county then," said Harden jocularly.

"Very good; I may as well commence with the Doctors," retorted Clarendon recklessly.

In fifteen minutes, young Davidson entered. He was the bearer of a challenge.

A duel was arranged. The young men were to meet in the Glen at six o'clock the next morning. Although Edward, as the friend of both parties, declined acting as the second of either, still he determined to be present, for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation, if possible. Late at night he entered Fielding's office. The lamp was burning, but the young physician was not in the room. Opening the door which led into the sleeping apartment, he beheld the Doctor seated by the fire, absorbed in deep thought.

"Fielding, cannot this affair be amicably adjusted?"

"It is impossible. The insult was too gross."

"But if he apologizes?"

"I do not think he will; and if he does, in my present state of mind I would reject all explanations."

"Why?"

"Because he is altogether too impetuous, and wants chastising."

"If you lose your life in the attempt?"

"It will be my destiny!" and he shrugged his shoulders.

"Davidson is your second; who is Clarendon's?"

"Captain Morgan."

"Harden, Douglass, and myself, will be present."

"Take care that no one else is apprised of the meeting, or we will have the hounds of justice upon our footsteps."

"What are your weapons?"

"Pistols."

"And the distance?"

"Will be determined upon the ground."

"Good night. I regret the quarrel."

"It will be all the same, one hundred years hence."

"Perfectly reckless!" muttered Edward, as he closed the office door.

The May morning dawned fair and cloudless. A warm rain, during the night, refreshed the flowers, and the forest impregnated the atmosphere with sweet odours. As Clifton and his companions attained the highland which overlooked the Glen, a thin vapour curled upwards from the bosom of the lake, and like the removal of breath from a mirror, it disclosed the smooth and transparent surface. "Fielding is already upon the ground," observed Harden.

"I do not see him," said the Judge.

"Look yonder, where the scanty underbrush gives you an indistinct view of the shore."

"True!"

The sound of horses' feet rapidly advancing, was heard, and Clarendon and his second dashed up. They were all soon assembled upon the beach.

"We must lose no time!" said Clarendon, eagerly. "I fear the constables have obtained information of our movements."

"It is not our fault that the affair is not over now," said his antagonist, in a low tone, as he glanced at his watch.

"Another taunt, Dr. Fielding!" replied Clarendon, fiercely. "Captain Morgan could tell you that we were detained!"

"Not another word!" interrupted the Captain. "He who impugns our honour makes an enemy of me."

Although he despaired of success, Edward attempted to effect a reconciliation. The refusal was positive. Captain Morgan touched his hat to young Davidson, and they walked aside.

"I have my own pistols, Mr. Davidson; I thought they were better than any you could procure on so short a notice."

"Thank you, Captain."

"They are loaded alike; you can take your choice."

"Your word is sufficient; either will do."

"At what distance shall they fire?"

"I am instructed to insist upon five paces."

"Why that will never do. It is murderous!" ejaculated Clarendon's second.

"My orders are positive!" said the other, firmly.

"Ten is the usual number. I will consult my principal."

"Yes, yes!" said Clarendon, impatiently. "We will insert the muzzles of our weapons in each other's mouths, if he is willing. *Anything* to avoid the interference of the officers."

The ground was measured. Five short paces between time and eternity. The combatants faced each other. Fielding was calm and collected. His countenance was resolute, and his commanding figure was drawn up to its full height. Clarendon's face was flushed with anger, and his graceful form trembled with passion. As the words "Make ready!" were pronounced by Captain Morgan, every symptom of agitation disappeared, and his figure became as motionless as the surrounding oaks. His arm was elevated until it covered the form of his antagonist. The word was given, and a simultaneous report followed. Fielding placed his left hand upon his side, and reeling back-

wards, fell, desperately wounded, upon the greensward. His gallant foe remained standing for an instant, and then sunk to the earth. Harden raised his head. The current of his blood had ceased flowing; the pulsations of his brave heart were silent. The spirit had departed, and the soulless clay was all that remained of the gifted and heroic Clarendon.

### CHAPTER XXX.

"Who, that 'midst a desert's heat  
Sees the waters fade away,  
Would not rather die than meet  
Streams again as false as they?"

MOORE.

WHEN we separated from Alice Howard, she was fourteen years old. How had she borne the absence of our hero? Her journal will disclose.

"September, 1840.—I have not heard from him yet. Why does he remain silent? Surely he must know that his absence is a source of unhappiness to me. And yet why should he? It would have been unmanly to make an exhibition of my attachment. He never told me of his love. I am but a school-girl. Still his manner was so tender. Could papa have exacted a promise from him? The thought is horrible! Oh! he could not be so cruel. I will ask him. But that will never do. It will force me to disclose my *unsolicited* affection. Time; time alone, will unravel the mystery!"

"January, 1841.—To-morrow will witness another examination. Shall I stand at the head of my class again? I hope so, for his sake. It is that alone which arouses my ambition. I will not surrender the hope that he will return to claim me. Fate would not be so unkind as to separate us for ever. During his absence I will cultivate my mental powers, and fit myself to become his companion. Heavens! with what joy the idea thrills my heart!"

"I am happy. My parents are affectionate; the school-girls love me; the teachers all take pride in my mental improvement, and the mirror flatters my vanity. Is it not wrong to be gratified by flattery? But truth is not flattery, and the mirror is truthful; that, at least, is honest. If I should be deceived, though, by its assurances. To know ourselves is next to impossible. How many girls, ay, and women too, fancy themselves beautiful?"

I think them shockingly plain. If I should deceive myself as well as they! Let me see. I have beautiful eyes. My teeth are white as ivory, and what is of equal importance, well set. My complexion is rich and changeable. My nose straight and well formed. My eyebrows beautifully pencilled. My lips—yes, they are rather pouting, but well curved and rosy—and that, too, without biting them. My waist round, my arms plump and tapering, and my hands and feet all that I could wish, for I could see Mr. Edward admired them. Neck swan-like, throat full and white, and—that's all.

"One cannot trust to public criticism, because popularity depends so much upon manner. I have seen very plain, but clever young ladies, surrounded by beaux. Dress, too, is an important auxiliary. But there is one infallible indication of beauty, so I heard Miss Glendower say. If the attention of strangers is arrested as you pass, it is safe to count upon the possession of great personal loveliness. They gaze as if they were looking upon a glorious specimen of art.

"But what do I care for female charms. It is only for the sake of Edward Clifton, whom I may never behold again."

"June, 1842.—Again at the head of my class. I ought to be satisfied. I have no thought but for Edward and my school-books. Many an hour, as I am seated by my lamp, does memory revert to those moments of happiness when he was by my side. Too fleeting hours! why were you numbered so rapidly with the irreclaimable past? Gone, gone! but memory lives."

"March, 1843.—In four months I shall graduate. What joy that word gives to many a school-girl who has been for one-third of her life immured in brick walls. For years she has obtained faint glimpses of the gay world through her prison bars. For fleeting moments suffered to escape, only to return to more than slavish bondage, she has sighed for the hour which is to witness her emancipation. So others feel. They complain of being forced to sleep forty in one room. One asks for a free circulation of air. Another has a violent cold. They are watched, and the malicious report them. Two young ladies were sent to bed, yesterday, for twelve hours. Last night, when the informer blew out her candle and jumped into bed, shivering with cold, she found the sheets saturated with iced-water. With a scream she bounded upon the floor. An ague was the consequence. To-day, the young ladies, who admitted the perpetration of

the deed, were sent to bed for twelve hours longer."

"July, 1843.—It is over. I have triumphed. The highest prize was awarded me, and what is far better, they all admitted my right to it. No exhibition of envy, and they all kissed me. Why could not he have been present? In one week we start for Saratoga. I shall then be in society. How I pitied poor Henrietta Templeton! It will be one year before she will be released, as she terms it; she has been for two years my intimate friend. How she wept when I bade her adieu! clinging to my neck, she deplored the fate which kept her imprisoned for twelve months. The time will soon pass, and the day she leaves the brick building for ever, will be the happiest of her existence. The emotions which in after-life cause the heartstrings to quiver, are never so gushing, so overwhelming, as when the school-girl claims her freedom. The happiness which has been gaining interest from disuse, during five years of oppression, she now deems exhaustless. Will the future disappoint her hopes? I have yet to learn.

"I shall take this journal with me to Saratoga. Perhaps we shall extend our visit to the Falls.

"Here we are at the United States. It is thronged with gay and fashionable people. I have been introduced to several young men; they are very attentive; but papa is immensely rich. The beaux strike me as belonging to the species snip. Cliques are rapidly forming. It is amusing to see with what grace one marriageable lady encircles the waist of another, who chances to have a brother at the springs! How affable superannuated matrons become, after having introduced their offspring to each other! With what wonderful precision manœuvring ladies calculate the effect of being seen in conversation with Madame this, or Hon. Mr. that! Although I have no right to complain of the scarcity of admirers, for I have my share of the sensible ones—after having disposed of the others,—still the idea suggests itself very forcibly, that all the manœuvring which illustrates a life at Saratoga, meets with but an indifferent reward. If mammas will exhibit their adroitness, as auctioneers, in the disposition of youthful daughters, or elderly nieces, they should take them to a better market. There are not more than a dozen good matches at the springs, and for them, there are at least fifty applicants. Not that mothers seize a gentleman by the

button-hole, and exclaim, 'Won't you marry my daughter?' No; there are more graceful, but not less significant methods of making the request.

"There are too many ladies here; the market is overstocked; the supply is greater than the demand, and I have heard papa say, *that* always produced competition, and reduced the price of the article. And then, to think how envious they are. Last evening, an accomplished young lady was entertaining a knot of gentlemen. A discontented damsel, after glancing with malicious eyes at the belle, exclaimed: 'She passes for a girl just from school, when every one knows she is no chicken.' What a funny expression! I do not think I shall like Saratoga."

"I am so happy, we start to-morrow for Lake George. I shall behold the scene of Cooper's 'Last of the Mohicans,' for we pass by Glenn's Falls, and the Bloody Pond.

"How long I gazed from the bridge at Glenn's, upon the whirling rapids, as they washed the rocks beneath. Here Cora and Alice Munro listened to the roar of the cataract, whose eternal voice is echoed by the surrounding hills. Here the fatal rifle of Hawkeye was levelled at his foes. Here the gallant Uncas perilled his life in defence of the 'dark hair.' Here the musical voice of David contended with the thunders of the falls, and the war-whoop of the Hurons. Here, too, the manly form of Duncan Heywood was interposed between the trusting maiden and the unbri-dled ferocity of the savages.

"Still farther on, we passed by the glassy pool, beneath whose surface the bodies of Dieskau's soldiers were buried. Here too, the daughters of Munro wandered at midnight, encompassed by lurking Indians. Yonder is the mountain, from the summit of which they saw the earthen walls of William Henry beleaguered by the formidable power of Montcalm. Before us is the scene of that frightful massacre, so dishonourable to the French commander, so heedlessly invited by Munro. The environs of the 'Holy Lake' have been rendered immortal by the graphic pen of Cooper."

"May, 1844.—Thank Heaven, I know Edward is alive and prosperous! This morning I was reading a Southern paper, when I saw the name of Edward Clifton at its head, as a candidate for elector. I did not know what that was, until I asked papa. And then I thought there might be some other Edward Clifton. Glancing over its columns, I saw a report of a

speech which he had delivered, and then I knew it could be no other than my Edward. The language and style were his! My heart is overflowing with happiness!

"Alas! how sudden the transition from joy to woe. I can scarcely write in legible characters; the paper is blotted with my tears! My poor, kind, affectionate father, expired scarce one week ago, in a paralytic fit! My head throbs as though it would burst! And poor, dear mother, the terrible affliction has prostrated her physical powers; if she too, should be taken away, leaving brother and myself alone in the world!"

## CHAPTER XXXI.

"Whene'er adown thy favourite walk I go,  
Still, still I feel the pressure of thy arm;  
And oh! so strong the sweet illusions grow,  
I shun, I loathe whatever breaks the charm."  
OPIE.

In May, 1844, the Democratic Convention assembled in Baltimore. The two-thirds rule was adopted, and eight ballots between Van Buren and Cass resulted in no choice. Messrs. Clay and Van Buren, had both written letters in opposition to the annexation of Texas. The manifesto of the latter gentleman ruined his prospects for another race, and it was apparent from the moment the Convention met, that some other person would be selected. On the ninth ballot, James K. Polk of Tennessee, received the unanimous vote of the delegates. Mr. Clay had already been nominated by acclamation, at Philadelphia, and the note of preparation was already heard, which preceded the fiercest struggle since the triumph of Jefferson.

The Democracy had shaken off their apathy, and now addressed themselves with their hereditary enthusiasm to the Presidential conflict. Associations were formed, political companies were organized, electors and sub-electors were chosen; everything denoted a campaign of more than ordinary brilliancy.

A convention had assembled in Stamford for the purpose of nominating a candidate for elector. All the counties in the Congressional district were represented. As Harden entered the hall, an old gentleman was addressing the chairman in a prosy speech. He had almost concluded, and was then urging the nomination of



Col. Burkhart, whom he represented as an honourable citizen of high character.

"I desire to ask the gentleman a few questions," said Harden, earnestly; "if he has no objections?"

"Certainly not," and he courteously rose.

"I have not the honour of knowing Col. Burkhart; what is his age?"

"At least seventy; one of our first settlers."

"Can he make a speech?"

"Yes, but he cannot undergo the labours of a canvass."

"There, Mr. Chairman," resumed the young Senator, decidedly. "I, for one, am utterly opposed to his nomination. He may be, and undoubtedly is, an excellent citizen; that, sir, is not sufficient? The tactics of the last campaign will not do now. They must be abandoned; we repose no longer upon our oars; this election must be carried by activity and enthusiasm; old men have outlived enthusiasm, they will not do, sir; we must have active, energetic young men, to bear our flag aloft. The whigs boast, and with truth, that their orators are the most eloquent, and their politicians the most indefatigable. That must no longer be the case, or if it is, we had better disband at once, and with folded arms, witness the elevation of Henry Clay. Are you prepared to do that?" exclaimed the speaker, vehemently.

"No! no, never!" thundered forth the excited audience.

"Then use the only means to avoid defeat. Look at the ticket which the whigs have selected; not a man upon it who cannot justly claim the appellation of an accomplished orator! Not a man upon it past fifty, while more than half number fewer years than did Napoleon, when he became the second conqueror of Italy! Search out the young men of your party; let them buckle on the democratic armour, over stout hearts, and hopefully enter the political arena! Such a man I nominate for the office of elector; I know him far better than any one present. I am confident he will give the most entire satisfaction! He is young, eloquent, enthusiastic, and an unwavering republican and democrat! He thoroughly understands politics; his vigilance is sleepless; his courage unquestionable!"

"Who is he? name him!" shouted the delegates.

"I propose, as our candidate for elector, my friend, Edward Clifton."

It was carried by acclamation, and cheer upon cheer welcomed the rising po-

litician, as he was introduced to the meeting.

At night, Dr. Fielding—who had recovered from his wound—and Edward called to see Helen Douglass. Emily Davidson, her brother, and Mrs. Foster, were in the parlour as they entered.

"How are you, Mr. Elector?" exclaimed Mrs. Foster. "I have not seen you since our return."

"My conduct has been unpardonable, but professional engagements have been so urgent that I have been forced to neglect all my friends."

"And I suppose, now you have added politics to your other cares, you will be more estranged from us than before?"

"Oh no! It will be a duty, as well as a pleasure, now, to pay court to the sovereigns and their better-halves."

"Well, you must be assiduous in your attentions, for the General is a whig, you know, and I have a great admiration for Henry Clay."

"Indeed! It is well, then, he is verging upon sixty-eight."

"Impossible!"

"It is a fact, I assure you."

"He is almost too old for the Presidency. But then, his competitor is upon the opposite extreme!"

"Harry of the West will have supporters as long as he lives; Col. Polk will be forty-nine years of age before his inauguration, and that is fourteen years older than the Constitution requires."

"When he is inaugurated! You surely do not expect to defeat the great leader of the Whig party?"

"Undoubtedly."

"What assurance! And with a person who has been beaten twice for Governor!"

"There! I see the influence of the General."

"Well, every one is aware that Polk is scarcely known out of his own State; while Mr. Clay's reputation is world-renowned!"

"You will pardon me for saying, Mrs. Foster," observed Fielding, "that there is such a misfortune as being too well known."

"How can that be, when his actions have always been consistent and patriotic?"

"It could not, if they had been so."

"You surely would not accuse the illustrious pacificator of a want of patriotism?"

"Far be it from a young man to bring so serious a charge against the venerable statesman. Nevertheless, an impression

pervades the minds of the democracy that he did not assign sufficient reasons for deserting the republican ranks."

"Oh, the prevailing cry is always 'traitor!' whenever a politician changes his opinions, however conclusive his reason may be."

"Come, Fielding, you are confirming Mrs. Foster in her errors by putting her upon her mettle. Recollect, our opponents boast of having the influence of the fair sex! Every convert we make is so much gained."

The Doctor conducted Emy Davidson to the piano, and Edward seated himself beside Helen Douglass. She welcomed him with a glad smile.

"We do not see much of you now."

"I regret it, exceedingly, but professional men cannot dispose of their time. You have not missed me, however; for I heard you were a tender and devoted nurse of Fielding's while he was suffering from his wound."

"Papa would have him brought to our house, because he is an orphan, and has no one to care for him."

"And so you supplied the place of father and mother? Nay, do not blush; he is a noble and gallant gentleman, and might well claim an interest in the female heart."

"You must not talk so," replied the maiden, half imperiously, as she tapped her foot impatiently upon the carpet.

"What! not your best friend?" he said, reproachfully.

"There, there, I will not quarrel with you," and she frankly extended her hand.

"What say you? Mrs. Foster," said Fielding, "shall we not make up a party to visit Randle's Cave?"

"I should be delighted! I have long desired to fathom its depths."

"Will you chaperone us?" inquired Emy.

"Certainly."

"When shall we go?"

"As half-a-dozen is a party large enough, we can soon arrange it."

"To-morrow, then; who will go?"

"There are six present."

"It will be entirely out of my power to make one of the party," remarked Davidson; "but Harden will gladly become my substitute. Not a week since I heard him express a desire to see the Cave."

"How far is it?"

"Scarcely an hour's ride hence."

"And the conveyance?"

"Necessarily equestrian. The road is impassable for carriages."

The ladies expressed their delight.

"Shall I have the pleasure of seeing you home, Mrs. Foster?" inquired Clifton, as she was tying on her hat.

"If you please. Good night, ladies! We must start early, to avoid the heat of the sun. Would you believe it, the idea of this excursion makes my heart bound like a school-girl's, Mr. Clifton!"

"How will the General like this adventure?"

"He suffers me to do just as I please; besides, he is now in Mississippi, attending to his plantation."

"Why do you not accompany him?"

"Travelling through that country is such a bore, after having once seen it. Do come in; I am alone."

"Pardon me, not to-night. May I constitute myself your beau, *par excellence*, for to-morrow?"

"A lawyer's technical limitation! ha! ha! Yes, for to-morrow; good night; their hands separated, and his receding footsteps rung upon the pavement."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

"And strangely, through the solid depth below,  
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,  
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss."  
GOETHE.

"But still the dingle's hollow throat,  
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note."  
SCOTT.

By eight o'clock they had dismounted at the outlet of the Cave, and given their horses in charge of a servant. The mouth of the cavern was at the summit of a rough acclivity. The air came forth from the dark abyss, cold and damp.

"You had better stand for a few moments upon the verge, until your blood gradually cools, or the change will be too great," observed Dr. Fielding.

"It makes me shiver," said Emy Davidson.

"You will soon become accustomed to it. In winter the air is so warm that it produces a feeling of suffocation."

The lamps were lighted, and they commenced the descent. It was at first precipitous, and then the earth sloped gradually to the first floor. This apartment was of vast extent, and the ceiling scarcely distinguishable. The ground was irregular; rising gradually in the distance until the pathway approached the dome;

it then fell away, and in the distance there were a succession of low-arched rooms.

As they advanced, the earth was saturated with water. "It is well, girls, we brought our India-rubbers and wore short dresses," said Mrs. Foster.

"The Turkish costume would have been preferable," observed Harden.

"But your sex are so ill-natured if we usurp any of your apparel."

"That objection comes from the married men, I hope you will observe," replied the Senator; "I fancy the short skirts and full trousers, fastened around the ankle, would look charmingly!"

"That is, if the lady has beautiful feet and small joints," interposed Edward.

"Knowing your hallucination upon that subject, Clifton, I should have mentioned it as an indispensable prerequisite."

"Does Mr. Clifton enter into such minute details?" inquired Mrs. Foster, as she slightly elevated her apparel and bounded across a pool of muddy water.

"Whenever an opportunity is offered him."

"How rarely we think of it, don't we, Helen?"

The merry eyes of the damsel sparkled as she replied, "I am fearful the Turkish costume would be denounced more bitterly than it is by a majority of our sex, if Mr. Clifton's rule was enforced."

"I am a decided advocate of the short skirts under all circumstances. Are not you, Clifton?"

"No. A lady never looks so well as with a flowing train; I mean in the drawing-room. For the street, her dress should come to the top of her boot, in fair weather as well as rainy, until the national habit of spitting becomes obsolete."

"I agree with you," responded Emy Davidson. "It is impossible to walk the streets, in the present style of dress, without having them soiled, unless they are held up with both hands."

"If a lady looks well in the drawing-room, robed in a long dress, is it not just as becoming to her in the street?" inquired Fielding.

"It would be if the street was as free from dirt as the drawing-room," said Harden; "but if you see her skirts gathering all the filth upon the sidewalks and crossings as she sweeps along, I ask you if it does not destroy all the romance which since the age of fifteen we have associated with spotless garments?"

"But, then," said Emy, "the pantaloons and short dress of Turkey would hardly be considered modest here."

"I do not know what you would think of it here," observed Dr. Fielding, "but it is decidedly more proper than the style of holding dresses in the Eastern cities."

"Fie, Dr., you do those ladies injustice."

"Do you think so? wait until you have seen them yourself."

They had now penetrated a long distance into the bowels of the earth. A part of the way was difficult, even dangerous, as the path wound along the verge of deep chasms, or led over precipitous rocks. At such places, the ladies accepted the proffered aid of their companions. At length they entered the square room. Natural seats had been erected upon the border of a stream which flowed through this portion of the cavern. From the ceiling hung stalactites, which reflected the light of the lamps like polished marble. This chamber had obtained its name from the regularity of its sides.

"Come, Sambo," said Harden, "spread the cloth upon that table yonder, and prepare the lunch."

They were seated around the board partaking of a meal rendered delicious by exercise. For beverage, they had their choice of cool water or sparkling champagne.

"It is singular," observed Miss Davidson, "what could have produced these spacious apartments."

"They are undoubtedly one of the thousand freaks which Nature committed," replied Harden.

"Or formed by the internal throes of the earth," said Fielding.

"Or cleaved from the rocks by the ceaseless action of the limpid element," observed Mrs. Foster.

"Or erected by the hand of the Almighty, to illustrate his omnipotence," remarked Helen Douglass.

"It is curious that caverns abound in several States east of the Mississippi. The soil of Kentucky, especially, has a limestone basis, in the bosom of which subterranean apartments abound. In several, they manufacture saltpetre."

"The atmosphere must be healthy, then."

"Unquestionably."

"It gives one an excellent appetite, at all events," observed Helen. "Mr. Harden, may I trouble you for some more pastry?"

"Have you ever been here before, Sambo?"

"Ofen, Massa Fieldin'."

"Is this the termination of the cave?"

"I dun no, but I hearn Cap'n Flemin'

say, away down yonder there is anodder hapartment."

"What, at the point where the stream is lost in the rocks?"

"Yes, Massa."

"Clifton, suppose we follow the bed of the creek, and see if there is not another room."

"Agreed. If the ladies are not afraid to remain here by themselves, we will all go, and give them a distant view of the cavern by the light of our candles."

"Oh, do. Nothing will harm us. I should so much like to witness the spectacle," exclaimed Mrs. Foster.

"Light the candles, then, Sambo, and arrange them in a cluster upon the frame."

"Now, then, you son of darkness, move on; if you are killed, I will see that you are properly dissected."

"Yah! yah! yah! the Doctor, him very secious."

The ladies watched the receding party as their forms diminished in the distance, and the lights grew more and more indistinct. Their progress was slow, as they picked their way along the water-course, now stepping upon the stones which emerged from the stream, and anon clinging to the sides of the precipice a hundred feet in the air. Once they clustered together, and waved their lights, the faint rays from which scarcely penetrated the gloom to the spot where the ladies congregated. Suddenly they were extinguished, and that part of the cave was involved in darkness.

"What could have caused the accident?" exclaimed Emy, hurriedly.

"A blast of air," responded Helen.

"Come, we must go to their relief, at every hazard. They can never return in the darkness," continued the agitated girl.

"But perhaps they have matches."

A faint flash for a moment lit up the gloom, and was succeeded by a rumbling sound, which increased as it approached, until it rung through the cavern, and each solitary nook and gloomy dell had again and again echoed the reverberation.

"It is a signal of distress," said Emy. "No time is to be lost; let us proceed."

"But can we thread that dangerous path?" anxiously inquired Mrs. Foster.

"We can try. At least we can go part way. The light from our lamps may assist them to return."

Another flash was followed by the report of a pistol.

"Come, come!" impetuously exclaimed Helen. "I will not leave them to grope their way in darkness, over those

frightful chasms. If you will not accompany us, Emy and I will proceed alone."

The generous girl seized a lamp, which cast its light upon her pale but resolute countenance, and, advancing a short distance, the maiden looked back upon her companions, while the outlines of her beautiful form were drawn against the gloom.

"Stop a moment, and let me get up all my clothes, Helen," said Miss Davidson, as she prepared to cross the stream.

"I will go with you, girls." They descended together.

"What is that?" said Mrs. Foster. "Is it light?"

"Not from their candles," responded Helen. "I saw it before the report of the first pistol. It is probably the light of day penetrating through a crevice in the rocks."

While they were proceeding along the dismal way, Harden was endeavouring to ignite a lucifer match.

"It was wrong to extinguish all the candles, Fielding," he remarked; as match after match flickered a moment, and then went out. "The atmosphere is damp, and we will be in a sad predicament if I cannot relight them. There is a current of air here, too. Let us advance a little. Softly, here is a descent. We are at the bottom. Now let me try." The wood caught, and the candles were soon lighted. They now proceeded, and in a few minutes reached the bank of the creek.

"What has become of the ladies?" inquired Clifton. "They are no longer visible."

"Sure enough," replied Harden, "they have vanished like fairies."

"Could they suppose that our lights were accidentally extinguished, and have they started to relieve us?"

"Lay not the flattering unction to your heart, Fielding. There is a bend in the creek; see you not the reflection of their lights upon the vault?"

"Yes, Harden is right," observed Clifton. "Let us proceed."

The stream now plunged into an unfathomable abyss. Standing upon the summit, the noise of the falls, which for some time had faintly reached their ears, now made the rocks tremble beneath their feet.

They mutely gazed upon the roaring flood as it disappeared.

"Here ends our ramble," said Harden, "unless, Sam Patch-like, we leap into the gulf."

"Let me cast a stone over the falls to

ascertain their depth," observed Fielding. "Here, Sambo, bring hither that rock."

No sound came back but the roar of the water.

"They must be of great depth. As there is an insurmountable barrier to our further progress, let us return, and conduct the ladies here."

Approaching the spot where they had left their companions, no lamps could be seen.

"By Jove! Fielding, they are repaying you for your attempt to frighten them. They are not here, though; the spot is vacant. Halloo!" No answering response was heard save the echoes of the cavern.

"This is strange," said Clifton, anxiously. "Have they become impatient at our long absence?"

"Surely, they would not attempt to return without us," replied Harden. "It is only a joke; they are secreted in some of these nooks; let us find them."

But the search was ineffectual, and the young men assembled again at the spot where they had last seen the ladies.

"One of two things is certain," said Edward, decidedly. "They have either returned to the mouth of the cave, or, alarmed for our safety when the lights were extinguished, they lost their way in attempting to approach us."

"Clifton has given us the correct solution of the matter," said Fielding, "and I propose that two of us retrace our footsteps in search of the path which led them astray, while the other two return to the mouth of the cave."

When Edward and Sambo emerged from the cavern, there was no sign of the fugitives, and the horses were standing as the slave had left them.

Hastening back, Edward met his baffled companions, whose search had been equally unavailing. They were all now thoroughly alarmed for the safety of the females.

"Are there no pathways diverging from the main avenue leading to the falls?" inquired Clifton.

"None; we have examined both sides of the creek, from its margin to the dome, and there is but one channel."

"Let us examine the earth; perhaps we can discover their footsteps."

They all knelt to the task, but the ground was so beaten that an impression could not be made upon its surface. Receding from the centre, they sought long but ineffectually for some sign of their companions. They had all yielded in despair except Fielding, who

was examining the border of the stream. "By Heaven! here it is!" he cried joyously, "and here, and here. They have crossed the creek."

He was not mistaken. The impression of several small feet had been made in the soft earth. But the trail was again lost upon the opposite shore, and every attempt to find it proved fruitless.

"Well, gentlemen, what's to be done?" asked Harden.

A painful silence ensued.

"The ground becomes marshy, a few rods ahead. Suppose we examine it," said Fielding.

No print of a female foot was visible.

"If you are certain," said Edward, "that no channel diverges from this, it is useless to seek for them in the direction of the falls. We must explore every avenue between this and the mouth of the Cave, and speedily too, for the day is waning."

At the end of two hours they had examined every nook and corner throughout the cavern, and disheartened and dismayed, they stood at the outlet.

"There is some fearful mystery about this affair," said Fielding, solemnly. "I leave not the spot until it is unravelled!"

"We will remain," replied Clifton. "Harden, you and Sambo return to Stamford with the horses; it will not do to let the brutes starve. Do not mention the affair to any one, except Judge Douglass and Davidson. A large crowd will only render their recovery the more difficult, by removing all traces of the wanderers. Return hither as soon as possible with ropes, food, and lights."

The sound of the horses' feet became more and more indistinct, until at last it died away in the distance. The sun had disappeared, and night had drawn her sable curtain across the shifting scenes, as the young men again penetrated the tomb which enclosed the living, if not the dead. They shouted "Helen!" "Emy!" but the reverberating echoes alone replied, "Helen!" "Emy!" at first distinctly, and then more and more faintly, until their names were pronounced as if by the spirit of the place, in accents low and whispering.

"This suspense is intolerable!" said Fielding. "What frightful calamity can have befallen the ladies?"

"Perhaps, in following the bank of the creek, they have been precipitated into deep water, or have become confused by the intricate windings."

Once more they proceeded towards the falls, and for half a mile examined every

foot of the way. There was a basin a short distance from the square room. It did not exceed a dozen feet in diameter, but was far deeper. The water was transparent, and they could discover no object upon the bottom. The rocky pass rendered it impossible to follow a trail, and they reached the falls without having obtained the slightest clue of the lost females. The dispirited Fielding was preparing to return. "Stop!" said Clifton, who had been gazing into the abyss. "Is not that a light far down the chasm?"

"Impossible! No human being could reach the foot of the falls alive. It is doubtless the reflection of our candles upon the spray."

"No! by heaven, it is a light!" shouted Edward. "There! there! dim and scarcely perceptible; do you not see it?"

It vanished, and for several moments not a word escaped the lips of the young men as they gazed with awe for the reappearance of the light. They saw it no more, and turned their looks upon each other for an explanation.

"There is a tradition," said Fielding, in a serious voice, "that a gang of highwaymen once inhabited this Cave; but that was many years ago."

"Great God! Doctor, why did you not inform me of that report? We ought not to have left the ladies unprotected."

"It had escaped my memory. I regarded it as the idle fancy of the superstitious."

"It may, alas! prove too true, and if these helpless women have fallen into their hands!"

"Stop! for Heaven's sake! there's madness in the thought."

They gazed long and anxiously down the gulf, but no ray of light penetrated the mist. It was now midnight, and the two young men seated themselves upon the verge of the precipice. They had not kept their vigils long, when lights approached from the mouth of the Cave.

"What is that!" exclaimed Fielding, with a nervous start.

"Harden is returning," said Clifton.

The forms of Judge Douglass, Harden, Davidson, and Sambo, were seen threading the devious way.

"What news of the lost ones?" inquired the Judge, anxiously.

"We have seen a light at the foot of the falls."

"Where is the channel which leads thither?"

"We have searched for it in vain."

"Sambo, the rope!"

"Stop, Judge, that shall be my duty!" said Fielding.

"Take food, then, before you make the attempt."

"Impossible! I have no appetite."

"Here is brandy; your strength will fail you."

"What would you do?" exclaimed Harden. "It is more than two hundred feet to the foot of the falls. Inevitable destruction awaits any one who makes the attempt."

"I will try. When I pull this cord, raise me; until I do, let me descend by the rope."

A pulley was adjusted to prevent the hemp from being cut by the rock, and the adventurous young man was soon lost in the spray. He continued to descend, and coil after coil of the rope disappeared, until they supposed he had nearly reached the foot of the falls, when the weight was suddenly unloosed, as if the rope had been severed. In dismay they rapidly drew it up, and to their amazement, discovered that the cable had been cut with a knife.

"Who could have done this?" said the Judge.

"Certainly not Fielding," responded Edward. "He would not deprive himself of the only means of escape. I will now make the attempt!"

"No, no! Mr. Clifton, him my massa!" said Sambo, resolutely. "I must go for him myself."

"You are an affectionate fellow, but I can manage this affair better than you."

"Mr. Clifton, I *mus* go for Massa Fielden," persisted the slave, while the tears started to his eyes. "Him allers kind massa to Sambo."

"Let him go if he insists," interposed the Judge. "All we want to know is the fate of the lost ones."

The black disappeared in the mist, and when he had descended as far as his master, the rope was again severed. Listening intensely, they caught the sound of a suppressed yell, as, mingling with the roar of the cataract, it came faintly to their ears.

"There is an unfathomable mystery about this cavern," said the Judge, solemnly. "It is folly to hazard more lives in attempting to descend the falls. What is our next resource?"

"If, as I suppose," said Clifton, "there are rooms unknown to us in this cave, may they not be inhabited by reckless and desperate men, who have seized our companions?"

"The thought is horrible," said the Judge, as his cheek blanched.

"It is, and I regret that I am forced to suggest it. But if I am right, we must adopt a different plan of operations to effect their rescue."

"What do you propose?"

"We must wait for them to disclose the passage, which we cannot find ourselves. Our lights must be extinguished, and they must believe the Cave is deserted. I suggest that one of us remain in ambush at the mouth of the Cavern, another here, the third in the square room, and the fourth in the middle of the Cavern."

The Judge grasped his hand warmly. The food was divided, and they agreed to keep watch in silence for twenty-four hours. Harden returned to the outlet, while the others remained, Clifton at the falls, Douglass in the square room, and Davidson towards the mouth of the Cave.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

"When, as she saw him madly spring,  
And midway up in danger cling,  
She flung him down her long black hair,  
Exclaiming, breathless, 'There, love, there!'"

MOORE.

"Then tell me, why, thou child of air!  
Does slumber from her eyelids rove?  
What is her heart's impassioned care?  
Perhaps, oh sylph! 'tis love!"

MOORE.

Hour after hour elapsed, until the sun had once more mounted into the heavens. Edward was seated upon a projection of the rock, resting his cheek upon his hand. Exhausted by fatigue, the struggle between watchfulness and sleep was, nevertheless, long and painful. The murmuring of the waterfall soothed his senses and the impenetrable darkness which walled him in, afforded no object upon which his eyes could rest. The lids closed at last, and his form relaxed, as a deep sleep settled upon his frame.

The Judge was more wakeful. The fate of his only child weighed heavily upon his mind, and his vigilance was sleepless. Seven hours had elapsed; still, nothing disturbed the tomb-like silence which reigned in those subterranean halls. The moments dragged, as though ages had been claimed by time since he commenced his vigils. To his tortured heart, it might have been days, weeks, months, or years, since he extinguished his light.

His limbs were stiff; he touched his head to see if it had become bald. He gnashed his teeth, and laughed low and merrily, when he ascertained they were still in his jaws. He laid his finger upon his pulse, to see if it beat with the feebleness of age. It dashed on with the velocity of a raging fever. The suspense at length amounted to intense agony, and he was in the act of shouting Clifton's name, when there fell upon his ear a noise as of rushing water. It continued for several minutes, and then died away with a murmuring sound, like the escape of water through a whirlpool. A faint light was now perceptible, issuing from the earth, scarcely a dozen rods beyond the river, and in the direction of the falls. Crouching behind one of the benches, the Judge saw four men emerge from the basin, which we have already described, and proceed in the direction of the spot occupied by Clifton. When their forms had disappeared behind a curve in the rock, he lighted the candle in his dark lantern, and advanced cautiously towards the basin. The water had disappeared through a hole in the bottom. In the side of the rock, several feet below the water-line, a stone door had been fitted in the natural wall so artistically, that it baffled the most careful examination. It was now open, and within, Judge Douglass saw a flight of wooden steps, leading upwards. He now secreted himself behind a small mound of earth, near the secret door, and extinguishing his light, anxiously awaited their return, trusting to the vigilance of Clifton to watch their movements in the direction of the falls.

Edward's sleep was disturbed by horrible dreams. The events which had transpired within the last twenty-four hours, still haunted his imagination. He again traversed every avenue in the cave, and with thrice the labour which the actual search had cost him. He examined each apartment, with that painful precision which the mind exacts, when the frame has been exhausted with fatigue. Rendered desperate, he resolved to descend the cataract. The rope was adjusted, and he hung over the chasm. The spray dashed over him, and his clothes were saturated with water. He swung in the air, at an immense distance from the foot of the falls. The scene was gradually illuminated by some unknown agency, and he was in the act of resting his feet upon the rock, when there fell upon his ear, the sound of discordant laughter. Opening his eyes, he saw Col. Fenton, standing before him.

"This is a merry meeting, young gentleman; it enables me to pay off old scores, ha! ha!"

Clifton sprang to his feet.

"Not so fast, the odds are against you. You have afforded me a capital opportunity of revenging the insult put upon me a few years ago;" and he levelled a pistol at the breast of our hero.

"Reserve your threats for one who fears them. What have you done with my companions?"

"Oh! I have them safe in our dominions, where I propose to conduct you. An application of the bastinado will improve your manners?"

"Fool! are you not satisfied with me yet?" He sprang so suddenly upon Fenton, that his weapon was dashed from his hand before he could discharge it. Seizing his foe by the throat, he dragged him towards the precipice, over which he would have hurled him, but for the interposition of his followers. After a short but desperate struggle, Edward was bound. Fenton leaned against the rock panting, and deadly pale.

"To the secret staircase with him!" he shouted hoarsely. As they disappeared through the stone door, it closed after them, the trap at the bottom, resumed its position, and the basin was in a few moments filled with water.

A plan of operations at once suggested itself to the Judge, which he proposed to adopt.

Follow we now in the footsteps of the ladies. They had scarcely passed the creek, when they were seized by six armed men, who sprang from behind a hillock, where they had concealed themselves. Pistols were presented, and with low but stern voices, the outlaws threatened to murder them, if they uttered a word. Trembling with alarm, the lamps fell from their hands, and they were surrounded by impenetrable darkness. They were then hurried through the door which was closed after them. Candles were lighted and they ascended a winding staircase, of some forty steps, which terminated in a large apartment. In this room were stands of arms, cutlasses, and pistols, and upon the walls were suspended the enormous horns of moose and deer. It looked like the hall of a feudal baron. An armed sentinel was traversing the room. At the extremity of the apartment, the stone floor projected over an abyss, more than two hundred feet deep. The prisoners shuddered as they gazed into depths, which would have been imper-

ceptible, but for a flood of light from beneath. They could distinguish a dozen men, engaged at various amusements. Some were wrestling, others leaping, a third party were pitching quoits, and a fourth played at cards. Altogether it was a scene of gay and careless revelry. One of the captors raised a stone trap in the floor, which disclosed a circular staircase. He motioned for the trembling females to precede him.

"We will go no further!" said Helen resolutely.

"You must descend the staircase, Miss," responded a savage-looking fellow, who appeared to be the leader of the party.

"What is the cause of this violence? We have harmed no one. I implore you to let us return?"

"It is impossible; the Captain will explain everything. You will find him a courteous gentleman. Come, proceed; or shall we carry you?"

"Let us go, it is useless to resist!" observed Emy.

"You are discreet, Miss!"

They descended the spiral staircase, a hundred steps, and found themselves in a room, furnished with all the comfort of a parlour. The floor and walls were covered with deer and bear skins, and from the ceiling was suspended a chandelier, which cast a soft light through the apartment. A table, chairs, and a sofa, occupied various parts of the floor.

"Ladies, you will please be seated, until we report to the Captain. If you do not attempt to escape, no harm will be done you." Retiring to the extremity of the room, they descended another staircase and disappeared.

"What can be the meaning of this?" said Mrs. Foster, as she threw herself upon the sofa.

"It is unaccountable," responded Emy. "It seems like a dream. Am I really awake?"

"I have a faint recollection of a tradition," said Helen, "that this cave was once inhabited by banditti?"

"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated Mrs. Foster. "And yet, that it is occupied by men, engaged in some unlawful vocation, the offensive weapons in the room above, and this furnished apartment, are unmistakable proofs."

Further conversation was interrupted by the approach of a man, in the prime of life, whose frank countenance and polished address at once reassured them. His form was slight, his features regular, and his eyes dark and piercing.

"I regret, ladies, that you have been put to any inconvenience. The Cave has been visited so much recently, that our operations have been greatly impeded. I gave orders for one or two persons to be captured, whose disappearance might create alarm, and keep others from entering the cavern. Now that they have been so ungallant as to make you prisoners, I shall be forced to detain you for a few days, perhaps a week, until we abandon the Cave for ever."

"But by what right do you restrain us of our liberty? Our absence will occasion the greatest anxiety among our relatives, and you will be seriously punished!" observed Helen.

"I am pained that circumstances render it absolutely necessary for me to cause you or them uneasiness; but the liberty, if not the lives of my followers, gives me no alternative. I have not the right, but the power, to control your movements."

"You will let us send word to our friends that we are safe, won't you?" inquired Emy.

A smile crossed the handsome features of the stranger, disclosing teeth of perfect whiteness.

"I must uncourteously refuse even that request. But in the mean time, I will exhibit the curiosities of my realm; your movements shall be unrestrained: my library will be at your disposal; and I trust hereafter you will regard this adventure as a pleasant episode in the journey of life."

He pulled a string, which had been concealed by the tapestry of fur, and the distant sound of a bell was heard. In a few moments footsteps approached, and a page entered the room.

"Here, Carlos, conduct the ladies to the diamond chamber. You will please excuse me for the present. I will meet you again within an hour." He raised his hat and bowed gracefully, as they followed the footsteps of the page.

"A charming person, is he not?" whispered Mrs. Foster. "This is becoming romantic!"

As they descended, the sound of a waterfall came to their ears, low and musical. At the foot of a long staircase, they found themselves in a circular and dimly-lighted corridor. Turning to the right, they entered through a door, what appeared to be an ante-room. It was in the form of a parallelogram. The ceiling was not higher than an ordinary dwelling. The floor was elegantly carpeted, and the walls were papered. The furniture was

richly carved, and consisted of sofas, chairs, a table, marble washstands, and a large mirror.

"This appears like enchantment?" said Helen, after the page had retired.

"What elegant furniture, for such a spot as this! Chandeliers which would grace the White House, carpets from Turkey, paper from Paris, marble from Italy!" exclaimed Mrs. Foster.

"How regular are the walls, and how even the floor. Can they be of rock?" and Emy stamped her little foot upon the floor. "No, 'tis a wooden floor, and the walls are of wood too; why, we are in a house!"

By the time they had performed their ablutions, and smoothed their hair at the mirror, their jailer host entered the room.

"Let us manifest no distrust?" said Mrs. Foster, as he approached.

"I hope you suffer no inconvenience from your imprisonment, ladies?"

"Only so much as pain for the alarm of our friends, and a sense of personal restraint, may produce!" replied Mrs. Foster.

"What a mystical bower you inhabit, sir?" remarked Emy. "May I ask how long it has been your abode?"

"Almost three years!"

"And have you not in that time seen the light of day?"

"Often! I saw you at the Governor's reception, not one year ago."

"Indeed, and why do you prefer these subterranean apartments?"

"Ah! there," he replied archly, "you force me to be mute."

"I beg your pardon! I did not desire to obtain possession of your secrets."

A distant bell struck nine.

"Does that indicate the hour?" inquired Mrs. Foster.

"Yes, Madam!"

"Is it night or day, upon the earth? I have taken no note of time, since we entered these dungeons."

"It is nine o'clock at night. If you will allow me, I will conduct you to the supper-table." They entered another room, where a table was loaded with every delicacy, which could tempt the appetite. Mrs. Foster had no one at home to be alarmed at her absence, and Emy was an orphan; they soon, therefore, recovered from the terror which their novel position created. Not so Miss Douglass. Her fancy dwelt upon the agony of her father and mother, when the shades of night set in, and she still absent. Poor girl, she little thought her watchful parent was hovering near her!

As soon as they were seated at the table the stranger withdrew.

"Shall I do the honours?" inquired Mrs. Foster. "Helen, do eat. You must not be alarmed; we shall be released, at most, in a few days."

"In a few days!" responded the maiden, with tearful eyes. "What will my poor mother think has become of me? Besides, what assurance have we that our persons are safe while we remain in the power of these lawless men?"

"I am certain we can suffer no harm as long as this stranger is our protector."

"How powerless will a single arm become, when opposed by a score of desperate outlaws! The leader of a gang like this holds his authority by an uncertain tenure."

"I think our friends will come to our rescue," said Emy.

"How can they? If they discover the secret door, every avenue hither is guarded. There is no alternative for us but to remain, with what courage we can muster, until the Captain of the band releases us."

After they had concluded their meal, the page conducted them into the library. The walls of this room were papered with oak panel. The large book-case was filled with standard works. Josephus ranged side by side with Scott's novels. Gibbons' Rome, and Byron's works, the Spectator, and Shakspeare's plays, Cooper's novels and Hume's History, were crowded upon the shelves; while Bulwer, Dickens, Sue, and Irving, were represented in the general mass of literature. Emerging from the library they entered a corridor. The roar of the falls was now distinctly heard.

"What produces that noise, Carlos?" inquired Mrs. Foster.

"It is the descent of the creek above into the chasm. Would you like to see it?"

Threading the corridor for about twenty yards, they turned abruptly to the right, and descending a short flight of steps, the page threw open a door, and the astonished females found themselves behind the sheet, and near the chasm into which the water was precipitated from a height of more than two hundred feet. The concussion was reverberated in thundering echoes through the vaulted cavern. A cloud of spray hovered around the falls, into which the rays of the candle could scarcely penetrate. While they were endeavouring to pierce the gloom, a flood of light was cast upon the descending column. From whence it emanated they could not divine, but its effulgence revealed, not

only the outlines of the falls, but formed a thousand miniature rainbows in the flashing spray.

Far above them, the projecting rock over which the water poured, appeared to tremble, and the ladies shuddered as they withdrew their eyes. Helen cast another fearful glance upwards. She uttered a piercing shriek, and exclaimed, "It is falling!" They all started back, except the page, whose eyes were riveted upon the overhanging cliff. He put his fingers to his mouth and uttered a shrill whistle. Three men entered the room, whose attention was directed above. Helen fearfully raised her eyes again, and trembled with horror as they rested upon a human form suspended in the air. The mist concealed from her view the rope by which he was descending, and the figure appeared, to her over-heated imagination, the tangible creation of a disordered brain.

With straining eyeballs she gazed upon the phantom, as it slowly approached the foot of the falls. Her blood congealed, and the pulsation ceased to beat, as she recognised the countenance of Dr. Fielding. Two of the men hastily disappeared over the platform, which was elevated a dozen feet above the small area between the foot of the cataract and the rock upon which they were standing. Fielding struggled unavailingly to reach the platform. For one moment it appeared as though he would succeed, and then he swung out towards the sheet. Helen darted to the edge of the precipice, but too late to aid him. The rope was severed by the remaining outlaw, and the form of her lover disappeared. With a faint cry she sank to the earth.

"Bear her to the star chamber," said the voice of the Captain. Mrs. Foster and Emy hung over the form of their friend. It was long before the blood returned to her cheek, and the drooping lids disclosed the languid eyes.

The apartment had evidently been prepared for their reception. It was more gorgeously furnished than any one they had hitherto seen. The furniture was rosewood, and the curtains which overhung the beds were brocatelle. The soft and downy beds were covered with spotless linen. Upon the marble table were several standard works. They were startled as they beheld the glittering blades and jewelled handles of three daggers.

"'Tis an assurance of our safety," said Mrs. Foster. "In whatever desperate enterprises this person may be engaged I believe we are safe from violence."



Let us examine this window; it opens upon a balcony. Why, girls, come here! We have been transported to the front of the falls." They were separated from the sheet by less than twenty yards. The balcony projected from the side of a perpendicular rock, at an elevation of seventy feet from the earth, and enabled them to take in the overwhelming grandeur of the scene. The light still fell upon the water, whose sparkling jets glittered like diamonds in its resplendent rays. They had a view of the falls from the point where they gently curved over the dizzy height, to the chasm into which they were precipitated. At the top, the river was not more than ten feet wide, but spread out in its descent to more than double that width.

The bell long since tolled the hour of midnight, and the exhausted females barred their door, and threw themselves upon the beds. Mrs. Foster and Emy struggled ineffectually against the demands of exhausted nature. Their senses were lulled by the music of the cataract as it penetrated the apartment, and they soon lost the consciousness of danger in a profound sleep. Helen recalled the events which had transpired since she entered the Cave. An age had glided past in that brief period. Her senses refused to slumber, and turning over the pages of Lamphere's Classical Dictionary, she confounded the fabulous doctrines of mythology with the mystical wonders of the cavern. She took up the dagger, and scrutinizing its polished surface mentally exclaimed—"Of what fiendish crime hast thou been the unconscious agent? or art thou yet to receive the first impression of blood: perhaps of mine?" and a cold shudder ran through her frame. "Or, if not, in defence of that which is far dearer—my honour!"

There came floating upon the air the glorious music of a brass band. Throwing a shawl over her shoulders, she stepped upon the balcony. No one was visible. She listened with enraptured senses to the soothing melody, as it came in swelling notes or softened cadences upon her ear. The tune was changed, and a warlike blast filled the cavern. As she was endeavouring to ascertain from whence the music proceeded, two figures appeared upon the balcony to her right. Her heart bounded with joy as she recognised the form of Dr. Fielding. He waved his handkerchief. At that instant his companion raised his arm; the lights were extinguished, and the scene was shrouded in impenetrable gloom. She rejoiced at the

escape of Dr. Fielding, and with an assurance of safety retired to her couch.

As she adjusted her hair and rested her cheek upon the pillow, a strain of music, wild and plaintive, seemed to float in the air. Now approaching the balcony, and then receding until the mellow notes were faintly heard. Mrs. Foster slightly moved, her lips parted, and she whispered, "'Tis heavenly!" Helen's eyes closed, and she dreamed of many figures floating in the air in the vain attempt to rescue her from imprisonment.

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Beneath, terrific caverns gave  
Dark welcome to each stormy wave,  
That dashed like midnight revelers in—  
And such the strange, mysterious din—  
At times throughout those caverns roll'd—  
And such the fearful wonders told  
Of restless sprites imprison'd there."

MOORE.

"Ah, no! I will  
Withdraw myself from every human eye."

ALFRED.

"Love, all-defying love, who sees  
No charm in trophies won with ease;  
Whose rarest, dearest fruits of bliss  
Are plucked on danger's precipice!"

MOORE.

"Lock him in the dungeon!" exclaimed Fenton, savagely; "we will deal with him at our leisure."

"Ay, ay, sir. Do you hear the orders? Come, proceed!"

Resistance was unavailing, and he entered a gloomy cell which had been walled up, and into which the air was admitted through a small opening. The guard retired, and their footsteps were heard ringing upon the rocky path. Half an hour might have elapsed, when Clifton heard his name pronounced in a whisper.

"Massa Clifton, come to de door!"

"Well, Sambo, you went over the falls in safety?"

"Yes, massa, by gad; but I like to got stove in at de bottom!"

"Where are the ladies? Have you seen them?"

"Them well. Dey hab good room; berry good supper. Dey seem astonishment at de strange sights down here; and de Capen, him perfic gemblem!"

"How is that, Sambo? Is not the person who ordered me to be thrust into this hole the Captain of the gang?"

"Oh, no! dat one ony second. The

Capen young, hansom, and a gemblem; sed he, "Lease the darky"—dat's me—"gib him something to eat, and let him hab fur few days dat which mus seem a curosty—his liberty and 'dependence.'"

"Where is your master?"

"Here in de room yoner, sleeping soundly."

"When he wakes let him know my situation. Tell him I am in the power of an enemy who will not hesitate to do me an injury."

"Sambo will tend to it."

When his slave had communicated to Dr. Fielding the situation of his friend, he at once sought the young leader. He found him in a room connected with the library, exhibiting to Mrs. Foster and her companions some rare paintings and statuary.

"Dr. Fielding, I am so glad to see you!" exclaimed Helen, as she advanced to meet him, with a joyous smile.

"I assure you the pleasure is mutual. Mrs. Foster, Emy, how are you both?"

"Quite well, after a refreshing sleep."

"You must join me in a petition to our courteous host—for he acts the character with more grace than that of jailer—to release Clifton from a dungeon."

"Clifton in confinement!" exclaimed the ladies. "Oh, sir, you will release him?"

"Pardon me for interrupting you, ladies; your request is granted. Here, Carlos—order the warden to release the prisoner. 'Tis his work; a second disobedience of orders." And his brow gathered into a heavy frown as he left the apartment.

"These paintings are exquisite! What think you of this copy of Titian's Venus?"

"It is really beautiful!"

"And this representation of the Madonna?"

"Is evidently by one of the old masters. What grace in the expression, what mildness in the eye!"

"Mary, Queen of Scots; well executed. She must have been irresistible. Catharine de Medicis; how imperious the look. Napoleon; the stamp of greatness is unmistakably disclosed. Cromwell, the great statesman, and the remorseless hypocrite. The serious face of the first Charles, and the calm and resolute countenance of Washington, all well executed. Our host is evidently a connoisseur. This bust of Webster is faultless, this of Clay not so good, but passable. Here is the determined physiognomy of old Bullion, in contact with the iron visage of his great rival, the South Carolina nullifier. A statue of

the first conqueror of Italy, imported from Europe. Let me pull aside this curtain. The three Graces! They are beautiful. No statuary that I have ever beheld equals this group."

They wandered through the apartments towards the falls.

"Why, Clifton, my dear fellow, thrice welcome!"

Our hero was cordially greeted by his four associates. The page announced that breakfast awaited them. As they were seated at the table, Edward recounted to his companions the events which had transpired since they were separated.

"And where is father now?" inquired Helen.

"I cannot inform you. From the position which he occupied, he must have observed the secret door. I did not claim assistance from him, because, in the event of his capture, our friends without would have no clue to our place of imprisonment. What number of men hold possession of the cavern?"

"At least a score," replied Fielding.

"Are they engaged in some desperate enterprise?"

"Unquestionably! else why the secret door, these furnished apartments, and the seizure of our persons?"

"'Tis strange," responded Edward, musingly, "that an organized band should exist in the vicinity of Stamford."

"What can be the object of the association?"

"I cannot divine. It would be difficult to connect anything dishonourable with the courteous leader of the band."

"I will vouch for his honour," said Mrs. Foster. "A belted knight could not be more loyal in his bearing. Besides, these rooms are proof that he possesses a refined and cultivated taste."

They returned to the library, for the purpose of re-examining the paintings. Fielding again lifted the curtain which concealed the Graces. They were gone! What they thought was one side of the room, was suddenly elevated, and disclosed a scene that appeared like the creation of enchantment. In the centre of the area was a fountain, whose innumerable jets caused a gentle shower to descend upon that part of the grounds. Countless lamps were suspended from the vault, casting a flood of light throughout the vast arcade. Half-a-dozen statues, including the three Graces, occupied different positions upon the stage. Those in front of the fountain stood revealed in all their classic elegance, as chaste and pure as

Powers' statue of the Greek Slave, while the figures beyond were softly shaded by the misty drapery of the waterfall. The curtain fell, but rose again in a few moments. The scene was changed. Six powerful gladiators were in the act of seizing the helpless nymphs, who had timidly shrouded their forms in robes of gauze.

"We have been deceived!" exclaimed Fielding, in amazement. "Our faultless statues are living, breathing mortals."

"This was the statuary, Doctor, which you have never seen equalled! This is your boasted skill in anatomy and physiognomy!" said Mrs. Foster; and she laughed merrily.

The artistes now gave a succession of beautiful tableaux. The Capture of the Sabines—Bacchus at his Revels—The Elopement of Helen—The Meeting of Antony and Cleopatra—The Execution of Anne Boleyn, and the Separation of Josephine and the Man of Destiny. When the curtain rose for the last time, the inspiring notes of a polka filled the arcade. It was danced with exquisite grace for several minutes, when the females were borne aloft by some imperceptible agency.

When the eyes of the astonished spectators were directed to the floor, the gladiators had also disappeared. The lights were extinguished, and the curtain fell.

Before they could give expression to their wonder at these extraordinary exhibitions, the wildest commotion arose in the corridor beneath the library window. They saw the leader of the band standing upon a platform slightly elevated above the floor, upon which he had just stepped, from what appeared to be his private study. In front of him were a dozen men, at the head of whom Clifton recognised his arch enemy.

"What want you, Col. Fenton?" said the clear and sonorous voice of the commander.

"I want Edward Clifton, whom you have rescued from my grasp!"

"And to accomplish that object you have not only induced these misguided men to revolt, but have violated your own oath."

At this allusion to a breach of discipline, the least resolute of the party hung their heads.

"Prate not to me of revolt!" cried the enraged Fenton. "I no longer obey your orders until Clifton is delivered into my hands."

"For the last time I order you to retire," said the young leader, with folded arms

and bent brow, the swelling veins of which indicated the violence of his passion.

"Never!" thundered the exasperated subordinate. "Nay, frown not at me! your minions are not within call, and you are in my power."

"Fool! then die in your madness."

His last words were swallowed by the explosion of his pistol, and the awestricken spectators beheld the arms of Col. Fenton, for an instant, wildly grasping at the impalpable air, when he fell to the earth. A few convulsive struggles were followed by a quivering of the limbs, the eyes rolled wildly in their sockets; and then all was still.

"So perish the insubordinate. Who will be the next victim?" said the stern voice of the commander.

A minute of profound silence ensued, while they gazed upon the stiffening form of the dead, and then by one of those sudden transitions from fear to recklessness, they prepared to revenge the blood of their comrade.

"I will be the next victim!" exclaimed a gigantic Scot. "And I!" "And I!" "Down with him! he is but one man; shall he shoot us down with impunity?"

They began to gather around the young chief, whose slight form was motionless, as with folded arms and scornful eye he watched their movements. Those nearest his person, still restrained by the sanctity of delegated authority, confined their hostility to gesticulations; but those in the rear attempted to reach his bosom with their daggers.

Edward and Fielding were on the point of starting to his relief, when he clapped his hands. A vast sliding door rolled back, and two pieces of artillery were pointed at the mutineers. Before they had recovered from the alarm occasioned by this unexpected diversion, twenty rifles were levelled at their shrinking forms.

"When will you learn it is absolute folly, to struggle against my authority? Throw down your weapons. There, now; cross your hands. Major, place these desperadoes in irons, until I can determine their fate. Begone." And with an imperious gesture, he waved the crestfallen rioters from his presence. "Remove the body of the mutineer. Since the warfare of Milton's angels," he continued in a melancholy voice, "so perish all who assail the established and necessary regulations of law and order." He gazed for a moment upon the unconscious clay, and then directed his glance to the library.

Every trace of passion had disappeared from his countenance. Bowing low, he observed with a sad smile, "I regret, ladies, that you have witnessed this scene. It was one of those summary, but unavoidable inflictions of justice, which society even is sometimes forced to adopt, although protected by the power of municipal authority. I did hope your sojourn in my dominions, would have been unalloyed with a pang. Perhaps the future may prove more auspicious." He raised his hat gracefully, and withdrew.

"What an extraordinary being! Who can he be?" inquired Emy.

"And so handsome!" said Mrs. Foster.

"It all appears to me like a dream!" observed Helen, "so wonderful are the spectacles, which we have witnessed. But is there no way for us to escape? If father and mother were only apprised of our safety, I should be so happy. Is there no avenue leading to the open air?"

"That we cannot leave these apartments, without the permission of this singular man, is, I think, beyond a doubt," said Fielding.

"But cannot our friends rescue us?"

"Impossible! A larger force than the chief could rally, cannot operate effectually in the narrow passages leading to these halls. To attempt the falls after the experience of Fielding, would be absolute madness."

"Yes, that would be too awful," replied Helen, with a shudder.

"Did you have a distinct view of the secret door, ladies? But I forgot your lights were extinguished. You should be able to describe it, Clifton?"

"Yes! Both the door and the gate at the bottom of the basin, are opened from within."

"The water then must be drawn off, before the door is opened?"

"Certainly!"

"What an ingenious contrivance! And the gate is opened from beneath?"

"I presume so! It is doubtless an iron slab, adjusted in a groove, so as to slide back and forth."

"Can we not induce the Captain of the band to let me apprise father of our safety?" said Helen, in whose mind a single idea predominated.

"That would thwart the very object which he had in view in seizing our persons."

"But if father saw the entrance to this part of the cavern, as you suppose, the attempt to keep away visitors will prove

abortive. He will never abandon the cavern until we are rescued! "Why not apprise him of the fact?"

"That would enable him to frustrate the designs of Judge Douglass."

"But if he intends to release us voluntarily, and there is no prospect of a rescue, of what avail are the efforts of our friends?"

"You are right. Here he comes; I will mention the subject to him.—Your generous defence of my person," said Clifton, "renders it a pleasing duty to treat you with frankness. The father of this young lady was a witness of my capture. The entrance to this part of the cavern was disclosed to him. A hundred armed men, by this time, have taken possession of the Cave, and the outlet to these apartments are besieged by a force superior to your own."

For a moment the countenance of the chief turned pale, and then he bit his nether lip, and muttered, "Fenton, thou art doubly curst!"

"What would you?" he exclaimed, turning his dark eyes upon Edward.

"I seek not your confidence, but gratitude demands that I should throw no obstacles in your path. There is but one way to remove our friends from the outer cavern."

"Name it!"

"Let us assure them of our safety, and our speedy return."

The stranger mused. His arms were folded upon his breast, and his head sank upon his bosom.

"I will accept your terms," said he, frankly extending his hand. "Here are writing materials; your message shall be delivered at once."

Helen hastily indited a note to her father, assuring him of the safety of herself and companions. It continued—"It is useless to attempt our rescue, it will prove unavailing. We shall be released in a few days, and that event will be hastened by your withdrawal from the Cave. This spot equals the creation of Aladdin's lamp. We are all well, and now I am as happy as the rest. Ever your affectionate Helen."

The note was delivered to the stranger. "And now let us visit the falls."

"From what an immense height the water is precipitated! This part of the cavern must be far below the surface of the earth."

"At least four hundred feet."

"And vast rocks are piled mountains high over our heads."

"What rumbling sound is that beneath our feet?"

"Why the falls have disappeared."

They gazed upward. Nothing was seen but a few small rivulets trickling from the brow of the precipice.

"The river is descending through the basin. He is delivering your message, Helen," said Edward.

The water now gushed from beneath their feet, and flowed into the channel several yards below.

"Come hither," said the page.

Opening a sliding door concealed by the tapestry, he conducted them to another room, which had evidently been just deserted. Several articles of a lady's toilette were upon the bureau and table, and, standing beside a chair was an embroidery frame. Scissors, thread, and scraps of silk were lying upon the carpet. They followed the page to the balcony. From an immense height, the river descended in a succession of cascades, and, confined as it was in a narrow channel, the water was lashed into a white foam. Lamps were arranged from the foot to the summit of the falls, and, together with the overhanging cliffs, formed a beautiful vista. While their eyes were riveted upon the descending flood, there appeared, just where the first cascade was seen curving over the rocks, the shadowy outlines of a child rapidly gliding along the crest of the waves. She was clothed in the habiliments of a fairy, and balanced herself upon one foot with ease and gracefulness. Her eyes were directed to the wondering spectators, and at intervals she kissed her hand. Although she was borne upon the water, and her form was occasionally enveloped in the spray, yet she did not touch the raging flood. She continued to descend, now moving with a velocity which made the ladies hold their breath, and then gliding slowly down the rapids. Pausing upon the crest of a fall, scarcely more than forty feet from the balcony, she bowed gracefully, and then vanished in what appeared to be the solid rock. Before they had withdrawn their eyes from the elevation, she reappeared for an instant at the point where they had first beheld her.

"Whatever may be the object of this singular man in fitting up the cavern with so much elegance, he certainly delights in the magical," said Dr. Fielding.

"Yes; and he practises it to some purpose. What with paintings—your statu-

ary—nymphs, and fairies, he surpasses the mystical wonders of the Ravels."

"Hush!" exclaimed Emy. "Is not that music?"

About half way to the summit of the falls, they saw the form of a lady descending from the vault towards the river. She was seated at a harp, and her round, alabaster arms, glided with exquisite grace along the strings. Before she had executed the prelude, the river had disappeared, and the channel was empty. At first, the notes floated softly towards them; but as the harpist proceeded, as if inspired by the melody, she touched the strings with greater power. The song was from the opera of Maria de Rohan—the rondo which the Countess sings when apprised of her husband's safety. As the last notes were borne to the eager listeners, the artiste started to her feet. The flood was again pouring over the precipice, and rapidly descended one cascade after another. She gazed wildly around, and her countenance was blanched with terror. She occupied one of those level rests that intervened between the shoots. As the foaming river appeared along the brow of the rock above her, she seemed paralysed with terror, and in the extremity of her fears, the unfortunate female sank from their view. Helen clasped her hands, and exclaimed, "She will be lost! she will be lost!"

"No power on earth can save her," responded the Doctor, solemnly. "She will be dashed in pieces ere she reaches us!"

Down, down rolled the river, as if affrighted at its own velocity. They gazed eagerly upon its foaming crests, but could obtain no trace of the unfortunate lady. Sadly they turned away, and were leaving the balcony, when the notes of a harp swelled above the roaring waters. Looking upward, they saw the smiling face of the harpist, as she slowly ascended towards the vault, and disappeared.

"It is too bad to sport thus with our sympathies!" said Helen, pettishly.

"Why, you would not have her drowned, to make that a tragedy which was only intended for our amusement!" replied Clifton.

"No, but I would not have her pretend to be so much alarmed. My nerves are not yet quiet!"

The notes of a guitar next stole upon their ears. Scarcely a dozen feet could separate them from the artist; still he was invisible. The strings were touched with much skill, and a manly voice sang the following words with exquisite feeling.

In dreams I see thee by my side;  
Again I clasp that yielding form:  
The rapture of the lingering kiss  
Is on my lip and cheek, still warm.  
Upon my brow how sweetly steals  
Again, the fragrance of thy breath,  
As when we pledged, for ill or weal,  
Our love to each, through life till death.

That lovely arm is gently thrown  
Around my neck, and lingers still,  
While blushes gather on thy cheek,  
And tears of joy those eyelids fill.  
I try to kiss those roseate lips,  
And press again that breathing form;  
The warm caress is not returned.  
I wake—alas! the vision's gone.

"What witchery is this, and to what magical arts is our attention next to be directed?" inquired Mrs. Foster.

"Why, you seem to think the resources of our host are exhaustless," said Helen.

"Yes, and I expect each feat to be more startling than the one which preceded it!"

"What an unconscionable woman!"

Emy returned to her room, and the rest separated into pairs, and wandered through the apartments and along the spacious halls.

"Who would suppose, Mr. Clifton, that real life could present such an enchanting scene!"

"You are pleased with it, Mrs. Foster?"

"Nothing that was ever conceived by the most fruitful imagination, can rival the splendour of this subterranean abode. I could linger here for ever."

"Doubtless, after it is abandoned by its present occupant, you will induce the General to remove his quarters hither?"

"I would make the attempt, if this atmosphere is not destructive to health and complexion."

"It is not extraordinary that you prize the latter highly!"

"Do you think not?"

"No! You could have no cause for alarm, however; this air would benefit both, if indeed either could be improved."

"How flattering!"

"Nay, how truthful. Cast your eyes upon those rounded arms, and along that figure which is not inclined a shade too much to embonpoint! Why, they indicate perfect health! And for the complexion, come to this mirror—yes do—there now, is truth flattering?"

The mercury gave back a face radiant with blushes.

"You have no right to call the blood to my cheek."

"Not if it occasions pain!"

"How dare you insinuate that pleasure causes it?"

They returned to the library. Mrs. Fos-

ter seated herself upon the damask sofa. The sound of the distant cataract was faintly heard. A solar lamp, upon the centre table, cast its mellow light through the room, and Edward was exhibiting to his fair companion some steel engravings. Strains of music, softened by distance, entered the apartment. The notes were plaintive and low, and floated with overpowering sweetness upon the air.

"We have been surveying the apartment, Mrs. Foster, which was assigned to you last night. It does not equal in magnificence the three rooms which are to be devoted to yourself and the maidens, for the future!"

"Are we to occupy different chambers?"

"So it seems. I presume one was assigned to you last night, in deference to your fears."

"Doubtless."

"The apartments of Clifton and myself are contiguous to yours, so you have no cause of alarm."

The stranger entered the library with a young and beautiful woman leaning upon his arm. She held by the hand a child, about three years old, who gazed timidly around him.

"Will you allow me to present my wife, ladies?"

"Certainly, I am happy to make her acquaintance," said Mrs. Foster, as she extended her hand. "Although we are semi-prisoners, madam, still we shall never forget the courtesy of your husband."

"I am happy to find he has sustained his reputation. I know he regrets the necessity which forces him to detain you."

"Probably more than I do, for I have been confounded, yet delighted, with all I have seen."

"The feats were all invented by my husband, for the purpose of amusing me, at times when the recollections of home weighed heavily upon my mind."

"They are alike creditable to his taste, and his affections. Have we witnessed them all?"

"Not half. The vast dimensions of the Cave afford full scope for his powers. But your dinner awaits you. You, no doubt, find that air and exercise give you excellent appetites."

"Will you not join us?"

"Thank you, no! My husband and I dine later, and always alone. Au revoir."

"A charming person, is she not?"

"So lady-like and refined."

Mrs. Foster was more than ordinarily vivacious. Her wit was keen and sarcastic, and she launched it at every one ex-

cept Edward. Him she addressed at first in a constrained voice, and then her manner became more frank. Her large black eyes flashed upon all the rest. She did not raise them to his countenance.

"Why, you seem inspired, Mrs. Foster," said Fielding; "I have never seen, even you, so brilliant before."

"I can now see how poor Ellen is tortured!" thought Clifton. "Never mind, madam, I'll square her accounts with you yet."

His bearing became more frigid as hers softened, until a reply more than ordinarily caustic induced her to look him full in the face, with a wondering, and half-reproachful glance. They were no longer estranged.

Returning to the library, they were met by the stranger. "I shall detain you no longer," he observed. "The recent mutiny postpones for an indefinite period my departure from the cavern. There is one request I must make, prior to your release."

"Name it," said Fielding; "we can refuse you nothing!"

"To the extent of your power prevent all attempts to explore this part of the Cave until I consent."

"We will."

"I can defend myself against any force which may be brought against me, but I wish to avoid a useless sacrifice of life. For your own satisfaction, I here declare, upon the honour of a gentleman, that our operations do not, in the slightest degree, violate the laws of the land."

"I am glad to hear it!" said Edward, warmly. "This assurance makes me still more grateful for your kind interference in my behalf."

The adieus were spoken, and with sad countenances they emerged from the secret door, and proceeded towards the mouth of the Cave. They found Judge Douglass and Davidson awaiting their exit, with horses to convey them to Stamford.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

"Thy name and watchword o'er this land,  
I hear in every breeze that stirs;  
And round a thousand altars stand  
Thy banded party worshippers,  
Not to these altars of a day,  
At party's call, my gifts I bring;  
But on thy olden shrine I lay  
A freeman's dearest offering"

WHITTIER.

"My bosom glowed; the subtle flame  
Ran quickly through my vital frame;  
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung;  
My ears with hollow murmurs rung."  
PHILIPS.

THE Presidential struggle had commenced.

The electoral candidates had mounted the stump, and barbecues and mass meetings were the order of the day. The leading issue of the canvass was the policy of annexing Texas to the United States. That question illustrated the instability of public opinion. The opposition of Mr. Van Buren to the measure was made the pretext for quietly laying him upon the shelf; yet it is doubtful if the overwhelming selfishness of the man did not contribute more largely to his defeat. The young democracy were anxious to get rid of him upon any terms. They regarded him as a political incubus, who would always bring defeat upon the party. Despised at the North, distrusted at the South, he could still rally a few devoted friends, while the masses were far from enthusiastic in his support.

The whigs were zealous in the cause of Mr. Clay. His nomination in 1844 was a foregone conclusion, notwithstanding his opposition to the annexation of Texas. His sympathies must have been favourable to the extension of the "area of freedom." Such had been the tenor of his public action. While Secretary of State he endeavoured to acquire Texas from the central government. What could have changed his opinions when the "lone star" had become "practically free and independent?" It is the prevailing opinion that every politician studies the main chance, and he may have supposed that the Northern States would turn the scale in the presidential contest. His position was truly embarrassing. The Southern democracy assailed the letters which he wrote from time to time upon the Texas question, with the utmost violence. From the date of his Raleigh manifesto, to the seventh of November, he fulminated half a-dozen decrees; but while he failed to satisfy the abolitionists, he greatly embarrassed his Southern friends. Mr. Clay did not correctly interpret public sentiment when he stated, in his letter of May 9, 1844, that the annexation of Texas was "not called for by any general expression of public opinion." In the slaveholding States the project was almost universally approved, and the extraordinary spectacle was witnessed of whigs and democrats assembling in the same convention to express their approval of the contemplated

union. In the North, the question was not so popular, but even there it had many advocates, notwithstanding the opposition of Mr. Van Buren.

It did not, however, exercise so much influence upon the ballot-box as its friends had vainly supposed. In fact, the result proved the fallacy of all human calculations. In the Southern States the admirers of Mr. Clay changed front, and from zealous advocates of annexation became its fiercest opponents. Mr. Clay carried every Southern State which he could safely count upon if the Texas question had not become an element in the canvass; while Mr. Polk did not lose an electoral vote at the North by his favouring the annexation of slave territory. The New York abolitionists did not display their usual tact. Instead of sapping the foundation of southern power by opposing an enlargement of its limits, they cast their votes for Birney, and thus elevated an avowed extensionist to the presidential chair, by the election of Polk and the defeat of Clay. One of Mr. Clay's predictions has been verified. The annexation of Texas involved us in a war with Mexico. But the result of that conflict was the acquisition of California, as well as the annexation of a State, which, in time, might have become a formidable rival.

Whatever causes may have operated to render the annexation movement less effective than it proved in 1844, it is not to be disguised that the Americans possess the same desire for the acquisition of territory which distinguished their Norman ancestors. We mean *Norman*, not *Saxon*. Notwithstanding the constant and nauseous allusion to the Anglo-Saxons, they were always kicked and cuffed, overrun and subjugated, by every nation that took the trouble to invade England. The Angles, Danes, and Normans, to say nothing of the Scots and Picts, regarded those famous Saxons as fit subjects for an iron yoke, and menial offices. We have no cause to be proud of our Anglo-Saxon ancestry, although we certainly hear our public men lauding the Anglo-Saxon race, when one-half of them do not know the reason why the two words are mated. They had neither the spirit nor the power to resist invasion, and the only way the fair sex could regain in the bower what their warriors could not defend in the field, was through the irresistible power of love and wedlock.

We have reason to be proud of our Norman ancestry—that splendid and unrivalled race of men—who could retain the con-

quests which they had won; although their blood has been somewhat diluted by intermarriage with the Britons, Scots, Picts, Saxons, Angles, and Danes.

The cry for more land is not confined to one section, although it is mainly to one party. The opportunity for the extension of our boundaries has hitherto been almost entirely confined to our southern frontier. But when a small slice can be obtained from Canada, as in the settlement of the northeastern boundary, we find even Mr. Webster can quietly pocket it, with as much modest gravity as Yankee Hill ever exhibited when receiving a more than ordinarily large piece of pumpkin-pie. The satisfaction with which he nabs the tempting "one mile wide," is indicated by slowly sliding the tongue along the lips from right to left, while the head is slightly inclined, and a scarcely perceptible, though prolonged "hem!" is heard, savouring more of religious cant than political gratification.

"And so you commence the campaign to-morrow, Clifton? Will Grayson meet you?"

"I presume so; we have published a joint list of appointments."

"There is to be a barbecue, I understand?"

"Yes; will you accompany me?"

"How far is it?"

"At Dryden's store, about fifteen miles distant."

"Why, that is in a whig neighbourhood. Rather an inauspicious place to start the ball."

"Not at all. I wish to convert the whigs; the democrats are right already."

"You have a formidable task to contend, single-handed, against a host of whig lawyers."

"But I shall not struggle alone."

"How so? I am not aware that you will have any assistance, unless I desert my patients, and Harden will shake off his lethargy, or rather laziness."

"You are mistaken. A few weeks ago I heard the whigs were making taunting allusions to the superior activity of their candidate, and to the place of my birth. They shall pay dearly for both, before the canvass closes."

"What is your plan of the campaign?"

"Associations are formed in each county in the congressional district; the members of which are pledged, in writing, to address the people twice in a month. No one is to be apprised of the plan, and I shall accomplish two objects. It will, in the first place, indicate an ex-



traordinary degree of enthusiasm in the democratic ranks when private citizens mount the stump; and in the second place, as they are not aspirants for office, their opinions will appear more disinterested, and will consequently have greater weight."

"A capital idea! And how many sub-electors have you initiated?"

"Sixty intelligent and influential farmers and mechanics will make speeches next Saturday. There is no visible connexion between them and myself, and to our opponents the movement will appear like the voluntary action of these disinterested patriots."

"Why, the whigs will be utterly confounded!"

"I intend they shall be so. I did not undertake the canvass for nothing. If you accompany me to Dryden's, be ready by eight o'clock. I must be upon the ground at eleven."

"Have you adopted rules for the discussion?"

"Of course. He speaks an hour. I reply for the same length of time. He rejoins for thirty minutes, and I close the debate in twenty."

"And is that the programme for the canvass?"

"No; I open the debate every other day."

"That's it, is it? Have you not been astonished that more personal rencontres do not occur, where two champions address the same crowd?"

"There is always danger where your opponent is not a lawyer. They are accustomed to the gladiatorial arena, and although greater control over the passions is required in political than legal debates, still propriety and good sense will ever mark the conduct of gentlemen."

"But suppose you differ as to facts?"

"In that case, the proof must be forthcoming. That, however, is rarely the case. The history of political parties is thoroughly understood by all candidates. Principles are accurately defined, and the propriety of their application is the essence of political debates."

"And you apprehend no difficulty with Grayson?"

"Not the slightest; he is a high-toned gentleman, who would scorn an equivocation, or subterfuge. If I meet Major Henderson on the stump, it is not unlikely a collision may occur. I regard him as the most unscrupulous demagogue I have ever seen."

"He is the whig candidate for the state at large, is he not?"

"Yes; and the most accomplished orator upon their ticket. In private circles he is a gentleman whose colloquial powers and fascination of manner I have never seen equalled; yet in political discussions he does not hesitate to employ every artifice calculated to win votes from the Democratic party."

"Clifton, suppose we call upon Helen Douglass? I saw Mrs. Foster wending her way to the manor a few minutes ago."

"I have so much to do, before starting to-morrow."

"But you have not seen either of them since our return from the Cave."

They were seated in the Judge's parlour.

"You have been a sad truant, Mr. Clifton, since our return from the fairy regions. So far as you are concerned, we might as well inhabit those subterranean apartments, *ad infinitum*."

"I have been preparing to start upon a mission for the conversion of unbelieving whigs."

"And like all such charitable personages, you leave your own neighbours to take care of themselves, while you are engaged in the philanthropic attempt to enlighten others. Well, that is characteristic."

Dr. Fielding was passionately fond of music, and conducting Helen to the piano; he seemed enchanted by her exquisite voice. Mrs. Foster and Edward were seated upon the sofa in the corner of the room. The evening was warm, and she wore a dress cut low in the neck, with short sleeves. The balmy air gently agitated the vines which covered the trellis-work, and, laden with perfume, kissed the cheek of the lovely woman. She was knitting a purse. Their conversation was low, for they did not wish to impair the effect of Helen's song. At length they were silent; but her taper fingers still wove together the silken thread.

The spell was broken as the last note ceased its vibration, and Helen rose from the piano.

There were perhaps five hundred voters assembled at Dryden's store. A stand had been erected in a grove hard by, and thither the candidates proceeded. As they were personal friends, they walked with arms locked, carrying saddle-bags packed with documents. Horses were tied to the swinging limbs several rods from the stand. The spectators were conversing in knots, or, seated upon the

benches, were quietly awaiting the arrival of the speakers. The subject of conversation was almost invariably political. All eyes were directed to the youthful champions as they entered the crowd.

"Young, are they not?" said a venerable old man to his juvenile companion.

"Yes, but none the worse for that, grandsire. I can take my chance the sooner."

"What! you don't want to become a politician, do you?"

"I should like to when I get well enough informed, which I hope will be the case before I am as old as they are."

"Egad, youngster, you are becoming ambitious. Pray, which side shall you espouse?"

"I am a confirmed whig already."

"Indeed, and for what cause?" said the old man, who had served under Jackson in Florida, and was a thorough democrat; perhaps for that reason.

"Because I like the whigs the best. They take more notice of their public men. Look at the two conventions which assembled at the capital during the last presidential canvass. The whig candidates for electors were paraded through the streets in carriages, to the envy of half the town. Do you think there were a dozen young men who did not resolve to become whig candidates for electors at some future day. What a contrast did the democracy present. Their candidates were groping through the city, seeking the most indifferent accommodations, without being elevated an inch above the common herd. Nothing was done to reward them for the past, or to stimulate them for the future. Bah! who would be a democrat?"

"Why, you young renegade! But I will lecture you another time; Mr. Grayson is speaking."

The whig champion grasped the subject with boldness and ability. He took decisive ground against the immediate annexation of Texas, as calculated to impair the honour of the United States, and involve the country in a war with Mexico. This at once raised the question of Texan independence, and opened the whole doctrine of the right of revolution. He advocated a tariff, discriminating for protection instead of revenue, a restriction of the veto power, and the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands. These were the issues which Messrs. Clay and Polk had made up for the canvass, and they were defined and elaborated with great ability by the impassioned orator. He was much applauded

during his speech, and when he descended from the stand he was warmly congratulated by his friends.

Edward knew that the weak point in his opponent's speech was the Texas question; and without committing the dangerous fault of evading any issue that had been presented, he nevertheless exerted all his powers to demolish the anti-Texan argument of his opponent. The sympathies of the audience were with him, and they were alone prevented by the force of party drill from joining the democratic ranks en masse.

Clifton rapidly reviewed the history of Texas; its acquisition in 1803, its retrocession in 1819, and the final struggle for independence in 1836. He argued that nothing could be clearer than the right of Texas to dispose of herself. The only remaining question was the propriety of admitting the territory to the sisterhood of States. He assumed that there was no doctrine more positively endorsed by the American people than that contiguous territory should be acquired whenever we have the opportunity. "There are overwhelming arguments in favour of the policy," he declared. "It is always well to rid ourselves of troublesome neighbours, and thus avoid vexatious disputes in settling boundary lines. We convert rivals into friends and allies; nay more, we make them a part of ourselves. We sweep away those conventional forms and absurd jealousies which have caused rivers of blood to water the fields of Europe. We obtain land for the millions who will cultivate it before the expiration of this century. Each citizen will feel a double interest in the onward strides of the republic, because he owns a portion of the soil, and by our gigantic strength, we shall command that respect which is rarely accorded to poverty and imbecility by the conventional etiquette of either nations or individuals. It is sometimes said our career may terminate like that of the Romans. Suppose it does; would not the pride of the most ambitious be satisfied, if the United States could for centuries occupy a position of such unexampled splendour in the West as that which the 'City of the Seven Hills' maintained in the East. The science, refinement, and military renown of that celebrated power will occupy a larger space in the memory of posterity than any other nation. The triumph of the English arms under Marlborough, Wellington, and Nelson is marred by the successive conquests of the island by the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Nor-



mans. France can boast of the matchless but meteoric course of Napoleon, while she mourns the occupation of her capital by Henry V. and the allied armies. Austria, once raised to a first class power by the genius of Maria Theresa, suffered the legions of Bonaparte to hold possession of Vienna. Prussia, elevated into greatness by the military science of Frederic, was prostrated between the rising and setting of the sun upon the field of Jena. Russia applied the torch to her ancient capital when she could no longer defend it, and she now watches in vain, notwithstanding her colossal power, for an opportunity to seize Constantinople.

"How immeasurably does the long and brilliant career of the Romans overshadow that of any other European nation. It stands out upon the pages of history alone and unapproachable. For centuries they held the destinies of the world in their grasp. My opponent says our thirst for land will make our destiny run parallel with that of the Romans! For one, I will give him the full benefit of the assumption. Nations, like individuals, are affected by the operations of time, and if from the womb of futurity, events of such magnitude are to be revealed, as were traced upon the pages of Roman history, let the startling consummation be compiled in the annals of America. I wish a destiny no more grand for the American States than is recorded by the Roman historian. But while I make this admission, I am not disposed to let him create the impression that the cases are at all parallel. They are widely dissimilar. The Romans extended their conquests by the sword. They maintained them by the same coercive authority, and whenever their military surveillance was withdrawn, the conquered provinces revolted. It was a misfortune, too, that the seat of their power was a single city, into which the boundless wealth of the empire was poured, but to corrupt the public heart, and enervate those soldiers who had caused the remotest nation to tremble at the mention of the Roman name. Here, we seek not the acquisition of Texas by conquest. They are our friends, who do not wish to be converted into enemies. They desire a more perfect union with their fatherland. It will not require mercenary soldiers to hold them in subjection; on the contrary, if a war ensues, they will be the first to rally beneath the stars and stripes. I am confounded at the absolute folly which prompts a refusal of their application. The history of the human race does not afford

another instance of such stupid political madness, as that which marks the policy of the Whig party. At the behest of a distinguished statesman, they array themselves against a struggling people, who have staked their lives in defence of their altars and their homes, and they expect you—ay, you! individually and collectively, to obey the order, "left face." Many of you have relations who fell in the Texan revolution. Can you reject their appeals, and force them to become aliens from the land of their nativity? Will you become the laughing-stock of the civilized world, by refusing a bloodless extension of "the area of freedom," when England, France, and Russia, are yearly re-marking their boundaries with blood?"

"No, no! never!" shouted the excited crowd, who were carried away by the enthusiasm of the speaker.

"You have made a good impression," whispered Fielding, as they advanced to the spot where the barbecued meals were placed upon the tables.

The process is simple by which the food is prepared. Trenches are dug in the earth, into which wood is thrown and burned to coals. Round sticks are laid across the trench, and the carcasses of beef, pork, or lamb, are placed upon them. During the process of cooking, they are sprinkled plentifully with salt, vinegar, and pepper. They are then laid upon rude tables, erected for the occasion, and the spectators are invited to help themselves. The method of "helping one's self" is quite as primitive as the preparation of the fare. The utensils which are brought into requisition, present no kind of uniformity. Each man draws forth his pocket-knife, and in the aggregate, they vary in size from a slender blade to an Arkansas tooth-pick. Some of them bear unmistakable evidence of having been used in cutting tobacco, while others are stained with apple-juice. With these weapons each man carves for himself, and when the meal has been postponed, to accommodate long-winded speakers, and the crowd have become hungry and impatient, the spectacle in the vicinity of the eatables is quite as uncouth and disorderly as that which often disgraces the unmannered, at a fashionable supper-table.

"I can tell you one thing, Mac,—Clifton proved too much for your man to-day."

"Nonsense! Colonel, how you are governed by prejudice."

"Not a bit of it; it is a fact, and no mistake, and I can prove it. The whigs looked exfluctified, when our candidate

was pouring in them licks on the Texas question."

"You imagined such was the case. I must confess, though, that the lads are very well matched."

"That's anuff—whenever an opponent admits that his man is not superior to ourn, the game's up. Come, now, confess, Mac: ain't it darned hard for a man to be forced to change his opinion, just because Harry of the West says he must?"

"I have great confidence in Harry, Colonel. He may be right, arter all."

"But didn't you make a speech, Mac, not four months ago, in which you pledged yourself, under all circumstances, to vote for Texas? Ain't agoin' to crawl-fish, are ye?"

"Well, hasn't a man a right to change his opinion?"

"Yes, but it looks suspicious on such a short notice."

"Come, Mac, that's hardly fair. Recollect, *your* party ain't always consistent. Didn't Mr. Grayson say that in Pennsylvania the democrats have inscribed upon their banners, 'Polk, Dallas, and the Tariff of 1842,' and ain't you all opposed to the tariff of 1842 in this State? If inconsistency is so bad in me, how does it appear in you?"

"That's a fact. But the great question is, whether we shall admit the lone star; one of your brothers fell at the Alamo, didn't he?"

"Yes, and it will be a hard pill for me to swallow Mr. Clay after his letter, though he is a great man."

"You had better go with us, Mac; there will then be no abandonment of principle," said Clifton, who was passing by. "Recollect, delay may throw that country into the arms of our ancient foe, which was so recently moistened by the blood of your kinsman."

"I'll think of it, Mr. Clifton," said the honest farmer, as a tear gathered in his eye.

For the purpose of awakening the enthusiasm of his party, Edward projected a convention at Duncanville, at which the different States and Territories were to be represented by young and beautiful women. Public curiosity was awakened, and thousands congregated to witness the spectacle. The streets were lined with carriages, and every window was filled that commanded a view of the procession. At eleven o'clock, the distant roll of a drum was heard, accompanied by discharges of artillery. As waving flags were seen approaching the court-house, the inspiring notes of martial music floated

upon the air. The head of the column advanced, and thirty ladies, clothed in black riding dresses, with velvet hats and white plumes, and mounted upon white horses, slowly passed through the avenue of human beings. Each lady was escorted by a gallant, mounted upon a black horse. Their progress was indicated by waving handkerchiefs and loud huzzas, and when they assembled around the court-house steps, hemmed in by the vast throng, the enthusiasm was boundless, and cheer upon cheer rent the heavens, while the continuous booming of cannon added to the grandeur of the scene. Mrs. Foster, Helen Douglass, and Emy Davidson, were among the splendid array.

#### CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Look Nature round, her features trace,  
Her seasons, all her changes see;  
And own, upon creation's face,  
The greatest charm's variety."  
MOORE.

"It is the hour when from the boughs,  
The nightingale's high note is heard;  
It is the hour when lover's vows  
Seem sweet, in every whispered word."  
BYRON.

Mrs. FOSTER was sitting at the parlour window, pensively watching the departure of twilight; that hour into whose fleeting moments are crowded so many sad and regretful thoughts. The servant lighted the carcel lamp, but turned the wheels so that it cast a soft and mellow light through the apartment. He then retired without disturbing the meditations of his mistress. Mrs. Foster, like many other ambitious girls, had sacrificed herself for the attainment of wealth, and when too late, found that gold could not fill the void in her affections. There was a ceaseless yearning for some object upon whom her love could be bestowed. Her fate was like that of thousands who have vainly sought to gratify an ambition for display, by attempting to stifle the unappeasable cravings of the heart. Her feelings had acquired a bitterness, which caused her to level her cruel sarcasms at her unoffending step-daughter. And yet she was gifted by nature with warm and generous impulses. She was not an exception to the rule, however, that a sacrifice of the mind's purest emotions, for whatever cause, will surely be followed by the remorseless importunity of love, until the sensibilities are de-

stroyed, and the warm current of affection is changed to bitterness and woe.

She started as Mr. Clifton was announced, and a blush suffused her cheek. She advanced to meet him with a pleased smile.

"I am glad you have called, for I was so lonely."

"Can it be possible that you are ever sad?"

"And why not? The chalice which is held to the lips of the most gifted, is often poisoned."

"I have observed it. Can you explain the cause?"

"We are too rarely satisfied with our condition, and are oftener inclined to complain that fate has not been more propitious, than to be thankful because it has not been more unkind."

"The universal discontent, should therefore be attributed to a malformation of the intellectual powers, rather than to the fortune which destiny confers."

"Do you think so, Mr. Clifton?"

"Unquestionably. If only a small segment of the human family repined at the decrees of an invincible necessity, then it might be attributed to our own selfishness. But the malady is universal and overwhelming, and saps the foundation of all our joys. Discontent caused the banishment of Adam and Eve from Paradise, and it is the mightiest curse which was invoked upon their descendants."

"Greater than revenge?"

"Immeasurably so! The thirst for revenge may be satisfied! It may be alleviated by the absence of the person who aroused its fury. But discontent obsequiously envied by envy and jealousy, preys with remorseless determination upon the human heart. How often do you see the happiness of a whole life sacrificed, in the attempt to outshine others. A splendid party, or a gorgeous equipage, may prevent the man of business from meeting his engagements, his paper is dishonoured, and pecuniary embarrassment and financial ruin is the consequence. It is almost the only cause of domestic strife between those who ought to be united in feeling and interest. If the husband holds the purse strings, the wife is always endeavouring to open them, and if resistance is offered, she loads him with reproaches. She is discontented if her daughter does not receive attention, or if her son marries against her consent. She is unhappy if her party is not as good as her neighbour's, or if her pew does not occupy as conspicuous a portion of the

church. In short, what with one cause of dissatisfaction and another, she manages to render herself, and all about her, supremely unhappy."

"Thank you for this sweeping condemnation of our sex."

"Don't misunderstand me! Although we are prevented by our pursuits, from making ourselves miserable about such matters, yet destiny has no brighter career in keeping for the sterner sex. What is it that causes the cheek of the student to pale over the midnight lamp? Why does the soldier recklessly meet the iron hail, and bristling bayonet? To what end does the adventurous merchant trust his all to the viewless winds, and tumultuous ocean? It is because discontent has assumed absolute control over his wayward fancy!"

"But are not inconsiderate marriages the source of as much wretchedness?"

"The anguish caused by uncongenial alliances, is doubtless more intense. But ill-starred weddings are not universal. A similarity of taste may produce, what is sometimes termed the full fruition of conjugal bliss, where there is nothing to alienate those who have once loved."

"Shall I infer from your language, that the bonds of love are dissoluble?"

"Can you doubt it! A gentleman, gifted with all the impetuosity and romance of youth, is introduced to a lady, in whose veins courses blood as warm and passionate as his own. Each seeks to please the other; no circumstances occur to mar the favourable impression which both have made. He enters her presence with glossy hair, polished boots, and a closely shaved chin. She of course does not receive him with matted tresses, soiled frock, or crumpled collar. Her toilette is faultless, even to the well-laced boot; and if by chance, her outside garment does not fall to the carpet, as she occupies the sofa, there is nothing revealed but spotless linen. They are married. Before two years have elapsed, he prefers the club, or the lodge, to her society. Instead of trying to win him back, by the matchless power of love, she upbraids and reproaches him, until the company of his associates becomes more attractive than her own. If he is naturally domestic, a disordered household, and a slovenly wife, will soon alienate him from his dwelling, and banish the husband and father from those who should claim his respect, as well as his affection."

"Why, Mr. Clifton, what a mournful picture you draw of matrimony!"

"I believe it is not overcoloured."

"But the survivor suffers the keenest anguish, when the mate is claimed by the remorseless tomb."

"That depends very much upon the age of the mourner. If young and rich, I fancy they soon overcome their grief. A friend of mine has been thrice married. After the death of his first two wives, he was inconsolable, and expressed the belief that the grave would soon shield him from mental agony. His spirits are buoyant, and he is now the picture of health. Few lovely women, who are fond of admiration, (and who are not,) would cry their beautiful eyes out, if left widows when young, without children, and with a large fortune."

"But old people are deeply afflicted at the loss of a companion!"

"Because they have outlived admiration, and *habit*, as much as affection renders each necessary to the other."

"Does matrimony prove so destructive to affection?"

"It sometimes is more powerful than Dally's Pain Extractor."

"I have known man and wife perfectly miserable, when parted for a short time."

"Men and women are strange beings. They pick at each other when together, and mourn for each other when separated."

"Is there no such sentiment, then, as unchangeable love?"

"With but one exception, no. There are a thousand causes which will sunder the marriage tie, alienate friends, or produce deadly feuds between members of the same family. The love of a mother for her offspring is the only mortal sentiment, which neither time nor circumstances can change or destroy. Amid dishonour or crime, it steadily clings to the object of its adoration, and unfalteringly pursues its footsteps from the cradle to the tomb."

"What an unbeliever thou art! But you cannot be so incredulous as to suppose that love is merely a fantasy?"

"Circumstances will undoubtedly produce a condition of the mind called love. Its duration may be momentary, or it may exist until every emotion is destroyed by the last, long sleep. It is generally aroused between the sexes by intellectual superiority, moral worth, or personal beauty. Its course is often erratic; and almost universally becomes less intense, when the object is indisputably our own, or is hopelessly beyond our grasp. Nothing can arrest its career. Religion, duty,

reputation, all yield to its irresistible sway. Every other sentiment is powerless, when passionate love usurps the throne of reason."

"But its demands have been resisted!"

"Ay, by those whose charms were not sufficiently attractive to force them to act upon the defensive. They deserve no laudation for remaining immaculate, until they are tempted."

"Do you not believe that matrimony is a barrier to wandering affections?"

"Doubtless, in some instances. It is far from being universally so."

"But when one seeks to discharge all the duties that the regulations of society impose upon her, will she not be greatly aided in her advance along the path of propriety?"

"Doubtless, and hence the importance of devoting our attention, as much as possible, to those whose fate is more or less linked with our own. I have no doubt, but that a steady, unfaltering determination to contribute to the happiness of our associates, will secure our own."

"I am glad you think so, for I have resolved to make it the rule of my life; that is, with one exception."

"And what is that?"

"I cannot tell you. There is one person, however, at whose presence my feelings revolt."

"Is she so odious, then?"

"Not personally; I have rarely seen a young lady who possesses greater attractions."

"Tis strange then, that your feelings can be so embittered. Has she ever wronged you?"

"Never! she only reminds me of another's existence!"

"She is your step-daughter."

"How know you that?"

"Because, driven to desperation by your harshness, she was upon the point of committing suicide, when my hand arrested her fell purpose."

"And why did you? She would else be for ever withdrawn from my sight?"

"Is it possible, that one so lovely as you are, can possess a heart so cruel? You were made for love, why disfigure your moral and personal attractions by cruelty and revenge?"

"Because, I hate and despise her."

"She has never wronged you. Extend towards her but the hand of kindness, and she will repay it by devotion."

"It is utterly impossible."

"But, let me implore you, Mrs. Foster,"

said Edward earnestly, as he took her hand. "She is a sweet, gentle girl, whose very existence you are daily torturing. Will you destroy the just hopes of happiness, which a person placed under your protection, has a right to claim? Remember, that it is *happiness*, which we all seek, in this brief existence. I know you will be more gentle. Stubborn cruelty is unnatural; especially in the bosom of one, who is formed for the dominion of love."

Her pulse beat more quickly, under the soft pressure of his hand, as he warmly urged his request. Her eye became liquid, the whole frame thrilled with emotion, as if each muscle was gifted with a new life. Her beautiful limbs became powerless, and every nerve thrilled with exstatic life; the respiration was quick and fluttering, the eyelids were half closed, the countenance was pale, save where the cheeks were illuminated by the hot blood. Under the influence of a strange and irresistible fatality, her head fell upon his shoulder, and her sweet breath played upon his forehead. Edward was at first appalled; but as the lovely burden rested in his arms, it was more than mortal power could resist. While her rosy lips were imparting their sweetness, the parlour door was opened, and Ellen Foster stood before them.

She gazed for a moment, transfixed to the spot, and then turning away, she sighed, "At least my bondage is ended. I am a slave no longer. So at last does retributive justice overtake the bad."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

"Morning's ruddy beams tint the eastern sky:  
Up, comrades, up, and climb the mountain high!  
Let the sluggard sleep, we must slumber shun;  
Ere nightfall, honour must be won.  
Haste! haste! the merry bugle sounding  
Chides our delay, chides our delay.  
Haste! haste! o'er rock and glacier bounding,  
Each gallant hunter singles out his prey."  
ANONYMOUS.

"The antlered monarch of the waste  
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.  
But e'er his fleet career he took,  
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;  
Like crested leader, proud and high,  
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky,  
A moment gazed adown the dale,  
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,  
A moment listened to the cry,  
That thickened as the chase drew nigh;  
Then as the headmost foes appeared  
With one brave bound the copse he cleared."  
SCOTT.

The Presidential election was approach-

ing. Edward had laboured with extraordinary energy, through the changeable weather of spring, and now the cool and bracing air of autumn served to reinvigorate a frame, which had endured the scorching heat of a summer's sun. There was no abatement of the enthusiasm; conventions had succeeded mass meetings, processions and barbecues followed each other with amazing rapidity, and the whole population of the State seemed to be in motion. Counties were traversed, and each day, large crowds were addressed by popular orators. The passions, as well as the prejudices of the populace, were aroused, and heavy bets were made in violation of the statute. The history of political conflicts furnishes no parallel to the intense excitement which pervaded the ranks of the rival parties. But there were moments of relaxation. The country abounded with game, the streams contained myriads of fish, and hunting and piscatorial excursions were often formed.

On a bright morning in the month of October, Grayson, Edward, and a party of a dozen friends, accompanied by several ladies, including Ellen Foster, Helen Douglass, and Emy Davidson, started for the barrens, about ten miles to the west of Stamford. This was a portion of country thinly covered by a stunted growth of trees. The ground was undulating, except where it bordered upon the creek; it there became rough, in some places precipitous. A lofty hill overlooked the chase, and upon this, the ladies stationed themselves. The openings in the forest enabled the spectator to command a view of the surrounding country, as far as the sight could extend. To the south, the barrens spread out for several miles, and terminated in a dense wood. The surface of the earth in that direction was rolling, and a succession of gentle acclivities and grassy valleys, like the waves of the ocean, approached to within one mile of the mount. At that point, instead of continuing to groove the barrens transversely, the ridges and glens curved, until the outlines of each were traceable from the position which the ladies occupied. The base of the elevation was watered by the creek, which flowed from east to west. The stream was scarcely more than twenty yards wide, but it was sluggish and deep. The ground sloped to the water's edge upon both sides; in some places, however, it was so marshy that it would neither support the weight of horse or deer. Beyond the creek was a level waste, almost entirely destitute of timber,

over which the eye roved until its vision was arrested by distance alone.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Fielding as they all dismounted and gathered for a few minutes upon the pinnacle, "it is proposed that the game shall have a chance for its life. Instead of taking stands from whence the deer is shot down as it passes, we have all determined to follow the hounds. I have had some experience in this dangerous amusement, and it becomes my duty as a hunter as well as a surgeon, to apprise the uninitiated that it is far more hazardous than the renowned steeple chase of the English empire. There, the ground which each horseman traverses, however perilous, is yet accurately defined. He can become familiar with its localities by repeated observations. He knows where his steed is to be favoured, and where his powers of endurance are to be tested; where a canter is to be succeeded by his fleetest motion. But here it is far otherwise. We have to follow in the footsteps of the chase, wherever instinct and sagacity may direct its flight. There is no time to search for level routes; the plunge or the leap must be taken on the instant, for he alone receives the guerdon of beauty who is in at the death. All who have not sufficient courage or ambition to encounter the danger can remain with the ladies; the others must mount and away speedily, or the sun will dry up the dew, and the deer will leave its lair."

"As I am a servant of the people, duty requires me to avoid all unnecessary perils," said Harden.

"Especially as your place cannot be supplied," retorted Helen.

Several others excused themselves; and the two candidates for elector, Fielding, and six experienced hunters, were all who mounted their horses. Edward bestrode a powerful black charger, whose depth of chest and well-formed limbs indicated great strength and fleetness. Upon his jetty hair were spots of foam as he impatiently shook the reins, and ground the steel bit between his teeth. Grayson was mounted upon a white horse. The curved neck, flashing eyes, and restless neigh, as he glanced at the leashed pack, revealed his eagerness to be in motion. Fielding rode a bay mare, whose slender and beautiful proportions created the impression that she was not equal to the task of keeping pace with the hounds. And yet to the critical observer, the expanded nostril, well-developed hips, and prominent muscles, disclosed elements of strength

and speed, calculated to make her a formidable competitor. Davidson, who was a celebrated horseman, was seated upon a dapple gray. It was with great difficulty that he could restrain the impetuosity of his horse. He seemed to be phrensied with excitement, and if the dogs uttered a wailing howl, he bounded forwards, and suddenly checked by the curb, he reared aloft, until the ladies shrieked with terror, for fear he would be precipitated upon the daring rider.

The rest of the party were well mounted upon steeds that had often endured the fatigues of the hunt. There were thirty bloodhounds in the pack, besides two cur dogs and one greyhound. Upon the speed of the last three, they mainly relied, after the deer were driven into the opening. Raising their caps, they bowed to the fair arbiters, and turned their horses to the west, for the purpose of gaining the rear of the game.

An hour elapsed, and still there was no appearance of the huntsmen.

"I am fearful, ladies," said Harden, "we shall have no sport to-day."

"For one, I am willing to waive the prospect of enjoyment for an assurance that no accident will happen," responded Helen. "I almost regret that I came to witness the hunt."

"You surely do not apprehend so much danger?" inquired Emy.

"Excitement often prompts the riders to encounter perils, that, in a moment of coolness, they would shrink from with horror," interposed Judge Douglass.

"Who is your champion, Helen?"

"Well, I don't know, Emy; who is yours?"

"I'll choose Mr. Clifton."

"Dr. Fielding shall be mine. And yours, Ellen?"

"Mr. Davidson rides such a magnificent horse," said Ellen Foster, timidly, as a blush stole over her countenance, "I think he will triumph."

"And has Mr. Grayson no friend here?" inquired Harden.

"Yes, that am I," said a spirited girl.

"The white horse will prove the victor!"

Harden swept the barrens with his glass, but there was still no sign of hound or deer.

"The game is up."

"Where?" demanded Helen, eagerly.

"Oh; I only meant to say that we shall have to return as we came."

"Pshaw! give me the glass."

Slowly the maiden examined the openings from the point where the hunters dis-

appeared to the spot where they were expected to emerge from the forest. There she gazed for several minutes.

"Yes, it is a deer!" she exclaimed, "and by the size of his antlers, one of the largest that roam the forest."

"Which way does he hold?" inquired Harden, eagerly.

"He stands with head thrown back, as if listening to pursuers, just where the farthest point of the barrens terminates in the forest."

"Why, that cannot be less than five miles distant."

"He is in motion. Stop; he disappears. Now he ascends another ridge. A second pause; it is but for a moment; he is now thoroughly alarmed. Away, away he dashes!"

"See you not the horsemen?"

"Not yet. Yes, yonder bursts the dapple-gray from the thicket. Now, nerve thy muscles, gentle deer, for death is on thy footsteps!"

"Your champion has the start, Ellen," exclaimed Harden; "but where can the others be?"

"There comes the black horse in the other's track, and emerging from the bushes to the right is another. It's the bay. Good heavens! how madly he rides," and the girl's voice trembled. "Along the ridge, from the left, dashes the white charger. They are all in view. The start is beautiful! See, they disappear together in yonder valley."

"You forget; they are too far away to be seen with the naked eye. But where is the buck?"

For a moment she examined the scene in silence. "Ah! there he is, doubling to the right, as if he would deceive his pursuers. Foolish thing! there are eager eyes upon your bounding form, as well as unerring scent upon your footsteps. A direct, undeviating flight is your only hope. While he is making the curve of yonder elevation they are approaching us in a body."

"The pack opens. Hear you not the hounds?" cried Harden.

"Yes, and see them, too. Their forms are scarcely perceptible, still they rapidly follow in the path of the game."

"What music in their voices!" exclaimed Harden, enthusiastically. "Nothing could be more delicious!" and he gazed with intense excitement upon the horsemen, who were just coming into view.

"Now the chase seems to fly. But good heavens! What is that bounding along, with head erect, regardless of the

trail? It gains upon him, too, notwithstanding the velocity of his motion. 'Tis the greyhound! Poor victim! I fear there is no hope for you. Here, take the glass; I can look no longer."

They were all now in open view. Thrice the buck had doubled, but his attempts to elude pursuit only had the effect of prolonging the scene in that part of the field. Whenever he disappeared behind a hill and changed his course in the valley, the greyhound lost the direction, and was thrown off. But the moment he ascended another elevation, the relentless foe was in swift pursuit. The bloodhounds, on the contrary, followed the trail with undeviating steps, through all its windings. With heads bent to the earth, and tongues protruding from their mouths, the opening pack held on their way. The horsemen had kept nearly in a body for three miles. The white horse and the bay were a little in advance, but not enough to indicate a final triumph. As they approached the spot where the hills and valleys curved in the direction of the mount, they spread out, so as to prevent the deer from turning upon his footsteps. Thus baulked, he headed directly for the creek, and towards the hill from whence the spectators were watching his flight.

Davidson and Edward kept the summit of two ridges, while Grayson and Fielding traced the line of separate valleys. The rest of the hunters were scattered over the field, and were all some distance in the rear of the others. About one hundred rods from the mount a narrow dell crossed the course. The descent was abrupt, except at the spot where Grayson was approaching it. But there the passage was rendered difficult by a mass of grape-vines. Davidson and Fielding were familiar with that part of the ground, and they had barely time to raise a warning shout to their companions, when they were upon the verge of the glen. There was no time for hesitation or delay; and Edward, dashing his spurs into the flanks of his horse, urged him to leap the gulf. The feat was a hazardous one. For three miles his horse had followed the dogs at the top of his speed, until they were all passed, except the greyhound and one of the curs. The dell was not less than twenty feet wide, and half-a-dozen in depth. The summit upon each side was firm, however, and with a tremendous bound the black horse cleared the chasm. Fielding was not so fortunate. He had overtaken the powers of the mare; for a moment her slender form was seen floating over

the abyss, but only her forefeet touched the bank, and she rolled backwards into the gulf.

The dapple-gray now approached the glen. Davidson had succeeded in checking his speed a few rods from the bank, and he now approached it with his limbs well gathered under him. Although a faster steed than the black, he was not so good a leaper. As the rider touched him with the spur, he bounded forward with an angry snort. The distance was too great, and the hindfeet alighted upon the slope of the bank. For a moment it seemed that Davidson, too, would be hurled backwards, but the horse with a spring regained the level ground, and bounded away.

The career of the white charger had not been arrested as he approached the spot which had proved so disastrous to Dr. Fielding. He dashed with headlong speed into a cluster of grape-vines, and Grayson was unhorsed.

"Good God!" exclaimed Harden, "where are Grayson and the Doctor? they have disappeared. Look! look! horseman after horseman vanish from our view. By heavens! yonder dashes a riderless steed! See! there too goes the white horse. But three horsemen can be seen. Stay; is not that Fielding who appears to be rising from the earth? The glass! It is; onward he comes, but too late! Davidson and Clifton are almost here. How their horses foam! Is it not a glorious sight? Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

The cheers from the excited Senator caused the deer to swerve so much, that instead of passing to the left of the mount, he turned to the right, and bounded along the valley which intervened between the elevation which Edward and young Davidson were traversing. The buck was large and powerful, and still held on with surprising velocity; but it was apparent that his strength could not much longer endure the exertion which it was necessary to make, in order to elude the attack of the greyhound. The bounds were still lofty, but his motions were not so elastic, and the tongue which protruded far from his mouth, indicated that his flight would soon terminate. The noble dog gallantly pursued the chase. For the last mile the deer had scarcely diverged from a direct line, and each moment the distance was lessened between the two. When the stag had reached the bank of the creek, the greyhound was not more than three yards behind. The course which Edward and Davidson had taken was more direct

than that of the deer, for they knew he would attempt to gain the creek along one of the ridges which led to the pinnacle. They were, therefore, within twenty yards of the chase when he disappeared over the bank of the creek.

"How the foam pours from their sides!" exclaimed Harden, "and from their mouths, too; still, they want not the spur. With what eagerness each horse pursues the game! See; the forms of their riders are thrown back, as with tightened reins they endeavour to check their speed." The two huntsmen raised their caps as they swept past the mount.

"For heaven's sake, be careful!" shouted Harden, as the reckless horsemen dashed down the declivity towards the water. "The marsh! the marsh! Clifton."

The warning came too late, and the gallant black struggled unavailingly to release himself from the slough. The dapple-gray was more fortunate. The ridge which he had followed terminated in a gravelly beach, and the generous steed had plunged into the water before the buck had gained the opposite shore.

"Your champion is the victor, Miss Ellen," said the Judge.

"Perhaps not," exclaimed Emy; "the game is not yet caught!"

"Yes, but your knight is hors de combat."

The stag had reached the shore, and was ascending the acclivity, when the greyhound seized him with his terrible jaws, and they again floated in the stream. The buck now turned, and struck fiercely at his relentless pursuer. When thoroughly aroused, a stag at bay becomes a formidable foe. The hound was one of the most resolute of his breed, and returning to the attack, they fought with the greatest fury, as they slowly drifted down the current. Twice had the teeth of the assailant been fastened in the throat of the stag, yet each time he was dashed off, with a violence which caused the blood to pour from his lacerated breast. The stag was now hemmed in with foes. Davidson slowly swam his horse towards the combatants, and a score of blood-hounds were plunging into the stream.

"Oh! it is too cruel," exclaimed Helen, as the tears started to her eyes; "will you give the gallant stag no chance for his life. 'Tis cowardly to encompass him with foes."

"He shall have fair play," replied Harden; and with a voice that soared above the cry of the hounds, he ordered David-



son, in the name of the arbitress, not to mingle in the combat.

In the mean time, the greyhound continued to assail the deer with the most savage determination. Both were desperately wounded, still they fought on with unconquerable resolution. The buck no longer attempted to gain the shore, and, regardless of Davidson's presence, he had no eye but for the enemy, whose assaults he met with corresponding ferocity. Once he hurled the dog from him with such violence that he disappeared for several moments, beneath the surface of the water. Instead of trying to escape after this repulse, the enraged animal glanced his blood-shot eyes around, as if awaiting the reappearance of the hound. The exasperated dog came up near the head of the stag, and seizing him by the throat, he clung to his victim with a power which resisted every attempt to shake him off. Again and again the body of the hound was stricken with a force which drove it from the water, and disclosed the terrible wounds which were furrowed by the sharp hoofs of the deer; still his teeth remained fixed and immovable, as though fastened upon his foe with the power of a screw. The blood of each dyed the water; their struggles became less and less violent, and ceased altogether, as they touched the beach several rods below the pinnacle.

Davidson, who had, with great difficulty, beat off the blood-hounds, now approached the combatants. The forms of both were rigid and motionless.

Clifton succeeded in extricating his charger from the mire, and reached the mount just as the rest of the party assembled at its base. One of the hunters had broken a rib, Grayson had received a contusion upon the shoulder, and Fielding's head was bound with a handkerchief, for the purpose of stanching the blood, which flowed from a cut in his temple.

Davidson, alone, of all the huntsmen, had met with no accident, and he now approached, bearing the antlers of the stag upon his saddle-bow.

"Gentlemen, to the successful champion is awarded the meed of beauty," observed Judge Douglass; "Ellen, 'tis yours to present."

The horseman bent low, as the timid and beautiful maiden adjusted an embroidered scarf over his shoulder, and tied it upon his heart.

"It was a right gallant chase," said Harden; "I wished myself in your midst. But what unhorsed so many of you in one spot?"

"It was that treacherous chasm," replied Fielding; "I have always cleared it before. Your horse made the most splendid leap I have ever beheld, Clifton; his feet lighted upon the bank a full yard from its edge."

"I wish he had been as successful in passing the slough."

"Oh! that was the fault of neither. The ground has the appearance of being firm. How did you pass the gulf, Davidson?"

"Not so well as Mr. Clifton. I came near sharing your fate, Doctor. Poor Carlo, I regret your fate! He might have been living, but for your orders, Miss Helen."

"So might the stag, Mr. Davidson, but for this day's sport. To my poor judgment, one appeared as worthy of life as the other."

"But he was a noble fellow."

"Not more so than the deer. How magnificent his retreat; how gallant his defence."

There was a great contrast in the appearance of the horses now and when they started from the mount. They were covered with foam, and with drooping heads and trembling limbs, the panting steeds were recovering their breath. The bay mare had received a wound upon her shoulder; the breast of Grayson's horse was lacerated, and the blood trickled along the white hairs; the black charger was covered with mud; and from the body of the gray the water still dropped. One horseman had lost his stirrup, another his bridle, while the saddle of a third was turned. The hounds were equally overcome with fatigue; some were cooling themselves in the creek, while others stretched their bodies upon the earth.

After partaking of a lunch, the party returned to Stamford.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Sickles ring,  
Maidens sing  
To the sickles' sound;  
Till the moon is beaming,  
And the stubble gleaming,  
Harvest songs go round."

HOLTZ.

"The boat had touched this silver strand,  
Just as the hunter left his stand,  
And stood concealed amid the brake,  
To view this lady of the lake."

SCOTT.

"But you must confess, Mr. Harden,

that the democracy resort to a great many expedients for the purpose of catching votes. It was hardly fair for gentlemen to join the company of squatters who attended the convention."

"That was not a whit more inexcusable than the log cabin trick of 1840, Judge Douglass."

"Because Mr. Clay sought to protect the public domain from a set of land pirates, why, men who are surrounded by wealth, clothe themselves in rags, in order to personate the frontier-men."

"Waiving the question altogether, of the propriety of forcing a class of citizens from the public lands at the point of the bayonet, who are doing more than all others to develop the resources of this country, there was no more deceit in the personation of squatters by men of fortune, than there was in creating the belief that General Harrison resided in a log cabin."

"But your party denounced the 'hard cider campaign,' as you termed it?"

"Not more than yours did the Jackson furore of 1828. The fact is, political tactics will change, and each party should have the privilege of arranging its own plan of the campaign. Conventions, mass meetings and processions, do not cause the excitement; they are only evidence of its existence."

"Well, Tuesday ends the struggle. Where is Clifton?"

"To-day he speaks at Thompson's Cross-roads; next Saturday night he addresses a torch-light procession at Stamford; Monday he makes a speech at Bergen, and Monday night he will harangue the populace at the Narrows."

"How indefatigably Clifton has conducted the canvass. He has more than redeemed the pledges which you made for him in the convention."

"Yes; and his zeal and ability will be rewarded by a seat in Congress, at the next election."

"So soon! Why he has not been in the state six years."

"His popularity has been of rapid growth."

The crowd at Thompson's Cross-roads was large and enthusiastic. Major Henderson, the whig candidate for the state at large, desired to close the debate. To this Edward would not consent, as he claimed the right of terminating the discussion alternately. The Whig orator was enraged, and mounting the stand, invited Clifton to meet him at Morgan's tavern, where there was to be a whig barbecue two days after. It was a vain boast, for

he knew that Edward had an appointment that day in the adjoining county. Contrary to his expectations, the challenge was accepted, amidst the cheers of the democracy.

Morgan's tavern was situated in a neighbourhood almost entirely inhabited by whigs, and Henderson anticipated that an overwhelming majority of his party would be present. In this expectation, too, he was disappointed. About a dozen miles from the place of meeting, was a portion of country densely settled by democrats, a hardy and inflexible body of men, who could muster five hundred votes at the polls, or wield five hundred bludgeons in a fight. Col. Miller exercised an unlimited control over this clan, and to his house Edward directed his steps, after he had accepted the proposition of Major Henderson. Miller was a gentleman of large possessions, and lived in princely style, upon the shore of a beautiful lake.

Clifton was welcomed with much cordiality by Col. Miller.

"I should have gone over to listen to your speech, to-day, but for unavoidable business engagements. Here, Frank—take the gentleman's horse. That is a fine animal, Mr. Clifton." And he looked admiringly upon the black steed.

"He has done me good service during the canvass. In a few days he shall have rest."

"Yes, the election will soon be over. Come in, the air is chilly as night approaches. Excuse me for a moment."

Edward seated himself by the cheerful wood fire, and examined the furniture of the parlour. It was furnished with Eastern splendour. The velvet carpet was from the choicest looms of Brussels, the sofas and chairs, manufactured from papier maché, were inlaid with pearl, and the curtains were made of the richest brocatelle. One of Chickering's pianos was open, and the pieces of music which were scattered upon the stand, proved that the artiste had just left the instrument. It was not often that our hero had passed a night in such luxurious quarters during the canvass. He heard the soft rustling of silk, and rose to his feet.

"My daughter, Mr. Clifton."

Edward bowed to a lovely girl, who could scarcely number seventeen years, although her form was above the medium height, and her proportions were round and flowing. Her eyes were deep blue, fringed with black lashes, her nose was Grecian, the cheeks dimpled and bloom-



ing, and her manner indescribably fresh and piquant.

"Do you know, Mr. Clifton," she said, frankly extending her hand, "your want of attention came very near making me turn my coat?"

"What, become a whig?"

"Yes. I have never been so neglected before. Can you expect ladies to remain firmly wedded to their principles, without being noticed, any more than men? And don't you have to keep a vigilant eye upon the unterrified and unshaken—and in some cases the unshaved, if not the unwashed democracy—to prevent desertion from the ranks?"

"Why you are half a whig already!"

"That is because your competitor was more politic than yourself. You don't know my influence. Papa controls a twenty score of votes, and he does almost everything I ask him. You see there are breakers ahead."

"If I had known there was so much at stake, I would have paid my devoirs at an earlier day."

"You would not have left it to chance to bring you at last, eh? You need improvement—as a politician, I mean. It is unpardonable not to know *all* the influences which affect the ballot-box."

"Take me under your protection."

"If you prove an apt scholar, perhaps I may. Do you suppose I can shape you into a respectable candidate for Congress?"

"Pardon me; I have no such ambition."

"Of course not! I never saw a person who had. Still you all accept nominations, and if elected rarely resign; or if you do, it is that resignation which pockets the honours, and the—salary."

"Suppose I have aspirations for a seat in Congress?"

"You can be nominated and elected."

"But I am barely old enough."

"That makes no difference. 'There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood,'—you know the rest. Besides, I think voters, like women, are rather partial to young men."

"Will you yield me your support, while you are giving direction to my ambition?"

"That depends upon your encounter with Major Henderson. He is so unscrupulous that I would do almost anything to see him overthrown. He thinks his powers as an orator are matchless."

"Will you listen to the discussion? I do not know how a champion could fail when fighting beneath such eyes."

"Come now, Mr. Clifton, that was well

said. I like to see a person keep a stock of compliments on hand. I always do."

Supper was announced.

"Where is Brother Malcolm, mother?"

"He went over the lake to see the Mortons. He should have been back, though, before this."

"You will like Malcolm, Mr. Clifton, if you are, as I have heard, a strict constructionist."

"I am politically; if I was socially, I might take exception to some of your speeches."

"Has Augusta been saying sharp things?" inquired Col. Miller.

"Yes; she shoots with a long bow."

"That is her nature; she spares no one. Even I am not always safe. And so you meet Major Henderson day after to-morrow?"

"Yes, sir."

"He is the most unscrupulous politician in the whig ranks, and coupled with his unquestionable talents, it renders him a formidable opponent. Have you met him during the canvass?"

"Twice only."

"And how did he bear himself?"

"Courteously."

"He knows with whom to trifle. It is a part of his tactics to have the whigs constitute a majority of the crowd whom he addresses."

"So I understand."

"And he is equally fond of closing the debate. Who will terminate it at Morgan's?"

"I shall."

"Very well. It shall be my duty to foil the Major in his anticipations of having a one-sided affair. It is a whig barbecue, but I understood you to say that the democrats were invited to attend."

"With much ostentation."

"To-morrow, then, I will arouse the neighbourhood, and five hundred democrats shall back you at Morgan's. I hope Malcolm will return to-night. Ah, here he comes. I believe you are acquainted."

The young men greeted each other with much cordiality.

"Will you favour me with a song, Miss Augusta?"

"Certainly; what will you have?"

"Any one you please."

The maiden seated herself at the piano, and after running her fingers skilfully over the keys, she sang, with a voice of exquisite sweetness, the plaintive words of Byron,

"The day of my destiny is over."

Edward yielded to the power of melody, and his imagination still hovered in the realm of song, long after the strings ceased their vibrations.

She resumed her seat upon the sofa.

"What words for you to sing?"

"Why?"

"They are far too sad for one whose spirits are so buoyant and gay as thine."

"You surely do not suppose that my heaven is always unclouded? Ah, no! I am not exempt from the general doom, that mars the joy and crushes the hopes of frail mortality."

"If you are unhappy, who can escape the decrees of inexorable fate?"

"No one. There are moments when I am indescribably happy. But they are precursors of sadness and gloom. My emotions are often typified by the lake. Come with me."

She raised a curtain, and opening the blinds of a window which was half concealed in a charming alcove, disclosed the waters of the lake, as the placid sheet reflected the light of the moon.

"See, that portion of the lake nearest this shore has a mirror-like transparency; but yonder, the surface is curled into gentle ripples by the breeze, as it moves over the water. The element is no longer quiet. Its tranquillity is disturbed, and within an hour its bosom will be lashed into foam. Such is life; fluctuating, uneven, incomprehensible."

The view was cheerless. The forest was clothed in undress, the dew was congealing into frostwork, and the cold wind sighed mournfully through the leafless branches of the hickory and the oak. Closing the blinds, they returned to the fire.

"Do you play backgammon, Mr. Clifton?"

"Quite well, I flatter myself."

"Would you like to play?"

"Very much."

The board was produced. Clifton observed that it was ornamented with mosaic-work, and judged that it came from a Chinese manufactory. They were both skilful players, but the lady was not so stoical under defeat as her opponent, and she occasionally threw the box down, as ill-luck followed the dice. At last, when he had taken up three of the white pieces, and she could enter neither, the men were all suddenly shaken together, and his triumph was prevented.

"Why, Mr. Clifton, ain't you ashamed to move the box in that way?"

"That is a good joke. You remind me of a lad who entered Dr. Fielding's office,

and while examining some object of curiosity upon the shelf, precipitated a dozen bottles of medicine upon the floor. Without waiting to be assailed, he promptly inquired, 'Dr. Fielding, are you as mean as ever?' Becoming the accused, when he intended to be the accuser, the Doctor was nonplussed. Neither of you, however, can be charged with singularity. It is a way the world has of shifting responsibility."

"I believe you say truly. Few of us are willing to assume the full responsibility of all our actions. But the common enemy has not been idle. It is late Good night; may sweet dreams be thine!"

"They will be, if sleeping follow the waking thoughts."

After breakfast the next morning, Col. Miller and Edward proceeded to examine the plantation. He had seventy able-bodied, and healthy negro men, whose cheerful faces proved that they were happy and contented.

"I will first show you my tobacco establishment; that I keep separate from my other buildings, because there is more danger of fire."

"How much tobacco did you raise this year?"

"I have no certain means of judging, as it is not all pressed yet. I planted about twenty acres."

They entered an immense stone building, divided off into various apartments. In the first room, a large quantity of tobacco was suspended over a fire for the purpose of "curing" it. This is effected by the smoke and heat. Passing into another room, Edward saw a dozen slaves engaged in "stemming" tobacco.

"I thought this branch of the business was done by large establishments?"

"It is, but as I have a force sufficiently strong, I extract the stems, and press the tobacco myself."

"You prepare it for market yourself, then?"

"Invariably."

They entered the press-room. Here some stalwart fellows were screwing the leaves into hogsheads.

"This tobacco," said Col. Miller, as he placed a leaf in Edward's hand, "is from seed which I procured in Cuba; I think the quality is quite as fine as that which they raise either in Florida or upon James River."

"Why do you not manufacture it, then?"

"I have made arrangements to do so next season."

"At what price can you afford to sell

tobacco, pressed in the leaf, and make a fair profit?"

"At three cents a pound."

"But you obtain far more than that for it?"

"Sometimes, though the price fluctuates very much. Mr. Meredith, when does Philip start with a load of tobacco?"

"He was taken sick this morning, sir, and I sent Thomas."

"Has Dr. Manton seen Philip?"

"Yes sir! He says he has the bilious fever."

"Very well, you must see that he is properly nursed; you know that he is one of the most valuable slaves on the plantation!"

"Ay, sir."

"How is Phebe?"

"Almost recovered. Sally had twins last night."

"What, Solomon's wife? Why, the puritanical rascal has not been married four months."

"Yes, your honour, and I told him so."

"And what was his reply?"

"He stammered a little at first, and then responded with a grin, which disclosed all his ivory."

"Massa Meredith, Ise no wus than white folks; dey nebbber always wait for clergyman."

"The slanderous villain. Is he the one whose voice is so loud in prayer?"

"The same, sir."

"I believe he is not the only person in the world, Mr. Clifton, whose conduct does not keep pace with his professions."

"If you please, Col. Miller," said the overseer; "Pilot wants to marry Phillis."

"Is her mother willing?"

"Yes, sir."

"Send him to me. Mr. Clifton, we will now visit the cotton gin!"

"Do you raise cotton, too?"

"Oh yes, a dozen acres."

They approached a frame building, in which there were immense quantities of cotton, some of it prepared and ready for market, while a large amount had only been removed from the boll.

"The cotton gin is almost indispensable. How did you ever do without it?"

"The process of extracting the seeds was slow, and laborious. We are under great obligations to the inventor of the machine; without it we could not supply the world with cotton."

"Well, Pilot, what do you want?"

The question was addressed to a powerful negro, who stood awkwardly twirl-

ing his hat, as he cast furtive glances at his master.

"Speak out, fellow; you have not been guilty of any misconduct, have you?"

"No, no, massa, ony Ise fallen in lub wid Miss Phillis."

"And you want to marry her?"

"If you please, massa, I should like to be united to her in matrimony."

"Will you make her a kind and affectionate husband?"

"Sartin, massa, I will shiel her from de winds ob de heaben."

"Very well then, marry her. But recollect, if you do not treat her kindly, I will sell you."

"Neber fear, massa!" and the happy fellow walked off with stately dignity, for a few steps; and then, unable to restrain his feelings, he exclaimed, "Phillis am mine!" and then followed those feats by which an African indicates his pleasure. He threw himself upon the ground, and rolling over several times, he at last sprang up, and rapidly turned several somersets. He finished his demonstration by throwing his arms around a negro who was leaning upon a post, and squeezed him against the timber with such violence, that he fairly writhed with pain.

"Slaves rarely make cruel husbands," observed Col. Miller; "but it is well, nevertheless, to keep them under a wholesome restraint."

"How do they bear separation from their partners and children?"

"I have never had occasion to sell any. They are sometimes, however, separated by execution sales, or when the property is divided between heirs. I have observed, that they adapt themselves to circumstances more readily than whites. If husband and wife are separated, they soon marry again. Their affections will not bear the test of time."

"I am afraid infidelity is not confined altogether to the black race," replied Clifton.

"As for the unhappiness caused by the separation of relations, it is not so great as that which is hourly witnessed among the whites. But the abolitionists say that in one case it is voluntary. The assertion is untrue. Thousands, in this country, are separated from their kindred by decrees as irresistible as that which transfers the slave to another State. Look at the Irish, the subjects of the *philanthropic* government of Great Britain. The will of the master is not more absolute than the inexorable necessity, which drives the son of the Emerald Isle from his kindred and

his home! What appeal is there from the system of impressment, which tears the subject, at a moment's warning, from his fireside, to sustain a wretched continental policy, or maintain the supremacy of the ocean! Here, those who are left behind, are fed and clothed; but who gives assurance to the victim of a press gang, that starvation and dishonour does not await his wife and his children? May a thousand curses light upon the hoary-headed and mendacious hypocrite, who can prate of slavery, while the millions of his own land are ground to the dust, and emaciated forms and sunken eyes proclaim the horrors of starvation!"

"The hypocrisy of the government and the people of Great Britain, is not alone confined to the subject of slavery."

"Hoot! is there a solitary question of international or domestic policy, that they do not view with a selfish and prejudiced vision? With what ceaseless energy are they accumulating obstacles to the annexation of Texas! They have adopted the motto, 'Let us get all we can, and prevent other parties from getting anything.' To all intents and purposes, they play the grab game."

They now passed out of the enclosure into a field of seventy acres, covered with a splendid crop of corn. About twenty men were engaged in harvesting it.

"To-night they have a corn-shucking, which is always a source of much happiness to the slaves."

Col. Miller exhibited his carpenter and blacksmith shops.

"You have everything that is requisite for a farmer, not even excepting a flour mill, which I see yonder."

"Yes; the expense of keeping my tools in repair, and erecting outbuildings and quarters, would be too great. Four of my men are first-rate blacksmiths and carpenters. My negro cabins, you will see, are built with a view to health and comfort. Interest, as well as humanity, induces me to keep my slaves from sickness."

"You must look to Augusta for amusement during the day," said Col. Miller, as they entered the house, "while Malcolm and myself prepare for the gathering to-morrow."

The warm sun had dissipated the frost, as the young lady put on her cloak and hat for the purpose of exhibiting the grounds to their guest. The beauty of the surrounding scenery had been only partially revealed the evening before, by the fading twilight. The mansion rested

upon an elevation of one hundred feet above the shore. The lawn sloped gradually for a distance of forty yards, and then descended abruptly to the water's edge. A flight of sixty marble steps led from the summit of the acclivity, to the border of the lake. The grounds were embellished with every flower and plant known to botany or the florist. The spacious lawn was ornamented with statuary, some of it antique, the rest from the hands of modern sculptors. Upon one of the pillars which relieved the top of the staircase was a statue of Jefferson, in bronze; the other was surmounted by a marble bust of Napoleon.

"You can discover papa's opinions," said the fair guide, "from these representations. He regards Jefferson, as the greatest statesman of modern times, and Bonaparte the most illustrious warrior, the world has ever known. The statesmanship of the one, and the military skill of the other, typify the impregnability of his castle."

From the head of the staircase, a full view was obtained of the surrounding country. The great feature in the picture, was the lake. It was embosomed in a range of hills, which were elevated almost into the dignity of mountains. Between the water and the foot of the range, for about three-fourths of the lake shore, was a strip of land half a mile wide, which was in a high state of cultivation. Along the rest of the shore the water laved the base of the hills. Gravelled walks extended through the grounds, and wound along the edge of the bluff. Several fountains were playing in different portions of the park, and their sparkling jets glittered like diamonds in the rays of the morning sun.

"How can I best entertain you, Mr. Clifton?"

"By giving me the benefit of your society."

"If you are fond of hunting, we will go in pursuit of partridges."

"What, is the gun, too, one of your weapons?"

"No, I use a snare."

"Ah! that is more characteristic."

They were soon mounted, and accompanied by three servants, cantered along the beach. Diverging from the shore, about a mile from the mansion, they entered a country road, which wound through a valley densely covered with forest trees.

"There ought to be partridges here, Plato?"

"Dere am, Miss Gusta; I seed 'em day fore yesterday."

"Sportsmen do not fancy this way of taking game, Miss Miller."

"I know they do not, in the more densely inhabited portions of the State, but here partridges are so abundant that what few I take are scarcely missed."

"Plato, what noise is that?"

"I'm blessed, if it ain't Lion."

"Why did you not chain him? He will frighten the game. Drive him back at once. What, he won't go! then tie him to a sapling, until we return."

"How fond dogs become of hunting?"

"Oh yes, brutes prey upon each other, with as much remorselessness as those who are gifted with reason instead of instinct. But hist! what is that?"

A bevy of partridges ran across the road, several rods in advance of the party.

"Adjust your net, Plato."

The negro made a circuit, and placed the snare beside a fallen tree, whose trunk was lying parallel to the course which the game were taking. The net was a dozen feet in length with a mouth six feet wide. After he had set it, the negro returned, and with his associates endeavoured to turn the partridges in the direction of the net. But the noise of a stick, which broke beneath the feet of Pluto, alarmed the birds, and they darted away into the forest.

"You did not manage that with your usual judgment. Try again."

The next attempt was more successful. The slaves commenced singing a low and plaintive song; it acted like a charm upon the game, and in a few minutes a dozen were driven into the snare and secured.

"They are won to their doom by the siren's voice. Sweet sounds are not without their effect upon even these timid creatures."

"But is it true, that they are less easily alarmed when the hunters sing?" inquired Edward.

"Yes; it is said that they have an appreciative ear for music, which forces them to hover near the person who is driving them into the snare."

After capturing as many partridges\* as they desired, Miss Miller and Edward returned to the house.

In the afternoon they descended the staircase, and entering a boat, Clifton rowed to the fishing-ground. Baiting the hooks, he threw them into the water, and

\*This bird is known as the quail, throughout the North.

they reclined upon the cushions, waiting for the fish to seize the bait.

"How magnificently your abode appears from the lake, Miss Augusta?"

"I am glad you like it. There is no spot, that I have ever beheld upon this hemisphere or the other, which can at all compare with my own dear home."

"Have you been abroad, then?"

"I was absent two years."

"And did you see much of Europe?"

"We wandered over not only a great part of Europe, but penetrated into Asia, and touched the borders of Africa."

"Where did you pass the most of your time?"

"In Paris and Italy. We were for several months at Lake Como, and spent three weeks delightfully in Naples. But Paris is of all cities the most charming. There is but one earth, and one Paris."

"Do you not like the American cities?"

"I think them intolerable. The climate of the four principal northern towns, is an insuperable objection to them. You are never certain of the weather unless it is the intense heat of July and August. But the atmosphere of Paris, is like our own. The seasons change so gradually, that they glide imperceptibly into each other."

"What do you think of New Orleans?"

"It is passable during January and February."

"Why, the inhabitants of the Mississippi Valley, think the southern metropolis unrivalled."

"It is because they have seen nothing more charming. It will always be deserted by every one who can get away, for eight months in the year. The other four will, in time, be gay; but the day is not yet."

"You are anti-American."

"No, I am only just. It is a source of sincere regret that our country does not present more attractions to the scientific and the educated. It cannot, however, be expected that a power still in its infancy can rival that which, having past its meridian, is slowly but steadily crumbling beneath the touch of decay."

"For centuries the Eastern continent has been gathering her works of art, yet how steadily civilization and refinement fades before the approach of barbarism and imbecility. Even in Italy, whither the sculptor, the painter, the musician and the poet turn their footsteps, the people are fit subjects for despotism, while the Czar of Russia, wielding with the concentrated force of a single will the vast power of

his serfs, still makes it a problem whether Europe, with all her boasted superiority, is to be republican or Cossack."

The maiden continued, as her eyes flashed with enthusiasm: "The world is indebted to the United States for nearly all the modern discoveries which have benefited mankind. The application of steam to navigation and the transmission of intelligence by electricity are two practical illustrations of American genius, which are scarcely second in importance to the art of printing; while the matchless Powers, in the creation of the 'Slave,' has rivalled the statuary of Greece and Rome. Time, time only is wanting to make the United States in every respect the leading power of the earth."

"I beg your pardon for considering you other than a patriotic, true-hearted American lady, and one, too, who examines with the mind that which is presented to the vision."

"Thank you for the compliment, although it is weakened by the opinion which caused its utterance."

"No, verily, it is not in the slightest degree impaired, for you will have the candour to admit that few ladies of your age weigh with discriminating judgment those events which give shape to the career of the human race."

"That is to say, my self-love is to be soothed at the expense of all young ladies who are still in their teens. As an individual I am flattered; as a woman I am indignant."

"You saw nothing in Europe surpassing the natural scenery of this country."

"In that respect, our own land is without an equal. With the exception of Russia, the powers of the old world dwindle into principalities, compared with the grand dimensions of the western republic. Our inland seas and majestic rivers, our lofty mountains and vast prairies, our mineral wealth and natural curiosities, our productive soil and variety of climate, are without a parallel on the face of the globe. What can equal the Falls of Niagara, with its islands and its rapids? What can compare with the Mammoth Cave, with its vast subterranean abodes? What can surpass in sublimity that immense territory which, stretching from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, is watered by the tributaries of a single river. Europeans may scorn comparisons, but while they affect to be contemptuous, they cannot observe but with admiration the splendid possessions which the energy and enterprise of our people are so rapidly developing."

The sun had disappeared, and the shades of night began to steal across the water as Clifton and Miss Miller landed upon the beach. A cheerful wood fire—that luxury of the country—welcomed them to the parlour.

"Well, Mr. Clifton, I hope you have passed a pleasant day," observed Col. Miller.

"I have rarely been so much pleased; indeed, the moments have flown. It has been a happy relief from the labours of the canvass."

"Were you successful in hunting and fishing?"

"We caught more birds than we did fish."

"How is that, Augusta? You are generally successful upon the lake."

"Mr. Clifton talked so much, or rather kept my tongue so constantly in motion, that I believe the fish were frightened away."

After tea, Col. Miller inquired of Edward if he would like to witness the wedding between Pilot and Phillis.

They proceeded to a church which had been erected upon the border of the negro cabins.

"I require my slaves to attend this church twice every Sunday."

"Who dispenses the word of God to them?"

"In the morning it is done by a clergyman, who is the tutor of my children; in the evening a patriarchal negro harangues the audience with much fervour."

"Of what denomination is the latter?"

"A Methodist, of course."

As they entered the church, the assemblage arose—a mark of respect which the gentlemen acknowledged by touching their hats.

"I have observed one thing," said Edward in a low tone; "the slaves are almost invariably polite. I never meet one upon the highway but that he raises his hat with as much grace as a Broadway dandy."

"They are probably more punctilious, because their salutations are always returned."

The bride and groom now entered the church. She was dressed in white, with a profusion of pink and orange-coloured bows attached to various portions of her robe. Her wavy hair, which would have been the envy of a modern belle, was arranged with considerable taste, and her hands were gloved with yellow kid. The groom wore a broadcloth coat of the finest texture, white pantaloons, a deep red cra-

vat, and a salmon-coloured vest. As the African preacher was in the act of commencing the ceremony, the waiting-maid of Miss Miller advanced up the aisle, bearing in her hand a magnificent wreath and a large bouquet. As she delivered the latter to the bride, and arranged the former gracefully upon her head, there was a vehement and prolonged demonstration of applause throughout the building, accompanied by complimentary allusions to their young mistress.

"She am a bressed lady, so kind and 'siderate."

"I could die for Miss 'Gusta; yes, dat I could."

One, more enthusiastic than the rest, sprang upon a bench and exclaimed:

"Gentlemens, dis periteness and affability calls for proper 'preciation. I purpose three cheers for Miss 'Gusta." And they were given with a will.

The venerable preacher commenced the ceremony.

"Do you, Pilot Miller,\* take dis lady for to be your lawful, wedded wife; do you promise to cling to her through sickness and health, till def part um? Do you, Phillis Miller, accep dis gemblem for your lawful, wedded husband; will you, forsaken by all others, cleft unto him alone till def do you sundy? Den I pronounce dem husban' and wife."

"Is a marriage ceremony performed by a slave regarded by the negroes as binding between them?" inquired Clifton.

"Always. This preacher is held in as much veneration by my people, as the most learned divine is by an admiring congregation. His age and piety command universal respect. Besides, marriage is considered, even among white people, as a civil contract merely, which can be formed without the agency of a clergyman."

"Do your negroes ever intermarry with slaves who do not belong to you?"

"It very rarely happens, and for a curious reason. The slaves have an aristocracy of their own. Those who belong to wealthy individuals, lawyers, successful politicians, or distinguished officers, hold themselves apart from the coloured fraternity whom they consider less fortunate. I happen to own vastly more negro property than any of my neighbours, and hence they are very aristocratic."

"They do not like poor people, then?"

\* The slaves often assume the names of their masters.

"They have a mortal aversion to any one who is poverty-stricken, whether he is white or black. It is the prominent feature in the negro character. I have often been amused by the conversation of my slaves, when they thought my attention was directed to something else. Hark! we will hear it illustrated now."

"Ise tell what, Sambo, you've been wid Miss Tucker quite long nuff; you knows berry well dat her massa am extricably evolved in det, an still you will pay her tension."

"You mus confess, Dinah, dat de gal am brutiful."

"And 'spose she am, what den? Does dat make her massa rich, consequently 'spectable? You ought to be old 'nuff to know dat 'spectability am everyting in dis world, an who can hab dat widout money?"

"But de gal ain't to blem 'cause her massa am 'bliged to morgige all his plunder."

"It am her misfortin, and misfortunate individuals mus' 'sociate togedder. Dey can't 'spect de hairistorisy to elevitate dem."

"But I seed you, Dinah, conversing wid Tom White, de lorrier's man."

"And 'spose you did? don't he b'long to our set? Don't his massa practyze at the bar-room? You arn't haquainted wid noffin', Sambo; you are a monstruss igrant nigger. Can't you seed dat siety makes 'strictions atween peoples who am engaged in different hocupations? De lorrier, the rich man, the politiceener, and sufforth and sufforth, am 'sidered 'spectable, werry 'spectable. Fashionable persons mus' 'sociate wid each odder. Dey ain't 'spected to stoop down to de level of hevryboddy. Nebber pull de onfashionable up to your own persition, nor try to keep up dem who war once your hequals, but who hab fallen. Allers 'sociate wid fashionables, who am fashionable now."

"Well, I don't seed, 'cause why a gal happen to b'long to a poor man, dat she should 'ceive no tension howsemever."

"Dat is caze your eddication hab been neglected. Your 'sociation hab been of de vulgar hordes. Now you hab been sold into a 'spectable family, you must conduct yoursel' as sich."

"But how can poor nigger tell fashionble colored women?"

"Ladies, Sambo, ladies; you must draw 'stinction atween women and ladies. Dey ham sep'rated by a himpassable ditch. How can you tell a fashionable lady? Why

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

"He's standing in the market: round him throng the burghers, and by torchlight he harangues them."  
KOTZEBUE.

by de company she keeps! Dat's de invariable rule. And if you are igrant of gentilsity, cut all but dem who b'long to individuals wid whom master and missus 'sociates. Don't I speak your sentimetality, ladies and gemblem?"

"You hab dewined the extinction correspondingly, Miss Dinah."

These leaders of the ton then changed the subject of conversation.

They returned to the parlour.

"Your present was received, Augusta, with vociferous applause."

"I am glad of it, for Phillis is a faithful girl; was the wedding a distingue affair?"

"Quite so. All the aristocratic negroes in the neighbourhood were present."

"I hope you have provided a bountiful supper for them."

"Everything in abundance."

At a late hour, a violin, flute, and tamborine were heard beneath the parlour window. A lively air was executed with much skill, and then a well-modulated voice sang the words of a popular song. An immense number of persons joined in the chorus, and the melody now swelled with a powerful volume upon the breeze, and anon floated low and whisperingly away.

"It is the Harmonic Band," said Miss Augusta.

"Can it be possible they are negroes?"

"Without an exception. They are all our own."

A succession of beautiful airs followed each other, and among the rest, a celebrated corn-shucking song. This consisted of words composed *ad libitum* by the leader; its chief feature, however, being the splendid chorus. To every Southerner, this song is as familiar as "household words." Miss Miller threw open the casement, and stepped out upon the balcony. No sooner had the rays of the moon lighted up her features, than her presence was hailed by the waving of handkerchiefs, and loud huzzas. Each member of the dark assemblage cherished a reverent attachment for their beautiful mistress.

At midnight, a profound repose had settled alike upon the gorgeous mansion, and the lowly cabins. The owner calmly slumbered in the midst of loyal hearts, whose pulsations acknowledged the power of kindness and affection.

THE messengers of Col. Miller had ridden far and fast, and by the setting sun, they returned wearied to the mansion. The democracy had been summoned to the gathering. Along the shore of the Lake, in the valley of its tributaries, o'er barrens, hill, and dale, the warning voice had been heard. Horsemen were seen winding along the by-paths and lanes, through forests and over streams, single and in pairs, until by eleven o'clock they had accumulated into masses, and swept along the principal thoroughfares towards the place of meeting. The whig leaders looked aghast at this unexpected demonstration. Where they expected to be almost the entirety of the crowd, they found themselves in a hopeless minority. A large number of ladies honoured the occasion with their presence, and among the number was Miss Miller, who had driven over in her father's carriage with Clifton. She had no sooner arrived upon the ground, than Major Henderson—who under a bland exterior concealed the chagrin which the gathering of the democracy occasioned him—paid his respects to the Lady of the Lake, as she had been designated.

"I am most happy to see you, Miss Miller, although you are found in loco-foco society."

"You are very kind, Major Henderson. I fancy you do find rather too many Democrats in my train;" and she cast her eyes over the vast body of men who still hovered upon a neighbouring hill, awaiting the arrival of Col. Miller.

"Oh, no! I am always willing to convert unbelievers to the true faith."

"That changes so often, it is hard to tell what it is. But even if it was like the laws of the Medes and Persians, your efforts would be hopeless against the immutable principles of yonder multitude."

"Mr. Clifton, you have an accomplished assistant. You would do well to attach her fortunes to yours *in toto*."

Edward was, for a moment, embarrassed by this direct allusion, and he was also slightly indignant, because he knew it was intended to annoy Miss Miller.

"The political fidelity of Miss Augusta, although more unchangeable than that of some whigs I could name, is nevertheless surpassed by her domestic accomplishments. Either as a republican, or a private companion, any gentleman would be



honoured in winning her hand. I could not say more, perhaps I ought to have said less."

The blush which had tinged the cheek of the maiden at the allusion of Major Henderson, overspread her countenance before Edward had concluded. Whether the emotion was produced by pleasure or pain, he did not attempt to learn, as she turned away her head.

"Well, then, as I can accomplish nothing by a political controversy, let me make myself agreeable in another way. As you are so learned, it is a difficult task. Shall I converse in Spanish?"

"You had better first learn to walk Spanish."

"Ha! ha! Major, you will have to give it up."

"I believe I shall. Yonder comes your father with his legions, Miss Miller. I must vent my indignation upon them."

"It will prove as powerless as your wit. Au revoir."

The stand had been erected in a grove, and thither the orators and the crowd held their way. Both speakers had become celebrated. Henderson had long maintained a high reputation at the bar, and he was now regarded the most accomplished stump speaker in the Whig ranks. Clifton was more youthful, but during the canvass he had triumphed over all competitors except Major Henderson. This was the third time the two champions had met, and both parties raised a prolonged shout as they ascended the stand. The two preceding encounters had been considered drawn battles. Major Henderson opened the debate. In his splendid exordium, he remarked that it was difficult to follow the doctrines of the Democratic party, because they were always "changing their batteries." He denounced the annexation of Texas, advocated a tariff discriminating in favour of protection, the abolition of the veto power, and the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands. He was repeatedly interrupted by applause, and as he sat down, loud cheers were given by the whigs. But their shouts were like the sighing wind compared to the raging tempest which greeted Clifton, as he rose to reply. Nothing so elevates a public speaker as applause. It buoys him up with a power that no subject possesses, however inspiring. With a throbbing heart, Edward acknowledged the cheers of the democracy, and then prepared to answer the speech of his opponent.

"When I accepted," he said, "the chal-

lenge of Major Henderson to meet him here to-day, I did so with the expectation of addressing an audience almost entirely composed of whigs. How grateful to my feelings is it, then, to witness this vast assemblage, whose hearts beat responsively to my own! I am under great obligations to him" (and he bowed to Col. Miller) "who has won your affection by his virtues, for a reception as gratifying as it was unexpected."

"The gentleman commenced his speech with the charge that the democracy are constantly 'changing their batteries.' If he means that we have to employ flying artillery for the purpose of assailing positions which his party assumes one hour, to be abandoned the next; I acknowledge the fidelity of the simile. But if, on the contrary, he insinuates that the democracy change their principles, the accusation is gratuitous and unjust. 'Changing our batteries?' It comes with a *bad* grace from him to make such an assertion. I hold in my hand an address issued by that gentleman scarcely one year ago, to the electors of this congressional district. He was then a candidate for Congress. Here it is, with the name of G. A. Henderson attached. Does the gentleman intend to put in the plea of *non est factum*? No! He is prudent; the document, although not old, is still a 'dangerous thing!'" In this circular he declared that he would first discuss the question which he regarded as more important than all others—the question of the currency. To-day, he has addressed you for one hour and thirty minutes, and the word currency has not once passed his lips. Why is this omission? Because political capital can no longer be made out of the currency question. That which was more important than all other questions in 1843, is deemed unworthy of a thought in 1844, by the gentleman who presumes to accuse the democracy with 'changing their batteries!'"

This hit was loudly applauded by Clifton's friends, and he observed a pleased smile upon the countenance of Augusta Miller.

"On the first Monday in May a meeting was held in Beaufort, for the purpose of advocating the annexation of Texas. Both political parties were represented. I had the honour of submitting the resolutions, which declared in unequivocal terms, that Texas had conquered her inde-

\* An assertion of Col. Polk, in his canvass for the Gubernatorial chair, in 1839, became celebrated throughout the Southern States. In reviewing the political course of Governor Cannon he used to exclaim, "Old documents are dangerous things!"

pendence—that no power had a right to forbid the union—that our refusal would force them to become slavish dependents of the British government, and that annexation was demanded by national policy and political considerations, of overwhelming importance. Would you believe it possible that such resolutions were advocated and voted for, by the gentleman who has to-day denounced the Texas question as a 'humbug?' And yet, he mendaciously charges the democracy with 'changing their batteries!'" The bitterness with which Edward revealed these scraps of history caused the Major to turn red and pale by turns, while the democracy raised their hats and gave three tremendous huzzas. The orator caught a glimpse of two little hands, as they were applauding the skill with which he had thrown back the charge.

"It cannot have escaped your observation, that the principal objection urged by Major Henderson against the annexation of Texas, is based upon the assumption that it will involve us in a war with Great Britain. That the English government feel a deep interest in the question there cannot be the slightest doubt. Her agents here, in Mexico, and Texas, are employed with unwearied diligence in opposing the contemplated union. Her object is quite apparent. England would curtail the limits of every other power, while she is enlarging her own. That is the prominent feature in her national policy. It has employed the talents, and commanded the exertions of her statesmen, for more than six hundred years. If I was an Englishman I should not oppose the doctrine; being an American, it is my duty to denounce it. As a private individual I must take care of my own household; as a citizen of the republic, she will always claim me as one of her devoted worshippers. Great Britain wishes to defeat the annexation of Texas, because it will extend our boundaries. The power of the United States is increasing with gigantic strides. Our commercial career threatens to rival that of England, and the day is not far distant when the supremacy of the ocean will be transferred to the western hemisphere. Everything calculated to postpone that event is eagerly sought for. The political existence of the government depends upon commerce. It enables the nobility to win the admiration of the vulgar, by gorgeous display. It secures the fealty of the clergy with costly benefices. It retains the allegiance of the army and navy by vast expenditures. It pays the

interest of the national debt, and thus secures the creditors of the government by the indissoluble bonds of interest. As liberal sentiments gain form and solidity in the British Isles, the expenditure of money must also increase, in order to control those opinions. If the commercial prosperity of the country is arrested, it will prove as fatal as a decline. Her career must necessarily be onward, and hence she is extending her dominions in the East with fire and sword. Where it is expedient, she opens ports and secures markets with the persuasion and eloquence of a park of artillery!

"Not only will the acquisition of Texas increase our commercial importance, but it will prevent England from getting either a direct or an indirect control of the cotton lands in that State. A rupture with the United States would affect the stability of the British monarchy, by destroying her manufactures. They must have cotton, and the absorption of Texas will give us the control of nearly all the valuable cotton lands in the world."

"Now, then, we have seen the reasons why the Cabinet of Victoria are so active in attempting to defeat this measure. Let us now see whether they have any right to interfere. It is an axiom quite as forcible in its applicability to nations as to individuals, that a public exemplar must ascend the forum with unspotted garments. How does England stand this test. If there is one nation upon the face of God's earth more guilty than another of unscrupulous rapacity, it is Great Britain. With, or without a pretext, she is year after year extending her limits in Asia. Nationality is extinguished, and whole principalities are swallowed by the insatiable cormorant. With bloody hands and distended stomach she comes to our door, to give us lessons in international law! Away with such cant and hypocrisy! it will not pass current here." "No! never! never!" shouted the indignant crowd.

"She threatens us, say you? So she did in 1775, and in 1812. Will her voice be silenced by submission? Or is it the correct doctrine to declare it as our unalterable determination, not to submit to the slightest interference in the foreign policy of the United States?" Another shout attested the popularity of his annunciation.

The reply of Clifton was claimed by his friends as a triumphant refutation of his opponent's arguments, from beginning to end. Being no politician ourselves, but only a faithful chronicler of our hero's sentiments, we cannot decide between the



two orators. It is sufficient to say that the democracy were enthusiastic, while the whigs were crestfallen, not only by the result of the debate, but because they had not provided sufficient provisions for the immense assemblage. Their chagrin was not a little increased by the waggery of two democrats, who had abstained from approaching the tables until the food was all consumed, when they remarked, "We have eaten nothing yet, and are very hungry. We presume, however, as the whigs invited us to partake of a feast, it will be forthcoming in due season." These remarks produced shouts of laughter from the democracy at the annoyance which they gave the whigs.

Clifton seated himself in the carriage with Miss Miller, and they proceeded homewards.

"Well, you heard the discussion; do you nominate me for Congress?"

"Yes; I will not only nominate, but I will support you. I was never so gratified as at the discomfiture of Major Henderson. He is so vain."

"But he is certainly a man of great eloquence."

"Undoubtedly; but he wants tact, and what is of far more importance, principle. What would he have given to-day if he had not issued that circular?"

"It did embarrass him very much, but he could gain more votes when it was published by discussing the currency question than any other."

"Precisely so; and therefore he is controlled by expediency rather than principle."\*

The forest seemed alive with democrats; in all directions were heard their cheers and shouts, as they were returning to their homes. "Three cheers for Edward Clifton!" "Three for the lone star!" They were given with a power which sent their echoes over rock and hill. As the carriage descended into the valley of the lake, there swelled upon the breeze the words of a popular song—

"And we will vote  
For James K. Polk  
And George M. Dallas too."

They alighted from the carriage, and entered the parlour, as the last rays of the sun glittered upon the tranquil waters of the lake. Augusta gazed upon the scene, and a shade of sadness crossed her countenance.

\* The reader must not consider it remarkable that the young lady converses so fluently upon political subjects. Ladies at the South take a far greater interest in politics than they do at the North.

tenance. As she turned towards him, the expressive eyes of her companion were observing her emotions.

"Come, I shall lose my character for vivacity," and she ran her fingers over the keys of the piano, and sang the words of a lively air.

"You think me a singular girl, do you not?" she inquired, as she advanced to the fire.

"The most remarkable lady I have ever known."

"Perhaps I will some time tell you my history. For some reason, I cannot divine what it is, I am drawn towards you. There is a strange similarity to a person I once met in Europe, when I was a mere child. I am only eighteen, and that was half a dozen years ago." She leaned forward until her flowing curls touched his cheek, as her eyes half mournfully scanned his features. "No, it is not; but so like him." The servant announced that supper awaited them.

Long before the hour appointed for Edward to address the people at Stamford, the court-house was crowded. There was a large number of ladies in the assemblage. More than five hundred persons bore torchlights in the procession. Upon each one was inscribed, political devices, which elicited the cheers of the crowd as they passed along.

On the day preceding the election, Clifton, addressed a large crowd at Bergen, and mounting his horse, accompanied by a few friends, he started for the Narrows, where he was to make his last speech. It was nearly dark before he left the village, and the place of meeting was thirteen miles distant. They proceeded rapidly along the road.

"We must stop at Mallory's, Clifton, as we pass," said Harden.

"We shall be too late, then, at the Narrows?"

"No danger of that. They will not have the transparencies all the way from Stamford, before ten o'clock. Besides, Mallory expects us, and he would be offended if we did not call. He would think he was slighted because he is poor. Do you know he has named a child for you?"

"Is it possible! I must call then."

"At nine o'clock, they alighted at an humble log cabin. The door was thrown open, and a man of large and powerful frame emerged into the gloom. He was clad in homely apparel, but there was an honest sincerity and frankness in his manner, which at once attracted you towards him."

"Light, gents, light! Mr. Clifton, you are welcome. Mr. Harden, I am glad to see you. Here, Tom, take care of the horses. My old woman began to think you would not come."

"The sun had disappeared before we left Bergen, and the darkness forced us to ride slowly."

"Better late than never; come in. Wife, this is Mr. Clifton, Mr. Harden you know. Set down; the night is cold. Get out, Tiger! He always will seat himself in the corner," he added apologetically.

There were but two rooms in the log cabin, and the furniture was of the most simple kind. The table was made of pine boards, and was covered with a spotless cotton tablecloth. It was loaded with a variety of dishes, which would have tempted the appetite of a gourmand. Roasted partridges, roast duck, pig and turkey, stewed chicken, and squirrels. Sweet potatoes, fried and baked, pies, puddings and tarts, with tea and coffee, and delicious cider to wash it down. The hungry politicians—not hungry in the New York acceptance of the term—feasted upon the viands. They had fasted since morning, and speaking and riding are wonderful tempters of the appetite. The good woman was evidently pleased at the manifest zest, with which her company applied themselves to the food, and she urged it upon them, with homely courtesy, until they could eat no more.

"Where is my little namesake, Mrs. Mallory?"

"I kept him awake to see you, until nearly nine o'clock. He is asleep now."

"I must have a peep at him nevertheless."

The gratified mother took a light, and turning down the cover of a cradle, disclosed the countenance of a lovely babe.

"What a really fine child; how old is it?"

"Not quite six months," replied Mrs. Mallory, and her heart warmed towards the admirer of her offspring.

"What a forehead; how exquisite the contour of the head! That boy, Madam, will make a figure in the world."

"Do you think so, Mr. Clifton? I wish you could see him awake."

"Oh! he will have plenty of opportunities next summer, dame, when he is canvassing for Congress," responded her husband.

"I hope you will be nominated," she observed.

"Thank you, Mrs. Mallory, for your

good wishes: I am now in the hands of my party."

"And they will be sure not to forget you."

"Come, Clifton, we must be going. It is nearly ten o'clock."

"Will you not accompany us, Mr. Mallory?"

"I don't know. What do you think of it, dame?"

"Go by all means; let the crowd be as large as possible. I would go myself if it was not for the babe."

"You have made a friend of my dame, for life, Mr. Clifton, by praising her child. The road to a mother's heart is through her offspring."

At midnight, Edward had concluded a speech, which was pronounced the most splendid of all his efforts. Thus ended the canvass.

The next day the grandest spectacle was witnessed which is ever presented to the human race,—the representatives of twenty millions of freemen assembling at the ballot-box, for the purpose of selecting a chief magistrate. The executive power does not descend, as of right, from father to son, imbecility does not grasp the sceptre which can alone be wielded with success by a mighty hand.

The conflict was over; the smoke lifted from the battle-field, and the illustrious embodiment of whig principles, was once more seen flying amidst the dispersed and disordered ranks of his party. Fate had again thwarted his aspirations and balked his ambition. Will the future be more propitious, and hope again reassure the great pacificator?

## CHAPTER XL.

"See'st thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this Fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty?"

SHAKESPEARE.

ALICE HOWARD'S JOURNAL, "December, 1844.—It has been several months since I opened this journal. I have been tolerably happy. If not perfectly so, it is not for want of admiration. I believe they take the natural buoyancy of my spirits for encouragement; if so, is it my fault? I cannot always appear sober and sedate. Tomorrow I start for New York. Florence Brainard has so often desired me to visit her, that I can no longer decline. She re-

sides in Union Square, which is now considered the fashionable locality, though how long it will remain so is doubtful. The west end, in the Empire city, is migratory. I shall be in time to see the beaux on New Year's.—There are hours when I am so unhappy. The void in my affections cannot be filled. Fatal exercise of parental authority! how many hopes are wrecked by thy decrees! But I do not despair. There comes occasionally to my wearied soul, along the pathway of the future, a faint, low whisper, that all will yet be well.

"New York, January 2, 1845. At eleven o'clock yesterday, the visiting commenced. Florence looked very lovely; and she was dressed with such exquisite taste! She does not exhibit such a fondness for contrasts, as many of the New York ladies, though I think there is a slight improvement in the fashions, in that respect. They still display a partiality for bright colours, in fashionable circles; but full dresses, which combine the hues of a rainbow, are now almost exclusively worn by the Bowery girls.

"As for myself, Florence was kind enough to say that I was 'beautiful.' What cared I for the compliment! There is no one here whose admiration I seek to win. If I was in search of *desirable* beaux, I certainly should never think of coming to New York. What specimens! There were not more than half a dozen who could claim the appellation of manhood. All the rest were below the medium height, slender, effeminate-looking creatures, whose greatest ambition it is to raise a sorel mustache, and dance the Polka. What a contrast to our Norman ancestors! that unrivalled race of men, whose heroism in the camp, and gallantry in the court, made them the models for Europe's chivalry. How helpless would the condition of the 'beauty, and booty' of New York become, if its protection was entrusted to such miserable defenders! They would not go unwhipt from the presence which they now enter, with so much assurance. Not that they are to be censured for their soft appearance; that is the result of inconsiderate marriages. It cannot be expected, that dwarfs will give birth to giants. But they are to blame for constantly thrusting their diminished heads into the foreground. The ladies are by no means excusable for encouraging their advances. I know they attempt to justify it by the assertion, that a 'poor choate is better than none.' But they forget that by appearing to be satisfied with the 'poor

choates,' they keep off the good ones. No gentleman, who has a particle of self-respect, will enter into a competition with such rivals, and consequently they will keep possession of the field, until they are brushed away. And they talk such perfect nonsense! I drew out several of them yesterday. They invariably commenced; 'Compliments of the season, Miss Howard. The day is excessively cold. Have you been to the opera yet? Is not Barilli divine? It is said she will soon be married to the son of a wealthy citizen. Ah, good morning.' They have caught the habit too of *teetering* from the New York ladies. It is bad enough for a female to keep bobbing up and down as though she was set on springs, or had St. Vitus's dance; her robe at least prevents the observer from discovering what causes the vibration. The ladies are beginning to regard the movement as anything but dignified, especially since a married lady who teetered excessively, has been sent to her parents by her husband, for an indefinite period. A young lady said a good thing to Mr. Black, a few nights ago. She endured his teetering as long as it was sufferable, and then bluntly remarked, 'Look here, Mr. Black! if you cannot stand like a gentleman, the sooner you leave me the better!'

"But the New York beaux are not only blessed with an extraordinary amount of assurance, they are sometimes impertinent. At a party night before last, one of them peremptorily desired some elderly married ladies to vacate a parlour which was wanted by the dancers. One of them protested against the rudeness of the request, when he flippantly responded—'You needn't find fault, madam; I have just turned my own mother out.' Where is the deference which is due the female sex? Utterly unknown to these regulators of modern chivalry. And then they are so unmannerly at a supper-table. Instead of waiting until the ladies are helped, they form a barrier around the table, and with the obstinacy of curs, adhere to their positions until they can eat no more.

"January 15, 1845.—I have been out almost every night. There is a perfect mania for parties. And then how much they dress! The lady of the house desires a crush. It is a matter of indifference how long her guests remain, so her rooms are crowded during a portion of the evening. They must not only be crowded, but it is desirable to have them thronged with splendidly-dressed ladies, and therefore females who have the money and the good

taste to dress well, are often invited out. Our sex never dress for the gentlemen; always for each other. A good figure is also considered important, as diamonds and dress show off better than upon a dwarfish person.

"The rapid accumulation of property cuts up the pretensions of the would-be aristocracy of the city. At a party a few nights ago, a tall and elegantly-dressed lady, who glittered with diamonds, attracted much attention. She was a tallow-chandler's daughter. Her father had become a millionaire—had given a magnificent party. The fashionables at first hesitated, and then attended it. The daughter was in society at once. A name descending for generations, is no more powerful in giving direction to fashion, than the man of yesterday. The old Knickerbockers are strangers in their own city. Their position has been usurped by a new race, whose movements are onward, progressive.

"Yesterday the owner of a splendid equipage, and the proprietor of an establishment in the court end, flatters himself that his wife has become the leader of the ton. To-day he looks with amazement upon a carriage more gorgeous than his own, as it dashes along Broadway. Whose is it? There is no coat of arms visible! Neither is there upon his own. Why should there? one is a hatter and the other a tanner. The upstart cannot be put down because he is a plebeian. If blood is to be the criterion, the accuser may chance to find that his own but recently flowed in the veins of a cooper or a drayman. That won't do; so the criterion is *wealth* at last. Anybody who has that, can move from East Broadway into Fifth Avenue; can take a box at the opera; patronise Ball, Tompkins, and Black; sport a fine pair of horses; give a grand party, and become one of the fashionables. If Mrs. Smith hears Mrs. Brown whisper, 'Oh! she was a tailor's daughter!' she can reply, 'Well, was not your father a shoemaker?' So at last they have to fall back upon their money. Mrs. Jones can sport her ermine tippet quite as gracefully, if her grandmother *did* beat furs, or if she was beaten herself because she *did not* beat furs. It only shows that Mrs. Jones is more fortunate than her grandmother, because she *wears* furs, instead of beating them.

"If Mrs. White has succeeded in elevating her opera-glass gracefully, it certainly can make no difference if her father did succeed, after quite as much practice,

in hooping barrels with precision and despatch.

"If Mrs. Black possesses the art of delicately colouring the cheek, when the rose has ceased to bloom, it does not diminish the skill of the toilette, because her parent used a larger brush—a greater variety of paints.

"If people desire to become fashionable, they must become notorious. They must have more flowers at a party, more musicians; their carriage must be unequalled, and their residence more gorgeous. They will then be *talked* about, and *stared* at.

"That, at last, is the object of the ambitious. The warrior, the statesman, the beauty, the fashionable, like to have the gaping multitude turn their heads to say, 'There they go!' Ladies are as much influenced by this passion as the sterner sex. One thing is certain, so far as New York society is concerned,—the vulgar of to-day may become the fashionable of to-morrow. Not the vulgar in manners, but the vulgar in position; although it is by no means rare, that a change of position is unaccompanied by that refinement which is so essential in polished society. The Americans are, however, quick of perception, and with surpassing readiness accommodate themselves to the new sphere into which they are thrown. If at their first party there are plenty of coopers and tailors, there will be fewer next time, and at last none but the fashionable will be seen in their saloons.

"These transitions occur, more or less, in all American cities; not so frequently in Philadelphia, still less in Boston. Even in England—that country of boasted ancestry and hereditary titles—wealth often elevates the vulgar to a municipal position which brings them in contact with royalty itself. I am not placing these thoughts in my journal because I justify this universal scramble after the dross of the earth. Independence has, of course, become quite a necessity. That is always desirable.

"A few months ago, a beautiful young lady, throbbing with ambition, instead of love, married a man thrice her age, because he was rich. She sported her diamonds, exhibited her carriage, threw open a splendid dwelling to admiring friends. Yesterday he failed, and to-day she is a beggar. For a moment she was delighted, because her hopes fed on vanity. The food is withdrawn, and she is wedded not only to an old, but a poor man. There is a fatal error in the education of young ladies at the present day. The almost

universal remark is—'She must not marry a person who cannot enable her to continue in the sphere where she is now so bright an ornament.' Perhaps her father lives beyond his income, in supporting that very style which it is deemed so essential for his daughter's suitor to possess. If he should die, the salary would be lost which keeps up the establishment, and the splendid style would yield to one more lonely. At his death, a diminished principal might be divided among those who had many opportunities of marrying happily. In order not to marry below their condition in life, they must often ally themselves to decrepitude, or enjoy a state of single blessedness. Who own the princely dwellings which adorn Fourteenth Street, Union Square, and Fifth Avenue? Men who have acquired fortunes themselves, by enterprise and good sense. The next generation often becomes effeminate, and in accepting the son, you contract a marriage with one who has neither the strength to defend, or the soul to appreciate you. If an alliance is formed with a rich bachelor, his settled habits and ascetic temper render him a perfect nuisance. Then, why not marry a fine-looking, noble, generous young man, whose prospects are good, if you will, but whose manly heart reciprocates the impulses of your own?

"But here I am giving a delineation of society, and lecturing my sex, when I only commenced describing a New Year's reception.

"February, 1845.—I am still in New York. Florence was so anxious for me to remain until after her party. Night after night I have attended parties and the opera, until I am nearly exhausted. I discover every day new phases in society. A prominent feature is the determination with which the ambitious endeavour to enter circles more exclusive than their own. It is sometimes resisted by those who had quite as much difficulty in obtaining admission themselves, but who forget their own struggles, in the hour of triumph. To be seen in the rooms of Mrs. A. or Miss B., is considered an important step up the ladder. Not that the guest is in the slightest degree more attractive, only she shines with a reflected light. There is a vast amount of stupidity exhibited in these reunions. Occasionally I meet a person who can emerge from the common-places of the day, and by her sparkling wit and vivacity, create a desire to see her again; but they are like oases in the desert—exceedingly rare.

"Certain cliques affect to be very ex-

clusive. What is the cause and effect of exclusiveness? The solution is readily given. A family having nothing but wealth out of which to manufacture notoriety, are resolved to make the most of their capital. They can boast of neither illustrious descent nor remarkable intelligence; but they have money enough to keep up a handsome establishment, and give occasionally an elegant party. It is desirable, in their estimation, to have a small circle of acquaintances, an admission to which is with difficulty obtained. The outsiders designate them as a proud set. What of that? Is it not exactly what they desire? They at once acquire notoriety; that is all they want. The more difficult the entrée to their saloons is rendered, the more an obsequious class of the community will seek for admission. Persons who understand the moderate attractions of these exclusives, smile at the skill with which they manage a limited mental capital.

"They argue thus:—If everybody can claim the acquaintance of a lady, the world will not consider her very fashionable. Tom, Dick, and Harry are well enough in their place; they are neither decidedly fashionable, nor positively vulgar, but they are gentlemen whose acquaintance can never benefit you in the slightest degree. Well, this trio boast of the delightful party which they attended at Mrs. Smith's. All this does not assist Mrs. Smith in the accomplishment of her ambitious aspirations. It is rather an obstacle, because their praises reach the ears of Mrs. Talbot, who immediately sets Mrs. Smith down as a nobody. If, on the contrary, Messrs. Tom, Dick, and Harry are not received at Mrs. Smith's, it is an evidence that that distinguished lady holds herself quite above them. They will be sure, nevertheless, to herald her party, because they like to have the names of distinguished people constantly on their lips. If, after performing the duty of avant couriers, they are asked, 'Were you at the party?' their negative reply will add to the social position of Mrs. Smith. The standing of a lady, though a stranger, may be as well known by the company she keeps, as though she was your intimate friend.

"If I was ambitious of winning a fashionable position, I should most decidedly practise the exclusive system. It is preferable in every respect. In the first place, it is troublesome to know everybody! If you give a party, and do not invite them, they will declare that they were forced to cut you, and will assign a different reason for it. They are always

certain to be in the way when they are not wanted. If you are conversing with a lady whose good opinion you are anxious to win, they are sure to obtrude themselves, with a warmth and cordiality which betokens the greatest intimacy, and before you can shake them off, you read in the eyes of your fashionable acquaintance, 'what a common-looking woman!'

"In the next place, there would be no wall-flowers at your entertainments, to go away discontented, because they received no attention. In a mixed assembly, there will always be wall-flowers, because they are not acquainted with your set, and to know no one renders a party exceedingly stupid.

"There is another peculiar feature in New York society. The leaders of the ton consider their circle as the centre of the universe. Everything disconnected with it, is regarded as of secondary importance. They are irritated whenever the attention of their votaries is attracted to any outward object. It must be exclusively turned to them and their affairs. Their parties, the entertainments given by their friends, their favourite artists, must exclusively command your admiration. An event of general importance had become more than a nine days' wonder; the public observation would not be diverted from it; it was the topic of conversation in every circle. A lady, who believed her friends constituted the centre of fashionable society, but who had not sufficient mind or patience to grasp the subject which was eliciting the comments of all, lost her temper at the tenacity with which public observation was distracted from her narrow sphere, and riveted upon a subject of world-wide renown. 'For heaven's sake!' she exclaimed, 'do not mention that subject; I am tired to death of it.' She was egotistical, and it interfered with the revolution of that contracted sphere which constituted her little world.

"Perhaps vanity which would exact incessant devotion, is not confined altogether to New York. I am a Philadelphian, and I may not do the Manhatanese full justice. They might discover quite as many defects in the society of the rectangular city; although it will be admitted, that New Yorkers have quite a moderate opinion of the 'suburban villages.'

"They have established a curious fashion in New York, which seems to be gaining votaries. The dresses are cut so long, that to walk the streets without soiling them, is next to impossible, especially

when the vulgar habit of smoking in the street is tolerated. Some of the ladies, therefore, think it necessary to elevate their skirts so as to avoid the filth upon the side-walks and crossings. This would all be very well if they wore pantalettes. Custom has established a rule that ladies (off the stage) shall wear a covering for their limbs. That rule is constantly evaded, especially by those females who are blessed with beautiful proportions. They seem to take an especial pleasure in promenading the streets after a rain or a snow, because it gives them an excuse for elevating their dresses; but it does not give them an excuse for doing so, unless their limbs are encased in something besides stockings. If a lady wears pantalettes, it is because, in three cases out of four, she has not been favoured by nature with model proportions. It is very seldom that skirts are elevated *decidedly*, above the pavement without the limbs being protected from observation, *unless* they are round, swelling, and well formed.

"It was only yesterday, as I was driving down Broadway, with Miss Brainard, that I saw two young ladies walking upon the fashionable side, between Canal Street and Stuart's. As the way was obstructed by omnibuses, our carriage proceeded slowly. Both ladies were splendidly attired; their undergarments were fine and spotless. One of them had on drawers, which were fastened around the ankle, the other wore none; or if she did, they terminated above the knees. Several times she caught the impertinent gaze of gentlemen fixed upon her really beautiful legs. She may deny it, but I *know* she did. The skirts were not lowered the breadth of a hair. I was terribly mortified for her, especially when I discovered a knot of loafers following in her footsteps, making their vulgar remarks. I thought, who could she be? At last, turning her head, I saw it was a young lady to whom I had been introduced at a large and brilliant party. She recognised me, and bowed, but I was so much shocked at her want of modesty that I did not return it.

"If they reply that their drawers sometimes work up, I can only say that there is a way of fastening them around the ankle. It is very convenient, I know, to have them made so small that they will not fall to the instep; *provided* they are pulled up to the knees, where they will remain.

"This fondness for making exhibitions can be traced, in a certain degree, to the

dressing and training of children. If a little girl has handsome limbs, she is taught to exhibit them with pride. She is attired for that purpose. She learns to become vain of them, and the incipient vanity of childhood gains boldness from habit, until at length, as a woman, she walks the streets unblushingly, with nearly, if not quite, half her continuations exposed to the gaze of the vulgar. There is an old saying, that "Modesty is the highest quality which can adorn a woman."

"Well, I declare, I have written quite an essay in my journal! I have, nevertheless, whiled away a weary hour."

"Heigho! when will Clifton return?"

## CHAPTER XLI.

"Flag of the free heart's hope and home!  
By angel hands to valour given;  
The stars have lit the welkin dome,  
And all thy hues were born in heaven,  
For ever float that standard sheet!  
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,  
With freedom's soil beneath our feet,  
And freedom's banner streaming o'er us?"

DRAKE.

MR. POLK had been inaugurated, and the executive power passed into his hands. Younger than either of his predecessors, his administration was destined to become more eventful than any one that had hitherto illustrated the career of the American Confederation. His great knowledge of men enabled him to select a cabinet, whose extraordinary powers, and vast influence, assisted him in no inconsiderable degree, to perfect those measures which radically changed the foreign and domestic policy of the country. The Department of State was intrusted to James Buchanan, who was the leading democrat in Pennsylvania, until the elevation of Mr. Dallas to the Vice-Presidency. The selection was a master-stroke of policy. Mr. Buchanan had long been an advocate of protection; even in the canvass of 1844, he was charged with claiming Mr. Polk as quite as good a protectionist as Mr. Clay. By his transfer to the cabinet, from an open advocate of protection, he became, at first, a quasi supporter of a revenue tariff, and then one of its decided friends. He had one eye fixed upon the Presidency; it was therefore necessary for him to elevate his position above the contracted sphere of Pennsylvania, so as to command the attention of the whole

Union. This could only be done by yielding to the current which threatened destruction to the protective policy. It was a bitter pill for him to swallow. But what could he do? He was associated with a free-trade\* cabinet! A resignation upon the ground that he still maintained his ancient faith, would array him in opposition to the administration, and a large majority of the Democratic party. The sacrifice went to the extent of a total abandonment of his chances for the Presidency, for the purpose of retaining his local, and what might at last prove a temporary popularity. The influence of a name was given, therefore, to the free trade policy, which, under other circumstances, might have been arrayed against it. To be sure, it amounted to nothing in Pennsylvania, because the only member from that State, who voted for the tariff of 1846, was the personal enemy of the Secretary of State. But a formidable opponent was won over to the popular cause, and it remains to be seen, if State pride will not yet bring the Keystone State to the support of her favourite son, and the new faith which he has espoused.

As the head of our foreign department, he maintained the honour of the United States with consummate ability. The policy which he undeviatingly advocated in the settlement of our difficulties with England and Mexico, was bold and inflexible.

Robert J. Walker was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. This statesman leads on the progressionists. He has far greater tact at discovering the current of public opinion, than any of his cotemporaries, while with unshaken boldness and fortitude, he gives direction to its course, without attempting to restrain its impulses. He relies with implicit confidence upon the judgment of the people, and they have thus far sustained the measure of his belief. It was his letter advocating the annexation of Texas, which gave an uncontrollable direction to the popular voice. It was his unanswerable arguments that contributed so much towards the establishment of free trade between the United States and Great Britain.†

The selection of Gov. Marcy as Secretary of War, gave great offence to the Van Buren faction in New York, who

\* By free trade, the author means a tariff discriminating alone for revenue.

† "It is, indeed, not improbable that the free trade propositions of our Secretary accelerated, if they did not prompt, the kindred measure in England, of a total repeal of the Corn Laws."

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER, Feb. 21, 1846.

were anxious that a member of General Jackson's cabinet, and a man of moderate capacity, should receive the appointment of Secretary of State. His calibre was not considered sufficiently weighty for that position, and having refused the post which he held under a previous administration, it was tendered to Gov. Marcy.

The Mexican war rendered the position one of great responsibility, and it was fortunate for President Polk, that he had secured the services of a statesman whose judgment and energy qualified him to discharge its responsible duties. George Bancroft was appointed Secretary of the Navy. Twice have individuals who had illustrated the pages of American literature, presided over the Navy Department,\* and the same honours should have been conferred upon another, whose experience in early life, qualified him for the discharge of its duties.†

The Post Office was filled by one of the most celebrated economists and reformers in the House of Representatives, Cave Johnson of Tennessee. His mild and courteous manners, his unwavering integrity, and his profound knowledge of the masses, rendered him a safe and influential cabinet councillor. John Y. Mason, a successful politician, and Messrs. Clifford of Maine, and Toucey of Connecticut, completed the cabinet of Mr. Polk.

The President was scarcely installed in office, before he committed the fatal error of attempting to conciliate both factions in the Empire State. It is useless to disguise the fact, that a politician, to become successful, must adopt the motto of George the Fourth, and General Jackson—"I will adhere to my friends, and set my enemies at defiance." Instead of standing by his undoubted adherents, he sought to disarm the secret hostility of the Van Buren men. The greater his concessions, the more unmanageable they became, until before the close of his administration, they were its fiercest opponents. His real supporters were taunted with the favours which were conferred upon their rivals, until, believing themselves abandoned, they left the cabinet to contend the best way they could with their remorseless assailants, until the President and his advisers dearly paid the penalty of their folly. At a later day, Mr. Fillmore is playing the same game, and with consequences quite as disastrous. He gains no wisdom from the melancholy experience of his predecessor.

\* James K. Paulding, and George Bancroft.

† J. Fenimore Cooper.

It will be confessed by the political opponents of the late President, that he carried out the platform which he laid down in his inaugural address with an unyielding determination. There is but one solitary instance of his swerving from a position which he had assumed, and that was in adjusting the boundaries of Oregon. He committed a fatal blunder in conducting the negotiations, which, having the effect of alienating his warmest friends, embarrassed his administration almost from its beginning to its close. In his first annual message to Congress, he asserted that our title to the whole Oregon Territory had been maintained by irrefragable facts and arguments. In the discussion between Messrs. Buchanan and Packenham, to which he referred, the Secretary of State insisted that the northern boundary of Oregon extended to the latitude of 54° 40'. To this extent Mr. Polk claimed that our title was "clear and unquestionable." His subsequent agreement to cede the territory between that line and the forty-ninth degree of north latitude was not only an unauthorized surrender of soil which was unquestionably our own, but violated a principle that had been solemnly announced by himself. In his first annual message he reiterated and endorsed the Monroe doctrine, that it is the unchangeable policy of the United States to prevent European powers from colonizing any portion of this continent. If we will not permit them to colonize territory which does not belong to us, how can we surrender our own domain for that purpose?

This palpable inconsistency offended the Western democracy, and enabled the opposition members of Congress to charge Mr. Polk with separating the two great questions which were in issue before the people—Texas and Oregon,—for the purpose of aggrandizing the South at the expense of the North. It will always remain a blemish upon the splendid administration of Mr. Polk, that he surrendered nearly 200,000,000 acres of land, to gratify the rapacity of that power, which exhibits a remorseless thirst for dominion.

In the midst of clamour, he misconceived alike the wishes of his constituents and the foreign policy of the British government. He was appalled by the cry of War! which was raised at the capital. He ought to have known that the opinions of those who surrounded him did not reflect the popular sentiment. A thousand extraneous influences are mingled with the political atmosphere of the metropolis



The foreign diplomatic corps exercise a far greater power than many suppose. They give elegant parties, receptions, and suppers. They are 'hail, fellows, well met,' with radicals and federalists, and by the urbanity of their manners they acquire a very considerable influence. They ply members with doubts; they are ever watchful and vigilant, and seek every opportunity to instil their opinions. But the great public heart is not contaminated by the poison. Nothing interposes between its pulsations and national honour. Its vast might is not fettered by the cobwebs of diplomacy, and its strong right arm is ready to strike, regardless of the consequences. Politicians do not rely enough upon the judgment and patriotism of the people. Few men trusted them so implicitly as General Jackson, and with such triumphant success. How many instances does our brief history afford of politicians being swept from office by an indignant people, when they had vainly thought that they had succeeded in hoodwinking them, by trickery and deceit.

Mr. Polk's political vision was obscured by the mist which the foreign diplomatic corps had raised, and he could not discover the movements of the masses. A skilful statesman will watch the distant breakers, as well as the undertow; if he does not, his bark will be wrecked while he is throwing the lead at her bow.

The executive also misunderstood the condition of the British Empire. Its sagacious rulers could threaten, because that cost neither money nor blood. But they were in no condition to fight. They were under bonds to keep the peace sufficiently large to bankrupt the empire, if they were forfeited. Famine was staring Ireland in the face, and if the supply of food and cotton had been arrested, a starving population would threaten destruction to hereditary institutions and social order. These things Mr. Polk ought to have known; not that we would claim unjust demands from weakness, any more than we should abandon our rights when menaced by the strong. We ought, at least, to avoid being frightened at our own shadows.

With the exception of the Oregon controversy, the career of Mr. Polk was brilliant and successful. There were incidents, it is true, which his friends regretted, but they consisted principally of appointments to office. They were temporary, and will soon be forgotten, while that splendid superstructure which was erected by Mr. Polk and the democratic

party will long remain the admiration of posterity.

## CHAPTER XLII.

"Oh, boatman! wind that horn again;  
For never did the joyous air  
Upon its lambent bosom bear  
So wild, so soft, so sweet a strain."

BUTLER.

"With splinters of the dryest pine,  
Now feed the fires below."

SCHILLER.

"Horror seizes thee!"  
GOETHE.

"AND when do the bridal cortège take their departure for New Orleans, Mrs. Broughton?"

"Immediately after the marriage ceremony is performed."

"And you accompany them?"

"Yes. They intend to invite a number of intimate friends, and yourself, Mr. Clifton, among them."

"I am grateful for their kind remembrance. But is it not a singular coincidence, that the Misses Douglass, Foster, and Davidson should be married the same night and in the same church?"

"You know they have been perfectly devoted to each other for a long time, and it was probably a girlish fancy."

"And so Fielding, Davidson, and Harden are the happy individuals. I had an idea of the state of affairs; but they ought to be ashamed for not confiding their secrets to me. However, I suppose they were so full of it themselves, that they forgot others."

"The joyous intelligence will soon be communicated, as they will be united next Thursday. On Friday we all go on board the John Randolph, and ho! for New Orleans. The best state-rooms have been engaged for the bridal party, and we anticipate a delightful excursion. March is the gayest month, you know, in the Southern metropolis."

"Why, really, your enthusiasm is quite enough to tempt me to make one of the party."

"Of course you will. I count on your becoming my protector in case of accidents; and as Mr. Broughton is now in New Orleans, you cannot refuse." And she gave our hero a glance into the depths of her beautiful eyes that would have shaken the resolution of one still more impassive.

The eventful day had passed, and the

noble steamer was descending a tributary of the Mississippi. The air was clear and bracing, for the country still presented the appearance of winter. Patches of snow could be seen, where the genial rays of the sun had not fallen upon it, and nothing but the leafless trees and naked shrubs were left of that munificent vegetation, which ornaments the shores of our Southern rivers.

There were few passengers save the wedding cortège, and the splendid cabin was the scene of gayety and mirth. A band of musicians had been engaged, and the waltz and polka, cards, music, and conversation served to occupy the revellers as the pointed keel of the Randolph ploughed the bosom of the stream.

Travelling upon the Western waters—bating the danger of fire and explosions—is always delightful. The table is loaded with every delicacy, and the ever-varying scenery upon the banks elicits the admiration of the wayfarer. The river-bottoms—which invariably spread out on one or both sides of the stream, to the adjacent hills—in their primitive state are covered with a growth of large forest trees. The soil, having been made by the river, and the drainings of the upland, is inexhaustibly rich. Here and there the industry of the settler is manifested, but by far the greater portion of the bottoms are still held in possession by those lofty trees, whose forms have for ages braved the lightning and the storm. There is a contrast, too in the openings which relieve the solitude. Here the stumpless earth, elegant mansion, and spacious outbuildings, prove that the native wilds have long since yielded to the dominion of its relentless foe. Anon, the eyes rest upon a log cabin with its bark roof, wood and mortar chimney, lowly entrance, and humble furniture. But the resounding axe, and levelled forest is opening a path to wealth and luxury.

Want is unknown, and the necessities of life abound in that land of plenty.

Flat-boats are often seen along the shore filled with wood for the steamers. They rest quietly upon the water, until the waves which are rolled away from the rushing keel come hurtling against the inert mass. For a moment it is fiercely rocked, and then, as the waves subside, it again sluggishly hugs the shore. Occasionally the Randolph stopped at a village to land or take in passengers, but the stern voice of Captain Joe Miller was soon heard from the hurricane deck, exclaim-

ing, "Take in the plank!" and the floating palace again swept down the current.

"Come, ladies, let us play eucher! We have tried whist long enough. How it is possible that you can be so fond of whist, I cannot tell. It requires us to use all the cards, and exhausts all the patience I can command. I play for amusement, and not to make my head ache watching the progress of the game."

"You must not let it be known that your patience is so easily disposed of, Mrs. Fielding."

"Call me Helen, Mr. Clifton; it is so formal to prefix the Mrs. to my name."

"Certainly, if you will permit me."

"Yes, I will allow you that privilege. Come, Mrs. Broughton, you and Mr. Harden seat yourselves at this table, if the others will weary their heads with that stupid game. Let us beat the gentlemen a few hands."

"What a wonderful favourite eucher has become within the last few years," observed Harden.

"Because it is a social game, and scarcely interrupts the conversation."

"That accounts for its popularity with the ladies," said Judge Douglass.

"What an imputation, papa. As for myself, I think the gentlemen make quite as good use of their tongues as we do."

"I do not know when it is. To my mind, nothing can equal a dozen women assembled in the same parlour. There are positively no listeners, and twelve distinct voices are heard at the same time. I once knew a lawyer who always managed to rid himself of a taciturn visiter, by responding in monosyllables. Egad, he would have been excessively popular with the ladies, Helen. A good listener is all they require."

"Our sex are quite as often flattered by the seeming deference of a good listener," observed Clifton. "The most ignorant attribute your courteous attention to remarks, which, judging from their effects, they think speak volumes of wisdom, when you know they utter the most stupid nonsense. All you have to do, is to bow and smile occasionally, and they will leave your presence, not only well satisfied with themselves, but firmly convinced that you are the most intelligent person they have ever known. If, on the contrary, you exhibit, by a word or a look, the contempt which you must feel for their insufferable vanity, if not for their ignorance, you make enemies of them for life."

"There, papa—what do you think of that?"



"I believe it is strictly true. Wounded vanity is more difficult to heal than any other passion of the human mind."

"Is it because silent men are good listeners, Clifton, that they generally have more credit for wisdom than they deserve?" inquired Fielding.

"In a great measure; as wisdom is so much more rarely uttered than nonsense, the silent man occupies a safe position when he keeps his mouth closed."

"And his looks, like the face of the owl, speak volumes of thought."

"That is your comparison, Mrs. Broughton."

"Of course; a politician must disclaim all unpopular allusions to the dear people."

"What is the matter, Davidson?" inquired Fielding, as the former hastily descended from the hurricane deck.

"The Ellen Kirkman is rounding the point, which we passed a moment ago, and a trial of speed will take place between the two rivals."

"What, a race?" said Mrs. Broughton, as her cheek became pallid.

She had witnessed an explosion from the generation of too much steam, scarcely one year before.

"Oh, let's witness it!" joyfully exclaimed Emy. "Come for your hats," and she bounded away, but soon reappeared, attired for a promenade upon the deck, where they all soon congregated.

"Which is the fastest boat?" asked Judge Douglass.

"That has never been tested," rejoined Capt. Miller. "The Randolph has for years been without a rival upon the Western waters. The Kirkman is a new boat, and is said to be unequalled for speed. This is the first time they have encountered, and the trial can be no longer postponed. Fire up, men!"

The dry hickory and oak speedily disappeared in the grate, and the enormous engines groaned, as they rapidly moved the machinery. The firemen and deck hands were all negroes, and they enlivened their toil with the music of the river songs.

"We have one hundred miles to run before we reach another port, so the test will be a fair one," cried Captain Joe, as he calmly watched the progress of the two boats, as they rudely parted the smooth current of the river. The forest and surrounding rocks prolonged the echoes of the steam, as it harshly burst from the "scape pipes." The double engines of the Ellen Kirkman were forcing her keel through the water at a tremendous rate of speed, and the anxious spectators, who

occupied the hurricane deck of the Randolph, saw the space between the two rapidly diminish.

"Ah, ha!" shouted Capt. Miller, "they are burning tar!" and black columns of smoke rolled from the chimneys of the approaching steamer.

The passengers were now thoroughly excited, and even Mrs. Broughton lost all apprehensions in the general enthusiasm.

"Why do you not also burn tar?" inquired Mrs. Fielding.

"Consideration for my passengers, as well as for the boat, alone prevents me," was the sententious reply.

"Never fear for us; do not submit to the disgrace of being passed."

The captain hesitated a moment, and cast his eyes again at the Kirkman. It was now evident that more steam must be generated, or the Randolph could no longer boast of being the fastest steamer in the world. A frown gathered upon the stern countenance of the commander, as he muttered—

"It is a violation of my regulations, but there is no help for it. Men, bring out half-a-dozen barrels of turpentine."

A loud cheer from the lower deck, expressed the delight of the crew. The barrels were soon ranged along the grates; the heads were burst open, and the wood was dipped into the inflammable liquid. The effect was almost instantaneous. The vast fabric darted onward with an angry snort, and the space between the struggling, but unconscious competitors, was increased. Another wild cheer rose from the deck, and this time it mingled with one which burst from the excited passengers. In the moment of enthusiasm, they were unconscious of being threatened by an instantaneous and horrible death. Nothing but the uncertain, yet hitherto iron power of the boilers, was interposed between them and eternity. They had never been so tested before, and a point becoming weakened by the action of fire, might yield to the overwhelming power of steam, and shiver the boat into fragments. Every timber was shaken by the rapid motion of the engine, as it hurled the enormous mass over the water. The sun had gone down, and the curtain of night fell upon the scene. Still, barrel after barrel of turpentine disappeared in the fiery grate. The dinner bell summoned the passengers in vain; they had forgotten all else in the excitement of the race. The fires on board the Kirkman now gleamed with a fearful brightness through the gloom, and appeared like two glittering

orbs pursuing the flying steamer, with the relentless perseverance of fatality. The channel, for the last twenty miles, was broad, and extended nearly in a southern direction. It now contracted to a narrow space, and the river wound its serpentine course through the hills. Onward moved those floating palaces; the one following in the wake of the other. Every foot of the way was familiar to the pilots, and the obedient vessels curved along the narrow channel without any abatement of their speed. Upon the deck all was energy and activity. The dark faces of the sable workmen glistened in the light of the blazing fires, as the sweat streamed from their foreheads. The scene resembled the dominions of Vulcan, when the fabled god presides over his forges.

The river now widened again, and the prow of the Kirkman was turned directly for a point about one mile ahead, while the Randolph was forced to keep the main channel.

"By heavens! pilot, she will cut us off!"

"There is a greater prospect of her grounding, Capt. Miller," was the prompt reply.

"Do you think so? If she does, at that rate of speed, she will become a total wreck."

"They are checking her speed."

"No, they are not. She does not draw so much water as the Randolph, and besides, she is not so heavily loaded; still it seems almost incredible that her commander attempts that passage!"

All eyes were directed to the Kirkman, as her broadside was disclosed to view. Every window, above and below, seemed to be illuminated, and the lights danced merrily upon the curving waves. The Kirkman was slowly gaining upon the Randolph, when a tremendous cheer burst from her decks. The waving handkerchiefs of her lady passengers could be seen, as they joined in the universal exultation.

"You are shouting before you are out of the woods!" muttered the deep voice of Captain Joe.

"Can you not increase your speed, Captain Miller?" eagerly inquired Dr. Fielding.

"Impossible! both boats are going at the top of their speed. The safety-valve is fastened down, and there is imminent danger of an explosion."

Intelligence which, at another moment, would have blanched the cheek of the most reckless, now passed unnoticed by the most timid of that little circle.

The Ellen Kirkman had passed over the

shoals as though under the influence of magic, and she now headed for the main channel, with the intention of cutting off the Randolph. This movement violated the regulations of the river, as one boat could not cross the bow of another unless she had passed her. The Kirkman, on the contrary, was pursuing a direction which would inevitably bring her bow in contact with the wheel-house of her rival, unless the latter swerved from her course. In a moment all was confusion on board the Randolph, when the loud and authoritative voice of the Captain was heard above the din, as he warned the pilot of the Kirkman to keep away. The hands of both steamers abandoned their work, and watched with awe-stricken countenances the approaching masses. The excitement upon the hurricane-deck was changed to dismay, and the affrighted females retreated to the stern of the boat. Still the Kirkman bore down upon her rival, as if determined to sink her.

At this moment a loud voice issued from the lower deck of the Randolph, commanding the pilot of the other to bear away. A shout of defiance was the only reply, and it was scarcely uttered when the report of a rifle echoed through the forest, and the fatal messenger of death pierced the bosom of the reckless pilot. For a minute, during which time a breathless pause was maintained by the startled spectators, no one grasped the helm. The Kirkman was not more than forty yards distant from the Randolph, and was rapidly approaching, when her forward decks were riven, as if by a thunderbolt. The explosion was terrific; the fated boat trembled in every joint, and the scattered fragments covered the bosom of the stream. The mangled bodies of many of the crew were swept overboard; some clung with desperation to the wreck. Several of the passengers had shared the same horrible fate, while the rest, having retreated to the rear of the boat, were saved from destruction.

All rivalry in a moment ceased. The engines of the Randolph were reversed, and she slowly swung round until, with great difficulty, she was lashed to the Kirkman. Now commenced the work of searching for the wounded and the dead. No one who has never witnessed the effects of an explosion, can at all appreciate its horrors. Its parallel is never seen upon the battle-field. Limbs may be torn from the quivering bodies, and brainless skulls may lie at your feet, but the intense agony of a scalded frame is indescribably awful.

The skin was blown, by the rushing steam, entirely from the ebon face and chest of one poor negro, so that he looked like a bright mulatto. Many were thrown overboard by the explosion. These sufferers were most of them secured while they uttered the most appalling shrieks, and although shivering with cold, implored their deliverers, in tones that pierced their hearts, to put their burning limbs again in water.

"Is it not terrible!" whispered Helen, as she assisted with trembling hands in the work of mercy. Never did those beautiful brides present such an angelic appearance, as when they ministered with so much tenderness and devotion to the relief of the sufferers.

Slowly the wreck was towed into the next port, and the Randolph again headed down the stream.

When the passengers awoke the next morning, the steamer was ploughing the current of the Mississippi. A feeling of awe steals across the mind of him who looks for the first time upon its broad surface, and recollects that within its banks are the contributions of its innumerable and mighty tributaries. The rill which modestly hides its crystal drops in the shade of some far-off grove, abandons its home amid the flowers, and borne along by a resistless fate, mingles with the flood, and loses its sweetness at last in the unchangeable bitterness of the ocean.

"When you look at the commerce which floats upon this river and its branches, Judge Douglass, how can you doubt that it was wisdom which dictated the purchase of Louisiana?"

"I have never denied but that the acquisition was an important one, Mr. Harden. The extension of our boundaries may sometimes become important. I only contend that an indiscriminate and remorseless desire for more territory will ultimately involve us in foreign, if not domestic wars."

"But it is the policy of all the principal powers to acquire contiguous territory."

"I know it is. There is this striking difference, though. Their possessions are won by the sword, and maintained by force. Here, the citizen yields obedience to the Constitution under the impulse of morality and public opinion. The rule of action in a country where the sovereign exercises power by 'divine right,' and a republic where all authority is delegated by the people, is beyond comparison."

"Your objection only applies to the incorporation of territory whose inhabitants

are opposed to annexation, and does not exclude those who are anxious for admission within the pale of the union. Even that rule I think is altogether too limited. The interests of our country may require the forcible acquisition of territory, and the river upon whose waters we are now floating might have rendered the violation of your policy absolutely necessary. Suppose France had pertinaciously refused to transfer her title; as she undoubtedly would if the continental views of Napoleon had not absorbed his attention. Do you pretend to say that the vast commerce of the Upper Mississippi and its tributaries should remain under the control of another power?"

"No; the doctrine of self-preservation, which applies to nations as well as to individuals, would justify the forcible acquisition of the Mississippi, from its mouth to its source."

"Well, then, you concede the argument in its length and breadth."

"By no means. Another case cannot be mentioned where the material interests of the country would be so much affected, as the possession of New Orleans by the French."

"Perhaps not. Still, there are other methods of annoying the commerce of the country, besides the possession of a fort at the mouth of the Mississippi. Adjacent harbours, where a fleet can hover, ready, at any moment, to capture our merchantmen and attack our men of war, should be kept under our own control. Such places are numerous along the shores of Texas. Even in the hands of a rival republic, they might occasion much inconvenience. But suppose, in the course of events, they should pass under the control of England, what a source of annoyance they would become! Great Britain has scarcely a resting-place for her fleets, from Halifax to the Isthmus of Darien. Her statesmen would not hesitate to avail themselves of almost any pretext to seize a harbour situated in a healthy climate, where, with their present navy, they could for years command the Gulf of Mexico. By the annexation of Texas we have, at all events, removed that difficulty from our path."

"Well, now you have acquired Texas, I suppose you are satisfied?"

"By no means. As our territory expands, it will create a necessity for the acquisition of new barriers for its protection."

"Why, what do you propose to swallow next?"

"Alta California."

"You surely do not want to stride across the Rocky Mountains?"

"Undoubtedly. That the eyes of our population are turned in that direction is proved by making the settlement of the Oregon boundary an issue in the last canvass. But we want ports further south than Oregon. If the English offer to accept the line of 49 as the boundary, giving them the whole of Vancouver's Island, will our government refuse? If not, the harbour of Puget's Sound is the only one which we possess upon the Pacific, and the entrance to that, through the straits of Fuca, will be commanded by a British battery upon the southern point of Vancouver's Island. It is folly to suppose that the commerce of the East will, for a long period, either double the Cape of Good Hope, or the southern point of South America. It will force a transit through San Francisco. The power of Mexico is too feeble to hold possession of California. It must come under the dominion of England or the United States. Interest demands its acquisition by us."

"What pretext can be offered for seizing California?"

"I have reasons for believing that the new administration will force a settlement of American claims upon Mexico. It will be resisted, and it is within the limits of probability that a war will ensue. At all events, instructions will be sent in a few weeks to Commodore Sloat to seize California in case of a rupture."

"With the intention of retaining it?"

"Of course."

"Well, you are a cormorant! Nothing will satisfy your rapacious appetite. But, my dear sir, in this insatiable thirst for empire you forget that there is danger of our becoming so unwieldy that we will break with our own weight?"

"There is not the slightest danger of it. The population which is admitted into the Union will not resist annexation. Any government is preferable to their own, and they will gladly become citizens of the great Republic!"

"Over what people would you cast the protection of the stars and stripes?"

"I would annex the whole of North America."

"Ha! ha! You have chosen a liberal margin. What will Great Britain say to your arrangement?"

"Nothing. Her British possessions are more expensive than profitable, and she would willingly rid herself of them to-morrow, upon fair terms. If the Imperial go-

vernment is, on the contrary, disposed to be contumacious, there will simply be an abridged edition of the revolutionary struggle."

"In which Brother Jonathan will take part, I suppose."

"Individually, if not collectively. Our sympathies will always be in favour of republicanism."

"Do you imagine that a majority of the Canadians would advocate annexation?"

"I have not a doubt of it, if it could be accomplished peaceably. Their burdens are not so heavy as to force them, at this time, into a bloody revolution. But when the mother country, ceasing to treat them so tenderly, applies the screws, they will speedily revolt."

"But the French Canadians are unlettered, and would scarcely make better republicans than the inhabitants of old France."

"That is true; but unlike the European French, they would constitute but a small segment of the population. Their ignorance instead of becoming more profound by feeding upon itself, would fade before the progress of universal education."

"And the Mexicans; you would annex them too, with all their vices, and fondness for revolutions. Since the revolt of Hidalgo, I believe two successive years have not elapsed without a bloody insurrection. They would become beautiful republicans, truly!"

"Oh, I do not propose to swallow the eight millions at once. They must be taken in small doses. The Americans will soon spread themselves over the province which is annexed, and by inculcating the principles of free government, and intermarrying with the native population, they will soon be qualified to claim the elective franchise. Besides, if it should, for a time, require garrisons to make them yield obedience to the laws, we shall have to use no more vigilance than is necessary to keep the Indian tribes in subjection. You might as well contend that our Western forests should be surrendered to the roaming savages, because it requires an armed force to maintain the supremacy of the whites, as to insist that territory should not be acquired when a portion of the population are disorderly."

"Your words are quite too mild, Mr. Harden. You should say *aliens*."

"Very well, *aliens*, if you will; but not like the original owners of this vast domain, *aliens* for all time. The Mexican, with all his Spanish obstinacy, will

at last yield to circumstances. The Indian will never bow his haughty head to the conqueror. The men of property cannot fail, in a short time, to discover that stability and permanence are far preferable to anarchy and misrule; they will, therefore, gladly hail the change."

"But there is one insurmountable objection to your stupendous plan."

"I should like to hear it."

"It is the impossibility of making general laws, which will not weigh oppressively upon some portion of the empire. Even now, when our territory does not cross half the degrees of latitude from the Northern Ocean to the Isthmus of Darien, sectional animosity threatens destruction to the Union. Armed resistance to the tariff of 1828, was alone prevented by the influence of General Jackson, and the passage of the Compromise Act. How can you graduate a revenue law that will not elicit complaints from the Southern planter, or the Northern manufacturer? How can you frame an act, that will give satisfaction to the countless interests which are presented, within each degree of latitude, from the ice-bound regions of the North, to the unhealthy savannahs of the torrid zone?"

"Your insurmountable objection, notwithstanding it is often urged, amounts to just nothing at all. What is there in the wants of Canada, to make a tariff more onerous upon the South? and what is there in the fruits of Mexican labour, to cause Northern men to oppose annexation? A more extensive market will certainly be acquired for Northern manufacturers?"

"True, but where is the additional revenue to come from, which will be required? From the South, of course. The North will dance, while the South pays the fiddler, as usual."

"Very well; and will not the South have a larger population to help pay the fiddler? The burden cannot be greater than it is now. Besides, Judge, it does not come with a good grace from you, to urge that objection. Recollect, your party advocate a tariff discriminating for protection instead of revenue. However, I have another unanswerable reply to your argument. Abolish all tariffs and substitute direct taxation, as a method of raising revenue; then you may annex the whole continent if you will."

Mrs. Harden, listened to this conversation with much interest. Leaning forward with her head resting upon her hand, while the luxuriant hair was thrown back from the temple, she was the picture of earnest

attention. She appreciated every objection, and quickly assented to every proposition which was sustained by the authority of reason.

Davidson and his young bride were seated cosily together, in a distant part of the saloon, and it was easy to discover that the first hours of the honeymoon had not yet passed.

Fielding and Helen, too, were apart from the rest. They did not shrink from isolation in that sweet dream of love, from which there is always an awakening. Why may it not last for ever? An existence in the realms where Cupid holds dominion, is changed with sadness for that of stern reality. The airy consciousness of bliss—the blending of two hearts that have hitherto been separated by the conventionalities of life—the departure of doubt and the certainty of possession, after being realized for a brief hour, like all earthly emotions, lose their freshness in the solemn duties of mortality. "Twas bright, 'twas heavenly, but 'tis past." Clifton and Mrs. Broughton were promenading the hurricane deck. The air was more balmy as they descended the river, and vegetation was bursting forth under the magical power of a Southern sun. They had taken tea and resumed their walk upon the spacious deck. The night was clear and starlit, and they gazed at the shadowy banks, and broad savannahs, as the majestic steamer swiftly glided down the swollen Mississippi. Occasionally they would meet a steamboat breasting the rapid current, and a friendly greeting was interchanged by the ringing of bells. Innumerable flat-boats were passed, whose dark outlines sat motionless upon the river, or rocked in the waves of the Randolph. The music of a violin came across the water, mingling with the melody of the boatman's song. It floated over the tide at first indistinctly, and then as the steamer approached the inert mass, the words were plainly heard—

"We'll dance all night till broad daylight,  
And go home with the galls in the morning."

A voice from the boat exclaimed,  
"It is the Randolph. Hallo! Bill Smithers."

"Hallo yourself!" was answered from the lower deck.

"What's the news above?"

"Kirkman's burst her bilers."

"How many killed?"

"Only twelve. Dick Henley 'mong them."

"The devil! Where'bouts?" came in-

distinctly from the questioner, but the Randolph had swept by, and the answer was lost upon the waters.

"Those are happy fellows. Would you believe it, Mrs. Broughton?"

"They seem to be, although the only thing to relieve the tedium and monotony of such a voyage, must be its perils."

"And yet they enter upon it as a relaxation and amusement. I recognise the voice which you just heard from the flat-boat. That person is the owner of fifty slaves, and is worth not less than one hundred thousand dollars; still he has been the sport of wind and tide for the last five weeks!"

"Is it possible! I thought it was necessity which induced the boatmen to resort to the river."

"Not always; it possesses as much attraction to some of our population, as the deep, deep sea, does for the sailor. Once a year they take an excursion to New Orleans, with corn, tobacco, cotton, staves, hoop-poles, or poultry, and return in a steamboat."

"But is not the voyage surrounded with perils and hardships?"

"With more hardships, surely, than a cabin passage in the Randolph, but not with so many perils, as you can testify!" The lady shuddered at the recollection of two explosions.

"Accidents rarely occur," he continued; "they are sometimes wrecked in passing the rapids, but the disasters are seldom attended by a loss of life. A boatman has a much easier time now than formerly. He has only to keep his craft in the channel, and float with the current. Before steamboats navigated the Western waters, they not only took produce to New Orleans upon these unwieldy flats, but merchandise was forced up those streams in keel-boats."

"How was that done?"

"The goods were packed in a long boat, which had a projection upon each side, just above the water-line. These platforms were occupied by boatmen, who forced the keel against the current, with the aid of long poles."

"Impossible!"

"It is true, I assure you!"

"How far?"

"Sometimes a thousand miles!"

"Why, it was worse than the task assumed by Sisyphus."

"It was no child's play, truly; especially where they were obliged to warp it past the rapids."

"And how was that accomplished, pray?"

"One end of a long cable was tied to a tree far up the stream, and the other to the capstan, and the boat was warped up the current."

"How much we are indebted to Robert Fulton for the application of steam to water craft. The transmission of produce and merchandise is now a pleasure."

"Not as much so as you may suppose, Mrs. Broughton. The danger of running against snags, the fear of collisions, and the dread of explosions, requires the vigilance of the commanders to be sleepless. Their watchfulness is illustrated by an anecdote which is related of Captain Joe Miller. In fair weather, it is his custom to seat himself upon the lower deck, and leaning his back against the capstan, gaze out upon the water. The mischievous mate discovered one night, that wearied by long vigils, the commander had fallen asleep. He softly turned the capstan upon which he was seated, until the countenance of the old veteran faced the fires; the doors of the grate were then thrown open, and Captain Joe was aroused. Springing to his feet, he shouted, 'Good God, men! reverse the engine, or she will be into us in less than a minute.'"

Edward and his companion continued to walk the deck until a late hour. The night was lovely, and from off the shore came the breeze laden with the fragrance of early flowers. The notes of the whippoorwill were faintly heard, and here and there a light pierced the shrubbery, and danced upon the water. The coast, however, was soon locked in repose, and nothing disturbed the silence of the hour, save the groaning of the engines and the splashing of the water-wheels.

"Does it not seem like enchantment, Mr. Clifton, this sudden transition from the dreary region of frost, to the almost perennial bloom of another climate?"

"And yet I like our seasons far better. We have variety, instead of sameness, and that, you know, is more attractive."

"To your sex, undoubtedly."

"Pardon me, if I think not more so than to your own. We tire of a forest when travelling, and long for a clearing to relieve the solitude. When traversing a prairie, we sicken at the unrelieved waste, and cast our eyes eagerly around in search of woodland. If we are hemmed in by mountains, how gladly we hail the open land; and if nothing but hillocks bound the vision, with untold pleasure we gaze upon the roughest barrier which Nature has

erected. The tempest is a welcome relief to the calm; new faces, fresh scenes, excitements, all help to banish monotony, and to encompass us with that variety which is the charm of human existence."

"New faces, I think you said. How complimentary!"

"If they were all like yours, Mrs. Broughton, a change would be for the worse."

"Oh! thank you," and the lady made a low and graceful courtesy.

"Do not think I spoke ironically, for it is the truth! I am unacquainted with any lady who wears so well as you do!"

"Why, do ladies so poorly stand the test of intimacy?"

"I have not mingled much, you know, in the society of ladies; still I have found that some of them become insipid."

"Really, then, I should advise them to see less of you."

"I hope you will not follow the advice yourself."

"And why not? I had better retreat while I have your good opinion."

"That you will be sure to have, under any circumstances. You have too often revealed the delights of Nature, to one who was ignorant of its power, to suffer me to become either ungrateful or unjust."

"Why, what on earth are you two amusing yourselves about, at this late hour!" exclaimed Dr. Fielding, as the married coterie advanced along the deck.

"We are not unmindful of the beauties of Nature; that is all."

"Neither are we," and the Doctor bowed to his fair companions.

"We have been discussing the new style of dress, Mrs. Broughton," observed Helen.

"And what do you think of it?"

"That it was invented for the benefit of ladies whose forms are not as faultless as that of the Greek slave."

"Doubtless, and the aforesaid ladies are trying to induce all others to adopt the fashion, although it is far less graceful than the old."

"In which particular they resemble an unfortunate Reynard," remarked Harden.

"How so?"

"A fox prowling upon forbidden premises, unfortunately had his tail cut off by a steel-trap. Fearful of becoming the laughing-stock of his companions, he immediately announced a new fashion—that of wearing no tails. It became popular, and in a few days there was not a fox in the pack that had a tail for ornament or use. But I do not see anything about the

anecdote to cause so much suppressed merriment," continued Harden, confusedly, as the ladies proceeded in a body along the deck, and at last gave vent to merry peals of laughter.

As the middle watch was changed, they all left the deck and retired to their state-rooms. The Randolph was gliding through an eddy, whose current was running up stream, when the passengers were aroused from slumber by a concussion which shook the vast fabric to its centre. In a moment the most intense excitement prevailed throughout the boat. Edward darted towards the bow, for the purpose of ascertaining the nature of the accident, and caught the startling intelligence which was communicated by one deck-hand to another—"The hold is filling with water." At the same moment he saw Captain Miller running towards the pilot-house. He paused a moment, and remarked, "Mr. Clifton, arouse the passengers at once; the Randolph will sink in less than twenty minutes." Retreating to the saloon, Edward met the steward, to whom he repeated the information. The latter instantly seized a bell, and, ringing it furiously, soon awakened the passengers. The Randolph was a long distance from land, when her keel struck the sawyer, and as soon as Captain Miller seized the helm, her bow was turned towards the shore. But the collision had proved much more disastrous than any one supposed, and before the ill-fated steamer had passed over half the distance to the bank, there were half-a-dozen feet of water in her hold. The total destruction of the boat and cargo was not only threatened, but the passengers were surrounded by imminent perils. The place of greatest security was the hurricane deck, and thither the cabin and steerage passengers crowded. They had all gained that position, and with feverish excitement watched the progress of the boat, as it seemed, to their overwrought fancy, to drag at a snail's pace towards the shore. The Randolph was slowly settling into the water, as the remorseless element rose to her lower deck, when Helen exclaimed, in a voice trembling with terror—

"For Heaven's sake, where is Mrs. Broughton?"

"Good God! is she not here?" answered Clifton.

"No, no! she could not have been awakened."

Edward waited to hear no more, but hastily descended the staircase, notwithstanding the assertion of Captain Miller, that the boat would sink before he could

return. Fortunately, he knew the number of her state-room. It was the last but one in the ladies' saloon. He knocked upon the door. No response came back. He shook it violently; still all was silent. A voice shouted from the forward part of the boat, "*She is sinking!*" With an effort of Herculean strength, the young man burst the door from its hinges. The object of his search had risen from her bed, and overcome with terror, had swooned, and was now lying upon the carpet, unconscious of the dangers which surrounded her. Edward raised her yielding form in his arms, and emerging into the saloon, was proceeding rapidly in the direction of the staircase, when the bow of the boat sunk into the river, and the water rolled along the cabin. His escape by the staircase was cut off. For a moment he was paralysed by the apprehensions of an instant and terrible death, and then summoning all his courage, he retreated to the farther end of the ladies cabin, and passing through a state-room, plunged into the Mississippi, in time to avoid being carried down by the descending mass.

Fortunately for the passengers, the bow of the Randolph had glided into shoal water before the catastrophe occurred, and the front part of the hurricane deck was above the surface of the river. Cables were taken ashore, and the wreck was secured.

A shout for aid was heard, coming from the bosom of the stream, but each moment it grew fainter and fainter.

"Launch the boat!" exclaimed the voice of Captain Miller.

"It is Clifton! let me accompany you!" said Fielding.

The life-boat was soon rapidly cutting the tide in the direction from whence the voice proceeded. Silence now brooded upon the water, and the conviction sunk like lead upon the heart of Fielding, that his friend had perished. With the assistance of lanterns they endeavoured to pierce the gloom, still nothing but an interminable waste of waters could be seen.

"Hold!" shouted Captain Miller, "I saw two bodies sink hereaway."

The boat hovered near the spot, and for several moments they gazed, with straining eyeballs, into the deep.

"Here they are!" exclaimed Fielding as two heads rose almost to the surface, and then receded again. With a sudden spring the Doctor caught Clifton by the hair, and raising his head above the water, the two bodies were taken into the boat. Clifton's arm encircled the waist of the lady, while hers clasped his

form, so as completely to paralyse his exertions.

"This is the cause of their sinking," said Fielding, as he unclosed the arms of Mrs. Broughton. "He was an excellent swimmer, and would have kept them both above the water much longer, if his arms had been free."

The faces of both were pale. A faint flutter was perceptible in the region of Edward's heart; but the form of the lady was icy and motionless. Death had unmistakably placed his seal upon her marble forehead. As soon as they reached the steamboat, every exertion was used to restore Edward to consciousness, while the weeping females hung over the cold and pulseless form of their late companion.

The efforts of skill and affection triumphed. The colour returned to his cheeks, and the sufferer unclosed his eyes. He gazed at first wonderingly upon his friends, and then his eyes rested for a long time upon the form of Mrs. Broughton. At length he turned away, with a mournful shake of the head, which made the scalding tears course down the cheeks of the most unfeeling. The language, expressive, though voiceless, plainly uttered, "I would have saved you, but I could not."

A melancholy party left the Randolph, and going on board another steamboat, started once more for New Orleans. It was their painful duty to deliver the soulless remains of the wife, to the shuddering embrace of the husband. Grief assumed the throne, where mirth had ruled before; so sudden and inexorable are the decrees of death. The calm, cold clay, was even more lovely than when a happy, buoyant spirit inhabited the mortal tenement. The graceful outlines were unwasted by disease, and the complexion had assumed a marble whiteness, save where a rosy hue had regained its empire in her cheeks, and re-illumed the smiling lips. The long dark lashes seemed to tremble as though her expressive eyes were in the act of resuming their power. The form appeared to be slumbering tranquilly, while the soul was wandering in the land of dreams, and the lips were slightly parted as if to welcome its return. It was difficult to realize that it was the last, long sleep, from which there is no awaking, until the nations are summoned by the archangel's trump, to appear at the judgment seat.



## CHAPTER XLIII.

"In the lexicon of youth which fate reserves for a bright manhood, there is no such word as *fail*!"  
BULWER.

THE Congressional convention was to meet at Sherwood in a week; for the nominations were usually made in April. Every county had selected delegates. Not such persons as are used by Tammany Hall, and the politicians who meet at the Broadway Hotel, but the substantial portion of the community who cannot be hired to nominate a person because he carries a long purse, with the strings untied. In cities, the practice of nominating candidates, is too often an absurd burlesque. Unless an aspirant will suffer the political hucksters to bleed him freely, he stands no chance. Blackguards rule the ballot-box, because candidates are selected at the point of a bludgeon, and within the swing of a slung-shot. Respectable people will not mingle with bullies, and the latter therefore have full sway. Perhaps this melancholy condition of affairs is more strikingly illustrated in the Empire City, than in any other. Meetings are sustained or put down by hired rowdies, and the arm of the rioter is more powerful than reason or patriotism. A meeting was called in the Park, to denounce a public functionary. A dozen men were present, nine of whom were sent by the office-holder himself. The chairman was hustled out, a new one appointed, and resolutions complimenting the public functionary were passed unanimously. When the first Texas meeting was held in New York, it was denounced as a Tyler movement, the stand was pulled down, one man was killed, the coat was torn from the body of the speaker; and yet within four months, the longest torchlight procession ever witnessed in the city, was got up by the advocates of annexation. Men push themselves prominently forward, in primary assemblages, who would not be allowed, in the Southern States, to occupy the position of door-keepers. The evil will increase until the respectable portion of the community peremptorily refuse to support a ticket that the rabble have had the *slightest* agency in forming. Their candidates, instead of courting and paying for the friendship of blackguards, will be taught to discountenance and disown them. Even now it is a cause for congratulation, that the nominees, who have resorted to disreputable expedients to secure a nomination, are often defeated at the polls. When this is

*universally* the case, the law and order men will have discharged their duty. How different is the condition of public opinion in the Southern States? None but men of high character, are chosen as delegates, and when they make a nomination, it secures the support of the party. It is rarely the case in a poll of ten thousand, that a solitary democrat or whig refuses to vote the party ticket.

It was apparent, to all, that Clifton would receive the unanimous nomination for Congress. His exertions had been crowned with so much success in the Presidential contest, that he had a host of friends in the district. It is useless to deny that he felt a deep interest in the proceedings of the primary meetings which assembled in the different counties. Although he took no part, directly or indirectly, in getting them up, still, as one after another instructed their delegates to vote for Edward Clifton, a feeling of gratitude for the warmth of their devotion was uppermost in his heart.

At Bergen, a preference was expressed by one of the crowd for Blount Merriweather. The announcement instantly called Squire Burrows, a democratic veteran, to his feet, who exclaimed vehemently, "What has Blount Merriweather done to command our support? Has he not always proved a *fair* weather democrat? Did he ever battle in our cause when our ranks were dispirited by defeat, and the success of our candidates was doubtful, if not hopeless? No, sir, he is not the man for a crisis; he lacks the moral courage to head a forlorn hope. Such an individual can never become a successful leader. He alone is entitled to the championship, who exhibits intrepidity in the hour of defeat, as well as in the moment of victory. That person is Edward Clifton; we have tried him. Where is the orator who would have performed the duties which he did in the last canvass? Neither storms nor heat, arrested his movements, and for half a year his time was devoted to the advocacy of our cause, and the defence of our principles. And now, when honours are at our disposal, we ungratefully confer them upon another! Such, gentlemen, is not the way I cancel my obligations. Gratitude, as well as duty, points unerringly to Mr. Clifton as the democratic candidate, and to abandon him now, would be dastardly and unjust. I for one will never consent to it, until his claims are rejected by the Congressional convention. Mr. Chairman, I propose that our delegates be instructed to

vote first, last, and all the time, for Edward Clifton."

It is needless to say that the proposition was carried by an overwhelming majority.

The village of Sherwood was thronged with delegates. It was remarked that they were an unusually honest and determined-looking body of men. The presence of some of them was an indication that they felt a deep interest in the result, as they had come on horseback, a distance of sixty miles.

The convention was organized by the appointment of Col. Miller as President. Clifton's nomination was proposed in a resolution offered by Senator Harden. A delegate from an adjacent county opposed it upon the ground that the candidate was too youthful. He observed, "Mr. Clifton I understand is not yet twenty-five years of age, and to send so young a person to the halls of Congress, would I think be setting a bad precedent. I will frankly confess that his age is the only objection which I can urge against his nomination. But that to me is insuperable. You cannot have forgotten that he obtained during the Presidential conflict the soubriquet of 'the young elector.'"

The delegates listened impatiently to this objection, and when the speaker had resumed his seat, a dozen members sprang to their feet. Harden was recognised by the chair.

"I deem it almost unnecessary," he commenced, "for me to express my dissent to the opinions which have just been announced. I can see they are disapproved by almost every member of this convention, including its presiding officer. But a due regard for the prejudices of the gentleman who has just resumed his seat, prompts me to remove his doubts, if possible. I know his influence, and am anxious to secure his support for the ticket."

This politic allusion was well received by the delegate, who immediately remarked—

"The nominee shall have that, whoever he may be."

"I am glad to hear it," resumed Harden. "Twas what I expected from his known adherence to principle. But to his objections. On the day of election, Mr. Clifton will be twenty-five years old. The fathers of the republic recognised that age as sufficient to qualify a person to discharge the duties of a Congressman. It is surely unnecessary to appeal to history in confirmation of their judgment. Hannibal and Bonaparte overran Italy before they

were twenty-six. A small portion of the world only was left unconquered by Alexander, when he was twenty-five. At the age of Clifton, the three mightiest conquerors of the world had covered themselves with immortal renown. William Pitt, the most illustrious of British statesmen, was Chancellor of the Exchequer at twenty-two. But I will not multiply illustrations. What pretext is there for the assertion that the favourite of this convention is too young? If he is still youthful, has he not the fire and enthusiasm which is necessary to accomplish great ends? Where did he encounter a successful opponent in the last canvass? And yet the oldest, youngest, and ablest whig orators were arrayed against him. And, as if this was not sufficient, did not the United States District Attorney resign his office, for the purpose of attempting to arrest the tide which was setting in so strongly against Mr. Clay in this district? I speak advisedly when I say that Clifton conducted the canvass without the slightest desire for personal rewards. He is devoted to his profession, and regards political office as a great barrier to professional eminence. His name was proposed without his sanction, as a candidate for Congress, in several preliminary meetings; his reputation is now in the hands of this convention, and he would be above human infirmities if he did not take a deep interest in our deliberations. No one can present such powerful claims to our support as Edward Clifton, and I know that I speak the sentiments of this convention, and the people whom they represent, when I declare that we should be dishonouring ourselves more than him, if we leave this hall without tendering a unanimous nomination for Congress to 'the young elector.'"

These remarks were frequently interrupted by great applause, and as Harden concluded, the assembly arose to their feet and gave three tremendous cheers. Harden's resolution was carried by acclamation.

Edward had several cases to dispose of before opening the canvass, and among the number was a suit which he was defending for a Mr. Franklin.

"But will the cause be tried this term?"

"Yes; both parties are prepared, and for one I am anxious to get rid of it."

"It has been on the calendar a long time. What are the facts in the case? I am ignorant of them, although I heard of the case a long time ago."

"Simply these. Franklin, and Drum-



mond, his co-defendant, were members of the county court, a tribunal having power to appoint guardians. One was selected for the plaintiff, but sufficient security was not taken, and the assets entrusted to his hands were squandered. It appears by the record that Franklin, my client, was on the bench when the court met, but that Drummond, and two others, signed the minutes. Now if either or both of the defendants made the appointment, the plaintiff will recover, provided there is no other defence. The question is, who was upon the bench at the time the order was made. The fact is, that Franklin left it immediately after the court met, but he cannot prove it."

The trial came on, and the case of *Briston vs. Franklin and Drummond*, was at last before the jury. The cause attracted much attention, and the court-house was crowded as Edward rose to address the court.

"It is my purpose, may it please the court," he commenced, "to be very brief in the investigation of this case. The law and the facts are embraced in a nut-shell. If either of these defendants are liable, it surely is not my client. The question is, who appointed the guardian? The orders of the court are not complete until they are signed. If they are, why is that formality necessary? The practice of the court was to hear the minutes read the morning after they were entered, and then affix their names to the record. Until it was signed, the minutes were under the supervision of the court. Mr. Franklin did not sanction the orders of the court on the day after this appointment was made, for the record shows that it was approved by Mr. Drummond and others. He is therefore liable, if anybody is, for the failure to take security. But there is one impassable barrier to a recovery by the plaintiff. The action is barred by the statute of limitations. I would not rely upon this defence if I did not know that my client was guiltless of all blame. Actions of this kind are barred, if not commenced within three years after the removal of a disability. It was the duty of the plaintiff to institute his suit within three years after his majority. He has not done so. The writ was issued on his twenty-fourth birthday."

"Very well, Mr. Clifton," interposed the Judge, "that was sufficient, as three years had not elapsed until the following day."

"Just so thought his mother, may it please your honour, when she swore in this deposition to statements which she

thought would just cover the case. The witness and the court both labour under a mistake as to the law. This writ bears date the 15th day of March, 1840. Mrs. Briston testifies that her son was twenty-four years of age on the 15th day of March, 1840. The plaintiff, on the contrary, was, in the eye of the law, twenty-four years old on the 14th day of March, 1840."

"What, the day before his birthday?" asked the Judge.

"Exactly so."

"The court would like to know how you will make that appear."

"I will show your honour. It is a well-settled principle of law that parts of a day are never recognised. The day, one and indivisible, is alone counted."

"The court admits that proposition."

"Very well. There are three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. The plaintiff was born on the 15th day of March, 1816, at 10 o'clock, A. M. The 15th day of March, 1816, being in law indivisible, counts as one day, and the child had completed three hundred and sixty-five days on the 14th of March, 1817. You cannot count the 15th twice, because if you do, the year will be composed of three hundred and sixty-six days. In fact the child was a year old on the 15th day of March, 1817, at 10 o'clock, A. M., but not in law. Follow out the proposition. Mr. Briston was twenty-one years old on the 14th of March, 1837, and ought to have instituted his suit on or before the 14th day of March, 1840. Not having done so, his right of action is lost by the statute of limitations."

"You are right, Mr. Clifton," observed the court; "the plaintiff might as well agree to a non-suit."

In the month of May, 1845, Edward opened the campaign for Congress. The whigs nominated Malcolm Macgregor as his opponent. This gentleman was born in the district, and from that fact expected to obtain democratic votes. A host of kinsmen belonged to the opposite party, and as they were Scotchmen, and consequently clannish, he hoped that they would manifest greater devotion to their relation, than to their principles. In this expectation the whig leaders coincided, and confidently expected that Clifton would be defeated. Although they did not dislike him personally, and were cautious what terms they employed when referring to his political career, still many of them had been handled rather roughly in the last canvass, and would now rejoice at the frustration of

his hopes. It was predicted, too, that a personal difficulty would take place between the candidates. They were both young and impetuous, and the political forum is more likely than all other places to test the sweetness of one's temper. If your indignation finds vent in an expression more than ordinarily severe, a challenge follows, or a personal collision at once ensues. The danger is enhanced by the presence of political friends, and hostile opponents, the one to cheer, and the other to scoff.

"And so you open the ball at Bergen to-morrow, Clifton," observed Fielding. "Does Harden accompany you?"

"Yes; owing to my persuasions, he has accepted the nomination for a re-election to the Senate."

"I am glad of it. The senatorial district is composed of four counties, which you will have to canvass, and he will be a pleasant companion, as well as a powerful assistant upon the stump."

"I assure you I have a proper appreciation of the facts which you have mentioned."

"What do you think of your opponent, Clifton?"

"I have never met him upon the stump. He is said to be a good speaker, but rather an unscrupulous declaimer; something like Major Henderson."

"You will have an 'affair' with him then, before the canvass is over."

"A candidate may always anticipate a difficulty when he meets an opponent on the stump, and if he avoids one, it is a species of good fortune for which he ought to be grateful."

"You passed through the Presidential conflict without a personal encounter."

"I was then advocating the claims of another, not my own. A person canvassing for himself is far more sensitive."

"Why is it that lawyers so much more rarely have deadly combats than politicians?"

"Because they are accustomed to the rules of debate, and besides, like electors, they are speaking for others. Members of the bar are not so apt to come into collision, when they are candidates, as other classes of the community."

"Macgregor is not a member of the bar?"

"No, he is a physician."

"Then you had better go prepared for any emergency. Our profession are inclined to be obstinate, and a dogged adherence to settled opinions is more cha-

racteristic of the medical fraternity, than a frank acknowledgment of error."

"You are *frank* to make the admission."

"I would not proclaim it on the highways, but I do not hesitate to tell you. So you would do well to commence the canvass prepared, at any moment, to administer a pill, not of his own making, either, to Dr. Macgregor."

"Do you think this will do?" inquired Edward, as he took a heavy revolver from his desk.

"I have a very poor opinion of Colt's revolvers, generally," responded Fielding, "and would rather trust to a Durringer, or a bowie-knife. This, however, seems to be a substantial weapon."

"A Durringer has but one ball, and it is a penitentiary offence to use a bowie-knife."

"Yes; our legislators, in order to conciliate the pious community, are doing all they can to sink the chivalry of the South. They will never be satisfied until we become as spiritless and cowardly as a nation of traders usually are."

"And so you believe personal conflicts are necessary to preserve our character for intrepidity?" said Judge Douglass, who had just entered Clifton's office.

"Submission to insult by nations or individuals has a tendency to degrade character. There are some offences which the law cannot punish. The strong right arm must then defend your honour. I believe that wars are a national blessing, when they are not too frequent. They serve to foster a martial enthusiasm, and keep a people from sinking into that worst of all conditions, a nation of spiritless traffickers."

"But you forget that the horrors of the battle-field carry anguish to the domestic circle."

"No, I do not; I admit it all. Still, there are some evils more to be deplored than even that. A loss of self-respect, which follows in the footsteps of departing valour, is far more calamitous. We become the willing victims of the strong, and occupy the position of a cipher in the catalogue of nations. Not only that, but the loss of national character is accompanied by that mental imbecility, which is the fatal enemy of science and of art. Look at those empires which claim the gratitude of the present age for discoveries that have benefitted mankind. They have become equally celebrated for their martial renown. Where has sculpture, music, painting, philosophy, astronomy, and belles-lettres, been illustrated with a splen-

dour and success that will claim the admiration of posterity? Upon the ensanguined plains of Greece, the gory valleys of Italy, the blood-stained fields of France, and in the smoking villages of old England. If you want a contrast to this picture, look at China! that land of wooden shoes and mental imbecility, where three hundred millions of people suffer twenty thousand British to batter down the walls of their cities!"

"You speak warmly, Doctor."

"Because I despise the stupidity which is constantly advocating peace as the greatest blessing which can be conferred upon the human race. It is not strange that an interested clergy should endeavour to transform a martial people into the truculent victims of priestcraft; because the power of the church will then be augmented. Donations to religious institutions will become even more frequent than they are now. The ties of consanguinity will be as powerless as a rope of sand, when the mind, enfeebled by disease and palsied with terror, seeks to win a pathway to the celestial regions, by yielding to the sordid demands of a clerical comforter."

"Do you suppose that the church employs improper means for the purpose of obtaining bequests?"

"I have not the slightest doubt of it. Since the dawn of Christianity, or rather since the ascension, the disciples of our Saviour have always understood the value of money. They have employed every means to accumulate the dross of earth; before the Reformation by the absolution of sins, and since that time by performing mass for the dead, and smoothing the passage of the dying Protestant to the world of spirits."

"Why, surely you cannot condemn that religious consolation which enables the departing soul to look death calmly in the face?"

"Not when the consolation is disinterested; but if the unscrupulous clergyman hangs over the trembling body, when it is about to yield up its immateriality, and with hypocritical cant induces him to disinherit a helpless family, for the purpose of enriching the church, the execrations of men and the curse of heaven should fall upon his head!"

"But how is this influence brought into action? A man has the legal right to dispose of his property as he pleases."

"Leave the *modus operandi* to the skill of the reverend clergy; they are versed in the mysteries of the human heart. What

is the process, ask you? I once witnessed an illustration of its power. A wealthy planter was taken suddenly ill. The ravages of the fever could not be checked, and it was apparent that a speedy dissolution would ensue. Alarmed at his approaching fate, he sent for a clergyman. His life had been reckless and profane, and the meekness of his amiable wife had often been put to the severest test. Overcome with fatigue, I had thrown myself upon the sofa in a secluded corner of the room, and was asleep when the minister entered. I awoke, however, in a few minutes, and knowing that the youthful clergyman did not exclusively employ his time in laying up treasures where 'neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal,' I watched his movements.

"With a solemn and sepulchral voice he began—'I sincerely regret, my dear sir, to find you in this awful condition!' (the enunciation of the word awful being greatly prolonged.)

"So do I, but fate is resistless; can you give me no consolation in this terrible moment?" And the eyeballs of the dying mortal seemed starting from their sockets as he watched the countenance of the man of God.

"A pause ensued. 'You have lived a remarkably sinful life, Mr. Bradshaw, and although you have been raised under the very droppings of the sanctuary, still you have never rendered obedience to the commands of the Almighty.'

"I know it; I know it, Parson Henning; but is it too late now to repent?"

"Blessed by the munificence of heaven," continued the divine, with increased solemnity, "you have always manifested your ingratitude by withholding from the church that pecuniary aid which enables it to become the instrument, in the hands of God, for the accomplishment of much good."

"At this apparent extinction of his hopes, the sick man sunk back with a groan. In a few moments he turned to the minister, and in a faint, but earnest voice, whispered,

"Is it too late to make amends for my remissness and folly?"

"The clergyman shook his head, and responded sadly: 'It is the duty of mortals to employ the gifts of a Supreme Ruler in promoting the eternal interests of the human race. This life is but a fleeting hour, given us to prepare for that existence which has no end.'

"But surely, an indulgent God will not

refuse a death-bed repentance to one who is willing to aid his chosen servants?"

"But you have never done so."

"I will do so now, if it is not too late," said the agonized Bradshaw, as the clammy perspiration gathered in large drops upon his forehead. I caught a flitting glance of Henning's countenance. A gleam of triumph was succeeded by a hard, relentless expression, which seemed to say, 'There is no harm in torturing him some more.' He continued, 'The individual who sets at defiance the commands of God, faces a terrible responsibility! If he obeys the divine requirements, an eternity of bliss awaits him beyond the river of death. But if, like you, Mr. Bradshaw, he revels in sin and iniquity through a long life, without one act of charity, his mortal career will terminate, but what becomes of his immortal spirit? It will either be forever chained, with its living consciousness, to the body, in that silent, cold, dreary, remorseless grave, from which there is no escape, or exist through an eternity of suffering, in the lake of unquenchable fire!'

"For God's sake, forbear!" shrieked Bradshaw, as his body shook convulsively for a minute, and then all was still. I was in the act of springing from the sofa, when Henning started to his feet, and exclaimed, 'I have carried it too far! fool that I was; but where is a restorative?' He applied the hartshorn to the nostrils of the fainting man, who shortly opened his eyes; but it was evident he was fast sinking.

"You spoke of giving aid, but now to the chosen servants of God!" whispered Henning.

"Alas! it is too late," murmured the dying man.

"It is never too late to repent! God is always ready to welcome the sinner."

"Do you think so?" said the other joyfully. "Oh! I will do anything to secure a pardon!"

"You can greatly assist the humble servants of the Almighty, to spread the truths of his Divine Word."

"How? Name the conditions!"

"By giving of your wealth to the church. You know I am the president of a religious institution; make a bequest to me, in trust for religious purposes; it will greatly commend you to the mercy of an offended God."

"I will do it. Name the sum, and quickly too; I am sinking fast."

"To whom much is given, much will

be required," responded the other with a nasal intonation.

"But my wife and helpless babes; what will become of them?"

"Leave them a small sum! Riches will only distract their attention from their heavenly duties. If poverty overtakes them, it shall be my care to protect them from suffering."

"As you will!" muttered Bradshaw, faintly. 'There is paper in that drawer; write a will; you must do it soon; my strength is failing; fast! faster!'

"Henning seized the pen, and with a flushed cheek, rapidly traced the black lines (not blacker than his heart) upon the spotless sheet. As I was in the act of moving noiselessly from my position, for the purpose of arresting this nefarious transaction. The movement of the pen was arrested, as Henning heard the death-rattle in the throat of his victim. A momentary struggle ensued; the limbs trembled, the brow contracted, and then all was over.

"Fool that I was, to delay so long!" burst from the lips of the baffled clergyman, as he ground his teeth with irrepressible rage, and dashed away the pen.

"As I rose from the sequestered corner, where I had been lying, and advanced towards him, his countenance was suffused with a deep blush, which was quickly succeeded by a livid hue. I fixed my eyes sternly upon his own. His look of disappointment gave place to a meek and sanctimonious expression. I have seldom been so much enraged, yet I addressed him with a calm voice. 'Mr. Henning, you have disgraced your calling; you have increased the dying agonies of a fellow mortal; and you have fully justified your claim to eternal damnation. Now, sir, if I treated you as you deserve, your infamy and rascality, would be proclaimed to the world; but I shall only make a slight atonement to the dead, by kicking you down stairs.' He protested, but seizing him by his white cravat, I administered half a dozen tremendous applications with my cowhide boots, the last of which sent his reverend body whirling down the staircase. Losing his balance, he bounded from one step to another, until he tumbled at last upon the floor, where he lay for several moments, and then rubbing his back with one hand, and his legs with the other, he limped away."

"And the verdict of the world, would be, 'Served him right!' exclaimed Judge Douglass.

The meeting between the two candi-

dates at Bergen passed off without any difficulty, and for several appointments, Edward flattered himself that the canvass would be an agreeable one. He was doomed to disappointment. Macgregor, worsted in argument, resorted to misrepresentation, and in the closing speech at Sherwood, he charged his opponent with changing his position upon the tariff, in order to suit different localities. After they had returned to the hotel, Clifton sought an interview with his opponent, and warned him, that he would not submit to misrepresentation. "The reason I call your attention in private, to the injustice which you are doing me," he continued, "is because we are heated while addressing a crowd. That is no time to settle difficulties, unless it is at the point of the pistol!"

"Very well, sir; if you wish to settle it in that way, I am at your service!"

"But I do not; I greatly prefer a gentlemanly discussion. You must be aware, nevertheless, how fatal it will be to my prospects, if I suffer you to charge me with advocating principles, to-day, only to repudiate them to-morrow: I might as well abandon the canvass and return home."

"I will certainly not oppose that step!"

"Probably not; but you shall not force me to it. It was my desire that principles should be discussed, and that personal difficulties should be kept out of the canvass. I have been warned against you. I am prepared for any emergency; you would do well to meet me hereafter with something else besides documents, if your misrepresentations of to-day are to be repeated."

"I understand you. I always go armed; your advice was unnecessary."

The young men separated, with courteous expressions, although their forms were trembling with passion.

The next day they were to meet near the spot where Macgregor was born, and in the centre of his clan. About a thousand persons had assembled to hear them speak. With the Democratic portion of the crowd, Clifton was very popular, and with any other competitor, there would not have been the slightest doubt of his receiving the entire vote of his party. But Macgregor was their kinsman and family physician, and was personally very popular. He opened the debate and reiterated his charge of inconsistency against his opponent.

"Specify the time and place, as well as

the inconsistency of which you speak?" interrupted Edward.

"I will do it, sir. At Bergen you advocated a tariff for revenue, with discrimination for protection. There are several persons here, who heard you avow yourself at Sherwood, yesterday, in favour of a tariff, discriminating in favour of revenue alone."

"Yes, that he did!" exclaimed several of the crowd.

After Macgregor concluded, Clifton mounted the stand; but he observed that there was no applause from the Democracy.

"I have been accused of inconsistency. If the charge is true, I do not merit your support."

"What do you mean, by saying if the charge is true?" exclaimed Macgregor, vehemently. The crowd began to thicken in the vicinity of the stand.

"You will require all your coolness, before I get through with you, Doctor. Knowing the high character for which the kinsmen of my opponent are celebrated; it is a painful duty for me to impeach his honour. I would not have done so, but for the unwarrantable attack which he has made upon me to-day; I am accused. What is the reputation of my accuser? Hitherto, spotless; but no longer so. I heard recently, that he declared before the nomination of Mr. Clay, that he would vote for no man for the Presidency, who was opposed to the annexation of Texas. Having voted for Mr. Clay, he now vindicates his consistency, by denying that he ever made any such declarations. I so understand you, Doctor?"

"Certainly, sir."

"You see, gentlemen, how important it is for his own consistency to remain unimpeached, if his charge against me is to have any weight. Now, I hold in my hand the written statement of ten men of unquestionable honour, who swear that he did make the declaration which he now denies."

A long pause ensued, while intense silence prevailed throughout the crowd. Macgregor retained his seat, and a deadly pallor overspread his countenance. "Is it possible!" burst from the lips of his nearest kinsmen. "Gentlemen, after this illustration of my opponent's veracity, I will declare, that the charge which he has made against me to-day, in all its length and breadth, is quite as destitute of truth, as the denial which he has just uttered." Macgregor sprang to his feet, but his movements were arrested by the authorita-

tive voice of a leading whig, and a member of the Presbyterian Church, who exclaimed, "It is a painful duty for me to impeach the veracity of a relation, but I am forced to it by a regard for truth. I listened with undivided attention to the speeches of Mr. Clifton at Bergen and at Sherwood. The position which he assumed upon the tariff, was forcibly impressed upon my mind, because I believe its adoption will inflict a fatal blow upon the manufacturers of this country. At both places he advocated a tariff discriminating for revenue alone." As the old man resumed his seat, Macgregor drew a pistol, and taking a quick aim at Clifton, fired. The crowd had not only encircled the stand, but some of them had mounted it. One of them attempted to strike the weapon from his hand, but only succeeded in moving it slightly upon one side. The ball entered Clifton's shoulder. Rendered furious, the baffled assailant drew a knife, and rushed upon his foe. With the quickness of thought, Edward seized his wrist, and struck him violently upon the mouth with his revolver. The blow knocked several front teeth from their sockets, and hurled Macgregor from the stand, when the combatants were separated.

For several weeks after the collision, neither of the candidates addressed the people. Edward was disabled by his wound, and Macgregor's articulation was almost destroyed. Still he refused to take the advice of his friends and withdraw from the canvass. In an interview with Clifton, he declared his determination not to accuse him of inconsistency again, and asked, as a personal favour, that he would not repeat the pledge which he had given. As our hero was desirous of discussing principles alone, he acceded to the proposition, although by doing so, he surrendered the overwhelming advantage which the *faux pas* of his opponent had given him.

Before the canvass was ended, he was destined to have one more personal difficulty. After attending a list of appointments, he passed one night at Sherwood, on his way to Stamford. Scarcely had he dismounted from his horse, when one of his warmest friends informed him that Dr. Coleman, the whig leader in the county, had inquired if Clifton had not delivered an abolition speech while at College. Edward's feelings were deeply wounded, because he had been upon the most friendly terms with Dr. Coleman. But this emotion soon gave place to a feeling of indignation. He knew the object of the blow.

The next day, as he was proceeding to Stamford, he met Dr. Coleman upon the road. The latter greeted him with the utmost warmth and cordiality. They rode together for several miles, when Clifton charged him with attempting, by infamous means, to injure his popularity, and informed him that on the following Monday he should publicly denounce the insinuations as false, in Sherwood, where it was made.

The court met at Sherwood, and an immense crowd had assembled. It was here that Edward had made his earliest friends, and delivered his first speech, and here he felt a desire to sustain himself triumphantly. In the course of his remarks, he alluded to the inquiry of Dr. Coleman, and pronounced the charge that he had ever made an abolition speech, or written an abolition letter, that he was now, or ever had been an abolitionist, an unqualified falsehood.

After he had concluded, the Doctor made his way through the crowd, and, livid with rage, mounted the stand.

"It is strange that the gentleman," he declared, "should become so excited upon the subject. I indignantly repel the charge that I intended to do him injustice; I only made the inquiry as his friend."

"As my friend!" responded Clifton, ironically. "No! as a hidden, secret, dastardly enemy, you endeavoured to stab my reputation. If I had delivered an abolition speech when a boy, although I might have been appointed by the presiding officer to advocate that side of the question, you knew very well it would be fatal to my popularity. You thought if there was no foundation for the insinuation, still the poison might silently and secretly destroy my reputation. It was an infamous attack upon a stranger, and was rendered doubly dishonourable, because there was a smile upon your face when you were using the poisoned dagger of the assassin. As my friend! After the blow had been inflicted, you met me with the blandness of a friend, and made no allusion to my youthful opinions. A friend warns you in private, a craven-hearted foe assails you in secret. Go, sir! Hitherto you have maintained a high character; now your hypocrisy is unveiled, and you will leave this hall the object of relentless and unmitigated scorn."

Intense excitement prevailed during this scene, and Clifton noticed the tall and commanding form of Col. Miller among those who thronged the lobby of the court. That gentleman despised Coleman quite

as much as he admired Clifton. His eyes flashed, and his form trembled during the controversy. As Edward concluded, and passed the petrified form of the Doctor, Col. Miller exclaimed, "That is enough, gentlemen. That is satisfactory. Three cheers for Edward Clifton!" And the wild, prolonged, and enthusiastic huzzas shook the building.

It was the night preceding the election. Clifton had completed his appointments, and returning to Stamford, threw himself upon his bed almost exhausted. No one can describe the delights of that moment. The labour has been performed, the duties to himself and his party have been discharged, and nothing remains but for the ballot-box to decide the contest.

"Let me congratulate you upon the termination of the canvass," said Fielding, as he entered Edward's office.

"Thank you; I am glad it is over; the fatigue and excitement is enough to affect the most powerful constitution."

"You do not fear the result?"

"Oh, no! I shall beat Macgregor a thousand votes."

"Is it possible! why that is more than the party majority in the district."

"I know it is. Without any agency of mine, the result of the meeting at Belden's, where he was exposed in the presence of his relations, has been widely circulated. Not only that affair, but the collision with Coleman, has given me many whig supporters."

"It could not be otherwise. Our citizens are magnanimous, and any attempt to crush a person by dishonourable means, will surely recoil. Besides, an influence has been operating in your favour which you least expected."

"What is that, pray?"

"My wife has persuaded her father to vote for you."

"What! Judge Douglass vote for a democrat! I am under a thousand obligations to Mrs. Fielding."

"Well, you will soon have an opportunity of expressing them, as she intends to give a party in honour of the member elect."

The morning of the election dawned fair and cloudless. The entire vote of the two parties was polled. Runners had been selected for the purpose of bringing returns to Stamford by midnight, and the greatest excitement prevailed in the village. Clifton's office was the headquarters of the democrats; Blanton's for the whigs; and around each several hundred persons had congregated to ascertain the

result. As night set in, they had obtained the vote from every precinct in that county except one. Heavy bets had been made that Clifton's majority would be greater than either the candidate for Governor or Senator, and that it would reach three hundred and fifty. It was now three hundred and forty, and at the precinct yet to be heard from, the parties at the last election were tied. They were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the courier, and at last the sound of horses' feet was heard, as the rider dashed into the centre of the circle.

"Fifteen majority for the Governor, nineteen for Harden, twenty-four for Clifton!"

The welkin rang with cheer after cheer as this result was announced. A profound silence reigned in the vicinity of Blanton's office.

As the returns from the other counties had first to be compared at the county-seats, several hours must elapse before they could be received. The crowd broke into knots, the two parties mingled together, and many a good-natured repartee served to while away the hour.

"Which county do you expect to hear from next, Mr. Clifton?"

"Madison."

"What will be the whig majority?"

"About two hundred."

A single shout was heard across the square, followed by loud applause, and then a voice exclaimed,

"Whig majority in Madison, two hundred and forty-five!"

"That is greater than I expected," said Clifton.

"What will the democratic majority be in Faulkner?" inquired Fielding.

"I am so much disappointed in Madison, I can hardly venture to predict," responded Clifton; "I think it cannot, however, be less than three hundred and ninety."

The sound of horses' feet was again heard, but this time it came from another direction. It clattered along the bank of the river, was for a moment lost in the glen, and then the steed thundered across the bridge. The next instant, a horseman, mounted upon a bay charger, from whose sides the sweat poured, threw himself from the saddle, and, twirling his hat around his head, announced four hundred and sixty-nine democratic majority in Faulkner.

The cheering which followed this intelligence was long and enthusiastic.

"Well done, glorious old Faulkner!" burst from the lips of many a democrat.

"What do you think of that, my whig

friend?" exclaimed Fielding, as he slapped Squire Morris upon the shoulder.

"Only that we are as much surprised as you were a moment ago, by the news from Madison."

"One hundred and forty-five whig majority will be the returns from Henry," said Harden.

"We ought to have heard from that county before now," said Judge Douglass.

"The change in the vote since the last election has probably been very little; they are German, you know."

"Whig majority in Henry, one hundred and fifty!"

No applause followed this announcement.

"How high will our majority range in Cleveland?"

"You can judge better than I how that county has gone, Harden."

"Your majority will be three hundred and fifty; mine, three hundred."

An unusual commotion was heard in the Whig crowd, and a voice exclaimed:

"That's positively awful!"

"It must be the returns from Cleveland, and favourable to us."

The messenger rode his exhausted horse across the square, and his arrival was welcomed by a joyous shout.

"How is it? What is the result?" demanded the eager questioners.

"Majority for Clifton, four hundred and seventy-five."

"Impossible!" burst from a hundred voices.

"True, I assure you."

The enthusiasm now became intense, and the cheers were terrific.

"Upwards of a hundred votes more than I gave you."

"How will it stand in Jefferson, 'Squire Morris?"

"About fifty majority for the whigs."

"The messenger is late."

"There he comes; and with good news for us," cried Morris, as he darted towards the head-quarters of the whigs. The huzzas in that direction were loud and prolonged. A democrat came over with a dejected countenance.

"One hundred and seventy-five majority for the whigs in Jefferson!"

This information came like a cold bath upon the democracy.

The only county to be heard from now was Washington. It was forty miles from Sherwood to Stamford, and another hour must elapse before the runner could arrive. It was now eleven o'clock. The unfavourable returns from Jefferson made the demo-

crats await with considerable anxiety for the news from Washington. Clifton felt a deeper, because he had a personal, as well as a political, interest in the result. Sherwood was his earliest home in the State; it was there he had made his first political speech; and there Fenton and Dr. Coleman came rudely in contact with him. It was in the county of Washington that he denounced the unscrupulous conduct of his opponent, in the midst of his kinsmen. It cannot appear strange, then, that his heart beat and his cheek flushed whenever a shout was raised across the square. He was almost certain of an election; but to the young and ambitious, when the ballot-box has decided their popularity, success alone is not enough. They compare with jealous eyes their own vote with that of others upon the same ticket; and a falling off gives quite as much pain as the contrary result does pleasure.

It was half an hour past midnight, and both parties began to think of dispersing.

"This is your last card, Clifton; what will it be?"

"I hope my majority will be four hundred. I shall be satisfied with that, though I shall not complain if it is not more than three seventy-five. Less than that will disappoint me."

"Well, here it comes, good or bad."

The notes of a bugle were heard in the distance; as they floated merrily upon the night air.

"'Tis Frank Place. The news is good!" exclaimed Clifton, in a joyous tone. "It is the signal we agreed upon."

The pent-up feelings of the crowd gave way at this announcement, and a tremendous huzza was borne to the ears of the startled Whigs. To increase the enthusiasm, a brass band commenced playing.

In a few minutes a foaming steed bounded into the midst of the immense throng, and, rising in his stirrups, the horseman proposed three cheers for Clifton. They were given, and, as the last huzza floated away upon the breeze, a profound silence fell upon the multitude.

"Democratic majority for Governor, four hundred and twelve; for Senator, four hundred and one; for Congressman, six hundred and ninety-five!"

It is impossible to describe the delirium which, for a few minutes held possession of the crowd. At length it took the form of action. Rushing forward, they seized Clifton, and in spite of his protestations, mounted him upon their shoulders, and bore him in triumph around the square.

The majority for the democratic candi-



date for Governor, in the congressional district, was one thousand and forty-five, for Clifton, fourteen hundred and thirty-six.

The feelings which were experienced by our hero, are rarely felt during a mortal existence. Only when the object of our adoration has been won, and the ambition of the youthful aspirant, for military or civic honours, has been gratified.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

"I think of thee, when soft and wide,  
The evening spreads her robes of light,  
And, like a young and timid bride,  
Sits blushing in the arms of night."

PRENTICE.

### CONTINUATION OF ALICE HOWARD'S JOURNAL.

"JUNE, 1845.—I have just been informed by my mother, that father exacted a promise from Mr. Clifton, not to address me until six years had elapsed. He counted upon the instability of human affections! So far as I am concerned, how fatal was the opinion! Perhaps not so with Edward; he may have forgotten me, and the heart's youngest, freshest, purest emotions, may be wasted upon a person, whose fidelity exists only in my imagination. Within seven months I shall know my destiny! Six years will then be numbered with the past, and his word will be kept inviolate. If other scenes have changed the current of his affection, a remorseless doom is mine! It is terrible to stake the happiness of a life upon the uncertain fidelity of man. And yet it is fate which controls us. The heart, it is true, may be kept under the iron rule of the brain! But it is the sway of the despot, which crushes while it restrains. Still I do not despair, for I have a consciousness of power that can brook no rival. Why should I? The mirror bids me hope!

"In a week I start for Newport. Hitherto my visits to the ocean have been confined to Cape May and Long Branch. The company at the former place is too promiscuous; the crowd is too great. At Long Branch, there is not enough variety. The visitors are nearly all Philadelphians. But at Newport are congregated the grave and the gay from all parts of the Union. They shine by contrast. I shall pass some time in New York, and then proceed in the Bay State, to Newport; a summer there, an autumn here, and a winter in

Washington. That is a programme to satisfy the most exacting.

"New York, June, 1845.—Here I am at the Astor House. Several friends were anxious for me to take up my abode at their houses, but I prefer remaining here. Although the fashionables have not yet taken their flight to the summer resorts, still they are preparing to do so. It is too late for parties, though receptions have not been altogether discontinued. The custom of having evening receptions is an excellent one, else the visiting would degenerate into formality. Ladies often exchange calls through an entire season without meeting, and at last they become the creatures of ceremony, with no warmth, and scarcely any social vitality. I have often been amused, when they accidentally meet; unmeaning compliments, and formal ceremony mark the interview, and they separate without any impression having been made by either, save that which a faultless, or vulgar dress; graceful, or common manners, may have produced. The exit of the visiter does not call forth warm commendations upon her frank, and yet lady-like deportment. It is too often followed by a process which a Baltimore girl called 'picking to pieces,' something in the following style.

"Did you ever see such a frightful hat? Velvet, with a sixpenny rose on each side. And, then, what a funny expression! She said a gentleman wore his hat on the back side of his head!"

"Upon my word, yes."

"And yet she was educated at Madame —"

"It is far different at a reception where forms are laid aside with your hood and cloak. Then pride and formality are for the hour unlaced, and cheerfulness and gaiety preside over the festive scene. Friends who are brought together upon such occasions, are afforded the *only* relaxation from the stiffness of New York society. Morning calls are governed by the iron rules of etiquette. Parties are made the occasion for display, and nothing else. The exhibition of your own jewelry and brocade, and a mental inventory of the ornaments with which the persons of your friends are decorated, make a sad inroad upon agreeability. If you chance to have a daughter in the room, anxiety, because she may not have so many beaux as she ought, is superadded to your other cares, and renders your stupidity profound. By the way, how ridiculous some mothers do make themselves at parties. If their darlings do not receive

as much attention as they desire, it puts them at once into a fever of excitement. They gaze with intense earnestness at every male acquaintance who passes, and, if he eludes them, their disappointment is truly laughable. There is absolute terror in the idea of becoming a 'wall-flower,' and, to avoid it, all sorts of attention is shown to the most unworthy specimens of chivalry. It makes very little difference how vulgar the manners, or revolting the person, so he fills a pair of pantaloons and dances the polka. He may wear a vile mustache and have the most abominable breath, it is all endurable, provided he dances the polka. But just think of it. It is not enough that all this is to be endured, but you must be polite and attentive to the vagabonds. A few nights ago, a young lady had been playing the agreeable to a most insufferable coxcomb, whose spindle limbs and effeminate countenance proved him one of the rarest specimens of New York beaux. After he had withdrawn, she remarked, sotto voce, 'After that, he can't refuse to ask me to dance.' Young ladies, who have a fortune in their own possession, or are blessed with great expectations, have plenty of beaux for the dance. They are relieved of much annoyance. Why it is that being constantly upon the floor is considered so very desirable, I cannot tell. But it is, and some of our sex will have partners even if it occasions a loss of self-respect. And good dancers are in great demand. Not long since, I saw a fond mother watching, with admiring eyes, the floating form of her daughter as she whirled through the waltz. She whispered to the person who was seated next her, 'How important it is for a young lady to have a partner who dances well.' I know the young lady, and I thought 'how important it is that the head should be cultivated as well as the heels.' And yet, strange to say, they depend more upon the accomplishments of the ball-room, than the study, to win admiration, if not a husband.

"I have not the greatest opinion of schools in New York. Perhaps some of them may be as good as any in the Union, yet there are several that rank very high for which I have not much respect. With the semblance of great strictness and severity, the discipline which enforces application is exceedingly lax. Parents send their children to school for improvement, and not to become the victims of tyranny. There is one institution of very high reputation, where several of my acquaintances have been educated, whose proprietress

has rendered herself obnoxious by her overbearing disposition. It has been often proved that young ladies, as well as young gentlemen, can be governed by kindness much better than by harshness. But the principal of whom I speak, probably embittered by an event that forced her into a position greatly inferior to the one which Nature had qualified her to adorn (although she could have exercised no possible control over it), vented her savage humour upon her defenceless pupils. A proud spirit was continually warring against its fate, until all who are more fortunate, become the objects of its fury. To mortify and disappoint those who are placed under her temporary charge, seems to be the object of her existence. Instead of encouraging them by kindness and gentle words to surmount the difficulties in the path of education, she constantly throws obstacles in their way, by irritating their temper, thwarting their reasonable desires, and turning those who would love and obey her into relentless foes. She arouses the worst passions of the human heart—hate and the desire for revenge. The whole system is illustrated by the experience of a young lady from the South, who came on with her relation to attend the institution. While her sister remained, the proprietress was all affability and kindness. It was, 'My dear, will you have this? my dear, will you do that?' until, at length, the maiden would have defended the old lady against every assault. A week had not elapsed after her sister returned, before there was a gradual change. Going one evening to ask a question, she was saluted with the sharp inquiry, 'What do you want, Miss?' Instead of love and willing obedience, she has inspired fear and dislike.

"But she will say, that severity is absolutely necessary to enforce order. That plea is simply untrue. The contrary has been too often demonstrated. Affection is a far more powerful agency in the management of the young as well as old. All despotisms are odious, whether nations or individuals are the victims. To be released from oppression, is the ceaseless desire of the sufferers, and for the accomplishment of that object, they will devote time which otherwise would be employed in mental improvement. A parent who places his daughter, in the school of Madame —, expects to have her prepared for that circle in which he moves himself. When he trusts her, to the savage rule of Madame —, she is a tender, sensitive flower, upon whose



cheek the winds of heaven have never blown too roughly, all submission, all love. How is her nature changed by the tigress into whose clutches she has been thrown. Her daily food would disgrace the mess-room of the lower deck, that the claims of avarice may be gratified. The victim of harshness first weeps, and many a night is her pillow saturated with tears. Obstinacy succeeds, and at last, an insensibility to either punishment or reproof. While young, she becomes hardened, and at length the punishment of being put to bed, in a dark room, for twenty-four, sometimes, for thirty-six hours, only calls into action those passions of the human heart, which otherwise would have remained dormant. What are the thoughts which occupy the teeming brain, during those long dreary hours of solitude? Hatred, and a thirst for revenge. Her noble impulses undergo a transition, the sweetness of her disposition is turned to gall; the heart, where love held dominion, is bruised and lacerated. She at last escapes from this worse than Southern bondage, but how changed? The dungeon is unlocked, but the effects of tyranny cling to the victim, long after the harsh voice ceases to fall upon the ear. The maledictions of outraged humanity will pursue the fiendish tyrant to her last home; and the grave which holds the form, that living, was as remorseless as itself, will never be hallowed by a tear.

"And yet, Madame —, is truculent, as all tyrants are; she knows the importance of having at least one lady in each class graduate with high honours. That one is often as imperious as herself. A few explosions of temper, such as dashing books upon the floor, breaking slates, declaring that she won't be treated so, she will leave the school first, soon causes the proprietress to temporise, and at last to submit. So bright an ornament must not be lost. But her pent-up rage is visited upon the heads of those whose expulsion from school would be no loss.

"I never come to New York, without being amused at the fantastic operations of cliqueism. There are at least half a dozen sets that assume the leadership of fashion, and probably one is just as much entitled to it as another; each think the rest are made up of a mixed set, and the latter have precisely the same opinion of the former. Mrs. Linton inquired if the company at Mrs. Blanckton's was not excessively mixed. Mrs. Fondling replied, that she did not discover it. 'Why, I understood,' observed Mrs. Linton, 'that the Ferdinands were there.' A few days after

Mrs. Ferdinand asked Mrs. Fondling if the company at the Mantons was not exceedingly mixed. 'I did not perceive it,' replied Mrs. Fondling. 'Why, I heard the Lintons were there,' said Mrs. Ferdinand. If I believed all that one clique said in praise of themselves, and in condemnation of the remainder, I should have an exalted opinion of one, and a moderate estimation of the other.

"Taste in dress is also a fruitful source of amusement to me. The judgment of individuals is considered faultless by themselves. Sweeping and wholesale condemnation is visited upon the style of dress which the wearer considers the height of fashion. The possessor regards her robe with unmistakeable satisfaction, while her neighbour views it with spiteful contempt. If each person who claims the possession of exquisite taste was to be made our model, our dresses would change much oftener than the seasons. The occupant of a mansion in Fifth Avenue has her style; the one in Fourteenth Street has another; Mrs. Slaughter, of Union Place, has a fourth; the Bowery girl a fifth, and the tenant of East Broadway a sixth. After all, it depends quite as much upon their dressmakers as their own taste. Locality has a greater influence upon taste and fashion than one would suppose. The inhabitants of a dwelling in East Broadway move in altogether a different circle from the Westenders. They rarely enter the opera house; because Niblo's or the Broadway is the extent of their ambition. They do not attend balls at Tammany Hall, but they give unostentatious parties at home. The young ladies grow up, marry, and pass a life in that quiet, unambitious sphere. Suppose their lot had been cast in a fashionable street, their career would have been far different. A box at the opera, a bill at Stewarts, a summer at Saratoga, tickets for the fancy ball at the opera house, satins, brocades, diamonds; everything which wealth can command would scarcely satisfy them. These same dashing belles, under other circumstances, might have been struggling for pre-eminence at Tammany Hall, or the Apollo Rooms. Locality is everything. These would be unpalatable truths to those who claim the leadership of fashion by inherent right.\*

"Newport, August, 1845.—I have been

\* The author would remark, that the fair Philadelphian is not wholly exempt from those prejudices which are entertained by the inhabitants of Boston, Baltimore, and the city of rectangular streets. There is not a stricture which she has made, that will not apply with quite as much force to Moyamensing and

here almost one month. How rapidly the time passes. I breakfast at nine o'clock, remain at the ten pin alley an hour, dance until eleven, bathe in the surf till twelve, dress and dine at two, and promenade the hall for an hour. Then ride to the tea house, or walk to the cliffs; return for tea at seven, and dance until midnight. It is a mystery how well the ladies stand this dissipation; probably they would sink under it, were it not for sea-bathing and exercise upon horseback.

Cliqueism attempted to gain an ascendancy at first, but its prurient demands were put down in a summary manner. A family from New York, with a common name and low extraction, had surrounded itself with obsequious beaux, who claimed the right of controlling the music, and giving direction to the dance. This was the more insufferable, because they had learned some fancy dances which were unknown to the other guests. In a public hotel, no clique has a right to monopolize the amusements. If their enjoyment depends upon a particular routine of pleasures with which the rest of the company are unfamiliar, they must either seek a cottage or obtain a private parlour. To expect all the other guests to become spectators, while a dozen persons float through the mazes of an intricate cotillion, is altogether too unreasonable. So thought a spirited lady from Alabama, who, not so exclusive, became the centre of a large and admiring circle. She sought every opportunity of thwarting the plans and scouting the pretensions of this set, and succeeded so admirably that they shrank into the narrow position for which nature had really intended them. The male portion of the clique, who always exact until resistance is offered, meeting with a sharp rebuff from a knot of navy officers, also moderated their pretensions.

"It is inconceivable how anxious some ladies are to see their names in the columns of a newspaper. To be heralded as the belle of Newport, is the object of their daily, hourly thoughts; and they submit to the companionship of men who are low in character and common in manners, simply because they are correspondents of the public press. It seems to me that a modest lady would shrink from, rather than court, this publicity. It is a notoriety which will not improve their reputations, or assist them to obtain desirable husbands.

"Father of mercy, the hotel is on fire!

"The far-famed Ocean House is destroy-

Philadelphia proper, as well as to the fashionable and the vulgar of that city.

ed. I had scarcely time to escape with my baggage, and here I am at the Atlantic. But I am wearied of Newport. To-morrow I start for home. Perhaps my brother may return."

## CHAPTER XLV.

"Oh! have I lived to see thee once again?  
Breathe the same air, my own, my blessed one?  
Look up! look up! these are the arms which sheltered  
When the storm howled around; and these the lips  
Where, till this hour, the sad and holy kiss  
Of parting lingered—as the fragrance left  
By angels when they touch the earth and vanish.  
Look up!—Night never panted for the sun,  
As for thine eyes, my soul!"

BULWER.

ALICE HOWARD returned to Philadelphia, and week after week passed away, until the changeable weather of November was about to succeed the clear skies and refreshing atmosphere of October. The form of the maiden had now acquired that transcendent loveliness, which rendered her so beautiful. She was above the medium height, and the form, full, and flowing in its outlines, possessed the most perfect grace and flexibility. Her tapering arms were round, and white as marble, and the hands and feet were small and exquisitely formed. The head, face, neck, and shoulders more than realized the promise of childhood. Her hair when dishevelled, almost reached the floor. Her eyes were large, bright and expressive, and her pearly teeth contrasted beautifully with the rosy, pouting lips. She possessed that charming naïveté and grace, without which no one can lay claim to pre-eminent loveliness.

It was with a heart throbbing with wild excitement that Edward Clifton traversed the street in the direction of Mrs. Howard's. His hopes were about to be crowned with happiness or for ever destroyed. At length he approached the dwelling. His mind was filled with anxiety when he descended those marble steps six years ago, and now as he ascended them once more, his brain whirled with contending emotions. The scenes through which he had passed, since the hour when that door closed upon his hopes, were startling and eventful; still, with the lightning's quickness they flashed through his mind. Time seemed annihilated, and in the excitement of the moment, it appeared as

though he was turning upon his footsteps, to obtain a renunciation of that decree which banished him from the presence of Alice.

But the hallucination was gone, as a strange countenance answered the signal of the bell. Appalled by his anxious look, and tremulous voice, the girl did not, on the instant, answer his inquiry for Miss Howard. An age of agony was crowded into that moment of hesitation, and the thought sunk like ice upon his heart, "She is dead; or, what is far more horrible, she is married." The object for which he had struggled for six long years was now beyond his grasp.

"Heard you not?" he exclaimed almost fiercely. "I inquired if Miss Howard is at home."

"I will see, sir; walk in." In after years memory would recall the overpowering sweetness of those words. They were simple and commonplace, but they lifted a terrible doubt from his oppressed heart. The object of his adoration was living, was still unmarried.

"What name shall I mention?" inquired the maid.

"Say that an old friend desires to see her." Clifton cast his eyes around the room. A faithful memory claimed each painting which hung upon the wall, as an old acquaintance. The same fire appeared to burn in the grate, the piano stood where he last saw it. A guitar leaned against the sofa, as though the strings had just been touched, and a volume of Scott's novels was lying open upon the centre-table.

Scarcely had he made these observations, when the parlour door moved upon its hinges, the rustling of silk was heard, and a graceful form stood before him. For a moment they gazed at each other with overpowering intensity.

"Thank God, you have at last returned!" burst from the lips of the maiden, as she staggered forward, and fell into the arms of her lover.

Those words, "at last," revealed the deep, exhaustless well of her affections. Silently Edward embraced the form of the beautiful girl. His joy was too big for words. He gazed upon every lineament of her face, and traced the development of those beauties which even in childhood were so rare and promising. His feelings were overcome with gratitude, and the tears coursed each other down his cheeks. Her eyes were closed, but her heart beat wildly, against his own. The lips were

slightly parted, and her fragrant breath played upon his cheek.

"Dearest Alice, shall we ever part again?"

Her eyes unclosed, and she answered his inquiry with a look of unutterable tenderness, while the arm which encircled his neck drew her form still closer to his own. Their lips met in a long, lingering kiss, in which was pledged an eternity of love and fidelity.

"Why have you kept me in suspense for six long years?" inquired Alice, as she gently withdrew from his arms.

"In an evil hour I gave my word of honour to your father, not to address you until the present time. However much I regretted the obstacle which interfered with my hopes, I had no resource but to await the hour which was to emancipate me."

"And what assurance had you, dearest Edward, that I would not wed another?"

"None whatever, and hence the horrible doubts with which I was often agonized."

"You have reason to be thankful, for it is not often that a maiden yields her affections unsolicited to the keeping of another."

"You ought not to say *unsolicited*, for although I did not avow my attachment in words, still you could not have been ignorant of its existence."

"And pray, how was a girl of fourteen to divine your thoughts?"

"Females understand the language of admiration at a very early age. Did you not know the state of my feelings?"

"Yes; and it was that knowledge which kept my heart true to its allegiance. But I am so glad you are with me again!" and the girl pressed his hand fondly between her own.

"I learned the death of your father through the newspapers, and although I deeply sympathized with you, still my condolence could not reach your ears. Ah, me! a hard fate has been ours. But Fortune has done her worst, and in giving me your heart and hand, she compensates me for many an hour of suffering and woe."

We will not take the liberty of an author, and reveal more of the conversation. Those who have enjoyed the ecstatic bliss, which an assurance of possession, at no distant day, never fails to confer, can imagine all that it becomes us to conceal. Suffice it to say, that before the interview closed, the wedding day was fixed for the 28th of December, so importunate was the lover, after his hopes had been so long deferred.

"You will call at nine o'clock, and accompany me to the party," said Alice, as Clifton stood at the parlour door, with his arm round her waist.

"Certainly, if you wish to go."

"I have already accepted the invitation, and Miss Everton is a warm friend. Besides, I want to display my Congressional beau," and she surveyed his manly form and handsome face with a look of pride.

"I will not fail you, then."

One kiss, one embrace, and they parted.

At the hour appointed, Edward entered the parlour. Mrs. Howard was there to receive him. Her welcome was warm and affectionate. In a few minutes Alice came in, robed in a white embroidered silk. Her luxuriant hair was tastefully arranged, and sufficiently ornamented her head, without the aid of flowers or jewels. A large diamond pin sparkled upon her bosom. Her Norman feet were encased in white satin slippers, and her exquisitely moulded arms were naked half way from the elbow to the shoulders. Happiness beamed in her expressive eyes, for her heart was full to overflowing.

"How well you look to-night, Alice."

"Thank you, dear mother, I feel so."

Edward did not express his admiration in words, but with a woman's discernment she saw it all. He was certain that he had never looked upon a being half so beautiful before. Love is gifted with a strange, magical power, in the first moments of his ascendancy. Not only does the god surround the object of your idolatry with inexpressible charms, but he gilds *everything* perceptible to the senses with the tints of happiness.

"Is the carriage at the door, mother?"

"Not yet."

"I have one there," said Clifton.

"Our own will soon be here. We never enter a public carriage, since a friend of mine caught the small-pox in one. You had better discharge yours. Will you button this glove, Mr. Clifton. Have I not grown since you rescued me from that frightful lake?"

"Yes, charming."

"Hush! you must not flatter me."

"It is the truth, and that is to be spoken at all times. Why this glove is marked number six, is it possible you can get it on?"

"Yes; that is the number, I always wear. Good night, ma! do not wait up for me."

"Mr. Clifton, it will be so late when you return, you had better take a bed here."

"I am much obliged to you, Mrs. Howard, but it is only a few steps to Jones's, and I promised a friend to meet him there early in the morning."

They entered a carriage lined with orange-coloured damask. It was odd, but as they approached the house, whose illuminated windows indicated it as the one where the party was given, Miss Howard asked her companion to button her glove again.

The company had nearly all assembled when they entered. The rooms were crowded with the beauty and fashion of Philadelphia, and there was scarcely space for the dancers. Many a bright pair of eyes were turned upon our hero, as he was presented to the hostess by Miss Howard.

"Who can he be?" whispered Mary Jones to her beau.

"I cannot tell; I think he is a Southerner, if I may judge from his manner and complexion."

"Probably she picked him up at Newport."

"Poor fellow! he will fare no better than the rest of them."

"The rest of us, you ought to say, Mr. Meredith."

"Nonsense! I was not an admirer of the haughty beauty."

"If you were not, rumour was unjust. However, I never knew a gentleman who was willing to acknowledge that he had been rejected. Why, I cannot tell. It surely is no disgrace to manifest a preference for a young and lovely woman. And so you think Alice will add him to the long list of her conquests, only to reject him?"

"I am not so certain of it," replied her companion, who had been watching the movements of Miss Howard with so much interest that he only heard the last observation of Miss Jones.

"You do not think he is an accepted lover?"

"It is difficult to tell; though I have never seen Alice Howard bend her haughty neck so graciously before. And see, what volumes of love are revealed by her eloquent eyes, as she raises them for fleeting moments to his own. The heightened colour; the arm which rests with greater weight than usual upon that of her companion; the rapt attention when he breathes his low words into her ear; oh, it is unmistakeably a match!" and the fierceness with which he concluded his remarks, proved the intensity of his feelings.

"Where could she have met him?" he

continued, musingly. "I am certain he was not at Newport last summer. Miss Jones, Alice is a friend of yours; can't you tell me where she met this gallant?"

"Since you feel so much interested—although you never did address her—it is strange you have forgotten, that when a mere child she was saved from drowning by the intrepidity of a youth whose name was Edward Clifton."

"I know; but her father, who was an abolitionist, forbid his attentions, because young Clifton defended the peculiar institutions of the South."

"That is true; but Alice was neither an abolitionist nor ungrateful, and I think it will turn out that this gentleman is Edward Clifton, a young member of Congress elect."

"Yes; I heard her introduce him as Mr. Clifton."

"Then you, and all other competitors, may hang your harps upon the willow. Is he not young to be elevated to so high a position?"

"He is scarcely more than eligible, and will be the youngest member in the House."

It was soon whispered through the room that our hero was the accepted lover of Miss Howard, and a rising young statesman. Introductions succeeded, until they became the centre of a large circle. Finding himself a lion, where he expected to act an humble part, Clifton called into requisition his brilliant conversational powers. Alice hung upon his words with delight, and her heart overflowed with thankfulness that her lover was so worthy of that priceless affection which she had so freely bestowed.

It was past midnight when they again entered the carriage. Alice no longer cared if her hair was disarranged; and as his arm encircled her zone, and drew her yielding form to his bosom, her head rested upon his shoulder with a fond and graceful abandon.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

"Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb  
The steep, where Fame's proud temple shines afar!  
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime,  
Has felt the influence of a malignant star,  
And waged with Fortune an eternal war!  
Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,  
And Poverty's unconquerable bar;  
In life's low vale remote has pined along,  
Then dropped into the grave, unpitied and unknown!"

BEATTIE.

"Westward the star of Empire takes its way."  
BERKELEY.

"Within 'twas brilliant all and light,  
A thronging scene of figures bright;  
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,  
As when the setting sun has given  
Ten thousand hues to summer even,  
And from their tissue, fancy frames  
Aerial knights, and fairy dames."

SCOTT.

AFTER remaining a few weeks in Philadelphia, Clifton proceeded to Washington to take his seat in the House of Representatives. There is no place where the immensity of the Union is so forcibly illustrated as in that celebrated hall. Not only each State, but each Congressional district has its representative, and the speaker may at one minute recognise a member whose door opens upon the tumultuous waves of the Atlantic, and the next, one whose window looks out upon the tranquil waters of the Pacific Ocean. Congregated beneath its lofty dome are those into whose hands are placed the fiat of peace or war; the prosperity or destruction of this glorious confederacy.

Hon. John W. Davis, of Indiana, was nominated by the democratic members for the Speakership, and was elected without serious opposition. There were quite forty majority for the Democratic party in the House, but it was not a majority that could be safely relied upon; there were too many conflicting interests to divide and distract.

The hall of the House of Representatives presented a grand appearance, with its immense area, superb breccia columns,\* and lofty dome. It is badly constructed for speaking, the enunciation of the most powerful voice being lost among its angles and galleries. In the summer, the atmosphere is insufferably warm. The sun at midday, falls with all its intensity upon that wing of the Capitol, and the mass of rooms and walls beyond, prevents a circulation of air.

The National Capitol, and the grounds which surround it, never fail to arrest the attention of the traveller. The building occupies the most commanding height in the city. Approaching it from the President's house, along Pennsylvania Avenue,

\* There is nothing in Washington more attractive than these breccia columns. There are not less than thirty of them in the hall of the House of Representatives. They are placed along the outside of the circle, and against their massive proportions rests the ladies' and gentlemen's gallery. The component parts of the stone must have been at one time nothing but pebbles of all sizes, shapes, and colours, but subsequently blended together by a concretion, which has given them the consistency of solid marble, with the power of sustaining a polish even more smooth and mirror-like.

it presents a grand appearance, which is greatly increased upon entering the grounds. There is nothing attractive in the basement, which is very properly screened from the observation of the distant or casual examiner, by a terrace. The rest of the building is built in the Corinthian style; the columns which adorn the eastern and western porticoes, are thirty-six feet high. The library opens upon the western portico; this spot overlooks Pennsylvania Avenue, and indeed, almost the entire city of Washington. In the centre building, is the far-famed Rotunda. Its lofty height, its overhanging arch, its renowned paintings, combine to make it one of the most attractive localities in the building. The length of the Capitol is three hundred and fifty-two feet, depth of the wings, one hundred and twenty-one feet. The grounds cover an area of thirty acres. The western portion is by far the most attractive, being a succession of terraces at first, and then a gradual descent to Pennsylvania Avenue. The eastern part is highly ornamented, but is almost a dead level.

The Capitol is not built, as many suppose, of white marble. That, as well as the White House, and Treasury Building, is built of a porous sandstone, and they are all preserved from the action of the elements by liberal coats of paint. The National Post-office is the most classic and elegant building in the city. The blocks are manufactured from beautiful white marble, which defies the action of the elements. The locality of Washington is unfortunate, and its selection as the metropolis, proves the moderate expectations of its founders. The principal part of the city is built upon a marsh, and the slope which leads to it. There is no commerce by which its importance is to be increased, and stuck down upon the banks of the Potomac in a barren waste, it will always have a sickly existence, dependent alone upon the public treasury. If a sterile soil and isolated situation were selected for the purpose of preventing the growth of the city, in order to avoid the danger of mobs, a much better spot could have been chosen. The impolicy of the selection was painfully illustrated during the administration of the fourth President, when the humiliating spectacle was witnessed of a Capitol in ruins, and a Government dispersed. The event disclosed the folly which placed the archives of the country within reach of the Vandal's torch. The Capitol should have been located further from the sea-coast; the wilderness west of the Allegha-

nies, if necessary. It is not too late to remove it now. If timely notice is given, it can be defended, where it stands, against any force that may be landed on our shores. But in case of a sudden irruption, with the aid of steamers, it might again fall into the hands of the modern Goths. That disaster should not a second time mortify the pride of a people who can protect the Capitol, if erected where it ought to be, in the valley of the Mississippi, against the assaults of a million of armed men. There are unanswerable arguments in favour of its removal. The centre of our power, will soon be a thousand miles West of Washington, and it is idle to suppose that members will consent to traverse the confederacy, in order to reach the Capitol, when it can be changed by the stroke of a pen. The day is past, when half-reverential, half-superstitious objections could be successfully urged, because the Father of his country, selected Washington as the seat of the General Government. Already, the work of his hands is crumbling beneath the touch of policy.

That part of the District of Columbia which was granted by his native State, has been retroceded by an overwhelming majority; notwithstanding the constitutional objections of John Quincy Adams. In this progressive age, reverence and superstition afford slight barriers to the iron decrees of an invincible necessity, and those who seek to arrest its progress with a name, however potent, will be whelmed by its irresistible career. The cost of all the public buildings in Washington, is less than seven millions; that cannot therefore be urged as an objection to a removal.

Great preparations were being made by the Secretary of State, for his party, at Carusi's Saloon. No private residence was sufficiently spacious to entertain the guests. Mr. Buchanan was rich, and a bachelor. Although age began to frost his locks, still his heart was genial, and his general admiration for the sex, continued unabated. No one was a more welcome visitor at the Presidential receptions, than that portly gentleman. What if his head is bent upon one side, and his left eye does squint, as if he was glancing the other along the barrel of a rifle, it does not impair his affability.

The services of the city confectioners, were called into requisition, the oyster cellars and lobster saloons were exhausted, canvass-back duck, partridges, and quails, were collected. Every preparation was made to render the affair one of extraordinary brilliancy. Distinguished stran-

gers in the city were anxious to obtain invitations, and the town was on the *qui vive*.

At length the evening arrived. A long line of carriages, thronged Pennsylvania Avenue, the head of which was turning into a cross street, in the direction of the Mall. When Clifton entered the room, the contrast between the gloom without, and the glare within, was painful to the eye. The Halls were almost lined with sperm candles, which cast a radiant light throughout the Hall. The courteous Secretary received the guests within the door. The room was already filled. The ladies vied with each other in the magnificence of their dresses. It was almost like a fancy ball, so varied were the robes. There was the rich, though subdued attire of the North, the gay habiliments of the West, and the dazzling costume of the South. Almost every State in the Union contributed a choice flower to the array of beauty which made up the lovely bouquet. The beautiful figure and dignified manners of the Bostonian, the exquisite form and graceful ease of the New Yorker, the faultless elegance of the Philadelphian, the buoyant spirits and sparkling wit of the Baltimorean, the dark eyes and warm-hearted candour of the Tennessean, the rosy cheeks and impulsive vivacity of the Louisianian, the unstudied frankness of the Georgian, and the self-possessed and lady-like bearing of the Virginian. It is this mingling and contrast of character which gives the balls of the Metropolis their peculiar attraction.

Conventionalities exercise a powerful influence upon manners, and this fact is nowhere more perceptible than in the saloons of Washington. That barrier which restrains the impulses of the Northern girl, is past with a dashing bound, by the spirited Southerner. The belles of New England possess less of that charming piquancy—call it coquetry if you will—which renders those of the Middle States, so agreeable. But, even the latter cannot claim that unstudied, impulsive vivacity, which makes the warm-hearted Southerner so popular in the ball-room, and social circle.

The assemblage was not exclusively American. The bearded face of the Russian minister, was conspicuous in the throng; his breast covered with orders, while upon his arm, leaned an ornament far more beautiful than them all—his lovely American wife. The English ambassador, with his quiet gentlemanly address—you would know him for a bachelor

bowed his way through the crowd. No one could tell, from the courteous words which were exchanged between the Secretary of State and himself, that they had recently met in the lists, from which the English functionary had escaped with the loss of his shield.

The servant of Louis Philippe had not the appearance of one who would abandon a lucrative post, because his master was compelled to vacate a throne. Subjects who are not within the blaze of royalty, are often the most devoted.

There was the massive brow and broad shoulders of the Massachusetts Senator; conviviality unbent the austerity of his manner, and he was engaged in conversation, not boisterous, but merry, with the eloquent Senator from Kentucky. They had yielded themselves to the hour.

In another part of the saloon was the iron-gray head and restless eyes of the distinguished South Carolinian. Even in that festive scene he could not distract his mind from the one absorbing idea of his life,—the wrongs of the South. A knot had collected to listen to his short sentences, and compact language. Further on, was the portly form of "Old Bullion." He could scarcely overcome the habit of talking to himself, or prevent his arms from indulging in quick, passionate gestures.

But here comes a tall, commanding form; aged, but not in the slightest degree bent. He becomes the cynosure upon whom all eyes are fixed. His attention is bestowed, undividedly, upon the throng who surround him. It is the eloquent and gallant "Harry of the West."

Near him, and conversing in a rapid and earnest manner, is a gentleman with long straight hair, thin pale face, and slender finger, pointed significantly towards the Kentucky Statesman. This is Henry A. Wise.

In the upper part of the room is a majestic form, clad in the undress uniform of a general officer. He mingles very little in the conversation, yet his eagle glance is thrown over the crowd, and rests for a long time upon Mr. Clay. It is the commander-in-chief of the regular army—then the hero of Lundy's Lane—subsequently of the Mexican Garitas—later still—the occupant of the white house?

Not a dozen feet from the warrior, is a figure almost as athletic, and altogether more graceful, whose urbanity of manner and conversational powers, have collected a circle around him. He is the hero of San Jacinto, and the first President of the

"lone star republic." And this portly gentleman, whose dimensions are almost equal to Jack Falstaff, and whose countenance would indicate the consumption of quite as much ale as had the effect of blowing the doughty knight "up like a bladder," is the successful foe of the triple alliance, and the embodiment of progressive democracy.

Following in his footsteps is a dwarfish figure, with almost a hang-dog look, whose manners are half-modest, half-sycophantic. He was the successful champion of free trade. And who is this, with heavy tread and countenance: with bent neck and rough exterior? It is the long-headed, plodding, sagacious, logical, Secretary of War.

And this bald-headed, mild blue-eyed, tall, and venerable-looking man, whose soft and winning address calls so many smiles to the lips of his friends? Why that is "Old Cave," Postmaster-General.

There is now quite a commotion near the door. Another distinguished arrival? The crowd parts, an avenue is formed along the centre of the room. A slight person, of scarcely the medium height, bows his way through the crowd. He has a bright, full, intelligent gray eye; his forehead is projecting; his mouth and chin indicate great firmness and resolution; his hair is partially silvered, although he has scarcely reached the prime of life. This is the chief magistrate of the American confederacy.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

"And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace  
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,  
Of finer form, or lovelier face."  
SCOTT.

"Forth the lovely bride ye bring;  
Gayest flowers before her fling  
From your high-piled baskets spread,  
Maidens of the fairy tread!  
Strew them far, and wide, and high,  
A rosy shower 'twixt earth and sky!"  
MILFORD.

#### CONTINUATION OF ALICE HOWARD'S JOURNAL.

"NOVEMBER, 1845.—A new era in my life is approaching. I am about to leave the path which I have hitherto trod in safety, for the unknown realms of matrimony. The most important event which occurs during our existence, is often thoughtlessly welcomed as a harbinger of

bliss. It is a dread change. It requires the full mastery of love to overcome a modesty which shrinks within itself. It calls into requisition the strongest ties of affection when we surrender our identity and self-control. We exchange a certainty for an uncertainty. But every succeeding moment of time is an uncertainty! The past is our experience—the present is our reality—but the future? it is unknown.

"Is love changeable? Can it be an evanescent passion, which possession destroys? Fearful thought! No! no! it must be that essence of our being which divines call immortality. Love is the passport to the confines of heaven; it is the watchword of the Christian warrior. May not a particle of its spirituality be infused into that earthly sentiment which mortals feel for each other. If the man of God forsakes the world, and sacrifices the temptations of earth upon the altar of duty, does not the maiden abandon everything for her accepted lover?"

"But I have seen ardent lovers become indifferent, when the anxiety and uncertainty of courtship yield to the assurance of possession. Did they never love, or loving once, have they been alienated? If such should be my fate? It would be too horrible. Yet my own feelings may change, and that which now appears so frightful, by familiarity, may be viewed with indifference. Ah! no, *that* were impossible. I have loved him too long; my affections have resisted too many assaults. He knows I love him; his feelings are not, therefore, wrought upon by doubt. No, I will believe him. He is noble, generous, magnanimous, and I will trustingly yield my happiness to his control.

"December, 1845.—My wedding-day approaching, and the moments seem to fly while I am preparing for that event. Perhaps Edward would not thank me for the admission. My occupations are so intimately connected with himself, that, although absent, he seems constantly before me. The immense fortune left me by my father, enables me to gratify every wish, and my wardrobe, mamma says, is already sufficiently large. Still each day I am making additions. The wedding-dress is at last selected. It was my taste, although mamma and Miss Glendower advised another costume.

"I hope I shall look well in it.  
"I do not mean, after marriage, to follow the example of some girls, who appear to think that any dress will do for their husbands. For them it is sufficient, that to the close of the marriage ceremony,



their attire has always been faultless. After the knot is tied, what necessity is there for keeping up appearances? Are not their fortunes made? Common, vulgar, *fatal* error. Is there not a possibility that love may yield to disgust? To dress for my husband shall be my first thought, and if I delight him, what care I for others? That he is pleased to see a lady dress with taste, I am perfectly satisfied. I will not ask him if he likes this or that style; that shall be my task. But the effect of neither will escape me. A man does not often assume the tiresome duty of superintending a lady's wardrobe. He is sometimes forced to do it, when his wife is utterly destitute of taste. Some men, also, are just fussy enough to delight in such occupations. But the task must be irksome to the sterner sex. They are satisfied, if their wives dress with taste, without the annoyance of thinking about it themselves.

"My wedding robe has been sent home by the dress-maker. They say it fits me exactly. I think it is rather too low in the neck, but Miss Glendower says, not for one who has such an 'exquisite bust, and whose neck and shoulders are the perfection of Nature's workmanship.'

"December 27, 1845.—My arrangements are completed, and to-morrow I stand at the altar. My heart beats as wildly, but not so painfully, as when the angry waves of the mountain lake were dashing over me. It is an intoxicating and joyous emotion, which causes this fluttering at my heart. Edward has just left me; how kind and affectionate were his words; what ardent devotion beamed from his dark, lustrous eyes.

"What my fate may hereafter become, I know not; but I have an unyielding confidence in the power of love. I will so tenderly caress the fickle god that he shall never abandon me, and when I enter upon a new existence, it will be with the hope of obtaining happiness, without being pained by the doubts which have hitherto been its bane. I do not give my hand while my heart is secretly clinging to

another. My affections have not been lacerated by disappointment. I have not sought to win the love of one who lightly treated my advances, only to yield my bruised heart to the most *available* candidate for my hand. No!—I have given the concentrated power of my virgin affections, hitherto untouched and uncontaminated, into the keeping of my betrothed. May God direct him to preserve the gift within the inmost recesses of his heart!"

Thus closed the journal of Alice Howard. Whether she transferred to its pages, in after life, the emotions of a teeming brain, we are profoundly ignorant.

The morning of the wedding-day dawned upon an unclouded sky. The ceremony was performed at Mrs. Howard's. Her bridesmaids urged her to be married in church; but she shrank from the gaze of the vulgar, who claim it as a privilege to throng the aisles, whenever a couple are thus publicly united in the bonds of matrimony.

Hand in hand, they started upon the journey of life, with the consciousness of possessing those essential elements of mortal happiness,—mutual confidence and unchangeable love. May their pathway be strewn with thornless flowers, and their earthly bliss be unmarred by a sorrow or a tear!

Dear reader, in commencing this book, you received no pledges, made only to be broken. There was no attempt to allure you onward, by the promise of either mental improvement or momentary pleasure. If to this page you have followed the career of Edward Clifton and Alice Howard, we hope an occasional smile has played upon the lips of beauty, and smoothed the wrinkles upon the brow of manhood; that the heartstrings of all have thrilled with pleasure or trembled with emotion, and that the restless and immortal mind may have a somewhat clearer perception of that temporary existence which is but the forerunner of eternity. If so, dear and gentle reader, the author has not laboured in vain.

THE END.