

LORD OF HIMSELF.

A NOVEL.

BY

FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

"This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall,
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all."

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

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plain

TO MY WIFE

These Pictures of Life in her Native State

ARE

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

A PREFACE for which any necessity exists is always an after-thought. A novel should ordinarily explain itself, and there should be no occasion for the author to come to the footlights; otherwise the reader in search of entertainment might fear it was only a sermon in disguise to which he was invited. But after conversing with a gentleman who had read the early sheets of this story, the author felt that a few words might be needed to give a clearer idea of the actions and the motives of its ideal characters.

The reader will please to remember that during the last thirty years, great social as well as political changes have taken place. Since the fabric of slavery was consumed in the flames of civil war, the whole course of thinking and action in this country has taken a new direction. It has required no little effort on the part of the author to free himself from later impressions, and to present a faithful picture of life and manners as they were at that time, which now appears so remote. In the lifetime of a generation, the world's dial seems to have moved centuries. What are familiar truths now were then subjects of earnest controversy. The social system of the slave states appeared strong in itself, and doubly so, protected as it was by local governments and by constitutional bulwarks. The upheaval was as unexpected, and has proved as tremendous in its effects, as the revolution of '89.

It would have been easy (after the event) to have given to some person of the drama a spirit of prophecy, but that would have been untrue to history. It would have been equally false to have attributed to any character a conception of the absolute right, or a superiority to the ideas of caste. This consideration should temper the disappointment that may be felt at seeing men and women, naturally just and generous, accepting the lower position, stopping short of the demands of enlightened conscience, and exhibiting themselves as the slaves of an unreasoning prejudice. Judging from the comments of the friend referred to, it would seem that few people here are able to understand the true condition of southern society as it was, or to perceive that the thoughts

and feelings of even the noblest southerners might be so tinged with inherited and all-pervading notions concerning the inferior race as to make them now appear less kindly and considerate than they really were.

The reader who does understand what influences moulded southern men and women will not expect the novelist to paint an unprejudiced hero. Such a person would be as anachronistic as an ideal advocate of liberty of conscience in 1630 in Boston.

The freedom of intercourse between young people which prevails in the northern states has never been known in Kentucky. Young ladies in the rural districts do not, as a rule, receive calls except in the presence of their elders. The prevailing tone of address is stately and deferential, recalling the manners of "chivalrous" times. For the least indiscretion, real or fancied, or for any presumption on the part of a suitor, the rifle in the hands of a father or brother is the ready and efficient rebuke. A love scene such as is depicted in the highly colored novels now fashionable, would be impossible in any decorous household. Every woman is taught reserve from the time of pinafores; every man is taught discretion and self-control by a prevalent sentiment no less than by stern examples.

Time and distance, while they give picturesqueness to scenes and characters, are likely to blur their clear outlines; and it is possible that in attempting to recall early impressions, something of their original vividness has been lost. But it is more to the purpose to portray human life in its essential qualities than to attempt an over-nice delineation of peculiarities of speech and manner.

It is not an unfamiliar, and certainly not an unfriendly hand that has made these sketches. The story, as a whole, is purely a fiction, but every one of its incidents has its foundation and parallel in actual events. "Aunt Phillis," whose uncouth speech may try the reader's patience, is a portrait. Two or three other personages are also drawn from life.

Trusting that the reader will believe that this is a novel, and not a series of essays, and hoping that the threads of the story may bear the weight of the slight discussion that appears proper to illustrate it, the author commits his work to the judgment of the public.

BOSTON, May 1, 1874.

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LORD OF HIMSELF.

CHAPTER I.

THE RUSSELLS OF BEECH KNOLL.

BEECH KNOLL, in Barry County, Kentucky, was the residence of the Russells, an ancient Virginia family that had migrated in early times, and had obtained possession of a large tract of fertile land. The house stood on an elevation among native trees, mostly beeches, and commanded a fine southward view of meadow, field, and woodland, with glimpses of the river that loitered in the bends under the shade of giant sycamores, or ran brawling over the shelves of limestone in its winding course through the valley. Fifty years before, the original proprietor was almost literally monarch of all he surveyed. It was almost a day's ride to visit all the various parts of the estate. The stables, stacks, ricks, fodder yards, and negro houses then formed a large and populous settlement that clustered around the springs on the eastern slope of the Knoll.

The family mansion was originally a simple structure, with wings and broad verandas. In the next generation, the alterations made for Isham Russell in the west wing, gave the buildings an irregular, but, perhaps, more picturesque, appearance. Immense masses of climbing roses

covered the eastern windows, and vines hung like fresh tapestries on each side of the ample porch. In the carriage-house was the old English chariot, once gay with satin linings, and trimmings of silver. Blooded horses, with glossy coats and interminable pedigrees, frisked in the stable yards, or cantered over the hill pastures: "profligate creatures" that have eaten up many a southern plantation. In the hall were the family portraits, whose pictured wigs, brocades, jewels, and lace attested and justified the family pride. But all this was in the olden time. A change had come. At the period of our story the house was occupied by Mrs. Mildred Russell, widow of the late Randolph Russell, and her only son, Beauchamp. In the western wing there were windows without glass, and only a portion of it was habitable. The veranda was borne down in places by the weight of the old rose bushes, and the walls had lost nearly every trace of paint. The log houses in the negro quarter were deserted and ruinous. The stables had lost most of their tenants; a couple of cows and two rather aged, but still serviceable, horses were the only beasts to be seen around the masses of fodder and straw. The working force consisted of an ancient negro, Scipio, his wife, Phillis, and their granddaughter, Sylvia. These were all that remained of the once numerous family of blacks, — and Sylvia was not the property of the Russells, but of Mrs. Russell's brother, — but they were enough to cultivate the few fields that were left.

The late proprietor, Randolph Russell, had come into possession of about a fourth of his father's estate. The personal property, and most of the lands, had been sold to pay the racing and gambling debts of his brothers, and to satisfy a judgment in favor of Mr. Wyndham, who lived not many miles distant. A Dutchman had become

the owner of a tract that contained the best corn lands, and had built a modern brick house over against the old mansion of Beech Knoll. The southernmost tract had been bought by Ralph Beauchamp, an eccentric bachelor brother of Mrs. Russell, who lived the life of a recluse in a house he had built on the river bluff. The plantation of sugar maples near by had given the place the name of Maple Grove.

Even these sacrifices had not been sufficient. To satisfy the insatiable Wyndham, money had been raised by a mortgage on the home lands of Beech Knoll. Randolph Russell had preserved his dignity and pride, but not much more. Tired, at length, of wrestling with debt, and with the Wyndham lawsuits that had lasted for so many years, he had given up the unequal contest and his life together, and was buried in the garden among the myrtles, under the great catalpa tree. He was a man of genial temper and exemplary life, but not equal to his father in talent for managing, and the burden was too great for him.

Mrs. Russell had never signed the mortgage deeds of the home lands, and her dower rights were intact. Her son, Beauchamp, was now twenty-two, heir to a family feud, to paternal debts, and infinite troubles. He had been tolerably educated at an institution that was a college in name, and an ordinary high school in fact. He had never earned a dollar in his life, and did not know how to put his abilities to any practical use. He might not have been too proud to work, if he had known how. He had sometimes followed the plough for a morning, but the ancient Scipio had always indignantly objected to "young massa's demeanin' hisself;" and probably the little he could earn in ploughing would not have greatly affected the general result. Indeed, a more helpless

being than a youth of one and twenty, the descendant of a good family in Kentucky in reduced circumstances, it would be difficult to find. He is not thoroughly educated, and therefore cannot teach school. Moreover, the practical Yankees, and their descendants, have furnished most of the teachers, and made the profession unpopular. Trading is monopolized by the common people who have no grandfathers, and by Jews who have almost too many. The Virginian of cavalier blood cannot traffic. He might follow a profession, if he could find the means to live while studying.

If ever a youth had excuses for his indolent mode of life it was Beauchamp Russell. He was a universal favorite. As he was very handsome and very affectionate, his mother naturally adored him. As his features and bearing recalled his grandfather, the famous Squire Madison Russell, the negro servants believed he was destined to restore the ancient glory of the family, and worshipped him accordingly. They toiled for him, defended him by word and blow, and would have robbed for him if they could. But the ploughs and hoes were too few, the fields were narrow, and the soil needed nourishment and stimulus. The efforts of the small force scarcely yielded more than the necessary food for the family. Master Beauchamp was fain to be content with a suit of homespun jean of butternut color for ordinary wear, and one of "store" cloth for Sundays, and for election and county court days. The cloth suit was much worn and unfashionable, but it was, like the knight's coat of arms, a badge of respectability. Mounted on his horse, a handsome beast, though nearly as old as his master, he was a sightly person no matter what he wore. He was six feet and two inches in height, as straight as a young poplar, with the head of Antinous and the limbs of a wrestler,

and he sat his horse with an easy grace that you will not match until you look at the figures on the sculptured frieze of the Parthenon.

To say that Beauchamp Russell was a universal favorite but faintly expresses the fact. All faces looked kindly at him. The old men who remembered his father and grandfather, and knew how they had been entangled in the snares of the detested Wyndhams, father and son, could not repress their sympathy. They "allowed" that he had had a "mighty hard chance;" but that such a "likely" young man would some time (they didn't know how) "come to his rights," and be master of a restored and more splendid Beech Knoll. In all gatherings of the young people he was a natural leader. The best jumper, the best rifle shot, the most daring fox-hunter, the liveliest at merry-makings, the kindest neighbor to the sick and the poor, and the most gallant squire that ever tendered homage to a lady,—how could he be other than he was, the most admired and beloved of all the young men in the county? With all his splendid beauty, and his natural power and grace, he had not a trace of vanity, and was as unmoved by the silent or the spoken flattery of mothers and daughters as the rock is by the flower leaves that fall upon it. Such a clear, sweet, sunshiny soul, it was a pity it was born to such a heritage! The memory of former wealth and grandeur only made the present poverty more bitter. Even the slender support on which he depended would be taken away in case his mother should die. For with her death her widow's tenancy would end, and his title to the last remaining lands would be lost by foreclosure of the mortgage his father gave. The mortgage was given to his mother's brother, but the young man did not place any dependence upon that.

It would be only proper to introduce to our readers the widow Russell, but the beginning of our story takes us rather to the servants' quarters. "Uncle" Scipio and "Aunt" Phillis occupied a part of a log house in the rear of the family mansion, the remainder of which served for the kitchen. To begin with, dear young people, banish the ideas of thick lips, coarse and greasy skin, and splay feet, when you think of Aunt Phillis. True, she was a slave; she could neither read nor write, and her speech was broken and indistinct, like that of a savage; but her features were delicate, her voice was soft and musical, and her hands and feet were as small as those of the fairest dame of her age. Aunt Phillis was a native of Africa, and was believed to have been born a princess. She was stolen away in her childhood, while playing on a river bank, and was sold in Cuba to a New Orleans trader, from whom the old Squire Madison Russell had bought her. Her mind, naturally acute, had received an odd kind of development, and her native fetishism mingled with her acquired Christian devotions in a rather illogical way. Charms and philters were secretly cherished, while religious hymns and prayers were outwardly practised. Though she had married Scipio, a pattern of faithfulness, as well as the blackest and plainest of his race, she maintained a position of calm superiority to all the common herd of negroes. Her cabin was so neat and her glance so sharp as to make the most careless field-hand look about for the foot-mat of corn shucks when he entered the door. Though she was short in stature she had a queenly air, and there was never a man or woman of her race so bold as to offer her the least impertinence or disrespect.

It was in early October, and the cool air swayed tranquilly over Beech Knoll. Not a sound was heard except

from the ducks gabbling about the rivulet that issued from the spring-house, and the crows that were cawing in the woodlands behind the house. Aunt Phillis was sitting by the kitchen door when the full, deep voices of the hounds announced an arrival. The dogs were boisterous, but their tones expressed delight; and in a moment Beauchamp appeared at the stile in the rear, and throwing the reins over the post, bounded lightly over into the yard. His face was glowing with exercise, and naturally expressed the joy of a hunter in luck. He set down his rifle and stalked towards the kitchen, while Uncle Scipio went to take care of the horse, and to bring in the game. Aunt Phillis smiled proudly on the handsome young man, and asked —

"What luck, Mass' Beechum? Ah, I knows. I sees ste good luck in ste eyes."

"Well, aunty, we haven't much meat in the smoke-house, and I was bound to bring home something to eat."

"Massa, ste earf is ste Lord's, an' ste fullness stereof, an' ste cattle on a stousand hills; an' shoar ste squirrels an' ste birds are for you and ste missus."

"Yes, aunty, they are mine as long as I have a good rifle, and can draw a bead on a squirrel's head in the top of a tree. But, Scipio, have you counted the game?"

"Well, massa, not bezactly. Dere's two, tree dozen squirls, and dere's de pheasants, and de quails. Well, dere's 'nough, anyhow, and dey's all shot troo de head."

"I reckon so," said Beauchamp. "As if I ever shot a squirrel in any part but the head!"

Aunt Phillis here went into the kitchen to look after her work, and as she was busying herself in preparations for supper she sang fragments of a psalm. In this she adhered to the manner followed in rural churches, first

repeating a line, and then singing it. It seemed as if she was representing two characters, one of them "lining out" the words, and the other responding in song. It was something like this:—

Repeating — "Ste Lord into he scarden come."



Repeating — "Ste spicy yiel ste sweet perfume."

Singing — Melody as before.

The remaining lines of the stanza were generally omitted, except on great occasions, when they were given with a melody improvised to suit the circumstances. But the two lines above would sometimes be repeated as long as it took her to get a meal ready. In fact, the melody was apt to become monotonous.

Something mysterious in her looks, as she went in, attracted Beauchamp's notice; and while Scipio went to put up the horse, the young master lingered at the kitchen door. The granddaughter, Sylvia, was engaged in setting the supper table in the house, — the "big house" the negroes called it by way of distinction, — so that no person was in hearing.

"Mass' Beechum," said the old woman, fixing her small, black, beady eyes upon him, "you 'members ol' Aunt Milly?"

"Right well I do," was the reply. "She's free, and in Indiana."

"Yes, Mass' Beechum, she *was* free, but dey's done cotch her and ste chillen."

"No, aunty, that can't be. Uncle Isham, before he

died, gave her free papers for herself and all her children, and bought her a place to live on over the river."

"Well, nev' mind; stey got her."

"Do you mean she has been kidnapped?"

"Kidnap? Yes, massa, steal up to ste house night time. Stey haul 'em out o' bed, and fotch 'em ober ste ribber. Hide 'em at Fleemister's in ol' stable by stack-yard. Gon' to sell 'em. Ste Wyndhams not done paid up yit. Ste horses, ste mules, ste corn, an' hogs, and ste ol' farm all gone, an' now stey want our blood."

"They *can't* sell free people, aunty. The law won't allow it."

"Ste law!" exclaimed Aunt Phillis, in a fine disdain. "Ste law only ol' blanket; cover good man an' bad man. Ste law like you gun; *you* have him, you shoot me; *I* have him, I shoot you. Ste law eat up ste Mass' Randolph, eat up Mass' Isham, an' young Mass' Thomas. Keep 'way, honey! ste law eat you too."

"Well, aunty, I am hungry enough to turn round and eat the law myself. Just broil me a bird, — won't you? I'll see what can be done for Aunt Milly. Above all things be cautious, and hold your tongue."

Aunt Phillis smiled half scornfully at the idea that she needed any caution on that score, and commenced plucking a quail, in her swift and dexterous way, like her "neat-handed" namesake.

Beauchamp sauntered around the yard, reflecting upon the news he had heard. Aunt Milly, as the reader has seen, had been emancipated by her former master, Isham Russell, Beauchamp's uncle, before his death. Her children were nearly white, while she was a rather dark mulatto, but with extremely regular Caucasian features. Beauchamp regarded her as a sort of foster-mother. Her children had been his playfellows, and he could

hardly have been fonder of them, during his boyhood, if they had been of his own blood. Then he thought of her caprice in naming her children. Perhaps she was ambitious for them — for it had not escaped notice that they bore the Christian names of prominent people in the county. His thronging suspicions came into a circle, and whirled him into a vortex until he was dizzy.

Well, whatever the case may have been, he was glad his uncle Isham had been thoughtful for this "black but comely" woman, and her singularly handsome brood, and had placed them far away from painful recollections; from censorious eyes; from pharisaical pride; — and the other kind, if there is one; — from tasks and bondage, and from the auction-block.

Then he recalled to mind that the property of his uncle Isham, to which his father succeeded, had been the chief means of his father's ruin. For the reader should know that one of the Wyndham lawsuits began with Isham Russell. The battle raged some years before Isham gained a tardy and costly victory. When he died, he told his brother Randolph that he did not owe any one, and that there was not a single matter of business unsettled. The incautious Randolph! He became administrator, and was the sole surviving heir. His trust was fatal to him. Neglecting to make inventories and returns to the county court — and why should he make them, he thought, when there were no debts to pay, and he was sole heir? — he thereby made himself liable personally for any claim that might be brought against the estate.

Isham's lawyer dying about the same time, the Wyndhams, under a pretence of newly-discovered evidence, filed a bill in chancery against the too-confiding Randolph, got the old case re-opened, and after a number of years, William Wyndham, the survivor, obtained a judg-

ment for a very large sum. The sacrifices that had been made to satisfy the judgment have already been told to the reader, and it was not satisfied yet.

Beauchamp could not understand, however, by what law or right Aunt Milly and her children could be re-enslaved. His feelings and his reason alike rebelled against this monstrous abuse of power. The thought of his old "black mammy" at Court House Square, rolling her large, mournful eyes upon her pretty daughters, and her handsome sons, his former playfellows, as they stood shivering before the scrutiny of purchasers and idlers! He could not bear it. It should not be!

A silvery voice calling his name interrupted his meditations. He turned and answered, "Yes, mother, I'm coming," and strode across the green plat, through the rear door, into the house.

The broiled quails and fried squirrels, smoking on the table, gave a pleasant savor, as he opened the door, and the claims of appetite thrust aside, for the time, the evil news. Sylvia stood at the table with unobtrusive attention, her round, good-humored face, smooth and brown as a filbert, set off by the white kerchief that confined her thick and close curls. Mrs. Russell was pouring the coffee as her son entered. The color came faintly to her cheeks as he saluted her; and if it had not been for her suit of mourning, and the plain white cap, the closest observer would have been puzzled to guess the relation between this stalwart and muscular youth and the delicate and placid woman. Her frame was slight, and her stature below the medium size; and as her hair was glossy brown, her face without a wrinkle, and her eyes softly brilliant like a girl's, it was difficult to imagine her the mother of a young man of such heroic mould.

Homer's heroes ate, and he has done justice to their

feeding. We can only hint at the supper to which Beauchamp sat down—the delicately-browned “corn-pones,” the sweet potatoes (roasted in the ashes), the clear white hominy, and the fragrant coffee poured from a silver pot, last relic of the old days of splendor. These, with the quails and squirrels, made a solid and attractive repast, and our hero indulged himself to a degree that would have shocked the sensitive Poet of the Breakfast Table.

“My dear little mother,” said the young man at length, as he moved back from the table, “won’t you let Sylvia go to the kitchen and eat her supper? She can just take off the dishes now, and come and clear up the table afterwards.”

Sylvia readily understood the hint, and took away the platters, leaving mother and son together.

“Mother,” said he, “what is this I hear about old Aunt Milly? Phillis says the Wyndhams have had her kidnapped, and are going to sell her and the children.”

“I was afraid you’d hear of it, Beauchamp,* and be getting yourself into trouble all for no good. I’m sorry for Milly—very sorry.”

“I’m sorry, mother, and mad, too. At her time of life, to be put up again for sale like a horse—and all her children! It’s hard for her. And it’s so unreasonable, so against justice! Why, she’s free; and what law have they got for it, anyhow?”

“O, Beauchamp, don’t ask what law there is for anything. The law has ruined all the Russells, and it will not be on our side, nor a help to any of our freed negroes.”

“Well, my dear little mother, I’m just going to put a stop to this. Milly has her free papers, and no judge

* The name was always pronounced *Beecham*.

can go behind them. If the Wyndhams have her shut up, they’ve only stolen her, and they expect to get a decree to sell her and the children, and so make the stealing right afterwards. Anybody that finds them can let them run now, and whistle at the Wyndhams and the law.”

“Beauchamp, don’t talk so!” said his mother, with sudden energy. “We have no money to fee lawyers, and our own troubles are enough. You’ll only make yourself liable in some way. We have few friends enough now, and what will you do when you are pointed at as an abolitionist?”

“An abolitionist! Why, I shall whip the man that says so. I’m no abolitionist. I stand up for my state against the Northerners, as my father and grandfather did. But Milly is free.”

“O, they’ll have some way to twist the law into a noose for her; and you are so rash,—so brave, I know, but so rash,—I know you will get into difficulty. These people would be only too glad to see you in the wrong, and get the advantage of you.”

“Don’t fear, mother; I shall take good care.”

“Why, Beauchamp, that Steve Wyndham, William’s nephew,—do you remember how he shot Graves in the street, in daylight, at Clearfield, just for electioneering against his uncle? He and his troop are riding about with rifles and revolvers; and if you interfered, and Mr. Wyndham gave the word, they wouldn’t mind shooting you, more than if you were a crow. Now, my dear, dear boy, I am as hurt for poor Milly, your kind old black mammy, as you are, but you can’t help her; and if anything happens to you, I pray God that I may die at the same hour.”

“Don’t take on so, mother; I’m not going to get shot.

And before I do anything, I shall talk with uncle Ralph. He knows the law as well as the judge, and his head is as long as a horse's."

The widow appeared to be comforted, and, after a few repeated warnings, changed the subject.

"I was wondering, Beauchamp, that you have not been down to Papaw Creek. The big meeting has been going on for some days. You haven't been to any meeting for many a week. Brother Grimes is to preach next Sunday."

"No, mother. My cloth coat isn't very new, and I can't wear a jean suit in such a crowd; my boots are patched; the bridle-rein has been mended too many times; the saddle is rusty; and old Mack, though he walks fairly, has no other gait now. We are quite old and out of style, Mack and I. We won't do for the girls of Papaw Creek."

"Beauchamp, don't make fun. I know your coat is not as handsome as it was, and that Mack is rather slow. But I'd like to know who makes a better figure, horseback, than my son?"

"That's because you are my mother. But all the young men and girls know. They see the shiny seams, and the frayed edges, and the rusty leather; and their young horses go bounding away from poor old Mack. We haven't any chance, Mack and I."

There was a current of bitterness under this banter that pained Mrs. Russell, and yet left her with no way to reply. But she had a motive, hardly confessed to herself, and she continued:—

"Did you know that Miss Shelburne, the pretty niece of Squire Hamilton, was down here on a visit?"

"O, mother! And *she's* to be at the big meeting! It's hard; but there's no use. I can't make any show

before her. She is an heiress, you know, and every young man about here, let alone her own county, is running mad after her. No, I can't go to Papaw Creek. She's lovely, and lively too. But I'll try to think her a fool, as uncle Ralph says every woman is (except you, my dear little mother), and we will stay at home together."

"But I can't bear to see you so downcast. You should think yourself as good as the best."

"So I do, mother; but until there is a turn, and I have a good horse, and a new suit, and enough money to make me feel like a man, I'd rather keep in the back-ground. In the woods, my jean suit is as good as a king's. When we come to our own, I'll try to please my good little mother, and myself too. Miss Shelburne's very well; but there are just as many pretty young does every year in the Knobs, for all the hunters are carrying them off."

"But there are new hunters coming on, too. They all have their chance, but it does not last always."

"Ah, mother, you're a schemer, I see. Well, I'll try to brush up and go to the big meeting, to please you. But I shall only be slighted, mortified, and come back ready to hate women as hard as uncle Ralph does."

At this moment the loud voices of the hounds were heard, and Beauchamp went to the porch. Mr. Arthur Howard was the visitor—a man of northern birth, who was a schoolmaster, and a student of law. He dismounted firmly and hitched his horse, though in a careful way that showed he had not been accustomed to horseback riding from his youth. He was of good stature, though not so tall as many young men in Kentucky. He looked like a student, while at the same time he was robust and active. As Mr. Howard's chief function in

this story is that of an observer, any more particular description is unnecessary. He walked up to the porch in his usual measured pace, but with a cheery look and a pleasant word.

"Glad to see you," said Beauchamp, with a voice of hearty welcome.

"I needn't ask you if you are well," said Mr. Howard. "You are always well, and with life enough for half a dozen. I may as well tell my errand at once, for there is no time to be lost. The boys have made up a fox-hunt for to-night, and I have come to ask you to join, as you are the most familiar with the country, and know so well how to manage the hounds. The moon is right, and the air not too chilly."

"But I haven't a horse."

"Ah, we know. But Davis wants you to ride his mare, Sycorax; so you'll easily keep the lead. You can ride with me to the ford, and leave your horse with the McKinleys until Davis comes along."

"I've just been out shooting, but am not much tired. It is the old set, I suppose?"

"Yes, with one addition, my predecessor in the school."

"What! Harrison Adams?"

"Yes. He's a tolerably good fellow, if he is a little silent. Being a Hoosier, he hasn't got into our ways yet—your ways, I mean, for I always forget I'm a Yankee."

"Yankee by birth; but we never think of you, Howard, as a stranger."

"You flatter me. You will see. When I have my hat knocked off by the branches, my face scratched by the briars, and my carcass falls one side of the fence while my horse leaps over to the other, you will see whether I am more Kentuckian than Yankee."

"Hope you'll have better luck; though uncle Ralph's timber is pretty hard to get through,—so many fallen trees, and so much wild brush. But can the Hoosier ride?"

"Like a jumping-jack. In fact, I think his father was a centaur, and that he was born horseback. No, Beauchamp, you can't play any tricks with him, at least in that way."

Beauchamp smiled and called to Scipio to saddle his horse, then went into the house to speak to his mother. After listening to many cautions he came out to the stile-block, and was at length mounted. Scipio ducked his grizzled head, and hoped "young massa would be careful ob good ol' Mack."

Beauchamp told Scipio of the change he was to make, and that he would ride Mr. Davis's mare Sycorax.

"De debil's grandma!" exclaimed Scipio. "Now she t'row you, Mass' Beechum, or she kick you, or she bite you, shoar."

"I'll look out for her," said Beauchamp, gayly. "Now, dogs!" and he gave a shrill whistle. "Now, Plutarch, Seneca! Plato! Venus! Niobe! Sappho!"

The dogs gave a complimentary howl at the invitation, each on a different pitch, put up their noses and tails, and bounded towards the riders.

"By the way," said Howard, "I see your dogs all have classical names."

"Yes, it was a fancy of my grandfather's; and the names have been handed down through several generations of pups. We have had represented nearly all the famous poets and historians in our pack."

"Except *Tacitus*," said Howard.

CHAPTER II.

AN OLD-FASHIONED FOX-HUNT.

A FOX-HUNT in Kentucky is not attended by the parade and circumstance of which we have heard in stories of English life. There are no gay scarlet coats, nor marvellous top-boots, and no elaborate preparations. They take place frequently by night, when the moon is favorable; and the best sport is found in the woods or unenclosed fields, for the staked-and-ridered fences are too high to be vaulted over. Several packs of well-bred hounds are assembled, selecting the most trusty, and those that have hunted together. The hunters are in their ordinary dress, or, rather, in old suits to save the better clothes from injury. Some wear buckskin leggings, and some heavy boots; and the style of head-gear is as chance or fancy may determine.

Foxes were plenty enough in any direction; but, to avoid trampling over ploughed fields, and getting through or over fences, the hunting was generally sought in a vast tract of aboriginal forest about four miles distant. More than twelve hundred acres of timber stretched along the river, — now dipping into the bottom-lands, now covering the acclivities, and now spread over a diversified and rolling country. In the lower lands were enormous sycamores and poplars. Sometimes a fallen trunk, six feet through at the butt, and nearly a hundred feet long, would block the ordinary path. Sometimes the pendent

vines would threaten the horseman with the fate of Absalom; sometimes a tangled thicket would prove impenetrable to horse or rider; sometimes a dangerous slough or a deep gully would compel a long circuit. But there were no fences; and in many places there was a kind of vegetation — hardly to be called turf — that gave a secure footing, and the horses could gallop over it as over a race-course.

The hunting party met at the ford near McKinley's; and after our friend Beauchamp had exchanged horses, all set out at a rapid pace. The mare Sycorax was a beautiful creature, chestnut-sorrel in color, and with the clean limbs, springy gait, fine head and ears, which denote good blood. There can hardly be a greater pleasure for an active man than a brisk canter upon a lively and well-trained horse, especially with agreeable company, on a smooth bridle-path, and under the clear light of an October-moon. It is the very ecstasy of motion, exhilarating to soul and sense alike. Beauchamp was in his element; he was as fond of a fine horse as though he were an Arab, a Tartar, or an Apache. He rode in front, and kept the dogs in order by voice and whip. The others followed as they could, — Arthur Howard, Will Davis, Harrison Adams, and half a dozen others. In about half an hour the party arrived at the border of the forest. Here the hunters deployed to the right and left, their horses walking slowly among the gigantic trees; and all advanced by parallel lines, somewhat behind Beauchamp, who led the way into the heart of the woods. Now and then a young hound got off upon the scent of a rabbit, betraying his error by the tortuous course he followed. His exulting yelp was soon cut short by the crack of the whip. If the huntsman had any doubt about the hound's having found a fox trail, he had only to wait, and notice whether

the elder and more experienced hounds joined in the cry. These sagacious creatures generally came near when they heard the eager bark of another dog, and swept the earth with their broad and palpitating nostrils. When they perceived the scent, if it did not appear to belong to a fox or deer, they left the premature barker with silent contempt; otherwise they lifted their heads, and gave no uncertain sound. Every pack has one or more dogs whose superior intelligence is acknowledged, and whom the others follow unquestioning.

Howard and Davis were near together, moving in silence, except for the crackling of the dead branches under their horses' feet. Beauchamp was in advance, out of sight, but within hearing. The dogs could be heard eagerly scampering here and there over the abundant leaves, and covering a wide track in their combined course. There was an occasional eager whimper from the dogs, sometimes a bark, but no fresh trail had been found. All at once a yell broke out from half a dozen throats, bass, tenor, and baritone vying in energy, and mingling their notes in not unmelodious concert. The expectant hunters listened for the direction which the chase was to take, while all were pressing to the centre of interest. But the dogs ran a very short course before they stopped, and began barking at the foot of an enormous poplar tree. Beauchamp saw the situation, and was angry enough.

"Why, Plutarch, you old villain! not to know a 'coon track! Plato! I'm ashamed of you: you're just fit to hunt 'coons or 'possums for a party of niggers."

"What's the matter?" asked Adams, who rode up as the hounds slunk away. "You can't say, 'Plato, thou reasonest well!' because he has started from false premises."

"The dogs have only treed a 'coon," said Beauchamp, indifferently.

"Couldn't we cut the tree down?" asked Adams.

"Yes, by sunrise," replied Beauchamp.

"It's the *cui bono* you're thinking of, I suppose," said Adams.

"I don't hunt 'coons," said Beauchamp, sententiously.

The other hunters came up. Davis's quick eye ran up the lofty tree; then he tapped the bark.

"This is a dead tree," he said, "hard as a bone; it couldn't be chopped down in a day."

The party pressed rather near to Beauchamp.

"Look out for Sycorax!" he exclaimed. "She'll kick if she has a chance."

All heeded the warning but Adams, who, being a practised horseman, and proud of showing an indifference to danger, did not retreat at once, and not until the vicious mare had dealt his own horse a prodigious blow on the side with her hoof. Adams had been sitting with one leg drawn up, and the foot over the pommel of the saddle. The hoof struck the saddle-flap, and the accidental change of position saved the rider from a broken leg.

"I gave you fair warning," said Beauchamp.

"What do you ride such a d—d beast for?" was the reply.

"She carries me well enough," said Beauchamp; "and you might have kept out of the way of her heels."

Adams was full of conceit, proud of his superior learning, given to quotation of Latin commonplaces, and he habitually assumed patronizing airs, which galled Beauchamp more than downright incivility.

"Come, no hard words!" said Davis. "It's my mare, Adams: we know she's a tartar. But such a gait, such speed, such endurance! Why, Adams, her colts have

the best record in the county; and *she* can't be beat either, for a short stretch, nor for a long pull. Just give her room, and there'll be no trouble."

"Well, my horse is done for for this night," said Adams. "Notice how he puffs and groans."

"Perhaps we shall have no race," said Davis; "and if we do, and your horse don't keep up, you can't get lost, with this moon to light you. The horse will take you out to the big road, if you give him his head."

Adams sat moody and unpacified; his self-love had received a shock, and he could not forget the narrow escape of his precious leg. The manner of Beauchamp was not calculated to allay the irritation. But there was no time for more words, for just then the hounds, that had strayed off, set up a cry that was heard for miles. Beauchamp listened eagerly.

"There is Venus, Sappho, old Plato, and now Seneca. No mistake this time. Ah, boys, what a chorus that is! Hear that deep boom of old Plutarch, how it sets off Juno's fine cry!"

The indescribable tumult increased, then lulled, then became intermittent, until the heavy notes of the trusted old dogs were heard far in advance. They were on the trail. The younger dogs followed with joyful peals.

"Now, boys," said Beauchamp, "listen a moment! They are going up from the bottom. The fox has been down here prowling, and has gone up to the oak knobs. There's soft ground ahead, and the horses may be stalled. Take a sweep to the right till you cross the head of the gully, and then shoot away for the high ground. Whoo-oo-oope!"

His high-pitched and long-drawn call echoed through the woods, even above the voices of the dogs that jangled like a chime of bells ringing a triple bob-major. All

rushed on pell-mell, clearing dead branches and trunks, sweeping under stiff boughs that seemed to grow downwards for spite, or at times galloping over level places, where the moonlight flickered through the tall tree-tops. Horses as well as men felt the keen sport. No need of switch or spur. But it was in vain that the hunters tried to keep together. Beauchamp naturally led, for Sycorax went on like a fiend. Davis followed closely on a mettled colt. Howard, on a stout gelding that insisted on trotting, was bumped and tossed, until he thought he should be shaken to pieces like a wooden toy; and in a short time he found himself a mile behind. Adams was not able to keep up at all, his horse having been hurt or dispirited by the kick. He soon dropped into the rear, and then turned and endeavored to find his way out of the woods.

Howard and the other young men waited, and soon were pleased to hear the troop coming nearer; for the fox had turned from the oak lands towards the river again, expecting to baffle the dogs by doubling on marshy ground. What a *crescendo* as the cry came over the hills! The whole party, excepting Adams, were now together again, and moved swiftly on the trail.

We cannot recount all the incidents of the night, — how the fox puzzled the dogs in the wet ground, and then got away up to the high lands again; how Howard got a tumble in jumping a gully; how Davis's colt ran away with him, and could not be got under control until the hunt was almost out of hearing; how the others experienced the usual vexations with dead limbs and brier thickets; and how the fox was at last overtaken, and torn to pieces before Beauchamp could get near enough to interfere.

He called the dogs, encouraged them with cheering

cries, and then, turning to the quarter where he supposed his companions were, gave a long, loud, and exulting whoo-oo-oo-oope!

In doing this, he had carelessly dropped the bridle-rein, that he might have both hands at liberty to make an extempore conch-shell of them. A stout, projecting branch caught the loose rein, and it snapped just at the bit. Sycorax had been chafing with impatience and on compulsory good behavior, and now saw her advantage, and commenced frisking and curvetting. Beauchamp thought he could reach forward and get his finger in the ring of the bit, so as to bring her to a stop; but the knowing creature held her head away, so that he could not reach any part of the bridle on that side. He had thought of sliding off, but he waited a little too long. The mare imperceptibly struck into a swifter pace, and whirled among the trees like a mad dervish. In a very few minutes our hero, Beauchamp, the surest, bravest rider in the county, was leaning forward, holding to mane and neck, without the least attempt to control the maddened creature. Low branches raked his head; long briers scraped his body; his knees bumped against the solid trunks. This way and that, kicking up and rearing alternately, followed by sudden stooping and springing off obliquely, a rod at a bound, — rushing on like an arrow, and then stopping short, — so the furious mare proceeded; while Beauchamp, unable to guide or to dismount, could only cling for life, with entire ignorance of the way he was going, and with the certainty that his hold could not last long.

In such a condition, minutes are hours, and hours eternity. Beauchamp had not the slightest idea of time, distance, or direction, while he swept like a new Mazeppa through the woods. He had borne all that human muscles

could endure, and he found himself striking a bank like a projectile from some engine, after describing a dizzy parabola.

The mare was soon out of sight. After some minutes, when he had recovered from the shock, he moved, he raised his head, he rose slowly to his feet. Thank God, his bones were not broken. He could walk, though stiffly. Where were the dogs? and where were his fellows? — most important of all, where was *he*? The region was unfamiliar. There was not a sound to be heard. He put up his hands, and gave his long, musical, penetrating whoop. No answer. Another. The echoes of his voice came back multiplied from the hollow wood, and that was all. The moon and stars showed him the general direction to be taken, and he began patiently to thread his way through the pathless woods. Silence was spread like the air. His own footstep, in leaves or brush or on harder soil, was absolutely the only sound. He had walked probably half an hour, when he saw a dark form before him, that finally took shape as a house or stable, or a building of some sort. He came nearer. Could it be? Yes, it was the old stable on the Fleemister farm. He was five miles away from where he supposed he should have been. Should he stop? At the stable? Yes, perhaps; but not at the house; for Fleemister was the friend, or rather the obsequious lackey, of his life-long enemies, the Wyndhams. He drew near to the stable, which he expected to find open; but the door was padlocked, and the little square windows were nailed up. It was a building made of hewn logs piled upon one another cobhouse-wise.

There was no shelter to be had, then, unless he went to the house; and the alternative was to walk seven miles home. He thought he would try a window again. It

was fast, and he could get no purchase to move it. At this moment he heard a kind of low moan within, and, brave as he was, the unexpected sound sent a thrill through every nerve in his body. He listened in breathless silence. The sound slowly grew articulate, and formed itself in words.

"Who's there? Who troubles those that have troubles enough?" The tone was one of utter sorrow, and it seemed strangely familiar.

"Who speaks?" asked Beauchamp, eagerly.

"Say yourself who you are," was the reply.

"I am Beauchamp Russell," he said, in a low and tender tone.

"And I am your miserable black mammy! For the Lord's sake, Massa Beecham, how came you here at midnight, so far from the Knoll?"

"I have been hunting, and have been thrown from my horse, and must now walk home; but that is a trifle. Phillis told me you were here, but I hardly believed her."

"Yes; the Fleemisters brought me here, — stole me by night out of my house, and have me locked up here till next court day."

"But where are your children?"

"Bertram's gone away, I don't know where. Sally and Harrison I 'spect are somewheres in the neighborhood. Little Tim and Fanny are in Fleemister's house. They took us all, every one, except Berty, who is where they can't touch him."

"And you can't get out of here?"

"No; all locked up, — nailed, bolted. But why do I want to get out? I couldn't get the children away, and they're what I care for. The Wyndhams can't hurt poor me any further. It's no matter what they does to Milly

now. Her heart is broke, an' her pride is broke, and in place of the good Lord it's only the devil reigns."

"Don't be downcast, Aunt Milly, for I'm going to get you out."

"Don't, for God's sake! If you sh'd try to pound the lock, or to prize open the window-shutter, they will hear you at the house. Tom Fleemister would just as soon shoot you as not. He'd shoot anyhow, and swear he shot a thief trying to break into his stable. No, Mass' Beecham; be quiet, honey, and get away from here soon."

"I didn't intend to break open this door, Aunt Milly. I meant to say that I will try through the court, or in some way, to give you your freedom again."

"Not without my children, Mass' Beecham, — not without them. I am a worn-out ol' woman, I shan't last long; but the children," she continued, with a tingling, electric emphasis, — "the children that God made free, and the master made free, and the law made free, — the children, I say, *shall* be free. They shall be free if I have to lose my soul for 'em. No man that buys 'em shall live in peace. There shall be fire in his stables, sickness in his cradle, and death in his kettles and milk-crocks!"

The terrible energy of the woman made Beauchamp's hair stand on end. He tried to soothe her, and assured her that he would procure counsel, — that he would interest his friends for her, — that any sacrifice he could make, even till he stood penniless and barefoot, should be made.

Milly only moaned inarticulately. Soon she ceased, and looked out through the chinks of the logs towards the dwelling-house.

"There is a moving there," she said, in a whisper. "Start off, softly but quick. Keep under the shadow of the trees along the fence. Step lightly — *but quick*. If

Tom gets a sight of you, there may be a *ting* of a rifle."

Beauchamp was no coward, but he was unarmed, and did not believe in exposing himself to danger or to suspicion when it could do no good. Besides, he saw that if his interview with Milly were known, it might hinder any action in her behalf. So, promising soon to send word to her, he started off with a light and brisk movement. He did not start any too soon. From his safe covert under the deep shadows he saw a figure stealthily approach the stable, and afterwards examine every nook and corner of the yard. When at a proper distance, Beauchamp left off his tiptoe progress and walked on stoutly towards the village through which he must pass on his way to Beech Knoll. He had not gone far before he heard a horseman behind him. The rider neither paused nor spoke, nor appeared to see the pedestrian; but Beauchamp saw in the clear moonlight the features and form of Adams, and was tolerably sure that he had come from Fleemister's house. How Adams could have got out on that side of the woods, why he had stopped at Fleemister's, — such low people, — and why he had now passed him without recognition, were questions that Beauchamp could not solve. But he pushed on, and reached home, without further incident, some time before day-break.

The fatigue of the long night, with the chase, the run-away horse, the fall, the excitement of meeting Aunt Milly, and the long tramp on foot, was sufficient to tax the endurance of the strongest; and Beauchamp, when he once got in bed, fell into a sleep such as none but active men ever know. His mind in dreams repeated the adventures of the evening. He hunted through interminable forests, with uncounted packs of hounds. He felt

again the springy step of Sycorax, and watched her erect and nervous ears. Then he thundered with herds of horses on a race, over vast plains, fording rivers, leaping over ravines, struggling up sharp slopes, and careering over fallen logs. Then the pace grew faster and faster, until his brain whirled, and he fell like a clod upon clods, and then woke, feeling sore in his flesh and bones as though from an actual concussion. He turned over and slept again. Then he was talking through the chinks of the log house with his black mammy, and heard her passionate sorrow for the lot of her boys. As her wrath rose, he could see the gleam of her eyes like a cat's. The wretched stable, with its dirty straw bedding, was lighted up within. A fire was under a kettle, and, with hideous incantations, Milly crouched over the steaming and appetizing mess within. She looked up, and brushed some spiders from the old walls, and put them in the kettle.

"That for Fleemister," as she dropped in one after the other, — "and that for Wyndham, — and that, and that!"

The fire grew brighter. It glowed like a living eye. It sought the very seat of life, and scorched his soul. He could not bear to look, but could not turn away. The intensity of feeling was too much; he started, and rubbed his eyes.

The morning sun was shining in through the uncurtained window full in his face; and from below came up an odor of breakfast that to the hungry youth at that time was sweeter than the perfume of flowers, or the breath of the loveliest woman in the world.

CHAPTER III.

THE HERO THINKS LAW NOT ALWAYS THE PERFECTION OF REASON.

AFTER breakfast Beauchamp related his adventures to his mother, touching upon his mishaps with a careless levity, and insisting that he was but slightly bruised, and not injured in the least. When he told of his midnight talk with Aunt Milly, she was greatly excited and apprehensive, and again begged her dear son to be cautious.

Aunt Phillis made several errands into the house, but Beauchamp said nothing to her, thinking that any word of his might be misunderstood. He knew, of course, that all the colored people, bond and free, had means of communicating with each other, and that his conversation with Milly would be soon known to them, if not to the whites. He sent Scipio to the ford to bring his horse home, and meanwhile he walked to town, between two and three miles distant, to see if Sycorax had got home safe.

The town was not much to see. It consisted mainly of a little square, with a dingy brick Court House standing in the centre, around which the traders, lawyers, and a few mechanics were sheltered in "ten-footers;" and on its pavements and sidewalks the casual visitor, as well as the habitual idler, might have to fight his way or maintain his place against stray groups of impudent and ill-

conditioned hogs. The side streets had some fine houses and gardens; and there were a few scattered churches, designed, apparently, to show a proper contempt for worldly luxury, as well as for all the orders of architecture.

Beauchamp walked along the street, bowing, and returning every kindly "howdy" from the town's-people. When he reached the school-house he called out his friend Howard, and they rapidly exchanged explanations. Howard had returned in company with Davis without accident. Sycorax was found at daybreak at Davis's stable door, with bridle and saddle badly damaged, and some pretty deep scratches on her side. Howard had no doubt she was as lively and vicious as ever, and ready to run away again if she had a chance.

Beauchamp remained only a minute, and then returned to the Court House square, where he had promised to wait until the noon intermission of the school, that he might talk further with his friend. He walked into the Court House and chatted awhile with the clerks. Before long the sheriff politely handed him a document which gave him enough to reflect upon. It was a copy of a petition to the Chancery Court in behalf of William Wyndham for a decree to sell certain slaves, once the property of Randolph Russell, in order to satisfy the judgment formerly rendered in the case of Wyndham vs. Russell. The names of the slaves were mentioned: "Milly, unmarried, complexion dark, aged about forty; Bertram, her son, complexion olive, aged about twenty-two; Harrison, her son, light brown, aged about twenty; Sally, her daughter, a light quadroon, aged about eighteen; Tim and Fanny, twins, very light, aged about ten."

Beauchamp sat a long time looking over the paper. The purport of it was plain enough. But he had had no

legal training, and much of the phraseology was Greek to him. How the court had jurisdiction, — how Milly was to answer for his father's or uncle's debts was past his comprehension. The longer he sat, the more his reason was at fault, and the hotter his indignation grew. Half a dozen times he came near blurting out his wrath; but looking at the placid clerks, busy over their books and papers, and reflecting how little sympathy he could look for from those who were daily familiar with the forced sale of homesteads, the foreclosure of mortgages, the seizure of crops, utensils, and horses, and the division of slave families upon the death or the insolvency of their masters, he restrained himself, and resolved to wait the coming of Howard. He only asked the clerk, "What is meant by this petition being 'from the office of Wyndham and Adams'?"

The clerk reminded him that William Wyndham was formerly a lawyer by profession, though not in practice for many years past, and that Mr. Adams, who had been recently admitted to the bar, had the use of Mr. Wyndham's library, and the benefit of his name."

"I understand," said Beauchamp, thinking of Adams's coming from Fleemister's after midnight, — "I understand. Mr. Wyndham is old, and needs the aid of a younger man. He gives Mr. Adams the benefit of his name. That is good. I wish him joy of his partnership and of the benefit of Wyndham's name."

Beauchamp nervously tossed one leg which was crossed over its fellow, then changed positions, and tossed the other. He was too full for calm thought, too full for prudent utterance. He could imagine how Samson felt when bound by Philistine withes, and all his glorious locks gone. His mind rebelled against law, against society, against God himself, who suffered such iniquity to be

done by the authority of government, and with the sanction of religion.

Mr. Howard soon came and took the angry and unreasoning Beauchamp to an office across the square. For Howard was a law student, and had the use of a room and library adjoining Squire Hamilton's. The squire was out, and they had the rooms undisturbed.

They were no sooner alone than Beauchamp broke forth into the most passionate complaints. He repeated the history of his ill-starred family. He painted the rapacity of the Wyndhams, the progress of the detested lawsuits, and the consequent ruin of his family. Then he showed Howard the paper he had just received, and described to him the condition of the wretched Milly and her children.

Howard was greatly moved by his friend's distress, as well as by the pitiable case itself, but he knew that law and management were worth more in the emergency than sentiment or anger. He showed Beauchamp that the law did not allow the freeing of slaves except when the master owed no debts; and that if, after an apparently lawful manumission, there were valid claims brought against an estate, the courts had power to decree that the freed slaves should be sold to satisfy those claims, provided there was no other visible property to be levied upon, and those freed persons were within reach of the process of the court.

"But these people were out of the jurisdiction," said Beauchamp.

"Yes, they *were*; but you admit they are here *now*, and that is enough."

"But is kidnapping no crime?"

"Yes, in a free state; under some circumstances it is here."

"Then, whoever stole them away is answerable to the Indiana law as a kidnapper!"

"Yes; but that amounts to nothing. Any man who is acquainted with the facts will tell you it is as easy to catch a fugitive slave in Indiana as here. Those Hoosiers for twenty miles from the river are sprung from the meanest and poorest of the southern whites, — at least, many of them are, — and they have as much mercy for a nigger as an alligator has for a little dog. Talk with Adams, our former schoolmaster, — now lawyer — Wyndham and Adams, — and try to touch his feelings. Go tell *him* how sorry you are about your black mammy!"

"I wish Sycorax had kicked his leg off, — —."

"Swearing won't do any good. This is a case for sharp practice, diplomacy, tact."

"The truth is, Howard, I hadn't intended to mention this matter to you at all, — at least, for the present. I acknowledge that the case is beyond me, and I intended to consult my uncle Ralph. But receiving this notice I could not keep it to myself."

"No matter, my dear friend; I am not a lawyer yet, and there is no fee for consultation. But have you any objection to my laying the matter before Squire Hamilton?"

"None at all, — that is, in a friendly way. Just at present I have no money to fee a lawyer, and I cannot even on credit run up a bill of expense. But I shall raise some money to test this case, even if I sell my horse, and dogs, and rifle."

"Well, this evening I'll talk with him. You might call in at the house, say to-morrow or next day. You know Miss Shelburne is there. They'll all be glad to see you."

"I'm not sure. The squire, perhaps; — the lady, no."

A son of a broken-down farmer, in brown jeans, on foot? No, no, my Yankee friend. That may be in the East, or in fairy-land, or in the Arabian Nights. In Kentucky it's land and niggers. Nothing else. Must have them. No good without them. Otherwise you may be good looking or clever, but they will say, 'It's a pity, now, such a nice fellow should be so poor! What in the world is he to do?' Not that I think of marrying, or anything of the sort. I can't marry until — until something happens that isn't likely to happen."

"Well, I won't talk with you to-day. You are too blue. Go and see your uncle Ralph, who is a wise man, as you say, — though a little queer. I will talk with the squire."

"Let's beat them, Howard!" exclaimed Beauchamp, with sudden enthusiasm. "By the Power that made me, — that made me human, that made you wise and cautious, and both of us courageous, — we *will* beat them."

Beauchamp walked out, — past the taverns, with their bells ringing for dinner, — past the "stores," resplendent with gay prints and red flannels hanging from the doors and windows, — past the post-office, where a knot of sage politicians were discussing national affairs, — past the shops, where the great tent-like wagons halted, — across the dark, covered bridge (the nightly shelter of the village swine, and sometimes of belated cows), and so out by the rocky "branch," and over the hills and the level stretches, until he reached Beech Knoll.

There are some practical and energetic men, who, when in difficulties, waste no time in vain laments, but push directly for the course that experience and reason point out. They dash away sentiment, free themselves from the drowsiness of reverie, and resolutely meet the issue with fate. Beauchamp knew that his true course was to

see his uncle Ralph, and, after laying all his perplexities before him, to ask his advice and his help. The extremity of the case demanded help, and that was just what he hated to ask — especially from such a man as Ralph Beauchamp. No urchin with the toothache ever thought of the dentist with a livelier apprehension. So the day was wasted.

He was thoroughly wretched. He loitered about the stable, and avoided his mother. The friendly Scipio could make nothing of him. He walked to the woodland, and there passed the most of the day, listening to the crows, or startling the pheasants till they whirled away, or watching the quails as they cowered under the fences or crept away under leaves and bushes. All were safe that day. The squirrels chattered in the tree-tops or scampered up the rough trunks, and waved their tails in triumph. The peace of nature was soothing, but nothing could bring relief to Beauchamp; for his were real troubles. The crops were small, and after the little household was fed, and the ordinary necessities supplied, there was none too much left for taxes, to say nothing of the clothing he so much needed. He felt cut off from the society of his mates, and pictured to himself a life of deepening solitude, which to his ardent and social nature was dismal enough. In spite of his denials and his affected indifference, he *had* been greatly impressed by the beauty and sprightliness of the heiress, Miss Shelburne; and right at the beginning the bitter lesson was set before him, "Thou shalt renounce!" Now, his old nurse and all her children were ensnared. They were to be sold, and he must be a silent spectator of the outrage, without the power to save even one of them. It did not seem to him that there could be any further humiliation. Yes, there might be; for in the event of his mother's death,

her tenancy by dower would end, and the equity of redemption of the land would be sold, and he would be a beggar.

He returned to the house to eat a late dinner, pleaded illness, parried all his mother's questions, and, when evening came, planted himself in the chimney corner and read the Louisville Journal by the light of a couple of tallow candles. This served merely to pass the time, for, in Beauchamp's state of mind, the pungent wit and drollery, as well as the sentiment, of the editor were lost upon him.

The next day was passed in a similar manner. When he went by the kitchen door Aunt Phillis showed an encyclopædia of intelligence in her face; but Beauchamp was impassible. Scipio turned up his eyes in devout apprehension, and feared "young massa had done broke his heart."

Beauchamp's mind was now like an eddy in the river; its depths were black and impenetrable, while trifles floated in ever-returning circles on its surface. The branches, chips, and refuse, when once involved, swept endlessly around the basin, and found no outlet.

He was not without resolution and energy, but he saw no way out of his difficulties. He could do nothing to help himself while he remained at home, and he knew his mother would not consent to his going away. Were he less generous, less conscientious, less scrupulous — But why dwell upon *ifs*? The limitations around a man of honor are like the bounds of fate, or rather the immutable laws of God. So in moody reverie, or in the depths of self-humiliation, in lonely walks, through lingering days and sleepless nights, Beauchamp dragged out the time until Sunday came.

The family had been originally Episcopalians, but there was no church for that form of worship in the neighbor-

hood. Mrs. Russell went to the different churches in good weather, and joined with Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians with equal regard. There was no place of worship nearer than the town just mentioned, and the more frequented churches in other parts of the county were from six to eight miles away.

The day was bright, the air, though cool, was bland, and the roads were still good, the fall rains not having yet set in. It was the last and crowning day of the big meeting at Papaw Creek. Mrs. Russell gave the use of her horse to Scipio and Phillis, and they started away early, though at a sober pace, he in the saddle, and she on a folded blanket behind him. Sylvia was to remain at home with her mistress.

Beauchamp sat by the chimney corner toying with the light fire of hickory wood, building up lattice-work for the curling flames to play around. His mother had made many attempts to draw him out and divert his mind, but had now given it up as hopeless, and did not renew the suggestion that he should ride down to Papaw Creek. His silence was not sullen or angry; his face was covered with a tender shade of sorrow, and his tones, in addressing his mother, were so kind that they became almost pathetic.

It is useless to reason with a man in this state. The fit will have its course, unless it is checked by some friendly violence, or by the presence of something that demands action. On this occasion the friendly violence came in the person of Arthur Howard, who had left his horse at the stile, and stepped upon the porch unannounced. His musical voice and winning smile broke in upon the gloom that hung over Beauchamp, and half magnetized him before he was aware.

"Why, Beauchamp, poking over the fire this glorious

morning! Come, get ready, and let us ride to Papaw Creek."

"Really, Howard, I can't. I'm not in spirits."

"That's the very reason you should go. The air is fresh and delightful; the sun is as genial as a friend, and warms without scorching. The town-people are all turning out, and the Creek will have all the élite of the county to-day. Come, man, it isn't good to mope. Come, let us see the fall fashions. Besides, I've something to say to you on the way."

"Why didn't you go with Miss Shelburne?"

"O, she has beaux enough. She'll be there, and you will see her. She's beautiful, to be sure, but I'm not interested."

"But I'm a poor-looking object, with my old clothes; and there isn't a decent saddle on the place, nor a horse fit for anybody under seventy."

"Pshaw! it isn't as if you were a stranger. Everybody is glad to see you, and nobody but yourself cares what you wear."

"Well, there's no resisting you. A wilful man must have his own way. Wait till I scrape my chin. If I only had a full beard like yours, now! Scipio has polished my boots, and I can soon saddle Mack for myself."

Papaw Creek big-meeting must have a new chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIG MEETING AT PAPA W CREEK.

THE grassy lane is passed, the long gate swings to, and the two friends are on the main road. The country was still beautiful, though the splendor and luxuriance of summer were gone. A silvery blue haze rested on the distant woods, and the smoke of the neighboring houses and cabins rose like slender plumes. Cattle roamed over the grass lands and corn fields, and nibbled at the stacks of wheat straw and husks at will. The crows were busy in their predatory excursions, and the swine found abundant food under the beech and hickory trees. After riding a short distance, Beauchamp felt like a new man. The situation had not changed, but there was a different way of looking at it.

The county roads were rarely laid out for the public convenience solely. It was a part of the unwritten law that no man's farm was to be cut in two; the roads, therefore, were generally on the dividing line between estates, and either made wide circles or turned abrupt corners, or else followed the course of a branch or creek.

At one turning Beauchamp paused, and pointing to an old oak, asked his friend to notice the line of fence that ran northward from it, and thence led eastward and around Van Holm's farm. "That tree is on a false boundary line, made on a false survey, and is marked by a false 'blaze' on the bark. You see it, just about the

height of a man's head. Well, the true oak, marked by the original surveyor (though the 'blaze' is nearly grown over now), is on that rise of ground yonder. The boundary, being in dispute, cost my father near five hundred acres of land. The evidence of Van Holm turned the scale against him, and in favor of Wyndham. It was thought to be singular that, immediately after, Van Holm should have bought the land. When I think of all the Wyndhams got out of my uncle Isham, and out of my father as administrator, for us to lose the best part of our land on what I believe was perjured testimony, was hard enough."

"Few families have been so unfortunate as yours," said Howard. "But how did this come about?"

"It's a long story, and I'll spare you the details. My uncle Isham had extensive dealings in partnership with James and William Wyndham, in produce, such as wheat, bacon, whiskey, hemp, and, I'm afraid, in negroes now and then. They did business at Louisville and in other places down the river as far as New Orleans. This began before the days of steamboats. The book-keeping was not very exact, I presume, and there was a lawsuit. My uncle Isham always swore he didn't owe them a dollar, and, after a long contest, he gained his case. But after his death, when father was administrator, they pretended to have discovered new evidence, and got the case re-opened. By this time uncle Isham's lawyer, who knew the whole history, died, and the Wyndhams had it all their own way. They just walked over the course. You know what has happened since. But taking this slice off our home farm long ago, was the hardest blow we ever got."

"It's a pity we couldn't turn Van Holm inside out, so as to see whether he did lie or not."

"Yes; but he should be nailed up afterwards on the smoke-house as a warning, like a thieving crow."

"Was Van Holm a witness in both suits?"

"Yes; but Wyndham had other witnesses also. Van Holm was the chief reliance. Wyndham said, before the last trial, that his witness could hit the bull's-eye at a hundred yards; and, if that wasn't enough, he would have one to hit it at *two* hundred. Other people, he said, were very anxious about having good lawyers; *he* was better suited with good witnesses."

"How came Wyndham to have so much litigation?"

"Because he sought it. Litigation has been the business of his life. He, and his brothers, while they lived, all throve upon it. Our part of the state was badly surveyed, and the plans, made out by incompetent draughtsmen, lapped over each other like shingles. It took near fifty years to fix corners and lines so that any man could be secure of a title. The Wyndhams, and men like them, went about over half a dozen counties, buying these paper titles; and then they cheated or bullied the rightful occupants, or else compromised for as much money as they could get. In our case the Wyndham brothers got hold of the next tract west, and as the corner was described as 'an oak tree on a ridge, blazed on the south side five feet from the ground,' they claimed that the true tree was that one half a mile back of us. How that tree came to be blazed none of us ever knew. Father and uncle Isham, who played about here when boys, declared the bark *then* was whole. But they couldn't testify, and Van Holm could. The Wyndhams got the land, and Van Holm bought it, as I told you."

"A story of barratry, champerty, and maintenance, with a strong flavor of perjury," said Howard.

"I don't know your law phrases," replied Beauchamp;

but if you have any other that means anything worse, you might as well put that in too."

When the two horsemen reached Deer Creek they saw great numbers of people coming down the valley on their way to the big meeting. All along the natural road, among the spotty white trunks of sycamores, now sweeping with the curves of the stream, now splashing through the silver ripples of the ford, now rising on high, turf-covered banks, now clanking on broad shelves of limestone, the people came, and still their numbers grew. There were young men on prancing colts, elderly men on comfortable pacing horses, and women on safe farm horses. The women nearly all carried children, a small one in arms, and often a larger boy or girl clinging to the maternal skirts behind. There were colored men and women, whose attire seemed to invite the praise due to faithful endeavor, if no more. And now and then would pass a well-mounted and well-dressed young lady, carrying her head with an erect yet unconscious air, and riding as Diana would have done if she had ever used a side-saddle.

The scene was lively and picturesque, especially to Mr. Howard, who was not "to the manner born." The paces of the horses, the attitudes of the riders, the odd contrasts of figures in the various groups, gave the young men plenty of amusement of a good-natured kind. After crossing two or three rocky and clayey hills, they came in sight of the wide valley through which Papaw Creek runs. The trees were thickly planted over the swelling alluvial mounds, and the woods on either hand reached down nearly to the banks. The persimmon trees swung their fruit like coral ear-drops, and the scarlet haws by the fence rows displayed their gorgeous clusters to the sun. Howard was never tired of looking at the mighty

trunks of the poplars that shot up like gray columns, often fifty feet, without a limb, and watching the smaller sprays in the distant tops, waving and murmuring in the upper current of air.

Papaw Creek is broad and noisy, but shallow, and is easily forded, except during winter freshets. When the riders gained the farther bank, they saw, right before them, the church and its surroundings. It stood on a slight rise of land, that was mostly wooded, and the open space around it was smoothly carpeted with soft turf. It was a simple building of brick, of one story, with sloping roof, and without spire or pinnacle, arch or column, cross or trefoil, vestibule or sacristy; just so many plain, dull windows on each side, the rear end a blank wall, and in its front two doors that opened directly into the building, and led into the two aisles. But it is early for service, and we must first see the horses hitched, and then look about awhile before going in.

The trees, for a considerable distance around the church, were of recent growth, and had abundant branches within reach of a horseman's hand. Each rider, upon dismounting, fastened his bridle rein to the end of a swinging limb, high enough to keep the horse from slipping or breaking his bridle, and yet with length enough to allow the animal his natural freedom of motion. Hundreds of horses were thus fastened through the grove, some standing in abject quiet, some neighing and stamping, and some vainly trying to get near enough to annoy their neighbors. The men were hardly more devout than their horses. They were scattered in groups through the grove, chatting, arguing, comparing crops and prices, making appointments for the monthly County Court, and exchanging the small gossip of rural neighborhoods. In summer the religious services were frequently in the open

air, and there were rough benches for boys and other vacant-minded folk to whittle and cut initials upon after their manner. Howard told Beauchamp that, in the matter of whittling, the Kentuckians could easily carry off the prize jack-knife, — that even the Connecticut Yankees could not hold a whetstone to them. The two friends sauntered around the church, looking with not incurious eyes at the belles of the neighborhood as they alighted at the blocks, and admiring the ready tact with which a bundled and closely-veiled creature, done up like a sack of wool, shook herself out in waving lines of drapery, as she touched the ground, and threw her curls into fine disorder, as the veil dropped from her head. Then, as she walked with easy and natural step towards the church, her glowing cheeks and clear glancing eyes would have made even a languid city beau enthusiastic.

"What a gait!" Howard said, as one particularly splendid woman swept by. "Do you know, Beauchamp, that in the most highly-civilized places — I mean where wealth and culture have done their best — you can't find a single woman of *ton* that can walk like that?"

"Why, it seems natural enough."

"Yes, that is it; it *is* natural; but in the fashionable world there is no nature. Women somehow subdue it, drive it out. They burden themselves with dress, in the first place — but we will leave that mystery. The beauty of ancient art is seen in the natural carriage of the body. The Greek statues are alive with it. A modern woman is a ship's figure-head, a mummy, wrapped in endless folds and cerements, only her face is covered with enamel in place of bitumen. I never saw one of these gorgeously apparelled creatures whose figure was so sumptuously encumbered, whose mouth, from the daily habit of propriety, had become composed to the expression of a

breakfast roll, and whose gait was a slowly gliding motion that you couldn't analyze, nor account for on the theory that they were bifurcated like other people, — I say I never saw one of these calm creatures without wishing that some friendly old fairy might cut her stays, bundle up her superfluous skirts, shoe her with things she could *run* in, and whisk her off to clamber over such brown hills as these. Jupiter! what a change! She would soon know what her lungs were for, as well as her hands and feet."

"You are thinking of the old story of the statue that became flesh."

"Yes; but the miracle wrought for Pygmalion will not be repeated. The modern marble will not throb into life. It is perfectly satisfied with itself, and would be annoyed by an emotion. It is where people live much out of doors, and where they are not depressed by labor nor sobered by too much study, that you see this vivacity and graceful motion. There is no spring to the step of a slave, or of a bookworm. But see! there comes the cavalcade!"

Beauchamp needed no prompting, for he knew that but *one* person could be the centre of such a group. Squire Hamilton and his daughters came first, and after them Miss Adelaide Shelburne, with several gentlemen following. Beauchamp saw that Harrison Adams rode at Miss Shelburne's side, and having seen that, he could see nothing else. The party were soon dismounted, and came towards the church, directly by the spot where Howard and Beauchamp were standing. Greetings were exchanged with varying shades of cordiality. When Miss Shelburne stopped to speak to the two friends, Mr. Adams, in the character of her esquire, stood behind her with an air that was intended to be dignified or haughty, adjusting the fit of a glove, or the pressure of his hat, or giv-

ing a finishing touch to the contour of his waistcoat. He looked and nodded a good morning to Howard, and one not quite so good to Beauchamp; and then he swayed a trifle on his heel as a pivot, and showed his fine teeth and massive chin, and flourished his bamboo stick. A glance was sufficient to show to Beauchamp what it takes a sentence to describe; and he thought, during that glance, that Adams, though he disliked his manners, was really a fine-looking man, and one whose pretensions were not to be despised. Squire Hamilton, a man of mountainous stature and granitic features, affected the blunt speech and homespun dress of the farmers, and was always distinguished by the extraordinary brim of his capacious hat. He berated Mr. Howard (his law pupil) for not coming with the family party, but, looking humorously at Beauchamp, excused the desertion on account of the recruit he had picked up. The squire's two daughters, Malvyny and Betty, as he called them, were tall and well-featured misses, with waxen complexions and cold blue eyes, rather past the meridian (which in Kentucky is at twenty-five), and a little reserved, if not prudish, in manner. Whether prudish or not, they could not wholly conceal their inward annoyance at the free manners of their cousin Adelaide, and they looked on rather gravely from under their blue veils while the little colloquy went on at the church door.

Beauty is as rare as genius. Pretty and lovable women are, fortunately, not uncommon; but once or twice in a generation there comes into the world a bright exemplar of all that poets have imagined in shape and feature; as if to show that the Creator is not less mindful of the ideal than his humble copyists, the painters, and to renew to every age the vision of the eternal beauty to which all his forms tend. Such a presence was Ade-

laide Shelburne, a revelation of perfect harmony in outline and color. The impression she made was instant and ineffaceable; still it was difficult to describe what was so dazzling. Her freedom of movement and mobility of expression conveyed the idea of intense life. She was somewhat above the middle size, though the perfect symmetry made her figure appear smaller. She wore at this time a closely-fitting black velvet riding-habit, and plain skirt of black silk that hung in simple lines to the ground. Her brown hair was so luxuriant that her black cavalier hat with its white plumes could hardly cover all its wreathed masses, nor restrain its escaping curls. Beauchamp was tremulous, eager, abashed, wishful, silent. He had met her twice before, but he had never seen her in so full a light; and now he noticed as for the first time the delicate chiselling of her features, the tender violet blue in her eyes, and the soft tint of her cheeks, like the petals of a pale tea rose through which

"Her blood so eloquently wrought
That one might almost say her body thought."

"This glorious creature should have been painted by Vandyke, the painter of princes," thought Howard. "None more brilliant ever shone from his canvas." The cooler northerner felt his own heart beat a little quicker, but the little throb was soon quieted, though he revelled in the sense of beauty not less than his companion.

It was not much that Miss Shelburne said. And, by the by, our lives are less influenced and our souls less touched by epigrams, aphorisms, and strokes of wit, than by those commonplaces which the heart goes out with, while the eyes, and the tone of voice, and the mantling color are saying more than tongue utters. Beauchamp felt that the emphasis of her manner and tone were for

him, and his nerves quivered again. It was merely of the delightful day, the canter over the winding road and along the water-courses, and of the expected festivities of the coming season, that she spoke. It was quite enough for him. As she swept by in her easy yet queenly way, there was a tumult within him that he could not quell. All the glorious, and beautiful, and tender impressions of his life, — all that he remembered of rare odors and tropical blossoms, — all that he had dreamed of fabled goddesses and of the heroines of his beloved poets, rushed in upon his mind until his sober senses swam. Could he have analyzed his emotions, grouped them, and portrayed them, he would have been a poet.

But the loud voices of the congregation within, joining in the morning hymn, roused him from his ecstatic reverie, and he was aware that the service had begun. Now that she had passed, every other face looked dull and uninteresting. He and his friend followed the current, and took a seat with the men on the left. The other aisle was appropriated to the use of the women.

The big meeting had been going on for some days. There was preaching in the morning; afterwards, a recess for lunch, which was brought by each family; and then a season of exhortation and prayer in the afternoon. When these services occupied only one day, it was popularly called a "basket meeting;" when they were continued for several days, the occasion was called a "big meeting." To these, preachers or "elders" and praying brethren came from a wide circle, and were entertained at the houses of friends in the neighborhood. This Sunday was the last day, and the enthusiasm and fervor that had been gathering during the week were about to culminate. It was very easy to tell by the countenances of the assembly who of them had been seriously engaged

in worship, and who had come for curiosity. But there was a decent attention on the part of the whole audience; it was only among those who remained out doors that horse-trading, and politics, and story-telling were enjoyed.

The singing at such meetings was always an object of curiosity to Mr. Howard. He had some musical talent and culture, and he could never sufficiently wonder at the choice of tunes, the uncouth pronunciation, the short-breathed phrasing, and the long-drawn single notes of the untutored choir. What we term Nature, if it is not really Art, is generally attained by Art. "Natural" singers, — that is, untrained singers, — are the ones who easily fall into grotesque modes of utterance, and whose style becomes incrustated with affectations. The tune was in the minor key, and the melody led over some peaks that were worse than Alps to scale, and from which the throaty tenors and laboring sopranos constantly slipped off. Some sturdy "natural" men growled out the melody an octave below, and fancied they were singing bass. One stalwart farmer, with the purple face of an admiral, and with a throat covered with yellow hair like a fox's, poured out his soul in a series of *festoons*, his voice swinging from note to note, and connecting phrase with phrase and line with line by a tremendous *portamento*, till he produced a "linked sweetness" that was quite different from what Milton intended. This robust singer was entirely forgetful of himself while he raised his voice; the music was a delirium; he generally loosened his cravat by the end of the first stanza, pulled it off when the second was done, and before the hymn was concluded he had unbuttoned his shirt collar, without knowing it, to give his larynx full play. Beauchamp had heard it related that this gentleman's niece one Sunday before going

to meeting had coaxed him up to a window, and under pretence of fixing his collar, had sewed the neck-band of his shirt together with a strong linen thread — an expedient that prevented him from airing his Adam's apple during the songs that day. But the *altogetherness* was impressive. It was a shower, a tempest of sound, and in its volume the lesser dissonances were mostly drowned. The bulk of good tone and the solemnity of effect came from the rear seats, where the negroes sat. The psalm was "lined off;" that is, each two lines were first read by the elder, and then sung by the congregation, — in the way we first heard Aunt Phillis singing in her kitchen.

After a short prayer there came another psalm, sung to one of the detestable tunes for which the Yankees are responsible, — without soul or character, and written without knowledge and without feeling, which could be made by the yard, like cotton cloth, — tunes which have enriched compilers and publishers, while they have smirched the good name of a really musical city. Howard writhed over its senseless progressions and its droning harmonies, as if he had been personally answerable for the dullness which the psalm-book maker had diffused. The main prayer came next. It was a stupendous piece of architecture, reared by considerable pains and study, — a history of the world from the creation down, — bringing in kings, prophets, evangelists, and apostles, and giving a complete synopsis of the plan of salvation. Considered as a petition to the Almighty, its rotund sentences were well nigh blasphemous. Special petitions followed the first great movement, embracing the nation, the state, the county and neighborhood, with glowing reminiscences of the past week's labors, pleasing anticipations for the church in this world and the next, and due warnings to the careless and unrepentant. Mr. How-

ard looked at his watch, — a quite improper proceeding, but he was curious, — and he found that twenty-five minutes had passed. The sentences grew shorter, the groans and amens from the audience were more intermittent, and at last, with half audible murmurs, the elder sat down, burying his face, as he did so, in a large colored silk handkerchief. The elder's unpremeditated increase of tone through the prayer was a study in itself. Readers remember the curious musical imitation employed by Rossini in the description of Calumny in the opera of "The Barber of Seville;" how the low murmur swells and rises until it becomes a sustained and tremendous uproar. So the elder, beginning in a moderate and steady tone, grew more enthusiastic as he went on through his appointed course; and by imperceptible degrees his voice gained in power, and his utterances became more emphatic, until in the latter portion the volume and quality of sound were intolerable. The descent from the high pitch was more rapid, and when his voice began to fall, the concluding sentences were scarcely heard. Of the depth of feeling and utter sincerity of the elder in his long resounding prayer, there could not be a doubt. The fault was in the custom which he followed, that of making the prayer in effect a discourse to the assembly, during which the attitude of a humble petitioner was forgotten. The brief and comprehensive prayers of the English church, though they must lack the fervor of unstudied utterances, have one saving quality — that they do not *preach*; and so they may sometimes save worship from the painful extravagances of unlettered men. Not all hearts are touched by the same means. The prayers from the liturgy would have been cold and unsatisfying at a big meeting; and we must admit that that mode of worship is best which is most

effectual to lift the affections and touch the conscience of those who engage in it.

The sermon followed. It was an extempore production, following certain familiar trains of thought, abounding in scriptural quotations that were often ingeniously woven together; and at tolerably regular intervals the text was repeated with more earnestness than relevancy.

"I have heard him preach that sermon a great many times," whispered Beauchamp, "and he never did it better. From here on I know it by heart."

The preacher, as Beauchamp predicted, closed with a picture of the glories of heaven, and misquoted (with a curious inattention to rhyme) the stanza with which his final sentence was usually rounded.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first began."

Beauchamp chuckled over the ending, not from irreverence, but the frequent repetition had made the bad rhyme irresistibly ludicrous. The ladies, whose glances he expected to intercept, kept their faces resolutely towards the preacher's desk, and if they had any perception of the fun, they restrained it bravely. The decorum of the world is maintained by women, and most of the religion also.

As there was to be no second service this day, a brother arose to pray, and afterwards began an exhortation. He addressed his remarks to the unbelieving and impenitent, and, after a very short prologue, attempted to describe the condition of the souls finally lost. He dwelt upon the horror of darkness, the sense of banishment, the gnawing of the worm that never dies, and the future that was without hope. Growing more earnest and more lit-

eral, he sketched the great lake that burned without illumination, and imagined the tortures of ever-during fire and remediless thirst. He spoke of the sinners floating on this surface of seething pitch, and raising their hands for mercy that did not answer, while every finger smoked with the heat that scorched without consuming. Then he changed the figure, and asked the congregation to imagine a vast abyss of darkness and torment, tenanted by fiends that flew through its measureless vaults like evil bats, while there whirled endlessly a wheel so enormous that it exceeded the whole orbit of the moon—a wheel whose radiating spokes bore crowds of clinging wretches around its axis, whose revolutions were measured by thousands of years; and just at the top a small lookout, through which once—barely once in the tremendous interval—the sinner got a glimpse of the blessed in heaven, and then fell on his long descent through the depths, and round again through every form and thought of horror, until the momentary light came to make the succeeding gloom still more terrible.

The audience received this frightful description with varying emotions. Howard listened with calm wonder. He was a cool and reflecting person by nature, and he had been trained to look at religion from a different point of view. The passionate appeals and the answering excitement around him were abhorrent to his ideas of decorum. He could not be amused, for he had a strong devotional feeling, and too tender a sense of what was due to others; but he was not “edified,” to say the least. Beauchamp had heard scarcely a word of it, for all his thoughts clustered around a white plume at the right. Stout farmers said to their neighbors that it was “powerful black.” Timid women looked yet more timid, and some mild eyes were suffused with tears. Elders groaned,

and cried, “Have mercy on them! God, open their eyes in time!” But among the colored people in the rear the waves of emotion rose and submerged all thoughts but those suggested by the awful future. The men shivered and moaned, uttered terror-struck Amens, and dropped on their knees. The women fairly shrieked with the ecstasy of fear. “Save us, good Lord! Lord, have mercy! O my soul! O, de poor sinners! O, de good Lord! Take us out ob de lake!” The sounds swelled until groans, cries, and Amens multiplied confusedly; and when the fiery appeal followed, there were not above fifty in the house that were not on their knees wrestling in prayer.

There were a few words spoken; some desultory prayers were attempted; but the climax had been reached, and the meeting soon ended.

Among the last speakers, who occupied a few minutes each in exhortation, was one whose few spoken sentences those who were present would never forget. There was nothing in any way remarkable about his person: he was simply commonplace. But his harsh and croaking voice rose and fell in sing-song waves; his eyes had a dull and sullen look; he beat the air in his gestures; and at regular intervals he gave a breathing at the end of a word that sounded like a grunt added to it by way of emphasis. This was the way he began: “Brethring and sisters, I’m all the way from *Indianny-ah*, and I’ve left my wife and six children-*ah*, and come to preach the gospel-*ah* of the blessed Jesus. Brethring, I ain’t larned-*ah*, and my blessed Master, *he* wast n’t larned-*ah*. ‘How can this man teach-*ah*,’ said the Pharisees, ‘having never larned-*ah*?’ And I ain’t praoud-*ah*, and my blessed Master he wasn’t praoud-*ah*; fer, didn’t he go round barfoot-*ah*, a-preachin’ repentance to the Scribes and the men of larnin-*ah*? ”

This specimen will probably suffice. It was an exhibition which required the exercise of a large measure of charity on the part of the hearers.

The two friends, when once out of doors, drew long breaths of the fresh air. They looked up to the serene heaven from which the beneficent sun was shining on the good and the evil alike, making glad the out-door loiterers as well as the devout, and the former currents of thought resumed their course. Howard imagined he was just emerging from a nightmare. Beauchamp thought the afternoon was fine, and wondered if he should succeed in riding home with Miss Shelburne. Mack's paces were no longer brisk, and, in the hurry of so many people, he feared he would not be able to keep up with the young lady; for she was a superb horsewoman and proud of her skill, and was, moreover, attended by a number of enamored youths, eager for the honor of her company and her smiles. Then Adams, he was sure, would stick like a burr, and he too had a swift and powerful horse.

Squire Hamilton's servants brought the horses for their master's party, while Howard and Beauchamp made haste to have their own ready to mount.

We leave the great throng of the devout to disperse and go their own ways, carrying their fresh hopes of immortal joys, and their tender memories of the season of worship. We leave also the indifferent and the scoffers to return home with such vague thoughts as the meeting had suggested. Nothing is in vain; and certainly the impressions of a Papaw Creek big meeting are not easily to be forgotten.

But we must follow our young men, who are in saddle and moving as fast as they can among the crowd of people as they ride down the slope to the ford. Miss Shelburne was already in advance, and her well-trained horse was

springing up the opposite bank. Beauchamp thought he saw a friendly invitation in her face; but it might have been only the sparkle of life in her eyes, and the smile which good health and good spirits bring to the active rider. Squire Hamilton and his daughters settled into a sober pace. Beauchamp and Howard passed them, and urged on their horses. They gained ground for a time. They splashed through water, they sprang over rocks, they scrambled up the banks, and sped along the turf. They came nearer, Beauchamp ahead, and within easy distance. Some of the group of young men were hard pressed, and jolted along uncomfortably; but Adams seemed to ride like a man of steel, pliant yet firm, rising in his stirrups, or swinging in a canter, as his horse changed his paces. Beauchamp was within a very few yards. The road took a sudden turn. To keep up such a speed, Beauchamp knew he must pick the smoothest ground. A high bank seemed to promise a level stretch of smooth turf. The white plume was just ahead, waving in the wind, and the lithe and courageous rider was pressing on, managing her horse with ease, and showing her power and grace in every motion. Adams was resolutely following. Beauchamp urged his horse up the rise, while the object of his desire was gayly nodding to him over her shoulder. In a moment he would be at her side. No; it was too much: the faithful horse was not equal to the occasion; he sprang a tendon in the effort; he hesitated, stopped, faltered, and seemed about to fall. When Beauchamp slid off to the ground, the waving plume was far in advance, and the convoy in close pursuit. He thought he heard a merry laugh borne on the wind: it would have been music under some circumstances; but now, when he was baffled in his vehement wish, unhorsed and left behind, it seemed the cruellest

laugh he had ever heard. Had he spoken, his words would not have been such as the Papaw Creek elders would have approved.

Howard came up presently, and the situation was discussed. Beauchamp was full of his disappointment; and before he could utter a word of pity for poor Mack, he must needs berate the frivolity and vanity of the young lady who had led him such a dance.

"Confound the women! they are all alike. Put one of them horseback, and she'll ride like a Tartar-ess, and, if she can keep ahead and have enough dangles at her horse's heels, she won't mind who falls behind, — the best man or the silliest, — it's all the same to her. Motion is what she wants; flattery she must have; and her laugh will be loudest when her best friend falls. I believe she would walk over, yes, gallop over my heart, if it lay throbbing there in the road. The more fool me."

"Come, Beauchamp, don't be unjust. Miss Shelburne can't have known the accident to your horse. She enjoys a brisk ride; she is young and full of spirits, and she has gone on, I'm sure, without a thought of anything but the exhilaration of a canter on this fine day, and without any notion that the speed of her horse would tax yours so severely."

"I don't believe it. She is a vain and heartless girl. She will take admiration from any fool that offers it. See how she stuck to that Adams."

"How Adams stuck to her, you mean. Besides, he isn't a fool by any means."

"She must have seen I couldn't keep up. She must have heard poor old Mack's heavy breathing. No; she's a coquette, a flirt; prancing along, gay and thoughtless, sweeping ahead, and devil take the hindmost."

"There's no reasoning with you when you are out of

humor; so let us see what is to be done. If Mack can walk at all, we can lead him home; and you and I will take turns on my horse."

Mack could walk, though slowly; and the young men began their tedious journey. Soon Squire Hamilton overtook them, and, when he learned of the mishap, he called to one of his servants, who was riding a stout farm-horse, to dismount and lead Mack home. Beauchamp, being provided for, got into the servant's place, and jogged on leisurely.

When they reached Beech Knoll, Beauchamp pressed Howard to stop for an hour for the late dinner, or early supper, — for on Sunday but two meals were served.

The simple dinner, with its kindly conversation, need not occupy our time now. We shall do better to pass to another chapter, at the beginning of which Beauchamp will be on the way to visit his uncle Ralph.

CHAPTER V.

A LOAN AND A LECTURE.

MAPLE GROVE was about four miles distant from Beech Knoll; and as there were no streams to cross, nor other natural obstacles on the way, it was not difficult to reach it in an hour's walk. The path led mostly through woods, and, for a considerable part, on the bluff that overhung the river. Beauchamp started early, intending to see his uncle at the house before he should get away to visit some distant parts of his plantation. He usually rode, as most Kentuckians do; but as Mack was disabled, he preferred to go on foot, rather than ride his mother's horse, especially as his active habits made such a walk a mere pastime.

The house faced southward towards the river; and down the slope in front, on both sides of a ravine, there was a handsome grove of maples, commonly known as the Sugar Camp. But the usual approach to the house was through an irregular growth of locust trees, by a path leading to its eastern end, and parallel with its front. The owner, Ralph Beauchamp, as has been mentioned, was a bachelor; and it might be necessary to mention it several times in order to suitably emphasize the fact. When Beauchamp arrived, he saw his uncle seated in a home-made chair in the porch, rolling a cigar on his knee out of a leaf of native tobacco.

Premising that Mr. Ralph Beauchamp has rolled his

cigar, and lighted it with a live coal brought, by a beetle-headed and saucer-eyed negro child, with a pair of tongs, and that he has invited his nephew and namesake to take a "cheer," we must pause for a moment.

A good judge of human nature says, "The apparel oft proclaims the man;" and we must ask our readers to look at one whose chief pride it was to call himself a plain Kentucky farmer. He was dressed in home-made jeans, gray-blue in color, which had been carded, spun, woven, cut, and made by his women servants. The wool, it is hardly necessary to say, was shorn from his own sheep. His shoes were solid and ugly, and were tied by strings of hemp. His shirt of unstarched linen was simply buttoned at the neck; and now that it was autumn, he wore a plain black cravat. His eyes of yellowish gray were set far underneath beetling and bristly eyebrows; and his straight hair overhung his face on each side in lank, untended masses. His nose was pointed and prominent; his chin was covered with a stubbly growth, of tawny wood-color, that was kept in such order as it was by occasional random clipping with shears, and was faded to flax color at the straggling ends. He was neither tall nor very muscular, but his countenance and all his movements indicated a strong and wiry body, and an unobtrusive but perfectly indomitable will. He had the reputation of being very rich, while he had the outward appearance of a miser. The novelist, who is expected to know everything, in this case frankly confesses that he does not know the exact truth. The best opinion would seem to be, that he was richer than he pretended to be, but not so rich as the common people thought. He was a graduate of Yale College, and had read law for a few years, but had never entered into practice, and was now as thorough a recluse as one of the woodchucks of Wal-

den Pond. He had a library, that, for the time and the location, was so unusual as to be fairly called magnificent. About one third consisted of law books, the remainder of English and French classics. Copies of Shakespeare were numerous, from the early folios to the latest annotated editions; and it would somewhat surprise a stranger to find that this eccentric man, who dressed like a slave, was a student of the great dramatist, and familiar with the most acute of his critics and commentators. But few persons knew of his abilities or his accomplishments. The county people knew only his rough exterior, and dreaded his sarcastic speeches. He scarcely ever had company at his house, and no woman, except his sister and his servants, was ever seen there.

It is not strange that Beauchamp felt reluctance in going to his uncle for assistance. He feared he would have to disclose something to this censorious woman-hater which he would prefer to keep to himself. Then the young man never felt quite sure of his footing with his uncle. His general course had not been unfriendly to his nephew; but his words were enigmatical, because it was always impossible for any one to tell whether he spoke in jest or earnest. His quibbles and hits were delivered with a grave face, while he smiled in uttering things hard to be borne.

"Good morning, uncle Ralph."

"Morning. Afoot, hey! Horse lame? Bad road to Papaw Creek. Bad time for horses when a she-fool gallops ahead and all the young he-fools follow." All this with a merry, but half malicious laugh.

Beauchamp saw at once that his uncle's negroes had brought the news of the mishap of the day before. He judged it prudent to begin with the other portion of his errand. So he told his uncle of his having talked with

Milly, and of the petition for a decree to sell her and her children. Uncle Ralph listened with some interest.

"Now, can this be? Is this law?" asked the young man.

"Certainly."

"And can nothing be done?"

"O, yes. You have only to pay up the judgment—a trifle of five thousand dollars or so."

"But you know I can't do that."

"Well, if you don't pay it, and no other property can be found sufficient to satisfy it, Wyndham will get his decree. He can't get the decree as long as there is any other property of your father's that has not been levied on."

"There is Scipio."

"Worth about as much as an old cur."

"But still he would fetch *something*."

"You hard-hearted reprobate, you wouldn't have old Scipio sold?"

"Not at all. You don't see what I am driving at. If we could suggest to the judge that there was property that had not been levied upon, could we not get a continuance? And before another term of court, something might turn up."

"Meanwhile Milly would be in custody."

"I know it; but jails have been broken before now."

"Whew! Are you an abolitionist, or a rebel?"

"No, neither; but I want to save my black mammy."

"Nonsense! I should as soon get sentimental over my old cow after she had stopped giving milk."

"You are not half as hard as you try to make believe. I know you had a mother, for you are my mother's brother."

"Well, how was it about laming your horse?"

"You can have it your own way; for you show that you have heard the story."

Uncle Ralph laughed internally, and then said quietly, "Just let Scipio bring Mack down here. Pete is a good hand for a lame knee, and you can have my old horse Pomp until the lameness is cured."

"Thank you kindly, uncle Ralph; but Mack is done for. He's too old to get over such a sprain. I shall have to buy me a new horse."

"If you had only caught up! But to lame your horse and let the Hoosier beat you too, wasn't it *too* bad!" The deep-set eyes gleamed grimly, and there were puffy, explosive laughs.

"Enough of that, uncle Ralph."

"You just go on, running after women! Pretty or ugly, they're all the same. The homeliest wench in the world, as soon as you give chase, or show a preference, puts on the airs of a duchess. Pursuit implies choice, choice is flattery, and flattery turns her head."

"I really wonder, uncle, whether you hate women as much as you pretend. Come now, who was she? For some young woman flirted with you long ago, and gave you a hard fall; that's sure."

"No, I never had any notion to be what they call 'father of a family.' There are fools enough now, and fools enough who want their kind perpetuated."

"Well, uncle, I can't take pleasure in your gibes. As I am the son of a woman, your sister, I don't like them. You talk just as if *you* did not belong to the human race."

"Well, what do *you* think of women? Are you a marrying man? Who will eat corn pones and bacon with you, or weave or knit for you? Not Miss Shelburne. *Will* she now?"

"I don't know, uncle. I sometimes think I shall have

the good luck to set up our family again. I am going to try."

"O, I've no doubt you'll try. You're a good marksman; but there's no market for birds and squirrels hereabouts."

"I don't mind your taunts. I know I've been idle enough to deserve them. But I'm going to teach school and study law."

"It is school-keeping, is it, that is to bring back the old acres? Why, you'll scarce earn your salt."

"Mr. Howard has offered me a partnership, and that will give me nearly eight hundred dollars a year."

"No; the Yankee don't do that—does he? 'Dern my skin,' as McKinley says, who'd have thought a Yankee would do such a thing?"

"He has made the offer, and I'm going to take it."

"The law you will learn, I suppose, is to keep up the family litigation."

"I shall be able to defend myself, but I don't court any more strife. There has been too much already. But, uncle Ralph, I need some assistance now, and I have shown you that I have reasonable prospects. I want to employ counsel for Milly. I want to buy me a horse and saddle, and I must have a suit of clothes."

"H—m—m! So you want to run in debt, and spend your money before you earn it?"

"I must have a start."

"For a horse, old Pomp will serve you until Mack is better. Milly doesn't need counsel—or rather, counsel won't do her the least good. And for clothes, you can get a suit of jeans, such as I wear, for a trifle."

Uncle Ralph looked keenly out from under his jutting eyebrows.

"Well, uncle, I don't want to be uncivil, but you

know I couldn't go about if I were to dress as you do. You know the dogs bark at you everywhere, as they would at a pedler, or a beggar, and you glory in it. Pomp is well enough at a plough, but his speed is not much."

"Not enough to catch a galloping young woman, I know."

"But, uncle, won't you allow me to be my judge as to what I need? I can't dress as you do, nor ride such animals as you do, nor let my hair hang out of the holes in my hat, nor show my stockings through my split shoes, nor carry eggs to the stores to barter for needles and thread. You enjoy your oddity. It fits you. It wouldn't fit me."

Uncle Ralph laughed loud and long at the rough sketch of himself. Gradually his merriment subsided, and at length, he asked, in a cold, business-like tone, "What security have you to offer?"

"Why, you know my circumstances. I can't give you any security but my word."

"You can give me a deed of the home farm."

"It is yours already. Mortgaged to you for all it is worth."

"Well, I want an absolute deed."

"I will sign one if you want me to, for it can make no difference to me."

"It may make a great difference some time to both of us."

"I will sign a deed, and I will trust to you that, in case the property shall ever be free from encumbrance, you will deed it back to me, if I pay you what you advanced with interest."

"Well, so far, all is agreed. But I have a notion to lend you the money in an unusual way."

"It wouldn't be strange. You never do things in the way other people do."

"I haven't any money to-day, except in bank, but perhaps I can get a check cashed in town. Now, I want you to draw a draft on some banker or other person abroad. The reason why is my business solely. As you have no funds abroad, it will come back protested, and the paper will then be a valid claim against you."

The young man looked puzzled.

"Just as you like," said the uncle. "You know I wouldn't be justified in lending money at six per cent. without security. You have no security to give me. If I take a larger interest, it makes the whole transaction void by our stupid usury laws. But on a foreign bill of exchange a larger interest is allowed after protest. There, I have given you one reason. I may have another; but it is all the same to you."

"You are a riddle."

"It is plain enough. You draw on some one. It is no fraud, for I know, as well as you, that you have no funds abroad, and no expectation of the draft being paid. You give me a deed that you admit has very little, if any, value, and that is all the security I have. The draft comes back protested, of course, and then I can have a rate of interest proportioned to the risk."

"Well, it shall be done. My name is Russell, and I'll draw on the Duke of Bedford. His grace doesn't know me, and refuses to honor the draft. It makes him very little trouble. The draft is a boomerang, and comes back to me. I am the one inconvenienced."

Youth is the season of hope. A note or draft has an innocent look when new — much more so than when the clockwork has run down, and pay-day has come.

Beauchamp's spirits had been rising with the near

prospect of success, and he ran on with endless gay rubbish. The girl with her basket of eggs, and her visions of affluence, whose fall is held up to us as a warning, was a fair parallel.

His uncle speedily recalled him to sobriety.

"I will meet you, Beauchamp, at the village to-morrow morning, where we can have the papers made out, and the deed put on record. Don't treat this affair as a joke. You will have about seven hundred dollars. You can manage this so as to carry you through, or you can waste it in gallivanting after coquettes in a very little time. If you are sharp, you can save yourself and make a beginning of your fortune, sure. If you lose it or fool it away, you needn't come to me. This is the first, last, and only thing I do for you."

Beauchamp winced, and had half a mind to abandon the loan that was given him so grudgingly, and coupled with such stinging words. But his long mental struggles had left him in such a condition that failure would have been the same as death. He felt that he must put down his pride and take the loan, and then trust to his own energies to carry him through. He answered slowly and with feeling.

"Uncle Ralph, for anything less than a matter of life and death, I would not have come to you for help in the first place; and I wouldn't take your help now, if I saw any other chance. For you have given me good counsel, but in the bitterest words I ever heard from a friend; and you make your favor a load that is heavy, heavy. I will try to think you are kinder than you pretend, and though I shall stand by the conditions we have agreed upon, I shall hope you are not a man that would go out of his way to injure or wound his sister's son."

"Beauchamp," said his uncle, rising up, and speak-

ing with a surprising change of manner, "you'll find out it's easier to be taught by a friend in advance than by the hard lessons of experience. Listen to me a moment. In college and for some years afterwards I was in debt. That I am not in debt now is owing to my rigid and persistent economy. I gave note after note to meet bills and notes coming due, until the orbit of the whole year was traversed by them as if they were a system of baleful satellites. The various parts of the orbit were marked by the appearance of the threatening bodies; the three hundred dollar, the five hundred dollar, the four hundred dollar, the two hundred and fifty dollar moons came round with frightful regularity, and my horizon was scarcely ever clear of them; they were either rising or just overhead, or luckily setting for a season. They blighted everything. All my thoughts were centred in them. Sometimes the impressions took a different form. I was at sea, — afloat on an Arctic ocean. I had to steer among icebergs. Collision meant sinking and death. The icebergs were the notes due banks, which *must* be steered clear of. But the floating masses in the sea of small debts, often threatened to close around me, and shut me off from further progress.

"I could vary the comparisons without end. I cannot tell you what I endured; I would rather have foregone my education. I should have been happy as a farmer — boy and man. Thank God, I got through with it all. I got through it by meanness, by pinching self-denial, such as you have no idea of. The whole experience saddened, sobered, hardened, and perhaps embittered my nature. I know what the sympathy and the friendship of the world — men and women — are worth. Self-interest is the whole of it. It is your money, your help into power and place, your pleasant table, your flattery — that is all

I can see you are astonished at me. For years I have not opened my lips in this way to a human being. I adopted the lingo of my negroes and of the neighboring 'crackers,' and the blundering grammar of our first people.

"I have put aside the mask. You see me as a somewhat different person from what you imagined. Whether you see me again as I am, — in my library, or recounting my adventures in college, or whether I appear to you as the uncouth and ill-natured, eccentric man, whom every body shuns or hates, — depends on yourself, or rather on your own future course. An idle, purposeless youth, — though he may be my nephew, could not expect to be my intimate friend."

If the heavens at this time had opened, and the angels had been seen ascending and descending upon a ladder, as in Jacob's dream, Beauchamp would not have been so much astonished. His uncle had been to him not only a plain farmer, but one of the most sordid and repulsive sort. Though he was very kind to his slaves, so much so that he was blamed in the neighborhood for lowering the standard of discipline, his biting speeches and contemptuous glances made him appear a very embodiment of malevolence. He used the roughest words, and was perfectly careless of forms, as he was disdainful of courtesy. He exulted, as the world thought, in his unpopularity, and practised all sorts of unsavory jokes. Vanity and pretension were the objects of his scorn. If a man had any weakness, his keen rapier found it out. Now this strange man had dropped his disguise, and talked like a superior being. Beauchamp thought of the nights he had spent at Maple Grove. He remembered that his uncle never went to bed, but always slept on rugs and blankets that were spread for him on the library floor. He remembered the high-pitched voice he

had heard crooning over snatches of song at midnight and long after. He did not know then that in these hours his uncle truly lived — that by lamp-light he held converse with his favorite authors — that while he was alone, the pleasures of his life were most keenly enjoyed. Just as he sat there — this strange man, smoking his huge and not very fragrant cigar, patting the floor with his coarse heavy shoe, with his wild head and queerly clipped whiskers, and playing with his worn leather watch-guard, Beauchamp felt he could have fallen on his knees to him. It will have been surmised that Beauchamp had an impressible and strongly sympathetic nature. The sudden surprise, the revelation of high mental qualities and of human feelings, once tender, though now, unfortunately, hardened, came upon the young man with an electric force. He fairly sobbed, choked, and with dimmed eyes turned to his uncle, exclaiming, —

"O, uncle Ralph, what a blessed, old singed cat you are!"

"Yes, I *am* a singed cat, very likely. But *you* are not singed yet, though I am afraid you will be, you foolish moth! Keep out of the candle! These pretty women are *spidery*. They are never satisfied until they have some fly fast in the web. Then let him struggle and buzz! They can look on calmly. It isn't their fault. O, no!"

Beauchamp began to think his uncle was near being right, but he did not reply. "Well," added uncle Ralph, "we'll meet to-morrow. You just ride old Pomp back, and send up Mack to be doctored. Send Scipio with him, do you mind!"

The intellectual light had faded off from his sharp and homely features. He puffed his big cigar, and looked the cross and ill-natured being he had always been. Beauchamp started home.

CHAPTER VI.

POOR WHITE TRASH.

THERE is an interlude for a change of scene and costume. The hero is soon to appear in a new suit; he has a new horse to take the place of Mack, and meanwhile he is vigorously at work reviewing his studies. We will take the opportunity to show a few other characters concerned in this story.

Tom Fleemister, in whose custody Mr. Wyndham had placed Aunt Milly and some of her children, lived about seven miles from the county town, on a road that was very little travelled. In fact, it was hardly a road at all, but rather a series of lanes with occasional gates or bars to keep cattle within bounds. It was not an easy thing for a stranger, after branching off from the main road, to find his way to Tom's house even with careful direction. The inquirer would be told to cross a certain pasture, sighting by a clump of willows, then turning by certain oaks, past Uncle Pomp's log house, then over the hill, and through Gillie Cochran's cattle-yard, and from there straight over to Ben Sanderson's orchard fence. From Sanderson's there was a bridle-path, and it wasn't more than three quarters of a mile to Tom's. Few places would be worth so much trouble, and Tom's was not one of them. Excepting Mr. Wyndham and the sheriff, hardly any of the county people ever ventured out there. But at Sanderson's it had been noticed that once in a while

strangers, mounted and equipped as if for long journeys, appeared to have come from the neighborhood of Tom's. Perhaps they had lost their way.

Fleemister lived on a small farm that was mortgaged to Mr. Wyndham; but *how* he lived by any crops that any one ever saw, growing or gathered, on the washed and gullied fields, was a mystery. But he did live in some way; and, besides, Mrs. Fleemister had borne her husband a great number of children to be fed. They filled the little habitation full. No matter how many might be clustered about the great cheerless fireplace, or peeping out of the unglazed windows, there were sure to be more out doors, gathering chips or brush to burn, or driving up the lean cow, or going to the "branch" with bucket and gourd for water. They were doubtless distinguishable to the eyes of father and mother; to other people they looked precisely alike. They all had flaxen heads, tanned, by sun and exposure, to a dirty white color. Their faces were thin and tallowy in hue; their eyes were like those of wild creatures. The scanty skirts of the bare-legged girls, and the ragged and thorn-pinned trousers of the slim-shanked boys, were pitiable to look at, even in the fine October weather that was prevailing. Mrs. Fleemister was rarely addressed by the ceremonious name we have given her. Her husband and her husband's unmarried brother Jack, who generally "staid" with them, always called her Cad, though she had been named Candace, for the Ethiopian queen. The children's ideas of the fourth commandment (of which they had heard only vague rumors) were satisfied with calling the authors of their being "pap" and "mammy," or "mam." We hesitate — for the historic muse is sometimes modest; — to enter into particulars as to ward-robes, and as to the decencies and comforts which the

poorest people in older countries consider necessary. It may give an idea of the mode of life of the poor whites of thirty years ago — and the class is not extinct, though most of them have strayed away to western and north-western territories — to say that their food was almost wholly of corn, made in dishes of mush, or in cakes baked on flat stones, or in the baking-pan. This utensil, which served also as a frying-pan, and a couple of kettles, were all the articles used in cooking. Milk was tolerably plenty, save when the streams ran dry. "Meat," which in Kentucky always means some preparation of swine's flesh, was not very abundant. But when Tom and Jack were lucky, there were rabbits, squirrels, and birds. The eastern epicure will hear with wonder that these dainty articles were held in general contempt, and that a piece of boiled bacon, with greens in the season, was considered the correct thing, good enough for anybody. At "pig-killing time" there was a feast, a surfeit, in fact, of liver, roasted sparerib and chine, — backbone they called it, — hog's-head cheese, and "crackling," or "scraps," as the crisp residuum of the lard is called at the east. Of the table service, the greasy fingers, and the napkinless board, the less said the better. Fleemister raised a little crop of tobacco, and the eldest of his numerous children had acquired the art of rolling a rough kind of cigars, which sometimes, in a favorable state of the market, brought as much as a dollar a hundred. For the wants of such a family little more than a hundred dollars in money was required yearly. New whiskey was twenty cents a gallon; a few dollars provided powder and shot; the summer dresses of Cad and her daughters were made of plain cotton cloth dyed with peach leaves; the winter garments were of jeans or linsey-woolsey, which the patient, or rather impatient, Cad

wove on a hand loom that stood in the out-house; and one pair of shoes and stockings for each were enough for the few months in which those luxuries were indulged in. A few simple dyes, and a pound of Rio coffee for great occasions, an axe, and a few pounds of cut nails, were the only other articles ever bought or considered necessary. The matter of sustaining life on a minimum had been understood and practised by the Kentucky "crackers," with such success as we have seen, long before any civilized Yankee had tried the experiment. The true philosophy is not so much to reduce the cost of living, as it is to make every outlay contribute to strength and comfort, culture and happiness. We prefer to think that both savagery and twopenny views of life have had their day, and to believe that in future times men will look back upon the squalid cabin and its accompaniments as we now do upon the merely animal existence and the lacustrine dwellings of the pre-historic age.

Books were unknown at Fleemister's. This was a literal truth. The most careful search would not have discovered even an old almanac, nor any printed paper, unless it had been used to wrap a bundle. Cad had once possessed the accomplishment of reading, but since her marriage it had fallen into disuse. Neither Tom nor Jack, nor any of the tow-headed brood, knew a single letter. On the rare occasions when judgment had to be passed on the denomination of a bank bill, it was a matter for serious consideration. But it was noticed by the traders in town that Tom's fingers had an infallible touch, and that he could tell a bogus bill with his eyes shut. Cad preserved some recollection of her early reading, especially of novels, and she had bestowed the finest names she could remember upon her offspring. The pressure upon her stock had been strong and constant, and it was doubt-

ful whether she could have furnished many more of her favorite kaleidoscopic combinations if the necessity had continued. There is a limit in kindly nature, even to the spread of thistles and Spanish needles. The nomenclature of this family was a matter of endless amusement to those who chanced to hear the sharp voice of Cad about her household duties. No one had ever heard all the names; in fact, none knew how many children there were. Cad never shortened nor omitted a name, but gave each combination in full, though with an emphasis and a tone that we cannot represent in type; and she tossed them about with careless profusion.

"Nancy Arcady Jane, do you take the kiver off that bake-pan! Tighlman Justice, go and cut some wood! and you, Orburn Napoleon Bonaparte, pick up some chips! Atlanty Ameriky Livadia, wipe Dorothea Corinne's nose! Calanthy Ellen Candacy, you hunt the cow! and you, Orbilia Tyrene Sandusky, carry them slops to the hogs!"

The eldest daughter, whose fingers coaxed the rough tobacco leaves into shape for smoking, was more bountifully supplied with names. She wore them like a group of trophies. "Eloisa Androlena Almonrosa Jerolina de Mont Blanc Fitz Allan Davis Fleemister." Such prodigality as this could not continue, and the names of the succeeding infants were judiciously curtailed.

The log house at this time had some additional inhabitants. Two light mulatto children—Tim and Fanny, Milly's ill-fated twins—were lodged on bundles of straw, covered by a few rags, resting upon some cross-laid poles that formed a sort of attic floor. This dark and generally smoky perch was reached by a movable ladder. The silly little creatures did not know enough to run away, if they could; and they passed their time in a mute terror, much like a couple of lambs waiting for the coming of

the butcher. Fleemister, or rather his master, Wyndham, was satisfied that Milly would not try to escape without the children; so she was kept apart from them in the old stable, as we have seen.

The holding these freed people in close custody, without legal authority, caused Mrs. Cad no little anxiety. Her reflections on the law were not very clear or profound, but she had some dim notion of natural right, and she was sure that Mr. Wyndham and Tom were outside of the law in what they were doing. The sheriff was a person who excited her utmost fears; for she knew that if that official came up their unfrequented road, the visit boded Tom no good. So she looked and listened, until in every bush she saw an officer.

Tom was at the door, cleaning his rifle with wads of tow, and Cad, who had just taken some corn pones and a crock of sour milk up to the twins, came and leaned against the door-post. She was not beautiful to look upon. Her hair hung in stringy locks on either side, that were cut even with her chin. She was lean and scrawny. Her teeth were sordid and decayed, her lips were thin and blue; and her complexion, as well as her spiritless air and lack-lustre eyes, showed that she was a victim to fever and ague, or, as the disease is generally called, "the shakes."

"Now, Tom," she began, in a querulous tone, "I don't like keepin' these dratted niggers. What's the good, anyhow? Milly keeps a moanin' like an old cow that's lost her calf. Somebody'll hear her; and then what? Blamed if I don't think she'll die. She don't eat, and she chatters and takes on like she had the shakes. 'Pears like 't must be powerful cold in the old stable. The wind comes in through the chinks, and nights it must be shivery. This mornin', when I carried her corn-

cake, she begged me for a little coffee, or tea, even 'arb tea, or saxifax; somethin' hot, she said, for 'pears like she was all gone inside."

"Doggon the ol' cretur!" exclaimed Tom. "She ain't goin' off that way — is she? It's too doggoned bad if she does. The ol' man Wyndham has promised me five dollars in every hundred of all the whole lot of niggers bring at the sale; that is, promised me and the Hoosier. You know *he* treed the game, and we went in for it and got it. Now, if Milly dies, there's a clar loss so fur. If she's *got* to die, why in — can't she wait till arter the sale? Then let her die and be doggoned to her."

"Don't talk so hard about the poor cretur," replied Cad. "'Tain't her fault that she's cold and down-sperited-like in the old stable. If you don't want a sheep or other sick cretur to die, you must take keer on't and cosset it."

"That's so, Cad," said Tom, thoughtfully. "I wonder what we could do. I reckon I'll git a little pinch o' store tea in town, — an ounce or two, — and you kin bile it, an' try to warm up the ol' cretur. Can't we make a bed o' some sort on the floor here? She can lay with her feet to the fire, leastwise as long as Jack's gone off."

The effect of this first philanthropic reflection was to turn Tom's thoughts to the twins also, who were roosting so uncomfortably on their perch near the rafters.

"And them little nigs," he continued, in a tone that he would have persuaded himself was kind and disinterested, "they musn't git down in the mouth. They must look tough an' hearty — look as though the grease was stewin' out of 'em, so full of bacon an' middlins." He smiled a lank and cadaverous smile at the picture of the plump and happy childish faces he had imagined. "Take keer of the purty little creturs! It's dollars to us to

nave 'cm look stout an' peart when the sale comes off. Tom looks tol'able lively, but the gal Fanny seems kinder moanin' arter her mammy, like. She mout cheer up if she could see the mammy."

"Did you tell where the older gal, Sally, an' the boy, Harrison, was?"

"No, I didn't tell; an' if anybody axes, you can say you don't know, fer you don't, and won't. Wyndham knows, he doos, what's what. Why, that Sally, dern my skin ef she ain't as purty as a peach. Real kind o' lady-like. Nobody ain't goin' to git sight of her, now you bet. The boy too, they say he reads and writes like a squire. Peart chap, straight an' harnsome. Knows little too much for a nigger; but he'll break in, he'll break in." Tom's hand was thoughtfully plucking at the scanty beard on his chin, while he was mentally calculating. "Why, Cad, that Sally and Harrison together'd knock down easy at three thousan'. Least, they *would*, if 'twan't for the Ablishen stir, so Wyndham says. Court sets in two weeks. If Wyndham keeps his word, we'll have a purty pile. You shall have a new gown, Cad, an' new shoes and stockins. An' the gals —" But here Tom was appalled at the thought of what so many new gowns and shoes would cost, and he held up.

"I say, Tom," said his wife, with some animation, in view of his prospective generosity, "I say, when you go down to the town for the tea for old Milly, you git me a piece of tobacker. 'Pears like I can't take any comfort in leaf tobacker. It burns kinder hot like, and gives me arterwards a water brash on my stomach. A new pipe an a piece of good tobacker, there now, Tom!"

"Wal, I reckon —"

"Calanthy Ellen Candacy, do you *shoo* that rooster off the table! He's a peckin' the dough out of the mixin' pan. Dirty ol' cretur; just look at his tracks!"

"Now, if Wyndham *should* take the back track!" continued Tom, meditatively. "No, he can't, and he won't; but if he *should*" — here he tapped his long rifle significantly — "somethin' 'd drap. No foolin' any more. No, Master Wyndham, no foolin'."

"O, you *dratted* dog!" exclaimed Cad, in despairing tones, as a great lean white and yellow hound disappeared with a half-stripped bone in his mouth. "You *dratted* dog! Tom, that cretur's done carried off the jowl that I was gwine to cook in the pan with the sweetaters, and there ain't no more fat. You'll have to cut a piece of middlins."

Tom was as much amused with his wife's distress as he was angry with the thieving old Tiger. He cut a slice of the meat with his big hunting-knife, and then went to the stable to see how Milly was getting on. She was comfortably clad, but her only bedding was a blanket, in which she lay wrapped on the loose straw that covered the ground within the stable. The building was without a floor. She made no conversation with her custodians. Even in her old state of slavery she would have considered herself lowered by any intimacy with such "poor white trash." Now the loathing was changed to hate and a desire for vengeance, on account of the wrongs, insults, and ill usage she had received from them. She looked at Tom as the crouching but wary dog looks at the beggar, his ominous eye slowly following the intruding figure, and ready to attack or defend.

"Why, Milly, doggon my skin if you don't look as though you'd bite! Come, git up. None o' that. I've come to take you up to the house. It's gittin' mighty cold hyer." (The *hyer* is sounded in one syllable, like *yer* with a preliminary rough breath.)

Milly showed no sign of relenting nor of gratitude.

But she was thoroughly chilled, and she thought that she would see some of her children at the house. She got up without a word, and followed Tom, though with a trembling and unsteady step. Arrived at the house, she found the mistress sitting by the great, smoky fireplace, her elbows on her knees, puffing away at a cob pipe with a reed stem. Milly gave a sudden cough as the acrid smoke reached her lungs.

"What ails ye?" inquired Cad, with some asperity. "Don't smoke, I reckon. Too fine over 'n Indianny."

"Don't you let out so much tongue," said the husband. "You see she's sick. You told about 'water brash' on your stomach. Now just you look out for that. Take keer of the 'water brash,' and put that old pipe up. It's blacker than the sut of the chimbley. Hyer, Milly, hyer's a cher," setting out a split-bottomed chair polished by use as well as hacked and whittled by many knives.

The groups of tow-heads in all quarters of the room were regarding the unusual scene with wonder. All eyes were fixed upon the strange face and prophetic eyes of the dark woman, whose pride and whose unbent will offered such a contrast to the "slack-twisted" mistress of the house, and to her awkward and shambling spouse. For if Cad was not beautiful to look upon it was also true that Tom "did not handsome much" — as we once heard a Frenchman say of his wife. The look of laziness, sluggishness, ignorance, and suspicion in his dull eyes was indescribable. And his long hair, his thin beard, his filthy clothing, and his hands, that might have served for the talons of a buzzard, made a picture of squalor which we should have to go among savages to parallel.

Milly merely rolled her large eyes in dignified silence,

and seated herself in the corner to warm her benumbed feet. Meanwhile Tom went to the ladder, and called the twins. Milly heard the names, and her mother's heart fluttered. Tom came down the ladder with each child in turn, stepping very carefully; and as he led the frightened little wretches to their mother, he said, in what was meant to be a very jocose tone, "Mighty careful, Milly, we are of high-priced goods. Hand 'em up and down the ladder like chany vessels. Can't afford to break a five hundred dollar article."

It was wonderful to see the change in Milly's face. You, perhaps, have seen, reader, the pathetic look in the eyes of a seal in an aquarium. If you have hunted, you remember the melting sorrow in the eyes of a wounded deer. And a dog sometimes shows so much soul in his earnest glance that you think he *must* speak, or that he thinks and feels like the superior being, his master. So in the nobly-formed face of Milly, dusky as she was, the deep affection for her helpless children glowed, and saddened, and melted by turns, as the sudden joy of meeting, and the doubts and fears of the future, flickered over her face in alternate light and shade. How she hugged them, kissed them, *cooed* over them, smoothed their straight black hair, — then held them at arm's length to look at them, and then folded them again to her bosom, with scores of kisses more! Then began their artless prattle. It was of the lost home in Indiana, the lost freedom, the lost everything. Milly checked the talk that would lead to unpleasant consequences, and did her best to comfort them.

"Bless my heart," Cad exclaimed aside to her husband, "just to hear the little creturs! Why, they don't talk nothin' but dixonary and truck!"

Atlanta America Livadia here observed to Eloisa An-

drolena Almonrosa (&c.) that "mam never hugs us and takes on that-a-way."

Milly at last asked her keepers where Sally and Harrison were. She did not get a very satisfactory answer. She feared they might have been already carried off and sold "down the river," and persisted in her questions. Tom, to end the matter, said doggedly, "No use, Milly, to ax anythin' more. The gal an' the boy is *right*, all safe, an' will be on hand at the 'pinted time. At the Court House door you'll see 'em. An' you'll see 'em squarely sold. You an' all on 'em."

"I shall never be sold," said Milly, quietly.

Tom laughed. "You won't, hey? I should like to know why."

"I've served my app'inted time. My task is done. The Great Taskmaster knows it. My task as slave is done. When I have no more to do as free woman, the Master will set me task up yonder."

She rose slowly and unconsciously as she spoke, and her words came with the solemnity of another world. As she ended she stepped back, her eyes closed, her hands fell, and she would have rolled upon the stones if Cad had not caught her. Milly was insensible.

The twins were sent up to their perch and bound to silence by many threats. The brood of Fleemisters were quelled by the excited Cad, and Tom was induced to go to town at once to get a doctor.

"I reckon Wyndham'll stand the doctor's bill," said Tom. "Dern the critter, — I do believe she's goin' to be mean enough to die, arter all!"

He started off on foot, his trousers tucked in the tops of his clayey boots, his weather-beaten hat pulled on his head like a conical extinguisher, and his lean and evil-looking dog following him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PIERREPONTS GIVE A PARTY.

THERE was a party at the house of Mr. Pierrepont, who lived a few miles from the county town, to which all the young people of the neighborhood were invited. Mr. Pierrepont was the son of French parents, but was born in this country in a large city on the seaboard. His baptismal name, Jean Jacques Rousseau, testified to the democratic principles of his father, but fitted oddly upon the head of a rustic aristocrat and slaveholder. Kentucky was an unsuitable field for the success of socialistic principles, or for exhibiting the blessings of living in a state of nature. The young man was endowed with the natural wit, acuteness, and vivacity of his race, and had been educated with some care; but upon settling down as a farmer, he gave himself wholly to his crops, his stock, his negroes, and the details of household economy, and renounced the tastes and the literary culture which most native born Frenchmen of his class try to keep alive. He had never been in Paris, but he kept up his knowledge of French, and he spoke English with accuracy and fluency. At the time of our story he was a well-preserved and blooming gentleman of sixty years. A faint claret flush showed through the natural olive of his cheeks, and his eyes had all the softness of youth.

It is clearly a violation of the common law of fiction to dwell upon this sketch, for Mr. Pierrepont, though an

important person in the county, will not be a main character in this story; but the narrator, who remembers his amiable manners in society, and the fine play upon his intellectual features while in conversation, is glad of an excuse to recall his picture for a moment.

The house was ample, if not elegant, and its arrangements were such that a very large number of guests could be entertained for an evening, and, if necessary, for the night. Its surroundings of oak pastures, and broad, undulating lawns, dotted in summer with flowering trees and shrubs, formed a natural park. Wide verandas afforded welcome shade, and offered rest in Canton arm-chairs. Even at the time of the party, in late October, the vines on the enclosing trellises were green, and the air without was not too cool for an occasional promenade, at least in the opinion of some couples, — especially as the moon was at its full, and very luminous.

Mr. Pierrepont, with his stately, but rather old-fashioned wife, and his charming widowed daughter, received the guests with a frank hospitality that put the shyest and most inexperienced youth completely at ease, and that made of each damsel, for the time, a duchess in her own right. The house was all open, and was lighted by myriads of candles. Cards ruled in the library, and in some of the chambers. In the south room, a group was gathered about the piano-forte; a veritable "Erard," but which had become rather thin and music-boxy in tone.

The company was not "select;" invitations for such occasions were quite general, but included only the young people. It was not customary in the rural districts to permit the gray heads and mob caps to intrude with their "Vanity of Vanities" into festive gatherings.

Harrison Adams is a conspicuous person, from his fine presence, and on account of his reputation as a rising

lawyer. Arthur Howard is observed also, though less known, and is regarded as a rather prim but good-natured specimen of the educated Yankee. Beauchamp Russell appears in a new suit, the master-work of the village tailor, and seems rather abstracted in manner. Will Davis, the fox-hunter, with pleasant features, brown eyes, and full of animation, is the readiest of all in his attentions to the ladies, with whom he seems to be on excellent terms. Miss Betty and Miss Malvina Hamilton, with their tall figures, composed features, and cold blue eyes (which, Howard noticed, had the exact color of forget-me-nots), supported like flanking statues the radiant young person for whose sake the party was given. Miss Adelaide Shelburne has been already sketched with the most vivid colors on our palette; and it is enough to add now that she wore a dress of white silk, with hints of blue in ribbons and borders, and that she displayed no ornaments except a spray of myrtle and a white camellia bud in her brown hair. Her supremacy was as absolute as that of Spenser's Queen Gloriana. Such a miracle, as she appeared in this breathing world, is rarely wrought, either for a country party in Kentucky, or for the most select circle in beauty-haunted Baltimore.

Beauchamp approached the presence not ungracefully, but not eagerly, and paid his compliments in ordinary phrases. He did not linger, though he felt in his soul that he could do nothing less than worship her. The mortification of his unsuccessful chase on the return from Papaw Creek church had disappeared. But his uncle's sarcastic cautions no less than his own circumstances dulled the edge of his resolution, and gave to his manner and conduct a hesitancy and vacillation that were little less than pitiable. Perhaps there was a lurking distrust in his mind, for the young lady evidently enjoyed the un-

feigned homage tendered her on every side; and it was not uncommon in Barry County—and perhaps elsewhere—for a belle to show bright eyes in answer to the tender speeches of a number of admirers in succession during the same evening. So Beauchamp, after the common-places were ended, feeling uncomfortably that curious eyes were upon him, and that he had made a poor figure, bowed and sauntered near the singer at the piano.

The singer had a right to sing, for she had a fresh and beautiful voice; and though it was untrained, her simplicity and feeling made it impossible not to sympathize with her, if not to admire her. Those were the days when "*Sweet Afton*" flowed, when "*The Carrier Dove*" bore the lover's message, and "*Love's Young Dream*" had not come to an end. Such simple melodies, with such *tum-tums* of accompaniment, agitated the breasts and moistened the eyes of your mothers, young ladies, just as your hearts palpitate to Mozart's *Il mio tesoro*, or answer to the longing call in Beethoven's *Adelaide*. What could renew those sensations? How could we hear those dear foolish old songs with the delighted ears and the trembling nerves of thirty years ago? Who could sing them for us like the brilliant Eliza S——, a being all light, a soul of celestial fire? She is singing other airs now. It was she who first revealed to our neighborhood the exquisite pathos of "*Auld Robin Gray*," and the delicious coquetry of "*Within a Mile of Edinboro'*." To hear that glorious voice again, I could endure even the thunder of "*The Battle of Prague*," which poor Eliza's sisters always *would* play with four hands. And, as we are musing, where is the gay Mark Headley? He thrums his guitar no more under your windows, ladies of B——; nor tells you in his sweet manly tones that "'Tis Midnight Hour;" nor pours out his lament in "*O, would I were a Boy*"

again!" The spicy smell of the jessamine and honeysuckle pervading the cool and dewy air of those summer nights as we stole among the shrubbery, while the quaint and penetrating notes of the guitar sounded the prelude for the serenade, comes back this moment over the long interval! Ah me! We all sooner or later take up the old burden, *Eheu fugaces*.

Beauchamp walked away again, this time with Arthur Howard, and pointed out quietly the ladies about whom his friend inquired. He was not merry at heart, and the gay tone he assumed was at once a relief and a mask to his feelings.

"That sweetly smiling, solid beauty there is Sue Haycroft. Observe those dangerous eyes. You wouldn't believe it, but she is the most finished flirt in the county. Without saying anything, she looks everything. Three young fellows at this moment are dying for her — I think there are five. Each of them hopes and believes he is the favored man; but, mark my word, she'll jilt the whole lot, and look on with eyes of innocent surprise at their distress. When she marries, all the Deer Creek boys will go into mourning, and then hold a big meeting to cry *boo-hoo* together.

"There is Ellen Danforth, with an eye like a deer, and a pretty foot. Notice the satin slipper is always out. She holds on mighty well, for she was no chicken when I was a boy. Will Harcourt, not one-and-twenty yet, hangs about her, you see. She'll have him bridled, sure."

"And be a good mother to him, I hope," interposed Howard.

"Do you see that little white nun, Lucy Fenton? The Dove is the name she goes by. Ever since the poet of the county made her the subject of a poem that chanced to be printed, she has been calming her tempestuous

nature, and looking meek and dove-like. When she has attained the right expression, she doesn't speak for fear of breaking the charm. But the faithless poet didn't marry her — poets never do. And O —

'The difference to *she*.'

— That young man, with so much hair and shirt-collar, is Aloysius Pittsinger, clerk in the principal store, as you probably know. Shallow and noisy, and *such* a bore! With a strong head for business, he used to go to the breakdowns and candy-pullings, and during the evening ask the young ladies if their mothers had any dried apple to sell. We roasted him on that, and asked him if he had any nutmegs or indigo in his pockets for barter. If you want to see some sport, you just ask him how he sells indigo. He looks up at the Dove wistfully, but I doubt if she flies down to perch on his finger."

At that moment they passed a fine-looking woman, a brunette in complexion, with regular features and an air of intelligence.

"Miss Kate Wyndham," said Beauchamp in an undertone, "daughter of the enemy. Of course we don't speak. It isn't her fault that her father is a rascal; but the affair is so public, and my mind has been so often freed about it, that I couldn't meet her."

"She has the look of a cultivated woman."

"O, yes; brought up at the Nazareth school, kept by nuns, you know. Quite well educated for our part of the country."

"Pride enough."

"Enough for a dozen. No family like the Wyndhams, she thinks. I don't see what she's going to do, unless she looks out of the county. There's nobody here good enough."

"Unless she were to capture you."

"Pshaw! She's as proud of her money as she is of her family. Rich marry rich."

"But what a pretty story it would make!" said Howard. "Father rich and proud. Daughter rich and proud too, but with an eye for a handsome young man. The son of the enemy, to be sure; but what is there left to fight about? thinks she. Better a treaty of peace. Father Capulet and widow Montague shall shake hands. Romeo and Juliet set up housekeeping. Family grander than ever; and the expected heirs will divide the county between them."

Beauchamp laughed in spite of his feeling of annoyance, and then said, "There is many a more disagreeable girl than Kate Wyndham — perhaps a little imperious — but sensible, modest, and *almost* a beauty. But there is a gulf between our families — a gulf nothing can ever fill up."

"Unless, like a Curtius, you leap in."

"Howard, if she were to be weighed in a scale with gold for balance, and the deeds of her father's lands thrown in, and I could have her for the asking — But, nonsense! I won't finish the sentence. Why should I vow and protest? You know how I hate the old robber, and why I hate him. I wouldn't share his plunder, not even to come by my own again. A jest is very well, my friend, but this comes rather near! — I think she'll have to take Adams yet. Business connection, you know. She won't take him if she can get anybody else, for she hates a Hoosier nearly as bad as she hates a Yankee, and that is bad enough."

"But you forget," said Howard, "that you thought Adams was looking in another direction. See now, he is talking to our *other* beauty, Miss Shelburne. He is offering her his arm. They are going to lead the dance."

This stroke taught Beauchamp where was the joint in his armor of proof, and he felt it keenly. But he restrained himself with considerable effort, and, advancing with more ease and address than Howard had given him credit for, he asked Mrs. Warfield, the daughter of the host, to dance with him.

Premonitory tunings of fiddles were heard in the ante-room, then dashes of bows at random, bits of melody, then more tuning of a long-drawn, painful kind, until at last the orchestra appeared. It consisted of three jolly-looking negro men, two with fiddles (negroes never have *violins*), and the third with a rude instrument in the shape of a flute. Their kinks of hair had been tightly wound with strings during the previous week, so that they stood out like so many twisted spikes; and these were now loosened and coaxed out, until their heads looked like vast globular brushes. There was a slight rush for partners and for eligible places in sets, and a moment afterwards the signal was given for a quadrille, and the dancing began.

Mr. Howard was standing near the fiddlers, admiring the tact and readiness with which they surmounted all musical difficulties, either going round or ignoring the matters of keys, intervals, and harmony, and yet giving well-marked melodies in lively rhythm. Force and enthusiasm carried everything before them, and the listener soon gave up the idea of applying any rule of art to test the performance. Like the bobolink, the musical negro is a genuine, untaught minstrel, not a musician, and it is about as easy to set down the notes of the one as the other. Howard was also struck with the calls for the movements in the dance; and he was only able to know what the calls were when he saw them interpreted in the figures. After something that sounded like "Cavalry

soul!" he saw a gentleman advancing alone. Then he heard, "Ladies dissemble!" and the ladies met in the centre. It was enough, however, that everything was spirited, natural, and enjoyable. The dancing, too, was honestly performed: no shirking at the "nine and ten," and a brisk "pigeon-wing" for a finish. The "many-twinkling feet" was a phrase that meant something.

While Mr. Howard was looking on, Mr. Pierrepont came near and asked, "Do you not dance, Mr. Howard?"

"Sometimes; and I always enjoy it; but I know very few figures, and am always afraid of making confusion. I am studying the matter."

"No need of studying. Dancing is like skating in one respect: you have only to forget yourself and move naturally. But the way for you to avoid confusion is to select for a partner a lady who knows the intricacies, confess to her at the outset your utter ignorance, and beg her to be kind enough to look out for you, and you will be piloted through without a care or a fear."

"By the by, sir, speaking of skating, as the river here never has any good ice, I wonder where you got your practice?"

"In the north, to be sure, where the ice is. O, I know Jamaica Pond, and, for that matter, the Frog Pond, too. But that was a great while ago."

"Then you came out here to a wilderness?"

"Not quite. Boone had preceded me — a little." This with a pleasant smile. "But the people here in early times had wonderful ideas about your Eastern States, and couldn't be made to understand how I, a Frenchman, could have been born in Yankee land. One fellow, I remember, in a deerskin blouse and raccoon cap (or helmet, rather, for it was precisely such a crest as our

Keltic and Gothic ancestors wore), asked me if I had seen any witches hung, and whether 'there war ary of them ol' Pilgrims round yit.' I denied as to seeing the witches, either hanged or otherwise, and asked him what pilgrims he referred to. He answered, 'Why, Matthew, Mark, Deuteronomy, and them.'"

"I had a similar experience," said Mr. Howard, "only a few days ago. An old gentleman asked me what was the capital of Boston, and how far it was from Massachusetts? I explained to him the facts civilly, and then he asked if we had big farms and plenty of niggers."

"I noticed that young Russell was with you; what is he doing? Good boy; but I'm afraid of some outbreak of the old blood. Able men the Russells were, but it was either 'draw poker,' or racing, or whiskey, or something else."

"I am happy to tell you," replied Mr. Howard, "that Beauchamp Russell has started in a new career; he is a student, and while he will teach a part of his time with me, he will read law with Squire Hamilton. He has begun resolutely, and is industrious and apt."

"Wonders never cease, and this is the most wonderful of all."

"Well, so it is; and I had some difficulty in persuading him to leave off for an evening, so as to accept your invitation."

"I hear he is troubled about the petition for the sale of his uncle's negroes — those that were set free."

"Yes, he has been in a state of great wrath, though I cannot see what he can do to prevent it."

"Nothing, by the law; I was afraid he might try the rifle. Hot blood, you know. My neighbor Wyndham has given out that he has heard, and has reason to believe, that young Russell and his friends —"

"Meaning me?"

"Possibly — that young Russell and his friends have threatened to liberate some or all the negroes by force, and that he shall take such precautions for defence as the case may require."

"That is a way of saying, that he will shoot either of us at sight, if we go near his house — is it?"

"He shoot! O, no. You don't know him. Why should he shoot, when the Fleemisters and Houghton are his henchmen? Princes fond of hunting anciently kept leopards to bring down their game. Our wiser neighbor keeps a lean, fierce 'cracker' with a long rifle."

"Thank you for your friendly hint. But I am sure that Mr. Russell has never made a threat of the kind."

"That may be so. But, if after a little puff of smoke, and a slight perforation by a bullet, there should be an inquiry, and Mr. Wyndham has his witnesses to prove the threats, it would be all the same. You have been here two or three years. How many persons have you known to be punished for shooting and wounding, or even for killing outright?"

Mr. Pierrepont continued, "You say this is all dreadful, and I admit it. So is our slavery. We all know it. But we can't change. We have the system, as the hunter had the wolf by the ears, and so feared to let go his hold. Now, it's in vain to reason abstractly upon this or any other topic, so far as you and I are concerned. *Think* what you like. Believe, if you choose, all the fine theories of my father's idol Rousseau. But be sure to let the thought remain a thought. If it gets utterance as a word — even *one* word — you are a marked man, and a ruined man for this country, forever."

There were many things in what Mr. Pierrepont had said that commended themselves to Howard's practical

good sense, and others which he mentally took serious exceptions to. But he considered only the kind intention, and, wisely concluding that a dancing party was not a place for argument, and that, not to be singular, he ought to take part for a while, he excused himself, and made his way towards the charming Mrs. Warfield. He made use of her father's simple stratagem, committed himself to his partner's guidance, and went through the figures without getting the dancers into serious disorder more than three or four times.

Beauchamp danced without intermission. After Mrs. Warfield, he had Miss Haycroft for a partner, choosing her, we fear, principally for the purpose of making the young fellows of Deer Creek unhappy. Then he danced with the Dove, and told her such funny stories that she forgot her mouth entirely. The satin-slipped Miss Danforth he neglected, partly because her boy-lover, Harcourt, was so constant and assiduous. The exhilarating effect of the music and of the rhythmic motion had diffused a sort of breezy air through the rooms, and communicated to our hero, and to others perhaps, a subtle and potent intoxication. Bacchantes were not inflamed with wine only. Beauchamp's courage came to him. He had been watching the favorable moment, and when he saw his rival, Adams, leading out Miss Wyndham, he wound his way through the throng, and presented himself before Miss Shelburne. She accepted his invitation, and they led the quadrille.

It is impossible to show the reader how two such finely-formed people moved through the dance, or to paint their glowing faces, in which equal pride, courtesy, and deference were seen. Supper was next announced, and Mr. Pierrepont considerably yielded his right of escorting Miss Shelburne to Beauchamp. Mr. Adams and

Miss Wyndham stood opposite, and although they chatted pleasantly together, the reader might not err in surmising that each of them, for separate but similar reasons, was not greatly pleased with the conjunction of the two handsome persons across the table.

The supper was substantial in quality, and was served with hospitable profusion. Wines were not in general use in Kentucky, but various enticing compounds supplied their places. *Pêche Liqueur* (always known as "peach lacure") was in high favor. This is made by packing a barrel with the finest ripe peaches, and then pouring in old and smooth whiskey, until it is full. After standing a year, this *liqueur* acquires a flavor which enables the tippler to bear up against "prohibition" anathemas with undisturbed mind. Some people add spices, which is an error. Another and more dangerous beverage was egg-nogg. The reader hereupon smiles, and thinks this a very familiar drink, and hardly worth mention; but if he has not tasted it in Kentucky, he is in a state of ignorance. The great bowl with its white mountainous heaps, and its delicious golden depths, and freighted with uncounted headaches for the next day, is something to be admired, but to be sipped as the bee sips honey dew.

Good health, active habits, and an hour spent in dancing, are sufficient to give famous appetites; and our party was a hungry one. The drinks were lightly sipped. There was not a cheek the redder except for exercise.

Beauchamp was never at a loss for ideas, and rarely for fitting words; but now that he was actually beside the lady, he was silent in spite of himself. If he were to speak at all as he felt, there was so much to say; and the near neighborhood of two persons to whom he had an aversion was a great drawback.

"After all," he thought, "what could I say? What is it to her, that the father of the young lady opposite (who is eying me so sharply) has robbed our family and made me poor? What is it to her that I am madly jealous of Harrison Adams? She would laugh at it. What is my speech, or my silence, either, to her? What does she care for my lack of attention during the month she has been here? What am I to her in any way? And if I drop apology, and dare to reveal the secret in my heart, what have I to offer? — only the hand of a beggar. Nothing could persuade her that I was not mercenary. As uncle Ralph says, I am only a poor moth about a candle."

These thoughts passed through Beauchamp's mind in quick succeeding waves, and he grew momentarily more undecided. It was a case of "shilly-shallying;" of the traditional "faint-heart;" of letting the "I dare not" wait upon "I would." All this is true. But in the case of this descendant of the ruined family of Russell, was not reason on the side of the doubt? The argument was all one way; but that was when he looked to the left. When he looked on his right, the dusky atmosphere brightened, and the whole fabric of imprisoning doubts underwent a transformation (as in a Christmas pantomime), and became a bower of delights.

So he skimmed the surface of things, like the waterfowl that neither floats in repose nor ventures on upward wings. Meanwhile Miss Shelburne listened and looked, and uttered the proper phrases at the right time with due emphasis, in the sweetest low tones ever heard, while her violet eyes and her full and half-parted lips expressed the most engaging and earnest attention.

Beauchamp proposed a promenade, and they walked through the rooms into the porch, and so on, to the veranda — merely "to see if the moon was really full,"

he said. There was no moon, but heavy clouds instead, moving swiftly and threatening rain; and they came back into the south parlor, and sat near the piano, apart.

"Miss Shelburne," he said, rousing himself for an effort, "I want to tell you a little story. I suppose you will soon be going back to Herbleu County, and this may be my only chance. There was a young prince in the East, who, on account of some faults of his ancestors, was in disgrace with his sovereign, and had lost all his possessions. He was still a prince, but his kingdom was wholly in himself. No one respected his dignity, and he was even forced to get his bread by the labor of his hands, so low had he fallen. While in this condition he saw a lovely young princess from a distant country, who was more beautiful than Fatima, and as wise as Zobeide. His soul burned with a secret but consuming fire. He said, 'If I tell this princess I love her, she will scorn me; but if I turn away from her, I shall die. What shall I do?'"

Miss Shelburne here broke in upon the narration, saying, in her clear, low tones, and with a steady, but meaning emphasis, —

"I have heard the story, Mr. Russell; pray let me finish it. This princess had one day overheard the unhappy prince sighing on her account. She did not love him, for she did not know whether he was worthy to be loved; but she did pity him for his misfortunes. So she said to him, 'Prince, show yourself worthy of your birth. Do not sigh, but rise up, and try whether by your own hands you cannot rear a higher dignity, and earn a greater renown than you have lost. Then you need not humble yourself as a suppliant to any, but can choose the most beautiful and the best.' As I was going to say," she continued, without change of countenance, but in a more conversational tone, "I was glad to see how much you

were interested in the singing. Some time I should like to tell you about the music I heard last season at Cincinnati. I don't remember all the composers' names, but Mozart and Beethoven affected me most. Mozart was as full of beauty as a spring day; the other was beautiful too, but sometimes so strange, so grand, so overpowering, that I shivered as if I had heard my name called in the night, and my secret thoughts echoed by an unseen spirit."

It may be conjectured that footsteps approaching had caused the sudden change from the fable to German music. The most excellent woman in the world is sometimes capable of an innocent artifice; and, when it is necessary, she will put prying people on the wrong scent long before the duller man has perceived what was the matter. So it was. The company had come back from the supper table, and Mr. Howard and Mrs. Warfield were among the first. Miss Shelburne, with heightened color, but with an air of gracious composure, rose to meet them, as did Beauchamp, and the conversation became general.

A low, steady, monotonous sound had been heard for some time; now it increased so that the gentlemen went to the door and looked out. It was raining in torrents. Beauchamp declared that every drop was bigger than a blackberry. The wind rose and roared among the trees around the house. Faster and heavier the rain fell, and in a few minutes it was evident that none of the party could safely leave for home, especially as the roads were uneven and slippery when wet, and all the little branches would be full very shortly. Mr. Pierrepont now shone out in his capacity of host. He assured the company that he could provide for all the ladies, and that the gentlemen could occupy sofas and lounges, and he had abundant blankets. Meanwhile the dance should proceed.

All joyfully assented. The fiddlers struck up, and the sets were rapidly filled ; and the merry din of music and laughter drowned the dismal sound of the storm that was raging without.

Beauchamp did not feel inclined to dance, because he saw what he thought was a warning look in Miss Shelburne's face ; so he joined a whist party, with Mr. Pierrepont for his partner.

Between two and three o'clock the dancing began to flag. The ladies excused themselves and retired. The servants brought in blankets, and the young men disposed of themselves on the parlor floors the best way they could. Beauchamp did not sleep at all.

The guests were not wakened very early, as may be supposed, and it was not until ten o'clock that breakfast was served. Mr. Howard had taken an early start, that he might be in time for his school. The storm had cleared away, but the evidences of its power were seen in the prostrate shrubbery and the broken limbs of trees, and all the lands seemed flooded with the enormous rain-fall. All the company had come to the party on horseback, except Miss Shelburne and her cousins, who had a comfortable old-fashioned carryall. The river flowed between Mr. Pierrepont's and the county town, and there was no bridge at the point where the road crossed it. The river always rose rapidly after such a rain. Those who were on horseback felt sure of being able to cross the ford, even if their animals had to swim a short distance. But it was thought best to make a reconnoissance before allowing the carryall to venture into the swift water. This Mr. Pierrepont and his servants undertook to do, the services of the young men being declined as unnecessary. The company were soon mounted and went their several ways, leaving behind only the

three ladies mentioned. Beauchamp had lingered, hoping to have a single word with Miss Shelburne, but failed to see her until he was in the saddle. Then, spurring up to the door where she stood, he asked, "Was the fable ended?" She replied, "Yes ; the princess waited to see how her advice was followed."

"My story says that he *did* rise, and that he returned to claim her who was the 'most beautiful and best.'"

If the lady did not smile, at least she did not frown, and she gracefully waved him a farewell.

Beauchamp was not sorry to find himself alone, and he allowed his horse to walk so as not to overtake the party going to town. He was in no humor for the jokes and gossip, and the comments upon the faces, dresses, and dancing of the ladies, which form the staple of conversation the day after a party. He was full of vast schemes. The law was a small province that he would subjugate forthwith. Business would come, then wealth and honor. A new house on Beech Knoll, and then — ! His blood tingled at the thought. The county should see that the blood of the Russells had not died out ; and as for the Wyndhams — to be sure, what an absurd notion that was of Howard's ! Romeo and Juliet indeed ! Then he came back to his uncle Ralph, and fancied he saw *his* long nose poking into the matter. Now, if he, Beauchamp Russell, were put on the witness stand, what reason could he give as a basis for the airy structure he had just been erecting ? Simply this : that a pretty woman whom he loved, but to whom he had not dared in manly fashion to avow his love, had substantially told him to go to work ; and that, on parting the morning after, she had smiled on him — she who smiled sweetly on all. Was he *not* the foolish moth around the candle ?

So, between the extremes of feeling, the pendulum

swung, until the young man found himself nearing the ford. He saw his friends ahead on the opposite bank, and the shining legs and flanks of the horses showed that they had been swimming.

But his attention was just then drawn to his horse's ears, which showed that the animal recognized the presence of somebody or something unusual. From out of a clump of bushes started a female figure, and stood directly in the way. It was a young woman, white, as he thought, though he was not quite sure. She was bundled up in shapeless clothing; but as she threw off the shawl that wrapped her head, her long, straight, black hair fell from its confinement, and Beauchamp saw by the family likeness who it must be.

"Is it you, Sally?" he asked with surprise.

"Yes, Mass' Beecham, I am Sally; Sally Russell they called me in Indiana."

"Well, what in the name of goodness brings you here? How did you get away? And when you once got started, why did you stop? Going to town, on a public road, in daylight! It's the foolishhest thing I ever heard of!"

"Well, Mass' Beecham, it looks foolish, but I *haven't* been on the travelled road, and I *ain't* goin' to town, and I *am* tryin' to get away to stay. But first I must go to your mother."

Beauchamp shook his head.

"For the Lord's sake, just you tell me how to get across this river. I tell you I'm goin' to try to get to Beech Knoll, and I shan't go back to Wyndham's, not if I drown in the river — not if I am chased by dogs — not if I am taken to jail — not if I am whipped."

"Why, Sally, what has happened? Your eyes look wild. What has raised this fury?"

"Mass' Beecham, there's things not to be spoken of—

things that make you mad — things that you *must* run from — things you'd be torn in pieces for. Don't stop me. I've waited for *you*. I knew you were at the party. I trust you. Now help me over, or I will jump into the river."

The fierce intensity of her expression showed Beauchamp that she might do just what she said. He meditated a moment, and then said, —

"Sally, to go through the town will certainly be dangerous for you, at any time of day, and you must expect to be pursued. Keep down the river bank this side for about a mile, then cross the stone bridge over the dead creek, and you will get round the town, and not have to cross the river at all. I won't ask you any more questions. Go your way. You can trust me, as you say, and you can trust my mother. But don't be seen by anybody, no matter how long you are in getting to our house."

Sally sprang out of the road, and was lost in the bushes, creeping and crouching among them like a hunted doe.

Beauchamp went on to the town greatly wondering.

CHAPTER VIII.

MILLY ESCAPES BEING SOLD.

WHEN Beauchamp got to town, as he was passing by the Court House he saw his mother's horse hitched to the rack, and going into the clerk's office he found Scipio sitting gravely near the fire. Fearing that something had gone amiss, he inquired what he had come for.

Scipio smiled and grinned, and then said, "Young massa want to know eberyting."

"Is mother well?"

"O, yes, Miss' Mildred, she well an' peart."

"Did she want anything?"

"No, Mass' Beecham, but ol' Scip, he want som'n. Rheumatiz powerful bad. Got roots an' barks an' leaves, and want some whiskey to soak 'em."

"You miserable old toper," said Beauchamp, laughing inwardly. "And so you've come to town for whiskey? Do they sell whiskey at the Court House?"

"Don't be hard on poor ol' nigger, Mass' Beecham! You know de tahvuns, dey won't sell ol' Scip any whiskey; so I come to Mass' Joe Heady—he always good to ol' Scip—an' beg him to get jes' a little; on'y for the barks, an' de leaves, an' de roots, massa."

"So you are keeping the clerk's office while he goes out to get you a bottle of whiskey! Well, upon my word, you are well set to work, both of you!"

Just then Mr. Heady, the clerk, returned, and gave a bottle to Scipio, who, with a profusion of bows, and good wishes, and blessings, backed out of the door, and getting into the saddle, started for home.

Mr. Heady took his friend's banter good-naturedly, and said that an old and faithful, trusty negro, like Scipio, ought not to suffer, if a pint of whiskey would make him happy. He went on to say how jolly the old fellow was, and how he had told stories of the old times, both of the Headys and the Russells, and then laughingly added, "He looked over everything in the office with the gravity of an old monkey, inquired what the books were, and what they were for; what all the pigeon-holes were for; an' 'de Lord's sakes,' what so many papers were for. Then he asked about 'de big machine,' meaning the hand-press with the county seal. I told him that that had to be put on every paper to make it lawful; and then he wondered again, with his 'ge-mently! Mass' Joe,' or 'Laws a massy!' So he went through with everything down to the blotting pad, pens, and eraser. Finally I was glad to go and get his whiskey to get shut of him."

"O, it's all proper," said Beauchamp. "I didn't come to call you to account; but as I saw the horse, I was afraid something might have happened, and so came in to inquire. Good morning, Joe. When you are old, and want a pint of whiskey to make some bitters, I hope somebody will be as good to you."

The services of the assistant teacher were not required in school that day, and Beauchamp went to the law office to renew his incursions into the province he intended to overrun. He had some difficulty in fixing in his mind the doctrine of "contingent remainders," for the living problems of the present day were so much more vivid

and interesting. He thought of the chances of saving Milly and her children; then, how he was going to manage to pay his uncle Ralph, when the draft came back protested; then, how it was that Adams had been so suddenly successful, and had so much money; how it was that a self-seeking, cold-blooded — But he reflected that *she* couldn't know what the man really was, since women only knew women, and men, men; and, perhaps, she didn't, after all. And so, drifting away, away from "contingent remainders" by whatever current of thought or feeling, he always arrived at the same haven. No, it was not a haven, for it was open on all sides to winds of doubt and fear, and he could not anchor. But whatever else was true, this was true, he was sure: that she had the finest figure, the loveliest face, the most captivating eyes, and the most musical voice in the world. Then the notion of the province to be subjugated, and the warnings of the princess, returned; then the straying off through devious ways, to end as before. And so *da capo*.

He laid down his book and walked into the square. There was nothing stirring, not even a spoon in the red-eyed tavern. Aloysius Pittsinger, in the adjacent shop, was nodding over his account book. All the young people had gone to bed, or were lounging, and stretching, and yawning. The pigs had the streets to themselves. But a horseman soon appeared in the square. It was Dr. Rhodes, a medical practitioner of doubtful repute, whom Beauchamp knew to be deplorably ignorant, and believed to be as destitute of good feeling as he was of courtesy. He called out to Beauchamp, who thereupon stopped to hear what he had to say.

"I say, Beecham, that's a tough case up there at Tom Fleemister's. Free Milly, you know. She takes on mighty bad. Says she wants to see you — must see you before she dies."

"Before she dies! Is Milly so sick as that? What is the matter?"

"O, you can't tell about these old women, black or white. They take up strange ideas. She talks and raves about her children — as if they wan't goin' to be better off to have good masters, than to be starvin' over in Indianny. She says she's goin' to die, then goes into highsterics; and I'll be derved if I don't reckon she *will* die."

"Poor old Milly! As her trouble is mental, you couldn't do anything for her."

"Do anything for her? I reckon I did. I flung in the old gray" (an elegant term for calomel), "enough to fix *her*. She won't have the highsterics no more, anyhow; but her teeth'll rattle, 'fore many days, like the keys of a pianny."

Concealing his rage and disgust as well as he could, Beauchamp inquired if Tom Fleemister knew of Milly's desire to have him go to see her, and if Tom was willing.

"O, yes! Tom's no objections; not if you go alone, and don't make no disturbance. If you want to see the ol' woman you'd better go soon. She *may* live to git over it, and she *may not*."

Beauchamp gave his thanks for the message, and as soon as he had eaten a morsel, and attended to the wants of his horse, he started off.

He arrived at Fleemister's some time before sundown, and rode directly up to the door. The sound of the horse's hoofs had been heard, and Tom came out. Beauchamp dismounted, and in a friendly tone saluted "the master of the house," as we are accustomed to say. But what a house, and what a master! Tom was civil enough, after his surly and stolid fashion, but was not disposed to waste words. Beauchamp inquired where

his brother Jack was, and was told that he was staying at Wyndham's. Beauchamp instantly conjectured that Jack was employed there to guard the captive children of Milly; and as he was, if possible, more brutal and more evil than Tom, there might be a sufficient reason for Sally's fury and her desperate attempt to escape.

"Mr. Fleemister," he said, with a studied attempt to be polite, "Dr. Rhodes brought me word that Milly, who formerly belonged to my uncle Isham, and who lived at our house when I was an infant, is now very sick, and wants to see me. Can I go in and see her?"

"I reckon," said Tom, opening the door. Beauchamp entered and looked around the half-lighted room. Mrs. Cad, sitting by the chimney corner, had her youngest on her knee. The other children were scattered about, some sitting on the edge of the bed, some on the table, and some lounging against the lower rounds of the ladder that was used to reach the loft. The bewildering array of dirty-white heads, grimy faces, and soiled and torn clothes, all of one bad pattern, and the numberless wild and curious eyes that were fixed upon him, formed a picture of a human menagerie undreamed of by showman or missionary. On the floor, a little way back from the fire, was spread something that served for a bed, and there poor Milly lay dying. A mother not widowed, but husbandless. Once freed by the tardy repentance of a dying master, and sent away like Hagar (but with a better provision for her Ishmaels), and now torn from her new home, and watched by human brutes, without decent care of nurse or doctor, without the solace of children or the prayers and kindly words for which her parting soul longed. Death is terrible even when all is done to comfort the sufferer; when children and friends are present with love and sympathy; and when faith

reaches through the gloom to the brightness beyond. But for this miserable woman, after a time of comparative ease in a state of freedom, while full of hope for the future of her children, to be seized and thrown back into the house of bondage, and to know that her children and children's children were doomed to a life without hope, — and for her now to lie stretched on the floor of a wretched hovel, about to die without any sure hope in the divine mercy, this was a heaping up of suffering, terror, and despair.

Beauchamp drew near, and sat down beside her in a low chair, and waited a moment for her to speak. He was quite astonished to see the change that had come over her, — shown in the thin and pinched lines about her mouth, her sunken cheeks, and her doleful large eyes. She looked at him steadily. He spoke kindly, and asked if he could do anything for her.

"Not much," she said. "I am going where you can't help me, nor anybody but the great Master. I would like to talk, but don't know how long I can hold out. I didn't look to die here, this way. I did hope to see the children once more. They've taken away the little ones this day. Harry is a good boy, an' stout an' brave; he'll look out for himself: but poor Sally — a lamb amongst wolves."

These words were uttered in most pathetic tones, and were accompanied by looks of utter anguish; but there were no tears. It seemed as if the blessed fountains of tears had been dried, and the eyelids scorched, by the fever within.

"Promise me, Mass' Beecham, that you will be friend to my children. I know you can't buy 'em, nor stop their bein' sold; but you may do something to help 'em. I shall die happier to know they've one friend."

Beauchamp, with choking voice, gave the promise.

"You see, young massa, if it's hard for free people to be good, how much worse for slave! I had hoped for my Sally, and for the little Fanny," — here she gasped, and gave a look that was beyond speech, — "but when a woman can't be her own mistress! O, Mass' Beecham, you see, by what I would have Sally be, what I would 'a been. People know what the poor slave *does*; they don't know what she *would* do, nor how much evil and sin she runs away from. The good God knows, and he will forgive."

Her breath was evidently failing, and a strange fluttering showed itself in the pulsations in her neck. But she kept on at intervals.

"It seems only yesterday since I held your little head to my bosom. You nestled there 'long with my Berty. Think as well as you can of your poor ol' black mammy; bad as she has been, she'd give her blood for you —

"There's two men who have sworn the lies. Bend your head nearer."

He did so, and she spoke a few words in a low tone in his ear.

"Remember this. The Lord may change their hearts, and so you come to your own again. — That doctor," — and she shuddered as she spoke, — "so rough, so cruel, ugh! I *told* him I didn't want any medicine. There's nothing for a slave mother's troubles in his saddle-bags. 'Fore God, Mass' Beecham, he's hurried me out the world. But a day sooner, a day later, it's all the same. O, my Bertram, if I could once see you! No, you shouldn't see your mother *here*. You'll never know that she slept in a stable on straw."

"But the Lord of Glory was born in a stable," said Beauchamp.

"Yes, I know. Bow your head once more." Again

she spoke in a low and inaudible tone. "Tell Wyndham *that*, if he should ever catch Berty and offer to sell him. All the black thoughts go, when you come to die, Mass' Beecham. I was mad when I said I would murder and burn. You 'member in the ol' stable, that night. And then I *would* 'a killed somebody. But it goes by like the storm, and the peace comes and you forgive, 'cause you have so much yourself to be forgiven. Kneel down, — won't you? — and say the Lord's Prayer. It grows dark *here*, but up there it's all light."

Beauchamp knelt down, unconscious of the curiosity his movement excited among the swarming little heathen around him, — unconscious of Cad's contempt, and of Tom's sullen wrath at his long stay. He repeated the Lord's Prayer fervently, and then took hold of the black mammy's hand. There was no *will* in it. During the petition, the poor soul had gone with its burden of sins and sorrows to the Creator.

Beauchamp rose up solemnly, and simply said, "She is dead." There was a low murmur, and half-frightened glances were cast upon the body.

"Slipped out just in time," said Tom. "The court sits on the case Monday."

"Her case has been carried to a higher court," said Beauchamp.

"An' how's we to be paid for her keep?" inquired Cad, with an injured air. "We was to have some'n from the sale; now she's dead, an' we don't get nothin', an' have the trouble of buryin' her besides."

"For her 'keep,' you will have to look to the one who put her in your charge. I will attend to burying her myself. Let the body remain where it is; it can't harm any of you now; and I will send a coffin early in the morning and make you no further trouble."

Tom "allowed" that Cad and the children couldn't sleep in the room with a "dead nigger," but was persuaded finally to submit to what was inevitable, and to let the body remain undisturbed for the night.

It was after sundown when Beauchamp started. He rode to town at a quick pace, gave an order for a coffin, and then went home. He found his mother waiting for him.

"What *has* kept you so late, Beauchamp?" she asked. "And what ails you, my dear boy? What has happened? You are pale and tired, and your eyes are red. Are you in trouble? or have you had a quarrel?"

"My dear little mother," said Beauchamp, "you just get Sylvia or Phillis to set me some supper, and I'll tell you all about it."

When Mrs. Russell resumed her seat, he began:—

"I'm not in trouble on my own account, and I've not had any quarrel; but I should like to have one, if it would do any good. I've just come from Fleemister's and have seen Milly, my poor black mammy, breathe her last."

"Milly dead!"

"Yes, dead; dead from grief, dead from chill of soul and body, dead from hunger and neglect, dead from the loathing of the crawling beings that caught and held her, and, lastly, dead from the murderous treatment of a brute that calls himself doctor."

The long strain upon his sympathy during the day had been rather too much for him, and his faculties had an unnatural activity, giving to his speech a rhythmical and oratorical tone that seems affected only to those who have never experienced the glow and the thrill that go with it.

"How excited you are, Beauchamp! I'm afraid your wits are unsettled."

"No, mother, not unsettled; but I'm all alive with one

tremendous feeling of wrath. That woman was *murdered*, as surely as though she had been stabbed or strangled. Wyndham is a murderer. Those vile Fleemisters are murderers. And Dr. Rhodes is an accomplice."

He spoke with rising energy, and in his excitement did not notice that Aunt Phillis, who was bringing in a teatray, had probably heard every word he said.

He repressed his emotion, and sat down to eat some supper. After a while he said, "Mother, I believe the hearing on the petition to sell Milly's children takes place on Monday. Fleemister had carried away the twins, Tim and Fanny; I presume to Wyndham's. There'll be, besides, Harry and Sally —"

He suddenly recollected the meeting by the river-side in the morning, and wondered if Sally had been seen. He thought it best to ask his mother, and found to his great surprise that she had not been at Beech Knoll, and that nothing had been heard of her. He then detailed the conversation he had with her, and added that he felt sure what her intention was; and, since she had not come, he feared she must have been caught, unless she was lying concealed because she found scouts were out after her. Here was a new source of perplexity, but whatever the case might be, no aid could be given her; she would have to work out her own escape, or take the inevitable consequences of capture. One thing was saved to him; he would not have to tell her of her mother's death, and he almost hoped she would not appear until after the body was buried.

It occurred to Mrs. Russell to inquire of the servants as to whether they had seen or heard of Sally. Scipio was first called on, and answered in the negative so decidedly that he was not cross-examined. Sylvia made similar replies. Phillis declared she did not know where

Sally was. Upon being asked whether she had seen her, she said, "Yes, smany time." "But has she been here?" "No, mass'; not here." "I don't mean in this room, but here, on the place?" "No, massa." "I think you know where she is." "No, massa." "Have you seen her to-day?" "Well, Mass' Beacham, smany col'd women go 'long s'road; smaybe Sally go too."

By this time Beauchamp was sure that Phillis had met Sally, and had probably secreted her; and then it occurred to him that it was better so, — that if inquiry were made, as was quite sure to be the case, it would be better for him, and especially for his mother, to be able to say with truth that they did not know her whereabouts, and had not seen her. Therefore he concluded it would be discreet to let the matter drop.

Aunt Phillis then inquired about the death of Milly, and being told in general terms, she exhibited more emotion than was usually seen on her withered face. She wiped the tears from her eyes with her apron, and returned to the kitchen. For a long time afterwards mournful sounds were heard. It seemed that the servants were repeating passages of Scripture, particularly from the prophets (whose bold images so strongly affect impressible minds), alternating with prayers and lamentations, until their feelings could find no fit expression but in song; and then the doleful hymns were heard, sung with passionate emphasis, — such as "The Hebrew Children," with its interminable stanzas, and that literal picture of Judgment scenes which the negroes call "The Long White Robe." *

* This last hymn does not "begin at the beginning." At the start it appears to be a continuation of something that has just been sung, and it is easy to see that it might go on (with variations) without end. The line, "Crying, Oh Lord, &c.," was rendered much according to the feeling of the

Beauchamp was tired enough, but he was excited too, and he could not sleep. It seemed to him that the singing in the kitchen lasted all night. Nature had its way at last, and he sank into fitful and unquiet slumber. But the thoughts and events of the day still ruled his mind,

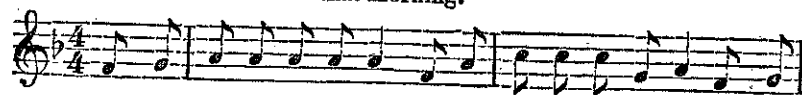
moment. The exclamation "Oh" was sung with a *twist* which musical notes cannot express.

"And the preachers on that day,
They will shout and fly away
When they hear the trumpet sound
In that morning; —
Crying, Oh Lord!
See how I long for to go, my Lord,
To wear the long white robe
In that morning."

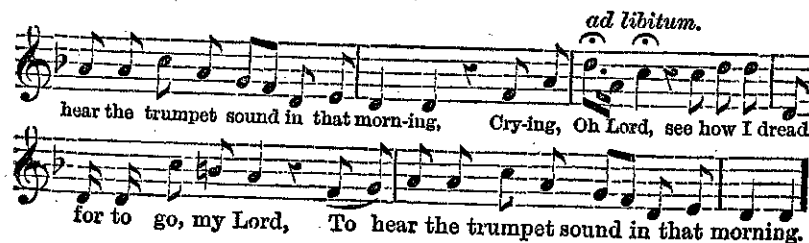
The "brothers" and "sisters" are introduced in the next stanzas. Then come the "sinners": —

"And the sinners in that day,
They will flock and fly away
When they hear the trumpet sound
In that morning; —
Crying, Oh Lord!
See how I dread for to go, my Lord,
To hear the trumpet sound
In that morning."

Chorus Da Capo. For I really don't believe,
And I cannot now believe,
They will wear the long white robe
In that morning.



And the sinners in that day, They will flock and fly away, When they hear the trumpet sound in that morning; — Crying, Oh Lord, see how I dread for to go, my Lord, To hear the trumpet sound in that morning.



and everything was acted over in strange and distorted guise. Milly was sold on the auction block and delivered to her purchaser a corpse. Van Holm confessed his perjury, and Miss Wyndham offered to make restitution. Bertram was captured in the disguise of a beggar, and was bought in by Wyndham after Phillis had whispered a word in the old gentleman's ear. Fleemister was digging a grave for Milly near the garden at Beech Knoll, when a voice from under the catalpa tree called him "liar" and "villain," and he dropped his spade and ran away. Sally was struggling against the violence of Jack Fleemister, when old Phillis thrust a charm into his face, and he was changed to Tom's lean and evil dog Tiger, and Sally was spirited away. Miss Shelburne appeared only as a spectator in these scenes, and with all his efforts Beauchamp could not get near enough to speak to her, because her uncle, Squire Hamilton, always interposed his broad bulk. His uncle Ralph sat in the fork of a tree and laughed. Then Milly was buried, and the negroes sang round the grave, —

"And we'll all wear the long white robe
In that morning."

This part of it was true, for Beauchamp was awake, and the dismal tune was sounding from the kitchen. So the night passed.

CHAPTER IX.

VISIONS.

THE Sunday came with an unusual solemnity. The events of the preceding day had affected the family deeply, and none went out to church, not even the indefatigable Scipio. Beauchamp bethought him of his New Testament, and spent most of the day in trying to recover something of the little Greek he had once learned, by reading a Gospel in the original, with the aid of the Latin version, printed on opposite pages. It was not quite an act of worship, because it required some effort to perceive the evangelist's meaning through two languages, neither of which was perfectly transparent to him. But the exercise occupied his mind, and the train of thought it suggested accorded with the piety which his mother had early instilled into his mind, and which had been newly awakened by his prayer with the dying Milly.

In the afternoon the coffin came, and a grave was dug near the garden line. By twos and threes the colored people came from town, and from the near plantations, until there were fifty at least. One of their number, who was accustomed to lead in exhortation and prayer at their meetings, conducted the services. Beauchamp and his mother walked out through the garden, and witnessed the ceremony. The prayer was touching, from its simple and scriptural style. It was, in fact, a kind of mosaic of apposite texts, not always correctly quoted, but which

formed a strong, consistent, and often poetic whole. Beauchamp could not but feel how powerfully (though perhaps unconsciously) this uneducated black man had put the case of his people before the merciful Creator, by referring to the responsibility for their sins and shortcomings which their masters, by the fact of ownership, had assumed. All the familiar phrases of "breaking the yokes," "undoing the heavy burdens," and "letting the oppressed go free," were wrought into his appeal; and after depicting the sufferings of the deceased Milly, he thanked God that she had found rest — that when God saw the burden was more than she could bear, he had taken her away and set her free in his own home — that she had gone before she had the pain of seeing her children taken from her and scattered — that though no children closed her dying eyes, she had one powerful friend who comforted her, and who "took her by de hand jest in season to gib it into de hand ob de blessed Jesus, who was waitin' dere, eben in dat mean cabin, to take it, and lead her, all pardoned and sanctified, into glory." Then he prayed with great fervor, and in a long series of petitions, for Beauchamp and his mother, and at every pause the *amens* of the company showed the current of their sympathy. The prayer at length came to an end, and the lid of the coffin was unscrewed. All looked their last upon the strangely regular features, once so comely; they were now thin, but they wore an expression that went far to justify the bold figure used in the prayer. The coffin was lowered and the earth was thrown in upon it, but not before Phillis had cast upon the lid a small bunch of herbs or flowers. As the simple service ended, the setting sun came with level beams through the locust trees, and in a moment touched the horizon, and then sank from view.

"I am de Resurrection and de Life," said the black preacher, solemnly; "and as dat sun, now gone down, shall to-morrow rise in de east and light de world, so a'ter de night ob de grave, de soul ob de just shall rise and shine in de new day dat shall never end. Amen."

The evening passed as the day had done, but nothing was heard of Sally. The singing and praying were kept up in the kitchen until after midnight.

In the morning Beauchamp walked into town and heard some classes in school. At noon he went over to the Court House with his counsel, Squire Hamilton, to attend the hearing. There were but few persons present in the Court Room. Mr. Wyndham was there, of course; a sedate looking, dark-complexioned man, with a chin deeply blue from the roots of his thickly-sown beard. Beauchamp observed him more closely than he had done before, and saw where the handsome brunette got the imperious lines in her face. Mr. Adams, the junior in the case, smiled pleasantly at Beauchamp, and tried to assume a professional air, as though the case interested him solely in its legal aspects. The "following" was on hand, as it always was. Mr. Wyndham never had a case in court, no matter how trivial, but the Fleemisters, Van Holm, and Houghton were to be seen in attendance, or within call. Dr. Rhodes was there also, full of whiskey to his swimming eyes, and looking on with an expression which Beauchamp thought was somewhere between that of Silenus and Satan. On the other side were Beauchamp and his counsel, Squire Hamilton, only.

It would not interest the reader to enter into the details of the proceedings; it is enough to say that the case was not decided, but was continued on the suggestion that the petitioner had not shown that he had exhausted all other remedy, and that until all the other

property lately belonging to Randolph Russell, not in the hands of innocent third parties, had been taken and sold, the court could not pronounce a decree to make void a *bona fide* manumission, and order the persons that were made free to be sold for their master's debts.

Squire Hamilton said to Beauchamp, "I have done what you and your uncle wanted done, but it's not accordin' to my judgment. You'd better let the niggers go. I know it's hard for 'em; at least they think so, as they've been free a while. But you are just puttin' a stick into Wyndham's hands for him to beat you with, and, my word, he'll use it. There's Scipio and Phillis first. Those he left, I 'spose he'll say, out of consideration for your mother, though the truth was, he thought they wouldn't bring much. Now he'll have them sold. Then there's your equity of redemption."

"I have sold that equity to uncle Ralph."

"But he might demand to set your sale aside."

"That's true; but it would take time, and he'll find uncle Ralph a hard man to fight."

"Let's see; the young one, Sylvia, belongs to your uncle, don't she?"

"Yes; we own only Scipio and Phillis, and I think I can get uncle Ralph to advance me enough to bid them in. They'll not bring much; they're both old, and nobody wants them; besides, unless Wyndham buys them himself, there are not many of our neighbors who are unfriendly enough to bid against me, if I show that I mean to have them."

"Well, you buy 'em in, we'll say, and what they bring isn't a primin'. In three months there's another term, and *then* he'll get his decree, and meanwhile the young niggers will have to lie in jail."

"But in three months a great many things may happen."

"O, I know, it's the hope that something'll turn up. Nothing ever does turn up. You make yourself trouble, and cost, and expense just for a notion — a notion about your black mammy's mongrel brats. Now, Beauchamp, I am your old friend, and I know you've the good principles of a Kentuckian along with your good blood. But there will be those who will say you are at heart an abolitionist. Look out for that, young man. You've taken hold o' law now, and you hope to rise. Now, the first idea of law is property. And what the law makes property, that *is* property. If you take these new northern ideas, you might as well shut up your books, and go off where you'll live on salt codfish. I warn you, young man, in time. This community, this state, an' the nation, ain't goin' to stand the abolitionists much longer; and if you don't show yourself *clare* against 'em, I wouldn't stand in your skin a day."

The squire almost fancied himself on the stump as the sentences came rolling out, and the tone grew higher and higher.

"Squire Hamilton, you were my father's friend, and I believe you are mine. I don't need to defend myself to you. I am glad you assure me of that. I am not an abolitionist. I stand by my people and my state, as I've always said. But I have some feelings about poor Milly's children that I can't explain to you now — and, perhaps, some knowledge that you haven't; and if I can save them from being sold, I'm going to do it. I shall *try*, anyhow. And this is a matter about which I have a right to judge for myself, and decide what I ought to do, if every man in the county was against me. But they can't be against me. I'll defy the most ignorant or the most drunken

crowd that ever got about the Court House on 'nigger election' to hear the case as I should know how to put it, and not give me their cheers."

"Well, Beauchamp, I honor your pluck, and I hope everything'll turn out as you wish. But, remember, if you're to be a lawyer, you must be on the side of property and order; keep on the safe side of things established; stand by the old paths; stick to precedents, and damn all theorizing."

"Like the precedents that the Declaration of Independence starts off with, for instance."

"That was a horse of another color. That was a white folks' revolution. It was a white folks' constitution they made, and the laws are for white folks; and, by G—, this is a white man's government."

The squire's huge frame dilated with his rising feeling, and his massive features gleamed with an intense expression, which was very much like wrath. Beauchamp did not care to provoke his counsel and preceptor, and assured him that, as far as he was concerned, the foundations were safe from any attempt to upturn them.

Beauchamp went to the office and began anew the subjugation of the province he had taken in hand, with all his might. The day passed without incident, and when it was near dark, he called for Arthur Howard to go out with him and spend the night, as the house had been rather gloomy. He was glad that Howard had not been at the Court House at the hearing, as he might during the noon recess of the school; for he knew something of the prejudices that existed against him, in common with all northerners, and he was anxious that his friend should not be needlessly compromised by showing interest in a topic upon which the community was so sensitive and excitable.

They walked out to Beech Knoll, and after supper took their "cloud-compellers," and sat by the broad open fireplace. When Beauchamp called for wood to replenish the fire, it was brought in by Sylvia. He did not notice this until he had called the second time; and then, when Sylvia again came with the light wood to make a cheerful blaze, he inquired for Scipio, and was told that he had gone out for the evening. Mrs. Russell retired early, and left the young men together.

Beauchamp's mind had been greatly impressed by the death scene he had witnessed on Saturday, and as he painted it to Howard, he mentioned all the particulars he had observed as the end drew near, — the dry eyes, the heaving chest, the stiffening lines about the mouth, and the fluttering motion of the arteries of her neck. While this was going on, he saw his whole life in perspective.

"My first dim recollections are of my black mammy," he said. "Her son Bertram was of my age, born the same week; and I presume we were often rocked in the same cradle, and when we were older, we rolled together on the carpets in the house, or on the mats in the kitchen. We were nursed by the same bosom, we ate out of the same dishes, and were tossed and dandled on the same knees. We explored the closets together for cake, and sweetmeats, and sugar, and played with the puppies by the kennel. My father was a handsome person to remember, gracious and kindly, and my mother, as you know, is all sweetness and serenity. I am proud of being the son of such a man and woman; but all the vague and indistinct memories of childhood, and of infantile delights, are associated with the woman whom I saw die, and with her son, my foster-brother and play-fellow. As we grew up, the difference in our condition began to separate us. The books and the school were

for me, not for him. Let him be what he would, he must be a nigger still. He was to do the little errands and tasks fitted to his age, while I was allowed to do what I pleased. I had the gay suits which a fond mother delighted in, while he was dressed in linsey or tow breeches. But he learned his letters as soon as I, and I found when he was ten years old, that though he had had no training and very little help, he was able to read very well, and had what we should call a very good start. He was very handsome, only slightly olive in color, and was robust and well formed for his age. I don't know much about him since he went to Indiana, only that I have heard he went south as servant to an army officer, and from there he escaped, and went, probably, to Texas. Poor fellow, he little imagines what his mother has suffered, and what his brothers and sisters have to go through!

"While I was sitting beside Milly, my life seemed to me like a series of pictures, each enclosed in the other, and then one projecting beyond the other in space, like the parts of a telescope, until at the farther end of the vista I saw myself, a white baby, playing, and cackling, and crowing beside a yellow baby on Milly's knee. Then, nearer, each successive year of my growth, after the manner I have told you, was represented, until I came to my stature of a man, and then found myself face to face with the black mammy on her death-bed. So, by a scarcely noticed effort of will, my telescope stretched out or shut up, and when my mind rested, each epoch of my life was enclosed, one within another, like the carved hollow ivory globes which the Chinese make for toys.

"I have been obliged to spin this curious experience out; for, though my faculties took cognizance of all that I have told you, and of a hundred thousand details more,—even to the taste of the sweetmeats, the odor

of our garden lilacs, the characteristic faces of the dogs, and of every article of kitchen ware,—the whole series of reminiscences seemed to be perceived with one single backward glance.

"I suppose you think it strange that I have talked so much about a poor old negro woman. Most young men, as my uncle Ralph says, would have the same feeling for her they would have for an old favorite cow. I know she's nothing but a nigger (though I rather hate that word), and Berty's nothing but a nigger, wherever he is. But he was my playmate, and I cannot help thinking he's a little nearer our flesh and blood than those black and stupid creatures that were *made* for slaves."

There was a slight but distinct sound at this moment which seemed to be near, but which could not be certainly located—a sound like the creak of a door, and a hollow, echoing footfall. Both started, but after a moment all was still, and the sound was attributed to some action of the wind in the unoccupied portion of the house.

"I have an experience somewhat similar," said Howard, "and I wish I could give you an idea of it as it came to me. But there is a swiftness in thought that astonishes and still eludes us, and the most vivid conception frequently fades before you can hold it long enough to fix its evanescent hues in your memory. I will try to tell you what I saw; for I saw it as really as we both saw your mother just now.

"My dear father had suddenly died while I was away from home. I got to the house in season for the funeral, and saw the serene and venerable features of the good man in his last sleep. He seemed *only* asleep, for his eyelids were gently closed, and there was a beautiful, soft flush on his cheeks. The village and country people had come to bury him. The genuine sorrow of these

unpolished but warm-hearted neighbors was exquisitely touching to me; I felt it stinging through my own deeper grief, until I could not bear to look upon the good, homely, honest faces around me. Eight men were chosen as pall-bearers, most of them seventy years and upwards; and these affectionate friends would not have the hearse used, but carried the coffin, four or six at a time, to the graveyard.

— "I saw the scene in three flashes, quick and successive; but *what* I saw will require a little time to tell you.

— "I must premise that as a child I had always thought of death as something far away. I knew, of course, that young people died; but I had settled it that my life was to be lived out to the farthest verge; and were not my father and grandfather both between me and the great enemy? When my grandfather died, I had something of a shock; but I held out stoutly, for my father remained strong in his declining years, and placid as the evening of an autumn day. Now he lay *there*!

— "I saw an immense landscape in morning light, bounded only by hills whose tops were purple mist; and in the portion in which I was there were children playing, gathering wild flowers, and sailing mimic boats upon a stream. The bland air was all perfume, and its repose was stirred only by the songs of birds and the merry laughter of children. Sounds from afar at times reached us (for I was a child) that jarred upon our ears, and awakened a sudden apprehension. It was as if we were in safety ourselves, but vaguely feared that tumult and peril were not far off. I saw a region at some distance where serious and mature men were gathered, and from thence heard notes of martial music, now joyful and now funereal, — never a complete strain, but only chords and

suggestions. It sounded like the far heard music of a battle-field. Beyond was a thin line of gray and bent veterans, on the very verge of the landscape. What was beyond *them* the eye could not pierce: it was a cloud of mystery and terror. Out of it seemed to come shafts, — though we saw effects rather than causes, — and one after another these white-bearded warriors fell, until at length all had vanished, like a column of mist along the horizon, torn and rent, and then dissipated in air by wind and sun.

— "It was noon, and I was among the serious and mature men. The flowers and sports of children were forgotten. We toiled and marched, and strove and defended; but every now and then arrows came over upon us, as though falling in vast aerial curves, and our numbers lessened. The music was near, painfully near; for I could hear that its piercing tones and brazen clang only covered the cries of stricken men, and the laments of broken hearts. Still we kept cheerily together, and pressed on, though the unspeakable horror beyond seemed nearer, darker, and soul-chilling. The music slowly faded from hearing, and only sullen drum-beats reached us. All the while I saw the thin line that was now next before us, torn and rent and dissipated as the first had been.

— "The day was wearing away. I was weary, and longed for night and rest. I was thirsty, and when I saw a pool, I stooped for water; and there, as in a mirror, I saw — Great Heaven! — not *my* childish face, but the wrinkled, care-worn face of an old man, with a beard like thistle-down, and long, thin, gray locks hanging over my bent shoulders. I looked up. I was in the front rank, ALONE!

"These pictures had passed through my consciousness as a rocket cleaves the air; and before I could say so much as a word, the long train of fire had swept its high

course, the cool blue had closed behind it, and it was as though it had never been."

Beauchamp had never seen his friend so much excited. He told his mental experience with the heightened color and moist eyes that showed how deeply the poetical image had been impressed in his mind. Both felt what Shelley calls —

"Solemn midnight's tingling silentness,"

and did not speak for several minutes.

The sound that startled them earlier in the evening was suddenly repeated. There was a creak as of a door, a footfall, and then a heavier noise as of something falling.

"It is singular," said Beauchamp, "about those noises. They may be caused by the wind, but they don't sound like it. I'm going to investigate."

He took a candle, and went into the hall and up the broad stairs, and then into the rooms on the west side, from which the sound appeared to come. Mr. Howard went up with him. The rooms were deserted, and the windows were broken, so that the candles flared in the currents of air. Dust and silence, nothing else. They walked through that portion of the house, and examined everything carefully, but saw nothing which they thought could have occasioned the noise. The bare floors and large empty spaces made sounding echoes to their footsteps, and that was all. They returned to the sitting-room, and resumed their places by the fire. They chatted, without further interruption, upon school-keeping, law,—Wyndham, Fleemister, Adams, and Squire Hamilton; and then by a natural transition discussed the supposed character of Miss Adelaide Shelburne, as though she were an algebraic "unknown quantity," until Howard declared himself sleepy; upon which both went to bed. All was

quiet during the night; only Howard declared in the morning, that, not long after he had got to his room, he heard the great gate at the farther end of the lane swing to and latch.

After breakfast, as Scipio did not show himself, Beauchamp went out to the kitchen and inquired of Phillis what had become of him. She answered at once that he had run away, and was by that time in a free state. Beauchamp was surprised at first, and then laughed heartily; for Scipio was old and totally ignorant, and the thought of his attempting to get away was only ludicrous. He declared he would not attempt to pursue him, but let him run until he got tired, when he would be sure to come back. Mrs. Russell said she had given him a pass for his protection, on Saturday, which was good until Monday morning. But that, Beauchamp knew, was not worth anything on any later day, nor out of the county; and Scipio must have something else to depend upon if he travelled on the main road. However, Beauchamp did not trouble himself about the matter, for he expected in a few days to see the old fellow skulking home like a scolded hound.

So the friends walked into town to attend to the school.

CHAPTER X.

MISS SHELBURNE'S POLICY.

SQUIRE HAMILTON lived in a substantial brick house on one side of the town, and in his homely but profuse way entertained a great deal of company. His manners and speech, as we have seen, were blunt and downright; but the most studied politeness would not have procured him so much business or so much consideration in the county as he enjoyed; for people naturally thought a man who courted them so little must be both honest and independent. He was not a great lawyer, but he was a prudent, safe adviser, and he was a man in whom people had full confidence. He had his share of craft, too, and of the desire to manage and control, and to make the plans, and passions, and weaknesses of others serve his ulterior ends. Nothing like frankness as a mask for policy; nor is there any way, in this wicked world, to cover your purposes and veil your meaning in inscrutable mystery, comparable to blurting out the truth. The wicked world is not used to it.

Miss Adelaide Shelburne was the daughter of the squire's deceased sister. She was an orphan, just out of guardianship, and the owner of a fine estate in Herbleu County, where she resided. She was accustomed to visit her uncle Hamilton once a year; and when she arrived, there was a ripple in society that spread to the borders of the county. The young men all adored her, at greater

or lesser distances. Their papas all thought what a pretty daughter-in-law she would make. The matrons thought it was a pity such a gay young thing hadn't a good sensible mother to advise her. The young ladies thought her very stylish, quite pretty, in fact, but entirely too fond of admiration, and—if the truth *must* be spoken—rather heartless and inclined to flirt. Her cousins Betty and Malvina thought her beautiful, very learned, and, after the first fortnight, very tiresome. Her vivacity fatigued them. They were exemplary ladies, industrious from habit, famous housekeepers, skilful with the needle, patterns of all the domestic virtues, and no longer very young. But their sewing and mending, their pickles and preserves, their knitting and crochet-work, their neighborhood visits, and the Sunday services, comprised all their ideas of life. The sprightly cousin got tired of seeing only snowy linen, perfect needle-work, and thorough housekeeping. She would read an extract from a favorite author to them, and, unless it was short, Betty would ask Malvina, in the midst of the most touching or the most brilliant sentence, whether such a place should be gathered, or if it would be better plaited. Perhaps in the middle of a stanza of Childe Harold the preserves wanted stirring, or some bluing must be added to the starch for laces. At various times she tried to interest them in romances—in *Ivanhoe*, in *Guy Mannering*, and in the novels of Miss Austen. They listened, with composed faces, and showed not a ray of intelligence in their forget-me-not eyes. About Shakespeare they had as clear a conception as they had of Elder Graves's sermon on the Near End of the World, which was proved by calculations based on Daniel and Revelation. If Beauchamp had read them a chapter on "Contingent Remainders," they would have heard it with the same placid features, and

the same changeless color in their steady eyes. A couple of large, good-humored, perfectly proper, and worthy women. They made their father thoroughly comfortable, for they studied his needs and his tastes. He wanted nothing more of them. When he had done with his office, his pipe and his weekly newspaper furnished him all the amusement he desired, unless sometimes neighbors came in for a friendly game of whist. His talk was of the county affairs; — who was saving and gaining, and buying land, and who was selling a negro every year to pay his expenses; — who was attentive to the daughters of his wealthier clients, and whose landed estates would go naturally together. All that went on outside this narrow circle that made his world was a matter of indifference. One subject of national importance, however, engaged his attention, as we have seen in his late conversation with Beauchamp Russell. Authors, painters, poets, and composers, although he did not know any of those classes, he held in a passive kind of contempt. There was no money among such people; and only the successful farmers and capitalists, in his judgment, were entitled to respect. All the rest of mankind he thought were born to wait on them. A schoolmaster was a kind of upper servant, tolerated because he was useful. A preacher was only a little better.

There was no music in the house; and when Adelaide broke out unconsciously into song, as she frequently did, Miss Malvina reminded her that a cousin of hers had got "the consumption," and the doctors had said it was only her singing all the time that had "strained her breast." So the amusements were few, and a party like that we saw at Mr. Pierrepont's was a matter to be talked of for a year. There was no denying it: the cousins were so unlike, that they might as well have been of different

racings — each side ignorant of the language of the other. Adelaide, when her resources failed, fell into the depths of ennui, and the sisters wondered why she must always be so flighty, or else "in the dumps," and "down in the mouth."

Adelaide, who knew from previous experience how the time would drag when she got to her uncle Hamilton's, had provided a little stock of books for leisure hours. These she had at hand on a little table near the head of her bed, and evenings when the monotony below began to oppress her, she would retire to her room, and read herself to sleep. As the novelist knows everything, and could give full details even of the young lady's wardrobe, but will not, it may interest readers to know the names of the half dozen books considered indispensable by a well-educated miss of thirty years ago. They were *Ivanhoe*, *Milton's Minor Poems* (the minor here more attractive than the major), *Scott's Poems*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Childe Harold*, *Lalla Rookh*, *Pope* (a very fresh-looking copy), the *Scottish Chiefs*, and a few numbers of a queer, comical story, the *Posthumous Papers of The Pickwick Club*, by a new writer, called *Boz*.

Adelaide sat by the window one afternoon, her book in hand, but closed, except that a finger was thrust between the leaves where she had been reading. She had heard the horn with which the arrival of the tri-weekly stage was announced, and presently her uncle came into the house with a letter in his hand, his face beaming like the sunlit crest of a mountain.

"Now, puss," said he, "we must know all about it. Which of your beaux is this from? Answer before you break the seal. *Of course* you know the handwriting."

"Why, it *looks* like my uncle Shelburne's hand, only neater."

"So it does, to be sure. Why didn't I see that it

wasn't a young man's letter? He wouldn't have used a wafer now — would he? but wax, and with two hearts for a seal. And there isn't any flourish in the writing, or other sign of being in love; all plain and business-like. Well, puss, after you read it, tell us all the news. If he wants you to come home, you jest say we can't let you go yet."

Adelaide took the letter, and carelessly turned it over between her thumb and finger, toying with it without looking at it, until her uncle saw that she was not going to open it in his presence, and retreated to another room.

When the squire came back, as he did after a short time, there was a marked change in the looks of his niece. She sat in an easy chair with the open letter in her hand; her cheeks were covered with a deep glow, and her eyes were slightly dilated, and looking into vacancy. An unconscious foot, neatly slippered, and with narrow bands of black ribbon crossed over the instep, and around the ankle — a very pretty, old fashion it was, for a pretty foot — was visible beyond the folds of her dress; and its nervous movements showed how deeply her mind was absorbed in thought, and possessed by varying emotions.

The squire was curious, but he hesitated, and then stopped, as if he feared to intrude. His niece was the only person in his house that would not be managed. He had no faculty to cope with her. He did not understand her moods, and her gayety at times was as unaccountable as her pensiveness. Her replies were sometimes direct enough, and sometimes illusory. He failed to apprehend her meaning — as Matter might fail to comprehend Spirit. He used to say that her mind had as many coats as an onion, and that he never knew when he had got through the coverings of pretence. The figure was not quite

true, and the reader must not confound the retreating of the soul within itself with anything like falsity or deceit. Delicate and sensitive natures instinctively shun the contact of the grosser, and bar even the *looking at* their hearts' sanctuaries.

"Well, puss," said he, after he had attracted her attention, "you look troubled. No bad news, I hope."

She pressed her hand to her forehead, and made an attempt at a smile as she replied, "No, uncle, no bad news;" and then her face became serious again. He took a chair and sat down near her, crossing his legs and tossing his huge foot meditatively.

"Adelaide," he said, in a tone intended to be sympathetic and persuasive, "I don't want your confidence unless you choose to give it. But you're my dear sister's daughter, and if there's any matter of doubt or difficulty on your mind, you would naturally ask counsel from me. All things right on the farm? Nary nigger run away — has there? Or has uncle Shelburne got a beau for you?"

"I am tired of the talk about beaux, uncle," she said, somewhat pettishly.

"You may be tired of the talk, but you don't seem to be tired of the beaux. You always have a half a dozen, because you smile so mighty pretty on all alike, that each fellow's heart jumps into his mouth when you look at him."

"That is why I am a flirt, a coquette — is it?"

"Most likely. When a young man thinks that killing look of yours is *for him*, and then sees you throw it just as bright on the next one, he isn't pleased, naturally; he considers you a flirt when you scatter about what he wants to monopolize."

"When Pope said of his heroine, —

'Favors to none, to all she smiles extends,' —

he intended to be complimentary; and I'm sure, uncle,

that is all I do. But the poet's next line doesn't prove true : —

'Oft she rejects, but never once offends.'

It never could have been true. Pope didn't understand the case. I think the rejected *are* offended, and that they don't take any great pains to conceal it."

"Then why do you have so many of them buzzing around?"

"Merely a piece of strategy, uncle John. When they are numerous, they are always in one another's way, and I am more at liberty. If I had only one admirer, I should find it harder to keep him at a distance."

"So it's cavalry tactics, puss, making diversions all round, so as to conceal the position of the main force! And you *want* to keep them at a distance — do you?"

"Certainly. It has been in one way my chief study ever since I left school. From the time I was a little girl, I have been in an atmosphere of flattery. My nurses told me I was beautiful, and was to be an heiress. I remember that young men used to talk nonsense to me before I had done wearing bib-aprons."

"But you forget two things; first, that it is natural for the young men to admire you, and, next, that it is the destiny of all pretty girls to marry."

"I don't believe in destiny, uncle John. A girl takes up with a lover half against her will, persuaded by parents or friends, and then thinks it was her destiny. I think we fix our own destiny, and we shouldn't complain of Providence or fate, if the destiny doesn't please us."

"But, my pretty puss, I haven't proposed any beau to you. We've not one here good enough. Who there may be up in Herbleu County, I can't say. It's your uncle Shelburne's family that you're vexed with, not me, puss, not me."

"Of course I don't doubt your good intentions, nor uncle Shelburne's, but I have heard of but one subject, I might say, all my life, and that is my marriage. This has made me 'worldly,' as the preachers say. I think I have had no real childhood on account of my wealth, just as the poor have none, for their poverty. Every young man seems to suppose that I am ready with a smile to accept some offer, and his in particular. At home I have been talked to in behalf of, I can't say how many; I should think a dozen, at least. A farmer, a young doctor, two or three lawyers, and a melancholy preacher, who is a widower with three children, have offered themselves within a year. My relations, without my asking their advice, were always weighing and comparing these suitors, as if it were a matter of life and death for me to take up with one of them. It was partly for that reason that I came here for a time, to have the pleasure of being free from intrusion and importunity, to enjoy life in doors and out doors without encountering every few days some person who would have me believe that his fate is bound up in mine. In short, my dear uncle John, I do long for the bliss of being let alone. I am not old, and if I were, I am the only person to regret it. I love my books, and I should like to be as accomplished and wise as the sweet Lady Jane Gray. I like to be free to dwell in the privacy of my own thoughts. I love sunshine and calm; and the coming of these lovers brings clouds and storms. I love my liberty, and I mean to keep it."

She had risen up while she spoke, and the squire thought, as he had often thought before, there never was such a queenly girl, with such a proudly beautiful face — such a noble, frank character, with such a maidenly delicacy of feeling. Only he did not analyze the subject

of his admiration, but rather gave in his spontaneous homage in the lump. As he would have said, he "went his pile on her."

We shall see, hereafter, what she came to think of her policy towards her admirers.

"But *we* haven't persecuted you here—have we, puss?"

"I have no complaint to make, uncle John, of anything in particular. It is the general tone; it is the whole atmosphere I live in. If I am at a party, a gentleman thinks he shall please me best by what is called 'making love.' As if love could ever be *made*! And you and my cousins, every day and hour, speak in such a way as to give the impression that you think every thought and wish of mine were centred in getting a husband. It is the constant influence of this idea that has fretted me and made me old before my time. At twenty-one, I am afraid I feel more like thirty."

"Well, puss, by and by, when I and your other uncles get old and ready to drop off, you will need somebody to care for you, and to manage your property."

"Perhaps so, uncle; but don't you think it is the desire to 'manage my property' that prompts a good part of the attention paid to me? If I were a poor girl, should I have had a dozen offers before coming of age?"

"O, bless your soul, puss, you don't know yourself. You are handsome enough for a queen. You must really forgive the young men. Nobody can help admiring you, and loving you, too; only it is not every one that has the courage to tell you."

"But I know pretty girls, and clever, too, perfectly charming in every respect, who, because they haven't rich fathers, are not the least sought after. No duels will ever be fought on their account. They are free to go and come, and they will not be annoyed by half a

dozen young men galloping after them. I don't believe that beauty alone draws, at least here. It may be the case where money is plentier and beauty rarer. But here, every young man who hasn't a fortune of his own endeavors to get one by marriage; and there are a dozen handsome fresh faces for one heiress."

The squire was looking at the letter occasionally, but he did not venture to ask about it again. He played about, rather, as he would with a ticklish customer for a client.

"You haven't told us about your conquests here. Is it Harrison Adams, or one of the schoolmasters, or both?"

"I don't mind telling you, uncle John, but you are not to repeat it—that Mr. Adams has intimated quite plainly several times that he would have no objection, or rather, that he would be quite pleased, all things being considered, and if it were *perfectly* agreeable to me and to my family—but I haven't patience to repeat—" and she stamped her foot. "He seemed as if he were about making a trade. I could think of nothing but a boy who has a jack-knife to swap, and does not trust it out of his hands until he gets hold of the other. He seems to me only a cool, shrewd person, and whatever he does is from policy. His business and his love must bring him riches. Then these are to give him position. He will, by and by, own the largest farm here, he will have the richest wife, and will be in Congress by the time he is forty."

"Do you think so? Well, you have a knack of prophesying. If he's to rise in this way, he's the man for you, he's the man for you—I mean to say, if you can put up with a Hoosier. The Hoosiers may be smart, and all that, but I can't think one of 'em *quite* like our old Kentucky stock. But how you would shine in Washington! That's something to think of, puss—to think of."

"It isn't worth a moment's thought, uncle. He is too

cautious to risk anything, and he will be afraid to commit himself. He may think I should say B after he says A. But though I know the alphabet, I don't choose to help him or any one repeat it. I don't know what love is, for I have never felt it. But I am very sure what it is *not*; and I say that the man who is so prudent that he will not risk everything,—refusal, mortification, and all,—has no love to offer. He is only negotiating. Love never thinks to hesitate. It gives itself and all without stipulating for a return."

"Bless me, dear, how came you to know so much? You say you have not known what it was to love, but you lay down the law like a chancellor. How do you find out all these fine things?"

"From books, uncle. From novels; and if they *are* fictions, in one sense, they contain the essentials of truth as it is seen by the most observing of men."

The confidence she felt in the wisdom she had learned in this way was stronger now at the entrance into life than afterwards. She had yet to learn that studying the errors and misfortunes of others is not sufficient to guard us from *other* errors and misfortunes of our own; that every life has its own trials in new phases growing out of its peculiar and unforeseen circumstances, and that these will perplex and torment the wisest as well as the most thoughtless.

"But I don't see how you came to get so excited over your wisdom, nor what has started you to begin talking to a foolish old man about all these things."

She saw that his curiosity was aroused as to the letter, and she said to him, —

"I shall have to confess, uncle, that there was a reason for my getting into this train of thought. This letter—I tell you in strict confidence, as if I were a

Mason in full communion" (here her eyes brightened)—
"this letter is from a young man of our county, and in it he has made me an offer of his hand. I will read you a paragraph:—

"For I am afraid, my dear, if I may call you so, that, even in the short time you are to be away, you may listen to the vows of some other, perhaps even worthier of your love than I can pretend to be, and that in listening you may be lost to me forever. In such a case, though you may be fortunate and happy, I feel that I should never cease to be miserable. I cannot wait for your coming home, but must send this, and my heart and soul along with it, to tell you that I love you, and shall always love you.'"

"Very well said. A very pretty piece," said the squire. "And who may this be?"

"He is a young man of twenty-five, of good family, good principles, and good habits. His family is wealthy, and as he will inherit from his father and an uncle besides, he will be very rich. I suppose he would be considered the most eligible person in our county—for any one who fancied him."

"Gemini! how you fetch 'em down! You should have a bag, as the sportsmen do, to keep your game in. You know what I mean. When two hunters contend for a wager, they save the heads of the birds and creatures they shoot, and then each head counts for so much. As for instance, in your bag, a schoolmaster counts for an owl, so much; a doctor for a chicken hawk, so much; a farmer for a barn-yard fowl, so much; a black-coated preacher for a crow, so much; a lawyer—"

"For an eagle," she interposed. "For, as the Bible says, wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."

"But all this doesn't explain why you were so excited. It seems you don't *love* the young man; so it wasn't *that* which made your face look like a pina."

"I was thinking why it was I *couldn't* love this young man, who is so worthy of any girl's love."

"Well, what's to hinder? He is good-looking — isn't he?"

"A very agreeable and very handsome man."

"It's either a notion, a foolish girl's notion, or else" — and here he fixed his eyes on her — "*you love some one else*. I wouldn't do it, puss. He'll never rise, — never redeem his farm, — never come to anything. You mark my word. Besides, he's more'n half a Yankee, unsettled like, talkin' of natural rights an' theorizin'. When a man begins that way, you never know where he's goin' to stop. He questions and examines; he doubts and he disbelieves; he becomes an infidel in his religion, and an abolitionist in his politics; and I should like to know what's blacker'n that!"

The colloquy was not finished, for the tall figure of Miss Malvina appeared in the doorway, and supper was announced.

Readers have probably noticed a certain *cutting edge* in the speech of Miss Shelburne, and will infer that she was more noted for clear intellect than for womanly feeling and a tender heart. They must be content, for the present, to take her own explanations, and to consider the nature and effect of the influences that had surrounded her, before coming to any adverse conclusions. It is not in the midst of general adulation that a girl's sincerity of character and tenderness of heart are put to the trial.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COOING OF THE DOVE.

WE trust our readers have not forgotten the Dove, who had preened her feathers for the party at Mr. Pierrepont's, and witnessed the festivities with such serene composure. Miss Lucy Fenton was the eldest daughter of a respectable mechanic of the county town, and was undeniably quite pretty, but so devoid of sprightliness, except in certain ecstatic moments, that a real pigeon would be almost as lively a companion as she. The county poet, who had immortalized this damsel, was the disciple of a very flourishing school — a school whose works are represented in nearly all the newspapers of America, occupying the Muses' corner, just over the prices current. He was a puny Wordsworth, stunted by mental rickets, and suffering from the periodic breaking out of poetic rash. The attacks varied in intensity, but the disease was generally of a mild type. He had tried rhyme, but he said it fettered his free soul; and truly if his soul kept step with his metres, it must have been fettered, for the lines limped abominably. So he confined his efforts to blank verse, and wove his bright imaginings, and his soul-full aspirings, like brilliant threads into the regular ten-syllabled warp, warranted full width. The well-known classical poems, entitled *Lines to Her who will Understand Them*; *Ode to a Dying Tomtit*; *To a Dove on the Stable Eaves*, and *Separation, or the Break-*

ing *Heart Strings*, were his. Lucy Fenton was the lay-figure whose flexile nature obeyed his wishes, who made intellectual poses for his studies, and put on any of the grades of emotional expression at command. He found her as convenient as a barber's wig-block, to try his handiwork upon. Fed and nourished by celestial food, the maiden grew up in the world, but not of the world. Her soul dwelt apart, and occupied itself in high communings, and strove after a passionate love of Nature — in verse. Of Nature itself she knew nothing. For all her raptures about flowers, she could not tell a violet from a wind-flower. It was as if she went mad over muslin blossoms, waxen leaves, stuffed birds, and plaster-of-paris rabbits. Nature did not own the acquaintance either of this inglorious poet or of his inamorata. Nature keeps her secrets well; she does not reveal them to the noisy admirers who prate of the favors of intimacy.

Lucy had just finished school, and was newly admitted to the circle of young-ladyhood.

The county poet had meantime begun to feel that the Dove cooed quite too much; he found with regard to her the truth of Crusoe's prophetic line, —

"Her tameness is shocking to me."

While this might be partly true (though no very singular wildness was ever observed in him), yet it was suspected there were other and less creditable reasons for his meditated faithlessness — in fact, that he had rolled his passion-lighted orbs towards a bird of brighter plumage and better-feathered nest. The parting was done with great naturalness. The poet bewailed his hard fate, lamented that the hour had come, and (turning Shelley topsyturvy), that he must now

"Teach in suffering what he learned in song."

The poem before mentioned, *Separation*, has celebrated this touching scene. With bursting tears he bade her farewell, rushed despairingly from her presence, and — was married next day to Miss Julia Jones, the prospective owner of two hundred acres of land and six healthy negroes.

When the poet was fairly wedded, the perfect bliss filled his soul, and he was silent — like the yearning boy who, when his mouth is filled with the tough candy ball, despairs of further utterance until he has done rolling his sweet morsel. There was nothing more in life for him that it would be of any use to agonize for. Song birds are lean. The well-filled crop interferes with the trilling larynx. The bobolink, best of singers, no sooner gets into comfortable feed than he forgets his quaint music, and becomes a fat, prosaic creature, doomed by poetic justice to be shot and eaten.

In the state of spiritual widowhood in which the lorn damsel now found herself, the memory of her previous experiences was sweetly sad, or sadly sweet — the order is not material. Her face assumed an air of tender melancholy, and she walked

"With even step and musing gait."

But this beautiful demeanor, I regret to say, was not generally captivating. Perverse mankind is not usually pleased to re-light love's flame on a last year's blackened altar, when it can start a fresh blaze on a new one. The youth does not delight in broken hearts when another has done the breaking; nor is he overjoyed with crumpled roses unless he makes the Sybaritic devastation himself.

To her mother Lucy's behavior was a deep and poetic mystery. She observed her artless attitudes, the plaintive tones of her voice, and fancied that the calm repose

of her manner only covered thoughts that did lie too deep for tears. She feared the dear wounded bird would never spread her wings, except to fly away to the better land. So she cuddled and soothed the poor thing, and said she *should* rest her aching head on mamma's bosom. She even had the girl's bed brought into her own room that she might watch over her, sleeping and waking, lest she should become an angel unawares. The father—unfeeling man—agreed to the moving of his daughter's bed, but for another reason. *He* thought it was "just as well to watch her, or else, before you knew it, she'd be runnin' away with some derved fellow, like a dod-rotted fool as she was."

It was at this juncture that the youth of many locks and ample Byronic shirt collar appeared on the scene. Aloysius Pittsinger was his name. He was a consolation. His very name, Aloysius, had a sweet gurgle in the sound, resembling the anticipatory and involuntary noises from children's mouths at the sight of sugar lollipops. He was a clerk in Mr. Goldstein's store. There he dispensed tobacco, both fine-cut and plug, assorted nails, New Orleans sugar, Rio coffee, Porto Rico molasses, Gloucester mackerel, together with foreign cloths and homespun jeans, and all the gimcracks which little negroes coveted and the swarms of summer flies had spared.

The appearance of Aloysius happened in this wise. Mr. Fenton was an early riser, but was loath to go to his shop without his breakfast. On the fateful morning he had come down rather earlier than usual. After due search and discussion, it was announced to him that there was nothing at once appetizing and substantial in the house that could, within the desired period, be got ready for the table; and his wife made bold to ask if in

this emergency he wouldn't go out and get something. To a hungry man, in the faint interval after a "nipper" and before a solid bite, such a proposition is an unpleasant surprise. But, after devoting the cook and the household generally to immediate pains and inconveniences, and to something more hereafter, Mr. Fenton put on his slouched hat and started out. He mused also.

If I were ambitious of the fame of the great American novelist, or were contending for the fifty thousand dollar prize offered by the publishers of the Metropolitan Album, and hoped to have my thrilling descriptions read by its subscribing army of three hundred and fifty-one thousand chambermaids, I might paint the current of his swift thought thus:—

"The air bites shrewdly. Ha, by the mass! Shall I to the *abattoir* and ask the slayer of oxen for a steak? or a chop from the loin of sheep, a bell-wether of Kentucky's finest flock—Kentucky, state renowned for dainty mutton? Or does the slayer of oxen yet sleep, supinely stertorous, heavy with the lingering fumes of the nightly Bourbon? Perchance he *has* no steak, no chop!—all gone to feed an insatiable people! Bethink me. Ay—And the *abattoir* is far, though its perfume is nigh; it is thrice a hundred yards from hence. I will go to the house of the Israelite, Goldstein, and get a fish—a fish dear to losel Yankees, and not scorned by the sons of the sun-land either. 'Tis well. I will make the trial. Haply I shall find that the young man, Pittsinger, whose prænomen is Aloysius, has arisen, and is even now combing his ambrosial locks."

What he *did* think was something like this:—

"It's doggon cold this mornin'. I wonder whether that derved old drunken Bill Stone's got ary bit of fresh meat—and if he's up yet. I don't b'lieve it, for he

was drunk's an owl last night at old Red Eye. Besides, it's fer to the slaughter-house. Le's see. I might get a mackerel at Goldstein's. I'll do it. Biled a little, to take the salt out, and then het with cream, it ain't bad, by a derned sight."

He walked out to the square, occasionally blowing his cold fingers. The shutters were not taken down from Goldstein's front windows, but Mr. Fenton knew that the clerk slept in a little room in a ruinous lean-to back of the store, and he rattled the door to call him. There was no answer, nor sound of any one stirring, and he rattled again. His powerful shake made the square resound. He called, endeavoring to throw his voice through the key-hole, "Aloysius, ain't you up yit? I want a mackerel."

The silence was aggravating, and there were internal qualms that made Fenton doubly impatient.

"Aloysius, you lazy bones! Do you hear? I want a mackerel for breakfast. You're thest the no-countest boy I ever see! If 'twan't for your father, you'd thest starve."

Fenton sadly meditated, and was about to give it up, when he heard a voice within, saying, "Never too late, Mr. Fenton. You shall have your mackerel. You needn't wait. As soon as I get my clothes on I'll tote you over one."

Mr. Fenton returned, and found all the children, including the Dove, ready for breakfast. He stated the case, and they sat expectant. The Dove, who had come down with her back hair loose, felt a momentary flutter, and debated whether she should not go up stairs and twist her pale yellow locks into a knot, and fasten it with her high-topped silver comb. But, on further reflection, she considered that the graceful negligence of falling tresses

might be quite as fascinating as the more elaborate mode, especially with a simple morning dress. So she confined her efforts to attaining a fine *spirituelle* expression. She was eminently successful, and when Aloysius arrived, she arose with a faint crepuscular smile, and an attitude to which a formally disposed hand gave point, and gently bade the youth good morning.

Aloysius had scarcely washed the sleep out of his eyes, and his hair was more rebellious than usual, springing up in wavy masses, and brushed back from his thin temples and sloping forehead. He had on, however, a smart neck-tie, and looked generally spruce in his apparel. He held a mackerel, fresh from the brine, wrapped in a brown paper, and, in his agitation, when he beheld the charmer, he did not observe that drops of the salt and greasy fluid had been trickling down the front of his cloth suit.

This is a scene which I commend to any gentleman who may illustrate this story with his pencil: The Dove in her most picturesque pose; papa sullen and impatient; mamma agreeably civil, but sadly in need of some "fixing up;" the children open-mouthed in attention; and the polite Aloysius gracefully handing the dripping paper parcel to the black-visaged cook, while he turns his head over his left shoulder, and looks an unutterable message to the Dove.

Let us imagine the breakfast over. Indeed, it was only to show, historically, the tableau in which Aloysius first felt that his secret love was returned, that we have thought it worth while to meddle with such trivial matters.

A day or two later, when business was dull at the store, Mr. Pittsinger excused himself to his employer for an hour, and hied him to the Dovecot. His hair was

artistically disposed, and fragrant with the perfume of the dressing. Some remedy had proved efficacious in removing the stains of fish brine, and his clothes were a credit to his tailor. The Dove unbarred the portal, and the ambrosial youth entered.

Most men who have made a superficial study of the female heart please themselves with the idea of being able to instruct the beloved one in the beautiful service of love. They like to impart the responses, and cultivate a charming variety of epithet in the mimic litany. They can quote a few stanzas, and, though ignorant of Shakespeare, will rifle the repertoire of Romeo and Juliet, and of Antony and Cleopatra, of all the glowing phrases. They filch the "properties" of the heroes of the stage and of novels, and are armed, as they fancy, at all points.

A woman's simple bodkin is a better weapon than man's two-handed sword. Miss Lucy had been graduated in the oldest school in the world, and was Mistress of Arts. She had now an opportunity to put in practice the lessons she had learned. Here was a fresh and pliable nature ready for her method. She would teach him — delightful thought! After the first barriers of reserve had been passed, and the conversation had swept over the field of town gossip, and not a wisp of scandal remained for future gleaners, the all-important subject emerged into view. It rose slowly, its coming light flushing their sky some time before the full orb appeared.

With such a teacher success was assured, and the progress of Aloysius was very gratifying. In less than half an hour he had passed the primary grade, and was promoted to higher class studies. She had taken him through the poetry of love, and had displayed to him all the posies she had gathered from the red-covered, gilt-edged Annuals, and from the Magazines — those with the

beautiful fashion-plates, you know. She read him poemlets that she had marked and committed to memory in Byron and Burns, but above all she doted on Moore.

O Thomas, gayest of Irishmen, wittiest of diners-out, most melodious of sentimentalists, what a deal you have (or have had) to answer for! Of Moore the Dove could not say enough. She talked ecstasies. She dwelt on his *tendresses*, his *espiègleries*, his *plaisanteries*. (I believe those are the terms used in society novels.) She fairly hugged his memory, as, I doubt not, she would have hugged the trim little figure of the author himself. She posed for the *Light of the Harem*, for *Gulnare*, for the *Maid of Athens*, and for *Highland Mary*; but though in her entrance into Dream Land she had been led by Another, like a female Dante conducted into the pale realms of shade by an immature Virgil, she nevertheless was silent as to the verses that had first made her famous, and had awakened the spirit of poesy in her tender virgin soul. *The Dying Tomtit* might fall off his perch unnoticed, and *The Dove on the Stable Eaves* was welcome to snatch grains of corn among the barn-yard fowls, for all that she cared, now that Another had proved faithless, and her Aloysius was near.

Extremely foolish these things look. But we are all similarly foolish once or twice in our lives. The supremacy of mind does not extend beyond its own sphere; in the domain of love all proper men are equal. The professor who murmurs his passion in Sanskrit to a blue-stock-ing, and receives her tender answer in Hebrew, *acts* in precisely the same ludicrously awkward fashion as Aloysius is doing at this moment. Kings have no royal way of wooing, *if they woo*; nor is a countess, in presence of her future lord, free from the timidity and palpitations, and the instinctive *acting*, which belong to universal

womankind. Ponderous Gibbon falling on his knees to make a declaration, and unable to get up afterwards without help, is just as laughable an object as if his mind were not rich with the spoils of all learning, and he were an unknown burgher of Lausanne, instead of the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

Really, I suppose it is not generous to expose this couple to ridicule, at least in their tender relations. But the persons themselves are not greatly deserving of our regard. Aloysius is pert, ignorant, vain, narrow, and cunning, and a spoony besides. He looks pretty well, is quite obliging in his way, and takes all the care of his person he can in the limited space he has around the poor bed in the lean-to. But he must carry the ill-natured adjectives, and may deserve more of the same kind. And to see him capering like a newly-tamed bear at the beck of the minx who has taken him in training, and to see stagy attitudes and groupings, to hear all the rhymes to *dove* and *love*, to listen to the pretty endearments, and especially to notice the superfine, kid-gloved, and satin-slipped English in which their commonplace sentiment and empty thoughts are clothed, might move the laughter of graver people than we.

The hour wore away. It always does at the rehearsal of a duet like this. Naturally Aloysius referred to his future with hope. There is never a time when hope is so bright, and when fortune seems so near to a young man, as when he looks at the prospect along with the dear being who is to share it. The salary he now received was very small, but it would be increased, he was confident, though Goldstein was a confounded Jew, and did not encourage ability nor hold out any inducement to enterprise. We may say, by way of parenthesis, that after Aloysius sold out the stock of indigo at ten cents by the

pound, instead of by the ounce, the employer did not have good reason to set a very high value on his services.

But he (Aloysius) would one day have a store of his own. The town should see such a stock of goods as would make the women crazy. "Then Goldstein shall know that I am not his understrapper. Don't mention it, dear Lucy, but I must say I hate him. But I have ways of making a dollar he don't know of."

He dwelt on his projects, chuckled over them, turned them round, made all allowances for things going wrong, estimated his savings and put together his future gains, and he could arrive at no other conclusion than that he was to be prosperous and finally rich. Obstacles and drawbacks he made light of. With her, with his Lucy, *darling* Lucy, he would face a world in arms.

She was so overcome by the idea of his courage, his generous thoughts and plans for her, and his ardent visions of their future happiness, that she sobbed on his manly shoulder.

"O Aloysius, I knew you were handsome and noble, but I did not dream what a great soul you have. You are too, too good. And you are so fresh in feeling, so child-like, so pure and innocent! so thweet—too, too thweet!" Here she wept bitterly. In her moods of deepest feeling she affected something very like a lisp.

The noble Aloysius was deeply moved. A tear stood in either small gray eye, as he bent over the lithe and willowy form of his beloved, and something reddened and stung the end of his manly nose. He whipped out his bandanna, brushed away the unbidden tear, and soothed the titillating nostril, saying with choking voice, following unconsciously the artless lisp of the prattler beside him, —

"O Luthy, huthsh! You're too, too thweet youthelf!"

It was a blissful moment, as they looked up at each other through their blinding tears, and their eyes met like lights in a fog.

"Who shall separate us?" said the trustful damsel, triumphantly.

"Nobody — nothing!" he answered, firmly and cheerily; but the next word stuck in his throat. For there, within ten feet, stood Lucy's wrathful parent, looking uncommonly vicious. Lucy saw that the impending storm was about to burst; and, gathering up her robes with one hand, like a heroine of tragedy, while she grasped Aloysius with the other, she fell plump on her knees before her angry sire, and exclaimed, "Have mercy, father! Grant us your blessing!"

It was extremely well done, but it did not answer. The father lifted her up as tenderly as he would a calf, and replied, —

"Git up, you hussy! Git up off your knees! Go to your mother, you doggoned silly fool! This is what comes of your pote-ry. You're thest *moony*. None o' yer boo-hoo-in' to me! I thest won't stan' it. I'm thest clare mottified fer ye. Be off! an' you thest shet that door."

Then he turned fiercely upon the other offender, rolling up his sleeves, and advancing with mischief in his looks. A moment ago, Aloysius felt as brave as a lion; but somehow the spirit had left him in the time of need, and left him as limp as his own broad shirt-collar in an August day. He would have retreated, but the enemy was between him and the door. He thought it best to temporize, or rather to try to mollify; but he stammered perceptibly.

"All proper, sir. All upon honor, sir, — fair and open.

I offered myself, sir — in marriage. You can ask *her*, sir, if you don't believe *me*."

"Aloysius Pittsinger," the father replied, "on second thought, I wouldn't hit such a coward. I'd thest as soon hit a woman. Yer hain't the pluck of a caaf. But I know yer, thest as well's though I'd made yer. Yer a mean, triffin', or'nary critter. Yer the no-countest chap in this town. Comin' sneakin' round here to make a bigger fool of a gal that's big 'nough fool now. Yer thest a mean, contemptible, low-lived cur. Now you thest clare out, and go back to your business. You're thest the man to ax for dried apple when you go on a frolic. An' if you stick to sellin' indigo at ten cents a pound, you'll git rich."

Poor Aloysius! would he never hear the last of that indigo?

"Well, sir; certainly, sir; yes, sir. I was just going as you came. All honorable, sir. With your daughter's full permission, sir."

"Doggon her permission, an' you too. Don't want you *round*. You're a cur — fr'm a bad breed o' dogs. Don't *want* you, hon'able or dishon'able. Quit, will yer, and clare out!"

Thus entreated, Aloysius left the house with an injured air, seeing all his green hopes blasted, like sprouting corn after a spring frost.

We will not lift the veil that covers the privacy of the Fenton family for the day.

CHAPTER XII.

TOWN GOSSIP.

IF Aloysius was disposed to be silent as to the way his visit ended, Mr. Fenton was not equally reticent. It soon got noised about the town that the mourning Dove had been cooing for a new mate, and that matters had progressed so far between them that the father suddenly interfered, drove the young man out of the house, and shut up the girl on bread and water. The town was in a tumult of laughter; for the follies and vanities of so conspicuous a person as Aloysius Pittsinger were perfectly well known. There were persons who knew how much he owed the tailor, how many pairs of (very tight) boots he had a year, how many weeks' board he was in arrears at the tavern, and how many bottles of hair-dressing, cologne, and other fragrant essences were required to perfume his great mop of hair and his handkerchiefs. The young men took his gauge pretty accurately, and were never weary of leading him into absurd positions, and playing rather cruel practical jokes upon him. They knew about the interrupted *tête-à-tête*, including the father's morning call at the store, the dripping mackerel and all; and thenceforth he had to run a gantlet of gibes wherever a "crowd" was gathered. The goading was incessant and sharp; the indigo business was nothing in comparison. Small boys were sent to inquire the price of mackerel. He received a small bottle of some fluid

warranted to extract fish-oil and brine from woollen goods; also a recipe by mail for something of the same kind. Several copies of the newspaper containing the poem in honor of the Dove, written by his predecessor, were sent to him. Even Goldstein was cruel enough to ask, a day or two later, —

"Aloyshus, did you found some dry apple ven you was been mit Miss Fenton?"

Aloysius began to wonder whether he should have to kill some of his tormentors, or whether he would leave the "blamed little town," as he called it. They would not give him a day's peace. If he affected to laugh with them, they grew the more boisterous; if he showed annoyance, they irritated him the more deeply with mock sympathy.

Aloysius was in the midst of his tribulation, when there was a stir in the little shop. It was on account of the advent of Mrs. Cad Fleemister. She had come down to town on horseback, bringing two children, one in her lap, and one behind her. The horse was a sedate creature, borrowed from a neighbor, and moved along the street with an evident sense of the responsibilities resting upon him, and with a steadfast mind to resist the various temptations to which country horses are exposed. The horse sidled up to the block that stood before Goldstein's store, and the amiable Israelite called out, —

"Aloyshus, go to te block mitout, and help te lady off, — ach, himmel! zwei kinder, too!"

He looked out, while Aloysius was lifting off the children, and meditated. The indications were not promising for a profitable trade. The woman would be a tiresome customer. So he dodged out, and went to his own house, leaving the shop to Aloysius.

Mrs. Cad wore a prodigious sun-bonnet, made of green

cambric, of the "scoop" pattern, which with its ample cape covered her head and shoulders, and made her unrecognizable. When she got within doors, she took off the sun-bonnet, and seated herself by the open stove. The elder child, appeased by a stick of candy, made herself at home, and trotted around the premises with great hilarity. The only drawback to the child's happiness was, that, whenever she passed by her mother, that far-sighted and decorous woman made a dab at the innocent's nose with a handkerchief. The younger child nestled close to the mother's breast, and continued to wiggle and whimper until its natural rights were acknowledged, when it subsided into a state of purring content. Then Mrs. Cad produced her pipe, and begged a bit of tobacco. The pipe was filled and lighted; and, all these preliminaries having been adjusted, the negotiations began.

"You see, Mr. Pittsinger, I had to come to town myself, 'caze Tom's laid up with rheumatis. He's got 'em powerful bad in his back. I put some whiskey on to a piece of jeans, an' rubbed him, an', my Lord, how he did holler! 'Spect he's got a spine in his back. Took 'em goin' out nights arter coons, I reckon. Howsever, he said you'd do jist as well by me as him. Got any shoes?"

The pipe drew hard; and Aloysius politely got a fresh coal and started the fire anew. Then he answered. "Shoes? Yes, m'm. What size?"

"I want a lot for the young ones. Put out a lot on 'em. There," she said, producing two pieces of a twig, "them's two sizes, the oldest and the youngest. Give me — lemme see — eight par between them 'ere. What's the price of 'em?"

Aloysius answered politely.

"Wal, now jist so many par stockings — not too big; their legs is slim."

The stockings were produced, and the requisite number counted out.

"Got ary purty patterns caliker?"

Aloysius placed a number of pieces on the store counter, and Mrs. Cad hitched her chair nearer. "I reckon I'll take that ere green one with the yaller figger."

She counted on her fingers, making calculations as to the number of yards required.

"Got ary other piece like this?"

There was not another.

"What's that thar?"

"Muslin-de-laine, m'm; two and six. Beautiful goods, warranted all wool and fast colors."

"Me and my eldest we want a coat."

"How many yards, m'm? And from which of these pieces?"

"O, I *don't* know. Such a *lot* o' things, I'm kind o' confused like. — Ever which you druther, — ever which you think'll be the fashion next year. How many yards, did you say? Wal, I reckon about eighteen for both of us."

The thread and trimmings were provided; then came purchases of cotton cloth, of tobacco, coffee and tea, and three or four bits of gay ribbon. The whole being concluded, Mrs. Cad called for the reckoning, and paid the amount from a parcel of bills she carried in a brown paper wrapper. About half of them were well worn, as bank-bills are apt to be; the remainder were bright and new, and crackled in handling.

Mrs. Cad produced a piece of corn bread and bacon from her pocket, and ate with a good relish; after which, being thirsty, she was prevailed upon to take a little whiskey and water. Thus fortified, she was ready for her journey home. Most of her purchases were stowed

in bags she had brought for the purpose, and the remainder was left for Jack to come for. Mrs. Cad put on her sun-bonnet, and got into her saddle. Aloysius handed up the children; and the sedate horse, finding the town inhospitable, affording neither provender nor water, started off with such unspoken maledictions as ill-treated horses use.

Luckily, Barry County had very few inhabitants like the Fleemisters, and their appearance and speech was about as strange and outlandish in the town as they appear to our readers.

Aloysius put away the bills he had received, and locked up the money-trunk.

By the aid of a negro messenger he had established a means of communication with his loved one, and every few days the most gushing epistles were exchanged. She assured him of her unalterable affection, and was ready to fly with him to the ends of the earth. He, on the other hand, spoke of new plans and new hopes that would demand a wider sphere, and begged her to be patient until he could make all things ready, when he would fly with her on wings of love, far, far away from the tormentors who preyed on him, and from Goldstein, who oppressed and humiliated him more than ever.

The little town, like most places of its size in Kentucky, had a knot of male gossips, with no very pressing occupations of their own, who met mornings and evenings in various hospitable places of resort. In summer the gathering was at some place on the sidewalk, where they sat with chairs tilted back against a shop, or tree-trunk, or hitching-post, moving only to keep in the shade. In cooler weather they met in-doors, wherever there was most freedom allowed, or most fun to be had. Now it was at the tailor's shop, now at the clerk's office in the

Court House, sometimes, but less frequently, at the tavern, occasionally at the Post Office, or in Goldstein's store, or similar places. Some smoked, but most of them ruminated with quids, and the floors where they met bore witness of them. After dark some played cards, rarely for money, nearly all took what whiskey was necessary for exhilaration, and there were generally parties who engaged in poaching eggs, or, on special occasions, stewing canned oysters, in the little rear rooms of the stores. The accommodations were scanty and poor, but the hospitality was boundless. Few got tipsy, though all took their share of whiskey, and often more than was good for them. There was absolutely nothing going on that these inveterate gossips and jokers did not know. Everything was discussed, and the fun-making never ceased. The people might just as well have lived under glass. The natural effect was to make every young man most secret and discreet about love affairs. There was no confidence; each feared discovery because he knew his fellows were merciless. On the other hand, it was not usual for unmarried ladies to receive visits or calls from gentlemen except in the presence of the family; so that a prudent young fellow, restrained by fear of ridicule, might pass months without being able to say a tender word safely to the lady whom he admired. It was only by a casual meeting on horseback going or returning from church, or on the way to a dinner party, that any private communication could be had.

How these customs hemmed in our friend Beauchamp Russell is easy to be seen. It was certain that he could not see Miss Shelburne without attracting curious and unpleasant attention, except in the presence of her cousins. He made plans one day which the next day showed to be futile; but he stuck patiently to his law books out

of school hours, and waited for his opportunity. Squire Hamilton professed himself delighted with his pupil; he was astonished, also, for he had not imagined that an indolent young man could shake off the associations of his fellows, and totally change the habits in which he had grown up. But the fact was, that Beauchamp was outstripping his rivals in the extent of his reading, in his rigid attention to his notes, and to the classification of topics and authorities. The euchre parties missed him, and the nightly suppers knew him no more.

To save the trouble of carrying back and forward the law book he might be reading, he borrowed a volume at a time from the county library to use at home, so that he might pursue the same course of reading there as at the office in town. One evening, as he was going out of town, he stopped at the clerk's office for a volume. The clerk, Mr. Joe Heady, was always quite friendly, and told him privately that a new execution had been issued on Wyndham's old judgment, and that the sheriff would doubtless try to make a levy. He inquired especially about the slaves.

"There is only Phillis," he said, "and I'll send forthwith to uncle Ralph to come in and give a bond for her."

"But there was Uncle Scipio."

"O, yes; I see you remember the bitters. That was a good joke on you, Joe."

"I don't mind doing the old nigger a good turn, and I should likely as not do the same thing again."

"Didn't you know he had run away?"

"Why, no. *He* run away? Ridiculous!"

"Well, he *has*, ridiculous as it is. Here is a letter that some one has written for him that explains matters; and there's a good laugh on you. Just look at this:—

"my onerd Masr Beechum de ol mair Fly is at de stabil in Loosevill. Masr Wageners stabil. Ise sory to truble you an Mis Milred. Its mity cold off yer. But ol Sip cant be sole no how dis time, not fer no Windum. Wen de Lords good time cum ol Sip he trabil bak. Cant dy off yer no ways. Plese God you git tru wid Windum sum time.

tel Masr Jo Hedy de biters werk powful. set ol Sip way up hi, den set him down way ober yer."

The letter was without date, but was neatly superscribed by a more intelligent hand. Beauchamp went on to say that a letter had been sent to the stable-keeper in Louisville, and, in consequence, the horse had been led back home by a neighbor. Beauchamp was in constant merriment all the time he was talking; so much so that Mr. Heady at last asked him what there was so funny.

"The bitters," said Beauchamp. "Don't you see? Scipio says the bitters first set him up, and then set him down in Indiana, Canada, or wherever he is."

"I don't see how there's any fun in *that*."

"*Don't* you? Well, I do. You remember you told me about the old nigger's curiosity; how he inquired what this was for, and what that was for, and put in his wondering exclamations. What he wanted was to know how the county seal was put on a paper to make it valid; you showed him, you remember, and then he said, 'O, de Lord's sake! dat's de county seal, an' you just bring down de handle dis a way.' The old rascal had a forged free paper then in his pocket, and he knew it wouldn't take him across the river without a seal; and after he had coaxed you to go out and get the whiskey for his bitters, he clapped a seal on his document, just as you had shown him! Ha, ha! By George, it's too funny! Who'd have

thought old Scip smart enough to be up to such a trick?"

Somehow or other the clerk did not laugh. It didn't seem so funny to him. Jokes at our own expense never do. He took rather a professional view of the case, and was inclined to think it a punishable fraud.

"First catch your rabbit," said Beauchamp, "and then you can talk about skinning him. But, my dear friend, I *must* laugh; I can't help it. Besides, my laughing shows that I don't take it very hard. No, 'pon my honor, I'm glad he's gone. He wouldn't bring much, and if he had been here I would have had him bought in. I should not allow him, any more than Phillis, to be sold to a stranger. — But the boys'll be laughing at you, sure. I can't say how many boxes of sardines and cans of oysters it will cost you. Just you laugh too; you might as well, for you'll never hear the last of Scip's bitters."

"I don't know that you need be telling it all over town," said Heady.

"O, I showed the letter to Howard, for it was too funny to keep. You know I don't bear you any ill will, but I showed it without thinking, and as he is something of a wag in his sober way, I have no doubt he has mentioned it, and by to-morrow it will be flying around lively. You'd better send for the oysters by the next stage, and give a 'blow-out;' you'll have it to do."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HEROINE RIDES OUT AND WALKS HOME.

BEAUCHAMP started out gayly with his law book under his arm, and was soon striding over the rough and rocky road to Beech Knoll. There was a place in a ravine where the road followed a branch that was always bad walking, and a pedestrian could get through dry shod only by springing from one stone to another. High above this water-bed was a bank, and on the top of it a very narrow path, just wide enough for a single person, and perhaps for a sure-footed and sober-minded horse, between a high fence on one side and the abrupt slope to the road on the other. Beauchamp had taken the main road, and was springing lightly from point to point, on loosened fragments and the projecting edges of shelving rock, when he heard the peculiar snort by which a frightened horse makes known the presence of something he doesn't understand, and doesn't mean to pass. The ravine was overhung by a heavy growth of trees on either side, and it was always a cool and dark place even at the noon of a midsummer's day. But there was still light enough to discover objects, though dimly, and, looking up, Beauchamp saw a lady on horseback. He comprehended the situation in a moment. To get out of the mud and water of the branch, the rider had incautiously taken to the bank some distance back, and had now come to a place where she could not turn her horse and go back, and

great caution was necessary to keep on the narrow path as it wound down the bluff into the road. The features of the lady were not to be discovered, but Beauchamp saw the terrified and snorting horse backing, and in danger every moment of slipping off. Once or twice he saw a hind foot just over the verge of the sheer descent, and the path was eight or ten feet above the level of the road. There are some moments when resolve, calculation, precaution, action, are blended in one rush, and when by instinct a brave and generous man does in one second the exact thing necessary for the emergency. A sudden fury guided by equally swift judgment possessed Beauchamp; he scrambled up the bank, and approaching the horse, as a horseman knows how, took the rein at the bit with a gentle motion, but with an iron grip. The horse knew he had a master, and became more quiet, though he still snorted and trembled violently. Still keeping the bit in his firm grasp, Beauchamp swung between the horse's head and the fence, and spoke in a steady voice. "Drop the reins, miss! Don't be frightened. Take my hand, and then steady yourself by that stake. Don't fear! the stake won't fail you. Now step on that corner rail, and then hold on. There! you are safe." He backed the horse, and then let go the bridle and aided the lady to the ground. The horse, left to himself, got a hind foot over the edge, lost his balance, slid down the bank, and rolled over as he reached the bottom.

As the lady was dismounting, her veil was brushed aside, and Beauchamp saw, with a great thump at his heart, that it was Miss Shelburne whom he had rescued from danger. He felt an honest glow of pride. Not that the chance service gave him a shadow of right, or even a vantage-ground, — not that he would avail himself of an appeal to gratitude for the regard he coveted; he

would have given the same aid to any woman, just as swiftly, just as unerringly, and he wanted no credit, no thanks, for acting upon a manly instinct. But as danger had been averted, and there were no consequences (save, perhaps, to the horse) more serious than a little fright and a walk home, he could rejoice, without being *too* selfish, that he had the opportunity which he had so long desired.

It is a pity it takes so many words to show what goes through the mind in an instant, for we left Miss Shelburne leaning against the fence; and when Beauchamp looked at her the second time, he saw her color gone, her eyes fixed and half closing, and a dewy perspiration starting from the beautiful curves over her now colorless lips. As he saw that she kept a convulsive hold of the rail, he maintained his delicate reserve; and though he did not offer to support her, he stood so near that he could instantly do so should the faintness increase. Slowly her eyes came out of what looked an eclipse, her color returned, her breathing grew rapid, and rigid tremors passed over her frame. Tears followed, and spasmodic sobs, growing less, momentarily, until at last the severe nervous trial had passed, and she found herself standing unhurt on firm ground, and the horror of the last few minutes gone like a nightmare on waking.

"Mr. Russell," at length she said, "what can I say to thank you?" Her eyes again swam in tears. Beauchamp feared for the result of any further agitation, and he said, quietly, —

"I am glad to have been of service, and very glad I chanced to come along when you needed help. But let us think about your getting home; it will soon be dark. Can you walk?"

"O, yes. I am entirely recovered."

"Your horse has got up and is limping along. Shall I

catch him? I could assist you to mount, and then walk beside you."

"No, Mr. Russell; I prefer not to get into the saddle again to-day. Let the horse go on, and he will find the stable."

They carefully trod the path down to the road, and as they passed along, they saw what had frightened the horse — a dead animal in the fence corner.

Miss Shelburne was not content with the way her fervent thanks had been received, or else she feared that her words had failed to give an idea of the gratitude she felt. The sense of the danger came back to her mind, and then, as she coupled it with Beauchamp's ready and powerful help, and saw him coolly pushing aside her proffered thanks, she determined that it should not rest so. The wave of grateful feeling came back with new force, and would not be restrained. He should know that she did not take such brave and unselfish conduct for granted; and that when she told him she thanked him for it, she meant more than was given in return for a rose-bud. She would have him know that she was not like some of the frivolous and unfeeling of her sex, who take everything done or suffered for them, whether holiday courtesy or the danger of wounds or death, as something due to women as a matter of course. They were threading their way down the branch road, and Beauchamp, who, a little while ago, had been walking over it in his swift, unheeding way, now thought he had never seen such bad walking; and he was occupied every moment in pointing out the drier and smoother places for the lightly-shod feet of his companion.

"I really wished to thank you, Mr. Russell," she said, "and you seemed as if you were listening to every-day talk that means nothing. I feel a gratitude I cannot ex-

press, and I cannot let it go in your way. You must not depreciate yourself. You must not be so proud as to refuse or think lightly of my heartfelt thanks. I haven't words to praise your presence of mind. And how quick and dexterous you were! I hadn't time to think once what was to be done before you had got me out of danger. Just to imagine what would have happened if I had been thrown down that steep bank!"

"Miss Shelburne," he said, slowly and in a voice that faltered somewhat, "your thanks and your praises are the sweetest words I ever heard. They are enough for ten times as much as I did. All that troubles me is, that gratitude sometimes implies a sense of obligation; and that is a burden I don't wish you to feel when you think of me. That was why I shrunk from your gratitude, though I was touched by it for all that. I have wished so often to see you, since the party at Mr. Pierrepont's, and found no way to do so, that, now the time has come, I am really afraid I am not so sorry for your mishap as I ought to be. I have my streak of selfishness, you see! I wouldn't give up this walk with you, this evening, even over this provoking road, for any earthly pleasure, — not to be prince in favor with the king again, without the princess. The idea of gratitude just spoils it; for, so far as it goes, it reverses things. I should be perfectly happy with this half hour to talk with you, if there had been no frightened horse, no peril, no rescue, — no gratitude. Just we two walking down the road, with no more to divide us or fetter us than two school children."

"That is a delusion, Mr. Russell. We should have to be children to feel so. I must moralize a little, as you offer me the occasion. We are all weighted down with something. You are pursuing your studies to give you

weight with men. Why don't you give up learning law, and say you won't take an unfair advantage over people that way? The rich man has his advantage, and the good and noble man has his, — often a much greater one, — though he sometimes doesn't see it. And women have theirs; some have the advantage of beauty, some of dress and fashion, some of sprightliness, some of family and estate. You can't compare two persons without thinking of these different advantages, and seeing how far one counterpoises the other, and whether the invisible scales are equal. My uncle James, who keeps racing horses, says, 'There's no comparing speed without handicapping;' and I think it's much the same in the race of life."

Beauchamp thought she was talking rather too well. He was in the habit of being listened to; and the young ladies of Barry County, when his talk took a serious turn, either replied in monosyllables (more or less prettily) or took the first opportunity to steer the conversation out of deep water into the shallows. The contrast, on the present occasion, was striking, and he was not quite sure whether he was pleased. To be sure, the philosophic sentences were uttered in the most charmingly simple way, and came from the loveliest lips in the world; but all that he had read or heard made him think that the woman to be *loved*, though she might have good sense and wit, and a fluent and pleasant way of speaking good English, should not be *too* profound and sententious. That would reverse the ancient order of things. But this was only a flitting thought.

"Then you generously offer me an advantage," he said. "Or, rather, you intimate that I have it, and I suppose you mean that I can't divest myself of it. But there are 'weights,' as you call them, not so easily adjusted.

In the case of a lady of family and fortune, who has every gift of nature both in mind and person, and who has enjoyed every advantage that wealth can procure, I don't see how you will make the 'invisible scales' even between her and any young man ever born here, — much less one whose only possessions and only hopes are in himself."

"Such a young man may have all the possibilities, and there is where my comparison fails. As time goes by, these advantages change. The lady's beauty fades, or the bloom of it wears off. She does not usually grow any *more* intellectual by having household cares. The young man keeps his good looks longer. If he studies for a profession, his faculties develop, his knowledge increases, and his tastes are refined; his daily life makes him strong and self-possessed; and if he is wise and prudent, he acquires a fortune, which is better than to have inherited one. Then he may found a family, and so become the head of it, which is better than having had an ancestor to do this for him."

"What a sermon for a poor young man!" Beauchamp thought. He had never, in his dreams of his own future, seen the successive steps of his ambition so clearly pointed out; and there was something in the way it was done that filled him with courage as well as pleasure. Flattery is depressing to really noble minds; and its tendency is to make those persons whom it pleases, so well satisfied that further exertion seems needless. But encouragement based on the knowledge of good qualities, and on the necessity of labor to bring them into action, is quite a different thing. Beauchamp felt a wave of mingled pride and resolution surging through his being, and while she talked he believed he could attempt everything, bear everything, and accomplish everything.

"If you had set out to show me what I ought to feel, to hope, and to resolve, you could not have done it better. I cannot suppose that you don't understand something of my feelings towards you; and since you know so well my present situation, you must have imagined the great motive I have to better it. I say the *great* motive; for though I may be ambitious and willing to exert myself to rise, it is not a common ambition that has moved me. I don't say that I don't desire money. I need it enough, Heaven knows. I acknowledge that I should value position and influence, knowledge and culture, and all things that men aspire to; but all my desires (next after making my dear mother comfortable) are bound fast in one, and that is, that my success might make the distance less between me and you, that when I should be bold enough to tell you how dear you are to me, you would not feel that there was such a difference between us that you could not listen."

"If my influence is enough to lead you out of the ways of most of the young men here, I shall be glad. I can't flatter myself so far. You have talents, and happy manners, and, as I hope, the resolution and industry to make a name for yourself. Your success will be in what you *become*, more than in what you possess. I have truly a warm interest in your future, and believe you may have all the prosperity you wish."

"But there can be but one success for me. Rather, I would say that I don't care for success unless it is for you and with you, because it will be all owing to you. I know I've been a careless, indolent fellow, fond of idle sport, of hunting, and cantering about the country, instead of doing a man's part in life. I have turned about, as you know. I am giving my best endeavors to earn a living, and am preparing, I hope, for something better

But for you this wouldn't have happened. This day I should have been hunting deer in the Knobs about Salt River; and year would have gone after year in the same good-for-nothing round. I must tell you that I loved you from the first moment I saw you; but at first it seemed to me I might as well have loved a royal princess. I could only look up to you and wish. I knew that there was no hope as long as I was looked down upon. The difference in fortune made me silent, because I wouldn't be regarded as seeking a wealthy connection to save myself from the toil of making my own way in the world. And you would naturally think, and all the world would say, that your estate was as great an attraction as yourself. This is a matter you can never be *sure* of in any offer, for you *are* rich, and you have no way of putting a lover to the proof. But you might, some time, come to know that there are men who wouldn't lie for their right hand; who would not flatter a beauty for her favor, nor cringe to a great man for any earthly advantage. When you *know* such a man you might believe him when he told you that he loved you for yourself alone, and that he would show you that he would achieve success without any aid from your fortune or your friends."

"Your pride becomes you, Mr. Russell. Did you ever think some men were as proud of their poverty as others of their riches? — I mean, proud of not being cast down by poverty."

"Possibly. In my case it's about all I have to be proud of. And, in a sense, as the preachers tell us, the kingdom of heaven is within us, so a man succeeds in the affairs of the world by possessing his own soul. But I musn't be losing my precious minutes in this way, for we are nearing the river, and when we pass the bridge I shall be dumb. I can't talk, at least to you, while on a

brick sidewalk. I love to have the turf, or even the rough ground, under my feet, and to feel that the air I breathe doesn't belong to the gossips of the town. I want an atmosphere of my own, — an ocean of it, — and nothing living but a tree near me. Let me return to what I was saying. Can you imagine that I could go on with my tasks, and that I should have the strength to resist all the influences around me, and do this year after year, without the hope of bringing myself near to you? Won't you say, at least before you go back to your home, that there is room for me to hope?"

"You see, Mr. Russell, that what you ask is simple enough to you, but quite different to me. You would annihilate time, but you forget that I can't. You would anticipate the reward before you have done the work."

"But if the laborer knows in the morning that he will have his reward when the day's work is done, he has something to sustain him through the heat and burden."

"The comparison would be more like if you were the farmer that sows his seed, takes care of the crop, and hopes for rain, and sun, and the favor of Heaven to insure him a harvest."

"I know that the reason is against me, but I tell you I cling to that hope. It is the only thing that cheers me; and if I couldn't cherish it, I should never accomplish anything. I want you to feel that I have some sense of honor, and that I wouldn't ask you for a pledge, — there is so much to be done on my part that I may be unequal to it. I wouldn't have you bound in the least. But you could say whether I have any of the traits of such a character as would reasonably satisfy you, — whether I am agreeable to you, — whether, if other circumstances were equal, —"

"It is the *ifs* — pardon me for saying — that make me

hesitate. I respect you, — think highly of you; and — and you must know the impression you make. It isn't necessary for a lady to *tell* a gentleman he is agreeable; he should see that for himself in her face, for she wouldn't *wish* to conceal it. Could you ask me to say more until time makes an end of *some* of those *ifs*? Won't you let me add to your noble traits patience? I think you have nearly all the rest."

Had our hero been older, he would have seen that more was conveyed than the words of themselves signified. Her tone, from being earnest, had grown almost tender, and her looks (in a better light) would have been eloquent. As it was, he was full of hope.

The horse had considerably walked along the road with them, and now, when they had come to the bridge, Beauchamp took the bridle rein. It was quite dark, and they walked up a side street towards Squire Hamilton's house.

"Will you go in, Mr. Russell?" she asked, as they reached the gate. Beauchamp thought of his mother waiting for him, and excused himself, and then said, "Tell me if I may not see you again before you go."

"I hope so; but I can't promise, and I can't make the occasion. If it comes naturally, I shall be sincerely glad to see you. Don't forget that I am a thousand times obliged to you. Please remember that. Good night!"

Miss Shelburne, on going into the house, found her uncle in the sitting-room, and said to him, without preface, "Uncle John, I have been detained by a little mishap — only the misbehavior of my horse; and I have been talking with the most manly man I ever met."

"And, pray, who may he be?"

"Beauchamp Russell."

"Humph!"

CHAPTER XIV.

SPIES OUT.

BEAUCHAMP experienced a singular elation, or, rather, elevation of mind, on his way home. The influence of the conversation had been stimulating in the highest degree. In mere force of intellect he had met his match, and in adroitness his superior. He recalled his first impressions while Miss Shelburne was speaking of the possibilities of a poor young man of talent, and now saw that the real encouragement he derived was quite different from what he supposed she was intending, — that she had not shown the steps by which he was to reach *her*, but the way to self-development, and to a future of his own. And on the whole he was not sorry. He would not have been pleased to see the least advance on her part; and after she had told him of her solid respect, and assured him that he was far from disagreeable, there seemed to be but one thing more needed, — namely, his own steadfast endeavors to make up the complement of character, attractiveness, and position that would entitle him to press his claims with ardor as an equal. Now, he was only a humble suitor.

There was only one thing about her that gave him disquiet, and that was the constant throng of admirers who followed her. *Was she a coquette? Could she talk to all these light and frivolous men in the calm and sincere way he had just heard? No; for he had always noticed*

(and heretofore with secret displeasure) that she laughed, and bantered them in her airy way, attracting and repelling them like pith-balls under the influence of a magnet. Now he thought he saw the reason. Her gay badinage and habitual smiles were for them; her measured but kind and heart-drawn words were for him. And he remembered that her tones were constantly warmer than her words. Yes, on the whole he felt encouraged. Her estimate of him and of his capabilities was sufficiently flattering. He had only to persevere, and time would soon prove his earnestness. She should see that he would redouble his exertions, and in time she would believe what he had told her, — that he lived and toiled for her alone.

His swinging and elastic gait corresponded to his feelings, and he moved swiftly along the road home. Passing by the scene of the averted accident, he found his law-book on the bank where he had dropped it, and in a very short time he entered the lane that led from the "big-road" to the house. The dogs were barking in a way that showed some reasons for apprehension on their part. There were long and thin-toned howls, alternating with loud and angry defiance. Beauchamp had a vague presentiment that something evil was stirring, and he looked from right to left warily, but kept straight on. As he neared the house the dogs recognized him, and gave their boisterous welcome; and just at that moment, at a place where he thought he had seen something dark moving slowly, a figure leaped lightly over the fence, and ran through the lines of standing cornstalks in the adjoining field, towards the road. In the midst of the gloom the momentary glimpse was not enough to make him certain; but Beauchamp felt sure that the person was Jack Fleemister. It was Sally that he must be looking after. It

followed that the Wyndhams believed she was still in the neighborhood, and had set a spy to watch Beech Knoll. Beauchamp wondered if his rifle was clean, and if he had powder and fresh caps. He had time, however, in crossing the yard that enclosed the old mansion, to compose himself, and he entered the house with his usual smile and pleasant word for his dear little mother.

The supper table stood waiting for him, and by the fire sat his mother, and his uncle, Ralph Beauchamp. The presence of the latter was a great surprise, for he was seldom away from home, and when he had occasion to see his sister he came in the daytime, and rarely staid an hour. He was pretty sure to be at home three hundred and sixty nights in the year, and always reading in the large, square room that served him for dining-room, library, and chamber. Beauchamp was sure that something unusual had taken him away from his beloved folios that night.

"Howdy?" said uncle Ralph.

"Right well, thank you, uncle."

"You are late, Beauchamp," said his mother.

"Yes, mother. It was something unusual, and not to be helped."

"Have to stay and help thrash some big boys?" inquired uncle Ralph, with a queer smile.

"No, uncle; and I might as well tell you all about it." And he gave an account of the affair in a few simple words.

Uncle Ralph grunted, and Mrs. Russell said, "How frightened the poor girl must have been!"

"Did she do it well, the fainting, and all that?" asked the imperturbable old bachelor.

"The most natural acting I ever saw," replied Beauchamp. "It fairly imposed upon me."

"All got up for effect," was the reply.

"I think it was," replied the nephew. "The young lady must have timed my coming home to a dot, got a hog killed and laid in the fence corner, then rode up on a bank where she knew she couldn't get down, trained her horse to scare and snort, and sat ready for the grand tableau of rescue."

Uncle Ralph winced a little, and said, "These flighty young women dote on dangers. They like to be scared as well as some frisky horses do. Did you never notice how pretty they squeal when they see a spider? A dead carcass is something worth while being scared at. You remember the Prioress in Chaucer:—

'She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe if that she saw a mous
Caughte in a trappe, if it were ded or bledde.'

Then, after it is all over, it is such a relief to have a strapping fellow, six feet two, ready to support her! then the blushes and the blubbing, the shaky thanks, and the consolation of a little cry with her tingling cheeks rubbing against a woollen coat,—O, it's precious! Then the tall fellow has *his* turn. How brave he feels as the manly rescuer! How he struts and lifts his beak like a young gobbler over the dear creature! I'd have given a dozen coon-skins to have seen it. But you hadn't your usual sense, Beauchamp, to let the horse get off the bank and tumble into the road. When the scared woman had a good hold of that fence, why didn't you just let her hold, and you lead the horse down easy? I'd have saved the horse."

"I'll be bound you would, uncle. Every man to his taste. You might take care of the horse, and I should take care of the lady."

"Well, Beauchamp, I won't be hard on you. I come

to see about buying Phillis, or giving a bond for what she'll bring, as you sent word to me. Sister Mildred, suppose you ask Phillis in."

While Mrs. Russell went to call Phillis, uncle Ralph intimated to his nephew that he had a word to say to him in private before he left. Beauchamp pressed his uncle to stay over night, but he thought it better to get home. He said he couldn't sleep in a bed; it smothered him. A spread on the floor, with his feet to the fire, was the right thing. At home he could read himself to sleep, and, if he took a notion to sing at three in the morning, he disturbed nobody.

Phillis's face wore a curious expression. Her small eyes looked wary, and there was a firm setting of her lips together.

"Well, Aunt Phillis, howdy?"

"Howdy, Mas'r Beecham?"

"Phillis, the sheriff's going to sell you."

"Den he gwine to sell poor ol' 'tick, — no count ol' 'tick."

"Suppose I buy you, how would you like it?"

"You buy me, smebbe; but I's don leave de missis."

"But I make all my niggers mind."

"O, Phillis knows you, Mas'r Beecham. You's bark worse'n you's bite. You's never gwine to stake Phillis from de missis."

"Well, we'll see about that. But where is Scip?"

"O, he's don run way; he's gone like striffin ol' fool. Hopes he'll have de's icicles on he's ol' nose. Some day he's come screepin back."

"But where is Sally?"

"'Sdon know, mas'r."

"But *don't* you know, Phillis?"

"Phillis sdon know nuffin, spoor ol' head she got.

Sally young an' smart. Sally run way; smebbe she keep way, stoo."

"Well, Phillis, we'll let you go if you'll sing 'The Long White Robe.' Come, tune up!"

"Ol' Phillis, she big sfool, but she sing ins de kitchen. Can't sing for *you* all. You white folks laugh; smebbe you cry when you sees all saints in slong white robes."

"Well, Phillis, we'll let you off this time."

Beauchamp had been, as it were, inadvertently looking at his rifle, blowing through the tube, and trying the lock to see if it was in good order. When Phillis went out, Mrs. Russell excused herself for a time, and Beauchamp and his uncle were left together.

"Haven't hunted much lately, I reckon?"

"No, uncle; no more of that. I teach three hours, or four, some days, and all the rest of my time I give to law."

"Going in strong, are you?"

"I'm doing my best."

"How do you get your books?"

"I read Squire Hamilton's in town, and Joe Heady lends me a volume at a time to read out here."

"I'll lend you a few. You shall take my Coke — dry old cud, but solid; then Saunders, the foxiest of pleaders; and a few others. You master those old treatises, and see how soon you'll pass all the young men that read the diffuse and easy works in fashion. These modern books are only the weak dilutions of the old ones."

"Thank you kindly, uncle. I shall be glad to get your books. I mean to make a lawyer if study can do it."

"But, Beauchamp, you don't mean to have a case of your own for your first appearance — do you?"

"Why, no; what do you mean?"

"Do you know where Sally is?" (very seriously).

"No, uncle; on my soul I don't."

"Right sure, are you?"

"I mean it, uncle. I haven't the least idea."

"Well, Wyndham thinks you do. He believes she's hid about here, and that you and your mother are knowing to it."

"He lies like a dog!" said Beauchamp, in great wrath, "and whoever says so, I'll cram it down his throat."

"He'll not say so to you; he knows it wouldn't be safe; but his spies will watch, and if they find her about here, he'll make you smart for it. Dangerous business to help hide a runaway."

"That was the meaning, then, of that fellow's jumping the fence and running through the cornfield!"

"When? to-night?"

"Yes, just as I came up the lane. I couldn't see very well, but it *looked* like Jack Fleemister."

"That's very like. Jack kept watch over her for Wyndham, and, *quis custodiet*, you know, — who shall watch the watcher? He likely got too fond of her, and so she put out. Now he's running round as fierce as Satan after a soul that has slipped through his black fingers. She's pretty, that Sally, just as pretty a piece of flesh as your Herbleu beauty."

"Uncle Ralph, please oblige me by not making comparisons of that sort. You may rail at women in general, but I don't want you to hint at any mulatto girl in the same breath with naming Miss Shelburne."

"Well, if she's found here, there will be people enough to make the comparison, and they won't spare you, either, for all your high sentiments."

"But she *can't* be here; we know what rooms we have, and she couldn't live here a month without our finding it out in some way."

"Don't be too sure. The niggers hide well. They're

cunning. Think of all the old rookeries you have — the old stables, the corn-barns, hay-ricks, the carriage-house, the attics and all! Why, Phillis could keep her hid a year by changing her round when close pressed. This is the real reason why I came over to see you, that I might put you on your guard. Not that you're bound to look her up and deliver her; that's *their* hunt. Let them skin their own varmints. But she's worth a pile of money; that's enough to keep your friend Wyndham's eyes open; and I judge Jack Fleemister has *his* motives — probably a big reward, for one. So your house and all your ways will be watched. They mayn't do you a mischief, and again they may. It's just as well to keep your rifle handy. I wouldn't shoot unless I had the right of it, and that pretty *clare*; but if I did shoot, I'd take care not to miss."

"You're right there. I shan't get into a fight except in self-defence; but if I do, there will be no miss. The man that is within range of my rifle must have a head smaller than a squirrel's if he carries it home without a hole in it."

"Well, I'll ride. I left my horse under the shed. You be cautious, young man. Prudence is what you lack. It's a mighty sight easier to get into a scrape than out of it. Better have your friend Howard come out and stay with you a while. Two's better than one. And a clear-sighted witness, known to be truthful, is sometimes of use."

Beauchamp went out and got the horse, and his uncle mounted and rode away.

The young man seemed fated to have plenty of things to think of. He found his mother had returned to the sitting-room, and he sat down with her.

"I was thinking, Beauchamp," she said, "as we were talking a while ago of selling Phillis, how acre after acre,

and our servants, and horses, and crops, have gone to satisfy that judgment of Wyndham's, and that the whole of this sore trouble has come from the false swearing of one or two men. You know we have often spoken of Van Holm's testimony about the oak tree that was blazed for the old corner of our land. We know he swore falsely. And by that means we lost five hundred acres. Perhaps you don't remember that at the trial that finally went against us there was a paper laid before the jury that your poor father declared was a forgery. But it was well done, and it had Van Holm's name as witness to it. He swore positively to your uncle Isham's signature. Your father knew it was false, but Van Holm swore he saw him sign it. I often wonder whether he has any conscience, and whether, now he is getting into years, he is ever troubled by the thought that his perjury has been the means of robbing us of our land, and of stripping us of everything that would bring a dollar. How can such a man see death coming, and know that he must go to judgment, and there to answer for the deeds done in the body! I don't see how he can sleep nights. And his wife must know. And they have no children. Miserable people, they may have got our land at a bargain, but they paid a dear price, the price of their souls."

"Well, mother, Van Holm has the land, and that is all he cares for, I imagine. A heavy, brutal old man, with a cold eye and a warm nose. I don't believe he has a particle of feeling, nor a scruple of remorse. He gathers his crops, and sells his stock, and beyond his daily labor and his drams, I don't believe he cares a fig for anything."

"He was different when I first knew him. He was more slender and cheerful-looking, and his Pennsylvania brogue was amusing, in place of being repulsive, as it is now. I think his crime has burdened him, and that the heavy and brutal looks you speak of are the result of a

long struggle with the inner voice. It is the doggedness of a man who knows that he is in the wrong, but is bound to brazen it out; and to do this he has drowned his better nature in whiskey. He is a Catholic, you know, but for many years he has not been to church. I was reminded of this by hearing that he attended mass at the chapel a week or two ago, when Father Hennequin came over from Beardsley."

"Father Hennequin! That is the priest that Howard knows so well, and thinks so much of."

"How should Mr. Howard, a son of the Puritans, be intimate with Father Hennequin?"

"Some of Howard's female pupils, who were Catholics, went, after leaving him, to the school kept by the nuns; and that establishment is one of Father Hennequin's posts. At the annual exhibition Howard was invited by some of the parents, and went over and remained a day or two, lodging in the priest's house. They have frequently met since, and are great friends."

The conversation then turned upon the fugitive Sally, and Beauchamp asked his mother if she had any reason to suppose that Sally was still in the neighborhood? She could not say, but she thought not. "You don't believe she could be hid here in the house?" he asked.

"Certainly not. I know every part of the house, of course, and am about it enough to be sure that there is no one here."

"The time will soon come when the family will have to be sold. I don't know how to stop it, and you know I can't buy them."

"No, Beauchamp; and I'm that sorry for 'em, I could cry. However, they haven't Bertram, and that's one comfort."

"I am glad that Berty's away, too, for we were babies

together; but why shouldn't you be just as sorry for Sally, or Harry, or the twin picaninnies?"

"I'm sorry for all of 'em; but Berty's a likely boy, and was a great favorite of your uncle Isham's."

"I know what you would intimate, mother, and I know what the general opinion was; but it isn't so. Berty is not my cousin. I *know* who his father is."

"Thank Heaven if he's *not* our flesh and blood. But how can you be so positive?"

"Don't ask me the question. You just be sure it is so as I tell you. I wish I was half as sure about Sally."

"Don't say so, Beauchamp. There can't be anything certain about it. Let the dead rest. I feel like I wouldn't want to have such a thing even hinted at."

The dogs without were uneasy, and there were occasional barks. Their language, to the practised ear, was quite intelligible. It said, as plainly as possible, "We don't like it at all; there's some suspicious person about, and we'd like to know what he wants!"

"There must be some runaways about," said Mrs. Russell, "and the dogs hear them passing."

"Perhaps so," said Beauchamp. He did not intend to let her know his uncle's errand, nor the suspicion he had as to Jack Fleemister. "Whoever it is," he continued, "he'll do well to keep clear of old Plutarch, or Seneca either. Those dogs have about as much sense as we have. They don't molest a neighbor, nor a civil and well-dressed stranger, even; but you know they won't let a strange nigger, or pedler, or, least of all, a cracker, come into the yard. — Well, mother, it's about bed time. I think I'll take a look at the kitchen and over the house."

He drew on his slippers, and stepped softly to the kitchen door. There was a bright fire-light within, and Phillis and Sylvia were squatted before it. The girl was knitting, and Aunt Phillis was rocking herself and singing

some of the endless stanzas of "The Hebrew Children." He then came into the house, and took a candle and walked through the rooms. The portraits stared at him from the walls; he almost expected to hear the rustle of his grandmother's silks, and the snap of the old silver snuff-box which his grandfather held in his fingers. His father looked down on him benignantly, and his uncle Isham looked like a cheery bachelor, not at all troubled by money affairs or neighborhood gossip. He opened every closet and explored every nook and corner. All was dusty and desolate, and the rooms were rather like the home of a family of ghosts than the hiding-places of living creatures. He was satisfied that there could be no one in the house. He finished the round, and descended the broad stair amidst the silence so deep, so dead, and before he got into the sitting-room heard a long-drawn sigh — at least a sound as though from human lungs. His heart beat quicker, and a peculiar thrill passed over him. He listened again. There was no sound, nothing but his own footfall. It was a freak of the wind, or the swinging of some loosened clapboard, or a sound made by a rat, and exaggerated by echoes; for he was sure there was nobody in the house. Bidding his mother an affectionate good night, he went to his room, and before morning he had traversed endless rough roads with Miss Shelburne, who was in the sunniest humor; and he would have been supremely happy in her society if his steps had not been dogged by Jack Fleemister.

Before he started to town in the morning, a negro man came from his uncle Ralph, bringing a couple of law books, and a note. The note was very short: —

"It was as you thought. I saw J. F. as I rode away.
R. B."

CHAPTER XV.

JOE HEADY'S TREAT.

WHEN the stage-coach arrived in the county town with the mail, the little driver used to put his lips to a tin horn (as long and slender as those held by the angels in the Pre-Raphaelite pictures which adorned our Sunday school books); and blow a blast as though he would blow his soul through it. Then he would gather his reins in a professional twist, and, drawing himself up so that the toes of his jack-boots barely touched the dasher, call to his horses with profuse "doggons," and, swing his long whip with a prodigious crack, that usually exploded just over the ears of the high leader. The horses, that had been poking along at the rate of four miles an hour over the abominable road, now

"Exulted under him, and knew their king."

They would put up their noses, and swing out their tails, and canter over the pavement with such fury as to draw to the windows, as they passed, all the prevailing types and colors of womankind. The sound of the horn and the rattle of the wheels penetrated all the offices and smoky dens around the square; and very soon the leisure-loving set, who, like the Athenians, "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing," gathered at the post-office to see what passengers had arrived, to learn the latest quotations in hogs, to look

over (other people's copies of) the Journal, and to assist the dim-eyed and rather thick-headed postmaster in the heavy task of sorting the contents of the mail-bag.

"What yer got in the boot yander, Jim?" asked one of the 'interviewers' of the sturdy little driver.

"Dead Sure Cure for the Curious," said Jim. "Bran new medicine. Want some?"

"Where you gon' to take 'em?"

"To the Court House. Ordered expressly by the judge, for lawyers that ax too many questions. I wonder where Joe Heady's at."

"Reckin he's gone out diggin' roots for bitters."

"Won't one of yer run over and tell him to come yer?" asked the driver.

No one answering, he exclaimed, —

"I wouldn't be doggoned mean like *you* all, no way. You're that mean you'd steal a ginger cake from a nigger baby. H'yer, you black monkey," addressing a small negro boy; "go over to the Court House, and ax Joe Heady to come right over h'yer."

The boy ran, and presently Mr. Heady came, bringing a basket. The parcels directed to him were all marked "Bitters;" seeing which, the little driver winked, and the Athenians laughed again. He took them, and crossed the street, and then the driver, having delivered his various errands in the square, mounted the box, and, turning a wide circle on a sharp trot, cracked once more his portentous whip, and drove to the stable. Heady, meanwhile, deposited his bundles at the tailor's shop, and went to his office to make out the list of invitations for the evening.

These were written in legal blanks used for filling out summonses, and were signed "Scipio Russell Niger, by his next friend, J. Heady," and were duly adorned by the

county seal impressed on vermilion. The documents were served by a deputy sheriff, and the preparations were speedily made. Mr. Howard and Mr. Russell received their summons just as they were leaving school, and the latter was prevailed upon to stay in town "just for this once." The party was to be given at the tailor's shop, as it was provided with the best stove and the largest board. When it was dark, and the shutters were closed, the guests came quietly and singly, and the festivities began. The viands consisted of canned oysters, sardines, pickled lobster, eggs, and, what was the greatest rarity in a country of corn-bread, a can of Boston "crackers" — biscuit, as our English friends term them. The oysters were generally eaten stewed in a pan with a little butter and pepper. Eggs were devoured in vast numbers, cooked in all conceivable ways.

When eggs are plenty and fresh, we are grateful for the beneficence which has furnished mankind with hens. On this occasion, the health of Alexander the Great was solemnly drunk, because he had had the good sense to bring back from India into Europe those useful fowls.

Of materials there was a lavish abundance, but of dishes and utensils there was a woful lack. Some ate out of brown earthen-ware bowls; others speared oysters with ashen splinters. Tin dippers served for water — not much used, there being apparently a prejudice against town wells. Yellow crockery mugs were in request for the whiskey, which was from Van Holm's oldest barrel, marked 1825. Later, there were tea-cups for the *pêche liqueur*, and for the wonderful snowy heap of egg-nogg that came at the end. Then pipes prevailed, those made of cobs with reed stems, and the tawny Powhatans, being about equally in favor.

The tailor, familiarly called "Shears," being invited to

"take the chair," "the cloth was removed" symbolically by setting the dishes not wanted in the corners of the room; and he seated himself cross-legged on the ample board, and, brandishing his yardstick to enforce silence, called Joe Heady to a low stool on his right, and Mr. Beauchamp Russell to a cushion on his left. The tin dipper rested in the golden fluid. *Conticuere omnes*, each holding his mug, while the tailor, remaining seated like another Eastern monarch, made a speech from the throne. He was happy, he said, to welcome the gentlemen of the town to this entertainment in behalf of his friend the clerk, whose well-known modesty would not allow him to speak in public. It was another proof of his kindness, of his regard for his fellow-men, both white and black. His was not the heart to refuse a favor even to the dusky son of Africa. He remembered the stiffening joints and the aching back of the poor nigger, and would not see him suffer, — not he, so long as a pint of whiskey bitters would give him solace. He was also so obliging in trying to gratify curiosity, and to show the usages in his office to the benighted and ignorant! How he watched the ardor with which his explanations were given, and saw with delight the first signs of intelligence gleaming behind that dull and dark mask! Here, in this dawning of mind, he had his great reward; and, with the consciousness of doing a generous act, he bade the innocent old man farewell. "Farewell!" he thought, as he gave him the bottle; "may the secret juices which Mother Nature has hidden in those medicinal barks assuage the pain of rheumatism, and make life a blessing."

But now he had had a painful revelation of the wickedness of mankind, even of niggers — a new proof of total depravity, and a new justification of the ancient curse pronounced on Ham. This child-like old nigger had be-

trayed the confidence reposed in him, and taken advantage of his friend's absence to affix the seal of the county to forged free papers — free papers which some miscreant, instigated of the devil, had falsely, and of his malice aforethought, made and provided for the deceiving son of Ham aforesaid. "For this we condole with our friend," said the tailor. "This treachery has wounded his feelings, and will from henceforth seal up the fountain of kindness to any of the faithless race. Let us drink to him, and show our sympathy."

Howard was standing near Beauchamp, when the latter, bending over, said in a whisper, "You confounded Yankee, you wrote that speech! Old Shears never could have made it in the world." Howard smiled, but said nothing.

"The butler will advance with the golden cup!" said Beauchamp. "By command of his majesty, King Cabbage, the ceremony of kneeling on presenting it is on this occasion omitted."

"Crown the goblets!" said Howard, "and let us drink. Long life to the clerk! and may he never put the county seal to a worse summons for any of us than this!"

King Cabbage now called on the Yankee schoolmaster, who declared that, after his majesty's clear and touching statement of the case, there was really nothing left for a mere pedagogue to say. "But," he said, "every fact has its reverse, like a medal, and every act its reflex. Light is attended by shade. A triumph for the one side is a defeat for the other. The victor's laurel is here, and the widow's weeds there. Thus in the classical ballad, when the singer tells how

'De grasshopper sot on de sweetater vine,'

and

'De turkey gobbler come up behine,'

if he has in mind the joy of the triumphant gobbler, he will sing the next line in the major key with energy: —

'And — YANKED him off de sweetater vine;'

but if he has in mind the sorrow naturally felt for the grasshopper who was ruthlessly snatched away from his pleasant companions in the potato patch, the melody will run into a plaintive minor key. On this occasion, I should be false to my birth if I did not avow that my sympathy is pretty evenly divided. It is check and checkmate in the game of Black against White. I lament for Heady's loss of faith in human nature, especially black nature; but I must rejoice in the successful wiles of this sable Ulysses who has escaped from the thralldom that has held him so long. And as Indiana has given us one of her brightest sons, we have now made a feeble return, at least keeping the number even."

Adams did not greatly relish the ironical compliment. In fact, when he was called on, as he was directly, to give a toast, he plainly showed his irritation; and, instead of the humorous remarks that he had intended, he gave a political turn to affairs by eulogizing the institution of slavery, and condemning to perdition the abolitionists, "and all their friends, open or secret, in free or in slave states."

"Come," said Beauchamp, "none of that, Adams. You've no business to be angry. Can't you take a joke?"

"Why, won't *you* drink 'death to abolition'?" asked Adams, with a sneer.

"I'm squarely against the abolitionists," he answered, "but my friend Howard here may have different opinions. And as long as he takes no part in our politics, and doesn't interfere with our niggers, he has a right to think what he likes. This is a time for fun, not for politics,

and it's not the civil thing to bring up a subject just for the sake of giving offence."

"Mr. Adams can propose what toasts he chooses," said Howard, "and express them in the tasteful way that suits his nature. I have the right to drink them, or to decline them. I don't propose to *argue* anything over a bowl of egg-nogg, and in the presence of our wise King Cabbage. At a suitable time I have no objections to letting the gentleman know what I think. And I will say frankly, in spite of his rudeness, that my reference to him was not meditated—a mere playful allusion on the spur of the moment, without thought of offence; and after saying that, if he chooses to keep his anger, he is welcome."

"By my royal authority," said King Cabbage, brandishing his yardstick, "I command peace. No quarrelling in presence of your sov'ring, gen'lmen!—especially over goo—good liquor."

Beauchamp said, "I propose a 'drum-head' court-martial, with an appeal to the head of Savoy. What do you say, old Cold Slaw?" This to the King.

The King commanded silence, and ordered the golden cup to be brought and passed to each of his subjects in turn, who sipped of it gravely.

"Now you are a rose-cabbage, gracious monarch," said Beauchamp, as the tailor's face began to glow.

"Well, Davis," said the tailor, "what news from our other subjects? We hear you have tidings. Our royal ear is ever open."

"And mouth, too," some one added.

Davis, thus appealed to, arose, and asked that the whole company be first sworn to secrecy. King Cabbage desired Heady, the clerk, to administer the oath, which was done in a tin dipper; and Davis then proceeded.

He said that Providence and a little nigger had put a great secret in his possession, which his duty to King Cabbage now obliged him to reveal. It was nothing less than the clandestine correspondence that had passed between Aloysius Pittsinger and Lucy Fenton. (Hear! hear!) The enamoured Aloysius, being gently questioned, had owned the soft impeachment, and in a few gushes had poured out to him (Davis) all his trials, his hopes and fears. The letters from the Dove he had seen, and they would draw tears from the eyes of an iron spider. An elopement was planned, soon to be carried into effect. Article by article the dainty wardrobe of Lucy had been conveyed to Goldstein's store, and was now in Aloysius's trunk.

"'Tis well," said the King in a husky voice, and with a halting style of utterance. "'Tis well. Your sov'ring accepts your thanks;—no, your sov'ring gives you thanks. With my yardstick—no, old Shears's yardstick (a king nev' has a yardstick)—I measure out this business—ess—ess. Gen'lmen, quit laughing, and 'tend to your sov—ring! The steed, that's one. The license, that's two. The farewell escort, that's three, and all told."

Committees were appointed on the three lines of duty. Davis said he had a horse in view whose performances would be highly gratifying. Heady was charged with framing a suitable license, and a writ of *exeat regno*; and the deputy sheriff, who had been silent hitherto, was to provide an escort.

His majesty was then assisted to vacate the throne, and was supported while he stretched his royal legs. There were songs, with guitar accompaniment; "Old King Cole" and "Down among the Dead Men" being most applauded. The company broke up in tolerable season, and in reasonably good order. Howard went out

with his friend to pass the remainder of the night at Beech Knoll.

"The walk will do us good," said Howard, as they got into the open air. "The breeze will blow the smoke out of our clothes and hair, and the exercise will be useful in various ways."

Howard was thinking of the little flare-up with Adams, and wondered what was the secret repugnance that so often put them at variance.

"What is there about Adams," he asked, "that is so disagreeable? He seems to be generally popular, and to be on very friendly terms even with the stiffest old farmers in the county. He is well-read, and is usually affable. But whenever we meet, we seem to be mutually repelled."

"I think that what is disagreeable is the man himself," replied Beauchamp. "He hasn't taken the pains to disguise himself to us. In intellect he is strong and shrewd. Morally, I think, he's rotten. I mean that he is purely selfish, and that he hasn't a single motive beyond selfish policy that makes him regard truth or honest dealing."

"Still it would not be safe to say so, because I suppose there is no evidence whatever against him. But I agree with you, I don't trust him. There is a false and evil spirit looking out of his eye sometimes. But what do you Kentuckians think of a man, born in a free state, who goes beyond you all in damning abolitionists? Is it *necessary*?"

"It's a hard question," said Beauchamp. "Slavery is a matter so difficult to deal with, that our people are never *quite* at ease. It is not so much the fear of any rising, but they think that discussion makes their property less valuable, by making slaves discontented and owners apprehensive. Now, I respect the opinions you have been brought up to hold, and don't look for you to change

them. But you must know as well as I do, that, if you ever expect to succeed at the law here in Kentucky, you'll have to plant yourself squarely on southern ground. That you haven't taken one side or the other, but have held your peace, shows me that you don't expect to stay here longer than you teach, or after you are admitted to the bar. Adams sees this point, and, as he does mean to stay, and is bound to succeed, he rather overdoes the business, at least for me. But no one is so violent as a new convert, as our people would consider him, or an apostate, as he would be to you. Now, he goes beyond *me*, for he argues for slavery as being absolutely right. I don't agree to it. I am sorry we ever had the institution; and we shouldn't have had it, if Henry Clay could have had his way. When our constitution was framed, there was only a majority of two votes in favor of slavery. When it was revised, twenty-five years later, and Clay and others did their utmost to have the policy of gradual emancipation adopted, they were beaten; and since then we've all had to follow on the conservative track. I have heard these things talked over at my father's table; and I know that the doctrine, that slavery was divinely sanctioned, as the Baptist preachers, such as Waller, claim, is something new, and it's monstrous. As Tom Marshall told Waller, when he had said that God ordained slavery, 'I have too much respect for *my* God to attempt to defend him from such a slander as that.' No, it's an evil. It's bad for young men to grow up with a race below them, and so learn to become tyrants from their intercourse with one sex, and something worse from contact with the other. It's bad for the small farms to be gathered into big plantations, and have the laboring whites driven out to Missouri; and, I suppose, if you ask the niggers, they would say it is bad for them. They

are not often sold away, but if a farmer is in debt they have to go, of course; and when a master dies they have to be sold to settle the estate. I've seen a great many sold, and though *some* didn't seem to mind it, most of 'em *did*. But there's no man, I venture to say, in the county, leaving out Wyndham, the Fleemisters, and that wretch of a Houghton, that wouldn't say, that to take Milly's children and sell 'em, after they'd lived free for years, is just cruel. Perhaps every man wouldn't talk about it to you the way I've been running on, but I know what the people think."

"Did you ever think, my friend, what is to be the end of all this? Is slavery always to continue? Will it slowly wear out, or be broken in some great revolution?"

"I think it'll slowly wear out, just as the Saxon churls slowly rose to freedom in England. It may take centuries here. It took four hundred years there. A revolution is impossible. Who is to fight? The negroes can't. We shan't, for we have all we claim guaranteed to us by the constitution. And the north won't, for it wouldn't be politic; and besides, they couldn't live if the cotton mills stopped. If there were a division of the two sections, the border states would suffer like the outside rows of a cornfield."

"If I thought that emancipation would be even begun in my day, I might conclude to settle here," said Howard; "but I don't want my posterity (if I am to have any) brought up under the influences you have described. And I have no doubt I shall be obliged, by a sense of duty, to quit this pleasant country, even if I am not driven out, and try to get a living in my own thickly-settled state."

"By the by, speaking of Adams," said Beauchamp, "what do you think his matrimonial intentions are? So

shrewd a man as he will want to strengthen himself by an alliance with some family, — and with the best he can fasten to. Will he marry Miss Wyndham?"

"I can't say. I rather think not. I think I have heard that Miss Wyndham don't fancy him."

"But her father does."

"That is quite another matter. The girl has just as much spirit as the old gentleman, and if she won't, she won't."

Beauchamp remembered the Montague and Capulet nonsense, and wondered a moment what had prompted it. Then he thought of another lady, and said with a tone as artless and indifferent as he could assume, "You don't think he would succeed with Miss Shelburne — do you?"

"Do you know any reason why he couldn't?"

Beauchamp thought he *did* know a reason, but he did not intend to betray the lady's confidence, nor reveal his own hopes, and therefore he made a meaningless answer.

"As I told you once before," said Howard, "women never penetrate to the real nature of a man like him. He has manners and a good figure; he is able, successful, and is looked up to, or rather is feared, which is often better for business than being respected. He would seem to a gay and brilliant woman like Miss Shelburne a very pattern of a man. And then her uncle! — for I tell you in confidence, in spite of his blunt ways, he is an old fox. He may *like* you or me better, but for some reason or other he would do that Adams a good turn sooner than either of us. He naturally *hates* a Yankee, and he fears you are about half one; and though he has always despised Hoosiers too, it's plain that he sees that Adams is an established fact, — a man not to be overturned, and therefore to be courted. It will take a long time for you to make him believe that you are

really determined, and that your industry is not a mere temporary *splurge*. Besides, he has a lurking distrust of your soundness on the slavery question. However, I don't want to cause you trouble in mind, nor to make you suspicious. But it's always well to know the ground one stands on."

Beauchamp's spirits had been rapidly running down while Howard spoke. With the best intentions, Howard was not always discreet, because he did not see when it was better to be silent. Excessive frankness is sometimes as hard to bear as ill-nature itself. Beauchamp was glad when they came to the house, so as to end the conversation that so depressed him.

At breakfast, Beauchamp explained his absence the evening previous, and inquired if anything had happened. All had been quiet, his mother replied, and there was no news of Sally.

CHAPTER XVI.

A ROMANTIC ELOPEMENT.

AS our readers have imagined, Aloysius Pittsinger was preparing to fly, or, as he styled it, "to leave the blamed little town." All his clothes and trinkets were packed, his affairs with his employer, he flattered himself, were kept accurately, and he was only waiting for the horse, which his kind friend Will Davis had engaged for him. And *she* was ready too — ready to leave father and mother for the sake of her Aloysius. The day was fixed. On a Saturday morning by daylight, Aloysius was to be at the bridge on the edge of the town with a covered buggy and the trunk that contained all the worldly possessions of these two trusting hearts; and the young lady was to rise, slip down the front stairs noiselessly, go out of the front door in her ordinary dress, and quietly trip along the street to the place of rendezvous. All happened as it should, and the confiding damsel took her seat in the buggy, and then wept and sobbed on the breast of her protector as if she could never be comforted. She was a poor, weak thing, she said, and Aloysius must pardon her natural tears. Turning around at length, she apostrophized her birth-place, and hoped that Heaven's choicest blessings would descend on her cruel pa and her unsympathizing ma, whom she yet fondly, dearly loved. For those who had made sport of her trials, and treated the sacred feelings of a

maiden's heart as of little worth, she had charity; she could forgive, but not forget. Aloysius soothed her, and then gathered the reins to start. "Good by, mean little town!" he exclaimed with a lofty look. "Good by, thou tyrant, Goldstein! Good by, nest of slanderers and vipers! Good by, busybodies! I go to put leagues between me and ye! Get up!" This last exclamation was for the horse. To explain why the horse did not take the exclamation very much to heart, it will be best perhaps to remind the reader of an old story.

A shrewd fellow owned a horse that had somehow got a habit of stopping abruptly the moment he got off the paved part of the street and found himself on an ordinary road. The habit was chronic, and the beast was obstinate. The owner advertised the horse for sale, and added, "As the owner wishes to go out of town, he has no further use for him." The horse came into the possession of a new master, who was not long in discovering this peculiarity. Beating did not do the least good, and persuasion was a waste of time and temper. He went fiercely to the former owner, saying, "I thought you said you sold the horse because you had no use for him!"

"Softly, my friend! I said I had no use for him because I wanted to go out of town. Now this — beast never would go!"

A horse with a similar meditative turn of mind was harnessed to the vehicle that carried Aloysius and all his hopes. He answered the summons to "get up" with a slightly recalcitrant movement, but did not start a peg. The beak of the expectant runaway grew red and then purple with wrath, and shaking off the charmer that clung to his side, he raised his sinewy arm and let the whip-lash fall like flail-strokes on the animal's back. The horse moved as a steamboat does at starting; groaned

out a slow turn or two of the wheel, and then stopped again. Meanwhile the clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard on the street, and the sound came momentarily nearer. Lucy listened with alarm, and then she wept again, and said, "Aloysius, don't desert me! Cling to me, love! Save me from my angry sire!" "You do the clingin'," said the now angry lover, "and let me try to get this derved old fool of a horse to go."

Lucy almost swooned in her terror, while her hero laid his thwacks on the back of the horse. Truly the animal had a fund of obstinacy, a capacity for standing unmoved, that would have served for a regiment of donkeys. A hatter, beating fur to make a felt, would not have been more indefatigable than Aloysius; and all the good it did was to beat out the dust which the half-awakened hostler had left. The lover began to sweat, although it was a cool morning, and the fog rose chill from the river. The horse was at last induced to walk, though circumspectly, choosing the smoothest part of the road for his footing, without concerning himself where the wheels had to go. So the vehicle was drawn first to one side of the road and then to the other, and its progress was now and then stayed by the wheel hitting a projecting rock, or stump, or fence corner. Aloysius had exhausted his catalogue of oaths, and had blasted his friend Davis and his ancestry; likewise the horse, and all other horses for his sake; and the horse's owner and family to the remotest degree. Pale about the eyes, and with a nose like an enraged gobbler, he had wound the reins in the handle of the dasher, and now sat with his pistol cocked, while the horse walked on in a brown study, or meandering at his own pleasure, and the vehicle seemed about to turn topsy-turvy as the wheels went over the hillocks, or sunk into the gullies.

Lucy was frantic with fear. But the danger of upsetting, though imminent, was merged in the apprehension she felt on account of being pursued. The tramping sound came nearer, and to escape was impossible. What an untold energy of cursing the wretched Aloysius expended on the horse as he slowly moved on his tortuous way! The pursuer was just behind, and presently came alongside. Lucy looked out and shrieked as she saw a stalwart figure mounted on a powerful horse. The rider was masked, and wore a large flowing cloak. Aloysius set his teeth together and faced the horseman, his finger playing with the lock as he did so.

"Put up that dratted little shooting-iron!" exclaimed the unknown in a deep voice, at the same time showing the barrel of a horse pistol.

Aloysius looked at the huge muzzle not a yard distant, and did as he was bid.

"I know'd you was a low-lived, ornary cuss, from the time I first set eyes on yer. Yer thest the no-countest feller I ever seed. I've thest a good mind to let a hole into that little head o' yourn, anyhow."

"Mercy, father! don't shoot! spare him! Kill me if you will! kill your unhappy child!" exclaimed Lucy, in tragic tones that for once were not assumed.

"Kill *you!* you little fool! I don't waste powder that way. You kin go thest whar yer like. I'm derved glad to git shet of yer. But *you*, you sneakin' thief, don't you never show that mean face in these parts, or, by Gementley, I'll thest double it up like a pewter pot! I don't need no pistol. If I give you thest *one*, I kin knock yer to bug-dust."

With this the horseman turned and rode back. Aloysius had not felt very talkative while he could look into the barrel of the horse pistol; in fact, his organs would

not have served him to fling back defiance; for his mouth seemed paralyzed, and cold tremors ran over his nerves. The horse plodded on; and Lucy had settled down into a shapeless heap of clothes in the bottom of the buggy. Slowly she rose up, and looked out after the retreating rider.

"Wretched, murderous man!" she exclaimed. "To think that masked assassin was the author of my being! that he has cursed his eldest-born! that he has cast reproach upon my heart's beloved, my dearest Aloysius! This is the last drop of bitterness in the cup! How noble in you to restrain your anger! Had you slain him, there would be no more peace for your Lucy this side the grave. Generous man, you spared the father for the daughter's sake! May Heaven bless you, my love!"

"That wan't your father."

"Not my father!"

"No. He tried to talk like the old man, but I knew better."

"You knew better, and didn't fire? Why did you not meet him with deadly aim, and destroy the false wretch? 'None but the brave deserve the fair.' You should have defied him to mortal combat. You should have torn off his mask, and overwhelmed him with the force of truth. Perchance he was one of the idle youths of the town, who has with unloaded pistol made a mock of you, and is returning even now to relate his base exploit to his fellows. That I should have linked my fate to a coward! O, Aloysius, it is too, too much!"

"Now you just shut up, and don't make a fool of yourself. I don't care about a charge of lead any more'n you do. Besides, if I'd fired, it might have turned out to be the old man, arter all. Any noise would have brought the town out on our track, and where should we have

been? Now, we're safe, and on the road to Indiana, where love is wavin' Himing's torch for us over the river. Come, my Lucy, you're all over it now, and let's be happy. — If it wan't for this *derned* old horse!" This last exclamation was wrung from a heart of woe.

With such speed as they could, they went on for nearly an hour. After passing through a long, winding ascent through a ravine, they came upon a level tract of high land, where there were cross-roads. The hearts of the travellers failed them when they saw a horseman near the guide-post, directly in the way they were going; and one on each side of him, not far off, drawn up as it appeared on the cross-road. There was nothing to do but to go on. As they came nearer, they saw that the three riders were masked. When the vehicle came to the guide-post, the central figure waved his hand in a commanding way, and bade the driver halt. "Approach, brethren!" the voice said. The two riders rode up, and took their places on either hand. "Present your warrants," continued the voice. Three pistols were levelled at the unhappy Aloysius. "You see our authority. Answer now what shall be inquired of you, and all shall be well. Refuse or equivocate, and prepare to die. Aloysius Pittsinger, do you love this woman, yes or no? You are silent! Nod, if you cannot speak. 'Tis well. Are your affairs settled? You are wise. Have you made your will? Imprudent man! Have you any packets of indigo? or any unfilled contracts for dried apple? None. Then Goldstein is not wronged. Do you forgive your enemies? Then drink a loving cup." A horseman here handed Aloysius a tin dipper, with a rousing dram of whiskey in it. "Drink it, brother, in token of amity." Aloysius took the dipper, and found the whiskey so palatable after his exertions, that he swallowed the last drop.

"Drink now with our brother on the left." Aloysius did not think his friends in the masks very bloodthirsty; in fact, he began to consider the ceremony a good joke; so he laughed, and pushed away the dipper.

"Present your warrants!" said the chief speaker. The pistols were again pointed; and one of the maskers, as if to show that it was not safe to trifle, discharged his weapon in the air. The sound was convincing; and Aloysius took the dipper, and with some difficulty gulped the second dram.

"Give now to the traveller his writ of *Exeat Regno*." A roll, tied with blue ribbon, was then handed to him.

"'Tis well. Now for the license. You are about to enter into the holy state of matrimony. Do you promise to support this woman as a white man should? He promises. Do you engage that neither she, nor any fruit of your marriage, if Providence should bless you with children, shall become chargeable upon this county? Noble youth! The county is safe. Drink now the third cup in token of your promise. First, hold up your hand." The chorus in deep voices chimed, "HE SWEARS!"

Aloysius would fain have escaped the third dose. Whiskey was beginning to be odious, so his stomach assured him; and he begged hard. He thought he should like to join the Washingtonian Society off-hand. He cursed in his soul the man who had first turned the sweet, red kernels of corn into this nauseous and fiery fluid. The chief was inexorable. "Drink!" he said; and the wretched man saw once more that three barrels were levelled at him. With a mighty effort he took the dipper, opened his mouth, and poured down the contents.

"'Tis well," said the leader; and he handed Aloysius a second roll.

"The ceremony will now conclude with burning incense. Brother, the tapers!"

Cigars were handed and lighted with fusees; and the expectant bridegroom, half stupefied with three draughts of raw whiskey, was forced to light one for himself. He knew the brand. Ill-fated man! They were Goldstein's worst, made by the fair hands of Eloisa Androlena Almonrosa Jerolina de Mont Blanc Fitz-Allan Davis Fleemister.

"Let the cortège advance! Forward!" Aloysius looked up. The company seemed to have increased—doubled, in fact. The chief of the party rode ahead, and two grave figures followed him. The carriage containing the run-away lovers came next; and the rear was brought up by three more men on horseback, masked like the others. All six were smoking like so many animated tar-kilns; but not a word was spoken. The procession, save the incongruity of the cigars, had the solemnity of a funeral.

During the whole extraordinary scene, the young woman had not uttered a word. Her bubbling emotion and her poetical commonplaces had been exhausted at the first adventure near the bridge. This last indignity had completely overwhelmed her. She covered her face, and was silent, a prey to mortification and rage. Aloysius, fearful of what might happen if he let his cigar go out, puffed as steadily as he could; but, after a time, the rank flavor of the tobacco was too much for him. He felt a cold, clammy sweat oozing from every pore. The load of whiskey, too, was burdensome. His head sank in deadly faintness, and the odious roll of Fleemister's tobacco fell to the ground. Lucy now roused herself, and, finding that she could not arouse her partner, took the reins, and guided the chariot of love. Thus the cavalcade proceeded. Lucy thought the road long enough to encircle the world. But at length the horsemen came together, and then rode forward and took their places,

three on each side of the road. The carriage went by, and, as it did so, the six maskers raised their hands and gave a military salute. Lucy kept on in silence, and saw the escort no more.

About noon, the horse, whose speed rather improved (since it could not fall off), had drawn his load into a cluster of houses, called by courtesy a town; and Lucy, seeing a tavern sign, determined to stop, and try to refresh man and beast. With some difficulty, Aloysius was got into the house and laid on a bed. Lucy was indefatigable in her attentions, and, after a couple of hours, she saw her hero open his eyes. She took a modest lunch; but the whiskey and tobacco were still in the ascendant with Aloysius, and he could not eat a morsel. Not wishing to spend longer time in a public place, she prevailed on him to start, and the horse was brought out. After paying the bill, Aloysius said he felt quite peart, and took the reins. All was smooth for a few miles; but the drowsiness returned, and Lucy became driver again. The day dragged interminably. The sun set, and night came; and, though the lights of the city at first seemed so near, she thought afterwards that they receded as fast as the provoking horse advanced. At length they struck the pavements, and then the horse pricked up his ears, and started off in a very fair trot. The jolting wakened Aloysius, who opened his eyes and blinked at the gas-lights in the windows and at the street corners, and then undertook to drive, as he knew the streets. The bustle increased. Carriages dashed by, and omnibuses, with deep rumbling, jolted against the edge-stones. The thronged sidewalks, the glancing lights, and the continuous roar, made a deep impression upon the susceptible Lucy. Then she thought, too, of the finery in the shops; and she wondered whether her dear Aloysius wouldn't (after they

were married) buy her some of those beautiful ribbons, or a bonnet, or some of the jewelry which she saw in the cases. She wondered if they were to live in the city. How she longed for the change! She would see life. The theatre would show her heroes and heroines who could talk in verse, and take those lofty attitudes which, thus far, she had only imagined. Her Aloysius should be rich: all people in cities were rich, and lived in fine houses, and were waited upon by servants. What Aloysius was to be, she had not thought, — but something very great — a speculator in hogs, or a tobacco factor, at the very least. Then he would have a bank, and be president of it, and bring home bank-bills by the square yard, which she could have for the shearing. How mean the little town looked, as she now saw it with reversed telescope! She would never return there — never, until she went in her own coach, with a pair of cream-colored horses.

Occupied with these gorgeous visions, one rising above another like the palaces seen in cloud-land, the panorama of the city passed swiftly by Lucy, and soon the carriage descended the steep slope of the levee to the ferry-landing. The river looked vast and wide in the starlight, and the lights shone dimly from the farther shore. She felt a chill as they approached the water, and she shivered while they sat waiting for the coming of the green-eyed steam ferry-boat that was to take them across to their destination — to the fruition of their hopes. Aloysius had forgotten about the waving "torch of Himing," on the other side, and was silent — silent as a drover thinking of the price of pork. The boat came near to the landing, and its great wheels were struggling with the current that tried to swing the stern off. Bells jangled; silence followed. Bells again, and the engine groaned,

and the wheels churned the water into foam. The boat was secured, the landing-platform laid, and Aloysius chirruped to his horse to go on. "Now, Lucy," he said, brightening up, "for Indiana, love, and liberty!"

But there were two men at the gangway of the boat who took the horse by the bridle. Aloysius thought they were there to collect the toll, and he felt in his pockets for a piece of silver. He was speedily undeceived.

"Drive back," said a man holding the horse at the bit.

"Back, back your horse!"

"I'm going over the river," said Aloysius.

"Not to-night," said the man.

"I sh'd like to know who's goin' to stop me."

"I am. Now, the less row you make the better. Just jump out and come with me."

Aloysius "allowed" that he should do no such thing, and bluntly said so.

"Well, if you want a muss, you can be accommodated."

The second man, at a signal, took hold of the horse's head, and the first came to the side of the buggy on which Aloysius sat, and grasped him by the arm.

"Come with me, sir!"

"Why should I go with you?"

"Because you must. I've a warrant for your arrest."

"Arrest me! What for?"

"Passing counterfeit money."

Aloysius was thunderstruck. He knew he had counterfeit bills in his wallet that he intended to use on occasion, but he had not meant to pass one at the little tavern where he had rested. He now knew that in his drunken stupidity he must have done so; and in consequence he had been pursued, trapped, caught.

Lucy was now completely broken down, and she cried as she had never cried before. She had not a word for

Aloysius. The revulsion of feeling against him as a criminal was sudden and intense. But for herself, alone in a strange city, with all her hopes dashed, with no prospect but to return to her father, to ride up the street in the hated stage-coach while every woman would be flattening her nose against the window to see her in her disgrace, her sorrow was sore indeed.

"How can I leave this girl?" asked the sobbing and trembling Aloysius; "who will care for her?"

"If you will behave yourself, and not force me to put the bracelets on," said the officer, "my friend here will take the lady to any hotel, and treat her as a lady should be treated."

Aloysius, completely cowed, gave his word he would go quietly, and started with the officer, saying in a whimpering tone, "Good by, Lucy. This is all a mistake. I shall prove it in court, and shall be cleared. Don't believe me guilty."

Lucy did not answer a word. She told the officer that she wished to go to Waggener's stable, where her father always put up when he came to the city, and that she should ask Mr. Waggener to take her to his house. The officer got into the buggy, and drove to the stable, and then to the house of the proprietor, and there left her.

Poor Lucy! her castles had all toppled over.

CHAPTER XVII.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS is a season of universal festivity in Kentucky. The Catholics and Episcopalians, who take the lead in celebrating the day by appropriate religious ceremonies, are by no means in the majority; the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, who do not generally hold special services for this festival, outnumber the others by far. But these last-named religious sects, though quite strict in their doctrine, seem not to have the antipathy to this ancient holiday, and to Easter, which has prevailed in New England. The interval from Christmas to New Year was devoted wholly to pleasure. Work was suspended, schools had vacations, and family gatherings and neighborhood dinner parties prevailed. The annual hiring of slaves began January first, and ended December twenty-fourth, so that those who were out at service had one week of freedom. Household and farm servants were not expected to do much beyond getting the daily meals and caring for domestic animals; and the number of family negroes was generally so large that by taking turns in the kitchen, or at the stables, the greater part of them could be granted leave of absence. The "boys," whose duty it was to provide fire-wood, though generally behindhand, and obliged to cut and split every evening, were always careful to have a huge pile, and a sufficient number of sturdy back-logs, ready before Christmas eve. It was a

standing joke, when the "boys" came to ask for their leave of absence, for the master to inquire about the firewood, and on being told that there was plenty ready, to grant them permission to go off on their frolic, provided they got home before the back-log was burnt out. The "boys" never grew to be men, and the joke never got old; it was as good as new every Christmas. For the "boys" always took care to cut down the biggest gum-tree to be found, and to soak a number of lengths of the butt for a fortnight beforehand in the branch. One of these ponderous green and wet logs was generally safe for several days; which the master and the "boys" knew perfectly well as they grinned over the annual pleasantry. Until the verge and room of liberty should be narrowed for us into the limits of one week out of fifty-two, we can hardly tell what slight things would be enough to make us hilarious. Christmas was therefore the grand red-and-gilt-letter day of the year for the colored population. Its coming was looked for by those in prosperous families with pleasure, but by those in poor or declining families with dread. For none of the last could be sure where they would spend the next year, nor what anguish of separation was before them. But in general the negroes were light-hearted; and all classes, bond and free, prepared for Christmas with ardor.

Nothing showed so clearly the decline which the Russells had experienced as the stillness of Beech Knoll at this season of plenty and of rejoicing. The great dinners and the constant throngs of company for which the mansion had once been distinguished were no more. This year there was a frugal table set for mother and son, and two guests — Mr. Ralph Beauchamp, and Mr. Howard, the schoolmaster. One old woman and her granddaughter were the only occupants of the servants' quarters.

Uncle Ralph had considerably sent hands with a team every week, after Scipio ran away, to haul and cut wood.

Christmas week had been nearly filled with engagements by Beauchamp for himself and his mother and friend. They were to dine one day at Mr. Pierrepont's, and one day at Uncle Ralph's; and the young men were invited for one day by Squire Hamilton. How eagerly this last invitation was accepted by one of them it is needless to say. It was for the next day after Christmas. But Howard, for some reason, was not so eager; and as he awoke on that day with a slight headache, his disinclination and his illness together made a decided case of indisposition, and Beauchamp went alone, leaving Howard with his mother.

Beauchamp feared that there was to be a large company, but was delighted to find as guests only Mr. and Mrs. Pierrepont, and their daughter, Mrs. Warfield. He felt it a duty to be jolly, and did his part to admiration. He praised the squire's bowl of "lamb's-wool" (a beverage of whiskey, containing clouds of floating pulp of roasted acid apples, sweetened and spiced). He quite won the hearts of the tall, blue-eyed daughters by his judicious commendations of their really excellent preserves and sweet pickles, as well as by his affable manner and the interest he showed in the county gossip in which they delighted. He drew out Mr. Pierrepont, who not unwillingly told of his adventures in the Eastern States; and who, afterwards changing the theme, discussed the probable permanence of the government of France under the Citizen King, Louis Philippe. To Mrs. Pierrepont, who was a native of the county, he talked about the history of the older families, and with Mrs. Warfield concerning the gay season she had spent in Philadelphia. None knew, and but one person suspected, the cause of

his high spirits, and of the aptness of his phrases, and the unstudied and genial grace with which he carried off the honors. He was treading air. His nerves thrilled and his heart beat; but the excitement, contrary to his usual experience, only gave him added power and unfailing tact. He shone at his best that day; the reader knows why. Every thought, and word, and act, every glance and smile, and all the intuitive arts that society calls into play, were filled and inspired by the presence of the one adorable woman to whom he scarcely addressed a word. Nor was this gayety displayed for effect. It was a purely unconscious influence which swayed him, and which made him direct his play, as though at billiards, so as to "carom," by no matter how many reflecting angles, always upon the same object. He shone at his best, as Nature always intends the lover to shine in the eyes of her he loves.

The squire watched Beauchamp closely, but masked his reconnoissance by an indifferent manner. He saw, like a wary card-player, without showing anything in his own face, and he thought he understood the matter. His inquiring looks at his niece were less successful. She looked extremely beautiful, but was less demonstrative than usual; and though she bore her part in conversation with a lively good humor, she gave no ground for any sort of conclusion in her uncle's mind.

A game of whist came after dinner, the squire taking Mrs. Pierrepont for a partner, and Mrs. Warfield playing with her father. Miss Shelburne never played cards, and Beauchamp excused himself. The Misses Betty and Malvina were temporarily engaged in superintending some domestic affairs. All the party were to dine the next day at Mr. Pierrepont's, and Beauchamp was thinking how he could let Miss Shelburne know that he wished she would

go on horseback instead of in her uncle's carryall. He asked Mr. Pierrepont how he had come to town.

"On horseback. — Your play, squire; a spade leads."

"The river is deeper than usual, I suppose," said Beauchamp, looking at Miss Shelburne as if he would like to talk with his eyes, since *they* could not be overheard. He succeeded in gaining her attention.

"Yes; deep enough to wet the bottom of a carriage. — A heart, Eliza; take the heart."

"Your dinner is set for two o'clock, I believe. We can allow an hour, and start from here at one." Though talking to Mr. Pierrepont, Beauchamp's attention was steadily fixed on the violet eyes near him.

"Yes, I should think so. — The knave leads, squire, and the queen follows. The king being played, the queen has it her own way, and takes the knave."

The violet eyes looked serene, but Beauchamp thought they were intelligent and *rather* tender, too, and he determined to call at one o'clock next day, trusting that he should find Miss Shelburne ready to accompany him. He meant that Howard should engage the squire in conversation, and he thought his mother would naturally fall in with the daughters. But he had found before how hard it was to arrange such a party; for it depended on the order of their mounting, which, as they were not cavalry men under orders, he could not control.

The pattern housekeepers came in, and after them servants with candles. Then coffee was served, and small talk was current, though the game went on. Miss Shelburne was asked about her return home, of which something had been said, and she replied that she expected to go the day after New Year's. Miss Betty wondered whether she would come again next year, or whether her new husband would not want to have her stay at home.

"My husband, if I have one," she answered, "will let me do as I please about visiting my relations, I am quite sure."

Miss Malvina wondered which of her beaux was to be the happy man; the rich farmer, or the widower preacher; or was it the doctor? Miss Shelburne smiled, and replied that she feared the right one had not presented himself. "There's nobody here that's a match for her — is there, Beauchamp?" said the squire, bluntly, looking over his spectacles from the card table.

Beauchamp felt the point of the foil, but answered warmly that he knew no match for her in Barry County or elsewhere.

"I don't think I ought to be discussed," said the young lady, "nor matched, as if I were an odd glove; do you, uncle?"

"Hearts are trumps," said Mr. Pierrepont, gayly, "and the largest heart takes the trick, Miss Shelburne; isn't that so? Other things may be unequal, but the article 'heart' is so indefinite that it may overbalance everything."

"I rather think you are right, papa," said Mrs. Warfield; "but perhaps Miss Shelburne prefers another trump — diamonds, for instance."

"I reckon Adelaide don't know what the trump *will* be," said the squire. "It's generally what happens to be cut. The dealer can't always tell till the card is thrown. And it's pretty much luck and chance — isn't it, Adelaide?"

"You mean that 'marriage is a lottery,'" said Miss Shelburne. "I have been brought up on proverbs. 'Love is blind' is a favorite with my uncle Shelburne, while my aunt tells me of 'going through the woods and putting up with a crooked stick at the last.' Then my old black

nurse says, 'It's better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave.' But she is religiously inclined, and looks up to the preacher — the elderly one, who would have been pleased to get a young step-mother for his children. I've thought it might be wiser to steer clear of all these warnings by remaining single. While I am my own mistress I feel I shall have a very good one; or, at all events, an indulgent one."

"All the fillies think so," said the squire; "but in one way or another they're all brought to the bridle at last."

Beauchamp was sure that the squire was trying to make him or his niece uncomfortable, — perhaps both; but he tried to appear unconcerned, although at times he had *felt* scarlet, and wondered whether his color would not betray his thoughts.

The party separated early, as the Pierreponts had some little distance to ride. Coffee was served for the ladies before starting, but the gentlemen gave their preferences for the "lamb's-wool." Beauchamp exchanged good nights, and walked out to Beech Knoll.

The next day the little household made ready to go out to Mr. Pierrepont's. Mrs. Russell so rarely went from home that it seemed to her like making ready for a journey. A young negro man from the neighborhood, who was supposed to be fond of Sylvia, was making a day's visit, and he was very proud to groom and saddle the horses. Beauchamp and Howard both rode fine young horses, while Mrs. Russell preferred the slow but sure-footed Fly, her dependence for many years. The three paced leisurely through the town to Squire Hamilton's, and found all their friends in the saddle except Miss Shelburne. Mrs. Russell rode up to the spot where the squire was waiting, wished him a "merry Christmas," and said she was glad to have the opportunity to ride with him, if

he could put up with the slow gait of her horse. Howard rode on ahead to overtake the Misses Hamilton, and by the time Miss Shelburne was ready, Beauchamp had the field to himself. This particularly pleased him, because he had not done anything to bring it about.

It was a lovely winter day. The night had been cool, but the sky was without a cloud, and the sun at midday was warm. The doors and windows of many houses were open, and groups of men and boys in various places were engaged in sports in the open air. On the green in front of one house a number of young men in their shirt-sleeves were pitching dollars. Everything showed that it was a holiday season. The negroes were going in various directions, visiting relations, and stopping in to chat with the families they had known or served. Warm and comfortable dresses were the rule, though often absurdly out of style; and the grotesquely blossoming bonnets of the one sex, and the odd-shaped and shiny hats of the other, were often comic enough for a *Mardi Gras* procession.

The road lay along the river-bank for some distance, and was overhung by large trees, in which the blue-birds, jays, and crows kept up a chatter as though celebrating a noisy holiday of their own. The pale green water slept in the warm light, and the clear white patches on the trunks of the "bony buttonwoods," as well as the delicate tracery of the leafless branches, were reflected in the natural mirror. The air was pure and bracing, and it was no wonder that our hero felt the exhilaration of the perfect day. He purposely restrained his horse, that seemed bent on overtaking the party in advance, and champed the bit, and took short, high steps in his impatience. Miss Shelburne, who, as we know, was a graceful rider, gave her horse an easy rein, and was borne with an even, swinging gait. They talked of the glorious day,

and of the coming dinner parties, and then of the squire's dinner the day before. Beauchamp remarked that for some reason the manner of the squire had been less agreeable lately. He wondered what might be hidden under the blunt question he put him.

"I noticed the way he spoke," said Miss Shelburne, "and thought it not very friendly.. It was embarrassing for me to be the subject of discussion."

"No one would grudge you a compliment," he said, "but it should be paid voluntarily, and this question was like a summons to stand and deliver. There was a thorn in the point of it intended for me. Perhaps I flattered myself in the way I understood him, but I wish to Heaven I could believe he has the least ground for the suspicion which made him say what he did to me in your presence. Do you think he wants to have you go home?"

"He hasn't tried very hard to make me stay."

"Is he afraid of your discretion?"

"He has great expectations for me, and he hasn't a very high idea of the prudence of women — of young girls especially. His favorite saying is, 'Propinquity, puss — propinquity and opportunity — they decide everything. You don't like Mr. Brown, at first, but habit reconciles you.' And then he quotes that odious line of Pope's, that we

'first endure, then pity, then embrace.'"

"He must have been inwardly vexed, then, that my mother took possession of him. It was her doing, though, not mine; but I feel that I never loved my mother so much as at this moment — never felt so grateful for anything before; and she so unconscious of it, too! You see I can't talk about anything without finding somehow that you are at the other end of the sentence."

"I see, at all events, that you happen to think of everything in a certain way, so that with you the proverb is true, that 'All roads lead to Rome.'"

"The proverb suits me. Rome was mistress of the world; so there must be a highway from every quarter to the capital."

"The language of compliment suits you."

"If you knew how I am kept back by a fear of seeming too bold, — how a feeling of delicacy has given me a reserve beyond what is natural, — you would not speak in that way. You would see that I don't try to find out ways to say complimentary things, but that, whether I talk or meditate, I presently come upon some avenue of thought that leads naturally to you, as the sovereign of my little world. That is why 'all roads lead to Rome.'"

"Well, we'll drop the word 'compliment.' Perhaps I should say you talk like a poet, or, rather, that you talk as if you had a poet's heart."

"I am not a poet; that is, if a poet is a 'maker.' I have some feelings about beautiful and noble objects and sentiments, — feelings that some men would call womanish; for I often find my eyes wet in reading a fine passage, — but I never tried to write a line of verse in my life."

"You remind me of the difference between the 'vision' and the 'faculty divine.'"

"That is why poets tell us what we feel. We see their images, and they are so like our own experience, that we think we could have written the very same things. Now, when I am with you, I have a feeling that masters everything else, and it makes me imagine I could write the finest lyrics in the world about you."

"You have the enthusiasm of a poet, surely."

"But I could never compass it. You are to me a poem in yourself, all harmony. I feel it, but can't express it."

"I'm afraid we shall have to take up the word you didn't like."

"It isn't a compliment, at least in the usual sense, to say that a beautiful woman is a poem. A poem is thought, language, and music, all born together. Isn't a noble soul, in a beautiful outward form, and with fitting expression, a poem, too? I think so, and it's the work of the Great Poet or Maker."

"My dear Mr. Russell, I'm afraid you are an idolater. You make your golden image first, and then you worship it. I wish I might be like the image you have made, but I know I am not. I don't think I am as worldly as my relations imagine; but such a perfect creature as you are thinking of wouldn't have been so frivolous. Yes, I insist upon it. I have an ideal, but I am myself far from it. I should have continued at school, or in the companionship of such cultivated people as my teachers. I should not have been so much nor so early in society. And O, my dear mother should have lived!"

"I know you must have been surfeited with admiration, but I don't believe it has spoiled you. You have spirits, and like gay company. You are so amiable that you don't want to give pain to any one; and your very denial sounds so tender, so considerate, that I should think men would linger to be denied again. Wherever you are, you must have admirers; all who look upon you must love you in some way. But I believe you have kept your good heart, and that it is as fresh as the core of an unopened rose."

"I am greatly obliged to you for your good opinion. You know everybody says I am a coquette. I hope I'm not. And your explanation, or your apology for me, looks so plausible, that I should like to think it true. I hope it is. I shall try to believe it. We never quite know ourselves."

"We ought to know ourselves better than others know us. People who judge us can see better than we what we have done; they don't know, and never can know, what we are."

"But don't we flatter ourselves even there? Isn't there a kind of evasion, or playing at hide-and-seek, within us, that deludes us and leads to wrong conclusions?"

"Yes; but the wrong conclusions may not always be flattering ones. But we won't go into metaphysics. My heart tells me what you are, and I don't want to reason about you."

"You are so positive, that you won't have any reason to complain if you should discover traits that are not so agreeable."

Beauchamp felt baffled. His companion was kind, almost tender, in her tone, but — That is the word; there was constantly a *but*. For he felt that if her bright eyes and lovely lips attracted, they also warned. The passion that had absorbed him, body and soul, would not let him rest. He *must* find some way to reach her heart, and to know the state of her feelings towards him. The time that he would have to wait for her, the efforts he must make to raise himself in the world — these were nothing. He could cheerfully undertake a service like Jacob's, if he only *knew* that Rachel was to be his reward in the end. He thought he must venture a bold stroke; he must make an appeal in simple words that would demand an equally direct reply. But his present disadvantages pressed him down; his delicate feelings, and perhaps a lurking fear of the danger of being too precipitate, held him back. His soul shrunk from the task, and seemed trying to hide its throbbings in a thicket of words. His lips could not frame, nor his breath send out, the simple words, "Do you love me?"

When they were fording the river, Beauchamp rode close by her side, so that his horse might not splash the water upon her. He could almost feel the touch of her shoulder, and it seemed to him that an invisible influence radiated from her.

"Aren't you tired of this kind of a struggle?" he asked. "We seem to be only striving for mastery; and you — are you not? — endeavoring to keep yourself aloof?"

"Really, I *am* tired," she answered, with a look that set his heart throbbing again; "come, let us quit it, and be children, as you once wished we were."

"No, let us quit it, and meet face to face as we are. Let me see you as *you* are. My fate is now in your heart. Let me read it, even if it kills me. Let me look into those beautiful depths of your eyes. For myself I have nothing more to tell you; I never can have anything more. It would be only to say in different words the same thing — 'I love you.'"

It was after a slight pause, and with a visible effort, that she answered, —

"You have forgotten all we talked about — that you have so much yet to do for your own sake. Your studies, your industry, and your success are all to come. I granted your possibilities; but here it is, hardly a month, and you appeal to me, as if you had overcome all obstacles already."

"I don't forget. I know it all too well, but I can't do as you would have me. You don't know what kind of a burden you leave me to bear. I'm not an impatient boy, but it's not in my nature to be satisfied with merely your friendly approval of my conduct; nor could I go on with a vague hope that you might some time say I had earned your love. *With* your love, I can toil and

wait, but without it I should be wretched, for I couldn't make up my mind to give you up, and the suspense would kill me."

They had crossed the ford, and were going up the steep bank. Just as they reached the top, Beauchamp, who was behind, saw that the girth of her saddle had become unfastened. He quietly asked her to stop. He slipped off his horse, and, raising his long and sinewy arms to her, he said, "I must fasten your saddle-girth. Let me help you off before the saddle turns with you."

She dropped the rein, and leaned forward to alight. He caught her as though she had been a child, and gently lowered her until she stood on her feet. In her descent, by accident her cheek touched his face. His first strong impulse was to press his lips against it; but his better nature ruled, and kept him from the sweet trespass. It was with pride that she saw the temptation resisted, and she felt that this was a man whose honor was as strong as his love. As he held his lovely burden even for one second in his arms, the feeling he had wrestled with burst forth. The fine-spun cobwebs in which his speech had been entangled were brushed away, and the simple words came. "Do you love me?" he asked. Her cheeks suddenly flushed, and the crimson spread even to her neck. In her eyes there were misty tears. She looked at him for a moment; then her face brightened, and with a tumultuous rush of feeling she answered, "I do love you."

The sweet trespass was a trespass no longer. "We must ride," she said, looking up the long road to the hill where the party were. "We are already belated." Beauchamp, with such a reason for being late as he had, was not greatly concerned. He fastened the saddle-girths firmly, and then assisted her to mount, as only a strong

man could do. He held down the palm of his right hand, and she placed her left foot in it; then, taking her right hand in his left, he raised her lithe and springing form to the saddle-seat, as though he had lifted a plaything in the air. He adjusted her foot in the stirrup, and then, after mounting his horse, they went off in a canter. As they swept along he had a new sense of her beauty. Exercise and excitement had diffused a fresh glow upon her cheeks, and given new depth and lustre to her eyes. He noticed, as if for the first time, the fine, full lines of her figure, and the poise of her head upon her exquisitely beautiful neck. And this lovely woman, so full of vitality, and with such a rare nature, had told him she loved him! The thought was so ecstatic that he could not grasp it, could not make it real; least of all could he utter it. But they were rapidly overtaking the others of the party, and he roused himself from his dreams, for he felt that he must exchange a few words with her while there was an opportunity. In five days she was going to leave the county, and he might not see her again before her departure. Five days! how short the time seemed! In a few hurried words, heard clearly, but not framed in orderly sentences, it was understood that she would write to him at once on getting home, but that there should be no announcement of their relations until circumstances should justify the publicity. And he must not return to town with her, but leave her to the care of her uncle and cousins. He must be extremely discreet at the dinner, and always. He was not to be annoyed nor surprised if any number of young men called for her to ride, or went with her to any party. All of which he took in good part, for it seemed that he could not refuse anything while she looked at him.

In a few minutes they came within speaking distance.

of their friends, and then relapsed into an easy gait, which they maintained until they reached the house.

The dinner was delightful, as all dinners were at Mr. Pierrepont's; for there was not only the plenty which was so common, but everything was arranged with the intuitive taste and the practised skill of a connoisseur. The host had the rare art of putting his guests on the best terms with each other and with themselves. He seemed to anticipate their wishes, and no part of the time hung heavily, for at every proper interval he had new resources for their amusement. There were two of them who did not greatly need his assistance, and who would have been perfectly satisfied with a crust, so that they had the pleasure of being near each other. How beautiful the one seemed, and how noble the other! So thought Mrs. Warfield, and Mr. Pierrepont assented. Only he considered it a pity that such a fine, tall young fellow had such a dull prospect in life. A poor schoolmaster! it was indeed a pity! He *looked* like a patrician, the inheritor of acres as well as of a noble name. But there was no chance for him, poor fellow. — Do not think there was any contempt mingled in this regret. There was nothing in the youth that demanded pity. The trouble was, that his wealth was thus far wholly in himself. The great, heavy, worldly-wise squire looked upon him as being a sort of Pegasus in harness, with too high spirit for drudgery, and with no chance to spread his drooping wings. He looked at his radiant niece, and, as he truly loved her in his worldly-wise fashion, he watched over her mentally, and looked forward for her to some brilliant alliance, far above the rank of any country schoolmaster or struggling attorney. His large moulded features and inscrutable eyes showed no trace of his thoughts and feelings. But, for that matter, the perfect content of

reciprocated love forms an effectual mask, too. And the noble and lovely faces revealed nothing of their secret joys and their ardent hopes.

After dinner, Miss Shelburne was prevailed upon to sit down to the piano. She could not sing, she said; she could not command her voice; but she would play something. She had, as she once intimated to Beauchamp, a great fondness for music, and especially for the compositions of the German school, then scarcely known away from the seaboard. She played a minuet by Mozart, then a lovely andante movement from Beethoven, then a tender piece by Reissiger, *Les Fleurs du Printemps*. This was a revelation to Beauchamp, who had never before heard a piece of classical music on the piano-forte. Mr. Pierrepont and his daughter and Mr. Howard, to whom the music was somewhat familiar, were delighted, and not a little surprised. Beauchamp was completely overcome. The melody was ravishing, and there was something in the harmony (though he could not distinguish the one from the other) that set all his nerves quivering like the strings of the piano. The educated musician probably never knows the incomprehensible, the all-pervading feeling of delight and wonder which a man ignorant of the science, but naturally fond of music, experiences when he first hears a work of genius.

Then Mrs. Warfield sang some ballads in a tasteful style, and afterwards a gay French *chanson*. There was a quiet game at cards. Pictures and engravings were enjoyed. Mr. Pierrepont told his lively old stories in his vivacious way. Altogether it was a red-letter day, especially in Beauchamp's calendar.

Beauchamp and his friend Howard left early. As they rode away across the grounds, they noticed that the peacock had flown into a cherry tree, and sat there, poising

his body against the weight of his magnificent tail-feathers, and squalling in harsh but mournful tones. A gentle south wind was rising, and a fine haze was creeping overhead. All these signs indicated that the beautiful day had been a "weather-breeder," and storms were now in order.

The next day was to be passed at Maple Grove, and Howard went to Beech Knoll to spend the night.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNCLE RALPH'S VIEWS.

THE morning was cloudy, but the expected rain had not come. Mrs. Russell was disposed to stay at home, as the weather was threatening; but her son insisted she should go. It might not rain for a day or two. If it did she would be in comfortable quarters. So she was prevailed upon, and made ready.

The dogs had barked during the night, and Beauchamp gave strict charge to Phillis and Sylvia to remain at home and keep watch of the house, and to let him know if they saw any one skulking about the premises.

The little party reached Maple Grove before noon, and were welcomed by the owner in his own queer way. He shook hands with them formally, and said, without a change in his countenance, that he was glad to see them. Whether he was in a brown study, or whether it was his whim for the time to put on a stately air, is of no consequence. Later in the day he showed his guests the most delicate attention; but his innate oddity was always manifest in something — in extreme opinions and highly-colored statements, if nothing else.

Howard had always wondered at the great dissimilarity between Mrs. Russell and her bachelor brother; but now that he saw them together, they appeared to have some points of resemblance. Mrs. Russell was comely and prepossessing; and she had an air of serenity that made

her widow's garb and her neat muslin cap seem peculiarly appropriate. Her brother Ralph's features were more decided and prominent, but their contour was not so repelling as their habitual expression.

The house, though plainly furnished, was kept with scrupulous neatness. The ashen floors were white and smooth, there being no carpets, but only parti-colored woollen rugs under the tables and before the fireplaces. The cool, damp air made fires necessary, and there was a famous blaze from a pile of hickory wood on the brass andirons in the chimney of the library.

Uncle Ralph, or rather Mr. Beauchamp, as we ought to call him, was in full dress. He had shaved his chin, brushed his hair into something like order, and put on a linen shirt with a wide falling collar and a black cravat. He had on a blue swallow-tailed coat with brass buttons, a light buff waistcoat, and a pair of black pantaloons. This suit, together with a pair of French boots brought from New Orleans, he had first worn at a ball on the occasion of Jackson's inauguration in 1828. — But we must hasten to say that he was no partisan of Jackson's. The coarse and illiterate militia general, as he considered him, descended from a scrubby family in North Carolina, was not likely to be highly esteemed by one who was related in blood to the accomplished and high-toned gentlemen of the Old Dominion, such as Jefferson, Madison, and Randolph.

After the first civilities were over, and the cheerful fire had driven away the chill, there was a period of quiet, with occasional intervals of conversation. Mrs. Russell took out her knitting. Beauchamp talked with his uncle about business affairs (not material in this place), and Howard busied himself before the ample book-cases. A library that has not been bought for show, but which

has grown, volume by volume, by the purchases of years, gives a curious summary of the owner's mental traits, as well as a panorama of his progress and culture. The number of books may not vary greatly from time to time; about a thousand or fifteen hundred will suffice for most men; but there is a continual movement of the mass as in a glacier. As new topics come up, it will be necessary to have the noted books, at least those that remain noteworthy for a year; and there will generally be found a corresponding number that have outlived their usefulness, and are slipping to the rear of the moving column, waiting for the repose of the garret or for the metempsychosis of the paper-mill.

The titles gave Howard some matter for thought. They seemed to show that the same mind could take pleasure in legal subtilties, in Shakespeare, in Pepys and Evelyn, in Plutarch, in Bacon and Montaigne; in Boswell's Johnson and in Rabelais; in Bunyan and in Voltaire. Howard noticed that there were few if any contemporary authors; and he saw no American books except *The Federalist*, Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, Wirt's *Letters of a British Spy*, and Weems's *Life of Washington*. The grandiloquence of this last work, it may be observed, gave much the same kind of entertainment to the owner, that cultivated men now find in the "Philosophy" of Tupper.

Mr. Beauchamp had a pleasant chat with Mr. Howard about his books, and showed him with some pride his rare editions of Shakespeare, and of other old English classics. The schoolmaster had never been in the library before, and he felt some curiosity about the history of a life that had been passed in the midst of so much silent wisdom. He asked Mr. Beauchamp if he had ever practised law.

"Only a year or two. I was then living in a large town in the southern part of the state. I had *studied* law with all my might. But the practice was something different. The young officer studies strategy in a book; when he tries it in the field there is always a difference in the circumstances; the enemy don't do what he has expected, and the plans don't work. With the law and the right on your side, you may yet lose your case. The judge, if it is a *nisi prius* term, may not take your points, because they are not familiar, and you are bothered and perhaps lose your temper. When the evidence is to be admitted, or, rather, excluded, it makes you think of our old-fashioned doctors' precautions against allowing a fresh breath to stir the stagnant air of a sick room. The judges let in light upon a case as an oculist does upon an eye, — closing the shutters tight, and excluding every beam except the one that comes through the prescribed crack. Then you may have an unscrupulous fellow against you, who will browbeat your witnesses, and suborn and lead his own, — one who will smuggle a confederate into the jury-box, or frighten some one who is there. Or he will trample on law and evidence, and make a stump speech to the jury, appealing to their passions and prejudices, which he understands and you don't, and wrest your verdict from you. In the time I was at the bar I think I saw as many cases go wrong as right. You see that to go through a piece of legal reasoning like a problem in mathematics is one thing; but to establish the conclusion of that reasoning in the midst of lying or forgetful witnesses, stupid or prejudiced jurors, and unfair opposing counsel, is quite another thing."

"Then you don't believe a lawyer has the right to do wrong in defence of his client?" said Mr. Howard.

"Certainly not. Lord Brougham is an ass. — Beg your

pardon, sister Mildred. — A lawyer mustn't forget that before he was a lawyer he was a man; and that he can't do a dishonorable thing, not even for his client."

"If that rule prevailed it would put an end to the greater number of cases in court, I should think. If counsel were never to contend for a principle of law before the bench, nor make an assertion to the jury, that they did not religiously believe to be true, — no, it's too much to think of, — the lawyers would starve."

"That's their affair," said Mr. Beauchamp. "There would be no harm done to the public if a good many of 'em did starve, — though it might be unpleasant to *them*. But do you believe, Mr. Howard, that the world will never get up to a higher standard of morals? Is lying wrong? And is a lawyer's lying — when the bench knows he lies, and his client knows he lies, and everybody but the twelve men in the box knows he lies — any less wrong than other people's lying? The judge gets up and tells the jury, 'Gentlemen, if you believe so and so, you must give your verdict for the plaintiff; but if you have a reasonable doubt,' &c., &c.; when he knows that the 'reasonable doubt' has no foundation but in false swearing, and that the counsel had good reason to know it was false when he offered it, and when he argued it. Don't you think we are going to get beyond this venerable farce of a jury trial? I do. It's a standing invitation to perjury. It keeps alive the evasive and disingenuous mode of statement that you call 'pleading.' It makes pretence as good as proof, and it has for centuries carefully cultivated what you might call an artificial conscience in the profession; that is, it furnishes tissue-paper excuses for fictitious distinctions between the true and false, and allows the whole body of men that are concerned, judges and all, to do or to suffer open wrong and injustice,

strictly according to law. If there had been any idea of morals in the profession, my nephew there would to-day have been the richest man in the county. The case against his father was a cob-house of legal fictions. One good, acute justice, unfettered by precedents, with full liberty to inquire, and full power to act, would have riddled the evidence, got to the heart of the matter, and sent the plaintiff out of court. The 'courts of conciliation' of Sweden, also, are said to work admirably. As whetstones for professional wits our courts are just the thing; but to mete out justice among men, the less said about them the better."

"I am sorry the profession lost you," said Mr. Howard. "You might have helped reform the practice; but you became disgusted, I suppose, and turned farmer."

"Not immediately. I thought, for a while, of deserving the gratitude of a generous and grateful public."

"I don't quite comprehend."

"You shall see. The town where I lived was built on a river that was navigable for a considerable part of its course. I interested myself to have it locked and dammed so that steamboats could come to the town. When that was done, it added fifty per cent. to the value of every bushel of corn and bale of hemp raised in the county. As the steamboat wharf was a mile from the centre of the town, I proposed having a railway built on which a pair of mules could draw a number of tons of freight back and forward. That saved the value of the town's property; otherwise a new town must have grown up at the landing. Then I persuaded the people to build a new school-house, as the old one had become a refuge for pigs. We got a town organization, — trustees and the like, — and pavements, and sidewalks, and drains followed."

"By this time the town must surely have been named

for you," said Mr. Howard. "In Europe they would have had your statue set up in the square."

Mr. Beauchamp laughed heartily; his nephew, who knew the story, smiled, and Mrs. Russell looked sad.

"I am afraid you haven't read history aright, or perhaps you think that ingratitude is obsolete. I became the most hated man in the town. Naturally I had endeavored to better my own fortunes by the improvements which I helped forward. But the fools who saw that, did *not* see that all the property of the town had doubled at the same time. I was prosperous, and therefore I was the common enemy. I was stung by slanders, and, not being a good Christian, I retorted with taunts and *tu quoques*. Few men see through questions of policy unless there is a new dollar just within reach. I was impatient with the near-sighted obstinacy that only balked enterprises on account of expense, and could not see the greater results beyond; and I took little pains to conceal my opinions. Wounded self-love was roused — a plenty of it. In our town council we had little fights over local matters; they look contemptible enough at this distance, but *then* they were enough to keep the community in an uproar. The result of it was, that at the end of three or four years I was glad to sell out my property, and go away to live alone. I knew that while I remained a bachelor, and had a farm large enough to swing around in, I could live in peace. I came here just before my brother-in-law, Randolph Russell, died. If you should go down to that town to-day, and inquire who was the most unpopular man that ever lived there, you would be told that it was Ralph Beauchamp. If you asked the reason, nobody would be able to tell you. This is certain: I never did any of the blamed fools any more harm than to tell them, sometimes, what they were."

"So you wouldn't advise a young man to follow the career of a philanthropist, or a benefactor of his species, I suppose?" said Mr. Howard.

"A young man might do as he liked. For myself, I had enough of it. If I were starting in life fresh, and, going by a log house, I should see a man walking ankle-deep in mud to his well, and then see him draw up a bucket of water by main strength with a crotched pole, I suppose you think I would stop and give him a piece of friendly advice—do you? Once I should have done it. I should have said, politely, 'My friend, if you will get a few planks or slabs and lay them down, you can walk dry-shod to your well. And if you get a pump, it will save you a heap of trouble. Or, if you don't want that expense, a well-sweep that you can make in a few hours with your axe, will enable you to draw up a full bucket with ease.' From that minute he would become my enemy. To offer advice is to take the position of a superior, and nothing angers low people so much as to know that they are looked down upon. I am grown wiser. Now I should stop and say, 'Howdy?' take a drink of cool water, offer him a chew, say it was a fine day, and ride on. I advise him to lay-planks and get a pump! Not if I saw him up to the middle in mud."

His energy was so amusing that even Mr. Howard laughed with all his might—the more because he thought there was a secret core of kindness under this hard external crust.

Mrs. Russell and her son had been enjoying this talk, for they knew that their friend Howard had very little idea of the real power, and the varied knowledge, of the bachelor recluse. In fact, they were unable to remember the time when any man like Mr. Howard had been invited to his house. His appearance at this time, in his old-

fashioned full-dress, was the highest mark of attention to his guests. The nephew had followed his words very carefully, and had been surprised to notice how free they were from the prevailing slang, and how easily and appropriately they were uttered. In town, on county court days, he was not more choice in his language than any uneducated farmer.

When the time for dinner was near, two filbert-colored damsels appeared, clad in linsey dresses, and broad and clean white aprons, and with their heads neatly wrapped in muslin kerchiefs. They quickly spread the table, walking about in felt slippers, and putting on the crockery, glass, and cutlery without the least jar. It was like a mimic show, it was so dexterous and so noiseless. Mrs. Russell had before offered her services to her brother, if she could be of any use in overseeing the preparations; but he answered that he reckoned the girls would make out to set the table and serve the dinner, and that he preferred she should be quiet and take her comfort. When dinner was ready, Beauchamp, looking out through the door, could see a "detail" of young negroes ranged on the way from the outer kitchen to the main building, ready to hand in fresh dishes, and to send back the plates as they were removed.

To describe the dinner would be like giving the bill of fare at an abbey four hundred years ago. It was the perfection of plain cooking with unbounded resources. One dish followed another, all served by the two damsels; and, meanwhile, not a word came from the kitchen, and not the clatter of a dish was heard. Everything was perfect, Mrs. Russell declared, even to the custards, creams, and sillabub. Then the napery was so pure and snowy, the glass so crystal clear, and the knives so bright, that the table was a pleasure to see.

After dinner coffee and pipes were served, and an hour later the inevitable huge china bowl of egg-nogg. Mr. Beauchamp was ordinarily abstemious from choice, but on holidays he upheld the family traditions; and he used to declare that a man who wouldn't get drunk on Christmas would steal if he had a chance.

Mr. Beauchamp began to inquire of Howard about his studies and his intentions. Howard replied that he expected to be admitted to the bar in the course of a few months, but that his plans were not definitely settled. He supposed he should return to his native state, and might enter into practice there. His studies had given him a fondness for law as a science, but he didn't know how he should succeed in a business that required so much tact and management. He supposed that the more conscientious a man was, the less business he would get, because he would be bound in honor so often to advise a foolish or angry client to settle and keep out of court.

Beauchamp here interposed: "I tell you, uncle, my friend here thinks of the law just about as you do. He is one of the philosophical kind, interested in abstract principles, but fearing he must go through dirty ways to get them settled in actual practice. I predict that he'll not stay in the profession long, but will get off into something more congenial to his tastes. Perhaps he'll turn author—I think his fingers itch now."

"I am going to give you a little counsel," said Mr. Beauchamp. Howard and his friend both began to smile. "Yes, I see. You are thinking about the man in the mud. Well, I *will* mention a plank or two, in spite of my own rule. One plank to be avoided is the party plank. Never walk on it, least of all into office. Shun public station. You may be allured. You may even think it is a duty. Don't do it. If you fill one of the

larger offices, you must have a fortune of your own, for no salaries in this country are sufficient for a gentleman to live on. Show me a man who has grown rich while in office, and I will show you a thief, or a blackmailer, spy, or informer—much the same breed. Above all, shun the *little* places, those just in reach of the pop-guns and stinging, pin-pointed arrows of small and envious men, and of party-newspaper men. Now, the tradition is, that Shakespeare died in consequence of a surfeit or drinking-bout with Ben Jonson, who came down to Stratford as his guest. *My* belief is, that he was elected one of the town council, and that he was so plagued by his fellows and the public, so lampooned about his mulberry tree, or so pitched into by the church wardens about something or other, that he got a stone-cutter to make that slab with its shivery, cursing epitaph,—

'GOOD FREN'D FOR IESUS SAKE FORBEARE,' &c.,—

and then got quietly under it to have a little peace. Just imagine Goethe a member of the school committee at Weimar! We should have had a new scene in Faust, with Mephistopheles to whisk the whole of them off at the end. These petty vexations of place, big or little, wear the soul out. O, if I could set up before you some of the town trustees who worried me! But, as the preachers would say, I pass on to the second plank. My nephew hints at authorship. If this is in the least connected with the matter of earning your daily bread, my advice is short—Don't do it!"

"Come, now," said the nephew, "we can't have this! You have been proving too much. You have knocked the law endwise, and have shown that an honest man can't be successful at it; though, for all that, I am going to try, and to succeed too. Then you would have us

believe that doing good to others makes one unpopular; and I suppose the inference is, that to be happy we must be purely selfish. And now you want to destroy all the romance of literary life. No, uncle, you can't break *all* our idols, nor rob us of all our illusions. I shall still hope that a good lawyer may be a good man; and that a public-spirited man, if he is prudent, may not meet with such treatment as you did. And I shall believe, if my friend Howard wants to become an author, he needn't look forward to dying in a poorhouse. If these are delusions, I will stick to them all the same. And, by the by, uncle Ralph, don't you think that the bright sayings are generally only half true? Like a rifle ball, they go with a twist."

"I have thought," said Mr. Howard, "that many epigrammatic sentences are like the fabrics in which a shining silver figure is woven. Your essayist or talker shows you his brilliant web, and you see the glitter of certain lines of truth; but presently some other man takes the same warp and woof, and turns it, and you see the figure reversed, and the silver thread is on that side too. We have had such people in Yankee land, writers and talkers both, whose sentences can be *turned* like reversible suits."

"Now admit, uncle Ralph," said Beauchamp, "that you could go through almost all professions and callings in the same slashing way, and not leave a feather of credit for any of them."

"It is natural for youth to be enthusiastic," said Mr. Beauchamp; "I was. Wait till you have passed thirty years, and then you will be talking to some ardent young fellow as I talk to you."

"If we listen to you, we drop one thing after another, and slide into savagery," said his nephew.

"I should like to know what he has to say about authorship," said Mr. Howard.

"Nothing that is new," said Mr. Beauchamp. "The history of authors has been nearly the same in all times. Their poverty and sufferings, one would think, would be a sufficient warning; but the new candidates for fame don't seem to mind it, 'neither would they hear if one rose from the dead.' I don't believe one in a hundred gets as much for his manuscripts as he would receive for copying the same number of pages of law documents. But even if you make up your mind to go hungry and ragged on your way to renown, you soon find that your reception in the literary world is not precisely what you expected. I never have written anything for the stage, thank God, but I *should* like to write a farce on the first appearance of a young author. He is full of innocence and 'entuzzymuzzy.' He has fairly turned himself into his work, undergone a sort of transmigration of soul. He comes out of his garret with his precious volume under his arm, and thinks that *now* he will be repaid for his toil. Men will welcome him, ladies will fête him, the literary journals will praise him. At the very least, his book will be carefully read, and a fair and candid judgment of it given. Its merits will be pointed out, and its defects—no, it won't have any defects; that is out of the question. He fares much like a frisking and unworldly young rabbit, who, coming out of the bushes into a field, is first waylaid by a dog; then, escaping the fangs of this first enemy, he is pounced upon by a hawk that has been sitting on the limb of a dead tree, waiting for some such unwary fool; and if the hawk happens to drop him, the wretched victim has his brains knocked out, at last, by some illiterate lout, with a club."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Russell, "what comparisons for

the critics! You are hardly just—are you, brother Ralph?"

"Perhaps not. Probably it is true, as Mr. Howard says, that no slashing observations are strictly just. But that will be the way the author will think he is treated. A man with his first book has an exaggerated idea of its importance, and of his own. He is like a man with a boil on the end of his nose. The affair fills a large space in his consciousness. He doesn't see that the critics have to earn *their* living. In the world of nature it is all fair. The dog, the hawk, and the lout, each thinks the rabbit was created expressly to furnish him a dinner. The critic is a writer who is hired for so much (or, generally, for so little) a column, to furnish a certain part of the periodical. Whatever he does, he must make his article entertaining; if he doesn't, it won't help him to be as just as Minos. He will have so many books to skim over that he cannot do them justice; and, in truth, most of them are scarcely worth the little notice they get. Within certain limits, he is at liberty to praise the books of his party, his church, and his set, and to *pooh-pooh* all the others. I honestly think most of them mean to be fair, but *non omnia possumus*, and the author will inevitably feel that his labor has been very inadequately estimated."

"But, as you say," said Beauchamp, "the author is so full of his book that he can't judge correctly; the verdict of the disinterested critic is apt to be the true one."

"I grant you; but the professional instinct is strong, and the critic's view is always *de haut en bas*. The man who knows just how Napoleon could have succeeded at Waterloo, who could have taught Metternich state-craft, Paganini fiddling, and Beau Brummell dress, won't lose any opportunity to show his superiority. Then there are

sniffers,—religious sniffers, who have noses for a rationalistic taint,—political sniffers, who, as Sir Boyle Roche might have said, smell a party-leaning in your discussions,—and an endless variety of sniffers with their special aversions. Between them all, it's a wonder any book ever lives.

"I am only trying to tell your friend the sort of experience he will be likely to meet with in what people call 'the pleasant fields of letters,'—to show him what kind of a thing 'a life of lettered ease' is. But the kings' sons, in the Arabian Nights, all went on, one after another, though told better, and each in his turn became a *monoculos*, a sort of one-eyed warning to mankind."

"I don't want to put my experience against yours," said Mr. Howard, "for I have very little; but in Europe some of the very best writing is done in the way of criticism. Some essays I have lately read display as many high qualities as the purely creative authors can boast. To be sure, you must know who is talking, and must make allowances for Whig and Tory, for Churchman and Dissenter. That is to be expected. I don't see why Scott couldn't have written a just and lively critical essay, nor why Macaulay couldn't write a powerful novel. The two kinds of faculty, to a certain extent, might exist in the same person. The authors and the critics *should* be mutually serviceable. And I expect to see the time, if I live to be fifty, when there will be able and reasonably impartial criticism in this country, and our literature will be the gainer for it. And I venture to suggest that when that time comes the authors will have a better chance, even if your one-sided view of the critics is correct; for when the ability to perceive and to express is shared by many, as it will be, these same sharp fellows will keep each other in order. It will be, to follow your

simile, as if the hawk on the dead tree kept watch of the prowling dog, and both stood in fear (as they reasonably might) of the ugly brute with the club."

Mrs. Russell had been looking out of the window at intervals for some time, as the clouds were threatening, and the rain was beginning to fall. She was sorry, she said, to interrupt the conversation, but she feared it was high time for her to start before the storm should increase. Her brother went to the door and looked out, as did the young men, and it was the unanimous opinion that it was best for her to remain over night. Mr. Beauchamp assured her she should have a bed, although he did not indulge in that enervating luxury. Mr. Howard looked at his watch, and was surprised to see how the time had slipped by.

We ought to say, in behalf of Mr. Beauchamp, that a man who did not have company oftener than he did might be pardoned if he talked at some length when he had good listeners. He had been bottled up a good while. Some thought of this kind was in his mind; for he said jocosely, when he saw the young men about to start, that he had run off a year's stock, he supposed, from his still, and it was time now to wait until he put in a new "mash." Mr. Howard begged he would make no apology for talking, — that it was a pleasure, and to him an unexpected one, to hear so many congenial topics mentioned, even though he could not wholly agree with the view taken of them.

Mr. Beauchamp did not see why they should not all stay, and he promised, if they did, he would not talk any more, but would get his servants in from the kitchen to sing, "pat jubar," and dance for their entertainment. At any other time, Beauchamp said the offer would be tempting; but, for himself, he felt bound to return home.

Mr. Howard then said he should go also. Their horses were therefore brought out, and each rider was provided with a heavy blanket to keep out the wet. Uncle Ralph promised to ride over to Beech Knoll with his sister the next day, if the rain held up. They started out in a light but steady rain, and urged their horses up to a good smart pace.

Mr. Howard, half a dozen times, expressed his surprise at finding such a rare character, and a man of such reading, living so entirely by himself; and he asked his friend why he had never told him about his uncle before. Beauchamp answered that he never himself knew what his uncle really was until a month before; at which Howard was more surprised than ever. He, in common with the county people, had thought of Mr. Beauchamp as merely an odd, eccentric, miserly, sharp-tongued man. As such he was sufficiently remarkable; but his literary attainments, his acute observation, and his power of speech, produced an almost startling surprise. He observed to Beauchamp, as they rode along, that he now saw where his "mother wit" came from, for in truth the young man had a great many ways and expressions like his uncle.

When they reached Beech Knoll it was quite dark, and the friends were surprised to find no light in the kitchen, where they expected that Phillis and Sylvia would be waiting for them. They put their horses in the stable, and then approached the house. All was dark and still. Beauchamp went into the kitchen and found it empty and the fire out. "Confound the wenches!" he thought. "Have *they* run away too?" He and Howard went into the house. All was dark there, too; but they heard sounds as of persons in pain, and Beauchamp speedily lighted a candle. The light showed a most extraordinary scene. Phillis and Sylvia were both lying on the dining-room

floor, bound with cords and gagged, and feebly groaning. With ready knives the cords were cut, and the gags were removed. The women could not get up without help. They were raised from the floor, and the friends saw with horror and wrath that their naked backs were covered with blood. They had been flogged. High purple lines and ridges, intermingled with cuts, crossed on their chocolate-colored shoulders, and blood stained the floor where they had lain. It was pitiable, sickening. Both men felt the tears come, even through their rage. They bestirred themselves. Howard ran into the kitchen, made a fire, and put on a kettle of water. Then the wounds were washed, soft linen bound on, and as soon as they could move their stiffened joints the women were assisted to their bed, adjoining the kitchen. Neither of them could talk for some time, their mouths were so stiff and sore from the gags.

In time, and little and by little, the story of this fiendish treatment came out. Jack and Tom Fleemister, who had been undoubtedly watching the opportunity, came into the house about noon time, and began ransacking the rooms. They searched every closet and corner; they flung open beds and clothes-presses; and when they found no trace of Sally, they fell upon the negro women with oaths and blows, and demanded to know where she was hid. Phillis and Sylvia attempted to scream for help, but they were caught and gagged. For a long time, more than an hour, they thought, this questioning went on; but the ruffians did not succeed in getting a word from either. They made only one answer—they didn't know anything about the girl. Enraged at their obstinacy, the Fleemisters stripped their shoulders and flogged them with beech twigs. This produced nothing more than groans and cries, until at last the brutes be-

came satisfied that there was nothing more to be gained, when they bound their victims and went away.

Beauchamp wondered if they had stolen anything, and ran to look for his rifle. It was standing in its usual corner, and the cap was in place; but on trying with the ramrod he found the charge had been drawn. He put in a fresh cartridge, and wondered why they didn't steal the gun, rather than rely upon the trick of drawing the cartridge.

He went back into the kitchen, carrying his mother's tea-caddy, and made a cup of tea. Sylvia was greatly cast down, and moaned and cried; but Phillis, after being refreshed, seemed to rise into a new and higher state. She connected her sufferings and trials with those of the people of God, the saints and martyrs who had remained faithful even unto death. Beauchamp, while he stirred the fire, heard her murmur, "For He was wounded for our transgressions, an' bruised for our iniquities; and with His stripes we are healed — with *His* stripes we are healed." Types cannot convey an idea of the pronunciation of these pathetic words. They were not easy to utter, and her untrained vocal organs mumbled them, but they came slowly and in a tone of reverence that made them impressive.

Beauchamp asked her if he could do anything more to make her comfortable.

"No, bress ste Lord!" she said. "You good soul, Mas'r Beecham. Mighty glad ol' Scip ain't here. Stey flog him, an' he holler *sure*. Tell all stey ax him."

"Tell *what*, aunty?"

"Tell all he know, — more too. Ol' Scip like all men. Men big; make great noise. Ste women *bear* — bear eberyting. Who bear ste chillen? Now go to bed, Mas'r Beecham."

Beauchamp then left the kitchen, charging the women not to attempt to stir in the morning until he came to see them.

He went into the house and sat down with Howard, and tried to talk about the affair; but it seemed like running a plough in new ground, that jars heavily against some root every yard or two; not many words would be uttered before the sentence would plunge into a curse, and spend itself in inarticulate anger.

Neither was disposed to sleep, and it was not until near daylight that they spread anew the clothes upon the beds and lay down.

CHAPTER XIX.

AUNT PHILLIS UPON LAW. — A PARTING. — RIFLE PRACTICE. — RETROSPECTIONS.

WHEN Beauchamp woke in the morning, his first vague hope was that the occurrences of the previous night were only parts of a horrid dream; but, on going down stairs, the blood stains and the fragments of cords attested the actual truth, and he set about putting the house in order, so that his mother should not have a shock on coming home. His experiences in camping out while deer-hunting had made him handy in culinary arts, and he had something of a talent for house-keeping, so that he prepared a breakfast without much difficulty. The negro women willingly kept their bed.

Under the law no colored person could be a witness in court against a white man. This Beauchamp and his friend knew very well; and that the Fleemisters knew it, too, was shown by their cowardly proceeding. There was no crime against person or property which those skulking ruffians could not have committed with impunity, provided the only witnesses belonged to the black race. If they were ever to be brought to justice, it must be by means of some admissions of their own. The friends, therefore, resolved to keep the affair strictly secret, so that, if any report of it got abroad, they might follow it back to its source, and so get some hold of the perpetrators. It was quite likely that Beauchamp had

some purposes of vengeance, but they had not taken any form, and the most that could be said was, that he did not intend to be unduly scrupulous in case he ever had a chance at the villains. It was necessary for Mr. Howard to go to town, and he promised, while there, to use his observation only, and by no means to give a hint of what had been done. Beauchamp remained at home, to wait for his mother's coming. There was still a light rain, but not enough to keep her in the house.

When Phillis and Sylvia had taken a little tea and a light breakfast, Beauchamp sat down by the kitchen fire and mused. The conduct of the Fleemisters showed that they fully believed Sally to be concealed in or about the house. If that was the case, Phillis could not be ignorant of it; and he could not but admire the faithful, the heroic endurance she had shown. He had never known such an instance of fortitude; his experience had been, that the colored people, though disposed always to shield their fellows from capture and from harm when they could, were apt to falter at the stroke of the whip, and to let out their secrets rather than suffer torture for any length of time.

He said to Phillis that he supposed she would die rather than betray Sally's hiding-place.

"Dono, mas'r. 'Tick hard to bear. Ol' back mighty sore." Phillis always said "stable" when she meant "table," and *vice versa*. Why she did so we cannot tell, any more than we can explain why Goldstein always transposed the consonants in "bearl puttons."

"Then she is here — is she?"

"Phillis don' say so. Mas'r Beecham goin' stake he sturn to ax? Fleemster, he ax yest'dy, and young massa st'day! S'pose by'm by, Fleemster, or ste ol' debil, Wyndum, ax Mas'r Beecham?"

Beauchamp perceived the subtle chain of thought in the old woman's mind, and forbore asking her further questions. The most he cared about was that he should not be held responsible for the girl's concealment; and he accepted the position of ignorance, — willing ignorance, if you choose, — leaving the task of baffling inquiry to the one who had been willing to do it with her own body bared to the lash.

"Well, Sylvia," he said, after a pause, "how did *you* stand it? You were never whipped before — were you?"

"'Twas mighty bad, Mas'r Beecham. Never had a blow 'fore, only little switchin' from Aunty Phillis when I was child. 'Pears like I couldn't bear it no way. Aunty she look at me so, I's clare scared of dem eyes. So I set my teef *hard*, and jest let de water run down my cheeks, till dey got tru beat'n'."

"Pshaw," said Phillis; "you scry out like spig when ste dog bite he sleg. You holler like ol' Scip when stey pull he sbad toof."

Beauchamp said good humoredly, —

"Ah, but Phillis, she's young and tender; not used to it. You are tough and plucky, — old Africa unadulterated."

Sylvia replied that aunty "hollered" too, and swore besides.

"No, chile," said Aunt Phillis, "no swear; only say ste Bible words. Phillis swear like spreacher swear."

Beauchamp laughed when he thought what an armory she had to draw from, if she remembered the curses pronounced in Scripture upon evil-doers.

They talked then about the chance of getting the rascals punished; and here Phillis was quite befogged. All that Beauchamp could say failed to show her why the Fleemisters shouldn't go to jail. She had been beaten

and gagged; that fact *she* considered settled. Somebody (so she reasoned) had done the wickedness. Then *somebody* must be punished. If the Fleemisters didn't do it, who did? Let them show who did! The "presumption of innocence" and the "burden of proof" were subtleties too refined for her. If two drunken men could come and beat two women, black or white, at midday, and nothing could be done to them for it, Phillis thought the "king-pin" of the universe was knocked out, and the whole load would fall between the wheels. If the Lord didn't avenge, as he said he would, there wasn't any Lord. If the devil didn't have them, then that creature was a superfluity, and should be abolished; and if law on earth didn't take notice of black as well as white, then the law was not according to the gospel, which was no respecter of persons. This summary of ethics, according to the view of Phillis (lying on her scarified back), gave our friend Beauchamp something to reflect upon. He saw that Phillis went deeper than the commentators; and he wondered, if they had her shoulders, whether they wouldn't agree with her. Phillis had gone through this slowly, in detached bits of sentences, as one etches in a picture, and had expressed her thought by a number of symbols and parables. One of the figures she used was so homely, just, and comic at the same time, that he laughed aloud, though not unkindly.

"Ste Lord like ol' turkey-hen. Ste hen call all ste tired little chicks, an' stey come when she cluck. Stey *all* come—black, white, an' speckle. All run in ste coop; an' ste hen she rise up, an' she cover all ste chicks wid her fadders an' wings. Ste law say, 'Go away, black chick! clar out, speckle chick! I don' want yer;' an' *dat* ol' hen she let ste fox catch um, an' ste rat bite um. Ste law ol' fool hen."

By noon the rain had ceased, and Mrs. Russell returned home in company with her brother. Beauchamp met them at the stile, and accompanied them into the house. He shut the doors of the sitting-room, and then related what he had seen and heard. Mrs. Russell was completely overcome with trouble following trouble. As for uncle Ralph, we could not do the least justice to the vehemence of his anger; but when the first tempest had passed, and the matter was coolly considered, he was obliged to admit that nothing could be done to bring the villains to justice, unless they imprudently furnished evidence against themselves. He said, however, that the general feeling against them was so strong, if this new outrage were known, there would be no difficulty in getting a band of "regulators" to drive them out of the state. He tried to cheer up his sister, and said that these trials were the appointed means of humbling her pride. This piece of irony was well understood, for Mrs. Russell was one of the meekest and least pretentious of her sex. He told her that, as she would now have a hospital for a few days, she would need help, and he would send a man and woman to assist in household affairs.

Beauchamp talked with his uncle aside about the question of Sally's place of concealment, and said he supposed now that the negro women were so disabled, if a sharp watch was kept night and day, they might be able to track either of them when she should go to carry Sally's food.

"I had a pea-hen," said uncle Ralph, "and in the early summer I knew she was setting. She would stray away from the yard, and if she saw any one watching her, she would stop and scratch, and look about with an indifferent air, as if to say, 'It's a fine day; good scratching hereabouts; just taking a little exercise. Perhaps you thought I was going into the wheat-field, and that I

have a nest there; but, bless your soul, *I* haven't any nest there.' You might wait as long as you chose, you wouldn't see which way she went; and before you were aware, she was off. In due time she had a young brood following her about the yard. I don't watch pea-hens any more. — By the by, nephew," he continued, "old Mack is so much better of his lameness, I reckon he can bring up the boy and girl I'm going to send you. You'll need to be careful of him, but he'll answer to do part of the work now."

"Thank you, uncle. You are very thoughtful. But speaking of Mack reminds me of Scipio. I don't know that I'm sorry he got off, for he is old and in fear, no doubt. But how do you suppose he got his free papers?"

"You told how he put the seal on, — a good joke, — but I don't know who could have made them out. Perhaps some one, who just knew how to write, copied the form from an old one."

"If you wouldn't get mad, I should say that I didn't know any one who *could* write the papers that had a better chance to do it than you."

"Me! nonsense! *I* forge free papers for an old nigger!" His eyes twinkled queerly, with lights varying between sternness and merriment, and then, without further words, he walked out to the stile whistling, and rode off.

Mr. Howard came out of town late in the afternoon, and reported everything quiet. None of the Fleemister gang had been seen, nor had Mr. Wyndham been in town. Not a lisp of the trouble at Beech Knoll. But he had other important news. He was told by Squire Hamilton that Miss Shelburne had been sent for by her uncle, and was going to start for home the next morning. She was

to go in the squire's carriage to a town about twenty miles distant, where she would take the stage. But Howard's principal attention was given to a rifle he had borrowed and brought out, intending to practise shooting at a mark. He asked Beauchamp to get him some ammunition, that he might try his hand. "Not to-night," said Beauchamp; "it's getting dark." Howard acquiesced, not willing to push the matter, but wondered what had so suddenly cast a cloud over his friend. Beauchamp walked apart, and was silent.

Next morning Mr. Howard was up betimes, and was experimenting with his rifle. He asked Beauchamp to try a shot, but the latter said he didn't feel like shooting, couldn't hit the broad side of the stable; and asked to be excused until he could go on an errand in town. So Howard practised by himself for a while, but his fingers were so benumbed that he hit wide of the mark. Beauchamp saddled his best horse, and rode off down the lane. The mud had frozen just enough to make the surface yielding and the travelling easy. He passed along the street, and soon saw the looked-for carriage as it was starting out. There were two persons in the carriage — Miss Shelburne and her uncle — besides the driver. As they approached, Beauchamp raised his hat, and halted, and at a word from Miss Shelburne the driver stopped the horses. Beauchamp bade the squire good morning, and then said to the young lady, "So you are going to leave us, and sooner than you expected?"

"Yes," she answered; "uncle Shelburne has sent for me, and his message was so urgent I concluded to start at once. Don't you ever visit our county? We shall be *very* glad to see you there, — and any of uncle John's friends," she added, with a side look at the large figure beside her.

"Well, puss, we must be going," said the squire. "We shall see you next Monday, Mr. Russell. It's court day, you know. I come back to-morrow. Good by."

"Good by," said Miss Shelburne, with a cordial emphasis; and the carriage drove off.

Beauchamp could not utter a word in reply. He was like one fallen into a strange world, — knowing not where. He was dizzy; his horse walked towards the Court House without the rider's guiding him. He could not have wished to hear a good-by said in a kinder tone; the trouble was, the words could not be made to convey a pleasant meaning. But why had her uncle cut short the interview? and why had he dropped his familiar Christian name, and called him, his friend and pupil, "Mr. Russell"?

The reader will have seen before this that our hero was an impatient youth, much swayed by impulse, and too easily elated or depressed. Something is to be overlooked in the case of the only son of a widow.

Recovering his self-possession in a measure, he rode to the Court House, though more from habit than from any purpose. In fact, the only business he had to do that morning was completed when the carriage drove away. In the clerk's office he saw Mr. Wyndham talking with the deputy sheriff. The conversation stopped when he came in. The sheriff, who was a friend of Beauchamp, advanced and spoke to him pleasantly. Mr. Wyndham remained fixed and unbending, regarding him with not very friendly glances. Beauchamp, who was not deficient in tact, withdrew and mounted his horse. He was in a restless humor, and would have stopped somewhere, but no place presented itself to his mind. Most of his associates were away in various parts of the county, engaged in Christmas dinners and parties. He was reminded that

he had not kept a partial engagement for the day before, and that he was expected to dine that day at a house about five miles distant. The outrage committed on his servants had driven the matter out of his mind, and to-day he was absorbed in one thought. He would try to remember to send an apology. The result was, that he rode along the street aimlessly, found the town empty, and his world also, and was soon on the way home, simply because that was the natural thing to do when he could not make up his mind to anything. He wondered if any one else was ever so idiotic.

After putting up his horse, he called to Howard, who was reading, and proposed to try a few rifle shots. Howard assented, and they went out into the yard. They first put up a narrow shingle on the trunk of a beech tree something over fifty yards distant. When Howard raised his rifle and was taking sight, Beauchamp called to him to stop.

"Not that way!" he said. "No human muscles can hold a gun on the mark. You must recognize the fact that the barrel is heavy, and you must fire while you are raising it. Observe, I cock it, and set the trigger, and then I look at the mark, while the gun is held so as to be in a line with it, but at rest. Then I raise the barrel thus, deliberately, keeping it in line; and at the same time my eye looks along the barrel to the farther sight; and on the instant that sight covers the mark it will be level with the hind sight, and in a wink I pull trigger. The shot is made on the rise. Try to put up the gun on the mark and hold it, and your arms will tremble with the weight, or with your breathing, or your excitement, so as to make the end of the gun move from side to side, and you'll not hit anything. There, now try it. Steady! steady! shoot on the rise, just as the sights in range cover the

mark. Good! That was a plumper. In the middle of the shingle, by Gemini! That's the way to shoot, — off-hand. Firing at a mark from a rest amounts to nothing. You never get a rest for your gun when you *need* to shoot. The deer won't wait for you to rest your gun against a tree. You must blaze away as you raise it, aiming a trifle before him. And if you were to defend yourself from an enemy with a rifle, no chance for a rest then, either. Wait to get a good aim, and you're plugged. The matter of a second becomes one of life and death."

They fired several times. Beauchamp grew more interested and excited, and displayed the nerve and skill for which he was famous. Howard took the instruction naturally. He was a man of considerable muscular power and steadiness, and his performances were highly creditable.

They went into the house, and, in the interval before dinner, Beauchamp began to comment on his friend's habitual equanimity.

"One would think you never had a trouble," he said. "You say the right word, and you do the right thing, though you're generally pretty cool about it. I am either up or down, and I'm afraid I lead my friends a precious dance, if they care anything about my humors. One thing is sure — I never saw you change color in presence of a lady, nor show the least excitement about a beauty or an heiress. How do you do it? You have hinted about the 'young woman,' as you call her, away in Massachusetts, but that is a good way off, — and how constant you are!"

"Wait till evening," said Howard. "These things won't bear daylight. The secret life of almost any man would have a sort of interest, if we could read it. Every man is a walking riddle, known to few, and to himself least of all. As I think of myself and my life, I seem a

simple object enough; transparent as a fish from the Mammoth Cave; not a particle of mystery about me; no secret closet and no skeleton in it. There's a bull for you. But if anything of mine interests you, you shall have it at a suitable time. After supper, when the room is cheerful with candles and a ruddy fire, while the sparks are playing hide-and-seek in the soot thickets at the back of the chimney, and two people, just two, are sitting down with a comfortable punch between them, and each leisurely blowing smoke, then is the time when heart inclines to heart, and they can talk sentiment in the spirit of it, and mention tender and holy things without fear of ridicule. Enough now, for the new servant is coming to set the table."

Evening came, and after the table was cleared the hearth was swept up. Those who sit in modern drawing-rooms, by the hot-air register, the

"black pitfall in the floor,"

require some effort to bring to mind the ample fireplace of the days gone by — the brick and stone supports and arch, the broad flat stones of the hearth, and the mass of coals that glowed under the burning wood, and seemed to fall forward to throw their genial warmth into the room. Between the feet of the andirons, and on each side, was ranged a row of apples that might have tempted Atalanta, — gorgeous pippins, gay "Prior Reds," and dark Romanites — apples which seem to have disappeared from nurserymen's lists, and which (for a man of fifty) the new varieties do not replace. These were sputtering, rocking with the heat, as though suffering the first throes of martyrdom, blowing off steam, blistering, sinking down shapeless, while the rare summer juices were leaking out upon the hot stones, and filling the air with a homely, in-

inimitable perfume. Soon the roasted pulp was transferred to an old china bowl, the proper ingredients added, and the delicate nectar called "lamb's-wool" was ready.

Pipes were on the little stand between the friends — new cob pipes with reed stems, and presently the unmixed tobacco was lighted. "Odious!" I hear some female reader exclaim. But trust us, ladies, to give a tired or troubled man that serenity and amiableness you so much value, there are few things so effectual as a few puffs of smoke. It was in a well-perfumed room that the poet wrote the lines that every smoker treasures: —

"And, as her incense floats and curls
In airy spires and wayward whirls,
Or poises on its tremulous stalk
A flower of frailest reverie,
So winds and loiters, idly free,
The current of unguided talk,
Now laughter-rippled, and now caught
In smooth, dark pools of deeper thought."

Mrs. Russell looked on benignantly, and took a small ladleful of the nectar. She was not often demonstrative, as we have seen, but she stopped before retiring to her room, and in her unrestrained, motherly way gave her son a kiss on his forehead, and expressed her joy and comfort in his having a faithful friend in troublous times, and hoped their hearts would grow together like the hearts of David and Jonathan. Howard somehow found his eyes wet, and Beauchamp rose up, towering above his "little mother," and then bent forward and threw his arms about her. He did not speak. The tenderest feelings are generally unspoken. Mrs. Russell left the room with a velvet-slipped step, and there was a long pause, during which the pipes were neglected, and the fine, shrill whistle from the log of water-oak on the andirons was heard piercing the silence.

"What a blessed mother you have, Beauchamp!" at length said Howard. "Our mothers are the source of what is purest and best in us, and I can't think of any relation so tender, even in the great hereafter."

"Your mother is still living, I believe," said Beauchamp.

"Yes, and in good health. My recollections of her are bound up with my past life, and will last as long as I feel or think. She is taller than your mother, rather commanding in figure, firm in intellect, strict in doctrine, but with a pervading love and an active charity that outrun her creed."

They smoked in silence a few minutes, and then Howard continued: —

"My early life was passed in poverty. We were above want, but that was all. I don't remember when I learned to read. I am told I began as soon as I could talk. My early studies were the catechism and Scripture lessons. I could repeat to you 'effectual calling' now, I believe. But I managed to browse a little in forbidden pastures. 'The Scottish Chiefs,' and a few similar works, which were loaned to me by a maiden aunt, inducted me into the world of fiction. When I was eight years old, a gruff and snuffy Scotch doctor, whose heart was as tender as his exterior was rough, lent me a copy of Adam's Latin Grammar, and with him I went through the rudiments. Schools in our town were kept only half the year; and even now I ache to think how poor they were, and I don't know that they are much better yet. However, I was grounded in the three R's, and so got a foundation that was serviceable. I won't go over particulars. My opportunities were few, and never of the best. Sometimes a poor student would come out from the nearest college and teach a High School for three months; then for a year I

would have no chance to pursue my studies. All the time I did my share of manual labor with my father, and hard labor it was, and there seemed to be no way out of it. I didn't mind the labor, but I had an overpowering desire for learning, and I would have gone through fire for it. Years wore away, and at length I was about to see my desires gratified. A relative offered to lend me money to educate me, on condition that I should agree to study for the ministry. This I promised sincerely and cheerfully. I had not a thought of doubt, and I believed that as a clergyman I should find employment for my hungering and thirsting faculties, and fill a position of honor and usefulness. I had but a meagre allowance, and was reduced to shifts to keep up a decent appearance that would make you smile. I was admitted with the freshman class in college, — barely admitted, for I had been fitted in a short time, and had far from a thorough training. In a year I worked my way up among the first half dozen, and that year was the only period of regular study under competent instruction I have ever had in my life. I left college. You wonder at it. But consider. The pledge I had given secretly galled me. I had no doubts, as I said, but I saw that all free minds were in a state of motion, and I shuddered to think of the fate of a man condemned to preach what he did not believe with all his heart. I must be free, — free as air. To read, examine, weigh, and judge seemed the noblest prerogatives of mind. Those prerogatives I had renounced. I had at the outset given my adherence to a system; and that accounted for everything, settled everything, excluded farther inquiry, and left my soul imprisoned. It did not matter what the system was; it might be true, but the bond became hateful. I loathed it, loathed myself for making it. Yet I had never called in question a single doctrine

of the church, and should have taken offence at any one who had told me that my disquiet was due to lurking unbelief. I left my class, gave up my collegiate prospects, my pleasant associations, went to my relative and told him my resolve. I did not ask him to change the condition. I knew that was hopeless. I drifted out west, crossed the mountains, and finally settled here."

"A hard fortune for one who wanted to be a scholar," said Beauchamp. "Don't you think there will be a way to make up your classics and philosophy in the Beyond? I do. You will take up your studies and follow them in better company and freer air. But you have passed over one subject. You haven't mentioned the 'young woman.'"

"My friend, I can't make a very romantic story out of that. But while teaching, as I always did in vacations, I fell in with a young lady. She is not an heiress, nor such a beauty as strikes you blind and dumb. She is a plain little brown bird, but with the sweetest note in the world. Her soul illumines her face, and I never think whether she is beautiful or not. A fine, wise, delicate-minded, cultivated woman; far better read than I am, and with such a quick natural perception, that you think she takes an idea without words, simply by intuition. Here I have stayed and worked, and studied and saved, and all that I may go back some day with matured faculties, and, I hope, able to bear my part in the world, only for her sake."

"What a rare Yankee you are! regular as a mantel clock, ticking away under a glass case. How I should like to see that little brown bird! You mustn't let her mope too long!"

"As you say you wonder at my equable ways, I suppose it is by contrast, and that you have some cause of disturbance. You have appeared moody and restless of

late, though I admit you stuck to reading; and I sincerely say, I never saw a man of your years, and (pardon me) your habits, who accomplished so much."

"My time has run to waste, pretty much. I don't know that I ever earned a dollar before you came here, for I never felt the need of one. My father and mother meant I should have a good training, and they gave me all the advantages our state affords. But I have always been fond of active sports and out-door life, and the whistle of a quail or the bark of a fox used to have more charms for me than the metres of Horace, or even the music of the spheres. I got through college somehow. I have a store of pleasant thoughts about books, but little thorough knowledge of them. You know the sad story of our family. I saw no way to retrieve our fortunes but by success in a profession. That is my only motive for study, and it spurs me on day and night. I am afraid, if we had our old estate as it was, I should be as careless and pleasure-loving as my father and uncles. Perhaps though, now, the habit of study begun by necessity, will in time become a second nature, and I may grow into a scholar in spite of myself."

"Are you quite sure that the motive you mention is the only one? Has it never occurred to you that your estate and your future position in the country will aid you in some other way?"

"I see. *Rem acu tetigisti*. You have hit it. I have another motive, but connected with the first—though perhaps not subordinate to it. I have seen a lady for whose sake I would like to be learned, rich, influential, and all that, if I thought those things would make me worthy of her—would enable me to address her as an equal."

"And the lady is Miss Shelburne. I thought as much. And she, does she know? Does she favor?"

"You ask me too much. The matter is somewhat in the dim future. I have a great deal to do yet. But, Howard, come now, let us drop this a while. It is not a case yet like your plain little bird. Some time I will say more."

There came a time when, if the young man had been a little more frank on this occasion, his friend might have saved him a great deal of pain.

The conversation took various turns, and the evening sped. The great logs burned through, and the chunks fell over on opposite sides, scattering snowy flakes around. The pipes were out, the lamb's-wool had become cool, and the candles bore great black plumes in the midst of their blaze.

The fire was raked up, and the friends went to bed.

CHAPTER XX.

A SKIRMISH AND A SURPRISE.

IT was Saturday, and at the end of Christmas week. Three days had been filled with delight, especially that Tuesday, brightest of all Tuesdays, when our hero had gone in company with his beloved on the never-to-be-forgotten ride to Mr. Pierrepont's. The events of the last two days had depressed his spirits, and he thought now of the court to be held the following Monday, of the inevitable decree against Milly's children, and of the sale soon to follow. These "coming events cast their shadows before," and gave him a vague uneasiness, and at the same time deepened his sense of personal insecurity. But, if such thoughts oppressed him, he was like a young pine tree, and reared his head anew to the sunlight when the storm had passed by. He determined to be cheerful, and to avoid dwelling upon calamities that he could not avert. After breakfast, he proposed to Howard that they should ride out to see Will Davis in the middle of the day. Howard, who was greatly elated with his success in rifle-shooting, advised deferring the excursion until after dinner, and proposed to practise for a while. It was a novelty to him, and he reminded his friend that next Tuesday they would have to turn the wheel that moved the school machinery.

"You are right in your figure," said Beauchamp. "A schoolmaster is more like a mill-horse than any

creature else, treading in a circle, and moving unwilling machines by main force. This tugging in an endless round, shut out from the active world, makes one old before his time. You will always see a mill-horse galled and spavined, and generally blind besides. But we don't put on the harness till next Tuesday. Meanwhile, let us be colts, and kick up our heels. I'll shoot with you, or do anything in this blessed world."

"It's a perfectly beautiful day," said Howard — "like one of the fine days in autumn. Winter and age have their charms, and nature teaches us to take kindly to both. See the blue haze over the woods, and notice how the yellow light lies on the brown meadow! *There is color, and beauty too, if it is sober.*"

They went out into the yard, and enjoyed the fresh air and genial light. Phillis had crawled out of bed, and was sitting sunning herself by the kitchen door. Her eyes blinked, as if she were an ancient brown owl. Sylvia was moping about in disarray, too much cast down to prink for the eyes of her expected lover. The horses had been turned out into the meadow, and were gambolling and rolling over on the dry grass. The younger dogs had gone to a neighboring hill, and their short, joyful howls showed they were doing a little hunting on their own account; while the grave Plutarch and Seneca were stretched in the sun over by the clump of lilacs, and had their lazy fill of the common bounty. Barn-yard fowls shook themselves, stretched out a wing with a leg under it, and scratched about idly, wondering if the warmth was really spring, and meditating about the store of eggs expected from them by Easter.

The rifles were brought out, and a store of ammunition placed in a chair at the end of the veranda. A new shingle was nailed up to the trunk of the tree, and on it

Beauchamp had tacked a piece of black cloth, the size of a dollar. "Now, old Massachusetts," he exclaimed gayly, "no more stable-door shooting! You must cut that cloth every time."

They fired in turn, "old Massachusetts" doing pretty fairly. Then Beauchamp took his rifle, and put ten successive shots into the cloth. "There," said he, "that will do. I must wipe out the barrel."

He wound a wisp of tow on his ramrod, and cleaned the barrel and loaded it, and then with a pin cleared out the nipple, and put on a cap. Howard was not satisfied. He was beaten too far altogether. So he cleaned his gun in like manner, and fired a few times. As he stood ready to fire again, he was facing the north-east, just out of range with the sun, and there was a mass of thick willow bushes in the ravine near the spring, just beyond the tree he was shooting at. Mrs. Russell preferred they should have their sport on that side of the house, rather than on the southern exposure, where the family lived, and where the servants were likely to be passing. Suddenly Plutarch started up, looked towards the willows, and gave a growl. Beauchamp instinctively grasped his rifle, and stood eagerly looking at the spot. Howard, not heeding the dog, was about to fire, when the willows parted and figures appeared in clay-colored suits, shapeless hats (except one with a large raccoon skin cap) and all with lank, straggling hair about their lean and dingy faces. It was but a glance that he had, but the picture in the whole, and in detail, he never forgot. The next instant there was a sharp crack of a rifle, and Howard felt a shock. His own rifle was in the air, but his arms fell. He was stunned. He thought he was shot in the head. The willows were thrust aside, and three men came out; there might be more, but three were clearly

seen. The two dogs barked furiously. Beauchamp saw the well-known raccoon-skin cap of Tom Fleemister, and saw that he or his brother had just fired the shot at Howard. He raised his gun, and fired at the man with the cap, who fell dead, as though by a stroke of lightning. Beauchamp turned to load for his life, for two men were advancing, and one seemed ready to fire. Howard was confused and unready, and blood flowed down his face upon his bosom. With a bound from the veranda, a man rushed upon the scene, took Howard's gun from him, raised it, and fired, and a second assailant fell. It was Ralph Beauchamp who had come. But, quick as the action was, it was a second too late. Two rifles were discharged simultaneously from opposite sides, and when the second man fell back among the willows, Beauchamp, at the same moment, was stretched senseless upon the grass, with his rifle in his hands. A small red spot on the upper prominence of his forehead showed where the ball had struck.

During this dreadful scene, which thus far had not occupied thirty seconds, there was not a word spoken. But now two horsemen came at a furious gallop up the lane, waving their hands and shouting with fury. They dismounted and rushed into the yard, calling out, "Don't shoot!" "Stop firing!" "I command you in the name of the law!" It was Mr. Wyndham and the deputy sheriff.

"Yes, 'don't shoot,' you murdering villains!" said uncle Ralph, with a tremendous oath, while the tears ran down his face and his rifle trembled in his hands. "You send your hounds on before you to kill my boy, and now it's 'don't shoot!' Confound your miserable souls, that young man's life is worth more than all of yours — yours, William Wyndham, thrown in." Uncle Ralph groaned

and wept aloud, and bent over the body. There was a slight flutter of the pulse, a slow and rather stertorous breathing as in sleep, but intelligence had fled. "And, O God," he continued, "my poor sister! This is too much." He sat down on the ground, put his face between his hands, and sobbed like a child. Mr. Wyndham mumbled some unconnected words, saying, in substance, that the shooting was without his order or his knowledge, and certainly against his wishes; that he had a warrant to search the premises, which the sheriff was going to execute; that the party on foot came across lots because it was nearer, so as to arrive at the same time, if their help was needed. Besides, it wasn't certain that the Fleemisters were not attacked first. Else, how were Mr. Russell and Mr. Howard out there with rifles and a chair full of ammunition? Mr. Howard had recovered his senses, and stepped forward, covered with blood as he was, and said, in such words as he could articulate in his distress, that he and his friend were shooting at a mark. "Well," said Mr. Wyndham, "let's see what luck you had — how many marks you've hit;" and he walked away scowling, towards the edge of the ravine. The sheriff was in a flutter of excitement, and was as much horrified at the shooting of Beauchamp as even his more intimate friend and his uncle. He looked at Mr. Howard, and, wiping off the blood with his handkerchief, saw that the ball had ploughed the flesh just at the angle of the jaw, and taken off the lower tip of his ear. "Not dangerous," he said, "though painful. It was near enough. I shouldn't care to take the chance."

Mr. Wyndham's inquiry about his followers showed that Jack Fleemister, who had that morning exchanged his hat for his brother's fatal cap, was stone dead, shot through the temples; that Van Holm, who was in the

rear, and unarmed, was shot through the right side, and Houghton wounded in the fleshy part of the arm by the same bullet. Tom Fleemister was unhurt.

Mr. Wyndham returned; and asked the sheriff to proceed with his search. By this time Mrs. Russell had seen the inanimate body of her son, and the small deadly rivulet trickling from his forehead, and she fortunately swooned and became unconscious. Phillis was groaning and howling like a lioness whose cub had been torn from her, and Sylvia and the two servants from Maple Grove joined in the doleful chorus. Beauchamp was a man whom everybody, black and white, naturally loved. It would be vain to attempt to paint the mingled grief, horror, and rage which Howard felt, or to describe the cries and imprecations around the prostrate body.

Uncle Ralph finally ceased his curses; they were drowned in his sorrow; and he moaned like David over Absalom. "Would to God I had died for thee, Beauchamp! Beauchamp, my boy, my boy!"

The sheriff, greatly affected, remonstrated with Mr. Wyndham against making any search at such a time; but he said that they had gone so far he was going to have it through with; he couldn't afford to have two rows when one would answer; and if the sheriff wouldn't do his duty, *he* would make the search himself. Meanwhile Howard, who had had his jaw tied up with a handkerchief, told the negro man to catch a horse and to ride to town quick for a doctor, and got the women to help him carry Mrs. Russell in and lay her on her bed. Sylvia was directed to stay and rub her temples, to fan her, and wait for her coming to herself. He then brought a mattress from Beauchamp's room, and covered it with bed-spreads and a sheet, and with the aid of the sheriff and uncle Ralph, carried in and laid down the still

breathing but senseless form of Beauchamp, placing his head on the pillow in a natural position. Howard remained by the bed, alone in his great and inconsolable grief.

Mr. Wyndham in the mean time had disposed of his forces. He bandaged Houghton's arm, and sent him over to Van Holm's house to get assistance to carry home the wounded man, and a team to bear away the dead body of Jack Fleemister. He left Van Holm lying on his back breathing hard, and telling him he would soon be cared for and sent home, he motioned to Tom Fleemister to follow him. They approached the house, but found uncle Ralph standing in the porch with his rifle in hand, and looking uncommonly dangerous.

"Stop!" he cried out, his finger feeling for the trigger. "What are you going to do?"

"I am going to get my property, my nigger Sally, who's hid in this house."

"What's your authority?"

Here the sheriff interposed, thinking that blood enough had been shed, and spoke gently to Mr. Beauchamp.

"The warrant's regular, granted by the court, and I advise you as a friend not to stand in the way. I should be bound to prevent you, and you know I don't want to do it."

"But to come and kill people, and, when the whole house is in such distress, to fetch out a dirty warrant to look for a runaway nigger!"

Mr. Wyndham merely grunted, and smiled contemptuously. The sheriff said it was a matter of taste. If Mr. Wyndham thought it was a suitable time to do such a thing, that was for him to consider. For himself, he would see Mr. Wyndham, and the judge, and the whole county besides, somewhere else, before he would go rip-

ping up a house, with a dying man in the parlor, and a fainting woman up stairs. He washed his hands of it, and if he lost his office for it he didn't care.

"Anything about Fleemister in that warrant?" asked Mr. Beauchamp.

"Not a word," said the sheriff. "If the girl belongs to Mr. Wyndham, *he* might be safe in going in, though I wouldn't say. Fleemister has nothing to do about it. The warrant was for me to serve."

Fleemister stood a little in the rear, looking like an ill-conditioned, tawny fiend.

"Well, Mr. Wyndham," said Mr. Beauchamp, "if you insist on going through the house, and haven't done enough evil to-day, you can go. But if you, Tom Fleemister, set your foot on the threshold, I'll put a bullet through your head." He looked as if he would do it.

"You can go back, Fleemister," said Mr. Wyndham, "and stay by Van Holm. Perhaps he'd like a drink."

Fleemister turned to obey, when uncle Ralph, by way of parting, asked, "How happened it that Jack was killed instead of you? I know, you treacherous brute!" he said. "You changed hats! You knew that old coon-skin head-piece would catch Beauchamp's eye. You got Jack to wear it, and the wrong man has been shot. However, Mr. Wyndham," he continued, "if you have two rattlesnakes to knock on the head, it doesn't matter much which you go at first. Tom's time will come. — After you, sir!" — as Mr. Wyndham came into the doorway. — "You have the warrant. But with your permission I shall go through the house with you. There isn't much to see in the rooms, — not so much as there was before they were stripped to furnish yours."

A bitterer expression was never given to words; and the stern, hard lines of Mr. Beauchamp's face, now that

the tears were dried from his reddened eyes, and his pent-up wrath seemed striving for utterance, made a most forbidding picture. Mr. Wyndham was not in the least cowardly, but he did not think it wise to irritate this fierce and resolute man by a single word. He walked up the front stairs that led from the hall, followed by uncle Ralph, and turned into the chamber usually occupied by Beauchamp and his friend. He opened the closet that served them for a wardrobe, and for a minute there was a sound within of wrenching boards apart; directly after, he came out and displayed to the eyes of the astonished uncle the trembling fugitive Sally, whom he held by the arm.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Wyndham to his adversary, "what have you to say? How is it about that young man who was too honorable to hide a runaway? Here she is, and has been all the time, right in his bedroom."

"Stop right there!" said the other. "She may have got in here this very morning. You shan't defame my nephew until he can answer for himself—if he ever does," he added, in an undertone of feeling.

"You might as well try to excuse a nigger that you had caught with your chicken in the top of his hat."

Uncle Ralph adopted a little lower key in his reply, but none the less positive.

"In nine cases out of ten, — yes, ninety-nine out of a hundred, — this case would have a black look. But there are some people I *know*, Mr. Wyndham, and my nephew is one of them. I have heard him speak of this case, and I know that he had not the least idea that Sally was here. He has hunted for her often enough."

"A mere blind, sir. Youthful folly, sir; it wouldn't do to confess it to the elders!" and Mr. Wyndham seemed trying to laugh.

"But his room-mate, Mr. Howard, is below. Perhaps you would believe *him*?"

"Not a word, sir. He might as well tell me that black is white."

Sally was in an agony of terror, and shook violently, looking with glances of anxious inquiry into the faces of the two stern men. Mr. Beauchamp was thinking only of the misery which her hiding had brought to Beech Knoll, and in his unreasoning mood he broke out upon her with his maledictions.

"Confound your false face. Why have you been lurking about here to get your only friends into trouble? When you got away, why didn't you go clean off? — not stay where you were sure to be caught? Beauchamp talked like a baby about your mother's brats, and I really believe he'd have sold his clothes off his back to have helped any one of you. Now he lies on the parlor floor, dead or dying, — all on your account, you whimpering fool. If you're sold down south, and get whipped into the bargain, it will serve you right."

Sally only shivered and wept, and said, sobbing, "None of the white folks knew where I was, though they looked for me many a time."

"Enough of this," said Mr. Wyndham, leading Sally down stairs. He went out to the stile, and called to Tom Fleemister, who came with a strap. Mr. Wyndham mounted his horse, while Tom bound Sally's arms behind her, and the two started on the road to town, Sally walking in advance, and Mr. Wyndham riding behind her, as though he were following home a stray sheep. A pretty pastoral scene! Tender shepherd, playful, thoughtless sheep!

The messengers sent out began to return. A negro man came over from Van Holm's with a wagon and a

pair of horses, and the wounded man was carefully laid in it on blankets, and slowly driven home. Another man came with Houghton, driving a pair of mules, and carried off the dead body of Jack Fleemister. Tom rode in the hinder part of the wagon, wearing the coon-skin cap that had proved so fatal to his brother. There was a feeling of relief at Beech Knoll when the wagons and the horsemen had gone.

"About time for the doctor — isn't it?" said the sheriff to Mr. Beauchamp.

"If Dr. Baird was in town when the man got there, he ought to be here very soon."

In a very few minutes a horseman was seen galloping rapidly along the road, and presently he entered the lane, and came up at a full run. "He's riding Sycorax," said the sheriff. The doctor heard the words, and hastily said that, as he was about starting, he saw Davis, and told him what had happened; and his own horse not being very swift, Davis at once jumped off, and asked him to ride Sycorax, as she had been a racer, and could carry him out like the wind. Dr. Baird went into the house, and uncle Ralph and the sheriff followed. Howard rose up and grasped the doctor's hand without a word, the tears coming anew to his eyes. All stood back to give light, and the room was still as death. The tick of the doctor's watch, as he took note of the pulse, sounded in their very hearts. He listened to the breathing, and to the movement of the heart, that kept steadily at work, like an untended engine in the hold of a shattered vessel. He examined the wound in the forehead, and at length rising up, his pale face and anxious eyes showing the depth of his feelings, he said, "It is not hopeless, as I feared. To be sure, the chances are against him; but he has youth, great vitality, and good habits on his side. The ball,

you see, struck on the frontal prominence, where the outer tablet of the skull is thick. When the shot was fired, the man with the gun must have been on lower ground; or else our friend was just in the act of throwing his head back. For the wound, instead of being circular, is slightly elongated on its upper margin. The ball, striking the solid bone at such an angle, glanced upward. The shock to the brain causes the present symptoms. If the inner tablet of the skull is uninjured, the effect of the shock is likely to pass away. But if he remains unconscious, it will be an evidence that some splinter of the outer bone, or else an effusion from a blood-vessel, presses upon the thinner tablet beneath, and that pressure must be relieved, or death will ensue. It is a delicate matter, and we can't be too cautious. I should wish that I might have the assistance of an experienced surgeon. Even if he is relieved from the pressure I have mentioned, we have to guard against inflammation, which would be very likely to be fatal."

"I will go to Louisville for a surgeon," said Mr. Howard.

"No, you won't," said uncle Ralph. "You're faint now. You'd fall off your horse. My man Pete shall go, and ride Beauchamp's new horse." He disappeared to give directions; and the doctor hastily dressed Mr. Howard's wound.

"How did you like the sound of the bullet?" asked the doctor. "Did it sing? As you are a musical man, perhaps you can tell us the pitch."

"I think it was a false note," said Howard, "for it nearly tore my ear off."

Mr. Beauchamp, coming back, said that Pete would ride to a certain friend of his, about half way to Louisville, and there take a fresh horse, and leave his own till his return. In this way, he thought, the man would reach

the city before night. Howard looked at his watch with a feeling of surprise. So many things had happened, that it seemed an endless time since breakfast. It was only eleven o'clock. In less than twenty-four hours the surgeon could be on the spot. The doctor thought the case would not suffer in that time, and ordered only the loosening of his clothing, absolute quiet, and the constant application to his head of cool water—just cool, neither tepid nor cold. Mr. Howard got writing materials, and the doctor wrote a letter, to be delivered to his friend the eminent surgeon; and then said, as Van Holm had been a patient of his, he would ride over and examine him.

As there was now an interval of quiet, the sheriff asked Mr. Howard to relate the circumstances of the affray, especially how it began.

Mr. Howard, in a few words, told of his passing the week with his friend, and of their shooting at a mark for pastime. "Let us go out, just a moment," he said. "You shall see the situation for yourselves." They went out, and stood by the end of the veranda. "Here I stood, and there was Beauchamp, just where he fell. The shingle, with the black cloth disk, is still nailed to the tree yonder; and if you will go up to it, you will see the fresh bullet-marks. Right in the line of the tree you notice the clump of willows. I was raising my rifle to shoot, and, of course, it was bearing on the willows; that is, if I had missed the tree. The dog barked, but I thought nothing of it; nor of Beauchamp's movement, which I heard, but did not see, as my eyes were fixed on the mark. Before I could fire, I saw men coming out of the willows, and then heard a report; and I felt that I was hit. You see my cheek. Then Beauchamp fired, and a man dropped; the others came on. Mr. Beauchamp, who had just got here, though we had not seen him before, rushed in, and seized my gun. I was stunned,

or faint, or both. Beauchamp had nearly loaded, when there were two reports; it seemed to me, nearly at the same instant. The second man fell on their side; and as I turned, I saw Beauchamp stretched his length on the ground. Then you and Mr. Wyndham came, and the firing ceased."

"You wan't out expecting the attack, then?"

"Not at all. How should we?"

"Nothing said about any reason for your learnin' how to shoot?"

"Not a word. There was no occasion. Beauchamp suspected that the house was watched, and he naturally was annoyed about it; and on Wednesday night, when we came home from Mr. Beauchamp's, where we had been to dinner—Shall I tell it, Mr. Beauchamp?"

"O, yes," he replied; "it's of no use to keep it secret any longer."

"Well," continued Mr. Howard, "when we got here that night, we found the two negro women bound and gagged, and their shoulders badly marked by beating. I suppose the wales and scars will show plainly now. They said the beating was done by the Fleemisters, who were trying to make them tell where Sally was hid. We both were indignant, as any humane men would have been; and Beauchamp, I am inclined to think, would have made the place hot for them if they had showed themselves. The practising at a mark had nothing to do with it, however, because, as I have just said, that was my suggestion."

"Well, you are clare, any way," said the sheriff; "and you too, Mr. Beauchamp. I didn't think you would pitch in like you did, nor that you was so good a shot. Poor Van Holm is done for, I'm afraid. You peppered him. He didn't want to come; he was dragged into it.

It's a pity one of the others wasn't killed in his place. A triflin' set of curs, make the best of 'em."

"I'm told they found Sally," said Mr. Howard.

"Yes," said Mr. Beauchamp. "I saw her led out of the closet in your sleeping-room."

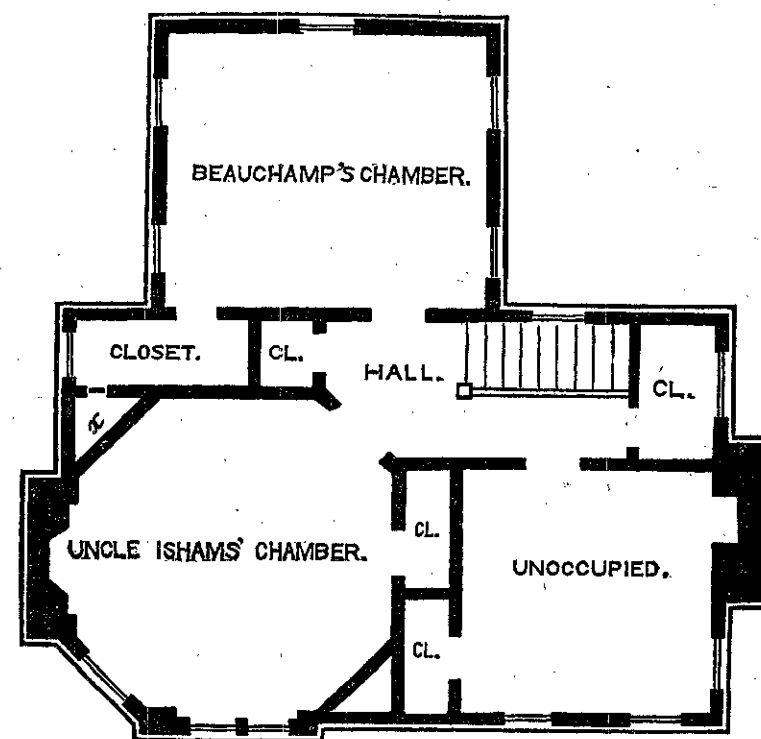
"Out of Beauchamp's closet! Why, you're joking. Beauchamp has looked the house over for her, and I too."

"But there she was, notwithstanding; and it 'pears to me, that, unless you believe in miracles, or witches, or something of the sort, *one* of you two young men must have known she was there. There *are* witches nowadays, I'll be bound; but they're not old nor ugly."

Mr. Howard was considerably nettled; but he knew the aversion of the bachelor to women in general, and he thought he would let the insinuation pass without resenting it. He simply reiterated the statement, that neither he nor Beauchamp had any knowledge of her being in the house. He said, frankly, that Beauchamp suspected it to be so, and that they had several times made thorough search.

"How could it have been 'thorough,' and she right there, not ten feet from your bed, for months?"

"I think I understand it," said the sheriff. "Mr. Wyndham told me just where he was going to look. He said he met an old man lately, who, when he was younger, had been here with his father, who was a carpenter, and worked upon this house, making alterations for the old Squire Madison Russell. They got talking together, and an idea popped into Wyndham's head. So he asked the old man about the house; and this was what he told him: he said that Mr. Isham Russell, who was a gay young man, wanted some rooms for himself, and got his father to make an addition on the west side. The main room at the south-west corner was made eight-sided. One corner was cut off on the outside, and the opposite corner



FAMILY MANSION — SECOND FLOOR.

was sliced off for a doorway from the upper entry. The two other corners were boarded and lathed to correspond, and from the inside the room was all solid. But from the young man Beauchamp's room if you went into his closet, there was a way to slip a loose board, and crawl into one of these old, forgotten corners. The window that was made for that closet was boarded up, so all was dark inside. Most likely, no one had ever crawled into that place before. None of the white people knew about it. But niggers find out all the old rat-holes; and Aunt Phillis had tucked Sally away in it, and brought her, day after day, what she wanted. When Beauchamp was away, Sally could come out. It's all clare enough when you see how 'twas done. But it's plain to me that the young men didn't know nothin' of her bein' within gunshot. Some of our young fellows *mout* have been more curious."

Howard went up to the chamber, and came back utterly astonished that so obvious a hiding-place had been overlooked.

"I think I'll go up and see how sister Mildred is," said Mr. Beauchamp. "You can stay by the bed here, Mr. Howard. And I'll thank you, Mr. Sheriff, if you'll meet those people coming to the gate, and get rid of them as civilly as you can. It's very kind of them to come; but there's nothing to be done, and they will only be in the way."

He found that Mrs. Russell was somewhat recovered, but not sufficiently to make it prudent for her to leave her room. He assured her that the ball had not penetrated the bone, that everything was done and to be done, and that, if she would be patient, she would see her son restored to her. She was pitiable in her nervous weakness and her abject grief. Much as he loved her, — and she was the only woman he did love, — he was glad

to resign her to the care of Sylvia, and go to attend to household affairs. About the house he saw everything, and provided for everything. He drove up the remaining horses, and fed them, and gave directions for a much needed meal. He picked up and brought in the ammunition and the rifles; and as he set down the one he had fired, he hit his forehead, saying to himself, "Just a second late, old fellow! A few years younger, you wouldn't have let that 'cracker' have a chance to knock the boy over. Ah! you're not so spry as you were!"

The sheriff remained till nightfall, and then rode into town, saying that next day, which was Sunday, he would send out Will Davis to stand in his place, as there would be a great crowd of inquiring friends.

Before night, Dr. Baird returned, and looked at the still slumbering young man. He said it was now evident that some pressure existed upon the inner tablet of the skull, for the effect of the mere shock would not have lasted so long. Still the case remained as at first, and there would be no harm done if the operation could be performed next day. Mr. Howard did not allude to his own case, although he was unable to move his jaw, and could not articulate a word, except after a fashion with his lips, and could not eat anything more solid than gruel. Mr. Beauchamp enjoined absolute quiet upon the negroes, telling Phillis that there was to be no howling, and that, if he heard a single note of "The Long White Robe," he would come out and send her where she would need one to wear.

Blankets were spread on the floor, and the two men passed the night in the room. Mr. Howard did not close his eyes. All night the broad and manly chest of Beauchamp heaved and fell with a slow motion, and the thick, troubled breathing was a sound that hourly grew more painful to hear.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE HOUSES OF MOURNING.

THE beautiful Sunday morning dawned. All these lovely days bring sorrow to some houses. There were three homes in Barry County over which the shadow of death was hanging.

In his log house, or rather in the out-house adjoining, Tom Fleemister was endeavoring to fashion a box for the body of his brother. The ceremony of the inquest and the burial were to take place next day. Two or three people of his class were in the house, drinking whiskey by the side of the bed on which the body lay. Cad, who had, as we know, made some improvement in her outfit, was arrayed in a smart delaine dress, and her hair was done up in a twist, with short locks plastered in a semicircle on each temple. The multitudinous and many-named children all had on shoes, and dresses that reached below their knees. Tom had kept a close mouth; but it was evident that from some source he had received an addition to his income. There was still room for improvement, but the children were lodged and fed rather better than wild animals now. The coon-skin cap hung on a nail; and the wife and friends, if they knew of the crafty exchange that had given to Jack the ounce of lead that was meant for Tom, were too polite or too sympathizing to mention it. They sat, and drank their whiskey, and smoked cigars, rolled by the eldest daughter, Eloisa &c.

&c., and heard in the pauses the grinding sound of Tom's dull saw, or the blows of his axe or hammer, and his uncouth oaths when he now and then awkwardly jammed a finger. Who shall lay bare the secrets of a heart like Tom Fleemister's, and tell of the mingling, surging currents of remorse and selfishness at the thought of the fatal result of his cunning? Would he say, "Would to God I had died for thee, my brother"? He was sorry, doubtless, for the occupant of the box — sorry as the dog is for his fellow who is rent by the boar, when he thereby had been enabled to shun the tusk. He might have thought that the man without children could be better spared than he, who had so many mouths to feed; and it did not occur to him, probably, that, if he were to be in the box instead of Jack, Cad would in no long time take up with the survivor, and the Fleemister world would go on and increase as before. Among mankind, as in the natural world, we see instances of the permanence of certain types, though not always the "survival of the fittest."

Let us leave this mourning family, and look into the house of Jacob Van Holm. It was a handsome brick building, standing on a piece of rising ground, and, though lacking in the surroundings of old trees and gardens, was almost as picturesquely situated as the mansion at Beech Knoll. Van Holm was nearly sixty. He had migrated from Pennsylvania long before, bringing his wife Katrina. They had both been industrious and frugal. His farming was always thoroughly done, and the value of his property had increased year by year. He had some transactions with Mr. Wyndham years before, and the latter soon saw that the Dutchman, as he was generally called, was a man of excellent judgment. Their safe operations in live stock and produce continued until there was an inti-

macy established which yielded good results in money, but which led to evil for Van Holm. The intimacy never extended to social affairs. Mr. Wyndham was of the bluest blood of Virginia, and, though he was outwardly and ostentatiously cordial to all men who served his ends, and showed them profuse attention when they came to his house, he never allowed them to feel that they had any claim to the inner rites of friendship. There were but few families in the county with whom his wife and daughters were on any really friendly terms. Mr. Wyndham had a domineering nature, though it was masked by a persuasive manner. His retainers (for such all his associates became) were absolutely at his command. They voted for his candidates; they advocated his ideas and projects. If he had a lawsuit, — and he was seldom out of litigation, — all his friends were on hand; and in time it was remarked, that their knowledge of his business was so intimate, that a case could hardly arise but some of them knew the precise fact on which the decision would hinge. It was impossible to be on half terms with such a man. The people who followed him must go the whole length. His friends he aided and praised, lent them money and credit, and stood by them. All others he fought, with fierce disregard of right. If a man didn't help him, he was an enemy; and for an enemy there was no word too bitter, no blow too heavy. Many persons were kept on his side, or at least feared openly to break with him, because they knew that, if they opposed him, their credit might be destroyed, their reputation attacked, and their wives and daughters slandered. This policy has been pursued with success in modern politics.

Year by year this spider had wound his web about Van Holm; only the spider did not eat him, as he was more serviceable alive.

Some time before the events we have been narrating, Van Holm had been restive under his bonds. He was not a good villain, at least for a long career. He had some lingering conscience. He was deeply dyed in perjury; but when other work was set before him, he had begun to revolt. Neither threats nor cajolery could make him go farther. He was persuaded to go to Beech Knoll under the promise that there was to be no violence. He went unwillingly and unarmed, and when he found himself facing fire, he turned to run, but was a little too late.

Jacob had no children, and his wife was his sole nurse. They were rich, and had servants enough; but Katrina allowed no one to wait upon him but herself.

There was but little external hemorrhage from his wound, but the doctor had told Mrs. Van Holm that the wound was surely mortal; that he might not die with the first inflammation, but the injuries were beyond cure.

A gloomy Sunday morning for this house. The sun could not illumine the darkness that hung over the mind of the sufferer, nor the balmy air restore the freshness to the anxious face of his nurse.

He had but one thing to say, and that was to repeat, in various phrases, his longing desire to see Father Hennequin. His memory ran back to the far-off chapel where he had made his youthful vows, and had received the sacramental bread, "very God of very God," and the years of irreligion, of greed, and of crime constantly rose between him and that holy vision.

Father Hennequin could not come too soon.

At Beech Knoll there was a state of suspense which oppressed all alike. For a few hours the condition of unconsciousness into which Beauchamp had fallen was not alarming, but the constant sound of his heavy breathing had become almost unendurable. Uncle Ralph, as well

as Howard, grew restless, regretting that the doctor had not taken some decided measures, and fearing that the surgeon from the city might come too late. Uncle Ralph got up and sat down again without any motive, and moved about uneasily, looking every few minutes down the lane. Mr. Davis arrived early, and received his instructions. The town had rung with the news, and the most wildly-exaggerated rumors were current, some of them of a scandalous character. Curiosity would have led many of the town's people to flock out to the house, if the doctor and the sheriff had not taken pains to let it be known that company was not desirable. But great numbers of colored people came during the day to the kitchen, coming and going with mournful faces. Sylvia was the one who was obliged to answer all the questions that were asked; for Phillis was in one of her high and silent moods, and could not be got to say a word. Mrs. Russell was prevailed upon, with great difficulty, still to keep her room. The morning that seemed so interminable to the watchers, wore away, and before noon a carriage was seen entering the lane. Uncle Ralph went out quickly to the kitchen, and got a visitor there to mount a horse and ride to town for Dr. Baird. The surgeon left the carriage at the stile, and came at once into the house. Mr. Howard marked the rare union of force and gentleness in his physiognomy, and was pleased to observe the air of cheerfulness and hope which his evident intellectual powers and modest and kindly manner diffused.

A physician or surgeon who possesses native moral qualities, with personal attractiveness and the requisite professional knowledge and skill, is often the highest type of a man, the best product of modern civilization. There are few lawyers that have so much general knowledge and culture, and they rarely have or retain the

refined feelings which belong by instinct to the brightener of sick rooms. Some persons might claim a similar rank for the clergy; but the pulpit orator may not be the most cheerful visitor at the bedside; the theologic, or, rather, polemic training does not often form a well-balanced character, nor develop the most genial traits. A philanthropist often appears to care for none except those in his esoteric circle; and we have seen that reforms are frequently led by the most one-sided and ungenerous minds. The good doctor who is also a good man, and is wise, healthy, and hearty, is worth the whole of them in a time of trouble.

The surgeon had been out on professional duty for the greater part of the night, and when he got home towards morning, he found Mr. Beauchamp's servant in his house waiting for his arrival. The urgent note was effectual, and he started at once before daylight, and took his sleep on the way. By changing horses when half the road had been gone over, the driver made excellent time, and he had reached Beech Knoll sooner than could have been expected. The surgeon showed his ready tact, and in a very short time, while carrying on a general conversation, he had learned the history of the case, had observed the symptoms, and was ready to begin the critical examination before Dr. Baird arrived.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon details which would only interest professional readers. It is sufficient to say that there was a small fracture, without an outward or visible depression, and that a small splinter of bone was removed, as well as a quantity of extravasated blood from within. In a few minutes after the wound was dressed, Beauchamp opened his eyes and exclaimed, "Drop that gun!"

"He has dropped it," said the surgeon, gently.

"Don't you see? He won't fire. It's all over, my dear fellow."

Beauchamp's eyes moved slowly about the room, resting upon each of the sympathetic faces in turn, and then, as if existence were a conundrum that was too much for him, and he was inclined to give it up, he slowly shut his eyes again. In a short time he rallied, and his faculties seemed to be under control. Uncle Ralph was the most elated of all, and went up stairs at a bound — checking himself, however, before he got into his sister's room — to announce the successful operation and the happy result. She would have gone down then, but her brother now feared for the effect on her son, and conjured her to wait a little while. Mr. Howard stood by the window, and was looking out through streams of joyful tears.

Preparations were now made for the care of the patient. A bed was brought down for him, and then he was carefully lifted, mattress and all, upon it. His cumbersome clothes were removed, and his condition was made as comfortable as possible. The surgeon kept careful watch over him, and mildly checked any attempt to speak or to move. More by his manner than by words he succeeded in securing obedience, and his wishes were law. By occasional hints and suggestions, he conveyed an idea of the situation into Beauchamp's mind, and prepared him and his friends to acquiesce with patience in the interval of silence and repose which Nature demanded for restoration. Not a precaution was forgotten. He went over the ground with his professional brother, and discussed all the contingencies that might arise; and when they had agreed on these, he took the doctor, with Mr. Howard and Mr. Beauchamp, aside, and, in clear, concise words, pointed out the symptoms they might expect, and gave ample directions for their guidance.

Then the surgeon asked for a lunch, having eaten nothing, except a morsel while his horses were changed, since the evening before. He sat down and ate heartily for a short time, and then, sitting back to the wall, he was asleep in a moment. Mr. Beauchamp saw how thoroughly tired he was, and kept silence, that he might be refreshed by his nap. Meanwhile, Phillis had appeared, looking in inquiringly, and Mr. Beauchamp, to prevent her disturbing the sleeper, went out to talk with her.

"Wall, Massa Ralph, spec young massa all right now."

"'All right,' you think, with a big hole in his head?"

"G'long, Massa Ralph, stalkin' about hole in 's head! Jess want to scare ste ol' woman. G'long!"

"Well, he *has* a hole in his head. I saw it."

"But young massa 'll *die* wid a hole in 's head."

"I expect he *will* die, Phillis."

"O, Massa Ralph! You eyes a shinin' — sdry shine, not wet! You tink ste young massa die? No, no! Don't fool *stis* ol' woman sdat way."

"Well, Phillis, it's no thanks to you that he isn't dead, and the house torn down! You did *your* best. Hiding a runaway like you did, right in the house! Heap you care about your young master or mistress either!"

"Young massa scare 'm shootin'. Fleemster's ferce as dogs. Stey fight all so, if Sally no here. Phillis couldn't make 'em 'top shoot."

"Ah, but, Phillis, the reason the trifin' dogs came was, they had tracked the rabbit. They were right on the scent, and knew she was here, and you know you hid her. You're the one that's to answer for the killing of Jack Fleemister, and Van Holm, and Beauchamp too. St. Peter'll ask you about it, up yonder, and will say, 'Go away, Phillis! You don't wear the long white robe

here, nohow.' Then you'll have to come back, and live it all over again."

"Ste great Massa put no load on spoor ol' woman she can't tote. He no break ol' Phillis' back. He no make her tote ste Fleemster's sins."

"But how about your own? How many times have you lied about Sally? Said you didn't know where she was, you ornary old nigger? Who'll have to answer for your lies? Not the Fleemisters."

"Well, Sally some time in house, some time in 'table loft, some time in scorn barn. How Phillis know wen dey ax?"

"O, but you can't get off that way. You know you meant to lie. These little dodges ain't no 'count. St. Peter's got 'em all marked down — great black marks on his book."

"Ste ol' Peter he lie, too, once, an' he cry 'bout it. Spec he's done rub Phillis's marks off he's book wid sleeve when nobody lookin', he feel so mighty bad for ol' woman."

"Don't flatter yourself! The Bible says, 'All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' How do you get away from that?"

"Well, Massa Ralph. Ste good people go to Aber-
ham sbosom; don' stey? Ste Fader Aber-
ham in heaven; ain't he? Fader Aber-
ham he tell big lie, too. He say
he's ol' woman, Miss' Sarah, he's sister, 'caze he feared
ste Egipt king want to tole her 'way. An' stey shill sit
down in ste kingdom of heaven wid Aber-
ham, an' Izek, an' Jacob. An' didn't the ol' fox Jacob lie too, an' make
fool he's ol' blin' fader? No, stey nebber turn ol' Phillis
'way. Stey say, 'Ol' Phillis, come right 'long yer, inter
ste kingdom! Nebber min' 'bout sdat lie you done tole.'
An' ol' Phillis she go in an' she sit down, — not side ste ol'

Miss' Sarah, an' ste white folks, but 'side aunt Hagar on ste low seat."

"Got it all figgered out — haven't you, Phillis? Glad to see you know so much of the Bible, though 't isn't best to use it to pick out excuses for lying. But you haven't any other hiding-place round here — have you? You haven't got old Scipio stowed away?"

"Ol' Scip? No! He can't hide; can't hold he's tongue; stalk all time. Hide ol' squawkin' gander! — No; ol' Scip he gone sure 'nuff."

"You know I'm goin' to buy you, Phillis, and do you want me to buy him too?"

"Mebbe stey don' cotch him. Massa buy him wen stey cotch him."

"They may sell him as he runs; and if I buy him, I shall have to take my chance of catching him."

"O, well, massa can buy him. He hab ol' goose; den he hab ol' gander, too. Mebbe you buy Sally, and Harry, and ste little chillen?"

"No, I don't buy wild deer; couldn't keep 'em. Got hands enough, any way — enough to eat all I raise. Only buy you to hear you talk Scripture — Bible talk."

"Mass' Ralph, you just make fool poor ol' woman."

"No, Phillis; the poor old woman makes a fool of me. I always get the worst of it."

The old woman's eyes twinkled as she went about her work. Mr. Beauchamp lived so much with his servants, that he was in the habit of conversing with them more freely than was usual among the white people. Even in families where the greatest humanity was shown there was little said to the blacks except by way of command. The gambols of the children, and the droll sayings of a few favorite house servants, were indulged for the sake of sport; but the superior class, reared with an ever-

present sense of mastership, could see little in the intellect of a negro to lift him above the level of a trained animal. They did not feel so much actual repugnance to the person of a negro as is felt among most northern people to-day. There was a prevalent feeling of kindness—a condescension to those of low estate—a looking down without a thought of haughtiness, and without any *active* contempt. It was a calm, good-natured, high-class feeling, such as prevails in the analogous ranks in England to-day. This is to be understood of the better class of slave-owners. There were enough tyrannical, and cruel, and unthinking masters and mistresses to make the condition of their own slaves wretched, and to make the future of all slaves a source of apprehension. And, further, the constant *influence* of the relation of master and slave was precisely as described in the well-known passage in the Notes on Virginia.

Uncle Ralph was fond of teasing, and he never failed to try to annoy a servant who, like Phillis, had the wit and the pluck to answer back. He enjoyed it fully as much as a discussion with a Papaw Creek preacher on the subject of predestination.

The surgeon awoke after half an hour, and prepared to return to the city. By this time Pete came along, riding Beauchamp's horse, both pretty thoroughly used up. He was allowed a day's additional furlough, and sent to bed. Mr. Howard had been meditating about his school, and now saw that he must give another week's vacation, for he could not, as uncle Ralph suggested, "jaw" the boys much in his condition. So Mr. Davis was to carry in a notice to that effect, to be posted up in town. The hearing on the petition of Mr. Wyndham, for the sale of Milly's children, would have to go without further opposition, for Beauchamp could not be spoken to upon the

subject; and, even if he were able to be present, there was nothing that could be done.

The surgeon bade the friends good by, and started, and Dr. Baird went to town with Mr. Davis. Uncle Ralph and Mr. Howard loitered a while in the porch; and then, as they went in, they saw Mrs. Russell sitting beside her son's bed, holding his hand in hers, and looking at him, with a proud smile on her weak and tearful face—like a mother's joyful, trembling looks when first she sees her new-born babe.

Mr. Howard stepped back, with an instinctive delicacy, and put his hand on uncle Ralph's arm; but he only pooh-poohed, though in an undertone, while at the same time a little salt drop oozed out of each eye.

Mr. Howard said he could attend to the wants of the patient for that night, and uncle Ralph thought it was better for him to go home to look after his own affairs, but promised to ride up in the morning.

What a strange, many-sided, great-hearted, old trump that man is! thought Howard, as uncle Ralph rode away. By what bitter experiences an ardent and generous soul becomes soured in temper, and loses its faith and interest in mankind!

Let us leave the house to its needed repose.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN ARREST, AND A SUGGESTION.

THE quarterly session of the Circuit Court always drew a large number of the county people to the town. Prominent lawyers from neighboring counties followed the judge on his circuit, and, for the week, the taverns were full of bustle to secure their harvest. It was a time for settlement of accounts, for bargains in real estate and in farm products, and especially for the manœuvring of politicians. The court-room was reasonably quiet: tobacco was not smoked, but only chewed, and the practice of expectoration was reduced to a science. The bench was simply a raised platform, with a rail in front; and members of the legal profession often occupied seats on either side of the judge — leaning back on tilted chairs. To one accustomed to the black-gowned decorum of a court in which English traditions were upheld, this was something horrifying. Where the utmost freedom of manner prevailed, and everything was new, there was but little regard paid to time-honored forms.

Mr. Wyndham was present, and with him his associate, Mr. Adams. When the case was called in which he was interested, Squire Hamilton rose, and simply said, that the young gentleman at whose request he had appeared had been seriously wounded in an affray, growing out of the case, and was unable to attend court; and that he did not know of anything now to be said which

would controvert the petitioner's claim, or justify a postponement. A decree was therefore entered; and the clerk was directed to issue a warrant for the sale of the persons of color named in the petition, that day fortnight. The proceedings of the session have no further interest to us.

There was a recess for dinner, also for plain whiskey in abundance, and unlimited tobacco; after which the court held a short afternoon session. Mr. Wyndham had meanwhile gone home. The sheriff mailed his advertisement to Louisville, to be printed in the newspapers, and to be posted in the form of handbills so as to attract buyers. The day was nearly over. The litigants, witnesses, and spectators were departing. Tom Fleemister had just come to town for some unknown reason, and now on a sudden found himself in a position of prominence. The sheriff took him into custody on a charge of passing counterfeit bills, and lodged him in jail, where Mr. Wyndham's stray sheep, Sally, was also penned.

The condition of the country at that time was peculiarly favorable to the operations of counterfeiters. There were not many banks or money brokers, and forged or altered bills might circulate from hand to hand for a long time before they would receive any careful scrutiny from practised judges. A buyer of hogs or mules might traverse the state, and put in a moderate number of good-looking counterfeits in any large payment he made, and so go on from county to county, using due caution, and complete his round without being detected. The management of the business was a matter requiring experience and skill. There were probably in nearly every county persons who were more or less implicated in the crime, and who had certain parts to perform; but these were not enlightened as to the general scheme. For instance, an ignorant

person like Tom Fleemister would be left as much in the dark about the ramifications of the system, and the names and whereabouts of the managers, as he was with regard to the celestial mechanics. Tom had been but recently employed as a distributor and messenger, and once or twice he ventured to do a little business on his own account. His arrest happened in this wise:—

The officers who arrested Aloysius Pittsinger were particularly struck with the excellence of the engraver's work on the bill he had passed; and as two or three other counterfeits, apparently from the same steel plate, had been passed on the same line of travel, they felt sure that there was a new distributing agency somewhere in the neighborhood. It was considered worth while to make an effort to get some of the principals; for it was quite certain that a vain and inexperienced youth like Aloysius was only a tool of shrewder men. Their opinion was confirmed when Goldstein came to the city and made a fresh complaint against his late clerk for putting some of these same "dangerous tens" in the cash box, and taking out an equal number of genuine bills, when he left on his bridal tour. Aloysius was therefore offered the chance of escaping punishment, if he would turn state's evidence and implicate his confederates—a proposition which he eagerly accepted, though, to enhance the value of the sacrifice, he affected a coy reluctance at first. The officers expected to haul in a person of some consequence, and were greatly disgusted when they found that it was only the miserable Fleemister. However, a warrant was sent up for him, to see what would come of it. When Fleemister was safely locked up, the sheriff rode off at once, with a couple of attendants, to Tom's house.

The sheriff's party dismounted at some distance, and tied their horses, and then stole up quietly, and got into

the house before any alarm could be given. Cad and her numerous brood were eating supper. The sheriff looked determinedly at her, and told her that, if she uttered a word, or gave a signal to any of the children, he would carry her off to jail that night. Eloisa &c. &c., and another sister, also the eldest boy, were isolated from the younger children, and all of them strictly watched. The sheriff then surveyed the premises. The plan of the house was not at all complicated; it was as simple, in fact, as a woodchuck's hole. There was a clothes-press and an old chest of drawers below; these he pointed out to one of his aids, and asked him to keep his eye on them. He looked up and saw the loft, or scaffold, on which Milly's twins once rested. Putting the ladder in position, he ran up and saw a quantity of hands of tobacco lying in a smooth pile. The order was quite creditable to somebody's carefulness. He turned the pile over as if it had been a haystack, and found beneath an old petticoat. He lifted this tattered article, and took out of the pocket a flat package. The size, shape, and weight showed that it was probably the thing he was looking for. He descended, and tore off a corner, and looked at it by the fire-light. He had what he wanted. The clothes-press and chest of drawers were examined, but they contained nothing contraband.

Cad, being then released from silence, wanted to know the meaning of "this comin' and haulin' over the house;" and, what was more, what they had done with Tom. The sheriff told her that he was in jail for passing counterfeit money. Then the cries that arose might have been heard a mile, so the sheriff thought. Tears meandered down nearly a dozen pairs of cheeks, making sinuous, clean channels in the dark, incrustated surfaces, like plans of river systems in maps. Eyes and noses had full liberty to distil,—

"Like the Arabian trees, their medicinal gums."

There were no handkerchiefs to check the flow. Tom had gone to jail in sullen silence — not a word from him, not a tear from his dull eyes. The punishment of criminals almost always distresses others far more than themselves. But Cad and her children gave themselves up to their grief, and cried and sobbed without restraint. And well they might; for, when Mr. Fox is trapped, who will bring home partridges and rabbits to the cubs? The old robber, though hated by the world, is thought by his family to be a meritorious and persecuted individual.

The afflicted family had plenty of time to cry — then, and for some months afterwards.

The sheriff returned to town with his prize, and, after examining the contents, sent a list to the Louisville officers with specimens. A large portion of the package consisted of those "dangerous tens," but they were nearly all unsigned. — Ah! then some one in Barry County, or along on the route, has the skill to put in fac-similes of the signatures! Will Tom enlighten the officers on this point? Or has he been kept in ignorance, lest he should know too much? A man not given to talk, he will not tell what he knows, unless it is to set him at liberty.

It will be necessary now to pass over a few days, during which nothing that was noteworthy occurred. Beauchamp seemed to be slowly gaining, although there were some symptoms of fever that gave the doctor uneasiness. There was to be need of all patience in the world in his case. The school in town remained closed, for Mr. Howard, though able to talk, felt disinclined to begin a term until Beauchamp's recovery. One afternoon he learned from the servants that a priest was passing the day at Van Holm's house. He thought it was likely to be his

old friend, Father Hennequin. It was lonely at Beech Knoll, and he thought it must be lonely at Van Holm's also. He knew that the good father would not be likely to return to his home that night, and a sudden desire to renew his old acquaintance prompted him to send over and ask if the father would not pass the night at Beech Knoll. Father Hennequin came, and was welcomed by Mrs. Russell with the respect due to his profession. After supper she said she would sit by her son, and leave Mr. Howard with his guest. The fire burned brightly, and the chairs were drawn up before it, with the little table between. Pipes were lighted, and the conversation took a discursive range, — starting with the recent fight and then going into the question of slavery, and so on to the ends of the earth.

Father Hennequin appeared to be about fifty years old, and was a large and muscular man. His beard was cleanly shaven, his features were more sharply drawn than usual, and he had less of that tendency to fat about the cheeks and neck which is often seen in ecclesiastical faces. His hands and feet were large, and the articulations of his joints showed that he had been very powerful, and at some time probably accustomed to labor. He wore habitually the reserved and chastened expression belonging to persons of devout life, but when he spoke his smile was singularly frank and winning. His hair was slightly gray, and had become thin over his forehead.

After they had talked for some time, Mr. Howard said, "I believe you once told me you were not of French extraction."

"No," he replied. "I was born in Northern Vermont, and of Yankee parents. I was a lumberman, as you might see by my hands. Once, while rafting on a river that empties into the St. Lawrence, I fell between the logs

and was seriously injured. My comrades left me at a little village to die. I was taken care of by a French family, and finally restored to health. During my convalescence I embraced the Catholic faith, and as I was then less than twenty years old, I determined to obtain an education, and devote my life to the church. I had the usual varied experiences of the poor student. I taught school several winters, and 'boarded round,' often with penurious, mean people, at whose tables I had much ado to get enough to eat. One woman, I well remember, used to make her butter in little globes, and put them out in the cold until they became solid. When they came on the table they would have answered for grape-shot. The butter-knife made no impression on the smooth, and hard, rolling spheres; and the most I could hack off at a time wouldn't have been enough to grease a rusty *sou*. Very frugal people, Mr. Howard. Our negroes waste more every year than would keep the whole State of Vermont. As I always have had a good appetite, I suppose the memory of these early privations has stayed by me, and if I eat more now, it is by way of recompense. — I see you are curious about my name. For domestic reasons I did not care to wear my own, and took my present name from that of the family who befriended me."

"How strange that a Vermont Yankee should have become a Catholic priest, taken a French name, and settled in a rural district in Kentucky."

"Yes; I often think of it. I don't know that I regret my early trials. The labor I did made me a strong man; having been used to scant fare I appreciate the abundance here; and having been born among Protestants, I know better how to present the truth to them."

"You will find me a tough subject, father. I am not disputatious, but inert. I don't doubt you could confute

any proposition I should lay down; but speculative doctrines and church history don't affect me. I believe in the *fruits* of righteousness, and when I see them I don't care to inquire, like an analyzing botanist, what species of tree produced them. But I should think that a clergyman of your church, who is a student of human nature, would have some very singular cases come under his notice in confession. Like the hero in Le Sage's novel, you see houses unroofed; and, besides, you see hearts as they are. This, I think, is a source of power that is unlimited. Lacon says the reason it is easy to write a brilliant dialogue is, that the author talks for both sides, and shapes the speech of the one to give the chance for the repartee of the other. The priest who knows the secrets of his flock has a wonderful opportunity for good, in bringing together estranged hearts, composing strife, and causing reparation for injury. He has also a power for evil that is equally unlimited, if he is a bad man. The penitents are chessmen, and he moves both sides of the game. — Don't think I am going to step over the line, and ask you even a single question as to what you have ever heard. But you know me so well that I am tempted to put before you a supposititious case. And you need not even answer that unless you like. Suppose that I were the priest, and you, my friend, a layman; suppose you knew, or had excellent reason to believe, that a person under my spiritual charge had committed a great crime; suppose that the crime had injured an innocent family far more than it had benefited him; suppose that you saw my patient to be apparently near his end, and you knew that he ought not to die without making what reparation he could; suppose you knew me to be ignorant of all this, and believed that the dying man lacked the nerve to make a full confession and paltered with his conscience; — what do you think you would do?"

"It is a long preamble, and my judgment might be affected by a great many circumstances that you don't mention. Hypothesis and fact are rarely quite at accord. Still, to come straight to the point, no clergyman who knows you, and believes you sincere and disinterested in the matter, would have any scruple to hear what you might have to say. After he had heard you, what impression your story made he would not be likely to tell you; nor would he intimate what he proposed to do or to say about it. He would be at liberty to hear, and no more. What he would *do* you could only infer from your knowledge of him."

"Well, Father Hennequin, I am going to make a clean breast of it, for I feel it my solemn, bounden duty. I particularly request that you shall *not* say a word to me in reply. For it doesn't concern me personally, and I have a delicacy about meddling. Jacob Van Holm, who, I suppose, is soon to die, has committed two great crimes, — as I believe. He swore falsely in a trial about a boundary line, and in consequence the title to the land on which he lives was unjustly taken from this family. His farm, in the sight of Heaven, is the property of the young man in the next room. Next, he swore falsely (I say so, in my judgment, as before) in identifying the signature to a paper on which a case turned in court, some years ago, against this same family. This last suit reduced the Russells to poverty, and it has now involved some freed slaves, who are soon to be sold at auction to help pay this unjust judgment. Van Holm profited somewhat by the land suit, but not by the other. Now, what he *ought* to do, and what he must do, if he is penitent, is to make such declarations as truth demands, in the proper legal forms, and before the proper persons as witnesses, and to place the declarations in the hands of some one who can

use them to compel the unjust litigant to make restitution. Mr. Russell will not be able to take any part in this, for his recovery will be very slow. His uncle, Ralph Beauchamp, is the man to represent him. And this should be done without delay, for fear Van Holm should die before he can go through the necessary formalities."

"Don't you think he should give a thousand dollars to repair our poor chapel? I suppose he can afford it; and we'll have him put that in, too. — That was a rare time we had, by the by, last summer, when you came over. My garden was never so fine, — such roses and geraniums! and those rich, maroon-black calacanthus blossoms, — was there ever anything so sweet?"

"Yes, my friend; my visit to Nazareth was a delightful one. Your house and garden are charming, and the school-girls seem to be as happy as butterflies. But most of the sisters impressed me with the deepest melancholy."

"Their lives are devoted to God, and, believe me, they haven't a thought or regret for the world they have left behind. You are looking at the material side of things. Some people must cultivate the spiritual field, and keep alive the flames of devotion in the hearts of the young."

"I see the force of what you say, but I assure you I never could look upon those women without feeling pity for them, because they were forever denied the blessed boon of love. They may live for others, but the sacrifice they make is too great; it is nothing less than their hearts' blood."

"All the more glory to them, now and hereafter. — But let us speak of your young friend. Is he in a dangerous condition? Trephining is no joke. Are you not afraid of brain fever setting in?"

"I think he will live through it. We don't mean that he shall have a fever. But when he comes to recover

he will have some bitter things to think of. The children he has tried to save will be sold and scattered about. But his sharpest trial will be in meeting the slanderous stories that even now have begun to circulate about him. He has been under some suspicion before now, simply for being my friend; and you know how ready the public is to take up the cry against an abolitionist. Then the fact that the girl Sally — who is really a beauty, by the way — had been lurking here so long, and was actually found in his room, will be in every one's mouth. Neither of us knew where she was, but that is something that no one else but God knows, and the general depravity makes people wag their heads."

"It is a rather serious matter for a pure-minded man; the common sort wouldn't mind it. In this world you have not only to be good, and pure, and true, but to appear so. If the gossips once make a point against you, it's seldom that you ever get it rubbed out. — But I think I'll take a parting whiff and go to bed. I shall ride home to-morrow, but am to return next Sunday for service, and I shall then see you as I go to Mr. Van Holm's."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOLD AT AUCTION.

AFTER the decree was given for the sale of Milly's children, Mr. Wyndham had Harrison and the twins, Tim and Fanny, put in charge of the jailer, with instructions to look after them and to feed them well. The first requisite in a slave was a strong, healthy body. Education, except in practical matters, was considered a drawback. Good muscles for labor, a tractable temper, and just enough training to do work well, — these were the qualities that were considered by purchasers. The four children possessed some of these requirements in good measure. Their bodies were shapely and well knit, and they were well disposed and pliant. They knew rather too much, however, — at least, the two older ones, — and the fact that they had been once free was thought to take away a great deal from their value. It was believed that they would be trying to escape, and therefore would not bring what they ought at the sale, unless they were bought by some one from the extreme Southern States. Mr. Wyndham was greatly rejoiced, therefore, when he heard that a wealthy planter or slave-dealer — for reports varied — from New Orleans was coming from Louisville to buy them.

We shall find it difficult to put ourselves in imagination into the places of Harrison and Sally as the time of the sale drew near. The auction-block was the one

great terror of a slave's life. Whipping and abuse, hunger and nakedness, were lightly esteemed in comparison. The dullest brute that ever lifted his heavy hoe, the man who had not a thought beyond his animal existence, and to whom freedom was an idle tale, shuddered at the prospect of being sold. The yoke he bore had become fitted to his neck, and he feared to exchange. With how much livelier feelings a young man of twenty years, one who could read and write, who had been used to the dress and comforts of civilized life, who looked forward to an equal marriage and an undisturbed life in freedom, regarded the act that was to thrust him down to the level of a beast of burden, and to blast every hope for this life! We *cannot* put ourselves in his place. We cannot make real to our minds the terrible situation. The soul revolts at it. But regrets were unavailing for these victims of the law; they were hemmed in and kept down by a force as pervading and irresistible as gravitation.

Think! young man of twenty, young damsel of eighteen! Persuade yourselves, now, after your schooling is finished, and you are anxious to find your appointed places in life, that your labor, your recreation, your maturer progress, your affection for kindred and the dearer ties for which every human soul yearns, are under the absolute control of another! Imprisonment in a cell, or between four walls, might appear at first to be more terrible; but if the mind could reach forward and take in the whole of the momentous fact of slavery, — covering every inch of one's own life, and continuing the same misery to offspring, — the shutting up of the body in prison would appear the milder alternative.

Look for a moment at Harrison Russell, — for the freedman as well as the slave, was known by his master's surname, — and consider what may be done by law, and in

a community of really kind and Christian people. He is twenty years old. Open his shirt collar and look at his finely modelled chest; roll up his sleeves and notice the fine lines of his arms. Don't hesitate for any feeling of delicacy! It will be done at the sale. Ask him to hold up his head, and see the perfect poise and the clear features! The tint and the round contour of the face, and the straight, shining hair, recall the Eastern types of beauty. The smooth skin over the frame of his chest, and over the elastic muscles that brace and swathe his breast and shoulder, is fair and glossy like the surface of the bronze Mercury by John of Bologna. A handsome creature, strong and alert, what a pity he has a soul of his own! If he were only an animated statue, we might admire his proportions and flexile grace as we would those of a favorite animal. But he thinks, and he feels, and we know it. His heart is full of thoughts of his dead mother, hunted down and dying among human brutes. And in his pocket, even now, there is a crumpled letter that he has read a hundred times, and in the lining of his waistcoat is a common daguerreotype, out of which looks a face with sweet and melancholy eyes, like those of the young mother of Moses by De la Roche. Yes, this young man, who is to be sold like a horse, has loved! And this is the end of it — a crumpled letter and a poor daguerreotype.

Sally, during her sojourn in Indiana, had attracted the attention of a cultivated and religious woman, and had received the kind of training fitted to make her virtuous and domestic. Though she lived at home, she spent much time with this kindly and helpful neighbor, and under her influence was likely to become what Milly most desired, but was so unfitted herself to exemplify. The showy manners, the tastes for display, and all the

offensive forth-putting, so often seen among half-caste women, were absent. Her apparel and person were scrupulously neat, and her nature seemed to have become refined by the same process. Her face, as we have mentioned, was very handsome; her features, like those of her darker-skinned mother, had sufficient prominence, and were moulded symmetrically; and the rich peach-color of her cheeks was not more attractive than the modest and down-dropping glance of her large and lustrous eyes. She had no crumpled letter in her pocket, no daguerreotype, but she had a small Testament, a neat sewing-case, and the usual assortment of knickknacks which young ladies affect. But, though she had left no lover behind, she had, like all our daughters and sisters, her day-dreams, her air-castles. She had felt the stir of Nature's prompting in her heart, and now she was brought face to face with destiny. Destiny seemed at one time to have come in the person of the vile wretch Jack Fleemister. He was dead; but what might come next? Perhaps an enforced union with an uneducated, grovelling black man, a field hand without culture, without sentiment, without aspiration for anything beyond a slave's life. Then she would have the prospect of living in dirt and ignorance, and of bringing into the world a succession of children that might be taken away from her and sold as calves are. Or she might be bought, like a Circassian at Constantinople, to become something she shuddered to think of. In what shape was her destiny to come? Whatever it might be, she was helpless.

The day had come, and the four children were arrayed in their best at the Court House door. The principal farmers had come in from the surrounding country. There were several from adjacent counties, men who were not regular dealers in slaves, but who had capital,

and who attended auctions, and bought, when they saw a chance to buy low, with a view to profit. There was the usual crowd of idlers. All the little shops were emptied, and the taverns also. As the hour approached, there was a crowd in the square, numbering, perhaps, fifty or more. Mr. Pierrepont had come down, more from curiosity than anything else, for he had slaves enough; still, his daughter had said that if the girl Sally didn't bring *too* much, she should like her for a waiting-maid. Squire Hamilton thought that Harrison would make an excellent boy to attend to his horses, and help about the house, and he had come to look on. Our hero, Beauchamp, was unable to be present, as we know very well; and Mr. Howard had ridden in because he knew that when his friend got better he would want to hear the particulars of the sale and the names of the purchasers. In answer to inquiries, he reported that Beauchamp had symptoms of fever, with occasional delirious intervals, and that his condition was critical. Mr. Ralph Beauchamp was passing the day at Beech Knoll, and did not come in to the sale.

The dealers and speculators began to look over the property. Harrison was felt of, turned round, made to stand, to sit, and to walk about. Some took him by the forehead and chin, and inspected the condition of his teeth, as jockeys do horses. The result of the examination was highly favorable; all agreed that if he would be contented, a better made, and apparently a better natured, boy could not be found. Who could paint the face of the "boy" while thus inspected, and his points thus canvassed? Had the spectators of the sale seen an actual portrait painted by a master, depicting the emotions struggling for expression on the "boy's" face, they would have been powerfully affected; but they did not understand or feel the mingled terror and despair that

were exhibited before their eyes. The world is most touched by ideal sorrow. The jewelled and perfumed lady feels a tenderness at a picture of homely life or of poverty or sentimental distress, but she would recoil with disgust from the actual hunger, and squalor, and weeping. So tragedies are veiled from the eyes of the beholders; and a scene that is merely unpleasant or shocking to contemporaries may become heroic and memorable to succeeding generations.

Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Adams, and the sheriff came out of the Court House, and after them our old friend, Aunt Phillis.

The sheriff then called the assembly to order, and said, "Gentlemen, before selling the niggers advertised, I have to say that Phillis, that you see here — Phillis, you'll have to step on the block; you're so short —"

Phillis muttered, "I go on ste block! Yes, go on anyting for missus. No matter 'bout ol' Phillis."

The sheriff went on without noticing her: —

"Phillis, I say, is an old woman, and has been in the Russell family for fifty years. I am authorized by Mr. Ralph Beauchamp to bid fifty dollars for her, as he wants her to stay in her old home. But according to law, I am obliged to offer her to the highest bidder. Does any one bid more? Any more than fifty dollars? Going at fifty dollars, and all done. Sold to Ralph Beauchamp for fifty dollars."

Phillis stepped down from the block proudly, and as she did so, Squire Hamilton called out to her, "Phillis, we all know you're worth your weight in silver; but nobody wants to take you away from your mistress; and that's more to your credit than if you outsold that likely young wench there."

The sheriff continued: —

"I had expected to sell Scipio at the same time. He, as you know, is an old slave, brought up in the same family; but he has run away, —

"Got off by the help of Heady's bitters," said some one in the crowd, in the midst of good-humored laughs.

"And I will sell him to the highest bidder, *as he runs*, the buyer to take his chances of catching him. Mr. Ralph Beauchamp offers ten dollars."

There was a general hilarity, but no bid was offered. Scipio was long past his active usefulness, and would not be worth much even if he came back voluntarily. He was knocked down to Ralph Beauchamp for ten dollars, at which Phillis chuckled more than any one else.

Harrison was now put up, and the bidding began. The sheriff dwelt on his youth and his good disposition.

"He looks a little downcast now, gentlemen, but he'll pick up. Among strangers so, and not knowing which of you is to have him, he don't show so bright as he is. But he'll be a first-rate hand, able and stiddy, and knowin, and trusty, too. Sound as a hickory nut, and gentle as a kitten, gentlemen. Knows horses and farm-work, and handy at odd jobs. How much am I offered?"

"One hundred dollars."

"Take it back, sir; say five. *Only* one hundred dollars! Boys' play, gentlemen."

"Two hundred." This from Squire Hamilton.

"Two hundred dollars, gentlemen. Worth a thousand, easy."

"Three hundred," from a Louisville dealer.

"Three hundred, gentlemen. Must bring a thousand, if one dollar is worth another."

"Five hundred," from a new bidder.

"Six hundred," said the Louisville dealer.

"Seven," said his competitor.

Squire Hamilton now retired, as his figure had been exceeded. The country speculators also saw they had no chance.

"Seven hundred and fifty dollars," said the Louisville man, looking round for his rival.

"Eight," answered the same imperturbable voice.

"Eight hundred and fifty," said the Louisville man, with a tone showing something like vexation.

"A thousand," said the other.

The excitement rose, and people stretched their necks to see who was bidding.

"Now, gentlemen," said the sheriff, "you begin to talk. There's men here that know the worth of a boy like this. One thousand dollars I am offered! Fifty — shall I have it? One thousand! Going at one thousand! Going! Fifty do you say?"

The Louisville man, after an apparent mental struggle, nodded.

"Ten hundred and fifty, gentlemen! Ten hundred and fifty! Eleven — shall I have it? Going at ten fifty! Going!"

"Eleven," said the rival bidder.

The Louisville man buttoned up his pockets and stood back. The sheriff rung his conventional changes on "Eleven," but got no response. The "Going!" was repeated, while the sheriff looked around the circle. There was no answer. "Going! Gone! Sold for eleven hundred dollars. Who shall I say, sir?"

"Cash," was the answer.

Harrison looked at the face of the successful bidder, and groaned aloud. The face and the dress of the man showed that he was a southerner, and Harrison saw that what he most dreaded had befallen him — he was sold to go down the river. The misery of life on a cotton or

sugar plantation was all that was before him. The wretched boy shook with the extremity of his agony, and continued to sob.

The buyer coolly advanced, and showed a bag of gold to the sheriff.

"In a few minutes," he answered, referring to the payment. "The bill will be made out and the money counted in the clerk's office as soon as the sale is over."

The looks of the stranger were not prepossessing. He was of medium stature, or rather above it, and had the complexion of a Spaniard. Over one eye was a dark patch, and there was plainly visible, on the eyebrow above and on the cheek below, the ends of a scar that showed how the eye had been cleft by a knife. His firm-set mouth covered by thin black mustaches, and his silent manner, heightened the impression made by the patch and the scars. He wore the broad-brimmed hat, black clothes, fine, unstarched linen, and neat-looking, dapper boots that are the distinguishing marks of Cubans, and of Spanish residents in Louisiana. The weather seemed to chill him, and he had on his shoulders a loosely-folded Mexican poncho.

It was now Sally's turn. She displayed more fortitude than was expected. But she kept her eyes bent on the ground, and her breathing was irregular and anxious. There was a slight murmur as she appeared, for such a face and such a form were seldom put up for sale, — except, as Willis says, in church, where —

"Honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do."

The sheriff noted the good points of the girl, and proceeded to invite bids.

Mr. Pierrepont bid five hundred dollars.

"Five hundred I am offered, gentlemen—five hundred! Worth a great deal more money. Who says six?"

The Louisville dealer nodded.

"Six hundred dollars, gentlemen! Be lively, for it grows chilly. You know she'll bring more. Six I am offered. Who says seven?"

"Seven hundred," said Mr. Pierrepont.

"Eight," chimed in the dealer.

Mr. Pierrepont shook his head.

"Eight hundred I am offered! Eight, going at eight! Who says nine?"

The southerner had been looking on indifferently, but now he increased the bid fifty dollars.

"Eight fifty!" said the sheriff. "Worth just as much as the boy, and perhaps more."

"A dainty piece, and a dainty price," said Squire Hamilton. "She ain't worth more *to work*." This in an aside to Mr. Pierrepont.

"Eight fifty!"

"Nine," said the Louisville man, making a rally.

"One thousand," said the southerner, carelessly.

The buzz of interest among the spectators increased. An auction is like a horse-race in one respect. Every spectator likes to see who will win, and finds himself excited in watching the progress of the struggle.

"One thousand dollars I am offered!" said the sheriff. "Going at one thousand! The best chance for profit this day. Good for five hundred more in New Orleans. Who says eleven hundred? Going at one thousand! Eleven—shall I have it?"

"Eleven hundred," said the Louisville man.

"Eleven it is! Going at eleven! A good margin yet. Going at eleven! Going!"

"Twelve," said the southerner, amid a general murmur at the high price reached.

"Twelve I hear! Will anybody say more? Going at twelve! Going! Twelve hundred dollars! Going! Gone! Sold for twelve hundred dollars to—"

"Cash," said the southerner. "You can write the name Señor José de Sandoval." The words sounded strangely on account of the delicate, but distinct, foreign accent.

Sally, hearing the fatal word "Gone," looked up at the sinister face of the purchaser. She trembled violently, as Harrison had done. But knowing now that she would probably have the company of her brother, she reached out to Harrison and grasped his hand fervently, while a smile shone through her tears.

"The gal is pleased," was Squire Hamilton's comment. "One of them good-looking wenches is better pleased to go south than to stay here and work for an honest livin'."

Mr. Pierrepont, to whom this was said, replied, "You can't always tell what a girl's thinking of. She looked at her brother when she smiled, and they are both bought by the same man.—But, squire, we might buy these twins—you take the boy, and I the girl. They are well grown for their age, and every year they'll be improving. They haven't any bad habits nor foolish notions,—they can't have at their age,—and we can bring them up to our liking."

"Well, let's see how it goes," said the squire. Little Tim was next put up. He was too white and too delicate to bring a great price. The competition was not lively. The southerner, being appealed to, said, "*El niño parvulo*—too little."

Squire Hamilton bought the boy for three hundred dollars, and Mr. Pierrepont the girl for twenty-five dollars more. The little creatures looked as frightened as lambs about to be penned; but they had no adequate sense of what was happening. Sally kissed them, and cried over

them, until Mr. Wyndham interfered, telling her to shut up, and not to set them howling.

Mr. Pierrepont said to Squire Hamilton that he would leave the child Fanny to go with her brother Tim for that night, as he thought it might be better for them both; and, besides, he proposed to ride out to Beech Knoll with Mr. Howard. So the twins were sent off hand in hand to Squire Hamilton's, and Sally and Harrison given into the jailer's care until the next day, when the buyer was going to take them away in the stage.

The spectators and idlers dispersed, and the southerner went into the clerk's office with the sheriff and Mr. Wyndham, to settle for the purchases. Señor Sandoval took out his bag of buckskin and counted on the table twenty-three hundred dollars in gold. The sheriff looked at the coin. It was apparently genuine, and had the small letter "o" to denote the place of coinage. He rang several pieces—they sounded well—they were good. Mr. Wyndham examined them, saying that in a transaction of some magnitude, and with a stranger, caution must be pardoned. The southerner smiled queerly, and hoped they would satisfy themselves. The gold was good; he had taken it from the mint himself.

The sheriff then wrote out a bill of sale for Harrison and Sally; and, flattering himself that he had the name to a dot, wrote it as "Hosea D. Sandy Val."

The disappointed speculator from Louisville went to the tavern, and Señor Sandoval soon followed. The latter politely condoled with his rival, saying that *both* could not have the negroes, and he didn't choose to give them up, as he wanted them expressly for his own plantation. He had had business in Louisville, and seeing the handbills, had come up solely for the sale. Señor Sandoval asked the dealer if he would "take something"? The

dealer assented, as it was exactly what he felt he needed at that time, — he had been so cursedly cold out in that open, windy square.

They took off their overcoats; and the barkeeper, who hastened to assist the foreign-looking customer first, noticed that there was a bowie-knife in his breast pocket, and a pistol in a pocket under the skirt of his coat.

"Whiskey for me," said the Louisville man.

The Spaniard gave a slight expression of disgust, and asked for plain claret. He might as well have asked for Johannisberg or Yquem. But the obliging barkeeper suggested "peach la cure."

"Peach la cure! And what is that? Ah, *yo veo!* *Pêche liqueur!* *Bueno!* I take some."

After dinner the Spaniard said he was fatigued from travelling, and asked for a room to lie down. A fire was built for him in a chamber, and he withdrew.

The Louisville man found congenial company among some of the town's people. A little game of "draw poker" was arranged, and the evening was spent amicably, the town's people rather having the advantage at the end. The Louisville man paid his losses about midnight, stood treat all round, and was voted a perfect gentleman.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DEVOTED TO THEORIZING.

THOSE readers who think that with the extinction of chattel slavery the equality of mankind has been established, and that there is nothing left for Christianity nor for legislation to do in regard to the fundamental principles of the social structure, can skip this chapter.

Mr. Pierrepont was riding out of town with Mr. Howard, and as he noticed that the latter was not very talkative, he supposed the sale had set him thinking. He said, "I suppose the impression of this day is not a pleasant one."

"Not at all," Howard replied. "But you remember your own caution to me, and I had determined to keep my thoughts to myself."

"O, but, my good friend, my caution related to other people — not to me. Talk to me at any time and you'll not ruffle me in the least. I can hear the word 'slavery' without turning purple, and gasping for rage. Tell me what you have been thinking of, and without any polite translation."

"Well, I will say that this sale to-day has given me a new view of what is possible under the law. Under smooth phrases, and following venerable forms, your judges and sheriffs do the work of fiends. I believe if the universe had been ransacked to bring together the means of giving the keenest torture to two simple innocents, nothing could have exceeded what was done to-

day. That gold which Mr. Wyndham carried off is as truly the price of blood as Judas's thirty pieces. But what I wonder at, and cannot get over, is the indifference of the bystanders. How could they see that anguish unmoved? How could they speculate upon the future of that young man, and still more, that modest-looking young woman, delivered over to the mercies of that ruffian from Louisiana? I didn't see a sign of sympathy in a single face."

"The want of sympathy is due to custom. These people see auction sales frequently, and though this was an extreme case, and cruel enough, I grant, the bystanders don't reflect on it, because it's settled with them that niggers *have* to be sold. You could take a generation of children, even of your philanthropists' sons, and by bringing them up among cannibals, you would find them as undisturbed at the sight of cutting off a human chop or steak, as you are at seeing a butcher slicing some mutton for your breakfast."

"But, my dear sir, you can't tell me that you think this is *right*. You have let me see the workings of your mind. You are quick and acute, and you can reason. You won't say you think it was right to sell those two young people to-day, law or no law."

"No, I'll be frank, and say that this case by itself is a very hard one — not to be justified on principle. But the system is not quite so bad, even as it is shown to-day. The two little children are provided with good homes, at least as long as the squire and I live; and you saw, too, that no one was willing to disturb Mr. Beauchamp's plans for Scipio and Phillis. These things are surely to be taken into account. But I anticipate your further questions. I go before you and admit that slavery is wrong. I won't waste a moment by going over either the moral or the

social or economical grounds. But I ask you to look at the condition of a fair-minded master here. What can he do? Emancipate? Yes; and after reducing himself to beggary, find that he must support his slaves in a free state, or send them to Africa to die. They haven't a ghost of a chance across the Ohio, nor in any climate they can live comfortably in; and you know we are not allowed to free them and leave them here."

"I used to be taught that we must do right, and leave the consequences to God."

"That's one view of it, and there's another view, that we must provide for those who have any claim upon us, even if that claim grows out of our sins, just as if there were no God. What shall Solomon, when he sees the true light, do with the two hundred and ninety-nine surplus wives? (I believe that's the number.) Shall he take the one and support her, and leave the rest to God, that is to say, to starvation? 'I trow not,' as the Bible says. We have this enormous load of ignorance, this mass of black helplessness, upon us, and we can't roll it off in a minute. We *must* look at consequences. Theorists are very well, but the real and substantial progress of the world is done through the agency of men who put theories to practical use, and who make changes that will save the generation, and not destroy it. The abolitionists think they have thought the matter all out for us. I don't think they begin to comprehend the results of the step they advise; that is, of immediate and unconditional emancipation.

"Listen to me a little further. We are constantly attacked by arguments that start from two distinct points, and pursue distinct methods; and the abolitionist hops nimbly from the one to the other, as occasion requires. Now, either we will take Christianity or Political Econ-

omy; for they are at total variance. If Christianity is good for the world, and is founded on the best reason, then the other is false and injurious. Now, the system in the most civilized communities is not Christian. It is substantially this: to buy at the cheapest rate you can, and to sell for the most you can; to employ what labor you want, and when you want it, and pay the least sum you can get the work done for. It is simply *laissez faire*, and devil take the hindmost. It is doing, under decorous forms, what savages do, and animals. Selfishness is the mainspring of every action. Christ taught that self was to be suppressed; and if his golden rule could be followed, all men would be brothers. What, then, would become of bargains, of profits, of hoarding? You tell me that there are Christian men who fall in with this state of things: but that is no matter. They don't reflect. They *think* they are Christians, but it is nevertheless true that one day of actual Christianity, as Christ taught it, would overturn every commercial and financial theory and custom in the world.

"If I take the precepts of Christ for my guide, I must set free my slaves, and divide my lands with them or share the crops with them; and, as I have the superior intelligence, I must advise, educate, nourish, and build them up into something like the stature of Christian men and women. Because I am far-seeing and prudent, I shall have money, and they will not. I must *continue* to divide with them. If I have two coats, or two sheep, or a surplus of anything, I must give to him who is lacking. I shall bind myself to a slavery that will never end but with my life. But here your political economist comes in and says, 'Not so. If you give to the idle and improvident, you develop pauperism, — the eating curse of free states, as slavery is of ours, — and you destroy

the foundations of manly character.' 'Man must be taught,' says the theorist, 'that he must live by his own labor, and, if he won't learn otherwise, then he must learn by bitter experience.' Divide every year, as these agrarians say, and you give a premium to idleness and unthrift. Property, the theorist urges, is the legitimate reward of well-directed toil and virtuous, frugal living. Scatter it, and you take away all the inducements which make our society as a whole, and our lives as individuals, better than that of savages. So, in your close-packed towns you are working on the theory of political economy. Christ is no more thought of than if he had never lived. Having no chattel slavery, and every man being at liberty to do as he likes, you consider that Christianity has done its whole work, except as it prompts the relief of the worst cases of suffering that come to notice. A man introduces a system of machinery that saves a thousand tons of coal a year. You welcome it. The surplus coal can wait for consumers, and meanwhile mining slackens, so that supply shall not greatly exceed demand. But he introduces other machinery, and saves the labor of a thousand men. These people *can't* wait, and they will starve, many of them, before they can get into new relations with your system of labor. Does your manufacturer then feed them? clothe them? give them rent or fuel? Not at all. He has paid them their wages, as long as he wanted them. They have eaten up what they have earned, and now he has no more use for them. Where is Christianity? Or, a time of financial distress comes, and the mills shut down. The managers say if they run, they will do so at a loss, and therefore they stop to protect themselves. Who feeds the discharged laborers and their swarms of little ones? Where is Christianity?

"So, under your system, the property system, the system of political economists, you have an immense number of people who are never one month removed from pauperism. An accident to their limbs, a fire in their workshops, a panic in the money market, the invention of new modes of manufacture, or the decline in value of some product, sends hundreds into your streets begging, to land in your poorhouses or penal institutions at last. This is an evil that threatens your rich men in their mansions, and troubles your lawgivers in their halls. All your forces, both of state and municipal government, and all the work of your churches, will grow more and more powerless to cope with it. Don't ask me what is to be done. I only started to show you that men have not got to the bottom of the social problem, by any means. And I wanted to show you further, that the anti-slavery man, as well as the supporter of the system, has no right to *name* Christianity in the discussion of the subject. It is not a rule of action anywhere, and I don't see that any body pretends to accept it as such. All the northern man can logically do, is to argue with us on grounds of humanity and of public policy. The 'humanity' is the only thing that touches us, for all agree that communities have the power and the right to regulate their public policy by their peculiar circumstances. And, believe me, my friend, the time will come when the eyes of the world will be turned to the shocking results of civilization, shown in the human wrecks left in its course; and when your ragged, homeless, hungry paupers will lift their hands to Heaven, as you think our slaves are doing night and day. People may, in future ages, wonder whether chattel slavery or wages slavery was the greater barbarism of this century. If you reckon it, as they do a battle, by the number of the dead on each side, I am not sure which will have the distinction.

"We do keep off pauperism here, and we do guard against starvation. There is no want of food nor of raiment anywhere in this state. Other matters are bad enough, I admit; too bad for defence or apology. Now, shall we adopt your system with these ignorant blacks on our hands? If your educated, skilled, and moral population is kept up with such difficulty, and if the hungry and ragged people, the victims of your system (or the unfortunate exceptions, if you please to call them so), make such demands upon charity, what would happen here? Suppose we should suggest that Christianity has still something to do for free states, and that you try and devise some plan whereby labor shall be sure of its reward, — a plan under which starvation cannot happen, — a plan that does not class a surplus of coal and a surplus of human beings in the same category! Don't talk to me of 'averages' and exceptions. That system is false which allows any human being to die of starvation. The lives of men so lost can't be reckoned as so many imperfect products of a machine, and be used over again, like pieces of old metal. I must be allowed to hate your philosophers of 'averages.' I claim for every human being born into the world a share of its fruits and its shelter, as of its unhoarded light and air. I have said nothing of the colossal fortunes of your great mill-owners and other capitalists, which only an unchristian system could make possible. If you could trace to their source each of the separate dollars they possess, and could know what toil, privation, sickness, and death they have cost the original producers, you would see that each hoard of millions is a monument of human bones as stupendous and as ghastly as Tamerlane's."

"Your father named you prophetically. I should almost think, as I hear you talk, that the soul of Jean Jacques animated you."

"I hope not. Rousseau had some grand ideas; he himself was a pitiful fellow, one of the meanest of the great men of France. He set the world thinking, Thomas Jefferson among others, and so he is a sort of grandfather of American democracy. But, if the world were to do no better than he did, — what with his Madame de Warrens, and his putting his children out to be supported at the public expense, — it would be a wretched state of things. If a philosopher should arise who could show how these incompatible things might be reconciled, he would do the greatest service done for mankind since the Christian era. If he shows the happiness and the virtue of all men to be attainable by the Christian doctrine, so much the better for the doctrine, and the political economists will go under. But the welfare of the race is of greater moment than any doctrine. That welfare will be kept in view; it cannot be otherwise; and the doctrine that does not accord with it will go under. — To resume for a moment: I think the philosophers of the free states must show a little clearer light ahead. All is confusion now. There are thinking men here who would act if they could; but what can be done to move this unreasoning, dogmatic, excitable people? One man like myself is like one drop in a raging ocean. I don't see what *I* could do, nor how any action of mine could affect the general result. I shall take care while I live, or at my death, that the evil shall not be greater for anything I have done or neglected."

"You were speaking of the peculiar traits of the Kentucky people. As they are descendants of Virginians, and both are of the same stock as the people of New England, I have been puzzled at the marked difference in their mental traits and their habits of life."

"You are a Yankee, and I am a Frenchman, and there's

nobody to listen; so we can talk of these people as they appear to us. It isn't wholly slavery that has caused the diversity, but that has been the principal influence. The Yankees were all Roundheads, the Virginians favored the principles and customs of the Cavaliers. The religion of the Puritans was a personal and a paramount matter. The Virginian was less under restraint, and lived a freer and often a more dissolute life. Devotion and self-abasement, with inevitable hypocrisy following, — always like sun and shadow, — prevailed at the north; personal freedom, self-assertion, and a jealous sense of honor, at the south. In one place, a man lived only for the state, and the church, its bulwark; in the other, the state, and what church there was, existed for him. In one region men gathered in towns, and near the sea, from which they got their living; in the other, the population was scattered over larger spaces, on fertile lands. The one section was learned in books, the other in men. The people of the colder climate lived much within doors, and so were under mutual restraint; those in a warmer locality were much abroad, and acquired individuality, and so an impatience of rules and of contradiction. Add to these diverse influences the deep and lasting effect of mastership on the southern side, and you will see how the two sharply contrasting characters have been produced. The Yankee is obedient to law; the Virginian means to be a law unto himself. If a Yankee is maligned, he will tell you that he means to live so that men shall not believe the evil of him. If it is a Virginian who is maligned, he won't rest easy until the maligner doesn't live at all, and then people may believe about him what they like. The use of knives, pistols, and rifles about here is really shocking."

"But I fancy the true first families of Virginia didn't come out here. For there are few who have those

profuse ways of living, or are noted for an indiscriminate hospitality. Not that there is not a great deal of generous good feeling, but it has seemed to me (in collecting tuition bills, for instance) that the weathiest men are as ready to make a dollar, or to save a dollar, as any Yankees I ever knew."

"You must know that *money* is scarce here; but if you were hungry, the same man who tried to cut your bill down would give you a pig or a turkey without a thought. But there's less of the old 'high tone' than formerly, I really think. Perhaps it's owing to the coming in of so many thrifty Dutchmen. Or, it may be, the old blood has been running out — so much of it gone into the veins of coachmen and barbers. These old fellows, like Mr. Wyndham's father, and the grandfather of our young friend Beauchamp, with their ruffled shirts and lordly ways, were men of force, and men who would have made a mark anywhere. You may have a better *average* in Massachusetts, — there is the word I hate, — but the best sort of a Kentuckian, after he has been long enough at the seat of government to receive the education he couldn't get at home, becomes a powerful man for any public service. His individuality comes in, and his self-reliance, his courage, his strong will. You have had a great many better *scholars* than Henry Clay — men who could teach him classics, history, finance, as if he were a school-boy; but as a controller of men and measures, as a power in the government, he distanced them all."

"The case of Clay was rather a brilliant exception. It will be a long while before another man will wield a similar influence, even if he should have far superior abilities. It is not that great men are not born, but the general average is so much higher. In a country of

mountains you are less impressed by the height of particular peaks. Besides, I think that 'oratory' has declined in estimation; the term 'oration' has come to convey an undertone of sarcasm. Statesmen *debate*; they collect facts and statistics, and make their appeals to reason. 'Oratory' won't change a single vote. The North Carolina county of Buncombe has given a name to these showy pretences; and it will go into the dictionaries and note-books as a comic illustration of the political discussions of our time."

"The hardest strain upon the republic is yet to come," said Mr. Pierrepont. "God only knows how the slavery question is to be settled; but no change in policy will be adopted without a severe struggle. If the south is worsted, it will have the terrible problem of the status of the negroes to solve, and it will be a tumultuous time for a generation. The danger to the north in the event of success, or of defeat either, will arise from its wealth. The accumulations at the commercial centres are to make them enormously rich. Money is a power, and never a quiescent one. Your rich men will put themselves into office, or they will send their paid attorneys to legislate for them. They will so touch the subtle springs of finance as to make every affair of state serve their personal advantage. They will make corruption honorable, and bribery a fine art. It is now a mark of decency and a badge of distinction for a public man to be poor. Every one knows that a public man can't be rich honestly; but you will live to see congressmen going to the capital carrying travelling-bags, and returning home with wagon loads of trunks, and with stocks and bonds that will enable them to snap their fingers at constituents."

"It is the old story of republics," said Mr. Howard. "They are founded by valor, reared by industry, with

frugality and equal laws. Wealth follows, then corruption, then the public conscience is debauched, faith is lost, and justice is thrust out. Then the general rottenness is shaken by the coming of a new Cæsar, and an empire is welcomed because liberty had already been lost, and anything is better than anarchy. However, let us hope this is far away."

"Well, we have got over our road without thinking of mud, water, or stones. Here is the gate, and we will alight from our horses and hobby-horses, and go in to see our friend Beauchamp. Not a word of the sale to him."

"Your caution, I am afraid, is unnecessary. Poor fellow, he has symptoms of fever, and he may be raving. Mr. Ralph Beauchamp is here, and we can talk with him, if not with his nephew."

CHAPTER XXV.

LETTERS.

From Squire Hamilton to Miss Shelburne.

— —, January, —, 184—.

MY DEAR NIECE: I promised, when you left, that I would write to you if anything of importance happened; and I now sit down to give you an account of a fatal and *murderous* affray, in which my late pupil, Beauchamp Russell, was a principal actor. A coloured girl, that once belonged to his father's estate, and was to be sold for debt, escaped from custody, and kept out of sight. She was young, nearly white, and, *they say*, very handsome — though I don't like to use a word for a wench that only belongs to a lady. Mr. Wyndham was to have the price she fetched, and he, of course, was anxious to recover his property. He had information that she was hid by the Russells, and so he got a warrant, and had the sheriff go with a lawful *posse* to search the house. As some of them came nigh, Master Beauchamp and *his friend*, the Yankee schoolmaster, fired at them, one or both. One man they shot dead, another had a bullet through his arm, and the third was hit in the body, and won't live long. The schoolmaster got a wound on the side of his face, and Beauchamp was knocked over by a ball hitting him in the forehead. He has been operated on, but he has no sense, I'm told, and is likely to go off with brain fever. But the worst is to come; and some folks think if the

young man had been killed outright, it would have been quite as well. The negro wench *was* in the house, and was hid in Beauchamp's chamber. She had been there for a month or two. It has most killed his mother, who has done nothing but take on ever since. The wench was sold yesterday, for a great price, to a southerner, and I saw her laughing when she was bid off. She is a pert, bold baggage. This talk is *all through the county*, and if the young man recovers — as I hope he may — he'll find it more comfortable to go off and live with his northern friends, where colour is no objection. I dare say people may be civil to him, but he can't ever get over this. It's too open and shameful. The Yankee is about the only man that stands up for him. This is the consequence of hearing to abolitionists, of which I warned him long ago. I am sorry so likely a young man should have so *completely* flung himself away.

I bought a little brother of this girl Sally, named Tim. He's the peartest and liveliest little monkey I ever saw. He's a little too yallow, but he may be a good boy, if he hasn't got any *notions* in his head.

My respects to your uncle Shelburne.

Your affectionate uncle,

JNO. HAMILTON.

From Miss Betty Hamilton to the same.

— —, January, 184—.

MY DEAR COUSIN: As I know pa has written to you, he has most likely told you of the *dreadful* shooting Affair. It seems like there's no end of fights, and it most makes me tremble to have county court come, for somebody gets drunk and shoots somebody, or takes out a knife and cuts their faces. pa thinks this will go *hard* with Beecham, for if he gets well, he and the schoolmaster will have to stand trial; and pa says *somebody* must be

made examples of. They had a doctor from Louisville for Beecham, and his uncle paid fifty dollars for cutting a peace out of his head. He'll look like a *fright*. — not much mater, for folks that fight must expect to care scars. Little Tim is a nice and handy boy. Im glad pa bought a boy, for we don't want those forward girls, specially the yallow ones with red cheeks. I *did* think better of Beecham. It's too bad. He has no sister to be shamed for his behaviour, though his mother is quite *broke down*, and sees nobody. I am sorry for her. Of course he'll go off, for Ladies wont bemean themselves to keep his company here. My pickels got froze, and I must have new vinegar for em. I have to lock up my sweets now Tim's come. Malvina has a sweet pretty tidy most worked for you. Mr. Adams called and asked after you. I wish Beecham had *him* for a friend. Pa says *he's* a man of substance and character. Brother Grimes is to preach here next Sunday, and I hope he'll show what the *ablish-onists* are, and warn the young men from the error of there ways.

Your affectionate

BETTIE.

The Postscript of a Letter from Harrison Adams to the same.

P. S. I resume my pen barely to allude to the, unfortunate occurrence with which the usually quiet air of the county is ringing. I shall not repeat the shocking details of the tragedy, nor pause to drop a tear over the slain, nor to mourn for the afflicted families of the participants. The chief point of interest centres in a young man whom you know, and whom I once called friend, but who now has fallen 'as low as the fiends.' It shows how innocent a face Vice may wear, and how long it may hold its brazen forehead aloft. It also shows the far-reaching consequences of false principles, and the debasing tenden-

cies of philosophical speculation. A *thought* in time becomes incarnate in an *act*. Truly,

"Nemo repente turpissimus fuit."

Against the insidious inroads of irreligious scepticism, and the baneful teachings of modern infidelity, I, for one, mean to maintain a firm, a decided stand. The constitution, and the religion of the Bible, are my chart and compass.

H. A.

Love is, a plant whose growth and flowering are almost always contrary to theory, and apt to dash prediction with some kind of surprise. A floating wisp of thistle-down may transport its seeds most unexpectedly, and again, after the most careful planting and assiduous attention, they may fail to germinate. It sometimes seeks support like a vine, and sometimes is strong in itself like an oak. It may die in rich, garden soil, or may grow green, like the house leek, on air. It is sometimes mistaken for an odorless weed, and gets a vigorous growth before it is known; sometimes it languishes under the most favorable conditions; and again its seeds may lie long in darkness, and germinate after they are supposed to be dead.

Miss Shelburne had often questioned herself, without coming to any absolute conclusion. She had received so much attention from girlhood, that it was hardly to be expected that any man, even the most brilliant and captivating, could awaken in her heart the sudden and tumultuous feeling which is called love at first sight. Under the influences that had surrounded her, she had been obliged to consider offers, and to make comparisons, from which in time she had learned that *all* the excellences would never be found united in any one suitor. She was

in this state of mind when she visited Barry County, and there had met Beauchamp Russell. He was by far the handsomest young man she had seen. His stature and carriage would have made him conspicuous in any assembly. His face was full of fresh color, and the exuberant life of his nature was evident in every look and motion. He was strong, and tender too; and his intellectual powers, though not matured, were acute and vigorous. The only drawback, as she thought, was the hesitation, not born of timidity, but of thoughtfulness, and the delicate reserve, which at times stood in the way of prompt action. Plainly, he had not lived so much in the woods and fields for nought. He had become a hearty lover of nature while he had been developing his bodily powers. Now that he had become a student, he had brought to his books the most perfect health, and the unwasted activity of nervous force. Altogether, he appeared to her to be nearly a complete, manly character. Nor did she think much about his adverse fortune. She was not tempted by wealth. But she was ambitious; and the man of her choice must not only be in himself all that she desired, but he must challenge the admiration of the world as well. He must be a man to whom she would feel compelled to look up. It was not enough that her wealth would be sufficient to relieve him from the necessity of labor. She could not admire, and felt that she could not love, a man who was to be lifted up by any advantages which her fortune or her family influence could give him. She had seen the awakening of ambition in our hero, and had, rather hastily she feared, told him she loved him; — rather hastily, because she felt now that her love was based upon what he promised to be, and not what he then was. So she had returned home thoughtful and uncommunicative. She went to the

neighborhood parties, where everybody was gracious to her as before, but this momentous question was scarcely ever out of mind: Do I love Beauchamp Russell? The solution was all in all to her, and she did not feel sure about it. If the plant she was secretly tending was sprung from the true seed, it had a slow and unpromising growth. Daily she watched over it, and let in the sunlight upon it; but, like many in-door nurslings, its leaves lacked color and vitality. Would it survive through the years that must pass, until it should have vigor to withstand the vicissitudes of the outer world? She had depended much upon the judgment of her uncle, John Hamilton, and she had not ventured to tell him that she had given a poor law-student encouragement. The views and plans of her uncle Shelburne she knew very well. Her hope had been that Beauchamp would soon display such signal ability, and achieve such high professional distinction, as would amply vindicate her choice when she made it known. Till then, she felt that she must keep it secret. His memory was still tender to her; every word he had uttered, every look of intelligence and of sympathetic feeling, she had treasured in her heart.

Such was the situation when the letters arrived with which this chapter began. She was at her uncle's house, and she was expected that evening to go out with her cousins to a dancing party. The letters were handed to her by a servant in her room, and she read them in the order we have given. There was a long pause, however, after the first was read. The blunt and straightforward narrative of her uncle, if accepted as literal truth, left nothing for the imagination to fill up, nor, as it seemed, any chance for explanation or hope of mistake. She knew her uncle was not inclined to place a high estimate on Beauchamp's stability of character, but she did not think

him so far unfriendly as to misrepresent facts or suggest false and scandalous inferences. The letter was a crushing, terrible blow — a blow that completely stunned her. She sat a long time holding it in her hand, and the fatal intelligence it conveyed seemed to travel on every nerve, giving such a sense of torture as she had never thought possible. It was such grief as the heart seldom feels more than once in a lifetime. Had the letter announced his death, she thought her sorrow would have been less. Death, even in a disgraceful brawl, was better than the dishonor that followed. She could have mourned her hero dead, even proudly, but she could only cover and suppress her regret for his infamous fall. Then her old pride came up, and she resolved that she would shake off the unworthy remembrance, and put under foot every vestige of the love she had cherished.

The letter from Bettie confirmed her in the resolution she had formed. Yes, the sacrifice should be made. The name, and the memory also, should be obliterated; the inner shrine should have no place for either. *She* was pure as snow, and her sense of delicacy was as much shocked as her pride. She would quietly uproot the tender plant she had cherished, and fling it away.

The letter from Mr. Adams was a diplomatic attempt to open a correspondence on a subject which he declared interested him greatly, and he hoped that under her favor he might be allowed to renew his protestations of love. She tore the sheet into shreds, and put them into the waste-basket. She sent word to her cousins that she was ill, and must be excused from going out that evening. She was indeed ill, and the change in her face would have excited grave apprehensions in the family, if she had shown herself; but she kept her room. For hours she meditated, sometimes with dry and reddened eyes,

and sometimes with sad and tearful ones. In those hours she seemed to have lived years. Resolution built, and as often fond Regret destroyed. Memory recalled sweet pictures, and then self-asserting Pride came and blurred them. The struggle cost her dear; but in the end her mind settled into that calmness which is more sad than a fresh sorrow. She had borne the stroke, and was not wholly prostrated, — as the tree loses its branch, or the wounded soldier his limb. When she felt sufficiently composed to trust her brain to think, and her hand to write, she sat down and penned these letters.

From Adelaide Shelburne to Madame Loewenthal, at River-cliff, New York.

MY BEST-BELOVED FRIEND: You once said to me, when you were about leaving our school to be married, that the time might come when an impulse would lead me to write to you; and that, if my heart ever felt such a prompting, to yield to it, and write as to my sister. You were prophetic, or perhaps it was only your fine insight into my character and needs; for I now feel drawn irresistibly to renew the intimacy, and to ask a sister's love. I think I see your dear, calm face, and your mild eyes behind those gold-rimmed glasses that used to awe me so much when I first became your pupil. I wonder if household cares have at all deepened the thoughtful lines! I don't believe it. Your forehead is like pure marble yet, and I can bring to mind the delicate network of veins in your temples. You see I remember you well, and I should not need one of the new sun-pictures (daguerreotypes I mean) to recall any feature or expression.

Well, my dear schoolmistress (for, though you are married now, you will always be to me only Miss Eleanor Sidney, the master's head assistant), I am thinking of

paying you a visit. I heard you were living in a charming country house on the Hudson; and I *know*, if that is so, there will surely be one room in it for your old pupil. I am rather tired of the monotony here, — the monotony of constant visits, and dinners, and dances, — and I long for the healthful exhilaration which I always felt in your society. I want to take up some branches of literature, and read under your advice. I should like to practise music enough to keep the little hold of it I have; and, as the city is so near, I could easily have the advantage of lessons and of the best concerts.

Pray assure your good husband that I am not quite the hoiden I was when you first knew me, and that I hope I shall fall into your ways of life so completely, that he and you will soon think I am a natural and necessary part of the family. But if it is not entirely, *perfectly* convenient for you to receive me in your own house, will you be so kind as to take the trouble to find me a suitable place? The style of living will not be so important as being near you.

You know probably that I am just of age, and am not *obliged* to consult any one about my movements. But my own house is now shut up for a time, and most of my servants are hired out. My uncle and family, with whom I am staying, will be sorry to lose me (so I flatter myself), but they will easily be persuaded that it is best for me to take the trip; and I promise myself the greatest pleasure in being with you again, as well as the greatest benefit from the daily instruction I shall receive.

Is there a little Loewenthal? I smile to think of my prim instructor (who was the *least little bit* of a blue-stocking — was she not?) with a chubby boy or girl on her knee, and covering the roly-poly cheeks with kisses, while she talks baby-talk in German!

I shall hope to receive an early answer; and meanwhile I shall begin the few necessary preparations, so as to be ready to start. I presume my cousin, a young gentleman of twenty-four, will accompany me to New York.

With grateful recollections, I remain,

Your affectionate pupil,

ADELAIDE SHELburnE.

From the Same to John Hamilton, Esq.

MY DEAR UNCLE JOHN: The letter you were so kind as to send me was a great surprise, for I had supposed Mr. Russell was not a man to engage in such a desperate fight, nor to secrete a runaway servant in his house. In his conversation he always seemed to show a high sense of honor, and it is hard to account for such a difference between profession and practice. I hope he will recover from his injury; and *when he does*, I wish you would deliver to him the letter which I now enclose, but without making any conversation with him or with any one about it. If he should die, will you please send it back to me by mail, with the seal unbroken?

I am soon going to visit a former teacher of mine, who is married and lives near the city of New York; and I may stay for some months. Before I start I will send you my address. Please give my love to my cousins, and accept for yourself my best wishes, and my gratitude for all your kindness.

Your affectionate niece,

ADELAIDE SHELburnE.

If uncle John looked sharply through clear spectacles when he read this, he must have seen that in some places the paper was blistered with tear-drops; although it was

a second copy that he received. The first draft was blotted and badly written. It seemed that her pen would *not* write the words, *If he should die*, at all; and there were traces of hesitation and tremulousness elsewhere. When it was copied, it looked so formal, and so unlike her usual hand, that she laid it aside, and after a time copied it again. But certain words (like Colonel Newcomb's *Adsum*) make us cry whenever we read them; and for her, the phrase, *If he should die*, was one that could not be got over. Tears started whenever she came to write it. But the marks on the copy were pressed out, and it was finally sent to the post-office.

She had another duty to perform that was not painful like that of writing to her uncle, but which cost her much anxiety, and was only done with great reluctance and after several days' delay. Mr. Miles Robertson, the gentleman who had written to her while she was visiting in Barry County (a portion of whose letter was read to Squire Hamilton), had several times called on her, and continued to press his suit. She felt that something was due to a man of such high character and evident sincerity. Courtesy was due, and respect, but, most of all, truth. But how the truth could be told gave her pause. She must decline his offer; she could not do otherwise. But it was due to him to say that she did so with entire respect for him. In doing this, she knew she went against the strongly expressed wishes of her uncle Shelburne, who had many times said that Miles Robertson was a man of whose love any girl in Kentucky ought to be proud.

Adelaide Shelburne to Miles Robertson.

DEAR SIR: I hope I am sufficiently grateful for the honor you have done me in making an offer of marriage,

and I feel that I am quite unworthy of the admiration you have been pleased to express. But the greatest wrong I could do to an honorable man would be to accept his love and give him my hand, unless my whole heart went with it. I can say most sincerely, that I have never seen any qualities in you that do not call for my highest regard. You seem to me to be capable of a lasting attachment, and formed for the happiness of domestic life. If love always followed reason, I could not ask for more. But we do not and cannot control our affections, and I must tell you that I do not feel for you the love I ought to bear to the one who is to be my husband.

Whatever pain this frankness may cause you, it is certainly better for us both that there should be no doubt upon a question that concerns our whole lives.

With best wishes, and assurances of lasting regard,

I am faithfully your friend,

ADELAIDE SHELburne.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A WITNESS CHANGES HIS TESTIMONY.

WHEN the first dangerous symptoms had subsided, Jacob Van Holm might have appeared, to unprofessional observers, to be in a comfortable state of convalescence. Comfortable he was, but not convalescent, and never would be. The injury to his lung had brought on consumption, with its slow but sure decay. He went about the house, and in pleasant weather went out doors; but he knew that he was stricken fatally, and that his days in this world were numbered. He had received no visits except from the doctor and Father Hennequin. From the one he had implored to know the worst of his case, and from the other he had asked what was to be done for the good of his soul during the time that should be left him. Father Hennequin had set before him his duty with unsparing plainness of speech. He had explored all the refuges of deceit, and had swept away every pretence. The task was hard, but not to be put off. Nothing less than full reparation would be accepted. Repentance as a state of mind was, doubtless, commendable, but its actual fruits only would satisfy the demands of divine justice, and entitle the sinner to pardon. To make this reparation it was necessary that Jacob should take his wife Katrina into his confidence, and reveal to her the guilty secrets of his life. The bitterest humiliation for a man is self-humiliation, and next is his humili-

tion before his wife. After a man has once accused himself, in the privacy of his home, there is nothing more to be dreaded. This Jacob Van Holm had done, and like a broken-hearted man had sobbed out his self-condemnation to her. But, in truth, it was not wholly unsuspected, for his sudden increase in wealth had been a matter of anxious thought to her years before; and there were many things in his character, and many events in his life, which she could not reconcile with perfect integrity on his part. These were sorrowful days to the pair. There was no repose for the present, no brightness in the future, for either. Death was waiting for one, and shame for both. Jacob moaned, and moved about or sank into his corner by the fire, like one bereft of hope; and the solitary, childless Katrina knew that she was soon to be a widow, possibly destitute, without friends, and with no claim to the respect that is due to virtuous age. It had taken a long time to bring Jacob to the point of making the confession, and stripping himself and his wife of their property to atone for the crime.

It was a few weeks after Father Hennequin had passed the first day with the penitent, and he was now with Dr. Baird, in the sitting-room, waiting for the coming of Mr. Ralph Beauchamp, Mr. Heady the clerk, and a county magistrate who had been sent for.

The doctor noticed Van Holm's agitation, and said, "Mr. Van Holm, you feel pretty comfortable to-day — don't you? Let me caution you. Be calm, and don't become the least excited. Answer only such questions as may be asked you until the statement has been reduced to writing; and then, before you sign it, you can make such corrections and additions as you think best."

Father Hennequin added a word of counsel: —

"You will feel relieved the moment this is done. It

will take a great load off your mind, and make you happier even for this world. And, as you have not long to live, your land and your money are of small consequence. As for your wife, we will see to it, in any arrangement that may be made about your property, that she is comfortably provided for. Don't let the thought of her being in want prevent your telling the whole truth; for she will not be allowed to suffer."

Neither Van Holm nor his wife made audible reply. Both had passed the stage when words could express their feelings, and both sighed in token of a sorrowful resignation.

The persons who had been summoned soon arrived, and all were seated at a table, Mr. Heady officiating as scribe. Before the nature of the statement was made known, the magistrate was asked to satisfy himself that the witness was of sound mind, and in full possession of his faculties. The clerk then produced a copy of the record, and the papers in the two cases, of which the reader has been informed. These were shown. Van Holm then proceeded to depose that, in a suit brought by Mr. Wyndham and his brother against Randolph Russell, he had knowingly and wilfully sworn falsely in relation to a boundary line; and, in consequence, Mr. Wyndham obtained possession of a tract of land that was rightfully a part of the Russell estate; that he had been persuaded to do this by Mr. Wyndham with the promise that he (Van Holm) might purchase it, after Mr. Wyndham got possession, at a certain sum, which was much less than its value; that he did purchase the land at the price named, and had ever since lived on it. This statement was written out with due particularity, and was then signed and sworn to by Van Holm, and attested by the others.

A second deposition was then written out, in which Van Holm stated that, in a certain other suit between the same parties, a paper was exhibited in court, and shown to the jury, purporting to be signed by Isham Russell, with his (Van Holm's) name upon it as an attesting witness; that he had at the trial sworn positively to seeing Isham Russell sign that paper; but that the paper was in fact written long after Isham Russell's death; and that the signature to it was a forgery, known to be such by Mr. Wyndham, who had procured it to be done. This was also signed and sworn to, and then attested.

Van Holm then said he wished to give a deed of the farm to Beauchamp Russell, in order to repair the injury done in the first-named case, and to give him what personal property he had, to make up, as far as it would, the loss which the Russell family sustained by the other suit.

Here Mr. Beauchamp interposed:—

"We don't agree to this, Mr. Van Holm. You and Mr. Wyndham made about an even thing of it in the land suit, and if you give back one half, Mr. Wyndham should the other. In the case about the settlement with Isham Russell, you don't seem to have had any advantage. It was wholly Wyndham's. He must make up that himself."

"But he won't do it," said Van Holm, feebly.

"Let me have the papers, and you see if he don't. He is not in *immediate* danger—is he?" he asked, in an undertone, of the doctor. "He'll live a week—won't he?"

"Yes," said the doctor, "a month; perhaps two, or even more. But he'll be growing weaker every day, and there is no time to be lost."

"My nephew is very sick," said Mr. Beauchamp, "but I don't reckon he's going to die yet, and I shall act for

him, like I was sure he was going to live. If you set a day for Mr. Wyndham to come here and help arrange this little matter in a friendly way, I will engage he'll be on hand. I think he'll do a'most anything to oblige us, rather than be obstinate."

"Do you consent that Mr. Beauchamp may take these two depositions of yours, Mr. Van Holm?" asked the magistrate. Jacob nodded, and then looked on the floor as he had been doing.

One by one the visitors left the house, after promising faithfully that they would on no account mention what had happened. This Mr. Beauchamp had earnestly enjoined, as he feared his plans might be thwarted unless he were the first to convey the intelligence to Mr. Wyndham. Father Hennequin remained and talked with Van Holm and his wife for a while, until they had become calm, and then he too rode away towards Beech Knoll.

Mr. Ralph Beauchamp was not a man to go to sleep with the documents he had in his pocket, and after he had mounted his horse he rode into town, hoping he might see Mr. Wyndham; but he was not successful. There was still time to ride out and see him before nightfall. The matter he had undertaken pressed heavily on his mind, and momentarily the impulse grew stronger to try the effect of the news. He had thought at first he would go soon, or in a few days, and would act with deliberation. Nothing would be gained by precipitancy. But, as he rode along, the thought of the uncertain tenure of Van Holm's life came to him vividly. Then he reflected that the confession, in the nature of things, would hardly be kept secret; and its premature disclosure might ruin everything. For, if Wyndham had a hint of it, he would go to Van Holm at once; and the struggle between the powerful, imperious man who had

so much at stake, and the feeble and vacillating wretch who was trying to get out of his toils, would be likely to end in only one way. This thought decided him. The blow must be struck at once. He rode on rapidly, and was turning the matter over in his mind, and considering how he could make the demonstration most effectively, when he saw Mr. Wyndham riding leisurely along the road. He spurred on and overtook him. Mr. Wyndham was quite surprised; for Ralph Beauchamp had always avoided him in a manner that was plainly, and often offensively, marked. Mr. Wyndham drew his breath a little faster, set his jaw firmly, and made a curt answer to the "Howdy, neighbor!" Mr. Beauchamp, not appearing to notice the incivility, rode along beside him, and talked upon indifferent matters to gain time. The other chafed, and would have been glad of an excuse to ride away, or to give freer vent to his rising impatience. But the man with an object in view was imperturbable, and was mentally coiling the line, like the cool boatswain before he launches the harpoon. Mr. Wyndham soon gave signs of being annoyed; his dark face began to whiten so as to show the deep color of the roots of his beard; and the movements of his nostrils were ominous of coming wrath. The other paced along composedly, now and then dropping a word, and watching the excited looks of his companion. At last Mr. Wyndham could bear it no longer, and he spoke in a tone of scarcely suppressed anger:—

"Mr. Beauchamp, no road is wide enough for you and me to ride side by side. Unless you have some particular business with me, I'll thank you to ride on, or allow me to do so."

"Mr. Wyndham, this is a very fair road, just wide enough for our two horses, and I have something particu-

lar to say to you. And while we are out of ear-shot I can talk more freely."

"You can speak for yourself about being out of ear-shot. I have no business with you that makes privacy necessary or desirable."

"I was considering," said Mr. Beauchamp, with a queer, drawling deliberateness, "whether I should take up with Jacob Van Holm's offer to-day, and I should like to get your advice."

"What have I to do with you and Van Holm? Do you take me for a fool, that you pretend to ask my advice?"

"You'd better hear what his offer was. He wanted to give a deed of his farm to my nephew, Beauchamp Russell."

"Well, he has no children, and he might as well do that as give it to his church."

"But I wouldn't allow it until I consulted you; for I said I reckoned if you knew it you'd insist on giving back the purchase money and interest for the benefit of Katrina his wife."

"Sir!" said Mr. Wyndham, checking his horse, "what do you mean?"

Mr. Beauchamp checked his horse at the same time, and kept his relative position, and then coolly said, "I mean, sir, that the money you had from Van Holm is the fruit of perjury. The land belongs to my nephew in the sight of God. Van Holm found he couldn't carry his crime with him to the judgment, where he is bound to go, and wants to clear his soul. You have part of the proceeds, and I thought that fair was fair, and if restitution was to be made it should be done by both of you."

"Do you know who you are talking to? I'll make you eat your words, every one of them, and not in privacy, but on the Court House steps."

"That will be a sight — when it happens; and as you mention the Court House, I will tell you further that I have Van Holm's confession in due form in my pocket, signed, sworn to, and attested. When this is shown to a judge, as it will be, we will see which of us will eat his words."

Mr. Wyndham gave an indescribable sound of rage, and with a terrific oath attempted to draw a pistol. But his antagonist was watchful and ready. All this time, while he had been talking so calmly, he had the butt of his pistol in his hand; and, in a flash, he put the muzzle against the other's breast, saying between his steady, unblenched lips, —

"Drop your hand or I'll fire! by the living Jehovah!"

Mr. Wyndham saw that he was not quick enough, and he sullenly let his hand fall.

"This case is not to be settled by a pistol shot. Even if you were to kill me, like an assassin, the knowledge of Van Holm's perjury, and of your share in it, is in good and trusty keeping. You may as well try to dodge the angel of death."

"You can trump up as much of this stuff as you like; you can't disturb a judgment after so many years. Van Holm's deposition is purely *ex parte*, and a lie besides. You can't get the case re-opened. And, if you did, before you can get it on for trial, your miserable tool will be dead and in hell."

"Listen to me. — And stop fumbling about that pocket! I don't want to kill you, unless you will have it so. — I haven't started on a cold trail. Van Holm has told the truth; I haven't a doubt of it now, if I had before. You show that every word is true by your foolish anger. Now, with this fact to start with, do you suppose I am a man to be bluffed off? You don't know Ralph Beauchamp! I

am going to make this so plain to you that, after you have slept on it, you'll come over to-morrow and bring the money I spoke of; and you'll be as civil as though you came to a wedding. Before you talk about showing fight, just consider a few things. Five witnesses heard the statement, besides Van Holm's wife. It can't be hushed up, Mr. Wyndham — not by fight, surely. Don't flatter yourself that Van Holm is going to die in a hurry; he'll live long enough to fix you. If you say fight, I shall go to the nearest judge — to every judge, if necessary — and get a commission to take the statement over again, giving you notice. You can't shake him a hair. I won't let a day pass without action, and I'll spend all I'm worth. If there isn't law, by the Eternal, we'll make law. I'll go to the governor, to the legislature, and summon the power of the whole state to have justice done. How will you stand? You won't dare go to town for fear of being mobbed. The whole state shall ring with it. How will your grand brothers and relatives like it? You will be beaten, a hundred times beaten. And you'll be the most damnably blackened man that ever was kicked out of a court of justice. All this to keep the few thousand dollars that you wronged my brother-in-law out of! It won't pay, Mr. Wyndham. Now, if you are reasonable, you'll meet me to-morrow at Van Holm's, say at twelve o'clock. I've said my say. And as you were so polite just now as to hint that the road was too narrow for two, I'll be obleeged if you'll ride on, and keep straight ahead until you get out of sight. You know that *I* won't shoot a man in the back."

The expression of Mr. Wyndham's face was beyond description. His eyes glowed like coals, and the waxen color of his skin looked like death. What a fiendish look it was! He gave but one malignant glance, and rode on.

As a mark of friendly attention Mr. Beauchamp remained without moving, and with his pistol in his hand, until the other had gone a hundred yards. He then wheeled about and rode through town to Beech Knoll. There, quite unexpectedly, he found Father Hennequin, and he at once asked him if he would not, for a sufficient reason, make a sacrifice of his comfort and pleasant society for the night, and return to Van Holm's. Father Hennequin looked inquiringly. "I merely want to guard against a contingency," said Mr. Beauchamp; "and I know if you are there you will not allow any one, — any *improper* person, — to have conversation with the sick man, whether by night or day, until I can come and relieve you."

The hint was sufficient. The good father did not ask a question, but grasped Mr. Beauchamp's hand and returned to Van Holm's. When he reached the house he gave instructions to Mrs. Van Holm, and to the servants, and seated himself with the cheerless couple for the evening.

Mr. Beauchamp inquired after his nephew, chatted in a light and humorous strain with Mr. Howard, and then sat down to tea with his sister. Beauchamp was in a high fever and constantly delirious. His mother and Mr. Howard alternated in taking care of him.

It was not a favorable time for the late sessions of which the old bachelor was fond, for Mr. Howard, when not wanted in the sick room, took what time he could for rest. At an early hour a few blankets were spread on the sitting-room floor, and Mr. Beauchamp lay down, to meditate rather than to sleep.

In the morning the much-planning uncle started off pretty early, and rode over to Van Holm's; and, after satisfying himself that the coast was clear, he put his horse in the stable, and went into the house. Then he sat down to wait, and meanwhile read the last Journal, an old almanac,

a patent-medicine pamphlet, and a book of devotion. He could have read the doings of a genealogical society rather than be idle. He was one of those active people who must be doing something, or reading something, because an hour of inaction was the severest penance. He passed this time in the morning in a room by himself, thinking it best that only Father Hennequin should be with Van Holm.

About eleven o'clock Mr. Beauchamp heard a horse's steps, and looking out of his window, that commanded a view of the entrance to the house, he saw it was Mr. Wyndham coming. His conjecture proved true. He went into the wide entry, and when the door opened, he saw with intense satisfaction how suddenly the visitor's countenance fell.

"I rather *thought* you'd come early," said Mr. Beauchamp. "You meant to get the start — didn't you? You were afraid you might keep me waiting! Father Hennequin is with Mr. Van Holm. Shall we go in together?"

Mr. Wyndham did not make a very connected answer, but moved towards the door of the room where Van Holm was. Mr. Beauchamp stepped forward, opened the door, and ushered him in. Van Holm trembled, but Father Hennequin, who was by him, put a firm hand on his shoulder.

Mr. Wyndham spoke scarcely a word before he motioned to Mrs. Van Holm to come near. Taking out a bag from his overcoat pocket, he said to her, "I have heard that your husband is thinking of giving away his estate here, and as he has always been an excellent friend to me, I don't feel like allowing you to be left so, and I have brought over a small sum which I beg you to accept."

"Very kind of you," said Mr. Beauchamp, speaking for Mrs. Van Holm, who hesitated and looked quite puzzled. "Let me count it. Shall I, Mrs. Van Holm?"

Hardly understanding this theatrical proceeding, Mrs. Van Holm looked from the one to the other. Mr. Beauchamp took the bag from her hand, and counted the money on the table. The new coin, from the sale of Harrison and Sally, made a part of the sum. The amount was about what Mr. Beauchamp had calculated. "Now, Mr. Wyndham, pray be seated. Mr. Van Holm, if you please, I will now write the deed you spoke of yesterday."

He sat down and wrote a brief but comprehensive instrument, — for he was lawyer enough to know that the less verbiage the stronger the writing, — and after a word of explanation Mr. and Mrs. Van Holm signed it, and Father Hennequin and Mr. Beauchamp attested it. Mr. Van Holm then delivered it into the uncle's keeping for the nephew. Mr. Wyndham said, when this was done, he didn't see the need of his waiting to see the ceremony.

"One thing at a time," said Mr. Beauchamp. "There is another matter, Mr. Wyndham; and, now that the title to the land is settled fairly, as friends should settle, I want you to do one thing more."

"I haven't come here to be mocked —"

"Not at all. Don't speak in such a way. You'll agitate our sick friend. He feels much better now the burden is off his mind, and so will you. You have a much heavier one to get rid of. Mr. Van Holm has made a *second* deposition. It seems that he was induced to state in court that a paper of your making was older than it really was, and was signed by Isham Russell. He now confesses that error. He asks leave to change his testimony."

"You have laid your plans to rob me."

"No, sir; it is restitution we are looking for — the robbery was done some years ago. You got a judgment in that case for above twenty thousand dollars and long

arrears of interest. This you have wrung, drop by drop, out of Randolph's heart, I might say. It must be paid back, dollar for dollar, with interest, to his son. — You are astonished, and you wonder I didn't mention it yesterday. The dentist only draws one tooth at a time, and generally the easy one first. I won't press you. You can let me know before the day is out; if you don't, a messenger will start to Frankfort, where the judges now are. When I have your answer, you can have ten days — can't he, Father Hennequin? — to make your payment, or to give security for the part you need time on. It comes to a little over forty thousand now. We won't keep you longer this morning. You may wish to consult counsel. I shall expect your answer at Beech Knoll. Father Hennequin will stay here with Mr. Van Holm until you make up your mind."

Mr. Wyndham saw himself completely circumvented. Father Hennequin was in command, and he knew he could not get access to Van Holm. Mr. Beauchamp was cool, wary, and merciless. To pay was ruinous, to refuse was dangerous. He thought it better to temporize. He said that so large a demand, made so unexpectedly, and in a somewhat peremptory manner, ought to have a little consideration. He *would* go to town and consult a friend, not counsel, for he did not require any; and Mr. Beauchamp should presently hear from him.

As soon as he had gone, Mr. Beauchamp took Father Hennequin aside, and said, "The man means mischief. He is going to set a back fire. Probably he will make a charge of conspiracy. Let us see; there is no magistrate in town except our friend who took the deposition, and of course *he* won't grant a warrant. The nearest one for his purpose is Squire Kinchelow. It will take two or three hours for him to get there and back. A great deal can

be done in two hours. I will ride over to Beech Knoll, and attend to a matter. If there is any trouble here, let Mrs. Van Holm hang out a white sheet from a front upper window, and I'll return."

Arrived at Beech Knoll, he asked Mr. Howard to prepare himself to ride to Frankfort, and then sat down to write a petition to the court, and an explanatory letter to the judge of the district. This being done, he gave Howard his instructions.

"This is a matter of moment, or, you know, I wouldn't ask you to go. You will ride Beauchamp's new horse. When you get to town, ask Mr. Heady to take the papers in the two cases, Wyndham vs. Russell, and go with you. If he objects to going in the interest of one party, say to him that *you* are the person that represents the petitioner, and that he is to go as the proper officer to attend upon the judge, — a sort of off-hand *amicus curiæ*, — and as the proper custodian of the papers, which the judge must see to understand the case; for this suit was before his day. If this is stated to him right end foremost, he will go. He has a good heart, and he knows where the right is in this matter. *You* will carry these depositions, and you will not part with them except while the judge reads them. You will state what you know of the case. The land matter is settled. The petition is to have the other case opened and put on the docket, and for a commission to take Van Holm's deposition anew *de bene esse*. You will say that there is a probability of a counter charge of conspiracy, and that speedy action is highly desirable. It is better to have you two go, and that neither of you should have both sets of papers. If the Fleemisters were at large, Tom out of jail and Jack out of —, I should think your best way was to go round, and not strike the Frankfort road for some miles out. But Wyndham has lost the

two best knaves in his pack, and I don't believe you will be troubled. A sharp eye will do no harm, however. By the by, ask Davis to let Heady have Sycorax. Here is money for your expenses. I'll see that Beauchamp does not want for attention. Now, my Yankee friend, be lively! You are cautious naturally; so we leave that part of the advice out. This is an exciting game, and *WE ARE GOING TO WIN.*"

While this hurried preparation was going on, Mrs. Russell looked anxious; but she got a nod from her brother, and waited for an explanation. A lunch was set on the table, and both Howard and Mr. Beauchamp ate heartily. Then Howard, equipped with leggings, saddle-bags, and blankets, started off. When he was gone, Mr. Beauchamp inquired after his nephew, and learned that his condition was without change. He sent for Sylvia, and asked her if she could see Van Holm's house from the kitchen window. She said she could.

"Well, do you keep a sharp lookout, — every minute, mind you! — and if you see anything white hanging out of a front window, you come in and give me a shake."

He filled a small pipe and took a few whiffs, and in a few minutes he leaned back and seemed to sleep. If it was not sleep, it was a sort of half-conscious drowsiness that was almost as soothing.

In about two hours Phillis (who saw everything) noticed a sheet hanging out of a window at Van Holm's, and said, "See, Sylvia, chile. Dere's ste long white robe ober yander. Ste poor ol' man done got to go."

Sylvia was reminded of her duty, and ran in to tell Mr. Beauchamp. He roused himself, gave his head a little shake (to scatter the sleep out of his hair), and got his horse to ride across the field to Van Holm's house.

He found the sheriff there with a warrant for the arrest

of Van Holm, Father Hennequin, and himself. He asked what the charge was, and it was shown him, indorsed on the warrant: Conspiracy to extort money by threatening to accuse of a crime. The officer was soon convinced that he could not take Van Holm into custody in his bodily condition, and he contented himself with asking the other two to ride with him to town.

Mr. Wyndham had made his first counter move.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANOTHER MOVE IN THE GAME.

A LOYSIUS PITTSINGER was not precisely a ticket-of-leave man, but he had his liberty upon certain stringent, and, to him, very disagreeable conditions. He was required to report at the chief's office in Louisville on stated days, and to hold himself ready to go hither and thither upon secret service whenever he should be told. And the service he had to perform was usually as much of a secret to him as to the public; for the truth was, that the officers had not the least confidence in him, and they maintained their power over him solely by fear. On this day, when the sheriff was going into town with the two "conspirators" whom he had arrested, Aloysius came up in the stage from the city. He rode inside, though unwillingly, for he was inclined to be social; but the sturdy little stage-driver would have none of his companionship — "not, if his soul was doggoned, would he have a blamed thief on the box beside him." Aloysius, finding his friendly overtures repelled, wrapped himself in his dignity and his blanket, and kept a proper silence all the way. It was cruel to send him back to the scene of his exploits and of his final humiliation. As he drew near, he saw the guide-post where he had swallowed the three fatal tin dippers of whiskey, and the thought gave him qualms even then. The stage thundered through the bridge, and the horses (pelted with pebbles, of which the

little driver carried a small pailful for use on a grand *entrée*) galloped along the street. Then the familiar faces came to the windows. He knew the pattern of every calico dress, and could have told the style of every gaudy breast-pin. The very air seemed to be full of tongues, and all thrust out in derision. But his heart throbbed most when he passed the house where his Lucy lived, and where she had first taught him to whisper of love. He felt like a ghost that had come back after the funeral rites to the scenes of his mortal life. Was Lucy still single? Did she still think of him? or did she love another? The thought was too painful to be endured.

The stage drove up to the tavern, and Aloysius got out. He was endeavoring to preserve a lofty calmness of manner, and he did not look at any of the faces that were grouped about the door. But Mr. Ralph Beauchamp was there, and at once recognized him. He, with Father Hennequin, had just given bail for their appearance to answer to the charge made against them, and the priest was waiting to ride out to Van Holm's. Mr. Beauchamp in a few words asked his companion to ride on, and not wait for him, as an idea had occurred to him which he thought it desirable to follow.

He advanced to the shrinking Aloysius, who was sitting in a back room, and in a few minutes put him completely at ease. The young man was touched by his affable manner and his not too obtrusive sympathy, and soon turned his heart inside out like a pocket. He showed most sensitiveness on the subject of his arrest, declaring that it arose wholly from an accident. He dwelt upon the indignity he had suffered, and the compulsory intoxication, and strongly asserted his innocence of any intent to pass a bad bill. It was when he could not tell what he did. Truly, he didn't "go to do it." Mr. Beauchamp

accepted his version of the affair, and then directed the conversation to the way out of the difficulty. Fleemister's arrest was spoken of, and Mr. Beauchamp inquired whether the authorities were satisfied to let the matter end there, or whether they meant to make Fleemister expose the next man to *him*. Aloysius said he had an "ideer," but couldn't say for certain; that he was going to see Fleemister, and see what he could do with him.

"Well," said Mr. Beauchamp, "this seems to be your main holt. If you open *his* mouth, you'll do all they want of you, and you can then go to a new country and start fresh."

"Yes; but Fleemister's an ugly dog, and close and sullen. You can't count on *him*. What'll move some men won't faze *him*. I b'lieve you might roast one side of him like a log, and he'd stand it *like* a log."

"There's a mortgage on his place — isn't there?"

"Yes; Wyndham has it."

"I s'pose he'd like to have it clare?"

"No doubt."

"I think I know a man that would lift the mortgage for him, and get him out of jail, too, if he'd be reasonable."

"*That* might fetch him," said Aloysius, musing.

"You've come to see him?"

"Well, ya-as — partly," said Aloysius, not wishing to appear *too* communicative.

"You have an order to see him?"

"Yes; a note to the jailer."

"Suppose you go round, and meet me here after supper. I wouldn't mind something for your travelling expenses, if it all goes right. That's between us, of course."

"Of course," said Aloysius, rubbing his hands.

Mr. Beauchamp then went to Mr. Heady's house, and

there was told (as if he didn't know it) that he had gone to Frankfort on court business.

"Do you keep the key of the Court House?" he asked of Mrs. Heady.

"There is one key here. The sheriff has another. The key of the private office, I heard him say, he has just left with Mr. Davis, who sometimes helps him, and who will stay in my husband's place to-morrow, and until his return."

Mr. Beauchamp thanked her courteously, and went to find Mr. Davis. After a short interview with that mercurial and adventurous young gentleman, it was agreed that they two, with another trusty person, should go to the Court House shortly after nine o'clock, and pass the night. Mr. Davis went to get the key of the outer door, and a supply of provender and tobacco, while Mr. Beauchamp went back to the tavern to keep his appointment with Aloysius. The secret-service agent reported that captivity had produced its usual effect, and that Fleemister was much cast down. He had cautiously made advances, which were met less sullenly than he expected. And the result was that he, Aloysius, was convinced that Fleemister would be ready to "name his friends in the business," if he was sure of being let off, and especially if he could call the little farm his own. This latter condition Aloysius seemed to think was indispensable.

Here the matter was to rest until the following day, when Mr. Beauchamp promised there should be put into the hands of the county attorney money enough to clear the mortgage on Fleemister's farm, to be paid over by him whenever Tom should "come to the scratch." Leaving a small sum by way of earnest-money, Mr. Beauchamp parted from Aloysius, and went to the Court House.

Mr. Davis had brought with him the tailor, commonly called Shears, and once known to our readers as King

Cabbage. The potentate had a roll of cloth in his arms, and a set of closely-fitting curtains was speedily nailed up to the windows of an upper jury-room, which it was proposed to occupy. This was directly over the clerk's office, and there was communication by the main stairway in the hall. A bountiful supply of cold viands was provided, together with a jug of the national beverage, that cheers and does inebriate; also a supply of pipes. Conversation was carried on in a whisper, and all kinds of noise and moving about carefully avoided. The young men regarded it as a mere lark, an adventure that promised some fun; but Mr. Beauchamp, who had reasoned the thing out to his own satisfaction, kept his counsel, and listened. He was sure something was going to happen. The evening passed pleasantly, though whispering became rather irksome, and King Cabbage vowed that he would give considerable to "holler" once. They told all the current stories; and Davis gave to Mr. Beauchamp an amusing account of the escort that attended Aloysius on his elopement with the Dove, and of his frantic struggles to urge on the lazy horse.

Mr. Beauchamp's reasoning was sound. About twelve o'clock there was a noise at the window below. It seemed as if it were being forced by a lever. The pressure was steady for a time, and then a louder sound was heard, as the fastening gave way. The lights in the jury-room were put out, and each man had his arms ready. Looking out, they saw below two figures by the window, and two horses tied to separate posts. The taller and larger helped up a young and active man to the window-sill, who thereupon bounded lightly through, and landed on the floor of the clerk's office. The man without stood close to the window, and gave directions in a low voice to the one within. In the silence, every word of the low voice was heard distinctly by the party above.

"Go to the glass door at the end of the standing desk. On the third shelf, at the extreme right, is a tin box. The bundle is in that box, marked 'Wyndham versus Russell.' The wrapper is soiled, almost black, and it is tied with a red tape. Strike a match, and you will see it." They could not hear the answer; but, after a pause, the voice continued, —

"You don't find it? I'll swear it's there. I saw it this day, as I came through town."

There was another pause.

"It is there, I tell you. Be sure of the third shelf, on the right."

"Gone, do you say? Gone? What's gone?"

"The box there, but the papers gone? Look then at the shelf above it — second tin box from the left. Bundle marked in the same way."

"What! that gone too? The dog suspected me; he's carried them off. We have had our trouble for nothing. Well, come out. Pull down the window after you."

The window was shut down with a bang, and the man without saw that the one within did not appear. A light suddenly shone; there was a scuffle within. He mounted his horse, and galloped away as for his life.

The watchers had stolen down softly, shut the window, struck a light, and then surprised and captured the young man in the office, who proved to be Mr. Wyndham's son. Two of them had done this. The third, Mr. Beauchamp, had rushed out of the door to capture the confederate, but he had taken the alarm and made his escape.

Davis and the tailor were disposed to take the prisoner to the jail, and wake up the sheriff to give some color of authority for detaining him; but Mr. Beauchamp interposed.

"No," said he; "let us set him at liberty. The real burglar has escaped. We don't war with boys. They didn't get the papers they came for; but Mr. Wyndham has shown his hand, and he can't play his game out. That's the main point. Let the boy go. If he is wanted, the authorities can get him at any time, and our evidence will be sufficient to convict him, and the father too."

Davis felt like other hunters, when asked to give up the game they have taken, but he yielded to Mr. Beauchamp's advice, and the young man was allowed to go. Mr. Beauchamp then told them that there was some probability of the old lawsuit being reopened, and that Mr. Wyndham was desirous of preventing it by abstracting papers from the files. Those papers, he said, were put out of his reach, and the only object in watching was to make the criminal intention of Mr. Wyndham evident.

The party separated; and Mr. Beauchamp, to whom all hours were alike, rode out to Beech Knoll, and assisted for the remainder of the night in taking care of his nephew.

The town had plenty to talk about next morning. The coming of Aloysius, and his visit to Fleemister at the jail, were soon noised about. Then Mr. Beauchamp, who was seldom seen to talk with any person except on business, and who had always a sharp word rather than a pleasant one for the town's-people, had been seen in private conversation with Aloysius, a kind of man that he usually made game of; and this was a puzzle. The departure of Heady and Howard was known also, and that gave rise to speculation. But the climax was reached when the attempt to break into the Court House got abroad. This was repeated with variations and additions, until it grew into a thrilling adventure worthy of a place in a dime novel. There were persons who knew about the

whole matter, as they said, — how many pistol shots were fired, what hair-breadth escapes there were, and what bullet holes in coats; what great oaths were sworn when the tailor flashed the lantern on the surprised cracksman, and what a desperate trial of strength ensued until the young ruffian was thrown on the floor, and bound hand and foot. What it was all about no one seemed to know; though it was evident that "something was going on." A great many separate things were known by different people; but the connection of them (though we trust it is clear to the reader) was comprehended only by one man, Mr. Ralph Beauchamp. All agreed that he was very busy about *something*; and it was a matter of general remark that he had never been known to come to town dressed so much "like a white man," or to show himself in so amiable a mood.

These events, however disconnected and mysterious, seemed to point mainly in one direction, and caused a renewal of interest in the old and well-known contest between the Wyndhams and Russells. The elder people recalled the early splendor of Beech Knoll, and its stately founder, and told of the company entertained, the horses, the flocks of negroes, as all elderly people speak of the things that most affected them in their impressible youth. Then the handsome sons were brought to mind — Thomas, who died in early manhood; Isham, who lived to middle age, a bachelor; and Randolph, best and gentlest of men. The old stories of gambling, horse-racing, cock-fighting, and other kindred vices, were renewed; and the younger generation learned how the estate was cut in pieces, and the wealth of the family dissipated, until the melancholy history was brought down to the date of this story, when the property had shrunk to nothing, and the last survivor of the family stood in his shoes, an heir to memories only,

and with no expectations beyond those which should come from his own labor. The greed and the haughtiness of Mr. Wyndham were well known, and every one felt that he had profited unjustly by the errors and the carelessness of Beauchamp's uncle and father. The general feeling of the county people had been entirely on our hero's side up to the time of the late tragic occurrences. But a revulsion took place. The community, as we have had occasion to notice, was intensely excited upon the question of slavery, and had become so fiercely intolerant that any unexplained fact, or baseless suspicion even, was enough to start a flame that would sweep over the county. Even so prudent a man as Howard found that he could not safely express a qualified dissent from a fire-eater's propositions; and on one occasion, when he had been seen talking over the fence with a slave whom he had known familiarly in a house in which he had once boarded, found the story flying about with the absurdest tags and conclusions hanging to it. And when, as it happened not long after, the slave ran away, there were a plenty of people who believed that the "blamed Yankee was showin' the blasted nigger how to get off." Beauchamp became the centre of all these suspicions and watchful eyes. His intimacy with the Yankee schoolmaster was one great fact against him. And when he went around talking in his frank and impulsive way about the injustice of selling his old black mammy, Milly, and her children, it was attributed to something more than mere sentiment.

It was settled that Beauchamp had become an abolitionist at heart, though he stoutly denied it. For such a man there could be only feelings of aversion; and this aversion ranged through the scale, from simple regret to downright hate. When the wind sat in this quarter the vanes all pointed one way. Every act had the worst in-

terpretation put upon it. The shooting affair confirmed the general belief, and the attempts at explanation made by the sheriff, and Beauchamp's steadfast friend, Davis, were heard with incredulous looks. He was a friend of the niggers, it could not be denied, and the finding of Sally was cited triumphantly. This last incident was conclusive. It was curious to see the effect of it. Men whose whole lives were passed in sensuality were loudest in their gibes and horse-laughs. In a neighborhood where "the first stone" could have been tendered by the merciful Master to every man, and scarcely one would have been found hardy enough to throw it while His eyes were looking on, this discovery of what was supposed to be a concealed intrigue was an occasion of the keenest delight. Sinners enjoy the exposure of other sinners, while the pure in heart look on with pity and sorrow. Beauchamp, if he had been known to be sound on the main question, could have lived an immoral life (within certain bounds) without much scandal. His supposed opinions gave a deeper color to the sin.

So the novelist, Dumas the younger, the shameless apostle of profligacy, after giving his adhesion to the abstract dogmas of the church, is elected to the vacant chair in the French Academy, while the profound and philosophic Taine, a man of stainless life, but suspected of unsound theology, is shut out.

The women of Kentucky, and probably of other slave states, had opinions of their own, which the men did not share, and seldom had knowledge of. The coming to the surface of any such scandal as this, gave an occasion to observant people to see the real feelings of women on certain subjects which were never openly mentioned. And there was hardly a woman in the county that could speak peaceably of Beauchamp. While he lay on a sick

bed, and the issue of the fever was so doubtful, the animosity of men and the disgust of women were in abeyance. But these feelings were only smouldering; when the time should come they would burst forth in consuming fury.

This digression may enable the reader to imagine the tumult that prevailed in the little town after the singular occurrences related. After the old battles were fought over again, the difficulty was in understanding the game in progress; for what such queer pawns as Aloysius and Fleemister could be used for by either player, was not at all obvious to the lookers-on.

Mr. Beauchamp went into town about midday, and, as he rode along, abstracted as he was, he could not fail to notice the sharp looks with which he was regarded by men and women. Cynic as he was, and profoundly politic, he was not displeased to be the subject of public curiosity. He delighted in mystery, even when there was nothing in it. And mystery is often like mist, dark only when seen from without. He liked at times to make the uncultivated stare, though he never appeared to notice them. When he arrived at the tavern he found Aloysius sitting in the back room, smoking a cigar. Aloysius offered one, but Mr. Beauchamp declined, saying he preferred a chew; and then, for the sake of affability, pulled out a twist from his pocket and bit off a piece. After the preliminary commonplaces, Mr. Beauchamp inquired what the news from jail was. Aloysius, with the elastic spirits that belong to such natures, had risen much in his own estimation since the preceding day, and appeared to take some pride in his character of negotiator, and he replied rather jantly, "The news is not so good as it might be. Sorry I haven't something bang up to tell. What has happened

I can't say; but Fleemister said, 'Drat the mortgage! I ain't goin' to peach nor turn tail.' Them's the words he used."

"H'm — who has been to see him?"

"Not knowin', can't say; but the jailer was cross about people comin' to see Tom, and I reckon he's had callers. I see Jack Houghton in town this mornin'."

"Houghton? Yes, I see. Couldn't you find out if it is Houghton that's been to see him this mornin'?"

"Yes, I don't mind. I'll go over now, and be back in a minute."

When he returned he said briefly, —

"'Twas him."

Mr. Beauchamp fell into a deep study. The move he had made the evening before had been the subject of thought to *somebody*, and he could not have his game all to himself.

"You think he's fixed, then?" he said.

"Set as the hills," said Aloysius. "Or, rather, he's a bull-dog that won't let go when once he's set his teeth, no matter how you pound his derved head."

Mr. Beauchamp reflected that if Tom's refusal was caused by counter offers, it wouldn't help the matter to increase the bid, for that would suggest another, and the competition might run up to any extent; and Tom would only have exaggerated ideas of his importance, and be more obstinate than ever. It was better to wait.

Mr. Beauchamp got up to go, and bade Aloysius good by. The young men would not be back from Frankfort until the next day, and there was nothing more to be done in town; so he thought he would go out to Beech Knoll, and stay with his sister and nephew.

Aloysius found the time hang heavy on his hands, as he was avoided by his former acquaintances, and there

was nothing in the world to do. He welcomed the time when the stage drove to the door, and he took his place to go back to the city. When it rolled by the house of the Fentons, he gave a deep sigh, and looked out. He *might* have gone into a poetical rhapsody over the love he had lost, and worked up his feelings till he shed passionate tears; but there were two reasons why he did not — the presence of a passenger opposite to him in the stage, and the fair Lucy herself at the window. Lucy was looking out, her face all smiles, — as if she were not lately an Ariadne deserted by a compulsory Bacchus, — her eyes sparkling, and her lips gathered into a half-opened rose-bud, from which her fingers were conveying, by a light, graceful motion, — could it be? — yes, the fingers were throwing a kiss to somebody. Did she know he was in the stage? There was a momentary flutter in his heart. He leaned forward expectant. *Did* she mean to assure him that she was still faithful? Ah, no! Following the direction of her eyes, he looked up and forward. The kiss was thrown to the little stage-driver, who was stretching his feet out to the dasher, while he cracked his whip, and then leaned back to restrain his fiery steeds. Unhappy Aloysius! What had life in store for him? To be succeeded or supplanted by a Jehu not more than five feet high! — a man who wore greasy boots that engulfed half his body! — a man condemned to spend his days on the box of a little, dirty rattletrap of a stage! He settled himself back in his corner, and resigned himself to his solitary lot.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

THE messengers returned from Frankfort after being absent nearly three days. Their mission had been successful. They brought an order to take the deposition of Jacob Van Holm (after giving due notice to Mr. Wyndham) in a manner that would make it available in the new trial. The machinery of the law was put in motion, although with a reversed action as far as concerned the interests of Russell and Wyndham. The former aggressor began to feel the slow but irresistible force that was drawing him up to account for his misdeeds.

Squire Kinchelow, the magistrate who granted the warrant for the arrest of Mr. Beauchamp and Father Hennequin on a charge of conspiracy, heard the case, and promptly dismissed the complaint; and he intimated that if any criminal proceedings were to grow out of Van Holm's deposition, they would not be directed against the attesting witnesses. Mr. Wyndham said something about going to the grand jury, but the magistrate reminded him that every citizen had that right.

The same magistrate, with two associates, sat to hear the complaint of the prosecuting officer against those who took part in the affray at Beech Knoll. The hearing had been twice postponed on account of the continued illness of Beauchamp Russell; and as the term of the Circuit Court was near at hand, it was concluded to go on with

the case as far it concerned the others, without waiting longer for Beauchamp's recovery. The statements of Tom Fleemister, Jack Houghton, Ralph Beauchamp, and Arthur Howard, and of the sheriff and William Wyndham, were all patiently heard. It is unnecessary to repeat the story. The clear and uncontradicted evidence of Mr. Howard showed that he and his friend had no thought either of doing or of repelling any violence. And as Howard was hit first, and other rifles were pointed, the right of the party to return the fire was unquestioned. This presumption also extended to Mr. Beauchamp, he being a relative, and being on the ground with no wrongful intent. On the other hand, it was argued that the party approaching were acting under color of lawful authority as a part of the sheriff's posse, and when they saw rifles aimed at them, they would have good reason to believe that it was with an intent to resist their coming. The result was, that all the parties were discharged from custody. There remained a complaint against Beauchamp for harboring and secreting a runaway slave, but that could not be acted upon until his recovery.

If Mr. Wyndham had been a man for whom the sympathy of just and generous people was possible, there was now ample occasion for its exercise. But his nature was cold and unfeeling, his will was resolute, his temper uncompromising, and his conduct showed an habitual disregard of right where his own interest was concerned. There were but two questions that he ever took time to consider — whether the matter in hand would benefit him, and whether it could be done safely. All considerations of consequences to others were of no account. In his thought he would reach his ends by levelling hills and filling up valleys. He would find a way, or he would make one. For many years he had gone on

this high-handed course, and had grown rich. He had a large landed estate, and great numbers of negroes; and he had claims, generally secured by mortgage, against a great many people in the county. Very few rich men in Kentucky, thirty years ago, except in one or two cities, had any large amount of movable property, such as stocks, and bonds, and ready money. They were rooted to the soil, like their trees; they flourished and lived in plenty, but could not be transplanted. Mr. Wyndham had now to consider what he was to do about meeting a claim for forty thousand dollars. To raise such a sum, he would have to call in the money due him on mortgages, or to sell a part of his land and a considerable number of his negroes. When this conclusion was reached, his love of money was aroused, his pride revolted at letting the occasion of the sacrifice be known, and he determined to resist. Then he thought of the new suit that would be vigorously pressed, of the future watchfulness of the clerk after the unsuccessful attempt to steal the papers, of the dead certainty of Van Holm's dying words when put in legal form, and of the unmatched cunning and legal skill of his new antagonist, Ralph Beauchamp; and, putting all things together, he did not see a single loophole of escape. To be beaten in a legal contest, after an exposure of his crimes, and then to pay afterwards, was a maddening thought. If he had to pay, it would be better to make a compromise before the terrible trial should come on. As long as he had property, he knew he would have to respond. And if Ralph Beauchamp lived, whether his nephew survived or not, he feared the case would surely go against him. He might transfer and cover up most of his property! And, if Ralph Beauchamp was obstinate, and *would* rush on his fate —!

The property first. He devoted a day to a thorough examination of his affairs. He collected his deeds, notes of hand, and mortgages, and made full lists of them. He made out schedules of negroes by name, also of horses and other animals, and of his furniture and plate. He set about calling in every dollar he could collect without making too much disturbance. When these preparations were made, he went into town and had a long consultation with Harrison Adams.

That sagacious young gentleman heard the preliminary hints and suggestions of his senior with erected ears. The silence of Miss Shelburne in regard to his letter he had rightly interpreted, and he was obliged to confess to himself that he had not the least hope of winning her. Miss Wyndham was a fine-looking girl, of good natural ability, and quite well educated; and her share in her father's property would make her wealthy in the course of time. Mr. Adams had reflected upon this before. To be sure, he would greatly prefer Miss Shelburne; but, leaving her out of the account, there was scarcely a young lady in the county equally attractive. He had begun to feel pretty sensibly that Mr. Wyndham's reputation was not altogether to be envied. But he agreed with his senior in considering money the chief moving power in human affairs, and he flattered himself that by judicious conduct he might make a better name for himself, and acquire the wealth of a father-in-law, without sharing his unpopularity.

These thoughts passed rapidly through his mind while Mr. Wyndham was beginning to unfold his plans. He saw from the beginning what the elder was driving at, and smiled to see how he stumbled along in his talk. For men always cheat themselves by phrases. "*Convey the wise it call*" is the thief's periphrasis. So every

form of crime, every selfish or unlovely action, every lapse from virtue, is cloaked by some fair-seeming name, and the mind is half deluded into a belief of its own innocence. Had Mr. Wyndham made his proposal in plain words, it would have looked fully as brutal as it was iniquitous. He would have said, "I am in difficulties. I have committed a crime that has been discovered, and if the case goes against me I shall have to pay more than I choose to part with. I will divide my property into two portions. That which can be carried away or speedily converted into money, I will take for myself and my son. The land I will give to you if you will marry my daughter. If my son and I go away, my wife shall live with you. I shall not leave the state unless I am obliged to; and shall not be obliged to, probably, if I can put my enemy Ralph Beauchamp out of the way. Take my land and my daughter. Whether you love her or she loves you, I don't care, but she shall marry you if you and I make the bargain."

The naked proposition was heartless enough, but Mr. Wyndham probably did not admit to himself that it was criminal, nor contemplate it except in the envelope of excuses and fair phrases, with which he attempted to lay it before his future son-in-law. The latter was not greatly troubled by conscientious scruples either, but he was ambitious for preferment, and so wished to stand well with the people of the county. The force of the evidence against Mr. Wyndham he did not know; and, as that doughty litigant had been almost always victorious in court, he supposed that, with his usual tactics, his usual fortune would continue, and that before long, he, Adams, would stand an equal among the wealthy landholders of the county. As for Miss Wyndham, he had no objection to her on his part, and he never dreamed that she would think of refusing him in any event.

The chief trouble lay in the fact that the exigency did not admit of delay. It was necessary that the marriage and the settlements should take place at once, and both the elder and the younger feared that the suddenness of the proposal might make an unfavorable impression upon the young lady's mind. And the father knew that his daughter, though naturally amiable, like her mother, had a will of her own, and had not hesitated to set it up even against his when hard pressed. When the main points were agreed upon, there was a discussion as to which of them should broach the subject to her. The father thought that *he* should carry the intelligence, and lay his paternal commands upon her. The young man, who thought himself quite an eligible person, and fascinating withal, was inclined to try his luck as a lover in the old-fashioned way. Backed by the father's influence, he believed he should be irresistible. This view finally prevailed.

When Mr. Wyndham went home, he naturally carried on his face the shadow which his impending calamity had cast upon it. The hate and mortification he felt seemed to have given fierceness to his looks, and the closely-crowded wrinkles on his brow and at the corners of his eyes were like so many arithmetical computations. Parental tenderness and the foresight of affection were hardly in harmony with such a visage; and those close and scornful lips would look strangely in uttering a message in behalf of a lover. Mr. Wyndham proved a bungling messenger. His daughter heard him with wonder, and his manner filled her with apprehension. She saw that he was under excitement, and was evidently full of trouble, and she could not understand why such a fair-weather subject as marriage should be taken up at such a threatening, stormy time. She had before felt

forebodings that her father might endeavor to use her as a make-weight in some trade, and she had thought that Mr. Adams might be the person with whom the transaction would take place. She had naturally seen her father's partner often, and had found him always agreeable. But he had never put himself in the attitude of a lover, and never had uttered one tender word. The plainest woman living, and the one with the least pride, will resent the idea of being led to wedlock by a man who takes her consent as a matter of course. Her woman's heart will not be satisfied unless she is solicited by the tender arts and endearments which nature prompts the lover to use and the beloved to expect. The natural result of Mr. Wyndham's talk was, that his daughter left him with every nerve tingling with wounded sensibility, and with all her powers braced for resistance. She was not a weak creature to dissolve in sorrow, nor to sink into imbecile helplessness. She did not shed a tear, but her fine features glowed with an unlovely light, and she could not sleep for the strong desire to assert her woman's pride.

In the morning she dressed herself with care, and all in black — silk, velvet, and Brussels lace. Her superb black hair was wreathed with ornaments of silver and ribbons of white satin. Her long white hands were free from ornaments, except one small diamond ring. If she could have smiled, what a lovely woman she would have been! As it was, she looked like the heroine of a tragedy, and her beauty only emphasized the chilling impression she made.

Mr. Adams made his appearance in the forenoon, and was shown into the parlor. He had taken some pains with his toilet, and, but for a nervous trepidation that he could not wholly control, he would have been not unworthy to stand beside the woman he met.

The customary salutations were exchanged, and he seated himself not far distant, and entered into conversation upon the affairs of the town and neighborhood. He gradually got the better of his nervousness, and talked with liveliness and point. His manner was bland and conciliatory, even deferential. It was meant to be tender, but it came short of that. The man who is really in love is rarely thinking of himself or of the impression he is making. His homage is unconsciously tendered, and even his stammering and hesitation are eloquent. It piques an observing woman at any time to see an admirer too much at his ease.

Miss Wyndham heard him with civility, and not without smiles; but her smiles were the lights that played over marble. Her perfect self-possession boded him no good. She continued to listen as he spun out the conversation, reserving her strength for what she knew was coming.

At last he opened the subject in tolerably connected phrases, and with as much warmth of tone as his nature allowed him to show.

"Miss Wyndham, I have the great pleasure of telling you that I have your father's permission to speak to you upon a matter that greatly concerns my happiness. I have long been sensible of your beauty and your many excellent qualities, and I have hoped I might on my part be esteemed in some measure worthy to claim a like regard from you."

"You are talking of love, I suppose."

"Certainly, Miss Wyndham, I would fain tell you how much I love you. I thank you for the word. It shows me that you anticipate what I would say."

"Do you think I can believe what you say? I have often been in your company, and you have never spoken

of love. You have never shown by any look or action that you had a feeling for me different from that you felt for any lady. Have *I* changed all on a sudden, or have you?" The words were uttered with composure, but an icy smile played round her mouth.

"Really, Miss Wyndham, there must be a time for love to begin. If I had loved you before, I should have asked your permission to tell you so. If I love you now, I think it is not a matter for reproach that I take the earliest time to avow it."

"I have heard of love at sight, and can imagine it. I have seen instances in which love has grown up gradually. But when two young people have been much together, and without pretending any affection for each other, — mere acquaintances, or friends, if you please, — and by and by, without any warning, one says to the other, 'I love you,' it looks either like a cruel joke, or else like the working of some motive of interest. I am not experienced, as you know very well, but I don't think that is love, — or that lovers do so."

"You mustn't doubt my sincerity. I know I'm not impulsive, and couldn't do such an absurd thing as to fall on my knees, or clasp my hands, or implore, as lovers do in novels. I want you to believe that I do admire you and love you, and I offer you my hand with all my heart."

"No, Mr. Adams, I'm sure you *won't* do an impulsive thing. I don't ask you to fall on your knees. I shouldn't believe in your sincerity any sooner if you were to be ever so absurd. But I *think* I should know the sound of a lover's voice if I should ever hear one, and I *feel* that I should know the looks of a lover's eyes."

"I pray you don't make up your mind too hastily. Think upon this for a day or two. The idea comes to

you suddenly, but it will appear differently when you have become accustomed to it. You will learn to love me."

"I shall think upon it, certainly. I could not forget it; but it won't become any more agreeable by thinking upon it. Love isn't a gift to be taken out of a purse and bestowed for the asking. I might love some man in spite of myself, and I might not love another if all the world wanted me to."

"Not if your father asked you?"

"Not if my father asked me."

He had never noticed how beautiful she was before. While he thought he would take her provided he could not do better, she was only moderately attractive. As she sat now, with all the pride of her ancestors in her fine eyes, and deliberately flung his artificial rose-buds and waxen orange-blossoms underfoot, how magnificent she looked! How he wished he had not wasted his time in dangling after the other beauty! How he cursed the fate that drove him to this ill-judged attempt to bring over a spirited woman like this in a week! The thought made him almost desperate. But he was not without that sort of tact which lawyers acquire, however little he had shown of it in his wooing. He had seen in court that there was a point beyond which it was not prudent to drive a witness; and he began to feel now, that if he said much more, the proposition would be so decidedly rejected, that he could never have any pretext of renewing it. He had got that point of policy by heart; and, loath as he was to retire from the field so completely beaten, he concluded it was wisest to do so, while he could leave some loophole open for his return.

"My dear Miss Wyndham, I am afraid the difficulty is, we don't understand each other. You may think me

mercenary. Excuse me if I think my prospects put me beyond any such suspicion. I look around the county, and I fail to see how you can hope to make an alliance, here at least, that will place you in any higher position. On my part, I declare that you would fulfil all my hopes, and gratify all my pride. You have never looked so beautiful as to-day, when you have been so pitiless. And I had never an idea of your strength of character, nor of your deep feeling either. The more you have said *no*, the more I exclaim *yes*. I mean to deserve your love, and I hope yet to win it, in spite of you."

"I see you are not satisfied with what I have said. I don't know that I could be plainer. I shan't choose a husband for his position, nor because he has prospects, nor because he is better educated than the young men of the county. I may *never* marry, but if I should, it will be some man I can love. I shall not care about his pride, nor much about my own. And I don't believe that anything will change my feelings towards you. Let us be friends, and drop the subject."

Mr. Adams had gone to the last verge, and dared not utter another word. He took his leave, and rode into town in a state of anger and mortification that he had never known before. Baffled, scorned, and castigated by a country girl, a miss without experience in the world, one to whom he was afraid to utter a quotation, either in Latin or English! Where now were the visions of the broad acres tilled by the scores of negroes? the position in the county, the expected preferment? He was sent back to his little office, to wring his paltry fees from unwilling suitors; and the day of his prosperity and power was deferred until he could bring it about by the slow results of his unaided industry.

He lost no time in communicating to the senior the

result of his visit. Mr. Wyndham got up and swore a great oath ; and, declaring that it would be seen who was master in his house, he mounted his horse and rode home.

When he got to the house, he went into the parlor where his daughter still was sitting, looking idly out of the window. The mud upon his boots showed that he had been riding hard, and the expression of his dark features and his excited manner indicated plainly the struggles within. He started when he observed the unusual care she had bestowed upon her dress, and his anger rose with the thought that she had adorned herself only to make the rejection more emphatic.

"Kate," said he, roughly, "if you had only left that bit of white ribbon off your head, you'd be in full dress for a funeral."

"I have not dressed for a wedding," she replied.

"I don't believe you ever will dress for one, if you refuse such offers as you have had to-day."

"I choose the funeral, then. I can't accept the offer of a man who shows me that he marries for policy. And until I please, I shan't marry at all."

"But I desire you to reconsider. Adams is a man of parts and education. He has no bad habits. He is good-looking, as you know, and he has the manners of a gentleman. What have you got against him?"

"I have said, father, that I can't marry a man I don't love. Mr. Adams may be all you say, but he doesn't please me. He thinks of his precious self. He doesn't know what love means. He may have the manners of a gentleman, but he hasn't the soul of one."

"If he isn't a gentleman, who is?"

"Beauchamp Russell."

Mr. Wyndham almost howled with rage.

"Am I to have the name of that young reprobate flung

at me? He comes from a dissipated, loose, bad family. He hasn't a dollar, and will never make one. And after the murderous spirit he showed, and especially after the contents of his chamber closet were brought to light, it looks well for you to parade him as a pattern of a gentleman!"

She tapped the floor with her foot, and looked at him steadily, but did not answer. The desperate situation pressed upon his mind. She *must* submit. He would not be thwarted. He was almost tempted to be pathetic, and appeal to her to give up for his sake.

"Kate," he said, in a milder tone, "I don't believe you would willingly see me brought to shame and loss, not if you knew that compliance with my wishes was of so much consequence to me. I want to see you well provided for. And the day you marry Adams, I intend to give you two a joint deed of all my land, and furnish you ~~with~~ enough to cultivate it. You'll be handsomely settled for life. Now don't ask for reasons, but answer like a good girl, that you'll do as I would have you do, and make me happy. A fortune and a husband at once — an offer that any girl in the country would take up with in one minute!"

"I don't see why you are anxious to give up your property. I don't need it, and while I have a home, the land can remain yours; I prefer it should. I don't want it while you live."

"I tell you there are reasons. Must I go on and explain, that if you refuse, you drive me to ruin — to disgrace?"

"What does this mean, father? You don't owe Mr. Adams, I am sure. If you did, he wouldn't ask you to give me to pay the debt — would he?"

"Suppose I were to tell you, that if you hold out with

your stubborn pride, I should have to lose forty thousand dollars."

"I am glad that I am reckoned at a good sum, and not offered too cheap. But you *can* lose as much, and still have enough left to live on — can't you?"

"But I *won't* lose so much, I can tell you. I am not to be balked. I haven't brought up a daughter to defy me to my face."

"I am of age, and I can't be made to marry against my will. But I won't leave it so, father; for I know you wouldn't put such a thing upon me. You *couldn't* ask me to marry, when I tell you what I have. Don't ask me to be that man's wife. I can never do it."

"I say you are an obstinate huzzy. I won't put up with your airs. I'll make my will to-day, and leave every dollar to your brother. If you won't hear to reason, after all I have said, I'll turn you out of the house. I'll see if you can carry your high head, and turn on your heel when I am on the brink of ruin. You shall be —" Here his countenance, which had been growing fiercer with his ungovernable passion, seemed to have turned purple. He foamed, and stamped, and gesticulated. He turned towards the girl, and looked as if he would fall upon her with violence. His utterance grew thick and unintelligible, while the blood in his face seemed to have filled every vein and artery to bursting. He stopped, he reeled, he groaned, he fell his length upon the floor. There was a convulsive movement of the limbs, a momentary gasping for breath, and he was dead.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONVALESCENCE.

THE long night was passing away, and our hero was emerging into the light of day. His fever had subsided, and he began to feel the return of natural sensations. He was thin and weak, and unable to lift his head; but it was enough for his mother and his faithful friend to see the clear, steady light of intelligence in his eyes, and to know that the crisis of his disease had passed. To the bewildered patient everything seemed to be new. He was in a new world. This was not truly his little mother that bent over him so tenderly, but a good angel in a lace cap, that bore her likeness. And the man was not his friend Howard, but another spiritual ministrant; only he wondered if any angelic people wore beards. Every sight and sound engaged his earnest attention; the mere sense of existence was a delight. As he afterwards said, on a certain occasion, he felt at this time like an infant, full of perpetual wonder at the aspect of human faces, and at the sounds in and around the house. He could have crowed or gurgled with pleasure, and he believed he looked open-eyed at the commonest events, so exquisite was the new sensation of merely seeing and hearing. But when the novelty of his situation had become dulled, and he began to send inquiries backward, so as to form an idea of the state of his feelings and perceptions on first waking from the long obliviousness, he found himself

baffled. He thought at first, if he could only catch the hem of the trailing robe of some vision, or remember the last fading hue of some rainbow that spanned his horizon, he could bring back a vanished thought, of which the image still loomed immense, like a mirage. As often as he returned to the subject, he was more and more baffled, and like a ship at sea, he was drifting farther away from the misty and insubstantial pageant in the air. If he had succeeded, he believed he should have thrown some new light on mental processes, and perhaps have approached the seat and source of thought. When he tried further to bridge over the long chasm of weeks, and connect his waking impressions with the scene in which he had lost his consciousness, he was still more at fault, and the mere effort fatigued him, like trying to lift something beyond his strength. So he gave up thinking, or tried to, and looked. The patterns on the walls and on the rugs, the shapes and grained streaks of the stones that formed the hearth, the knots and the waving lines of wood fibres, the filaments of the bed-clothing, the very motes that floated in the sunbeams, were all regarded in detail by his curious eyes. Time was measured by events. There was the long night, and the little "cat-naps" by day, interrupted with seasons for gruel and chicken broth, and the little messes of the sick room. These affairs were the figures on his dial, and their round made the day complete.

The joyful intelligence was soon known, and Phillis appeared one morning, coming in on tiptoe, her little shiny eyes glistening with pleasure. By this time the reality of the world was established, and Phillis did not seem to her young master to be a coffee-colored spirit. Sylvia, too, "the nut-brown maid," looked timidly in and smiled; and Pete (who lingered at Beech Knoll occasionally) blubbered out his thankfulness. Uncle Ralph came,

twisted his long mustaches, and seemed to be more of a sphinx than ever, but did not propound his riddle, not wishing to take an unfair advantage of a sick man.

When Beauchamp was able to talk, there were several matters about which he had a strong desire to be informed. First of all, he asked Mr. Howard, when they were alone, whether there was any intelligence from Miss Shelburne. Mr. Howard shook his head. Beauchamp fell to thinking. He wondered, if *she* had been hit with a bullet, or was in any way brought to death's door, whether he would have stayed away, and sent no message of sympathy. He could not imagine such a thing. But perhaps a young lady might be diffident, and take a different view of the affair. Besides, the mutual agreement of secrecy might be in the way, and she could not come to see him, or send any word to him, without revealing the tie, and so compromising herself. Still, he thought *he* should not have waited, but would have risked something. "She might, at least, have sent me a letter," he thought.

Then he wanted the affair of the shooting cleared up, and Mr. Howard was obliged to tell him so much as was necessary of that exciting story. It was mostly new to Beauchamp; for he had been so much absorbed while loading his gun, that he had not seen the wound nor the blood on Howard's face; nor did he know that his uncle Ralph had been on the ground. This recital and cross-questioning occupied a long time. Howard showed him the straight scar where the bullet had made a furrow, and Beauchamp said it should be tattooed—"Tom Fleemister, his mark." He was not greatly curious about his own wound, but Howard assured him that the doctor said there would not be a scar larger than a good-sized pea, and that in a short time the discoloration would pass away.

Beauchamp wanted to go on to make other inquiries; but Howard said he had now enough to think of for a few days, and he must wait. But, later in the same day, Phillis came in, and Beauchamp asked her where Sally was.

"Ste Lord only know, Mass' Beecham," she answered. "She done sol' down souf."

"Really, it's too bad I was keeled up here. So she is sold down south. What became of Harry?"

"He sol' 'long wid her. Planter man, big hat, spatch ober he's eye, buy Sally, an' Harry too."

"And the twins?"

"Mass' Pierpon hab one, an' Mass' Hambleton ste oder."

"So Sally is sold down south. Where did they find her?"

"In ste house some place; some closet, some cubby-hole. Phillis don' know."

The entrance of Mrs. Russell put an end to the conversation, and Phillis retreated.

Two things rested heavily on the young man's mind. His beloved had not been heard from, and the children of his black mammy had been sold. It was a great deal for a weak and nervous man to bear. He did not talk any more, and he had no pleasure in studying carpet patterns for the rest of the day. There was a small wet place on his pillow, one that remained wet for some time.

His recovery was necessarily slow. Time passed, and he was still feeble and requiring all his mother's care. He became able to dress himself and go about the house, but he could not read, and he was easily fatigued. When the bed was removed back up stairs, a little packet was seen to drop from the mattress. This was picked up and opened by Howard, who found in the paper a grain of corn stained with blood, a tooth, a little pebble that

looked as if it might have done duty in a fowl's gizzard, a claw from some bird, a bit of stained cloth, and a wisp of human hair. He was puzzled, as well he might be, and showed the articles to Beauchamp, who laughed for the first time since his recovery, and kept laughing as if it were the most amusing thing in life. Beauchamp at length explained that this was a charm, or amulet, which Phillis had placed under his bed to restore him to health and drive away evil spirits; and he added gayly, "I think it has done the business. At all events, the charm has been there, that is one fact; and now I am better, that is another. Cause and effect, you see! What more can you say for the medicines I have swallowed?"

"*Post hoc, ergo propter hoc,*" Howard suggested.

"The good pagan means well, and I won't make fun of her," said Beauchamp. "But this little mess of rubbish is so deuced funny!" And he laughed again.

"If you come down to a solid basis, I'm afraid there are as irrational things done by wiser people. 'Little messes of rubbish' are still held to be potent in law and divinity as well as in medicine and witchcraft."

It was a proud day for Beauchamp when he was so far recovered that he was allowed to take a ride on horse-back. He rode out through the lane with Mr. Howard, and thought he could endure the fatigue of going to town and back. It should be mentioned that the school had not been resumed, and that Mr. Ralph Beauchamp had laid strict commands upon Mr. Howard that no hint of Van Holm's repentance, or of the new suit against Mr. Wyndham, should be mentioned in his nephew's presence. Beauchamp therefore knew nothing of any change in his own fortune, nor of the prospect of recovering what his father and uncle had lost; nor had he been told of Mr.

Wyndham's recent death. They rode at an easy pace. The familiar road was now full of tender associations. There was the high bank where her horse took fright. Below was the rocky and water-washed path where they had walked together. It seemed to him that the very stones should remember her elastic tread. There were the dark hemlocks whose gloom had been enlivened by her radiant presence as she had passed beneath. When they had passed through the well-known streets, Mr. Howard was fearful that, if they alighted, some indiscreet person might blurt out what Beauchamp should not then hear; and he suggested that they should merely ride to the post-office and to Squire Hamilton's, and say "howdy," without getting off their horses.

The squire came out to the door and shook hands with the young men, and hoped they would soon be going on with their law studies. He was civil, and perhaps kindly; but Beauchamp, with the egotism that is natural to invalids and to those who have made narrow escapes, thought that the squire treated him and his trials with a great want of sympathy. It requires some effort for a well man, and one whose head has *not* been a target for rifle bullets, to put himself in thought into the condition of a convalescent like our hero, and to feel how vast a space such an experience fills in his mind. The squire had not much imagination, and it did not occur to him that his young friend would be so sensitive, and would notice his manner so closely. As Beauchamp was about to start, the squire felt in his pockets, with the air of one who had just been reminded of something that he had forgotten, and then handed him a letter. Beauchamp merely saw that it was without a post-mark, and then put it in his pocket and rode away.

When they reached home, Beauchamp was pretty well

exhausted, and he went into the house, while Howard went to the stable with the horses. In a short time Howard entered the room, and saw Beauchamp sitting by the fire, shivering, deadly pale, and looking up at him with an expression that conveyed something beyond words. Beauchamp silently handed him a letter, with a sign that he should read it. It was as follows:—

SIR: After the occurrences of which I have been informed by letters from relatives, there seems to be no alternative for me but to recall the promise I made you, and to bid you farewell. Until I came to write these words, I had no idea of the pain they would cost me; but the chief source of my regret is to find that the character I had begun to admire was only a pretence. Whatever else had happened, I could have borne it, if I could have still believed you were the honorable and pure-minded man I once considered you. As it is, I have only to express my wish that our acquaintance shall now be at an end.

ADELAIDE SHELBURNE.

Howard had never greatly admired Miss Shelburne, except on account of her beauty. He believed she was vain and frivolous, and that the light that shone in her eyes was mere animal vivacity, which she shared with the kitten playing with a ball of worsted. Moreover, he entered so fully into his friend's feelings, that he instinctively took his view of the case, without stopping to consider the force of the reasons that had led the lady to her conclusion. He had never expressed his feelings, however, and now they came out with an energy that surprised even himself.

"I say," he exclaimed, "that she is an unreasoning, inconsiderate, cold-blooded creature, and I give you joy

in being rid of her. To hear, decide, and sentence you, all in one breath, as if you were a culprit,—without waiting to examine or verify a single wild rumor, or to hear an attempt at explanation,—in short, to condemn a man as a criminal without a trial, and declare the judgment final, is something so monstrous, even for a woman, that I haven't patience to speak. Take her at her word, my friend, and let her go."

Beauchamp remained silent. His face spoke for him. Howard went on:—

"To tell you the truth, I have feared just what has come to pass. You should know, that, after you fell, and while we thought you were killed, Mr. Wyndham came into the house, followed by your uncle Ralph, walked straight to your chamber, and led Sally out of her hiding-place. It was in the corner of uncle Isham's room, into which she got by moving a loose board in your closet. Mr. Wyndham was triumphant, bitter, sarcastic; and your uncle Ralph had nothing to say in reply except his belief in your innocence. You and I know how that is, and how often we had hunted for the girl. But you see it had a bad look. The affair, of course, got noised about, and such stories do not grow less by repetition. Some people have reported these things to Miss Shelburne, and she, it appears, takes them to be true without investigation, and sends you this cold-blooded letter. Your character a pretence! My dear Beauchamp, she might look the world over before she would find another man so single-hearted as you. I say again, let her go."

Beauchamp still remained silent, and, after a time, his friend ceased talking, and considerably left him. For some hours the young man struggled with his emotions, and by degrees he became calm. He rose from his seat, and went into the next room, where Howard sat reading.

"It is time to begin again," Beauchamp said.

Howard looked up in surprise at the calm tone.

"I have kept you from your school too long. Let us begin next Monday. Have you any law books out here? I think I can read an hour or two at a time."

"Why, you look like a ghost!" said Howard. "You are not able to teach, and I don't believe you can study. Perhaps it is better, however, for you to divert your mind."

"I don't need diversion. There is nothing to be diverted *from*. I shall gain in strength from this time, and I must accustom myself to bear such labor and study as I can. See these torn pieces! *That* matter is ended. It will not be necessary to speak of it again."

There was nothing of what is falsely called "sentiment" in his tone or manner. It was the cool and steady utterance of a composed mind. Howard felt that he was looking at a man who could have held up his hand to be cut off, if necessary, without flinching. What suffering it had cost him to reach that height of self-control could only be guessed.

So the law studies were begun anew, with short readings at first, and before long with increased energy. Beauchamp threw himself, heart and soul, into his work. He took an airing on horseback in the morning, and generally a short walk after dinner, if the weather did not forbid. He did not go into town at all. He avoided the road where he had once walked with her. Mr. Howard brought out the law books as they were wanted. The school opened, and Beauchamp was left alone, as it was not necessary for him to render any assistance the first week. The name of Miss Shelburne was not mentioned after the time when Beauchamp threw the fragments of her letter into the fire.

There was a pleasant surprise at Beech Knoll one morning, when, after breakfast, word was brought that there was a new arrival. It was no other than Scipio, who came on tiptoe into the kitchen, where Phillis was at work, and nearly frightened her to death. Beauchamp had recovered his spirits in a measure, though he was too hard a student to be very gay, and he seemed to have passed into the serener region of manhood since his sickness. But Scipio's humility was extremely comical. It was hardly a metaphor to speak of his hang-dog look. As old Phillis had prophesied, he had "come screepin' back." He knew very well that he would get nothing worse than a scolding from his young master.

"So, you bad penny," said Beauchamp, "you've come back! You old prodigal, we shan't kill any fatted calf for you. Why did you go off?"

"Feared, massa, dey's goin' to sell de ol' man — sell him for de Wyndham's debt."

"You's done sole, anyhow," said Phillis. "You's done sole for sten dollar. Sten-dollar man you is. Bring not so much 's horse, not so much as houn' wid's teef out. Sole you as you run, so sheriff say. He! he! Ol' Scip he *can't* run." Phillis was sharp in manner, and Beauchamp had no doubt her anger was genuine. She thought of loyalty to the Russells as she did of religion, and even more. It was an instinct and a passion in her heart; and Scipio's desertion was nothing less than a crime; and though she probably had known when he was going, it was surely against her will that he went.

"Mighty little *you'd* help pay the Wyndham's debt, you trifling pld 'coon! Did you think anybody'd buy you? Did you suppose we were going to let you be sold off among strangers? What did you think you were

good for, anyhow? And to run off, when you might have been here to help while I was on my back!"

Complaints are hardly ever very consistent; and Beauchamp was vibrating between being vexed at Scipio's defection, and a half playful desire to tease him by setting a low value on his services. Between both of these feelings, Scipio saw that he was not hit very hard, and he meekly bowed his mouldy-looking head, as if he invited the buffet which he knew he deserved.

Mrs. Russell reproached him for his misbehavior, and added, with a sincerity of manner that made Beauchamp laugh outright, —

"If you go off again, Scipio, you may stay. You shall never come back to live with us again." She had not the least idea what Beauchamp saw to laugh at in this threat; nor had Scipio, who was frightened at the thought of banishment, and declared that he never would attempt to run away again — never.

Beauchamp then called to mind his device for getting the county seal on his free paper, and said to him, "Joe Heady'll be after you, Scipio. You better keep shady and not go to town. I wouldn't wonder if he should cut your ears off for the trick you played on him."

"What, *me*, Mass' Beecham! — *me* play trick on Mass' Joe Heady?"

"Yes, *you*, you gray old 'possum. Didn't you contrive to get him to go out of the office to get you some whiskey, so that you could put the seal on your free papers?"

"O, Mass' Beecham, ol' Scip not smart 'nuff to fool white folks." This with a demure look.

"Don't deny it. It's clare as day you did it. But how did you get your free papers, anyhow? Who wrote them, and signed my name and mother's? There'll be trouble for somebody."

"Ol' Scip got no free papers."

"But you *did* have; and I don't believe any free nigger could write well enough. Some white man did it. You'd better own up."

"No, massa; nuffin to own up to."

Beauchamp did not press the matter. In the first place, he did not want to proceed to extremities; and if Scipio held out, there would be no way to get at the truth without threats of whipping. And there were but two persons whom he suspected, — his uncle Ralph and Howard, — and he would not want to tax either of them with it, except in joke.

Scipio was then asked to give an account of his adventures; but what little he told was fragmentary, and came from direct inquiries. He had stopped in Louisville for a time, both going and returning, and had spent some time in towns in Indiana, and in the vicinity of Cincinnati. He had blacked boots and cleaned knives at hotels, but was kicked about and generally ill treated. He had tried to take care of horses and do "chores" for farmers, but was not spry enough. The truth was, he had lived a vagrant life, sleeping in barns, and feeding on cold victuals and crusts, which were often thrown out to him as to a dog. It was too late in life for him to adapt himself to new circumstances; and the reader will readily imagine, that an old man, accustomed to the kind of service he could render on a Kentucky plantation, would be woefully out of place in the turmoil of a tavern, or anywhere among the descendants of Yankees who did their own work.

When this rambling conversation ended, Phillis took the opportunity to speak to Beauchamp apart.

"You talk, Mass' Beecham, 'bout payin' ste Wyndham debt. Ste debt done paid. Ol' Wyndham's dead."

"Dead! Mr. Wyndham dead! When did he die?"

"Las' night. Got pow'ful mad wid 's daughter Kate. Choke up, an' fall down on ste floor, dead."

"How did you hear of it?"

"O, black folks know. Know heaps tings."

"Does uncle Ralph know it? or Mr. Howard?"

"Mass' Ralph Beecham, no. He hear ste day, mebbe. Mass' Howard, he hear ste day, too, in stown. Don' tell ste missus. Let Mass' Howard fetch ste news. Stey tink ol' woman know too much."

Beauchamp promised her he would not mention the matter, but would wait until the news was told in the evening. How it was to affect him he had not the least idea, for his uncle had not told him of the new turn in affairs caused by the confession of Van Holm.

Another event made no little stir about this time. The twins, Tim and Fanny, disappeared. They were both missed the same night, and there was not a trace of them, although diligent search was made for miles around. Squire Hamilton was greatly disquieted. He drew the inference that abolitionists were at work, and he declared that, unless they were detected and punished, or driven out, they would grow bolder and attempt greater things, and by and by there would be a general insurrection. These intimations added new force to the general feeling against anti-slavery men. The brunt of it, of course, fell upon Arthur Howard, the only northern man in the county who was not an open advocate of slavery. Even he was habitually reticent, but the public mind was in such a state that reticence itself was criminal. Neutrality was impossible, because no one was let alone. He lived at this time wholly at Beech Knoll, and walked through the town without stopping to converse. He had been so circumspect that no ground of accusation could be found

against him. But now it was certain that some one had helped the little runaways, as they could not have got off unaided. The faces around him grew darker and more suspicious. Some of the older pupils dropped off. Squire Hamilton was perceptibly cooler. The trustees of the school had caught the prevailing infection, and there were rumors of change. Howard saw that there was a storm coming, and that he was powerless to prevent it.

CHAPTER XXX.

GOOD AND EVIL COME UNSOUGHT.

OUR hero was now fully engaged in the subjugation of his province, although there was no princess for whom the labor was done. It was impossible that he should ever forget the woman who had so deeply touched his heart, and to whose inspiration he owed his newly-wakened ambition, and his resolute change of life. He had tried to forget her, and he never allowed himself to mention her name; but he often wondered where she was, and whether she *had* so utterly cast him out from her regard. But there was no way to inquire, even if he had forgotten his pride enough to seek for it. Like all young men of healthy and unperverted natures, he had hitherto looked forward to the love of a virtuous woman as the sufficient reward of the highest exertion, and the chief happiness of life; and all his efforts were directed to gaining wealth and position, that he might be worthy of her. His faith in female candor and stability of mind had been weakened, if not destroyed. If Miss Shelburne, with her fine intellect and apparently just and generous nature, could be so capricious, unreasonable, and peremptory, what was he to look for in others? He began to think, with his uncle Ralph, that women were inherently fickle, and that they were to be treated as playthings by fond or silly youths, and let alone by the wiser men who have serious work to do.

This was the tendency of his thinking, rather than his settled conviction. In truth, he did not think deeply about the matter at all; for he could not give it any long consideration without bringing up recollections that were too painful to be kept in view. But his studies were continued from other motives. Ambition had been aroused, and, perhaps unconsciously, his wounded pride added a little vigor to his purpose. The world should see the success he would achieve, and he was not unwilling that the lady who had rejected him should see it too. With his growing interest in his studies his industry increased, and he read so many hours daily that his mother and his friend had to beg him to take more time for recreation and sleep, for fear of injurious results to his health. But his daily horseback ride, his temperate habits, and his excellent constitution, saved him from the usual fate of overworked men.

The diminished number of pupils in Mr. Howard's school made it unnecessary for him to employ an assistant, and Beauchamp gladly relinquished the thought of teaching, and devoted all his time to law. Squire Hamilton only shook his head when Mr. Howard came for a new volume, and declared that Beauchamp could never become a lawyer if he raced through books in that way. His own mind was slow in movement, and it was incredible to him that a young man could go over so much ground understandingly. When these sayings were reported, Beauchamp merely said, "Wait till we meet to argue a case in court. He will then see whether I have skimmed over the surface, or whether I comprehend the principles."

As he grew stronger he extended his rides, and began to frequent the town, though only for a few minutes at a time. He was not at all wanting in sensibility, as we

know, and he soon began to notice that there was a great change in the feelings of the town's people towards him. He had been accustomed to find his company sought for, and had seen, with a not unworthy pride, that his opinions were deferred to. He knew he had been "popular" among people of all ages. It was so no longer. If he went to the post-office, he was met with barely civil nods, and curt "howdys." No one entered into conversation with him, and if he began any talk it soon ended. The ladies whom he met looked over his head, or on the walk, or found something interesting on the other side of the street. Squire Hamilton looked wise and inscrutable. Mr. Adams was distant, and affected haughtiness. The only persons who met him with the old cordiality were the sheriff and Davis. For some time he observed these things, and, though he wondered what the reason could be, he said nothing. He stood firm in his own shoes, conscious of no act that required concealment or apology, and he was too proud to ask for any measure of friendliness that was not freely given him. But a proud man may feel his secret sting, and Beauchamp was one to suffer most acutely from contumely or neglect. His heart was so open and generous, he was so ready to say a kind word, or do a friendly service, and he so unaffectedly loved his fellow-men, that he was pained inexpressibly when he saw himself shut out from regard. He sometimes felt like exclaiming, "What have I done, old friends? I am the same Beauchamp whom you once loved. If I have done anything amiss, or failed in any neighborly duty, or am become unconsciously changed in your eyes, tell me so, and let me set right what is wrong."

As the days went by, this coldness and estrangement increased. Beauchamp had often wondered before how

his uncle had changed from a gay young man in society to a cynical and sarcastic recluse, and he now began to see how naturally such a transformation might take place. He began to fancy himself another uncle Ralph, moving among men with no feelings towards them but indifference or contempt, and working steadfastly for himself.

There are stories among the common people of all nations, in which are represented human beings changed by magic into the semblance of animals. It is a grand vizier that becomes a stork, or a prince who is turned into a frog. The art of the story-teller is shown in taking the stork vizier or the frog prince into the scenes he has been daily familiar with, and exposing him to the rudeness of those who had once loved and honored him. The changed creature feels the contemptuous looks and the brutal behavior, and is wounded almost to tears; but he has lost the power of speech along with his human form and expression, and all he can do is to look with beseeching eyes, that seem *almost* human in their sorrow, and to bear with the humiliation until it pleases fate to restore him again to the shape of man. It is well for the most loved and appreciated youth to know that in this world it is entirely possible for him to fall under a similar enchantment, and seem to be the thing he is not — a something odious to human sight, and outside the pale of human regard. He may walk the streets and meet dulled or averted eyes. He may find a desert around him in public assemblies, and a solitude in crowded streets. The beards he has seen wag across the table in times of festivity may be turned stiffly away, and the features he has seen kindled with gladness may be like monumental effigies. This is merely to become “unpopular,” and it is something very easily done. When it is done, the transformed may weep bitter tears, but no one will regard

them. His heart will ache, but the pang will be unnoticed. He is lost to the world, as if he were Cheops, buried in the gloomy recess of the great pyramid.

Great minds rise superior to such things — do they? Yes, truly, their work in life goes on, and they may “bear to the stars their sublime heads,” but they will *feel* nevertheless.

Beauchamp was not dependent upon the little town, a very few persons excepted, and he went on with his studies unmoved. But he was wounded sore within, and his features saddened into a sterner, but perhaps not less attractive style of beauty. The world should not see that he was touched, he thought; but the world did see, as it always does. “No man liveth to himself.”

When this isolation begins, the gulf between the man and his fellows daily grows wider. He who is under the ban of society for any cause, or whose studies or pursuits lead him into solitary habits, may as well despair of retaining any *personal* affection or regard. If a man is missed from the usual gatherings, his absence is marked; and the reason is rarely known, or, if known, is rarely accepted. People will say it is pride, or reserve, or unfriendliness, or low company, or vice, that secludes him; else why does he not appear where *they* find pleasure and interest? The coldness increases and deepens into dislike. Then comes slander, the corroding curse of society — a curse so general and so deadly as almost to justify the bitterness of the haters of mankind.

As we have said, Beauchamp found nothing of which he should be accused; but he was sensible of the excited state of the public mind, and he knew that his intimate friend was an object of suspicion. He, probably, was aware, too, that his efforts to save the family of Milly were liable to misconstruction; and he had reflected that

the false rumors which had given the occasion for Miss Shelburne's final letter must have originated in his own neighborhood. Further, when the twins were spirited away, he had noticed that people spoke of the matter with a sort of half-conscious reference to him. Putting all these things together, he began to see that there was as much reason for the coolness and the aversion he had experienced as is generally requisite for such a result.

But Beauchamp was courageous as well as proud of his honorable name, and he would not allow any considerations of interest to sway him from the straightforward course he had marked out. His feelings towards Milly he was willing to avow, and stand by. He trusted that time would show how false were the rumors that connected him with any dishonor in secreting Sally, or in conniving at the escape of the twins. So he held his peace, and bore the altered looks of old friends with outward serenity.

It might seem strange that Beauchamp for so long a time had remained ignorant of what was done at Van Holm's. But the distance that was maintained towards him in town prevented any communication in that quarter; and at home it had been enjoined by his uncle that not a word should be said to him. It was late in March, when, one morning, Mr. Beauchamp appeared, and proposed to his nephew to take his horse, and ride out with him. Uncle Ralph was in very good humor, and talked freely. He questioned Beauchamp about his reading, and made running comments on the authors. He inquired about the school, and finding that Beauchamp was no longer engaged in teaching, he expressed his fear that there would be straitened affairs at home. Beauchamp said he did expect to be pinched, but thought he could manage to live through the year, and then he would try to increase his income in some way.

They were riding down the lane, and noticed the freshly sprouting grass in the fence corners, the swelling buds on the bushes, and the pearly rose flush on the peach orchards, that showed the coming season of blossoms. The high winds had ceased, and the sound of axes came from the fields where the spring clearings were in progress; and on every side rose columns of smoke from burning weeds and brush. The farming season was beginning in earnest.

"You have never been to see Van Holm since the fight — have you?" said uncle Ralph.

"No, it has been but a short time since I was well enough; and now I have a feeling of hesitation, — I hardly know what to call it. I can't bear to think of him, wasting away, as I'm told he is, without the least hope. I haven't any malice towards him, though I can't but think he once did our family a great wrong. But I feel that my presence would be painful to him, and somehow I think that the true kindness is to let him alone."

"He is a changed man, they say."

"I'm glad of it; and if I thought he wanted to see me, I would go and give him my hand. I'm sure I would, and tell him, heartily, that I forgive him."

"You were speaking of adding to your income. You know he can't run the farm, and he has niggers enough, and everything ready for the spring work, and I wouldn't be surprised if you could make a trade with him to lease his farm, or make a crop on shares."

"That would be very well if I expected to be a farmer. The lands are in good condition, and will yield well. But you know, uncle, I am wholly wrapped up in the thought of being a lawyer. I have already made some little progress, and this year will be very important to me. If I divide my time, — as I should have to do, — I shall be a

poor farmer, and certainly a poor student. I feel that I must put my whole strength into my studies, for a year, if not more; and, for the sake of my future prospects, I am willing now to be poor. I shan't need anything more, — except, perhaps, a little for mother."

"You can set the niggers at work. They can run the farm, and won't need an overseer; for Van Holm has brought them up well. And I would ride over once or twice a week to advise and help manage."

"I am greatly obliged," said Beauchamp, with feeling. "You are very kind and very thoughtful. But I haven't a right to ask or to receive such a favor. It would be a considerable undertaking to have a farm of five hundred acres on my hands, and I know you have enough matters of your own. No, uncle; I think I'll wait, and live a little meaner. I have a famous appetite along with my hard work, and I can satisfy myself with a corn pone as well as some epicures do with French dishes."

"We might go and see Van Holm, anyhow. It isn't far. You needn't hesitate. I have seen him, and I know he'll be glad to see you. There may be a little shock, but he'll be the better for it, and you too. Come, we'll just ride through this field, and up to the house."

Beauchamp was reluctant, but he yielded to his uncle's wish; and they went through a gate and skirted the edge of a wheat-field; then up by a grassy ravine through to the meadow, that lay stretched like a wide lawn before Van Holm's house. His men were at work in various places, and everything to a farmer's eye showed signs of forwardness.

They were admitted by Mrs. Van Holm, who, with a sad voice and humble expression, wished them good morning.

Uncle Ralph was in a cheerful mood; he returned her salutation in a breezy way, and asked to see Jacob. She

showed them into the sitting-room, where her husband sat near a window filled with potted geraniums and hyacinths, and seemed to gain less strength from the quickening sun than did the vigorous and beautiful plants behind him. Jacob started when he saw the tall figure, and pale, intellectual face of his neighbor, and, in his attempt to rise and speak, fell into a fit of coughing, after which he sank back into his easy-chair, and covered his face with his hands.

Beauchamp was greatly touched, and would have spoken, but uncle Ralph *looked* a command for silence, and then stepped forward and took the feeble hand in a tender fashion that was quite unusual.

"Come, neighbor, don't be cast down! We are not come to distress you. I wanted you to see my nephew, and I wanted him to see you. You will shake hands, I know." Beauchamp gave his hand to Jacob in silence.

"There," said uncle Ralph, "that is enough. Don't talk, neighbor; it will make you cough."

"You know how Beauchamp, my nephew, and the schoolmaster, happened to have their rifles out in the yard that day — don't you?" Jacob nodded.

"They were firing at a mark. The shingle was nailed to a tree just in a line with your party. You have been told? — Well, the schoolmaster is hit by a bullet in the jaw without any warning, and he and Beauchamp see a couple of rifles levelled at them. Shouldn't they fire? Was there any time for them to consider what it was all about? — I see you comprehend. Well, the schoolmaster was staggered, and I happened to be just in time to take his gun. I fired. You couldn't blame me, — defending my own kin! I aimed at Tom Fleemister, but I hit you and Houghton. I wish it had been Tom instead. Tom's ball struck Beauchamp in the forehead. You see the scar,

—still bluish, but fading out. Beauchamp has had a narrow squeak of it. It's awful to talk about these things as if it had been only boys' play; but you should know how it was. Now you can't have any revengeful feeling—can you? God knows how sorry I am! But here we are, face to face. We don't blame you. We are downright sorry for you. But it was to be so, and it can't be helped. Now, neighbor, won't you shake our hands, and say you forgive us? You know we wouldn't, either of us, have hurt a hair of your head willingly."

Jacob looked up, and gave a hand to each of the men who stood before him, and solemnly said, in his broken words, that he forgave them, and further, that he never had thought there was any wrong intended on their part.

"Come, now, let us cheer up. You'll be brighter when the sun grows warmer and you can get out of doors."

Jacob shook his head mournfully. Mrs. Van Holm was standing at the next window, looking out into the yard where some calves were tethered, and had frequent recourse to her apron to wipe her eyes.

"I see your men are at work," said uncle Ralph, "getting ready for the spring planting. You've a good set of hands. Are you willing to make a bargain for their hire till Christmas?"

"O, yes, — they can keep at work," said Jacob. "They'll pay the rent of the house."

"Their hire is worth a good deal more than the rent of the house," said uncle Ralph. "You can get their hire appraised by any fair man, and Beauchamp shall allow you the difference out of the crops."

Beauchamp was dumbfounded, and was going to ask what this meant; but his uncle gave his arm a hard squeeze, and frowned him into silence.

"We should hate to move," said Mrs. Van Holm, pathetically.

"You never *shall* move," said uncle Ralph. "I'll engage you shall have the house as long as you live. And the hire of your hands, men and women, will keep you comfortably."

"Does *he* agree to it?" asked Jacob, motioning to Beauchamp.

"Yes," said uncle Ralph. "You do — don't you, Beauchamp?"

"Agree to what?" said the young man, whose blood tingled with surprise.

"Why, that Mr. Van Holm and his wife shall continue to live in the house, and the rent be deducted from the hire of their niggers."

"What have I to say about it? You talk as if he didn't own the place!"

"No more does he. This place is yours. I have a deed here from Jacob and his wife, duly executed and witnessed, which I now hand over to you. Shall I, Jacob?" Jacob assented.

It would be impossible to describe the mingled feelings in Beauchamp's mind. He tried to speak, but broke down. If the knowledge had come to him at home, he could have borne it with more composure. But right there in front of the dying man, whose looks were so mournful, and while Mrs. Van Holm was weeping near by, it had an irresistibly touching effect. Beauchamp at length mastered his feelings enough to speak.

"Was this done of your own free will, Mr. Van Holm? — or was it got from you, while you were feeble, by the influence of others? I would not take this deed if it was not a voluntary act of your own."

"Mr. Wyndham has paid him back the original price of the land, and the interest," said uncle Ralph. "It was his own free motion; wasn't it, neighbor?"

"Yes," said Van Holm; "and Katrina's, too. It's all right, Mr. Russell. — Yours; not mine. I shan't be here long. There's enough *for her*. You say she shall live here. I am satisfied. — O God! but giving back the land don't wipe out the — the —" Jacob put up his hands to his face, and did not finish the sentence.

He grew calmer soon, and said, —

"You go on, Mr. Russell, with the farm work. Have it as you want. We shan't dispute about the niggers' hire. You can come and go, as you like. But come and see a poor, miser'ble old man as often as you can. We'd like to see him; wouldn't we, Katrina?"

"Yes, Mr. Russell," she said. "We are two poor old people, sorrowful like, and the house is gloomy; and young faces, you know, cheer us up. I hope you'll come often."

"I will," said Beauchamp, "if we are to let the past go by, and try to be as cheerful as we can. But I can't bear to come if I am to hear you moaning, and see only regret in your faces."

"If we had a son, we might be as happy as your mother," said Mrs. Van Holm — "no, not as happy. But we've no one to lean on; and, going down hill, as we are, it's so lonesome!"

The interview was growing painful, and the uncle and nephew thought it better to leave the old couple. So, bidding them good morning, they went out and mounted their horses. Beauchamp felt a strange sensation on the side next to the pocket in which he was carrying a deed for five hundred acres of land.

When they were fairly off, uncle Ralph said, "It's a pity, now, you can't attend to the farm. You might get something handsome for the crop, even after paying for the hands." There was a half malicious smile on his face, and his mustaches seemed to curl without assistance.

"You may think I'm a fool, uncle Ralph; and I'm not a man to despise such a farm as this. But I wouldn't take this farm as a gift if it were to break off my studies, or keep me from trying to succeed in my profession."

"Well, we might go back, and tell Van Holm we won't have his blamed old farm."

"I can stand your gibes, uncle; but you must know that I am in earnest about becoming a lawyer, — mind you, I say, a lawyer, — not merely to be admitted to the bar, and to dally with practice in a fine gentleman's way. And I should consider any good fortune only a curse in the end, if it were to take away my zeal, and so prevent me from cultivating myself and making the best use of my faculties. Poverty has done this much for me, — to show me that a man's best possession is in himself.

'My mind to me a kingdom is,'

as Queen Elizabeth's organist has sung."

"I like to hear you go on. I used to do so myself. But before you are fifty you'll say that a piece of land is about as good a friend as you've found, and as much of a kingdom, too. But go on with your law. You are right there. A well-read man is worth any two men. You'll have all the more to enjoy. *Be* the lawyer you talk about, and you'll be all the happier with your books, whether you succeed with the public or not. You'll know in time that all the ardent young men *don't* succeed, whether they deserve it or not."

"But if a man doesn't succeed, isn't it generally his own fault?"

"Why, yes; that's true in a certain way of looking at it, but not true in the way young enthusiasts regard it."

"The requisite talents, cultivated in the best way, and with proper industry and prudence, — surely they *must* succeed."

"But every one of your adjectives admits of a question. What are *requisite* talents? What is the *best* way of training? What is the *proper* kind of prudence? These open fields of discussion, and their answers may be as far apart as the poles. I see that you have a fondness for abstract notions. You'll find that every principle of right will require some toning down to fit it for practical use. Like all *young* men with a high sense of honor, you seem to think that perfect truth and sincerity are going to win. I tell you they won't. You've got to mingle a little worldly policy. Even the head of the Christian world said, '*Be ye wise as serpents*;' and He put this before the other injunction, to be '*harmless as doves*.' You will have to deal with men who have not your moral sense, — men who know of no motive but selfishness. You go among them with your high scorn of taking advantage, — with your idea of putting yourself in an equal or lower position, — with your transparent sincerity, and your kindly helpfulness, and see how you'll succeed! They'll pick your very eyes out. You take the foot of the table, and expect to be asked up higher! There are men of brass and pretence who'll go up above you, and look down on you condescendingly; and they would do so if Plato, and Montaigne, and Cervantes were in the lower seats to keep you company. You won't take the advantage! If you don't, you'll find that some one will take it of you, and take all he can get, too. You won't conceal your thought! Then some man who knows what you will do under given circumstances, will make use of you to serve his purposes. You will help those who need it! You can go on doing so, and not get through until the ocean of human misery is dry. My dear Beauchamp, life is a game in which all the figures, bishops, pawns, and all, are *animated*. They think they are working out

their own ends, and don't recognize the fact that they are moved by the great Player. Every man wants to count you into *his* plan, and use you for that end. You will try, on your part, to use *them* for your purposes. It is a matter of the strongest, or rather of the shrewdest. You can be as good at heart as you like. I know you will be truthful. You couldn't be otherwise; but you will have your own plans to carry out, and if you are to succeed you must refuse to become a pawn, or anything else, in another's game, unless it serves your own. A little selfishness is as necessary to existence as air and food. Wherever you see what they call a generous and public-spirited man, you will see one whose best efforts have been given for others, and who will surely die poor for his pains. If he should be in want, the public he has served wouldn't give him a crust. He would be regarded as merely a fool, that hadn't wit enough to take care of himself. — But I am sermonizing. I ought to have been a preacher. Shall we go back to Beech Knoll? I suppose you must return to your law books. Too bad — isn't it? — to have a farm to bother you now, in the most interesting period of your studies!"

"I like to hear you talk. There is a certain vein of truth in your worldly wisdom. I shall try to take out the gold from the hard quartz that holds it. I understand your drift, and believe you have wisely judged about me, — in some respects. I have no idea that I shall become anybody's instrument or tool. I have always liked Sir Henry Wotton's lines —

'How happy is he born and taught,
Who serveth not another's will!'

I mean to keep my individuality, and hope I shall have the prudence to keep my own counsel. But I don't yet

see that the next two lines are incompatible. At all events I like the sound of them.

'Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.

Or, to return to your illustration, I don't see why a man may not be as harmless as a dove, even if he is as wise as a serpent. But I have need of all my wisdom just now. I find there is a very bitter feeling prevailing in the town and neighborhood against me." He proceeded to mention some things which the reader already knows, and ended by declaring that he supposed he was at that moment the most unpopular man in Barry County.

"When these people know you have five hundred acres of land, they'll want to kiss your boots."

"I don't know about that. But I don't want any of that kind of good will. That is cheap, and any rascal can have it. I shall live to vindicate myself from every unjust suspicion; and I hope no one will know that I am worth even a garden patch until I do it. I mean to be as much respected while I am an heir without an estate, as if I were the largest landholder."

"You expect too much. People worship money, and they always will. Isn't it what they are all toiling or lying and cheating for? No humbug about that. Beauty and talent men can do without; or, at all events, they are tolerably well satisfied with what they have, and think they could grace almost any station; but you never saw a man who had money enough, and there was never a man so vulgar but fancied he could show a born duke how to live, if he had the means."

"Well, rich or poor, I mean not only to be clean, but to be *thought* so; and I know I shall make these people regret the wrong they are doing me."

"Perhaps they will regret it a little more when they know you are to have forty thousand dollars from Wyndham's estate."

"How is that?"

"Only this; that Van Holm's confession, which was the means of restoring to you your land, brings to light another fraud in the old suit against your uncle Isham, and which finally ruined your father. I have the evidence of Van Holm in black and white, that a document which turned the case in Wyndham's favor was a forgery. On the strength of it I have filed a bill in chancery to have the judgment reversed. It's only a question of time."

"But Wyndham is dead; and won't such a sum make his family poor?"

"There you are again! What is that to you? The money he got by crime from your father's estate is *yours*. It doesn't answer to be squeamish when your rights are concerned. But you needn't be at all apprehensive about the family coming to poverty. Mrs. Wyndham has a handsome property in her own right in Herbleu County, and I've no doubt she and her daughter Kate will go there to live. The son is a scapegrace, and it doesn't matter what becomes of him. Wyndham's estate can pay you without touching the land. So don't have any scruples about taking what belongs to you."

"This is a day to be remembered," said Beauchamp. "I woke up poor, I shall go to bed rich. But still, I tell you, I'm going to be a lawyer, and will *earn* my position just as if I hadn't a dollar."

"Well, he *shall* be a lawyer! And if riches are a burden to his soul, he can throw them away."

"By the by, uncle Ralph, what has become of that draft? That was a foolish prank, — worse for you than for me, because you are older, and ought to know better."

"The draft hasn't come back yet. Vessels make long passages in winter weather. I'll let you know when it comes. I have a little business in town, and I'll leave you here. You can ride home. Don't forget your law books. If you find your property won't let you study, you can give it to me."

Beech Knoll, that morning, was probably the happiest place on the western continent.

Mother and son sat hand in hand, thinking of the sorrowful past and of the bright future.

It was some time before Beauchamp could take up the treatise he was reading, and it is quite probable that he did not give the sharp and undivided attention to the author which he intended. He sat by the window that overlooked the Van Holm farm, and often found himself watching the field hands, and speculating upon the crops, instead of following the thread of legal statement.

His thoughts also wandered off, now and then, to Miss Shelburne, and he wondered whether she would be glad to hear of his good fortune. Had it pleased Heaven to have granted it before! If he only could have stood upon any terms of equality! His frame thrilled with the thought of the fiery, the irresistible appeal he would have made to her. But his flights always ended with a fall. For the fatal letter was still potent, though torn in pieces and burned.

CHAPTER XXXI.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.

WHEN Mr. Howard came out that evening there was a joyful scene. Beauchamp caught him by the shoulders and waltzed through the rooms, into the hall, out on the veranda, back again into the room where Mrs. Russell sat sewing, and then whirled him into a great chair in the corner. The noise reached the kitchen, and Phillis, and Scipio, and Sylvia came on tiptoe and peeped in, from a prudent distance, to see what was the matter. Beauchamp drew himself up until he seemed two inches taller than he was (as if six feet two was not tall enough), threw back his clustering hair, and, striking his breast in a mock-heroic manner, exclaimed, "Behold in me a landed proprietor! Base-born Yankee, respect me as the possessor of acres! Yonder farm of five hundred acres is mine. However, in consideration of what is past, we shall treat you all the same. You can sit at the same table with us, and breathe the same air, — always provided you pay due regard to the grand seigneur."

Howard, who had an inkling of what was going to happen, was not so much surprised, but he congratulated his friend with all his heart. The kitchen had heard the good news, and it was not long before there were joyful sounds from that quarter, followed by the liveliest hymns in Phillis's repertory. These the dogs heard, and howled in sympathetic chorus. The peacocks took up the sound,

and squalled from the trees by the spring, and there was a concord of rejoicing.

Howard then took from his pocket a letter, and handed it to Beauchamp, first getting a china plate by way of salver, and presenting it on a bended knee, with a "May it please your Highness!"

"After supper," he exclaimed. "We are hungry. It is our pleasure to eat. Mother, let us kill a peacock, roast him whole, and serve him with all his magnificent tail feathers!"

Mrs. Russell quietly smiled at this outburst, and ordered supper.

"If it were not for some considerations, I should say, 'To-night it is our royal pleasure to be drunk.' As it is, we will celebrate with *pêche liqueur* or lamb's-wool, or, rather, with both;—but moderately, as befits a man with such a position in the county."

After supper the apples were put to roast, and the friends sat down for an old-fashioned evening. Later, Beauchamp remembered his letter and opened it. It was from a dealer in produce in Louisville, a man who had formerly done business with his father, and whose relations with the family continued friendly. The contents surprised him greatly. The writer gave no particulars, but merely expressed an urgent desire for him to visit Louisville, and, if possible, the day after receiving the message. He added that it would be matter of great regret to all parties if anything should prevent his (Beauchamp's) coming.

"Go, by all means," said Howard. "It never rains but it pours. Perhaps somebody who cheated your grandfather is going to give you the Galt House." The letter was pondered over, but nothing more could be got out of it. It was an invitation without a reason; but

Beauchamp felt sure that his father's old friend would not send him such a letter for nothing. He determined to go, and soon made his simple preparations. The lamb's-wool was made, and the health of the new landed proprietor was duly honored.

In the morning Beauchamp started off on horseback, promising his mother not to stay more than a day in the city. The journey was tedious, as the roads were not very well settled; and he was so fatigued when he reached the city that he was glad to go to bed as soon as he had eaten his supper. He called next day upon his correspondent, and learned from him that the gentleman who wanted to see him was stopping at the Galt House. Beauchamp had lodged at a hotel of a humbler sort, the one generally frequented by his county people. The produce-dealer said he preferred that Beauchamp should go and hear what the gentleman himself had to say. The young man was disposed to be annoyed at this answer, and said that other people might have time to ride forty miles for nothing, but for himself, he liked better to stay at home. The other smiled, and suggested that he should not get out of patience, nor take it for granted that he had made the journey for nothing. Beauchamp finally went to the Galt House in no very good humor, and inquired for the person whose card he presented. He was presently shown into a private parlor, where he was accosted politely by a handsome young man, apparently a Spaniard or Mexican, speaking with a marked accent. The gentleman apologized for sending so far for him, and said he wanted to consult him about buying some slaves in Barry County.

Beauchamp was ruffled at this, and replied, "Do you take me for a nigger-trader, sir? And if you wished to

buy, why didn't you go to Barry County? It isn't any farther from here there, than from there here."

"It was about little Tim and Fanny I wanted to speak to you."

"They have both run away, sir. And I have had enough trouble on account of that family. I killed one man on the account of a sister of theirs. Another was shot, and will never recover. And I was hit on the head at the same time, and narrowly escaped. I am not to be asked to — to — Why, what's the matter with you, sir? Are you ill? For God's sake, what's the matter?"

The gentleman had listened with the liveliest interest, and his face showed the depth of his feeling as Beauchamp had told of the casualties; and at length he dropped his manner of speech, let his head droop into a humbler position, stooped, and asked, in the familiar plantation tone, "Why, Massa Beecham, don't you *know* me?"

"Why, Bertram, is it you? I'm right glad to see you." Their relative positions changed. It was Bertram who was now most obsequious, and it was Beauchamp who instinctively wore the look of superiority. Beauchamp was cordial and kind to his old playmate, but it would take the lifetime of a generation to put them on the same plane. The one would never forget that Beauchamp had been his master; the other could not forget that Bertram had been a slave. Between them was a great gulf fixed. But Beauchamp was, as he said, heartily glad to meet the long-absent son of his old mammy; and after the first surprise was over, they sat down to talk.

"Before I tell my story, Mr. Russell, — I must say Mr. Russell now, — I want you to know I shall send the price of Tim and Fanny to them that bought

them, by mail; so you needn't fear any trouble on my account. — I must begin back. After mother took us to Indiana, I went to school for a while; but I am afraid I wasn't a very good scholar, and I must have wore out her patience a heap, and my teacher's too. I was full of life, and liked to be out of doors. I had more fun in trapping prairie hens and partridges than in studying a spelling-book, and I was fonder of a horse than anything in the world. I used to ride farmers' horses to mill, and nothing I liked so much, when I grew big enough, as to break a colt. You will give me your hand on this, I know, for I remember what a bare-back rider you were, and how all the horses knew you and minded you. By and by I left school for good, and went to work at a stable. Then I went to a place where young horses were trained for racing, and there I staid some years, until I became a right smart rider. After I grew too big to ride races, an army officer hired me for his servant. He was stationed in one place after another in the Southern States, and I served him faithfully. I began to be afeard I might be sold as a slave (for I knew such things did happen) particularly after I saw a trader talking with my master, the captain. I wasn't going to wait for that, and so I ran away, and, after suffering great hardships, got on to Mexican soil. There I lived like a wild Indian for some time, until a Mexican saw me, and took a fancy to me. He had a large grazing farm, and thousands of cattle. He lived rough, but his cattle increased, and he became richer every year. There was really nothing in his house that you would expect to see, where a man had so much money. He only thought how many calves he would have in the spring, and how many hides he would have to sell in the fall. I served him for fair wages, and he treated me well. It was his interest to

do so, for I was of service to him. I was a bold rider, and I soon learned all the tricks of the graziers. I beat all the others in the care of his stock, and I was always on hand to keep off thieving Indians and half-breeds. I had become a sure shot, and I wasn't afraid of anything. I saved my wages, and had a very pretty pile of Mexican dollars and Spanish pillars. How long I might have stayed I can't say, for I was always restless like, and the grazing country was all explored for me. I had nothing more to gain there; so I thought. The Mexican had a wife and daughter. The wife died of a fever; and not long after a wild steer gored my master so that he died. As he lay mangled and dying, he nodded towards his daughter. I took the hint. I began to take some pains to dress and appear more like a gentleman. As I was now in charge of the place, I left the hard work to servants, — peons, — and was more like a master in an independent station. I had learned Spanish. I am not dark, as you know, — not darker than my master. I was much in company with my young mistress, Estella, and you can guess what happened. She married me, and to please her I went to church, — travelled a hundred miles to do it, — confessed, and was baptized with a Spanish name. We went back to the house where I had been a hired servant, and I became the master. My name was something like hers, and I am known in Mexico, and in New Orleans, where my business is done, as José de Sandoval. People sometimes put a 'Don' before it. But, as they say in our country, a cowl doesn't make a monk, and I am not a Don, *sure*. When I was fully settled in my new position as owner, I got a trusty man as overseer, and prevailed on my wife to come to Louisville with me. I didn't tell her the reason, for I didn't want to hurt her pride. We have spent two or three months here, living very retired;

but we are treated like white folks. You shall see my wife presently; but she doesn't speak much of any English, and she knows more about cattle than she does of matters that interest you. Well, my poor mammy died. I have heard the story; and for your kindness — But I won't stop now, for I can't speak of her without crying. There were Sally, and Harrison, and the twins *to be sold*, when I supposed they were free and out of danger. I watched the newspapers, and went where the bills were posted for sales in the country. I got a man to go up to Barry County with me to attend the sale, and we carried it off as well as we could. This was how I looked." Here he stooped and took something from his pocket, reached for a broad-brimmed hat, and in a moment appeared with a patch over his eye, and his face shaded by a *sombrero*.

Beauchamp here said, —

"But people told me the man had a scar above and below the patch, showing that one eye had been cut out."

"Only paint, Mr. Russell. I knew there must be an excuse for wearing a patch, and practised until I made a mark that looked like a scar."

"But you bid against each other."

"That was to carry out the plan. I didn't care what price I paid; and we ran up the bidding to frighten the country people off."

"But why didn't you buy the twins?"

"I didn't think it was safe to take the whole of 'em then. It might have made people suspect. And *shouldn't* I have been in a fix if I had been found out? No, it wouldn't do. It would have made a lively sale, to put up the high bidder and knock *him* off! I didn't care to run that risk. I saw they were both going to good mas-

ters, and I meant to do just what I have done. I went up to Barry County a second time to get them away, and that was a much harder job. I had to go alone and travel by night, for I didn't dare be seen. The little fellows were kept close, but after I got hold of Fanny at Mr. Pierrepont's, and made her know who I was, she went into the squire's for me, and brought out Tim. I met them just out of town, and we rode all night. I have put them at school across the river. Sally and Harry are at school, too. By and by, I'll get them together, and they shall live where they won't hear the name of slave. Beg pardon, Mr. Russell; I don't mean offence. I know you're a kind master; but a man who's been once free don't want the best one in the world. — And how is your good mother, Missis Mildred? The best and kindest lady I ever saw."

Beauchamp answered that his mother was well, and, since he had got over his hurt, she was very happy.

"And Mr. Wyndham?"

"He died a few days ago."

"You won't get mad if I ask if your affairs with him are settled?"

"No, — I know you mean to be kindly. My affairs are not settled with him, or rather with his estate. There is a suit pending to get back what my father paid."

"But he got most all you had."

"Yes," Beauchamp answered with a little sense of being annoyed.

"I heard so. I remember the grand old times, when there was horses and dinners, and all things in plenty."

The thought was not pleasing to Beauchamp, but he did not make any answer.

"You should be like the old Squire Madison. I should be clare set up to see you with a big farm, and with

folks to wait on you. You're not born to live in a poor way."

"I expect to live comfortably. I shall be a lawyer," said Beauchamp, with simple dignity, and a little shade of reserve.

"If the land was clare of debt," Bertram persevered, "you would be on a good footing."

He was getting pretty near forbidden ground.

"And as I have enough at my banker's in New Orleans, I want to give you a draft — no, don't be mad — lend it to you, I meant to say — enough to lift the mortgage and stock the farm. Don't look so, for God's sake! Don't look so! Ain't I your black mammy's son? If I *am* borne a slave, and if I *am* black, — though they don't call me black in Mexico, — mayn't I show I have a heart? Mayn't I offer a trifle to the son of the best woman I ever called mistress? Do you white people have all the right to do good with your money? Would you break my heart by saying no? I have more than I shall ever want to spend. I should like to hand you over a million, instead of ten thousand. — What, you won't take it! Don't say it, Massa Beauchamp, — Mr. Russell, I mean, — for God's sake, don't say it! *You*, to shut me out from the only chance I ever had to show how I loved you! *You*, that run the risk of life, facing the bullets of those devilish Fleemisters! *You*, that held my mammy's hand when she died! No, Mr. Russell, you *can't* do it. I know you're proud. I honor you for it. You say you will make your own way. I hope you will. I *know* you will. For you've a great, noble heart. But you musn't turn away from a poor fellow like me, who wants to show he has a heart, too! —

"Shan't he take it, Estella?"

The door opened, and a charming vision appeared in

the room. A dark, girlish-looking creature, simply but richly dressed, with tolerably regular features, and great, lustrous eyes, approached Beauchamp, grasped his hand, and kissed it. Bertram by this time was overcome, thinking of all the troublous past, and was weeping profusely. Estella looked from one to the other appealingly. Bertram dried his eyes, and spoke to her a few sentences in Spanish. She seized Beauchamp's hand again, and kissed it with a passionate earnestness.

"Estella says you must take it," said Bertram.

"Then you must tell her what I say," said Beauchamp, in a kind, but decided tone. "Only day before yesterday, I had given me a deed of a farm of five hundred acres. I am rich. My uncle tells me I shall surely recover a large sum from Mr. Wyndham's estate. I don't need any assistance whatever. I don't doubt your gratitude, and I am just as well satisfied that you have made me such an offer, as I should be to take the money. But I am not in need, and I certainly can't accept it."

Bertram looked disappointed, and then said, —

"But you'll allow me to send a small present to your good mother? Estella shall select it. She won't refuse a trifle from the boy she used to pat on the head; I know she won't."

"As you please. You know I am here on horseback."

"Yes, but I'll send by the stage. You may have something to do in the city, and I'll not keep you all day. But won't you come back this afternoon? I may think of something I want to ask you about."

Beauchamp said he would return after an hour or two, and left the hotel. The interview gave him much to think upon. There was a man with quiet manners, and a ready command of language, fluent, if not always grammatical, and a wide experience of life; and after a singular course

of adventure, he had become rich, and was now beyond the reach of the law by which he could have been sold as a slave. Yes, a freed slave had almost forced him to take a loan or gift of ten thousand dollars.

The reader should remember that the children of Milly had all inherited her regular Caucasian features, and straight black hair. Bertram had also a comparatively fair skin. He was an erect and noble-looking man. He walked, and spoke, and looked like a man of assured position and character. People in Boston, in 1874, are familiar with the face and bearing of a man of similar birth, who shows that the characteristics of a gentleman are not peculiar to the ruling race.

Beauchamp could not but ask himself what white man in Barry County would have made, on the whole, a better appearance, or would have shown such gratitude as this former slave. But probably the worst result of slavery was the indelible stain it left on the slave, and the never-to-be-eradicated prejudice it left in the mind of the master. Beauchamp saw more than he would have admitted to himself; but it was not possible that he could see an equal in any man of such birth. Probably the feeling instilled in his mind from infancy would remain through life, no matter how much reason might contend against it.

Beauchamp was soon tired of walking about the streets. He had very few acquaintances in the city; and when he had stopped at the stable to see his horse, and had called on the produce-dealer to apologize for his hasty speech, he had nothing left to do. He went to his hotel and dined, and then returned to the Galt House. Bertram said he had procured a trunk which he would have sent by the stage; the contents, he said, were for Mrs. Russell. But he added, that there was a small writing-desk in it which he begged him to accept. It was nothing, he said,

and he didn't want to make a mystery of it, but he wished the little trifle it contained to be kept for his young master's wife.

"I have no wife," said Beauchamp, gravely. "And I don't think I ever shall have."

"O, I can tell better than that," said Bertram. "You'll marry. The girls won't let *you* be an old bachelor, like your uncle."

"I am not sure about it," said Beauchamp.

"We shall see. And here is the key. Now don't shake your head again. This isn't money, and it isn't much. You must take it, and when *she* sees it — as she will see it — tell her it is from one of the despised colored people, if you please, but from one who would lay down his life for you. Now don't let us say any more about it. I hate to *talk* about being grateful. I like to *do* something, and then have done with it."

Beauchamp staid an hour, and answered Bertram's questions about the county people, and heard his plans for educating his brothers and sisters, and then rose up to go. Bertram shook his hand warmly, and held it, as if he felt more than he could utter. The pretty Estella wept at his going, and again kissed his hand. He gave them a hearty farewell.

"Really," he said to himself, as he walked away, "if I were to be much with Bertram, I'm afraid I should become an abolitionist!"

When he got home the next evening, and related the adventure to his mother and Howard, he was amused to see how differently they received it. To the Yankee the story was full of romance, and he evidently thought his friend had been cool and distant to his old playmate. Mrs. Russell, the kindest woman in the world, was afraid her son had been compromised in some way. She hoped

he didn't go to the dinner table with Bertram and his wife, and she wondered if it was known at the Galt House that Don José was only a mulatto woman's fairer son. Still she was glad to hear that Bertram was prosperous, and she said she wasn't too proud to accept his present, if it was only a modest one.

In due time the trunk arrived, and the present was found to be far from modest: two patterns of black silk for dresses, a rich shawl, numberless fine laces, both black and white, a sunshade, and a variety of knick-nacks, including some black ribbons wrought with flowers in gold thread.

"What a gay little mother you'll be!" said Beauchamp.

"It's too much," said Mrs. Russell, "and I've a mind to send them back."

"You can't," said Beauchamp. "Bertram was to leave for New Orleans on the boat the day after I left."

The writing-desk Beauchamp took out, and carried to his own room, and examined it by himself. He did not care, even in joke, to repeat the conversation he had with Bertram about the destination of its contents. The "writing-desk" proved, when opened, to be a casket, with superb jewels, set in diamonds and emeralds. Beauchamp had never seen anything so magnificent; he thought himself a new Sindbad discovering the treasures of a king. "He has deceived me," he said to himself. "'A trifle' indeed! It's a present for a duchess. Well, I must keep it until I see Bertram. And if I keep it until *she* accepts it, I think I shall keep it a good while."

Returning to the sitting-room, he said, "I've always had a mean opinion of a free negro. You know that here everybody calls them trifling, no account. But Bertram's case is a staggerer. If they were all like him, I should have very different ideas."

"We should not make up our minds in a hurry," said Howard, "upon a matter like the capability of a race. The lifetime of one man isn't long enough to enable him to form a judgment. A century isn't long enough. The French chroniclers, like Froissart, had a very poor opinion of our Saxon ancestors; but the verdict of history is, that the Saxon blood in the end was better than the Norman. You see a black man under every conceivable disadvantage. He is but a few generations removed from barbarism. He has been cultivated, as a plough-horse is, merely for useful labor. He is a slave, and, as such, has the slave's vices of lying, stealing, and obsequiousness. How can you expect manliness when it has been whipped out of a man? or truth when you make it his interest to lie? or industry and thrift when the stimulus to those virtues has been taken away from him? I can easily see that centuries might pass before the negroes, as a class, would attain to moral elevation, or would acquire the industrious habits and cultivation to make them good citizens. Even after they are free—if they ever are to be, which God only knows—they will be long in a transition state; and that is always a trying time for the most favored races. Look at any people after a long war, or after an insurrection, or other great excitement, even a great reformation. You will see the worst passions let loose. Idleness and unthrift will be the rule, and a generation will pass before society will settle to its normal condition."

"But I have a firm belief in their natural inferiority," said Beauchamp. "They have no intellect, and their faces show it."

"That may be so," returned Howard, "but I fancy you would not have seen any intellect in the face of a blue-hided Briton, such a one as looked out to see Cæsar's

galleys landing; nor in a wild Scot or Pict. This matter of intellect is a curious subject for speculation. Two or three centuries will develop it, double it; and in the same period another nation may sink to comparative idiocy. As to the *expression* of intellect, that is curious too. I believe you can't tell from a picture whether a man has intellect or not. It is all in the imagination of the beholder. The French dramatist and romancer, Dumas, who is just now making such a stir, has, I am told, the features and the woolly head of an African. Take his picture and look at it, and if you didn't *know* it belonged to a man of genius, you would think it was the very image of a field hand. There are several English statesmen I call to mind, who look like dull and prosy parsons, that would preach you to sleep—and would like to do it. When the power comes, and *you know it has come*, the face becomes luminous to you. An artist will take the picture of a clodhopper, and by lighting the eyes, make it *speak*. You say that Bertram's case is 'a staggerer.' Suppose, now, he had a suitable training, and by some revolution, he was made a senator from a state like South Carolina, that has a large preponderance of blacks. Imagine him in the Senate Chamber, in the midst of an harangue. You might make a picture of him that would be as fine as Clay's—though after a different pattern, to be sure."

"But Bertram's power is in his white blood. A full-blooded African is a dull creature."

"Grant it is so. I presume it is so. But you can't doubt that the order of creation is *progress*, and for all races after their appointed modes of development. And this despised black race may, in centuries, mature into something that even you would admire. If the negroes should ever be free, they will begin to lose the vices that

slavery fostered, and will strengthen in all their better qualities. The share that any generation has in influencing the character of a dependent and imitative race, like the negroes, may be small. But we must not be wiser than the Creator, nor impatient at His slow methods. We should rather endeavor to recognize and assist in the growth of what is good, and not assume that the negro is an exception to the rule which history and science show to be universal and eternal."

That day letters came from a Louisville banker to Squire Hamilton and Mr. Pierrepont, enclosing drafts for the amounts they had paid for the children they had bought. But the letters gave no intimation as to whom the money came from, nor did they mention a why or wherefore.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A YOUNG LADY'S DIARY.

MISS SHELBURNE made her intended journey to New York in company with her cousin. They remained in the city a few days, when they were met by Mr. and Mrs. Loewenthal, and the cousin returned home.

As she had foreseen, her getting away proved to be a matter of great difficulty. Her relatives thought New York immeasurably distant, and farther away in idea than in fact. There are few sections of the country in which there is such a strong *home* feeling as in Kentucky. The Yankee, it is well known, finds a home almost anywhere; and wherever he goes, he carries in his pocket, along with the garden-seeds, the germs of a town meeting, a church, and a school-house. If he has planted these, he is content to settle down and wait. He is not unwilling "to visit," either, provided he can go where he is not prevented from asking questions. Virginia and the Carolinas, too, have always been on visiting terms with the northern cities. Southern horses contend at the northern race-courses; southern planters and their families fill the opera-houses and theatres; southern belles display their charms at Saratoga, and did, until lately, at Newport and Cape May. But the natives of the agricultural region of the south-west, and of Kentucky in particular, have been isolated by feeling and long habit. Until recently, few people from that state ever ventured over the moun-

tains, except to purchase stocks of goods. The idea of a young lady of fortune going off to the Hudson River, to spend months in the society of a Yankee schoolmistress, who was married to a Dutchman with an unpronounceable name, was something unheard of. So Mr. Shelburne thought; so his family echoed; so all the neighbors said. It was a foolish freak, and could not fail to injure her socially in her county. She might go to New York, or Philadelphia, or Baltimore, for a short season, to see something of fashionable life, and, if she remained, while away, at a hotel, under the protection of relatives, it might even give her some *éclat* upon her return. But it would never do to live in terms of intimacy with a northern family, and expect to preserve her principles and her pride as a true daughter of Kentucky. So Mr. Shelburne urged; so the family insisted; so all the neighbors exclaimed. So all the hands in Herbleu County were thrown up — white and jewelled hands, nervous and strong hands, hard and clenched hands — in various elevations of astonishment, sorrow, and spite. The young ladies said *they* wouldn't do such a thing against the advice of their relations; the young admirers wondered if there was no one good enough for her to marry at home; and the elders said she would come back (if she ever came back at all) an abolitionist, or an infidel, or both.

Literally, she had torn herself away; for her family looked upon her as virtually dead to them from that moment; and society had passed a final decision in her case. The preacher of the neighboring church had remembered her quite pointedly in his prayer the Sunday before she left, and trusted that the erring lamb might yet be restored to her protecting fold. It was evident that he regarded the country beyond the Hudson as being without the general oversight of Deity.

But she had determined to go, with or without reason, and, as we have seen, she went.

At this late period in our story it would not be judicious to tax the reader's patience with any elaborate introduction of new characters; though the situation of a beautiful young lady of fortune, and one so lively and interesting as we hope Miss Shelburne has proved herself, newly alighted in the neighborhood of a great city like New York, might offer a tempting field for a romancer or a satirist. That city is a marvellous romance in itself, and the successful limner of manners in such a centre of fashion might find himself a satirist before he was aware. The diffident muse shrinks from the splendors of the Fifth Avenue, no less than from the nights of Bohemian clubs, and the miracle workshops of Wall Street.

Let us imagine the young lady cordially received, and taken at once by steamboat conveyance to a beautiful town on the North River, fifteen miles or more above the great city. By good fortune, she began early to note down her daily impressions, and the few unimportant events of her life, and we shall present some selections from this diary in lieu of any connected narration.

RIVERCLIFF, Feb. 12, 184-.

I am sitting in my room in a spacious house that stands on a slope east of the river. As I look out of my windows, I can see the noble stream, covered with sailing-vessels and steamboats, and with barges, and canal-boats that follow on as if they were animals led in a caravan. Across the blue water, and stretching somewhat above, are the Palisades, a precipitous wall of rock that makes the view grand, which would otherwise be only beautiful. The morning sunlight playing on these brown masses is

something very fascinating. I find myself stopping every few minutes to look out, while dressing for breakfast, as if there were danger that the panorama would go by. I am never tired of watching the qualities and tints of color that appear when one and another rocky prominence is lighted up. In the evening, the dusky and purple shadows settle behind the cliff and sleep in the recesses, until the sun goes down; and then the moon throws a silvery gray light over the scene, and it seems to change before my eyes like fairy-work. On the south-western verge are seen the blue hills of mist which they call Neversink, and these, I am told, are visible far out at sea. Staten Island is in sight too, and I fancy I can see its villas like white specks in the distance.

There is a handsome garden below the house, extending down half way to the water, but there is no sign of life in it yet. We have flowers in the house, however, — hyacinths, crocuses, and the like, as well as others that bloom through the year.

The view without is magnificent, and would be if I had to look out from a garret; but everything is comfortable and tasteful within. There are windows on two sides, and pictures and engravings on the other two. One engraving has given me a great surprise — I can't say whether it is of pleasure or pain. It is a figure of a beautiful youth lying stretched out by a brook. Mrs. L. says it is an illustration of a poem by Schiller. I started back when I first looked at it. It is *the very image* of a certain tall and graceful young man in Kentucky — like him in his shape and stature, and like him in his fine intellectual face. — B. R. could not wish to be more faithfully nor more poetically drawn.

I sit in a great, springy chair, covered with chintz, with a table near me, and the engraving over it; and I

find the air as agreeable as the out-door air of one of our mild April days in Kentucky. I miss our great, cheerful fireplaces, but Mr. L. has succeeded in producing a climate of his own; and we are quite indifferent to the chill winds that blow from the ocean up the river.

My old teacher is but little changed, though a shade more matronly. She is all light and purity — and *such* a model of order and method, too! She seems all calm — a sort of northern calm it is, and not a tropical languor; but I see, or rather I *know*, that her vigilant eyes are never quite in repose. The appointments of the house are simply perfect. Such neatness, such comfort, such noiseless but efficient service! I never saw the like. I wonder if it has not taken a great deal of scolding or of patience to bring her maids to such exact and orderly habits.

Mr. L. is the German consul, and, of course, goes nearly every day to his office in the city. How my shy and maidenly teacher came to marry a foreigner, I can't imagine. She looks, though, as if there were a strong current of feeling under her calm demeanor. I am sure she must have married for love; otherwise she wouldn't have married at all. She is a woman *I* would have chosen, if I had been a man; but the women whom *we* love are not often the ones that men love — else why are there so many sweet-tempered and lovable women left single? There are plenty of the other sort married, I am sure. And there are more of the unmarried in the east, I'm told, than in our state. But how could a nice and delicate creature, with a skin like alabaster, have fancied a dark and black-bearded man like Mr. L.? They both wear glasses — in self-defence, I tell them; and I think of my favorite Burns's advice: —

"Conceal yoursel' as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection,
But keek through every other man
Wi' sharpened, sly inspection."

Hers are of gold, such as she wore in the old times; his are of the finest blue steel wire. The swelling lenses of his glare in the evening light like the eyes of an animal; hers are transparent, and her sweet blue eyes show through them like turquoises seen in water. So, according to Burns, he rather has the advantage.

This is the only married couple I ever saw whose behavior to each other can be held up for imitation. They are fond of each other, as they ought to be; but they don't presume upon that to *parade* their affection in public, nor to neglect any of the little arts of politeness. He is evidently a superior man, finely educated; but he is as simple and straightforward as — as I used to think B. R. was. He is *attentive* like a lover. So many men, when once married, appear to forget all that, and take everything for granted. As to Mrs. L., I cannot find words of my own to paint her. I find myself repeating Wordsworth constantly, for his familiar lines could never have been so true of any other woman.

"A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.

A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light."

They have been married two years, but there is no little L. — which I am sorry for.

Feb. 14. It is Saint Valentine's day, but the good saint has grown unfashionable. The old traditions are forgotten and given up as childish. Is the world, as it grows older, *outgrowing* the fresh-hearted legends of the times when a maiden might look out for the youth that was to become her "Valentine"? The thing that is nearest and dearest must not be spoken of, not even to one's self. We may talk of books, or laces, or of drives and balls; but the one subject which is in the very heart of heart, and without which the whole world is poor, it is immodest to mention. We must act and talk, and (if we could) think and feel, as if it had no existence, except in fiction. The pensive young man by the brook does not do so.

Mrs. L. says I must study German, and I am to-day beginning the first lessons. She promises that I shall very soon read some of the minor poems of Goethe, and the ballads of Bürger, as they are easier and so much more attractive than prose.

Mr. L. begins to show himself a bit of a quiz. He has been talking in high-flown phrase, but with an air of gravity, about me — likening me to some statue, I forget which, and wondering how I was ever allowed to leave Kentucky. Among other things, he asked me if I was not followed to the border of the state by a procession of weeping youths, and whether I had not been obliged to part with a great many locks of hair as mementos.

I wonder if either of them ever thought there was a reason why I, after two years of silence, should suddenly propose to leave home. I trust not. I mean to be *circumspect*.

Our way of life is very simple. We breakfast early — at eight o'clock — because Mr. L. has to go to the city. I read until noon, when I walk for half an hour, or take

a drive, generally with Mrs. L. There is a lunch served at one o'clock, but I barely taste it, saving my appetite for dinner, which is served at four, or a little later, on Mr. L.'s return. We meet in the evening at eight for tea and conversation. These are our simple customs. They are *rules*, to be sure, but we don't feel them as restraints. I fear I had my own way *too much* at home in all respects. It is not well for us to know that everything can be made to give place to our whim for the time.

Feb. 20. I have had a real sensation. I have seen Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*. We went to the city in the afternoon, and stopped at the house of a friend of Mr. L.'s, and visited the theatre in the evening. I never saw a play in grand style before. The costumes and stage effects were *magnificent*. The principal actor was a fine-looking man, large and muscular; but he walked and talked rather too much as if he thought himself "the noblest Roman of them all." It was very fine, I know, but I had seen and heard Henry Clay so many times, that I couldn't admire the actor as others did. I really thought he *ranted*, especially in the strong passages, and I couldn't keep from thinking how Mr. Clay would have uttered the lines. *He* was majesty itself. With his tall figure, his wonderful eyes, and his musical voice, what an actor he might have been! Poor man, I think sometimes he will never be anything else. His many defeats, I fear, will kill him. People here, I find, think as I do, that it is a *shame* that so many common men, that nobody ever heard of, are put before him!

We remained in the city over night, and this morning Mrs. L. and I came home on the boat. Shall I ever tire of the beautiful scenery of the Hudson?

Feb. 22. I have been devoting the morning to writing letters home, — two to uncle Shelburne's family, and one to uncle John. I have painted my life here with rose-color, as, indeed, I should; but I tried to let them know that I still keep a warm heart for my friends far away.

Feb. 26. I have been very industrious. I am already trying to pick out some lines of German poetry, though Mrs. L. cautions me against hurrying, as she fears I may neglect the essential foundations. I have tried the piano, too, and its beautiful tones were so sad — I mean the airs I played woke sweet and tender thoughts of the past. I am to practise scales, and those odious exercises. When I looked over my lesson I said to Mrs. L., "Why, that's only a five-finger exercise!" — "True," she said; "and *five fingers are all you have!* Make them obedient at all times and *voilà tout.*" I answered that what I liked in a player was the feeling shown. "Yes," she replied, "but the feeling is inborn; you could never acquire that, though your sense of the beautiful may be cultivated; what you must do is to learn how to express it, and for that purpose we want the five educated fingers."

Feb. 28. Piano practice drags a little. I think I *could* become a player, but I am daily asking myself if it is worth all the time it costs. I can amuse myself *now*, and to play well I shall have to sacrifice some things which I think are quite as essential. German goes on famously. I read a little, and with real delight. Mr. L. tries to tempt me into talking, and holds out his hands, as I might say, to induce me to venture a step. I haven't got beyond half a dozen phrases. He was speaking, the other evening, of the literary merit of some of the little

poems I have been trying to read. He reads Shakespeare, and fully believes that he is the greatest of the moderns—and greater than the ancients, too, in his judgment. He loves Burns, though I tell him that *of course* no German can understand Scotch! But he thinks the shorter poems of Goethe and Schiller, and those of the witty and wicked Heine, form a class for which we have no parallel in English. They are simple thoughts, each shaped and polished like a diamond. Our poets, he thinks, shine more in longer poems in which there is sustained power. To make a short poem in perfect symmetry, and set it in perfectly-fitting words, he thinks is a rarer art.—I don't know that I remember the precise words he used, and I cannot tell whether his opinion is correct; but I have never seen any versicles in English that seem to me so exquisite as those I have been reading. Part of my new pleasure, Mr. L. says, comes from a sense of surprise at the double image, or rather at the image reflected from two surfaces. I suppose he means that in translating I have the delight of seeing the thought at the point where the two languages approach each other, so that I see its image in two mirrors at once. As the thought is often so subtle as to elude us in one language, we can catch its meaning in the other.

I should like to review French; but though my friends understand it, I find they don't care greatly for French literature. Mr. L. ridicules the language, and makes us laugh by his forced nasal pronunciation.

March 1. We have been driving across to have a view of the Sound. About three miles distant we found a spot from which there was a perfectly magnificent view. On our right was the distant city, only a few steeples piercing the cloud of smoke. Nearer were the beautiful

islands, and vessels were picking their way among them. On our left was the broad and blue water, and there was just wind enough to ruffle the surface and to throw up the white caps. It seemed to me I should never tire of looking at this scene.

I have found a new pleasure for the night, and that is to watch the great steamboats go by with their brilliant lines of lights, and to hear the roar of the wheels, and the steady working of the engine. I can raise the curtains and see this gorgeous spectacle even after I have lain down.

March 3. Our Sundays are not so agreeable as they might be on account of a disagreement about the matter of going to church. Mrs. L. was strictly brought up, and has always been in the habit of attending divine service, while Mr. L. shrugs his shoulders, and evades argument, but stays at home. I have generally been with madame, though her church is not the one I used to attend at home. She always remains after morning worship to teach a class in the Sunday school. To-day I stayed with her. Mrs. L. says that, whatever one may think of any particular doctrines, the habit of giving a stated time to the contemplation of religious truth, and to the culture of the moral nature, cannot be safely neglected. She says that we think *too much* of business, science, literature, music, and everything else, in comparison with our spiritual wants. When Mr. L. says, "That is an old story," she answers that it *is* an old story, but it is one that ought to be repeated a thousand times for every new soul that comes into the world. Moral truth, she urges, is the highest truth, moral worth the highest worth.

I am not sure that I understand what her faith is; but

I never felt such an influence from any religious teacher before. She lifts me up to a higher view. She makes me feel a scorn for what is base and unworthy. I am sure I am totally changed in my views of life. If all people were as sincere, as considerate, as kindly, as just as she, what a happy world this might become!

March 5. Spring is really coming. I have heard a blue-bird. The willows are hanging out their queer little cat's tails, and the bushes by the river have a misty look of pink over their tips. To-day I saw some strange wild flowers in a sheltered place. The gardener is at work upon our terraces and slopes, and though the winds here are so rough at times, I think I see the stir of Nature's new birth.

March 8. I have been unable to keep from thinking about my visit to Barry County. The picture over my table so often recalls B. R. to mind! In the few times I saw him, he impressed me as a man of perfect truth. He was an ardent lover, and a most generous one.

I begin to see that my "policy," which I foolishly boasted of to uncle John, was a piece of disingenuous conduct—the poor excuse of a frivolous girl for holding on to the admiration of half a dozen young men by giving them tacit encouragement, while I had never a moment's thought of listening to them seriously. I can't think of myself going about the country with such a train! A vain and spoiled creature! It was not wise nor generous. The love of one faithful heart is worth more than all the triumphs of the most admired belle.

What if uncle John was hasty in his judgment! He *may* have written to me upon the strength of rumors that have no foundation. But I have left open to B. R. no way of explanation. If he is still what I thought him!

But this is too dreadful. Such a proud and sensitive man as he is, he must have suffered more than I care to think of. Shall I ever know? I would give all I possess to know. And if he *were* what I once thought him!—

March 10. Sunday has come again, and I have been to church with Mrs. L. The sermon was upon Truth as an element of character, and as a law in human affairs. The discourse was mostly a repetition of well-known principles, and I was not much excited over it. But in the latter portion, the preacher used an illustration that impressed me forcibly. He said that, to the All-Seeing Eye the whole complexity of human action might appear as a figured and tessellated pavement, or a vast mosaic. Every act, even the smallest, has its place, like a piece of chiselled stone; and it is met and bounded on every side by related acts like other fitting stones. Nothing that is done is so insignificant that one can say that it does not matter whether it was done or not. Therefore, he said, a lie has no place in the universe of God. It touches nothing that is true, and so agrees with nothing, fills out no part of the pattern. The great mosaic is complete without it, and there is no way to put it secretly into any nook or corner. It must be left out, and will be spurned away as a piece of useless rubbish. He instanced the case of an ordinary lie, such as falsely saying that a man had gone to a place named at a certain time. The statement might be plausible, and there might be circumstances that tended to confirm it. But if it was possible to examine it in its relations to other established facts, its falsity would be exposed. Something else, that was true beyond any doubt, would be found inconsistent with it. The lie would not fit with truths around it so as to produce symmetry.

I wish I were a "detective" for a few hours, and that I could go through Barry County invisible! I should like to look out the "related facts" to that terrible affair at Beech Knoll!

After church I stayed with Mrs. L. to see her with her class in Sunday school. She has eight or ten young girls, from fourteen to eighteen years old. How I wish I could have had such a teacher at the same age! Three of these girls are from a boarding-school near by, and one of these I am sure is a quadroon. She has a Spanish name, and I know Spanish ladies are dark; but this girl has the bright, sunny, peach-colored cheeks which the sallow Spanish girls never have. Her eyes, though they are very beautiful, have a *peculiar* look. I can't describe it. But I have seen such eyes in Lexington, — never such modest ones, — and they belonged to the quadroons. If she is Mexican, as it is said, I don't understand how her speech is so free from a foreign accent. Mrs. L. appears to be very fond of her, and tells me that she is simple-hearted as a child. — Her name is Sara de Sandoval. There are strange things in Mexico. Fortunately there are no intermarriages between different races in this country.

I suppose I must have looked at her quite steadfastly, for I met her eyes, and saw that she noticed my gaze. She did not seem to be displeased, but rather attracted. She looked as if she would like to know me. Probably I shall meet her, for I intend to go for an hour every day to the German class in her school, as I want to improve every opportunity to talk and read the language.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DIARY COMES TO A PAUSE.

MARCH 16. The weather is still chilly at times, and the winds that come up the river are piercing; but the sun is warm at midday, and I am quite regular in my daily walk. Sometimes I go to the highest part of the hill, and sit down to watch the steamboats go by. When the wind is south, vessels often gather in the narrower part of the river above, and drift slowly with the tide in picturesque groups. It is a pleasure to me to see them, but how provoking it must be to the crews that are wind-bound! *They* don't care that their white sails on the blue water, with the cliffs behind, are making a picture for me. I suppose that the actions of one person make only a point, or a bit of color, in the view that is spread before another.

When I wrote this, I thought at first it was some of my own wisdom. But I generally find that my reflections are only reflections; that the light has come to me from some other mind. I suppose I was thinking of some verses that the transcendental poet Emerson has written, — though what "transcendental" means, I am sure I haven't been able to understand.

"Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling the bell at noon,

Dreams not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed hath lent."

March 20. Señorita de Sandoval passed by me to-day on my walk. Her eyes showed that she recognized me. I see her at school, though she is not in my class. I wish I could know that she is not a quadroon! Next time, however, I shall speak to her. This is not Herbleu County, and there is no one to make unkind remarks. I wish I could have a different feeling. I hear the Scripture read that says, "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth," but it seems only a form of words, without any meaning. If I felt it to be *true*, what I have written here about this girl would be a wretched piece of pride. Still, I don't *make* the opinions of society, and I don't know that I am responsible for the universal public sentiment. And I am sure that whatever else a young lady can do, she cannot afford to be *singular*. I would not dare speak, or even *think*, for myself upon such matters if I were *at home*. A colored girl! How could I have allowed myself to become interested in her! She is dressed modestly, but she displays exquisite taste, especially in choosing becoming colors. She was a poor scholar at first, but is now trying hard to equal her classmates.

March 25. I have spent two days with Mrs. L. among her friends in the city. We visited picture galleries and attended a grand concert. I don't know how to set down a word about the pictures, and I begin to see that Art, which I thought was a word only used with a capital by affected and pretentious people, has a real meaning, and forms an ideal world in itself. New York is a wonderful

city. I am amazed at its size. Yet the people think it has only begun its growth, and they have actually built their reservoir for the Croton water, some miles away from the City Hall! As if the streets would ever be filled out so far! I hope to see some other cities before I go home.

March 28. I have received letters from uncle John's family. They do not mention B. R. I suppose, by that, he has recovered; for if he had died (how those words stare at me out of the paper!) they would have mentioned it. The youth above me still lies stretched out by the brook. B. R. would be too proud to lie there *long*! I suppose he would get up, and, if he had nothing better to do, roam over the hills to shoot some squirrels.

March 30. Our life is happiest when we have the least to write. My "peace flows like a river," as the good Book says, and one day is just like another. I am now able to talk in German a *very little*, and my progress in reading is something I am really proud of. We frequently read a play of Shakespeare, or something from the more home-like poets. I have also read the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales; it cost me some labor, but I am more than repaid. The poetic *insight* in Chaucer is wonderful. He *saw* as much of men as Shakespeare did. I can't say he equals him. Nobody does.

April 5. I have had to assert my independence. I had no thought of being a charge upon my kind hosts, and I told Mrs. L. I wished to pay my board. She was hurt, and almost indignant; I said I knew her generous heart, and knew I was welcome; but *I* had some generosity, too, and was not to be outdone. I insisted on bearing a fair proportion of the household expenses.

The contest lasted a day or two, but I carried my point, and now I feel more at home, — though I know I was heartily received before.

April 11. I have met and conversed with Señorita de Sandoval several times. She is really a simple-hearted, child-like girl, as innocent and maiden-like as any girl of our race I ever saw. She is not very intellectual. I mean, that though she is industrious and pains-taking, she has no great *range* of thought; and when I am with her we don't talk of literature or philosophy. I rather like a change. Two such people as Mr. and Mrs. L. keep my faculties upon the stretch. It is hard to keep up with their pace. They seem to know everything, and I always fear I shall lose the point of what they say because I know so little. But there is one thing I have learned, which is *the pleasure of reading*, that will last me through life. Mr. L. says it is not so much the extent of acquirement that marks the scholar, as the attitude and habit of inquiry. I wonder if B. R. has adhered to his good resolutions, and is pushing on in his studies? He said he meant to rise *on my account*. Perhaps he will persevere for his own sake.

April 15. Mr. L. is reading Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. He began it upon my solicitation. He is quite familiar with the masterpieces of classic authors in English, but he has never read any of the *Memoirs* which I enjoy so much. His daily comments on the big, awkward, prejudiced, violent, but good-hearted and sincere old gentleman, are very amusing. He declares that, with all his learning, Johnson's opinions of contemporary writers were not worth a sixpence; that his *Lives of the Poets* is an instance of the blindness of men in regard to

the people with whom they have daily intercourse. He says that in literary circles there are personal influences always at work; that certain writers who are often paragraphed in newspapers become the fashion; that certain "sets" imagine they represent the letters, philosophy, and art of their time; they think their judgment in awarding fame is final. But when these pleasant people, who have been parcelling out honors and immortality among themselves, come to die, a new public is on the stage, and then the old set is voted dull. Soon the dust of oblivion settles on them and their works, and their faded laurel crowns are thrown into ash barrels, and some man who was scarcely thought of rises into view as the best writer of his age. He says it is hard for the "proper" people to think that the man who is sometimes in want of a mutton-chop, or who dresses shabbily, or smokes about the streets instead of attending the dull meetings of learned societies, has any chance in comparison with a writer who hangs a long string of initials upon his name.

Mr. L. says the two men of Johnson's time who had creative genius, and who are likely to outlive the changes of taste, were Pope and Goldsmith, and that the best word people had for one of them was to call him "Poor Goldy."

[I shall add here what I can remember of several conversations with Mr. and Mrs. L. about the authors they seem to admire most, Shakespeare and Goethe. I think I feel the force of what they said about one, and when I know more of German, I may be able to understand more about the other.]

Speaking of Shakespeare, he said, "That bountiful nature, sympathizing with every phase of character, embracing all the greatness and all the littleness of man-

kind, and making *Dogberry* as perfect a creation as *Hamlet*!" He wished that Ben Jonson might have been his Boswell; though it seems to me if there had been anything mean or gross about Shakespeare, I shouldn't want to know it. I should prefer to think of him as Mr. L. expresses it, "calm as a deity in the midst of a universe of his own creation!"

Goethe, he thought, was not so sincere or so generous as Shakespeare. Goethe knew men in masses, and looked at human nature in its aggregate. Shakespeare studied individuals, and painted infinite varieties, all distinct in thought as well as in manners and expression. These myriad forms were the all-sufficient materials for the English poet. The German poet aspired to the view of human life that belongs to the Infinite, and so resembled Milton and Dante, though perhaps not the equal of either. In his great drama, men and women were only shadows, or puppets, or embodied ideas; and the sorrows of ruined Margaret were of no more account in the vast whole than the drowning of a kitten in a wash-tub.

[If this is the result of "philosophy," I don't wonder that St. Paul preached against it.]

Shakespeare, he continued, has a strong sympathy with all his characters as human beings, and gives kindly touches even to depraved men; and he instanced *Falstaff*, whose wit relieves his cowardice and falsehood, and whose end, as he "babbled o' green fields," makes us almost drop a tear, and forgive his wicked and sensual life.

April 18. Since Mr. L. talked about the lives of authors the other day, I have been thinking how important is the part of our knowledge which is derived from the characters of great men.

"The proper study of mankind is man." We think

of this most strongly when we stand by the grave in which the remains of a statesman or a scholar are to be laid.

The race goes on, as Mr. L. says, piling up history, exploring the fields of science, and copying the beauty of nature; but the most interesting and useful of all accumulations are the lessons and the encouragements which we draw from great natures. Biography is the best history, Mr. L. says, because man is greater than the greatest of his works. The examples of courage, of patient study, of self-restraint, of aspiration for the good of the race, are better than all essays or sermons. The influence of examples, Mr. L. says, gives a possibility, a reality to our ideals; and as a rule, men improve most by imitation.

Thinking of all these noble qualities, I am led to use them to judge of the people I have known. How few men and women get beyond the first condition of selfishness! They do nothing and think of nothing but for their own advantage. If it even stopped there! But so many are willing to use deceit, to detract from others, and to show ill nature at another's success, that one would think that disinterested, generous conduct was only a fiction of the poets. There was never a man so generous and considerate as B. R. appeared, nor one so perfectly true. I can't reconcile it. *Could* he have lived two lives? May not the truth about him be still covered up. If I have misjudged him I am the most miserable girl in this world.

April 22. Señorita de Sandoval has just left me. We have talked nearly two hours. My feelings of repugnance, that rise so strongly when I am not with her, soften or vanish when I hear her artless talk, as I have

often done. I think she is incapable of falsehood, and this is a great matter when I consider how much I must depend upon her telling *the whole truth*. I am afraid I can hardly go on, slowly setting down word after word, when I would like to run through the interview like lightning, to keep pace with my feelings and the beating of my heart. She began by saying how much she had been *drawn* to me from the first, especially after she knew I was from Kentucky—how much she admired and loved me. There was nothing like flattery in her tone, and I saw it was an unconscious pouring out of her feelings. She said she was lonely in school, though kindly treated; that she was not one to live alone, but *longed* for a friend to whom she could talk without reserve, and who should know her as she was. [On some accounts I am sorry I do know her as she is.] She knew that I had not asked for her confidence, she said; but she knew also that I would not be one to betray it. It was something pathetic to hear her beseeching me not to think less of her; when she might have preserved herself in my eyes, as most proud girls would have done, by simply keeping her secret to herself. She told me she was the child of a slave mother, born in Barry County, and at Beech Knoll. I knew her story in a moment, and was greatly agitated. But I knew that, to be sure of getting true answers from her, I must hear her, without showing, by word or look, my intense anxiety, lest she should be put on her guard if she had anything to conceal. I repressed my feelings, and with a calm face I encouraged her to go on, though the effort required as much nerve as if I had to hold out my hand to be burned with a hot iron.

After her escape from the brutal man who had charge of her, she slept in outhouses and stables. Her clothes were torn and soiled. She had neither comb nor towel,

nor any regular meals. She was a wretched object, she said, and she wanted to try to get out of the state. Her mother had kept her as neat as a new wax doll. Her black friends told her that she couldn't get away from those who would be watching for her, and that she had better remain concealed in the neighborhood. Aunt Phillis some time afterwards thought of a forgotten closet in the house, and hid her there. She said she would be safe there, because none of the family knew of the place. [My heart stood still while she was uttering these sentences.] Her young master had not the least idea where she was, and had looked through the house for her a great many times. The strangest part of the story was, that she had to pass through his chamber to get into the forgotten closet. She had a good many narrow escapes, but was saved by the shrewdness of the faithful old Phillis. But it afterwards turned out that the son of the carpenter who built the house happened to say something that set a man thinking, and this man had a great interest in catching the fugitive. [B. R. was wrongfully suspected, then! It is certain that he had no part in secreting Sally, and never saw her. O, uncle John!]

She was looking out of a window when her young master and a school-teacher were practising with rifles. She used to venture out for light and air when there was no one in that part of the house. She saw them shooting at a mark on a shingle that they had nailed to a beech tree. She suddenly heard *another* gun a little way off. Then she saw the men who had come for her rushing on with rifles, and the one among them that she feared and hated most fell dead when B. R. fired. She saw no more, but hurried back into her hiding-place. [B. R., then, did not begin the fight, was not out looking for the sheriff's party, and fired purely in self-defence! O, uncle

John, what a cruel, false story you told! How *could* you have believed it? And did you ever take the least pains to find out the truth?]

Then she told me how she was discovered and taken to jail, and how she was sold. Her brother came in disguise to the sale, and bought her and another brother. [It was a great risk he ran, and the trick was the boldest and the simplest I ever heard of. I should never have believed that a colored man or mulatto would have had the wit or the courage to do such a thing.]

Her brother is now desirous of giving all the children the advantages of education, and, by and by, they are to go and live with him in Mexico.

I heard her story with such comments as I thought would sound natural to her, and asked her questions, with such indifference as I could assume, upon those points that most interested me. No variation in the questions brought out any difference in the answers. In different phrases I heard the same story, and I was obliged to believe that further inquiry might bring out more details, but would not throw the least doubt upon its main features.

Sally—for I must now drop the “Señorita”—appeared to be at once humiliated and relieved by telling her story. She is not a *strong* person, but gentle and confiding. She is content with the lower position, and her affections reach upward like tendrils for something to cling to. She had no heart, and no desire, to bear off the honors due to a Mexican heiress. That would be for a bolder and more impudent person to do,—and there are plenty of such. But her brother had judged truly when he decided that she must not be, with her complexion, simply Sally, nor be known as from Kentucky.

There is not a first-class school in the Union that would have received her. But as the Señorita de Sandoval, her complexion is rather “distinguished” than otherwise. I shall keep her secret. Can I keep my own?

April 23. I have spent a sleepless night. I was ill yesterday, and did not go down to dinner. Mrs. L. came up with a cup of tea, and offers of service. I pleaded a headache, which was the truth, though I did *not* say I had heartache also. It is a lovely morning, and I have my window open. The gray color of the sky is gone, and the whitest of fleecy clouds are floating in the deep, beautiful blue. Spring has come. It must be warm by this time in Kentucky. I would take down that engraving from the wall, if I thought Mrs. L. would not notice it. I cannot look at that sorrowful figure.

April 24. Mr. and Mrs. L. profess to have concern about my illness, and fear I have been studying too hard. We shall give up the German lesson for a few days. I don't know what to do to pass the time. The piano sounds like a melancholy Æolian harp; nothing but minor chords in it; a joyous interval or a strong handful of harmonies is impossible. I have tried to read; but what can a book do for me? I have tried Wordsworth, but he is for serene people; Burns for healthy and jolly people; Pope for the cynical. I might try Scott, but there is no one in his romances so wretched as I, because no one of them so entirely brought her wretchedness upon herself. The laments and farewells of the poets seem poor and artificial. Nobody that ever felt a grief like mine could sit down and write about it. I mean, write poetically.

April 25. Sally has been here, but I could not see her. I sent my regrets. How my Herbleu County friends would open their eyes if they were to meet her, and then see her card, "Señorita de Sandoval!" However, it *looks* as well as any other piece of pasteboard in my collection.

Is mine a selfish sorrow? If it were, I should deserve it all; but I think there are some feelings mingled with my unavailing regret that are not selfish. I remember the letter I sent to B. R., and it was a merciless one. As much as he loved me, so much agony that letter must have cost him. And this suffering which I caused that noble and delicate-minded man was wholly undeserved. He had nothing to do but to hide his misery in his own breast, for I left him no way of redress. The thought of the terrible wrong I did is my sharpest pang. If I could relieve him of that, — if I could say, "Beauchamp, I wronged you! You are the soul of truth and honor," — I think I could resign myself to a solitary lot in life, and be partly happy, just to have him know that he is without a stain in my eyes.

April 26. The days are all alike; only the river of my peace no longer flows. No German; though I found myself repeating some lines from one of my recent lessons: —

"Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer,
Und nimmer mehr." *

Mr. L. declares *he* is going to take me in hand, — that he is not going to have me moping. He tried to per-

* C. T. Brooks's translation: —

"My heart is heavy,
My peace is o'er;
I never — ah! — never —
Shall find it more."

suade me to take a trip to Albany with Mrs. L. on the steamboat; but I did not like to go. One scene is like another, unless we have the heart to enjoy what we see.

I think I was unjust to B. R. in another respect. I told him, in effect, that I could not marry him unless he was successful. That was a worldly and ungenerous answer. All I had a right to ask was, provided he was such a man as I could love, that he should do his best. I ought to have considered that all do not succeed who deserve success; and I can see that so high-minded and conscientious a man as B. R. might have harder work to rise in his profession than one more forward and less scrupulous. It was the wisdom of the world that I followed, and I now see it was foolishness. A poor and unknown young man, like B. R., might make the proudest girl happy in his love; while a self-seeking and self-satisfied one, like H. A., would only disgust her, if he were the richest man in his county. I wish I might be poor, if I could share poverty *with him*. If I thought a single spark of his love for me remained, I would go on my knees to him. Must I carry my sorrow to my grave?

Who is it that sings this true woman's song?

"I would that I could utter
My feelings without shame,
And tell him how I love him,
Nor wrong my virgin fame.

"Alas! to seize the moment
When heart inclines to heart,
And press a suit with passion,
Is not a woman's part."

April 27. Mrs. L. has been an hour in my room, and has talked to me with unobtrusive but motherly solicitude. I can see that she is greatly alarmed about my condition. My mirror shows that my color has faded,

and the roundness has left my cheeks. I have always been healthy, and never have had to call in a physician since I was a child. Mrs. L. insists upon sending to the city for medical advice. I know it is useless, and tell her so. She answers, that if I were not an invalid, I should not show the paleness and the loss of flesh. I try to turn the subject, but she will not be put off; and she declares if I do not have a physician, she will write to my friends in Kentucky, and tell them my condition.

What shall I do? Shall I have the medical adviser, and pretend to take his remedies? Can he "minister to a mind diseased"? I have a great mind to tell her all. It is only this dreadful load that burdens my soul, waking and sleeping. It seems to me that, if I could *cry* once, like a school-girl, I should have some relief, and that confession would ease my pain. It would be something to have my dear teacher's sympathy.

April 29. I did not rise from my bed yesterday; I was too weak. Mrs. L. came up after breakfast, and laid her hand tenderly on my forehead, and smoothed my hair. As I did not speak at once, she bent over and kissed me like a sister. I was tremulous with excitement, and when her lips softly touched mine, I could bear it no longer, and wept like a child. She sat down by my bed, and took my feverish hand in hers, and soothed me. I became calmer, and looked forward to the disclosure I was going to make as a positive relief for my overcharged feelings. When I was face to face with this duty (as it now seemed to me) there was no longer reluctance to speak, however much I might be humiliated in her eyes. I told her of my life, and of my love for B. R., and how cruelly I had broken off our intercourse. I did not spare myself, nor frame any excuses for my conduct. I then told her

enough of the story of "Señorita de Sandoval" to show how innocent B. R. was of the charges made against him. When I finished, I sobbed out, "And I am the most miserable girl in the world."

"From the bottom of my heart I pity you," she said.

"I wish I could see your Beauchamp Russell this moment, and could look into his heart to see what is in it."

"That would be little satisfaction," I replied. "He has cast me away before this as a wilful, unjust and hard-hearted girl. There is nothing to be done. I have no one to reproach but myself."

"I want to form a clearer idea of him," she said. "What is he like?" I knew it was only an expedient to keep me talking.

"I have told you he is very tall," I said, "and with a look of dignity that is not the least *old* or distant."

"But I judge of character by little things," she replied. "Tell me the color of his eyes and his hair, the shape of his features, his hands, the quality of his voice."

"His hair is ruddy chestnut color, wavy, but not curly; his eyes are hazel, very brilliant when he is animated, and very winning at other times. His features are quite regular, though rather prominent; his color is fresh, from his active habits, but his skin is delicate, like that of people of nervous temperament. His hands are not small, but flexible and shapely. — I can't bear a fat pudding for a hand. — His voice is deep, but of a rich musical quality."

"Really, I can see him," she said, "and he is a very proper young man. Has he large ears? If not, he will be stingy."

"You are only trying to tease," I said, "and I shall not answer another question."

"I know all about him, and don't need to have you say

another word. I will vouch for it, he is 'tender and true.' You see," she continued, with a mischievous smile, "if his chestnut hair had been curly, he would have been fickle; if his eyes had been black, he would have been intractable, and if blue, silly. I like the character in his hands. A fat, pudding hand, as you call it, is nerveless, and never grasps anything; it is only fit to show rings on. — Yes, the combination is good. Your Beauchamp was born under a lucky planet."

As she was rising to leave me I stopped her, and once more took her hand. "My dear friend," I said, "tell me truly. Why have you been asking these questions? Why do you speak of *my* Beauchamp? And why do you say he is 'tender and true'? You know we are separated forever. What can you be thinking of? I can see something hiding from me in those eyes of yours. Those blue curtains don't wholly conceal what is going on within. Not one of my family knows what I have told you, — not one; and no one must know it. Promise me that you won't try to open a correspondence with any of my relatives."

"I will not write to any of your relatives," she answered, and then left me.

I was very lonely without her. But I must get used to that. I cannot always be with her. And what shall I do when I go back home?

May 1. Another very ill day. Fortunately we are not troubled by company from the neighborhood. Mr. L. has few acquaintances here, and when he and madame *wish* for company, they have friends in the city. So Mrs. L. can give me much of her time. I thought my illness might be imaginary, — something to be shaken off, — and this morning I got up resolutely, and thought I would

swing about the room like an athlete. I fell at the first step. Mrs. L. heard the sound, and came up and helped me into my easy-chair, where I am content to stay. I am almost helpless, and believe I must give up writing, — it makes me dizzy. I resign myself to a torpid state. Would that my feelings and faculties were torpid, too!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

UNDER WHICH KING?

WE are in the habit of seeing fresh crops of good resolutions spring up like mushrooms, and then die unfulfilled when the circumstances that produced them have changed. Hardly any one expects that the vows of amendment made on a sick bed will be remembered by the convalescent sinner. It is fortunate if the voluble wooer's promises hold out after marriage has put him in possession as master. The school-boy who has escaped the rod often becomes as indolent or disobedient as before, when once the sharp corner has been turned. Beauchamp Russell had made an entire change in his life, for the sake of his love and his ambition, and impelled by his poverty. Before six months had passed, most of the reasons which had driven him to hard study and self-denial had lost their force. His love was blighted, and his ambition, so far as it related to the applause of man or woman, was dead. His fortunes had improved, so that he was in easy, if not affluent circumstances; and he would not be obliged to follow his profession for a livelihood. But the habit of study had been formed, and though he had thus far read only law, he had acquired a thirst for knowledge which would never be satisfied. He had found so keen a pleasure in intellectual exercise, that he longed for the time when he could vary his reading, and for an hour or two every day enjoy the treasures of his uncle Ralph's libra-

ry. Notwithstanding the entire change in affairs, he kept at his work, jealously guarding against any waste of time, or self-indulgence. Uncle Ralph was quite astonished. It was the Beauchamp pluck and tenacity, he said; the Russells were too fond of leisure and luxury to do anything unless they were obliged to. So he encouraged his nephew, being careful not to say too much, as the young man did not need spurring; and to give him full scope, he came every day or two to Beech Knoll, and advised about the operations on the farms. Little by little he took the direction of affairs, and very soon Beauchamp found that the land was cultivated without much care on his part, while he had his whole time for study.

Mr. Howard continued to make his home at Beech Knoll. The young men seldom went abroad, except that the one attended to his school, and the other to the law office.

The widow and daughter of Mr. Wyndham went to Herbleu County to live, as Mr. Ralph Beauchamp had predicted. Mr. Wyndham's brother, also a resident of that county, became administrator, and the business was left in the hands of Mr. Adams to settle. The proceedings in chancery were near at hand; the machine was slowly revolving; and our astute young attorney began to wonder whether he really would have to disburse for the estate such a sum — a sum that should have been his own but for the obstinacy of a foolish girl — and pay it over to enrich the man he hated. He had heard of Beauchamp's eager and tireless pursuit of his studies, and he knew what that meant. He knew that Beauchamp's natural abilities were of a high order, and that it would not be many years, in the ordinary course of things, before he would have to meet his rival at the bar. He had a sufficiently good opinion of himself, but he felt in his soul

that he would be no match for Beauchamp if the latter should regain the affections of the people, and continue in his studious courses. To collect and pay over thirty or forty thousand dollars just to set up that aristocratic beggar! No, there were several cards to be played first. Unluckily for him, the administrator had said to him, privately, that when the case should really come to trial, if the facts were as the Russells claimed, he (Wyndham) would take it out of court and compromise. The reputation of the Wyndhams, he said, had been hurt quite enough by his brother William's lawless proceedings; and, as the estate could afford to pay the sum claimed, he was not going to have all the evidence made public, and every loafer in Barry County talking about perjury and the like. Mr. Adams knew, therefore, that the administrator would not fight, and he could not do anything for himself on that side. Then he must see what could be done on the other. Beauchamp was now so much engaged that he was never seen on the street, and never meddled in politics or county affairs. The affray at Beech Knoll was passing out of mind. The escape of the twins could not be laid to his charge, in the absence of any evidence; and as Squire Hamilton and Mr. Pierrepont had received the drafts, their indignation had subsided. To make a "row" on account of the harboring of Sally, after she had been caught and had been sold at a good price, was hardly feasible. He knew that Beauchamp was under a cloud on account of these things, but the young man did not seem to mind that, for he kept on his way, and saluted people he met as if he had been the best beloved person in the county. To make him unpopular was not enough. He must be driven out of the county, or pushed into some fatal quarrel.

When a man is seeking for the means, fate often offers

an occasion ready made, and the crime seems rather to invite the perpetrator. Adams knew well enough that in the ordinary course of affairs he could not precipitate a quarrel in a way to derive any advantage; because his agency would be seen and his motives would be apparent. He had retainers of the baser sort who would do his bidding openly if there were any pretext, or secretly if they could do it in safety. Assassination would be attended with risk and difficulty, and that must be left for the last resource. It would be far more to his purpose to bring about some general gathering, at which both Howard and Beauchamp should be present, and then arrange his plans to have them set upon.

There was in the neighborhood one of those young men who seem to be born to puzzle phrenologists, and to show how many things may be known by fools. Nicholas Clark was about twenty-five years old, born of a good family, and had been well educated, — at least as far as his nature was able to receive instruction. But Nick was only a grown-up school-boy, with big, innocent eyes and a forehead like a white turnip. He could repeat his geography lessons by heart, and had committed to memory the names of kings and presidents in order. His greatest achievement and pride, however, was in his spelling. He remembered infallibly every combination of letters. In all the schools he had been the champion speller. But he had never got any farther. He was a big school-boy, and would always remain one. To recite a description of Tartary, or to spell a list of those catch-words that no one ever sees except in spelling-books, was his highest ambition. He was tractable and industrious at home, and probably did his part on the farm; and he read the newspapers, so that he was conversant with the affairs of the day. One who did not know him, and who should see

his bright eyes and "intellectual" forehead for the first time, might consider him rather above the average in intelligence. His language was generally proper in form, far more so than that of his fellows who derided him; but still the fact remained that he was a fool, — lacking the core of manliness, and without any higher idea of life than is comprehended by a boy in a short coat. When Nick came to town, he was always in the centre of a crowd of fun-makers, who complimented him on his attainments, referred difficult geographical questions to him, or disputed in his presence the spelling of some hard word. He would answer all questions and spell all words put to him, and look up to the bystanders with shining eyes and a pleasant air, much like that of a spaniel that is praised for his great trick of walking upright on his hind legs.

The mischief-loving Athenians had made their plans to annoy a certain self-important man in the county, who aspired to political preferment; and they had for a year been trying to induce the poor simpleton Nick to announce himself as a candidate in opposition. The politician had not yet "come out," but his desire and purpose were well known, and it was determined that Nick should be beforehand in taking the field. Of course there was no serious intention of trying to elect him, but the canvass was looked forward to as a source of boundless amusement. Nick had a speech written for him, and had committed it to memory. He had spoken his piece before an evening assembly of the choice spirits, much like that which we once saw under the rule of King Cabbage.

Will Davis and Harcourt were the chief instigators of the plot; and they coached poor Nick until he went through his part with readiness. The knowledge of what was going on was confined to a few; but Harrison Adams

got hold of it, and saw his occasion. He talked with the managers, and manifested great glee in anticipating the fun they were to have when Nick announced himself. Being admitted to the inner circle, he acquired an influence with the susceptible simpleton by skilful flattery, and a show of deep interest in his success. Nick soon came to regard Adams as his first friend, and hung around his office every time he came to town. When county-court day came, there was an unusual throng of people assembled, as the rumor had gone abroad that there was to be some sport in town. The eminent citizen who was desirous of representing the county came, as everybody else did; but he thought it too early to open the campaign, as indeed it was, for any serious purpose. But he naturally desired to know what was going on. Upon Davis's urgent representation, Howard and Beauchamp went to the Court House at noon to see the burlesque performance. Mr. Pierrepont was there, and Squire Hamilton; also the two doctors and Ralph Beauchamp. The young people were naturally on hand, and it was remarked that there had seldom been such a crowd of low fellows, even on the last drunken day of a presidential election. The time having come, Nicholas mounted the bench, and began to hold forth, while Davis and Harcourt, and their set, formed a body-guard around him. When the simpleton took off his hat, showed his full, round forehead, and smiled upon the crowd, there was a general yell of delight. The first part of his speech was ingeniously composed, and the eminent citizen was roasted with ironical compliments, and pierced by all manner of keen thrusts. The applause was constant and furious. The smiling face furnished an odd contrast to the biting sarcasms uttered; and the assumptions of wisdom and political astuteness by a natural fool were comical beyond

any power of caricature. The managers laughed until the tears started, and the heaviest of the country people haw-hawed at the jokes, which required no wit on their part to understand. Adams was in a distant part of the crowd, laughing from the teeth outward, but excited and nervous within. Beauchamp and Howard were not far distant, giving their attention to the mock harangue.

On a sudden, the speaker branched off upon national politics, which always signified one thing in Barry County. He denounced the growing spirit of abolitionism, and demanded to know if Kentucky should nourish vipers in her bosom to sting her to death. Great applause came from the rabble rout. Growing more pointed and personal, he alluded to the hiding of Sally at Beech Knoll, the escape of the twins, and other recent instances of negroes running away, and accused the abettor of these crimes of being a secret emissary of the abolitionists; and, then calling out the name of Arthur Howard, demanded that the vengeance of an insulted and injured public should be visited upon him.

Will Davis tried to stop the speaker, and told him in an undertone he was off the track — that he must return to the matter of announcing himself as a candidate. But the simpleton, whose speech had been changed without Davis's knowledge, was prepared here, and turned on his adviser, and denounced him, too, as a friend of the abolitionists. At this point the tumult was tremendous.

There was evidently an organization, or a secret understanding, among the lower sort of people in the crowd, and their shouts, and yells, and threats were appalling. Beauchamp and Howard were thunderstruck. They could not believe that Davis would be a party to such a manoeuvre, and they had understood that he was the prompter and next friend of the "candidate." The voice of the

speaker became inaudible, but he went on sawing the air, and making desperate efforts to finish his piece. Groans and curses filled the court-room, and the popular feeling seemed about to show itself in violence. A few harmless missiles, such as cigar stumps, were thrown, and cries of "Ride him on a rail!" "Take him out and rock him!" were heard. The crowd surged towards the place where Howard stood, glaring at him with eyes of fury, while he, erect and steady, but as white as marble, held his ground. Beauchamp sprang upon a bench, took off his hat, and faced the crowd. He demanded to be heard, both for himself and friend. He shamed the people that would act upon the accusations of an idiot, and put character and life in jeopardy for no just cause. There was not a single thing in the conduct of Mr. Howard to give offence to any reasonable men. For himself he had nothing to say, because he would not stoop to deny the charges made by a fool. "But let the skulking coward," he exclaimed in a thundering voice, "who hides himself behind that poor creature, and makes the lips of a simpleton the mouthpiece of his calumny — let that coward come out, and make even one of those charges here to my face, and I will make him eat every word he utters."

He was heard imperfectly by the mob, because their blood was up, and they were bent on mischief. More missiles came — inkstands and sandboxes from the desks, and whatever else could be got hold of. Both Howard and Beauchamp were hustled about, losing their hats, and getting rents in their clothing. Fortunately they were unarmed; for if either of them had shown a weapon, their lives would have been sacrificed in a moment.

Mr. Pierrepont, in an agitated voice, said to Squire Hamilton, "This is a mob, and it will soon be past control. We mustn't let these young men be killed. You

get up! Do, for God's sake! These people will listen to you." Ralph Beauchamp, with great difficulty got near his nephew, and there planted himself firmly. He had his hand in his coat pocket, and his breath came quick.

Squire Hamilton bared his head, and tried for some minutes to send his voice over the tumult. At length he got audience, such as it was, and spoke in the midst of constant interruptions, oaths, and cat-calls.

"Good friends, hear me! If we are men, and Christians, and live under laws, let us not turn a merry-making into a scene of riot! What are you trying to do? Do you take the words of that poor creature for truth, and then, without judge or jury, proceed to take vengeance into your own hands? What offence is proven against either of these young men? Will you condemn them unheard? Restrain your indignation! It is the duty of men in a republic to abide by the laws they have helped to make. Let this tumult subside. Ask either of them any questions. If they have done wrong, upon their own heads be the penalty. We have laws to punish the least attempt to tamper with our slaves, or to put this community in peril. I will join with you in requiring a strict investigation by the officers of the law, and in demanding a swift and sure punishment of any offender—yes, any offender, even if he were the son of my oldest friend. But, hear me, no violence!"

The noise gradually subsided, and a number of the most substantial citizens applauded the squire, and soon ranged themselves on the side of the room where he stood.

Beauchamp saw his opportunity, and, in the partial silence that followed, got up on the bench again, and asked to be heard. "I will answer for my friend, Mr. Howard, with my life," he exclaimed. "I call upon any man here, who has one word to urge against him, to say

it now. Let any man say if my friend has not in all respects been a discreet and law-abiding citizen."

"He is a d—d abolitionist!" several voices shouted out.

"How do you know he is?" demanded Beauchamp.

"Who of you ever heard him open his mouth on the subject?"

"Then let him say he is with us," was the cry.

"No, gentlemen," said Beauchamp. "You have made a charge against him. Now prove it. He needn't answer until there is something brought up against him. He has a right to his opinions."

"But he'd better be d—d careful how he lets 'em out round h'yer," said one of the "hill people."

"Let him show his hand, or shut his old shebang!" cried another. "He shan't keep school h'yer, nohow."

Mr. Howard endeavored to speak, but was kept back by his friends. Beauchamp quickly turned the current towards himself by saying,—

"But what have any of you got against me?"

"You're a nigger-stealer," said the hill man.

"Prove it!" said Beauchamp, from between his set teeth, and in a tone that showed he wanted very much to retort in less civil words.

"Didn't you hide that yaller gal?" continued the assailant. Just here the sheriff, who was on the judges' platform, shouted out, "You're clare in the wrong, gentlemen. Listen to me. I know about that. I had it straight from Mr. Wyndham, and I saw the place. He didn't know the girl was in the house. Stand up, Mr. Culverson! Mr. Culverson, gentlemen, can tell you that the corner where the girl was hid was left by chance when the house was built, and that the board that was between it and the closet had a new split in it, showin' that 'twas recently done. Isn't it so?"

The old carpenter said, "That's so, gentlemen. I've lately ben out thar, and it's so. Besides, 'twas I told Mr. Wyndham about it, and he know'd as well as I that this hidin' was done by the niggers. I b'lieve young Mr. Russell is clar on't."

"Wal, whar's them twins?" the hill man said.

"In some free state, I suppose," Beauchamp replied. "You know their brother was away and free; most likely he got them off. But he has paid for them. That is his affair, not mine. And I say to my friends, Mr. Pierrepont and Squire Hamilton, though I know I need not say it to them, that I had no hand in it. And now, fellow-citizens, I want to ask a question or two. Stand up, Nicholas Clark! — Will my friends Mr. Davis and Mr. Harcourt stand by him a moment? — Nicholas Clark, when you first got your speech ready for this occasion, was there anything in it about me or Mr. Howard?"

"N-no, sir," said the terrified simpleton.

"Where did you learn the last part of it? Tell the truth."

"In Mr. Adams's office."

"Then he wrote out the part you spoke last?"

"Y-yes, sir."

Mr. Adams laughed, though not very naturally, and declared that it was only a joke, like the rest of the speech — a mere piece of harmless pleasantry. Nobody, he said, should take the words of *such* a speaker seriously.

"Then I pronounce you a liar and a murderer," exclaimed Beauchamp. "You gathered this crowd of gentlemen! You tried to put the torch to this gunpowder! You intended that my friend, or I, or both of us, should lose our lives, you doubly damned villain!"

Adams rushed at the speaker with a howl of frantic rage, and called on his gang for help. For a minute there

was a sharp struggle. Adams had a knife, with which he cut his adversary's clothes and scratched his arm. But the help he expected was not ready. The sheriff, and Davis, and Harcourt rushed before the gang, and made such a display of weapons that the boldest paused. Ralph Beauchamp had seized upon Adams with an iron grip, and quelled him with the threat of blowing his brains out if he stirred. The mastery was gained by a few resolute men. A thrill passed through the whole room as the people saw the leaders of the intended riot held in custody, and men's eyes blinked as if each second they expected to see the flash of pistols or the gleam of knives. The triumph was complete.

It was now Ralph Beauchamp's turn.

"Fellow-citizens," he shouted, "you shall see what sort of a man has tried to stir up your feelings against my nephew, Beauchamp Russell, and bring him to shame. You shall know who it is that thinks the son of an old Kentucky family not fit to live in the county where he was born, and among the people he was brought up with. You know that Tom Fleemister is in jail for passing counterfeit money. Almost every one of you has lost by these villanous operations. But Tom Fleemister is only the poor tool, the miserable dupe, of this man, Harrison Adams! I give him into the hands of the sheriff. Fleemister has to-day made his confession, and he informs against Adams as the chief of the gang."

A deep and prolonged murmur followed. The whimpering fool Nick, feeling that he was somehow compromised by the scene that followed his speech, wrung his hands and showed the greatest trepidation; and when Mr. Beauchamp suggested that Adams's office be searched, poor Nick, fancying that he must do something to exculpate himself, cried out in an eager voice, "Look in his shoes!"

Look in his shoes, in the closet." Two young men went to the office by the sheriff's direction, and found that the simpleton had been more observing than wiser men. During the times when he had been haunting Adams's office, he had been prying into everything like a boy, as he was. In a pair of shoes, standing in the bottom of a wardrobe closet in the rear of his office, were found a number of the well-known "dangerous tens." They were lying smoothly under the thin inner-soles of kid leather; those in one shoe were signed, in the other unsigned.

The messengers returned within five minutes, and the news they brought soon circulated through the Court House. Beauchamp and his friend took occasion to withdraw quietly from the crowd, and went over to Squire Hamilton's office. The sheriff took his prisoner before a magistrate, and a preliminary hearing was had and bail fixed. There being no sureties ready, Adams was committed to jail. A group of men gathered around Ralph Beauchamp, curious to know how he had got his information.

"You see, gentlemen, after Wyndham tried to steal the papers from the clerk's office, I believed he was wicked and venturesome enough for almost anything. Everybody knew that Tom Fleemister had somebody behind him. I made up my mind that Wyndham was the man. I was mistaken. I apologize, — or, rather, I would if Wyndham was where he could hear an apology with any comfort; but I reckon he's otherwise occupied. Tom Fleemister was offered enough to clare off Wyndham's mortgage if he would tell, but he wouldn't. I gave it up. And I hadn't any reason to push the question further, for we had Wyndham foul anyhow, and we didn't need any better hold on him. I reckon Adams was a little careless, not to make Tom sure by paying as he agreed; for I got word a couple of days ago that Tom wanted to see me, and he

then said he would take up with my offer. I was rather curious, — I always was curious, — and was willing to pay a trifle. So I said, 'It's a bargain, Tom. Now, who's your friend?' 'Adams,' said he. I was clare taken aback. I questioned him, and found he hadn't much of any proof, and *his* word wouldn't go fur. Adams had been smart with Tom, and had covered his tracks well. And I doubt if a thing could have been proved against him if that blamed fool of a Nick Clark hadn't let out what he did. I was going to wait to see what would turn up; but just now, when it seemed time to do something to turn the hill people away from mobbing my nephew and the schoolmaster, I pitched in. It was a sudden thought, not a minute before I laid hold of him. Adams and Wyndham were each playing a desperate game. They didn't wholly trust each other. They worked together in some things, but each had a little private rascality of his own. About the counterfeit bills I was mistaken, as I said before; and I beg Wyndham's pardon. He has enough to answer for without them."

Groups remained talking in and around the Court House, but the interest of the occasion was over, for the comedy had taken an unexpected turn. No one thought of the silly farce of Nick's being a candidate any more; the disappointed jokers had not had a chance to give the champion speller a trial on the list of words they had got ready.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NEWS FROM ABROAD.

THE arrest of Harrison Adams naturally created a great sensation, not only in the county, but throughout the state. The news soon reached Herbleu County, where the brother and administrator of the late Mr. Wyndham lived, and he lost no time in going to look after the affairs that he had placed in Mr. Adams's hands. He sought out Ralph Beauchamp not long after his arrival, and had a long interview with him. That astute gentleman could be very patient and discreet when it was necessary; and he showed Mr. Wyndham, by the papers in the old suits, and by Van Holm's recent deposition, that the case of his nephew against the estate was clear and incontestable. After a time, Mr. Wyndham made overtures for a compromise, which Beauchamp, by his uncle's advice, accepted, and the case was struck from the docket.

Our hero was now rich; that is to say, he had sufficient for his wants. He would not have been able to vie with the gilded youth of eastern cities; but then, Barry County had no clubs, no opera, no yachts; and fashion was followed afar off. The modern art of living at the greatest possible expense, and getting in return the least amount of comfort, had not been cultivated in that primitive, agricultural region. The first idea that occurred to him was to return to his uncle the sixty dollars paid for Phillis and Scipio, and the seven hundred dollars he had borrowed, and then to get back the deed of Beech Knoll.

Uncle Ralph gave him back the deed, and said he would credit the money as a payment on the old mortgage.

"No," said Beauchamp; "I want to take up that protested draft first, lest it should become a revolving satellite. We will begin to pay up the mortgage debt soon."

"But the draft was paid, and I had the money from my banker."

"Paid! The Duke of Bedford has *paid* my draft? This is one of your jokes, uncle Ralph."

"Not at all. Your cousin, the duke, honored your draft. Nothing like blood."

"I am mortified, uncle, or I should be, if I believed you. It seems like the successful trick of a swindler. If what you say is true, I shall pay it back to him."

"Pshaw! What's a hundred and fifty pounds to Francis Russell—an eccentric, miserly, and weak-headed man, if he is your cousin?"

"He is not my cousin."

"Then what does your name of Russell signify?"

"We may both be kin to Canute, or Charlemagne, or Saxon Alfred; but the little drop of common blood doesn't tingle much, at least on my side. But how did this come about? Why should the Duke of Bedford accept a draft made by a stranger? He should have resented it as a piece of impudence."

"I'll tell you how it was. His grace doesn't see company, shuts himself up, gives no dinners nor parties, and so his funds accumulate. If you had gone to London in person, you wouldn't have seen him. But your draft reached him, as it was taken into his private apartment by the man of business. That particular day, his grace was better of his gout, and he could put his favorite foot to the floor. The letters and papers were handed to him. His grace thought it was a beautiful day, because he

could see across the square, and no gas lamps were lighted. Wonderful fine day for London, you see. He looked over the papers. 'Hum,' said he, 'what's this? A hundred and fifty. Who's *Beauchamp* Russell? Our family has never intermarried with the Beauchamps of Worcester. How came this crossing of blood, I should like to know? Off in America, too! Kentucky. Where's Kentucky?'

"His grace's man of business suggested that Kentucky was an island in the Caribbean Sea, discovered by one Daniel Boone, he believed. 'Boone! Boone! An English name. Island belongs to the crown. Why hasn't Peel taken possession? The idea! That any island should be found *anywhere*, and not be ours! I'll make a note of that for brother John. He shall attack the ministry for this inexcusable blunder. He shall move a vote of censure; yes, and make all England ring with it. Shouldn't wonder if it might be the overthrow of Peel, and bring the Whigs into power, with Lord John as prime minister. Egad! we'll think of that. And so a Russell is off there, and in want. Perhaps he has promised the money for his ransom from cannibals. Think of that — a Russell liable to be eaten for want of a hundred and fifty pounds! No; the head of the family must look out for all the remotest of the name. A Russell must not suffer for such a trifle. Accept the draft, and pay it. I'll send to Lord John, and have him open a correspondence with this kinsman of ours, and have him run up the British flag on the highest peak. It isn't a volcano — is it? Then a frigate can sail over, and take possession of the island.'

"Here his grace forgot himself, or rather his gout, and stamped upon the mat; and, though the fleece was three inches thick, his ducal toe felt the jar, and the noble

sufferer howled again. — That was the way your draft came to be paid."

Beauchamp was so full of laughter that he could not speak. It was evident that there was no chance for any sober discussion, and he waived further talk, mentally determining to make the uncle take back the loan at some time. But whenever the subject was brought up, uncle Ralph always insisted, and even swore, that the draft was paid, and he absolutely refused to take a penny on account of it.

Lest this adventure should beget any false hopes in the minds of those of my young countrymen who have contemplated the possibility of raising money by flying kites across the Atlantic, I should seriously advise them not to repeat the hero's experiment. Miracles of that kind are wrought only once. The heads of noble and wealthy families may not all be solicitous, like the late Duke of Bedford, about the welfare of distant and unrecognized relatives.

Behold now carpenters and other mechanics at work upon the mansion at Beech Knoll. The western wing was to be restored, and the octagon chamber furnished for Beauchamp's occupation. The house was to be painted and shingled, new trellises set up for the roses and vines, and the out-buildings put in good order. Beauchamp directed that the closet of his former chamber should remain untouched. The corner into which Sally had crept had been connected with events that had affected his whole life, and he determined that it should be a memento. Imagination works with the commonest materials. A shrine is formed of hewn stones, but the devotee recognizes upon them the last footprints of an ascended saint. A piece of Scottish oak in the floor of Holyrood shows a dark stain to the ordinary beholder. Look again, and you

see it is blood, hot from the veins of Mary's minstrel lover. There is a head of a woman carved on a shell. It is pretty, but no more. Look at the name as you hold it, and you see the face that Mark Antony gave up the world for. So, in a place that is associated with some crisis in life, the dumb walls speak. Since that morning when our hero met the slave girl by the river-side, his fortunes had been bound fast by fate with those of her family. He had been led through the sharpest trials to reach a happy end in one respect. It was a simple and apparently an unimportant affair, that Phillis should have hidden Sally near his chamber. But out of it had come death to Van Holm and Jack Fleemister, and a terrible season of suffering for himself. Then came the repentance of the false swearer, and the long-delayed but complete restoration of the family estate. And then, as if to make this triumph hardly worth having, the seeds of slander had been scattered abroad, and as a result, the lover had lost what he most prized upon earth. Fate had made sport of him, mocked him, and the useless jewels given him by the son of his black mammy seemed only the crowning piece of irony.

No wonder, then, that the closet is to be left without repairs, and the beech tree scarred by bullets is to stand in remembrance of the fight.

For some time after the escape of Howard from the mob, the question of his remaining as a teacher in Barry County was anxiously discussed. His friends were divided in opinion, though most of them believed he would not be able to stay; or, if he did, that he would not have scholars enough to support him. Beauchamp thought it was best to face the opposition boldly, and that with the support of a few substantial citizens, he would hold his ground. Howard was not a fighting man, but he had

displayed a certain *passive* courage, or an unflinching endurance that was much like it. Beauchamp thought him courageous, and said so to his uncle and Mr. Pierrepont, with whom he was talking about the matter. He said he believed Howard would not hesitate to say what he thought at any hazard, and that was an evidence of courage; and that he would stand to be chopped into inch pieces, rather than abandon a principle.

"That may be true," said uncle Ralph; "but to teach school in Kentucky, you don't *want* the kind of courage that will make you stand to be chopped up; you want the courage to *chop the other fellow*."

"Yankee bringing up," said Mr. Pierrepont, "makes good citizens—for Yankee-land; a little too much of catechism, and of turning the other cheek, to answer for this country. The Puritan father teaches his son to keep out of fights, and submit to wrong and buffeting rather than defend himself by any violence. It may make a good Christian, but it takes all the spunk out of a fellow for this world. Their courage is for martyrs like John Rogers. The Kentuckian don't care about the honor of being burned. Mind you, I am not decrying the grandeur of moral courage, and all that; but in this pugnacious world, and especially in this pugnacious corner of it, a man must be ready to take his own part. If he don't, he'll be hustled about and trodden upon."

"I suppose," said uncle Ralph, "that a cool and steady man, like Howard, might live all his life in Massachusetts, and never have to strike a blow. Though, for my part, I should think a man would want to hit some mean devil once in a while, just to keep his hand in. I think he'd better go back there—for his own sake, I mean. He'll never get on here. If he concludes to stay, I'll stand by him. I know he's honest and honora-

ble. But what's the use of living in a state of siege, and sleeping under arms? Life of itself is a hard fight enough. A man don't want to be at outs with the world. He gets enough of scrimmage after a while, and wants a quiet corner."

Squire Hamilton gave similar advice. The presence of the mob had wrought a great change in his habitual talk, if not in his opinions. He began to see that property and life would not be safer with one sort of a mob than another; that the "hillers," when full of whiskey, would be likely to do more mischief than the negroes ever could do; and no one could tell where the mischief would fall. Conservatism was his doctrine, both by reason and instinct. He ceased his old talk, that sounded so inflammatory, and became the stoutest partisan of law and order.

To Beauchamp he showed himself unusually friendly. He accepted fully and unreservedly the explanations that had come out, and volunteered to defend him from any aspersions. There was one thing he could never undo. He could not recall the letter he had sent to his niece. That mischief was accomplished. It was a fatal shot he had fired, and no repentance could avail anything after the explosion. He had not the courage to come out boldly and retract, but he meant at some time, when he met his niece, to break the force of what he had written. Now that Adams was in disgrace, and Beauchamp had come to his own, there was no one who could be named as a rival to the young man whose low estate and hopeless prospects he had so cruelly portrayed.

Tom Fleemister, according to agreement, was released on bail, and was furnished by Ralph Beauchamp with money to pay the mortgage on his little farm. He was fated not to enjoy his liberty long. He was taunted by Houghton with his meanness in betraying Adams, and a

quarrel was the result. Houghton's aim was quick and sure, and Tom was buried beside his brother Jack. It might be supposed that Houghton would be punished for the homicide. Not at all. It was shown to the satisfaction of the court to be a free and fair fight, and that if Houghton had not killed Tom, Tom would have killed him. That was the end of it. What could be more reasonable?

When the grand jury sat, it was found that with Tom's death the evidence against Adams was gone. The counterfeit bills had been found in his shoes, but there was not a particle of testimony to show any act on his part in connection with them. The grand jury therefore found no bill, and Adams was set at liberty. But after what had happened, Barry County was not a very favorable place for him as a counsellor at law. He settled up his affairs as speedily as possible, and removed to Texas, where, under another name, he became a very eminent citizen and a member of Congress.

Beech Knoll hardly knew itself in its new surroundings. The mould and the weather-stains had disappeared. The chimney-tops had been rebuilt. Swallows and martins chirruped around mimic white churches that were set up on the roof, and about gourds set up for them on poles in the garden. A cascade of roses fell over the east side of the mansion, and the new verandas were dressed in fresh green tapestries. The garden had renewed its former glories. Even the ducks and geese seemed to have felt the change that had come, and sailed proudly in decorous feather over a tiny lake that had been made for them below the spring house.

The change in-doors was equally marked. The sunlight flooded the rooms through bright new windows, and the dust and cobwebs of twenty-five years had vanished.

Uncle Isham's chamber was resplendent in its rose-gray walls and its tasteful furniture. The family portraits smiled benignantly from their ancient frames. Everything was fresh and joyous. Beauchamp declared that there was not a chance for a ghost left, not even for the thrill that follows a hollow footfall on the stairs.

The occupants of the house had not changed. Mrs. Russell preserved the same air of placid content, and moved about, or sat and sewed, as if she had never known anxiety. And Beauchamp was just the same hearty, frank, and generous youth. How well his prosperity became him! One could see that he ought never to have been poor; but the demeanor which is so natural and fitting in the landed proprietor would have been thought an evidence of intolerable pride before he came into possession. But Beauchamp had greatly changed, though not outwardly. The trials he had passed through had developed the strength of his character, and given a deeper tone to thought and sentiment.

On one bright, sunny day in May, he was seated with his books by a light-stand on the veranda. Mr. Howard was swinging negligently in a hammock, reading a novel. Mrs. Russell was occupied in sewing, now and then glancing at her handsome son as he toiled over his book, and meanwhile unconsciously brushed back his wavy hair from his forehead with his disengaged hand. A figure was seen coming across the meadow, the near way from town. It was Scipio, a sable Camus, "footing slow." He came up to the porch, and handed his young master a letter. Beauchamp took the letter, opened it, glanced at the signature, read a few words, and then, while every drop of his blood seemed to be on fire, he rose from his seat, and went into the house, and up to his chamber. It was a matter not to be disposed of on the veranda, with one's friend near by, and one's mother looking on.

RIVERCLIFF, MAY 3, 184-.

DEAR MR. RUSSELL: I venture to call you so from what I know of you through another, who has inspired me with the regard for you which I should feel for a near and dear friend. A young lady who was once my pupil, and is now my guest, occupies a sick chamber, and demands my constant care. I may say I am at once her nurse, friend, and sister. I hope you will believe at the outset, not only that this letter is written without her knowledge, but that, if she were to know that I have written to you, she would be deeply mortified and offended. I take upon myself whatever blame there is in this, and beg that any presumption of indelicacy may attach solely to me. Believing that, in a matter of life and death, the ordinary scruples, and the restraints which society imposes upon our sex, ought to be disregarded, I have determined to tell you what has come to my knowledge. I should not do this if I had the least doubt of your noble and generous character. I have such assurances, that I trust you implicitly, as being a man, incapable of any feeling but sympathy for a lady who is in a state of distress and humiliation. When you have read this, you will act as you think best, but I am sure you will not, by the least word, wound the honor of the lady by mentioning to any one in Kentucky the source or the nature of this communication. It will be unnecessary to repeat things which are already well known to you; I will only mention those that most concern you (at least, I hope they do) at this time.

The young lady, on reaching her home after a visit to Barry County, received a letter from her uncle giving a very unfair, and, as it turned out afterwards, a totally false account of a certain affray. That account was made up of the current rumors, and it was a *very* unfavorable

one for you. Indeed, it went so far into particulars, that it appeared there was no explanation possible on your part, and that it placed you where no man of good principles and honorable character could stand.

On the strength of that letter, corroborated by similar ones from the family, the young lady sent you a farewell, and immediately after came here for the remainder of the winter. How she has spent her time you will know, if you ever care to make inquiry. But I think she has never been at ease one day since she wrote to you. It is nothing less than truth to say that *she loved you*, and that she still loves you. She met here, by a strange coincidence, a young lady named Sara de Sandoval; and before long she had from her a new version of the affray and of all the circumstances. I will not attempt to give any details; it will be sufficient to say, that in the most artless and convincing way, this unlooked-for witness gave the fullest proof of your innocence. Her entire unconsciousness of the importance of her story made it "strong as proofs of holy writ." You will pardon me for adding, that this narration has given a new lustre to your character.

A considerable time has passed since the young lady heard this, and her sorrow has deepened every day, until now I really begin to fear for the result. She constantly blames herself for her hasty action, and more on account of the injustice done you than for the loss she has sustained; and her distress has become so pitiable, that I have broken over the customs of the world to let you know her situation. Unless she can have your forgiveness, I do not believe she will ever recover her peace of mind, if, indeed, she does not end her sufferings in death. This severe trial has shown her possessed of a depth of feeling and a sincerity of soul which I had never attributed to her. If you could see her, you would hardly believe

that it was the same young lady whose gayety and nonchalance at times gave you so much pain.

I must end this long letter. It does not require any reply. Indeed, I hope you will not write. I think I know what you will do. Our residence is within an hour's time of New York, and any one in our village will show you where we live.

With sincere regard,

Your friend,

ELEANOR S. LOEWENTHAL.

To BEAUCHAMP RUSSELL, Esq.

When Beauchamp came down to the veranda again, he was pale and serious, but his expression and his resolute carriage indicated great nervous excitement.

Mrs. Russell and Mr. Howard both looked at him with some surprise, but waited for him to speak.

"How long does it take to get to New York?" he asked.

"From six to eight days, according to the state of the Ohio River," Howard answered; and then added, "You are not going — are you?"

"Yes, as soon as possible. What is the best route?"

"By steamboat to Wheeling, then by stage over the mountains to Cumberland, and then by railroad. But this is sudden!"

"I will explain soon. Don't be alarmed, my dear little mother. There is no bad news. And I shan't be gone a long time. Would you like to have uncle Ralph come here and stay with you, or would you go to Maple Grove?" His lip quivered. He was in a state of trepidation, like one going into battle, and making provisions for friends at parting. While she was considering his question, Howard spoke.

"Well, Beauchamp, if you are going, I am going with you. I've been hesitating, and this seems to decide the matter. I will set my face eastward. Now I think of it, I have been here five years. I wish we were on the road now. I should like to annihilate space, and wake up in my mother's house.

Mrs. Russell said she would consult with her brother about where she should stay, but first she wanted to know of Beauchamp what it was that made it necessary for him to make such a journey.

Beauchamp, still pale and slightly tremulous, answered, "I have nothing to conceal; not from either of you, certainly. But the reason that induces me to go you must conjecture. I mean, rather, that I don't feel at liberty to tell you all the circumstances. I will say as much as this, that I am going to see a lady. You can probably imagine who it is. But even this is not to be mentioned. You, my dear mother, will trust me, that I shall do nothing rashly, nothing that you would not approve. You will very soon see me back here, and just as I am to-day, ready to go on with my work."

Howard repressed his curiosity, knowing that there would be ample time to hear about the matter on the journey. A messenger was sent to Maple Grove, and uncle Ralph came up in the evening. Beauchamp took him out of the house, and the two walked about the yard for an hour. The ridicule of the old bachelor had spent its force. He could make no impression on his nephew's mind, and he acquiesced in what he saw to be inevitable. He consented to remove his quarters to Beech Knoll for the time, in order to be with his sister.

Mr. Howard occupied the brief time before starting in calling upon a few attached friends and pupils, and settling his affairs. Notwithstanding the recent events, he felt a

deep regret at sundering the pleasant associations he had formed, and he looked forward to beginning life anew in his native state with no little anxiety. He feared that New England would be as foreign to him as Kentucky had been. At all events, he would see his mother and relatives, and surely "the little brown bird" also.

Beauchamp's preparations were made in a single day. He made no farewell calls, and spoke to no one of his departure. Squire Hamilton had been very kind to him of late, but that was now forgotten in the tempestuous anger that the letter had aroused; and he did not dare trust himself to see the old gentleman, for fear he might be led to offer him insult or violence. He thought he might meet him with a better temper on his return, especially if a young lady came as peacemaker; or, if there were to be a quarrel, he would leave it to her to carry on more effectively.

The leave-takings were over, very tender on the part of Howard and Mrs. Russell, and the young men started off in the little stage. Fortunately there were no other passengers, for Beauchamp was in the airiest mood, and indulged in every imaginable extravagance of speech and gesture.

Ah, who would not be twenty-three, in a coach with the best of friends, and on the way to see the loveliest girl in the world! Metaphor and hyperbole, smiles and triumphant ejaculations, fall far short of expressing the exuberance of feeling, even in anticipation.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

FINAL TABLEAUX.

WHEN, near the close of a long optical exhibition, the showman fears that he has wearied the patience of the spectators, he hurries on the concluding pictures, and whisks each one away, affording only glimpses of what might fairly claim more attention, if it were not growing late. Rocks become vapor, and pinnacles gleam through mist; a tumult is chased away by a group of merry-makers; gayly-ribboned peasants come dancing over the fields before the sullen draught-cattle can be driven off with their loads; exultant villains are cut short, — pulled through trap-doors by accommodating fiends; May blossoms spring from December's ice-covered boughs; and all too soon the hero and heroine come forward, anxious and out of breath with all they have gone through, to make their final bow and courtesy.

It was a mild and sunny afternoon at Rivercliff. The broad Hudson and the expanse of Tappan Zee were unrippled, and shone with the soft lustre of beryls. The light clouds above, the idle river craft, and the bold rocks on the farther shore, were reflected with startling beauty in the vast mirror. Mrs. Loewenthal was sitting in the western chamber with her invalid guest, and both were enjoying the unrivalled scene and the bland and refreshing air. Adelaide occupied her favorite roomy easy-chair, while

the hostess sat near the window, from which she could see the winding gravelled walk that led to the house from the outer gate. Two men were entering the gate at the same time that the sharp sound of escaping steam was heard from the wharf below.

"Adelaide, don't Kentuckians, like Spaniards, dress all in black?"

"Yes, I think so; but why do you ask?"

"Black frock coats, ample and negligent, — black satin waistcoats, — black cravats, and loosely-fitting black pantaloons, — quite trim in shape at the waist though, — that is the style — isn't it?"

"Yes, as I remember. But why do you ask?"

"Their boots are rather thin and fine — are they not? They seem to step as if the rough ground annoyed them, and they would be better pleased if they were on horseback."

"Why are you talking of Kentuckians, my dear?"

"I think I have seen them — at — some time; very stately, handsome men, too. I don't *quite* fancy their broad-brimmed hats. I should think they had wilfully punched them out of shape, just to give them a careless look before putting them on. But the broad-brims don't cover white and pink faces; it is a warm, sunny tint, with a becoming flush on the cheeks."

"You describe them so well that you almost take me back to Kentucky."

"I don't want to take you back there, Adelaide, even if I could transport you in your easy-chair as you sit; I would rather bring Kentucky here."

"I wish you could," said the girl, absently, but with a tender, regretful tone.

"Now, if I could bring two persons from Kentucky at this minute, whom would you have? I know before you

• speak, who *one* of them would be. The other—I shall have to ask his name. Perhaps you will know.”

Adelaide's breath grew hurried at the thought. There was something she did not understand in the tone and manner of her friend, and it made her heart beat fast. Mrs. Loewenthal heard at that moment the sound of steps treading the gravel-walk.

“Well, Adelaide, as you don't answer, I think I'll pick out somebody, and bring him myself.” She heard the front door opening, as she was listening for it. From the head of the stairs one could look through the hall to the entrance. Mrs. Loewenthal calmly walked out into the upper hall passage just in season to make a warning gesture, and then descended the stairs, leaving Adelaide wondering what it all meant.

She entered the reception-room, and advanced and gave her hand to Beauchamp, whom she knew at a glance, saying, with a sudden rush of feeling, while she still retained his hand, “God bless you for coming! I'm delighted to see you, but not a bit surprised. I *knew* you would come. I'm *so* happy to see you!” The tears that sparkled in her eyes showed how happy she was. Beauchamp was so much touched by the outburst, that he could not command himself to utter a word.

“And this is Mr. Howard, I presume,” she said. “I know all Mr. Russell's friends. I am glad to see you, for his sake.”

Mr. Howard said he hoped that next time she would be glad to see him for his own sake.

• “I left a young lady, sitting in an arm-chair, in a room just at the head of those stairs. She is quite feeble. Not a moment ago she said she would like to see some one from Kentucky, and I promised she should do so. You will make my word good—won't you, Mr. Russell? Gently!”

The caution was probably unnecessary, for though Beauchamp would have liked to go up stairs like a whirlwind, he unconsciously put on the quiet air of his mentor, and stepped as lightly as if he were a hospital nurse by profession.

Mrs. Loewenthal listened between her heart-beats, and next minute heard two exclamations.

“Beauchamp!”

“Adelaide!”

“Thank God!” she said, with an unconscious tone of sincerity. “Now, Mr. Howard,”—after a pause,—“my heart is so full, I must have air—relief after an overpowering anxiety. Don't you want to walk out on the cliff? We can enjoy a most magnificent view; and the day is just as beautiful as if it had been made for two of the happiest people in the world. Let us go out and have our share of it.”

Let us be as considerate as Mrs. Loewenthal.

—
“So you go farther east, Mr. Howard,” said Mr. Loewenthal.

“Yes. I shall start in the morning, and I think I may as well return to the city this evening.”

“No, you don't,” said Beauchamp from the veranda; “you must stay over night, for I have many things to say to you. Mustn't he, Adelaide?”

Both ladies, as well as Mr. Loewenthal, joined so warmly in the request, that Mr. Howard could not refuse.

As the lovers passed to and fro on the veranda, Mr. Loewenthal called out from time to time. It is hardly necessary to say that he could speak English well if he chose, but in his merriment he put the words in the German order, as if they had formed lessons in phrasing.

“Ah-de-la-ē-dă, was that the style of man from whom

you run away are? The girls do it not so in Deutschland."

Or, "Ah-de-la-ē-dă, it is good that you and Herr Russell not in Berlin live. Koenig Friedrich Wilhelm would never rest till he is in the Grenadiers."

Or, "Ah-de-la-ē-dă, suppose you go down to the riverbank, and Herr Russell shall pose for Schiller's Jungling am Bachlein. I should like him stretched-out to see, only he could now not melancholy enough look."

Or, "Ah-de-la-ē-dă, what for a miraculous recovery! Is your tall friend a doctor?"

Mr. Howard has gone home after the warmest handshakings, and bearing the heartiest good wishes, and the reader will see him no more. Perhaps he is now a country attorney, perhaps a master of a classical school, or perhaps — who knows what a clever Yankee, with a handy turn for affairs, may become?

Mr. Russell remained two weeks at Rivercliff, during which all the sources of pleasure were explored. There was a trip to Albany by daylight, a picnic across the river under the Palisades, a grand tour of the city, and various drives on the border of the Sound. Adelaide bloomed as naturally as the other roses in the delightful air.

"Parting was over at last, and all the goodbys had been spoken,"

and the lovers set their faces westward; but not before they had a kindly interview with Sally. It was a source of painful reflections as they left her, considering how impossible it was that she could live without humiliation or insult in the place that gave her birth, and how necessary to her comfort and self-respect it was that she should go away to look under alien skies for a home, and friends, and equal love.

Mr. Russell has passed the ordeal of a visit of ceremony in Herbleu County, and established himself in the respect, and even in the affections, of the Shelburne family. Now in company with Adelaide he returns home. They call first at Squire Hamilton's, and receive the congratulations of the tall blue-eyed daughters, and of the utterly astonished squire. He has not said a word to his beloved on the subject of his altered fortunes. They ride out towards Beech Knoll by the familiar rocky road.

"How well I remember," says Adelaide, "that walk with you under these deep shades! I *wanted* to love you even then. I had schooled myself to reserve. I had a foolish ambition. I did not know how empty the world was when love is out of it. *Now*, dear Beauchamp, how proud I am to remember your earnest and unselfish talk! I should like to hear it all over again. We don't care for success nor for fame. It doesn't matter to me that you are poor. Let us ask your good mother to go to Herbleu County to live with us. No matter about Beech Knoll. Or we might repair the house and live here, — that is, if it makes any difference to you. Only let us never be separated again."

"I think we'll live at Beech Knoll," he said. "At all events, let us wait to see what mother has to say about it."

When the riders entered the lane, their coming was at once made known. The hands from Van Holm's farm were at work at Beech Knoll near the house, and stood resting on their hoes. Sylvia and Phillis were standing near the porch, old Scipio at the stile, and Mrs. Russell (in holiday dress) in the front porch. One dog had passed the good word to another, and the whole pack opened their throats in a tumultuous welcome. Never

was there such a fine sight at Beech Knoll as when Beauchamp helped the lady off her horse, and, stepping down from the stile, walked up to the porch with her to greet his dear little mother.

"O, you wicked Beauchamp! Not to tell me of this! What a beautiful house, and *such* a quaint chamber! And the new farm, or rather, the old one now yours again! All the clouds blown away, and the blue all full of sunshine! I am only too happy. And I shall love your mother, even more than you do. But where is uncle Ralph? I am going to take him in hand."

Beauchamp said, "You will find him an intractable subject, but I hope you will succeed. Try him by asking him to read Shakespeare with you. If he finds you really interested in his favorite author, he may forget that you belong to the wrong sex. If he don't, I will love you enough for him and myself too."

In the autumn, Beauchamp Russell, on motion of Squire Hamilton, was admitted to the bar. The squire observed to the court, that the young gentleman had studied only a short time, but that his diligence and proficiency had been extraordinary. The judge replied, that license to practise was given to a young lawyer much as the degree of Doctor of Divinity is to a young clergyman, who receives the formidable initials as an inducement to begin in earnest the study of theology.

The Squire was thoroughly converted, and was henceforth as hearty and strenuous a partisan as Beauchamp could have desired.

During the summer, Jacob Van Holm died, and Father Hennequin was remembered in a handsome bequest, be-

sides another for the restoration of his church. The good father always made it a point to visit Beech Knoll when his pastoral duties called him to Barry County.

Will Davis, Joe Heady, Harcourt, and the sheriff joined the Sons of Temperance, and the brilliant oyster-and-whiskey parties in the rear rooms around the square lost their chief ornaments. Old Shears, however, held out; he would be doggoned if *he* was to be taken into any dark-lantern concern jest to be shet off from his liquor. King Cabbage lived on, a dethroned monarch, but keeping up his state, like some of the mediatized princes in Germany.

"They are beautiful, magnificent; but, my dear Beauchamp, why *were* you so extravagant? You know I don't require any such jewels as these to prove that you love me! Such a rich contrast! Emeralds and diamonds. Well, I suppose I must wear them for your sake."

"My dear Adelaide, that set of jewels was given to me for my future wife (and that is you!) by José de Sandoval. He said, 'Tell her they came from one of the despised colored race, but from one who would lay down his life for Beauchamp Russell.'"

"I hope you'll not think me strange, but I'm sorry you told me. Jewels ought to have noble or tender associations, and these can't have either."

"Don't be too sure, my dear. They may have both. Some time I'll tell you his story. But let me be a philosopher or a moralist—just for one moment. If I had been a successful planter, and at the close of a prosperous season I had *bought* you this set, it would have been paid for out of the toil of unwilling slaves, ignoble black men. You would have worn it proudly as my gift—at

least I hope you would. This was almost forced upon me — a generous, unprompted offering. Which should have the nobler and the tenderer associations — the beauty that is bought with the earnings of the labor of slaves, or that which sparkles with the gratitude of a free man?"

"Ah, your philosophy is too much for me. But don't let this be known in Herbleu County! Some people there would think it more to my credit if you had stolen them. I know something of Sandoval, and he is really a hero. But who in Kentucky can see heroism in a slave?"

Two newspaper clippings may be of interest.

From the Herbleu Clarion, October 20, 184—.

"Married at the residence of the bride's mother, by the Rev. Luther Calvin, Miles Robertson, Esq., to Kate, only daughter of the late William Wyndham, Esq."

From the Barry Eagle, April —, 1865.

"We are pleased to learn that our distinguished fellow-citizen, Colonel Beauchamp Russell, has been made Brigadier-General for his gallant conduct at the Battle of Nashville, December 16, 1864. His son, Shelburne Beauchamp Russell, not yet twenty years of age, has also been raised to the rank of Captain, for his brilliant service as Aide-de-camp volunteer to Major-General Thomas in the same action."

THE END.