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VOL. CCCXLVI.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS BY CHARLES DICKENS.

VOL. XXXIV

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

"Familiar in their Mouths as *Household Words*."
Shakespeare.

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VOL. XXXIV.

LEIPZIG
BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ
1856.

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A WIFE'S STORY.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

We stood on the deck together, —I and my husband—I, shrouded in warm wrappings, with folded arms, leaning against him. How strong he was! How firm he stood! How delightful it was to me to lean there so!

It was late, and a wild night; a strong wind blowing, and our ship bounding on over high-swelling waves. It should have been moonlight — the moon was at the full — but only now and then a wind-rent in the clouds let her pale light through.

We did not talk, the wild wind would have blown our words away, and my heart and soul were very full. Leaning there I thought I had found life-long peace, a refuge from all trouble and distress. What a beautiful future I pictured!

We were both young: I some five years the younger: a mere girl in age and in appearance, yet all too old at heart. Measuring life by the bitterness of gained experience, by its pain, and not by the number of its days and years, I was no longer young. My life had long been a struggle; a series of conflicts in which I always came off heart-wounded, sometimes hand-disabled, never subdued. I had been ever at war with circumstance. There was a strange and secret strength somewhere within me, that would not be crushed out: that would not let me yield. But though too strong to submit myself a willing slave to any imposed yoke, my nature was not strong enough, I was not wise enough, to gather all powers of soul, and heart, and mind together, into conscious possession, and then yield meekly, quietly, and entirely to the recognition of the controlling power of a higher will. So I had fought on as blindly as vehemently, doing battle boldly for real and unreal rights, resenting deeply both real and supposed injuries.

No mere woman can live long so, — at war with all around, — I had grown heart-sick, and utterly weary; soon I should have lain down, and yielded. But a great change came to me. While I had been struggling and striving in a night of great darkness, in which the things after which my ambition prompted me to reach always eluded my eager hands, God laid in my path, at my very feet, a good gift.

I was a governess when my husband began to woo me. I was his equal by birth, but what did that serve me? He was far above me in station now, was handsome, and much courted and admired. The daughters of the family with whom I lived would have been proud to win him, but he turned from them with his simple, frank indifference, and bent the power of his nature to loving me! I was rather small, generally very quiet in manner, not beautiful, and not plain. I believe I had a certain dignity of my own, which had been useful to me in my unprotected state. I felt that when I chose I could compel respect, and gloried in the power, though it made me more feared than loved.

I do not know what it could have been in me that served to draw my husband's notice upon me, and then to win me his love. I think, for his was a most faithful heart, that he must have regarded me, first, for the sake of some real or imagined likeness to my brother, my dead brother, who had been his friend. And yet it was hardly me he loved; of my real nature, its force, its aspirations, its vehement unrest, he knew nothing. He loved me as he saw me, looking through some medium of his own interposing.

Of course he was my first lover. Who else would have turned from our three household Graces, — the grown-up daughters of the family — brilliant, accomplished, dowered, and, apparently, sweet-tempered, as they were, to me? poor, plain, and proud, as I was considered. So, of course, he was my first lover! If I loved him aright I could not tell, — if I ever loved him as a wife should love, I do not even now know. I felt it infinitely sweet and strange to be beloved — to be the object of such manly, protecting tenderness as his. I asked no questions, — when I could once believe in his love, I gave myself up, abandoned my whole being utterly, to the great, new joy. There was nothing to distract my mind, nothing to divide my affection with him, and I had very large capacity of loving. His loving me was a sufficient proof of his goodness, of his disinterestedness, and great-heartedness. I was satisfied, and Harold could not long doubt that I loved him, and I am sure he never suspected me of accepting him for any other reason. He could see my eyes well over with delight, my cheek flush, and my hands tremble when he gave me any new proof of the love

I hungered, and yet half-dreaded, to be convinced of.

I remember, how well! the first thing that excited my mistress's (so I called her in my proud humility) suspicion of the truth, and that first stirred up a joyful, thrilling hope in my poor heart. Mr. Warden came to the house one morning, it was earlier than he had ever called before, and I was in the large school-room, giving a music-lesson to the youngest girl, the three elder sisters were in the room that day, busily occupied with various works of idleness, and still in morning-costume, so that an authoritative knock at the hall-door caused some alarm and stir. But I went on giving my lesson, wearily endeavouring to do the work of both teacher and pupil. The door opened, and some one entered before the young ladies had effected their escape to their dressing-rooms; there was a movement and flutter, but I did not look round, or imagine that it in any way concerned me.

"Mr. Warden was particularly anxious to see our school-room, and to discover in what praise-worthy manner you young ladies were occupied here; so I have brought him in to take you by surprise," I heard my mistress say in her most gracious voice.

Then I just glanced round, for I always felt a sort of interest in Mr. Warden for the sake of a remembered and happier lang-syne, though I did not expect him in any way to reciprocate it. He was standing at the far end of the room, surrounded by the four ladies: in his hand he held a most glorious bouquet of hot-house roses, which they were all admiring; he did not hold them carelessly and indifferently, and as if half-ashamed of carrying them, as gentlemen generally do flowers; but carefully, and tenderly, and half-proudly. I saw this at a glance, and, meeting his eyes, bowed slightly, and turned back again to the music-book and my pupil's heedless fingers, expecting that in a moment, the ladies, the visitor, and his roses would have vanished from my domain. But the fragrance of those flowers reached me, it grew more and more deliciously strong; — they must be near.

I turned my head very, very slightly, and became conscious that some one stood behind me — that the precious flowers almost touched my cheek.

"How very sweet they are," I ventured to say, the flowers drawing the words from me; for their perfume seemed to have entered my heart.

"Are you not weary, Annie? Your pupil does not seem very attentive — isn't it tiresome work?" Mr. Warden asked.

He was bending down to me, flowers in hand. Somehow I could not answer — something in tone or words touched me like remembered music, and I longed to weep.

He had heard of me as Annie all his life, and so forgot to call

me anything else, even now, when I was a poor governess, and he — but I am sure he never thought of that. He found me again, after having lost sight of me for years, he found me unhappy, and took me into his great heart.

I had not yet voice to speak when Mrs. Stone bustled up.

"Has not Amelia been attentive this morning, Miss Aston?" she asked with a great appearance of concern.

"She has not been less so than usual, ma'am," I answered coldly.

"You should complain to me, my dear, when you find her troublesome; she is rather a giddy child, I know. Come now, Amelia, and have your bonnet put on, a walk will do both you and Miss Aston good."

So saying, the lady went to the door with the child, thinking that we followed her.

"A moment!" Harold interposed as I was rising to do so. I sat down again in my chair by the piano, bending my eyes on the pencil-case my fingers were playing with, and wondering vaguely what he could be going to say. "I brought these for you," Mr. Warden began hurriedly, holding out the roses; "you said the other day how fond you were of flowers. I came down from London last night, and brought these from Covent Garden — may I leave them with you?"

I did not hold out my hand, so he laid them on my lap — they looked wondrous beautiful on my black dress.

Harold glanced round the room; we were alone; the young ladies had disappeared to dress, meaning that Mr. Warden should escort them for a walk that bright winter's morning.

"I want to know," he began confusedly, "are you happy here? How do they treat you? Do not be proud with me, remember —"

I raised my eyes, full of tears, gratefully to him. He should see that at least I was not proud to him, to any who treated me kindly.

"Mr. Warden!" Mrs. Stone called from the passage; "I know you are fond of flowers — I want to show you something rare in my conservatory. Oh! here you are! I beg your pardon for leaving you, I thought the girls had taken you into the drawing-room. This way, if you please — you must stoop your tall head a little, I fear."

I was alone — I sat as he had left me — there lay the flowers, I did not stir or touch them, I only bent down over them, their fragrance filling my soul, and, perhaps, a tear or two falling on their petals. That fragrance must have been a kind of intoxication, such wildly beautiful thoughts stole in with it.

It was winter: but this precious gift over which I bent carried me away to some heavenly garden of perpetual rose-rich summer. I gazed at my real roses, soft pink, rich crimson, snow-white, bright golden, they shut out the

great, bare room, the gaunt bare boughs swinging before the windows, they kept out sense of cold and emptiness, and filled my heart with warmth and sweetness. I do not know how long I dreamed.

My reverie was broken into roughly. Mrs. Stone entered with a stormy rustling of her handsome dress that told of some excitement.

"Oh!" she began, looking sharply at me; "Mr. Warden forgot his roses here, I suppose, I wondered where he had left them. He is gone out with the young ladies; Amelia is with her sisters, so you can go into the garden, if you please. You need not have touched those flowers, Miss Aston; put them in water in the drawing-room, if you please; no doubt they were brought for Julia, but Mr. Warden is rather shy, and perhaps did not like to offer them."

The lady approached, and looked more closely at my flowers.

"He must have given several guineas for that bouquet at this season," she continued; "very extravagant! but, however, he is a young man of large fortune, and, as a bachelor, can afford such extravagances — his father, I understand, was among the most wealthy of our merchant-princes — by the way, how does it happen you know him so intimately?"

"He was a friend of ours, — of my brother's, when I was a child."

"Indeed! then, of course, you know all about the family. Has he any near relatives living?"

"I believe not," I answered.

I had risen, and stood leaning against the piano, my flowers gathered up heedfully in my folded arms. I half guessed what Mrs. Stone would say next, and stood on the defensive.

"I observed," the lady continued, "that Mr. Warden called you by your Christian name. That was all very well when you were a child, but I am sure, as a sensible young woman, you will see that now it is hardly becoming. There is a wide difference of station and position, you must remember. For a governess to be treated with such an appearance of familiarity by a handsome young man of fortune, is not 'the thing.' You hear me, Miss Aston? Do not crush those flowers!"

I had gathered them rather closely to my bosom — I held them more loosely as I answered, —

"I do, madam!"

"I am sure you will acknowledge that I am right. I will mention the matter to Mr. Warden, if you choose — he appears to be rather an unsophisticated young man, and perhaps does not know much of the ways of the world."

"I think Mr. Warden will act according to his ideas of right, and not according to what any one may tell him of the ways of the world, Mrs. Stone."

"That scornful look and tone is most unbecoming, Miss Aston. I have told you before, that if you cannot better control your

temper, and treat me with more respect, I shall not be able to keep you, sorry as I should be to be forced to dismiss you. You know how much you have suffered already from the evil, but natural, interpretations put upon your frequent changes of situation. I wonder you are not more guarded. You cannot, I am sure, complain to Mr. Warden, or any one else, that you have experienced anything but kindness here."

"I shall not complain — certainly not — to Mr. Warden!" I interrupted.

"That is right; for once your pride is proper and becoming. You need not stand there any longer, I have done, I only wanted to warn you; I am sure you understand me. Take those flowers and put them in water, as I requested, they are beginning to droop. I am sure Julia will be pleased. I do not think Mr. Warden very clever, but he is a fine young man, very steady and good tempered, and Julia is ambitious and will spur him on, so they will suit well."

"Possibly!" I answered, "but about the flowers you are mistaken, ma'am, they are mine; Mr. Warden laid them where you saw them, — I had not touched them when you came in." I did not stay to see the effect of my words, but went up to my own room. There I put my treasures lovingly in water, and then sat by them thinking, and my heart softened as it had not done for many a day. I felt so grateful to Harold! Any way, it was so kind — so thoughtful to bring such lovely flowers for me! In my heart I was always most deeply grateful to him; but I do not remember that I ever thought of being so to Heaven for any of my happiness, and so my very gratitude grew to be a pain to me and a bane to him.

But I must not anticipate, though you know mine to be a sad story.

It was not so very long after my receipt of that first, most precious, gift — (I have the dust of those flowers now!)—that Harold asked me to be his wife.

It was on one early spring evening, when I had stolen half-an-hour's freedom from my slavery and gone alone into the garden. At least, it should have been spring by the calendar, but it was a wintry evening, bleak, black, damp, and cold. A very dismal and dreary evening, and so I loved to linger out in its ghastly, chill twilight. I believe I was always happier in what other people called most miserable weather. It seemed as if I relished throwing my defiance in Nature's face, and yet I loved her with no half love-liking. Just then, my proud, exulting heart joys in proving its happiness, its little dependence on aught external.

I had not paced, but rushed, up and down the broad gravel-walk, beyond the chance of surveillance from the house, till I was weary; then I stood leaning against a great tree, and the solemn desolateness of the time and the scene

would steal icily to my heart, and I folded my arms and gave way to a sombre, doubting, almost despairing, train of thought.

I loved the old tree I leaned against, though it grew in an enemy's soil. My heart had throbbed against it many a time — not with joy, but with grief, scorn, or impotent rage. And many a time my bitter, burning tears had fallen upon the turf above its roots. No one else ever stood there, leaning so, and I had grown to fancy the tree endowed with some power of sympathy, and that it bent down regardfully to me, and swept its branches lovingly over my face, and whispered consolingly in my ear. But my friend was mute and still that night, with neither touch nor tone for me. The evening was sullenly quiet, and there was no wind born murmur among the bare boughs.

As I stood leaning there — hidden from the path — I heard a step, a firm, crushing step, coming down the gravel-path. I knew who came — at least my heart knew — for it beat high against the tree's rough bark, stirred for once by somewhat else than pride or pain. But it did not beat there long ... I was soon found, though I stood quite still in my hiding-place. Harold reproved me tenderly, and yet authoritatively, for staying out in that raw, cheerless air. I answered, not proudly, as I should have done had any other spoken so, — but meekly and sadly. Then we both forgot the weather as that beaming, handsome, honest, face was bent down close to mine.

He loved plain-spoken truthfulness; and, if I blushed and pressed my cold hands beneath my shawl tight down over my swelling heart, yet I frankly accepted the love he frankly offered, and I did not scruple to let him know that I took it very thankfully.

Then I was drawn close to him. It was cold no longer, — my heart was warm and full. I suppose we walked up and down a long time — I remember it grew dark — but the sky cleared, and some few stars looked down upon us.

Harold simply told Mrs. Stone of our engagement, that we should be married as soon as I could make it convenient, and he had made proper preparations for receiving his wife, and added that he trusted I should meet with kindness and consideration for the little while it might be necessary for me to remain under her roof.

He spoke very courteously, but plainly and decidedly.

Mrs. Stone was surprised and mortified, and she could not quite well conceal it. She had not thought Mr. Warden's infatuation had been so great. She had had vague schemes, too, for sending me away, and then securing him for one of her own daughters.

She was silent a moment, and then said in a hard, unmoved voice.

"Of course you are aware, Mr. Warden, that Miss Aston must fulfil her engagement with me —

a prior engagement to that so hastily, and, to speak plainly, it seems to me, so unbecomingly, formed with you. She is here as a governess, and must continue here in the capacity for which she was hired for three months from this time."

A flush and a frown came upon Harold's face, but I interposed,

"I shall be quite ready, Mrs. Stone," I answered, "to perform all my duties as usual till the time for which I was engaged has expired. I do not think you can accuse me of having ever wilfully neglected duty; I do not know why I should do so now."

"Very well! This is, I believe, the last day of February" —

"The first of March, I think, ma'am; is it not?" I asked, turning to Harold.

"I think so," he answered discontentedly.

"On the first of June then, you leave my service?" Mrs. Stone said. "Till that time," she added, "I shall of course expect that my daughter's education will be carried on without interruption."

I bowed assent. Harold took his leave, chafing sorely at Mrs. Stone's manner, and at having to leave me for so long a time to her tender mercies. I was not sorry to remain where I was, my present happiness was quite enough, and I should be glad to grow quietly acquainted with that ere there came any further change. I crept out of the room soon after Harold went away, and was alone with my joy till morning.

It was well for me that I was love-strong and proof against annoyance, for that house was no home or rest for me.

They even tried to come between me and Harold's love, filling his ears with tales — some of them, alas! too true — of my violent temper, my singularities, my excessive pride, and my utter unsuitableness for making any man's home happy. But they soon gave up this attempt. Harold looked through their assumed to their real motives with the clear vision of a simple, sincere nature, and treated me only the more tenderly and pityingly when we met. This was not very often, or for long at a time: we had no opportunity of gaining any real knowledge of each other. During those three months I had time for thinking over the impending change: I might have weighed and tried my love had I had scale, or table of weights to guide me — I had not. I knew that I sickened at the bare thought of anything intervening between me and Harold, and shutting out the glimpse of a glorious, free life beyond my prison-walls that he opened to me, and I did not question of what nature and kind should be the love between husband and wife, or doubt whether we could make one another happy. I had one relative, a maiden aunt, in but poor circumstances, of whom I knew but very little; to her I went when that long three months had expired; from her house I was to be married in a fortnight's time.

In spite of my happiness I had grown paler and thinner of late. I had been kept wearily and closely employed all day; or rather had kept myself so, choosing to do more, rather than less, than formerly, and often sat up late at night busy with my needlework and my pleasant thoughts. Harold, worried at my frail look; he was glad my aunt lived in the country; I promised to try and get rosy and strong there. As her house was small, and I knew she had a nervous horror of strangers, particularly of gentlemen, it had been arranged that Harold should not follow me to Ilton until the day before the wedding. The fortnight I was there he was to spend in London, near which he had taken a house.

I found myself at my aunt's door at the close of a fine June afternoon.

Her door! I remember I smiled as I looked at it, it was such a tiny cottage-door; how would Harold get in? I laughed to myself as I stood waiting a moment, before I knocked. Everything laughed too; the green leaves in the sunshine overhead, the bright, trimly-tended flowers in the narrow borders on each side of the narrow path. Then, how the butter-cups laughed in the fields beyond! — such fields! so rich and dark-grounded and gold-spangled, bounded with hedges white with hawthorn. Field after field swelling and waving almost as far as I could see; only here and there a double row of tall elms or drooping limes, marking where some lane wound among them, or a little snowy patch of blossoming orchard varying their gorgeousness. And over the fields went the slow-flitting, dark-blue shadows cast by the hovering clouds. Perhaps, somewhere near, out of sight, they were making hay already — some very delicious fragrance was floated to me by the soft wind. I laughed again, and then turned to knock at the little door.

It was opened; my aunt peeped out shyly. She was relieved to find me alone; but looked as if she half-expected my handsome giant were lurking near.

"My dear, I am so glad to see you! God bless you! But I didn't expect you for an hour yet. Quite welcome, and everything is ready; though, but are you sure you are come alone? I heard some one laugh."

"I stood by myself, and laughed to myself, auntie. Yes, I am quite alone! I did not come by the coach; my luggage is coming by that, though."

"Well, you know, my dear, I shall be delighted to see your — Mr. Warden; but I am glad he did not come here yet; and what shall we do with him, love, when he does come? You say he is so tall, and my house is such a little one."

"If he cannot walk in to see me, he will crawl, perhaps."

My eyes were brimming over as I spoke, and aunt looked into them. She nodded and smiled to herself, and then sighed.

"And now you must come upstairs — not many stairs, you know — and I am sure you must want your tea."

My aunt bustled about, busy in taking off my bonnet and shawl. She kissed my forehead and smoothed my hair, and told me I had my mother's eyes; and sighed again, and prayed God keep me and guard me. Then she went down to make my tea, and I stood gazing out of the opened casement-window. I can exactly recall how I felt then! — can see all I saw from that window — and remember just where each rose grew of those that clustered round and tried to peep into the room. I picked one and put it in my hair, that I might have its fragrance near. Then I folded my hands quietly on my bosom and looked steadfastly out, and such a peace came into my breast, and tears came softly down on to my hands! But then I only looked out — I did not look up.

"Annie! Annie!" my aunt called at the bottom of the stairs, and I went down. A little table was drawn up to the bowery window; and the tea smelt fragrant and delicious, and was most refreshing. Everything reminded me of the country, — the bread, the butter, rich cream, and fresh eggs. Aunt and I sat and chatted and sipped our tea; and I felt very good and patient with her gentle talk; and afterwards we went out of the little back-door, through the little back-garden, into the fields behind, where they really were making hay. "I hope it won't all be made before Harold comes," I said. And then my aunt asked me a thousand questions about this formidable Harold; and from him we got somehow to the very important subject of my wardrobe, and discussed most thoroughly what I had and what I should want. My aunt had a kind neighbour, she said, who often offered her the use of his pretty pony-phaëton. If I could drive she would borrow it, as the best shops near were at Hard, seven miles off. I was not at all afraid of driving over those smooth, quiet roads; so when we went home, Mary, the little maid, was despatched, with my aunt's compliments, to this obliging neighbour, to beg the loan of his carriage for to-morrow. I stood on the door-step: I could not go in, it was such a balmy June evening; and it was so new and delicious to feel myself my own mistress — to expect no hasty summonses to remind me of my bondage. I saw Mary trip away demurely through an orchard, then emerge and pursue the narrow track across a golden meadow, then disappear again behind some trees and shrubs, from among which I could see sundry chimneys arise. She came back presently to say, with a half-smile, that Mr. Swayne returned his compliments, and the carriage was quite at her mistress's service; and so was he, if she would like him to drive her. So Mary had to trip back again with a message

that Miss Aston had a niece staying with her who would drive her; she was obliged to Mr. Swayne.

"Mr. Swayne is such an odd man!" my aunt said, quite bashfully, I fancied.

"Not so odd to think he should like to oblige you, auntie?" I answered.

Aunt only shook her head, and sighed again. The little placid sigh that seemed habitual to her, and that always made me feel impatient with her.

Aunt Aston, I knew, kept early hours; so I soon bade good-night. Mindful of the economy practised in her little household, I first put out my candle, and then sat in the window, 'neath the starlight, for hours. To dream happily on the basis of things probable was so new a delight, I could not easily be satisfied; and when at last my thoughts set themselves in musical order, I went to bed only to sing them over in my sleep.

But I remember I slept little that night; it seemed as if my soul under my eyelids kept up too much light. The red dawn woke me, and I did not close my eyes again; but while the first heavy dewiness was in air and on earth, I visited the hayfields, buried my face in the hawthorn-hedges, withdrawing it disfigured by one or two unfriendly scratches, shook the petals of some late-blooming apple-trees in showers down upon my upturned face, and gathered my hands full of wild pink and white-briar roses. Their perfume now always calls to my mind the bowery lanes round Ilton! There was a very wild life beating at my heart that morning, in spite of the quiet step with which I paced about. I went in with dew-dabbled skirts, torn hands, and hair dishevelled from its usual scrupulous neatness. Aunt Aston was down, and breakfast waiting; but I had a second toilette to make before I was presentable; and then I glanced ruefully at my hands when my aunt directed my attention to them. Harold would not like to see them so disfigured. I would wear gloves in future in my country rambles, I thought.

My aunt usually breakfasted at seven. That morning it was past eight when we sat down; and, before we had finished, our carriage was waiting for us at the door. I had, what seemed to me, a large sum of money in my possession — a whole year's salary untouched, and a little money saved from the earnings of former years besides. Yet saved is hardly the right word. My money, as soon as received, was always thrown into a drawer. I hated the sight of it. My wages — as I scornfully termed it. I felt nothing of the nobility or the worship of labour. I always resented — never gloried in — my state of servitude. My salary had, as Mrs. Stone reminded me, been handsome, and my expenses very few. I had worn mourning for years, and my plain black dresses had cost me little. So now I felt quite rich,

and, for the first time in my life, it gladdened me to hold money in my hand. I wanted to look well, and I fancied I might improve my appearance by dressing better. Harold had loved me as he found me; so, for him, I would gladly look as pretty as possible.

What my purchases should be was again the subject of conversation as I drove my aunt along the pretty, winding, fragrant lanes, down into the little valley, crossing the bridge over the placid river, through Lord A.'s beautiful chestnut-studded beech-groved park, which the use of Mr. Swayne's name enabled us to cut across. Then, slowly up the one long steep hill of the neighbourhood, across a small tract of open down, where the wind blew fresher, and I fancied the sea might not be far off, and down again gradually, the church-spire and house-tops, and clustering trees of Hard lying beneath us.

Arrived, our pony was dismissed for a few hours' rest. We had so much business to do! Hard was a very small town; but its shops were well supplied, and our fastidiousness had as good a chance of being gratified as at many a larger place.

Aunt Aston and I did not very well agree in our opinions about dress. She had the quietest, most Quaker-like taste for herself; but for a young person, like me, she fancied brighter colours, and recommended pinks, and blues, and greens, most indiscriminatingly. My soft, pearly-coloured silk delicately-patterned muslin, and cloudy-coloured barège did look rather sober-hued; so I bought some bright pretty ribbons to please Aunt Aston, and then we thought it prudent to ascertain the amount of our expenditure before buying more. I had already made a large hole in my small fortune; so that would do for to-day, we thought. We must calculate and consider a little before we laid out more there. Then we had visits to pay to the dress-maker and milliner. That last, I remember, was a most unsatisfactory visit. How plain I looked in her gay, flowery bonnets! but in one of soft, transparent white my poor face pleased me better; and in the choice of a second I allowed Aunt Aston to have her way. I was quite sick of my morning's employment by this time, and my aunt was tired too. She had friends in the town; should we go and see them? I said "Please no!" and so we went to a confectioner's, and thence sent for our little carriage, and away home. What a time we had spent! I felt a kind of contempt for myself and for my companion, who talked over our purchases with lively interest, as we drove home in the golden afternoon silence. I was warm and out of temper, in consequence of which, and of my languid, indifferent driving, I nearly overset our carriage, and very much frightened my aunt. She was silent, and I penitent, after that.

"A box come by the carrier for

you, miss," Mary announced, as she came to lead the pony home, when we had got out.

For me? are you sure?" I asked.

"Miss Annie Aston, Thorn Cottage, Ilton, is on it, miss; so I think it's for you." Of course there was but one person in the wide world would send anything to me. I sat down in the parlour window-seat, and took off my gloves, my bonnet, my shawl, deliberately, before I proceeded to examine its contents.

Mary considerately had it uncorded by the man who brought it. I opened it at last, and Aunt Aston proceeded to examine the contained treasures. I found a letter on the top, and was fully occupied with that. These things were "for my little wife, whom I have a right to bury under heaps of finery if I choose, and if I could bear to have her out of my sight; and who has no right to wave gifts of her husband's away with any proud flourishes of her little white hand," the letter said.

Harold had commissioned a lady-friend, a friend of his mother's, to choose these things for him, describing to her the little person whose wearing was to endear them. They were well enough chosen, yet rather too gay perhaps, and much too costly, I thought.

I stood musing, my letter in my hand, turning over with my foot quite absently the heap of treasures Aunt Aston was examining. I was doing mischief; my shoe was dusty, and with it I was touching a white lace something. Aunt called out to me, and then I roused myself, and listened to her comments.

"Annie, I'm afraid Mr. Warden is extravagant, dear; you must talk to him about it. How beautiful this is! We must send that to be made up — the coach passes our door this evening at six; you must choose what you will send. Did you see this brooch and bracelet — pearl and amethyst! — is it not pretty? You must be married in this; it is lovely! How you will astonish the people in the village! and the church is quite the other end of it. How will you get there? — there will be such a crowd! My dear child, what will you do with all these things?"

"Look here, aunt," I said. I had found a little separate packet of silk and ribbons, all of a pretty sober colour, on which was written, "For Miss Aston (Annie's aunt)."

"How very kind and thoughtful he is," aunt exclaimed.

"Of course he is, auntie dear," I said, proudly, my heart swelling with happiness. "The poor dress I had meant for you is thrown into the shade."

We made a selection from among my abundance, and despatched a large parcel to Hard by the coach that evening. Among the variety I had found one dress fit for Mary's wearing, and by presenting her with which I quite won her heart.

My unrestful spirit was begin-

ning to weary of Thorn Cottage at the close of the fortnight. The low, rich, lovely country even, became tedious, as I had nothing to do but enjoy it. I longed for hill-climbing, and most intensely for that great treat Harold had promised me, being by and on the sea. I was tired of dreaming over my needle-work, in my long walks, in the hay-fields, in the night-time — dreams I had no one to share: my spirit was thirsting to taste the communion, the perfect sympathy, which I fancied was to take all the pain of over-fulness from my soul for the future. My aunt could only sigh and smile, warn me not to hope too much, and caution me that in marriage, no doubt, as in every temporal estate, there was much to endure as well as much to enjoy. "Not hope *too* much!" I startled her one day by passionately exclaiming. "Was there then no joy in life? My past had been bitter enough to give me a right to demand joy for my future." My aunt began a tearful and prayerful and tender little lecture on meekness, and patience, and trust; but I could not bear it then, and went away with a perturbed spirit. I sat in my window up-stairs till it grew dusk enough for the moonlight to show its power. I had found a sweet thought before I had sat there long. Harold — my *one* friend, hope, joy — my life, my very life — was coming to-morrow. And I had forgotten all doubt and anger at the one who raised it, and had sat long smiling out into the moonlight, and hugging my happiness, when my aunt came timidly in. She had a candle in her hand; I thought she had been crying. "He is coming to-morrow, to-morrow!" I whispered, as we bade each other a very loving good-night. I lit the candle she brought me from her's, soon to put it out, for I liked the moonlight-streaked dimness.

Next day, aunt was much more fluttered and nervously expectant than I. Then she was *so* full of business, too! though what she had to do, I could not tell.

Her dress was home, fitted admirably, and became her very well. Everything of mine that I cared to have then was ready: it seemed to me that we might sit down and wait quietly.

I forgot to say that I had made the acquaintance of my aunt's polite friend, Mr. Swayne. He was a widower; his wife had been my aunt's schoolfellow and one particular friend; so there was the intimacy of almost relationship established between them. He was to be present at our marriage, giving me away, and at his house Harold would sleep the one night of his stay in Ilton.

While my aunt fluttered and flitted about the house, up-stairs and down, and in and out the kitchen, I did what I could; filled every glass and vase I could find with fresh flowers, took the covers, at my aunt's request, from the pretty furniture, and superintended the hanging of snowy

muslin curtains in the windows; then there was no more to be done anywhere, I was sure.

Harold would come by the coach at six in the evening. Tea was to be ready for him, and more substantial fare. I had first smilingly, then gravely, to remonstrate with my aunt about the over-abundance of eatables she wanted to provide.

"Gentlemen had such appetites — when they came off long journeys, especially," she said.

I put off my black dress that day. Early in the afternoon aunt and I went up to make our toilettes. I looked anxiously at my face in the glass. Country air had done something for me. The hue of my skin was freshened, and my cheeks boasted a little colour. I put on a pretty new dress, the tint of which suited me. It was not too bright, too dingy, or too delicate. My brown hair (I had plenty of it then) I braided very carefully. I fastened my soft lace collar with a pretty brooch — not the grand one, but one of Harold's presents, nevertheless. I had protected my hands carefully since the first morning, and the scars of the scratches had disappeared from them and from my cheek, and the transparent lace sleeves fell cloudily and becomingly down over those hands he admired. How carefully I looked at myself—scrutinisingly and gravely—till the very gravity of my poor face provoked me to laughter. But I thought of Harold — fancied him — so grand and tall and handsome — standing beside me, and turned away from the glass, disconsolately sighing out, "What can he find in poor little me!" I gathered a dark red rose from beneath my window, and put it in my hair, but without venturing to look at myself again.

I was warm; for it was a very brilliantly-sunny afternoon—but a delicious breeze came in at the open casement; so I sat down there to read. I had a book Harold had given me "because every one was talking about it" — a new poem — in my hand. I had not much cared to read it, as he had not done so, and I should not be following where his eyes and thoughts had gone before. I had had the book a month and had not opened it; and now I turned over the leaves, carelessly, at first, but my attention was soon caught.

I have that book lying by me as I write — it delights me still. I can read it more aright now, but not with the interest of feeling of that time. I had wanted to forget my sickening expectation for a little while. I was soon completely absorbed, forgetting even the giver of that as of all my other pleasures. Is it not often the way of the world to forget the giver in his gifts?

It was not a book to be easily read, understood, and forgotten. It called out all the power of my nature. I read on breathlessly, only, when my eyes were dim, pausing to look up and out over the wavering land.

My aunt knocked at my door, and then came in, saying:

"I would not disturb you before, Annie; but now it is nearly six I thought you could not know how late it was."

"Indeed I did not," I answered. "It is so very, very beautiful."

"What is, my love?"

"This book I have been reading — a poem Harold gave me; we must take it away with us: he must read it— we will read it together."

"Then he likes poetry as well as you do?" asked my aunt.

"Of course," I answered, confidently.

"How nicely you look! I am sure he will be pleased. But you are so like your mother! The brow and eyes are hers exactly, and — —"

"You do think I look well? — really, dear aunt? Better than the little, dusty, dusky traveller who stood at your door a fortnight since to-morrow?" I asked, anxiously.

"Yes; you are not like the same creature."

"I am very glad you think I look well."

I picked up the book reverently (I had dropped it when Aunt Aston startled me), and put it with things I was to take away with me; and then we went down-stairs.

I walked up and down the room while we waited — I could not sit still. The rumbling of wheels reached us in the country silence, while the coach was a long way off. But it was at the gate at last. Harold jumped off almost before it stopped, much to aunt's alarm, who was peeping shyly out from behind the curtains. I did not know if I ran out, or stood still, or what I did; I only knew that soon I was gathered within Harold's arms, and then held off at a little distance and examined. I raised my eyes inquiringly to his; I was soon sure that he was satisfied, and glad to cast them down, because the hot blood would rush blindingly across my face.

Then he introduced himself to my aunt, and thanked her so heartily and cordially that tears sprang to her blue eyes, for having taken such excellent care, as my appearance testified to, of me. And when he sat down she forgot how tall he was, and how afraid of him she had been, and they chatted away easily and gaily: and all the while my hand was clasped so close and tight in his! We had tea, and then we — Harold and I — went out into the hay-fields. Aunt ran after us to the door to beg Harold to take care not to knock his head as he went out; and he laughed his honest laugh, and she went smiling back, and up-stairs into my room, to make some last arrangements for me. The hay-fields that night! For neither of us were there ever such hay-fields again. Oh, my husband, you were happy then!

Next day we were married. I said farewell to my good aunt, to pretty Ilton, to bluff Mr. Swayne, and we went forth — he and I. For a little while I mused over the anxious, sad expression of Aunt

Aston's face, but soon forgot to wonder at it any longer.

FIRST UNDER FIRE.

Soldiers who have been engaged in "the dreadful revelry" of war, are often asked how they felt while performing their duty in the heat of battle. I believe that — allowance made for all varieties of temperament — there is a far greater similarity in the sensations felt on these occasions than is commonly supposed; and that, although habit blunts, to a certain extent, the perception of danger, it never takes off the keenness of its edge. The impressions of this kind made upon my mind as a fighting soldier in Mexico, are still quite fresh.

The soldier's love of novelty and excitement is more than a counterpoise to all depressing influences; and at no period of his career does his spirit show itself more buoyant than when he has been ordered out on a campaign. It is only after he has endured some of the stern realities of the situation that he begins to cast a nervous glance or two upon the road before him. One of the most common and natural of the sources of apprehension that disturb the young soldier, and one which his first engagement always finally disposes of, is a fear that his faculties may be so paralysed by the spectacle of carnage during an engagement, that, being rendered faint and incapable of performing his duty, the stain of cowardice may taint his character. With his first battle this apprehension vanishes, and he discovers that when he is once fairly in action, the excitement is intense, and his whole energy is concentrated on the work in hand. Comrades fall wounded around him and are scarcely noticed; there is no time for pity, fear, or anything but action.

I am a Scotchman by birth, but enlisted into the American service. It was not my fortune to come to close quarters with the enemy until I had been nearly three months in Mexico; I consequently experienced a portion of that uneasy state of feeling which I have just mentioned before first meeting the enemy face to face. I had become familiar with the sound, and with the fury too, of shot and shell, in trenches at Vera Cruz, and was on easy terms with them. Constant rumours of attacks, meditated on our rear, had helped also to keep the idea of close conflict familiar. In camp at Vera Cruz, I had become acquainted with an old soldier, Billy Wright, a fellow-countryman, who had served in his youth under Wellington, and been in several engagements without receiving any serious wounds. He had also fought with the Indians in the Florida war. I frequently talked with this comrade on the subject of my first engagement; and his advice to me invariably was, that,

as soon as firing had commenced, I should fire and load as expeditiously as possible, taking good aim; in which case, he assured me, that I should feel all right after the first few rounds. Poor old fellow! I passed him as he sat down, after the first few rounds at my first battle, Cerro Gordo, wounded; but he recovered from his wound, however, and was sent home to receive a pension.

We had lain inactive four or five days at Plan del Rio, a few miles from the enemy's strong position at Cerro Gordo, when General Scott having arrived, and examined as closely as possible the enemy's strength and position, at once decided on his plan of action. In pursuance of his design, General Twiggs, with his division, comprising the regiment to which I belonged, was ordered to advance by a newly-discovered route through the bottom of a ravine, and to gain a commanding position on the top of a high, unfortified hill. It was while moving down the ravine, which had been partially cleared by our pioneers, and while waiting until a party of the rifles should have beat up a suspicious-looking bit of chaparral in front, that we began to feel we were on the point of meeting with the enemy; but we had no expectation of anything more than a skirmish. A shot or two from the muskets of the enemy was followed by the cracking of our rifles; and at double-quick time we descended to the bottom of a steep hill, partly covered with brushwood, on the top of which stood a body of the Mexican infantry, busily engaged in firing down upon us as we came in sight. Luckily for us, their firing did but little damage; and, ordered to charge, we, with a loud hurrah, began running up the hill. When near the summit, we began to fire, and the Mexicans went off, as quickly as our shot, closely pursued by us up the hill. An effort was made by some of our captains to form their men into companies as they reached the top; but they could collect only a few, and soon gave up the attempt. We pursued the flying Mexicans down the opposite side of the hill, which was only divided from Cerro Gordo by a ravine, across which the enemy's battery fired grape among us; while some thousands of infantry, clustered like bees on the top and sides of Cerro Gordo, kept up against us an incessant fire of musketry. Our men now began to fall fast; and it was partly owing to the proverbial bad firing of the Mexicans that our small party of between six and seven hundred — for the united regiments of rifles and artillery did not number more — was not annihilated. As it was, our killed and wounded amounted to about two hundred. The affair lasted between two and three hours; and this was the first time of my meeting the foe face to face.

I found the meeting, after all

not such a terrible affair as I had fancied. To say that I felt no fear on going into action, would be a senseless boast. I did feel considerable apprehension on the first burst, and until heated to a degree of preternatural excitement. After the first few minutes, the fall of a wounded comrade would at the best only cause it to be said, "Poor fellow! There's Smith (or Thompson) down." The first whom I saw wounded in this action, was a rifleman. Just as we reached the top of the hill, he dropped his rifle with a cry of anguish, staggering to the rear. A musket-ball had entered his mouth. The horror imprinted on his features made a deep impression on me at the moment, and the recollection of it haunted me long afterwards.

After our return to the bottom of the hill from which we had started in pursuit of the enemy, the excitement of action having gradually passed away, we all felt very tired, and were soon on the ground preparing our rest. The groans of the wounded men, who were collected on a plot of grass close by, and over whom our surgeons were busy during the whole night, distressed us, and prevented sleep for a few hours. At length fatigue prevailed.

Next morning, the regiment to which I belonged, together with the rifles and sixth infantry, had the duty assigned to us of charging the hill of Cerro Gordo. While performing my share of that duty, I again felt the same intense excitement, swallowing up all perception of personal danger, and making me feel as if the ground were air. As on the former occasion, this state gradually wore off, and was succeeded by a feeling of great lassitude. I also observed, both in myself and others, certain indications of a fulness of the heart, and an inclination not easily subdued, to shed tears, which lasted for some time after the action.

Goethe — in his Campaign in France, after a preliminary account of having ridden out to a battery on which the French were then playing, for the express purpose of realising in person the effect said to be produced by coming within range of the guns during a cannonade — has described his sensations (known as the cannon fever) thus: —

"In the midst of these circumstances, I was soon able to remark that something unusual was taking place within me; I paid close attention to it, and still the sensation can only be described by similitude. It appeared as if you were in some extremely hot place, and at the same time quite penetrated by the heat of it, so that you felt yourself quite one with the element in which you stood. The eyes lose nothing of their strength and clearness; but it is as if the world had a kind of brown red tint, which makes the situation as well as the surrounding objects more impressive.

I was unable to perceive any agitation of the blood; but everything seemed rather to be swallowed up in the glow of which I speak. From this, then, it is clear in what sense this condition can be called a fever. It is remarkable, however, that the horrible uneasy feeling from it, is produced in us solely through the ears."

Most persons who have been in a similar situation will doubtless recognise the general truth of this description. Yet it is not a complete account of the soldier in active participation of battle. There is, then, an end of horrible, uneasy feeling: he is not shocked, but pleased—exhilarated. Many a comrade tells me, for his own part, what I always feel myself; that, in the day of battle, war acts on the blood like wine. Goethe's brown-red tint, apparently enveloping surrounding objects, I have often heard soldiers describe as a thing they had remarked when in action; and I can confirm it from my own experience.

The most trying situation for a soldier in front of an enemy, occurs when he is placed with his corps in reserve after the action has commenced. He listens to the firing, and perhaps sees, now and then, a batch of wounded carried to the rear, while he is every moment anxiously expecting his own orders to move forward. Then, he is fidgetty and nervous. On these occasions I have observed in many of those around me, as well as in my own person, a restless uneasiness of manner, a desire to be doing something, manifesting itself in a variety of ways. The order to advance brings sudden relief, and the troop gladly rushes on the danger that it was so irksome to stand by and see.

LAST WORDS WITH PHILIP STUBBES.

Grant me a few last words with Philip Philoponus, the Reformer, ladies and gentlemen.* I know what a patient long-suffering public you are; how in this and preceding ages you have borne, without a murmur, all Prynne's folios, all Sir Richard Blackmore's endless epics, all the interminable novels of Mdlle. de Scuderi. I know how, after Mr. Baxter's Last Words had been published, you accepted with melancholy resignation the More Last Words of Mr. Baxter. It is a shame, I know, to trespass on your good nature; but Stubbes is in earnest, and is burning to tell you more of the shocking state of things that existed in England in fifteen hundred and eighty-five.

Philip winds up his tirade against costly apparel by a final fling at swells in general. "Is it any marvel," he asks, "if they stand on their pantoffles, and hoyse up their sails so high! But

* See Household Words, Vol. XXXIII. p. 69.

whether they have argent to maintain this gear or not, it is not material, for they will have it one way or other, or else they will sell or mortgage their lands, or go a-hunting on Suter's (Shooter's) Hill, or Stangate Hole, with loss of their lives at Tiburne in a rope." Our swells are not quite reduced to such dire extremities in the reign of Queen Victoria. Long after lands have been mortgaged, and credit exhausted, the lively kite can be flown, and the valiant "bit of stiff" can be done. Young Rakewell does not turn highwayman now; he goes through the Insolvent Court, emigrates to the diggings, or joins the commissariat in the Crimea.

It is really astonishing, deceitful as is the heart above all things, and desperately wicked, what a miserable paucity in invention there is in our crimes. We find the very same rogueries exposed in Philip Stubbes's book as are daily adjudicated upon by the magistrates at our police courts, every day in the week. Speaking of bought hair and coloured (tremble ye ladies with fronts!) as worn by females, he says, "And if there be any poor women (as, now and then, we see God doeth bless them with beauty as well as the rich) that have fair hair, these nice dames will not rest till they have bought it. Or if any children have fair hair, they will entice them into a secret place, and either by force, or for a penny or two, will cut off their hair; as I heard that one did in the city of Munidnol, of late, who, meeting a little child with very fair hair, invegled her into a house, promised her a penny, and so cut off her hair, — and besides, took most of her apparel." Civilisation has increased wonderfully — oh, dear, yes! but has crime decreased, or altered one single lineament of its hideous face. Nice dames, it is true, no longer go about with brandished scissors, vowing vengeance to the fair hair of children; but how many "good Mrs. Browns" are there, and how many cases of child-stripping throughout the year at the London police-courts.

Mr. Stubbes proceeds to enter into the discussion of certain questions, into which I cannot, for obvious reasons, follow him. I notice, however, that he rails much at the absurditie of ecclesiastical magistrates making dissolute persons do penance in church in white sheets, with white wands in their hands. The congregation do nought but laugh, he says, and the penitent has his usual clothes underneath. The severity of the measures proposed by Philip for putting down vice would certainly astonish our modern Society for the suppression thereof. Vicious persons, he suggests, should either "drinke a full draught of Moises cup, that is, taste of present death, as God's word doth command, and good policy allow; or else, if that be thought too severe, they might be cauterised and

seared with a hot iron on the cheek and forehead, to the end that the children of Satan might be discerned from honest and chaste Christians." If Mr. Stubbes' suggestions were ever to be acted upon (and vagaries far more fantastic and absurd have passed into law even in this, our own time), what a demand for red-hot pokers there would be, to be sure!

Stubbes bewaileth beef. He is speaking of the great excess in delicate fare, the variety of dishes with curious sauces, such as the veriest Helluo, the insatiablest glutton, would not desire; the condiments, confections, and spiceries, and how meats bring destruction. "Oh! what nicety is this!" he cries. "Oh! farewell, former world; for I have heard my father say that, in his day, one dish or two of wholesome meat was thought sufficient for a man of worship to dine withal, and if they had three or four kinds, it was reputed a sumptuous feast. A good lump of beef was thought then good meat, and able for the best; but now it is thought too gross for their tender stomachs to digest." I wonder whether old Philip Stubbes ever courted the Muses — ever turned a rhyme in his younger days. If not actually one of the authors, he might have added an admirable stanza, touching beef, to that glorious chant When this Old Cap was New. In respect to how far meats bring destruction, Mr. Stubbes tells us, that a people given to belly cheere and gluttony must eventually and inevitably come to worshipping of stocks and stones. Belly cheer, I am afraid, is yet far from being eradicated in our land, but I have not yet heard that the viands of that great diplomatic cook, Carême, ever drove Metternich or Talleyrand to the worship of Mumbo-Jumbo; that any alderman of London was ever known to bow down, after a turtle dinner, before Gog and Magog; that the publication of M. Louis-Eustache and Ude's work ever made any converts to fetichism; or that there was ever a disposition on the part of the committee of the Reform Club to set up a pagod in the vestibule during the administration of their kitchen by M. Soyer. With all this feasting and belly cheer there is, it appears, but small hospitality in Stubbes' England, and cold comfort for the poor. For, while there are some men who, out of forty pounds a-year, "count it small matter to dispend forty thereof in spices" (?); and though a hundred pounds are often spent in one house in banqueting; yet the poor have little or nothing: if they have anything it is but the refuse meat, scraps, and parings, such as a dog would not eat, and well if they can get that, too; and, now and then, not a few have whipping cheer to feed themselves.

Says Spudeus to Philoponus (Spudeus is one of the most ex-

cellent listeners I ever met with) — says he, quite cheerfully, as if the shocking state of things rather tickled him, "You spake of drunkenness, brother — what say you of that?"

What has Mr. Stubbes to say against drunkenness — what hasn't he to say? He says that it is a most horrible vice, and too much practised in England. Every country-town, city, village, hamlet, and other places have abundance of ale-houses, taverns, and inns, which are so fraught with maltworms every day that you would wonder to see them. You shall have them there, sitting at the wine and good ale, all the day long — yea, all the night, too — and, peradventure, for a whole week together, so long as any money is left, swyllying, gullying, and carousing one to another, till never a one can speak a ready word. Then, when with the spirit of the butterie they are thus possessed, a world it is to consider their gestures and demeanours towards one another, and towards everyone else. How they stutter and stammer, stagger and reel to and fro like madmen, which is most horrible: some fall to swearing, cursing, and banning, interlacing their speeches with curious terms of ogglesome woordes. . . . A man once dronke with wine, doth he not resemble a brute beast rather than a Christian man? For do not his eyes begin to stare, and to be red, fiery, and bleared, blubbering forth seas of tears? Doth he not froth and foam at the mouth like a boar? Doth not his head become as a millstone, and his heels as feathers? Is he able to keep one up, or the other down? Are not his wits drowned — his understanding altogether decayed? The drunkard in his drunkenness killeth his friend, revileth his lover, discloseth his secrets, and regardeth no man. After this, Mr. Stubbes relates the following story, which I recommend for modern adoption in the Temperance oration way: —

On the eighth of February, fifteen hundred and seventy-eight, in the country of Swaben, there were dwelling eight men — citizens and citizens' sons — all tailors, very riotously and prodigally inclined. The names of these young Swabs, if I may be allowed to call them so, were Adam Giebens, George Repell, Jhon Reisell, Peter Herfdorfe, Jhon Wagenaer, Simon Henricks, Herman Frons, and Jacob Hermans. All of them would needs go to the taverne on the Sabbath-day, in the morning, very early. And, coming to the house of one Anthony Hage, an honest, godly man, who kept a tavern in the same town, called for burnt wine, sack, malmsey, hippocras, and what not. But Anthony Hage not being, though a landlord, a maltworm nor a member of the Licensed Victuallers' Protection Society — but being rather of the Lord Robert Grosvenor and Wilson Patten

persuasion, and perhaps afraid of the Swaben police — said they should have no wine till sermon-time had passed, and counselled them to go to church. But they all (save Adam Giebens, who said they might as well go if they could get no drink) said they loathed that kind of exercise. The good host then, not giving them any wine himself, nor suffering his barmaid to draw them any, went, as his duty did him bind, to church; who, being, gone, the abandoned young Swabs fell (as is usual in Mr. Stubbes' stories) to banning and swearing, wishing the landlord might break his neck if ever he came again from the sermon; and bursting forth into these intemperate speeches: the Deuce take us, if we depart hence this day without some wine. Straightway the Deuce appeared to them in the likeness of a pot-boy, bringing in his hand a flagon of wine, and demanding of them if they caroused not; he drank unto them, saying: "Good fellows be merrie" (a bold pot-boy), "for ye seem lusty lads." I suppose this salutation was a species of "Give your orders, gents," of the period; and the orders being given, he added: "I hope you will pay me well," which was, perhaps, equivalent to the dubiously-expressed hope of a modern waiter that it is "all right," when he has a tap-room full of suspicious customers. The Swabs assured him that it was so far right, that they would gage their necks, bodies, and souls that the reckoning should be paid. Whereupon much wine was brought, and they fell to their old game of swyllying, ullying, and carousing, till no Swab could see another, and they were all as dronke as rats. At the last (they must have got tipsy very soon, or there must have been a very long sermon at Anthony Hage's place of worship), the Deuce, their host, told them that they "must neede paie the shotte," (I quote Stubbes literally), "whereat their hartes waxed cold." But the Deuce, comforting them, said: "Be of good cheer, for I want no money, and now you must drink hot boiling pitch, lead, and brimstone in the pit, with me for evermore." Hereupon, immediately, he made their eyes like flames of fire, and in breadth as broad as saucers. The Deuce then broke their necks in sonder, and when Anthony Hage came back from church there was nothing left in the taproom but several empty pots, a strong smell of brimstone, and the body of Adam Giebens, who was not dead, but in a fainting fit. It will be remembered that Adam was the Swab who said that he didn't mind going to church if he couldn't get anything to drink; in consideration of which instance of practical piety he was spared by the demon pot-boy.

It cannot fail to strike the reader that this wild story is a cousin-german to that of the Handsome

Clearstarcher. Mr. Stubbes, too, seems fond of drawing his dismal legends from the copious stores of German diablerie. Having had his gird at drunkenness in these set terms, Philip Stubbes proceeds to demolish the landed gentlemen. Landlords, he says, make merchandise of their poor tenants, racking their rents, raising their fines and incomes, and setting them so strayt on the tenter-hooks that no man can live on them. And besides this, as though this pillage and pollage were not rapacious enough, they take in and enclose commons, moors, heaths whereout the poor commonaltie were wont to have all their forage and feeding for their cattle, and (which is more) corn for themselves to live upon; all of which are in most places taken from them by these greedie puttockes [Have a care to thine ears, O Stubbes!] to the great impoverishing and utter beggaring of many towns and parishes, "whose tragical cryes and clamours have long pierced the skies, crying, 'How long, Lord, how long wilt thou defer to revenge this villany done to thy poor?' Take heed, then, you rich men, that poll and pill the poor, for the blood of as many as miscarry any manner of way through your injurious exactions, sinister oppressions and indirect dealings, shall be powred upon your heads at the great day of the Lord."

As for lawyers, if you want to find vice and corruption in full bloom, you must go with Stubbes to Westminster Hall or the inns of court. But it is no use going there unless you are provided with good store of argent rubrum unguentum — red ointment, or gold, "to grease lawyers' fists withal;" but if this be not forthcoming, then farewell client: he may go shoe the goose. The glimpse given to us of the progress of a lawsuit in Queen Bess's time is highly edifying, and has a strong family likeness to the lawsuits now well and truly tried before our Sovereign Lady the Queen at Westminster: — "Sheriffs and officers do return writs with a tardè venir, or with a non est inventus, to keep the poor man from his own. But so long as any of the red ointment is propping, they will bear him in hand; his matter is good and just, and all to keep him in tow till all be gone, and then they will tell him his matter is naught! In presence of their clients they will be as earnest one with another as one (that knew not their sleights) would think they would go together by the ears. But directly their clients be gone, they laugh in their sleeves to think how prettily they can fetch in such sums of money, and that under the pretence of equity and justice." As to the lawyers themselves, they lead a happy life, like the Pope. They ruffle it out in their silks, velvets, and chains of gold. They keep a port like migthy potentates; they have bands and retinues of men in attendance upon them daily; they

build gorgeous edifices and stately turrets; they purchase lands and lordships. Is this not enough to make the mouths of all Chancery Lane water? to awaken emotions of melancholy envy of pallid and briefless barristers eating the tips of their fingers and the covers of their law books, and the skin of their hearts, in studious, penniless, almost hopeless idleness? Return again, ye golden times — ye auriferous Stubbesian days — when every stuff-gownsman wore a gold chain, and every Q.C. lived in a stately turret; when judges were corrupt, and lord chancellors took "presents," and attorney-generals were to be "spoken to," like prosecutors in assault cases.

There is this, I think, in favour of my Stubbes, that although severe, he is impartial. To use an expressive though inelegant metaphor, he tars everybody with the same brush. No sooner has he administered to the lawyers those sable trickling drops and penal plumes, by which Sydney Smith has poetised the somewhat prosaic operation of tarring and feathering, than he proceeds to attack the mercantile community. The "marchauntmen, by their marting, chaffering, and changing, by their counterfeit balances and untrue weights, and by their surprising of their wares (?), heap up infinite treasure. And this," Mr. Stubbes continues, "maketh things deare." These avaricious marchauntmen have so "balaunced their chests that they crack again;" and so greedy grow they, that though overflowing with wealth, they will not scruple to take their neighbour's house over his head, long before his years are expired. And besides all this, "so desperately given are many, that for the acquiring of silver and gold, they will not scruple to imbrewe their hands" (on the sheep and lamb, or over-shoes, over-boots principle, I presume) "in the blood of their own parents and friends most unnaturally." See what wonders civilisation has done in our time. In one respect, at least, we are superior to Stubbes. No grocers, tea-dealers, bakers, go about in our peaceful London streets, with their shirt sleeves tucked up and butchers' knives in their hands, crying "Kill! kill!" to the great terror of their relations and acquaintances. No marchauntman murders now with sword or dagger, pistol or bludgeon. He murders in his Marting. He poisons the bowl. He puts grave-worms into the sugar-basin and aqua tofana into the pickle-jar, and makes the wheaten loaf a Golgotha. He gathers his tea-leaves in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and sounds the death-trump in the blown-out vesicles of Nice White Veal, and tells cocoa that it is clay, and coffee that it is dust and ashes. And the higher marchauntman, the merchant prince, the titled banker, he never murders now for silver or gold. Oh no! He never embrewes his hands in the

blood of parents and friends most unnaturally. Oh dear no! He is contented with failing in a genteel, fashionable way, and killing widows and orphans and young children by the slow but sure process of ruin and misery and despair. No butcher's knife, or chopper, or pole-axe, no up-rolled shirt-sleeves for your merchant-prince or titled banker; but kills genteelly, murders his victim "as though he loved him," like that nobleman-executioner of the ancient régime, who, in the royalist reaction that in some provinces of France followed the Reign of Terror, condescended himself to massacre some Jacobin prisoners; but, tuait avec sa canne à pomme d'or, killed them with his gold-headed cane.

Can no good come out of England. — Are we so irredeemably bad that Stubbes must be down on us continually. Is Stubbes merely an inveterate old grumbler, croaker, misanthrope, mysogynist, and worldhater, or are we as dreffful wicked as Topsy! Flying off at a tangent of indignation from covetousness and greed of wealth, he is furious against the assumption of titles. "The world is such," he says, "that he who hath much money enough shall be Rabbied and Maistered at every word, and withal saluted by the vain title of worshipful, though notwithstanding he be a muck-heap gentleman. And to such extreme madness is it grown, that now-a-days every butcher, shoemaker, tailor, cobbler, and husbandman, nay, every tinker, pedler, and swineherd, every artificer, and other gregarii ordinis, of the vilest sort of men that be, must be called by the vaine name of maisters at every word."

But this is but a transient puff, trifling cap full of wind of Stubbes' anger. Soon the full current of his wrath is directed against the monster vice and corruption of the age — usury. He tells us plainly that money-lending at interest is murder. "The usurer killeth not one, but many; both houseband, wife, children, servants, family, and all, not sparing any. And if the poor man have not wherewith to pay, as well as the interest, then suit is commenced against him, outgo butterflies (?) and writs as thick as hail. So the poor man is apprehended, and being once convented, judgment condemnatory and definitive is pronounced against him, and then to Bocardo (the Fleet?) goeth he as round as a ball, where he is sure to lie until he rot one piece from another without satisfaction be made. O cursed caitiff! no man, but a devil; no Christian, but a cruel Tartarian, and merciless Turk ...." but I cannot follow Stubbes any further; for he goes on pitching into the usurers for four closely-printed twelvemo pages of black letter.

Hear Stubbes on the abuses of Sunday, and I will shut him up for good. Come hither and listen to Stubbes, you Mawworms,

Cantwells, Tartuffes, and over-righteous hypocrites of every grade and sect. Come hither Sir Joseph Surface, Bart., Lord Thomas Blifil, and Lord Viscount Sheepington (the family name is Wolf). Come hither all you

> Whose chief devotion lies
> In odd, perverse, antipathies;
> That with more care keep holyday
> The wrong than others the right way;
> Still so perverse and opposite
> As if they worshipp'd God for spite.

Listen all you who see crime in a Sunday pint of beer, perdition in a Sunday newspaper, ruin in a Sunday cigar, and destruction in a Sunday razor-strop; who think the Sabbath desecrated now, listen to how it was desecrated in the auriferous age and pious times of Queen Elizabeth.

"Some spend the Sabaoth day," says ancient Stubbes, "in frequenting wicked plays and interludes, in maintaining Lords of Misrule (for so they call a certain kind of play which they use), in May games, church ales, feasts, and wakesesses. In piping, dancing, dicing, carding, bowling, and tennis-playing. In bear-baiting, cock-fighting, hawking, and hunting. In keeping of fairs and markets on the Sabaoth. In keeping of court-leet, in football playing, and such-like devilish pastimes. In reading wicked books, in fencing and playing at staves and cudgels."

SYDNEY SMITH.

I HAVE always had great historic doubts about the reality of SYDNEY SMITH. That there may have been a person of that name, I don't deny — I think it likely, from Thiers's account of St. Jean d'Acre, and other authorities, that there was. Perhaps there were more than one; but it is very evident to me that the witty and wise, the manly and independent Sydney Smith, about whom we have all laughed so often, and for the supposed loss of whom many of us have wept, was a phantasm — or, at most, a character imagined by some gentleman of dramatic power, and admirably sustained throughout every scene.

How can it be otherwise? How can we believe that a man with all those qualities — the kindness that wins affection, the genius that commands respect — was left unrecognised and unappreciated for fifty years of his life, by those who had the best opportunities of knowing his virtues and qualifications? Let us see who those persons were. The Whigs of eighteen hundred were a large and influential joint-stock company for the seizing of loaves and fishes from the Tories. There was no end of their fondness for those piscine and cereal repasts. For many years before that date they had been kept from the public bakeries and ponds, and had complained of the exclusion as a

grievous wrong. They had produced the glorious Revolution, they said, and they considered themselves and their wives, and their sons and their sons' wives, and their daughters and sons-in-law, entitled, by right of birth, to all the good things the country could bestow. The country bestowed all the good things it could: and, at last, gorged and replete, the leeches dropped off, and the Tories took their place. They were positively stuffed to within an inch of apoplexy with the fat of the land. There were Whig lords in all the counties, in the enjoyment of patriotic sentiments and immeasurable estates; both estimable possessions dating from the arrival of the glorious Deliverer. There were stewardships and secretaryships, and commissions in the militia, and livings in the church, in their gift, all independent of kings or governments. They formed a little colony of abdicated monarchs in the midst of the people whom they had sucked and ruled. Diocletians, and Syllas, and Charles the Fifths, were plentiful in every shire; and the "grey, discrowned kings" were not without their courtiers who followed them (for salaries, of course) into private life. But years passed on — their former glories began to be forgotten — Salona and St. Just became tiresome, and the soul of Whiggery panted for a change. Pompous aristocrats, with coronets fantastically twisted to resemble caps of liberty, began to talk of the rights of man — meaning by that, their own right to a fresh lease of power and pelf. But the country laughed at them, for it could not give them credit for anything but selfishness and stupidity. So, the great lords betook themselves to little jobberies of their own — bought small boroughs, and bribed large ones — but still with no effect. They appeared ridiculous whenever anybody compared the liberality of their speeches with the narrowness of their actions. And at this time, seeing no real individual of their party able to astonish the Tories with the addition of wit and wisdom to the ordinary political banquets of both the parties, my theory is, that they imagined one, and called him SYDNEY SMITH. The class of men most deeply sunk at that time in dulness and self-seeking were the clergy, so they called SYDNEY SMITH a clergyman. They made him a scholar, a humourist — eloquent, gay, benevolent, and, above all, with a mind perfectly free from the trammels of sect or party; a Christian philosopher in holy orders. And they knew how, in this excellent creation, to unite perfect propriety of conduct, perfect orthodoxy of belief, with the more brilliant and captivating qualities of their hero. But, there are liberties people may take with fictitious characters which they could not venture on with flesh and blood.

So they put this youth, brimful of energy and goodness, in a curacy on Salisbury Plain. They left him with a broken-down cottage and a hundred a-year; a population not much above the Calmucks in intelligence; and potatoes, enriched with a little butter and salt, on the days when the butcher did not come into the parish, and they were many. Yet how did this imaginary curate bear up? Like Caractacus at Rome — like Marius at Carthage — like a great man under a cloud — with dignity and self-respect. The wit and scholar ate his potatoes in hope; and promotion came. He led a bear, and made him dance to the genteelest of tunes, and the authors go on to say, he became tutor to his squire's son, and conducted him to Edinburgh. A very unlikely thing, I should say, to have occurred in reality; for Mr. Beech could have sent to Oxford or Cambridge, and could have had a tutor for his son who would have licked the plates and laughed at his patron's jokes, instead of pouring back bright wit of his own, and who would have listened to his stories, and united the offices of toady and instructor in a strictly ecclesiastical manner. But we pass this over as an oversight. The imaginary creation, SYDNEY SMITH, is -one years of age. His fame is instantly secured. He is the centre of a large circle of the rising talent of the time. He projects the Edinburgh Review. He casts a new glory on the whole Whig party; arms it with new weapons, and places it on higher ground. The hereditary castle doors begin to turn on their hinges as the moment of his admission to the domestic hearth draws nigh. The doors are thrown open; marquis and earl and baron receive him with outstretched arms, and mouths distended from ear to ear. They almost discover the treasure of wisdom hidden under all that prodigality of fun. He makes their homes delightful to them — they can scarcely tell why. Their stiffnesses get thawed out of them by that perpetual sunshine of heart and brain. They feel, somehow, as if they were men, and not mere images of departed grandeur. They almost think they could descend to the arena, and have a manly struggle, for the love of the people and the enjoyment of power. Wherever meanness and darkness lurked, there was this tremendous curate with his Ithuriel spear. Wherever there was an argument too heavy for the feeble hand of a superannuated duke, he set feathers to it, and fined it down, and gave it a throw into the enemy's camp, which transfixed dozens at a time, as Munchausen transfixed the ducks upon his ramrod. All this was acknowledged by these rich and right honourable men; cradled statesmen and pap-boated leaders of the nation. And what did they in substantial acknowledgment? He *must* be a

myth? Does it enter into the imagination of the dullest of men that, in actual life, these dreamy pieces of state would have left such a man altogether unprovided for, out of their private patronage, and would have rewarded him, after much entreaty, with a government living without a house in the wilds of Yorkshire, with the descriptive name of Foston-le-Clay? Le-Clay, indeed! Not very good French, but very expressive English.

The fancied Sydney still goes on. He establishes himself in the Yorkshire wilderness. He builds a house, the ugliest and most comfortable in England, at a great expense out of his private pocket; and sets such an example of a cheerful performance of duty and universal good-will, that we forget his wit, and his literature, and his learning, and see only the generous man, the useful minister, the noble soul. This lasted year upon year. And year upon year Whig preferments must have been falling vacant. But Whigs have sycophants, and cousins, and nieces' husbands; and Sydney is supposed still to be left in Foston-le-Clay. It must be a satire, this biography — a bitter satire. And the Tories are scarcely less satirised in it than these grateful precious Whigs. What! If this were not a merely fanciful picture, do you think no Tory minister, no Tory magnate, would have said, "Well, here is a man who, if he had gone to the bar, would have forced his way into the Lords; if he had taken to literature as a profession, would have exterminated Rabelais, and Swift, and Sterne —Is he to spend his life at Foston-le-Clay? Where, in Heaven's name, *is* Foston-le-Clay?" And somebody would have brought him a map, and if he had been secretary for the home department, he would have been able to see it was in Yorkshire; and he would have said, "Let us show we can appreciate genius, and mirth, and goodness: let him have the best living in our gift — and we will make him a dean." "A dean, my lord?" replies the confidential private secretary; a nephew, who was plucked at college, and afterwards ran away with another gentleman's wife; "you can't mean that! The man is a notorious wit." "Ah, I didn't think of that. What would the bishops say if I promoted a wit? But hang it, let him have a living of a thousand a-year. Your governorship, Charlie, is six."

The determined carrying-out of this satire is a great failure in the work called The Life of the Reverend Sydney Smith (otherwise most tenderly and charmingly written by his daughter); and when the next edition comes out, I hope a new series of adventures will be introduced, for it must be sickening to any of the younger clergy who have aspirations for the kind and true, and who consider an occasional laugh no sin against any of the command-

ments, to perceive what their fortune is likely to be. They will look for comfort into the realities of life, and subside from Christianity and Sydneyism into selfishness and success.

There is a glimpse allowed, to be sure, of recognition at the end. After giving a good exchange to Combe Florey, the Whigs are supposed to follow the example of a noble Tory — a nobler than the one I have just imagined — and to make him a canon of St. Paul's. So says this veracious chronicle. But he is old; he has seen all his juniors promoted over his head. He has two dozen superiors in his profession, who look down from the awful plateau, or flat elevation, upon which their merits (and other considerations) have placed them, at the man who never shuffled, nor lied, nor truckled, who was only a sayer of good things, but not a claimant of them; who did not heap all his official preferment on himself; and did not even put his son into the church. Shut up the book; it is a malicious libel on the Whigs.

I suspect, after all, it is a mere reversal of somebody else's career. Instead of an honest, true, open, independent, gallant gentleman of the name of Sydney Smith, it is perhaps the topsy-turvied record of a grovelling, grasping turncoat of another name. Instead of wit and brightness, put down dinginess and stolidity; instead of earnest determination to make the best of the ills of life, of poverty, and neglect, and wilful misrepresentation, put down a grasping after everything to be got, a craving for wealth and station, adulation to a lord, insolence to a curate; and instead of Foston-le-Clay, and even Combe Florey, and a canonry at St. Paul's — hey! — Room there for my lord the bishop!

A WIFE'S STORY.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

So I stood that night — a wild, weird night — leaning against my husband with folded arms; loving to measure my insignificance; to be at his side, not much more than reaching to his elbow, yet as high as his heart, to look up into the handsome face so far above me when held erect, so often stooped down tenderly to mine. And I mused, over the bitter things of my past life, imagined the happiness to come for both of us, the happiness of hours, days, years, and a whole life spent together; never knowing end of love, nor weariness of existence. And I felt peace, and knew rest — for a little while — standing secure in the certainty of possession.

We were on our way to Scotland.

The wind blew round us; sometimes driving the waves so violently against the ship's side that the foam splashed up in my

face, and driving the clouds recklessly and violently across the wild sky, and the pale struggling moon. And we were rocked up and down, yet standing firm together, the wind and the sea singing us an inspiriting song, a loud soul-thrilling anthem; but too loud and too shrill for an epithalamium.

The other passengers had disappeared one by one, — we were alone. I could have remained there for ever, I thought, so supported, so serenaded. Breaking into the world of my imaginings came my husband's voice.

"Annie, darling, it is getting cold! What a rough night it is!" And as he spoke, the strong encircling arm drew my wrappings closer; he went on, "You must not stay here any longer, love; you had better go below, and get a few hours' sleep, for it is long past midnight. I shall get a cigar, and walk up and down a little; I am quite chilly, and I am sure you must be."

No, I was not; and I did not want to go down, out of the wind and the foam-splash into the close atmosphere of the ladies' cabin. I, leaning there, against his heart, had not thought of being cold.

"Get your cigar, if you must have one, Harold, but let me stay, please," I pleaded. "I am not cold at all, and I know I shall not sleep down there, it will be so warm."

But a drizzly rain began to fall; of course, staying out all night would have been a most irrational proceeding, and my husband was very wisely decided. He took me down-stairs, guiding my feet carefully in the uncertain light from the lamp at the bottom, and left me at the door of the den, as I called the crowded sleeping-place. Already I had seen, or fancied that he would expect from me, only an implicit and child-like obedience. As yet I had found it very sweet to obey, where to obey had only been to do what was most pleasant; to-night I was inclined to rebel; it was so stiflingly close and warm down there, "might I not go up again?" But Harold pressed a "Good-night," on my lips, pressing me the while to his heart, and my impatience vanished, and I obeyed.

I lay a long time, rocked on my uncomfortable couch, with my eyes obstinately wide open, listening to the firm, rather heavy, footstep pacing to and fro above me. At last, I suppose, I fell asleep listening, and then the step crushed painfully into my heart and brain, and I awoke in trouble and affright. It was new to me to be on the sea, it was awful, the waves rushed so fiercely past the little window against which I lay! I could but dimly see, yet I heard and felt them; they stirred, not fear, but a wild, half-pleasant excitement within me.

I listened again to the steps above; I felt half-jealous that without me he found pleasure in

lingering there so long. At last I heard the sound no longer; "He is going to sleep now," I thought, so I voluntarily closed my eyes, pillowed my cheek on my arm, and composed myself for quiet slumber.

When we touched land next day, all was wrapped in a mist-mantle; we could see nothing, but we went on by land to our first resting-place, — reaching it in the evening. On the morrow I saw the sun shine upon one of the most lovely places in the Highlands, — lovely and grand at once, and more beautiful than I could bear.

Harold had thought to surprise — thought I should admire it, — was very glad it was fine weather. I had never till now seen anything of mountainous, or even hilly scenery; the pretty country round Ilton was the most beautiful feature of Nature's face I had ever grown acquainted with.

Now, I stood by the side of the loch in the morning — the early morning — I looked down towards the sea; up to the splendid peak above peak of mountains piled up as far as I could discern; across the wide, still blue water, to the graceful hanging woods, and heathery sheep-dotted slopes on the other side. What could I do? My heart was swelling, my eyes kindling and dilating, my cheek flushing and chilling — I clasped my hands tightly together, almost as if in pain.

At that moment Harold came up, with a bright, laughing face, and hurrying step, and eyes fixed only on me.

I turned to him; I remember he stopped and looked at me wonderingly; I did not notice that then; I uttered a little of my admiration and delight, in words that seemed to me mockingly poor and feeble. I looked up in my husband's face for sympathy: he smiled down on me, kindly as ever; but somehow my haughty spirit rose up in arms against that smile; a flashing look of something like disdain aimed at him fell back on me, paining only my own heart, and a miserable doubt and dread darted through me.

Breakfast was ready, the urn waiting, and the salmon steaks on the table, Harold said. So I walked in beside him, not taking his offered arm, pretending not to see it.

The day was very warm and lovely, and we spent it on the water. We had hired a light little boat; Harold rowed it across to the other side; we explored that shore a little, then we moored our boat to the stump of a felled tree, and sat in it under the shade of the wood that hung far over the marge. We enjoyed the gentle rocking motion, the sound of the ripple against the side, and the delicious freshness of the light breeze that came up from the sea, and breathed upon our faces. We talked little, and very softly. I had taken off my

hat for coolness, and I sat in the bottom of our boat, resting my head against my husband's knee. I liked to feel his hand every now and then, passed caressingly and lovingly over my hair.

"Shall I read to you, Harold?" I asked, after we had sat so a long while, and I fancied he might be wearying of idleness, though I was not. Already I consciously recognised a difference between us.

"If you like, Annie," he answered; "if it won't tire you; but it is very hot."

I produced my treasured book, the book he had given me. I told him how beautiful it was, how much he would like it; and then I began to read. I read in a low subdued voice: I did not want to break in upon the harmony of the soft music made by wind and water.

How quietly I went on, and yet how deeply and troublously the poet's thoughts moved me! Sometimes I felt my cheek grow chill, and my eyes dim with tears, as some passage thrilled through me.

After I had read some time, I glanced round.

"Is not that true? Have we not felt it?" I said, looking up to my husband's face, seeking to meet its expression of emotion and pleasure.

His eyes were closed, his arm rested on some cushion he had brought for me, and I had not cared to use; his head was thrown back upon that arm, and he was fast asleep! I looked at him long, half in anger, half in love. I see the face now as it looked then. His sleep was child-like in its perfect repose; his brow was so smooth, his mouth so quietly happy in its expression, his breathing so low and regular. At least he must be dreaming some beautiful dream — dreaming only of me, perhaps, I thought.

I had lifted my head from its resting-place, I did not replace it; I sat quite erect, and kept myself very still. I put a fern-leaf, from a bunch of them I had in my hat, to mark the place where I had left off reading, and then closed my book. For some time I sat watching the ripples in the waters, and listening to Harold's breathing, with a cloudy face, and a heart that had not quite made up its resolve whether or no to resent this neglect. I got tired of sitting in dignified rigidity. I leaned over the boat's side, and amused myself with the broken reflections of my face and hands in the water; with splashing it up softly to my forehead, and seeing the separate drops, pearl-like, fall back upon the face of the loch. And I thought of Undine and water-sprites, good and ill, and tried to look to the bottom of the water, that seemed to repel my glances, by flashing back its own brightness dazzlingly on my eyes, — and imagined the sights fair and foul that might lie there, till I almost saw strange eyes and

hands, gazing at me, and beckoning to me, from below. Then I drew back to the other side, and folding my hands, gave myself up to day-dreaming. I knew it must be quite late in the afternoon, now; the wind had quite died away, the water did not ripple, our boat did not stir, there was a great dream-silence, under-toned by the faint hum and buzz of insects in the near wood.

A very audible yawn and noise of stretching and stirring, told me that my husband was waking at last. The noise broke in jarringly upon my delicious dreaming, it was so loud! I did not look up or speak, but sat looking straight before me far away.

"Why I have been asleep, I declare!" Harold exlaimed. "It is just five o'clock. Why didn't you wake me, Annie? You should have thrown some water in my face. You have been sitting there, quiet and patient, waiting for your lord's awakening, eh, you darling little mouse? How stupid you must have thought me?"

"I was very well amused," I answered, coldly.

"How? Reading, I suppose?"

"No; with my own thoughts."

"Your own thoughts, you saucy girl! Have you anything belonging to yourself, then? Were they not partly mine? those amusing thoughts? Eh, Annie?"

"Whatever else I may owe to you, I have still a right to consider my thoughts free, have I not, my lord?" I asked, only half-jestingly.

"You are angry, Annie! Come, you are vexed with me for going to sleep while you were reading! Your voice is so sweet it soothed me. If you had been speaking I should have listened to the words; as it was, I thought only of the dear voice."

"Did not the book please you?' I asked.

"To tell the truth, I did not understand much of it, I do not care for poetry; you cannot think how strange it seems to me to think of any man's making it the occupation of a life to rack his brains for out-of-the-way thoughts about men and things, and then to twist and turn them ingeniously up-side down and hind-side before, till he has set them into jingling order."

"And that is your notion of poetry?" I asked.

"Do you not think it a just one?"

"Do you not like music?"

"Why do you ask! The two things are so perfectly different. Yes, I like cheerful music; I don't pretend to understand the classicality of the art? But, my dear child, don't let us discuss art, or [illegible]y, or poetry now. You look quite pale, I am sure you are cold and tired; I am very sorry, it was very stupid of me to fall asleep; please to forgive me, and I won't do so again."

"Pray do, as often as you feel

inclined. I will learn not to mind it, I assure you," I answered.

"Learn not to mind, Annie! what do you mean? I do not want you to learn anything: I want you to be happy, and leave everything else to me."

"We must learn while we live, people say. It strikes me I shall have much to learn before I shall be able to do what you wish."

Harold sprang up hastily. He nearly upset the boat in doing so; the side on which I was sitting touched the water's edge,—I lost my balance, and should have made acquaintance with the bottom of the loch, concerning which I had been speculating, had not his strong arms been thrown round me.

"Good Heaven! — Annie! — My wife!"

I had been on the farther side from the shore — the water was deep — no help near — he could not swim — all this flashed through his mind, and I felt how the heart beat against which I was pressed.

"God grant you have not saved what you would have been happier for the losing!" something compelled me to say, as I looked up in his face. There was love himself, most beautiful and perfect, looking out from his eyes into mine, and I did not any longer struggle in his embrace.

"God be praised!" he murmured as he gently released me, and sat me down in the middle of the boat, when, at last, it had ceased its perilous rocking to and fro. I did not cherish my wicked spirit longer. He took the oars and rowed back. We were both grave and silent for a little while: but Harold's gravity soon vanished, so did all traces of emotion, save that he lifted me out of the boat, and put me down far from the edge of the loch, as if he could not trust me near the water again.

"I ordered dinner at five," he said, as we walked up the beach; "now it is half-past. Mrs. Mac-Something will grumble, I am afraid. You won't be long at your toilette, Annie? remember we are to climb the mountain, to see the sun set this evening."

The evening was only just pleasantly advanced and cool, when we set out on our little expedition. Harold had managed to hunt up a pony for me, as we had some two or three miles to go. He was very merry, and we laughed and chatted gaily as he led my steed and strode on beside me. But when we came to the narrow glen between high threatening masses of rock, that shut out the sunlight and frowned blackly down on us, the light talk and laughter pained me; it seemed impious, my heart echoed it so hollowly. I put my hand on Harold's lips, and said, "Be quiet, please!" very gently. He kissed my hand, and obeyed, seeming to understand; or else it was the grey shade that made his face look grave and pale, and we wound up in silence. I dismounted soon, as the way got rougher;

the boy, who had followed us, took the pony; and we went on alone. We, two, who should have been not two, but one.

The highest peaks were almost inaccessible, but the one we ascended was comparatively easy to climb, and we had been assured that the view was awfu' grand. When we were at the top, the sun was setting; we were just in time. I drew my arm from Harold's. I planted my feet firmly on the craggy ground. At first, everything swam before my eyes in a kind of mist of glory; but after a few minutes' steady gazing, all became distinct.

My soul strove and struggled, it essayed to dilate wide enough to take in all of the beauty, the glory, the grandeur; it endeavoured, passionately, to make God's things its own, containing them. It did not, owning humbly its child-like position and dependence upon the same Being, whose glory was now partially revealed to it, then take a meek, a reverent, an awful joy, in thinking of the Maker of the Universe, as the Father and Friend of every living soul. No! there was strife and pain, and impotent self-abasement, and as impotent, because as blind, aspiration within me. I forgot I was not alone. I cried out in the strange agony, and clenched my hands.

Then I felt myself clasped in his arms, I was turned round, I could see no longer, I felt as if some divine inspiration had been kept off from me by that human presence. Harold's calm, kind voice, was saying —

"You are too excitable, my darling; I would not have brought you here, if I had known it; you will make yourself ill; be quiet, and lean upon me."

But I struggled till I was free. Struggled so fiercely out of the darkness in which he held me, into the red, glorious, glowing light, that he let me go, and stood looking at me, wonderingly. The calmness of his half-pitying look, irritated me yet more. I poured out a torrent of wildly passionate words: as soon as they were spoken I would have given more than my life to recal them: but we were both silent. Harold drew my arm through his, and led me down.

I was miserable; ungrateful wretch that I was! I shed bitter tears as we proceeded home in the twilight. I thought I had wounded my husband deeply by my mad, impatient, ungracious words. Before I slept, I had thrown myself on my knees, sobbed out my sorrow, my wretchedness, and entreated his pardon. I remember he took me up and kissed me, as he might have done a child; he did not understand, one whit, what it was all about; he had almost forgotten that he had received any cause of offence: I found that to him it seemed a light matter; that in future I need not give way to any such agonising apprehensions of having wounded his calm, not easily-perturbed spirit.

He was too simply, unperplexedly, good for my comprehension. Yet I throned myself on an imagined elevation of intellectual superiority, and scorned his child-like singleness of heart. But this unhappy feeling grew up gradually; there was many a struggle first. I wished to believe my husband a hero, and so to worship him; but the only heroic aspect of his character, was the very one in which my eyes could not see him.

I was a heathen, my husband a Christian! Do not be startled and call up visions of Hottentots, or dark-skinned creatures of any nation; I was only spiritually dark. I had always lived with professing Christians; I had heard their professions, and felt their practice, and I was in heart truly a heathen. My aunt Aston was the only person of Christian practice with whom I had been acquainted; of her I had seen little, and had always inclined to indulge something like contempt for her weakness of character and timidity of nature.

While I lived with the Stones, Sunday after Sunday saw my place in the church-pew regularly filled by my person. My person, I say advisedly, for in my life of slavery the time of service on the Sunday, had always been a time of liberty: a time for the indulgence of day-dreamings, and wild, strange fancyings. The Stones lived in an old cathedral-town, and we always attended the cathedral-service; the music there was very fine; the organ was magnificent, and its tones gave a mystical elevation to my musings. Mine was the darkest corner of the pew; there I shrank back, and dreamed with open eyes the long sermon through.

The first Sunday we were in the Highlands, my husband had taken pains to reach a place where the church would be within an easy distance, the evening before.

It was a wild country place: the houses were scattered far and wide, and apparently there were but few of them; yet the church was full to overflowing, and the people in the plain, unadorned old building, neat and sober in attire, serene and reverent in countenance, impressed me forcibly. Everything was sternly simple about the service and the preacher. Sitting beside my husband, I, glancing up into his composed and attentive face, liked its expression, it was grand in its calmness. I would not have ruffled it for the world; and as I found that once or twice his eyes sought mine, and that he then looked uneasy, observing my straying and dreamy glances, I tried to listen too; but the art could not be learned in one day, and my thoughts would wander.

In the evening Harold asked me, rather doubtfully, if I would go again to church or stay at home — he was going. I would go, I said, and his face brightened. The evening service was very short, and we were soon out again.

It was a lovely evening. I felt in my husband's words — in many a little expression and turn of thought, that this Sabbath worshipping was, for him, no empty form; that he came from it holier and happier. That evening there was a kind of sweet, serious, chastened gravity in his tone and in his tenderness that drew my heart nearer his than I had felt it before, and yet made me feel half afraid of him. Very docile in spirit as well as in act; for once, I tried to learn of my husband.

We paced along the low, wild sea-shore, under the stars, in the balmy night air, and I tried to make him speak plainly to me of his faith and hope as a Christian. A girlish shyness on his part — or what appeared to me such — prevented my getting at the depth of his religious feeling. He seemed to have a vague awe and dread of speaking of these things. If this Religion were a real thing, it seemed to me that it would bear to be looked at in the face — to be spoken of in plain words; but I could get from Harold nothing but indefinite generalisations: of his individual experience I could learn nothing, and I did not want to hear from his lips any of the trite common-places that I heard so often before. I found that my husband could not reason—could not even give a reason for his faith. I ought to have looked to his life for the teaching I wanted.

After this evening, the subject of religion came to be an avoided one between us. I am sure I had unwittingly pained Harold by my tone, and I think he dreaded to find out how shallow were the waters of my belief. He loved me so well, that even this shadowy imagining and dread weakened his own faith. He loosed his anchor from its firmest hold in the haven of true rest, and so was more at the mercy of the wind and waves, liable to be wearily driven about and tossed.

All my influence — and I gradually grew to have much — over my husband was injurious to him — unhappy for him. It was of a destructive kind for any woman to possess — of a fiendish kind for any woman to wield. He grew to fear my uncertain temper, my scorn or sarcasm, expressed seldom perhaps by words, but often by look and gesture, which he read too much aright. I loved power diabolically, because for its own sake. I felt my power over him, and made him feel it too.

Our sojourn in the Highlands was, on the whole, a happy one: looked back on from a later time, it showed very fair and bright. I would willingly have prolonged it, but I fancied my husband began to show signs of weariness at the close of a month. So we went home.

CHAPTER III.

My home was very beautiful. Harold's thoughtful love had collected there, books, birds, pictures, music, flowers; everything he could think of that

should help to make my solitary morning hours pass away swiftly and pleasantly. My heart would have been very, very hard had it not been deeply grateful in its first surprise. Our coming to such a home could not be anything but happy. I thought, when he planned and arranged all these things, how many beautiful anticipations of future happiness must have been clustering and brightening round my dear husband's heart.

Such reflections quite subdued me, filling me with a strange pitying love for him. For awhile I kept such a strict watch and ward over my tongue and temper, ruled my rebellious nature with such an iron hand, that everything went smoothly and prosperously; I guarded Harold's heart from the only thing that would wound it; in cherishing his happiness I found my own. But I had no real and sufficient occupation; so much time and nothing to do in it; such a superfluity of unapplied power—such a lack of necessary patience. I soon became conscious that there was always a great aching void at my heart. Where I thought to find sympathy with every thought and emotion, a constant stimulus to all aspiration and mental exertion, I did not always find myself even understood. After awhile my vague uneasiness deepened into torturing longing and disquiet.

In my drawing-room I had found a splendid piano. Harold had said he liked music. I thought I had discovered both an occupation and a motive for it, when I applied myself heart and soul to the cultivation of my musical power. The slightest expression of a wish to take lessons placed the services of a first-rate master at my disposal. I had the taste of a real musician, and was already more than ordinarily accomplished in the art; now I studied root and branch, theory and practice, throwing all my unapplied energy into my endeavour. My zeal lasted through a whole autumn and winter: I wanted to surprise Harold by my performance, so never let him hear my practice. I employed myself in the composition of a piece. I had attempted this before in the long, lonely evenings often spent at the school-room piano at the Stones. The theme of this present effort was very wild and fanciful; mournful in the beginning — more mournful in the end — dying out into the extreme silence of death. Midway between beginning and end was a lively movement, full of some great tumultuous joy.

I submitted my MS. to my master's perusal. He played it through once or twice. I interrupted him impatiently to show him an ill-expressed meaning. When he had finished he bowed and paid me some compliments, showing me tears in his eyes; but I did not listen or heed — I only wanted the use of his knowledge, not the expression of his praise; and so I somewhat haughtily gave him

to understand. He bowed again, and then favoured me with some straightforward criticisms that were really useful.

It was the London season; my husband wished to see me do the honours of his beautiful house. So we were to give a very large party. It rather pleased me to be the centre of attraction in a large circle, and yet I despised myself for the pleasure it gave me. In this, as in many things, I felt my two natures at war.

This particular evening it was more pride for my husband than any care for the opinion formed of me, that determined me to appear to the best possible advantage. I knew many of his old friends and associates would be present, and I wanted him to feel not only not ashamed, but proud, of his wife.

In spite of everything incongruous in our natures, I loved Harold passionately, even when in my maddest moods I rendered him scorn and unwomanly despising in lieu of that wifely duty and loving gratitude he might so justly claim from me — even then I loved him. I never lost sight of this love — it made a torture of many things which indifference would have helped me to bear easily. I had a passionate power of loving in my nature — on whom else could I lavish it?

That night we were happy and gay; we stood in the drawing-room together, waiting our guests, and chatted merrily over the fire. There was nothing to excite any of the feeling which Harold did not comprehend in me, so it slumbered a dead sleep, and I was quietly content. I was not in the least nervous about the reception or amusement of our guests, though this was our first attempt of the kind. Our rooms looked beautiful, ornamented and perfumed with hosts of lovely flowers. Harold was more than satisfied with my appearance — we were sure all would go well. My husband seemed to expect me to be very timid and anxious, and in want of encouragement, and when I looked up fearlessly in his face, and told him I was not at all uneasy; that I did not care enough about any of these people to be at all afraid; that only for his sake, that he might not feel ashamed of his poor little wife, should I trouble myself at all about them; he looked down on me with a half-pleased, half-puzzled expression that amused me.

"What a very majestic little queen you would make," he exclaimed, stooping down to kiss me.

"Mr. Gower!" a servant announced just at that moment; but that gentleman had contrived already to be in the middle of the room, though we had heard no noise. Harold greeted his guest in rather a confused manner, and I in the coldest and proudest way.

This gentleman had already been introduced to me, and I disliked him. Harold always appeared to the least possible advantage in his presence.

Mr. Gower had a manner of lording it over him which I deeply resented; he seemed to feel for my husband a curious mixture of liking and contempt. I was vexed he should have heard our nonsense, as I knew he would consider it. We were a very uncomfortable trio for the few minutes that elapsed before any one else arrived; I drew myself up stiffly, only vouchsafing Mr. Gower a word or look when it was absolutely necessary. I knew this man had possessed great influence with my husband in his bachelor days; during our courtship I had sometimes heard of Mr. Gower, and always in a way that inclined me, half from jealousy, to think unfavourably of him. His careful observation of me, of which I was all the time aware, rendered my reception of our first guests ungraceful and embarrassed; but I soon succeeded in divesting myself of the troublesome consciousness of that observance.

It was very pleasant to me to see Harold moving about the thronged rooms, always overtopping every one else, so that his handsome, loving eyes seemed to find out his little wife in whatever corner she might be. But when our eyes met, and mine brightened under his look, withdrawing them I was sure to find Mr. Gower observing us. Whether he stood, as he often did, leaning against some door, or table, or part of the wall, idle and indifferent, or whether he were engaged in apparently animated and earnest conversation, he always seemed to watch me.

I exerted myself to talk and to please; often I found myself the centre of a brilliant circle, listened to admiringly, and I thought I only liked this because it so evidently gratified my husband. It was a new phase of life to me, and yet it seemed strangely old and worn already before that evening was half over. In the gay, superficial, or technical conversation about books and things — the things being pictures, operas, and so forth — no deep notes were struck, or if they were, it was by so mere a chance, by so careless a hand, that they seemed to deserve no heed, till Mr. Gower drew near; then the tone of the gossiping prattle always changed. He chose to interpret earnestly some careless sentences of mine, giving them a profound, hidden meaning; he tried to draw me out, to make me feel he understood me, and was worthy of something more than I gave others. But I grew silent in his presence, I would not be interested by him, and slipped away from the circles he joined. I felt, in some strange, half-angry way, afraid of him.

There were many fine professional and amateur musicians present, among the former, of course, my master. I was asked to play.

"I hear that Mrs. Warden is a very accomplished musician,"

Mr. Gower said, coming up to Harold; "I am told she has composed a piece which shows wonderful talent and even genius. We must hear it, Mrs. Warden," he added, turning to me.

Now the surprise my playing would give Harold and his pleasure were to be the crowning triumph of my evening, which was altogether to be a triumph — but my own music I had not intended to play. I was very unwilling to do so; to me it seemed a revelation of my inmost soul, and too sacred to be played there and then. But my music-master had noised abroad the fact of the existence of this composition, and I could not avoid performing it without making much more demonstration of my dislike to do so than I was willing.

My MS. was placed on the music-stand — Mr. Gower stood ready to turn over the pages. I felt a presentiment that my music would destroy all my calm and peace for that evening, but I sat down to play. Respect for the mistress of the house in the musician hushed every one in the room. The first chords — the first wails sounded upon a perfect silence: they stirred my soul powerfully, and then I played on, forgetting all and everything but the meaning and burden of my music. I am sure my cheek changed colour as I went on, it flushed and chilled so rapidly. When I had let the last chords die out into the silence there arose a great buzz and murmur, and people pressed round me with extravagant expressions of admiration and delight. I sat still a moment, my hands still lying on the keys, my eyes fixed on them — I was bewildered, and wanted my husband. When I rose I met that strange pair of eyes fixed on me. Mr. Gower had turned over my pages without speaking a word; now he said, "It is too beautiful to be played or praised here." He spoke softly, and offered me his arm. But my eyes had found Harold, and brought him to me, his arm was ready, and I took that, looking up inquiringly, half-fearfully into his face. He shook his head and said —

"You should not write such sorrowful music, Annie; it cannot please those who love you. It is not at all my sort; I suppose I don't understand it. But don't look heartbroken; every one is praising and admiring it, and appearing quite delighted."

I soon left him, and wandered about among my guests. "I might have known he would not like, or understand it," I muttered bitterly to myself, — "fool that I am!" The congratulations and compliments I received from all quarters only nourished the fever of pain and disappointment in my heart. When every one was gone, I sat down before the dying fire, and sighed wearily.

"A very brilliant evening, Annie!" Harold said, coming up joyously, and putting his hand on my shoulder. "You have had

a decided success, my little wife. You will be quite the rage, if you choose to mix much in society. I said you would make an admirable queen."

His words sounded mockingly in my ears; I sat still and silent, and he went on, standing beside me, and speaking gaily.

"I should not like you to be transformed into a woman of fashion; my little quiet mouse to be talked about and written about, as having been here and there, and said and worn so and so. The idea is ridiculous! Gower was saying, that whatever you did, you would do with such earnest, that I had better take care society did not engross you. But why so grave and silent?"

"Do you think I care for society, or for what your world thinks of me?" I asked, scornfully, moving my shoulder pettishly away from under his hand.

"Well, love, I did not know; I thought you seemed to enjoy yourself, seemed to be in good spirits. I suppose all women like admiration, and you have been pronounced fascinating, and I don't know what all. How splendidly you did play! How secret you must have been about your practising; you were determined to shine, I see. But why don't you compose polkas, or valses, or something merry of that kind, instead of such dismal incomprehensible music? Do you know, I don't suppose half the people knew what to make of it, only —"

"Do not say any more about that miserable piece! I cannot bear it to-night!" I exclaimed. "I thought you would understand it. O Harold! it is very hard! when I try hardest to please you, I fail. Do you think I practised, caring to please any one but you? We shall never understand each other, never be happy. I am quite weary of trying, weary of everything. You cannot love me as I love you, or you would learn to comprehend me. Everything turns to pain, to torture. What have I done, that I may never be happy? I have no one but you — no one; and there is no sympathy between us. We shall leave off loving each other; I shall turn your love to hate. I wish I were dead — dead and quiet." I began to sob violently. I felt what the expression of my husband's face was; though I did not look up at him.

"What is the matter, Annie?" he exclaimed. "For God's sake, be quiet — for my sake. Miserable! What have you said? You are worn out and over-excited, poor child! Pray, pray be quiet. Remember, —"

"Yes — I remember everything!" I answered. "That only makes it worse. I ought to be happy! Yes, of course I ought. You have loaded me with gifts, you have petted and spoiled me; and now, like a naughty child, I quarrel with my playthings! I am ungrateful, discontented, wicked! I have received thou-

sands of benefits; I am sumptuously lodged and clothed in fine linen, and yet I hold up my greedy hands, and cry out for something more. Poor child! No; you should say naughty child! — you should scold and punish me!"

"Annie!" Harold broke in, upon my scornful, passionate words; "Annie! you must be quiet, and listen to me."

I shut my lips firmly, clasped my hands tightly round my knees, and sat staring fixedly into the fire. In its dim red hollowness, I thought I could discern misery, vista after vista opening before me. How could I live with this torturing, craving, perpetual restlessness at my heart? It had been gone a little while; now it came back worse than ever; it would abide there always, I thought. Must my soul live all those future long, long years, alone? wandering on without aim or purpose, finding no rest for her world-worn feet? No! I would die first; or, at least, I should go mad.

And I sat harbouring like bitter thoughts; gazing before me with hot, dry eyes, though my passionate tears still wetted my cheeks.

Harold had not spoken. At last I glanced at him; he too sat looking into the fire; he had seated himself near me. A world of perplexed thought troubled and clouded his face. He felt my eyes on him, and turned his head slowly round to me. He spoke very gently and tenderly.

"I see how it is, Annie. Yes, I do not always understand you; sometimes I disappoint and pain you. You have often borne with my dulness patiently, but to-night your disappointment was more than you could bear. Yes, it was very hard, after you had been thinking you should please him, to have your husband the only one who did not admire your music. You are very clever, and have many thoughts and feelings into which I do not enter. I did not know you, Annie, when I asked you to marry me; if I had —"

"You would not have done so!" I exclaimed, — "oh, misery! Then you have left off loving me. I have wearied you with my temper and my violence! You thought you had won a good and quiet wife — one who would have kept your house in order — be always ruled by you — make your world her world — one who would be always grateful and cheerful, and content; and instead — Indeed, I do not wonder you cannot love the creature."

"You shall not speak so! — hush! I love you — you know I love you. Cannot I make you happy, my poor wife? I have been wrong and selfish; in my hurry to get the treasure I wanted, I did not pause to think if I were worthy to keep it. You were not happy, — I thought, presumptuously, that I could make you so, — that my great, entire love

would satisfy you. If I was mistaken and wrong, Heaven forgive me. Heaven pity us both — you most — my poor, poor wife!"

He spoke so sadly that my heart melted utterly. I threw myself on the ground, clasping his knees, and sobbed out:

"O Harold! I see it now. You are too good, — I am not worthy forgive me! What a wife I am to you! I owe you everything, and I poison your peace — make you miserable. No! I will not get up, I will stay here. You must tell me, — how shall I make you happy? How can I grow good and quiet? How can I alter myself? You must tell me; you must teach me!"

But he would not listen. He took me up in his arms, soothing and caressing me, as if indeed I had been a child, a penitent, passion-weary child, he carried me up-stairs. I was obliged to be passive now, because I felt utterly weary; so my head lay quietly on his shoulder, and my tears rained down quietly, without effort to control or restrain them. But this sweet tenderness was not what I had wanted, — I wanted him really to teach me — I wanted to have learnt from him the secret of quiet happiness. Ah! if I could only have governed myself — have spoken calmly and gently, and without tears, passion, or reproaches, have let him known how it was with me! That night I lay awake with the miserable consciousness that I had done no good, but great harm — that now, indeed, poor Harold's heart must be wounded, — that I had told my husband that his love could not make me happy, — that I was miserable!

Tormented for the few hours before daylight by such thoughts as these, I grew more and more restless and feverish. Next day, and for many days after, I was very ill, and during all the time my husband's tender, self-forgetting care of me was a constant reproach and cause of remorse.

The first day I was down-stairs, again, and tolerably calm and strong, I made a great effort to speak to Harold about that miserable evening. He would hear no explanations. I was to forget all about it. I had not made myself ill then, he was sure, I was feverish before. It was all his fault, — he ought to have known better than to subject me to so much fatigue and excitement. We had both talked nonsense. Not happy? We were both as happy as the day was long. Could I look in his face and tell him that I was not happy? he asked. He had come to the side of my sofa — had sat down by me and drawn my head from its resting-place, to pillow it on his heart. Lying there, looking up into those most loving eyes of his, I said I was happy then.

It was high spring-time, now. As soon as I was strong enough, Harold took me to the sea-side; there we had a pleasant time.

TWO SHILLINGS PER HORSE-POWER.

Dated the seventh of last August, there has come into the world — prematurely born — a Special Report of the Executive Committee of the National Association of Factory Occupiers. For reasons not very cogent as they stand in print, it has appeared proper to the managing committee of the Association to submit to its members an earlier report than the rules contemplated. The reason not stated in print is, on the face of the report, obvious enough; — the Association has become suddenly anxious to forsake some of its positions; to abandon, as dangerous, a large part of the too-extended line of its defences.

All the world being at liberty to march in and look at the abandoned trenches, we make bold to inspect them. Hear, O ye factory owners who have paid your two shillings per horse-power for immunity from all the legal penalties of resistance to the law which commands proper fencing of your dangerous machinery; this is the retired position taken in their new special report by the committee of your National Association. "They have not paid, and they do not intend to pay, damages or penalties in any case whatever." See, what a solid piece of work was this! At the meeting on the twenty-seventh of March last, the report of a deputation to London was read, and it contained the following recommendations. Remember it, all ye mill owners who have paid duly in accordance therewith your two shillings per horse-power! "The deputation are of opinion, that a fund of not less than five thousand pounds should be immediately raised; and they suggest, that all cases of prosecution, which the committee of management may be of opinion can be legitimately dealt with by the Association, shall be defended by, and the penalties or damages paid out of, the funds of the Association." Whereupon, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously resolved, "That the best thanks of this meeting be given to the deputation, for their valuable services, and for the report which they have just submitted. That the report which has now been read be printed and circulated through the trade, together with the resolutions adopted in London, and that every mill occupier be urgently requested to enrol himself as a member of the National Association;" also, "that the recommendation in the report, to raise immediately a sum of not less than five thousand pounds, be carried into execution, and that an additional contribution of one shilling per nominal horse-power from each mill occupier (making a total of two shillings per horse-power) be at once called for, to enable the committee to carry out the recommendation to defend, at the

cost of the Association, all cases which they may consider fairly to come within the sphere of the Association."

We here plant our flag on this abandoned work. It would not stand a storm, and it has yielded, partly to the feeling of the country, partly to a dread of the remote thunders of the law. Let us follow the Association to its new position. It undertakes "to protect its members from improper prosecutions." Nothing more. If, truly, nothing more, then may those members who do not happen to be paupers, who can afford to advance costs that will be reimbursed to them, thank the Assosation, but decline to pay two shillings per horse-power for nothing. The cost of an improper prosecution falls upon the persons bringing it. No costs are payable, unless the prosecution has been ratified by judicial approbation; if in the face of that, the National Association, setting itself as a judge over the judge, choose to cry "Fie, that is improper!" and so pay the costs of the defeated mill owner, it surely makes use of its funds in opposition to the law, and earns the dangerous and ugly name that law-books will, in that case, give to its proceedings. If it abstain from doing this, it can do nothing.

The Association have — we suspect illegally — been paying three hundred and eighteen pounds, the lawyers' bill of a firm that stopped an action, with consent to pay one hundred and fifty pounds, in pure benevolence, to the widow of a man slaughtered by machinery. This they did for the gentlemen of the firm, quoth the report, considering "the great expense to which they would be put by the action, even if it resulted in their favour, — Government not being liable, like other plaintiffs, in case of failure, to pay the costs of the defendant." Now, this is the one display of strength in their whole case; and we will hear what its worth is. Every point in the Factory Act has been scanned by the Association; and the abolition of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth clauses — providing for a prosecution instituted by inspectors on behalf of persons suffering from bodily hurt, occasioned by unfenced machinery — has been specifically recommended. These gentlemen who talk of Government not paying the costs of a victorious defendant, and of their just intervention on that ground, must therefore perfectly well know what the contents of the said clauses are. In the twenty-fifth, it is distinctly and circumstantially provided that no mill owner, prosecuted unsuccessfully for any case of accident within his factory, shall be made liable for the expense to which he has been put by an improper prosecution. The inspector having promoted an action on the part of Government, the clause goes on to declare, that "in case a verdict

shall be found for the defendant, or judgment shall be recovered against the plaintiff, or the plaintiff shall be nonsuited, the defendant shall have the like remedies for his costs against the inspector, as he might have had against the plaintiff."

What, therefore, must finally be done with the contributed two shillings per horse-power? It will all go, at last, to the payment of the dinner-bills of foolish deputations; and to the payment of the printers' bills of committee-men who publish pamphlets, called Reports, and Special Reports, loaded with foolish talk about the innocence of patient mill owners, hunted and harried by pseudo-philanthropists for refusing to fence their shafts and protect life in factories; the "negligence, fool-hardiness, and disobedience" of the poor men who, having perished upon unfenced shafts, lie silent in their graves. The only end of all which writing is, that gentlemen who pay two shillings per horse-power for the satisfaction of getting such stuff printed, place themselves in a very unfavourable light before their countrymen. They cannot do better than press upon the managers of their so-called National Association, the propriety of devoting the funds they have in hand to the fencing of some part of the machinery of their subscribers, and dissolving forthwith.

THE SARDINIANS.

In a former paper we described the Island of Sardinia. The people are not less picturesque than the island. Their costume, their customs, their amusements, are all ready to the hand of a melodramatist or ballet-composer. They are handsome, after the dark style of the south, half-Moorish half-Italian. Among the men, beards, moustaches, and long, flowing dark locks frame their dusky, fierce, black-eyed visages. In figure they are slender and active, and like all foresters and pastoral tribes. So much preamble is needful before giving the following descriptions of costumes, in order that our readers might fill in the faces and figures, male and female.

The men's dress consists of the veste, a double-breasted dark cloth waistcoat, buttoned to the neck; the calzonia, pair of very full dark breeches of the same material, extending to the knees, and edged with black velvet; the mutande, white cotton drawers, very full, terminating inside; high gaiters of dark cloth or black leather, for horsemen; a jabbano, or cloak with a hood, like the capote worn by the Moors, of material according to the taste of the wearer; and, to crown all, a long black or red cap.

The militia of Gallura, when they went to meet the late King of Sardinia, wore dark capotes, red velvet waistcoats, white drawers, and black gaiters; each

was armed with bright-barrelled guns, and mounted on a little, fiery, active horse of Arab descent. The Sardes are famous horsemen and lovers of horses. The female costume varies according to the province, but is always in the same rich parti-coloured style. A loosely fitting gown of a bright-coloured coarse cloth, a bodice of the same material, and a coloured kerchief thrown over the head, is the dress of the peasant women of Alghero. At Porto Torres they wear a yellow bodice trimmed with black velvet, fitting tightly to the figure, the front being open; a white handkerchief covers the bosom; the petticoat is of coarse red cloth; the head-dress a coloured handkerchief dropped negligently on the shoulders and neck. At Tempio, we find a scarlet, blue, or green velvet jacket, with a border of a different colour on the edges; an upper petticoat of a dark cloth, with a bright-coloured border ten or twelve inches deep, and an under petticoat of cloth of a different colour and quality, both very full, with countless plaiting at the waist, worn outside the jacket, and falling over the hips with great elegance. When the fair Tempiese goes out, she raises the outer petticoat from behind, and brings it over the head with a peculiar knack, which gives it a form somewhat resembling the Maltese hood. Altogether it is one of the most picturesque costumes of the island. A head-dress is sometimes of a coloured silk kerchief, tied into three knots triangularly, one of the knots fitting into the nape of the neck, and the other two into the forehead. They have something of a rosette form, but are so arranged as to show the borders and fringe with a most graceful negligence.

The Gallurese women handle the gun as well as the distaff, join in shooting matches, and take part in the vendetta, of which we shall presently speak.

The Sardes are almost all born poets, after a kind; it is calculated that one in sixty-nine can improvise where only one in thirty-eight can read; for, to improvise, the art of reading is no more needful than to Welsh bards or Highland pipers of ancient time. This facility of improvisation renders possible a most singular kind of feast or frolic, to use a very suitable American phrase.

Sheep constitute the chief wealth of the district of Gallura, of which Tempio is the centre. When the wife or daughter of a flock-owner has a quantity of wool to be plucked or combed ready for the distaff, she invites all the girls of the neighbourhood to come and help her, and all the bachelors to help them, as well as a few friends to look on. For the entertainment of the company she provides vases of flowers, a supply of bonbons, and roseglio, with music for dancing when the work is done. An ounce of bon-

bons is considered a fair return for one hundred pounds of wool. These Tempiese girls, according to Mr. Tyndale, are uncommonly handsome; we must imagine the effect of twenty or thirty of these gentle zitelle, cross-legged on the floor in their picturesque costumes, with each a bundle of wool before her and a lover lolling at her side, all chattering and almost drowning the sharp notes of an indefatigable guitar. Suddenly a cavalier commences his song, accompanying himself on the guitar. He improvises a tale of love, addressed to one of the fair wool-pickers; from time to time murmurs of "Bene, bene!" show that his talent is approved. He ceases his tale of love, and presents a flower to the heroine of his song. She, slightly blushing, places it in her bosom, not without a certain air of triumph; and, after a slight hesitation, asks one of her friends to answer for her. In a whispered conversation he learns the state of her heart, whether the answer is to be cool or jealous, and dictates to her line by line the answer which she sings. Amid the audience all the passions of youth and love are displayed — satisfied vanity, envy, rivalry, — poets anxious to sing, beauties panting to be sung.

We are indebted to Mr. Tyndale's enormous warehouse of Sardinian curiosities for specimens of these songs, taken down at a genuine graminatoggiu or wool-plucking. Their immense length enables us to give only a few verses from a literal translation.

THE LOVER.

Humbly, discreetly, and prudently
With true devotion,
This flower is presented to you,
That to you alone it may give
The real intention
And sentiment of love.
Continually anxious,
My beauteous Eva, to meet you
And tell and confide to you
This real passion.
If, therefore, you are sincere,
As it is believed you are,
Try to pronounce this evening
The desired decision,
Be it of life or death.
Oh, be not cruel
To your lover, who is stedfast!

And so on for a hundred lines.

THE ANSWER.

If the flower has so great a wish
To know what it does not know,
I will endeavour
To answer its message,
And to tell him that I have been
Open and sincere to all;
Tell him it is my intention
To wish him well and love him
As one truly devoted to him,
And that this smile is
The proof of real affection.
That if he loves me, and holds me in his heart,
As he frequently says he does,
Tell him I hold him also present,
That he may rely alone
On this my pure word,
If the flower has so great a wish (to know it).

But the Sardes can boast of finer poetry than these improvised couplets of compliments. A ballad directed against the tyranny of the feudal barons (the worst features of feudal tenure were not abolished until eighteen hundred and thirty-five), contains stanzas which are magnificent even in translation.

Marriage follows love more or less in Sardinia as elsewhere. When arrived at the serious point, sometimes the lover, accompanied by a friend, sometimes the lover's father, proceeds to the house of the girl's parents, and there gravely professes to have lost a sheep, for which he is in search. If the parents are agreeable to the match, they proceed, if they have several daughters, to present them one by one, reserving the one wanted until the last. Then follows the bargain as to exchange of gifts. A day is fixed for the exchange, and the lover gives his betrothed a solemn kiss — hence this meeting is called ora del facio; and from this solemn pledge he cannot swerve without dishonour to his betrothed, and taking upon himself the vengeance of her relatives and clan. On the day of betrothal, the friends of the bridegroom, called paralymphos, form a procession, and carry the articles composing his store to her father's house, where they knock and pretend to be impatient because the door is not immediately opened to them. The inmates inquire, who and what are these impatient people, and what they bring; to which the paralymphos answer, that they have honour and virtue. Then they are admitted — the family and friends in their gayest costume; and they proceed to exchange the segnati or gifts; and the list of the various articles being examined, the business is solemnised by a feast. The day of marriage is then fixed, and proclaimed in the village church for three consecutive Sundays. Eight days before it takes place, the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, forms a procession with carts loaded with the furniture, &c., he has undertaken to supply, to the house of the intended bride. Here they are examined, condemned if not up to the customary mark, and, when finally passed, repacked and conducted in state to the new house of the bridegroom.

The bride's procession follows a few days afterwards. The musicians, playing on the peculiar pipes of the island, march first, and friends follow, each carrying something: one a looking-glass, another a basket of crockery and glasses, a third a new distaff, with the flax or wool ready to be spun off. Another guest carries the picture of the favourite saint, destined to adorn the nuptial bed. A pillow, trimmed with coloured ribbons and myrtle, is a favourite gift; and the prettiest maiden of the party carries the vase to be used thereafter by the bride for fetching water from the fountain, but which, on this occasion, is filled with flowers. Each of her friends is the bearer of some little article of future use. Behind them follow the carts with the heavy goods, the horns of the oxen tipped with oranges and covered with coloured ribbons. Some wheat, with a pair of grinding stones, fill a separate cart, behind which

follows the ass whose future duty it will be to work the mill, his ears and tail adorned with ribbons and flowers. All the furniture being arranged, is adorned with flowers, which, however faded, must not be removed for many months after the marriage. On the marriage day the bridegroom proceeds with his companions to the house of the bride; who, on his arrival takes her farewell, receives the blessing of her parents, and is consigned to the hands of the priest. The bride takes with her a bottle of wine and a cake of the finest wheat, coloured with saffron and adorned with flowers, as a present to the priest; and distributes several cakes of her own making among her young friends in the procession.

The ceremony being over, they return home; where, at the marriage feast, the young couple, seated next each other, eat soup out of the same basin and with the same spoon. During the festivities which follow the feast, the bride is not allowed to move or speak during the whole day, though around her all is gaiety and merry-making. She must not speak a word until she leaves her grand chair to start for her own house. She is then placed upon a horse gaily caparisoned; and, led by one of the men at the right hand of the bridegroom, the females following behind her, and the men joining in his retinue. The cavalcade is preceded by the launedda, or Sarde pipes (an exact copy of the instrument on which Pan and the satyrs perform in ancient bas-reliefs), playing a nuptial song, in the chorus of which the whole party from time to time join. On arriving at the court of the house, the mother receives the bride, and sprinkles her with grain and salt. On reaching the door, she alights from her horse upon a little table covered with a gay piece of carpet, and thus passes into the house without touching the threshold. The bride is then accompanied to the bridal chamber, the nearest relatives sprinkling her with razia, bonbons made of sugared nuts and almonds, and a glass of water is emptied at her feet as she enters the chamber. A dance concludes the amusements of the day, in which the bride and bridegroom take no part.

If we turn to our classical dictionary, we shall find that the Sardes are married with almost exactly the same rites and ceremonies as the Romans. The dance, or Ballo di Tondo, of which they are passionately fond, is performed to the music of the true Pan's pipes, and appears to resemble exactly the Greek dances described by the Roving Englishman. All hands take hands or waists, and in a circle execute their favourite step. The ancient English privilege of benefit of clergy, might safely be extended to the Sarde population, as reading and writing are acquirements solely confined to the priests, the lawyers, who swarm and thrive, and the doctors; but the want of the knives and forks of education

is the less to be regretted, as there are no books published in the island, and only one newspaper — a small official gazette. Ecclesiastics abound in the proportion of one to every eighty-four inhabitants, including monks and wandering friars. Nevertheless, there are many rural districts where the services of the church are not performed more than once a-year. By way of supplement, convents employ eremiti, a sort of ecclesiastical commercial gents, who carry from farm to farm relics and doll figures of the Madonna, which the innocent country people, kneeling, kiss; and then repay the traveller with gifts of cheeses and other comestibles. By this means, many Sarde convents keep their larders very comfortably stocked. We meet in Mr. Tyndale's Travels with some amusing instances of hospitality and ignorance. But the ignorance may be matched in peasants' colleges in any county of England. Fro instance:

Arrived at Budduso, a village of twenty-three thousand inhabitants, after threading his way between two rows of hovels, made of mud or granite, forming a street about eight feet wide, the traveller arrived at a dead wall, where his cavallante, or horse provider and guide, exclaimed "Eccola, signore, La Osteria." The Sarde osteria, like an Eastern caravanserai, is a place where you may have house-room, finding, as a general rule, your own food and bedding. At Budduso there was a sort of bed in a corner of a room, with a window with a shutter — glass is unknown out of the seaport towns. But the room and the bed belonged to a signore, a lodger, who, however, after giving a supper, insisted on the traveller taking possession of room and bed. He had very much the appearance of the outlaws who so much abound in Sardinia — "an athletic form, courteous hauteur, a cut-throat stare," which last, however, passed away when he learned that "I was not a Piedmontese." In the course of a pleasant evening chat, "he asked where France and England were; thought the latter adjoined Piedmont; doubted if it were as large as Sardinia; but on inquiry who was our king in England, and being told we had no king but a queen, gave a most incredulous stare, burst into a fit of laughing, said, 'Come, cavaliere, una femina! una femina può governare? Come si fa? E vero? per Dio!'" (What, sir! a woman? a woman able to govern? How is it done? Is it really so? By Heaven!) The padrone of this osteria refused pay for his trouble in buying food. The furniture of the room consisted of heaps of barley bread, a primitively shaped stool, a table, a bed, and a large box. On another occasion the traveller having, according to the custom of the country, sent up his guide to a priest's house to ask the favour of a night's lodging, received for answer that the padre did not choose to admit him.

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While inquiring into the particulars of so unusual an answer, the priest peeping out of his glassless windows, perceived that the stranger was neither a Sarde nor Piedmontese, and descending hastily, overtook him, and asked in a most courteous manner, if it was he who was inquiring for a night's lodging. To which the Englishman answered hastily that he was; but was then going to seek a more hospitable house. The priest, with great emotion, began a series of apologies, seized the bridle of the traveller's horse, led him back to his door, and almost pulled him off the saddle into his house.

It seemed that the guide was not a perfectly respectable character, and there had been some cases of vendetta in the neighbourhood. A comfortable supper and an agreeable night of conversation followed, constantly interrupted by apologies on the part of the priest for his rudeness. He was not aware that England was an island, and wished to know whether Britannia was a king or a town. He had heard of tea, but had never tasted it, and our traveller fortunately having a little with him, a brew was effected, of which the priest drank seven or eight cups, to the infinite terror of his servant, who fancied that her master was being poisoned. All the while the good priest could not believe that ships were sent all the way to China to fetch dried leaves. Of Sarde simplicity, the following is not a bad specimen. Arriving at a friend's house, my host sent for a few friends to see a curiosity in island natural history — a live Englishman. I retired to my room, and sent my servant for a large tub and some jugs of water, much needed after a long ride in the sun. While in the midst of the operation the door opened, and my host entered, with four visitors in his rear, who, nothing daunted at my nudity, were formally presented to me; and so, wrapping myself up in my dressing-gown, I had to receive and exchange compliments. They inquired what I was about, presuming that I was going to bed for half-an-hour, and, according to their custom, without any clothes. But on replying that I was only taking a cold bath, there was a general outcry of surprise at my venturing to wash in cold water at that time of the evening. "Not necessary, and very dangerous. Do all your countrymen do such things? Are they very dirty in England? And on my reappearance down-stairs the ladies took up the examination, and in perfect innocent simplicity asked the oddest questions."

A traveller may make a present to the servant of a house where he has been entertained, but it would be a high offence to offer a stranger host, however humble, any payment in money for his expense and trouble. Genoese filagree brooches, rings, or little coloured handkerchiefs, may be presented with excellent effect, and should find

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a place in the traveller's baggage.

We could give many more instances of Sarde hospitality to travellers among the higher classes, but one among the humblest will be sufficient:

In proceeding to the mineral springs of San Martin, I halted, for the purpose of learning my way, at an ovile or hut of a shepherd. He was preparing to kill a lamb for his family, and offered to accompany me as soon as he had finished. His hut was composed of a mass of great stones, arranged in a circle of about twelve feet in diameter and eight feet high, with a conical roof of sticks and reeds uniting in the apex. A small piece of matting was the bed for the whole family, a few ashes were burning in a hole in the ground; a bundle of clothes, some flat loaves of bread, and three or four earthen pans completed the inventory of his goods and chattels.

His dogs and pigs basked contentedly at the entrance of the ovile, his sheep fed on the adjoining hill. In less than five minutes the all-potent Sarde knife had dissected the lamb, and we then proceeded together to San Martin, about three miles distant. After sharing my light meal, I offered him a trifle for his trouble, but he indignantly refused it, and on leaving gave me an adieu with a fervent and courteous demeanour which the highest and noblest could not have excelled.

We must not conclude our notes on the Sardes without telling something about the Fuorusciti — the Robin Hoods and Rob Roys of the nineteenth century who live under the greenwood trees and in the rocky passes of the Sarde mountains: outlaws pitied often by all except the officers of law. The name signifies outgoer. The people are chiefly fugitives from law or driven from home by vendetta. They are not to be confounded with common robbers. Strangers have nothing to fear from them. Their utmost demand is for a little powder and shot. Until recently justice has been unknown in the Sarde tribunals, which have been filled by strangers sent from terra firma, who counted on bribes rather than honest fees for their living. All this is altered, and is in course of being reformed under the constitution, which for the first time gave the Sarde equal rights with the Piedmontese.

Mr. Tyndale saw much of them in his forest rambles, and came to the conclusion that a general tone of honour, hospitality, and kindness predominated in their characters; and that they were for the most part victims of injustice or the weakness of the law. On one occasion his guide told him that having been witness to, although not a party in, a scene of vendetta and bloodshed, he had been obliged to fly from general society, and after for ten years leading a retired

life, had returned home on promise of pardon, and it was thus he obtained his knowledge of mountain paths, that made him useful as a guide.

Soon after thus talking, in winding through a copse, our traveller, who had proceeded some distance in advance of his guide and servants, in spite of repeated warnings that he should keep with them, in turning a corner came upon two men on horseback, who stood before him in such a manner as to bar his passage. As he approached, they stealthily cocked their guns and watched his every movement. He pulled up his horse and prepared for the worst. They began by respectfully saluting him. He carried no arms (the safest plan in Sardinia), his dress showed that he was not an islander. After a pause and mutual examination, a conversation began:

"E di terra ferma, il cavaliere?" (The gentleman belongs to terra firma?)

"Signori Si," I answered, raising my cap.

Upon this they exchanged glances, which showed they felt there was no danger for either of us.

"È Piemontese, il signore?" (The gentleman is Piedmontese?)

"No, Inglese."

Another look of astonishment and unbelief followed. Seeing that his imperfect acquaintance with Italian and ignorance of the Sarde language would be the best evidence that he was no enemy, our traveller entered into a general conversation, as if he had no suspicion of his questioners' real character, and they soon joined in friendly chat. After several questions, they asked how he came to be travelling alone, but on his replying that his servants were behind and would be up directly, they both started, fiercely grasped their guns, exclaiming:

"Come? dove sono?" (What! Where are they!) They had moved their horses to some high shrubs adjoining, from whence they looked through a vista in the direction of the path, and remained motionless sentinels on the look-out. Soon the horses' steps were heard in the distance, then the sound of the guide's voice, and before the traveller's retinue arrived, the banditti had recognised a friend in the guide. In a few minutes, gay conversation succeeded the doubts and fears. On setting out again, the two men offered to accompany our traveller.

These two men had become outlaws for very different reasons. Leonardo had stabbed and killed a companion in a brawl at a festa; for fear of the vengeance of the relatives of the slain, he had been obliged to fly from his native village and live for years as a mountain refugee; luckily for him, the parties concerned had kept it a secret among themselves, so that he

was not a legal outlaw, but only a fugitive from vendetta. The other, Giuseppe, more unfortunate, was the victim of the corrupt law system, which a few years ago was all but universal in the Island of Sardinia. He was a respectable farmer, unjustly suspected by a neighbour of stealing three heifers; his neighbour retaliated by stealing from him three cows. Giuseppe, anxious to prove his innocence, and less rash than the majority of his countrymen, placed the affair in the hands of an avvocato, a sort of legal vulture of the same genus as the British attorney. The avvocato took the affair into court; and, for three years, the profession kept up a continuous and purposeless litigation worthy of our own Court of Chancery, by which the cattle owners were both nearly ruined. At length they referred the dispute to mutual friends, who discovered that the false accusation had been got up by the avvocato, and that he had an understanding with the judge. The plaintiff and defendant now shook hands and swore vengeance against the swindling lawyer and unjust judge. The latter, having set about hatching pretences to lodge the farmers in prison, there was no time to be lost; so Giuseppe undertook to settle scores with the judge. He severely wounded, but failed to kill him. His friend was more successful; he killed the avvocato, but died shortly afterwards himself. Giuseppe fled, and had been for eight years an outlaw when he met our traveller.

As a general rule, the Sardes of the plain and mountain in lonely districts prefer private arbitration to law, and are happy in their arbitrators, who are called saggi, or wise men, or ragionatori. A feast when the decision is given, and reconciliation effected, is the only expense to which the disputants are put: the saggi are satisfied with the honour of their authority. Through the mediation of these good old men, lawsuits which would have occupied years and devoured a patrimony, and caused a vendetta which might have exterminated whole families, are settled in a day. Public opinion supports the decisions. In what we may call an action for breach of promise of marriage, the young shepherd who was defendant demurred to the sentence. The ragionatori rose indignant from their seat under the wild olive, saying, "We have spoken and done justice;" and, saluting the spectators, turned to their homes. But the uncle of the shepherd (and here is a picture for one of our young artists), who was leaning against a knolled oak, with his bearded chin resting on the back of his hand on the muzzle of his gun, started up, and extending his right hand to the ragionatori — "Stop, friends," he exclaimed; "the business must be finished this moment." Then turning to

his nephew, and putting his disengaged hand upon his chest — the other held his gun — he said to him, "Come, sir, instantly obey, or —"

The shepherd no longer hesitated; he sank upon his knees, and asked pardon of the saggi. Then his uncle demanded for him the hand of the maiden; the betrothal took place; and a feast and a dance, with improvised songs, followed.

We cannot conclude this sketch of Sarde outlaws without giving a scene in the life of the "noblest Roman of them all" — the hero of many a Sarde romance and ballad. Pepe Borm — of whom a Sarde Walter Scott might make a rival to our English and Scotch ballad heroes — had been compelled to fly to the mountains by an unjust accusation. There he became the head of a formidable band, who obeyed him absolutely. His private enemies and the government hunted him like a wild beast, and he, with as little mercy, shot down his pursuers. "Towards nine o'clock in the evening" — writes a noble, wealthy, and patriotic Sarde, the Marquis de Boyl, to his marchioness in eighteen hundred and thirty-six — "as I was finishing my dinner, a servant came and whispered to me that the celebrated Pepe Borm desired to have the honour of presenting himself to me. The minister of justice and all the official authorities of the village being at table, I ordered, in a low voice, that he should be conducted to my bedroom by a private way. I then went there, and saw enter a man of middle stature, about forty-seven years of age, of calm and majestic deportment. His hair was grey, as was also his long beard; his eyes were dark, and his face much wrinkled. Four others were behind him, one of whom was a handsome young man of twenty-one, of slender figure, with light beard and dark eyes. All were armed from head to foot; each carrying a gun, a bayonet, and a brace of pistols, and each of them held by a cord a dog of the fiercest aspect. Pepe Borm, followed by his sons — for thus he calls his comrades — advanced towards me, and they all kissed my hand with the greatest courtesy imaginable. After apologising for presenting himself thus armed before me, he hoped I understood his position, being continually pursued by his enemies and the hand of the law. He then proceeded to narrate to me the kind of life he had led for eleven years on the mountains, from having been calumniated by his enemies and the law authority without having killed any one. I was extremely delighted with his conversation, and questioned him on many subjects. He then begged me to ask pardon for him; and I replied that he could easily obtain it for himself, per impunità — that is, giving up another who had a price upon his

head. At these words, drawing himself back a couple of steps, and grasping the handle of the bayonet, which was placed diagonally in his waistband, he exclaimed: 'My lord, Pepe Borm has never betrayed any one; if the government does not choose to change the sentence on me, and I am to buy my liberty by treachery, I prefer a thousand times to wander in the mountains with my sons and honour, which I regard more than my life." At this answer I could not restrain myself; and, giving him my hand, he kissed it most respectfully, bending his head. I promised to do all in my power to intercede with the government for pardon. I also endeavoured to show him that some day or other he might be wounded, and then easily arrested. The four men who were with him, who had not hitherto spoken a word, here interrupted, and simultaneously exclaimed, 'Before that, we will all perish for his head.'

"I ordered supper for them, and retired to a little distance to avoid restraint. I longed for the pencil of Vandyke to paint their animated countenances, turning whenever the door opened. Their five dogs sat beside them, eager for the food thrown to them, but obedient. My maître d'hotel sat at table with the fuorusciti, and had to taste everything, as they hinted that the government troops might have become acquainted with their arrival at the palace, and it was necessary to take care, lest they should die the death of rats. I then went up to them, and they began pledging my health in toasts and good wishes. They gave me an account of their mode of life, wandering about all night, resting and concealing themselves the greater part of the day. On assembling in the morning they go through the rosario.

"At midnight I accompanied them to where their horses were tied up. I was astonished at meeting at a short distance twenty more of the band, with their dogs acting as a vidette. Three days afterwards I left my palace at Pullifigari, and met them all drawn up on the summit of a mountain, with their muskets grounded, holding their barrels in their left hands. They awaited me and saluted me, raising their caps from their heads with their right hands, waving them in a circle as high as possible, once more demonstrating their gratitude by affecting vivas, and wishes for a prosperous journey.

"Much do I regret the fall of a man who might have served his country well, if unfortunate events had not forced him to leave his paternal hearth for the wild mountains, there to lead as a fuoruscito a wandering life." Two years after this interview with the Marquis de Boyl, Pepe Borm was shot dead by a private enemy, while sleeping at the foot of a tree in the Piana di Murtas.

It is to be hoped that such victims and such scenes have

passed away for ever. The revolution of eighteen hundred and forty-eight, which gave to Piedmont a constitution, extended equal rights and privileges to the island of Sardinia. The recent liberal tariff has abolished all the customs' duties with which Sarde produce was at one time specially burdened. Lord Nelson wrote, in eighteen hundred and three: "Sardinia is very little known; it was the policy of Piedmont to keep it in the background, and it has been the maxim to rule its inhabitants with severity, loading its produce with such duties as prevented their growth. I will only mention one instance as a proof. Half a cheese was seized because a poor man was selling it to our boats, and it had not paid the duty. Fowls, eggs, beef, and every article of food are most heavily taxed on export. The country is fruitful beyond idea, and abounds in cattle, sheep, and would in corn, wine, and oil. In the hands of a liberal government there is no telling what its produce would amount to."

Lord Nelson's wishes have been realised; Sardinia is in the hands of a liberal government.

MUSIC IN POOR NEIGHBOURHOODS.

"WANTED — A person who can play the violin, and a female to sing and dance. Liberal remuneration will be guaranteed, providing they undertake to endeavour to please and amuse, in a room where from one hundred to two hundred persons assemble every evening. A man and his wife, with two children, will not be objected to. Apply to — Duke of Norfolk —."

Such is an advertisement lately inserted in a London newspaper, although the advertiser is located in a country town. It is one of many which frequently make their appearance, addressed to theatrical and musical people of a humble grade: such, for instance, as the following, which stood in typographical companionship with it:

"Wanted, for the Theatre Royal —, and other theatres, a first-class leading lady; also a good walking lady, combined with respectable utility. A good wardrobe, with youthful appearance, indispensable in each department."

Whether the youthful appearance is to belong to the wardrobe or to the leading and walking ladies, is not clearly indicated. The fiddler and the female singer, however, are those to whom we would here direct a little attention.

The advertisement points to a kind of social want — a want of

The advertiser is a publican; he evidently wishes to combine pints of beer with fiddled dances; glasses of gin with sentimental songs; the dances and songs are not ends in view, but simply means to an end, so far as he is concerned. On the part of his humble customers, however, this is not the case; the dance and the song are as much enjoyed as the beer and the gin, perhaps more. This has become a point of more

importance, especially in so densely-inhabited a place as London. It is good for us all to have a little music, and not less good for the horn-handed artisan than for the white-handed gentleman; it is — let us be thankful for it — a part of our nature to enjoy the concourse of sweet sounds. But the knotty question is, How are those who, in language which used to be employed more frequently in past days than in the present, were called the lower classes, to obtain their music? When a man wishes to smoke his pipe after a hard day's work, may he, or may he not, listen to music at the same time? Shall music be employed as an antidote to pipes and pints; or shall it be rather an addition, an admixture, an emollient, or something which shall rub off the crudities and open the heart to kindliness? Much may be said on both sides of this, as of most other questions; but as operatives, like men of better fortune, will have music in some way or other, there is a problem yet to be solved, how the music can be made to do the most good and the least harm.

In London the street musicians have improved in skill within the last few years; while the German bands and the monster organs, albeit somewhat rough and noisy, do certainly familiarise the ear with much German and Italian music of a superior kind. It is the evening music, however, the [illegible] when the labours of the day are over, that somewhat embarrasses our licensing magistrates and our Lord Chamberlains.

During the reign of Charless the Second, according to Sir John Hawkins, the humble classes in London were dependent on such occasional music as the publicans thought proper to give them. There was no variety of parts, no commixture of different instruments. Half-a-dozen fiddlers would scrape Sellenger's Round, or John Come Kiss Me, or Old Simon the King, with divisions, till themselves and their audience were tired; after which, as many players on the hautboy would, in the most harsh and discordant tones, grate forth Green Sleeves, Yellow Stockings, Gillian of Croydon, or some such common dance-tune: and the people thought it fair music. It was about this time that an extraordinary man exhibited a musical soul in the midst of sooty black diamonds. This was Thomas Britton, a small-coal man, and the founder of modern concerts. He lived in Clerkenwell, and hawked small-coal about the streets; and in the evening, retiring to his humble abode, and making all as clean and tidy as he could, he was wont to assemble round him singers and players who could join in a concert. His voice was so musical, and his taste so good, that his coal-shed concerts became attractive to persons far above his own station in life. Dr. Pepusch the musician, the great Handel,

Woollaston the painter, Hughes, a poet of those days, were among the guests; and not unfrequently the beautiful and witty Duchess of Queensberry would order her carriage thitherward, and enjoy a coal-shedful of beautiful music. But this tells nothing concerning the state of music among the working-classes at the time. Britton was a man gifted beyond his class; he belonged in occupation to the humble, but in taste to the refined.

Everything tends to show that in the last century, the masses of London either had no music, or music of a very rude description. Of course such men as Steele and Addison, and such papers as those in the Spectator and Tatler, revealed a higher taste. One of Isaac Bickerstaff's correspondents claimed to have discovered an infallible remedy for the spleen. He found that "sweet, easy flowing numbers are oft superior to our noblest medicines. When the spirits are low, and nature sunk, the muse, with sprightly and harmonious notes, gives an unexpected turn with a grain of poetry, which I prepare without the use of mercury. I have done wonders in this kind; for the spleen is like the tarantula; the effects of whose malignant poison are to be prevented by no other remedy but the charms of music." All this pleasant badinage apart, however, there is abundant evidence that, throughout the first half of the last century, and far into the reign of George the Third, the nobility were in general gay and frivolous, and the working-classes ignorant and gross; characteristics which showed themselves in respect to music as to other matters.

About a century ago, Fielding wrote an essay, intended really to point out the degraded state of morals among the people, but conveying, at the same time, a severe sarcasm on the upper classes. He seems to have thought that pleasures among the great could do no harm, but that the pleasures of the poor required sharp attention. His essay was An Inquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers, &c.; and in the course of his argument he observes: "Pleasure hath been, and always will be, the principal business of persons of fashion and fortune, and more especially of the ladies, for whom I have infinitely too great an honour and respect to rob them of any their least amusement. Let them have their plays, operas, and oratorios; their masquerades and ridottos; their assemblies, dances, routs, riots, and hurricanes; their Ranelagh and Vauxhall: their Bath, Tunbridge, Bristol, Scarborough, and Cheltenham; and let them have their beaux and daughters to attend them at all these; it is the only use for which such beaux are fit; and I have seen, in the course of my life, that it is the only use to which, by sensible women, they are applied. Such places of plea-

sure, therefore, as are totally set apart for the use of the great world, I meddle not with." But he did meddle with the amusements of the poor. There was so much robbery and dissipation in the public-houses, combined, as it would appear, with music and dancing, that he recommended stringent measures; and his essay led to the enactment of the statute of seventeen hundred and fifty-two, whereby such houses and rooms were placed under magisterial control.

According to the terms of this act, no house, room, or garden, for music, dancing, or such-like entertainment, could be opened within twenty miles of London, except by a licence annually renewed at the Middlesex quarter sessions. If this law were infringed, a penalty of one hundred pounds would be imposed, and all persons found in those places would be treated as rogues and vagabonds. The dancing and singing-places were not to be opened before five in the afternoon. Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and the Opera House, were exempt from this law, as having special crown-licences. It is evident at a glance that this statute was meant to meet the exigences of a peculiar state of society; the anomaly has been, to maintain the act in force when the state of society has changed.

During the second half of the century there do not appear to have been many such places licensed. One was Saddler's Wells, which has since grown into a temple of Shakspeare; another was Bagnigge Wells; a third was Ranelagh; while others were Marybone Gardens, the Bell and the Angel at Edmonton, the King's Head at Enfield, the Long Rooms at Hampstead, White Conduit House, Islington Spa, the Adam and Eve tea-garden, the Shepherd and Shepherdess, &c. Some of these had much celebrity in their day. Bagnigge Wells was a favourite locality; for eighty years ago a song told of —

"Drinking tea, on Sunday afternoons,
At Bagnigge Wells, with china and gilt spoons."

Ranelagh is familiar enough to the readers of Fielding, Goldsmith, and Johnson, for its lake, its elegant boat, its rotunda, its boxes for tea and coffee-drinkers, its orchestra, its vocal and instrumental performances, its strolling and flirting, its hooped ladies, and its powdered gentlemen, its fireworks, and its masquerades; it lingered until the beginning of the present century, when it gave way to bricks and mortar. Marybone Gardens belonged to the old manor house of Mary-le-bone; they were open freely to the public for many years, but a charge was afterwards made for admission, as to a favourite promenade, — and to something worse, if we are to credit Captain Macheath's expression of regret that he had lost money playing with lords at Marybone. The Bell at Edmon-

ton will never be forgotten until Cowper's Johnny Gilpin is forgotten. The White Conduit House lived until a few years ago; for information as to where it is now, ask the bricklayers. Islington Spa has given place to Spa Fields Chapel, — and, in short, nearly all the old tea-gardens have given place to buildings and streets.

Evidence, taken before a committee of the House of Commons two years since, plainly shows that the old statute, however well intended a hundred years ago, is not fitted for our day. The frequenters of Exeter Hall little dream of the interpretation which might be put upon the old statute, if rigidly enforced. The act virtually prohibits all morning concerts within twenty miles of London; and two of the Middlesex magistrates stated, "Such is the present state of the law, that if the trustees of Exeter Hall should permit the oratorio of the Messiah to be once performed in their splendid building, before the hour of five in the afternoon, their licence would be forfeited, and the hall must be for ever closed as a place of public entertainment; and if the proprietors of Willis's Rooms should allow a few concerts for charitable purposes to be holden there in one season without the machinery of ladies patronesses and committees, it would be at the hazard of paying a penalty of one hundred pounds for every entertainment — nay, it may be doubted whether the kind-hearted owner of any mansion within the proscribed district who should too frequently permit fancy fairs to be held within his grounds, would not be liable to fine and imprisonment, as the keeper of a disorderly house, provided bands of music were stationed in his park, and his high-born visitors indulged in polkas and quadrilles; for the courts of law have decided, not only that the character of the visitors is immaterial, but that it is not necessary (to ensure a conviction) that money should be taken at the doors, or that the place should be used solely or principally for public entertainments." At Exeter Hall, the difficulty is surmounted by arranging that the morning performances shall be rehearsals, without taking money at the doors, while the morning concerts at Hanover Rooms are considered subscription concerts, with patrons and patronesses, and so on. There are many excellent and highly popular places of amusement in London which might be placed in some peril if this musty, antiquated statute were enforced against them.

But what have the working classes been doing in the meantime? The extension of shilling concerts, and the excellent music performed at them, are at once causes and consequences of the improved tone of public intelligence; but working men do *not* attend them, except in small sprinklings. Look round the

hall on a shilling night, at Mr. Hullah's rooms, and at the various parts of the theatre at one of Jullien's shilling concerts, and you will see that the listeners are above the grade of those who are usually deemed the working classes. The harmonic meeting at the Pig and Whistle, at which the celebrated Mr. Baritone will preside, draws a greater number of those who, in the daytime, wear aprons and paper caps. There is a jollification about it which they like — an alternation of music and chat and smoke; they do not pay for the music, but regard it as a kind of bonus — a something given in by the capital landlord. The question is, not whether this is the best mode in which music can be heard, but whether the music will not lessen rather than increase any disposition towards sottishness. It should be remembered that our London is so densely packed with houses and people, such an extraordinary conglomerate of human beings walled up within bricks and mortar, that open air evening amusements are out of the question, except in few and far between instances. At Dresden, on the other hand, and, indeed, at most of the large German towns, there are public gardens at which all classes assemble in the evening, drinking zucker-wasser and other simple beverages, and listening to fine music played by a splendid band.

The law in respect to music-rooms is a whirl of confusion. There are ordinary licences for public-houses; there are music licences for public-houses; there are music licences for buildings which are not public-houses; there are licensing magistrates, who often assume the licence of Unreason. Then there are the licences for theatres and saloons, granted by the Lord Chamberlain, in accordance with an act passed about a dozen years ago. The distinction between the theatre licence and the saloon licence is curious: both relate to any and all buildings, within twenty miles of London, wherein tragedy, comedy, farce, opera, burletta, interlude, melodrame, pantomime, and other stage entertainment is given. The theatre licence is granted to about twenty places in the metropolis, excluding Drury Lane and Covent Garden, which are kept open in virtue of royal patents granted to Killigrew and Davenant in the time of Charles the Second. These patents are still in force, although one theatre has become an Italian Opera-house, and the other has become — anything. The saloon licence gives the same kind of permission as the theatre licence, to represent dramatic pieces, with three or four provisos — that the performances shall not commence before five o'clock; that no smoking shall be allowed in the saloon during the hours of performance; that no tables or stands shall be arranged for re-

freshments; and that no refreshments shall be supplied, except during the intervals between the performances. The reader will at once see that it is to such places as the Grecian Saloon and the Bower Saloon that these licences refer, — places in which the theatrical saloon is immediately contiguous to a tavern belonging to the same proprietor.

There are thus theatres unconnected with taverns; there are saloon theatres connected with taverns; there are taverns, having a licensed room for singing and dancing; there are harmonic meetings of various degrees of musicality; and there are penny theatres, which require much police vigilance. But unfortunately there are no clear lines of distinction between all these. What with the excise licence, the magistrates' licence, and the Lord Chamberlain's licence, there is sad confusion. Magistrates differ among themselves, and ermined judges differ from magistrates, concerning the interpretation of the law. A respectable publican may be in doubt whether he may have a pianoforte in a well-conducted public room; while another, encumbered by no scruples, may creep close to the edge of the law, and have both singing and dancing.

This is foolish and unjust. Music and the drama should not be regarded as prey, to be hunted and driven about as something unworthy. That they can work into the hearts of the mass of our London population is sufficiently shown by the experience of a theatre in the most densely-populated part of the east end of London, where Shakspeare is well played by good performers, where the prices of admission are to be reckoned by pence rather than by shillings, where the audience is as attentive as at any possible patent theatre, and where the numbers who attend are so large as to leave a sufficient margin of profit to the lessee. Not far from the same theatre is an entertainment certainly belonging to the domain of the fine arts, for it consists of panoramic pictures of some merit, elucidated by a lecture, and accompanied by music, and yet the price of admission is but a single penny. And here is afforded an old commentary on the licensing system; if the exhibitor had not designated his entertainment a lecture, he would not have been allowed to have any music without a licence, which licence, perhaps, he might never have been able to obtain. This is what we mean by music being, as it were, hunted about, as if something unworthy. The exhibitor just referred to is said to have spent five hundred pounds in a year and a half for panoramas, which are prepared in a painting-room of his own, by artists in his own employ; and he has sometimes had five successive audiences in one evening, each consisting of a room full of penny visitors pre-

pared for about an hour's exhibition. It is only in a densely populous neighbourhood that such a speculation could be successful; but it is precisely in such a neighbourhood that the humanising tendency of pictures and music and good dramas is most needed.

Music in poor neighbourhoods — how to get it, and of what kind? Since it is perfectly useless to deplore the decay of open air sports in the heart of London, we must drive indoor sports into London, and among them must be music. Music wants no driving, however — it grows up even among the most lowly — and if it can be kindly led into a rational direction, so much the better for the workman, and his wife and children. It is possible that the present confusion in the licensing system may be quite as instrumental in repressing the good as in checking the bad. The penny concert, the penny panoramas, the harmonic meetings, the banjo-player in a taproom, the sentimental singer up stairs, the theatricals in a saloon — all indicate a want, a tendency, a natural yearning, which may lead to good, if properly managed.

CHIP.

COAL MINING ON THE OHIO.

The first thing to be done after opening a coal bank — here, where I am working, up the Ohio river — is to fix an inclined plane from the river to the mouth of the pit. This is made of wood, and somewhat resembles the planes in use at the ballast dépôts on the Tyne, minus the engine. If it be intended to haul out the coal with mules, a wooden rail-road is laid from the top of the inclined plane, throughout the pit. If the diggers bring out their own coals, oak planks are laid for the wheels of the cart to run on. Screens are erected either at the top or bottom of the hill. The capital required for commencing a colliery (or coal bank) here, is trifling compared with what is requisite in England — in fact it would, in England, hardly give a supper to the sinkers.

The usual way of beginning to work the coal is, to drive one or two entries, or headways, through the substance of the hill, or as far into it as may be thought necessary. Rooms, or bords, are then turned away on each side of the entry. Each digger has a room eight yards wide, parted by walls, two yards thick, from the rooms adjoining. Each room is "driven" from fifty to a hundred yards. Means for promoting ventilation are never thought of, as the vein is considered to be quite free from inflammable gases. Few faults or interruptions occur in our mines, the only ones that I have seen are clay veins. They vary from six inches to three feet in thickness; generally lie in a perpen-

dicular position, and seldom alter the course of the vein of coal. The coal itself is of first-rate quality for household and steam purposes. The price paid for digging here is a dollar and three-quarters per one hundred bushels of separated coal; which is, I believe, the highest price paid anywhere. In some places the payment is as low as a dollar and a quarter.

The digger is expected to buy all his tools, and to keep them in repair. He must also sharpen them, the master providing means for doing so. He must set all his own posts, or props, and lay the road into his own room. He must find his own house; and, in most cases buy his own firecoal. Very often he must take part of his earnings in store-goods, sometimes greatly to his disadvantage. The balance due to him is generally paid when the running season closes, in summer and winter. At some banks, when a digger is about to leave, he has the right to sell his room. He must not calculate upon getting more than nine months' work in the year. Some of these things are not quite to the taste of men from Durham and Northumberland.

The coal banks are generally rented of the owner — half a cent per bushel being the usual payment here for the right of working. At some places the coal is leased, at others the rent is so much for each digger employed.

The produce of the mine is conveyed to distant markets in flat-bottomed boats, built expressly for the purpose, they are from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet in length, and about twenty feet in breadth, and are generally loaded five or six feet deep. Two of these are lashed together with strong ropes. At the outside of each are three oars, and each has a large steering oar at the stern. Sixteen hands are required, besides the pilot and cook, to take a pair of boats to Cincinnati, or Louisville; and, if the freight be destined for St. Louis, or New Orleans, a still greater number of men is engaged. These hands are paid by the trip — sixteen dollars a-piece, perhaps, to Cincinnati: twenty to Louisville. The run from Pittsburg to Cincinnati usually occupies six or eight days. Coal boating forms a very lucrative business, although the undertaker (or boss) is liable to loss, on account of the number of sand-banks and snags on the river. Fogs, too, are very common at night. It sometimes happens that the snag pierces the bottom of the boat, and, in that case, its own weight breaks it up in a few minutes, and down go three or four hundred dollars' worth of fittings. A plurality of means for obtaining a livelihood is the great thing in this country, and for any such necessity we, North-of-England men, seem to be little qualified. Some persons here are seldom without work. In the summer

they will be farming, in the fall coal-digging, in the winter lumbering, or coal-boating, or they go down to the Lower Countries. It is a common thing for men from these parts to go down to St. Louis, or thereabouts, and get three or four months' work in the winter, and although St. Louis is fourteen or fifteen hundred miles off, a journey of that distance counts almost for nothing.

WEIRD WISDOM.

THERE must have been something fascinating of old time in the true faith of an astrologer.

> Life's fitful gleam,
> Death's doleful dream,
> Stars rule, I ween,

said he: and there was a time, very long since, when he believed what he said very devoutly. In those days there were supposed also to be prophets. When Mother Shipton heard that Cardinal Wolsey meant to live at York, she said — we state all this on the faith of Lilly, who was an astrologer — she said that the Cardinal would never come thither. Whereupon Wolsey was angry, and desired the king to send the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Piercy, and Lord Darcey to her. Those gentlemen, with their servants, went disguised to the Ring House, near York, and leaving their men there, proceeded to Master Beasly, in the town, and said to him, "Beasly, do you go with us to Mother Shipton's house." So when they came there they knocked at the door, and Mother Shipton, what should she say, but "Come in, Master Beasly, and you, honourable lords, who are with him." Master Beasly would have put the lords to go before him, but said Mother Shipton, who saw none of them, she being within side, "Nay, Master Beasly, do you come in first. You know the way, and they do not." This they thought strange indeed, that she should know them, and yet never saw them. Well, then, into the house they went, and there was a great fire; and she having bidden them welcome, calling each by his own name, sent for cakes and ale, so that they eat, drank, and were very merry

"Mother Shipton," said the earl, "if you knew what we came about, you never would have feasted us with ale."

"Nay, but," said she, "the messenger shall not be hanged."

"Hark you, mother!" said the earl, "did you not say that the Lord Cardinal should never see York?"

"Yea," she replied, "I said he might see York, but never come at it."

"Well," said the earl, "then you must know that whenever he comes at York thou shalt be burnt."

"We will see that," Mother Shipton said, and plucking her kerchief from her head, she threw it into the great fire, where it

lay quite still, and would not so much as singe. And so she plucked it out, and put it on again.

Then said the earl, "What mean you by this?"

"If this had burned, I might have burned."

"Mother Shipton," quoth then the earl, "what think you of me?"

"My lord," said she, "the time will come when you will be as low a creature as I am, and that is a low one indeed."

Now this great nobleman was afterwards beheaded.

My Lord Piercy said, "And what think you of me?"

"My lord," said she, "shoe your horse to the quick, and you will do well. If not, your body shall lie under York pavement."

Now this nobleman having risen in rebellion, by not flying when he might have fled, was taken, and executed at York, where he was buried all but his head, which, being stolen, was conveyed to France. And Mother Shipton told him also, that his head was to be stolen from his body, whereat they all laughed.

Then my Lord Darcey said, "What think you of me?"

"My lord," said she, "you have made a great gun. Shoot it off, for it will do you no good. You are going to warfare. You will frighten many a man, but kill none."

Came not long after this the Cardinal to Cawood; and, going to the top of the tower, asked, "Where is York, and how far is it thither?" And he said, moreover, "One has prophesied that I was never to see York." — "Nay," said one standing by, "she said you should see York, but never come at it." Then he vowed whenever he came at it to come at her. After this they showed him York from afar, and said that it was indeed no more than eight miles thither. "Well," says he, "then I shall soon be there." But the king sent for him suddenly, and he turned back, and died upon the road to London.

And what of Master William Lilly, the astrologer, who is our authority for this tale of the prophetess? There is some curious matter in his life. He was born on Mayday, in the year one thousand six hundred and two, in the county of Leicester: a yeoman's son. After a little training from a country schoolmaster, he was sent, when eleven years old, to a school at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and remained there no less than seven years. At the age of eighteen his education ceased only because his father could not afford to let him go to Cambridge. He was consigned, therefore, to the friendly offices of Samuel Smuthy, a London attorney, and came to town in the waggon, as he says, "with twenty shillings and no more to buy me a new suit, hose, and doublet, and my doublet was fustian." On Tuesday, the fourth of April, sixteen hundred and twenty, he said good-bye to his father, who was

then in Leicester gaol, a prisoner for debt, and placed himself under the care of Bradshaw, the carrier. "Hark!" he says, on the road, "how the waggons crack with their rich lading!" Coming up by the waggon was mainly a pedestrian exercise, so far as the traveller himself was concerned; and when, after five days of tramp, through stormy weather, young Lilly reached London (it was on Palm Sunday, at three in the afternoon), after satisfaction given to John Bradshaw and his servants, seven shillings and sixpence was the amount of his remaining capital.

He proceeded at once to the house of Gilbert Wright, the patron to whom his friend, Smuthy, recommended him. Mr. Wright was a gentleman who could not write and could not read; but he was a gentleman, inasmuch as he followed no sort of calling. He had been, for many years, servant to Lady Paulet, in Hertfordshire; and when Serjeant Puckering was made lord keeper, he appointed Mr. Wright to keep his lodgings in Whitehall. Mr. Wright, having espoused a widow in Newgate Market, was recommended by the lord chancellor to the Salters' Company, as worthy to be admitted a member. So he was, and lived to become master thereof. "He was a man," says Lilly, "of excellent natural parts, and could speak publicly upon any occasion, very rationally, and to the purpose. I write this that the world may know he was no tailor, or myself of that or any other profession. My work was, to go before my master to church; to attend my master when he went abroad; to make clean his shoes; sweep the street; help to drive bucks when we washed; fetch water in a tub from the Thames (I have helped to carry eighteen tubs of water in one morning); weed the garden. All manner of drudgery I willingly performed, — scrape trenchers, &c. If I had any profession, it was of this nature. I should never have denied being a tailor, had I been one; for there is no calling so base which may not afford a livelihood; and had not my master entertained me, I would have been of a very much more mean profession, rather than have returned into the country."

Mrs. Wright, formerly of Newgate Market died, and Mr. Wright married another wife, also for the sake of her estate, she being competently rich, but seventy years of age, and he being sixty-six, or more. Notwithstanding the maturity of their years, this couple was perplexed by jealousy, and perpetually engaged in quarrels founded on suspicion of each other. Mrs. Wright, also consulted cunning men, with the desire of ascertaining whether she should ever be so happy as to bury her husband; and it was the frequent coming and going of astrologers and fortunetellers that excited

the first wish of Lilly to become acquainted with the secrets of their science. He did not make much progress, for want of books. Mrs. Wright II. died of a cancer, and after her death there was found under her arm a scarlet bag containing many things, "several sigils, some of Jupiter in Trine, others of the nature of Venus, some of iron and one of gold, of pure virgin gold, of the bigness of a thirty shilling piece of King James's coin. In the circumference on one side was engraven 'VICIT LEO DE TRIBUS JUDÆ TETRAGRAMMATON +. Within the middle there was engraven a holy lamb. In the other circumference there was ANNAPHEL and three +. In the middle, SANCTUS PETRUS ALPHA ET OMEGA.'" A former husband of Mrs. Wright II. had procured this charm from Dr. Simon Forman, the astrologer, to exorcise a spirit by which he was visited. For thirty-two shillings Lilly sold the charm, which was his perquisite.

In the year of the plague of sixteen 'twenty-five, Lilly remaining in London with his master, practised music at home on the bass viol, and bowling in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In the same year, his master brought home Mrs. Wright III., and died himself in sixteen 'twenty-seven, leaving his widow owner of his property, mistress of his servants and of his house, at the corner of the Strand. Mr. Lilly soon attracted the old lady's attention. "She made me," he says, "sit down at dinner, with my hat on my head, and said she intended to make me her husband, for which I gave her many salutes." She kept her promise, and before she had been many months a widow, Mrs. Wright the Third became Mrs. Lilly the First. She lived six years in that capacity; and, if Lilly himself be a fair witness on the matter, found no reason to regret her choice. Lilly amused himself with fishing, and frequented no company. In one year, widower and drysalter, Lilly began to spend his days of independence and of dignity, in study. He chose for tutor the Reverend Mr. Evans, an astrologer, living in Gunpowder Alley, whom he found, when visiting him for the first time, "upon a bed, if it may be lawful to call that a bed on which he lay, he having been drunk the night before. He raised himself up," says Lilly, "and after some compliments, was content to instruct me in astrology."

The reverend professor was by birth a Welshman, M. A., and in holy orders. He had, indeed, once been incumbent of a living in Staffordshire, but had been forced to fly his parish. His pupil describes him as "the most saturnine person my eyes ever beheld, either before I practised or since; of middle stature; broad forehead; beetle browed; thick shoulders; flat nosed, full lipped, down looking; black, curling, stiff hair; splay-footed.

To give him his right he had the most piercing judgment of theft that I ever met withal, yet for money he would willingly give contrary judgments, was much given to debauchery, and then, very abusive and quarrelsome, seldom without a black eye, or one mischief or another. This is the same Evans who made so many antimonial cups, upon the sale whereof he principally subsisted. He understood Latin very well, the Greek tongue not at all. He had some arts above and beyond astrology, for he was well versed in the water of spirits, and had many times used the circular way of invocating, as in the time of our familiarity he told me."

Many examples of his cunning, as indeed they were, had this teacher to give to his believing scholar. Witness what he had once done on behalf of a young lady in Staffordshire by help of the great spirit Salmon, who seems to have sufficed for his work without help from the attendant sprites of which there is no mention made — Cucumber or Lobstersauce.

The young lady had married for her preferment, a rich man advanced in years. The old husband desired to buy some lands for his wife's maintenance, but she was advised that they had better be bought in the name of a gentleman, a dear friend, though for her own real use and advantage. After the old man was dead the widow could by no means obtain the deed of purchase of those lands from her friend, and in her perplexity applied to Evans, who for a sum of money — forty pounds — promised to place the deed in her possession, by a given time. Then Evans applied himself to the invocation of the angel Salmon, of the nature of Mars. He lived an orderly life for a fortnight, wore his surplice constantly, and read his litany at select hours every day. At the end of the fortnight Salmon appeared and having received his commands vanished for a short time, after which he re-appeared with the very deed in question, and deposited it gently on a table over which a white cloth had been spread. The deed had been kept by the gentleman who was retaining it, together with other of his deeds and securities in a large wooden chest, which was locked in a chamber at one end of his house; but upon Salmon's carrying the document away, all that part of the house had been blown down, and all the gentleman's own proper documents and evidences had been torn to pieces and dispersed upon the wind. There can be no doubt then that Mr. Lilly placed himself under the tuition of a great enchanter.

By the death of Mrs. Lilly the First, her happy widower was left possessed of property very nearly to the value of one thousand pounds. He followed his studies closely for a year, during which time a scholar pawned to him, for forty shillings, a large

volume written on parchment, containing the names of those angels and pictures which were thought to instruct in the several liberal sciences. Out of this book Lilly sucked much wisdom. The budding astrologer bought, in the year following, a moiety of thirteen houses in the Strand, and, as a business speculation, took another wife, who had five hundred pounds fortune; but, alas! "was of the nature of Mars." Another speculation, entered upon at the same time, proved a total failure.

Davy Ramsey, his Majesty's clockmaker, had been informed that there was a great quantity of treasure buried in the cloister of Westminster Abbey. He apprised Dean Williams of this fact, and the dean, who was also Bishop of Lincoln, gave him liberty to search, with this proviso — that if any treasure was found, his church should go part in it. Davy Ramsey then went to John Scott of Pudding Lane, once a page to Lord Norris, who professed the use of the Mosaical rods, and engaged his assistance. Mr. Lilly was invited to take part in the enterprise, and joined it willingly. One winter's night, therefore, it happened that Davy Ramsey, with Lilly, and other gentlemen, entered the cloisters, and began experimenting. On the west side the rods turned one over another — an argument that there the treasure was. The labourers dug six feet deep, and found a coffin, which, says Lilly, "In regard it was not heavy, we did not open, a neglect we afterwards repented." From the cloisters the disappointed treasure-hunters went into the abbey, where there arose "so fierce, so high, so blustering, and loud a wind, that we believed the west end of the church would have fallen upon us. Our rods would not move at all. The candles and torches all but one were extinguished, or burnt dimly. John Scott," says Lilly, "was amazed, looked pale, knew not what to think or do until I gave directions, and commenced to dismiss the demons, which, when done, all was quiet again." Each man went home empty, Davy Ramsey carrying the half-quartern sack he had brought thither to take away the treasure in. Lilly and the wiser heads of the party had no doubt that the miscarriage was caused by the too great number of persons who assisted in the operation — some laughing, some deriding; and it was quite certain that, if the demons had not been dismissed, the chief part of the Abbey Church of Westminster would have been blown to the ground.

What further experiences Mr. Lilly had, how he knew spirits seen in crystals, who showed visions of absent people opening trunks and taking out red waitcoats — with much more after the manner of the wise and spiritual in the year one, eight, five, five — we go not on to tell.

And yet — however the case

be now — great students might, without shame to their wits, pore into senseless mysteries in Lilly's days. The astrologers formed a strong body, met and dined together twice every year, and dined well; for Elias Ashmole — the same Ashmole whose museum and library are among the scholastic treasures of the University of Oxford — was astrologer as well as herald and antiquary; and in his diary, after an astrologer's feast, there comes always a twinge. Thus, on the fourteenth of August, sixteen' fifty-one, he was chairman at the astrologers' feast in Painter's Hall, and he records how, "This night, about one of the clock, I fell ill of a surfeit, occasioned [not in the least, of course, by sack] by drinking water after venison. I was greatly oppressed in my stomach, and next day Mr. Saunders, the astrologian, sent me a piece of briony-root to hold in my hand, and, within a quarter of an hour, my stomach was freed from that great oppression which nothing which I took from Dr. Wharton could do before." Fits of gout, ague, &c., troubled Ashmole much, and after every astrologers' feast the attacks were severe, but he had his remedies. As thus: — "March eleven. — I took, early in the morning, a good dose of the elixir, and hung three spiders about my neck, and they drew my ague away. Deo gratias."

A VERY TIGHT LITTLE ISLAND.

Size is not the only element of value, even in the case of landed estates, wherein men have a special hankering after elbow-room. Bulk does not constitute brilliancy, nor does immensity necessarily imply importance. Dry deserts that may be measured by geographical degrees, sterile steppes overstriding half an empire's surface, Patagonian plains (lumps of the world's original paste, or dough, rolled out with an endless rolling-pin) are but cyphers compared with tiny patches of earth whose area, if cut out of them would be no more missed than a kernel of wheat from a sack of corn. Ætna and Vesuvius outweigh in the moral, if not in the material balance, whole chains of ordinary mountains. Runnymede was not a common-place mead, nor Vaucluse a vulgar fountain. The spot shines, like phosphorescent adamant, with its own proper light, as well as with every ray it catches from every luminous object near it. No trifling sprinkling of this bright territorial diamond-dust glitters on the British diadem. Besides the great central sun at home, she has distant outposts — fixed stars, twinkling merrily here and there throughout the dark vastness of terrestrial space — which cheer the British wanderer, and help him wonderfully to steer his way. There are Gibraltar, Malta, St.

Helena, and Ascension: the beloved of aldermen, the tomb of turtle. There are Ceylon, Newfoundland, Cape Town, and Corfu, none of which would be estimated in the market by the number of acres of land they contain. Last, and least, there exists another little jewel — a clear chip of rock crystal, a pure cairngorum — to the translucent brilliancy of whose native water recent circumstances have acted as the foil.

At the foot of Denmark, out in the North Sea, in front of the mouths of the rivers Elbe and Weser, facing Cuxhaven in Hanover and also commanding the island of Neuwerk, is another little island called by us Heligoland (Helgoland by the Germans), which will help us to smile with unaffected pleasure and grin the grin of gladness, at the moment when we are receiving the sincere sympathy, the amiable assistance, the frank friendship, and the candid coadjutorship, of our dear, dear allies the Germans in general, and the Austrians and Prussians in very particular particularity. We find it convenient to enroll a few foreign soldiers; and King Hiccup and his friends are so pleased at our doings, that they testify a disposition to provide board and lodging at their own expense, both for English agents and the recruits they may raise. It is a long way, too, and the road is not quite straight from the Tom Thumb German dukedoms to the shores of Albion. Britannia, therefore, steps forward a great deal more than half way to receive her young pupils in her ample lap. She has stuck her trident on the isle of Heligoland, and hoisted the Union Jack on the top, to give notice to all whom it may concern that here is a dépôt for the foreign legion which the English government is raising in Germany, to help us and our real allies in the Crimea.

Look at the map of Europe: there is a spice of humour in the choice of the spot. The advantages which it offers for the purpose are quite out of the common way. In time of peace, Heligoland is an advanced sentinel, who can constantly keep her eye open on what is passing in the north of Germany. In war, she is a little Gibraltar, from which, as a centre, Britannia can send her cruisers to wander about, her scouts to spy, and even her smugglers to trade. At all times, therefore, in spite of its tightness and exiguity, Heligoland is by no means to be sneered at, as a possession of importance to the United Kingdom; being a sort of outstretched snail's-eye, which allows us to watch whatever is in the wind on the North-German coast, at the mouths of its two main commercial arteries, Holstein and Holland. At the present moment, Heligoland, in reference to Great Britain, is in a position analogous to that of the mouse in the fable and the lion caught in the net. Tedescan art has woven

round us meshes and snares composed of four points, conferences, propositions, and mediations; but this little bit of pet-land enables us to laugh in our sleeve at the cunning of diplomatic huntsmen. According to the reports of the government agents from all quarters, recruiting for the foreign legion goes on most satisfactorily, notwithstanding the covert repugnance of some governments, and the open hostility of others. Great numbers of recruits are constantly arriving at the Heligoland dépôt, where a considerable number are still being trained and organised, and where they are behaving themselves so well that the fashionable world of the Hanse towns, although a little frightened at first, are again flocking to their favourite dot in the ocean for their annual sea-dips in it.

The history of Heligoland is very simple. In the fourteenth century the Danes had established a fort there; then, its only church paid a quit-rent to the chapter of Schleswig. Afterwards Hamburg exercised over it the simultaneous rights of lordship and protectorate; and, a desperate quarrel about herrings, ended in its being bombarded and taken by Denmark; but, in eighteen hundred and seven, it was taken by the English. For many years Major-General Sir Henry King reigned over Heligoland as governor. On this high functionary devolved the surveillance of the island and its lighthouse, besides the office of judge and umpire over the internal disputes of the inhabitants. The present ruler is Sir John Hindmarsh, necessarily a captain in the navy, to preside over this extraordinarily marine bit of territory. While the continental blockade lasted, Heligoland was of inestimable value to England as a convenient warehouse for smuggling.

This molecule in the midst of the waters is two thousand two hundred paces long, six hundred and fifty broad at the widest part, and some five thousand yards, or thereabouts, in circumference. It will be supposed that railroads are things uncalled for; nay, even that coaches-and-six, tandems dog-carts, and high-mettled racers, are not in high request. The island may contain a sedan-chair, or vinaigrette, for fashionable ladies; but the actual existence of such a vehicle the deponent had rather not affirm on oath. A hop-skip-and-jump tour of her Majesty's tight little island, is not an impossibility; and an intellectual flea, or a literary gnat, may one day give to the impatient world a nice little volume, with map and woodcuts, entitled "Travels in Heligoland."

On approaching the island from Hamburg, it looks like a triangular rock surrounded by the sea on every side. The colours it presents have been transferred to the flag it has had

the modesty to set up; which is red, white, and green; and Heligoland has not only a national flag, but a national minstrelsy. Here is a refrain apropos to both:

Roth ist der Strand,
Weiss ist der Sand,
Grün ist die Kant;
Das sind die Farben von Helgoland.

which, translated, may be rendered:

Red is the strand,
White is the sand,
Green is the band;
Those are the colours of Heligoland.

To the south-east, only a little morsel of level ground is perceptible — a tiny tongue of land, which is dignified by the title of The Unterland or Lowlands, and which rises gradually to the foot of the rock to about five-and-twenty feet above the level of the sea. On this stands the lower town, composed of something like eighty houses. In a gorge of the rock is a new staircase, which connects it with the Oberland or Highlands. This staircase, decorated with a smart iron railing, is ten feet wide, is composed of one hundred and seventy-three wooden steps divided into three revolutions, at the bottom of each of which are seats to rest upon, and oil lamps to show light on winter nights. After this, do not boast of the luxury of London and Paris!

On the summit of the rock, towards the north-east, stands the Upper Town, with about three hundred and twenty houses, and a church dedicated to Saint Nicholas, the patron of fishermen and babies (whether pickled or fresh). From this point the rock still rises, till it attains the Alpine elevation of a hundred and ninety feet above the level of the sea. Not far off (nothing is far off here) stands the light-house, erected by the English with no other materials than stone, iron, and copper. Its rays command an extensive horizon, notifying distinctly to the wave-tossed traveller, "This is I! — Heligoland, who shine so bright. Pursue your way, by the help of my luminous finger-post." But a beacon is an old establishment in Heligoland. In sixteen hundred and seventy-three, the Hamburgians built a pharos on the eminence called the Backeberg, wherein they kept up a cheerful coal-fire, sometimes burning, during winter nights, as much as four hundred pounds of coal.

Do not suppose that the continent of Heligoland is so poor as to be without its dependent islet, — a faithful satellite who never deserts it. Rather better than half-a-mile from Heligoland, on the south-east side, is Sandy Island, which is of the greatest consequence to the tight little mother country, because on that are taken the sea-baths, which put a considerable revenue into Heligoland's pockets.

And why should not your marine six weeks be spent just as well at Heligoland as at Aber-

gavenny, Brighton, Boulogne, or Etrebat? For lodgings you have plenty of houses built of brick; so that you need not be afraid of finding room. The natives are hospitable, polite, sober, and hard-working, and are as well worth study as the rock on which they dwell. The men are active on the sea, and exercise no other calling than that of pilots or fishermen; the women attend to the housekeeping and gardening, for there is no Royal Heligoland Agricultural Society. You may lodge either in the upper or the lower town, though the former is preferred for its more extensive seascape and its unlimited supply of breezes, genuine and fresh as imported. There are neither taxes, duties, nor custom-house officers. For anti-ichthyophagous persons, who cannot eat fish from morning till night, the steamers from Hamburg bring plenty of meat, besides fruit and first-class vegetables. The terrestrial fauna of Heligoland is limited, and would not require the zeal of a Cuvier to describe it. It contains cocks and hens, domestic rabbits, pigs, dogs, cats, sheep, mice, fleas, flies, gnats, earthworms, beetles, sparrows, and a few other well-known species, of equal interest to the scientific world. It generally has one cow; but only during the fashionable season; for, at the approach of winter, it is made into beef, and a new one imported next year. But its oceanic treasures are numberless. If you wish for a good field-day amongst the real game of Heligoland, put on your diving-dress, your bull's-eyed helmet, and your leaden-soled shoes: enter the waves; make your serving-men follow you overhead to ply the forcing airpump with brawny arms; and you shall see, if you do not perform, wonders.

Yes; come to Heligoland, for a change in the beaten routine of watering-places. I shall probably be strolling on the Unterland when you land. If I like not your looks, I will obstinately speak nothing but German in your presence. And in this I shall be justified by the authorities; for, although the natives have a tongue of their own — which has some analogy with that of the North Frieslanders — German is the only language employed in the schools and for divine service. If I like your looks, I will introduce myself as the writer of this contribution, and will proceed at once to initiate you into life in Heligoland. I shall knock you up very early in the morning — at an hour, in short, only known at home to your housemaid and milkman. You spring out of bed. You need not be a minute dressing; and it will not matter even if you dress in your sleep; for the delicious, the unrivalled air, will waken you the instant you get into it. Your lodging will be on the Oberland, and you make at once for the High Street of Heligoland — the Stairs. As the native flirtations chiefly take place on the landings, we shall doubtless

disturb, as we pass down, a pretty little scene of tenderness between a sea-and-sun-browned youth, and a pretty little fairhaired Heligolandess. On the strand we find one of the pilot-boats ready to take us over to Sandy Island.

As to the passage, you need not be under the slightest apprehension. It is performed in large sloops or yawls, capable of carrying thirty passengers at least, and which are placed under the entire superintendence of select pilots, and which are no other than the famous Heligoland salvage-boats, well-known throughout the North Sea, for rendering assistance to trading-vessels in distress, even in the midst of the most violent storms, and which can be rowed when a sail dare not show itself. An officer of the company of pilots is always present, both at the embarcation and disembarcation; he receives the passage-money which is fixed at at four schillings (four pence) each person. In fine weather we are over in ten minutes; in rough, it may take four times ten; but it is only late in the season that such long transits take place. Of course it shall be a fine day when we go; and, looking over the gunwale as it cuts the water into streaming ripples along the sides of the boat, you feel that there is no word to express the wondrous clearness of that transparent sea. Every rock, every pebble, every zoophyte, every waving sea-plant, down, down, down, in the lowermost deep, is seen as distinctly as if the keel could touch it. Your boat stops gently, for it has run its prow into the soft, glistening edge of Sandy Island. Take care! That end of the beech is reserved exclusively for ladies. The gentlemen's bathing-machines are at the opposite extremity.

You have had your plunge, and now for breakfast. What? Here? Certainly. You must have your breakfast on the spot, and it will be unparalleled. I defy you to know the true definition of that ill-understood word, until you have breakfasted after a sea-bath on Sandy Island. That pavilion, with windows all round within, and the thick belt of seats and tables without, opposite to the place where you land, and at an equal distance from the bathing-machines of the ladies and gentlemen, is the refectory. What will you have to eat? Some gorgeous scarlet lobster, — of which a Heligoland appetite seems able to eat any quantity with impunity; the most slippery of slippery oysters; eggs in all forms, from the domestic boiled, or the smooth-faced poached, to the luscious rumbled. What will you drink? The bottles of porter and beer, the cups of tea, coffee, chocolate, despatched in and around this busy pavilion, are not to be counted any more than the golden sands that lie before you. Everything is excellent, and the serving-girls are quick and clever, with now and then quite an original among them, who assists your digestion with jokes and quaint

remarks. The cooking is done in a kind of gipsy-hut behind the pavilion; and, if you become a great favourite with your serving-maiden, you will be admitted into the arcana of this queer little cooking-camp, and will get your breakfast hot from the stove, — no bad thing if the morning be a little cold. But then you lose the novel sensation of breakfasting in the company of a bevy of mermaids. The ladies, after bathing, issue forth from their machines with their long hair floating down gracefully over their shoulders, to dry in the sun. They leave their looking-glasses at home, and do not use them until they arrive there.

After breakfast comes the slow meditative saunter along the downs. You may find a tempting sunny hole in these downs, where you may lie down and take a siesta, sung to sleep by the listless and monotonous "Rauschen" of the waves on the shore. Rauschen is the word which conveys the sound so exactly, that I cannot prevail on myself to use any other; and besides, I suppose the waves have a right to express themselves in German on our tight little island, although the Union Jack does spread its colours above it. After your sandy lounge, you take a ramble on the side of the downs, among pavilions and bathers; and here, instead of yellow sands, you find pebbles of every hue and shape; some exceedingly beautiful, and worthy of adorning the fairest wrist, after a little cutting and polishing. Walk to the extreme end of this little promontory, where the waves curl round you on every side. Do not look behind, and you will imagine yourself standing alone in the ocean, where no land is to be seen, — nothing but the green sheet spread out on all sides, with here and there shifting dots of white-crested waves.

But it is time to return to the rock, where we change our toilet, and amuse ourselves till dinner, at three o'clock. The best table d'hôte is the Stadt London, on the Oberland; and here we are sure to meet our mermaid friends, all nicely dried and combed, who make dinner a most cheerful affair. After dinner, we go to a pavilion on the Unterland for a cup of coffee, and after that, comes the promenade along Kartoffel or Potato Walk, to the end of the rock, where everybody sits till sunset. This is the grand sight of our little island, and worth walking a mile or two to see, if we could walk that distance in Heligoland. But do not imagine that we go to bed with the sun. We no sooner see him safely tucked up in his gorgeous sheet of sea, than we bethink ourselves of the pleasant Conversations-Haus down below in a sheltered nook, where balls take place several times a-week: the native girls, with scarlet petticoats broadly edged with yellow, dancing among the ladies. On the nights when there are no balls, there is conversation. There are also a billiard-

room and a rouge-et-noir table. Here all the visitors meet every evening, and here they find the newspapers, which arrive in the afternoon with the Hamburg steamboat. Plans are discussed for the amusement of the visitors, because you must know there is a Pleasure Committee on our solitary little isle. This committee is composed of gentlemen. There is a treasurer, who receives subscriptions from all who wish to join, and then the committee discuss how they can best lay out the money.

Sometimes, in the dark nights, when there is no moon, the whole company set off in boats for a tour round the island; each person torch in hand, to explore the dark, mysterious caverns, in some of which the waves roar like thunder, or like wild beasts getting at their prey. This torchlight tour has a magical effect; and, if you have once made it, you are not likely ever to forget it. Fishing parties are also formed — lobster-fishing being in especial vogue. The finest turbot you could buy for money, could never pretend to taste like those delicious amateur fish caught on your own hook in the North Sea. What a supper they make, with the invariable Heligoland accompaniment of a smoking pyramid of potatoes! the native island vegetable. Potatoes and the sheep are the great institutions on Heligoland; the latter performing the duties usually performed by the cow in other countries. Indeed, one of the most amusing features in your evening promenade along Kartoffel Allée is the number of red petticoats with yellow hems, employed in milking the patient little sheep; which afterwards gets its reward of cabbages and other green stuff.

Every profession is represented (except, we are happy to believe, the law), in Heligoland: — Music by a German band and the mermaids, many of whom are syrens also; and painting by Herr Gaetke — of course, a marine-painter. He came to Heligoland about eighteen years ago, determined to win the secrets from the sea, where it was, as it were, at home, and without the restraint of a coast. He went to spend a summer, and he did not leave the island for more than sixteen years. His pictures of Heligoland in all kinds of weathers, his ships in distress, and his wrecks ashore, breathe life. Look round his atelier on the Falm or Esplanade, and you see that Gaetke is no common painter, a good ornithologist, and a capital shot. All those birds on his shelves, constituting every variety of feathered biped that takes its wing across the island, were shot, and stuffed by himself. He therefore gives to his adopted little country a museum, to complete its claim to art and science. Try to make his acquaintance: you will find him an agreeable companion, and the best cicerone on the island.

Finally — if you have a mind to feast on fish; to breathe pure air,

at least once in your life; to drink untaxed brandy, wine, and gin; to smoke un-ac-customed tobacco; to get on with your German; to realise, though not completely, Johnson's definition of a ship, — a prison, without the chance of being drowned; to form an attachment which shall last for life, or an aversion which shall grow bitterer and bitterer until you and its object can only quit the island in different steamers; to get a fierce, shark-like appetite; to rise with the lark (if there were one); to go to bed with the hens; and, above all, to behold me, the gifted scribe, in bodily presence —remember that the Heligoland season begins in June and ends in September; make hay, or way, while the sun shines, and swell our list of fashionable arrivals! Or, if you long for a uniform, the books of the Foreign Legion are not closed.

A WIFE'S STORY.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

'I HAVE brought home Gower to spend the evening," Harold said, one day, soon after our return home. "I thought you would like it. He is fond of music and poetry, and all that sort of thing; so I thought you would get on well together."

I thought Harold showed a bitter remembrance of those words of mine — I had never forgo ten them — in this speech.

"I do not want —" I began; but Mr. Gower was now in the room; it was necessary to receive him civilly.

"Do not want any interruption to your tête-à-tête evenings, Mrs. Warden? But you must be generous. Remember how long it is since I have had the pleasure of seeing you, or my friend, Harold. Since the evening when you surprised us all so brilliantly, you have been invisible. I hope," he continued, "you will give me credit for having been sincerely sorry to hear of your subsequent illness. I trust sea-air has quite restored you."

"I am very well now, thank you," I replied. Of course, Mr. Gower could not know the pain his words gave me.

"We have been staying at Seawash," Harold said. "Do you know it at all, Gower? It is very pleasant there. My wife fell quite in love with it, so we shall often go down there, again, I think."

"It has a very broken coast, has it not? the sea running up into many small bays, and lashing itself furiously against rocky points? I know it well. One autumn some years ago, I was there alone. You know the Devil's Tongue, as they call the longest sharpest point, I dare say, Mrs. Warden?"

"Yes, I do."

"I was returning from a long ramble late one wild evening, and saw the sea — it was very rough, — breaking magnificently

on the rock at the end. I went down, although it was growing dusk, and mounted to the top of the little peak. I was not much above the water, I could see no land; it was awfully beautiful to see from that wild point of view the heaving and breaking, meeting and dashing of the great, foamy, angry waves. I am a man of tolerable nerve and courage, but I felt an icy thrill pass through me; it was some time before my heart returned to its regular, quiet beating. Each wave that came whelming the rock at my feet, seemed as if it might swell up and wash me from my little pinnacle, and as if it hungered to do so. One reads of angry, foamy, troubled seas, but no words that I know can express the fearful excitement roused within one, standing in the midst of such wild commotion. There was an order in the wild going of the waves, too. I observed how, first, the waters on one side gathered themselves together and came rolling on, swift, and fell as fate, only to be met, scattered and broken, by the great army of waters tumbling on from the other side. What a pigmy I felt standing there! Yet I would not, for much, have missed the experience of the hour I spent there. The sky was almost as wild as the sea, only along the horizon there was a line of gleamy, watery light, and between sky and sea I was shut in!"

Some fascination made me raise my eyes from my work to Mr. Gower's kindled face; but I dropped them immediately, and did not speak.

"Did you get home safe?" Harold asked. "From the Devil's Tongue; people sometimes —"

"Pass into Hell's Throat. Excuse my interruption, I was afraid you might mar, by more genteelly expressing the idea of the nature of the transition. That boiling, surging world of waters gave birth to the idea in my mind. Yes, I got home safe, but not without a little further experience; when I turned and descended from my slight elevation, I saw water before me still; the tide had come up and covered the narrow and lower neck of land along which I had approached the end. I tried it cautiously, and was nearly washed away. I had no desire unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd, and with all my imperfections on my head, to lose sight of known life to try some unknown, perchance greater ill, so I gave up the attempt to traverse that wave-washed strip of land."

"What did you do?" Harold asked.

"Do, man! Just nothing. I went back to my former station, wrapped myself up tight in my cloak, and waited. Waiting is a famous cure for the ills of this life, Mrs. Warden."

"Did you know that you were safe there on the point?"

"When it was full moon and the sea roughened by a sou'-wester, that point was sometimes

washed over, an old boatman had told me, as we rowed past it the day before. I don't pretend to say but that I waited and watched the waters in great anxiety. Sometimes a slight lull in the storm came, and every wave reached less high than the former had done. Then, with a howl and a scream, the wind rushed across the water, and huge billows would leap, and well, and gurgle up, sometimes over my feet, always drenching me with spray!"

"Well! chacun à son gout! You call that experience which you would not have missed for the world? I cannot understand that. Can you imagine the feeling, Annie?"

I worked away diligently with a quivering hand, and answered absently, without looking up, "I do not know."

"Capital fish you get at that same place," Harold went on. "It is not like most fishing-places, where you can't get fish. Dinner ready? Very well. Gower, give my wife your arm; I must follow disconsolately for once."

Mr. Gower's narrative, the voice in which it was told, and the gestures accompanying it, had excited me painfully. The hand laid on his arm still trembled, but I stilled it by a great effort, yet not soon enough. He glanced at me significantly and said, "I think you did know, Mrs. Warden."

"We must have some music after you have given us a cup of coffee, Annie," Harold said, when he and Mr. Gower returned to the drawing-room after dinner.

I did not answer. I had secretly determined I would not play. I had not touched my piano since that dreadful evening. The thought of perhaps having to do so to-night had already given me a nervous headache, of which I thought I would, if need were, avail myself, as an excuse.

Mr. Gower was wandering about the drawing-room abstractedly, opening and turning over my books.

"Oh! you have this true Poet's book," he suddenly exclaimed. He came up to me, book in hand. "Is it not splendid? I am sure *you* like it, though I know very few ladies who do. I know the writer. I can introduce him to you, if you have any care to see the external features of the poet. Have you?"

"I think not," I answered.

"Ah! Right, right! It is a very vulgar curiosity that, concerning lions; and often its gratification — which proves no gratification — shivers a thousand beautiful imaginings to atoms. Does it not?"

"I don't know. I have had no experience."

"But you do know and have read this book. Ah! here 's a leaf of fern put in at one of the most beautiful passages. That is your mark?"

"Is it the book you read to

me on that luckless morning?" asked Harold, laughingly.

I blushed deeply as I said "Yes." I do not know exactly why. Mr. Gower looked inquisitive. "Little as you care for poetry, I am sure you admired this *so* read, Warden; did you not?"

"So much, that, soothed by the soft sweet voice of the reader, I went to sleep," laughed Harold.

"To sleep!" Mr. Gower gave an expressive shrug. "I have set one or two of these songs to music," he continued to me, "after rather a bungling fashion, I am afraid, but I think my melodies suit their meaning."

"Don't praise yourself, Gower, but let us hear and judge."

"Read the words, then, first," Mr. Gower said, putting the book into my husband's hand.

"Yes, that is pretty enough," Harold said, returning it, suppressing a slight yawn. "Could it not have been said more straight-forwardly and comprehensibly in plain prose, though? Don't transfix me with your indignant glances, but let us hear your music."

Harold stretched his great length on the sofa, composing himself to listen. The coffee apparatus was cleared away, and the lamp brought; and I sat down with my idle work to listen too.

Mr. Gower amused himself at the piano some time — coquetting with his memory. Then he began.

He had a fine voice, powerful, and under great control. The first song was set to wild and passionate music. When he filled the room with the greatest possible power of his voice, I cowered back into the depths of my easy-chair, dropping my work, turning my head away from the musician. I looked at Harold. 'Noise enough!" he muttered rather drowsily, in answer to my look, and closed his eyes.

I had just turned to observe Mr. Gower. I was curious to know if his own music woke any emotion in him. Yes; his voice died away trembling; yet he turned abruptly round to look at me.

He sang song after song, and Harold went to sleep. Harold had had one or two very hard days' work lately, and had kept late hours. "No wonder he is tired, poor fellow!" I said to myself; and I tried to subdue the great troublous heart-swellings that the strong, passionate singing produced in me. Mr. Gower went on singing or playing. It was a pleasure to touch such a magnificent instrument, he said, and since I would not play — for I had refused — he must.

At last I stole to my husband's side, and woke him softly. I thought Mr. Gower did not know he had been asleep; but poor Harold gave such yawns that he quite betrayed himself.

"I shall weary you as well as your husband if I go on longer," Mr. Gower said at last, rising from the piano, and coming to-

wards us. "I am afraid I have done so already, Mr. Warden," he continued, "you look a-weary, a-weary!"

"It is rather late," I said. "I have a headache. We have kept bad hours since we returned from the sea-side. Harold has been hard-worked, and, of course, I sit up for him."

"So you must forgive our having been rather bad company," Harold said. "I have not learnt to do without sleep, as you seem to have done."

"Five hours is enough for any man, when he is once used to it," Mr. Gower said.

"To exist, but not thrive upon," said Harold, glancing at Mr. Gower's very thin, worn form and face.

"Other things than want of sleep have made the ravages you see," Mr. Gower answered laughingly, and yet with a latent melancholy in the smile that died away very slowly from his face. "It is very well for you, Warden, and for prosperous, easy-going fellows like you, whom fortune favours, and whose life-paths are smooth and plain, to enjoy your eight or nine hours' sleep. But sleep is too expensive a luxury for us poor fellows, who struggle and strive with the world, and follow an exacting mistress, ever ready to avail herself of the slightest excuse for deserting us."

"Yet you would not change with me. Give up your glorious uncertainties — hopes of fame and dreams of ambition — for my common-place and inglorious certainties? Now would you?"

"No!" Mr. Gower answered slowly, sending his eyes out on some far-journey, and bringing them back radiant with a strange light. "No!" he answered, more assuredly, "I would not change. I would rather fight and battle on till death than know the respectable composure, the dignified indifference, of a man good friends with the world. For me there would be no rest in your life. I fancy I have not known what rest is, since I was a child. But Mrs. Warden's tired pale face reminds me to say good-night — so good-night."

Harold went down-stairs with him.

'Harold, do not ask Mr. Gower here again, please," I said, when he returned.

"Why, dear? I thought I had given you a pleasant evening."

"I do not think Mr. Gower is a good man. I do not think we shall either of us be the happier for having him here. No wife ought to find pleasure in the society of a man who shows no respect for her husband. I don't mind his coming when other people are here, but please don't ask him again when we are alone."

"Very well, Annie. I think I can see what you mean. I am sure you are right; thank you, love. But I am afraid that poor head is very bad again?"

"Yes, but it shall be well to-morrow," I said resolutely.

I struggled, yes, I did struggle bravely, but, O! so blindly! I struggled against knowledge, and pushed it back from me with violent hands, only to have it come and stand there again, on the threshold of consciousness—the knowledge that I was not happy.

Now we were settled at home again, things soon went back into the old miserable way. What was there to prevent their doing so? I had no new power of ruling myself, no new hope for which to live, no new light by which to walk. I loved my husband. Yes! but I know, now, that one poor weak human love will avail nothing when it stands alone, based on nothing, looking up to nothing.

Harold, seeing me look ill and unhappy, urged me to cultivate the acquaintance of some of the many people with whom we had exchanged visits, to try and make friends, but when I told him I wanted only him and no other friend — that he was enough for me — he smiled and looked pleased, and said no more.

So I fought on alone, my soul never satisfied, my heart never at rest, and every now and then some outburst of long-controlled bitterness or pain betraying me and making my husband miserable. He was very patient, very gentle and forbearing, but at last even he grew weary. His home came to be a place that he entered timidly, not knowing in what miserable mood he might find his wife; soon he entered it less willingly and hurried from it earlier, seeking in his business, in the pursuit of worldly good, distraction from its miseries and cares.

We grew rich; my husband more worldly; even this blame is mine — I, isolating myself from all human interests and cares, preying on my own heart — grew constantly more morbid, sensitive, irritable, and miserable. The distance between us widened daily. We stood afar-off from each other, but God mercifully sent little hands that should have drawn our hearts together.

CHAPTER V.

I HAD been three years a wife before I became a mother. My first baby came to me with the early summer flowers. I date best by them, because afterwards many things overlaid such blessed anniversaries, and made it difficult for me to endeavour, and hard for me to dare, to remember when, in what hour, at what season, this or that happened. And yet I can even now bring present to my senses the delicious fragrance and delicate loveliness of the flowers my husband brought to me so often at that time.

After the birth of my darling, there was a long interval during which I thought I was at peace: physical weakness made me quiet and stillness grateful, and the new great joy seemed to fill and satisfy my soul.

Again I smiled to myself as I

had smiled — how long ago it seemed! — looking out on the lovely summer beauty of the land round Ilton. I lay still, with meek-folded hands, and smiled into the face of my fair-pictured future, my beautiful new life, through this my own child. I fancied that all the struggle and pain and perplexity of existence were past; I looked back upon all past misery as one waking to some blissful reality looks back upon an ugly dream of the black night. I had found something so sweet, so pure, so delightfully dependent to live for, that I thought I now had grasped Peace, had detained her with my poor weak hands till she had touched with her holy healing my brow and breast.

"Yes! peace has come to me," I whispered softly-smiling to myself, raising the tiny baby-hand to my lips, while happy tears filled my eyes.

My husband was infinitely glad, and kind and tender. He showed to such advantage in my sick-room! I raised up my happy eyes proudly to him, it was so beautiful to see him subduing his strength to our weakness — my baby's and mine — or exerting it only for us; bending his handsome head down so low, yet then almost fearing to kiss the tiny baby-cheek; looking so concerned if the child uttered a cry, so amused and happy if he woke a doubtful smile in its queer little face! I thought this peace would last. I loved my baby so intensely! he loved it dearly and me anew through it. I thought my deep love all that was needful to make me a good mother. I gave up everything to my child, and Harold thought me a paragon, a perfect example of self-denying love. And for a long time we lived, O, so quietly and happy together! — we three, my husband, myself, and our child.

Our child was a boy; he grew into a dark-haired, blue-eyed, noble little fellow—a tiny Harold. I turned God's free-given blessing into a bane. How should I, undisciplined, unable to rule myself, be able rightly to educate another life? My husband, with his clear, simple, practical notions, and his decided judgment between right and wrong, was a far more judicious and wise parent than I. The child felt it. I worshipped, idolised him; and he would turn from my wild love to meet his father's calm tenderness. The older he grew, the more plainly he showed this preference.

"You hurt me, mamma, let me go; papa is coming," the boy exclaimed, one day. I had been showing him pictures, telling him stories, lying on the ground beside him; he had been listening with tranced attention, his great blue eyes fixed full on mine; he heard his father's step in the hall, and directly he struggled to get free from my arms.

"Papa will come; stay with poor mamma, darling! Do you not love mamma?"

"No," the boy answered boldly; he struggled himself free, pushed me away, and trampled over me with his little eager feet. I ran after him, but could not catch him in time; Harold came in, and my child's head was struck by the opening door; he fell, and cut his forehead against the sharp corner of a table. The blood flowed, and I was terribly frightened. I caught him in my arms; he had turned sick and quiet with the pain, but when I took him, he called out: "Papa! papa! papa, take me!" I could not pacify him, so laid him in my husband's arms.

I ran for water, sponges, and cloths; when I returned, my boy was sitting on his father's knee, leaning his little head back against his shoulder, and smiling faintly at some funny story Harold was telling him, while he held his handkerchief to the wound. The child let me wash and bathe and plaster up the cut, but all the while he clung to his father's arm, and persisted in saying that mamma had hurt him. He would not come to me, nor kiss me, but soon fell asleep in my husband's arms. Harold carried him up to the nursery, and waited to see him quietly sleeping in bed. I should have done that, should I not? Was I not his mother? This was not the first time my heart had been so wounded. When my husband left the room with our boy, I threw myself on the floor, and gave way to a wild passion of grief. I wailed and lamented, almost raved. Even my child, my own child, did not love me; it engrossed my husband's tenderness, and rendered me no love in return. My passion, indulged, grew uncontrollable. Jealousy gained sole possession of me. Was I to be nothing now? nothing to father, or child?

By the time Harold came down, I had lost all command over myself. He took me up and laid me on the sofa; he knelt beside me, begging and praying that I would be calm — would, at least, tell him what was the matter. I turned my face away, and burying it in the pillows, which I clenched between my aimless fingers, I shook the couch with the strength of my agony. Poor Harold! what could he do? pained and perplexed as he was. He sent for our medical man, but he was long coming. When he arrived, my passion had raved itself out; I was weak as a child, and suffering from extreme exhaustion. But my state revealed to Dr. Ryton the violence of the paroxysm just past; I believe it was after seeing me that day, that he began first to entertain the opinion that sometimes I was insane.....

It is no use. I cannot write calmly and slowly. I must hurry over all that is to come.... When I again became the mother of a living child, baby was once more for a little while an angel of peace in the house. I thought that this child, at least, a girl,-

with my brow and eyes they said, — should be wholly mine. My husband might engross the affection of our noble boy, if only this little fragile white blossom, this lily of mine, might rest solely and always on my bosom. I did not like to have my husband kiss, I hardly liked that he should see, this baby; I never let him take it in his arms. The first time it smiled brightly at him, and with its little hands clutched at the dark hair of his bent head, acute pain shot through my heart. Do what I could, I was not able to prevent the child from knowing and loving its father. Soon, very soon, I had the agonising, though self-induced, torture to bear, of seeing it turn from my fierce love, to hold out its tiny hands — appealingly, it seemed to me — to my husband. It lisped Papa before ever it had once said Mamma.

Harold's manner to his children reminded me of what it had been to me in the days of our courtship. There was the same protecting, beautifully sweet, yet manly tenderness. Sometimes I longed to be a child, to share the caresses my boy and girl received. My husband had left off almost all demonstrations of affection for me, but only because I had often manifestly shrunk from them; why, I cannot tell. I loved him, I never ceased loving him.

"Poor mamma is ill," Harold said sometimes, when I closed my eyes, and my brow contracted with the pain that so often throbbed there now. "Go, little one, and kiss her — very quietly."

"Must I, papa?" the little girl would ask. "I don't want to get down."

A few words in a low voice, and then a little soft mouth would be pressed up to my face. Sometimes I pretended to have fallen asleep, and not to feel the touch that thrilled my whole being through; then the play would cease, and my husband would draw the children into mother room.

My husband was much at home during that miserable time. I thought it was to keep watch over his children, and I resented this bitterly. Could he not trust them with me, their mother? Of what was he afraid?

Sometimes the indulgent, pitying, curious tenderness with which my husband began again to treat me, soothed me, and I could lie for hours in child-like quiet, with my head resting on his bosom. But this was not the love and sympathy for which I thirsted, and often my spirit rose up in arms, repelling this condescending affection, which mocked the love I craved. It was through the carelessness or maliciousness of a servant that I first heard how my husband was pitied as the poor gentleman who had a mad wife.

"Mad! they think me mad!" I repeated to myself.

I sent for Dr. Ryton. I cared nothing for what he might think of me. The idea of madness seemed to my proud, wrong-

judging spirit, to be attended with a humiliation I would not bear. They might think me anything but mad.

"You think me mad, and have taught my husband to believe me so," I said, in a cold, calm voice, when Dr. Ryton came. He looked at me with a severely scrutinising expression in his grey eyes as he sat down, close by, fronting me. He waited for a moment, as if he expected I should say more, then answered:

"You have taught us to think you so — I had almost said to wish to think you so. Madness was a very gentle name to give your malady; it was conferred in all kindness, in all charity."

"Kindness!" I echoed. "You have taught my husband so to mistrust me that he fears to leave my own children in my charge; and you talk of kindness!"

"Mrs. Warden reflect! Do you remember when I was last sent for to attend you? Do you mean to confess that that humiliating wildness of passion was voluntarily indulged?"

I felt the blood rush across my face, but I answered as steadily as he asked:

"Certainly. At the beginning I could have checked and controlled myself. To do so would have given me terrible pain. It was not worth while; it is a miserable relief to me to give way. After the storm comes a calm. In the weakness that follows after my violence, my head is cooler and clearer and my heart quieter. Life is fainter, its pain more endurable."

"You speak calmly enough now," Dr. Ryton said. "Can you not see the selfishness and wickedness of all this? Can you not see that, if indeed you are a responsible person — and in that light you wish me to consider you — you are sinning most heinously: destroying the peace of a home; wrecking the happiness of your nobly-good husband; alienating your children's affections from you; ruining your own soul! By Heaven! madam, you had better wish yourself the maddest poor soul in Bedlam than the voluntary abuser and destroyer you wish me to pronounce you!"

I paused and thought; he sitting there, stooping forward, bent his cold eyes on me steadily. A book lay on the sofa by me. I took it in my hand, longing to throw it in my enemy's face, that, at least for a moment, he might start and his gaze waver. But I thought it very important then to restrain myself. I only played awhile with the leaves, and then put the book down. Doing so, I looked up, and saw a kind of smile gleaming on the grey face opposite to me.

"I see you can control yourself, Mrs. Warden, and I also see the violent nature that is in you," Dr. Ryton said.

"Nature! yes, you are right there," I replied.

"A nature, madam, which you have sinfully neglected to con-

trol, all the faults of which you have cherished: You are a proud woman; you shrink from the humiliation of being thought mad, but you are blind to the far worse humiliation of allowing the devil within you to rule you."

"Go on, if you please," I said, quietly, as he paused.

I believe you are miserable, madam. I think you are a servant to whom many talents have been entrusted, and that you have not even only buried them in the earth, but have actively abused them. Your husband is not a man of genius — not even a man of great depth or sensitiveness of feeling; but he has a true heart and a patient soul. He is infinitely your superior. You might well fall at his feet and pray his forgiveness, and let him teach you to ask God's. Have you suffered patiently, as he has done? Have you loved in spite of wrong, as he has done? Have you returned good for evil, as he has done? I know nothing of your history — why he married you. It was a mistake, no doubt; but you, and you alone, have made it a fatal one."

"I will think of what you say," I answered. "You think I have sinned — sinned — sinned! You do not heed that I have suffered."

"Suffered! You will have to suffer much yet, madam; my prayer for you would be, that you might suffer, till at last the proud spirit should lie low, and be crushed out!"

"But it has been pain and suffering and ceaseless unrest and longing that have hardened me. Yet I am not hardened — I would my heart were a stone! I sent for you, however, for one purpose. Are you convinced I am not mad? I can hear no more of anything else now."

"Indeed, madam, before you sent for me, I had begun to understand your case otherwise. You are not mad. God forgive you."

"Say that again."

"You are not mad."

'You are to tell my husband so — but stay, I hear his step — here he comes, repeat it to him, Dr. Ryton."

My poor Harold came in, he looked wonderingly and anxiously at me.

"Have you been ill again?" he asked.

"I have never been ill in the way you have been taught to suppose; Dr. Ryton, repeat to my husband what you said to me."

"Your wife, Mr. Warden, wishes me to tell you that I have reason to change the opinion I expressed to you some time ago."

"Speak more plainly, if you please, sir," I interrupted; "you spoke plainly enough just now."

"In short," Dr. Ryton continued, only pausing while I spoke, not turning towards me, but looking at my husband steadily and compassionately; "she is no more mad than you or I."

"What is it, then?" Harold asked.

"That Mrs. Warden herself must inform you," he answered. He went, and Harold attended him to the door. I sat down to think. It was some minutes before Harold came back, and I did not look up to see the expression of his face. I said in a hard voice, "I want to be alone — I will go to my own room — Lily is in the nursery, Harold will be home from school in half-an-hour, you will not want me till they go to bed."

"As you like," he answered, indifferently and wearily; "I am going out — don't you remember I told you they wanted you, but you would not come? It is the party at Gower's mother's."

"Going out again to-night — and there?" I asked, pausing at the door.

Harold turned to the window.

"Is it any wonder?" he asked recklessly.

"No! it is no wonder that you should leave your home so often," I replied quietly, while a burning recollection of half-heeded scandal came to my mind. I went up to my room, but I did not pass the hours as I had intended — the poison of a malicious sentence rankled in my heart. I paced gloomily about; a throng of strange thoughts pressed for recognition, but a demon-hand, torture strong, held the entrance against them, and possessed me against my desire, spite of my endeavours. "He loves you no longer! no longer!" a mocking voice cried. I laughed scornfully to myself—I did not believe it; and yet the words came again and again, each time louder than before. I would not doubt — I would know — I thought. The wintry afternoon (it was a bleak March day) had long blackened into night, my fire was almost out, and my room dark and cold, when little feet came pattering up to my closed door, and my children's voices called me. They were come to say "good-night."

I opened my door, but that room was too dim and chill, and peopled with too unholy and unhappy thoughts for them; so, with my little girl in my arms, and my boy's hand in mine, I went down into the empty drawing-room, where the fire blazed cheerily and the lamps burnt brightly.

"Papa is gone out," Harold said, glancing round the room disconsolately.

"Papa is gone," Lily echoed sadly.

But I sat down by the fire, Lily still in my arms, and bade Harold bring the great book which was his delight, and I would tell him all about the pictures.

It was brought and rested on my knee, the boy lying on the ground beside it. I leaned my cheek against my little darling's soft hair as her fair head rested quietly on my bosom, and I told wonderful stories to my boy with his upraised, wondering eyes. I was

very gentle, and we were very happy. When nurse came there was a great outcry, and so I sent her away again. The children sat up an hour later than usual; my Lily fell asleep upon my bosom, and I carried her up-stairs, and put her to bed myself.

"You are a dear, dear mamma to-night," Harold said, when I bent over him and kissed his face after he had laid down. Tears streamed from my eyes — very sweet tears — I went down to the empty drawing-room, and sat by the fire crying quietly a long while. Then I wiped my eyes and thought. "If he loves me still, if there is yet time," I said, and in my mind I turned over a fair white page of life, and I essayed to lift my heart penitently to God; but I sickened when I thought of all my past, and said "There is no hope — there is no hope!"

It was past midnight when Harold came home, I was still sitting by the fire.

"You up still?" he said, as he came into the room.

I did not answer; there was a great struggle within me, I longed to throw myself on his bosom, or at his feet, and to weep out my strange new thoughts, and hopes, and resolves there; but I knew I should startle him, and that I had taught him to dread and to hate my tears. Besides, the idle tale I had heard forced itself on my recollection — my pride bade me know if that were true or false, before I humbled myself to one who might no longer care for me.

"Are you not going to bed now?" my husband asked, throwing himself into a chair opposite me.

"Presently," I answered, and stole a look at his face. I could read nothing there; his eyes were fixed on the fire. How should I begin?

"Harold! I have something to ask you!" Something in my voice attracted his attention; his eyes were on me immediately.

The struggle to keep calm and speak quietly, made my voice sound strange and hard, even to myself. Yet I tried to speak gaily — to tell him what I had heard, as a false thing I did not believe; knew I should hear him contradict; repeated only for his amusement, for the sake of hearing that contradiction.

But when he had heard me, he turned back to his fire — gazing, silently with a moody brow.

I urged him to speak. I grew afraid. Then he rose, and turned a stern face upon me. I had never seen him look like that before.

"Wife!" he began.... I cannot, even now, write the words he said. They sounded cruel, but were only truth. He did not answer my charge against him — did not notice it; he only reminded me of what I had made his home. His words smote me, how heavily. I threw myself down before him. I clasped his knees. I laid my head upon his feet.

"I cannot bear it to-night,

Perhaps I have been harsh. I cannot be patient longer," he said. Gently but firmly he put me by, and then he went away.

I lay where he left me for some minutes, half-stunned. But I heard his voice, and the noise of horses' hoofs ringing loud and clear on the frost-bound road.

I was at the window, and had opened the curtains and shutters just in time to see my husband riding away. Whither?

I did not go to bed that night. I lay on the ground by the window, where I had thrown myself, not unconscious for a minute. I remember what I thought about as I lay: how I should destroy myself. But my energy was deadened, my brain numb; and I did not rise to seek the means.

I watched the stars, so bright in the bright-blue heaven. I watched them blankly then; now I can recal exactly how they looked, and how they paled before the ghastly dawn.

Ours was always a late household. No one was stirring yet, when there came a heavy trampling of feet on the carriage-drive before the house, and then a knocking at the door. Every sound seemed muffled to me, for I was half-dead with cold and pain.

I rose with difficulty, vaguely wondering, and crept down-stairs. The knocking grew louder, but my hands were almost useless, and trembled long enough at the door.

Long enough! The door was open all too soon.

Without, waited my husband, patiently — ay, very patiently! He waited, but he made no noise.

I know all that followed that dread sight. I cannot write it. One picture you shall have that will be vividly present to me ever.

Harold, my husband — white, cold, blood-stained — laid upon a couch, lying there blind, and deaf, and dumb. His wife as surely — so I thought straightway — his murderess as if she had stabbed him to the heart (God knows she had!), stretched beside him, pushing the defiled, dust-soiled, blood-stained hair from his disfigured brow, and pressing there her vain kisses; dyeing her livid cheek red, laying it against his; putting her hot, livid lips to his cold, rigid ones, and crying to him wildly, ceaselessly, "Harold! husband!"

They took me away by force. No one pitied me much. Then, I really went mad. God was only too merciful to me — I went mad!

My husband, riding in reckless misery, he knew not where, had been thrown, and dragged along the ground, his dark hair trailing in the dust.

I believe he had been driven out by resentment at an unjust accusation, mingling with despair at the thought that his last chance of peace and quiet at home had fled, now that jealousy had taken form and substance in my mind. I do not believe his heart had

ever for a moment wandered from his home; finding no rest on his wife's, it had learnt to love his children with something more than a father's tenderness. He had suffered. O! how he had suffered!

TURKISH POEMS ON THE WAR.

In the East, singers and rhapsodists supply the place of newspapers. There, on the old classic ground of antiquity, we still may witness the origin of some new Iliad, singing the siege and fall of Sebastopol, which promises to be a modern Troy. First the rhapsodes, afterwards, perhaps, a Homer. Scarcely, had the present war lasted a month, before the rhapsodes in Turkey lifted their voices in the streets and coffee-houses. There was, moreover, the advantage of a printing establishment, if the lungs of the declamators and singers should fail. It is thus, that some warlike Turkish poems on the Oriental question have come over to us; fragments, perhaps, of a great future Iliad. These ballads enjoy a very extensive circulation. They are being sung and repeated, with the permission of government, in Constantinople and many other places of Europe and Asia. The broad-sheets are adorned with several engravings, illustrative of the events and persons described in the text — rough, clumsy productions, but not the less agreeable to the taste of the masses of Mussulmen. There is considerable confusion of time and place in them; geography, chronology, and history, appearing in a state of extraordinary fermentation.

First of all it appears, in despite of diplomatic assurances, that the war is looked upon by people in Turkey as a religious war, undertaken to resist the invasion, and to do away with the dominion of the infidels. The poems are full of the old Mussulman ardour of conquest. Once being excited, the followers of the Prophet want to lay their hand on the world; their next enemy, after the Muscovite Kral, is the Czar of the Catholic community. It appears, that Turkey still holds its central position, whither all other nations hasten to assemble, England and France amongst them, to fight the infidel Muscovites.

We have seen six poems on the war. The first two refer to the Danubian period of the struggle, when none but Turks and Russians were engaged, and brings the events of war down to the relief of Silistria. As was due, it is headed by the portrait of Omer Pasha. We shall select the most striking passages — beginning with the narrative of the complications that led to the outbreak of hostilities. "They say," commences the poet:

> the world-conquering foe
> Stretches out his hand after the seat
> of the Osmanli.

The infidel Muscovite has again become very arrogant.
May he soon meet his fate!
The infidelity of the rebel is without limit.

But Sultan Abdul Medschid, on seeing this, summoned a great council of vizirs, professors, and geometers; the Koran was read, the commentaries were consulted, and orders were given to prepare for war. Then

The poor and rich said: We have heard it and obey.
Thereupon the chapter of the Koran "We have conquered," was read,
They said: Let no one cling to this perishable world!
The body to the soul shall be the sacrifice.
We have heard this word. Let us prove it by deeds.

The summons penetrates into every corner of the empire, and all the nations obey it.

Many hundred thousand soldiers came by land;
Many ships came by sea.
Even from China (sic!) God be with them!
By Allah, that was a journey, they said.
Many hundred thousand soldiers assembled
By our Lord's command. We shall have bloodshed.
If it be God's will, we shall fight the infidels.
By his indulgence so it will happen, they said."

No sooner have they assembled, than the armies are marching to the Danube and fighting begins at Batoum and at Rustschuk, Widdin, and Tartukai.

At first he took the lead himself,
Selim Pasha, the hero of the age. They said
The armies are ready, the lines are drawn up,
The standards are planted on the battle-field,
The infidels are beaten, their soldiers are dispersed,
Their bodies hanged up — bleed them, they said.
The armies of Islamism went to fight,
We have beaten the infidels endless.
They fled and retired into the fortress.
And cried all at once:
"Mercy!"

Having proceeded thus far (without much military description, but with great national and religious enthusiasm), the poet is carried away by his inspiration, and goes on alternately to praise the deeds of his heroes on the Persian frontier and on the Danube; the passage of the river by Ismail Pasha; Mustapha Pasha's expedition to Albania in eighteen hundred and twenty-nine; and, lastly, again, the victory of Omer Pasha at Oltenitza. Finally, however, thanks and praises are given to the follower of the Prophet, the Sultan. Therefore —

In consequence of this victory,
The sub-lieutenant of the fifth company,
Of the first battalion of the fourth regiment
Of the Imperial guard, Redif,
Ordered the Friday's prayer to be read
From the pulpit, before the inhabitants of Silistria,
For the Gasi Abdul-Medschid-Chan."

Here the first poem concludes. The second is shorter, but more lively and vigorous. It resembles a summons to take up arms, more than a narrative of the war.

We have a religious war with that infidel,
Whom we already know a long time.
We send an army to Rome (!)
Our battle-field stretches as far as St. Petersburg.

For allies in this war we have the lion of God, Ali,
Ebubekr, Omer and Osman.
With these allies the war will last up to the day of resurrection.
We have taken the crowns of many rebels.
From you (the Russians) also we shall still get much poll-money.
* * * *
In our hand is the sword and shield.
Have you not yet felt the fire of the Osmanli?
It never recedes. Deliver up what you have taken;
And return to your life of fishermen.
We have many vizirs and doctors of law.
Sometimes many thousands of infidels
Have fought against the house of Osman.
But we have conquered those foes,
When the house of Osman unfolded the banner and took to the field.

The next piece is of a later date, going down to the death of Nicholas.

Brother, hear, now let us begin to talk:—
The Muscovite Kral says: I have a great claim.
We said: Tell us, Giaur, what that claim consists of?
The Giaur says: Open me the road to Jerusalem, I have a business there.
Abdul-Medschid-Chan-Gasi summoned his ministers.
They said: "That is a trick; let him not carry his business beyond the Bosphorus.
The doctors, the philosophers, altogether came to this decision.
Our religion is truth, our actions are
In harmony with the commands of the Koran.
There was a Russian general, called Menschikoff;
As soon as he heard this, he resolved upon making war.
At last he fled, ready to do so,
On the command of the Muscovite Kral.
Our military road leads to St. Petersburg.

The manifesto, the concentration of the Ottoman forces on the Danube, under Omer Pasha and Ismail Pasha, the achievements at Kalafat, and the battle at Citate, are all sung in proper order.

He (Omer Pasha) told the Muscovite:
"Thou shalt stay on the one side and we on the other side.
To us the doors of Paradise are open;
Our mothers are not ashamed, when they have children.
This, is the second example we have given on the battlefield of the Church.
In fact, our military road leads to St. Petersburgh."

A passing allusion is made to the Greek insurrection, which affords the poet an opportunity of inveighing against Muscovite perfidiousness, advantageously contrasting it with the courage and perseverance shown by the Turks in the defence of Silistria, and the reconquering of the Danubian principalities. At length, the English and French make their appearance, partly by land, partly by sea, and the campaign in the Black Sea is resolved upon:

"The Imperial fleet put to sea,
The English and French fleets assisted us,
We have determined to burn Odessa.
The fleet of the three powers, with a hundred thousand soldiers,
Went, on the morning of the seventh of November.
From Constantinople to Eupatoria (!)
Going to the centre of the Crimea, we have to live in Sebastopol.
The English took Balaklava.
The French puzzled the mind of Menschikoff.
Leaving the waggons of ammunition, he fled to St. Petersburg.
England and France are in our secrets.
In the valley of Inkerman many hundred thousand souls were burned.
We have to take Sebastopol in a short time,
To take prisoner the Kral of Russia,
And deprive him of his crown and throne."

Having thus summarily disposed of the Czar, the poet goes on to prophesy the final humiliation of Russia:

You (the Russians) have nothing more
to do with the trumpet;
At last you will return to your occupation of fishermen.

But the death of Nicholas intervenes.

The Kral of Russia could not resist,
And gave up his soul to hell.
His ministers were beaten.
We have a great God, who made the
world out of nothing.

The effect was:

They lost their senses and began
to wail for the dead man.
Some say: Give up thy place of
honour.
Others say: Thine injustice is mine injustice.
With so dirty a corpse you must go
down.
Thus far it is enough now to have narrated the war,
Afterwards we shall relate the further
events.

The picture on the printed sheet represents a sarcophagus, on which a dead man is lying in Russian uniform.

Another poem is inscribed: The Story of Menekli Ahmed Pasha, being a dialogue between Ahmed Pasha and Russia (Alexander the Second), the latter of whom is supposed to lean herself on Sebastopol. Ahmed Pasha points out the great power of the French and English, and of the Sheik Schamyl.

Nothing, he says, can resist them:

Nicolai Paulovitch fainted and went
away;
Menschikoff became sick, after him, and
went away:
Nachimoff fastened his ships and
went away —
We have seen it, now your turn is
come.

On this Alexander the Second gets frightened, lays all the guilt on his father, and resigns himself to his fate.

Two figures at the bottom of the sheet represent Ahmed Menekli Pasha and Alexander the Second, who, indeed, looks very miserable.

The last poem of the series is the longest, and is not so much intended to be sung, as to be performed in the streets and coffee-houses. It is inscribed, Narration of the War: the beginning very much resembling that of the third poem. Afterwards it passes into a dialogue between Omer Pasha and the Muscovite; when both personages are supposed to converse very politely on their different chances and duties. The following will be found interesting:

The Muscovite says: Know it well,
This year you will see it in the Crimea.
I have read the gospel in the Church
of St. Sophia,
When going from Pera to the Porte.
Omer Pasha says: We shall take it,
When fate holds her sway.
As regards Sebastopol, we know the
plan,
In a short time we shall be in possession of it.
The Muscovite says: You do not know
my skill.
Sebastopol will not be taken so easily.
I have mines there, that are invisible,
When you hit on them, look at the
smoke!

At last Omer Pasha ominously glorifies himself in the concluding lines:

Seven kings have ordered my portrait
to be made,
And sent it everywhere.

The engravings, added to this poem, represent four generals. In the middle, Omer Pasha and Ahmed Pasha; on the right of the latter, General Canrobert; on the left of the former, the late Menschikoff. To each personage have been added his accompanying emblems; Menschikoff having a carriage (the same probably in which he fled after the battle of Alma); Canrobert and the Turkish generals, French standards and Turkish horse-tails.

ROSES.

O! THE ineffable delight of a trip into the country, to see a show of roses, when you have a high-spirited, fast-trotting, rose-fancying hobby-horse to ride! "Cato," — one of our most learned authors, informs us — "Cato seemed to dote on cabbage." Myself may boast of out-Catoing Cato, in one respect: for I dote to destraction, on cabbage-roses. Take a full-blown Provins to bed with you; lay it on your pillow within reach of your nose; sniff at it an amorous sniff from time to time till you fall asleep; perform similar ceremonies the first thing when you wake in the morning, and you will not be too hard on my infatuation. I particularise a Provins, because although the tea-scented roses are delicious, while the Macartneys smell like apricot-tart, and the Jaune Desprez is a happy blending of raspberry jam with the finest otto or atargul; nevertheless, all roses by name do not smell equally sweet. In fact, some roses are no roses at all. The Christmas rose is a hellebore, which deserves a little protection with a hand-light if we desire it to wish us a happy New-year; the Guelder rose is a sterile snow-ball, which ought not to repudiate its classical title of Viburnum; the Rose Trémière, or Passe-Rose, is a hollyhock, which renders excellent service in the decoration of garden scenery; the Rose of Jericho is a cruciferous individual (?) — the note of interrogation shall be discussed hereafter — belonging to the same Linnæan class as cabbages and turnips, and in no way related to any sort of rose, "for, though it be dry, yet will it, upon inhibition of moisture, dilate its leaves and explicate its flowers contracted and seeming dried up;" the Rose-Laurier, or Laurel Rose, is the oleander, an elegant shrub with bright pink flowers, delighting to grow by the water's edge, but which, Algerian colonists say, poisons the brook that runs at its foot. The Rosa Mundi, the World's Rose, or Fair Rosamond, was a pretty young woman who was considered by her friends to be under no particular

obligations to Queen Eleanor; the Rose Effleurée, the Handful of Roseleaves, or bouquet for children and families, is a nice little volume of tales and poetry. I am sure that the roses of heraldry — stained-glass roses and gothic stone roses — have no right to claim any other than a verbal relationship with the legitimate family of Rosaceæ. And the rose on the spout of my watering-pot is only a bit of red-tin pierced with holes. All these, (with the exception of the lady) are false, sham roses, of fleeting merit, and mere outside show; whilst a real rose, even in its grave of pot-pourri, exhales a pleasant odour, and is sweet in death.

Know, ye who are unfamiliar with roses, that the queen of flowers, like the changeful moon, presents herself under different aspects. There are roses which resemble the beauties of the south; they blossom once in their season, they dazzle you with their charms, and then they depart. You have to wait for another generation of blooms. There are others — we call them perpetual roses, while the French style them rosiers remontants — which do not begin perhaps quite so early but which, having once begun, go on continually, till old Father Nip-nose comes to town. Even then, if you can shift them into warm, light, and airy quarters, in their pots or tubs, they will go on flowering, and flowering, till you fear they will flower themselves to death. Observe, that some of the old-fashioned sorts maintain their ground against new-born rivals. What an indefatigable bloomer is the old crimson China, or semperflorens! What an emblem of perseverance and hardihood is that sweet-scented, semi-double, faithful friend, the Portland, or Pæstan rose, which will present you with a cluster of bright red buds reflecting the gleams of December sunshine! The biferi rosaria Pæsti merit their repute of more than two thousand years; for, after all, we stand most in need of flowers which will carry a cheerful face under adverse circumstances. Any plant, or man, can be full of bravery during the hey-day of summer and prosperity; but our strongest sympathies are with whatever will make a goodly show, and even bear blossoms, in spite of the insults of the north-wind and the disdainful looks of the sun. Amongst the most unflinching bloomers is the Stanwell Perpetual, a spinosissima, or Scotch rose, with small double flowers of a very pale blush, which assumes for its motto, Never say die! Another stout-hearted flower, belonging to quite a different race, is Aimée Vibert, with its bright and almost evergreen foliage, and its thick clusters of pure white blossoms.

Perhaps, though not the most continuous in its succession of blooms, yet for lateness, as well as for the combined perfections

of form, scent, hardiness, and colour, the best autumnal rose yet raised (certainly in the Portland or Quatre-Saisons class), is a turn-coat flower whose history I blush to relate. But it averts your censure like other fair offenders; for, if to its lot some floral errors fall, look in its face, and you 'll forget them all. It made its appearance during Louis the Eighteenth's time, and was named Rose du Roi, or the King's Rose, in compliment to him. But when Bonaparte came over from Elba, and put the legitimate king to flight, the proprietor, thinking that his new rose with any other name would bring in more money, deemed it good policy to rechristen it Rose de l'Empereur, or the Emperor's Rose. But the hundred days were a limited number — fate did not choose to make them a hundred and one — and the Battle of Waterloo again changed the aspect of political affairs. The rose ratted once more, and was re-styled Rose du Roi. It is known in England as the Crimson Perpetual — I should have called it the Crimson Weathercock. To complete its diplomatic education, it only wanted to have passed for a time as the Rose de la République Rouge, or the Red Republican Rose. No autumnal rose-garden is complete without the two Desprez, the red (or Madame), and the yellow, or rather the salmon-coloured. The Géant des Batailles is also a hero whose prowess and whose manly beauty insure his gracious reception by the ladies. None of these are what the nurserymen call new; most of them are quite antiquated; but they will hold their own, and maintain their ground, long after Louis Philippes and such-like loose ragged things have been swept clean away by the breeze of forgetfulness.

I think that if you can make only one voyage of rose-discovery during the summer, it is better, more sentimental, and altogether more poetic, to defer it till the robin has commenced uttering his autumnal notes. One out-of-the-way rose-garden that I wot of is a gem in its own peculiar style. To get to it, you put your square-built old pony into your rumble-tumble four-wheel; you drive through high-hedged lanes and over breezy commons till you reach the turn-pike-road, which traverses a rather secluded district of the county; you pass gentlemen's seats on the right and the left, with their verdant parks and noble timber-trees; you drive through a village, with the prettiest of gardens before each cottage — no two of the cottages or gardens being exactly alike — while overhead is a flickering bower of cherry, plum, and walnut-trees, chequering the road with sunshine and shade; you pass a brick-kiln or two (symptomatic of the soil); and, after peeping over clipped quick-set hedges at the brightest of pastures and the richest of crops,

you reach a solitary way-side inn — the Merman. The pony knows where he is as well as you do, and stops. From out a stable-door steps a hale young man, with one hand partly bound in a cotton handkerchief, and the other covered with scratches more or less recent. He has been budding roses these many days past, and, as our noble allies say, Il vaut souffrir pour les roses (Roses are worth a little pain); nevertheless, he unharnesses old Smiler, who straightwith proceeds, snorting and whinnying, into the well-known stable. You enter the house, and find everything clean, countryfied, and way-side-inn-like, without the slightest pretensions to metropolitan adornments. You are met by a tall, gaunt, dignified woman, certainly not handsome, and assuredly never better-looking than she now is. She is the mistress of the house, and the rose-grower's wife. She looks as if she thought it would be a sin to smile more than once a-week; but she is an admirable cook — and did you ever know a good woman-cook who did not look dreadfully cross at times? You order dinner for five precisely, and step into the garden by a side-door, invisible from the road. The master, the enterprising horticulturist, has heard the sound of your rumble-tumble's wheels, and is coming to meet you — with slow step, unfortunately, for he has lost a leg since he began to grow roses. You have before you a tall, stout man — stouter since his loss — not handsome, but with an honest, open face, which prepossesses you at the very first glance. Between brother enthusiasts, preliminary ceremonies are short; so you walk up and down amidst hundreds and hundreds of roses — tall, middle-sized, short, and level with the ground, climbers, dwarfs, standards, pot-plants, white, blush, cream-colour, straw-colour, pink, crimson, scarlet, slate-colour, spotted, edged, striped, and blotched. You investigate the character of the early summer roses, whose bloom is past — you inquire into the prospects of the newest new varieties, and often get a shake of the head as the only response of the oracle — you ask whether the good old sorts still remain at par in the market, and Jove replies, with a complacent nod, that they are a wholesale staple article of public consumption. "This bed," he says, "entirely of Bath white moss, has been budded to order for America." You then look round and decide upon your plants, combining a sprinkling of the unknown and the speculative with a larger proportion of the approved and the true. And, then, a sharp magisterial voice rings the dinner-bell with the tongue of authority. You dare not remain longer in the garden, even if you wished to, which you probably do not; for, immediately after crossing the thresh-

old of the side door, you enter, to the left, a neat, snug little parlour with the window open, staring point-blank at the roses, and a little white-clothed table, hardly big enough for your party, but tending much to merriment and good fellowship. You take your seats, and instantly stern Minerva drops amidst you such mutton-chops, such green peas, such potatoes, and such melted-butter, followed by such a currant tart and such a rice pudding, that—oh! —words may express thoughts, but not sensations. The goddess concludes her miraculous performance by the production of a cream-cheese of her own manufacture. Expressions of your appreciation and delight burst from your lips, and — marvel of marvels — she smiles! Then, a bottle of wonderful port, and an invitation to the master to partake of it; he obeys the summons, and sets on the table a dish of Elton strawberries and a green-fleshed melon, grown in some hole and corner stolen from the roses. Then you ride your hobby-horses full gallop: how such a thing, sent out at such a price, turns out no better than a handful of coloured rags; how so-and-so's stupid gardener committed an outrageous donkeyism: how such another's inventive genius would produce leaves and flowers from a ten-year-old broomstick; how this year's committee of the Highanmityshire Horticultural Society is working; and, above all, whether the rose-fever has yet attained its climax. Then you stroll once more round the garden to fix upon a few additional protégés; you drink a parting cup of tea; Smiler takes his place between the shafts; you drive homeward through the cool evening breeze, and, as you watch the glow-worms lighting their lamps amidst the dewy wayside grass, you make a vow never more to judge of a woman's good qualities by her looks alone. Verily, rose-gardens are bits of consecrated ground, cut out and separate from common earth. If you could drop into the midst of this one, at the end of July, after having been shut up for nine months in a smoky city, you would go down on your knees before the flowers.

Roses have had a good deal to go through; it is true they have had a good long while to go through it in. When I began rose-growing, nobody would look upon a rose in any other light than as a pretty sort of thing very well for school-boys to talk about after a course of Virgil, Horace and Anacreon, and permissible for kind-hearted old maids to shelter in the obscure retreats of their obsolete gardens; but as, florist's flowers, the idea was not to be entertained. Dahlias then were all the rage, and were carrying off exclusively, innumerable silver cups, tea-spoons, sugar-tongs, medals, certificates, and highly-commendeds. Mr. Cathill (horti-

culturist, Camberwell,) records that when Mr. Rivers first began to speculate largely in rose-growing, his old foreman, long since gone to his last resting-place, came one day, with a very grave face, and said,

"Master Tom, you are surely out of your mind. What are you going to do with all those brambles? It is a shame to plant them on land that would grow standard apples!"

And so it was with myself and my friend: a lady, who imported the art from France into our neighbourhood, and who did me the honour to make me her disciple. We were looked upon as benighted heretics, humanely tolerated as amusing enthusiasts, and just escaped ostracism as heterodox gardeners; because, while others were running mad after Mexican tubers with repulsive effluvia, alike offensive to man and beast, we cared only to complete our respective collections of a hundred fine varieties of the rose. If many were too polite to say so, they certainly thought, that it was a burning shame, so it was, to grow nasty prickly roses in a garden that would produce double dahlias; and the scorn of the public attained its height when they heard of our begging ladies for their worn-out parasols to shade both our very dark crimson and our double-yellow blooms, and when they overheard us rejoicing at a pic-nic water-party when a thunder-storm drove muslin skirts and white chip bonnets pell-mell below the hatches, — that the delicious shower came just in time to save our last-inserted buds! But it is a long lane which has no turning; and the poor neglected roses soon came to a path which led them to make their triumphal entry. I daily make use of some convenient plate, engraved with the cyphers H.H.S., which my roses won at the Highanmityshire shows. My roses and I well-deserved the reward thus bestowed in the shape of pieces of silver; for I worked them all with my own proper fingers, and they exerted themselves to the utmost to return the obligation.

I strained just now at the word individual, as applied to plants; because it has been a question, among the dons of vegetable physiology, What is an individual in the world of botany? and judgment has been pronounced that a bud is an individual. A bulb, therefore, such as a Tripoli onion (which is nothing more than an overgrown bud), may claim to be no more than a simple individual; but an oak-tree is a herd, a crowd, a throng, a joint stock company, composed of as many individuals as there are buds on its trunk, branches, and twigs. What most concerns us here, is, that buds enjoy a vitality of their own, which is more or less independent of the rest. In cold wet climates, certain plants being unable to flower to any useful purpose, revenge

themselves and have their own way in the end, by throwing off living buds, which take root and settle themselves in the world with the utmost facility. Such plants are styled viviparous, or plants which bring forth their young alive. There are even leaves whose fecundity of constitution engenders a crowd of little budlings round their outside edge. Unless the practice of budding were extensively employed, the supply of choice roses could not meet the demand.

New varieties of roses (with a few rare exceptions) originate from seed. Suppose you have raised an invaluable novelty, like the Rose du Roi, or my own Maria. Your plant is, at first, unique; only a single specimen exists in the world. How to propagate it, distribute it, bring it into the market, and make money of it? Its seed, supposing any attainable, would probably produce offspring inferior to itself. Cuttings are a tardy and limited means of multiplication; besides, several subsections of the genus Rose strike root, as cuttings, with difficulty. Layering is a still slower process, and often not a bit more certain. Budding accomplishes all we can desire.

It has been discovered experimentally, that the buds of shrubs and trees, if skilfully and surgically inoculated upon other shrubs and trees nearly related to themselves — that is species belonging to the same genus — will grow and thrive. In a few cases, the faculty is extended a little more widely; thus, a lilac scion, grafted on an ash-stock, will live just a little while, — a summer or two. But the nearer the relationship, the greater the success; but even then, vegetable caprice has often to be contended with. For instance, many pears do well on quince stocks, others do not do well; and there is no knowing, except empirically, what the exact result will be. Therefore, if any gardener tells you gravely that he has budded a rose on a black-currant bush, or grafted a white-currant scion on a red-cabbage stump, look him full in the face; do not laugh, if you can help it; but set him down in your private memorandum-book as, — I will not here say what.

Now though, theoretically, any one species of rose may be budded upon another, this general rule will scarcely be carried out in practice; because common sense would prevent your budding a vigorous species on a weakly one, or a hardy species on a tender one. There are families of roses — the teascented, for example — which are killed by any but our mildest winters, and must be treated almost as greenhouse plants. For general purposes, the best stocks are furnished by the dog rose (Rosa-canina). Choose such as have grown in exposed situations, and have well-ripened wood, in preference to the green and immature, though pretty stems, that have been drawn up lank, under the shelter

of trees. The sweetbriar is not sufficiently hardy. Extra robust and tall stocks may be obtained from the Highland rose, which grows in the valleys of the Grampian hills. If you want to cover a wall with a climbing rose on which to bud a number of varieties, the crimson Boursault will answer satisfactorily, and all the better that it is a thornless species. Beginners are apt to be too fond of over-tall standards; but experience will tame down their lofty ambition to from two feet to two and a-half.

You will have remarked the beautiful effect of looking down upon a valley or a forest from the commanding eminence of a mountain side. Remember this principle when you are planting the stocks that are to form your future rose-parterre. Standard roses, once budded, grow but little, if at all, in height. They increase in thickness; and it is curious that in that respect the growth of the stem is subordinate to that of the head; that is, a vigorous head will form a corpulent stem, while under a puny head the body will remain puny, — an apt lesson for adminstrations and governments in general.

Wild rose-stocks are now an article of commerce. By giving an order to proper persons you may obtain a supply to any reasonable amount. The nearer home they are found, and the sooner they are replanted in your nursery, the better. November is the month of months for the purpose. In the early dawn of rose-growing in England, you could not get what you wanted through such regular channels as now; but what you did get were finer stocks, in consequence of their being less sought after. I had an agent in my service who was an enthusiast. On being shown a collection of standard roses in splendid bloom, he instantly caught the idea, and impatiently longed for the arrival of autumn, to be let slip to scour the country. He seldom brought in large quantities at once — nor did I want them; but what he did bring were magnificent fellows, such recruits as are not easy to enlist at present. One evening he came to me out of breath, but radiant with triumph. From a small bundle of clean, well-rooted dog-roses, he selected one, and waved it in the air, as a theatrical fairy waves her wand. "This, sir," he said, "cost me three whole days and part of a night; but I was determined you should have it. I had known of it all summer long, in a retired corner of Squire Preservem's park, and I had no need to tie a knot in my handkerchief, to bear it in mind. But the other day they warned me off the land; they thought I must be a poacher. They wouldn't believe me, and treated me as a liar, when I said that I only wanted to stub up a few old briars for a gentleman of my acquaintance, to change into roses. But I watched my opportunity, and took it at last. I crawled up one ditch,

down another; wet, or dry, was all the same to me. I lay squat for hours in a bed of nettles, and afterwards crept on all-fours through a thicket of furze and holly bushes. Never mind that; here it is, at last. Isn't it a beauty, sir?"

It was a beauty. The following summer I headed it with that bright-cheeked gallant, Brutus or Brennus (for he is so doubly christened), who grew, and grew, till he formed a shade beneath which I could sit in my garden-chair.

In a few words, I will let you into the secret of converting a briar into a standard rose; but still, you must take lessons of some obliging friend, like mine. You must see the thing done, and then practise it yourself on the first straggling hedge-rose that falls in your way. Note, too, that cherries, peaches, and apricots may be budded in the same way as roses.

Your pupils arrive, in autumn, at your seminary for young roses. You will have previously engaged a sufficient number of what the French call tuteurs, tutors, or stakes, to support them in an upright course of behaviour. Arrange them into forms, or classes, according to height. Inspect carefully their lower extremities; remove all corns, bunions, straggling roots, and whatever is likely to sprout into proud flesh, or suckers. Plant them at exactly the same depth as you observe them to have grown in their native site. Fasten each individual stock either to a stake of its own, or to a long horizontal twig supported at each end by two upright posts. They will thus pass their winter vacation, though they will not remain absolutely idle; for they will be making themselves at home and pushing root-fibres at times when you believe them to be fast asleep. In spring, watch the swelling buds that show themselves the whole way up the stem. When they are about a quarter of an inch long, cut off all but two, which will be allowed to grow, to be budded, at the height required. Of course, select strong, healthy buds, as near to and as opposite to each other as possible. Into these the whole vigour of the briar will be directed.

In July, after a thunderstorm, or when the ground has imbibed a soaking shower, some kind friend will send you a twig of a matchless rose. Take it in your left hand, look out for a plump, healthy, dormant bud; cut off the leaf, leaving half-an-inch of the foot-stalk; insert your knife a quarter or a third of an inch above the bud; cut downwards, and bring it out a quarter of an inch below; remove with your thumb-nail the woody portion, leaving a small shield of bark with a bud in the centre. This is the bud you want to make grow on your briar. To keep it moist, while you are preparing its new resting-place, you may drop it, if you like, into a glass of water; a snugger and

more convenient receptacle is at hand, — your mouth.

On the branch to be budded, make two slits in the bark like the two straight lines which form the letter T. The perpendicular stroke will run along the branch and terminate where it springs from the main stem; it must be a little longer than the bud you intend to insert. The horizontal stroke will be formed by a cut across the branch, and must be a little wider than the bud you want to put in. You must just cut through the bark, without dividing the wood beneath. Cut those slits with a pen-knife on a piece of paper, or on any fresh twig whose bark peels readily, and you will instantly see what their object is. With the handle of your budding-knife gently push or lift the bark on each side of the perpendicular slit, or stem of the T, so as to cause it to rise. Or you may do it with your thumb-nails. As fingers were made before knives and forks, so thumb-nails were invented before ivory-handled budding-knives. Do nothing that can injure or irritate the interior of the wound. If you poke inside it for half an hour, and plough up the skin, you will injure its delicate organisation, and in nine cases out of ten you may whistle for your bud. Instead of that, the bark once raised, take the bud out of your mouth, and slip it in gently till it reaches its place. Be as quick as if you wished to spare your patient's sufferings. It really is a surgical operation. The bud once settled between the divided bark, bind up the wound with ligature of softest lamb's wool. If you have not been clumsy, the bud will grow; and then you must unbind it, and let nothing else grow on the briar either at top or bottom. At the end of two or three summers you will have a handsome-headed rose-tree, from which you may gather basketsful of bouquets, if you prune it properly, — sometimes if you abstain from pruning it.

The other day I saw an outer barbarian clipping the head of a standard rose with a pair of shears. I thought, and was very near telling him, that he deserved to have his own nose thrust between the blades. There are roses, such as the old unrivalled cabbage yellow, and the pretty little Banksias, with their white or nankin-coloured tufts of tiny violet-scented flowers, which, I believe, cannot bear even the smell of iron. They will refuse to flower if you come near them with a knife in your pocket, even if you do not take it out and open it. You may get rid of their dead and used-up wood as well as you can, by breaking it off; but the scent of steel agress not with their constitution. What becomes of them, then, when they fall into the hands of these merciless butchers and assassins of roses? Many other roses, and exquisite ones too, if cut too close back, will produce nothing but leaves, year after year. Fearfully nu-

merous instances of this wanton ill-treatment may be seen in the suburban villas that swarm round large cities, where simple people get ignorant jobbing gardeners to prune their roses by the year. But rose-pruning is a fascinating amusement, which grows upon you, like billiards or chess; and I had as soon engage a fellow to eat my dinner, take my walks, or perform any other pleasurable action for me by the year, as prune my roses. It is true different roses require different pruning, and you say you know nothing of the art. Never mind. Try. By entering thus into intimacy with your roses, you will become acquainted with every phase and condition of their existence. You will learn to distinguish one from another by the look of the twig, as well as by the aspect of the flower. Your humble servant could readily name a hundred varieties of roses, on being shown a handful of leaflets, trimmings, and prunings. That, however, is nothing. Doubtless, Rivers, Paul, or Mitchell, have men in their employ whose more practised eye would extend the list further. One of the great hyacinth rearers in old times, in Holland, has asserted that he could recognise, by the bulb, almost every variety out of a collection of two thousand!

The sports of roses deserve to be mentioned, because several beautiful varieties have resulted from their antics. The York and Lancaster will now and then bear blossoms one half side of which is white, the other half red. The common Provins took it into its head to send forth a branch bearing the crested Provins, which the art of budding has rendered more or less permanent. The darling little moss Pompone metamorphosed itself out of the common Pompone (itself a miniature beauty of the highest merit), some say in the neighbourhood of Bristol, others in the garden of a Swiss clergyman. The caprices of roses must be complied with, if you would have them smile upon you. The coal-smoke of cities disgusts them utterly; the most tolerant of a highly-carbonated atmosphere being perhaps the maiden's blush and the old double white. It is of little use to plant yellow roses within I don't know how many miles of Temple Bar. I have never seen that admirable rarity, the old double yellow cabbage, blossom well, except when growing at the foot of a low wall, over the top of which it could straggle as it pleased. Nor has any good been done with it by budding, that I am aware. Perhaps we have no stocks on which to bud it, but must ransack the wilds of Persia to find them. The enemies of roses are legion. Of insect vermin the host is fearful. The maggots and worms and caterpillars and grubs which attack your heart's delight in spring must be picked out patiently with finger and thumb. Aphides, "our little green cousin who lives on the rose," are comparatively

harmless. A thunderstorm proves an excellent preventive; but thunderstorms are not always to be had at command. I take the tip of each twig in my hand, and brush off the clustering parasites with a painter's brush. An amateur (who deserves to be looked upon favourably), has invented a double aphis-brush, closing with a spring handle, which, says the advertisement, in a very simple and easy manner, instantly cleanses the rose from that destructive insect the green fly, without causing the slightest injury to the bud or foliage. Finally, encourage lady-birds and the sightless grubs of lace-wing flies, which latter, though blind, find out the succulent aphides, and instead of reserving them to act as milch-cows, pump them dry at once and throw away the empty husk, exactly as you would treat a St. Michael's orange.

There are roses which ought to make more way than they do — they are too shy, retiring, and perhaps fastidious in their habits. The microphylla, or small-leaved rose, bears most voluptuous flowers amidst delicate foliage; yet it is, like the cuckoo bird, seldom seen though often heard of. The multifloras, a charming family, comprising the seven sisters, would gratify us by making more frequent public appearances. The white Chinese anemone-flowered rose is all that is simple, and pure. It is clear that certain roses have suffered somewhat, both from evil tongues as well as evil eyes. Listen to the indignant complaint of that high-spirited horticultural traveller, Robert Fortune. "In the first volume of the Journal of the Horticultural Society I noticed the discovery and introduction of a very beautiful yellow or salmon-coloured rose. I had been much struck with the effects produced by it in the gardens of Northern China, where it was greatly prized, and I had no doubt that it would succeed equally well in this country. But from some cause — probably ignorance as to its habits or to the treatment required — my favourite wang-jan-ve, as the Chinese call it, was cried down. It had been planted in situations where it was either starved or burnt up; and in return for such unkind treatment, the pretty exotic obstinately refused to produce any but poor miserable flowers. Then the learned in such matters pronounced it quite unworthy of a place in our gardens amongst English roses; and I believe in many instances it was either allowed to die or was dug up and thrown away. Five or six years had elapsed since the introduction of this fine climber, and it had never been seen in its proper garb. But the results in two places proved it to be a rose nearly as rampant as the old Ayrshire, quite hardy, and covered from the middle of May, with hundreds of large, loose flowers, of every shade, between a rich

reddish-buff and a full copper-pink. The old standard plants in the open ground were one mass of bloom, the heads of each being more than four feet through. The successful cultivators would inform you that no great amount of skill was necessary in order to bring the rose into this state. It is perfectly hardy, scrambling over old walls, but it requires a rich soil and plenty of room to grow. The Chinese say that night-soil is one of the best manures to give it. Only fancy a wall completely covered with many hundred flowers, of various hues — yellowish, salmon, and bronze-like, and then say what rose we have in the gardens of this country so striking; and how great would have been the pity if an introduction of this kind had been lost through the blighting influence of such ignorance and prejudice, as have been shown by the person to whose care it was first intrusted." I have eased my mind by speaking a word in favour of ill-used, mismanaged roses. I will now mention a woeful blank which some enterprising rose-raiser ought to fill forthwith; we sadly want a thoroughly double Austrian briar, with the petals orange-scarlet above and yellow beneath. The desideratum only bides its time.

As to gathering roses; — when you wish to offer to your affianced love something as charming and fresh as herself, avoid making the attempt in windy weather. If a gentle shower will not come to your aid, water liberally all day long. Next morning, at three o'clock, or a little before, turn out of bed, and cut the choicest specimens, — none of them more than three-quarters opened, — before the sun has had time to kiss the dew off their leaves. Arrange according to your own, and your Dulcinea's fancy, and tie with a true-lover's knot of blue satin ribbon. When done, put the bouquet, or bouquets, in water, in a cool unoccupied room, with the blinds drawn down, till the moment arrives for the roses to appear in the divinity's presence.

Every one is acquainted with the French fashion of decorating graves with flowers. The way in which those flowers are generally respected, is an equally well-known fact. But everybody does not know the severity with which any violations of the little grave-gardens are punished. The Moniteur for September the twenty-second, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, states in its police report, that a woman named Badé, employed to keep up the flowers on a certain tomb in the Cimetière du Sud, conceived a singular method of fulfilling, without cost to herself, her office, which was liberally recompensed. Two handsome rose-trees, which overshadowed this tomb, withered and died. Shall she go and buy others to replace them? By no means. She remembers that, on another grave

some distance off, there are growing two magnificent plants of the same species. She takes them up; steals them; and employs them to adorn the grave which is entrusted to her care. The guardian of the Cemetery had already noticed a similar abstraction on the part of that bad woman. A complaint is made, and she gets for her pains — a year's imprisonment! Better law this, I think, than we usually get at home. Dear reader, I write as one — may you not read as one! — who has put Roses on the graves of the beloved.

TWO DINNER FAILURES.

Though Christmas comes but once a-year, and dinner comes — or ought to come — once a-day, three hundred and sixty-five times, in the year's course, I doubt if any number of extra banquets, at other times, could compensate for the loss of a dinner on Christmas day. I am qualified to speak on the subject, for I have gone two Christmases dinnerless. There might be, perhaps, some usefuller and more efficacious method of celebrating the great anniversary, than by devouring certain stated and set-apart meats and condiments, whose consumption is almost invariably followed by indigestion amongst the younger branches, and the indulgence in which frequently compels the strongest-stomached and bravest in gastric functions of us all to unloose the ultimate button of our waistcoats; yet if there be any observances on earth defensible — any festivities in the world excusable on the ground that they are not enjoyed in secret, in solitude, or in selfishness, that they are imparted, that they bring old acquaintance together, that they draw tighter the bonds of friendship, and staunch the wounds of enmity, that they are the delight of the young and the solace of the aged, that they promote good-fellowship, peace, and good-will among all men — these Christmas merry-makings are things that will live and will smell sweet to posterity to the latest time.

I like leaves in summer, and the glittering frost and white-washing of Nature's outbuildings in winter; but from muggy weather in January, and snow in July, good sense deliver me! So, by a parity of feeling, do I look evilly upon a man who orders plum-pudding after his joint at an eating-house in the middle of the year; so did I once quarrel with a dear friend because he gave me roast sucking-pig (at other times a celestial dish) for dinner on Christmas Day. There is a reason in roasting eggs; there should be a wise discrimination in the time and place of eating traditionally festive dishes. Pudding can be out of season as well as oysters. You would not roast cockles at a vestry-room fire. You would not singe a goose

with Tennyson's poems. You would not bid a convict condemned to die on Boxing Day, twine holly round the bars of his cell on the twenty-fifth of December. I will go farther than this. I cannot help thinking that a man who eats wrong dishes at Christmas time, or neglects to eat the right ones, must have some moral obliquity, some deformity of sense, some hump in his heart. There is engraven ineffaceably on my mind the newspaper details of a famous and cruel murder, whose date has utterly escaped my memory. In the report, I remember reading that the murderer and his victim — a woman — dined together on the Christmas Day preceding the murder off boiled scrag of mutton and turnips. I remember the heads of my family shaking their heads gravely when that fact was made public. No good, you see, could come of such a dinner.

With this strong feeling on the subject of Christmas in its connection with the pudding, it may easily be understood how the two Christmas disasters I am about to narrate made a strong and lasting impression on my mind, and why I reckon them as of decided importance among the griefs of which I have had my share.

Disaster number one, took place in a foreign clime, in the city of Paris, full twenty years ago. Yes; it must be twenty, correlative circumstances tell me so; yet I am not twice twenty years of age yet; and it appears to me that I can remember full fifty Christmas dinners preceding the one on which the disaster took place. And there must have been two repasts again preceding those: one composed of pap, the other of chopped meat and bread crumbs. Perhaps the dinners of my nonage — (childhood is so prompt to exaggerate) — counted double: perhaps I regaled sometimes in my dreams, or dined with the fairies, or played at pudding with my brothers and sisters. At all events twenty years ago I was a very little boy, and was invited out to dinner. The value of such an invitation may be appreciated when I tell you that I was a little stranded Englishman, in a strange land, among three hundred strange boys, in a great public school; that it was my first Christmas abroad, and that I was far from being familiar with the French language. The masters used me well enough, and the big boys did not beat me (the ennobling system of fagging is happily quite unknown in French schools), but I was very lonely, and friendless, and miserable. I did not know anything of the French games, I was a protestant, and could never divest myself of an uneasy notion that the corpulent ecclesiastic in the purple soutane, who came to prepare the boys for their first communion, looked upon me as an irredeemable brand for the burning—a living sample of those little wooden wheels, towed and

turpentined, used for lighting fires, and known, I believe, as blazers — and that he warned the other collegians to be chary in their companionship with me, for their souls' health. Indeed, Gueret, aged twelve, who was the greatest reprobate in the establishment, was the nephew of a bishop, and had once been convicted of stealing a peg-top, told me privately, on more than one occasion, that I could not be saved. I had a brother in Paris — many years older than I — who was studying at the Conservatoire; but he was so tall, had come to see me so seldom, had such a gruff voice, and wore such a fluffy white hat, that I was frightened of him, and called him Monsieur Frédric. Once, and once only, on the occasion of a projected visit on the next holiday to the Jardin des Plantes (pocket-money running rather short), I was emboldened, I may say, incited, by some of my schoolfellows who had boundless notions of my brother's wealth, to write to him, soliciting the loan of a ten sous piece. I suffered infinite agony of mind and consciousness of guilt till the answer arrived. It came at last in the shape of a bonny, new, two franc piece. I remember keeping it for a whole day and a half in an old morocco jewel-case, building all sorts of castles in the air as to the manner in which it was to be spent. But the holiday came, and the big boys undertook to lay my money out for me, to the best advantage. They laid it out to such advantage that, alas! they spent it all, all I solemnly declare no part of the feast came to my share, save a brown loaf, a stick of barley-sugar, and a cup of iced liquorice water, or coco.

I had a sister, at school in the convent of the Sacred Heart. I went to see her when I could get an exeat — about once in three weeks; and I may reckon among the adventures of my life that I have eaten plum-cake in a convent parlour, and have sate on the knee of a live abbess. But I had no other English friends or connections — my mother was far away — and I was homesick, and my small heart was weary. The boys without, as I have said, positively illtreating me, were apt to dance round me, to call me derisive epithets, — Rosbif, Pommedeterre, and the like; — they worried me dreadfully about a small tooth comb I used, and the like of which, I suppose, had never been in France before. There were some, who, though young, were politicians, and whose bitter taunts caused me often to bedew my pillow with tears for the involuntary share I had had in the Peninsular war, and the unconscious yet unpardonable degree in which I had been accessory to the illtreatment of Napoléon Bonaparte by Sir Hudson Lowe.

When Christmas came, and uprose Batten. Blessed be Batten evermore, and may the way of the world be soft to his feet, now,

wherever he may be. Batten was a pharmacien anglais, — he kept an English chemist's shop in the Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, nearly opposite the British embassy. He was a meek, mild, fair little man, who earned, I am afraid, but a scanty livelihood in purveying those much-prized blue-pills, and those indispensable black doses which are, to the British aristocracy and gentry travelling abroad as the air they breathe. Take any continental town — Tours, Nice, Pau, Ghent, Florence, Bad-Ems, Bonn, — wherever the well-to-do English form a colony, forthwith there sits down a merchant to supply them with black dose and blue pill. Religion (of a bitter aloes and pepper admixture) comes next, a circulating library next: a consulate, perhaps, at last; but medicine is the primary necessary, and it must be supplied. So Batten sold the "pilcerul" and the "nig-mist" to the English wayfarers in Paris. He had a very little wife, who was, for a wonder, quite as timid as himself. She used to cry a good deal. He had a good many children who had taken to the language, from their French bonne very kindly, and squabbled with one another in a delightful infantile jargon. Finally, he had (confound her!) an Irish servant of all-work, cook, housemaid, housekeeper, and major-domo, who was tall, raw-boned, choleric and red-elbowed, who was the tyrant of the whole household — a most devout Catholic, a very faithful, good, honest-hearted creature, and the terror and torment of Batten's life.

My big brother was engaged to eat his Christmas dinner with some great lady who lived in a pavillon rouge hard by the Parc de Monceaux. By the way it was neither a pavilion nor red, but was a great, staring, whitewashed house. I never knew a people (save, perhaps, the inhabitants of the Island of Barataria) so prone as are the French to call things by names which do not belong to them. But Batten, who had some previous knowledge of my family (originally due to black-dose and blue-pill, I believe), invited me and my sister to partake of his Christmas cheer at the Pharmacie Anglaise. We both obtained the requisite permission. At five o'clock that dark December afternoon we found ourselves, attired in gala-costume, in the friendly Batten's salon, happy, hungry, and full of home-thoughts.

There was Batten in a white waistcoat, looking — with his fair glossy hair plastered over his meek little forehead — to my irreverent mind far more like a waiter than a doctor, yet with sufficient odour of lozenges and ipecacuanha pervading him to vindicate his Apothecaries' Hall's pretensions. There was Mrs. Batten in a pink dress, and with pink eyelids too. The pudding had, perhaps, proved too much for her sensibilities. There was

Cousin Louisa, a relative and retainer of the house of Batten. She was hideous, but friendly, and was quite a Child's Own Book of stories and games. There was Captain Chiff, late of the Royal Waggon Train, who had lived in Paris ever since the peace of eighteen hundred and fifteen, and was reported to repose himself, every autumn, in the debtors' prison of Clichy (at the suit of some creditor who was compelled by law to pay a franc a-day for his support there), just as one might retire to a villa in the country. There were two Misses Chiff, angular, musical, and frost-bitten, nasally-speaking. And finally there was great store of children — the young Battens, ourselves, and some youthful pilgrims at various Parisian boarding-schools, similarly circumstanced, who had been bid to eat the fatted pudding by the friendly Batten.

We, children, were very happy and noisy, and talked and laughed much, comparing our school experiences among ourselves. The elder guests were decorously cheerful; but I could observe (I was a bit of an observer even then) that a gloom hung over our hosts. Mrs. Batten's eyelids, I repeat, showed symptoms of recent lachrymatory irritation. Batten was perturbed in spirit. He looked frequently towards the door; he asked me much too frequently if I was ready for my dinner; and he changed colour, and looked positively wretched when the door opened, and Irish Mary, so was the tyrannical servant-of-all-work called, came to lay the cloth for dinner. I noticed (inquisitive urchin) a certain wildness in that domestic's eye, an unsteadiness of gait, a mingled imbecility and ferocity of expression. You know how precociously shrewd children are — how they are gifted with a sort of second-sight — how the little scholars in Shenstone's charming poem eye the birch-tree, and shape it into rods, and tingle at the view. Well, I noticed all these things about Irish Mary; and another of my senses became awakened to a certain odour, half saccharine, half alcoholic, and I shaped it into rum, and trembled for the pudding.

Mrs. Batten had already dropped a tearful hint about a French female cook, who had been engaged the day before to prepare the dinner, Irish Mary having given symptoms of a recurrence of a disorder known as tantrums; which tantrums were evil spirits that lasted ordinarily about a week, and required to be laid in a red sea of rum. But the French cuisinière had broken down in an early stage of the proceedings. She had fainted: her syncope being attributed partly to the confined atmosphere of the kitchen; (which, as in many French houses, was on the floor above our heads), partly the mortification of having been worsted in verbal single combat by Mary, whose broad Connaught quite

diminished her French; partly through tight lacing. The vast majority of French female cooks have waists like wasps, and wear lavender boots. At length, after we had waited what seemed to me an inconceivable time, dinner was at length announced. We, youngsters, were bestowed at a side-table. My dignity was a little hurt by this, as also by the insulting but well-meant offer of Cousin Luisa to cut up my meat for me; but I was consoled by thinking of pudding. We had some very nice soup first, some turkey roasted and stuffed with chestnuts. The roast-beef was to follow, and then — then — the pudding.

It was to have followed, but it didn't. We waited a long time — a very long time. Our elders talked about the weather, the political disturbances, uneasily. Mrs. Batten left the room. She returned in a flood of tears, and whispered, sobbingly to Batten. The chemist started, trembled, rose and spoke —

"Oh, children! children!" he said, wringing his meek little hands, "I fear you must make out the rest of your dinner with cake and wine!"

Good gracious! what had happened? Had the French cuisinière sunk under syncope? Had her sweetheart, the Sapeur-pompier, arrived, and revenged her by sabering Irish Mary? Was the pudding spoilt? Yet we could smell it still (all odours are sentient in a French house), but, mingled with the smell, came soughing on the draught (all French houses are full of draughts) a wild demoniac sound, as of some person singing in the upper storey.

I know not what impulse seized us, but we all rushed upstairs — Captain Chiff leading the van, bravely, the Battens bringing up the rear, weeping, and we, children, hovering on the flanks like skirmishers. We reached the kitchen, and there we saw a sight that would have made sore eyes sorer. Everything was in confusion; but on the hearth confusion was worse confounded. There, O lovers of Christmas and its cheer, there was the remainder of our looked-forward-to dinner! Beef, pudding, mincepies, vegetables, melted butter, charcoal, ashes, brandy sauce, saucepan-lids, and horse-radish, all blended together in one hideous holocaust; and in the midst of the ruins of this culinary Carthage sat the infamous Irish Marius, wildly drumming with her heels on the floor, and with a ladle upon a stewpan!

She was tipsy. Her hair was dishevelled; her face was red. Empty bottles of every description (she was not particular in her drink, though she preferred rum) betokened the way she had been going. But she heeded not our presence; and in the very face of Nemesis — of us, defrauded innocents — of her wronged master and mistress —

thus she sang, in a loud, long-sustained howl —

Flare up, Mary!
Flare up, Mary!
Fiddle iddle um tum
Tow row! row!

Slowly and sadly we descended the stairs, to make out the rest of our dinner with cake and wine. As we regained the salon, the air and the words that the wretched woman was singing changed. She sang —

Hee roar, up she rouses,
What shall we do with the drunken sailor?

What was to be done with the drunken sailor was a secondary consideration to what was to be done with the drunken cook. She could not be paid her wages, turned out of doors, or given in charge in a foreign land. I believe Batten sent her back to Connaught at the earliest opportunity. But he never gave any more Christmas dinners.

Of Christmas disaster number two, though I was personally concerned in, and a sufferer by it, I must speak more in the third than in the first person. Indeed many of the circumstances which helped to lift the veil of mystery that at first enveloped this disaster were only subsequently elicited by the testimony of other parties. Witnesses had to be examined, evidence sifted and compared, before the full horror of the event that took place in Rhododendron Villa, Addison Road, Bayswater, could be fully comprehended or placed before the public in a narrative form.

An interval of ten years must be supposed to have elapsed between the first and second Christmas disaster. I had grown above side-tables, and had a a soul too haughty to have my meat chopped. I was old enough to shave, to blush, and to be in debt. I was old enough to feel a pleasure, and call it pain — to fall in love with a stay-busk, some crenoline, and some false hair, and think that it was lovely woman. I was old enough, in fine, to be invited to eat my Christmas dinner at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Charkison Rabbets, one of the eighteen clerks of the Petty-sky-blue-seal Office (since abolished), and fool enough to have my hair curled, and to put on silk stockings and pumps.

We were very genteel — oh, excruciatingly genteel, but not very lively. Our boots were as bright as the fire-irons, and the younger portion of us, when spoken to, blushed a much deeper red than the fire. A footpage opened the door. We were waited upon at dinner by a stately female domestic, who was an astonishing compromise between a housemaid and a thoroughbred footman. She wore ringlets, but they ought to have been powdered; she wore an apron, but it should have been plush.

The dinner was very genteel. We had fish; boiled turkey and oyster sauce; kick-shaws. People drank wine with one another, and had affections of the spinal

marrow in doing so. I made my usual highly-successful mistake of pouring sherry into a port-wine glass, following it up by my inimitable feats of upsetting my glass, turning a deep peony red, looking at myself in my spoon, and then wishing that I could sink through the earth, that the pudding would come, or that I were dead.

The pudding: it was below, and though Mr, Charkison Rabbets was a genteel man, in the copper. It was below, under custody of Jane Buck the cook. It was still imprisoned in its cloth, leaping, bubbling, blobbing, rumbling in its cavernous bath of boiling water. It had yet to be withdrawn, to be plunged into cold water, to be garnished with holly, and soused in brandy sauce, and to be served up on the dining-room table, to the pride of Jane Buck the cook, and the delight of a genteel party.

The little footpage was engaged outside the dining-room door — I will not say in selecting for his own refection tit-bits from the dishes that came out. The genteel housemaid who should have worn plush was waiting upon us. Jane Buck was in the front-kitchen, and was thinking that it was pretty nearly time to see about taking the pudding out of the copper.

It was now just dusk. We had dined at three o'clock, a genteel, but not fashionable, hour. The cook had just turned to go into the kitchen where the copper was, when she saw, looming through the area window, and darkening it, the dresser, the pie-board, her own work-box, and a human face!

It was a large, dark, and very ugly face, closely shaven, but surrounded by long, lank, black greasy hair; and round the occiput was a mark, as if the face's proprietor had been in the habit of tying a string round his head. It might have been the face of a bravo, of a murderer, of Medusa, of the awful Bull-and-Mouth itself; but it was worse than all these to the unfortunate Jane Buck.

The face, accompanied by the body that owned it, speedily entered the kitchen itself. A wide-awake hat of ashen hue surmounted it. The face was some six feet from the ground; below that was a long, voluminous Spanish cloak: and that was all, save Jane Buck and the twilight.

The cook did not scream: she did not faint, but she turned deadly pale, trembled in every limb, and faltered —

"My 'usband!"

It was indeed her husband; her wicked, vagabondising, brandy-drinking, short-pipe-smoking, wages-squandering, kitchen-stuff-devouring, unfaithful husband. Jane Buck's husband was the famous, but abandoned, artist, Signor Buck. He was by vocation a juggler, but was sometimes an acrobat, and had been seen as an Ethiopian serenader.

He had deserted his wife for years, paying her only periodical visits to extort money from her. He had even taken from her the only pledge of their union — a son, aged five — and the unhappy mother had once caught a glimpse of her wicked partner, in tights and spangles, standing on the head of another reprobate similarly attired, and holding forth their innocent offspring — the babe was also in tights and spangles — at arm's length, and by one leg.

"Thomas Buck," continued the cook, quaveringly, "what 'ave brought you here? What do you want?"

"Blunt!" answered the head and cloak fiercely. At the same time a gaunt, bony, knotted hand extended itself from the ample folds of the Spanish garment. It struck the pie-board violently. Then seeming to waver, it shook for a moment in thin air, then, almost unconsciously, closed upon the leg of a turkey in a half-emptied dish. The twilight obscured the cannibalic action; but, from a craunching sound and the previous antecedents of Signor Buck, there is every reason to believe that he was eating the drumstick of the turkey.

"Tummas Buck," replied Jane his wife, "you 'ave 'ad my wages, my savins — you have drunk my perkisits — you 'ave taken away my dear, dear little boy — what 'ave you done with him, Tummas?"

"He's a fizzer now," answered Signor Buck, gloomily

'A fizzer?" ejaculated the cook.

"'Prenticed to a swallower," the cruel father answered. "He's a doing carvin'-knives now, but he'll square red-hot pokers in doo time. But where is the blunt? I must 'ave it — I aint got a mag — I'm dry — give me blunt, plate, or linning, or grease."

"I won't," said his wife, indignantly.

"You won't!" exclaimed the signor, violently; "you won't! then to Spain — to Spain!"

This was too much for Jane Buck: brute as he was, she loved her husband. She flung her arms round him, promised him money, and entreated him not to go to Spain.

"To Spain! to Spain!" the signor continued to ejaculate. "To Spain! Gods! had I but a marlinspike!"

What the dissolute juggler would have done with a marlinspike, or whether he wanted one, or anything indeed, save money from his foolish wife, is problematical; but the threat, coupled with the expression of his wish for the nautical instrument in question, moved his wife to empty out her pockets and her workbox before him, and bid him help himself.

Signor Buck was just in the act of transferring the contents of these objects within the penetralia of his Spanish cloak when the parlour bell rang violently,

and the cook ran out of the kitchen, bidding her husband await her return.

Signor Buck was never seen again. Four silver spoons and a fish-slice, the property of Charkison Rabbets, Esq., were never seen again; and, worse than all, the Christmas plum-pudding — the pride, the hope, the joy of the family — disappeared with the spoons and the fish-slice, and was never seen again, and we went puddingless that Christmas-day.

Heaven send us all many more Christmases, and no worse disasters than these to chequer them!

THE BUCKLER SQUIRES.

Ten years have passed since my first visit to Riverport — there railways had not yet penetrated. A lumbering cross between an omnibus and an ancient stage-coach crawled up and rumbled down many little hills. We left the castle and the cathedral, the half-deserted city — melancholy in spite of gay uniforms, scarlet and blue; for round-about railways, rejected by city pride, have taken away all the trade of thirty-four gallantly appointed coaches, with consequential coachmen and Lothario guards, who, bugle in hand, charmed and broke the hearts of unnumbered chambermaids.

We travelled — slowly but steadily; for the roads were hard and sound — sometimes between high chalk banks, encumbering many a rood of fertile soil, sometimes between thin plantations of young upright trees, extending for miles, where the loud crack of the driver's whip waked up some combative cock-pheasant from his doze after an early morning meal. We passed fields destined for wheat, where two great strapping fellows, with four strong horses dragging a clumsy wooden plough, slowly and with monstrous dignity turned up miles of light soil. This was a county of hops, for whose benefit all other crops were starved. When all his science, and capital, and credit, had been exhausted on the hop-garden, the farmer treated the poor corn-fields to a sort of Barmecide feast, by scratching them with a superfluity of horse and man's labour, and nothing more. Next, we passed hop-gardens in their winter state. The creeping vines with the green foliage, the clustering flowers, and rich perfume, were gone. The late gardens were a waste, bare as a deserted camp, with huts (of hop-poles) left standing. So, first ascending as if by steps of short ascent, and then as steadily descending, we reached the brow of the hill, where the vale of Riverport opened before us.

It is a vale, such, in summer time, as we dream of in dreams, or fancy in school-days, if exiled

to some school among the dreary flats of a fen country, after reading Rasselas. The last part of the road creeps down along one side of a steep turf-covered hill, thinly sprinkled over with yew-trees of unknown age, that seem stretching their monstrous arms, and point to where a Druids' cairn marks the interval between the skin-clad Britons, whom Cæsar conquered, and the smock-frocked natives, who drink, not mead, but beer. Sheep feed on the sweet turf of the hill sides, in great flocks, white-faced and black-faced; with few traces of the ancient horned breed of the county, that made the wealth of the yeomen of Kent in Robin Hood's day, before the invasion of the "hops, carp, and pickerel." On the descending side, the mighty basin, smooth as if scooped out by Titan navigators' spades, is lined over with the many divisions of the varying fields. Here stubble fields, where the brown partridges cower as we pass. There pastures dotted with speckled cattle, black and white, more picturesque in the meadow than profitable to the butcher, — hop-grounds and the richly brown red of lately-ploughed fields. These repeated, again and again, carry the eye from the steep winding road which we skid down, beyond the fields, and the high banked hedges, to an ancient park of undulating slopes, thickly timbered with oaks, fast changing colour in the winter winds. Lower still, Riverport appears, with its solid church-tower, a grey speck upon the landscape. Masts and brown sails mysteriously moving, tell of unseen barges slowly creeping up a winding river before a favouring wind. More farms, farm-houses, with dusky thatched roofs, and long wooden barns. Then, on the other side the river, up rose, by degrees, the rounding hills, half-fields and half-plantations, where more hop-poles grow and more pheasants breed.

It was very pretty, ten years ago, to look down on this scene, and to take in the details as they grew with sight.

But, when we reached the boundary of the park we had admired in the distance, it was impossible not to be struck with the signs of desolation. The park palings broken down in a score of places; the lodge weather-stained, covered with mangy thatch; its little garden overgrown with weeds, and vegetables run to seed; a brood of dirty children staring and shouting as we passed; the mansion itself — a large, many-windowed brick building — absolutely deserted.

Our coachman — a cross-breed between an hostler and a ploughman, and not of the talkative breed — only growled out, in answer to our curious questions, "That 's Buckley Park. I 've heard that the grandfather of the squire drove his coach-and-six, but this un's a poor creatur."

We rolled slowly on, and crossed a narrow high-backed bridge, where a gang of idle country louts lounged over the parapets, slanging the bargees as they tided through the arches.

Riverport had a village of a single street, with a church, an almshouse, and a dozen taverns; before whose doors red-cravatted, flannel-shirted, giant bargees and nondescript ruffians — a mixture of the pauper labourer, the poacher and the tramp — with the help of slattern women, several fiddles and an organ, fought, shouted, and made a hideous din. The village, with church tower, and cottages with quaint chimney-stacks — so picturesque from a distance — formed a straggling, filthy lane, of decayed dwellings of stone, mud, and timber, used at haphazard. Every window was open; and, at almost every one, some slattern woman lolled and screamed to the children playing in the street.

A man with a fishing-rod is not afraid of a dirty village. My visit was to my old friend, Splinters (lately settled in Riverport, in all the new-flown dignity of the alphabet granted by the dignitaries of surgery and drugs), with a behind-thought, as the French say, of experimenting on certain famous trout streams. The village doctor knows everything. Is he not the Confessor of the nineteenth century? Hence my knowledge of Buckley or Buckleigh Park.

Where Buckleigh Hall now stands, stood, so says Domesday Book, at the Conquest, the dwelling of a Saxon Thane. The Conqueror gave it to William de Bouclere, one of his captains, with many thousand acres besides. From father to son, with scarcely a break from the direct line, the hall, the park, and a fair estate, had descended up to the time of the grandfather of the last owner. The stone keep and castle built by the first De Buckleigh, was dismantled in the wars of the Roses. A Bouclere Buckleigh, in Queen Elizabeth's time, built a pleasant mansion, after the fashion of that age. In William the Third's time, terraces, and clipt yew trees, and famous gardens were added by a prudent man, who married a Dutch merchant heiress. The time of George the Second gave a fantastical, powdered, patched Dame Agatha Buckler, anxious, above all things, to be genteel; so she took advantage of a fire to alter what was spared into a sash-windowed, pillared, porticoed hall. Successive alterations in the same spirit, with the help of stucco and stone pillars, reduced the once picturesque hall to a heavy yellow square parallelogram of carpenters' architecture; as unlike the ancestral house of the family as the last male heir was to the knight who won his manor at Hastings.

In course of time, the Buckleighs were transformed into

Bucklers. The first of the family was also the last who did anything to mark his name upon the county history. The Buckleighs and Bucklers were squires and justices of the peace; they never aspired to be knights of the shire. They generally intermarried with other Bucklers, cousins more or less removed, and were not prolific, We don't hear of any Bucklers famous in the army or the navy, the law or the church.

Some of the Squires Buckler kept hounds; all hunted and shot; committed poachers to the county jail; and drank to the king (over the water) until there was no king there to drink to: and then, with equal zeal, drank to King George fifty years ago. The Bucklers made it a point of honour to drive four horses, or a set of horses, as it was called, and not to allow their daughter to marry any one who could not keep a set for them too; hence, tradition mentions many withered, discontented spinsters, and some shocking runaway marriages by maiden Bucklers, who were thenceforward chased out of the county by a union of squires and squiresses. It need scarcely be said that, with the important exception of the Dutch heiress who introduced asparagus-beds and forcing-houses, but who died early of apoplexy, leaving one son, the Bucklers encouraged no innovations. Had ploughing by the horse's tail ever been the custom in England, it would have survived last in Buckler Park.

The Bucklers were hospitable to neighbours of their own rank, after their own heavy fashion. In the servants' hall, and kitchen, there was a sort of open house for all comers. Some lazy fellows or untidy women, beside the numberless cousins of the army of dependents, were always in the kitchen having cold meat, bread and cheese, and strong ale; of which last huge butts were brewed every October. They were charitable, too, after their fashion. On certain days, and especially St. Thomas's day, consecrated by immemorial custom, a crowd of the villagers marched up with basket and wallet, and received fixed allowances of food, clothes, and firewood, without distinction or inquiry; so that in course of time every family able to obtain a footing in Riverport counted on "Thomassin," the annual dole from the Hall, as so much income to be added to their lazily-earned wages. Indeed, during the last Buckler's time the doles were as good as cash; for Mr. Joe Brunt, landlord of the Jolly Boatman, was always prepared to give gin and ale, bread and meat, for flannel and faggots, either to clear off and old score or to commence a new one. So dole days were always celebrated by a general jollification at the Jolly Boatman. There were few, either husbands or wives, who, after partaking of Mr. Brunt's

good cheer, did not leave the Buckler Hall bundle behind the bar.

The Bucklers, too, were religious, after their fashion; that is to say, the squire seldom failed to appear and to slumber in the huge enclosed family pew, safe behind curtains from inspection; except from that of the charity boys in the Buckler uniform of green and yellow in the gallery. The Bucklers did not approve of education for the poor, and it must be confessed, that nothing serious was done in the Buckler charity school to interfere with their prejudice.

The Buckler tenantry were settled down on some of the richest land in the county, at rents which had not been raised for many generations. They grew magnificent crops of weeds; and trusted to a good season, now and then, to set them all straight. A Buckler tenant was commonly, at least, a-year in arrear. His farm-buildings — profusely patched with green timber, which he used wastefully, because he got it for nothing — almost tumbling about his ears. He was always grumbling, as was natural; for those who grumbled got an allowance. One knowing fellow obtained two reductions of rent by asking for a new barn, which he eventually built of the squire's timber, carted by the squire's team. Another deluded tenant, whom accident had sent to an uncle in the north, in his youth, was rewarded for some spirited improvements, by having his rent raised. He did not seem to mind that much; but, on its being observed that his daughter played the piano, he received notice to quit — the only instance of ejectment ever known.

You might know the Riverport and Buckler labourers anywhere by their lounging gait, and the ingenuity with which, when standing still, they managed to lean against a tree or a post. They seemed to crawl through life with one eye constantly turned toward the Hall kitchen, and the other, toward the workhouse, as the final, certain end of their journey. They touched their hat to the squire, with the profoundest humility, and mocked him, behind his back, in their peculiar dialect, over his own harvest-beer.

With such landlords, such tenants, and such labourers on the outlying farms, the Home Park farm, and the park itself kept pace in decline. Everything was taken out, and nothing put in; weeds buried the corn, thistles, rushes, moss, and nettles, overran the turf. The old fruit trees died out in the gardens, no one troubled himself to graft or plant. Once or twice, one of the squires ordered a collection of young fruit trees for walls and standard; but, when they came no one took the trouble to tend them when planted. The gardeners were the only persons who got a good supply of vegetables. They kept pigs in their

own Dutch garden. The squires of Buckler Hall were like the Dutch-planted pippins; they gradually wore out without any special extravagance; they muddled their income away in miserable litigation, and the expenses of buying more land, and borrowing money to pay for it, and each succeeding inheritor grew poorer, prouder, feebler in constitution, shier, and more reserved than his predecessor.

The last squire, Arthur Buckler, declined invitations, and, by degrees, his neighbours ceased to call. He was not a young man when he came to the property; and, as he did not show any signs of marrying, in spite of vigorous assaults made on his bachelorship by ladies willing to renew the glories of Buckler Hall, the moss-covered walks up to the hall were never marked by the carriage wheels of neighbouring squires, and were only trodden by villagers hurrying thanklessly along to receive their charity-doles — the last remnant of the pride of the Bucklers.

At length, a few months after my visit, the bell tolled, and the last of the De Bucklers was magnificently buried; leaving behind him a village of paupers, where strapping, able-bodied fellows kept the relieving officers in constant work, and took their relief as if it had been their wages — a work-house full of silly children, deserted wives, and mothers never wed, and an estate so covered with mortgages, bonds, and law costs, that it was not worth claiming by any of the remote descendants of female heirs, whom the pride and coach-and-four of the Bucklers had sent wandering to distant counties and to foreign lands.

After due time for the performance of those solemn ceremonies with which the tribe of legal boa-constrictors consume an estate, huge placards and column-long advertisements informed the neighbouring squires and squiresses that the estate which the first De Buckleigh won with his battle-axe was to pass away under the hammer of Mr. Cerule Smug, the noted auctioneer. Then curiosity broke loose; the hall, the gardens, the park, the home-farm were all explored. The neighbouring town sent forth fly-loads armed with catalogues of the pictures, furniture, plate, valuable library, carriages, harness, farm-stock of the late Arthur de Malpas de Buckleigh, Esquire; — the auctioneer having revived the old names. The moss-covered avenues were cut up with vehicles of all descriptions, from the Honourable Ridley Rowpoint's four-in-hand drag to Moses Mordecai's racing-pony dog-cart. But there was very little to see. The furniture was worn out, and its fashion was neither ancient nor modern. Of rich oak carvings and quaint needleworked tapestry there was none. The varied cellar of wines was strongly suspected by the knowing to have been imported,

with a collection of pictures, by the bland auctioneer. The library was composed of dark volumes of controversial divinity of Queen Anne's day, a few stray volumes of the St. James's Chronicle, Clater's Farriery, Racing Calendars, and a set of the Ladies' Magazine. The gardens were a waste; in the park half a dozen mangy does wandered dolefully. A monstrous barn, of admirable workmanship, dating back to the fourteenth century, was full of nothing but cobwebs. A few melancholy cows and a pair of aged hairy-legged cart-horses were the only sign of farming stock. The carriages figuring in the catalogue were an ancient family coach, in which a hen turkey was hatching her broods (not for the first time apparently), a chariot with three wheels, and a wonderfully tall gig.

Nothing remained to show the ancient glories of the De Buckleighs, except the avenue of oaks, the groves of beech-trees, and two solitary cedars waving over either end of the mouldering terrace.

Although the great Mr. Smug exerted all his eloquence, and dived into Domesday Book, and the History of Landed Gentry by the ingenious Mr. Perk, there were no bidders. The village was the natural appurtenance of the Hall, and there were few rich enough and bold enough to embark in an investment so dilapidated that for many years there must be perpetual outgoings, and few comings-in, in order to put the estate into decent condition. A century of neglect had to be recovered.

So the auction fell dead, advertisements announced that all that beautiful estate, including the park and mansion,— with the manorial rights, and also all the village of Riverport, were to be disposed of by private contract, on application to Messrs. Brown and Crayton, Solicitors. The mansion was shut up, the few servants and dependents migrated, some to settle on their savings, others to the workhouse and the almshouse. In a more remote part of the county, before the age of railways and high-roads, Buckleigh Park might have grown into a wilderness for gipsies to settle on, and tramps to appropriate. Some did, on the unfenced land.

At length a rumour ran through the country — travelling by way of the parish surgeon, the parson, and the lawyer — that a London man had bought the Buckleigh estate, and was going to live there. Among a certain class peculiar to every agricultural county, as much indignation was excited by this intelligence, as if a burglarious entry into the Hall had been effected by "the London man."

The class I mean are respectably descended from old squirearchical families, or fancy they are; at any rate, they have not been in trade for at least two generations — it includes a select

few of the learned professions — briefless barristers who have retired to cultivate a few hundred paternal acres, and been made magistrates on the strength of connection and profession; parsons (a decreasing number, I am glad to say) who despise their flocks, especially the broad-cloth section.

These squires and their dames with very moderate original education, not much enlarged by travelling, or sharpened by the rapid and miscellaneous society of the great world of great towns, where dulness, unless gilded with millions, so soon finds its proper place, associate with each other, ruminate over the same round of stationary ideas, and speak a language — unintelligible to strangers — composed of a mosaic of allusions to county or parish gossip. They generally agree in worshipping a county idol. Sometimes it is a duke or an earl, — in less titled counties, a baronet of the Browncoated school, — and this idol is their standard of taste, fashion, morals, and politics. To be noticed by the idol is to be happy, as that fortunate Peri commemorated by the late Mr. Thomas Moore; — to be unnoticed is to be miserable and contemptible. Loyalty to their idol, whose reflected brilliancy is supposed to give the worshippers a certain degree of importance, is the special virtue of these squires. It is not safe to suggest that any one not belonging to the set has fatter pheasants, finer horses, a better port wine, or more anything than the idol.

A shriek of horror was raised at a county tea-table, when a young rebel — a medical student fresh from St. George's — ventured to hint that perhaps the new purchaser might be a person of taste and spirit.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed a chorus, "the idea of some tailor or grocer or alderman succeeding to Buckler Park: building a villa with transparent drawing-room windows, a green door, a brass knocker, and a leaden Cupid for a sun-dial; cutting down the old trees, and having his vulgar city acquaintance to visit him." However, as no one of the species was prepared to protect the county by paying the price of the estate, Buckler Park passed into the hands of the London man.

Surveyors came down with chains, and mysterious triangles, and dumpy levels. Trees were felled and vistas opened. On one day it was announced that the Hall was to be levelled to the ground; and the next that every tenant and every cottager who did not hold a lease had received notice to quit. The new man was beginning to take possession with a strong hand. The whole park and home-farm was divided by red lines of draining tiles, — the gardens and the farm-buildings shared the fate of the Hall, and nothing except the Dutch garden was spared by the ruth

less improvers; who, with new-fashioned spades and picks, barrows and carts, cleared all before them, and left not a stone or a brick to show where the last Buckler died.

From time to time I used to meet at Lignum's Hotel, Gray's Inn, Mr. Clipper, a cousin of my friend Splinter, a junior partner of Binds and Clipper, the legal firm who did the business of nearly all the squires round Riverport, and shared their antipathies and genteel prejudices with a zeal not injurious to their interests. My before-described journey through his native parish was always an excuse for indulging the curiosity, which, by a sort of fascination, I felt about Buckler Park. My questions he answered, nothing loth. It was comical to watch the struggle between Clipper's loyalty to his clients' county hatreds and the sacred awe with which he looked on every millionnaire. "Well," I would say, "and how does the new man get on at Riverport?"

"O! awful, upon my word! A complete radical — a leveller — no respect for anything ancient — don't understand the feeling of the poor people—and has brought his detestable manufacturing notions into the county."

"Indeed! how's that — going to stand for the county on a programme of the Red Republic?"

"O no, nonsense! But you see, he won't leave anything alone. Not left a vestige of the old place, and brought all new people on the farm; interferes in the parish school; wants all sorts of new-fangled notions to be taught there. With this education, we sha'n't have a servant soon. Won't let the poor fellows work in the way they've been accustomed, got a foreigner for a bailiff, and set up a manufactory on the bank of the river."

"What, on the old brickfield? Why, I thought you sold up the last tenant of that brick-field for his rent?"

"Well," said Clipper, "it's no use talking to you. However, I assure you it's very aggravating to have a new man coming down among some of the oldest families in England, showing off his money — though, to be sure, the poor's-rates are very much reduced. Confound it, I can't go into the town without hearing of some one wanting an order to see Buckley Hall, and talking about the pictures and the statues, and the library, and the aviary, and the conservatory, and the model cottages, and the new school — hang his impudence! Why, sir, I've heard my father say that, in his time, no one under the rank of a peer, or a prime minister, or at any rate a very old baronet, presumed to have a picture-gallery. The model cottages are the worst of all, to make all our people dissatisfied; and schools where — 'pon my soul, you won't believe it — they teach even singing and drawing. They'll have a piano in every cottage, next.

But that's not the worst. You see, money will do anything nowadays; so they've put the new man into the commission of the peace, and made him a deputy-lieutenant. You see, our people are obliged to be civil, for the new man's a sort of favourite with Lord Browndown and the Earl of Domperley. To be sure, since he's been there, the shooting is very good at Buckley Park; the cock-shooting in his new plantations by the river is famous after a frost, and he has an uncommon good notion of managing the woods; I must own that. So he does somehow manage to get very good society. Why, my client, Squire Thicksedde (the Thickseddes have lived on their own estate since the time of Henry the Eighth) was persuaded by his wife — who wanted to see the Hall there was so much talk about — to accept an invitation to a shooting-party; and he wanted to know how the new man managed to grow such crops of turnips. You'll scarcely believe it — but it's true, upon my word — he sat next at dinner to two men, and had a good deal of talk with them; and you'll never guess who they turned out to be, for Earl Domperley and Bumptious, M. P. for the county, were there. Why, one was a painter, a fellow that does pictures for a living; and the other a newspaper man, and writes those vile things about the magistrates and the aristocracy. It was Mrs. Thicksedde who found it out, and you may imagine how shocked she was; for it was she who turned her back on her favourite niece for marrying a cotton-spinner — a rich man, too!"

"And who," I inquired, "is this horrid new man?"

"O! it's Mr. Wagerman; he was an engineer, they tell me, or a stoker, or something of that sort once; but now he owns coal mines and all sorts of things. Rather a gentlemanly man, I must admit, and has a capital cellar of wine, but a perfect revolutionist."

After this conversation, I was not sorry to have an opportunity of paying a second visit to Riverport. An invitation from Splinter to try the partridge-shooting of one of his patient's farms in September, gave me an opportunity of comparing past and present — the old squire and the new man.

A branch railroad — another of the innovations due to the dreadful Mr. Wagerman — brought me within a couple of miles of Riverport. As we descended the steep side of the beautiful valley, Buckleigh Park in the distance seemed unchanged; the noble trees, waved their broad arms above the turf as of old; but green patches of young flourishing plantations, stretching over scores of acres, covered hill-sides formerly bare and barren. So soon as we skirted the park, the well-built wall, the neat lodges, new clumps of ornamental trees, the healthy verdure of well-cultivated turf, fed over by beautiful cattle, gave signs of

wealth, taste, and agricultural progress.

A broad straight drive through ancient trees brought to view the new hall — built of a cool grey stone, quarried close at hand — somewhat in the Elizabethan style, but without slavish absurdity of details; with a central tower and wings, in style and colour far more ancient than the hideous building it had replaced. Nearer approach gave to view a long stately terrace, adorned with vases of marble filled with flowers, and statues in bronze. Turf banks, with brilliant flower-beds, contrasted with the carved stone buttresses. At either extremity, trees, that had seen beneath their boughs many generations of De Buckleighs, completed the picture. In front, a herd of mottled fallow-deer, with here and there a black buck and a white doe, cropped the short sweet grasses which, with the aid of drain-pipes and careful cultivation, had superseded the rushes and moss of the old park, Further on, separated by an invisible fence, fed the pets of the dairy. Pure Alderneys, with dark beseeching eyes; worthy of Juno, and more than one dappled, full-uddered Durham, and a choice flock of sheep, which gave a truly rural air to the delightful scene.

Entering the house-farm from the park — disturbing as we passed scores of half-tame pheasants, that fluttered up a moment, and then settled down again to feed — I found continued revolution. Every fence perfect, every gate swinging easily and catching fast; fields drained, dried, squared, and released of useless hedges (with enough left for shelter); some rich with yellow corn fast falling before the scythe and reaping-machine,—very different from the old style, where scarlet poppies and yellow charlock fought bravely, and not without success, for half the ploughed ground. Other fields, shaded with all the colours of green roots, Scotch turnips, swedes, and mangolds, flourishing and extinguishing weeds, where never anything but weeds grew before. Already, on a twenty-acre piece, clear of oats, half-a-dozen of Howard's iron ploughs, each drawn by a pair of quick-stepping horses, driven curricle fashion, were at work, — a practical satire on the Alexandrine style of four straggling horses and two clumsy men dragging a clumsy plough. Active boys, of a breed new to Riverport, were at work everywhere making war on weeds.

The lazy, drawling, thoughtless ways, once chronic in Buckleigh Park, had yielded to earnestness and active intelligence; just as the mangy deer had been superseded by a fine herd. A miserable five-score of bony, profitless sheep, by two great flocks of Cotswolds — the last great triumph of the skill of the English stock-breeders — the clumsy wooden ploughs, harrows, and head-thickening, soul-deadening flail, were replaced by the best

work of the Ransomes, Garretts, Hornsbys, and Crosskills, for sowing and gathering agricultural crops.

To get implements with money and a friend to choose them, is easy enough; to get labourers to use them, and make them work the pace required for the profitable use of modern implements, requires qualities money cannot buy.

From the fields to the farmsteading was the natural course, to see where was the produce, and what the fertilisers of fields converted in a few years from barrenness to overflowing crops. Good sweet haystacks in the corners of the grass fields, a fine array of round corn stacks, neatly built on stone tressels ranged around the huge barn, gave good promise of the interior of the farm-buildings. The huge barn, no longer empty or cobwebbed, had been turned into a business-like agricultural manufactory. In one division a steam-engine roared and worked machinery that threshed, winnowed, and cast forth wheat at one end, and sent the sheaves of straw rolling up into the loft at the other. Under another division, twenty-five great bullocks were fattening in the boxes which have immortalised the name of Warne — from the enlightened Lothians to benighted Sussex. The same capacious barn-roof covered a byre for the milking of cows, and pens of numerous pigs, whose food was cooked by the steam-engine boiler.

But enough of agricultural technicalities. From the farmstead to the village was the next step. More revolutions there. In the distance, saddle-backed, steep-roofed, belfried buildings, told of chapels, or schools. The high-backed bridge was clear of idlers, perhaps a rural policeman on his rounds had something to do with the clearance; but wages to any extent for hard work had more. An earthquake or an army of navigators had been at work in the main street; for fully a score of ancient dwellings, with their green groundsel-covered and black thatched roofs, had disappeared, and were replaced by cottages pretty enough for pictures. Even the butcher's shop — projecting with an overhanging roof, capital for shade, and convenient for displaying deceased muttons — was a bit of architectural effect. The windows where rags formerly did duty for glass had disappeared, and so had the dishevelled mothers and dirt-coloured children. The tenants, matched the houses. Faces and hands had not been forgotten when the water was applied to the diamond-paned windows and the scrubbing-brush to the floor.

A familiar humming sound drew me towards the belfried stone building, in whose style I recognised the picturesque taste of a sculptor who does not disdain to be an architect, or wood-carver, or anything else, small or great,

where beauty is required. This was the infant-school, built and supported at the cost of the new tenant of Buckleigh Hall, and well filled with little recruits, from as far round Riverport as little legs can go or be carried. There, the future peasantry and yeomanry of Buckleigh estate were being trained — a rosy, happy, chirping set. A little further on, the parish school appeared; but, O! how changed — cleaned, repaired, refitted. A trained master, bound to know something, had replaced the makeshift pedagogue. Maps, pictures and diagrams — the famous black-board which so much puzzled Lord Harrowby's inquiring friend, explained the necromancy by which the wild boys of the village had been reduced to order, and inspired with a degree of intelligence really alarming to any inquisitive stranger like myself, who may venture to put a question on arithmetic or geography.

In a word, the church, the schools, the cottages, the shops, the streets, and the inhabitants of Riverport, witness the care of a landlord not solely bent on screwing out the highest interest for his investment.

Riverport is now a quiet village, and semi-nude boatmen no longer run a muck through the one street, or fight pitched battles in the churchyard. They smoke the pipe of peace and drink mild ale without defying the passers-by to mortal combat. The squeak of the fiddle may be heard at the Bargee's Rest in the evening; but at an early hour every public "retires into the privacy of its own domestic circle," as the parish clerk sententiously informed us.

Do these material changes give unmixed contentedness? Are the wives satisfied that their husbands work longer hours, get more wages, and drink less beer; that their children are taught to read, and write, and to wash their faces and hands; to sing hymns and psalms, and reverently pray in church? Well, not quite. From Roman Horace's time to Sisty Caxton's there have always been praisers of time past to be found.

An old woman of vinegar aspect and suspicious alcoholic odour, complains grumblingly of the new man; that there is no life in the place now; and that the Hall isn't what it used to be. "Why, I can remember the time when my good man could go and get as much dried wood out of the plantation as he could carry, and no one said a word, and now you mayn't take a stick. To be sure, they give away coals, and flannel, and meat to some; but they ask so many questions, and want to know if the children go to school, and those that won't don't get none, except they're sick or so. Ah, those were the days when we went Thomassin' and got the best of ale, and beef, and clothes, every one alike, an' no prying into what you did. There was my poor son; just for nothing,

Squire Wagerman took and sent him across the water, poor lamb. They false-swore him. He never touched the pedlar's pack, I'm sure. And though my lady comes in her carriage, and brings me a few bits of things, I say these are not like the old times."

Very likely there are plenty more in the village of the same mind.

There are farmers, too, holding land under Mr. Wagerman who grumble a good deal at his tyranny, but do not seem inclined to leave. On Riverport farms I find the reverse of the Irish landlord system adopted. The worse a man farms the higher his rent is raised. One old fellow grumbles grievously because his land has been drained against his will, with that of his neighbours, and because he was charged four pounds per cent. interest for the operation. He confesses that he can feed sheep all the winter where they all rotted before; but still he does not hold with draining, nor like paying, nor like leaving either. He complains, too, that he is never left alone. His buildings were all tumbling about his ears, or rather his cattle's ears, and now nothing will serve the squire but a complete new set and a water-wheel to work a threshing machine: and he'll have to pay for that, though father used flails, and his father afore him. The young men accommodate themselves better, and it is plain to see that the force of example is ploughing in many mental seeds, grubbing up narrow mental boundaries.

But, next to the change in the village, the greatest change is in the labouring men.

"When Mr. Wagerman first settled here," said my friend and guide, "piecework was unknown in the parish, but he seemed determined to make the men earn their wages or leave the parish, and as it nearly all belonged to him, he had a fair chance. The first fight was when the ploughmen refused to use a pair-horse iron plough. That was settled, by the parish ploughmen being discharged, and others sent for from counties where crawling with a long team and an idle boy is unknown. The ploughmen soon gave in. Then came hay-making time. The new squire set a hay-making machine to work; first the hay-makers broke it—that wouldn't do. The squire's blacksmith, a capital mechanic, imported from railway works, set it to rights. Then they struck in a body; but that did not help them far: there was the machine, and by collecting all his gardeners off and grooms, and giving a hand himself, the hay was got in in good order. The ignorant people who struck against machinery, although the squire employed a hundred times more men than any previous squire of Buckleigh Park, at first found work in summer tramping about. In winter they were obliged to return home. There was grubbing up hedges, draining, and

other improvement work to be done. Mr. Wagerman offered it by the piece. They struck again. They would not work by the piece: no, they would go on the parish first. A servant sent on horseback with a message to the telegraph soon settled that business. Four-and-twenty hours brought a supply of labourers very happy to work piece work. At a week's end the parish labourers out of work applied for parish relief, but they were not to be so indulged. The new squire met threats of Swing fires with his insurances: undertook the reclaiming of a piece of waste, then recently enclosed, with spade labour. The trenching was offered at a price sufficient for a good man to earn three shillings a-day. All able-bodied men were referred to the spade-work on the common, and parish relief refused. Some worked and did well, some took employment with neighbouring parishes, some left the district; all worth having came to the squire's terms and conditions, and earned more money than ever they had earned in their lives.

"With a steam-engine going, instead of the flail, with his smart-stepping horses in the plough, with drills, clod-crushers, and scarifiers to look after, men could not crawl through their work, nor remain stupid, if they had any brains. They not only earned more, but spent less at the public-house. Wholesome cottages, which they are made to keep clean, continue on the lessons learned in the fields. The Squire Wagerman's wife helps and assists all she can, although with this generation it is up-hill work. To do what has been done required a resolute and wealthy person, who fully understood how to treat men, and how to use machinery. Mr. Wagerman tells me he looks forward to rest in future, when the generation now learning in the infant-schools shall be at work."

There are many men with estates, who mean well, but know not how to execute. Many who do not discover that it is for their interest to make those under them intelligent, sober, industrious. A great landowner can do more than a great prince; he can inoculate a whole county with a good example, if his good wishes are carried out with radical good sense.

This is no fiction; Wagerman is a real man. An estate cultivated in a most barbarous, unproductive manner has been made fertile by simple means. A village where dirt, ignorance, idleness, intemperance, were chronic, has been rebuilt, sewered, and cleansed: schools have been established for the young, industry has been made essential to the labouring, independence has been cultivated among all. And this, by a man, who thought it worth his while, not less than his duty, to sink some years of a large income, in restoring a moral tone to degraded labourers,

as well as fertility to an exhausted soil.

THE URSINUS.

THERE are few subjects that present to the psychologist more curious traits, and more subtle enigmas than lady poisoners. The character is so opposed to all our ideas of feminine feeling and affection, that, except under circumstances of extreme excitement, resentment of slighted attachment, blind jealousy, or revenge of injured honour, its existence would seem hardly possible. If we search for motives, we find them to be generally of the most selfish and grovelling kind. They are, commonly, to put out of the way some or all of the people around who have money to leave. Other base passions come into play, but Mammon, the basest spirit that fell, is generally at the bottom of their career. It is amazing the variety and amiability of character that is worn for years, to cover the foul fiend within. For long periods these female vampyres live in the heart of a family circle, wearing the most life-like marks of goodness and kindness, of personal attraction and spiritual gifts; caressed, fêted, honoured as the very pride of their sex, while they are all the time calculating on the lives and the purses of those nearest, and who should be dearest, to them.

Some of these modern Medeas have played the part of the fashionable, or the æsthetic; some, of the domestically amiable; some, of the devoted attendant on the sick and the suffering. Heaven defend us from such devotion! May no such tigress smooth our pillow; smile blandly on us in our pains which she cannot take away, though she has the satisfaction of knowing that they will take us away; and mix with taper fingers the opiate of our repose! Amid the most stealthy-footed and domestically benign of this feline race, were the Widow Zwanziger, and Mrs. Gottfried, of Germany. They were amongst the most successful, though not the most distinguished, in this art of poisoning. They went on their way, slaying all around them, for years upon years, and yet were too good and agreeable to be suspected, though death was but another name for their shadows. Funerals followed these fatal sisters as certainly as thunder follows lightning, and undertakers were the only men who flourished in their path.

The Widow Zwanziger was an admirable cook and nurse. Her soups and coffee had a peculiar strength; her watchful care by the sick bed was in all hearts; she kissed the child she meant to kill, and pillowed the aching head with such soothing address that it never ached again. Mrs. Gottfried was so attractive a person that her ministration was sought by people of much higher

rank than her own; she was so warm a friend, that she was a friend unto death, and one attached soul after another breathed their last in her arms. Husband after husband departed, and still her hnad was sought, and still it practised its cunning. At length, in her four-and-fiftieth year she was detected, and arrested. In prison, she walked amid the apparitions of all her victims, wept tears of tenderness over their memory, and finished by desiring that her life might be written; so that, having lost everything else, she might yet enjoy her fame.

All women of this class have had an extraordinary degree of vanity, — and, what is more, they have had a perfect passion for their art. The Marchioness de Brinvilliers was an enthusiast in the composition of the rarest poisons, of which her accomplice, Sainte-Croix, was so eminent a compounder. The admiration of her beauty, the distinctions of her rank, afforded her but a feeble satisfaction in comparison with that of watching the operation of some subtly lethal essence. She certainly was not the mere marchioness, but the princess of poisoners; and yet it remained for Madame Ursinus to give additional touches of perfection to this peculiar character. She was at once a lady of fashion, a pietist, a writer of useful tracts, a poetess, and a poisoner. Through all the dangers of these various careers, she lived to the good old age of seventy-six, and died — lamented! Brinvilliers, Zwanziger, and Gottfried confessed that they were conquered by their crimes; but Madame Ursinus, branded in public opinion, continued to defy it, and conquered even that; and to the very last gasp persisted in playing the heroine. Nay more, without confession, remorse, or penitence, she strove in her own way, and with no trifling success, to achieve the reputation of a saint. Surely it is worth while to dig up from the rubbish-heap of the Prussian criminal court, a few fragments of the history of such a woman.

The widow of Privy-councillor Ursinus lived honoured and courted in the highest circles of Berlin. Her rank, and the reputation of her husband, whom she had lost but a few years, her handsome fortune, her noble figure, and impressive features, together with her spirit and her accomplishments, made her a centre of attraction in the society of the time. She lived in a splendid house, and her establishment in all its appointments was perfect. We may imagine the sensation created by the news of her arrest.

Madame Ursinus was seated in the midst of a brilliant company on the evening of the fifth of March, eighteen hundred and three, at the card-table, when a servant, with all the signs of terror in his face, entered, and informed her that the hall and ante-room were occupied by

police, who insisted on seeing her. Madame Ursinus betrayed no surprise or emotion. She put down her cards, begged the party with whom she was engaged at play to excuse the interruption, observing that it was some mistake, and that she would be back in a moment.

She went, but did not return. After waiting some time, her partners inquired after her, and learned to their consternation that she was arrested and carried off to prison, on a charge of poisoning.

A confidential servant, Benjamin Klein, had complained in the preceding month of February of indisposition. She gave him a basin of beef-tea, and some days afterwards some medicine in raisins. This, so far from removing his complaint, increased it; and when his mistress, a few days afterwards, offered him some boiled rice, he said he could not eat it, and was much struck by observing that she carefully put it away where no one else could get it. This excited in his mind strong suspicions that there was something in the food which was detrimental to health, and associated with his condition. He resolved secretly to examine his mistress's room and cabinet, and in the latter he found a small parcel, with the ominous label — Arsenic.

The next day his attentive mistress brought him some stewed prunes, which she recommended as likely to do him good; and this time he accepted them with apparent thankfulness, but took care that none of them should enter his mouth. He communicated his suspicions to the lady's maid, in whom he had confidence; and she quickly carried off the prunes to her brother, who was the apprentice of a celebrated apothecary. The apprentice communicated the prunes and the suspicion to his master, who tested them, and found them well seasoned with arsenic. The apothecary very soon conveyed the discovery to the magistrate, and the magistrate, after hearing the statement of the servant and the lady's maid, arrested the great lady.

People, of course, now began to look back on the life of this distinguished woman; and it was presently remembered, that her husband and an aunt, to whose last days she had paid assiduous attention, and whose wealth had fallen to her, had gone off suddenly. Madame Ursinus was at once set down as a second Brinvilliers, and wonderful revelations were expected. The general appetite for the marvellous became ravenous and insatiable. There appeared almost immediately — it is wonderful how quickly such things are done — a book, by M. Frederick Buchholz, entitled the "Confessions of a Female Poisoner, written by herself," which was rapidly bought up and devoured, as the veritable confession of the Ursinus.

But, alas for the hungering and thirsting public, Madame Ursinus was not a lady of the confessing sort! She was a clever, far-seeing soul, who had laid her grand plans well, and had allowed no witnesses, and feared no detection. True, if she had poisoned her husband and her aunt, the witness of the poison itself might be forthcoming; but chemical tests for poisons were not then so well known as they are now. The bodies were disinterred and examined, and no trace of poison was found. The state of the stomach and intestines were most suspicious; but the doctors disagreed as to the cause, as doctors will; and so far Madame Ursinus was safe.

But, there was no getting over the fact that the prunes intended for the cautious Benjamin Klein had arsenic in them; and the Ursinus was too shrewd to attempt to deny it. On this point she did confess, promptly, frankly, and fully. But then, she meant no harm, at least against him. She had no intention of murdering the man. What good could that do her? — he had no money to leave. No; her motive was very different. In early life her affections had been thwarted through the usual obduracy of parents; she had married a man whom she highly esteemed, but did not love; another friend, whom she did love, had died of consumption; and she was disgusted with life. The splendour and gaiety which surrounded her were a hollow splendour, a wearisome gaiety. She had been prosperous, but that prosperity had only accelerated her present mood. She had out-lived the relish of existence, and had resolved to die. Ignorant, however, poor innocent soul! of the force of this poison, she wanted to learn how much would be sufficient for its object; and therefore she had done as young doctors are said to do in hospitals — made a few experiments on her patient, the unfortunate Benjamin Klein. She had given him the very minutest quantity, so as to be quite safe, and had cautiously increased the successive doses — not with the least intention to do him any permanent harm, but to ascertain the effectual dose for herself. She would not for her life have hurt the man. In society she had been noted for her sensibility — for the almost morbid delicacy of her nerves and the acuteness of her sympathies. That was all. As to the charges of having administered poison to her nearest connections, she treated the calumny with the utmost indignation. The judges were puzzled; the Ursinus was resolute in the protestation of her innocence; and the public were at a disagreeable nonplus.

And what really had been the life and character of the Ursinus? Sophia Charlotte Elizabeth Weingarten was the daughter of a so-called Baron Weingarten — who, as secretary of legation in Austria, had, under a charge of

high treason, crossed to Prussia, and assumed the name of Weiss. Fräulein Weingarten, or Von Weiss, was born in seventeen hundred and sixty. While residing in her teens with an elder married sister, wife of the Councillor of State Haacke, at Spandau, occurred that genuine love affair which her parents so summarily trampled upon. She was called home to Stendal, and, in her nineteenth year, married to Privy-Councillor Ursinus. The privy-councillor was a man of high standing, high character, and most exemplary life; but, unluckily, all these gifts and graces are often conferred upon or acquired by men who do not possess the other qualities that young ladies of nineteen admire. The worthy councillor was old, sickly, deaf, and passionless. In fact, he was a dull, commonplace, diligent, unimaginative pack-horse and official plodder; most meritorious in his motives, and great in his department of public business; but just the last man for a lively handsome girl of nineteen. On the other hand, he had his good qualities, even as a husband. He had no jealousies, and the most unbounded indulgence.

Soon after their marriage they removed to Berlin, where, amid the gay society of the capital, Madame Ursinus soon contracted a warm friendship for a handsome young Dutch officer, of the name of Rogay. Rogay, in fact, was the man of her heart. She declared, with her usual candour, in one of her examinations before the magistrates, that she was made for domestic affection. That as there was no domestic affection between herself and her departed husband, neither he nor she pretended any. They agreed to consider themselves as a legal couple, and as friends, and no more. As to Captain Rogay, she made no secret of it that she clung to him with the most ardent feeling of love.

This attachment, the privy-councillor—the most reasonable of men — so far from resenting, encouraged and approved. He wished his wife to make herself happy, and enjoy life in her own way; and there is a long letter preserved in the criminal records, which he himself wrote at her dictation, to the beloved Rogay, on an occasion when he had absented himself for some time, urging him to renew his visits, and that in the most love-like terms, the tenderest of which the old man underlined with his own hand.

But Rogay came not, he removed to another place, and there, soon after, died. Here was now another subject of suspicion. Rogay had cause, said people, to keep away; while she fawned on him, she had killed him. But here, again, the testimony of two of the most celebrated physicians of the day was unanimous that the cause of Rogay's death was consumption and nothing more. The physician

attested that he had attended Rogay while he was living and suffering under the roof of Privy-Councillor Ursinus; that Madame Ursinus displayed the most unequivocal affection for him; that she attended on him, gave him everything with her own hand, and that no wife could have been more assiduously tender of him than she was. She called herself Lotte in her communications with him; not only because her name was Charlotte, but because she was an enthusiast of the Werther school, and loved to be of the same name as Werther's idol. But yet Rogay withdrew himself and died alone, and at a distance.

Three years after the decease of Rogay died Ursinus himself. Old he was, it is true, but he was in perfect health. The kind wife made him a little festival on his birthday, and in the night he sickened and died. He had taken something that disagreed with him — but what so common at a feast? Madame Ursinus sate up with him alone; she called not a single creature; she hoped he would be better; but the man was aged and weak, and he went his way.

The year after, followed as suddenly her maiden aunt, the wealthy Miss Witte. One evening her doctor left her quite well, and in the night she sickened and died. The Ursinus was quite alone with her, called no single domestic, but let the good lady die in her arms. Both the bodies of the husband and the aunt, now Klein's affair took place, were disinterred and examined. There was no poison traceable, but the corpses were found dried together as if baked, or as if they were mummies of a thousand years old. The skin of the abdomen was so tough that it resisted the surgeon's knife, and the soft parts of the body had assumed the appearance of hard tallow. The hands, fingers, and feet of the old man were drawn together as by spasms, his skin resembled parchment, and the stomachs of both bore every trace of injury and inflammation which had reduced them to an inseparable mass. Yet, the eminent doctors declared that poison was not the cause of death in either case, — but apoplexy or — in short, that there was not the remotest symptom of poison.

So, instead of the pleasure-loving multitude obtaining a spectacle and a fate, the whirling sword of the executioner and the falling head were exchanged for perpetual imprisonment, and the handsome, wealthy widow of forty was sent to spend the remainder of her days in the fortress of Glatz.

Here she assumed a new character. Her part of the interesting woman of fashion was played out; she had become interesting beyond her wish, and fate had now assigned her another part, — to defend her life and reputation. There was a call to develope her powers of fortitude and

of intellect, and she embraced it; not only before the tribunal of justice, but in her whole conduct through the thirty long years which she continued a prisoner.

No sooner had she entered on her quarters in the prison of Glatz, than she set about writing an elaborate defence of herself. In her room, which was the best the fortress afforded to its captives, and which she was allowed to furnish according to her pleasure, she placed a little table under the narrow window in the massy wall, and arranged upon it everything that was necessary for literary labour. She was surrounded by books: not only for refreshment of her mind, but for laborious research and instruction. In this defence at which she laboured, for she was by no means satisfied with that of her paid advocates, she now discovered the uncommon abilities with which she was endowed. If any one had ever entertained a doubt of her powers of reasoning and calculation, of the clearness of her foresight, and the acuteness of her penetration, that doubt was here at once dispelled in the most convincing manner. She proved herself so profoundly vast in the law, that she now struck her legal advisers with astonishment, as she had done the judges on her trial. Her defence, which was addressed to her relatives, presented her in the new character of a masterly writer and legal scholar. This defence is still extant, and no defence of a murderer, not even that of Eugene Aram, is a more striking specimen of talent and of well-assumed virtue and virtuous indignation.

"Scarcely," she says, "can I call to mind, without the overthrow of my understanding and the utter prostration of my whole being, the accusation of being the murderer of my husband and my aunt. My innermost soul becomes worked with terror at the recollection of the moment when I was seized with all the horrors of death by the opened graves of my beloved relatives; when surrounded by all the pangs of a deadly cruelty, and pursued by the furies of a thousand-tongued imprecations, I heard myself cursed as the destroyer of those who sank so safely to slumber in my arms. Had Providence then heard the sole wish of my heart, the sole voice of my super-human anguish, that moment would have annihilated my life and my sufferings, and yet have flung the light of the sun on all the evidences of my innocence, which now, however, is made plain by other means.

"In vain have I been for ten long months pursued, martyred, broken to pieces, crushed in soul and body by the reproach of that shamefully horrible crime, and exposed to all the contempt and malice of the public. In vain have the graves of my loved ones been opened, the repose of the dead violated, and proceedings

taken in the first capital of Europe, in this age of knowledge and humanity, under the eyes of the most amiable and kind-hearted of kings, that have no example, and with posterity will have no credence. In vain have I, unhappy one, been represented by inhuman writers as a monster and a terrible warning; in vain have I been painted, in the blackest and the most venomous of colours, as a lesson to my own, and a dark eternal memory to after times; in vain have I been a thousand times murdered and tortured, — the highest authorities, the clearest evidence, pronounce me guiltless."

In the prison she was allowed a female companion, and was often visited by distinguished strangers, whom so far from shrinking from, she was ever eager to see, never failing to describe her misfortunes in vivid colours, to assert her innocence, and intreat their exertions for her liberation. Many of these, however, thought that the lot of the poisoner who rustled in silk and satin over the floors of the fortress — compared with that of other convicts, who for some rude deed done in a moment of passion laboured in heavy chains, welded to carts, or with iron horns projecting above their brows, sweltered in deep pits — had nothing in it of a severity which warranted an appeal to royal mercy.

But, in her seventieth year, the royal mercy reached her. She was liberated from prison, but restricted for the remainder of her life to the city and fortress of Glatz. Here she once more played the part, not of a poisoner, but of an innocent woman and an aristocratic lady. She again opened a handsome house, and gave entertainments; and they were frequented! Nay, such was her vanity, that she used every diligence to draw illustrious strangers into her circle. An anecdote is related on undoubted authority, which is characteristic. At one of her suppers, a lady sitting near her actually started, as she saw some white powder on a salad which was handed to her. Madame Ursinus observed it, and said, smiling, "Don't be alarmed, my dear, it is not arsenic."

Another anecdote is not less amusing. Immediately after quitting her prison, she invited a large company to coffee. An invitation to coffee by the poisoner, as she was called in Glatz by old and young, was a matter of curiosity, the grand attraction of the day. All went: but one individual, who had been overlooked in the invitation, out of resentment planned a savage joke. He bribed the confectioner to mix in the biscuits some nauseating drug. In the midst of the entertainment, the whole company were seized simultaneously with inward pains and sickness, gave themselves up for lost, started up in horror, and rushed headlong from the house. Glatz was thunderstruck with the

news, which went through it like an electric flash, that the Ursinus had poisoned all her guests.

Regardless of these little accidents, the Ursinus lived a life of piety and benevolence; so said the gaoler of the fortress, and her female companion. She sought to renew her intercourse with her sister, Madame von Haacke, saying: "We are again the little Yette and little Lotte; our happy childhood stands before me." But the sister kept aloof, and the wounded, but patient and forgiving Ursinus, exclaimed: "Ah! that life and its experiences can thus operate on some people, by no means making them happier. God reward us all for the good that we have been found worthy to do, and pardon us our many errors!"

She died in her seventy-seventh year; and her companion declared that she could not enough admire the resignation with which she endured her sufferings through the aid of religion. She left her considerable property partly to her nephews and nieces, and partly to benevolent institutions. A year before her death she ordered her own coffin, and left instructions that she should lie in state with white gloves on her hands, a ring on her finger containing the hair of her late husband, and his portrait on her bosom. Five carriages, filled with friends and acquaintances, followed her to the grave, which was found adorned with green moss, auriculas, tulips, and immortelles: an actual bower of blooms. When the clergyman had ended his discourse, six boys and six poor girls, whom the Ursinus had cared for in her lifetime, stepped forward and sang a hymn in her honour. The gravedigger had little to do; female friends, and many poor people to whom she had been a benefactress, filled the grave with their own hands, and arched the mound over it. It was a bitter cold morning, yet the churchyard could scarcely contain the crowd. And thus the poisoner passed away like a saint.

WISHES.

All the fluttering wishes
Caged within thy heart
Beat their wings against it,
Longing to depart,
Till they shake their prison
With their wounded cry;
Open then thy heart to-day,
And let the captives fly.

Let them first fly upward
Through the starry air,
Till you almost lose them,
For their home is there;
Then with outspread pinions,
Circling round and round,
Wing their way wherever
Want and woe are found.

Where the weary stitcher
Toils for daily bread;
Where the lonely watcher
Watches by her dead;
Where with thin weak fingers,
Toiling at the loom,
Stand the little children,
Blighted ere they bloom.

Where by darkness blinded,
Groping for the light,

With distorted conscience
Men do wrong for right;
Where in the cold shadow,
By smooth pleasure thrown,
Human hearts by hundreds
Harden into stone.

Where on dusty highways,
With faint heart and slow,
Cursing the glad sunlight,
Hungry outcasts go:
Where all mirth is silenced,
And the hearth is chill,
For one place is empty,
And one voice is still.

Some hearts will be lighter
While your captives roam
For their tender singing,
Then recal them home;
When the sunny hours
Into night depart,
Softly they will nestle
In a quiet heart.

A WIFE'S STORY.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VI.

When I was mad, of course they kept my children from me. Dr. Ryton took them to his own house. But their absence retarded my recovery. When once my ceaseless cry to have them back had been heeded, I recovered my reason; slowly, but surely, I grew quieter.

My Aunt Aston had come to nurse me. I owed it to her that I had not been consigned to the tender mercies of an attendant at a madhouse — mercies tender enough for me, in truth! She watched with me, bearing my violence, and concealing the extent of it as much as she could; and she pleaded for me to be allowed to see my children. Dr. Ryton had loved my husband as a friend; so he had hardly patience to pity me; he left me much to the care of a stranger.

When I could be moved, my aunt took me and my children to a new place. I did not ask or care where. It was by the sea — a wild, lonely, lovely place. I was perfectly sane then, but as weak and helpless as a child. I did not suffer much, even mentally; for spirit and flesh were alike subdued; my mind was as worn and as much weakened as my body.

Nobody saw me there but my aunt, my children, their nurse, Dr. Ryton, who saw me often there, and stayed sometimes unwillingly for days together, as much to watch them as to attend me, and Mr. Morton, the pastor of the district, an aged, most loving-spirited man. In him I saw the beauty of holiness, but I did not feel it. He tried to quicken my spiritual life, to rouse me from my almost idiotic apathy, and to turn a broken spirit upward. My only answer to him was — "Leave me; let me alone; let me be quiet."

My poor aunt sighed, far more heavily than of old, and shook her head; she thought me drifting into another world, laden with a cargo of unrepented sin that must sink me eternally.

"Shall we not tell her now? Would it not be better?" she asked of the grey-headed old man, who was turning from me

disappointed, but unwearied. He shook his head.

"Be patient and hopeful; with our merciful, all-pitying Father nothing is impossible. It is not His time yet."

"But I know it! I know it!" I said to myself, as they left me. "I am dying," and a strange ecstasy thrilled through me.

Every day, through the long months of early and mid summer, I was carried down close to the sea's marge, and laid there on a mattress in the fierce hot sun. But that sun did not scorch or even warm me; my heart was nigh dead, and I was always cold.

Dr. Ryton thought me sinking into life-long idiotcy, with my frequent moan and ceaseless complaint of cold. But I was living a thought-life, but so faint and so deep down, they could not know it; it was only now and then that I was conscious of it myself.

So I lay there, day by day — following my children with my eyes as they played upon the beach. They did not come very near, they were half-afraid of the still, white figure, and of the wild eyes fixed on them day after day.

"When will papa come home? when will he come and play here with us?" they asked Dr. Ryton one day.

They were hushed up and taken away, and the word seemed to me to come back out of a strange dream of some far past.

I remember that often I held up my hand feebly between my eyes and the sun, a gesture they did not understand. I wanted to watch how daily it grew more transparent, for I became thinner, paler, more shadowy day by day. The bright sun never burnt my white, sickly skin. For a long time they thought me dying, thought my brain was dead already.

Thank Thee for this most chiefly among Thy tender and numberless mercies, O God, I thank Thee for this most fervently. I did not die, I lived!

Summer was not yet wearing into autumn, when my noble boy, my first-born, my young Harold, was taken ill. They did not know that I understood them, when they talked of fever and danger in my presence. It was resurrection day to me, the day on which I heard them. Yet hardly so, I trust, for it was a resurrection to a knowledge of pain and a dread of death.

Their words sounded thunder-loud in my ears, which lately had received sound very faintly and sense very vaguely. They stunned me only for an instant. I think my gradual fading away had been half-voluntary, for I was often dimly conscious that I had yet the power within me to rise and live. And now I rose up! It was wet, I think, that day, for I was laid on the couch by a fire; they had spoken and gone away.

I got up; I could stand: I walk-

ed from the room. In the passage I met a servant, who started back in affright, and ran to call assistance. But I crawled upstairs and found my way to my child's room, and went in and up to his little bed.

"Let her alone," I heard Dr. Ryton say, as my aunt started forward and was hastening to me. I thanked him most truly for those words. My boy turned to me with a cry of "Mamma, mamma!" I was very weak and I sank down on his bed and his fever-flushed cheek was laid on my cold bosom. They let me stay: my boy fell quietly asleep — the first sleep he had had that had been quiet and refreshing since he was taken ill, they said.

He woke better. I watched him night and day; new life came to me a second time through him. And he loved me so! He would not suffer any one else to wait on him. And I watched the waning and waxing of the fever night and day; and the danger seemed over. The child grew worse and died. In my brief joy I had not turned to God; in my deep fresh agony I did not turn to him.

I could not sink back into the oblivion of my death in life. I sat watching by the dead beauty of my once so bold, bright boy: they talked of Heaven, hope, faith, meeting and consolation. I heard, but heeded not at all. My grief was fierce and passionate at first; I laid the child's dead-cold hand on my heart, but it could not freeze nor still it. I was outwardly quiet, lest they should think me mad again; but my heart burned, and night and day my spirit cried:

"Oh! Cruel! Cruel and Pitiless!" it raved against the Omnipotent; it lashed itself into impotent fury against the Will of the Great, Calm, and Just One.

My little girl they had sent away, but too late. She fell ill, and they brought her home. I would not believe it was the fever; she was always delicate, a little white blossom, and she had pined and fretted for her brother. It was the day that my boy was laid in the ground that my Lily came back to me, and I turned with my great, undiminished, concentrated power of loving to this fragile little form. Perhaps it was my impatient love, my hot kisses, that confirmed the fever-poison in her veins. She woke in the night, the second night after we had buried her brother, burning hot, and talked wildly of papa, of Harold, of Heaven. I called Dr. Ryton and told him the child was restless and not, I thought, quite well.

"I expected this," he answered. "Pray Heaven she may recover!"

"It is not the fever," I said, speaking against knowledge. "It is not the fever; she has caught cold."

"We shall see," he answered.

Oh! how cruel his coldness seemed!

"You must save her!" I cried.

"I shall try!" he answered, "but if she dies —"

"Dies! Have you — has God, no pity?" I interrupted.

There were many days of hope and fear. Other physicians came, and were commanded, implored, to save her. I prayed for her life, wildly, on my knees, with all the power I had. But she grew worse. One night I could no longer bear to watch her sufferings. I rushed out into the open air. It was a fresh, blowing night, and moonlight. I ran along the shore — the waves broke noisily upon the beach. "Alone, alone, alone!" that was all the wild winds and the wild sea said to comfort me. Turn to Nature for consolation! To "Nature, the mighty and all pitying mother!" She flings back your moan in your teeth! She mocks and echoes your cry.

My head was hot, and I felt bewildered. I went to where the waves washed the stones, — I knelt down and let one break over my bowed head. Then I rose and shook my wet hair to the cold wind, — that refreshed me, and I turned to the house again.

A black shadow fell across my path. Dr. Ryton stood between me and the setting moon. My heart stood still; what tidings! "She sleeps, you must not go in to her. We think she is saved!" The words were spoken in a cold voice, Dr. Ryton had no sympathy with my grief, or joy. The cold words fell on my spirit like heavenly dew, but as yet I dared not hope.

As we entered the garden, I signed to him to go into the house first. I stopped, — I fell on my knees — what could I say?

"Oh, God! hast thou heard my prayer? Is it for my sake thou sparest this flower!" So I thought, but I could not pray then.

As I rose, again a shadow flitted before the moon. I thought it had set — the shadow fell so blackly on my face but when I looked up, I looked straight on, and into her white serene face.

Mr. Morton was in the house: he met me at the door, and led me into the room where Dr. Ryton sat.

The two men looked at each other.

"Poor child!" the old man said, leading me to a seat.

"Poor child!" he repeated, looking at me tenderly. His gentle pity calmed me more than aught else could do. With my thin, shaking hands, I began to try and bind up my heavy wet hair, conscious of my wild, disordered look.

"Build up more patience than hope, Mrs. Warden," Dr. Ryton said, and I started, it was so long since anybody had called me by that name. "All is uncertain, even yet; on her waking, your child's life will hang upon a thread; any agitation will snap it. Every one about her must be calm and quiet, and she will ask for you."

"You will be very composed and still, will you not?" Mr.

Morton asked; "even though she should say things that would naturally shock and startle you. Even though," he continued, "she should speak of having seen her father."

"Her father! yes! she spoke of him the night she was taken ill," I answered, dreamily, and I pressed my hand on my brow, there was such pain there. But I subdued all sign of emotion, indeed some spell seemed on me that held me tranced. I rose to go away, —I meant to sit outside my child's door, and listen for her waking. Again Dr. Ryton and Mr. Morton looked at each other, the latter bowed his head.

Dr. Ryton spoke, very hesitatingly for him, "One moment, Mrs. Warden. I have more to say; for your child's sake, be calm. You have never inquired where your husband was buried, have never heard any particulars of his —"

He did not say that last dread word, and yet how loud it sounded to my consciousness, — Death. A thrill of agony ran through me.

"Buried! Harold, my Harold, in the quiet churchyard, in sound of the sea! But, no! do not think I am wandering! I know you mean my husband, not my child; both are dead and buried."

They exchanged doubtful glances. "It must be told now!" Dr. Ryton said, firmly. "It is very important," he began, "for your child's sake, that you should learn first from us what she will tell you; for we fear if it was left for her to tell, that the surprise would overcome you, and that then your agitation —"

"Why do you hesitate?" I exclaimed. "Cannot I bear anything for her sake — my only remaining treasure? Am I not used to pain and sorrow? But I will not complain, He is very good if He spares my child; and I shall learn, from her, to thank Him."

"It is not bad news we have to tell you."

"No news can be good to me, save what concerns her. If she lives, I may yet — but, O, my husband!"

"It is of him that Dr. Ryton would speak,' Mr. Morton said.

"Of him? Spare me!" I exclaimed.

"You saw him brought home, and you remember nothing more, do you, Mrs. Warden?" Dr. Ryton asked.

"Nothing more!" and as I spoke the terrible sight that ghastly dawn broke upon, came back to me, how vividly. "Cruel!" I cried, hastily. "Why do you torture me? But, yes! it is right, do not spare me, I did not spare him. Tell me all, — I am firm and quiet."

"If God, whose goodness you have doubted, in His infinite mercy —"

"Be gentle," Mr. Morton pleaded. "See," and he pointed to my quivering frame. I could not control that, — every word

seemed to lacerate my wakened heart.

"Mrs. Warden, God has been infinitely good to you. When you were taken away, your husband was not dead."

"Did he live to forgive me? Did he speak of me?" I asked.

I did not at all gather their meaning yet. How should I anticipate such mercy?

"He often spoke of you, — he often speaks of you: your husband lives, but —"

Dr. Ryton was very wise! That but — perhaps it prevented my dying of surprise and joy, and life grew precious.

"He lives, but he does not forgive me!" I said. "I deserve that pain, but it is terrible."

Dr. Ryton did not answer me, but said: —

"There is a slight stir upstairs; your aunt is coming down, and the door is open; you might go in and watch now, but remember agitation will kill your little girl. She will tell you that her father has kissed her this very night, and you must not look surprised. Can you trust yourself."

I bowed my head and rose. My pain had gone, it was all a dream, I thought; a dream in which life and death, and grief and joy moved confusedly.

I stumbled a little way. I thought it had been day-break, but there came night. I felt about in the black-darkness, and could find no way out of it.

My strength was overtasked; it gave way utterly.

Yet I did not find rest, for I did not entirely lose consciousness. The many days that I lay ill, I struggled against the darkness round me, and tried with my feeble hands to clear it away from before my eyes. I wanted to think and to understand — I had dreadful dreams or thoughts, I know not which to call them, as I lay, and these haunted me long after. The central idea was always that of Harold alive, stern and unforgiving. Once I fancied we met in a crowded London street, that I rushed to him, and fell down at his feet — that he spurned me away.

When the mist clouding my mind at last cleared away, — it was, I remember, towards the end of a very serene, beautiful day — I found that they had laid my Lily beside me, that it was her kisses on my cheek that roused me, though I had dreamed that other lips had been pressed there. With an intense longing tenderness, not all for her, I took her gently into my arms. What a joy to know her yet mine! How beautiful and loving she was!

"Papa has been here, mamma; dear papa kissed me!" were the first words she said.

"A dream, my darling!" I answered; "Mamma has been dreaming, too."

"No, mamma, aunt says it is true. He bent over me, and gave me a long, long kiss, just as he used of a night, at home."

"When was it, my darling?"

"The same morning that I wanted you, and aunt said you could not come. Did he not kiss you, mamma?"

I did not answer, and the little girl's head dropped wearily down upon the pillow.

"Why are you crying, dear mamma?" she asked, soon again lifting up her head to look into my face.

"I am so glad to have you, my darling. So glad you are getting well." I kissed her, and she soon fell asleep.

Not long after, Aunt Aston came up with some tea. "It is true, then?" I asked. "He has been here? Where is Dr. Ryton? How long is it since I was laid here?"

"Yes, he came, dear. Dr. Ryton went home with him. You have been ill several days."

"Where? Where does he call home, aunt?"

"London. He is gone back to London."

"He is gone, then!" My heart was very sick and sad, and yet I was very grateful to God. I turned away, and let the tears flow from under my closed lids.

I sobbed quietly a long while, and then some new purpose dawned upon me. I would not lie and weep and lament, I would — But I was so weak, — what could I do? Trust in God — who was loading me with mercy and kindness — and wait.

"Won't you have your tea, dear?" aunt asked, timidly.

I sat up and took it. Then my head felt cool and clear, and I seemed stronger. It was still early in the evening, so I humbly asked aunt to help me dress, I wanted to go down. She said Dr. Ryton would return to-night, I must speak to him and hear all. When I was dressed I sat down beside my child, and watched her quiet sleep. She was very thin and weak still, but Aunt Aston told me that she was to go out to-morrow, if it were as still and mild as to-day, and that the doctors said that now she would get over the fever, and be stronger than she had ever been before.

I asked aunt to go down, and to let me know when Dr. Ryton would see me.

When she went, I slipped down on my knees, with my eyes on my dear little girl's lovely face. I could pray.

I thought of Harold's love as turned from me for ever, so my heart was very sad, and I prayed for patience, but my heart was very resolved too, and I prayed for strength. But I did not feel that I prayed aright. I could not feel that my prayer winged its way to the eternal footstool, and I determined that I would learn how, in what spirit, to pray.

I had a Bible, and went to fetch it. But I heard voices below, so I crept down as hastily as my weak clinging to the bannisters would let me.

Dr. Ryton was not come; it was Mr. Morton whom I had heard.

Aunt Aston went up to put Lily into her own bed when she should wake, and to watch her while she still slept.

The warm evening light was pouring into the room downstairs, it bewildered me somewhat after the dimness of my own. I looked out silently for a few moments, raising my head up from off the couch where my aunt had put me, trying to collect my thoughts. But the brilliant glow on the cornfield, yellowing now rapidly, and on the still surface of the blue sea, dazzled me.

Mr. Morton came to my side, as I turned round wearily from gazing on the external brightness. The gentle manner of that good old man encouraged me to ask him many questions. He could tell me much, but not all, that I wanted to know. He could tell me about my husband's visit, of his having seen his little girl waking, for a moment, when I left her; and of his having watched beside her while she slept after I fainted. Had he stood by me, too? had he bent down over me? But no! I knew he had not, I dared not ask. He told me, also, that my husband had been to the churchyard, that he had knelt and wept by our boy's grave.

Why had they not told me sooner that my husband lived? I asked.

He had lain very long between life and death, Mr. Morton said. Dr. Ryton had many times utterly despaired of his rallying, and had, at others, hardly dared hope that he would ever recover health of mind and body after the dreadful injuries he had sustained; so he had thought it best to let me believe him already dead. Others about me had often longed to rouse me, by any means, from the apathy lying so heavily upon me, and had wished to tell me the truth; but Dr. Ryton had sternly bade them do so at peril of my life. When my boy's danger did at last rouse me, and when my husband was first considered to be steadily and surely gaining strength, Dr. Ryton still told them not to tell me yet; he thought it right that the discipline of conscious suffering should first do its work. He was not wise there. It was love and mercy that wrought a blessed change.

Where had my husband been? Why had Dr. Ryton ever left him? Who had nursed him? And as I asked that last question, a cry of agony broke from my lips, at the thought that I, his wife, had rendered myself unworthy that office.

Mr. Morton could tell me that Mrs. Ryton had most heedfully nursed my husband, and that Dr. Ryton had only left him because Harold, when conscious, implored him to be here, to watch over his children. He knew that Harold in those short intervals of consciousness had talked much of his children, and been painfully solicitous for their welfare, and that even in his delirium, he

had still spoken of them: but whether, and if at all, how, my husband mentioned me he could not tell.

After I had exhausted Mr. Morton's knowledge by my eager questions, I was ready, and very willing, to listen calmly to the old man's wisdom. That evening he spoke to my heart and to my need. I was very weak, and worn, and weary, and had little hope of happiness in this world, and yet I had an infinite mercy for which I desired, and as yet hardly knew how, to thank God. That my husband would ever again take me back to his heart and home, I scarcely hoped; and if I hoped the time would come, it looked so distant that my weak spirit wearied at the dreary desert to be traversed first. But that my husband lived, that I was free from the blood-guiltiness that had lain on my conscience, that my Lily had still a wise and tender father — did not these things demand boundless gratitude?

As, day after day, I sat in spirit very meekly at that good man's feet, the darkness gradually cleared away. By degrees I learned all the story of his own life, of his loves, and losses, and martyrdom of pain; I learned how his faith had been purified, and his soul sublimed, by patient suffering of the Lord's will.

Then, stilled to reverent attention, I heard the story, and was instructed in the teaching of another life. In my weakness and spiritual ignorance I had somewhat of the simplicity of a child, I listened simply to what was simply told, and all I heard came to me fresh and strange, and infinitely sweet and consoling. Through the unperplexed medium of the soul of a faithful believer, I could look clearly and steadily at the grand Idea of the Christian life.

And while I listened and learned, I exercised my newly-striven-after patience. Doctor Ryton did not come, and days passed in which I heard nothing of my husband. During those few quiet, even though somewhat anxious, days, I grew familiar with my future life. I did not harass and perplex myself by effort to discern its features, to depict its joys and sorrows, endeavours and failures, and far-off success; but I tried to realise to my own consciousness the spirit in which I ought to live, and in which, with God's help, I would live.

I often wept during those days. Night and morning my pillow was wet. But they were quiet, penitent, resigned tears, sad and yet sweet and blessed tears.

If wild regret for that dread and sinful past essayed to destroy my new peace, to lash my soul into tumultuous unrest, I knew now how to still the troubled waters; if my spirit failed me sometimes, and my heart quailed and sickened as I imagined what might be the poor forlornness, and the ceaseless longing, and the ever-failing

endeavour of my future — yet I could, even then, pray; and having prayed, could look down pityingly on my heart's trouble, and yet control its emotions.

I began to have some dim idea, some, not knowledge, but imagination, of what it would be to be able, in all scenes, trials, dangers, distresses, temptations, and pains of life, to be calm enough to feel that round all our restlessness flows "God's rest!" to be able to merge all hopes, fears, doubts, and dreads, in a perfect, unfailing trust in Him who makes all things work together for good to those who believe in Him.

CHAPTER VII.

The breath of autumn seemed to breathe upon, and sanctify as it saddened, the glowing beauty of the land; and nature appeared to sympathise with the sweet, patient soberness and penitence that softened my soul.

It was just the weather for my Lily, too — mild and still, with no fierce summer heat; she and I grew stronger together.

We very often sat long in the churchyard by little Harold's grave. It was generally there that Mr. Morton talked with us. In that churchyard lay the dust of all those who had been dearest to him on earth; so the spot was as sacred to him as it grew to be to us.

We went there alone one day — Lily and I. It was rather late in the afternoon. I did not mean to stay long, but it was so very serenely and perfectly lovely there that day.

I sat down, and took Lily on my lap. She was playing with a handful of wild weeds and flowers, and singing, as her custom was, very softly to herself. I had my arms round her, and rested my cheek on her soft hair — it was just as I had held her so long ago. But where was the bright boy, who had leaned against my knee and fixed his large blue eyes so earnestly on my face?

I looked out over the sea, far into the hazy distance, and slow tears dropped down one by one. The sea and the sky were all one colour, a soft greyish blue. On the sea there were no billows, in the sky no clouds; there was no wind to stir wave or cloud, or the black boughs of the large yew under which I sat: there was only a great and gentle peace — a perfect stillness over all. And was there peace in my heart?

Those slow heavy-falling tears came down one by one, and yet I hardly knew I wept, till, passing my hand over her head, I found my child's hair wet. I was not thinking of the past — I could not bear to do that yet; I was looking forward to an atoning future — a future of active and patient doing and bearing.

Clasping my fair child, I thanked Him fervently for His long-suffering kindness — thanked Him most of all for this life that lay before me. Thinking of these things, peace did come to my heart. Resolving to live a

life out of self; to live for others, to care for others, and, for myself, only to rest on God's mercy; I began for the first time in my life to know what peace of mind was. O, the blessed hours of that afternoon!

I sat facing the sinking sun; it seemed as if the haziness of the horizon would quench his beams, and as if he would sink without leaving any light and glory in the west. But the sky brightened afterwards.

The little gate of the churchyard was just behind me.

Lily turned on my lap to peep round my shoulder, when the latch was lifted with a sharp click.

My arms fell from round her — I trembled so with indefinite expectation. For a moment she was still; then she darted away from me with that old cry, "Papa — papa!"

I had not dared turn — I did not now. I rose, sick and agitated; the golden sunlight bewildered me, and I drew back into the black shadow, and leaned against the old yewtree. As its large stem interposed between my poor eyes and the setting sun, I thought of the shadow that had passed between me and the sinking moon as I rose from my knees that night in the garden. For the first time, I knew that it had been Harold's. He had seen me, then, in sorrow, endeavouring to pray, and had gone away without one word! I leaned back very faint. Was this my strength, my patience, my faith?

So near, and yet so far! The pain was very sharp. Would not my poor heart burst? It longed so earnestly, so wildly, for his forgiveness, his kindness, his pity — it dared not hope for his love.

I could see nothing from where I stood, between the old tree and the church wall; but I heard a sound — the churchyard gate shut hastily, and then the noise of retreating footsteps. With Lily in his arms, he had gone away, then! He had come only to see her — there was no thought for me!

I sank down then. I could reach to lay my head on the little mound of my boy's grave; and I thought my heart would beat its last there. If, forgetting my task undone, for a moment I cried, "O, would that I were dead!" Thou hast forgiven me, oh, Thou infinitely kind Father! for Thou hast patience with us, remembering that we are but dust.

After a little, I lifted up my head and rose from the cold earth. I stepped out of the dark shadow into the light of the level sun, and then I knew how near my husband stood!

What could I do? I did not dare look up. I watched how, as he stood, his shadow reached just to the edge of the little grave. I had not long to doubt, or watch. Our little girl was in his arms, he put her down very gently! "Ask mamma to speak to poor papa?" he said. Then I looked up; my sad eyes were gladdened by his old dear smile; I cried out that I

could not bear it, and I felt myself clasped fast in his arms.

And was this how we met? Yes! it was more than I could bear. I was weighed upon, burdened, bowed down, and humbled to the dust.

And Harold—it was long before I could look up at his dear face — and then I saw it changed. On the white brow were scars, thank God, none so ghastly as those of my dream; and the black hair was thinner, and its blackness dimmed. Round his eyes — but it was not at first I could meet them — were lines of care. All this was my work and not time's, and he took me at once into his arms, bent down over me, pitied me for my distress, mourned over my frail looks, whispered kind words of hope and joy, and — but he was good. O Harold! Harold! and I thought you could be stern, and cold, and unforgiving to your poor sinful wife!

And was my future to be saddened by nothing but my own heart's remembrance of its sin? Was this great love of my husband's mine yet? Was there no atonement to be made, no forgiveness to be painfully won, ere it could return to me?

It was this that humbled and softened me, more than all; the mercy shown me was so infinite.

I soon learnt — though I asked nothing, being so satisfied with what I knew — why I had waited in vain so many days for the tidings that did not come.

Harold had risen too hastily from a bed of convalescence to pay that visit to his dying little girl, to shed those tears over his dead boy; he had been fettered by a promise not to speak to me, told that I still thought him dead, and warned that any sudden shock of surprise, might make me a mad-woman, or an idiot for life. But he had had too great a struggle with himself to restrain the impulse to rush to me, and take me in his arms when he saw me kneeling, and so wan and ghastly by the pale light of the moon. The excitement and fatigue had been too much for him, Doctor Ryton had hurried him away and had kept him a prisoner till the day we met.

I do not think there was no shadow over my husband's love for me then; but his tenderness was greater than ever, and the shadow has passed quite away now.

That evening in the holy church-yard, kneeling by our boy's grave, we celebrated a second marriage — a second marriage, more sacred, more spiritual, and more happy than the first. I had found my rightful place then, at my husband's feet. Was he not most nobly and grandly good? I had learnt to reverence him, and so found rest on earth.

My happiness was ever sobered by memory of the past, and chastened by the looking forward to a future, to which the angel-hand of our dead boy pointed us: but I was O, how happy!

In all this I have expressed but little of my gratitude. My history shows what boundless mercy I had to be grateful for — it is my life that must tell if I am grateful.

You know why I have written this for you. God bless you, I can say no more, no better! You saw how I shrank from your innocently-put questions about my early married life; but I told you they should be answered, and they are.

It is very many years since I had the foregoing narrative from the writer:

> Beating heart and burning brow,
> They lie very quiet now.

The husband and wife are dead. I need not write this woman's eulogistic epitaph, for "her works live after her:" her memory is held sacred in many a home. I should like stern lips to quiver, and proud eyes to fill with tears reading her words: it can do no harm, and may do good — so here is that poor Wife's Story.

CHIP.

WHAT SHALL A RAILWAY-CLERK HAVE FOR DINNER?

It is an admitted fact that the stomach, — or, as Rabelais calls it, the great gaster, — is an unruly but invariable companion of all branches of human nature. Railway-clerks are branches of human nature, and are just as much favoured by this raging organ as lords who legislate about Sunday beer, and dine at clubs on that day if they please.

The railway-clerk is sufficiently well paid to be able to obtain a dinner — at least, if he avoid Epsom races, eschew irregular companions, and look at her Majesty's effigy steadily in the face before he throws away that precious picture wantonly. Yet some railways give their half-hour for the digestion or indigestion of a bad dinner in the middle of the day; others — the great Ichthyosaurio-Megatherian line, for instance — delay the dinner-hour till five o'clock; after which our railway-clerk (especially if the making-up of accounts is going on), goes back again to work till twelve or upwards. Perhaps an anxious little wife is waiting to take home a loving, hard-worked husband to a late and humble supper; perhaps the twain have been separated for the entire day, and then comes the temptation to sit later than is healthy, especially when the toils of the next day commence so early. Perhaps, in a lighter season, some precious hours are snatched for mental improvement — for reading, writing, and the lecture-room (for your railway-clerk is not necessarily an animal only covered with figures, as a Nineveh bull with arrowheads). But this comes not to our purpose — when is the railway-clerk to dine?

Is it necessary that all the

clerks be detained at one time? If so, railways are unlike any other institution in existence. If matters be well organised, and if you have leaders instead of martinets, everybody may get some leisure. And with the when comes the where of the question, and we will try to answer both by one solution. Railway-clerks are not resident on the premises. Many of them live near, many are compelled to live far away from the scene of their labours. Most of the stations are seated in the most unenviable neighbourhoods, and the doubtful beef, dried-up ham, or saveloys of a ham and beef establishment, or a plate of that ingenious compound known as à-la-mode (not, by the way, always a bad thing in its way), or the routine of chop and steak, steak and chop, form the staple of entertainment for the snatched half-hour. Now, even this would be not so bad, if it could be got at a decent time; but the chance of a bread-and-butter lunch (as at the great Ichthyosaurio-Megatherian) is a poor stamina for those who work from nine A.M. to five P.M., and we cannot help wondering whether the great iron monster cannot feed its cubs better.

Now why cannot our railway authorities, with their gigantic stations, their exaggerated halls, their sumptuous waiting-rooms, and princely hotels, why cannot they find something like a decent, cheap, and wholesome table-d'hôte for their own clerks, open, we will say, at one, two, and three o'clock, so as to allow of a certain number going to dinner without stopping the necessary work of the station, and likewise remaining within reach of call if imperatively required? Instead of "Chop, sir? — yes, sir — sixpence — bread, seven — tatoe, eight — any greens, sir! — no, sir," — we might have a good cut off a large wholesome joint, or a sole, or a slice of cod, wholesome vegetables and bread, for something like four shillings or four-and-sixpence a-week, everything being well served, and the large number rendering it a good speculation on the part of the company.

Under such an arrangement, especially with some senior clerks acting as stewards, not only men connected with railways, but those employed in all large establishments, would get better dinners, would be less distracted from their work, and enjoy more comfort than they can command at present. Every one knows both the economy and the wholesomeness of large joints.

We speak advisedly on this subject. We know those who had remained through long days of utter exhaustion, until broken health has taken from them wasted years, to seek some new employment. We have known those whom a life among eating-houses has eventually severed from all home ideas. Men are not mere machines (though even a machine requires feeding), and

if we would make our railway-clerks a permanent instead of a perpetually migrating body — if we would uphold railway credit as an active agent of civilisation — we must recollect that our railway-clerk has a stomach, and we must find out how, when, and where he is to dine.

SUPERNATURAL ZOOLOGY.

We open the first printed herbal, called the Ortus Sanitatis; it was published in the last years of the fifteenth century, and tells what was known, not of plants only, but also of birds, beasts, fishes, and stones, three or four hundred years ago. We have sketched in some back numbers of this journal the superstitions that formed part of the belief and science of our forefathers, so far as regards men and spirits, and fulfil now an exceedingly old promise by here setting down a note or two about their supernatural zoology; for of the wonders of their botany it will be quite enough to speak in one short paragraph.

They figured in good faith the arbor vitæ, or the lignum vitæ Paradisi, and stated that the flesh of any man who ate it would be firm for ever, and that such a man would be exempt from every care. The wood of this tree is not destroyed but purified by fire. Bitumen, floating on the Dead Sea is also reckoned among plants, although it is defined to be the dung of demons. Butter ranks among herbs as the flower of milk, and cheese has a like privilege. It is said, by-the-bye, that Zoroaster in the desert ate nothing but cheese for twenty years, and was during the whole time free from ache or pain. The Diptannum or Biptannum is described and figured as a sort of mint growing in rocky places, and well known in Thessaly and Crete, which being eaten expels arrows or any steel or iron weapons from the body. Arrows shot into a goat by the hunter, if the goat nibbles diptannum, are shot out again. Dew falling upon stones or plants congeals and produces manna. If gathered quickly it is green; if it remain long on the plant or stone it will acquire a whitish colour. Mandragora is male and female, and is figured with roots in the respective similitudes of a man and a woman. The plant itself, which is not fabulous, is described by Serapion and Dioscorides as having been used for the same purpose now answered by chloroform, before painful operations with the knife or actual cautery.

We say no more of botany, and will omit from our zoology all record of the fabulous properties ascribed to common things, as that the spittle of a young man kills scorpions, or that a toad being burnt to powder and the powder left to itself there will be produced out of it a new toad, and not only one but many; or that to get rid of mice one should

fumigate the house with the left hoof of a mule. We speak only of some of those animals that are no longer named in any volume of zoology. Such a creature is the Amphisbœna, which is a snake having a head in the right place and another where its tail should be. This animal, being particular about its eggs, holds up always one head to watch them while with the other head it sleeps. On the authority of Avicenna, it is stated, that to see or hear this animal is death, and that whatever it bites dissolves. The Cacus is our old Arcadian friend who drags his prey backwards into his cave, and used to exist not only in Virgil's poetry, but also in books of science. Cerastes was a serpent with four horns, of which knife handles were made, that sweated when near poison. In the terrible old days of treachery and passion it was quite worth a man's while to have some means of testing the meat into which he cut.

The Cephus was a man below, a sort of dog above; this creature was never seen except at games in Rome given by Pompey. The Centrocata had the body of an ass, the legs and head of a lion, the voice of an ox, and a mouth splitting the head quite open from ear to ear. Draco, the dragon, is an old acquaintance. In all early books on zoology he is carefully described, and there is a good deal said about his medicinal properties. He lived in caves on account of the heat of his body, and was big enough in India to crack elephants, India being the great seat of an interminable war between the elephants and dragons. There is a stone in the dragon's head which is not a stone unless extracted while he is alive; after his death it ceases to be hard. This stone is the chief glory and aid of Eastern kings. They cause dragons to be put to sleep with medicated grasses, and then stone them almost as easily as raisins. All things poisonous fly from a dragon's fat. The dragon's tongue taken in wine banishes night-mare. The dragon's flesh is of a glassy colour and cools those who feed upon it; for this reason, the Ethiopians, who live in a hot country, prefer that sort of meat. For old acquaintance-sake we have stopped some little time with the dragon, before passing on to the Draconcopedes. This is the serpent with a woman's head that tempted Eve. Bede is of opinion that it showed only its alluring face to Eve, and hid its serpent's body behind the trunk or among the leaves of the tree of knowledge. The Jaculus was a winged serpent that descended upon trees and killed by a look whatever lay beneath. Leviathan is the great horse on which the devil rides. It has terrible battles with the whale, and when they fight the fishes round about swarm in a crowd round the whale's tail. If the whale be vanquished, all the fishes are devoured; if the Levia-

than, or Levin, be baffled, he pours out of his throat a fearful stench, which the whale repels by squirting at it a great flood of water. In that case, the fishes, the whale's vassals, are saved by their feudal lord.

Maricomorion was a beast rarely seen, of about the bigness of a lion. It had a serpent's tail, a lion's feet, a man's head, and in its mouth three rows of teeth. It was of a reddish colour. Imitating the tones of the human voice, it invited the approach of men and then devoured them. Nepa was a serpent of which the female perished in the giving birth to young. The Onocentaur was the Bully Bottom of the old zoologist, he had an ass's head on a man's body.

A wonderful beast is the Pathyon, of which the heathens thought that it partook of the nature of divinity. It has a purple coat, all radiant with scintillating light. Its bones are wonderfully hard and strong, and its nerves can only be torn asunder with the greatest violence. The Pilosus is as a man with the hoofed feet of a beast; the blessed Hiero describes it in the life of Paul the Hermit. In the zoology of our forefathers, even the horse beloved of poets, Pegasus, was figured and described. After that, we need not be surprised at meeting also with the Pigmies, mature at the age of three years, old at seven; or at being told, as matter of science, how they ride on wild goats armed with arrows to make war against the cranes and capture eggs.

As there was no system preferable in those days, the arrangement of plants, beasts, birds, &c., was made alphabetical. In turning over the leaves of our book, we have looked from Pegasus to Pigmies, and now pause at Pediculi, the curse upon man's head. They are either produced from perspiration, we learn, or exhaled through the pores of the skin. They swarm in the heads of travellers, because in travel men perspire much and meet with a paucity of baths.

Turning on to letter R, we pause at Regulus, the basilisk. We find him discussed again under the head birds: for as he is partly cock and partly serpent, it is hard to know whether he is rightly bird or beast. At the sight of him, the breath of him, or the sound of his hiss, men become dropsical and die. The fatal part of him when he kills by being looked at, are three hairs under his head. The basilisk is produced out of an egg laid by an aged cock and hatched in a dunghill, or some say by a serpent, but this is uncertain. They who have seen the egg, say that it has not a shell, but instead of shell a skin so tough that it can scarcely be broken with a hatchet.

It is hardly necessary to repeat the well-known proof of the fine spirit of the Rhinoceros, that he dies of grief when made a captive.

The Salamander is depicted by the naturalist on a comfortable litter of fire. It is an animal without a spleen, and with the liver on the left side of the body. Pope Alexander had a robe made of the wool of this animal, which was not put into water but into fire when it wanted washing. We will hurry on to the Unicorn, because the representation of that animal on the British arms as of equal size with the lion — although in other respects accurate — is calculated to give an exceedingly erroneous impression. The unicorn is quite a small animal, though noted for its strength.

Of course the many-headed Hydra is described with scientific accuracy, and that we may end the alphabet of beasts with a Z, let us speak of the Zubro. This beast, which is depicted throwing into the air three dogs at a time, and trampling on another, is so swift, that, it turns round on its own dung as it is falling, and tosses it back to a great distance with its horns, in order that it may fall as a petard among, and suffocate the dogs by which he is pursued.

We will now treat of surprising birds, and briefly. The Barliata are a sort of Barnacle geese, growing at sea on putrid wood, to which they hang by their beaks till they fall off. The beaks are, as it were, the stalks by which they grow. The good bishop, Jacobus Atheniensis, in a history of Eastern travel, says that he has seen such birds growing upon trees by the seashore, and hanging by the beak as pears hang by the stalk. The Carista is a little bird that flies unhurt through fire. Need it be said, that a few centuries ago, the zoologist included among birds blowflies and stagbeetles?

There was of course also Fenix, the Phœnix, dear still to insurance companies, though why they love it we know not, since it is a type of nothing else but arson. This Arabian bird — there is but one — when old, collects aromatic herbs under a hot sun, and fans them into flame with its own wings, and so burns itself up, with the direct purpose of rising again in an improved state from the ashes. Manifest arson, gentlemen of the Phœnix Fire Office! The new Phœnix first appears in the ashes as a worm, but grows rapidly; and this indubitable fact in natural history used to be taken as a proof of the resurrection. Of Grippes, the griffin, and his deeds in Hyperborean mountains, we need only say, that here he is among the other birds; here too is Harpia, the harpy. Then there is Merops, an earth-loving bird, that builds in the earth, and hides its eggs deep underground. "I have heard say," said a young owl, in one of Lessing's fables, "that there is a bird called Merops, which flies backwards with its head towards the ground. Can that be true?" "No, my child, that is a foolish invention of man.

He himself may be such a Merops, for he would be too happy to fly up to heaven without leaving the earth an instant out of sight."

Is the Ossifrago another of these human birds? Its leading character is a great love for marrow-bones, which it takes up into the air and drops, when it desires to crack them and enjoy the marrow.

The story of the Pelican is not so wholly creditable to that bird as is most commonly supposed. Inhabiting the waste places of Nile, it behaves cruelly to its young before it gives its blood for them. Our naturalist says that the young pelicans, when they begin to grow, beat their parents in the face. The angry parents strike again and slay them. After which they sorrow for three days. On the third day, the mother strikes her rib, and opening her own side, bends over the dead little ones, and pours her blood upon them. By this they are restored to life. We dare not point out in an article of this description, what portions of the story of the pelican have caused that bird to be accepted as a Christian symbol.

The Piralis is a four-legged fly (and a fly is a bird) born out of the fire of ovens. The Porphirio is a two-legged bird, semi-aquatic, having one foot with free claws, and the other webbed.

We pass from birds to fishes; but the fancy of the old naturalist passed out of all ken, in treating of the wonders of the sea. There were sea-horses, sea-lions, sea-hares (awfully poisenous), sea-wolves, sea-swine, sea-locusts, and many more, pictured in books with a few fins and scales, as really horses, lions, hares, wolves, swine, and locusts. There was the Chilon, with a man's head, living frugally on nothing more than his own viscous humours. There was the Balena, not so very like a whale, most cruel to its mate. There were those marvels, the dolphins, who swam about with their babies at the breast, and their eyes in their blade bones, who dig graves for their deceased parents and friends, follow them in funeral procession, and bury them in submarine cemeteries, out of the way of the fishes. There was that strange fish the Dies, with two wings and two legs, which, in the perfect state lived only for a day. There is the Phoca, which is the sea-ox, another oceanic brute, who is perpetually fighting with his wife until he kills her. Always remaining in the same spot, when he has killed one wife, he disposes of her body, and takes another, so playing Henry the Eighth to a series of wives, until he either dies himself, or finds a mate who is a match for him.

What shall be said of the sea-monk, cruel and deceptive monster, who lifts up a monk's cowled head out among the waves near shore, and with a man's cry seduces men to their destruction? We have seen enough to lose surprise at finding Nereids fully

treated of as fishes, and even also Scylla and the Sirens. In treating of Sirens, the zoologist quotes Isidore's opinion, that the account of them is a fable of deceitful women, only to dispute it, upon the authority both of philosophers and holy men, who have regarded them as true sea monsters.

That we may close the list again at letter Z, let us name the Zitiron, which was a fish carrying a knightly shield before its breast, and with a head like a knight's head in a helmet, with the visor down. Also the Zedrusus, an enormous fish of the Arabians, with such vast bones that they were sawn into planks, as oak-trees are, and used for timber.

WAR AND WASHING.

The man who makes a blade of grass grow where no grass grew before is a benefactor to his country. Let us contemplate the exalted man. How benevolent he must look — how dignified his attitude must be when he is observing the newly-introduced herbage, and the nobleness of his character is not a bit diminished by the fact that he is himself benefited by the novelty, — nay, if he were enriched beyond the imaginings of a Jew or an army contractor, his merits would remain the same; he would still be a benefactor to his country, and an honour to his sex and name.

A blade of grass, in this traditionary saying, is, of course, a mere parable or similitude; it means many blades of grass — many acres of grass, and not of grass alone, but corn, and wine, and oil. It means, in fact, the cheapening and increasing of the food of man, — it means an annual allowance out of the bounteous exchequer of our agricultural patron of so many pounds a-year to every man who keeps house — my own share, in case of a considerable diminution in the price of beef and mutton, not to mention potatoes and bread, would be a very pretty little fund for pleasure trips to London, and perhaps a month at the sea-side. But, with war howling all round the world, and gallant seamen covering themselves with glory by courageous dashes at granaries and mills — burning the finest Dantzic (as quoted at eighty-four shillings) in quantities which would feed a moderate county for a twelvemonth, and ships and barques and all the small fry of commercial craft, employed day and night in conveying away mountains of biscuit and innumerable loads of wheat and flour, there is no chance of either additional blades of grass or diminished prices of food. And yet, with taxes rising, and no prospect of a speedy crumpling up of our gigantic enemy, some means must be found of economising our present expen-

diture, or increasing our present means.

Where then shall I begin my economy? If I bring havoc and desolation into the kitchen, and reduce my establishment by sending away my cook, how shall we get on for dinner? We can't eat even the tenderest lamb in a state of nature, and a raw round of beef is a frightful idea. Then the housemaid? Are we to live covered over with dust? windows unopened when we come down in the morning; cloth — and eggs — unlaid? water boiling in the kettle, but nobody to bring it into the parlour? And supposing all this got over, who is to wait at dinner? — Are we to bring in the dishes ourselves, and change the plates? O, true, it must be the nursery-maid — so called by a kind of hereditary nomenclature, for, properly speaking, we have had no nursery for many years. Ah, I see, it must be that quiet, silent individual who is always in a corner of any bedroom you happen to go into, also always on the stairs on her way to the kitchen with a seam in her hand; also always in the housekeeper's room apparently in the act of rising from tea or dinner. She must go. And is the cook to be worked to death in sewing on buttons and mending stockings, in addition to all her other work? Is the housemaid to have no help in cleaning out the drawing-room and the passage, and the three best bedrooms; in short, is the house to be turned either into a treadmill, if the remaining two do their duty, or a wilderness of sand and confusion if they don't? It can't, then, be the nurserymaid. I have no others. I have reduced to the lowest stage of reduction already, and I must find out some other means of making the two ends meet. My clothes? I dress even at present in the oldestof habiliments, as if I were perpetual president of the Antiquarian Society. My wife and children must dress respectably — of course, they must — and that consists in bonnets that don't cover above four inches of the back of their heads, and gowns that sweep the ground in front, as if they had all prodigious feet — which they haven't, — or wore trains, and had put on their clothes the wrong way; their gloves, of course, fresh once a-week, and a perpetual succession of ribbons and scarfs, as if they lived in a rainbow. O, yes, of course, they must dress respectably and I must pay the very respectable amount contained in the milliner's bill, — so there is no chance of economy in that quarter. I was disheartened for a long time — utterly puzzled how to contract my expenditure by a single shilling, when, fortunately, I went and saw a friend of mine, — a very excellent and sagacious friend, and a friend I think he will turn out to a good many people who may read this paper. They will certainly consider him, at all events, equal, if

not superior, to the exemplary individual who makes a blade of grass grow, &c. &c. &c. His name, for the convenience of identification, we will call Hobbins.

"Hobbins," I said, when we were left alone after dinner, "how do you manage the war?"

He looked a little surprised at first, but recollected my abrupt ways, and said, "I manage the war, my dear Bobbins? — I don't — nobody manages the war, as far as I see."

"I mean, how do you get over the increased expense of living?"

Hobbins laughed, and said, "Take another glass of this port — it will do you no harm — and in fact the war won't do you any harm either, if you do as I have done."

"I shall be delighted," I replied, and drank the wine in a moment. "How?" I said, expectingly.

"The war," he said, "is not half so ruinous as you think. The increase upon the income tax is about four per cent. How much have you a-year?"

I paused a little; but hang it, what's the use of being close when you go to a friend for advice? I told him as near as I knew.

"That's about — let me see. You ought to live well enough on that," he said; "and you have a wife and two daughters?"

"Yes," I replied; "but if you think you can clip off a single shilling out of gloves and bonnets, boots and silk stockings, you are mistaken. Mrs. Bobbins —"

"I don't mean that," said Hobbins; "but there's another way, without curtailing a ribbon. In short, I have no doubt, taking England all over, that I could carry on the war without the slightest pressure, and without any diminution of comfort."

"Comfort," I said; "perhaps not — but respectability; at least, what Mrs. Bobbins calls respectability."

"She shall be more respectable than ever; and you won't feel the tax at all. What is the heaviest item in your weekly bills?"

"Well, you know," I said, "Georgiana has a good appetite, and so indeed have Julia and Marianne; and as the butcher has raised his prices a penny a-pound, the amount is very large — considering we are only a party of seven, servants included."

"But you could knock off a joint, if required, or take some of the coarser meat. But of the unavoidables which is the most severe?"

While I was trying to remember, he seemed to get a little nettled at my stupidity, and said, "I'll tell you what, Bobbins, there isn't another man in Essex would be so slow. Your greatest bill, in proportion to your fortune and the number of your family, is of course the washing."

"Ah! so it is," I cried, quite astonished at my own forgetfulness — for I had mused upon

the subject long, and quarrelled with Mrs. Bobbins about it regularly once a-week.

"There is the rock that England will split on," said Hobbins. "She is such a vain fool — is Britannia. She has California in her wash-tubs, and won't pick up the nuggets. Sir," he added, looking like the late Doctor Johnson, "I will overwhelm the Russian emperor with soap."

"How? — Cannon balls? — Too soft," I said; but luckily so low that he didn't hear me.

"On the expenditure of this great country in the article of washing alone, there is the opportunity of saving more than the increased expenses of the war. I find it so in my own experience. This village finds it so. The county might find it so, if it were not a desperately obstinate county; and the nation — yes, the nation — might laugh at the doubled taxation, and call Poland into existence without any perceptible enlargement of its burdens. Ay!" he continued, warming with his subject — "tubs and combination — dirty linen and patriotic feeling — anything may be done! You, my dear Bobbins, may keep a gig upon the savings, and Warsaw may be free!"

"Julia hates gigs," I modestly observed, "and they are all anxious about a phaëton and ponies."

"Here is the whole question," continued Hobbins. I may observe, by the way, that he did not pass the decanter with the regularity required by the solar system. "Why should not the upper classes, as they are called, that is, the people who have houses and families of their own, have the benefit of union as well as the comparatively poor, or such as artisans and their wives and children, in the admirable lodging-houses lately built? In nothing is the saving more remarkable than in the article of washing. Lay it down as a rule at once, that no family can do its own washing economically, unless it is of such size as to present the features of combination, though passing under one name. But in establishments like yours or mine, where the work is not enough to occupy a maid or maids entirely, at that and nothing else, it is folly to think of avoiding the professional washerwoman. In her case it is only by undertaking for several families that she makes her profits. Her fires, her tubs, her drying rods, perform their ministrations in a cosmopolitan spirit, and get up the weekly linen for the most opposite establishments. The parson's bands meet in friendly communion on the wooden horse with the dissenting clergyman's neck-cloths (both perhaps a little overstarched). The money of orthodoxy and of dissent, goes equally to the Prussian blue and crimping iron. But the powers of earthly washerwoman are limited. Their appliances are usually too scanty to give the

benefit of this social combination to its full extent; and there can be no doubt that in country places like this, we are at the mercy of an ignorant and careless set of people, who charge preposterously for work very ill done; and I myself may state, that for many years I never had my proper complement of buttons, and my frills were generally burned into holes, so that sometimes they had the appearance of lace. All that is changed; and this is how the metamorphosis was accomplished.

"I went round among the neighbours, and found the discontent with the existing state of things universal. The tyranny of the washerwoman was intolerable, and we determined to become the Pyms and Hampdens of the laundry. Some were inclined to what may be called the fifth monarchy principles of total abolition, and talked of dirt and independence, by never having their clothes washed at all; but the principles of cleanliness and moderation were dear to the great majority. So I laid before them a plan I had deeply studied. The lady of the present day to whom wealth has been entrusted for the purpose of showing what a noble and unselfish use can be made of it, had presented to the hospital at Scutari an admirable contrivance for the rapid drying of the linen of a vast establishment for the reception of upwards of a thousand sick and wounded men. In the model wash-houses of London, excellent applianoes had been introduced for the saving of labour and fuel. In another quarter I heard of a contrivance for the washing of the clothes, where machinery performed the first and hardest part of the labour, leaving only the easier portion of the ironing and getting-up to the hands of the professional ladies. The calculation made by all the people I consulted as to the saving of expense by the adoption of these and other processes was, that it could not be less than a half of the usual outlay, and might be a great deal more. Here was a saving of half my annual bill — if of mine, of Jobbins' and Mobbins', and everybody else's. Now the number of people in this district with incomes from three up to twelve hundred a-year is immense, and although a man's outlay in this respect is not regulated by his income, but principally by the number of his family, I considered I was safe in taking the average washing-bill of each family at thirty pounds a-year, which is certainly not half their amount under the usual system. There are forty of us, all anxious to be tidy and economical, and here was a sum of twelve hundred a-year on which we could rely with certainty. We formed a sort of joint-stock company, managed by a committee of ourselves. We purchased an old barn, and fitted it up with long troughs for the washing, immense

cauldrons, fed from a tank of soft water, and a large drying-closet, with every apparatus of pipe and cistern that could be required. We also turned a portion of the building into a room for the finishing off of finer portions of apparel, with ironing-boards, needles, threads, and buttons to supply the place of the lost and broken; and the expense of all this preliminary stock was about three hundred pounds. In the old arrangement labour is almost the entire expense. In a washing, for instance, of a moderate-sized family, amounting to what is technically called twenty-four dozen (articles, be it understood, not people), the items consist of fifteen shillings for work, and only three shillings and twopence for material — namely, one-and twopence for soap, threepence for soda, a shilling for starch, and a penny for blue. Now here comes in the overwhelming advantage of the economy of labour. Our staff consists of fifteen damsels, strapping and tall, at twelve shillings a-week, a man and horse and cart, for general purposes, we take at one pound twelve; materials of all sorts, such as soap, starch, and soda, we put down for five pounds a-week; the coals at four; and the interest on subscribed capital at twelve shillings. This makes a grand total of twenty pounds four shillings a-week, or about a thousand and fifty pounds a-year. In addition to this, we must calculate the salary of a clerk of the washing-book, whom we think of appointing to keep the accounts and collect the weekly payments; and this, being liberal, we fix at seventy-five pounds. But with all this, there is a very satisfactory margin on the original estimate. We shall consider the surplus a fund for repairs and sundries — for machinery will get out of order, troughs will leak, tubes are not perennial, and coals and other materials may rise in price."

I paused a while before I made any reply to the benevolent Hobbins. He seemed sure of his ground — his calculations appeared reasonable enough. "But," I said, "this plan seems only adapted for a populous neighbourhood like this. It needs a great number of contributors to make the system economical."

"It needs a certain number," he replied; "but they need not be so many as I have said. It would still be a considerable saving if the company consisted of only a dozen; but in this, as in all other instances of combination, the more the better. If, instead of forty families we had eighty, the proportionate expenditure to each would be still farther diminished. But the great principle of the plan is as much proved by twenty as by a hundred. It is in anybody's power to diminish his washing-bill by a half, and that without injury to the present race of ginloving blanchisseuses, for their work

will be certain instead of precarious; the linen will be more carefully treated, the water mixed with no deleterious ingredients to give an easy whiteness to the collar and front, at the expense of early rottenness and decay; and, in fact, as I said before, I have no doubt the Russian war could be carried on on the savings effected in suds and soda. I shall propose to the herald's college that a clean shirt be introduced into the royal standard for the honour of Old England, and a sign of scorn and defiance of the unwashed savages of the north.

OUT OF TOWN.

Sitting, on a bright September morning, among my books and papers at my open window on the cliff overhanging the sea-beach, I have the sky and ocean framed before me like a beautiful picture. A beautiful picture, but with such movement in it, such changes of light upon the sails of ships and wake of steamboats, such dazzling gleams of silver far out at sea, such fresh touches on the crisp wave-tops as they break and roll towards me — a picture with such music in the billowy rush upon the shingle, the blowing of the morning wind through the corn-sheaves where the farmers' wagons are busy, the singing of the larks, and the distant voices of children at play — such charms of sight and sound as all the Galleries on earth can but poorly suggest.

So dreamy is the murmur of the sea below my window, that I may have been here, for anything I know, one hundred years. Not that I have grown old, for, daily on the neighbouring downs and grassy hill-sides, I find that I can still in reason walk any distance, jump over anything, and climb up anywhere; but, that the sound of the ocean seems to have become so customary to my musings, and other realities seem so to have gone a-board ship and floated away over the horizon, that, for aught I will undertake to the contrary, I am the enchanted son of the King my father, shut up in a tower on the sea-shore, for protection against an old she-goblin who insisted on being my god-mother, and who foresaw at the font — wonderful creature! — that I should get into a scrape before I was twenty-one. I remember to have been in a City (my Royal parent's dominions, I suppose), and apparently not long ago either, that was in the dreariest condition. The principal inhabitants had all been changed into old newspapers, and in that form were preserving their window-blinds from dust, and wrapping all their smaller household gods in curl-papers. I walked through gloomy streets where every house was shut up and newspapered, and where my solitary footsteps echoed on the

deserted pavements. In the public rides there were no carriages, no horses, no animated existence, but a few sleepy policemen, and a few adventurous boys taking advantage of the devastation to swarm up the lamp-posts. In the Westward streets there was no traffic; in the Westward shops, no business. The water-patterns which the Prentices had trickled out on the pavements early in the morning, remained uneffaced by human feet. At the corners of mews, Cochin-China fowls stalked gaunt and savage; nobody being left in the deserted city (as it appeared to me), to feed them. Public Houses, where splendid footmen swinging their legs over gorgeous hammer-cloths beside wigged coachmen were wont to regale, were silent, and the unused pewter pots shone, too bright for business, on the shelves. I beheld a Punch's Show leaning against a wall near Park Lane, as if it had fainted. It was deserted, and there were none to heed its desolation. In Belgrave Square I met the last man — an ostler — sitting on a post in a ragged red waistcoat, eating straw, and mildewing away.

If I recollect the name of the little town, on whose shore this sea is murmuring — but I am not just now, as I have premised, to be relied upon for anything — it is Pavilionstone. Within a quarter of a century, it was a little fishing town, and they do say, that the time was, when it was a little smuggling town. I have heard that it was rather famous in the hollands and brandy way, and that coëvally with that reputation the lamplighter's was considered a bad life at the Assurance offices. It was observed that if he were not particular about lighting up, he lived in peace; but, that if he made the best of the oil-lamps in the steep and narrow streets, he usually fell over the cliff at an early age. Now, gas and electricity run to the very water's edge, and the South Eastern Railway Company screech at us in the dead of night.

But, the old little fishing and smuggling town remains, and is so tempting a place for the latter purpose, that I think of going out some night next week, in a fur cap and a pair of petticoat trousers, and running an empty tub, as a kind of archæological pursuit. Let nobody with corns come to Pavilionstone, or there are break-neck flights of ragged steps, connecting the principal streets by back-ways, which will cripple that visitor in half an hour. These are the ways by which, when I run that tub, I shall escape. I shall make a Thermopylæ of the corner of one of them, defend it with my cutlass against the coast-guard until my brave companions have sheered off, then dive into the darkness, and regain my Susan's arms. In connection with these break-neck steps I observe some wooden

cottages, with tumble-down out-houses and back-yards three feet square, adorned with garlands of dried fish, in which (though the General Board of Health might object), my Susan dwells.

The South Eastern Company have brought Pavilionstone into such vogue, with their tidal trains and splendid steam-packets, that a new Pavilionstone is rising up. I am, myself, of New Pavilionstone. We are a little mortary and limey at present, but we are getting on capitally. Indeed, we were getting on so fast, at one time, that we rather overdid it, and built a street of shops, the business of which may be expected to arrive in about ten years. We are sensibly laid out in general; and with a little care and pains (by no means wanting, so far), shall become a very pretty place. We ought to be, for our situation is delightful, our air is delicious, and our breezy hills and downs, carpeted with wild thyme, and decorated with millions of wild flowers, are, on the faith of a pedestrian, perfect. In New Pavilionstone we are a little too much addicted to small windows with more bricks in them than glass, and we are not overfanciful in the way of decorative architecture, and we get unexpected sea-views through cracks in the street-doors; on the whole, however, we are very snug and comfortable, and well accommodated. But the Home Secretary (if there be such an officer) cannot too soon shut up the burial-ground of the old parish church. It is in the midst of us, and Pavilionstone will get no good of it, if it be too long left alone.

The lion of Pavilionstone is its Great Hotel. A dozen years ago, going over to Paris by South-Eastern Tidal Steamer, you used to be dropped upon the platform of the main line Pavilionstone Station (not a Junction then), at eleven o'clock on a dark winter's night, in a roaring wind; and in the howling wilderness outside the station, was a short omnibus which brought you up by the forehead the instant you got in at the door; and nobody cared about you, and you were alone in the world. You bumped over infinite chalk, until you were turned out at a strange building which had just left off being a barn without having quite begun to be a house, where nobody expected your coming, or knew what to do with you when you were come, and where you were usually blown about, until you happened to be blown against the cold beef, and finally into bed. At five in the morning you were blown out of bed, and after a dreary breakfast, with crumpled company, in the midst of confusion, were hustled on board a steamboat and lay wretched on deck until you saw France lunging and surging at you with great vehemence over the bowsprit.

Now, you come down to Pavilionstone in a free and easy manner, an irresponsible agent, made

over in trust to the South-Eastern Company, until you get out of the railway-carriage at high-water mark. If you are crossing by the boat at once, you have nothing to do but walk on board and be happy there if you can — I can't. If you are going to our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, the sprightliest porters under the sun, whose cheerful looks are a pleasant welcome, shoulder your luggage, drive it off in vans, bowl it away in trucks, and enjoy themselves in playing athletic games with it. If you are for public life at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, you walk into that establishment as if it were your club; find ready for you, your news-room, dining-room, smoking-room, billiard-room, music-room, public breakfast, public dinner twice a-day (one plain, one gorgeous) hot baths and cold baths. If you want to be bored, there are plenty of bores always ready for you, and from Saturday to Monday in particular, you can be bored (if you like it) through and through. Should you want to be private at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, say but the word, look at the list of charges, choose your floor, name your figure — there you are, established in your castle, by the day, week, month, or year, innocent of all comers or goers, unless you have my fancy for walking early in the morning down the groves of boots and shoes, which so regularly flourish at all the chamber-doors before breakfast, that it seems to me as if nobody ever got up or took them in. Are you going across the Alps, and would you like to air your Italian at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel? Talk to the Manager — always conversational, accomplished, and polite. Do you want to be aided, abetted, comforted, or advised, at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel? Send for the good landlord, and he is your friend Should you, or anyone belonging to you, ever be taken ill at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel you will not soon forget him or his kind wife. And when you pay your bill at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, you will not be put out of humour by anything you find in it.

A thoroughly good inn, in the days of coaching and posting, was a noble place; and I mean, with permission, before long, humbly to offer my experience of such establishments, in these pages. But, none of them would have been equal to the reception of four or five hundred people, all of them wet through, and half of them dead sick, every day in the year. This is where we shine, in our Pavilionstone Hotel. Again — who, coming pitching and tossing, boating and training, hurrying in and flying out, could ever have calculated the fees to be paid at an old-fashioned house? In our Pavilionstone Hotel vocabulary, there is no such word as fee. Everything is done for you; every service is provided at a fixed and reasonable charge; all the prices

are hung up in all the rooms; and you can make out your own bill beforehand, as well as the book-keeper.

In the case of your being a pictorial artist, desirous of studying at small expense the physiognomies and beards of different nations, come, on receipt of this, to Pavilionstone. You shall find all the nations of the earth, and all the styles of shaving and not shaving, hair-cutting and hair letting alone, for ever flowing through our hotel. Couriers you shall see by hundreds; fat leathern bags for five-franc pieces, closing with violent snaps, like discharges of fire-arms, by thousands; more luggage in a morning than, fifty years ago, all Europe saw in a week. Looking at trains, steam-boats, sick travellers, and luggage, is our great Pavilionstone recreation. We are not strong in other public amusements. We have a Literary and Scientific Institution, and we have a Working Men's Institution may it hold many gipsy holidays in summer fields, with the kettle boiling, the band of music playing, and the people dancing; and may I be on the hillside, looking on with pleasure at a wholesome sight too rare in England! — and we have two or three churches, and more chapels than I have yet added up. But public amusements are scarce with us. If a poor theatrical manager comes with his company to give us, in a loft, Mary Bax, or the Murder on the Sand Hills, we don't care much for him — starve him out, in fact. We take more kindly to wax-work, especially if it moves; in which case it keeps much clearer of the second commandment than when it is still. Cooke's Circus (Mr. Cooke is my friend, and always leaves a good name behind him), gives us only a night in passing through. Nor does the travelling menagerie think us worth a longer visit. It gave us a look-in the other day, bringing with it the residentiary van with the stained glass windows, which Her Majesty kept ready-made at Windsor Castle, until she found a suitable opportunity of submitting it for the proprietor's acceptance. I brought away five wonderments from this exhibition. I have wondered ever since, Whether the beasts ever do get used to those small places of confinement; Whether the monkeys have that very horrible flavour in their free state; Whether wild animals have a natural ear for time and tune, and therefore every four-footed creature began to howl in despair when the band began to play; What the giraffe does with his neck when his cart is shut up; and, Whether the elephant feels ashamed of himself when he is brought out of his den to stand on his head in the presence of the whole Collection.

We are a tidal harbor at Pavilionstone, as indeed I have implied already in my mention of tidal trains. At low water, we are a heap of mud, with an empty

channel in it where a couple of men in big boots always shovel and scoop: with what exact object, I am unable to say. At that time, all the stranded fishing-boats turn over on their sides, as if they were dead marine monsters; the colliers and other shipping stick disconsolate in the mud; the steamers look as if their white chimneys would never smoke more, and their red paddles never turn again; the green sea-slime and weed upon the rough stones at the entrance, seem records of obsolete high tides never more to flow; the flagstaff-halyards droop; the very little wooden lighthouse shrinks in the idle glare of the sun. And here I may observe of the very little wooden lighthouse, that when it is lighted at night, — red and green, — it looks so like a medical man's, that several distracted husbands have at various times been found, on occasions of premature domestic anxiety, going round and round it, trying to find the Nightbell.

But, the moment the tide begins to make, the Pavilionstone Harbor begins to revive. It feels the breeze of the rising water before the water comes, and begins to flutter and stir. When the little shallow waves creep in, barely overlapping one another, the vanes at the mastheads wake, and become agitated. As the tide rises, the fishing-boats get into good spirits and dance, the flagstaff hoists a bright red flag, the steamboat smokes, cranes creak, horses and carriages dangle in the air, stray passengers and luggage appear. Now, the shipping is afloat, and comes up buoyantly, to look at the wharf. Now, the carts that have come down for coals, load away as hard as they can load. Now, the steamer smokes immensely, and occasionally blows at the paddle-boxes like a vaporous whale — greatly disturbing nervous loungers. Now, both the tide and the breeze have risen, and you are holding your hat on (if you want to see how the ladies hold *their* hats on, with a stay, passing over the broad brim and down the nose, come to Pavilionstone). Now, everything in the harbor splashes, dashes, and bobs. Now, the Down Tidal Train is telegraphed, and you know (without knowing how you know), that two hundred and eighty-seven people are coming. Now, the fishing-boats that have been out, sail in at the top of the tide. Now, the bell goes, and the locomotive hisses and shrieks, and the train comes gliding in, and the two hundred and eighty-seven come scuffling out. Now, there is not only a tide of water, but a tide of people, and a tide of luggage — all tumbling and flowing and bouncing about together. Now, after infinite bustle, the steamer steams out, and we (on the Pier) are all delighted when she rolls as if she would roll her funnel out, and are all disappointed when she don't. Now, the other steamer is coming in, and the

Custom-House prepares, and the wharf-labourers assemble, and the hawsers are made ready, and the Hotel Porters come rattling down with van and truck, eager to begin more Olympic games with more luggage. And this is the way in which we go on, down at Pavilionstone, every tide. And, if you want to live a life of luggage, or to see it lived, or to breathe sweet air which will send you to sleep at a moment's notice at any period of the day or night, or to disport yourself upon or in the sea, or to scamper about Kent, or to come out of town for the enjoyment of all or any of these pleasures, come to Pavilionstone.

WINIFRE'DS VOW.

Winifred James sat in the autumn moonlight by the seashore with her friend Grace Wilson. The heavy dew had soaked through Grace's thin muslin gown, so that it clung dank and close about her; her hair lay uncurled on her bosom, and her wan face looked paler and sadder than ever in the waning light of the pallid autumn moon. There were no tears in her sunken eyes looking mournfully out on the dark waves, but they were full of a deeper sorrow than is ever told or lightened by tears. Her thin hands lay listlessly in her lap, and their palms, curved inward, were burning as if on fire; her lips were drawn and hard, and the veins on her brow were blue and swollen: no hope, no joy, no energy, no life was round her; there was nothing but the dull oppression of despair, the quiet of a sorrow which can only be dissolved by death.

Winifred had often tried to understand the strange mystery which of late had hung round Grace. For she had not always been the broken-hearted creature she looked to-night. But, excepting a promise that she would tell her sometime, Grace used to change the subject as soon as her friend approached it. However, to-night she let her say what she would. Either the time fixed by herself for her confession had arrived, or she was conquered by the tenderness and love and quiet strength of Winifred. Suddenly taking her hand, she placed it on her waist; and, leaning forward, whispered something in her ear which made Winifred shrink and start, and cover her face with both her hands, trembling.

"Now you will hate me," said Grace, in a hollow voice, letting her hand fall dead in her lap. "Like all the rest, when they know, — you too will despise and desert me. I deserve it!"

"Never! never!" said Winifred passionately, looking up through her tears and kissing her. "Never, Grace!"

"Nor it?" said Grace. "When I am dead will you take care of it?"

"No; nor it — and I will take care of it. But you will not die, Grace! You cannot die, then!

When you hear that little voice your soul will come back again to earth, were it at the very gates of heaven."

"Heaven? For me?" said Grace. "No, Winifred, my birthright on earth and my hope of Heaven lie in the same grave with my honour. Do not wish me to live as I am now. Why should I? What have I but to support eternal shame myself, and to see all that I love — all that belong to me — cast into the deep shadow of my disgrace? It were better for us all that I and it should die together. For when I am gone, who will be its mother? Poor baby! What wrong has it done to be born to an inheritance of sorrow and infamy?"

"I will be its mother, Grace," said Winifred. "I will love it, and care for it, all my life. If you leave it — if you die — it shall never feel that it has lost its mother. While I live, it shall have one in me."

"You swear this, dear Winifred?"

"I swear it!" said the girl, solemnly, raising her hand to heaven.

"Now I shall die happy," said Grace, kissing her cheek. "Death has no pang for me, now that I feel I shall not leave my poor child wholly motherless. A pang? No! death is my best friend, my only hope, truly an angel messenger from God! O, Winifred, how can I thank you for your goodness! You little know the heavy burden of sorrow I lay down, by this desolate seashore, to-night — a burden unclasped by your hands. But you will not be unrewarded. The God who punishes, recompenses; the hand which has stricken me will strengthen you. Now, let us go home. I am weary, Winifred, and my heart is very full. I must go and pray — not for myself; I dare not pray for myself; but for you and this innocent unborn life, I may; and God will not refuse to hear me when I ask His blessing for you!"

Weeks passed away, and Winifred stood by Grace's dying bed. The supreme moment had come; and, as she had foretold, the hour which gave life to her child, closed her own; — mercifully for her. Winifred did not forget her vow. She took that child of sorrow, shame, and death, and carried it to her own home, as tenderly as if its birth had been the wellspring of a nation's joy. Her mother, a kind, good, weak woman, sanctioned the unusual position she adopted: at least, by silence. She did not condemn, if she did not commend, but let things take their own course. She only lifted up her hands and eyes, saying, "Grace Wilson, who'd have thought it!" and so the sad story passed without further comment. But in time there were not wanting many who ridiculed the idea of such devotion, and who hinted plainly that little Mary was nearer to Winifred than a mere adopted child. It was all very well, they said, for Mrs. James to be so com-

plaisant, and Winifred so generous, but they had better reasons than a romantic morality between them. Depend upon it, when folks gave themselves out for better than the rest of the world, they were sure to be a precious deal worse. Grace Wilson was dead, and queer things were said of her; but who knew whether they were true or not? And wasn't Miss Winifred away out of sight for a long time, too? So the cloud darkening the tomb of poor Grace fell over Winifred as well; and the fatal truth that no wrong is finite, but that the influence of evil spreads and multiplies for ever, rested like a blight on the young foster-mother and her child.

It was striking the change which this adoption worked in Winifred. No, not change, so much as development. Always a girl of deep feelings and an earnest nature, the terrible story of one who had been like her own sister, her mournful death, and now this adoption of her child, brought out all that was most serious in her character, and subdued whatever girlishness she might have had. But this change in her, only made her character more beautiful. Always good, she was now admirable; always conscientious, she was now heroic. And how she loved that little one!

It was a dear little baby too, loveable for itself, if for nothing else more touching. It was one of those round, fat, curly things, that laugh, and cry, and kick up and crow, all day long — a thing of unrest and appetite, for ever fighting with its fat, foolish arms, and senseless hands doubled into rosy balls, striking wide, and hitting its own eyes or nose in the spasmodic way of babyhood; when it wanted to suck that doubled fist, making insane attempts before it could reach its rosy, wet, wide-open mouth, and generally obliged to take both hands before it could accomplish that first feat of infancy; a restless, passionate, insatiable baby, that had strong notions of its own importance, and required at least one slave in perpetual attendance; an unreasonable baby; a wilful baby; but a baby after a woman's own heart. So, to this little life Winifred devoted herself, never heeding the cold looks and slighting words of the world without, and never thinking that a day might come when any other love could step in between her child and herself.

Louis Blake was Winifred's great friend. They were like brother and sister, and inseparable. Louis was exactly Winifred's own age — five-and-twenty; the little Mary about three years' old now. It was circumstance and opportunity that made them such fast allies; for by nature they had not many points of sympathy together. Louis was a brave, energetic, honourable man, but essentially a man of the world — ambitious, clever, and eminently unroman-

tic. That in him which pleased Winifred was his manliness. Tall, handsome, powerful, and practical, he was the ideal of masculine strength; while the materialism and worldly pride which marred his character were not brought out in the circumstances of a quiet country life. The only side now seen was his undeniable common sense and personal dignity; and these were graces, not defects, in their present proportion.

They were together a great deal, walking, riding, sitting by the same dark sea which had borne away poor Grace's tears; reading together, thinking, talking, studying; until at last the conditions of their daily lives grew so closely interlaced, that neither thought it possible to separate them. Winifred had thought so little at any time about love, that it never occurred to her to ask herself whether this were love or friendship; and Louis knew too well how large his own ambition was, and how it filled his heart, to dream it possible he could give place to any other passion. So they went on in the old sweet way of descent, and believed they were standing on the high plain above.

But Louis began to think more of Winifred than he liked to acknowledge to himself; and he began to think, too, how he could arrange his life if he married her. If this should ever be, he thought the first thing he would do would be to send little Mary to the Foundling Hospital, or put her out to nurse, and afterwards to school. At any rate he would have her taken from Winifred. Louis thought this the best thing for the girl herself; and as for Mary's happiness, she must take the consequences of her painful position. Her birth was an accident, certainly, and it seemed hard to punish her for it but the birth of a royal duke was an accident too, and yet he got the benefit of it. So Louis reasoned, smoking his cigar in the evening, and believing that he reasoned judiciously and well.

Things went on in the same way for many months, until at last a letter came, demanding the immediate presence of the young student in London, on matters of great consequence, connected with his future career. Louis was pleased at the prospect of immediate employment; it was the first round of the great ladder won, and was the best practical news he could hear. But he was more than grieved to leave Winifred and South Shore. He had solved the problem, and found that love and ambition could exist together. His next lesson would be on their proportions.

"Winifred," he said, "I have bad news for us — though good for me too."

"What is it, Louis?" said the girl, looking up from the ground where she was sitting, playing with little Mary.

"Leave that child to herself for a moment, if you can," he said, almost pettishly, "and come with me into the garden."

Winifred gathered up her black hair, which had fallen below her waist, and, sending Mary to her nurse, went out with her friend. They walked some time in silence; Louis pale and agitated, his arms crossed, and biting his forefinger.

"What is the matter, dear Louis?" said Winifred at last, laying her hand on his shoulder, as a sister might have done. "You are so pale — and — why, Louis, you are trembling! Oh! what has happened to you?"

"I am grieved, Winny," he said, affectionately, taking her hand from his shoulder, to hold it between his own. "I did not think I should have felt it so much."

"Felt what, Louis?"

"Leaving South Shore."

"Leaving us? O! are you going to leave us!" cried poor Winifred, bursting into tears. "What shall I do without you, Louis — my friend — my brother - my own dear Louis!"

"And are you so sorry, Winifred?" said Louis in a low voice, holding her tenderly pressed to his heart.

"How can you ask, Louis! What will be my life without you? I cannot even imagine it without you to share it! Louis! Louis! what shall I do when you have left me?"

"Winifred," — and Louis trembled, so that he could scarcely speak — "do you then really love me — love me as my wife should?"

The girl started back; she flung off his hands, and looked at him with a wild, frightened look. Her colour went and came; her heart throbbed violently; her eyes were dim, and she could scarcely see. At first she was about to deny, and then to leave him — to rush from him to the end of the earth, if that were possible; and then these two impulses passed, and something broke and something rose within her. She went back to her old place, threw her arms round his neck, and, sobbing on his shoulder, said, "O Louis, I believe this is love!"

There was no time then for explanations. Louis could make no conditions, Winifred oppose no conflicting duties. The dream must go on for a short time; and, though the pain of separation mingled with the first joy of their love, yet this could well be borne when helped out with such divine stimulant.

Months passed before Louis even spoke of return, and months again before he could execute his wish. In all, it was between two and three years before they met again. In the meantime he had been in the heart of the world — in the midst of London life struggling, fighting, conquering, so far; but in the struggle his ambition and all his worldly passions were roused and excited.

He had been too with conventional people; and had got more than ever of that conventional honour and morality which are the farthest possible removed from truth. His object in life was success — by all fair means, and honourable. And though he would not have sacrificed love entirely, yet that love must be as compatible and as helpful as might be to the future he had marked out for himself. To Winifred herself there was no kind of objection. She had fortune; she was of good family; and her reputation, even through the undeserved reproaches sought to be cast on it, was yet grand and noble. But his objection was to the child. So long as Mary was with Winifred, she was no wife for him. For so long as she kept the little one by her side, and gave her her name, there would be still the scandal and the sneer; and his wife must be not only pure before God, but blameless before men. No; she must choose between her love for him and the little one. They could not exist together.

This was the feeling, then, that Louis brought with him to South Shore, when he returned after more than two years' absence, to arrange for their wedding. And these were the reflections with which he overwhelmed Winifred, in the first days of his arrival.

"You are not serious, Louis?" she said, turning pale.

"Never more serious in my life! My dear girl, we must have a little common sense in this world! We cannot always act solely on impulse against our best interests."

"But dishonour and perjury can never be our interest, Louis," said Winifred. "Not to speak of their intrinsic wrong, they are even bad stepping-stones to fortune."

"Dishonour and perjury are hard words, Winifred."

"But true ones, dear."

"That may be. But, dishonour or not," said Louis, rather angrily, "it must be done. Once now, and for ever, I distinctly refuse to sanction this absurd adoption of yours; nor do I recognise your duty or your right in maintaining it. Let the child be sent to school. I do not wish her to go to the work-house, or to come to harm; but I wish absolutely that my house shall be free of her, and your name dissociated from her."

"Don't say that, Louis," said Winifred, trembling. "Do not say that I am to desert my child, for that means I am to lose you. I could not break my vow, Louis, though I might break my heart."

"Folly! The heated fancy of an enthusiastic girl! Is this to be put in competition with my love, Winifred?"

"O Louis, nothing in the world can be put in competition with that," cried Winifred, "but duty!"

"A mere play on words. Your duty is to me."

"And to the helpless and the dead," said Winifred, softly.

"Then you don't love me, Winifred?"

"More than my life, Louis," cried Winifred, passionately.

"But not more than this senseless child?"

"Not more than my honour, my duty, and my vow," she said, weeping.

"Let us talk no more of it," said Louis, rising. "I leave your fate, and mine too, in your hands. Think well before you decide; and remember, that you have to choose between a superstitious literalism or my love, my happiness, and my life."

And he left the room, sternly.

This was the first of a long series of conversations, all in the same tone, and all on the same point; Louis becoming angry, and Winifred sorrowful; but both firm, and with each discussion less than ever disposed to give way. At last Louis, one day, more passionately than usual, even swore he would not marry any woman in the world who refused the condition he had made; and Winifred said firmly, she would not buy either her own happiness or his, by desertion and treachery. So, Louis went to London, and the day after wrote, so that Winifred could only reply by releasing him from his engagement. This release he accepted with ardent sorrow, but yet with decision; feeling that he had now given up all chance of peaceful happiness, and that he must make his life out of ambition.

So, the lives which should have been united for ever, became, not only separate and distinct, but estranged. But though Louis went back to the world and to the strife he loved, he was not happy; for he was not at peace with himself. Even now, while he still hoped all things from ambition, and while flushed with the passion and the eagerness of the combat, he had misgivings, — indistinct and infrequent, but not the less real; while Winifred sank into a silent, sorrowful, prematurely aged woman, whose only joy was in the love which had cost her all her happiness. Without Mary, she would probably have died in the first years of her widowhood — for it was a true widowhood for her, so friendless as she was. But the strength which had enabled her to make the sacrifice, enabled her to support it; and the love which had demanded it, rewarded her.

Winifred's mother died not long after this, and Winifred left South Shore with the child. They went into Devonshire, where they took a house in the most beautiful part of the county, and where they lived peaceful and retired — Mary's education the occupation of Winifred's life. Bearing the same name, Mary passed there for Winifred's niece, and even the motherly way in which she spoke to her, and Mary's calling her, "Mamma Winny," did not bring suspicion on them; for, as people

said, if there had been anything to conceal, why did they not conceal it? And why did they come as strangers to a place advertising themselves as unworthy of notice, when they might so easily have avoided all suspicion? So that Winifred found her life pass more easily here than even in her old house; and gradually her spirits gained, if not joyousness, at least peace.

Mary was now a beautiful girl of about eighteen or nineteen — a noble, animated creature, all life and love, and enthusiasm, and innocence. Just, free-spirited, with bright eyes and bright hair, a bright quick colour, and a voice that was like a silver bell; seeing all things through the clear air of her own hope and love, making a very sunshine round her path, and wherever she went taking joy and smiles with her; the true ideal of a glad-hearted girl. This was the development of that turbulent baby kicking in its cradle nineteen years ago. She seemed to have robbed Winifred of all her life, so exuberant was her own, so pale and depreciated her poor foster-mother's. All Winifred's beauty had gone with her youth. Her black hair had grown thin and grey, her laughing eyes were dim; her lips had lost their tint, her cheeks were pale and hollow; not a trace of any possible beauty in the past was left on her face; and no one who saw her for the first time would believe that as a young girl she had been even more than ordinarily pretty. But it had been a beauty merely of youth, passing with the bright skin and the happy smile of youth, and leaving the ill-formed features, with all their want of regularity exaggerated and unsoftened.

In the midst of his ambition, Louis Blake still remembered Winifred. She was the only woman he had ever loved, and as time gave its romance to the past, it seemed as if he had loved her even more ardently than was true. He had gained all he had striven for in life; he was rich and powerful, and his highest flights of ambition were realised. But his heart was empty; his home was solitary. He blamed himself for the part he had acted; and, secure of his position now, thought he had been even unwise in not associating Winifred and all her life with him. He would have been strong enough to have borne them up the ladder with him, and she would have lived down the petty calumny that endeavoured to destroy her beautiful action. For it was beautiful; yes, he recognised that now. Full of these thoughts, and just at the age when the man who has been ambitious in his youth wishes to be domestic in his maturity, he made inquiries about Winifred at her old home; and learning her address there, he set off suddenly to Devonshire, to renew his acquaintance — perhaps his love, who knows? — with his former friend and fiancée. But Louis made one fatal mistake.

He did not realise the years that had passed since he parted with Winifred. It was always the same Winifred whom he left sitting on the ground, playing with a baby girl — her black hair falling far below her waist, and her dark eyes bright and clear — whom he expected to find again. All the world told him — and he knew without vanity, that it was true— that time had been his friend. His curly chesnut hair, a little worn about the temples, had not a silver line in it; his bearing was more manly, and his figure better developed than when Winifred saw him last; success had given him a certain commanding manner which might easily pass for majesty; and constant intercourse with the world, a profound insight into human nature. He was eminently one of the present generation — one of the men whose mind and character influence their whole circle. Handsome, noble, and capable, he was a very king and hero to the minds of most women; against whom not the most beautiful youth in the world, were he Apollo himself, would have had a chance of success; and who, like a veritable monarch, might have chosen his queen wheresoever he listed. And he thought that time, which had so beautified him, would have done the same for Winifred. It would be a matured, ennobled, glorified woman that he should meet, but still the same that he had left; it would be the nymph become the goddess. And thinking, hoping, believing this, it was with all the fervour of his old affection that he knocked at the door of the cottage where they told him Miss James lived.

A beautiful girl came hurriedly and rather noisily into the room, almost as soon as he had entered. She did not know of his visit, and a deep blush broke over her brilliant face. Louis forgot all about baby Mary, and never remembered the possibility of this glorious creature being the butterfly from that cradled chrysalis; he only said to himself, that dear Winifred had just as much sweetness as ever, and as little vanity, else she never would have dared the presence of such a beautiful girl as this. He asked for her, however, smiling; and Mary went out of the room to call her, glad enough to get away.

Winifred came down almost immediately, bringing Mary with her. When she saw Louis, she stood for a moment — stupified, as if she had seen a ghost from the grave before her; then uttering a low cry, she staggered, turned deadly pale, and holding out her withered hands toward him, cried, "Louis! Louis!" and "My love!" and then fell fainting to the ground.

In her fainting the last chance of illusion vanished. O! why had he come? Why had he not been content to live on the pleasant romance of memory and faith?

Winifred's faintness soon passed; and with it her weakness. When she recovered, she held out her hand, smiling; saying in a firm tone, "It was such a surprise to see you, Louis, that I was overcome." And then, she began to talk of former days with as calm a countenance as if they had parted but last week, and had never met in love. She thus put them both into a true position, which they had nearly lost; and left the future unembarrassed by any fetters of the past. Louis could not but love the woman's delicacy and tact; and saying to himself; "I shall soon get accustomed to the loss of her beauty," believed that he would love her as of old, and that all would go smoothly and happily for them both. He was glad now, that he had come. After all, what did a little prettiness signify? Winifred was just as good as, perhaps even better than, she used to be; and what did it matter if she were less beautiful? Louis was philosophical — as men are when they deceive themselves.

He remained in Devonshire for nearly a month, and at the end of that time began to grow perplexed and confused in his mind. In the first days he had made Winifred understand that he loved her still; he had told her why he had come to Devonshire; he had spoken much of the softening and beautiful influence that her memory had been to him all his life, and of how he had hoped and trusted in the future; he had called back all her former love to him, and had awakened her sleeping hopes; he had poured fresh life into her heart, he had given her back her youth. He had spoken of her to herself as a being to be worshipped for goodness, and in speaking thus, had pressed a kiss on her withered cheek; and, when he had done all this, and had compromised his honour as well as his compassion, he found out that she was old and faded; that she was a mother, not a wife; that, considering her age, love-passages between them were ridiculous. If she had been Mary, now —!

Mary was much struck with Louis Blake. His grand kind of bearing, his position, the dazzling qualities of his mind, all filled her with admiration, so intense that it was almost worship. But worship tinged with awe. And, thus — she changed too. Her frank and childish manners became fitful and reserved; her causeless tears, her wild excitement, her passionate manner to Winifred, embracing her often and eagerly, as she used when as a child she wanted her forgiveness for an unconfessed, but silently recognised fault; her bashfulness when Louis spoke to her; her restless wretchedness when he passed her in silence; her eager watching for his eye and smile, and her blushes when she was rewarded; all gave the key to Winifred, so far as she was concerned; though as yet she did

not know that this key opened another heart as well. But, she began to feel a change, gradual, and perceptible, and sure, in Louis. He grew cold in his manner to her, and sometimes irritable; he avoided her when she was alone, and he spoke no more of the past; he was constrained, he was harsh — he no longer loved her, and this was what he was teaching her. His manner to Mary was as fitful as her own. Now tender and fatherly, now hard and cruel; sometimes so absorbed in watching her, or talking with her, that he forgot all the world beside, and sometimes seeming to forget her, and her very existence in the room. Winifred saw it all. She was the first to give the true name to this perplexity, and factitious attempts to reconcile impossible feelings; and when once enlightened she accepted her position with dignity and grandeur. There was no middle way. Louis no longer even fancied that he loved her, and she could not hold him to the promise made when under the illusion of that fancy. She must again judge between duty and self, and again ascend to the altar of sacrifice. He loved her child; and Mary — and Winifred wept as she said it low in her own chamber, kneeling by her bed, half-sobbing and half-praying — Mary loved him. Yes, the child she had cared for as her own, and for whom she would have given her life, now demanded more than her life. And she should have it.

It was in the grey evening when Winifred went down-stairs, passing through the low French windows of the drawing-room, and on to the lawn, where Louis and Mary were standing near the cistus-tree. But not speaking. A word too tender, a look too true, had just passed between them, and Louis was still struggling with the impulse which bid him say all, look all, and leave the issue to fate. Mary was trembling, tears in her eyes, and a strange feeling of disappointment stealing over her; though she could not have said why, for she did not know what she had expected. Winifred walked gently over the grass, and was by their side before they knew that she had left the house. Mary gave a heavy sob, and flung herself on her neck, saying:

"Darling Winny! How glad I am you have come!"

Louis turned away, painfully agitated.

"Why do you turn from me, Louis?" said Winifred. "Are you afraid of your friend? Do you fear that you cannot trust her love?"

"What do you mean, Winifred?" said poor Louis, passionately. "For God's sake, no enigmas! O, forgive me, dearest friend, I am harsh and hard to you; but I am mad! — mad!"

"Poor suffering heart, that suffers because of its unbelief," said Winifred tenderly: and ta-

king his hand she placed it in Mary's. Clasping them both between her own. "See, dear Louis," she said, the tears falling gently over her furrowed cheeks. "My hand is no barrier between you and your love. Rather a tie the more. Love each other, dear ones, if therein lies your happiness! For me, mine rests with you, in your joy and your virtue. And when, in the future, you think of Winifred, my Mary will remember the foster-mother who loved her beyond her own life, and Louis will say he once knew one who kept her vow to the last."

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS.

A DECREPIT old woman, tempted by a man in black, has signed with her blood on parchment a contract to become his, body and soul; has received from him a piece of money, the black king's shilling to the new recruit; has put one hand to the sole of her foot and the other hand to the crown of her head; and has duly received a familiar in the shape of a cat or kitten, a mole, a millerfly, or any other little animal, which is the corporate form of a demon, subject to the will of the said woman, lodged by her, and provided with a daily meal of her own blood, drawn from taps established for its use on different parts of her body. If any old woman has had an adventure of this kind and keeps such a familiar, she is undoubtedly, in spite of all the lights of all the centuries, a witch. But, whether any decrepit old woman ever did make such a contract and rejoice in the fulfilment of its terms, is certainly a question not worth asking in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five. However, let that pass. Grant her the demon, and then let us inquire, what manner of witch she may be. All will depend upon the use made of her ill-gotten power. If by it she choose to help people to recover stolen goods, heal sickness, and make herself useful to her neighbours, she is a white witch. If she be malicious, a cunning thief, an afflicter of children and of cattle, she is a black witch; if she be partly white and partly black in her behaviour, she is a grey witch; and her familiar spirit is accordingly pronounced to be black, white, or grey.

Why are almost all witches women, and, in sooth, old women? The popular idea of a witch coincides at this day with the picture of her, sketched by Master Horsett a quarter of a thousand years ago: — "An old weather-beaten crone, having her chin and knees meeting for age, walking like a bear leaning on a staff, untoothed, having her lips trembling with palsy, going mumbling in the streets; one that hath forgotten her pater-noster and yet a shrewd tongue to call a drab a drab, and who hath

learned an old wife's rhyme ending pax, max, tax, for a spell." His sagacious Majesty King James the First explained this by a theory, "For," he said, "as the sex is frailer than man, so is it easier to be entrapped in the gross snares of the Divell as was over well proved to be true by the serpent's deceiving of Eve in the beginning," and of course when the weaker sex is at its period of greatest weakness, when it has fallen into bodily decay and dotage, then is the time for evil powers to make sure of catching it in traps. So of a decrepit old woman, if she was poor and lived a lonely life, without the aid and comfort of a loving husband or a sturdy son, the presumption was fair that she must have been caught in the trap, and being a witch ought in the name of all things holy to be burnt alive. Moreover, there would be a disposition on the part of men to be very tolerant of women who were well-favoured or young, and at least an equal disposition on their part to be intolerant of women who were old and ugly. Let the tenderness of Colonel Hobson testify.

In the year sixteen 'forty-nine the people of Newcastle-upon-Tyne were much troubled with witches, and two of the town-sergeants were despatched to Scotland in order to enter into agreement with a Scottish witch-finder. On the arrival at Newcastle of this public functionary, the magistrates of the town sent the bellman through the streets, inviting any person to bring up suspected witches for examination. Thirty women were accordingly produced at the town-hall, and most of them, after trial by the thrusting of pins into the flesh, were pronounced guilty. The witch-finder informed Colonel Hobson that he knew whether or not women were witches by their looks, but when the said person was searching a personable and well-favoured woman the Colonel replied and said, "Surely this woman is none, and need not be tried." But the Scot said, "Yea, she was, for the town said she was, and therefore he would try her." Presently afterwards he ran a pin into her and set her aside as a child of Satan. Colonel Hobson proved on the spot that the man was deceived grossly, whereupon the witch-finder cleared the woman and said she was not a child of Satan. Nineteen women were ordered to be burnt at Newcastle upon the conviction of this man, who then went into Northumberland, where he tried witches at three pounds a-head. It is poor consolation to be told that this ruffian himself died on the gallows, when it has to be added that he confessed himself to have caused the death of two hundred and twenty women in England and Scotland, and, taking them all round, to have earned about a pound upon each job.

Of the trial of witches by water, every one has heard. A scene

like the following used in fact to be one of the incidents of ordinary life in English villages, and was not altogether rare when this letter was written, a hundred and eighteen years since, to the London Magazine:

"Oakley, three miles from Bedford.

"Sir, — The people here are so prejudiced in the belief of witches that you would think yourself in Lapland, was you to hear their ridiculous stories. There is not a village in the neighbourhood but has two or three. About a week ago I was present at the ceremony of ducking a witch, a particular account of which may not perhaps be disagreeable to you.

"An old woman of about 60 years of age had long lain under an imputation of witchcraft, who being anxious for her own sake and her children to clear herself, consented to be ducked; and the parish officers promised her a quince if she should sink. The place appointed was by the river Ouse, by a mill. There were, I believe, 500 spectators. About 11 o'clock in the forenoon the woman came, and was tied up in a wet sheet, all but her face and hands; her toes were tied close together, as were also her thumbs, and her hands tied to the small of her legs. They fastened a rope about her middle, and then pulled off her cap to search for pins (for their notion is, if they have but one pin in them, they won't sink.)

"When all preliminaries were settled, she was thrown in. But, unhappily for the poor creature, she floated, though her head was all the while under water. Upon this there was a confused cry: A witch! a witch! Drown her! Hang her! She was in the water about a minute and a half, and was then taken out, half-drowned. When she had recovered breath, she was tried twice more, but with the same success; for she floated each time, which was a plain demonstration of guilt to the ignorant multitude! For, notwithstanding the poor creature was laid down upon the grass speechless and almost dead, they were so far from showing any pity or compassion, that they strove who should be the most forward in loading her with reproaches — such is the dire effect of popular prejudices! For my part, I stood against the torrent; and when I had cut the strings which tied her; had her carried back to the mill, and endeavoured to convince the people of the uncertainty of the experiment, and offered to lay five to one that any woman of her age, so tied up in a loose sheet, would float; but all to no purpose, for I was very near being mob'd. Some time after the woman came out, and one of the company happened to mention another experiment to try a witch — which was to weigh her against the Church Bible; for a witch, it seems could not outweigh it. I immediately seconded the motion (as thinking it might be of service to the poor woman), and made use of an argument which (though as weak as K. James'* for their not sinking) had some weight with the people; for I told them that if she was a witch, she certainly dealt with the devil, and as the Bible was undoubtedly the word of God, it must weigh more than all the works of the devil. This seemed reasonable to several, and those that did not think so, could not answer it. At last the question was carried, and she was weighed against the Bible, which weighed about 12 pounds. She outweighed it. This convinced some and staggered others; but the parson, who believed through thick and thin, went away fully assured that she was a witch, and endeavoured to inculcate that belief in all others. I am, &c. &c."

A hundred years ago, three men were tried at Hertford for the murder of Ruth Osburn, who was suspected as a witch. The overseers of the parish, wishing to save the woman (who was seventy years of age), from threatened danger, removed her and her husband to the workhouse. A body of about five thousand people, however, assembled at Tring, and behaved

* K. James' argument why witches would not sink, was this: they had renounced their baptism by water, and therefore the water would not receive them.

with so much violence that the authorities were at length obliged to give up the victim. The poor woman was so much ill-treated by the ignorant mob in their experiments to prove whether she was a witch, that she died shortly after.

It is not fifty years, since Mr. Nicholson, the incumbent of Great Paxton in Huntingdonshire, preached against the belief in witchcraft to his ignorant parishioners, and told them some of his experience. A poor woman, the mother of eight children, persecuted as a witch, had gone to him weeping, protesting innocence, and asking leave to prove it by being weighed against the pulpit Bible. Mr. Nicholson then expostulated with his people in the church, but to no purpose, for soon afterwards their violence increased. At St. Noet's market, a woman coming home in the waggon, was about to put her parcel of grocery on the top of some corn-sacks, and was advised by Anne Izzard, a neighbour, not to do so; she did it, nevertheless, and on the way home, by some accident, the waggon was upset. This set the whole village in an uproar, and on the following Sunday night, its inhabitants went in a mass to the unhappy woman's cottage, dragged her naked from her bed, dashed her head against the stones of the causeway, mangled her arms with pins, and beat her on the face, breast, and stomach with the wooden bar of her door. When left to herself, she crawled for protection to the constable and was refused it; but, in the house of a merciful woman, who was a widow, she found refuge, and the widow, Alice Russell, bound her neighbour's wounds, and put her into her own bed. By this Christian deed, she incurred the wrath of the people brutalised by superstition, and was subjected by them to indignities, and kept in a state of incessant terror, whereof twelve days afterwards she died. But, on the day after the first outrage, Anne Izzard was again dragged out for ill-usage, after which she took refuge under the roof of the clergyman, who was blamed sorely for the shelter he afforded.

The belief in witches, even at this day, survives in many corners of the land, among an untaught people; while superstition of the grossest kind, though not the most atrocious, is to be met with everywhere. In the London drawing-room of the wealthy connoisseur in rappings; in the remote hovel of the poor man, who to avoid misfortune, is induced to swallow necromantic mixtures, and among whose household treasures are to be found constantly such documents as this: "The gar (jar) of mixtur is to be mixt with half a pint of gen (gin), and then a table-spoon to be took mornings at Eleven O'clock, four and eigt, and four of the pills to be took every morning fasting, and the paper of powder to be divided in ten

parts, and one part to be took every night, Going to bed in a little honey. The paper of arbs (herbs) is to be burnt a small bit at a time, on a few cooles with a little hay and rosemery, and whiles it is burning, read the two first verses of the 68 Salm, and say the Lord's prayer after."

GHOST-MUSIC.

NEAR Rupes Nova, in Finland, there is a lake, in which, before the Governor of the Castle dies, a spectrum, in the habit of Arion with his harp, appears, and makes excellent music. — BURTON'S Anatomy of Melancholy.

BENEATH the pallid castle walls
Of Rupes, where the rocks scowl grimly,
And down dark crags the sunlight falls,
A lake lies dimly.

Nothing is seen upon its shore
But weary waters, flat and grey,
Or boat that in the distance hoar
Fadeth away.

Or, peering out between the sedge,
The bittern; or the heron drinking;
Or stork that by the water's edge
Seems always thinking.

Yet, round about, by night or noon,
A murmur of enchantment flies,
Far-sounding, like a fairy tune
When daylight dies.

The rocks all round — broad, brown, and bare,
Down-trampled by the eternal streams—
Have struggled into shapes that glare
Like sculptured dreams.

And in the trees that shade the ground
The furtive wind sits always humming;
And in the caves is heard a sound
Of elfish drumming.

The Lake is smooth, and bare, and wide;
The distant shore looks out like sleep;
And sleepy water-lilies ride
At anchor deep,
And open their white vases dim,
And ruffle their dark leaves, and quake, —
Like water-nymphs that by the brim
Lie half awake.

And ever, when that ghostly mere
The moonlight paves with shaking gold,
Upward there grows a sense of fear
And gathering cold.

For, in the blue-black depths, a cell
Holds a swart goblin, known far round
For weaving one portentous spell,
On which is wound

The life of him who sits in state
Within the neighbouring castle walls,
And governs with an iron weight
His vassal thralls.

He sways them with a lordly will,
And holds their lives within his hand:
Death seems his slave; yet fears he still
When Death shall stand

Before him like a master, sent
To call him through the dark away:
He knows that when his life is spent
The Elf will play.

He knows that up from watery gloom
The awful Elf will rise, and take
The Harp that lies like sleeping doom
Beside the Lake;

That lies in broken rock and weed,
Untouch'd from year to year, except
When the loosed winds with shuddering speed
The strings have swept.

The dreadful Fairy heaves the Harp
From out the weed, from out the stone;
He sits upon a headland sharp,
And wakes its tone.

At first it seems a little sound,
Fine, and faint, and far away,
From behind the hills that bound
That rocky bay.

At first it has not strength to shake
The lightest leaf upon the tree,
Nor rouse the ripple on the Lake,
Nor start the bee

From out the swinging fox-glove bells
Nor sway the spider on his thread;
But soon the music pants and swells,
Till, overhead,

Comes the sound of many voices,
Comes the rushing of many wings;
And with those huge, harmonious noises
The dull air rings.

And the stagnant trees are shaken
As with wind in Autumn moaning;
And the ripples begin to waken,
And the bees cease droning

In the fox-gloves, and the spider
Shrinks in fear to a yellow ball.
Deeper spread the tones, and wider,
Round the Hall.

The near rocks thrill with an iron tongue,
The distant rocks give faint replies:
The doom'd man hears his death-knell rung,
And, swooning, dies.

Then sinks the Goblin down below;
The Harp lies idly by the lake;
This wreathèd ripples cease to flow,
The leaves to shake;

The bees again in the fox-gloves blare,
The crags hum fainter, thrill on thrill,
The spider trails out in the air,
And all is still.

A Power e'en yet in Finland reigns,
Who waits some music from beneath
To tell him that his planet wanes
In bloody death.

The hissing of glad swords, — the throng
Of bullets singing as they wend,
Like storms in March, — will be the song
That marks his end.

He watches in the day and night
To see the dreadful shape burn through;
And Europe, gathering up her might,
Stands watching too.

MODEL OFFICIALS.

The public mind is supposed just now to be considerably occupied with what is called Administrative Reform; and, therefore, any little hint on the subject will not be entirely thrown away. Now, there are two ways of illustrating a topic; either to surround it with a halo of perfection — to idealise it and offer its glorified image — to invest humanity with celestial beauty — to select the faultless features of a hundred models in order to compose one perfect statue; in short, to exhibit a pattern for imitation; or, to set before the spectator a picture of warning, — to teach temperance by parading a drunken Helot — to show Orson in all his wildness to anti-educationists — to point out the bottom (if there is one) of many easy descents, and to make it clear what we may come to, if we don't take care what we are about, and pull up others as well as ourselves when they are drifting a little too far in a wrong direction, and when even veteran red-tapers are obliged to endorse an application for a job with the unwonted memorandum, "This is too bad!"

Certainly, we are blest in England with a few official personages, — from the worthy magistrate who adorns the bench to the managers of various public establishments and offices, — who are striving to raise the standard of the British character in respect to faithfulness, despatch, and integrity. If we go on thus, we shall come to a climax soon. Public confidence will have reached a point beyond which it will not be possible to proceed further, — that way, at least. Thus, setting aside whatever has come to the private

knowledge of myself and mine, my newspaper this morning informs me, in its Multum in Parvo, appropriately so styled in the present instance, that, "on a Postoffice official, arrested the other day in the Duchy of Brunswick, the enormous quantity of fourteen hundred stolen letters were found. He had only been attached to the post-office for one year." And again, "out of one hundred and thirty-five letters containing money, which passed through the Wolverhampton post-office during the month of July, forty-nine have not yet reached their destination." Who is so unreasonable as to suppose that they ever will? And what should I deserve, but the bastinado, if I were so impertinent as to complain about my ten-pound note, and my maiden aunt's lawpapers, which haven't come to hand, and don't mean to, — unless a handsome reward is offered for the latter, — or to grumble that the postage stamps with which I deface the front of my letters are considerately removed before the stampers of St. Martin's have had time to blacken them? What, but stripes, are the meed of malcontents? And to that mode of discipline an insurgent populace will have to submit. The case is not without precedent, as you now shall learn.

Certain French officers have been compelled to act the part of police magistrates in Algeria; not that they particularly liked the task, but, "force," says the vulgar dictum, "has no choice." What must be — must. So these Frenchmen set to work to administer justice in the Arab courts of police and law, with much the same expression of countenance as you would assume previous to swallowing a bumper of salts and senna. Several of them, after a lapse of years, have turned their stipendiary magisterial experience to a literary account. Among others, Charles Richard, Capitaine du Génie, &c., has written what would be an amusing book, Scènes de Mœurs Arabes, were it not evident that he too is an official reformer in his way; — that he is by no means satisfied with his underlings — that he works with them, in a state of high disgust, like a man who is compelled to handle dirty tools, and that he only employs them for want of better.

But what, I ask, would be the use of burdening oneself with the load of office, high or low, if one did not thereby acquire a few privileges unattainable by the vulgar herd? — such for instance, as peeping into letters, if you are perched on the top of the tree, and of making them pay a handsome toll, if you are only nestled amongst the branches. I say, poor lords and gentlemen who compassionately undertake government for us, cannot go on with their hands tied as they are; they ought to be deputed to administer, to every unreasonable grumbler a

wholesome dose of the stick, after the Arab fashion. However, the reader shall judge for himself, whether Algeria does not furnish a useful hint. He shall be indulged with a glimpse into an Arab police-office, and shall hear the Frenchman's own report; he can then form his own conclusions, without being influenced by the reporter's wrong-headedness. Can you expect common sense from an officer of engineers, formerly a pupil of the Polytechnic school?

The bureau itself is of simple aspect, scarcely equal to Downing Street or the Horse Guards. A plain one-storeyed house has before its entrance-door a sort of courtyard furnished with enormous benches, which may be called an external antechamber. In another large court, on the other side of the building, a Moorish café displays its filth. Within, an antechamber contiguous to the door opens into an audience-room, which is nude of every other decoration than a series of broad benches. At one end stands a writing-table and the curule chair of the French-Arabian magistrate. A narrow passage leads from the reception-room to the deputy-magistrate's private cabinet, and also to the police-offices, properly so called, wherein a few privileged scribes follow their trade of scratching ink-marks on paper as fast as their fingers can go.

The actors who appear on this simple stage are neither brilliant nor numerous. First, there is the head of the bureau, or magistrate, an official part, in the present instance performed by M. Richard. His character compels him to act as the representative of European conquest and civilisation. Next is the kadi of the Arab bureau; a raven's-beaked face, consisting solely of a nose which exceeds the limits allowed to the human species — very stupid, but profoundly versed in the holy books — never at a loss for a text at the service of the constituted authorities — unclean, and smelling offensively — clothes spotte with black constellations, the sprinklings of his writing-desk — buried behind his principal's arm-chair in a heap of dusty and disorderly books — indefatigable with the pen. Thirdly (it ought to have been first) comes the chaouch, — a combination of beadle, policeman, drum-major, sheriff's officer, crier of the court, and chief constable — an individual who practises blind obedience, provided it does but bring him in something — ready to wring his own father's neck for the trifle of a douro — (four-and-sixpence) — mousquetaire's face, well-made figure, and tall enough to give a good thrashing to whoever chose to run the risk of one — highly respected and feared by the vulgar — a very bad Mussulman, being strongly addicted to strong liquors in secret — the epitome of human impudence and villany under a

pleasing aspect. (It is right to say what good we can.) In the wings, or side-scenes, are the medjelés, or Mussulman magistrates, who, for the most part, conceal beneath an imposing dignity or an evangelical simplicity of manners profound immorality, but who, nevertheless, compose the highest and the healthiest portion of Arab society. Then there is a chorus of functionaries of every grade, kaïds, cheiks, witnesses, defendants, plaintiffs, spies, and divers personages, besides equestrian supernumeraries known as mekrazenis, indigenous horsemen in the special service of the bureau. They are a species of centaur divisible into two parts — the man and the horse — who enjoy the feline faculty of seeing in the dark, and of travelling to any indefinite distance. Amorous as they are of douros and good cheer, when neither are to be had they are capable of fasting for a fortnight — the equine just as well as the human portion of the compound animal.

M. Richard's chaouch, named Djilali, was remarkable for astounding volubility of speech, the result of unwearied practice; and he often displayed it in public professions of attachment to his chief, such as — "I am your servant, your child, your slave, the sole of your shoes. I acknowledge none but you and Allah. Never will you find devotion comparable to mine." If the worthy magistrate ventured to hint that there was plenty of time for such effusions of affection at leisure moments, but that now he had better go and attend to his business, Djilali would retire, heaving such sighs as can only be heaved by misunderstood souls and undervalued hearts. But Djilali bestowed the outpourings of his love on those below as well as on those above him. One day, at the audience-room, when a case had been disposed of and another was coming on, the chaouch went to the door, as if summoned by a friendly voice, and at the same instant entered El Hhadj Bou Zebel, a fellow who had the run of the house, in consequence of being employed in cleaning the stables and in the transport of horse-manure. He held a broom in his hand, and both his dress and person bore evident traces which left no doubt as to the nature of his functions. He presented himself as a complainant in a state of the greatest exasperation; and, to judge from the indignation which he manifested, by his gestures, and particularly by the evolutions of his broom, you would have concluded him to be the victim of some gross iniquity. After a few stammered exclamations and broken sentences, he gradually became a little more calm and less unintelligible under the soothing influence of Djilali, who appeared to entertain for him a special sympathy. At last he shouted, "'Tis abominable! shameful! infamous!

I invoke Allah and his justice!"

"My poor Bou Zebel," said the magistrate, "what can have happened to put you into such a furious passion?"

"I have been treated worse than they treat the lowest shepherd. I have been insulted — my respectability has been lowered."

"The deuce! The affair is serious. And in what way, my poor Bou Zebel, have they contrived to lower your respectability?"

"I am your servant — I sweep your stables — therefore I ought to be treated with respect; that is my only object in working for you."

"Assuredly nothing can be truer than that," said the magistrate drily.

"I wait upon the makrezen, the courier, a public functionary — whoever insults me deserves to be punished."

"The fact is incontestible; and the more so, because, even if you were not a public functionary, no one would have the right to insult you with impunity."

"Nobody has any right to interfere with me but you. I will take nobody's orders but yours. I consider only as my equals or my inferiors all whose rank is lower than yours."

"Such pride is honourable, considering the functions you fulfil; but just explain what it is all about."

"It is, look you, that as for all the khalifs and all the aghas in the world, I look upon them as a mere nothing in comparison with myself, because I — I am your servant — I belong to your household."

"You are perhaps indulging in a little exaggeration, my poor Bou Zebel; but what is the meaning of all this talk?"

"It means that I have plenty of nose."

[To have plenty of nose signifies, amongst the Arabs, to be possessed of proper pride.]

"I never doubted the fact."

"By your cherished head! I had rather die than suffer the least diminution of the respect which is due to me."

"Those are noble sentiments; but what besides?"

"I can bear witness, in fact," Djilali chimed in, "that Bou Zebel is a famous fellow, and that he has a prodigious quantity of nose."

"Oblige me by holding your tongue," interrupted the magistrate; "for if you begin to blow your trumpet in concert with his, it is impossible to guess when there will be an end of it."

"To insult me! a person in the service of the courier! 'tis the upsetting of all received ideas!"

"The offence is grave, I allow," said the magistrate; "but only explain —"

"Me, who sweep your stables! me, a man of your household! your child! — for I am your child."

"Heaven defend me from repudiating the honour of the paternity; but after all —"

"Besides, ask Djilali about my antecedents; you must not fancy that I am a mere nobody."

'By Sidi Abd-Allah!" exclaimed the chaouch, "Bou Zebel is a very considerable personage, and, such as you see him, he has been a drummer in a battalion of regulars, where I was myself — he is my brother in arms."

"Ah, dear me!" said the magistrate, trying hard to keep his temper; "will you oblige me by not wasting my time in this useless way. Bou Zebel, I give you warning, that although you are an employé of the makrezen, and moreover my child, I will have you turned out of doors like the simplest private individual if you do not choose to explain yourself more clearly."

"Ah! Sidi, Sidi, you will listen to your child. You will not repulse him without doing him justice!"

"Ah! Sidi, Sidi," chaunted Djilali, "consider the wrongs of poor Bou Zebel!"

"Will you say what you want?" asked the magistrate, a trifle impatiently; for he began to feel like a certain right honourable speaker (who well deserves his salary), when honourable members have lost themselves in a wood of words in which they threaten to wander all night long.

"I will, Sidi; I am coming to the point. Sidi, I was busy in the exercise of my functions, occupied in brooming the front of the stables, when who should come but Hhamed Ould Denéï on horseback, at full gallop, as if he were going to break his neck. The lout, instead of shouting out Gare! laid me flat on my back, sticking on a muckheap, neither more nor less than if I had been a lump of carrion, saving your presence. I picked myself up, and said to him, with becoming calmness, 'I think, Ould Denéï, you might have had a little respect for an employé of the makrezen, a servant of the agha.' Instead of apologising, will you believe how he answered me? 'Go to the fire, you dog, son of a dog, servant of Christians.' I did not deign to make any reply to this gross insult, but came immediately to make my complaint before you."

"Were any witnesses present when this scene took place?" the magistrate inquired; "because you know it is not my practice to hear one side only."

"Yes, certainly; there were witnesses present. All the kaïds' horsemen were there. But, by your cherished head, I have spoken nothing but the truth. Cut off my head — cut me in two with a saw — if I have not strictly spoken the truth."

"There is no intention of cutting you anyhow or anywhere; but I should like a little further information."

"Do you suppose I have told you a lie? Me, your servant, your child? This is not the place for lying. Is it possible to tell a lie in your presence?"

"I have some reason for believing that the thing is possible."

"Ah, Sidi!" exclaimed Djilali, "Bou Zebel tell a lie! Impossible. Everybody knows that never did a falsehood proceed from his mouth."

"That is what we mean to verify, if it pleases Allah."

"Hé!" said Djilali, "what need of verification? Is not your servant's word a sufficient guarantee?"

"I must confess that it is not."

In spite of the reiterated protestations of the chaouch and his friend, witnesses were heard, and the result of their depositions was as follows: — Ould Denéï was passing on horseback, close to Bou Zebel, at a foot-pace, and not at full gallop, when the latter executed — most probably with malice prepense — a manœuvre with his broom, which sprinkled some filth on the garments of the former. Ould Denéï, having taken the liberty of making a few simple observations on what had occurred, was apostrophised with epithets such as son of a dog, son of a shepherd, and was even threatened with the broom of the public functionary. He replied to the verbal insults by others which bore in the market an equivalent value, such as, son of a hog, and son of horse-dung; and he avoided the contact of the broom by sticking both his spurs into his horse's sides. It was impossible to deny, in fact, that the horse had galloped; but, unfortunately for Bou Zebel, it was in an opposite direction to that which he had declared, and for an essentially different purpose.

"Well, Bou Zebel," said the court, when the witnesses had done; "you see that things did not occur exactly in the way in which you stated."

"Ah, Sidi! don't believe what they say. Their depositions are all false, as far as I am concerned. They are jealous of my position near your person. And besides, they detest me because I am your servant — the servant of a Christian."

"Sidi," said Djilali, "are you not aware of the sufferings we endure on your account? This poor Bou Zebel is a victim of the hatred with which we are persecuted because of you."

"I am truly sorry," said the magistrate, "because, to these misfortunes I am obliged to add another, namely, to make him spend a night in prison, to teach him, in the first place, to restrain the outbreaks of his broom, and secondly, not to lie."

At this there commenced an affecting attempt to mitigate the sentence pronounced, executed by the chaouch and his friend. The court cut it short by an imperative sign, and by calling in the assistance of a couple of

cavalry soldiers who were waiting on guard in the ante-chamber.

"What is the meaning," he asked, as soon as they were gone, "of this sympathy between Djilali and Bou Zebel? Have they played any tricks together in former times?"

"I believe so," snuffled the kadi, from the midst of his dusty books. "They are the fellows, as I have heard, who cleaned out Ali Ben Todjard, as he was returning from Algiers, with a mule laden with precious merchandise. It happened in Ben Alel's time."

"Ah! Now I understand. There must have been something of the kind between them."

"Djilali's influence," continued the kadi, "procured Bou Zebel his place in the stables."

"'Tis Djilali's protection which makes him so proud. It reminds me," the magistrate went on, aside, "of what I have read in the English journals: 'Handsome douceurs and secresy offered to whoever will procure the advertiser a government situation.' The Arabs at least have the decency not to print and publish —"

"Would you like to prosecute them," asked the kadi, in ignorance of the current of his superior's thoughts. "The commentaries of Sidi Krelil authorise —"

"Silence! We must not rake up old grievances. If we were once to begin to do that, I do not know who amongst you could sleep in peace."

The kadi held his tongue, folded up his commentaries, and seemed perfectly to comprehend the state of the case. There was even reason to believe, from the attitude which his nose assumed, that some trifling recollections of the past were flitting across his memory. The magistrate made signs to Djilali to introduce fresh plaintiffs and defendants. As soon as he had done so, a horseman entered to announce the approach of a cavalcade from the tribe Oud-Megaguin, who were coming to pay their âchour, or grain-tax; and that it was necessary to send some one to meet them, to conduct them into the town, and show them where to deposit their corn. Djilali, who was always fond of cultivating relations with loads of wheat or barley, volunteered his services to fulfil the mission with an unusual amount of energy. "Those young folks, every one of them," he said, with that adorably self-sufficient air for which we know him to be remarkable, "are quite incapable of managing such a business with anything approaching to competency. It is absolutely necessary that I should be there in person. Holy Sidi Mamar! if I were not, you would see a pretty scene of confusion." He started off, without waiting for permission, leaving his official sceptre in the hands of the makrezeni, who, although unworthy, has sometimes the honour to act as his substitute.

Djilali's double immediately set to work to perform his functions in the style of a man who is versed in the details of office. He introduced a female plaintiff, a beautiful girl of eighteen or twenty, of whom we have not time to say more at present than that she was a model of the Arab type in all its purity. Scarcely was her interesting story ended, when Djilali entered completely out of breath, by turns fanning and wiping his visage with the rich silk handkerchief which habitually adorned his girdle. He ran about the room in all directions, uttering innumerable exclamations, all of which, however, had a tendency to make you take him for a man who had just accomplished a mission of unequalled difficulty with an unrivalled display of genius.

"Holy Sidi Bou Krari!" he shouted. "May Sidi Abd Allah burn me to all eternity, if ever I have had so hard a job! What a bright idea of mine it was to go there myself! By the benediction of him who has made you victorious, and has raised you on high, there isn't a man in the world who could have got out of the difficulty, except your humble servant; and you know I am not in the habit of boasting."

"To whom are you speaking?" asked the magistrate, quietly.

"These Oud-Medaguins are more stupid than the asses they lead. Fancy that, at the moment when I arrived, they had almost all discharged their grain at the gate of the court of administration. There was a heap there as big as a mountain, and so well arranged, that the men and their asses were underneath — may Allah burn me if I am not speaking the truth — and their corn on the top of them. You know pretty well what the Arabs are. In their hurry to get rid of their load, and be off, they had completely caught themselves in a trap. There were shouts, howlings, kicks, and fisticuffs, enough to make you tremble. I confess that I once entertained a moment's doubt whether it would be possible for me to set matters to rights."

"I am surprised at your doubting," said the court. "And then?"

"Being well aware that words alone would not produce the slightest salutary effect, I caught sight of half-a-score good thick cudgels that were lying amongst the stores of wood, and with them I armed ten of the stoutest out of the cavalry soldiers who had escorted the party hither. I told them to do exactly as they saw me do; namely, to lay about them as hard as they could on the whole heap of rubbish. We thrashed, and thrashed away; in short, it was what I call thrashing."

"I will believe you on your word this time."

"To such good effect, that after a quarter of an hour's manœuvering, at the very outside, we succeeded in completely se-

parating the men, the asses, and the sacks, each in their own corner. This done, we were obliged to have the asses reloaded to make them enter the magazine; but this operation being much more simple than the former one, a few blows with the cudgel, and even often a few punches with the fist, were sufficient. Ouf! My right arm is dislocated. The sons of dogs shall dearly pay for the cudgelling which they made me give them."

"That would be no more than just; nothing but what is reasonable."

"If I were only paid," continued Djilali, wiping his forehead, "in the old Turkish way, according to the number of thumps bestowed, I am sure that I should have made my fortune." Then, as if suddenly inspired: "But, in fact, Sidi, why don't you pay me by the number of blows? They are my vested rights."

"It would be no more than just. But, you know, we have abolished the cherished rights of chaouchs. I lament the circumstance; but I can do nothing for you."

"Ah! Sidi, you are laughing at your servant."

"You are wrong to entertain such a supposition. But, if you please, have you not killed, or at least wounded, some person or persons in performing the operation which you have just described?"

"Wounded! killed!" exclaimed Djilali, in profound astonishment. "Did a rap with a stick ever kill or wound an Arab? On the contrary, I have known many cured in that way when they were ill."

"My dear Djilali, I have not the honour to be a chaouch; and having lost nothing by the suppression of the bludgeon, you will excuse my not being unanimously of your opinion on that subject. But, tell me, how many donkeys were there in the cavalcade of the Oud-Medaguins?"

"I counted six hundred and twenty-three."

"That 's a good many. Are you quite sure about the number?"

"When I say six hundred and twenty-three, I ought to have said six hundred and twenty-one. Because there were two — but it is an incredible adventure; I am even yet amazed at it myself."

"Let us hear the adventure. I am certain, beforehand, that you have not been the loser by it."

"It is perfectly inexplicable! Unless, indeed, some conjuring marabout has been working a charm and casting a spell."

"Really! I was not aware that you believed in marabouts."

"Sidi, who could have caused you to doubt it?" said Djilali, with the air of an innocent clown when caught in the fact of stealing sausages. "But you shall judge for yourself if there is not something miraculous in the matter."

"Out, then, with the miracle."

"My task ended, I was returning quietly towards my tent, wherein I required a moment's repose. After proceeding a few hundred paces, on turning round, I perceived behind me, closely following my steps, a couple of asses belonging to the cavalcade. Thinking very naturally that they had lost their way, I turned them round in the direction of the magazine, and sent them on their way rejoicing with the help of a few thumps artistically applied. This done, I continued my walk. A moment afterwards, I turned round, and, Holy Sidi Bou Krari! what did I behold again? The same two asses, which had not left me. Once more, I made them face to the right-about; but all in vain! A minute afterwards they were on my track again. Sidi, you know me — I am your child — you are aware that falsehood has never sullied my lips —"

"Verily, indeed!"

"You will believe, therefore, when I tell you that more than thirty times I tried to make the asses go home, and that my efforts proved unavailing. Consequently, this diabolical pair of donkeys, do what I could, followed me up to my tent, and into my tent, with me, and in spite of me. I was in a rage with them; so I broke my cudgel on their backs. But look here — seeing is believing." And Djilali produced his broken bludgeon in confirmation of his marvellous narrative.

"I will bet anything that these two asses had their load of wheat upon their backs."

"You know I have the utmost horror of falsehood. It is true; the asses had their sacks on their backs."

"The devil fly away with you!" exclaimed the magistrate, giving way to a burst of impatience. "You have been wasting my time in listening to a cock-and-bull story in justification of your making off with a couple of sacks of wheat. You have been prating about miracles, as if there were any miracle in that!"

"O Sidi, what a suspicion! To suppose that I could — Holy Sidi Abd Allah! May holy Sidi Maman strike me blind, if —" Djilali's embarrassment, as he endeavoured to justify himself, was overwhelmed with a burst of laughter, in which the whole assembly, the court included, joined.

"Get along with you!" said the magistrate, who could not help smiling when he looked at his chaouch's pitiable mien. "Do you take me for a Turk, to tell me such a parcel of nonsense as that?"

"Ah, Sidi! Sidi!"

"You deserve that I should make you pay dearly for your two sacks of wheat." But here a harmonious concert of supplications in the chaouch's favour arose in chorus in the midst of the assembly, in conformity with the Arab tradition, which, to the other privileges enjoyed by this func-

tionary, adds that of being unpunishable. The kaïd of the Oud-Medaguins confirmed the manifestation by the gift of the two sacks of wheat which miraculously entered Djilali's tent.

"Very well," said the court. "I do not wish to be severe on this occasion; but take care how you begin again." An admonition given a hundred times before.

"I am your child; you are my father!" The eternal argument of chaouchs when caught at their tricks.

"At any rate, have you sent back the asses, after having emptied their sacks?"

"Certainly, I have not failed to do so. Sacks and asses are now in their master's hands. You know, Sidi, how scrupulous I am in all those matters."

"So it seems," muttered the magistrate. "And now try and make up for the time you have lost me."

Djilali is the hero of other adventures. Enough for once has been given to-day. He is a study worth the attention of administrative reformers (if any such beings are still in existence), and he is recommended, as a model, to their consideration.

ITALIAN VILLAGE DOCTORS.

I LIVE in the neighbourhood of Naples, and as I wish to talk about some people here, without being too personal, let it be said that this my village is the commune of anything you please — of Castellano for example. My life is in the hands of one of those people about whom I intend to speak; it is most necessary, therefore, to be heedful lest I give offence. In an underhand way, let me without their leaves, talk of the doctors of our village, surgeons, barbers, priests, medical men — and women.

The priests appear to me to be at the head of the medical profession in this kingdom of the Two Sicilies. They publish the cures performed by almost every image, every relic. When the cholera was here, they taught our devout heathens to swallow bits of paper upon which were woodcut pictures of the Madonna. And as for the solidified Madonna's milk, which I take to contain more chalk than any milk in London, every woman in our village treasures a piece, which the priest has sold to her for a miraculous remedy against all distresses to which woman is liable.

I was so unfortunate as to fall sick while in this village, and my first visitor in illness was an old woman who drives a considerable trade in amulets and charms. She entered my room with a bit of chalk in one hand and a glass of water in the other. "Ah, signor," she cried, "here is a blessed remedy, if your excellency would but try it." "Tell me first what it is, my worthy mistress." She then explained to me that she was one of the sub-

scribers to a Society for the Conversion of the Turks, and that the monks of Ladro made their rounds once a-year to collect subscriptions. The collector when he last came round had presented to her and to other women small pieces of a sacred mountain of milk, which he assured them would work miraculously for the alleviation of pain, if some scrapings of it were taken mixed with water. "And I am sure, signor, it would make you better, if you would but drink some." I complied with her request by swallowing with a good grace the dose she offered, and her heart thereupon was opened. "Sure, your excellency, 'tis a blessed medicine. Padre Antonjo has just come back from Jerusalem, as you may see." Here she unrolled, in proof of the fact, a sheet of paper covered with bad pictures of the Temple, Bethlehem, the Madonna and Child, the Stable, and so forth, which were the border to a set of doggerel verses. "And the padre himself in his travels came to the great mountain of milk, which was made, he says, when the Madonna fled with her bambino into Egypt. Some drops of her milk fell on the ground, and immediately they grew up into this mountain. It was a prodigious miracle, signor." "Prodigious!" I agreed. "And," said the old charm-dealer, "that is not all the wonder of it; for although pious monks carry away every year a great part of the mountain, yet it has never lost in size, by so much as the bigness of an olive, since it was first made." My own faith being weak, I was not benefited by this medicine.

Supernatural help failing, I had only the natural to look to. Offers of aid were tendered to me by a very eminent neighbour, who, because he does not find that the practice of medicine will keep his hands — or his mouth — full, combines with it the occupation of day-labourer. In his capacity of labourer, this person is called Bugiardello, or the little liar, in contradistinction to his father, who is Bugiardo, the big liar. But Bugiardello when engaged upon a patient is respectfully styled Don Francisco; and there are times when he is absolutely regarded with veneration. The fame of Don Francisco extends even to Naples, and to spots forty or fifty miles distant from his native place; and when he sets out on a distant expedition, he arrays himself in a state dress — an entire suit of black cloth and a real Parisian hat — which is reserved for such occasions. All heads bow before him when he goes abroad in this attire, and tongues are quiet that have wagged often enough against the work-a-day Bugiardello in his red Phrygian cap and jacket. Don Francisco was originally famous for his vermifuges, which were doggerel verses spoken by him while he pressed with his forefinger and thumb against the stomach of his

patient. The vicar of our parish, however, claimed a monopoly of this branch of the healing art, and forbade its exercise by Don Francisco, who accordingly lost income until he made his great discovery that all diseases begin in the milt or spleen. There are few sound stomachs among us, and, as every stomachache or twinge of indigestion is declared to be a symptom of disease in the spleen, Bugiardello has a crowd of patients round his door at sunrise every morning. Each patient brings with him a fresh egg or two, and the doctor beats up egg and herbs to make a healing application to the part affected. Sometimes, he applies only the inside of a cactus leaf to the patient, and eats the egg himself.

The regular doctor looks with a true affection of the spleen at Bugiardello's practice, and often threatens to inform against him as a cheat. He never, however, gives himself that trouble. In close alliance with the legally recognised practitioner is a gentleman who puts over his door the picture of a person whose blood spouts from every vein, and who is evidently soothing himself by the trickling of so many fountains. I call this ally of the practitioner, a gentleman, but he is properly a fop, and commonly appears with a fullblown rose in his buttonhole, daintily walking on his toes. He is the village barber, who is also, in our case, a municipal officer, acting as turnkey to the village gaol. He has taken out his degree as bleeder, and is constantly at the heels of the doctor himself, whom etiquette forbids to use the lancets. It is Barber Andrea's belief that loss of blood is the chief gain that can accrue to man. This opinion being to some extent prevalent, every person in the village, sick or sound, is bled periodically, and many take bleeding and hair-cutting together, as a matter of course, once a month. Barber Andrea's marks are thus set upon every hand in the form of a number of small white scars, and if you meet the blood-letter himself abroad, he is commonly to be seen with his cuffs turned up, as if he had but that instant stabbed a vein. At the same time, he will own to you, that as he is a shapely man, he cannot help displaying some pride in his wrists.

For the charge taken by him of the poor — who constitute almost our whole population — the legal doctor of the commune receives pay from government. The manner in which he is subsidised, differs but little from the customs observed in Italy three centuries ago. Each commune has a limited power of choice. When a vacancy occurs, the syndic reports to the sub-intendent, who reports to the intendent, who reports to the superintendent minister of the interior. In the case of the islands under Neapolitan rule, a competition is invited, and the candidate who passes as the best

man gets the office. It is worth a trifle under forty pounds a-year. On the mainland, the minister selects one of three doctors, named to him by the municipality; and the pay is, in a commune of the first class, about twenty guineas a-year to a physician, and thirteen to a surgeon; in a commune of the second class, the respective salaries are twelve and ten guineas; and in a commune of the third class, eight guineas and four pounds. The payments on the mainland are less than those in the islands, because in the former case there is also some field for private practice. If the district served be of more than a given area, the salary is larger by a third. A physician acting as a surgeon, or a surgeon acting as a physician, can demand payment, even of the poor: his salary not covering such services. Connected with the little stipend is also the advantage that it remains to the holder as a retiring pension, after forty years' service. Twenty-five years' service qualify for a pension equal to one-half of the salary; twenty years, for a third. Two and a-half per cent. of all pay is deducted as a contribution to the widows' fund, out of which widows are pensioned with a sixth of the deceased husband's official income.

Ours is an island commune, and our signor doctor, Don Tommaso Sanguesuga, has an income of, I should think, as much as fifty pounds a-year. He is a very learned man, and has been chosen for our syndic on the strength of his reputation for great wisdom. We all understand, too, that he is a man who need not stint his wine, and can afford to eat his ragout at least once a-week. We look up to him accordingly. He came to us unmarried; and the want of a wife is a great drawback in the medical profession. Seeing that to be the case, he speedily took to himself the advocate's daughter; and the couple prosper. I, of course, during my own illness, applied to Don Tommaso. The milk and water had not done me any good; and I was only half persuaded by my good friend, Bugiardello, to try the effect of a vegetable poultice over the region of the milt; of course, the barber had, in the meantime, urged upon me copious and periodical bleeding; but I would surrender myself only into the hands of the regular practitioner, and Doctor Sanguesuga was called in. I was much edified by the learned discussions which he carried on at my bed-side, with some invisible disputant, and much solaced by the length of the words he employed, and the acquaintance he showed with the dead languages, which must be strong to save a man from dying. The good doctor's treatment of me was that which he uses in all cases, namely, some combination of these three ideas — a foot-bath, bleeding, and a sudorific. I recovered health. Therefore he is my friend. I make unceremonious calls upon him;

and although while I mount his stairs I always fancy that I hear much scuffling and running in his room, yet when I reach the wise man's study, and enter it, I find him in complete abstraction, poring over his book. He reads with his coat off, and his hands buried in his hair; and he is so immersed in constant study, that he never becomes conscious of my presence until I take the liberty to lay a hand upon his shoulder. Boerhave is his great authority; but, the works of other men of the same standing, bound in parchment, are upon his shelves. Boerhave may not be among the most recent authorities to which physicians in France, England, Germany, or other such countries, refer, but he was a great man in his day, and so in his day and village is the Doctor Sanguesuga. Our doctor has even saved money by frugal living, goes well dressed himself, adorns his wife with a gold chain and coral bracelets; more than all, he has contrived to buy five or six little houses, and has become a landowner. Yet I can scarcely have guessed his income at too low a sum. After my own illness, I pondered much upon the bill I had run up, and thought of all the guineas my good friend had earned. Not being experienced in the customs of the place, I referred the case to my servant.

"Well, signor," said she, "eightpence a visit is the sum paid to the great Doctor Sandolgo, the famous military surgeon; but that is paid by wealthy strangers. Here you are living in this commune, and paying taxes, for which reason I don't see that you will be expected to pay anything to Doctor Sanguesuga."

To that suggestion I demurred, and my servant went on,

"Well, to be sure, your excellency is an Englishman, and you would like to do something generous and handsome, so I should think you might.... O, no, I fear it would be too much!"

"What?"

"I was thinking that you might send the doctor what would, indeed, be extravagant."

"But what was it?"

"A leg of mutton."

I paid my doctor, therefore, with a leg of mutton, and was lauded on all sides for that act of profuse generosity. Having found this notion so extremely satisfactory, I always pay the doctor, now, with mutton; and, when I have had much need of the lawyer's services, I send him a round of beef. One cannot help remembering that such a payment to him is pecuniary in the oldest sense of the word, which was derived from pecus (cattle), at a time when ox-flesh stood for money.

INSTRUCTIVE COMPARISONS.

There are in Edinburgh two industrial schools, both very well

conducted, though founded upon opposite theories of education for the poor. A local pamphlet that has found its way into our hands, analyses the results that have in each case been obtained by matter-of-fact comparison between the last annual reports of the two institutions. The evidence obtained in this way is, we think, so far as it goes, of a kind likely to be useful to the public.

Of the two institutions thus compared, one, known as the Original Ragged School, is by some years the elder. Its foundation has been one of the many good works of a benevolent and able minister, whose high local repute does not exceed his merit — Dr. Guthrie. The management of this school, resting mainly in the hands of free churchmen, and entirely in the hands of pious Protestants, it follows that Protestant teachers, the Protestant version of the Bible, Protestant commentaries, have been made essential parts of the school system. Now, it is known very generally, that the wynds and closes of such places as the Cowgate and the Grass Market at Edinburgh, contain throngs of miserable Irish families; and that of all the ragged children whom these schools are meant to bless, no inconsiderable portion is supplied by Roman Catholics. Many persons of influence in the town considered it, in the case of the Original Ragged School, a serious objection that it was not practically open to all classes of the poor; and being unable to change the management, these gentlemen seceded from it in a body. Headed by Lord Murray, and afterwards by Lord Dunfermline, they set on foot another ragged school in consonance with their own sense of what is liberal and just: which other school exists under the name of the United Industrial. In the United Industrial School, it is made necessary that religious teaching should be given, in hours set apart for that purpose; but it is not furnished by the school itself, which is content to open its doors to the various religious instructors chosen for the pupils by their friends. For the last eight years the respective merits of these systems have been eagerly discussed in Edinburgh by those concerned in questions of the kind. The discussion represents in little, a much more extensive controversy. In that sense we think it worth attention; and so, taking the report of each school for the present year, and comparing the results proclaimed by each, we adopt the question, What have they to show?

In the first place, with regard to the funds which each has at disposal, it may be said that the income of the Original Ragged is about twice that of the United Industrial. The subscriptions for the last year amounted in one case to about sixteen hundred and sixty pounds, and in the other

case to about eight hundred and fifty; while the Original Ragged has the aid of a reserve fund, rather more than equivalent to certain special funds of the United Industrial, which form part of the voluntary contributions. With double funds, the Original Ragged School has had charge of more than twice as many children as its rival — the numbers for last year being two hundred and seventy-five in one case, one hundred and sixteen in the other; one-third of the larger number, but only one-sixth of the smaller number, being infants who were not receiving regular education. This larger per-centage of infants in the Original Ragged School, while it may account for the somewhat greater number that have been maintained by the same funds, must also be borne in mind as affecting the per-centage of work done, and giving a show of weakness to the elder school in some points of comparison which, to a certain extent, exceeds what is actually true. Thus, when it is said that of the Original Ragged scholars sixty-four in a hundred, and of the United Industrial scholars eighty-four in a hundred, are taught trades, there is no real inequality of operation to be marked; but a very marked difference appears when we discover that among the Original Ragged scholars only eighteen or nineteen in a hundred of those who leave school get employment, while employment is obtained at once by fifty-six in a hundred, of the children trained up on a less exclusive system.

The managers of the United Industrial School, keeping in view the children whom they have taken from the streets and put into decent ways of life, can account for about one hundred and forty out of one hundred and sixty boys who have gone to situations. Ninety of these are still in their first places. It can account, also, for ninety-two girls, who, out of a hundred and six finding employment, still keep up a friendship with their teachers. Thirty-four of these are still in their first places. The parents who send children to this school, having their religious feelings openly respected, are content; and from this school, accordingly, all straying away of pupils is extremely rare. On the other hand, the report of the school hampered by a too zealous orthodoxy, giving an account of its year's work, has to record that, while out of two hundred and seventy-five pupils, not more than forty-nine (or eighteen and a-half per cent.) went to employments, nearly an equal number (forty-nine) deserted, or would not return, or could not be found; that of the remaining number, twenty-two seceded to Roman Catholic exclusive schools, twenty-two went to parishes on which they had a claim, twenty-nine left Edinburgh without employment, and ten were

taken away by their parents. Thus, about half the number entering the more sectarian school was lost by desertions and removals; and the other school, with not more than half the resources, sent out into the world, last year, an absolutely larger number — a number larger by one-fourth — of ragged boys and girls converted into useful and industrious young men and women. It has also sent them out, not merely instructed in the religion of their fathers, but taught by daily habit the important lesson, that no difference of creed should part young playfellows, or divide the interests of men and women in the common work of life.

As for the filth and crime among our wretched classes, who does not know that it is too often at bottom a question of position? The other day a young thief, apparently in full sincerity, when sentenced to four years' imprisonment, begged for fifteen of transportation. If he were locked up for four years, and let loose again among his own companions, he could only thieve, as of old. Punish crime by all means — punish it severely while you pity the condition that produced it — but do not forget that there are thousands of poor devils plundering and begging, who cry, "Gentlemen, what else are we to do?" Such schools as those we have described just now, are good precisely in proportion to the means they offer for the manufacture of the raw material of thieves into honest artisans. And it is not only by ragged schools that this is done. Even while we write, our mind contains the fresh impressions of a visit to an unobtrusive London institution, at which a great deal of the same kind of good is done in another way. The pupils in this school are not simply the children of the wretched poor, many of whom have only a life of crime before them, but already convicted thieves. The place itself is a den of thieves happily penitent.

We have walked up and down the New Road many hundreds of times; but it was only the other day — because we made a special search for it — that we noticed the name of the Preventive and Reformatory Institution, painted in white, at the corner of Gower Street North. At the locality that had been indicated to us we saw nothing but a rather handsome cabinetmaker's shop, with customers in it. A beadle, in awful array of cocked hat, staff, and gold-laced coat, was standing over the way. We crossed, and diffidently requested him, as an official person, to direct us to Mr. Bowyer's Preventive and Reformatory Institution. He knew nothing about it. We described it as a place where ill-conducted boys and young thieves were taken in to be mended. No; he had never heard of it. And the stupid creature, with the uniform upon

his asinine person blazing in the sunshine, looked at us as though we had insulted the majesty of the law by mentioning a thief to him. A respectable tradesman, to whom we next applied, seemed to have a better opinion of the place, and pointed it out with alacrity. The cabinetmaker's shop itself was the establishment we sought.

Passing through the shop, we were conducted into a workroom behind, where several young men were at work upon different articles of cabinet ware, similar to those exposed for sale, which were also of their workmanship. They all touched their caps as we entered, and looked like respectable artisans. "But where are the thieves?" — "They are here," replied our conductor; "all whom you see have been in prison; and that boy," pointing to a bright-looking, intelligent lad, "was a regularly trained thief, and one of the best hands at that trade in London." A friend with us remarked upon the intelligence of their faces. "Why, yes," he replied, slightly laughing, "they have all lived by their wits till they are somewhat sharper than is needful." We were then conducted to a carpenters' shed, where heavier work was going on. One little fellow, who was sitting outside upon a bench, with a log before him, into which he was driving a chisel with great zeal, looked up at us with a comical twinkle in his eyes, as much as to say, 'Arn't it a fine lark to think of me coming here!" He too was an old acquaintance with the police. From the carpenters' we went to the smiths' place, where everything bespoke great activity; and the sweat was pouring down the men's faces in a way that answered for the vigour of their labour. There are tailors and shoemakers also in the establishment, but we did not visit them.

We went into the kitchen, and there we learnt that everything, from the kettles to the kitchen range, had been made on the premises. We then mounted up to one of the sleeping-rooms. It contained more beds than was absolutely desirable, but that could not in the present state of things have been avoided. Each inmate has a separate iron bed; everything is clean; and the room is airy and well-ventilated. We visited, last, the refectory and school-room: a long, white-washed apartment. Wooden benches and tables, and book-shelves containing some well-chosen books, completed the furniture. Here we sat down and began to ask questions. What are the rules? and how is the time spent?

The inmates rise at half-past five, and are allowed to go out of doors where they please until seven. Then they meet in the school-room, and have instruction in reading and writing, &c., until a quarter to eight o'clock, which is the time for prayers and breakfast. From half past-eight

until one, they are kept hard at work. They have an hour for dinner and amusement; then follows hard work again until six o'clock, when there is an hour allowed for tea and recreation. After seven, there is secular instruction until it is time for prayers and bed. The day ends at a quarter to ten. A very good mixture, on the whole, of

Books and work and healthful play.

as good Doctor Watts sings. Admission into the society is not difficult to any who apply for it. The only limitations are the funds of the establishment. The inmates are of all ages above sixteen. They come entirely with their own consent, and there is nothing to prevent their leaving at any moment if they please. They consist of convicted criminals — thieves, who, from attendance at the ragged schools, or any other cause, acquire a wish to leave their ugly mode of life, and try a handsomer. Some are youths struggling on the brink of vice and wishing to keep honest. Of late years, notices of this institution have been put up in different prisons, in order that prisoners desiring to lead an honest life may know where to apply. Sometimes the candidates are chosen by the chaplains, and with these pupils of industry the government pays five shillings a-week. As soon as a boy enters, he is put to a given trade; if he shows no aptness for that, he is put to another.

As for the discipline, the boys themselves are appealed to, and depended upon, to observe the rules of the establishment; and their self-respect is re-instated in every possible way. During the periods of recreation no surveillance is exercised; indeed, from the nature of the premises, which consist of several houses in a densely crowded neighbourhood, it would be impossible to set up anything like bounds. Nevertheless they are not found to consort with their old companions — they are placed above them, and consider they have made a step upward in life. Mr. Bowyer tells us, that the appeal to their self-respect is his stronghold over them all, and that he frequently entrusts boys who have been in the Institution for some time, with rather large sums of money to pay bills, &c.; that by so doing he had never once been made to suffer, never met with a breach of trust. To our anxious inquiry, How do you dispose of your inmates, when you have reformed them? he replied, "Most of them emigrate. Connected with the Institution there is a fund to enable us to send them out. All we have sent out have done well. Others again are draughted into the army and navy, and we have received excellent characters of them from their officers. Some, who are good workmen, have obtained situations in this im-

mediate neighbourhood. There is a disposition to employ them, and a character from us is a sufficient recommendation. Each inmate remains two years, by which time his good habits have taken root. Every boy who enters, has to undergo a fortnight's separation from his companions, and a bread and water diet. This is a test of his sincerity; and is not introduced until some weeks after he has joined; because, it is thought, when he has once enjoyed for a time the benefits of the Institution, his solitude is more likely to be profitable. If he wishes to work in his solitude, he is allowed to have his tools."

The expression of the boys' faces we found to be, with few exceptions, good. Mr. Bowyer tells us, that the improvement which becomes visible in that respect is so great, that after the lapse of a few weeks he can sometimes scarcely recognise a new-comer for the same lad who entered. The exceptions remarked by us proved to be all of them new-comers, and we were assured that they would alter their expression in the course of a short time. Much of the success that has attended the working of this institution is undoubtedly owing to the present influence of the manager over the inmates. He has evidently a liking for his work. Another advantage is, the simplicity and directness of the effect; there is no waste of power; no cumbrous machinery stands between the programme and the performance; there is no philanthropic routine to be set in motion; what has to be done, can always be done at once. The expenses of the Institution are incurred only for things of the strictest necessity. Nothing is wasted upon appearances: consequently great good has been effected with comparatively little money. Mr. Bowyer, who is founder of the Institution, was not a rich man when he undertook the work. His income was decidedly limited, and his time much occupied by his employment; but he was interested in the ragged schools; many boys came to him, and said, if they had a refuge and the chance of doing better, they would thankfully leave their evil courses. Then, at his own expense, he engaged rooms and began with eight boys, giving them at all events a home. Friends have since gathered round the good Samaritan; a list of noble patrons gives to his enterprise the prestige of their names; the value of his work is recognised by a free-hearted and free-handed public; and there is now every reason to believe that it will go on, increase, and prosper.

HOLIDAY QUARTERS.

I HAVE stolen away from care-haunted London (which has always seemed to me the abiding-place of turmoil and weariness,

with ungentle thoughts), and I am living in a little brick box on the pleasant heights of Richmond Hill.

I rise with the birds and the cows of a morning. I see the sheep wake one by one as I ramble forth with my pipe and thoughts. None but they and I are up, with the exception of a young man and his wife who keep a small shop in the neighbourhood, and who seem to be always healthfully wrestling with a coy but cheerful fortune. I love these mornings. They are so sunny and joyous. The three geraniums which blossom on my window-sill seem to be dancing always to the soft music of the breeze. The birds make quite a playground of the quiet road, and when disturbed whirr off to the old paling opposite, and trill out (as I fancy) a comic song of derision to the silly old bookworm, who shuts himself up with the feathers of that waddling bird the goose (their common butt); and a few such rags (metamorphosed a little) as they use to build the commonest part of their nests.

My landlord is a carpenter by trade. He is a short dapper brisk little man, who is fond of going about in a cap and shirt-sleeves. According to the usual mysterious dispensation of Providence, he has, of course a long wife. I am bound to say she is a very long wife: but a decent, thrifty painstaking body as needs be. She keeps her little house in as trim and well-scrubbed a condition as her little husband. If I might venture to make the remark, I would suggest that the house is a little too clean; and if the purport of some subdued remonstrances from the carpenter have reached my ears correctly, I might almost believe that if he were allowed to be dirtier he would be happier. I have an impression that he is often positively hunted down and harried by a piece of yellow soap and a small wooden bowl half-filled with hard water. The water, indeed, as I have good reason to know, is of so hard and uncompromising a nature, that it feels to the face like the application of a few saws or a bone-crusher. It is followed by an effect resembling the marks of stinging nettles, and the human nose looks red and angry for a good half-hour after its use.

The house is so very clean that if I take the liberty of laying down my pipe anywhere it straightway makes such a mark that I am fain to rub it out with my pocket handkerchief, lest it should be seen. I sit down in the natty little chairs with much timidity. I am apprehensive that they may be soiled or damaged if I treat them discourteously. When I go out, I look nervously behind me to see if all is in order. I scrupulously understand that the little room is confided to me under a tacit but awful responsibility to keep it tidy. I would not for a week's rent that the carpenter's long wife should come

in upon me suddenly with my papers in disarray and my handkerchief untied. I should fall too painfully in her estimation. I know that I am under a moral obligation to be orderly and neat in all my dealings. I have an uneasy suspicion that if I were otherwise I should be at once detected, that the watchful eye of the little carpenter's long wife would look reproachfully at me through the keyhole and abash me utterly; while her voice would be heard in accents of withering condemnation through the chinks of the little door. She is a vigilant woman with wonderfully harassing endowments of eye and ear. I could in nowise escape from her.

If I cough or sneeze, or move my chair ever so little so that it creaks I am inwardly aware that Mrs. Tiddie is uneasy in her retirement, and wonders if I have injured the bright little Kidderminster carpet. I hear her constantly call out, oh, dear! oh, dear! in great tribulation of spirit on such occasions; for we are divided only by a lathy partition according to the custom of builders in modern times.

Therefore, it betides that I am a sort of prisoner of honour. I know, indeed, that I may escape; but am obliged to confess that it would be highly unbecoming in me to do so. If I were to desecrate the snowy doorstep (which is the pride of Mrs. Tiddie's housewifery), by any hasty or indecorous movement—if I were flightily to jump over it, or to touch it with boots already familiar with dew and gravel—I should cause such a commotion in my landlady's breast, that I should be ashamed to appear in her presence during many days. I should feel like a guilty and worthless person while at meals, under her severe and unforgiving observation. Yet I do not like to go to her frankly and say, "Please, ma'am, may I go out," because I do not know how she might take it. I remain, therefore, patiently biding my time; and if I can only catch her when she is engaged with the greengrocer, or any other of the respectable itinerant tradesmen who cultivate her intimacy and enjoy the racy truths of her discourse during the fore part of the day, I boldly seize the advantage and swagger out with a "Good morning, Mrs. Tiddie!" I know that the risk of incurring her serious displeasure for such conduct is very much diminished when she is warmed and melted by the glow of social intercourse, from her usual austerity. I am not ignorant also that my absence at such times is desirable, as permitting Mrs. Tiddie a greater latitude of discussion, and even furnishing her with an occasion for more pungent remarks on my person and character, than a restraining sense of politeness would allow her to indulge in, in my hearing. Sometimes, however, when the weather is unfavourable, or Mrs. Tiddie is

engaged in her favourite domestic accomplishment of washing, I wait for an opportunity in vain. On one occasion, when reduced to extremities by a close confinement of two days, I seriously considered the practicability and prudence of making escape through the window. I was about to attempt the exploit, confident that my agility would enable me to clear the stocks, mignonette, and geraniums, which barricaded the way without doing devastation among them. I had no sooner risen from my chair, however, and gingerly raised the window in pursuance of my design, than an unfortunate click of the lattice-bolt at once brought Mrs. Tiddie to the apartment, with a "Lor, sir! won't you go haeut at the door; it 's a pity to muddle the flauers so, it is." It is, of course, needless to add, that I now subsided at once into my habitual insignificance, and remained as silent as a mouse during the rest of the day.

Now, the little carpenter manages better. Whenever he wishes to go to the tom-and-jerry shop, he acts with a wariness of judgment and coolness of discretion which, had he been born an hereditary legislator, would have infallibly raised him to the highest fortunes. He surlily requests Mrs. Tiddie to hand him over "that there sor." He takes the saw openly in his hand, as if he had got a hasty job, and thus accoutred marches boldly to the choice companionship of his own familiar crony. The crony is a pudding-faced young man, who has a habit of looking down and twisting his shoulders when spoken to, and answering as if his ideas were so rusty that he had some difficulty in getting them out. The rust seems even to have reached his voice, which has a reluctant croak about it, though it is not sulky or unkindly; for he assents to everything that is said, only he appears to make a concession while doing so, as if he had been a great while coming to a decision.

The carpenter and his wife have a daughter, a fair, surprised, blue-eyed little maid, with freckles and golden hair. She waits upon me. The little maid has not bright or even accurate ideas respecting boots. Mine have gradually faded into a brownish grey. I have occasion to suspect that they are washed, blacking being generally of too sullying a nature to be kept in the house.

The little maid prepares my bath. There are grits in it. She says they got there by accident. To my grosser vision, the grits appear little round lumps of mould from the garden. I am led partly to this conclusion because I see that my bath is sometimes used for the easier replenishing of a horticultural watering-pot. I confide to the little maid, in a friendly way, the objections which occur to me at the moment with respect to bathing in grits; but she opens her

eyes so widely, and looks so scared, that I make but a brief catalogue of them.

Then we have grand conversation about breakfast. I like to converse with the little maid. My breakfast is some very pale-coloured milk of a bluish tint, an impregnable-looking loaf, and some erratic butter on a saucer. I mention, in a jaunty way, that my bread and butter is not in slices. O! says the little maid, and will I cut it myself. I reply that I dare say cutting bread and butter may be a very good business, but that you must be used to it. Then the little maid smiles and vanishes. Presently she returns with the bread and butter in slices, of strange shape and dimensions. Indeed, I should say, blocks and wedges, such as might fit into the stomach of a robust ploughboy. The butter lies on them in lumps and blotches, for the little maid has spread it in her haste, and I have made her nervous. I take a perverse delight in making the little maid nervous: I cannot help it. So I ask her gravely whether she thinks a slice of her bread and butter would break my toes if I were to let it fall. "O, no! I think not, sir," chirps the little maid, and her white teeth glisten brightly for a moment; but the next she has disappeared, like a bashful ray of April sunshine, as if she really had not been brought up in that way, but to wear a well-starched frock, and look exceedingly prim in the next room, with the old Dutch clock, which ticks a waggish approval of such demureness.

But, O! how dainty looks the little maid upon a Sunday! Her face shines bright and early with scrubbing and yellow soap; she wears a white frock, with a blue something, and her straw bonnet is garnished with the astounding ribbon which I modestly deposited a week ago in the coal-scuttle for her use, though there appears to have been a tacit compact between us never to allude in any way to the circumstance. Daisies and buttercups! (excuse so appropriate an oath) what an enchanting picture of humble life looks the little maid as she trips through the garden-gate, all blushing, with the meat from the bake'us, handy. She seems to me like such a very busy little birdie, all chirrup, flutter, and rumpling feathers, that she is quite a study, and I can watch her, twittering and flitting about, for ever so long. It gives me, I vow, almost a feeling of pain when I think that she must, some day, fly away from her pretty nest, and become a scrubbing, washing, boiling, cleaning, scouring, vigilant, apple-faced, elderly female like her respected parent.

Our cottage is one of a good-looking row of out-of-the-way dwellings, so that pride may hide poverty decently there. Of course, we have a fine neighbour. The fine neighbour's husband, Mrs. Tiddie tells me, was in the

fancy bakery line. He had ideas about a horse and gig, a fast-trotting pony, also about Greenwich and Gravesend as agreeable places of recreation, so that the fancy bakery establishment was speedily sold, together with the good-will and fixtures. I am afraid that the fine neighbour's husband has now dwindled into the official in a gold-laced cap, who cries "C'tee! C'tee! 'Cross! Bank! Bank!" behind the most fashionable of our omnibuses. It is polite, however, to ignore this circumstance in our row. I do not know what the fine neighbour herself may have been, but I sometimes cherish an idea that she has been educated in one of our classical suburbs; she says "kayend" for kind, and "yeass" for yes, which I have observed are among the peculiarities which belong to academic parishes near London.

I am aware that the fine neighbour takes an incomprehensible pleasure in talking at me as I smoke my pipe of a morning. She issues, ribbony, from the little door of her house and falls into sudden raptures. This immediately brings out the little maid to join her, for we can, of course, hear our neighbours cough, and all that kind of thing, quite comfortably. "Oooooh!" said the fine neighbour, only this morning; "what beauti-ful flowahs! are they not, deeah?" The term of tenderness was addressed to the little maid, but her mother heard it, and immediately came out with a "Lor, weer?" for Mrs. Tiddie is of a practical and matter-of-fact turn of mind.

"Heeah, to be shyure, mem!" answers the fine neighbour, whose husband has joined the moustache movement, and who is fond of treating people as if they belonged in some degree to the French nation. This is, however, too much for Mrs. Tiddie, who at once flounces off in a great huff, with "Them's grunsell, mum!" We are very polite, outwardly, in our row; but I am compelled to own that Mrs. Tiddie subsequently indulged in such energetic expressions about the fine neighbour, when in the privacy of her own apartment, that I fear she scarcely entertains the same wondering admiration of her as the little maid who, I am sure, could listen to fashionable elocution for ever.

SPORTSMANSHIP IN EARNEST.

We have most of us, when boys, written edifying themes on gratitude, virtue, and luxury. The latter was a particularly favorite subject; but we never suspected, nor do we now suspect, the conclusion of that theme to be applicable to ourselves. When we have said our say about Lucullus's suppers in the Hall of Apollo and Heliogabalus's dishes of peacocks' brains, we think there is an end of the matter. Not a squire amongst us, nor a clergy-

man either, ventures to point to his neighbour and boldly utter, "Thou art the man!" But facts are better teachers than sixth-form themes. Our national shortcomings in the prosecution of war (redeemed, it is true, by a heavy penalty of blood), give us the hint that we may have too much yielded to the blandishments of pacific civilisation. I have conversed with sensible Frenchmen in easy circumstances, wealthy even, who have not hesitated to say,

"You English are too nice, too dainty in your personal ways, too luxurious. You think too much about your 'confortable' in your every-day life at home; and that's why you began so badly in the Crimea."

Now, although we certainly were *not* comfortable in the Crimea when the French had succeeded in making themselves perfectly so, the main question is none the less deserving of attention. Is it true, that fastidious gentility has threatened to be the ruin of England? That genteel young men, from smart linen-drapers' and druggists' assistants upwards, have thrust willing young women aside from employment in offices they would admirably fill, while themselves have forgotten every manly exercise — the cricketbat, the long pedestrian journey, the amateur firebrigade, and the volunteer drill? Have we been wearing out our hearts after points of etiquette, the patronising smile of aristocratic acquaintances, high places in the synagogues and streets, contemptuous puttings-down of dusty working-men, attempts at mimicking novel heroes of the exquisite class, and other mint-and-cummin tithings of social welfare, — have we been doing this, leaving unthought-of the means of strengthening the national sinews by physical training and the acquirement of practical knowledge? It is really a serious affair, if true, as many say and believe.

Gentlemen are, at this moment of our publication, popping their guns at partridges and pheasants, — sport in which active women, with a slight change of attire, might participate. Many a French vivandière would succeed very well after a few days' practice. In a French village which I now and then frequent, there died, not very long since, a lady, the entrance-hall of whose château was hung with skins of wolves of her own killing. What would she have said of a battue of pheasants reared under coops, with barn-door hens for their foster-mothers? But my friend Dr. Whipemwell means to set his boys a theme on luxury, as evinced in English sport. They will be required to leave the Romans out of the question altogether, and to discuss the moral and corporal tendency of the preservation of hares and partridges on the nation at large; — whether, in consequence of the penalties on poaching, the majority of our

population know the right end of a gun from the wrong one; and whether, supposing a few thousand armed Russians landed on the Suffolk coast (a possible, though I hope not a probable hypothesis; but the Muscovite fleet at Cronstadt remains intact), they would not butcher the inhabitants with almost as little effective resistance as Captain Cook's sailors experienced when, landing on some desert isle, they knocked the penguins and noddies on the head with bludgeons.

Our Indian sportsmen have done themselves credit by their onslaughts on wild pigs (mischievous brutes and capital eating), lions and tigers. Our Indian ladies have proved themselves heroines. Gordon Cumming is to be commended for having started fresh ideas as well as fresh game; I only wish he had killed more carnivora and fewer innocent cameleopards and antelopes. You remember the engraving, in Forbes's Oriental Memoirs, of the tiger carrying off a child in the presence of its mother, as she entered a jungle to gather sticks. The man who followed and shot that tiger would make by far a better bag than if he had killed five hundred leash of birds between his hot luncheon and his footbath previous to dressing for dinner. I am acquainted with a family who lived ten years in Algeria, where three beautiful children were born to them, who were never surprised (after the first time or two) to find a lion's footsteps in their garden in the morning, and one of their goats or tame antelopes gone. Perhaps, therefore, I shall be helping Dr. Whipemwell's boys in writing their theme on luxury in sport (especially as their time is entirely taken up with Latin and Greek — modern languages being deemed quite superfluous in the doctor's establishment), if I communicate to them a few facts and hints which have been let fall in print by M. Jules Gérard, killer of lions, and lieutenant in the third regiment of Spahis.

M. Gérard's shooting campaigns have been undertaken from a sense of duty; as his book is written in the hope of raising up worthy disciples and successors to himself in the same branch of the chace. Be it remembered that the French are to be thanked by the rest of Europe for many things they have done in Algeria; for many things which have been harshly criticised, and for much even which they could not help doing. The Arab has been too long regarded as a purely poetic object. It will clear our vision to rest assured that, if the inhabitants of the north coast of Africa had been allowed to have their own way, without control or interference, the Mediterranean waters might still be swarming with the pirates of Morocco, Tunis, and Algiers, and many a Christian family might have to mourn a member still pining in Mohammedan slavery.

But the Arabs are brave. They look down on Europeans from the height of their grandeur with insufferable disdain. The mission of the French, therefore, has been to subdue them by a moral victory. If you do good amongst them by giving to the poor, they will say you don't know what to do with your money; and will not think a bit the better of you for it. If you do good by rendering strict justice, they will say you do this to conciliate their good opinion; to convert them to your belief, your customs, your religion; and they will be distrustful of you. If you prove yourself bolder and stronger than they, they will hold you in respect and veneration. You will overawe them, always and everywhere. They will not dare to look you in the face. You risk your life, therefore, not solely for your own pleasure, but for civilised Europe, for your native land.

What the Arabs fear most, after God, is the lion. To destroy him they usually make use of stratagem. They decoy him into a hole, and butcher him there. They also murder him beneath the screen of solid-built subterranean retreats called melbedas, or from the tops of trees to which they have climbed. Rarely do they attack him openly; and, when they do, it is a battle in which the victory is dearly bought, even when the victory is on their side. But never has an Arab, alone or in company, dared to march against a lion, or to await him unprotected by shelter during the night. The insolent pride of this people has been lowered by the sporting feats of a single Frenchman.

The Arab is brave; and how is it possible for him to be otherwise? He is born, lives, and dies, in the midst of dangers which the civilised European knows not, and cannot know. In his childhood, instead of morality, they talk to him about massacres, war, and combats. The wisest, the most virtuous, the man of greatest consideration, is the man who commits murder the best, and the oftenest. He is taught family vengeance, mutual hatred of tribe against tribe, execration of Christians; and, to complete his education, when he has attained his fifteenth year, some evening, after the old men have been telling, around the fire beneath their tent, their hatreds and their vengeances,—when the neighbours have retired, just as the lad is going to seek a place to lie down in, his father pushes him with his foot, calling him lazy and coward. The boy, who does not understand what such treatment means, begs his parent to explain. The elder laughs, and points to an old pistol hanging on the tent-pole by the side of a poignard. The lad leaps towards his father, and respectfully kisses him on the shoulder. The parent, happy and proud to have so promising a son, makes him sit down

beside him, and addresses him thus: —

"Have you ever gone out at night without my seeing you?"

The lad relates the story of his flirtations with a girl whom he has sometimes visited, at the risk of having his brains dashed out by a pistol-shot.

"Very well," says the father; "but that is not enough. You are tall now, and it makes me blush to hear the neighbours call you little. It is time to show them that you are a man."

"I ask nothing better," replies the boy; "but to go alone, — the night looks very dark, and I am afraid."

"For the first time you shall not go alone. Take these arms. Take off your burnous; it is too white. And tighten your shirt beneath your girdle."

Whilst the pupil is making his toilette, the old man slips under a friend's tent, and says, "My son is ready." The mammas shed a few tears, fearing an unfortunate and unsuccessful result; but they are reassured by the knowledge that their darlings will be conducted by a man of prudence and courage.

Everything is thus arranged for the best; and, at ten o'clock, in a pelting rain and a night as dark as pitch, three men, dressed in earth-coloured shirts raised above the knees by a leather girdle, mysteriously start from the douar, or clustered group of tents. Beneath a burnous patched in a thousand places, and which has served three generations without being washed, each of these adventurers conceals a pistol and a dagger. Their heads are covered with brown caps, and their feet are naked. They march in silence across the country, and do not stop till they are within sight of their enemy's fires. The hostile douar consists of ten or twelve tents pitched in a circle, and touching each other. In the middle are the flocks and herds. Outside, and before each tent, are a multitude of dogs, who admirably fulfil the duty of sentinels. In the douar is a man whose father, or grand-father, killed the parent, or the grandparent, of one of our adventurers. The life of this man is what they want. One by one the fires are put out, and everybody sleeps, or seems to sleep, except the dogs. The elder, aware that at a certain hour of the night some of the dogs, worn out with fatigue, go to sleep at last, waits for the moment of action to arrive.

Meanwhile, a lion who has gone without his dinner, and who, as may be supposed from the lateness of the hour, has a rather sharp-set appetite, arrives in the same direction. He perceives three men crouching on the ground. "Good," he says; "here are three comrades waiting for me extremely apropos." And he lays himself down. You must know that the lion is naturally very indolent. Now, as men who prowl about by night are

more frequently cattle-stealers than murderers, the mother-lioness generally gives the following advice to her cub, when, on attaining his majority, he feels a desire to see the world: "My child, whenever you meet with men by night, you will follow them; you will do them no harm, so long as they keep quiet. Men's flesh is not so good as bullock's flesh; for the most part, they are as dry as herrings. You will therefore travel in company with them. When they arrive near a douar, you will lie down, and they will work for your benefit. Allow them to drive away the beasts they have stolen, to a certain distance; and then, when you come to a brook or a spring beside the path, present yourself and claim your portion."

The lion who has followed his mamma's instructions, has found the advantage of doing so. Instead of having to carry or drag his dinner for a tiresome quarter of an hour, and then going afterwards to find a brook to slake his thirst, he is spared all that trouble by his human friends. Well; our lion is stretched on the ground, and is waiting; but the dogs, who have seen his eyes, or have scented him, make a diabolical hubbub. The alarm is given in the douar, and every one is up and stirring. The women relight the fires, and throw blazing brands about. If that manœuvre is to go on long, the day will break before the lion's comrades can do a stroke of business. But hunger is pressing, and he grows impatient. "Ah, ha!" he says; "I may as well take a sheep myself; it is not heavy to carry." And he rises. The douar is situated on a slope, and he rapidly wends his way to a point above it. The dogs, who follow him with eye and nose, move towards the same quarter. He darts forward, and, in less time than it takes me to tell it, he has cleared the hedge, six feet in height, which surrounds the douar. He has caught a sheep in the inclosure, leapt back again, and disappeared. The dogs are inside the tents, dumb with stupor. The men are like the dogs. The tempest over, the rape of the sheep is formally verified. No European eye would be able to distinguish either sheep or tents, so grave-dark is the night. Everyone has gone to rest again, and, with the exception of a few old dogs, the guardian pack have followed their master's example. Then our three men carefully inspect the priming of their pistols, and, creeping on their hands and knees, they advance silent and invisible. The tent is pointed out by the elder, who only says these words to the young people, "Children, be men." They touch the hedge of living bushes which protects the douar; the outlet for the flock is stopped up with thorns. The old man whispers in his companions' ears, "Do not stir from this spot till you hear the dogs barking on the other side; but then dispatch your

work quickly." He turns on his belly right-about face, and, creeping round the douar, he has arrived at the side opposite to the tent of the common enemy. He raises himself little by little. If the dogs do not yet see him, he advances a few steps — he coughs. That will do. In an instant, at the warning given by one, all the curs of the douar are around him. To keep them at a distance he has only to walk towards them on all fours — the dogs are afraid, and will not come near him.

But the gate of the douar has already been cautiously removed by his lads in training. The tent is there, within their grasp. They thrust their heads in, and listen. Nothing. Everybody is slumbering. The women are at the further end — the children are near the women. The master, whom they want, is lying asleep across the entrance, with a pistol under his head and his yataghan by his side. The lad with whom we are acquainted has completely disappeared beneath the tent. The darkness prevents him from seeing his enemy, but he hears his breathing. He drags himself up to him; he scents his breath. The head must certainly be there! A pistol-shot is heard, and all is told. An hour afterwards, our three assassins are snoring in their tents, like saints in bliss. Next day, the child is proclaimed a man, and is allowed a deliberative voice in the councils. His comrades speak to him with deference, and some pretty girl will recompense him for his good action.

The man who has received such an education as this is necessarily bold, and bold by night. Whence, then, comes the respect which the Arab entertains for the lion? It arises from the numerous instances which the animal has given of his strength and courage. There have been many struggles, many combats — always has the lion proved the strongest. When he has fallen before the force of numbers, the victory has cost too dear.

The lion's existence is divided into two distinct parts, which make him, to a certain extent, two distinct animals, and have given rise to numberless errors respecting him. Those two parts are, the night and the day. By day his habit is to retire into the forest, away from noise, to digest and sleep at his ease. Because a man has chanced to meet face to face, with impunity, by day, a lion whom the flies or the sun has compelled to shift his quarters, or who was driven by thirst to the nearest brook, it has been said that the lion will not attack man; it has been forgotten that the animal was half asleep, and also had his stomach full. In a country like Algeria, literally covered with flocks and herds, the lion is never hungry during the day. The natives, fully aware of that, take care to keep at home at the hour when the lion leaves his den; and, if they are

obliged to travel by night, they never do so alone or on foot.

It is difficult to estimate the destruction of life and property caused in Africa by lions. One lion, whose acquaintance was specially sought after by M. Gérard, had been domiciled in the range of hills called Jebel-Krounega for more than thirty years. During that time his maintenance must have cost the neighbourhood no small trifle. From the age of eight months to a year, lion-whelps begin to attack the flocks of sheep and goats which during the day come into the neighbourhood of their home. Sometimes they attack cattle; but they are still so clumsy, that there are often ten beasts wounded for one killed, and their father is obliged to interfere. It is not before they are two years old that young lions are able to strangle a horse, a bullock, or a camel, by a single bite in the throat, and to clear the hedges, more than six feet high, by which the douars are supposed to be protected. The period from one to two years of age is absolutely ruinous to the country; in fact, the amiable family kill not merely to feed themselves, but to learn how to kill. It is easy to imagine the expense of such an apprenticeship to those who have to supply the materials worked upon. The Arabs, on pitching their tents in a fresh spot, calculate as follows: so much for me, so much for the government, and so much for the lion; and the lion has always the lion's share. Lions are not adult till they are eight years old. At that age they have acquired their complete strength; and the male, a third larger than the female, has his full mane. Do not judge of wild lions by the degenerate individuals whom you behold in menageries. The latter have been taken from the teat, and brought up like tame rabbits, not with their mothers' milk, open-air life, and liberty; but with insufficient and unhealthy diet. Hence their mean and slender proportions, their wretched physiognomy, and their scanty mane, which make them resemble poodle-dogs, and would cause them to be disowned by their fellow-brutes in a state of nature, who live well by plundering the Arabs, and on whom they lay a tax ten times heavier than that which is paid to the state. A lion's life lasts from thirty to forty years. He annually kills or consumes six thousand francs' (two hundred and forty pounds') worth of horses, mules, oxen, camels, and sheep. Taking the average length of his existence, which is thirty-five years, every lion costs the Arabs two hundred and ten thousand francs. The thirty lions at this moment to be found in the province of Constantine, and who will be replaced by others arriving from the regency of Tunis or Morocco, cost a hundred and eighty thousand francs annually. In the districts where M. Gérard habitually shoots, the Arab who pays five

francs in taxes to the state, pays fifty to the lion. The natives have destroyed half the woods of Algeria, to keep these dangerous animals at a greater distance. The French authorities, in the hope of putting a stop to the fires which threaten to destroy the forests completely, inflict heavy fines on the Arabs who act as incendiaries. What happens? The Arabs club to pay the fines, and the fires go on as destructively as ever.

The lion's black-mail on property is exacting enough; now for that on human life. In summer time, when the days are long, the black-maned lion (there are three varieties of lion in Algeria) leaves his den at sunset, and takes his post by the side of a mountain-path, to wait for late-travelling horsemen and foot-passengers. An Arab of M. Gérard's acquaintance, in such a rencontre, dismounted, took off the bridle and saddle, and ran away, carrying on his head the equipment of his horse, which was immediately strangled before his eyes. But things do not always turn out so well; and, whether on foot or mounted, travellers seldom get clear off, if they are once in the presence of the black-maned lion. There are a great many modern instances of Arabs being devoured by lions; the following is quoted because it is well-known to all the native inhabitants of Constantine: —

Several years before the French occupation of that city, amongst the numerous malefactors with whom the prisons overflowed, were two persons condemned to death, — two brothers, who were to be executed the next day. They were highway robbers, hamstringers, and cut-throats, of whose courage and strength the most surprising tales were related. The Bey, fearing they would make their escape, ordered them to be shackled together; that is, each of them had one foot riveted in the same ring of solid iron. No one knows how the matter was managed; but every one knows that, when the executioner presented himself, the cell was empty. The two brothers, who had succeeded in escaping, after vain exertions to cut or open their common fetter, proceeded across country, in order to avoid any unpleasant meeting. When daylight came, they hid themselves in the rocks; at night, they continued their journey. In the middle of the night, they met a lion. The two brothers began by throwing stones at him and shouting with all their strength to drive him away; but the animal lay down before them, and would not stir. Finding that threats and insults did no good, they tried the effect of prayers; but the lion bounded upon them, dashed them to the ground, and amused himself by eating the elder of the two at the side of his brother, who pretended to be dead. When the lion came to

the leg which was confined by the iron fetter, finding it resisted his teeth, he cut off the limb above the knee. Then, whether he had eaten enough, or whether he was thirsty, he proceeded to a spring a little way off. The poor surviving wretch looked around for a place of refuge; for he was afraid the lion would come back again after drinking. And therefore, dragging after him his brother's leg, he contrived to hide himself in a silo, which he had the good luck to find close by. Shortly afterwards, he heard the lion roaring with rage and pacing to and fro close to the hole in which he had retreated. At last, daylight came, and the lion departed. The instant that the unfortunate man got out of the silo, he found himself in the presence of several of the Bey's cavalry, who were on his track. One of them took him up on horseback behind him, and he was brought back to Constantine, where they put him into prison again. The Bey, scarcely believing the facts related by his vassals, desired to see the man, and had him appear before him, still dragging after him his brother's leg. Ahmed-Bey, notwithstanding his reputation for cruelty, ordered the fetter to be broken, and granted the poor wretch his life.

It is now time to buckle on our game-bag, and go out with M. Gérard to shoot a lion to put into it.

"My aid had been requested," — writes the Lion-killer, — "by the inhabitants of the Mahouna (circle of Ghelma), to rid them of a family of lions who had taken up their quarters among them, and who abused the rights of hospitality. On arriving there, I received all the requisite information, and I learned that every night they went to drink in the Oued-Cherf. I immediately repaired to the borders of that stream, and found there, not only those gentry's footmarks on the sand, but also the points of their usual approach and departure. The family was numerous; it consisted of the father, mother, and three grown-up children. According to the natives, their den was situated in an impenetrable stronghold halfway up the mountain. Old Taïeb, the chieftain of the place, came to me, took me by the arm, and said, as he pointed to the numerous tracks imprinted on the water's edge,

"'They are too many for us; let us come away.'

"At that epoch, I had already passed more than a hundred nights alone and unsheltered, with the starry firmament for my roof, sometimes seated at the bottom of a ravine frequented by lions, sometimes beating the narrow paths which were scarcely distinguishable through the woods. I had met with gangs of marauders and with lions, and, by the help of God and St. Hubert, I had always got out of my difficulties unharmed. Only, experience had taught me that two

bullets rarely sufficed to kill an adult lion; and every time I opened a fresh campaign, I could not help remembering such and such a night which seemed a little too long, either because I had been suddenly attacked by the fever which compelled my hand to tremble when I commanded it to be firm, or because an unwelcome thunderstorm had prevented my seeing the least thing whatever near me for whole hours, and that at moments when the rolling thunder was responded to by the lion's roar, so close that I regarded every flash of lightning as a lucky event whose continuance I would have purchased at the price of half my blood.

"But still, I loved this solitary life; I sought it from a feeling of nationality, for the sake of lowering the malevolent pride of the Arabs, whom I delighted to see bow down before a Frenchman; not so much for the services which he gratuitously rendered them at the risk of his life, but because he accomplished alone what they dared not undertake in company. And thus, not only was every lion who fell a subject to them of astonishment; but, moreover, they could not understand how a stranger dare venture alone by night into ravines which the natives avoided in broad daylight. In the eyes of the Arabs (brave in war, brave everywhere except in the presence of "the master," who, they say, derives his strength from God) the sportsman has no need to awaken the douars of the mountains by a distant gunshot, in order to obtain a triumph. It is enough for him to quit his tent at the evening twilight, and to return safe and sound at the point of day. It will be easily understood that this feeling of the popular mind made it a law for me to proceed in the path I had traced out; that it even afforded me a great support against emotions which were sometimes too strong; and, I am not ashamed to add, against the mental agony of nocturnal isolation in a country abounding with perils of every description.

"If, amongst the sportsmen for whose sake I have written these lines, there were one who desired to enter the lists, — in order to make him comprehend the enjoyment which is the recompense for the moral and physical fatigue necessarily undergone by whoever exercises such a profession as this, to him I would say: The career is open to all; enter upon it valiantly! But have nothing to do with the covered hiding-places, the ambuscades in use amongst the Arabs! Have nothing to do with daylight sport, either alone, or in the presence of people who will prevent your feeling afraid! Wait for the night; and at the first roar of the lion, set out, but set out alone and on foot. If you do not meet with the animal, begin again the following night, if you can, and then the next,

and then again the next, till your expedition has come to its dénouement. If you return (which I heartily desire, in order that I may resign my office to you), I promise you, in reward for the trouble you have had, in the first place, a perfect indifference about death, with whom you will always be ready to enter into alliance; and secondly, the esteem, the affection, the gratitude, and more than that, of a multitude of people who are, and will remain, hostile to all your countrymen, and to your religion; and, finally, recollections which will infuse youth into your old age. If you do not return (for which I shall be extremely sorry, both on your account and my own), you may be assured that on the spot where the Arabs find your remains, they will raise, not a mausoleum, as people call it at home, but a heap of stones, on the summit of which they will place broken pots, old iron, cannon balls, in short a heap of things which serve them in the place of epitaph, and which signify, 'A man died here.' You ought to know that amongst the Arabs, it is not enough to wear moustaches on your lips, and a beard on your chin, to be 'a man:' and I can assure you that this simple epitaph implies more than many eulogistic phrases, and that, for my own part, I desire no other."

This digression will be excused as a transitionary interlude to the rest of M. Gérard's story.

"The old cheik earnestly insisted at first, that I should enter the douar, and then that he should leave with me a few men, whose looks betrayed that they were not anxious to stop. I refused both propositions, and persuaded him to retire with his people; for the night was approaching, and the lions might now come down at any moment. The brave fellow unwillingly complied with my advice; and before leaving, asked my permission to say the evening prayers in company with his followers, in order, he said, that God might watch over me during the night, through the whole course of which no one in the mountain would close their eyes, but would anxiously await, both great and small, for the news which my gun should tell them. The prayer ended, the cheik came to me, and said:

"'If it please God to hear our prayers, and if you will cheer the spirits of those who love you, — after you have killed, light the fire which my men shall prepare directly; so that, when our ears have heard the signal of battle, our eyes may behold the token of victory. I promise you we will answer you.' I readily assented to Taïeb's wish; and in an instant an enormous pile was made, and so well prepared that a match was all that was wanted to set it on fire. While the cheik's people were busy about the preparations, with an ardour rare amongst the Arabs (who are the

incarnation of indolence), their master remained close by my side, and said —

"'If I thought you would not laugh at me, I would give you a piece of advice.'

"'An old man's words,' I answered, 'are always respected.'

"'Well, listen, my son. If the lions come to-night, the seigneur with the great head (the Arabs thus designate the adult male lion) will march the first. Do not trouble yourself about the others. The children are already too big for the mother to concern herself about them, and they all trust entirely to their father; keep your eye, therefore, on the seigneur with the great head. Do not forget that, if your hour is come, it is he who will kill you, and the others who will eat you.' His people having called him at that moment, 'Go on,' he shouted to them, 'I will follow you directly.' Then, after an inquiring glance around, as if he had some confidential communication to make, he put his mouth close to my ear, and said in a whisper, 'He has stolen my handsomest mare and ten bullocks.'

"'Who has robbed you of that?' I asked, in the same subdued tone of voice.

"'He!' he answered, pointing with his fist to the mountain slope.

"'But,' said I, beginning to lose patience, 'tell me the name of the thief.'

"'The seigneur with the great head.'

"The last words were spoken so low that I could only catch the final syllables; but I guessed the rest, and could not help laughing when I recollected his recommendations. A few minutes afterwards the cheik had disappeared in the wood, and I was left alone on the brink of the Oued-Cherf, in the presence of the footsteps of five lions who had been there only the day before, of the pile of firewood prepared in their honour, and of the mysterious den, over which the shades of night already cast an impenetrable veil, which my imagination amused itself with tearing asunder, to count the claws and the teeth of the seigneur with the big head and of the family under his protection.

"Seated beneath an oleander which commands the ford, I tried hard to discover with ears and eyes the fire of a tent, the barking of a dog on the hills, something, in short, which should say to me, 'You are not utterly alone.' But all was silent and dark around me — as far as sight and hearing could ascertain, nothing human was near. I was absolutely tête-à-tête with my gun. Meanwhile, the hour advanced, and the moon (which I did not expect to see, so contracted was my horizon) began to scatter around me a sort of half-light which I accepted with gratitude. It might be eleven o'clock, and I began to be surprised at having to wait so

long, when I thought I heard something walking in the wood. Little by little the sounds grew more distinct — there was no possibility of doubting they were caused by several large animals. I soon perceived beneath the branches some moving luminous points, which cast a reddish gleam. I had no difficulty in recognising the family of lions, walking in single file in the direction of the ford where I had posted myself. Instead of five, I counted only three; and, when they stopped at fifteen paces' distance from the river's brink, I thought that the one who came first, although more than respectable in stature and physiognomy, could not be the seigneur with the large head whose description had been given me, and whom the cheik recommended so warmly to my notice.

"There they were, all three at a stand-still, regarding me with looks of astonishment. Following out my plan of attack, I aimed at the middle of the shoulder of the first, and fired. A terrible roar of agony replied to my shot, and, when the smoke allowed me to see, I distinguished two of the lions slowly re-entering the wood, and the third, with both his shoulders broken, dragging himself on his belly to make for me. I immediately comprehended that the papa and the mamma did not belong to the party, a circumstance which I did not regret one single instant. Feeling now reassured respecting the intentions of those whom their brother's fall had induced to depart, I devoted my whole attention to him. I had just reloaded my barrel with powder, when, with an effort that made him roar with pain, he arrived within three paces of myself, showing me every tooth in his head. My second ball, like the first, sent him rolling in the river's bed. Thrice he returned to the charge. The third ball, put point blank into his eye, stretched him dead.

"The lion whom I had just killed was an animal about three years old, very fat and plump, and armed like a veteran. After having made sure that he was worth all the powder I had burnt on his account, and that the Arabs on beholding him would salute him with respectful satisfaction, I remembered the beacon pile, and soon made an illumination on the mountain ridge. The echoes brought me a distant detonation; the signal of the victory which the cheik transmitted to all the douars of the Mahouna, who responded to it in their turn. At daybreak, more than two hundred Arabs, men, women, and children, arrived from all quarters to contemplate and insult at their ease the common enemy. The cheik was amongst the first to appear. He informed me that whilst I was killing this lion, the seigneur with the big head, accompanied by his better half, had carried off

another of his bullocks for their midnight revel."

Now, reader, if you are a sportsman, you may have sometimes expressed, after dinner, a wish to kill a lion. You may have even said, "I am sure that I could kill a lion." If the desire is in your heart, and not on your lips merely, here is the clue to the secret of doing so. But no, — I had better stop short. You can go and take lessons of the lion-killing lieutenant himself.

PETER THE GREAT IN ENGLAND.

THERE was to be seen till lately in the Palace at Hampton Court, a fine full-length portrait of a beardless young man (intentionally beardless), in armour, with a broad and vigorous expression of face, with large eyes that betray a fixed determination of purpose, and, I must add, a liking for strong drinks. I refer to the portrait of Peter the Great, which Sir Godfrey Kneller painted for King William the Third during the brief visit of three months which the Czar paid to England in the exceeding sharp and cold season of the year sixteen hundred and ninety-eight. Kneller was never happier than in this picture. He knew his strength; and in the background — a sea-scape (as painters affect to call such things) — he obtained the assistance of the younger Vandervelde, a master in the treatment of maritime matters. This picture is now, I believe, at Buckingham Palace. Prince Albert took it away during the visit to England of the late Emperor Nicholas; but his royal highness, now that the case is altered, may perhaps think proper to return it to its old quarters.

Peter was in his twenty-sixth year when he first set foot in England. He had been learning ship-building at Amsterdam, and his visit to England was for no other avowed purpose than that of improving his mechanical skill by steady labour in our naval dockyards. He came among us with the approbation of King William the Third: houses were hired for him and his rough retinue, and paid for by the king.

His first London lodging was in Norfolk Street, in the Strand, then a newly-built street, and one of the best inhabited streets in London. Some red-brick houses of Peter's time still exist. His second house — I might almost call it his country house — was at Saye's Court, in Deptford, on the banks of the Thames, contiguous to the Royal Dockyard — then in the tenancy of Evelyn, author of the Sylva (now better known by his Memoirs), but recently sub-let by him to no less a person than the bluff and brave Admiral Benbow.

The chief native attendant of the Czar bore a name that has lately become familiar enough in

English ears: he was called Prince Menzikoff. His English attendant was Osborne Marquis of Caermarthen, afterwards the second Duke of Leeds. The marquis was a naval officer of talent and distinction;—and this selection by the king was in every way appropriate.

His visit was one of entire privacy, and consequently without those courtly ceremonies attending his arrival which usually accompanied the visits of kings and emperors and their ambassadors. He came to this country from the Hague with Vice-Admiral Mitchell, and arrived among us on Tuesday the eleventh of January, sixteen hundred and ninety-seven — eight. His arrival was soon made public, but the privacy of his visit was still as far as possible maintained. On the day after his arrival he went incognito in a hackney-coach to Kensington, to see William the Third and his court at dinner, — dining in public being then a custom still lingering about royalty. On the following day he called on the Marquis of Caermarthen in Leicester Square, then an invalid, having hurt his leg at the fire which, only a week before the Czar arrived among us, ceased to make Whitehall the palace of a sovereign. On the Friday following he received a visit from King William the Third. It was a private visit, made by the king in the coach of the Earl of Romney, the brother of Algernon Sidney, and the handsome Sidney of De Grammont's Memoirs. The Czar accompanied the king in Lord Romney's coach as far as Whitehall, where he stepped into his own carriage, and, attended by the Guards, went in his robes to the House of Peers. The penny-a-liner of the time, from whom we derive these particulars, adds: "His Czarish majesty was there, it is said, incognito." But this I see reason to doubt.

Peter the Great while in England was as shy and unwilling to be seen as Peter the Wild Boy. He was present at a ball given at Kensington by King William in honour of the birthday of the Princess Anne, afterwards queen; or rather he may be said to have seen the ball, for his shyness confined him to a small room, from which he could see without being seen. When he saw King William on his throne in the House of Lords (a sight he had expressed a particular wish to see), it was not from the gallery nor from below the bar of the house, but from a gutter in the house-top, from which he was enabled to peep through a window into the house. He retired from this unpleasant point of view sooner, it is said, than he intended; for he made so ridiculous a figure (says Lord Dartmouth, who was present) that neither king nor peers could forbear laughing.

He was taken to all our London sights at that time of any moment. To the lions and armouries

in the Tower; to the monuments and wax figures in Westminster Abbey; to Lambeth Palace; to the masquerade on the last night of the Temple revels; and to the two theatres in Drury Lane and Dorset Gardens. He was chiefly attracted by the Tower and the performances at Drury Lane. The wild beasts and implements of war were adapted to his rougher nature, while the charms of a Miss Cross, the original Miss Hoyden, in Vanbrugh's Relapse, and the first actress who had Miss prefixed to her name in playbills, were so engaging that the rough Czar of Russia became enamoured of her beauty. Of this Miss Cross the story is told in the Spectator, that when she first arrived in the Low Countries, she was not computed to be so handsome as Madam van Brisket by near half a ton. There is a fine old mezzotinto which still preserves to us the beautiful features that won the youthful heart of Peter the Great.

He did not speak English, nor is he known to have been at all desirous of learning it. Few of his sayings have therefore been preserved. Three, however, have reached us. He told Admiral Mitchell that he considered the condition of an English admiral happier than that of a Czar of Russia. To King William he observed, "If I were the adviser of your majesty, I should counsel you to remove your court to Greenwich, and to convert St. James's once more into an hospital." When in Westminster Hall, he inquired who the busy gentlemen were in wigs and gowns; and being told they were lawyers — "Lawyers!" said he; "why, I have but two in my whole dominions, and I design to hang one of them the moment I get home."

The Marquis of Caermarthen was very attentive to the wishes of the Czar. On Tuesday last (records the penny-a-liner of the period) the Marquis of Caermarthen treated the Czar of Muscovy in a splendid manner. He took him to Chatham to a launch, — and to Spithead to a naval review. They went to Spithead by the old Portsmouth road, and returned the same way, resting at Godalming for a day, where (at the King's Arms Inn, in the High Street) they had two meals: breakfast and dinner. The bills of fare on the occasion have been preserved by Wanley, the learned keeper of Lord Oxford's library. They were thirteen at table (an uncomfortable number), and twenty-one in all. At breakfast they had half a sheep, a quarter of lamb, ten pullets, twelve chickens, nine quarts of brandy, six quarts of mulled wine, seven dozen eggs, with salad in proportion. At dinner they had five ribs of beef (weight three stone), one sheep (weight, fifty-six pounds three-quarters), a shoulder of lamb, and a loin of veal boiled, eight pullets, eight rabbits, two dozen and a half of sack, and one dozen of claret.

Here is a bill reminding us by its locality and rabbits of Mary Tofts, who has given an unhappy celebrity to the pleasant little post-town of Godalming in Surrey. I have often wondered if the story of the Czar's two meals was remembered by the Emperor Alexander when, in eighteen hundred and fourteen, on the visit of the allied sovereigns, he passed through Godalming to Portsmouth, to return to the capital of the Czar Peter!

There was a natural curiosity among the English people to see a sovereign from so remote a country as Muscovy; and Overton, the printseller (he is immortalised by Pope), took advantage of this desire, and borrowing a plate from Holland of the effigies of his Czarish majesty, immediately worked off sufficient impressions to satisfy the public. Other proofs of his popularity have been preserved. A song in praise of the Czar of Muscovy was performed on Thursday, the tenth of February, in the Music Room of York Buildings, the Hanover Square Rooms of the then London; and the History of the Ancient and Present State of Muscovy, by Abel Roper, was advertised to be published this term —the lawyer then, as indeed long after, materially regulating the London season.

I have discovered the name of the opera which the Czar went to hear. It was Beaumont and Fletcher's Prophetess, or the History of Diocletian, with alterations and additions, after the manner of an opera, made by Betterton the great actor. It was a new opera. The music was by Purcell, the dances by Mr. Priest, and the scenes, machinery, and clothes were costly and effective. It was a perfectly successful piece, and there was enough in it to attract the Czar, to whom everything of the kind was an entire novelty.

A new entertainment was advertised for Thursday, the seventeenth of February, sixteen hundred and ninety-seven — eight. It was at Exeter Change, in the Strand, and was called (corruptly enough) A Redoubt after the Venetian manner, — "where," continues the advertisement, "there will be some considerable Basset Banks and a variety of other entertainments." No person was to be admitted without a mask. Tickets were to be had at the well-known chocolate-houses, Ozinda's and White's, and the entertainment was to begin exactly at ten o'clock at night. Peter came from Deptford to London to see this Venetian importation; but he found it suppressed with six constables at the door to prohibit the performance. To relieve his disappointment — so a Mr. Bertie writes to Dr. Charlett of Oxford — he fell to drinking hard at one Mr. Morley's; and the Marquis of Caermarthen, it being late, resolved to lodge him at his brother-in-law's. Here (and still with the Marquis) he dined the next day — drank a pint of sherry

and a bottle of brandy for his morning draught; after that, about eight more bottles of sack, and so went to the playhouse.

There was a cordial at this time fit for the closet of any person of quality, and very popular, if we may believe the public advertisements, called Nectar Ambrosia, the highest cordial — we are assured by the proprietor — that ever was made in England. It was prepared from the richest spices, herbs, and flowers, and drawn from right Nantz brandy. On Wednesday, the ninth of February, the author of the new cordial called Nectar Ambrosia, so much in vogue of late, presented the Czar of Muscovy with a large bottle of it curiously wrought in flint, which his Czarish majesty very kindly accepted, and he, the prince, and the rest of his nobles very highly approved of it. The proprietor was Mr. John How, living in Ram's Head Yard, in Fenchurch Street; a man no doubt of many trades, for I find that he was the publisher — in sixteen hundred and ninety-nine — of Ned Ward's London Spy. Ned himself afterwards kept a public-house, and may have had a finger in the concoction of the Nectar Ambrosia, that so took the Czar. This celebrated compound was sold in bottles, price two shillings and one shilling each, and in glasses of twopence and one penny each. The newspapers inform us, that the Czar afterwards sent for a quantity — highly approving of it.

There was a great meeting while Peter was in England, and at which he was expected to have been present. This was the Newmarket meeting, then the centre of attraction for horse-racing, cock-fighting, and other kindred pursuits. Led horses for the Czar — the papers report — had been sent to the palace. The king was there, attended by five dukes, eleven earls; by barons, baronets, knights, and squires. There was much that was attractive. The famous Yorkshire horse, backed by Mr. Boucher, was to run against Mr. Framptom's Turk. The distance was four miles — the weight that each was to carry was ten stone, and the stake five hundred pounds. Among the earls was a great captain, the future Duke of Marlborough. Lord Godolphin also was present — whose name, through his famed "Arabian," is known to thousands who never heard of the Godolphin ministry, nor Sid Hamet's rod, made immortal by Dean Swift.

There was one person whom the Czar (while in England) expressed a wish to meet, and that was Edmund Halley, the great mathematician and astronomer, whose practical acquaintance with the variation of the compass and the courses of the tides he rightly thought were matters of great importance. Halley spoke German fluently, and Peter was pleased with the conversation of the illustrious Englishman.

Religious enthusiasts sought eagerly to see this ruler of bar-

baric millions. The Quakers were, of course, the most pressing. William Penn (he lived in Norfolk Street) had an interview with him. The brother-in-law of Robert Barclay (the apologist) managed to converse with him on Quaker tenets, and to obtain his acceptance of two copies of Barclay's book. A teazing question was put by the Czar to Barclay's brother-in-law. "Of what use can you be in any kingdom or government, seeing you will not bear arms and fight?" The Czar was inclined to look upon them as Jesuits, but altered his opinion, and with his attendants in the English costume of the time, attended a Quaker meeting in White Hart Court, in Gracechurch Street: in that court where, only a few years before, Fox the founder of the sect had died. His presence was recognised, and, to avoid the gaze which he could not endure, he left before the meeting was over.

When Peter was in England the see of Canterbury was filled by Tenison — the same Tenison who, as vicar of St. Martin's, had preached a sermon of forgiveness at the funeral of Eleanor Gwyn. Peter paid a visit to the prelate at Lambeth, and, having expressed a wish to be informed as to our religion and constitution, the Archbishop, with the approbation of the king, selected the Bishop of Salisbury. No better man could have been chosen. The Bishop of Salisbury of that time was Gilbert Burnet, who had written the History of our Reformed Religion, the same divine who administered consolaton to the death-bed of Rochester, and contributed religious comfort to Russell in the cell and on the scaffold.

Burnet had good interpreters, and had much free discourse with him. He found that he was subject to convulsive motions over his body, and that his head seemed to be affected by them; that he was not wanting in capacity, and had a larger measure of knowledge than his education had led him to expect. He found him a man of a very hot temper, soon influenced, and very brutal in his passion, raising his natural heat by frequent recourse to brandy, which he rectified himself. His turn was for mechanics; and nature — so thought the bishop — seemed to have designed him rather to be a shipcarpenter than a great prince. He wrought much with his own hands, and made all about him work at the models of ships. He was resolved to encourage learning, and to polish his people by sending some of them to travel in other countries, and to draw strangers to come and live with them. He was desirous to understand the doctrine of the Church of England, but did not seem disposed to mend matters in Muscovy. The bishop adds — and this, perhaps, is the most important portion of what he has related about Peter — "He told me he designed a great fleet at

Azoff, and with it to attack the Turkish empire."

Here we have, explained, the policy which Russia has been pursuing secretly, but sometimes openly (now openly enough), since Peter learned to build ships at Deptford. Little, perhaps, did the Czar imagine that this policy was, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-four, to cost the country in which he was learning the arts of aggression, a fleet in the Baltic, a fleet in the Black Sea, and an expedition into the Sea of Azoff. Nay, that to repel his attack on the Turkish empire, France and England should join their forces for the first time; and that the existence of Turkey as an empire would be fought for, as it now is (a world-wide fact), before the greatest stronghold of Russia or of any nation, ancient or modern.

The Czar liked brandy and Ambrosia, and he liked a strong mixture called "pepper and brandy." The Marquis of Caermarthen often joined him in his orgies. But what told on the Czar Peter—perhaps from its frequency — is not known to have been injurious to the English marquis. Peter was at this time subject to convulsive motions of the body, that seemed, as I have already related, to affect his head. But the English were deep drinkers, especially our sailors, and the marquis was an English admiral — so, indeed, was Benbow, another of Peter's companions during his three months' visit to England. Peter should have known (we fear he did not) the most distinguished admiral then alive — Admiral Russell, who defeated the French off La Hogue, for which he was created Earl of Orford, and who is said to have mixed the largest bowls of punch ever made. One was dug in his garden at Chippenham in Cambridgeshire, the other he made at Lisbon.

There is still to be seen in Little Tower Street, in the City of London, a public-house (recently refronted) bearing the sign of the Czar's Head. This was the favourite resort of Peter when in London. Hither he would come from Deptford after his labours in the dockyard, and his watching the changes which the artificers of the yard were making in a yacht called the Royal Transport, which King William had presented to him, with permission to make such alterations in her as he considered necessary. He came from Deptford to London in a small decked boat, which he assisted in working to Tower Stairs. After the orgies he delighted in, he was not, I fear, very well fitted to pilot the boat on their return down the river to Deptford; but the Thames was not then lashed and troubled by large and small steamers and boats of every description, which now crowd her waters from London Bridge to Blackwall. He may have concluded his nights at the Czar's Head.

King William was not inattentive to the Czar. He made him a

second visit, at which an odd incident occurred. The Czar had a favourite monkey, which usually sat upon the back of the Czar's chair. As soon as the king was seated, the monkey jumped somewhat angrily upon him. The "great Nassau" was disconcerted, the whole ceremonial discomposed, and most of the time — Lord Dartmouth, who tells the story, assures us — was spent in apologies for the monkey's behaviour.

The Czar is said to have enjoyed his visit to England, but it was high time for him to return. He had been apprehensive of his sister's intrigues, and a confirmation of his suspicions hurried him away. On Monday, the eighteenth of April, sixteen hundred and ninety-eight, he went to Kensington, to take leave of the king. "He thanked his majesty for the kind entertainment and honour he had received in his majesty's dominions, and for the fine ship he had presented him with." On the same occasion, Peter made a present to his majesty of "a fine ruby of very great value." On Wednesday, the twentieth of April, he dined at Wimbledon with the Duke of Leeds, the Earl of Danby, so celebrated in the reign of Charles the Second, and the father of his friend the Marquis of Caermarthen. On his return to Deptford the same night, he found, "very fine music to divert and serenade him." This was the last night he spent on shore. On Thursday, the twenty-first of April, he set sail from Deptford, for Holland, under convoy of two men-of-war — the York and the Greenwich — and three yachts, commanded by Admiral Mitchell. He was detained for some days by contrary winds, but at last left England, which he was never to see again. He landed at the Hague, sending the Royal Transport yacht to Archangel, from whence (so it was said) he was to carry it by land to the river Tanais. Lord Caermarthen accompanied him as far as Chatham, to whom, however, he did not say farewell without conferring a favour — and one of moment. This was the right of importing tobacco into Russia. In the first year he was to consign three thousand hogsheads, in the second five thousand, and afterwards six thousand hogsheads yearly. What the marquis made by his monopoly no one has told us.

His physician he left behind him for two months, that he might see Oxford, Cambridge, and Bath, and took with him two boys from the mathematical school founded at Christ's Hospital by King Charles the Second, and what the newspapers of the time describe as, "the famous geographical clock made by Mr. John Carte, watchmaker, at the sign of the Dial and Crown, near Essex Street in the Strand; which clock tells what o'clock it is in any part of the world, whether it is day or night, the sun's rising or setting throughout the year,

its entrance into the signs of the zodiac; the arch which they and the sun in them makes above or below the horizon, with several other curious motions." This Peter bought, but the price is not named.

When Admiral Benbow returned to his house at Saye's Court, great was his consternation at finding the unnecessary damage that had been done to it by Peter and his retinue; still greater was the consternation which the author of Sylva expressed when he saw the state to which his far-famed garden had been reduced. Benbow complained to Evelyn, and both Benbow and Evelyn memorialised the lords of the Treasury for compensation for the injuries done. Their joint memorials were referred to the surveyor-general of works, Sir Christopher Wren, and to his majesty's principal gardener, Mr. London, the earliest English gardener of any reputation whose name has reached us. Both reported strongly in favour of the claims for compensation. Evelyn received, "in compensation for the damage done to his house, goods, and gardens, at Deptford, by his Czarises majesty and his retinue while they resided there," the sum of one hundred and sixty-two pounds seven shillings; and Admiral Benbow received, "for like damage done to his goods," the sum of one hundred and thirty-three pounds two shillings and sixpence. The payments were made by the paymaster of his majesty's works, and are included in his accounts. The indoor habits of Peter and his retinue were, it appears from the estimate of damages, filthy in the extreme.

In the garden at Saye's Court was what Evelyn himself calls an impregnable holly hedge, four hundred feet in length, nine feet high, and five feet thick. This fine holly hedge was a source of delight to Peter and his retinue. They made it a point of attack, and were accustomed to amuse themselves by endeavouring to drive a wheelbarrow through it. Peter himself was sometimes in the barrow. Such is the received story, which I can now confirm by Benbow's claim for compensation: his estimate for damages including the sum of one pound for three wheelbarrows broke and lost.

Evelyn was prepared for some damage to his house. "There is a house full of people," his servant writes to him, "and right nasty. The Czar lies next your library, and dines in the parlour next your study. He dines at ten o'clock and six at night; is very seldom at home a whole day; very often in the king's yard, or by water, dressed in several dresses. The king is expected here this day; the best parlour is pretty clean for him to be entertained in. The king pays for all he has."

London, the gardener, divided his report (it is dated May ninth,

sixteen hundred and ninety-eight) under, "what can be repaired and what cannot." The marrow of his report (it is now published for the first time) is as follows:

1. All the grass-work is out of order and broke into holes by their leaping and showing tricks upon it.
2. The bowling-green is in the same condition.
3. All that ground which used to be cultivated for eatable plants is all overgrown with weeds, and is not manured nor cultivated, by reason the Czar would not suffer any men to work when the season offered.
4. The wall-fruit and standard fruit-trees are unpruned.
5. The hedges and wilderness are not cut as they ought to be.
6. The gravel walks are all broke into holes and out of order.

The several observations were made by George London, his Majesty's gardener, and he certifies that to put the garden and plantations in as good repair as they were in before his Czarish Majesty resided there, will require the sum of fifty-five pounds.

GEORGE LONDON.

Great damages are done to the trees and plants, which cannot be repaired, as the breaking the branches of the wall-fruit trees, spoiling two or three of the finest true phillereas, breaking several hollys and other fine plants.

Any inroad of the Czar Nicholas and all the Russias upon Europe would leave Europe much as the Czar Peter and his retinue left the house and garden at Deptford of the learned and refined John Evelyn. I can hear the laugh of Peter, as with brute force, stimulated by drink, he drove the wheel-barrow, with Prince Menzikoff upon it, into the prickly holly hedge, five feet in thickness.

LONDON STONES.

HAMMERING at the Alps, when there is a wallet to be filled with geological specimens in London streets, is scarcely worth the while of any amateur stone-pecker who lives within sound of Bow bells. I understand going in search of Alpine breezes, studying physical geography abroad, fossil hunting, stratum stalking, but I should hardly think of quitting London to collect diversities of rock. Of that sort of geology, why may I not have my fill between Cheapside and Piccadilly?

To begin at the beginning, without climbing a mountain, I can see where the granite crops out, beyond the kerb of every pavement. The metropolitan police may object to a free use of the hammer, but even if no cart-wheel ever chipped us off a specimen, it is a blessed institution of the metropolis that roads or pavements are perpetually being taken up; and he is a wonderful man whose lot it never has been to get a specimen of granite in his eye, chipped from the mass by some one of an army of men licensed to use hammer and chisel. You may go to Switzerland or Norway, travel over miles, and see only one sort of granite. Here, in London, you have specimens of almost every sort. In chips of every form and colour, you may admire the spangles of the mica and the very many sorts of granite pudding

made by sundry mixtures of the felspar and the quartz. With granite, geology begins; upon that hard, crystalline rock, our solid earth all lies a-bed. It has been molten once, and has cooled into a crystalline form; of it, as well as porphyry, sienite and basalt, there are innumerable specimens to be had in the streets of London. We take an omnibus at the Bank for Paddington, and rumble over stones that were all prepared in the furnace millions of years before Cheapside was thought about, or indeed before Britannia's head was fairly above water.

Then, of the slate rocks that rest upon the granite, we have a most ample representation on the roofs of houses. Wherever there is a house being built, the seeker of slate is saved a trip to Wicklow or North Wales, and may fill his pocket with a class of rocks several thousands of feet thick, that naturally rise to a great elevation, and by their broken, serrated outlines, give peculiar beauty to the scenery of which they form a part.

The geological deposits of London are not governed by the same laws that regulate the depositions of the strata in the common course of nature. Here the first may be last and the last first, the granite overlie the clay, and such reversal of the usual order of things has been produced by no movements within the bowels of the earth, but by movements on its surface, commonly effected by the agency of water, wind, steam, and animal traction, brought into full play by the requirements of a crowded population. If there be a useful purpose to which the rock formation of any geological period can be economically applied, it is sure to be deposited in London, irrespective of any order of nature to the contrary; but if otherwise, the geological student may safely make up his mind that it will not be found. For this reason it is not easy to get specimens in London streets of the rocks which naturally overlie the primary — the transition rocks — which set out with Sir Roderick Murchison's silurian system. They are at home in England on the south-east borders of North Wales, where they reside constantly, and never come to town. They are the country cousins of the stones of London. But of the old red sandstone rocks, the Devonian, the coal, the new red sandstone, the magnesian limestones, which are the strata next following in order, we get numerous examples. Door-steps, landings, and many miles of London pavement are composed of a great artificial stratum of the carboniferous sandstone from Craigleith, and other parts of Scotland. In no place in the world are there to be found a greater number of the varieties of coal, or more people actively engaged in soliciting public attention to their respective qualities. Fragments of lias are

much less abundant, though they may be found in lapidaries' yards, chipped from the blocks used by lithographers, while of the oolitic series, which lies above, the specimens are splendid. Of the roe-stone, which comes among the stones of London as a friend from Bath, the new facing to Henry the Seventh's chapel, at Westminster, is a pretty specimen, but it looks worn, though its age is under thirty. Specimens of this Bath limestone may be had in the neighbourhood of several new buildings, and more specimens are to be found of another and a finer limestone brought to us from the Isle of Portland. St. Paul's Cathedral, Somerset House, and the Reform Club, are good specimens of this last. The curious observer may also study the effect of London air and smoke on stone. Some carved fragments meant to be worked into St. Paul's Cathedral have been lying in Portland Island ever since St. Paul's was built. They are covered with lichen, but not a chisel mark has moulded out of sight, while fellow portions of such columns which are exposed to the south and south-west wind in Saint Paul's church-yard have lost all sharpness of outline. Then there is the magnesian limestone, separated by the lower beds of new red sandstone from the coal. Westminster Hall is a London fragment of magnesian limestone, brought from the quarries of Huddlestone, near Sherborne. The New Houses of Parliament form a more recent specimen, of which it must be a proud thing to a chemist to feel that they provide for the legislature of Great Britain a grand temple of chalk and magnesia. The magnesian limestone used in the building of the Houses of Parliament, whereof there are to be had infinity of chips, is brought from Bolsover in Derbyshire, and its extreme durability is attested by the fresh look of a church at Southwell, in Nottinghamshire, built of the same stone some nine hundred years ago.

The decay of rocks, as well as many various kinds of them, may be examined also in our London graveyards. Every tombstone is a study for geologists.

The green-sand, which is exposed in cliffs on the south side of the Isle of Wight, is brought to the surface in London by deep borings for Artesian wells. Above the green-sand, and immediately below the London clay, is the great chalk formation, represented in the milk of the metropolis. As for the London clay, we case ourselves in that, for it is represented in the London bricks. Finally, there lies over all the alluvium, the London soil, the deposit going on in our own day. This is certainly a thing which no man will quit London to see, but which he must quit London not to see, the more's the pity.

A DREAM.

ALL yesterday I was spinning,
Sitting alone in the sun;
The dream that I spun was so lengthy,
It lasted till day was done.

I heeded not cloud or shadow
That flitted over the hill,
Or the humming-bees or the swallows,
Or the trickling of the rill.

I took the threads for my spinning,
All of blue summer air,
And a flickering ray of sunlight
Was woven in here and there.

The shadows grew longer and longer,
The evening wind passed by,
And the purple splendour of sunset
Was flooding the western sky.

But I could not leave my spinning,
For so fair my dream had grown,
I heeded not, hour by hour,
How the silent day had flown.

At last the grey shadows fell round me,
And the night came dark and chill,
And I rose and ran down the valley,
And left my dream on the hill.

I went up the hill this morning
To the place where my spinning lay,
There was nothing but glistening dew-drops
Remained of my dream to-day.

HALF A LIFE-TIME AGO.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

HALF a life-time ago there lived a single woman, of the name of Susan Dixon, in one of the Westmoreland dales. She was the owner of the small farm-house where she resided, and of some thirty or forty acres of land by which it was surrounded. She had also an hereditary right to a sheep-walk, extending to the wild fells that overhang Blea Tarn. In the language of the country, she was a Stateswoman. Her house is yet to be seen on the Oxenfell road, between Skelwith and Coniston. You go along a moorland track, made by the carts that occasionally come for turf from the Oxenfell. A brook babbles and brattles by the wayside, giving you a sense of companionship which relieves the deep solitude in which this way is usually traversed. Some miles on this side of Coniston there is a farmstead, — a grey stone house and a square of farm-buildings surrounding a green space of rough turf, in the midst of which stands a mighty, funereal, umbrageous yew, making a solemn shadow, as of death, in the very heart and centre of the light and heat of the brightest summer day. On the side away from the house, this yard slopes down to a dark-brown pool, which is supplied with fresh water from the overflowings of a stone cistern, into which some rivulet of the brook before mentioned continually and melodiously falls and bubbles. The cattle drink out of this cistern. The household bring their pitchers and fill them with drinking water by a dilatory, yet pretty, process. The water-carrier brings with her a leaf of the hound's-tongue fern, and, inserting it in the crevice of the grey rock, makes a cool green spout for the sparkling stream.

The house is no specimen, at the present day, of what it was in the lifetime of Susan Dixon.

Then, every small diamond pane in the windows glittered with cleanliness. You might have eaten off the floor; you could see yourself in the pewter plates and the polished oaken awmry, or dresser, of the state kitchen into which you entered. Few strangers penetrated further than this room. Once or twice, wandering tourists, attracted by the lonely picturesqueness of the situation, and the exquisite cleanliness of the house itself, made their way into this house-place, and offered money enough (as they thought), to tempt the hostess to receive them as lodgers. They would give no trouble, they said; they would be out rambling or sketching all day long; would be perfectly content with a share of the food which she provided for herself; or would procure what they required from the Waterhead Inn at Coniston. But no liberal sum — no fair words — moved her from her stony manner, or her monotonous tone of indifferent refusal. No persuasion could induce her to show any more of the house than that first room; no appearance of fatigue procured for the weary an invitation to sit down and rest; and if one more bold and less delicate sate down without being asked, Susan stood by, cold and apparently deaf, or only replying by the briefest monosyllables, till the unwelcome visitor had departed. Yet those with whom she had dealings in the way of selling her cattle or her farm produce, spoke of her as keen after a bargain — a hard one to have to do with; and she never spared herself exertion or fatigue, at market or in the field, to make the most of her produce. She led the hay-makers with her swift steady rake, and her noiseless evenness of motion. She was about among the earliest in the market, examining samples of oats, pricing them, and then turning with grim satisfaction to her own cleaner corn.

She was served faithfully and long by those who were rather her fellow-labourers than her servants. She was even and just in her dealings with them. If she was peculiar and silent, they knew her, and knew that she might be relied on. Some of them had known her from her childhood; and deep in their hearts was an unspoken — almost unconscious — pity for her; for they knew her story, though they never spoke of it.

Yes; the time had been when that tall, gaunt, hard-featured, angular woman — who never smiled, and hardly ever spoke an unnecessary word — had been a fine-looking girl, bright-spirited and rosy; and when the hearth at the Yew Nook had been as bright as she, with family love and youthful hope and mirth. Fifty or fifty-one years ago, William Dixon and his wife Margaret were alive; and Susan, their daughter, was about eighteen years old — ten years older than

the only other child, a boy, named after his father. William and Margaret Dixon were rather superior people, of a character belonging — as far as I have seen — exclusively to the class of Westmoreland and Cumberland statesmen, — just, independent, upright; not given to much speaking; kind-hearted, but not demonstrative; disliking change, and new ways, and new people; sensible and shrewd; each household self-contained, and having little curiosity as to their neighbours, with whom they rarely met for any social intercourse, save at the stated times of sheep-shearing and Christmas; having a certain kind of sober pleasure in amassing money, which occasionally made them miserable (as they call miserly people up in the north) in their old age; reading no light or ephemeral literature, but the grave, solid books brought round by the pedlars (the Paradise Lost and Regained, the Death of Abel, the Spiritual Quixote, and the Pilgrim's Progress) were to be found in nearly every house: the men occasionally going off laking *i.e.* playing, *i.e.* drinking for days together, and having to be hunted up by anxious wives, who dared not leave their husbands to the chances of the wild precipitous roads, but walked miles and miles, lantern in hand, in the dead of night, to discover and guide the solemnly-drunken husband home; who had a dreadful headache the next day, and the day after that came forth as grave, and sober, and virtuous-looking as if there were no such things as malt and spirituous liquors in the world; and who were seldom reminded of their misdoings by their wives, to whom such occasional outbreaks were as things of course, when once the immediate anxiety produced by them was over. Such were — such are — the characteristics of a class now passing away from the face of the land, as their compeers, the yeomen, have done before. Of such was William Dixon. He was a shrewd clever farmer, in his day and generation, when shrewdness was rather shown in the breeding and rearing of sheep and cattle than in the cultivation of land. Owing to this character of his, statesmen from a distance from beyond Kendal, or from Borrowdale, of greater wealth than he, would send their sons to be farm-servants for a year or two with him, in order to learn some of his methods before setting up on land of their own. When Susan, his daughter, was about seventeen, one Michael Hurst was farm-servant at Yew Nook. He worked with the master and lived with the family, and was in all respects treated as an equal, except in the field. His father was a wealthy statesman at Wythburne, up beyond Grasmere; and through Michael's servitude the families had become acquainted, and the Dixons

went over to the High Beck sheep-shearing, and the Hursts came down by Red Bank and Loughrig Tarn and across the Oxenfell when there was the Christmas-tide feasting at Yew Nook. The fathers strolled round the fields together, examined cattle and sheep, and looked knowing over each other's horses. The mothers inspected the dairies and household arrangements, each openly admiring the plans of the other, but secretly preferring their own. Both fathers and mothers cast a glance from time to time at Michael and Susan, who were thinking of nothing less than farm or dairy, but whose unspoken attachment was in all ways so suitable and natural a thing that each parent rejoiced over it, although with characteristic reserve it was never spoken about — not even between husband and wife.

Susan had been a strong, independent, healthy girl; a clever help to her mother and a spirited companion to her father; more of a man in her (as he often said) than her delicate little brother ever would have. He was his mother's darling, although she loved Susan well. There was no positive engagement between Michael and Susan — I doubt if even plain words of love had been spoken; when one winter-time Margaret Dixon was seized with inflammation consequent upon a neglected cold. She had always been strong and notable, and had been too busy to attend to the earliest symptoms of illness. It would go off, she said to the woman who helped in the kitchen; or if she did not feel better when they had got the hams and bacon out of hand, she would take some herb-tea and nurse up a bit. But Death could not wait till the hams and bacon were cured: he came on with rapid strides, and shooting arrows of portentous agony. Susan had never seen illness — never knew how much she loved her mother till now, when she felt a dreadful instinctive certainty that she was losing her. Her mind was thronged with recollections of the many times she had slighted her mother's wishes; her heart was full of the echoes of careless and angry replies that she had spoken. What would she not now give to have opportunities of service and obedience, and trials of her patience and love for that dear mother who lay gasping in torture! And yet Susan had been a good girl and an affectionate daughter.

The sharp pain went off, and delicious ease came on; yet still her mother sunk. In the midst of this languid peace she was dying. She motioned Susan to her bedside, for she could only whisper; and then, while the father was out of the room, she spoke as much to the eager, hungering eyes of her daughter by the motion of her lips, as by the slow feeble sounds of her voice.

"Susan, lass, thou must not fret. It is God's will, and thou wilt have a deal to do. Keep father straight if thou canst; and if he goes out Ulverstone ways, see that thou meet him before he gets to the Old Quarry. It's a dree bit for a man who has had a drop. As for lile Will" — here the poor woman's face began to work and her fingers to move nervously as they lay on the bed-quilt — "lile Will will miss me most of all. Father's often vexed with him because he's not a quick, *strong* lad; he is not, my poor lile chap. And father thinks he's saucy, because he cannot always stomach oat-cake and porridge. There 's better than three pound in th' old black teapot on the top shelf of the cupboard. Just keep a piece of loaf-bread by you, Susan dear, for Will to come to when he's not taken his breakfast. I have, may be, spoilt him; but there'll be no one to spoil him now."

She began to cry a low feeble cry, and covered up her face that Susan might not see her. That dear face! those precious moments while yet the eyes could look out with love and intelligence. Susan laid her head down close by her mother's ear.

"Mother, I'll take tent of Will. Mother, do you hear? He shall not want ought I can give or get for him, least of all the kind words which you had ever ready for us both. Bless you! bless you! my own mother."

"Thou 'lt promise me that, Susan, wilt thou? I can die easy if thou 'lt take charge of him. But he's hardly like other folk; he tries father at times, though I think father'll be tender of him when I'm gone, for my sake. And, Susan; there's one thing more. I never spoke on it for fear of the bairn being called a tell-tale, but I just comforted him up. He vexes Michael at times, and Michael has struck him before now. I did not want to make a stir; but he's not strong, and a word from thee, Susan, will *go* a *long* way with Michael."

Susan was as red now as she had been pale before; it was the first time that her influence over Michael had been openly acknowledged by a third person, and a flash of joy came athwart the solemn sadness of the moment. Her mother had spoken too much, and now came on the miserable faintness. She never spoke again coherently; but when her children and her husband stood by her bedside, she took lile Will's hand and put it into Susan's, and looked at her with imploring eyes. Susan clasped her arms round Will, and leaned her head upon his curly pate, and vowed to herself to be as a mother to him.

Henceforward she was all in all to her brother. She was a more spirited and amusing companion to him than his mother had been, from her greater activity, and perhaps also from her originality of character, which often prompted her to perform

her habitual actions in some new and racy manner. She was tender to lile Will when she was prompt and sharp with everybody else — with Michael most of all; for somehow the girl felt that, unprotected by her mother, she must keep up her own dignity, and not allow her lover to see how strong a hold he had upon her heart. He called her hard and cruel, and left her so; and she smiled softly to herself when his back was turned to think how little he guessed how deeply he was loved. For Susan was merely comely and fine-looking; Michael was strikingly handsome, admired by all the girls for miles round, and quite enough of a country coxcomb to know it and plume himself accordingly. He was the second son of his father; the eldest would have High Beck farm, of course, but there was a good penny in the Kendal bank in store for Michael. When harvest was over, he went to Chapel Langdale to learn to dance; and at night, in his merry moods, he would do his steps on the flag-floor of the Yew Nook kitchen, to the secret admiration of Susan, who had never learned dancing, but who flouted him perpetually, even while she admired, in accordance with the rule she seemed to have made for herself about keeping him at a distance so long as he lived under the same roof with her. One evening he sulked at some saucy remark of hers; he sitting in the chimney-corner with his arms on his knees and his head bent forwards, lazily gazing into the wood-fire on the hearth, and luxuriating in rest after a hard day's labour; she sitting among the geraniums on the long, low window-seat, trying to catch the last slanting rays of the autumnal light, to enable her to finish stitching a shirt-collar for Will, who lounged full length on the flags at the other side of the hearth to Michael, poking the burning wood from time to time with a long hazel-stick to bring out the leap of glittering sparks.

"And if you can dance a threesome reel, what good does it do ye?" asked Susan, looking askance at Michael, who had just been vaunting his proficiency. "Does it help you plough, or even climb the rocks to take a raven's nest? If I were a man I'd be ashamed to give in to such softness."

"If you were a man you'd be glad to do anything which made the pretty girls stand round and admire."

"As they do to you, eh! ho! Michael! that would not be my way o'being a man."

"What would then?" asked he, after a pause, during which he had expected in vain that she would go on with her sentence. No answer.

"I should not like you as a man, Susy. You'd be too hard and headstrong."

"Am I hard and headstrong?" asked she with as indifferent a tone as she could assume, but

which yet had a touch of pique in it. His quick ear detected the inflexion.

"No, Susy! You're wilful at times, and that's right enough. I don't like a girl without spirit. There's a mighty pretty girl comes to the dancing-class; but she is all milk and water. Her eyes never flash like your's when you're put out; why, I can see them flame across the kitchen like a cat's eyes in the dark. Now, if you were a man, I should feel queer before those looks of your's; as it is, I rather like them, because —"

"Because what?" asked she, looking up and perceiving that he had stolen close up to her.

"Because I can make all right in this way," said he, kissing her suddenly.

"Can you?" said she, wrenching herself out of his grasp and panting, half with rage. "Take that, by way of proof that making right is none so easy." And she boxed his ears pretty sharply. He went back to his seat discomfited and out of temper. She could no longer see to look, even if her face had not burnt and her eyes dazzled, but she did not choose to move her seat, so she still preserved her stooping attitude, and pretended to go on sewing.

"Eleanor Hebthwaite may be milk-and-water," muttered he, "but—Confound thee, lad! what art doing?" exclaimed Michael, as a great piece of burning wood was cast into his face by an unlucky poke of Will's. "Thou great lounging clumsy chap, I'll teach thee better!" and with one or two good round kicks he sent the lad whimpering away into the back kitchen. When he had a little recovered himself from his passion, he saw Susan standing before him, her face looking strange and almost ghastly by the reversed position of the shadows arising from the firelight shining upwards right under it.

"I tell thee what, Michael," said she, "that lad's motherless, but not friendless."

"His own father leathers him, and why should not I, when he's given me such a burn on my face," said Michael, putting up his hand to his cheek as if in pain.

"His father's his father, and there is nought more to be said. But if he did burn thee, it was by accident, and not o' purpose, as thou kicked him; it's a mercy if his ribs are not broken."

"He howls loud enough, I'm sure. I might a kicked many a lad twice as hard and they'd ne'er ha' said ought but damn ye; but you lad must needs cry out like a stuck pig if one touches him," replied Michael sullenly.

Susan went back to the window-seat, and looked absently out of the window at the drifting clouds for a minute or two, while her eyes filled with tears. Then she got up and made for the outer door which led into the back-kitchen. Before she reached it, however, she heard a low voice,

whose music made her thrill, say —

"Susan, Susan!"

Her heart melted within her, but it seemed like treachery to her poor boy, like faithlessness to her dead mother to turn to her lover while the tears which he had caused to flow were yet unwiped on Will's cheeks. So she seemed to take no heed but passed into the darkness, and, guided by the sobs, she found her way to where Willie sat crouched among disused tubs and churns.

"Come out wi' me, lad;" and they went into the orchard, where the fruit-trees were bare of leaves, but ghastly in their tattered covering of grey moss: and the soughing November wind came with long sweeps over the fells till it rattled among the crackling boughs, underneath which the brother and sister sate in the dark; he in her lap, and she hushing his head against her shoulder.

"Thou shouldst na' play wi' fire. It's a naughty trick. Thou'lt suffer for it in worse ways nor this before thou'st done, I'm afeared. I should ha' hit thee twice as lungeous kicks as Mike, if I'd been in his place. He did na' hurt thee, I am sure," she assumed, half as a question.

"Yes! but he did. He turned me quite sick." And he let his head fall languidly down on his sister's breast.

"Come lad! come lad!" said she anxiously "Be a man. It was not much that I saw. Why, when first the red cow came she kicked me far harder for offering to milk her before her legs were tied. See thee! here's a peppermint drop, and I'll make thee a pasty to-night; only don't give way so, for it hurts me sore to think that Michael has done thee any harm, my pretty."

Willie roused himself up, and put back the wet and ruffled hair from his heated face; and he and Susan rose up and hand-in-hand went towards the house, walking slowly and quietly except for a kind of sob which Willie could not repress. Susan took him to the pump and washed his tear-stained face, till she thought she had obliterated all traces of the recent disturbance, arranging his curls for him, and then she kissed him tenderly, and led him in, hoping to find Michael in the kitchen, and make all straight between them. But the blaze had dropped down into darkness; the wood was a heap of grey ashes in which the sparks ran hither and thither; but even in the groping darkness Susan knew by the sinking at her heart that Michael was not there. She threw another brand on the hearth and lighted the candle, and sate down to her work in silence. Willie cowered on his stool by the side of the fire, eyeing his sister from time to time, and sorry and oppressed, he knew not why, by the sight of her grave, almost stern face. No one came. They two were in the house alone. The

old woman who helped Susan with the household work had gone out for the night to some friend's dwelling. William Dixon, the father, was up on the fells seeing after his sheep. Susan had no heart to prepare the evening meal.

"Susy, darling, are you angry with me?" said Willie, in his little piping gentle voice. He had stolen up to his sister's side. "I won't never play with fire again; and I 'll not cry if Michael does kick me. Only don't look so like dead mother — don't — don't — please don't!" he exclaimed, hiding his face on her shoulder.

"I 'm not angry, Willie," said she. "Don't be feared on me. You want your supper, and you shall have it; and don't you be feared on Michael. He shall give reason for every hair of your head that he touches — he shall."

When William Dixon came home, he found Susan and Willie sitting together, hand in hand, and apparently pretty cheerful. He bade them go to bed, for that he would sit up for Michael; and the next morning, when Susan came down, she found that Michael had started an hour before with the cart for lime. It was a long day's work; Susan knew it would be late, perhaps later than on the preceding night, before he returned — at any rate, past her usual bed-time; and on no account would she stop up a minute beyond that hour in the kitchen, whatever she might do in her bedroom. Here she sate and watched till past midnight; and when she saw him coming up the brow with the carts, she knew full well, even in that faint moonlight, that his gait was the gait of a man in liquor. But though she was annoyed and mortified to find in what way he had chosen to forget her, the fact did not disgust or shock her as it would have done many a girl, even at that day, who had not been brought up as Susan had, among a class who considered it as no crime, but rather a mark of spirit in a man to get drunk occasionally. Nevertheless, she chose to hold herself very high all the next day when Michael was, perforce, obliged to give up any attempt to do heavy work, and hung about the outbuildings and farm in a very disconsolate and sickly state. Willie had far more pity on him than Susan. Before evening Willie and he were fast, and on his side, ostentatious friends. Willie rode the horses down to water; Willie helped him to chop wood. Susan sate gloomily at her work, hearing an indistinct, but cheerful conversation going on in the shippon, while the cows were being milked. She almost felt irritated with her little brother, as if he were a traitor, and had gone over to the enemy in the very battle that she was fighting in his cause. She was alone with no one to speak to,

while they prattled on, regardless if she were glad or sorry.

Soon Willie burst in. "Susan! Susan! come with me; I've something so pretty to show you. Round the corner of the barn — run! run!" (He was dragging her along, half reluctant, half desirous of some change in that weary day.) Round the corner of the barn; and caught hold of by Michael, who stood there awaiting her.

"O Willie!" cried she, "you naughty boy. There is nothing pretty — what have you brought me here for? Let me go; I won't be held."

"Only one word. Nay, if you wish it so much, you may go," said Michael, suddenly loosing his hold as she struggled. But now she was free, she only drew off a step or two, murmuring something about Willie.

"You are going, then?" said Michael, with seeming sadness. "You won't hear me say a word of what is in my heart."

"How can I tell whether it is what I should like to hear?" replied she, still drawing back.

"That is just what I want you to tell me; I want you to hear it, and then to tell me if you like it or not."

"Well, you may speak," replied she, turning her back, and beginning to plait the hem of her apron

He came close to her ear.

"I am sorry I hurt Willie the other night. He has forgiven me. Can you?"

"You hurt him very badly," she replied. "But you are right to be sorry. I forgive you."

"Stop, stop!" said he, laying his hand upon her arm. "There is something more I've got to say. I want you to be my — what is it they call it, Susan?"

"I don't know," said she, half-laughing, but trying to get away with all her might now; and she was a strong girl, but she could not manage it.

"You do. My — what is it I want you to be?"

"I tell you I don't know, and you had best be quiet, and just let me go in, or I shall think you're as bad now as you were last night."

"And how did you know what I was last night? It was past twelve when I came home. Were you watching? Ah, Susan! be my wife, and you shall never have to watch for a drunken husband. If I were your husband, I would come straight home, and count every minute an hour till I saw your bonny face. Now you know what I want you to be. I ask you to be my wife. Will you, my own dear Susan?"

She did not speak for some time. Then she only said, "Ask Father." And now she was really off like a lapwing round the corner of the barn, and up in her own little room, crying with all her might, before the triumphant smile had left Michael's face where he stood.

The "Ask Father" was a mere form to be gone through. Old

Daniel Hurst and William Dixon had talked over what they could respectively give their children long before this; and that was the parental way of arranging such matters. When the probable amount of worldly gear that he could give his child had been named by each father, the young folk, as they said, might take their own time in coming to the point which the old men, with the prescience of experience, saw that they were drifting to; no need to hurry them, for they were both young, and Michael, though active enough, was too thoughtless, old Daniel said, to be trusted with the entire management of a farm. Meanwhile, his father would look about him, and see after all the farms that were to be let.

Michael had a shrewd notion of this preliminary understanding between the fathers, and so felt less daunted than he might otherwise have done at making the application for Susan's hand. It was all right, there was not an obstacle; only a deal of good advice, which the lover thought might have as well been spared, and which it must be confessed he did not much attend to, although he assented to every proposition. Then Susan was called down-stairs, and slowly came dropping into view down the steps which led from the two family apartments into the house-place. She tried to look composed and quiet, but it could not be done. She stood side by side with her lover, with her head drooping, her cheeks burning, not daring to look up or move, while her father made the newly-betrothed a somewhat formal address in which he gave his consent, and many a piece of worldly wisdom beside. Susan listened as well as she could for the beating of her heart; but when her father solemnly and sadly referred to his own lost wife, she could keep from sobbing no longer; but throwing her apron over her face, she sate down on the bench by the dresser, and fairly gave way to pent-up tears. Oh, how strangely sweet to be comforted as she was comforted, by tender caress, and many a low whispered promise of love. Her father sate by the fire, thinking of the days that were gone; Willie was still out of doors; but Susan and Michael felt no one's presence or absence — they only knew they were together as betrothed husband and wife.

In a week, or two, they were formally told of the arrangements to be made in their favour. A small farm in the neighbourhood happened to fall vacant; and Michael's father offered to take it for him, and be responsible for the rent for the first year, while William Dixon was to contribute a certain amount of stock, and both fathers were to help towards the furnishing of the house. Susan received all this information in a quiet indifferent way; she did not care

much for any of these preparations, which were to hurry her through the happy hours; she cared least of all for the money amount of dowry and of substance. It jarred on her to be made the confidant of occasional slight repinings of Michael's as one by one his future father-in-law set aside a beast or a pig for Susan's portion, which were not always the best animals of their kind upon the farm. But he also complained of his own father's stinginess, which somewhat, though not much, alleviated Susan's dislike to being awakened out of her pure dream of love to the consideration of worldly wealth.

But in the midst of all this bustle, Willie moped and pined. He had the same chord of delicacy running through his mind that made his body feeble and weak He kept out of the way, and was apparently occupied in whittling and carving uncouth heads on hazel sticks in an outhouse. But he positively avoided Michael, and shrunk away even from Susan. She was too much occupied to notice this at first. Michael pointed it out to her, saying, with a laugh, —

"Look at Willie! he might be a cast-off lover and jealous of me, he looks so dark and downcast at me." Michael spoke this jest out loud, and Willie burst into tears, and ran out of the house.

"Let me go. Let me go!" said Susan (for her lover's arm was round her waist). "I must go to him if he's fretting. I promised mother I would!" She pulled herself away, and went in search of the boy. She sought in byre and barn, through the orchard, where indeed in this leafless winter-time there was no great concealment, up into the room where the wool was usually stored in the later summer, and, at last she found him, sitting at bay, like some hunted creature, up behind the wood-stack.

"What are ye gone for, lad, and me seeking you everywhere," asked she, breathless.

"I did not know you would seek me. I've been away many a time, and no one has cared to seek me," said he, crying afresh.

"Nonsense," replied Susan, "don't be so foolish, ye little good-for-nought." But she crept up to him in the hole he had made underneath the great brown sheafs of wood, and squeezed herself down by him. "What for should folk seek after you, when you get away from them whenever you can?" asked she.

"They don't want me to stay. Nobody wants me. If I go with father, he says I hinder more than I help. You used to like to have me with you. But now, you've taken up with Michael, and you'd rather I was away; and I can just bide away; but I cannot stand Michael jeering at me. He's got you to love him and that might serve him."

"But I love you, too, dearly, lad!" said she, putting her arm round his neck.

"Which on us do you like best?" said he, wistfully, after a little pause, putting her arm away, so that he might look in her face, and see if she spoke truth.

She went very red.

"You should not ask such questions. They are not fit for you to ask. Nor for me to answer."

"But mother bade you love me," said he, plaintively.

"And so I do. And so I ever will do. Lover nor husband shall come betwixt thee and me, lad, ne'er a one of them. That I promise thee, as I promised mother before, in the sight of God and with her hearkening now, if ever she can hearken to earthly word again. Only I cannot abide to have thee fretting, just because my heart is large enough for two."

"And thou'lt love me always."

"Always, and ever. And the more — the more thou'lt love Michael," said she, dropping her voice.

"I'll try," said the boy, sighing, for he remembered many a harsh word and blow of which his sister knew nothing. She would have risen up to go away, but he held her tight, for here and now she was all his own, and he did not know when such a time might come again. So the two sate crouched up and silent, till they heard the horn blowing at the field-gate, which was the summons home to any wanderers belonging to the farm, and at this hour of the evening, signified that supper was ready. Then, the two went in.

CHAPTER II.

Susan and Michael were to be married in April. He had already gone to take possession of his new farm, three or four miles away from Yew Nook; but that is neighbouring, according to the acceptation of the word, in that thinly-populated district, — when William Dixon fell ill. He came home one evening, complaining of head-ache and pains in his limbs, but seemed to loathe the posset which Susan prepared for him; the treacle-posset which was the homely country remedy against an incipient cold. He took it to his bed, with a sensation of exceeding weariness, and an odd, unusual-looking back to the days of his youth, when he was a lad living with his parents, in this very house.

The next morning, he had forgotten all his life since then, and did not know his own children, crying, like a newly-weaned baby, for his mother to come and soothe away his terrible pain. The doctor from Coniston, said it was the typhus fever, and warned Susan of its infectious character, and shook his head over his patient. There were no friends near to come and share her anxiety; only good, kind old Peggy, who was faithfulness itself, and one or two labourers' wives, who would fain have

helped her, had not their hands been tied by their responsibility to their own families. But, somehow, Susan neither feared nor flagged. As for fear, indeed, she had no time to give way to it, for every energy of both body and mind was required. Besides, the young have had too little experience of the danger of infection to dread it much. She did, indeed, wish, from time to time, that Michael had been at home to have taken Willie over to his father's at High Beck; but then, again, the lad was docile and useful to her, and his fecklessness in many things might make him be harshly treated by strangers, so perhaps it was as well that Michael was away at Appleby fair, or even beyond that; gone into Yorkshire after horses.

Her father grew worse; and the doctor insisted on sending over a nurse from Coniston. Not a professed nurse, Coniston could not have supported such a one; but a widow who was ready to go where the doctor sent her for the sake of the payment. When she came, Susan suddenly gave way; she was felled by the fever herself, and lay unconscious for long weeks. Her consciousness returned to her one spring afternoon; early spring; April, — her wedding-month. There was a little fire burning in the small corner-grate, and the flickering of the blaze was enough for her to notice in her weak state. She felt that there was some one sitting on the window side of her bed, behind the curtain, but she did not care to know who it was; it was even too great a trouble to her languid mind to consider who it was likely to be. She would rather shut her eyes, and melt off again into the gentle luxury of sleep. The next time she wakened, the Coniston nurse perceived her movement, and made her a cup of tea, which she drank with eager relish, but still they did not speak, and once more Susan lay motionless — not asleep, but strangely, pleasantly conscious of all the small chamber and household sounds; the fall of a cinder on the hearth, the fitful singing of the half-empty kettle, the cattle tramping out to field again after they had been milked, the aged step on the creaking stair — old Peggy's as she knew. It came to her door, it stopped; the person outside listened for a moment, and then lifted the wooden latch, and looked in. The watcher by the bedside arose, and went to her. Susan would have been glad to see Peggy's face once more, but was far too weak to turn, so she lay and listened.

"How is she?" whispered one trembling, aged voice.

"Better," replied the other. "She's been awake, and had a cup of tea. She'll do now."

"Has she asked after him?"

"Hush! No; she has not spoken a word."

"Poor lass! poor lass!"

The door was shut. A weak feeling of sorrow and self-pity

came over Susan. What was wrong? Whom had she loved? And dawning, dawning slowly rose the sun of her former life, and all particulars were made distinct to her. She felt that some sorrow was coming to her, and cried over it before she knew what it was, or had strength enough to ask. In the dead of night, — and she had never slept again, — she softly called to the watcher, and asked,

"Who?"

"Who what?" replied the woman, with a conscious affright, ill-veiled by a poor assumption of ease. "Lie still, there's a darling, and go to sleep. Sleep's better for you than all the doctor's stuff."

"Who?" repeated Susan. "Something is wrong. Who?"

"Oh, dear!" said the woman. "There's nothing wrong. Willie has taken the turn, and is doing nicely."

"Father?"

"Well! he's all right now," she answered, looking another way, as if seeking for something.

"Then it's Michael! Oh, me! oh, me!" She set up a succession of weak, plaintive, hysterical cries before the nurse could pacify her by declaring that Michael had been at the house not three hours before to ask after her, and looked as well and as hearty as ever man did.

"And you heard of no harm to him since?" inquired Susan.

"Bless the lass, no, for sure! I've ne'er heard his name named since I saw him go out of the yard as stout a man as ever trod shoe-leather."

It was well, as the nurse said afterwards to Peggy, that Susan had been so easily pacified by the equivocating answer in respect to her father. If she had pressed the questions home in his case as she did in Michael's, she would have learnt that he was dead and buried more than a month before. It was well, too, that in her weak state of convalescence (which lasted long after this first day of consciousness) her perceptions were not sharp enough to observe the sad change that had taken place in Willie. His bodily strength returned, his appetite was something enormous, but his eyes wandered continually, his regard could not be arrested, his speech became slow, impeded, and incoherent. People began to say, that the fever had taken away the little wit Willie Dixon had ever possessed, and that they feared that he would end in being a natural, as they call an idiot in the Dales.

The habitual affection and obedience to Susan lasted longer than any other feeling that the boy had had previous to his illness; and perhaps, this made her be the last to perceive what every one else had long anticipated. She felt the awakening rude when it did come. It was in this wise.

One June evening she sat out of doors under the yew-tree,

knitting. She was pale still from her recent illness; and her languor joined to the fact of her black dress made her look more than usually interesting. She was no longer the buoyant, self-sufficient Susan, equal to every occasion. The men were bringing in the cows to be milked, and Michael was about in the yard, giving orders and directions with somewhat the air of a master; for the farm belonged of right to Willie, and Susan had succeeded to the guardianship of her brother. Michael and she were to be married as soon as she was strong enough — so, perhaps, his authoritative manner was justified; but the labourers did not like it, although they said little. They remembered him a stripling on the farm, knowing far less than they did, and often glad to shelter his ignorance of all agricultural matters behind their superior knowledge. They would have taken orders from Susan with far more willingness; nay! Willie himself might have commanded them, and for the old hereditary feeling towards the owners of land they would have obeyed him with far greater cordiality than they now showed to Michael. But Susan was tired with even three rounds of knitting, and seemed not to notice, or to care, how things went on around her; and Willie — poor Willie! — there he stood lounging against the door-sill, enormously grown and developed to be sure, but with restless eyes and ever-open mouth, and every now and then setting up a strange kind of howling cry, and then smiling vacantly to himself at the sound he had made. As the two old labourers passed him, they looked at each other ominously, and shook their heads.

"Willie, darling," said Susan, "dont make that noise — it makes my head ache."

She spoke feebly, and Willie did not seem to hear; at any rate, he continued his howl from time to time.

"Hold thy noise, wilt 'a?" said Michael roughly, as he passed near him, and threatening him with his fist. Susan's back was turned to the pair. The expression of Willie's face changed from vacancy to fear, and he came shambling up to Susan, and put her arm round him, and, as if protected by that shelter, he began pulling faces at Michael. Susan saw what was going on, and, as if now first struck by the strangeness of her brother's manner, she looked anxiously at Michael for an explanation. Michael was irritated at Willie's defiance of him, and did not mince the matter.

"It 's just that the fever has left him silly — he never was as wise as other folk, and now I doubt if he will ever get right."

Susan did not speak, but she went very pale, and her lip quivered. She looked long and wistfully at Willie's face, as he watched the motion of the ducks in the great stablepool. He

laughed softly to himself from time to time.

"Willie likes to see the ducks go overhead," said Susan, instinctively adopting the form of speech she would have used to a young child.

"Willie, boo! Willie, boo!" he replied, clapping his hands, and avoiding her eye.

"Speak properly, Willie," said Susan, making a strong effort at self-control, and trying to arrest his attention.

"You know who I am—tell me my name!" She grasped his arm almost painfully tight to make him attend. Now he looked at her, and, for an instant, a gleam of recognition quivered over his face; but the exertion was evidently painful, and he began to cry at the vainness of the effort to recall her name. He hid his face upon her shoulder with the old affectionate trick of manner. She put him gently away, and went into the house into her own little bedroom. She locked the door, and did not reply at all to Michael's calls for her, hardly spoke to old Peggy, who tried to tempt her out to receive some homely sympathy, and through the open casement there still came the idiotic sound of "Willie, boo! Willie, boo!"

THE CAITIFF POSTMAN.

Once upon a time, and not by any means a thousand years ago, there was a great and noble baronet, who lived upon a very fine estate, famously stocked with game. And in the midst of this very fine estate, there lived a mean little country postman. In the midst of the estate, and hotly besieged and invested by the game of plump Sir Pitiless Stone, Bart, Mantrap Court, the little farm-house stood, at the end of the small village of Hareskin, tenanted of another landlord by the gaunt, weary-faced Matthew, of her Majesty's Post Office Department. Now, Matthew was an indefatigable and by no means too profusely salaried servant of the queen, who, like many a postman in a rural district, travelled forty miles a-day, through winter and summer, fair weather and foul — twenty miles on foot and twenty on a pony.

The few acres of ground which this mean little fellow of a postman has about his house wherewith to eke out a subsistence, are for the most part, orchard-land; and when Matthew's apples had been gathered, they used to be left exposed upon the grass for a month or two, according to the custom of the county, before being converted into cider. The rabbits of Sir Pitiless Stone love the little postman's apples; and accordingly they organise excursion parties every night during the season to eat apples and enjoy themselves at the expense of Matthew upon Matthew's orchard-ground. From all parts of the estate, trains of rabbits come into the bit of ground, forming, as they think,

parties of pleasure; though it is a sign of the great obduracy and hardness of that rascally Matthew's heart that he can find no pleasure in them. He did once, even, conceive the diabolical design of upsetting one of these excursion trains, and the story of that outrage is the subject of the present notice.

Perhaps it is too dreadful a story for the pages of this journal — not, indeed, on account of the strength of incident, but of the deep awe with which everything that concerns beings so high in the scale of law or nature as pheasants or rabbits have to be thought about, and of the irreverence of naming them together with such vermin as postmen. We will tell our tale as best we may, however: —

It pleased the sacred rabbits so to honour the poor postman as to eat his apples; and the postman's wife, out of her unsoftened and unsanctified heart, was bold enough to denounce these superior creatures, as if they had been her equals, by the name of vermin, and to order her son Tom — a private in Sir Pitiless's own militia regiment — to lay a snare for them. In this way she proposed to check those visits which were certainly an honour, and (though it might not seem so to her limited view) could only have been a blessing to her household. The bad woman and her son Tom — partly misled by a wicked law which authorises farmers and other creatures to kill hares and rabbits when they come upon their premises — supposed that a snare in their fence on the track of the blessed visitants would best answer their wicked purpose, and be also in accordanc with the corrupt spirit of the law just mentioned.

We almost shrink from saying that the atrocious boy Tom did accordingly, for the mean selfish object of protection to his paltry mother's paltry apples, lay a snare in the principal run of the rabbits, as the path of those bright ornaments of earth is called. If anything is required to assure you of the fact that he was utterly lost in the confined blackness and obstinacy of sin against all that is most sacred in the rural districts of England, we have only to add, that he did this audaciously, publicly, in the face of his neighbours; that there was even no concealment of it from the nearest minister of game, who as a keeper of their holy temple — the preserves — came on the same night and sat, like a game bird himself, perched on a tree all the night long directly over the said snare. So, when the black-hearted wretch came to the spot at about six in the morning to find his snare empty, the reverend minister of game leaped down on him and collared him, and dragged him off as a prisoner to Mantrap Court.

As is the way with all great rogues, Tom invoked loudly the aid of the law; declared that his

arrest without a summons was illegal, and defied Sir Pitiless to punish him.

"I have a good mind to commit you," said Sir Pitiless, and let him go.

O, what a good man was Sir Pitiless to be merciful to a vile boy! He was so kind as to see that when he could not strike this wicked Tom in front without much noise and trouble, to put him out of his pain, or into that destruction which is the reward of boys like him, it was better to stab him in the back. Now, as it was the pride of Tom to prefer his father's substance to the well-being even of a rabbit, here, in this pride, was the very handle for the dagger. Thus wrote the right honourable gentleman to the postmaster-general:

> My Lord, — I beg to call your lordship's attention to the case of the postman between Dash and Asterisk. He occupies a house in the midst of my game preserves, on which his sons, who are desperate poachers, are continually making depredations. He, however, pays their fines when convicted, and encourages them in their unlawful proceedings. I, therefore, have to request that you will deprive this man of his office, and appoint a more respectable character in his place.
>
> I have, &c. &c.,
>
> Pitiless Stone, Bart., J.P.

Now, instead of taking the word of a baronet, and quietly depriving the gaunt postman of his office, his lordship the postmaster-general must needs violate the confidence and secrecy implied always by the mover in this sort of transaction; for what does he do? He transmits the letter of Sir Pitiless the baronet to Matthew the mere postman, and asks him — him! — for his answer to the charge contained in it. What is the destiny of a country when a member of its government is to be found asking a fellow like that — a member of the vulgar class — to reply to what a gentleman has said? Who is he that he should have an answer on his lips?

Matthew, impertinent, as all low people are, behaved as might have been expected. He took the letter, in a great fright, to the clergyman of the parish, who knew all about the matter, as seen from his own conventional and narrow point of view. Matthew had been a parishioner of his for twenty years, and for that reason he had the audacity to think himself called upon to certify to the postmaster-general that Matthew's sons had never once been fined, were by no means poachers, and had never been accused of poaching save in the one recent instance; finally, that he himself knew the respectability of Matthew's family to have been kept unspotted for twenty years. Desiring to support himself in this wrong cause of opposition to the wishes of a noble baronet, whose only design had been to make a rascal feel what it was to grumble at the condescension of his game, this clergyman, referred to other clergymen and gentlemen of the vicinity for a corroboration of

his testimony. It is hardly necessary to add that the profligate government official took advantage of this testimony as a ground of refusal to the application of Sir Pitiless. Of what use is it to have a stake or pheasant in the country, if this is the attention one gets upon application even for the smallest favour?

Surely, however, there are more ways than one of ruining a postman. Sir Pitiless applied to Matthew's landlord, and desired to buy the little farm the caitiff occupied. Once become Matthew's landlord, he could, not only turn him out, but keep him out. The landlord, of the same gang, it would seem, with the postmaster-general, summarily refused to sell.

Sir Pitiless Stone, Bart., could do nothing then but worry the boy Tom in his capacity of private under his command in the Asterisk Militia. Tom, who had not respected rabbits, was of course the boy to speak murderously of a Bart. and was heard to say in a desperate way, that Sir Pitiless tormented and worried till he was half ready to run his bayonet through him. He did a better thing, by withdrawing himself wholly from the sight of his offended master. He enlisted into the line, and is at present a private of the gallant three thousand nine hundred and twenty-seventh, now on its way to the Crimea.

PIERRE ERARD.

On Monday, the twentieth of August last, when all Paris, and all its vast crowds of visitors, were agog to see Queen Victoria in the Champs Elysées, a stately hearse, followed by mourning coaches and a large procession, crossed the avenue, and changed for a moment the thoughts of the sight-seers. The question, "Whose is it? — whose is it?" brought out the answer, "It is the funeral of Pierre Erard, the piano-forte maker" — the last of his name.

Without prejudging the questions of rivalry and merit between the French and English pianoforte-makers, and while stating with all possible reserve the claims put forth by the Erards, we think part of their tale worth telling to our readers, most of whom must have heard of Erard's pianos. The genealogy of these instruments is the psaltery or dulcimer, the clavichord (the tinkling grandfather of the pianoforte), the harpsichord, and then the pianoforte — the soft-loud.

Sébastien Erard was born at Strasbourg in seventeen hundred and fifty-two, and was the eldest of the four children of an upholsterer. His father sent him, when he was eight years old, to schools in which he was taught the elements of architecture, perspective drawing, and practical geometry. His father having married very late in life, was sur-

prised by death before his children reached an age at which they could be useful to their mother or support themselves. Sébastien Erard became the head of a family at the age of sixteen. As his native town did not afford him the scope of which he felt the need, he set off courageously for Paris. There he obtained employment in the shop of a maker of clavichords, who was a man mean enough to dismiss Sébastien because he wished to understand all that he saw. His second employer having received an order to make a clavichord of an extraordinary kind, found it required a number of mechanical contrivances of which he felt himself to be incapable. Thanks to Sébastien, however, the clavichord was finished and pronounced a masterpiece. When the nominal maker was questioned by competent persons, he could neither show nor explain the mechanism, and was forced to refer them to his assistant. Henceforth Sébastien Erard found himself connected with distinguished persons, who made a point of extolling him. Presented to the Duchesse de Villeroy, who occupied herself much with art and music, she offered him a lodging in her hotel, which he accepted. At this period pianos were little more than curiosities. A few amateurs only had obtained them from Germany and England. Sébastien constructed one for the Duchesse de Villeroy — the first he ever made. The numerous orders he received caused him to send for his brother, Jean Baptiste, to come and help him. Quitting the Hôtel de Villeroy, he founded his house in the Rue de Bourbon, in the Faubourg St. Germain. By this first step (says M. Adams, of the Institute, patriotically) he emancipated his country from tribute to foreigners; English and German pianos gave place everywhere to French pianos, and the instrument which had been only exceptionally used came into general request.

The luthiers, or makers of musical instruments, who bought and sold foreign pianos found the new factory injurious to their commerce. They made a seizure in it, under the pretext that the brothers Erard were not members of the Corporation of Fan-makers to which the luthiers belonged. Sébastien Erard had powerful friends, however, and he obtained a brevet from Louis the Sixteenth which delivered him completely from the persecuting corporation. This document has the rare merit of being a pleasant specimen of the paternal government of the Bourbons; we translate it entire:

> This day, the fifth of February, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, the king being at Versailles informed that Mr. Sébastien Erard has succeeded by a new method of his invention to improve the instrument called a forté-piano; that he has even obtained the preference over those made in England, of which he makes a commerce in the city of Paris, and his majesty wishing to fix the talents of Mr. Erard in the said city,

and to give him testimonies of the protection with which he honours those who, like him, have by assiduous labour contributed to the useful and agreeable arts, has permitted him to make, to cause to be made, and to sell in the city and faubourgs of Paris, and wherever it may seem to him good, forté-pianos; and to employ there, whether by himself or by his workmen, the wood, the iron, and all the other materials necessary to the perfection or the ornament of the said instrument without his being liable on this account to be troubled or disturbed by the guards, syndics, and adjutants of the corporations and committees of arts and trades for any cause or under any pretext whatever; under the conditions, nevertheless, by the said Mr. Erard of conforming himself to the regulations and ordinances concerning the discipline of journeymen and workmen, and of not admitting into his workshops any but those who shall have satisfied the aforesaid regulations. And for assurance of his will, his majesty has commanded me to expedite to the aforesaid Mr. Erard the present brevet, which he has chosen to sign with his own hand, and to be countersigned by me, Secretary of State, and of his commands and Finances.

(Signed) Louis.

Le Baron de Breteuil.

The chief improvements in musical instruments due to the Erards are, the double action of the harp and the double escapement of the piano. Sébastien Erard imagined the improvements, and his brother, Jean Baptiste, and his nephew, Pierre, brought them to practical perfection.

The double action made the harp a complete instrument, on which inharmonically modulated music could be played. Sébastien Erard had been induced to turn his attention to the improvement of the harp by Krumpholtz, a celebrated harpist of Paris. After he had been working for a year, Beaumarchais, author of the Barber of Seville, who was at once an author, a politician, a musician, and a mechanician, on examining his plans told him frankly that, as they were impracticable, he would do well to abandon them. Erard did not heed his advice, and was on the point of obtaining success when Krumpholtz connected his interests with a maker of harps upon the old models. Erard felt that success was impossible in Paris if he encountered the opposition of the harpists with Krumpholtz at their head, and left for London. There he continued his experiments, finished his improvements, and established a house. The double action cost him twelve years of anxious toil; and, although he took out his first patent in eighteen hundred and one, he did not complete his invention until eighteen hundred and eleven. His immediate pecuniary success was extraordinary. He sold twenty-five thousand pounds' worth of the new harps in London alone in the first year.

The double escapement of the piano was not made public until eighteen hundred and twenty-three. The wonders achieved on the piano by such performers as Liszt and Thalberg, are due to the scope given to their perseverance and genius by mechanism which makes the instrument capable of expressing the sweetest, the most powerful, and

the most varied sounds, and the most delicate repetitions.

Organs have occupied the talents of the Erards, as well as harps and pianos. Sébastien Erard applied to the organ his system of expression by the fingers. An organ which he had constructed in the chapel of the Tuileries, was destroyed by the insurgents of July, eighteen hundred and thirty. Luckily, the whole of the mechanism of the expression had been preserved in the factory. Pierre Erard was authorised by the present emperor to construct another organ in the Imperial chapel; an order which he promptly executed. The new instrument is admired as a chef-d'œuvre of mechanical art.

The financial career of the Erards was chequered. The political events in France towards the end of the first empire had an evil influence upon commerce, and the Paris branch of the house was forced to suspend payments in eighteen hundred and thirteen, overwhelmed by a debt of more than one million three hundred thousand francs, or fifty-two thousand pounds. The establishment was not, however, totally crippled; for, aided by the prosperity of the London house, the firm paid off this debt in ten years.

The history of the fortunes of the Erards is picturesquely connected with the beautiful Château de la Muette, at Passy, near Paris, a château which may be seen from the end of the lake recently made in the Bois de Boulogne. When Sébastien Erard was a young man, newly arrived in Paris, he waited one Sunday at the gate of the château to see the Queen Marie Antoinette, who resided in it, come out in her carriage. Sébastien, who was in the midst of the crowd when she passed, cried, "Vive la Reine!" with a powerful voice and an Alsacian accent. The queen remarked the fine young man, whom she mistook for one of her own countrymen. She spoke to him, and asked him of what country he was? He replied, "I am French at heart by my birth, as your majesty is by your marriage."

The queen ordered the Swiss guards at the gate to allow him to walk over the garden and see the grounds. Sébastien went in, and spent the day in admiring the magnificent alleys and fairy-like walks of the park. A few years later Sébastien Erard constructed a piano for Marie Antoinette, which combined several remarkable inventions to adapt the instrument to the limited resources of her voice. About half a century after the Sunday on which the Queen of France permitted the young clavichord-maker to walk over the gardens, the Château de la Muette was for sale, and in eighteen hundred and twenty-three Sébastien Erard was the purchaser, and installed himself in it with his family. He took a great pleasure in repeating the

ment is made of keeping the scenery and properties in a separate building, to diminish the risk of fire; on which topic, see a future paragraph. In that magnificent opera-house, you may sit in the pit in a well-stuffed, plush-lined arm-chair; you may admire the ladies in the chorus with yellow bodices and black and purple petticoats; you may hear an opera, perhaps Verdi's Jerusalem, and remark that the army of female pilgrims must have had an excellent commissariat with them, to keep them in such tidy order and excellent plight; you may see a ballet marvellously danced and dressed, all for the sum of one and eight-pence English. This proud, luxurious city has a noble, horse-shoe-shaped, but ill-paved quay, on which hogsheads of wine are lying about, like so much worthless goods. It looks as if all the tubs in the world had convened a meeting there, to agitate a reform of their grievances. There are tubs new, tubs old, tubs yellow, tubs purple, tubs black, tubs on end, tubs reclining, tubs on shore, tubs on board ship, tubs sound in wind and limb, other tubs with their ribs staved in, everywhere tubs, tubs, tubs! And the sleek, soft-eyed, fawn-coloured bullocks, who drag, in pairs, those tubs about, or loads of wood, or do other leisurely work, — I wonder if Rosa Bonheur has painted them yet! If she hasn't, she ought to run down to the South purposely. Each of those oxen is allowed, I should think, a bottle of wine and bread-and-butter at discretion, at their déjeûner and dinner: how else should they be so fat and well-liking? I also entertain considerable doubts whether those aldermanic bullocks are ever transmuted into beef; it would be too near an approach to cannibalism to eat them. On the portion of the quay named Des Chartrons, there are elm-trees pruned to represent chandeliers (which causes them to grow short and stubby, and in many instances to be covered with gouty nodosities), and surrounded at their base with earth and tub-staves, so that their living trunks serve as mooring-posts for the goodly show of vessels in the crescent reach of the noble river. The show of shipping is goodly certainly; but with pride let me waive all comparisons, by informing you (even while strolling through the capital of clarets, Bordeaux the Stately), that there is only one London and one Thames in the world.

The ground-plan of wealthy, luxurious Bordeaux is a slight modification of the diagram of the Asses' Bridge, which has proved impassable to so many students of Euclid. The two sides of the triangle to be produced, AB, AC, are two long, long streets named — Cours, that start from a common apex, a tobacco-factory. But, instead of the cob-web network, or cat's-cradle, below the base CB of the

too often impregnable, un-Sebastopolitan triangle, the river Garonne forms a sweeping horse-shoe, and serves as a highway for migratory salmon, who afterwards migrate by land, over the Pyrenees, as far as Madrid. Were this crescent backed by a range of hills, up which the town might mount in a continued slope, the effect would be magnificent. The townsfolk, however, are equally content to flit to and fro on level ground through the handsome streets, many of which are called fossés, or ditches, from their occupying the site of former fortification. The river's bank, on the side which skirts the town, is lined with a vast arc-of-a-circle of quays. The general front of the quay slopes down to the water's edge at a gentle inclination, on the face of which the ebbing tides deposit abundance of drift-straw and cast-out rubbish, whose investigation would afford a clue to the nature of the cargo, destination, and habits of the vessels in the port at the time. From the quays, straight narrow streets dart away. Many of the houses composing them have almost flat roofs, covered with convex tiles, after the Italian, or rather the southern, style. There is something in the look of the place, something in the air, which makes you feel instinctively conscious of your neighbourhood to the Peninsula. Though the side streets start off so suddenly, they do not succeed in making their final escape, but are caught by the Cours (whatever title it may bear, whether St. Jean, De Tournay, or Du Jardin Public), which forms one of the stiltified legs of the aforesaid Asses' Bridge. Bordeaux is the torment of corny toes. Both the narrow streets, the airy quays, and the aristocratic courses are so roughly paved, that far better mosaic work is to be found in the Camp of Honvault, where soldiers amuse themselves by fetching pebbles from the beach in the short intervals of drill and drum practice. If you want to see vast bath establishments for men and women, — twin and similar, but separate temples raised to the Genius of Hygienic personal purity, — go to Bordeaux, and cleanse the outside of your platter; also, if it be your pleasure to behold gipsy-like women wearing extraordinary head-dresses, composed of a sort of shawl-handkerchief, folded in a way to defy all fraud, forgery, or imitation whatever. No need to ticket them with "Beware of counterfeits." No need to apply to the vice-chancellor for an injunction to prevent plagiarism in the present case. The head-gear is as perfect a puzzle as the napkin-folding mysteries of certain steamboat-stewards and restaurants, or the paper-folding feats of ambulant street conjurors. Other features of the town which strike you, are the numerous glazed galleries, or passages, like those of Paris. For fear the shops on your right

or your left should not attract your notice sufficiently, as you go past them, they contrive to meet you, by proxy, face to face. The names, wares, numbers, and merits of countless tradesmen are painted on canvas in large letters, and stretched across the streets from house to house. If Pegasus were trained to perform at Astley's (some say he has been reduced to worse shifts than that) these aërial advertisements would exactly serve him as garters and balloons, to jump over and through. As it is, prosaic pedestrians and carriage-people walk or drive under a series of sail-cloth triumphal arches, raised in honour of the goddess of shopkeeping commerce. Finally, Bordeaux will make you open your eyes at the splendour of the ladies' out-door dresses. You pursue in your mind the following train of logic; if the open-air toilettes are so gorgeous and rich, what must be the dazzling brilliancy of the dinner-party and ball-room costumes.

The word finally was used unadvisedly, because no allusion has yet been made to the effect produced on you by the wines of Bordeaux. Burgundy, Champagne, and Guienne (where we now are) are the three provinces of France which produce wines of cosmopolitan celebrity. Good Burgundy needs no bush, here. I cannot forget the touching couplet,

> Pomard, et Meulceaux;
> Et Volnay, qui est plus haut;

implying that while Pomard and Meulceaux are excellent, Volnay, higher up the hill, is also better, in short, at the top of the tree. I would even be content with a bottle of Moulin-à-vent, or Windmill Burgundy, for next Sunday's dessert. But let me not wantonly set your mouths a-watering. While the gods grant us a wholesome sufficiency, it is a sin to be hankering after dainty drinks; and the Bordeaux wines are a boon to mankind.

The claret climate, that is to say the climate of the Department of the Gironde, is moister, evidently, than that of the Côte-d'Or, where the best Burgundy wines are produced, to a considerable hygrometric degree. Unmistakeable signs are, moss, lichens, and ferns, on the stems and branches of trees, grasses growing on roofs and walls, and other slight but sure symptoms. The causes are manifest in its westerly position, skirting the vast Bay of Biscay, and in the influx and the confluence of two such rivers as the Dordogne and the Garonne, which not only supply an incalculable quantity of aqueous vapours, both visible and invisible, from their heaving bosoms, but also, by wide-spread inundations, fill the atmosphere with moisture at periods of no great interval.

If the Burgundian climate could be suspended over the face of the Bourdelais by confining it in some solid translucent celestial vault, like a vast bell-glass, claret wines

might perhaps become the best in the world; but they could not be poured out in that mighty flood-tide with which they now irrigate, like their own full-flowing streams, the thirsty throats of the wine-drinking world. On the other hand, if the humid mists of the Gironde were constantly to bathe the slopes of the Côte-d'Or, the quantity of its golden nectar might be enormously increased, the precarious fickleness of the supply might be greatly diminished by the moderating influence of the tempering vapour during sudden and sharp spring-frosts; but the colour might fade to a fainter ruby, the perfume might lose something of its exquisite delicacy, and the beverage be robbed of part of its latent fire. As it is, all seems to be for the best; of course I mean when all goes right with each respective vintage. Generous burgundy still remains to impart strength, taste, and spirit to the infirm and old; while noble-hearted, open-handed claret supplies the drink of nations, supporting the energies of laborious manhood, and sustaining without over-stimulating his active powers.

Were some cunning workman to carve for me two statues emblematic of burgundy and claret, neither of them should appear in female guise. Feminine forms would be more appropriately adapted to coquettish champagne (using the epithet coquette in its good sense, as the French often do); to dulcet, voluptuous, syren-like drinks, such as Malmsey-Madeira and Muscat-Frontignac. But burgundy should be an energetic young vintager of five-and-twenty, in the act of hiding tongues of flame in his golden vase, at the moment that he steps forward to pour out the wine. Claret should be a herculean man of five-and-thirty, such as Michael Angelo loved to pourtray, reposing after an interval of vine-dressing, like a river-god, with his arm leaning on a half-recumbent overflowing amphora, from which streams a purple, violet-scented brooklet that all who will can come and partake of.

Even from Paris only to Bordeaux is more than a mere step; it is a tolerably long hop, skip, and jump — though a pleasant one; no less, by railway, than five hundred and eighty-three kilometres, or one hundred and forty-five French leagues and three quarters, or three hundred and sixty-seven English miles, within a fraction. During the epoch of diligences, it took three days and two nights of continuous travelling to accomplish the journey, at a high fare, and at considerable cost for refreshment on the road. Now, you may start by an omnibus train at five minutes before eleven at night, and reach your journey's end at half-past seven next evening, for the respective charges of sixty francs twenty centimes, or fifty shillings and twopence, first-class; forty-five francs and

thirty centimes, or thirty-seven shillings and ninepence, second-class; and thirty-three francs sixty-five centimes, or twenty-eight shillings and a halfpenny, third class. An additional tax has lately been imposed, to pay for the expenses of the war. Before the invention of the rail, Bordeaux was isolated from the metropolis and other great cities of France. The long, tedious land journey deterred almost all but visits of necessity. But it was not a barbarous, ignorant, or poverty-stricken isolation; on the contrary, it was a wealthy, self-complacent, highly civilised and sensual independence. Bordeaux wanted for nothing that the capitals of kingdoms usually possess. Arthur Young, who travelled in seventeen hundred and eighty-seven, writes: "Much as I had heard and read of the commerce, wealth, and magnificence of this city, they greatly surpassed my expectations. The Place Royale, with the statue of Louis the Fifteenth in the middle, is a fine opening, and the buildings which form it regular and handsome. But the quarter of the Chapeau Rouge is truly magnificent, consisting of noble houses, built, like the rest of the city, of white hewn stone. I have seen nothing that approaches the theatre, built about ten or twelve years ago. The establishment of actors, actresses, singers, dancers, &c., speak the wealth and luxury of the place. Dauberval, the dancer, and his wife, the Mademoiselle Theodore of London (who remembers Mademoiselle Theodore? In what other book than Young's are her pirouettes and entrechats recorded?) are retained as principal ballet-master and first female dancer, at a salary of twelve hundred and twenty-five pounds, sterling. The mode of living that takes place here among merchants is highly luxurious. Their houses and establishments are on expensive scales. Great entertainments, and many served on plate: high play is a much worse thing; — and the scandalous chronicle speaks of merchants keeping the dancing and singing girls of the theatre, at salaries which ought to import no good to their credit. Journeyed to Barbesieux, situated in a beautiful country. [Now for a warning touch of ante- (not anti-) revolutionary aristocracy.] In this thirty-seven miles of country, lying between the great rivers Garonne, Dordogne, and Charente, and consequently in one of the best parts of France for markets, the quantity of waste land is surprising. Much of these wastes belonged to the Prince de Soubise, who would not sell any part of them. Thus it is whenever you stumble on a Grand Seigneur, even one that was worth millions, you are sure to find his property desert. Go to their residence, wherever it may be, and you would probably find them in the midst of a forest, very well peopled with deer, wild

boars, and wolves. Oh! if I was the legislator of France for a day, I would make such great lords skip again!" They were made to skip, with a vengeance, sooner than even he anticipated.

Arthur Young's journey to Bordeaux was made on horse-back, or rather mare-back, on an animal of unrecorded colour, but unquestionably gray; for, after resting one day at Calais to recover from the fatigue of nine hours' rolling at anchor, not to mention the voyage in a sailing vessel, she was ready next morning to start with her master for any indefinite distance. Now-a-days, such travelling would be deemed too snail-like, though it is a capital mode of seeing a country thoroughly and forming your judgments deliberately. But now, arrived in a few hours at Paris, you toss your carpet-bag into a hack-fiacre, and for twenty-five sous the course, you drive to the Gare, or station of the Chemin de Fer d'Orleans. Blessings on the French railways for one thing; they relieve you of all care about your luggage. You have it weighed, entered, you pay your ten centimes or upwards, you take your ticket, and then you need trouble no more about your impedimenta, as the Romans called it, till you reach your journey's end. But with a tiny little hand-bag, like mine, which a carrier pigeon might fetch across the Channel, containing nothing more than a shirt, a pair of stockings, a comb, a tooth-brush, a night-cap, and a piece of soap, you simply slip it under your seat. You are off; the barriers are left behind. You can now eat meat and drink wine untaxed by octroi duties. You rush across meadows through which the Seine meanders, becoming, at every fresh glance you catch of it, fine by degrees and beautifully less. The principal figures that animate the landscape are horses and cows, besides women scattered over the fields for the purpose of grubbing up dandelion plants to gratify Parisian epicures. The quantity of raw dandelion eaten as spring salad in Paris must, to use a novel expression, be seen to be believed. On we go, leaving suburbs, market-gardens, suburban villages, and village châteaux behind us. Everywhere we are struck by the immense abundance of fruit-trees. The plum season hereabouts must be a trying time. Have they any infallible antidote to the I-dare-not-say-what ache, in time of need? Perhaps the numerous walled-in orchards of St. Michel are only meant to put a prudent restraint on a people too voracious of vegetables and fruit. Turpentine is said to be a specific against the internal parasites which tease the inward man, when the outward man's mouth is too greedy of unripe gooseberries and apples; perhaps that may be the reason why more fir-trees are planted here than are usually seen in other parts of

France. You dart along a cut in the chalk-hills of Estampes; you glide on to Angerville; and there you find yourself flat on your back, as far as the picturesque is concerned, on the wearisome, endless plain of La Beauce.

The plains of Champagne are bearable. They are undulating; and you may speak of them in the plural number. La Beauce is a plain — and unbearable to those whose senses require other stimulants than corn and cattle. In La Beauce, supposing you to be standing on any given spot, you say to yourself, "What is the use of stirring? If I go forward ever so far, the scene will be exactly the same as it is here, and if I go forward for ever so long, neither my own nor my horse's legs will ever be able to carry me out of it." Take the idea of arable land, as present in the mind of a scientific agriculturist, let it spread itself out to an indefinite extent in all and every possible direction, like a pint of oil poured on the surface of a lake, as if it meant to constitute itself into a diaphragm of the universe, separating utterly the upper from the lower half of things created, and you have a clear notion of La Beauce. Belsia (the Latin name of this cheering landscape) — Belsia, says a middle-age poet who had the happiness to be Bishop of Poictiers, is a triste country, for it is deficient in only twice three things — namely, springs, meadows, woods, stones, bushes, and grapes. All which is true to the present day. There is not a bush nor a bramble to be seen; not even a respectable tuft of nettles, or a good tall thistle, for a benighted linnet or goldfinch to hide itself in. The paved roads show the want of pebbles — macadamisation would be a piece of extravagance only to be effected by the importation of materials from such enormous distances as would render them very precious stones indeed. What is it to us, flying travellers, that this brown and hedgeless desert consists of fertile loamy soil, which lets for so many francs per hectare? The little, squat, grey, dumpy towns seem to crouch as close to the ground as they can, either because they are ashamed of themselves, or because they are afraid of being swept away by the first fresh gale that blows. The neat, plain, utilitarian farm buildings are scattered over the land with such regular irregularity, that you take them to have been driven into their present positions by some principle of mutual repulsion, or, perhaps, had been suddenly fixed to the spot in the midst of a grand game of chasse-chasse. Everything else is made to give way to the convenience and comfort of wheat and beans, of ploughs and harrows, and of the animals who drag and drive them. The Beauceron grudges a currant bush or a cherry tree the space of ground it takes to grow in, because it is so much land stolen from his

darling grain. The best thing I have heard in his favour is, that he is in the habit of paying ready money. You grow sick of the very sight of La Beauce before you have travelled half-way across it; but have patience — look out of the window now and then. At last you will see a couple of blunt sticks rising side by side at the edge of the horizon. They are the towers of Orleans Cathedral.

"The origin of Orleans is lost in the night of ages." Oh, dear me, what a pity it is that the history of so many European towns should invariably begin with the above set phrase! What a delicious variety it would give to our topographical works, if we could introduce a few flourishing young cities, blooming in their teens, like the promising juvenile municipalities of California, New Zealand, and Australia. Orleans is old, and looks old. I won't bore you about the Maid this time, further than to say that I hope her own merits were greater than those of her statue in the market-place. Orleans is one of the numerous French towns whose prevailing tint resembles that of the harmonious Friar of Orders Grey; while the handsome cathedral, the dulness, and the easy life led there, tempt many devotees to "walk forth to tell their beads." The Orleannais speak low — an excellent virtue in a woman, but somewhat lazy and unenergetic in men. Those who have seen Dijon can easily picture to their mind's eye Orleans, except that Dijon has no river Loire, no raving, ravaging Vistula of the south, whose unchecked current, far too rapid for ordinary swimmers, compels the adoption of floating inclosed bath-houses for the use of the natives of the dried-up interior, who are glad to come to an inland watering-place, where, instead of Gravesend shrimps and Broadstairs flounders, they may eat barbels from the Loiret and salmon from the Loire.

The great delight of arriving at Orleans (except, perhaps, the anticipation of eating genuine plums in a preserved — should the season forbid a recent — condition) is consciousness of having escaped from the half-dozen negatives of the Beauceron wilderness. At Orleans there are vines, and promising ones too; a single stem left to a single stool about the height of a raspberry-cane. These slight peculiarities of training are worthy of note. Remember, we are now entering a district almost unthought of in England, which sends forth, in tolerable seasons, incredible supplies of excellent wine. On descending, as they call it, at your inn at Orleans, only call for a bottle of *white* Beaugency, and and if your landlord treats you well, you will find it delicious. I put *white* Beaugency in italics, because there are white French wines and yellow wines. The distinction is striking to the eye,

and might be made to enter into common conversation, without exposing the innovator to a just charge of affectation. Some of the wines of the Orleannais and the Touraine have a peculiar Irish whiskeyfied taste (to my own palate), as if the bottles had had a whiff of smoke puffed into them; sometimes it varies to a kind of aromatic, cocoa-nutty flavour. But their great merit, in the merchant's eyes, is their versatility; the number of characters they are able to assume; the wide range of parts in their répertoire. Vouvray, near Tours, is quite celebrated for its champagne. You may drink madeira which has never crossed the sea, and sherry which knows nothing of the south side of the Pyrenees. All these are spoken of with as little reserve as a London pastry-cook would employ in mentioning mock turtle. It may be believed that when the wines of the Loire once reach Bercy and the Entrepót de Vins at Paris, they are made to represent by turns the growth of every known and unknown vineyard. Their fundamental excellence, which enables them to manifest such varied talent, arises from the same cause which gives the Rhine wines their strength and keeping qualities — namely, that where the best samples are produced, the river flows from east to west. The grand consequence is, that the northern bank of either stream lies fully exposed to the noontide sun.

The principal lions of Orleans are the cathedral and the Loire, with its one stone bridge over it. It would not be reasonable to ask for more than one to span such an inundative shingle-sweeping stream; the railway, however, has contrived for itself a second viaduct. The first conducts you to an ill-kept botanic garden (for which I should blush celestial rosy red, as Milton says, were I the director), open to the public on Mondays and Thursdays. The only things there worth looking at were not botanic — some silky-feathered Cochin China fowls. As a set-off, at Orleans there are public and gratuitous lectures, and lessons in the art of pruning and grafting fruit trees, created, to borrow the indigenous phrase, by the department and the town in partnership.

The Orleans folks (and the same remark applies as you travel southwards) smoke a considerably less amount of the weed than is consumed in the northern departments of France, especially in those which are contiguous to the Belgian and the Prussian frontiers. There you may see even quite young men with a little round hole worn in the teeth on each side of the jaw, simply by the wear and tear caused by constantly holding a short clay pipe in the mouth. The Orleannais and Touraine women, besides carrying flat baskets on their heads, are also fond of surmounting their noddles with caps shaped like sewing-thimbles.

While looking at them, I could not drive from my mind the punishment administered in dame-schools called thimble-pie. More pleasing objects were the handsome carriages and well-dressed people who frequent the streets. The grocers' shops filled with stores of dried plums in great variety, besides pears and figs, are cheering to beholders gifted with a sweet tooth, as are also the confectioners' windows. Savoury condiments are seen in the market, in the guise of burnt turnips and flat-baked onions, to give colour and flavour to the pot-à-feu. Glance respectfully at the hôtels of the noblesse, with their lofty portes-cochères and their dull, dull walled-in courts, lighted with oil réverbères, and wonder that people whose names begin with De should permit such abominable faults in orthography as are to be seen on the posters pasted up against their walls and even painted on the corners of their streets.

Off to Blois in double-quick time! The banks of the Loire, as seen from the railway, do not correspond to De Balzac's eulogies; those of the Seine are infinitely prettier; and everywhere, as you rattle along, you have evidences that the Loire is a mischievous stream, — a passionate person who now and then loses all self-control, — a temporary maniac, with lucid intervals, during which he is sorry for the injury he has done to his friends and neighbours. He buries them beneath beds of shingle, sand, and gravel; he drowns them under a rushing cataract, and sweeps all their goods and chattels away; and then, by-and-by, he disfigures the landscape by displaying an empty bed, with more grey stones than water exposed to view. His natural guardians try to keep him within bounds by a sort of double-straight-jacket, called a levée. But the levées raised on each side of the Loire do not improve the beauty of the river. In some places, the railway runs within a stone's throw of the stream, which remains invisible; because the ugly levée screens it completely, rising before you like a tall green wall. The strip of land between the levée and the rising ground is as utterly marshy a patch of ground, as if it were a little bit cut out of Holland, considerably below high-water mark, and subject to the chronic inconveniences of infiltration and stagnant waters. All cultivation is obliged to be carried on by means of high narrow ridges, to serve as Mounts Ararat when the waters of the deluge are subsided a little, and deep furrows to act as drains. In spite of every precaution, the cabbages in the Touraine are scorched to death by last winter's frost, like our own at home, showing that that severe schoolmaster, Mr. Zero, has nipped [illegible]ly in central France as in England. Nowhere have I seen vines growing on so moist a soil. The very

vine-props, when done with at the end of the summer — to prevent their rotting, are obliged to be mounted high in the air, in little bundles, on four or five other props cleverly placed crosswise, and stuck in the ground. The vine-stools about Blois look like wretched snakes writhing to rid themselves of the shaggy coat of parasitic moss that annoys them by sticking to them pertinaciously. The moss is owing to the mists which rise from the bosom of the Loire itself, as well as from the constant vapours given out during great part of the year by the leakage of the river, which will ooze in, in spite of all the care bestowed on the levée. The vines themselves are cultivated in rows. In autumn, the earth is raised up in ridges; in spring, manure or fresh mould, when either are to be had, are laid in the hollow between the rows, and the earth is hoed back again over it. The vines of the Touraine (Tours may fairly be taken as the centre of this district), must receive a much greater supply of moisture from the atmosphere than those of Burgundy possibly can; and yet the former are by no means watery, or deficient in strength. To taste them you would not suppose them to have been baptised, either naturally or artificially. I suppose it is the sun who works all that chemistry. But, be assured, it will not do to trifle with Touraine wines because they happen to look white and limpid; for I have known even cider-drinkers attacked with serious delirium tremens. Though people may call them petits vins, when they once get fairly home, they will prove that they do not want for energy.

Before reaching Blois, you pass Meung, where Madame de Pompadour once opened a new bridge, by driving over it in her coach and six. People said that it must be strong, since it had borne the heaviest burden of France. Leaving Blois (where you cannot drive out of your head the horribly-treacherous murder of the Duc de Guise, with his sovereign's consent and knowledge), you get a fine view on the left of the castle of Amboise, where Abd-el-Kader spent five years of captivity. During his present visit to Paris, he and another illustrious personage can indulge in pleasant chat, touching their prison experiences. Soon afterwards, you skip over the Loire, and you find yourself at that particularly genteel English colony, Tours, on which I will not bestow another word except to say that Bourgeuil and St. Ibertin are good red wines, and that the city itself is a species of Frenchified Cheltenham. Your reception there will be measured by your connections; your own merits will have nothing to do with it. This (I am speaking of the English residents, you observe) shows a noble national spirit, and promises well for the

future prosperity of our beloved country.

So good-bye to the paté-shops and circulating libraries of Tours. Although I never paid eighteenpence in the pound in England, and do not live abroad on the income I have settled on my wife, still my father was a cobbler, and my respected mother a charwoman. With that drawback, my large fortune might help me to a little civil consideration; but my good looks, my talents, and my engaging manners, to none at all. What can't be cured must be endured. Hup! fiery locomotive steed, gallop away! Organised meteor, flaring phenomenon, gallop away! Carry us as fast as you can to Châtellerault.

On the river Cher, which falls into the Loire, you have the same levées and inundations, past, present, and to come. At Saint Maur, you have vines trained bowerwise. And then you enter the town of assassins. From time immemorial, the women and girls of Châtellerault have exercised the right of demanding the traveller's money, knife in hand, or if that failed, of attacking him fiercely with carving-fork and scissors. In the diligence days, it sufficed to have traversed a single street, to remember all the rest of your life that the place was famous for cutlery. While the horses were changing, these armed females climbed up the coachwheels, and made their invasion by the window, forcing a hailstorm of poinards and penknives down your throat. If you entered a room to take rĕfreshment, it was instantly swarm-full of cutlers' wives and daughters, each with her box, insisting, as the law of the place and their municipal right, that buy you must. There they were, young and old, ugly and pretty, but equally loquacious and equally impudent in demanding for every article of steel four or five times as much as it was worth. The railway has effected no great reform; for the she-brigands find their way to the platform of the station. I could not drink a glass of wine-and-water at the buvette without a young woman's sticking into me a dozen white-handled dinner-knives.

In travelling to Bordeaux, from the north of France, you rush forward to meet the spring. There, on March twenty-second, were wall-flowers in blossom, with hawthorn-hedges, rose-trees, and weeping-willows fast coming into leaf. At Poitiers, adorned with cypresses and picturesque quarries at the entrance of the town, artichokes and other vegetation were precociously advanced in the narrow valley through which the river Clain runs. Further on, the rows and quincunxes of fine old chestnut-trees speak well of the climate, and the evergreen box growing wild in the hedges, is a novelty, under those conditions, to English eyes. In Poitou, you behold real shepherdesses, who would not recognise their own selves at a fancy ball, or in

the portraits which fashionable artists have painted. They spin all day long, to while away the time; and they cannot help running the risk of intermingling their flocks (consisting of half-a-dozen sheep each at most), by meeting in knots of four or five to gossip and grumble about the price of bread. Around Vars, the land is cultivated in strips of equal breadths of vines and wheat, as if the inhabitants had resolved to produce exactly equivalent proportions of loaves and wine. Angoulême looks like a city suspended in the air. Its rocky pedestal, concealed by apricot trees in full blossom, is spitted by the railway tunnel, which pitilessly pierces it. You glide on to Libourne, famous for claret; you flit over the broad-spread stream of the Dordogne. A little further, and then a little further, and the porters shout the welcome word — Bordeaux!

BARBAROUS TORTURE.

In the present degenerate days a pair of curling-tongs, very seldom used, represents nearly all the apparatus of the hair-dresser, pertaining to the fine-art department of his profession. Scissors, razor, brushes, and combs, remain, of course, to him; but they belong to his profession merely as it is an useful art — as a branch of the fine arts it is almost extinct. Here and there a professor may be found who believes in high art, writes wig-maker over his door, and talks to a chance visitor of the general falling-off of the age. His rack is full of rusty tools; and, on his shelves, are worm-eaten blocks covered with cob-webs. He is told that the rabble of his profession shaving at a halfpenny a chin can thrive; that a halfpenny barber will sometimes, with his own hand, scrape together twelve or fifteen shillings on a Saturday night until Sunday morning; and he reckons up, on his fingers, that to earn fifteen shillings, an unassisted professor must lather and scrape a fresh customer every two minutes, and continue to do so without an instant's pause for nearly twelve hours; keeping him up all night, and cutting his way a little too far into the Sunday. There-upon he shakes his head, and says, "You may believe it, if you like." He has his doubts, and begs leave to retain them. It is not high art, he must observe.

"There was a woman who for many years shaved for a halfpenny opposite St. Giles's Church."

"Indeed, sir! I am not surprised. In the history of my art — speaking, by your leave, of the time when it *was* an art — I read of the fashionable barbers' shops in Drury Lane, under the reign of his sacred majesty King Charles the Second, and that five

of them were conducted by ladies, as I believe I may make bold to remind you that the ballad said,

> Did you ever see the like,
> Or ever hear the same,
> Of five wo-o-men Barberers
> That lived in Drury Lane.

One of these shops still remains, and nearly in the same state it existed in of yore. If you want to see it, sir, you must inquire for the corner of White Hart Yard. The daughter of the lady who kept it attended General Monk in the Tower, sir, and married him. It was a good match for the general. No, sir, I would not exclude woman from the practice of an art scarcely less fascinating than herself; and if, even in its degenerate state, she will adorn it by her touch, I am not surprised. It is her usual goodness. I am even consoled. Woman, sir, it has occurred to me often, is a great consoler. I am told that in France to this day the other sex ply the razor and scissors upon our sex's caputs very extensively. In what style, sir, would you have your hair dressed?"

"I want it cut, simply."

"Cut to look simple? Yes, sir. In the Roman style perhaps, with a Brutus. I hope you know, sir, that, according to the Athenian Chronicle, the barber's art was so beneficial to the Roman public, that he who first brought it into fashion in Rome had a statue erected to him."

"I need to have the patience of a statue."

"Did you ever meet with a book, sir, by one Mr. Philip Stubbes? Mentioned lately in an eminent periodical? Indeed, sir? Now, do you know, your wish to be cut simply, reminds me, by your leave, of the days of Queen Elizabeth, and of what Mr. Stubbes, (whose book I possess) says upon the palmy days of our art, in that reign so glorious to Britain. — I think I could recite the passage."

"Pray —"

"Not a word, sir." And our estimable friend, releasing our head suddenly, sat down by his table, spread one arm abroad over its surface, and beat time dolorously with his fingers as he droned forth at us, the elegant extract which he had (not, it is to be feared, without a suppression or two) stored in his capacious memory:

"There are no finer fellows under the sun, nor experter in their noble science' (well put, you observe, sir) — 'noble science of barbing than they be; and therefore, in the fulness of their overflowing knowledge, they have invented such strange fashions and manners of cuttings, trimmings, shavings, and washings, that you would wonder to see. They have one manner of cut called the French cut, another the Spanish cut; one the Dutch cut, another the Italian; one the new cut, another the old; one the bravado fashion,

another of the mane fashion; one a gentleman's cut, another of the mane fashion; one a gentleman's cut, another the common cut; one cut of the court, another cut of the camp; — with infinite the like which I overpass. For they have other cuts innumerable; and, when you come to be trimmed they will ask you whether you will be cut to look terrible to your enemy, or amiable to your friend; grim and stern in countenance, or pleasant and demure. Then, when they have done all these feats, it is a world to consider how their moustachios must be preserved and laid out from one cheek to another — yea, almost from one ear to another, and turned up like two horns towards the forehead. Besides that, when they come to the cutting of the hair, what snipping and snapping of scissors is there; what rubbing, what scratching, what combing and cleaning, what trickling and toying. And when they come to washing, how gingerly they behave themselves therein. For then shall your mouth be bossed with lather, or foam, that riseth of the balls (for they have their sweet balls wherewith they use to wash); your eyes must be anointed therewith also. Then snap go the fingers full bravely, God wot. Thus, this tragedy ended, comes warm clothes to wipe and dry him withal; then the hair of nostrils cut away, and everything done in order, comely to behold. You shall have also, your orient perfumes for your nose, your fragrant waters for your face, wherewith you shall be all to besprinkled; your music again and pleasant harmony shall sound in your ears, and all to tickle the same with vain delight. And in the end your cloak shall be brushed, and God be with you, gentlemen.' — Ah! sir, there are few passages in literature finer than that. I seem to see the thing before me. O, the palmy day of beautiful Queen Gloriana, which is, Bess!"

"But I trust, also, Mr. Wigmaker, that you seem also to see me before you, waiting, in the days of Queen Victoria, to have my hair cut."

"Certainly, sir. Would you like to play a little on the cittern while I am employed about your head? I have one here. In the good old times, cittern and lute were at the service of the barber's customers. Mr. Battrick, one of our last great men, sir, had a set of bells — Whittington's bells, they were called. Also monkeys."

"Monkeys are still met with, and parrots."

"In-deed, sir? I was not aware. Possibly you may never have heard of Thomas Battrick. He was born, sir, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty, and he died in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifteen; so that he was a Nestor, sir, and besides that, quite a Trojan. He practised in Drury

Lane, and in his later days there were never less than seven fights in Drury Lane every Sunday morning. He attended and encouraged them all, sir, for he was a great patron of the manly art of self-defence. He didn't shave for a halfpenny on Sunday mornings. Curious now, sir; that old man remembered the time when there were no shaving-brushes. Lather used to be put on, sir, by the hand, until the French barbers brought in the brush; in, I think I may say, the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six. A barber's shop in the old time, sir, looked rather more like a surgery than it does now. Do you remember the lines in Shakespeare, sir?"

"Pshaw! What lines?"

"Why, sir, these:

'The strong statutes
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,
As much in mock as mark.'

"Forfeits? What forfeits?"

"Ah, that 's the point, sir. Hear Doctor Warburton upon that: 'Formerly with us the better sort of people went to the barber's shop to be trimmed, who then practised the under parts of surgery; so that he had occasion for numerous instruments, which lay there ready for use; and the idle people with whom his shop was generally crowded, would be perpetually handling and misusing them. To remedy which, I suppose, there was placed up against the wall a table of forfeitures, adapted to every offence of this kind; which it is not likely would long preserve its authority.' Stevens says: 'I have conversed with several people who had repeatedly read the list of forfeits alluded to by Shakespeare, but have failed in my endeavours to procure a copy of it.' These forfeits, sir, were as much in mock as mark, because the barber had no authority of himself to enforce them, and he put them up more in jest than in earnest, nearly always in doggerel. Dr. Henley perfectly remembered to have seen a set of them in Devonshire. They were printed like King Charles's bantering rules."

"What do I owe you?"

"Save me, sir, you are not going with only one side of your hair cut! Excuse me, you really must sit down, and if you could keep your head still — let me see, what was I saying? Three hundred and sixty halfpenny beards shaved by one hand in a single day! Impossible. Now, that reminds me — ha, ha! — of the Flying Barber. But he is no longer in existence. He used to run through the villages, sir, with a can of hot water, his razors, soap, and napkin, and his barber's basin. You consider that singular, sir, do you not? One never meets now with the Flying Barber. That, by the bye, reminds me — I beg your pardon, sir, I did not catch your observation. Yes, certainly, sir. I do meet with a good many flying customers. It is a rare thing to

see the same face twice, such is the state of the profession. In the year one thousand — Sir, if you jerk your head so suddenly, an artistic cut is quite out of the question — in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-six, the race of barbers was menaced with complete extinction by a public announcement, which, if you please, I will repeat to you: 'A chemist from Germany is come over hither in order to obtain a patent for a certain water he prepares, that by only wetting the corner of any linen cloth with it, and rubbing it over the beard a little — be it longer or shorter — instantly moulders away the hair of it like dust or powder, cleaner and closer than any shaving, and in a tenth part of the time taken up in shaving, and for less than a penny charge each time, and yet does not in the least soil or hurt the skin, or cause any smart, or prevent the beard's growing again; nor does it smell any more than fair water, nor can hurt the mouth, nostrils, or eyes, should any by chance get into them. I does the same on the head as well as the beard.'

"Curious, sir, I think. Ah! we have had many a fright in our history, and many a bitter persecution. We have been sent to Bridewell, sir, for exercising our trade on a Sunday. When hair-powder was in fashion we have been fined twenty pounds a-piece, by the hundred of us, for using flour in our trade, on the plea that we took food out of the people's mouths. That was before the constitution of the Guild of Barber Surgeons. Very interesting circumstances, sir, are attached to our connection with the medical profession. Lord Thurlowe, in his speech for postponing the further reading of the Surgeons' Incorporation Bill, July seventeenth, seventeen hundred and ninety-seven, in the House of Peers, stated, 'that by a statute still in force, the barbers and surgeons were each to use a pole. The barbers were to have theirs blue and white striped, with no other appendage; but the surgeons', which was the same in other respects, was likewise to have a galley-pot and a red rag, to denote the particular nature of their vocation.' This description is well versified by Gay, in his fable of A Goat without a Beard:

'His pole with pewter basins hung,
Black rotten teeth in order strung;
Ranged cups that in the window stood,
Lined with red rags, to look like blood,
Did well his threefold trade explain,
Who shaved, drew teeth, and breathed a vein.'

We used to do all the bleeding and bone-setting that was wanted in those days. People were a deal better attended to then, than they are now, I 'm thinking; and since both callings were separated, they have both gone to the dogs. People don't shave, now, sir; they wear beards and moustaches. Then railways don't break half as many bones as bad roads and rickety carriages used

to do. Pay me, sir? Whenever you please. A barber who is an artist is paid only by fee. Look at your head in the glass, sir. Simplicity itself! I thank you."

YELLOWKNIGHTS.

When Roscius was an actor in Rome, I think it highly probable that private theatricals, imitative of the performances of the great dramatic exemplar of the day, were a highly popular amusement among the juvenile Roman aristocracy. It is pleasant as well as reasonable to think so. I would have given something to have been able to witness such a celebration in the great city of men; and that such sights often took place I have very small doubts. That amiable system of classical education under which you and I, my dear Hopkins, were reared, but which our sons, let us hope, will mercifully escape — that grand scheme of grammatical tuition which held chief among its axioms that the mind of youth, like a walnut-tree, must be quickened by blows in its advances to maturity; that the waters of Helicon were not wholesome unless duly mingled with brine; and that the birch and the bays were inextricably interwoven in the poetical chaplet — that system, I say, taught us (among irreproachable quantities and symmetrical feet) to look upon everything appertaining to Rome and the Romans with something very much akin to horror; to regard Plautus as a bugbear and Terence as a tyrant; to remember nothing of Horace but the portrait of Orbilius — nothing of Virgil but the sævæ memoram Junonis. But now that a new generation has grown up, and we ourselves (according to an ingenious theory some time propounded) have changed our cuticle, and have had provided for us a new set of viscera, we can afford to look back without bitterness or regret, without fear or trembling, upon the old days of verbum personale and studio grammaticæ. Queer days! They would have flogged us for reading Mr. Macaulay's Lays, and caned us had we looked upon Lemprière, not as a dull book of reference, but as the most charming collection of fairy tales in the world. Now all our gerunds and supines, our dactyls and spondees, our subjects and attributes, our hexameters and pentameters, are mingled in a pleasant jumble of dreamy memories: now that we quite forget what took place in the thirty-sixth Olympiad, and don't know the names of the forty tyrants, and can't remember the value of an As or the number of stadia between Rome and Capri (I speak for myself, Hopkins, but I should not, believe me, respect you half so much as I do if I thought you capable of remembering anything definite about Greece or Rome) — we can indulge in the fancy that the Romans were not at all times

frowning, awful spectres, with hook-noses, laurel-bound brows, and flowing togas, incessantly occupied in crossing the Rubicon, subduing the Iceni, reviewing the tenth legion, striking Medusa-like medals, standing behind chairs with hatchets and bundles of rods, or marching about with S. P. Q. R. stuck on the top of a pole. Cicero pleaded against Verres, but there were other advocates to plead in the cause of a countryman's pig. The geese were not always saving the Capitol — bo must have been occasionally said to them, and they eaten with sage and onions sometimes. The Cumæan sybil must have taken a little snack on her tripod from time to time. Mæcenas must have made jokes, great Cæsar stooped to pun, and stern Brutus played with his children. Yes; among all this solemn big-wiggery — these triumphs, ovations, sacrifices, orations (in which a tremendous amount of false Latin was talked, you may be sure), there must have been a genial, social, homely, comic element among the cives Romani. Who shall say that there were not Cockney Romans who pronounced vir, *wir*, and dropped the H in Horrida? Who shall say that there were no games at blindman's-buff, forfeits, and hunt the slipper, on long winter evenings, in the great consular families; that there was no kissing under mistletoe in the entertainments of the Roman knights; that there were no private theatricals, blithesome, ridiculous, and innocent, what time Roscius was an actor in Rome?

For that matter, I am persuaded that, long before, Thespis's little brothers and sisters performed tragedies in a go-cart, not in socks and buskins, but in socks and pinafores, before their big brother took to the legitimate business in a waggon; and that Alcibiades got up a private pantomime among his friends, parodying Aristophanes' Knights, with himself (Alcibiades) for clown, Socrates for pantaloon, and Glycerium for columbine. But confining ourselves to Rome, would you not have delighted to have witnessed some ancient private theatrical entertainment in in the now capital of the papal dominions? It is good (confounding chronology) to fancy the largest lamp lit; the Atrium fitted up, draped with some borrowed togas; the patres conscripti in the front rows, the matres conscripti behind, among them of course the mother of the Gracchi, thinking the performances of her children the most wonderful that ever were seen, but entertaining no very exalted opinion of the dramatic efforts of Master Marcus Antonius Lepidus, aged nine, or of that conceited little upstart Fatua Fanna, who would not be allowed to play at all if she were not the niece of the Pontifex Maximus. See — there are the blushing simpering young Roman virgins, all in fine

white linen with silver hems, and their tresses powdered with gold-dust. There is pretty little Livia Ottilia, the great heiress, whose cruel papa wanted her to give up her large fortune towards the expenses of the Punic war, and become a vestal virgin; but she knew better, and ran off to Brundusium with young Sextus Quintilius. There is demure little Miss Octavia Prima — she looks as though spikenard would not melt in her mouth; who would think, now, that she sticks gold pins into the shoulders of her slaves, and beats her lady's-maid with the crumpling-irons? There are the young Roman beaux, terrible fellows for fast chariot driving, wild beast fighting, gladiator backing: yonder is young Flavius, the president of the Whip club; his motto is Quousque tandem: there, ambergrised, powdered, perfumed, is that veteran toadeater and tufthunter, but pretty poet, Q. Horatius Flaccus; he will write a charming copy of Sapphics on the occasion, dedicated to his influential patron the Marquis Mæcenas, who will probably ask him to dinner and give him roast pig stuffed with honey, garum, and slave-fed carp. There is Ovidius Naso, who was a fine man once, but now goes among the gay youths by the name of Nosey. He has led a very dissipated life, and will be compelled to fly from his creditors by-and-by, to some remote corner of Asia Minor, attributing of course his forced absence to political reasons. There also, among the audience, you may see P. Virgilius Maro, in top-boots and a bottle-green toga. He, too, is a poet, but is a great authority on matters bucolic, breeds cattle, is a magistrate of his county, and president of the Campanian Agricultural Association. There is Curius Dentatus, that conceited fop, who is always showing his white teeth; and Aulus Gellius, who is a very Othello to his wife; and Pompeius Crassus, who is considered to be very like his friend Cæsar; and Mark Antony, who has incurred something like odium for his naughty conduct towards Mrs. Mark, and his shameful carryings on with a mulatto lady in Egypt; and there is Cato, the censor, who disapproves of theatricals, public and private, in the abstract, turning up his nose in a corner and pretending to read the last number of Sibylline Leaves. But, mercy on us! what chronology is this! Mark Antony, Curius Dentatus, and Cato the censor! As well have Romulus and Remus with the wolf in for the last scene, Numa Pompilius to give the entertainment, and Horatius Cocles announce that a shell-fish supper is ready. Away, pleasant fancies!

The mind of my life is as a cemetery, full of gravestones; but here and there are gay cenotaphs, airy temples of the composite order, with comic masks sculptured on the pediment; — flower-grown tombs, sacred to

private theatricals. This pen shall be a key, and open one of them.

There was "Yellowknights." Yellowknights was the commodious family mansion of Hipkins Hawes, Esquire, a man of the richest, but of the merriest and the best. He had a prodigious number of daughters, all pretty; and envious people said that his private theatricals were only baits to lure young men on to matrimonial destruction. He must have been very indiscriminate in his luring, be it as it may, for he was visited by a whole colony of sexagenarian gentlemen living in the vicinity, who cared, I think, much more about his rare old port than his performances, and by a host of children, among whom I can mention one youth, aged eight, who was decidedly not lured by any matrimonial snares with reference to the Miss Hawesces, but by a juvenile predilection for plum-cake, orange wine, trifle, a glorious grapery, an unrivalled nectarine wall, and a whole Tower armoury of toys, rocking-horses, cricket bats, electric ducks, regiments of soldiers, and India-rubber balls like balloons. Of course I fell in love with all the Miss Haweses afterwards; but somehow they all married somebody else. I'erhaps my hair didn't curl, so I could not come into wedlock with them. Hipkins Hawes took the young men exactly as they came, and as he found them. "If the fellows," he was wont to say, (he was a plain-spoken man), "come after my gals, let 'em. If Loo or Bell are sweet upon Jack or Dick, let them come to Hipkins Hawes and tell him what they mean, and he 'll see what to do. Hipkins Hawes knows how many blue beans make five." Hipkins Hawes did. Though he lived in that grand and commodious mansion Yellowknights, and kept horses, carriages, and footmen, he had formerly pursued no more elevated a calling than that of a coach-builder; and many and many a holiday afternoon have I spent in gazing at and admiring the wonderful lord mayors' and sheriffs' coaches that Hipkins Hawes built at his grand repository in Orchard Street, Portman Square. To be lifted into one of these carriages, and to sit for a moment on one of those imperial squabs, was to me then the summum bonum of human felicity. What would I give to be able to feel such a pleasure now!

We, the family of your informant, were humble neighbours of the wealthy Yellowknights people; dwelling, indeed, in a detached cottage, where an attempt at gentility was made by the existence of a coach-house and a two-stall stable, but the vehicular accommodation of the first of which was only called into requisition for a child's chaise, and in the second of which trunks, lumber, and odds and ends cumbered the manger, and refused not to abide by the

crib. The great mansion and our genteel cottage were both in a small village some five miles from London, with which communication was kept up by a bi-daily stage-coach. I went down to the village the other day by rail. Our genteel habitat had been pulled down bodily, and our two-stall stable occupied perhaps a hundredth part of the ground on which a mighty circular stable for roaring locomotives had been built. Yellowknights — where was that commodious mansion? It had been converted into a ladies' school — no: the South-Southern Branch College for Ladies. Lecturer on physical astronomy, Professor Charles S. Wain! Hipkins Hawes is Sir Hipkins Hawes, Bart., now, and dwells in a mansion at Tyburnia as big as a barrack.

But in the old days Hipkins Hawes, the retired coach-builder, was the merriest, most hospitable, charitable soul on the whole suburban country side. He was always giving balls, suppers, fêtes champêtres, archery meetings, charades, fancy-dress soirées, and especially private theatricals. The Miss Hawes used to drive to London in carriages and four (it was not considered extravagant to drive four horses then, and I have seen a great duchess, dead and gone, riding in a coach and six), convulse Holywell Street, and throw Vinegar Yard into an uproar, in voyages of discovery after theatrical costumes. They were quite costume-books themselves. I think I must have seen the eldest Miss Hawes as a Bayadère, Lady Macbeth, Columbine (in Turkish trousers), the Fair One with the Golden Locks, Zuleika, Clari the maid of Milan, Ophelia (a very cheap costume, consisting in the last part merely of a bedgown and back hair), Mrs. Haller, and Flora Macdonald. As to the youngest Miss Hawes, she was so incessantly playing fairies, sylphs, and Ariels, that at this day I can't help picturing her to myself with wings, a silver-foil wand, and a short muslin skirt; though I know her to be married to Mr. Bearskin (of Bull and Bearskin, stockbrokers) and the mother of six children. Then the young Haweses (males), of whom there was a swarm, all six feet high, in the army, the navy, the church, Cambridge University, Guy's Hospital, and the Charter House, were continually busy with private theatricals; painting scenes on the lawn, modelling comic masks in clay, putting the footboy to hard-labour in whitewashing, pulling up the dining-room flooring for traps, purloining the sheets and table-cloths for ghosts, blowing up the greenhouse with badly-made fireworks, stifling the servants with premature red-fire, and, in fact, as Mrs. Hipkins Hawes said (the only person at Yellowknights who did not approve of private theatricals), "turning the house out of windows." She was a weak lady, subject to headaches,

and with an expressive but somewhat monotonous formula of reply to every remark, namely, "stuff and nonsense." Said the doctor to her, when at last she lay mortally sick, "I fear, madam, that you are seriously indisposed." Whereupon, "Stuff and nonsense!" cried out Mrs. Hipkins Hawes, and died.

Hipkins Hawes himself did not take any active part in the private theatricals, save paying good round sums for the expenses incurred, and enjoying in a most beaming manner the enjoyments of the children he loved so well. His principal employment was to sit at the great French windows overlooking the lawn, drink old port, and tell funny stories to young Bearskin, the stock-broker, and to Captain Chuff, who had been a king's messenger, had travelled the wide world over, had a wonderful potato snuff-box, presented to him by the Emperor Alexander's aide-de-camp, and was reported to be a gay man. I never knew anyone seem happier, more contented, more at peace with the world and himself than Hipkins Hawes, the retired coach-builder, then a florid, bald-headed, fair, round-bellied proprietor, aged fifty. He would hold the prompt-book during the rehearsals of his children's plays, and make tremendous mistakes in his self-imposed task. He would laugh the loudest at the jokes, and clap his fat hands, and take the little children who had played the fairies on his knee and kiss them. Ah! those were the days of pipe and tabour, of joy and gladness, of cake and wine; of the mirror before any of the quicksilver at the back is worn off; of the plated service before whitening and chamois-leather have been too often used, and the copper begins to show. We youngsters were frequent guests at Yellowknights, partly, perhaps, because all youth was welcome at that universal children's friend society; partly because we were considered to be (I say it without vanity — woe is me!) a somewhat clever family. I had a brother who was a great chemist, who always had parti-coloured fingers and stained clothes, who burnt holes in all the blankets with noxious acids, who once nearly blew the front of the house out with some subtle chemical preparation, and who was always trying experiments upon the cat.* I had a brother who had a wonderful genius for drawing ships. He drew so many of them on the margins of his spelling-book, that he quite overlooked the words ending in one or more syllables, or the book itself, and turned out an egregious dunce. I had a brother who made electrical machines out of cardboard and sealing-wax, mo-

* What an inestimable boon has the invention of photography been to heads of families whose younger branches are addicted to the study of chemistry. You can't well blow a house up with a camera obscura, iodine, collodion, and gallic acid, and you may produce a pretty portrait of somebody.

dels of ships that wouldn't swim, and wooden clocks that wouldn't go. His famous and favourite feat, however, was borrowing sixpence of me, which he never gave back. I had a sister — she is dead, dear girl! — who wrote the neatest, prettiest hand that ever was seen, long, I am sure, before she could read. I have one of her books now. "Lines to —, Morning, Psalm CIX." I don't know what I was famous for myself, beyond sore eyes, and an intense love for private theatricals. This last attachment made me useful. I was call-boy, underprompter, mob (behind the scenes), Sir Jeffery Hudson in the pie, one of the Children in the Wood, Prince Arthur, one of Hop-o'-my-Thumb's brothers, a demon, a fairy, a black footboy, and the Yellow Dwarf. I wonder I never turned actor in after life: so devoted was I to the drama in those early days.

Our theatre was the great front drawing-room at Yellowknights, our stage, of course, the back drawing-room, the folding doors making the proscenium. The dining-room was our favourite salle de spectacle; but Hipkins, our host, fond as he was of private theatricals, was fonder still of his dinner, and was not to be cheated out of the enjoyment of his rare old port by the French windows looking out upon the lawn. I think Captain Chuff, Admiral Deadeyes (from the Priory), old Mr. Puffweazle the retired solicitor, and others of his port-wine friends, coincided in this view of matters: it was the more annoying to us, as the dining-room was garnished by two massive Corinthian pillars, and looked exactly like a real stage proscenium.

We did the best with what we had though, the drawing-rooms, and famously with those. Crowded audiences we used to have in those cheerful apartments, deaf old ladies in the front row, groups of happy children everywhere, and a grinning background of servants — to see how Miss Louisa do take her part to be sure! I need not enter into a minute criticism of our performances. We played everything, tragedy, comedy, farce, burlesque, and opera (all the Miss Haweses played and sang). I am afraid I was not much of an actor myself — I was so small and weak; but not to be egotistical, I imagine that I did once make something like a sensation as the physician's head in Za-zezi-zo-zu.

I think if I had built coaches enough (mental or bodily) to be very rich, that I should like to have a commodious family mansion, where my sons and daughters could play their private theatricals out. I am sure I would not grudge them the use of the dining-room, but would build a commodious summer-house on the lawn, where I could sip my old port wine.

THE PRESENT.

Do not crouch to-day, and worship
The old Past, whose life is fled.
Hush your voice to tender reverence;
Crown'd he lies, but cold and dead:
For the Present reigns our monarch,
With an added weight of hours,
Honour her, for she is mighty!
Honour her, for she is ours!

See the shadows of his heroes
Girt around her cloudy throne;
And each day the ranks are strengthen'd
By great hearts to him unknown;
Noble things the great Past promised,
Holy dreams, both strange and new;
But the Present shall fulfil them,
What he promised, she shall do.

She inherits all his treasures,
She is heir to all his fame,
And the light that lightens round her
Is the lustre of his name;
She is wise with all his wisdom,
Living on his grave she stands,
On her brow she bears his laurels,
And his harvests in her hands.

Coward, can she reign and conquer
If we thus her glory dim?
Let us fight for her as nobly
As our fathers fought for him.
God, who crowns the dying ages,
Bids her rule, and us obey —
Bids us cast our lives before her,
With our loving hearts to-day!

HALF A LIFE-TIME AGO.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.

After the stun of the blow came the realisation of the consequences. Susan would sit for hours trying patiently to recal and piece together fragments of recollection and consciousness in her brother's mind. She would let him go and pursue some senseless bit of play, and wait until she could catch his eye or his attention again, when she would resume her self-imposed task. Michael complained that she never had a word for him, or a minute of time to spend with him now; but she only said, she must try, while there was yet a chance, to bring back her brother's lost wits. As for marriage in this state of uncertainty, she had no heart to think of it. Then Michael stormed, and absented himself for two or three days; but it was of no use. When he came back he saw that she had been crying till her eyes were all swollen up, and he gathered from Peggy's scoldings (which she did not spare him) that Susan had eaten nothing since he went away. But she was as inflexible as ever.

"Not just yet. Only not just yet. And don't say again that I do not love you," said she, suddenly hiding herself in his arms.

And so matters went on through August. The crop of oats was gathered in; the wheatfield was not ready as yet, when one fine day Michael drove up in a borrowed shandry, and offered to take Willie a ride. His manner, when Susan asked him where he was going to, was rather confused; but the answer was straight and clear enough.

"He had business in Ambleside. He would never lose sight of the lad, and have him back safe and sound before dark." So Susan let him go.

Before night they were at home

again: Willie in high delight at a little rattling paper windmill that Michael had bought for him in the street, and striving to imitate this new sound with perpetual buzzings. Michael, too, looked pleased. Susan knew the look, although afterwards she remembered that he had tried to veil it from her, and had assumed a grave appearance of sorrow whenever he caught her eye. He put up his horse; for, although he had three miles further to go, the moon was up — the bonny harvest-moon — and he did not care how late he had to drive on such a road by such a light. After the supper which Susan had prepared for the travellers was over, Peggy went up-stairs to see Willie safe in bed; for he had to have the same care taken of him that a little child of four years old requires.

Michael drew near to Susan.

"Susan," said he, "I took Will to see Dr. Preston, at Kendal. He 's the first doctor in the county. I thought it were better for us — for you — to know at once what chance there were for him."

"Well!" said Susan, looking eagerly up. She saw the same strange glance of satisfaction, the same instant change to apparent regret and pain. "What did he say?" said she. "Speak! can't you?"

"He said he would never get better of his weakness."

"Never!"

"No; never. It is a long word, and hard to bear. And there 's worse to come, dearest. The doctor thinks he will get worse from year to year. And he said, if he was us — you — he would send him off in time to Lancaster Asylum. They 've ways there both of keeping such people in order and making them happy. I only tell you what he said," continued he, seeing the gathering storm in her face.

"There was no harm in his saying it," she replied, with great self-constraint, forcing herself to speak coldly instead of angrily. "Folk is welcome to their opinions."

They sate silent for a minute or two, her breast heaving with suppressed feeling.

"He 's counted a very clever man," said Michal, at length.

"He may be. He 's none of my clever men, nor am I going to be guided by him, whatever he may think. And I don't thank them that went and took my poor lad to have such harsh notions formed about him. If I 'd been there, I could have called out the sense that is in him."

"Well! I 'll not say more to-night, Susan. You 're not taking it rightly, and I 'd best be gone, and leave you to think it over. I 'll not deny they are hard words to hear, but there 's sense in them, as I take it; and I reckon you 'll have to come to 'em. Anyhow, it 's a bad way of thanking me for my pains, and I don't take it well in you

Susan," said he, getting up, as if offended.

"Michael, I'm beside myself with sorrow. Don't blame me, if I speak sharp. He and me is the only ones, you see. And mother did so charge me to have a care of him! And this is what he 's come to, poor lile chap!" She began to cry, and Michael to comfort her with caresses.

"Don't," said she. "It 's no use trying to make me forget poor Willie is a natural. I could hate myself for being happy with you, even for just a little minute. Go away, and leave me to face it out."

"And you 'll think it over, Susan, and remember what the doctor says?"

"I can't forget it," said she. She meant she could not forget what the doctor had said about the hopelessness of her brother's case; he had referred to the plan of sending Willie away to an asylum, or madhouse, as they were called in that day and place. The idea had been gathering force in Michael's mind for long; he had talked it over with his father, and secretly rejoiced over the possession of the farm and land which would then be his in fact, if not in law, by right of his wife. He had always considered the good penny her father could give her in his catalogue of Susan's charms and attractions. But of late he had grown to esteem her as the heiress of Yew Nook. He too should have land like his brother — land to possess, to cultivate, to make profit from, to bequeath. For some time he had wondered that Susan had been too much absorbed in Willie's present, that she never seemed to look forward to his future, state. Michael had long felt the boy to be a trouble; but of late he had absolutely loathed him. His gibbering, his uncouth gestures, his loose shambling gait, all irritated Michael inexpressibly. He did not come near the Yew Nook for a couple of days. He thought that he would leave her time to become anxious to see him and reconciled to his plan. They were strange, lonely days to Susan. They were the first she had spent face to face with the sorrows that had turned her from a girl into a woman, for hitherto Michael had never let twenty-four hours pass by without coming to see her since she had had the fever. Now that he was absent it seemed as though some cause of irritation was removed from Will, who was much more gentle and tractable than he had been for many weeks. Susan thought that she observed him making efforts at her bidding, and there was something piteous in the way in which he crept up to her, and looked wistfully in her face, as if asking her to restore him the faculties that he felt to be wanting.

"I never will let thee go, lad. Never! There 's no knowing where they would take thee to, or what they would do with thee. As they say in the Bible,

'Nought but death shall part thee and me!'"

The country-side was full, in those days, of stories of the brutal treatment offered to the insane; stories that were in fact only too well founded, and the truth of one of which only would have been a sufficient reason for the strong prejudice existing against all such places. Each succeeding hour that Susan passed, alone, or with the poor, affectionate lad for her sole companion, served to deepen her solemn resolution never to part with him. So, when Michael came, he was annoyed and surprised by the calm way in which she spoke, as if following Dr. Preston's advice was utterly and entirely out of the question. He had expected nothing less than a consent, reluctant it might be, but still a consent; and he was extremely irritated. He could have repressed his anger, but he chose rather to give way to it, thinking that he could so best work upon Susan's affection, to gain his point. But, somehow, he over-reached himself; and now he was astonished in his turn at the passion of indignation that she burst into.

"Thou wilt not bide in the same house with him, say'st thou? There 's no need for thy biding, as far as I can tell. There 's solemn reason why I should bide with my own flesh and blood, and keep to the word I pledged my mother on her death-bed; but, as for thee, there 's no tie that I know on to keep thee fra going to America or Botany Bay this very night, if that were thy inclination. I will have no more of your threats to make me send my bairn away. If thou marry me, thou 'lt help me to take charge of Willie. If thou doesn't choose to marry me on those terms — why! I can snap my fingers at thee, never fear. I 'm not so far gone in love as that. But I will not have thee if thou say'st in such a hectoring way that Willie must go out of the house — and the house his own too — before thou 'lt set foot in it. Willie bides here, and I bide with him."

"Thou hast may-be spoken a word too much," said Michael, pale with rage. "If I am free, as thou say'st, to go to Canada or Botany Bay, I reckon I 'm free to live where I like, and that will not be with a natural who may turn into a madman some day, for aught I know. Choose between him and me, Susy, for I swear to you, you shan't have both."

"I have chosen," said Susan, now perfectly composed and still. "Whatever comes of it, I bide with Willie."

"Very well," replied Michael, trying to assume an equal composure of manner. "Then I 'll wish you a very good night." He went out of the house-door half-expecting to be called back again; but, instead, he heard a hasty step inside, and a bolt drawn.

"Whew!" said he to himself,

"I think I must leave my lady alone for a week or two, and give her time to come to her senses. She 'll not find it so easy as she thinks to let me go."

So he went past the kitchen-window in nonchalant style, and was not seen again at Yew Nook for some weeks. How did he pass the time? For the first day or two he was unusually cross with all things and people that came across him. Then wheat-harvest began, and he was busy, and exultant about his heavy crop. Then a man came from a distance to bid for the lease of his farm, which had been offered for sale by his father's advice, as he himself was so soon likely to remove to the Yew Nook. He had so little idea that Susan really would remain firm to her determination, that he at once began to haggle with the man who came after his farm, showed him the crop just got in, and managed skilfully enough to make a good bargain for himself. Of course the bargain had to be sealed at the public-house; and the companions he met with there soon became friends enough to tempt him into Langdale, where again he met with Eleanor Hebthwaite.

How did Susan pass the time? For the first day or so she was too angry and offended to cry. She went about her household duties in a quick, sharp, jerking, yet absent, way; shrinking one moment from Will, overwhelming him with remorseful caresses the next. The third day of Michael's absence she had the relief of a good fit of crying; and after that she grew softer and more tender; she felt how harshly she had spoken to him, and remembered how angry she had been. She made excuses for him. "It was no wonder," she said to herself, "that he had been vexed with her; and no wonder he would not give in, when she had never tried to speak gently or to reason with him. She was to blame, and she would tell him so, and tell him once again all that her mother had bade her be to Willie, and all the horrible stories she had heard about mad-houses, and he would be on her side at once."

And so she watched for his coming, intending to apologise as soon as ever she saw him. She hurried over her household work, in order to sit quietly at her sewing, and hear the first distant sound of his well-known step or whistle. But even the sound of her flying needle seemed too loud — perhaps she was losing an exquisite instant of anticipation; so she stopped sewing, and looked longingly out through the geranium leaves, so that her eye might catch the first stir of the branches in the wood-path by which he generally came. Now and then a bird might spring out of the covert; otherwise the leaves were heavily still in the sultry weather of early autumn. Then she would take up her sewing, and with a spasm of resolution,

she would determine that a certain task should be fulfilled before she would again allow herself the poignant luxury of expectation. Sick at heart was she when the evening closed in, and the chances of that day diminished. Yet she stayed up longer than usual, thinking that if he were coming — if he were only passing along the distant road — the sight of a light in the window might encourage him to make his appearance even at that late hour, while seeing the house all darkened and shut up might quench any such intention.

Very sick and weary at heart, she went to bed; too desolate and despairing to cry, or make any moan. But in the morning hope came afresh. Another day — another chance! And so it went on for weeks. Peggy understood her young mistress's sorrow full well, and respected it by her silence on the subject. Willie seemed happier now that the irritation of Michael's presence was removed; for the poor idiot had a sort of antipathy to Michael, which was a kind of heart's echo to the repugnance in which the latter held him. Altogether, just at this time, Willie was the happiest of the three.

As Susan went into Coniston, to sell her butter, one Saturday, some inconsiderate person told her that they had seen Michael Hurst the night before. I said inconsiderate, but I might rather have said unobservant; for any one who had spent half-an-hour in Susan Dixon's company might have seen that she disliked having any reference made to the subjects nearest to her heart, were they joyous or grievous. Now she went a little paler than usual (and she had never recovered her colour since she had had the fever), and tried to keep silence. But an irrepressible pang forced out the question —

"Where?"

"At Thomas Applethwaite's, in Langdale. They had a kind of harvest-home, and he were there among the young folk, and very thick wi' Nelly Hebthwaite, old Thomas's niece. Thou 'lt have to look after him a bit, Susan!"

She neither smiled nor sighed. The neighbour who had been speaking to her was struck with the grey stillness of her face. Susan herself felt how well her self-command was obeyed by every little muscle, and said to herself in her Spartan manner, "I can bear it without either wincing or blenching." She went home early, at a tearing, passionate pace, trampling and breaking through all obstacles of briar or bush. Willie was moping in her absence — hanging listlessly on the farm-yard gate to watch for her. When he saw her, he set up one of his strange, inarticulate cries, of which she was now learning the meaning, and came towards her with his loose, galloping run, head and limbs all shaking and wagging with pleasant excitement. Suddenly she turned from him, and

burst into tears. She sate down on a stone by the wayside, not a hundred yards from home, and buried her face in her hands, and gave way to a passion of pent-up sorrow, so terrible and full of agony were her low cries, that the idiot stood by her, aghast and silent. All his joy gone for the time, but not, like her joy, turned into ashes. Some thought struck him. Yes! the sight of her woe made him think, great as the exertion was. He ran, and stumbled, and shambled home, buzzing with his lips all the time. She never missed him. He came back in a trice, bringing with him his cherished paper windmill, bought on that fatal day when Michael had taken him into Kendal, to have his doom of perpetual idiotcy pronounced. He thrust it into Susan's face, her hands, her lap, regardless of the injury his frail plaything thereby received. He leapt before her, to think how he had cured all heart-sorrow, buzzing louder than ever. Susan looked up at him, and that glance of her sad eyes sobered him. He began to whimper, he knew not why; and she now, comforter in her turn, tried to soothe him by twirling his windmill. But it was broken; it made no noise; it would not go round. This seemed to afflict Susan more than him. She tried to make it right, although she saw the task was hopeless; and while she did so, the tears rained down unheeded from her bent head on the paper toy.

"It won't do," said she, at last. "It will never do again." And, somehow, she took the accident and her words as omens of the love that was broken, and that she feared could never be pieced together again. She rose up and took Willie's hand, and the two went in slowly to the house.

To her surprise, Michael Hurst sate in the house-place. House-place is a sort of better kitchen, where no cookery is done, but which is reserved for state occasions. Michael had gone in there because he was accompanied by his only sister, a woman older than himself, who was well married beyond Keswick, and who now came for the first time to make acquaintance with Susan. Michael had primed his sister with his wishes with regard to Will, and the position in which he stood with Susan; and arriving at Yew Nook in the absence of the latter, he had not scrupled to conduct his sister into the guest-room, as he held Mrs. Gale's worldly position in respect and admiration, and therefore wished her to be favourably impressed with all the signs of property which he was beginning to consider as Susan's greatest charms. He had secretly said to himself that if Eleanor Hebthwaite and Susan Dixon were equal as to riches, he would sooner have Eleanor by far. He had begun to consider Susan as a termagant; and when he thought of his intercourse with her, recollections of her somewhat warm and hasty

temper came far more readily to his mind than any remembrance of her generous, loving nature.

And now she stood face to face with him; her eyes tear-swollen, her garments dusty, and here and there torn in consequence of her rapid progress through the bushy bye-paths. She did not make a favourable impression on the well-clad Mrs. Gale, dressed in her best silk-gown, and therefore unusually susceptible to the appearance of another. Nor were her manners gracious or cordial. How could they be, when she remembered what had passed between Michael and herself the last time they met? For her penitence had faded away under the daily disappointment of these last weary weeks.

But she was hospitable in substance. She bade Peggy hurry on the kettle, and busied herself among the tea-cups, thankful that the presence of Mrs. Gale, as a stranger, would prevent the immediate recurrence to the one subject which she felt must be present in Michael's mind as well as in her own. But Mrs. Gale was withheld by no such feelings o' delicacy. She had come ready-primed with the case, and had undertaken to bring the girl to reason. There was no time to be lost. It had been pre-arranged between the brother and sister that he was to stroll out into the farm-yard before his sister introduced the subject; but she was so confident in the success of her arguments, that she must needs have the triumph of a victory as soon as possible; and, accordingly, she brought a hail-storm of good reasons to bear upon Susan's. Susan did not reply for a long time; she was so indignant at this intermeddling of a stranger in the deep family sorrow and shame. Mrs. Gale thought she was gaining the day, and urged her arguments more pitilessly. Even Michael winced for Susan, and wondered at her silence. He shrunk out of sight, and into the shadow, hoping that his sister might prevail, but annoyed at the hard way in which she kept putting the case.

Suddenly Susan turned round from the occupation she had pretended to be engaged in, and said to him in a low voice, which yet not only vibrated itself, but made its hearers vibrate through all their obtuseness:

"Michael Hurst! does your sister speak truth, think you?"

Both women looked at him for his answer; Mrs. Gale without anxiety, for had she not said the very words they had spoken together before; had she not used the very arguments that he himself had suggested? Susan, on the contrary, looked to his answer as settling her doom for life; and in the gloom of her eyes you might have read more despair than hope.

He shuffled his position. He shuffled in his words.

"What is it you ask? My sister has said many things."

"I ask you," said Susan, trying

to give a crystal clearness both to her expressions and her pronunciation, "if, knowing as you do how Will is afflicted, you will help me to take that charge of him that I promised my mother on her death-bed that I would do; and which means, that I shall keep him always with me, and do all in my power to make his life happy. If you will do this, I will be your wife; if not, I remain unwed."

"But he may get dangerous; he can be but a trouble; his being here is a pain to you, Susan, not a pleasure."

"I ask you for either yes or no," said she, a little contempt at his evading her question mingling with her tone. He perceived it, and it nettled him.

"And I have told you. I answered your question the last time I was here. I said I would ne'er keep house with an idiot; no more I will. So now you've gotten your answer."

"I have," said Susan. And she sighed deeply.

"Come, now," said Mrs. Gale, encouraged by the sigh; "one would think you don't love Michael, Susan, to be so stubborn in yielding to what I'm sure would be best for the lad."

"Oh! she does not care for me," said Michael. "I don't believe she ever did."

"Don't I? Have not I?" asked Susan, her eyes blazing out fire. She left the room directly, and sent Peggy in to make the tea; and catching at Will, who was lounging about in the kitchen, she went up-stairs with him and bolted herself in, straining the boy to her heart, and keeping almost breathless, lest any noise she made should cause him to break out into the howls and sounds which she could not bear that those below should hear.

A knock at the door. It was Peggy.

"He wants for to see you, to wish you good-bye."

"I cannot come. Oh, Peggy, send them away."

It was her only cry for sympathy; and the old servant understood it. She sent them away, somehow; not politely, as I have been given to understand.

"Good go with them," said Peggy, as she grimly watched their retreating figures. "We're rid of bad rubbish, anyhow." And she turned into the house with the intention of making ready some refreshment for Susan, after her hard day at the market, and her harder evening. But in the kitchen, to which she passed through the empty house-place, making a face of contemptuous dislike at the used tea-cups and fragments of a meal yet standing there, she found Susan, with her sleeves tucked up and her working apron on, busied in preparing to make clap-bread, one of the hardest and hottest domestic tasks of a daleswoman. She looked up, and first met and then avoided Peggy's eye; it was too full of sympathy. Her own

cheeks were flushed, and her own eyes were dry and burning.

"Where's the board, Peggy? We need clap-bread; and I reckon I've time to get through with it to-night." Her voice had a sharp dry tone in it, and her motions had a jerking angularity in them.

Peggy said nothing, but fetched her all that she needed. Susan beat her cakes thin with vehement force. As she stooped over them, regardless even of the task in which she seemed so much occupied, she was surprised by a touch on her mouth of something — what she did not see at first. It was a cup of tea, delicately sweetened and cooled, and held to her lips when exactly ready by the faithful old woman. Susan held it off a hand's-breadth, and looked into Peggy's eyes, while her own filled with the strange relief of tears.

"Lass!" said Peggy, solemnly, "thou hast done well. It is not long to bide, and then the end will come."

"But you are very old, Peggy," said Susan, quivering.

"It is but a day sin' I were young," replied Peggy; but she stopped the conversation by again pushing the cup with gentle force to Susan's dry and thirsty lips. When she had drunken she fell again to her labour, Peggy heating the hearth, and doing all that she knew would be required, but never speaking another word. Willie basked close to the fire, enjoying the animal luxury of warmth, for the autumn evenings were beginning to be chilly. It was one o'clock before they thought of going to bed on that memorable night.

BOUND FOR BRAZIL.

"At half-past eleven, a. m." — so said a printed bill on the mirror of a Southampton coffee-room where at all hours of day and night, a waiter with ambrosial curls, and snow-white cravat, faultlessly tied, an apparently neversleeping being, is to be found, intently watchful, ready to minister to the varied wants of the continually arriving travellers, from all parts of the world, by sea and land — "A small steamer will be ready at the Docks, to convey passengers and their baggage to the Bella Donna. The Bella Donna will sail at three p.m." Where does the Bella Donna sail to? What do I know? To every part of the Indies, as the Spaniards used to call them. To South American ports — to Jamaica, — to St. Thomas — to Cuba, everywhere in those tropical sangaree-drinking regions, either itself, or in conjunction with other vessels; that is, personally or by correspondence. The Bella Donna is a Royal Mail steam-ship, of multifarious power; a first-class steamer, a floating hotel with a farm-yard, poultry-yard, and ice-house; where you can have everything you call for, and the only disadvantage is that

you can't do what I heard a little girl cry out very piteously to be allowed to do the other day in a hurricane between Calais and Dover — "get out and walk."

On this occasion I was not a traveller, and therefore coolly surveyed the collection around me, — the old hands intent on breakfast, the young ones fidgeting about luggage. In a Babel of languages orders were given for coffee, chops, boots, coats, ham, eggs, pens, portmanteaus, writing-paper, broiled mackerel, carpet-bags, ink, umbrellas, mackintoshes, and prawns. The waiters and boots were equal to the occasion. Travellers and foreign tongues were familiar to them. They were not in a hurry, they knew the exact time it would take to discharge their part of the living and dead freight, and received or gave their orders, and performed their work with the calmness of treasury clerks, or field-marshals.

My old friend, Pencarryn, about to report on certain South American and West Indian mines, had caught me on my way to the New Forest, and secured me as a spectator of his departure, — not romantically, for the voyage was nothing new to him — but he asked me to see him off just as he would have done, if he had been merely taking the steamer for Edinburgh instead of for Rio de Janeiro.

In due time we moved from the hotel on shore — through the broad, clean, well-built streets of New Southampton — in an involuntary procession of other voyagers, their friends and interpreters, led on by baggage carts on which were artistically piled trunks, chests, and hat-boxes, of every description of trunkish physiognomy. There is a physiognomy in trunks, and a specialty in baggage very suggestive, in the eyes of an old traveller, of the owners. There were vast square wooden boxes, not of the sailor sea-chest look, strong, serviceable, cheap, which hailed quite naturally from Aberdeen. Large portmanteaus of unmistakeably stout leather, no calf or canvass imitations, of curious colours, well banded round, and covered with stout protective knobs, some being provided, in addition, with little castors, were unmistakeably North American. Then there was the regular military baggage, black marked in white, "Captain Stumpe, one hundred and fiftieth West Indian Regiment." Even without the loud screams and vivid gesticulations of the proprietor, I should have known that the two yellow, ill-made portmanteaus, the capacious carpet-bag, the square hat-box, and the bundle of bludgeons and canes curiously carved, bound up with two umbrellas of brilliant colours, belonged to Monsieur Millefleurs, artist in hair-dressing, perfumer, and tonsor, bound for Havannah, from Paris, who was on his first voyage. Besides tin-boxes, bonnet-boxes, chests, bags, there

were many others, which to name, as the Latin Grammar says, would take up too much room.

The Mouse, tender-steamer, waiting to receive us — dwarfed to the size of a very Aztec by comparison with a huge mass in the offing — hissed impatiently in the manner peculiar to such sea sprites on such occasions. The deck was soon crammed with passengers and luggage — a Noah's ark of varieties, enlivened by a confusion of tongues. I will not profess to give the characteristics of each nation — that has been done too often. The march of steam has rubbed habitual travellers down to a general class not easily to be distinguished. A sombrero-hatted, black moustachioed, solemn, cigarette-smoking, person, whom I took for a Spaniard, turned out to be a Scotchman, deep in the hide trade; a thin dandy — ringed, chained, curled, caned, and studded; in the neatest of boots and tightest of gloves — in fact, in externals a pure Parisian, fresh from Tortoni's, the Jockey Club, and the Bourse — was a New Yorker. At any rate, there were gathered on the deck of the little tender English, Scotch, Irish, French, Germans, "Statesmen," Spaniards, Spanish creoles, Italians, Portuguese, Brazilians, English West Indians, and gentlemen and ladies of colour of divers tongues. With a few striking exceptions, there was no special difference between our party and one that may be found any summer's day on a Rhine steamboat. Wide-awake hats, moustachios, cigars, and cigarettes, many-pocketed garments and ample nether integuments abounded, as well as the before-mentioned curious bundles of sticks of all dimensions, from the shillalagh to the thin cane with gold, silver, or ivory head, strapped round an umbrella, which forms the invariable accompaniment—the modern fasces of a foreign fine gentleman.

One figure, however, stood out involuntarily, almost timidly, from the common-place groups around him — a middle-aged, middle-sized, fattish, lemon-complexioned gentleman; beardless, whiskerless, perfectly smooth-faced, spectacled, in snow-white trousers, white waistcoat, white cravat, grey cloth boots tipped with varnished leather, grey wide-awake hat, and loose black coat. I had never seen him before, except in pictures, sitting under a verandah, with a cigar in mouth, but at once recognised the West Indian creole shivering in spite of a bright English sun under the rising sea breeze. But the great attraction (not to me only) was a real Spanish or rather Havanese baby, a few months old, in the arms of a large, flabby, hard-complexioned, sedate Spanish nurse. It was a little plump thing, of pale white-lead tinge — not the whiteness of English babies — with the blackest beads of eyes, and a profusion of jet-black straight

hair peeping from beneath its night-cap. The little creature was full of the strangest antics and grimaces, screwing up its red little button of a mouth in a manner so unearthly, that a Scotchwoman, the wife of one of the engineers, pronounced it to be "no canny." Its favourite toy was — what will you guess, you learned in English nurseries? — not a coral, nor a bunch of keys, nor an ivory ring, nor a watch-chain, but — a fan! Here was a key to the inimitable grace with which the Spanish beauties handle a fan — they begin in time; taking their first lessons in a nurse's arms; whenever the little imp seemed inclined to be fractious, the fan was unfolded, gently waved before its face by the grave nurse, fluttered for a moment or two, and then the infant stretched out its tiny fist, seized the prize in a firm grasp, and tried to imitate the operation.

Of course we had not steamed many yards from the dock-side, before loud cries of lamentation arose, not for parting friends, — that sort of grief is reserved for less genteel conveyances, — but for parcels mislaid, and umbrellas left behind. Perspiring passengers and porters held up their hands on the quay, despairing for a moment, and then disappearing to hire one of the wary boatmen, who every week gather a fair harvest from the great Too-late family. A short quarter of an hour's gliding by the lovely scenery of the Solent brought us alongside the Bella Donna. The style of getting on board a large steamer from a small steamer has considerable advantages, both in dignity and comfort, over the small boat and rope-ladder system of emigrant ships; where, with a short sea and wobbling boat, climbing up an unsteady machine with efforts worthy of those of a street mountebank, becomes the necessity of passengers, without exception to age and sex; all of whom "must climb who never climbed before;" and not only climb, but hold on for their lives. We were better off.

When the Mouse ran alongside the Bella Donna, a sort of big door was opened in the side of the latter (excuse want of nautical knowledge), leading to the lower deck. The court was ready ranged in rows, to receive its king, the captain; on one side the officers in blue uniforms and gold lace; on the other, a selection from the crew, in white trousers and blue Jerseys, with "Bella Donna" embroidered in red on every chest. Among these were two negroes, of the blackest, fuzziest type; evidently impressed with the dignity of their office and the unaccustomed magnificence of their costume. After the captain, the passengers followed pell-mell, and were soon widely dispersed, the new voyagers madly shrieking for the steward and stewardess.

Leaving them to their confusion, I mounted to the deck; where, from bow to stern, a clear

promenade, long enough for exercise in a pony chair, extended without break or step — a vast improvement in comfort on the old style of lofty picturesque poop. Man-of-war discipline prevailed. The whiteness of the planks, the neatness of every arrangement, must be something frightful to the tobacco-chewing sections of the one hundred and fifty passengers whose acquaintance with dirt has been so close and so protracted, that they have acquired an affection for it. Two operations of a very different character were going on simultaneously. On one side passengers, escaped from the luggage department, were busy, choosing their light reading for the voyage from a parti-coloured collection transplanted from a railway station; — the stock of which had gone off with extraordinary briskness. On the other, the captain mustered his crew and engineers, a formidable array; for the officers and crew made up more than fifty; six engineers had under their command twenty-four firemen, eighteen coal trimmers, and a couple of mechanics. Stewards and servants made up a round dozen, beside a quarter of a hundred waiters to minister to the wants of a hundred and fifty passengers. As for the freight, besides two hundred tons of stores to be consumed on the voyage, and five hundred tons of cargo, there were some thirteen hundred tons of coal for the insatiable demands of the stoke-holes.

From the quarter-deck, I made my way amidships to look into the farm. I found it well stocked. In separate pens, pigs grunted, sheep chewed the cud; while fowls, ducks, geese, and turkeys, occupied long coops, in marvellous profusion. There is no department in which improvement is more needed than in sea-going pens and coops. If every sheep had its separate stall divided off by stout open rails, and if the coops for poultry were subdivided so as not to have more than four or five in each division; if, in addition, the grain-troughs were kept always full of food, and a tin fountain of sufficient size were attached to each water-trough, a large per centage of the poultry now destroyed during every voyage by over-crowding and fighting for water, would be saved, and all would be kept in good condition. Already poultry mortality had begun to take place, and the sheep, if they had been penned separately, would have avoided many bruises, without any loss of space.

From the stock-farm I descended to the kitchen, without halting in the long luxuriant dining-room, surrounded by softly-cushioned sofas. The kitchen is a sort of cage of iron, placed on the lower deck, nearly amidships; there I had the pleasure of seeing the French chef, a firstrate artist, attended by his myrmidons

at work, — and of learning how, within a section scarcely twelve feet square, dinners of many dishes worthy of the renowned artists of the Boulevard des Italiens and Palais Royal, — could be prepared, dished, and transferred to the hands of the twenty-five waiters; who, in full livery of blue coats with metal buttons, and white continuations, perform the part of genii of ancient story; and, at the appointed signal — no matter whether rubbing a sonorous ring, or ringing a bell — lay out the feast. To appreciate the capabilities of mechanical skill and cooking talents of a high order in triumphing over confined space, and in defying time, the steam kitchen of a steam-ship must be visited. The commander-in-chief, like Field-marshal Governor Crusoe, is monarch of all he surveys. He plans the whole, but does not disdain to execute details; thus, those who have on one day luxuriated over his best dish, a matelotte à la Macédoine, fricandeau de poulet, a vol-au-vent, or a Mayonnaise d'homard, may the next see him hard at work chopping the vegetables destined to form a delicious potage, with the rapidity and neatness of a machine; while keeping an eye on his ovens, his steamers, his braisières, his boilers, and issuing curt directions to his second in command.

In this vast floating caravanserai two French and one English artist sail permanently, for the passengers; besides four assistants. While the steam kitchen was throwing out perfumes of delicious fragrance to a hungry man, the door of a cabin close by accidentally opening, displayed another artist engaged on the pastry, — into the manufacture of which he was throwing his whole soul. From these two laboratories proceed the sources of the principal employment of the voyage: that is to say, — two breakfasts, luncheon, two dinners, tea, supper, also divers little snacks and portions for invalids and infants. A bill of fare for the preceding voyage, which fell into my hands, opened up a new course of study for sea voyagers. It was clear then that all tastes were consulted. Two soups prepared for fish, saumon en mayonnaise; then came solid joints, roast beef, mutton, and mutton boiled, with caper sauce, with other solids to meet the sober appetite of John Bull; — but there was also a vol-au-vent de volaille, ducks stewed with little peas — I translate here — and pigs' feet treated in a manner which only French genius can execute. After other strokes of talent of the same subtle character, a sacrifice was made to grosser English and German taste, in a roast goose. It was August — he was a stubble goose, slightly removed from a green goose. Other roasts succeeded, lightened up by a ragout of kidneys and sheep's hearts, and a haricot which, from such a hand, would

inspire perfect confidence. Sweets followed in delightful variety and profusion. To wash down these luncheons, dinners, and suppers, besides the odd hours to be killed by a cigar and cold drink during a voyage of fourteen days, some twenty tons of ice are provided, and a cellar containing about two hundred dozen of wine, well packed — sherry and claret occupying the largest space, port the smallest; Champagne comes next to sherry; Madeira, Hock, Mozelle, and Sauterne, each fill some dozen bins. Four casks of brandy, and about three hundred dozen of ale and stout, have also to be provided with compact storage.

The thirstiness of idleness on a South American voyage must be measured in gallons. In the above, the ship's crew's consumption is not included. Besides the two courses and dessert of the saloon there has also to be provided the following separate dinners:—For the officers' mess; for the engineers' mess; for the warrant-officers' mess; for passengers' servants' and children's mess. Among these, the engineers did not fare badly on pea-soup and roast pork, stewed breast of mutton, haricot, potatoes, rice, and plumpudding. For the children, chicken and rice, and tapioca-pudding were provided. After examining these bills of fare and seeing the artist at work, I was not surprised to find that the commander-in-chief of the kitchen had ten pounds, and that the second in command had six pounds a-month, with doubtless some perquisites. The crew, who have a cook of their own, feed daily on salt beef and suet-puddings.

A word of command recalled me from gourmand and gourmet meditations, to which only a Brillat Savarin could have done justice. The Mail tender was alongside, and a division of the crew, chiefly the grinning blackmen, were hauling across the connecting-plane a large cargo of packages, in shape much like gigantic roll-puddings. The canvass puddings contained newspapers, the leather ones letters — how many tons of each I did not learn, but something considerable; and their directions were quite an encyclopædia of geographical names. Then the word came, "All for shore!" and friends embraced and took leave; but "Good Lord!" as old Pepys would say, "that was a very cool, common-place business."

The romance of the sea has gone the way of the romance of the road. Buccaneer conquerors and picturesque pirates have become as impossible as those curled darlings of the melodrama who robbed in velvet coats, and spent their last days in Newgate, consoled by the lamenting visits of curious ladies of quality, and the best wine the jailor's cellars could afford. Even the romance of distance, which had survived the swarm of frigates so fatal to sea-robbing and secret island

homes in our youth, has passed away. A few years ago, although travellers no longer made their wills and embraced their despairing wives with a tragic air on proceeding from Exeter to London, a sea-voyage was still a serious affair. A man who had plucked mangoes from, or cracked cocoa-nuts beneath, their native trees was a small lion. To have visited South America was to have the credit of an intimate acquaintance with the qualities of diamonds; and a sojourn in Cuba entitled the fortunate individual, if young and not bad looking, to the deep attention of all the young ladies, while he told stories in which gigantic flowers and butterflies, snakes, lizards, and ladrones, were mixed up with dark eyes, cigarettes, siestas, volantes, mantles, and mantillas, orange-groves, and frightful assassinations.

Steam has changed all that. Distance (no longer) lends enchantment to the view. Passengers to Rio, Buenos Ayres, and Cuba, shook hands with their home-staying friends as they would have done had they been off in the Bella Donna to Brighton for a week. The only sentimental person in our return boat was a simple country lass, the newly-married wife of one of the engineers, who had never seen the sea or parted with her husband before that day. She wept profusely.

Even the old melodious ceremony dear to sea songsters of heaving the anchor was not performed on this occasion. As we moved off, the Bella Donna backed astern, loosed and slipped a rope that held her to a great buoy, and then her feathering paddles dipping almost noiselessly into the sea, she went away like a racehorse.

SUNDAY MUSIC.

This earth we live on is decidedly a very curious place, and people do the most extraordinary things upon it. 'Whatever is, is right,' of course — the number of feet in that line of the Essay on Man is certainly correct — but still I can't help doubting whether it be quite right to hate our brothers and sisters quite as much as we do. It can't be exactly a proper thing to take that which does not belong to us, and cut the throats of the legitimate proprietors, because they object to our proceedings; to believe, (or say we believe) that some hundred millions of our fellow creatures are bound headlong to perdition, because they believe rather more or less than we believe. It may be right, but it doesn't look like it, to send two honest labourers to hard labour in a villanous jail — to herd with Blueskin, Jack Rann, Bill Sykes, and Mat-o'-the-Mint — for the microscopic crime of leaving haymaking to see a review; it oughtn't to be right that a Christian priest, consecrated to God's

service for our soul's health, should, by virtue of his commission of J.P., have the right to do a shameful and cruel wrong. Let me only take one little slender twig from one of the fascines with which we are perpetually fortifying our stronghold of assumed right or wrong — one splinter of the yule log of inconsistency — Music on Sundays.

And, mind, I am tolerant, I am moderate; I am content to blink the general Sunday question — Sunday and bitters, or Sunday and sweetstuff. Meet me on this question: Is secular music on Sundays right or wrong, and are we inconsistent in our opinions and acts concerning it?

I maintain that music is always good; and better on our best of days, Sunday. I shall not be long in finding antagonists who will maintain that Sunday music is wrong, dangerous, nay, damnable.

Now, why should secular Sunday music be so dreadfully wicked? — or, again, admitting momentarily, that it might not be quite correct, why can't we be a little consistent in the application of our strictures, remembering that maxim so time-honoured (in the breach thereof), that what is sauce for the goose is (or should be) sauce for the gander likewise? Did you never dwell, O ye denouncers of Sunday music! in a provincial garrison town? Did you never listen without wringing of hands, or heaving of breasts, or upturning of eyes, or quivering accents — but, on the contrary, with much genial pleasure and content — to the notes of the regimental brass-band coming home with the regiment from church? Was not that music of a notoriously worldly, not to say frivolous character, including marches, polkas, potpourris, schottisches, valses-à-deux-temps, many of which, by the self-same musicians, you heard performed only last night at the Shire Hall Ball, or the Dowager Lady Larkheel's Assembly? And yet I never heard of an association in a country town for putting down regimental waltzes on Sundays; and I decidedly never knew the poet's corner of a country newspaper to be ornamented by such a brimstone bard as he who empties his penny phials of penny wrath upon the wind instruments in Kensington Gardens. Tell me, are there not scores of watering-places — pious watering-places, the chosen villegiature of serious old ladies with heavy balances at their bankers — of evangelical young ladies, whose lives are passed (and admirably, too) in a circle of tracts, good books, fleecy hosiery, beef tea, rheumatism, and bedridden old ladies — of awakened bankers, possessing private proprietary chapels, and never — oh, never! — running away with the cash-box — watering-places where pet parsons are as plentiful as pet lapdogs, and every

quack, and every ignoramus, and every crack-brained enthusiast can thump his tub and think it is a pulpit — can blow his puny tin trumpet and think it is the last trump? Yet in these same watering-places I never heard of denunciations of the cavalry band, or very frequently the subscription band charming the air with sweet sounds on Sunday afternoons, on the pier or the parade, the common or the downs. To come nearer home, who has not heard of the Sunday band playing upon the terrace of regal Windsor? Was not that mundane music patronised by the most immaculate, severely-virtuous of kings — the pattern family-man, George the Third! And who can err who copies George the Third? And to come nearer, nearest home, see where yon palace stands — that unsightly but expensive lump of architecture in eruption — that palace before which stand no unholy cabs (oh, wicked Place du Caroussel that sufferest cabs, omnibuses, citadines, Dame Blanches, and voitures bourgeoises!) — in that palace the sovereign necessarily dines every Sunday when in town. Do you think Mr. Anderson and the private band play psalm-tunes while the royal family are at dinner, indulge the royal ears with the Old Hundredth between the courses, and usher in the entries with the Evening Hymn? Away, ye hypocrites! Go away, black men, don't you come anigh us. You object to Sunday strains when the music is out-door — when it affords a rational, cheerful, innocent amusement for the tens of thousands of. overworked humanity.

I do not consider myself to be altogether a heathen, I have no sympathy for Fetish rites, or for any form of Mumbo-Jumboism, be that interesting ism found at Eldad, or little Bethel, at Saint Trumpington's Cathedral, or on the west coast of Africa. I am not a pagan, a worshipper of Ahriman, a follower of Zoroaster, or a disciple of Tom Paine, yet I am constrained to confess, that I can discern no difference at all between sacred and secular music, that should render the performance of the first permissible, and of the second obnoxious as impious on the Sabbath-day. Music may be grave or gay, lively or plaintive, but it is always sacred. It is an art. Its every phase can soften, refine, subdue, charm, refresh, console, humanise, elevate, improve. When it is coarse or vulgar, it is not music at all, but sound prostituted. So would I have no bad music allowed either on Sundays or week-days anywhere, but good music; what nice and conceited sciolist is to weigh the nice distinctions between the sacred and profane, — to tell me which is lay and which is clerical music? The Dead March in Saul, played in quick measure, is a jig; Adeste Fideles, is as triumphant, joyous, brilliant, mirthful, as the Happy, Happy, duet in Acis and Galatea.

My Mother bids me bind my Hair, is as plaintive as any air in any oratorio in existence: and so is Auld Robin Gray. Sound the Loud Timbrel, is in its actual time, almost a polka. Who can call that tremendous deep burst of joy and praise — that chorus or choruses, the Hallelujah; to which we, cold-blooded, fleshy, phlegmatic Englishmen even, accord the tribute of standing up uncovered whenever it is performed, — who can call the Hallelujah Chorus sacred in the Sternhold and Hopkins' sense of the word? Sacred it is as the master-piece of a great musician, but it is no sour canticle, no nasal chant. It is a triumphant pæan of happiness and thankfulness; it is the voice of all humanity, singing, not miserably, not dolefully, not with a mouth whose lips are cracked with vinegar, and whose tongue saturated with gall, and whose teeth on edge with bitter doctrine, and whose throat half-choked with a starched neck-cloth, but with full expansive lungs, with a heart beating with pleasure, with nerves strung with strong reliance and cheerful faith, with a whole spirit loudly, jubilantly giving thanks for the sun, the seas, the fields, the seed-time, and the harvest, for the merciful present and the merciful to come. Old Rowland Hill was right in his generation when he declared that he could not see why the devil should have all the good tunes to himself, — and followed his declaration by having the words in his hymn-book set to the best secular tunes. But I will go farther than Rowland Hill. I cannot see why the devil should have any good tunes. Let us respect and cherish, ennoble and protect the art of music, and there shall speedily be no harm in music, secular or sacred, on Sundays.

Sauce for the goose, sauce for the gander. In the name of common sense, if the Star steam-packet is allowed to start every Sunday morning for Gravesend with a brass-band on board, that plays gaily all the way to the suburban watering-place — if at Woolwich towards seven o'clock you may hear the Artillery band tuning up for the officers' mess, why should the crowds who now wander purposeless about the streets and parks of London be deprived of a cheap, wholesome, and sensible gratification? Which is best — to listen to the overture to Oberon in Kensington Gardens, or to brood over a tap-room table, muttering out the latest false or true news of the Turco-Russian war, or growling out the odds on the next Derby, or spelling out over a misanthropic pipe the record of the last prize-fight? Which is best — to go to a Sunday bed in pure weariness, or skulk about street corners and against posts till the public-houses open, and gnash your teeth with impotent abuse of the legislature when they close, or maunder over a pamphlet on raw cotton in a deserted club-room

— or to saunter on the green grass beneath the green trees, surrounded by happy groups, gay colours, kind voices, silver laughter, children spangling the sward like daisies, manhood in its prime, beauty in its flower, old age in reverent complacency — all kept together, not by strong excitement, not by frenzied declamation, not by fireworks or jugglers' feats or quacks' orations, but by the simple, tender tie of a few musical chords, of a pretty tune or two played by a score of men in red coats? We might have the grass and the trees, the children and the daisies, you say, without the music. If we need recreation, we might walk in the fields or the lanes. Yes; and I have seen a cow in a field, and she was chewing the cud, and a donkey in a by-lane, and he was munching thistles. If I wish to ruminate, to be alone, to be Misanthropos and hate mankind, I know where to walk; but if I wish to see my fellows around me pleasurably occupied (for what is happiness but delightful labour, and doing good actions the most delightful labour of all!), and by some harmless music pleased, and thereby rendering the best and sweetest thanks to that Giver whom (as good Bishop Taylor phrases it) we cannot please unless we be infinitely pleased ourselves — then thither will I go; and thither, too, I went only two Sundays ago, into Kensington Gardens, where sixty thousand persons (and not one pickpocket — apparent, at least), of every rank and grade in life, were collected to hear the band play. I forgive Sir BENJAMIN HALL much red tape, past, present and to come, for this one sensible concession of his.

The band playing in Kensington Gardens! Till within the last month, this celebration taking place during the summer months twice a-week was, with some few exceptions, an exclusively aristocratic amusement. Some ragged waifs and strays of bad or miserable humanity — some heaps of tatters that had souls inside, but very little corporeal life — were wont to come here and crouch upon the grass till routed up by park-keeper's cane, dully listening to the music, and wistfully gazing round from time to time in search of eleemosynary pence. But they seldom managed to elude the vigilance of the guardians even sufficiently to pass the gate. By times threadbare men who did not eat often, pacing the noble avenues in abstract thought or entranced perusal of learned books, would come, accidentally, upon the aristocratic throng; but they would glance at their shabby clothes and sigh, and hie away quickly on the other side, frightened like unto a fawn leaping out from a covert into some glade of Bushy Park, where a merry pic-nic party is assembled, and betacking itself, startled, into the umbrage of the

oaks again. People dressed to attend the band-playing at Kensington. Lines of empty carriages waited outside the gates, while their possessors promenaded the gardens. Round the braying bandsmen were gathered the great London dandies, the great London belles, the pearls of aristocratic purity, and, I am afraid, some other pearls of beauty and of price, but of more Cleopatrean configuration, and whose Antonies found here a neutral ground whereon to vaunt their charms and their possession. Could the wiry little terrier in the sulky brougham by Victoria Gate have spoken, he would have told you where the lady in the long black ringlets, with so many diamonds, and with gold flowers on her veil, was gone — the coachman could speak, but would not — he was discreet. The whole scene was a charmed circle of moustaches and tufts (the beard movement was not then), watchchains, filligree card-cases, Brussels lace, **moiré** antique dresses, primrose **kid gloves**, vinaigrettes, auburn **curls**, semi-transparent bonnets, varnished boots, and bouquet de millefleurs. As for smoking, who would have dared to think of smoking in Kensington's sacred garden, save, perhaps, wicked Captain Rolster of the Heavies, or the abandoned Lieutenant Lilliecrap of the Lancers? They smoked — those incorrigible young men — but then it was at some distance from the ladies (whose points and paces, by the way, they discussed not quite so respectfully, but with something of a sporting gusto); and there is a very difference, you will allow, between a penny Pickwick and one of Hudson's regalias at two and a half guineas per pound.

Miraculously to say, the swells (so unaffectedly may I be allowed to term the upper classes) remain. They positively, by a charming condescension and inexplicable affability, frequent the band-playing, now that it takes place on Sundays; and, considering the lateness of the season, in no diminished numbers. But to this inner ring of perfumed youths and jewelled dames, to these sons of proconsols, and daughters of prætors, and wives of ædiles, there is now added another belt — thicker, stronger, coarser, if you will (like a "keeper" to a ring of virgin gold) — a belt of workers, of peasants, mechanics, artisans, clerks, high middle-class, medium middle-class, and low middle-class men, who come here, Sunday after Sunday, rejoicing at, and grateful for, the boon (infinitesimally small as it is), who bring their wives and children, down to the baby at the breast, with them; who listen patiently and cheerfully to the music, and, wonder of wonders, do not endeavour to stone the musicians, root up the plants, set fire to the grass, dash out the brains of the children of the

aristocracy against stones, rend the swells limb from limb, sell the daughters of the prætors into slavery, defile the graves of the ædiles' wives, smoke short pipes in the vicinity of the band, fight among themselves, usurp the chairs by force, and refuse to pay for them, carve their names on the trunks of the trees, gather flowers from the Birchbroomicus Busbiense, introduced seventeen hundred and seventy-three (as the label says), pelt the attendants of the refreshment-rooms with ginger-beer bottles, or purloin Mr. Gunter's cheese-cakes and raspberry tarts! Who do none of these things, though certain sections of thinkers and speakers, even of a moderate description, appear to think that every Sunday crowd must necessarily commit acts of this nature.

My Sunday afternoon in Kensington Gardens was not, perhaps, begun under the most advantageous circumstances. Though the day was hot, it was lowering, and the sky seemed to say, Put on your white ducks and book-muslins, and leave your umbrellas at home, but in half-an-hour I rain. Again, I entered the gardens by a wrong gate (there are so many gates), and wandered about for some time disconsolately, finding myself at Bayswater when I wished myself at Knightsbridge, and catching a glimpse of the hideous Wellington statue at Hyde Park Corner through the trees, when the next vista I expected was of the red bricks of William the Third's hideous but comfortable palace. Then I came across two children whom I didn't love, as I do most children, but looked upon, on the contrary, with an evil eye, and malevolent aspirations, for they were horrible children; they squabbled one with the other, and threatened to tell of one another. One of them ran between my legs, and another cut me across the ancles with a whip — playfully, as he meant it, no doubt, fiendishly as I thought. They were aided and abetted in all this by a morose nurse, who looked darkly at me, and wondered, mutteringly, "What people thought of themselves." I confess, as far as I was concerned, that I thought it unjust that people should be tripped up and cut across the ancles. Then I was sorely annoyed by a stern and forbidding man, who persisted in walking before me, who had no right to wear the boots he did — they being aggressive, iron-heeled, and craunching the gravel as he walked. He carried an umbrella as though it were a cartwhip; and I could not help fancying that his name must have been something like Captain Prosser, formerly R.N., that he had been governor of some jail, and that he was a hard man, fond of the crank. Altogether I became uneasy and dissatisfied; was almost concluding that my dinner had disagreed with me.

But I came upon the music-

platform at last, the Guards' band standing in a circle and blowing manfully, the adjacent refreshment-room, the chairs, the price of which had been judiciously reduced from sixpence to one penny, and surrounding all, a compact, earnest, eager crowd,* listening with pleased ears to the music. The fine gentlemen, the beautiful ladies, the titled and happy of the land, were there in great force: their empty carriages waited for them at the gate as in the old time; but the immense mass of those present were toilers — working-people of every rank; nor is it necessary to draw any minute distinction between them, for the bank-clerk, the curate, the tradesman, have to work quite as hard, and find it quite as difficult to make both ends meet as the carpenter, the bricklayer, and the journeyman tailor. I do not think I am called upon to descant at length upon the good behaviour, the quiet inoffensiveness of the vast assemblage here collected; upon the absence of broils, or violence, or ribald talk. I am one of those who think that an English crowd is the best behaved, quietest, best humoured crowd in Europe. I think so still, though among those thousands in Kensington Gardens at least a tithe formed part of that ominous well-dressed throng whom, not many Sundays back, I had heard yelling at the same noble and happy personages they associated so comfortably with do-day; whom I had seen lashed to frenzy by the pig-headed exhibition of a misdirected police force, and which frenzy, but for the oil thrown a few days afterwards upon the waves, would have grown into a tempest such as not all the trails of all the six-pounders in Woolwich Arsenal, served by all the young gentlemen who have not the least business to be in the House of Commons, would have been able to quell.

The same crowd; the same Toms, and Dicks, and Harries; and see what a little is required to keep them in good humour. A circular refreshment room, with ices, gingerbeer, and Banbury cakes: some scores of garden chairs at a cheaper rate than usual, and a platform where my friends the redjackets are operating upon ophecleide, trombone, and kettle-drum, and this was all. I even remarked that the tunes the musicians played were of the dreariest, most lachrymose, most penitential tunes that could be well heard, — still secular music, no doubt, — selections from popular operas, of course, but so long-winded and melancholy, that I could not help fancying that the bandmaster himself was one of the principal objectors to Sunday music, and had made a compromise with his conscience by providing the most mournful

* The total number of persons who entered Kensington Gardens on Sunday, August the nineteenth, was sixty-one thousand, four hundred and fifty-eight.

pieces in the regimental repertoire. A patient public — a placable monster — a good-natural rabble, this same English nation. Here they seemed quite satisfied, pleased, nay, grateful, for the Lifeguards' band, with their "Tunes that the Cow died of." They asked not (at least audibly) for more than this, with the permission of walking about under the trees, and of seeing their children sporting on the grass. Yet but two Sundays before I had seen another public, far away beyond the Straits of Dover, — a patient public, too: good-natured, long-suffering, but not always quite contented. For that public were provided, as special Sunday treats, military bands, not one or two, but half a dozen; a whole concert of drums; miles of picture galleries, and museums, and antiquities, and palatial saloons to walk about in, free; and a Great Palace full of marvels of art and industry, for which the whole world had been ransacked, to be explored for four sous — twopence!

On the whole, I should like our Sunday to be quiet, cheerful, English, with a little more out-of-doorishness, — a little more harmony — there, I have said it! — a little more sitting down at tables, or strolling about grassy swards to hear good music. Don't stop short at Kensington Gardens, good Mr. Chief Commissioner. Don't stop short at the band of the Life Guards. Remember there are such places as Hyde Park, Saint James's, the Green, Victoria, and Battersea Parks. One volunteer is worth a dozen pressed men. Let the soldiers have their afternoon holiday if they choose one, or let them have extra pay if that is what they desire. We won't object to the rate. But let us have bands of our own in our public gardens to discourse sweet music to us on Sunday afternoons and Sunday evenings. There will be far more brotherly love, and far less liquor, and far fewer night-charges on Monday.

A little before six o'clock the musicians played Partant pour la Syrie and God save the Queen; then the crowd dispersed quietly. I saw not one policeman, and not one policeman was needed. The wheezy, red-waistcoated park-keepers were quite sufficient to quell the somewhat too exuberant animal spirits of the London boys, who are to be found in every London crowd, making noises where they ought to be silent, and clambering over railings where they have no business to be. Walking home, much elevated in spirits from the cheerful scene I had witnessed, and quite forgetting Captain Prosser and his boots, and the disagreeable children, I thought to myself, This is not much, but it is some relief for the toiling many.

AN ENEMY'S CHARGE.

A WELL-KNOWN ecclesiastical association, having for its members the Rev. W. H. Hale, Archdeacon of London; the Rev. W. H. Hale, Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's; the Rev. W. H. Hale, Master of the Charter-house; the Rev. W. H. Hale, Almoner of St. Paul's; the Rev. W. H. Hale, Chaplain to the Bishop of London; and the Rev. W. H. Hale, Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, has lately been made the subject of virulent satire in a something purporting to be a charge addressed to the clergy of the archdeaconry of London, by W. H. Hale, M. A. The Archdeacon of London receives about three hundred a-year; the Canon of St. Paul's, six or seven hundred and a residence; the Master of the Charter-house, eight hundred and a residence; the Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, two thousand and a residence; — all which moneys flow into one pair of pockets, and all which residences are the dwelling of a single priest. Now, taking hard advantage of the prejudice and scandal that arise from this fact, the enemy of the association — save a man from himself! — depicts it in the shape of a great Pluralist dissatisfied with his pecuniary position, and addressing from the pulpit a large body of Christian ministers, who come to him for seasonable counsel, on the blessings of filth as a source of lucre. For this is, in fact, the substance of the charge to which we are referring. Death and burial are its solemn themes. The final aspirations of the Christian are connected with his thoughts of some departed souls; but, to his spiritual pastors, the archdeacon is here represented as commending him chiefly in the form of one who is either a customer or dealer at another shop while living, and as resolving himself, when dead, into dust and gas, and money. Only in a land where there is L. S. D. instead of I. H. S. upon the pulpit-front, and a great ledger on the pulpit-cushion, could a charge like this have been delivered.

When, in eighteen hundred and fifty, some attempt was made towards the shutting-up of over-crowded churchyards; "in the month of December of that year returns were made," says the canon, "by the parishes and by the clergy to the Board of Health, of the amount of compensation which would be required for the loss of their fees; and I have it recorded in writing that the officers of the Board of Health, after receiving the returns from my own parish, intimated that the board would act with the greatest liberality towards individuals who should be affected by the act, such as the incumbent" (including the archdeacon, the canon, and the master of Charter-house), "the clerk and sexton. Thus far," it is said, "the legislature seemed inclined to adhere to the original purpose expressed

in the appointment of the select committee in eighteen hundred and forty-two, respecting the rights of the clergy. But, though many of the clergy" (not including the archdeacon, the canon, and the master of Charter-house), "have been impoverished, and all have encountered loss by the destruction of rights acknowledged by the legislature to exist, all thought of remedying the injury appears to be abandoned." This is set forth as the text of the archdeacon's charge, and he is represented by his cruel satirist — in the absence of all hope of compensation for the loss of intramural burial fees — as striking out against those whom he is contemptuously made to call the patrons of the public health, and falling generally into a state of combativeness, very ludicrous to see. Thus he is even supposed to test the gravity of his reverend audience by maintaining that the abolition of intramural interment is injurious in the highest degree to religion and to morals, and that no proof has been as yet adduced, that English churches and churchyards, containing the bodies of the faithful of many by-gone generations, are in any way whatever sources of disease, or are dangerous to the public health. If it were possible to suppose this charge really offered by an archdeacon of London to the London clergy, it would be just as possible to receive it in the light of something in a much higher degree injurious to religion and morals than the shutting-up of over-crowded churchyards in the heart of a great city. It is true that there are ill-paid clergymen in London who have lost part of an almost necessary maintenance by the loss of churchyard fees. We heartily desire that they should have their rights. But the great Pluralist who occupies three houses and locks up in his cash-box three clergymen's incomes, is not the man whose pity can console them most effectually, or whose advice (that they should eke their livings out by cleaving to a vested interest in what their countrymen declare to be abominable and corrupt) is most likely to be welcome to their ears. For which reasons we hold that the satirist of the aforesaid ecclesiastical association, has most bitterly and cruelly attacked its credit.

He has done wrong also to the body of the London clergy, who, during all the inquiries of late years into the state of their town churchyards, declared frankly, with but very few exceptions, that they were unwholesome, even in a religious point of view. The supposed archdeacon is made to talk, also, of that solemnity which was wont to attend the walking funeral from the poor man's residence to his parish church. Upon this head what is the feeling of the London clergy? Conspicuous among sound churchmen there is a dean

who, as a scholar and a poet, should have no very mean perception on a point of sense and feeling. "A funeral procession," says Dean Milman, "through the streets of a great and busy town, can scarcely be made impressive. Not even the hearse in gorgeous gloom, with all the pomp of heraldry, and followed by the carriages of half the nobility in the land, will arrest for an instant the noise and confusion of our streets, or awaken any deeper impression with the mass than idle curiosity. While the poor man, borne on the shoulders of men as poor as himself, is jostled off the pavement, the mourners, at some crossing, are either in danger of being run over or separated from the body; in the throng of passers no sign of reverence, no stirring of conscious mortality in the heart." What is this but a just expression of the simple knowledge of every man, woman, and child in London competent to observe what passes in the streets? The consciousness of an indifferent, unsympathising crowd, disturbs and distracts the mourner, throws constraint over the expression of his grief, diverts his thoughts from that inward contemplation of the heavenly mansion to which the lost friend has been led, and as a denizen of which — not as a denizen of the grave — it is the instinct, as well as the sacred duty, of the Christian mourner to cherish him in thought. The archdeacon is, by his merciless enemy, represented as setting aside for unsubstantial all considerations of this kind. "To bury the dead in places apart from human habitation," he is made to say, "is to overwhelm their memories in darkness; it is the putting the candle under the bushel instead of in the candlestick; it is a forbidding the light of the noble, the wise, and the good, who are departed, so to shine before men, that they may remember their good works, and be excited to follow their example."

What! is the light left by the wise and righteous a corpse-candle, and nothing more? Do we lose all when we lose their material dust and ashes? Certainly we do, the satirist would make us believe that the archdeacon thinks. The object of his discourse is said to be "to avert from my church and country as great an evil as can befal us — the neglect of the dead and loss of their example," by the loss of burial fees at St. Giles's, Cripplegate, and other churches having graveyards set among the crowded dwellings of the poor.

Of course the satirist understood that a rich pluralist was not likely to demean himself by personally burying a pauper, and that he might fairly be represented as not knowing that the parish church itself is not for persons of that class. The archdeacon is, indeed, shown as dwelling, in one part of his charge, on the comfort it must

be to persons who cannot go to church themselves, on account of their shabby clothing, to know that they have relatives buried in or near the building; but he, apparently, does not know that the burial service is not read within the church walls over paupers — that their bodies go straight to the grave. He is represented as eloquent, however, upon the privilege of interment near the church, speaking of Kensal Green as of a place far away in some wide desert, saying that there is hardly a village or hamlet in England which does not contain men and women around whose graves crowds will not willingly assemble to deplore their loss, and summing up accordingly with this inquiry — "If the places allotted for the dead be no longer places of concourse, is it not manifest that all those lessons — lessons the value of which even the Heathen understood — will be no longer taught?" If such a charge were solemnly delivered to the London clergy in a sacred building, they must be supposed to know that the close London graveyards really are frequented by deploring crowds; that it would be a Christian sight if they were so, and would speak well for the efficacy of our faith in a more spiritual life than that which is put off with this gross body. But the common belief of Londoners who pass to and fro daily before the old reeking graveyards, is utterly the reverse — that they are of all lonely places the most utterly deserted. From one of them, now closed, a visitor brought this description home:—

A long narrow strip, not above ten or twelve feet in width, between the walls of the church on one side, and the rears of some old dirty houses in Cloth-fair, which in some parts overhang the ground, on the other. To a stranger it has all the appearance of a filthy backyard, common to several low and filthy houses. The surface is strewed with cabbage leaves, parings of turnips, fish-bones, and other sorts of rubbish, with large splashes of filthy water that had been recently emptied from some adjacent window. There is a large pile of hencoops at one end, and there are a couple of dog-kennels at another part. Upon inquiring to whom they belonged, the schoolmaster of the parochial schools informed me that they were his property, adding that the management of the ground had been left by the churchwardens in his hands for the last three or four years, and that he made use of it as a convenient place to keep his fowls in. At the present season of the year, he said, it did not look nice; but in summer the grass grew quite beautifully. Before his time, the graveyard, he told me, was in a horrible state, and not fit to be entered by anyone, being ankle deep in many places with excrement, which had been thrown out from the houses in Clothfair, and no better than a common dung-yard. Yet then, or at least not very long before, it was the pauper burial-ground for the parish; and that multitudes of human corpses have been thrust into it is sufficiently evident by the great rising of the ground, by many feet above the level of the adjacent court.

They are not all so bad as that; yet inhabitants of London who remember what its graveyards were before the tardy interference of the legislature, know that this sketch does no serious injustice to the class. In a London churchyard not a whit worse than the average, a clergyman more care-

ful about Christian decorum than church-fees, has thus described the method of burial, the prevention of which is, according to the archdeacon's supposed charge, to be injurious in the highest degree to religion and morals.

The touching association of burial, and the sublime spirituality of our Burial Service, are broken in upon by the exhibitions of the most vulgar and even ludicrous scenes of daily life. The eastern end of my parish-ground, for instance, abuts upon Brick Lane, one of our most crowded and noisy thoroughfares, and at one corner stands a publichouse, which, of course is, not without its attractions to street minstrels. So the dead may be buried to the tune of Pop goes the Weasel, while street-boys wholly destitute of reverential feeling, climb about the rails, and offend the mourners with remarks familiar and offensive. On all these occasions, said the Christian minister, I labour under the indescribable uneasiness of feeling out of place. And yet the exposure of my burial ground is but partial, and is little or nothing compared with that of many others.

So felt the Reverend W. Stone, vicar of Spitalfields.

The dead are treated in the mock charge as objects of church traffic. This charge is made to begin by stating that attention was first called to the subject of intramural interment by Mr. Walker. The irregularities and indecencies of the graveyards described by that gentleman, chiefly took place in those unconsecrated cemeteries which were the property of individuals, or were attached to dissenting chapels. Then we come to the gist of the argument at once. The inquiries then set on foot, says the preacher, revealed to the public the extent of the expenditure upon burial; whilst the profit which then accrued, not merely to the clergy, but to the parishes and the undertakers, attracted the attention of capitalists, and caused the formation of cemetery companies, who, with the aid of the legislature, have nearly succeeded in securing to themselves the monopoly of burial within the metropolitan district.

In the beginning there was little to be feared. The cemetery system was at first unpopular; and, if it had not been for cholera, it is doubtful whether the cemeteries would have proved to be a profitable speculation. The whole mischief came of our rebellion in not taking the cholera as quietly as Christians should; who ought to swell and not destroy the burial-fees of their spiritual pastors and masters.

Afterwards, medical practitioners began to make inquiries, proper care of the health came to be discussed. And now, Science — profane defrauder of the churchyard! — has become so bold, as to consider her powers equal to the contest with this fatal disease, so that the registrar-general of births, has not hesitated to ask, — "Is London to continue every five years to be attacked by pestilence, and to lose so many thousands of its inhabitants? Cannot the conditions in which disease is fatal be determined, and cannot they be removed?"

Intramural interment, then, came into question, and legislation for its abolition was commenced, as the archdeacon is made to say, with a special direction that due respect should be paid to the rights of the clergy. The committee, saving vested rights in family vaults and allowing value to the clergy for the loss of fees, concluded that interment of bodies was injurious to the health of the inhabitants of large towns, recommended legislation, and that, after a certain date, burials in them should be prohibited. This was recommending, according to the supposed argument of the archdeacon, what was in the highest degree injurious to religion and good morals; but he is made to add, — the report caused little anxiety. The clergy and parochial authorities were gratified by the assurance that their rights would be respected — that they should not suffer in their pockets!

Thus there is no disguise. The cloak of religion and morals is worn open, to show the whole figure of Mammon. One of the first legislative interferences recorded, is the order that no coffin should be buried at a less depth than thirty inches below the ordinary surface of the ground; then the dangerous state of many churchyards and vaults led to the closing of the burial-grounds, — although, as the archdeacon is made to sneer, if the premises were true, power might with equal propriety have been given for shutting up the churches.

The year eighteen hundred and fifty-one was remarkable in the eyes of the supposed archdeacon. It was remarkable in the eyes of the world for the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, and for some other events; in the eyes of the archdeacon it was remarkable for the passing of an act of Parliament which favoured the commercial speculation of the cemetery companies. Afterwards came the law that no person should be buried within a hundred yards of a house; which is supposed to be considered by the archdeacon as equivalent to a sending of the dead out into the desert. He deplores the consequence of this in affecting language: —

> The church and churchyard of the parish has hitherto been one of the strongest ties to bind the people at large to the communion of our church. The right of sepulture in the churchyard was a right belonging to the poor as well as to the rich; it was their pride to bury their dead with due honour, to have the service read by their own minister, and large was the amount which persons, even of the humblest rank, paid to the parishes to secure to the surviving members of the family the privilege of burial in the same grave. Burial bound, I say, the people in the metropolis to the Established Church.

Alas for the lost days of churchyard monopoly!

To recover this, or to get compensation for the loss of it, or if neither can be done, to hurl defiance at the persons and opinions by which so excellent a business has been ruined, is apparently the object of the charge. Religion

and morals are in the highest degree imperilled, and as for your conjectures about wholesomes and unwholesomes, there is nothing whatever unwholesome in a putrefying corpse. In the following passage the satirist overshoots his mark, by carrying the absurd too far beyond the limits of the possible. No archdeacon could by any possibility have risked such reputation as he may have had by speaking in this fashion.

> The terms, shocking, disgusting, disgraceful, demoralising, are constantly applied to the presence of the dead body in the dwelling-house, as well as to the ordinary accidents of burial — and whilst historical science is permitted to ransack the barrow of the Celt or the Saxon, or to disentomb the contents of a necropolis; and ethnology determines by the form of the skull the race; and physiology the age and sex by the form of the bones, — and all this is detailed with the minutest accuracy in the philosophical journal, — the daily newspaper, and not a word said of disgust, — the casting up of th skull and of the bones in a parish gra is pronounced to be shocking to h manity, &c.

Now, surely the putrefaction of the Celts and of the ancient Peruvians is a process by this time pretty well complete; and as for what dry particles remain of them, we have entered into no most sacred contract to respect their barrows, or their bones. Having raised a childish argument to put into the mouth of his enemy, the writer of the charge knocks it down in the next sentence, by wording afresh the complaint, and calling the offence of society against good morals, the refinement which expresses strong abhorrence at the thought of turning up a body from the grave "until decomposition of all its parts is complete."

But what if it is putrid? the minister of the Most High, is represented as inquiring:

> It is an easy thing to use scientific terms, such as miasma, and gases, and deleterious emanations; and if you talk scientifically, or appear to do so, you may easily persuade simple-minded persons to distrust their own experience.... We have a right to demand, not opinions and presumptions, but experiments; not conjectures about wholesomes and unwholesomes, but facts duly attested, and deductions clearly drawn.

Well, though there are facts enough on record to make up a modest library; facts enough to have long since thoroughly convinced all men who attend to other matters than the cash-box, we will reproduce one or two that must have been perfectly well known to the archdeacon if he has read what he professes to have read, and if it be really the archdeacon who is holding such an argument: —

The meat in butchers' shops near London graveyards, whenever the stench becomes at all great, taints in a single day or night, and the taint of putrid matter is communicated to flesh and blood not only when dead. Sir J. MacGregor states that once in Spain, soon after twenty thousand men had been buried within a period of two or three months, the troops breathing the air and drinking the water round about

the place of burial were attacked by malignant fever and dysentery. In the two hundred and eighteen acres of London graveyards, a million and half of bodies were interred within the lifetime of one generation. In 1841, two grave-diggers perished instantly on descending a grave in St. Botolph's churchyard, Aldgate. Four men went ashore in Whampoa Roads, near Canton, to bury one of their comrades who had died of dysentery: they happened to select a spot for the grave in which a human body had been buried two months previously: the moment the spade went through the lid of the coffin a dreadful effluvium issued forth, and the two men engaged in the work fell down nearly lifeless. With difficulty their companions approached near enough to drag them from the spot, and to fill up the place with earth. The two men who were thus seized gradually recovered sufficiently to be able, with assistance, to reach the boat and return on board their ship. By the succeeding morning, the symptoms of malignant pestoid fever were fully developed in both men; of which disease one of them died on the fourth day and the other on the morning of the fifth. Of the other two, one had a severe attack of fever on the eighth day; the other a slight indisposition. Is there not evidence enough here of the danger of foul churchyards in the midst of dense populations? Should anybody wish for some further idea of a foul churchyard, here it is. Before the graveyard belonging to St. Clement Danes was closed and sealed with a thick seal of asphalte, on one hot summer's day, a grave was opened of such depth that the remains of at least ten skeletons were thrown up. The fœtor was then so overpowering, "that even the beadle of the parish acknowledged it was very bad." Not a window facing the graveyard could be opened, notwithstanding the oppressive heat of the day. "Some of the residents were obliged to leave their houses for a time; persons passing along Portugal Street held their nostrils; a policeman standing at the door of King's College Hospital was seized with vomiting, and one of the physicians of that institution who approached the open grave was suddenly seized with giddiness, and would have fallen down if he had not been supported by another gentleman." But upon all this the mock archdeacon, more stubborn than the beadle, having just dismissed as a cant phrase a very short and useful scientific word in use now throughout Europe, is represented as producing Scripture as an argument for filth and corruption, which is the boldest use of cant in our experience. "Nature," he says, "as well as Scripture, attests that every creature of God is good, and that death, not less than life, subserves in time to the good of man." Presently he is made to

say, "it is certain that the contact with putrescence does not generally injure health or shorten life." Perhaps there may be a trap set in that sentence, reservation being made of inhalation of it as it floats upon the air, and absorption of it through the lungs into the blood. "It is a remarkable fact," we are told, "not unimportant to the present inquiry, that of all beings man alone is buried. Organic life is the noblest work of chemical combination elaborated by the hand of Nature, which is God's minister." Another angel in the Hierarchy, of whom we never heard before. In ordinary life, men give the word Nature to the works of the All-wise, because a just feeling of reverence restrains them from the constant and familiar handling of His sacred name. It does not therefore follow that this word Nature should be elevated to the dignity of angel, by an orator who speaks to ministers of God, and whose express mission it is to hold discourse of sacred things. No matter; such, we are told, is organic life — the wholesome tying of a knot, whereof organic death is but the untying. We see, therefore, "how innoxious a thing in respect of life is death." There are vast numbers of animals who, not being eaten up, "die by the hand of death" (whatever that may mean), and are not deposited in graves when they become what the archdeacon calls, or is made to call, "dead corpses." Who is the worse for that? the author of the charge humorously inquires.

It is hardly necessary to say, that when the body of the animal decays, it stinks; — that the use in nature of the stink is to warn people that there lies something which they ought not to come near. If the author of the charge would any day next summer pocket the first dead cat that he may chance to pick up in the streets, carry it home, and put it in his pot-pourri jar, upon his study table or beneath his bed, he will not, after short experience wait to inquire "who is the physiologist who will say, avoid that" cat. The admonition of nature in this matter — except in the case of animals expressly created to get rid of offal by devouring it — is not lost on either man or beast.

But here, again, the satirist represents the archdeacon as blowing down his own card-house of argument. "If," he says, "the vicinities of some churchyards be unwholesome, it will be found on a candid examination, that other causes of disease exist there, such as filth and poverty; such as everywhere engenders disease, whether in the proximity of a churchyard or not." But filth is putrescent matter, animal or vegetable, and poverty represents only the weakness upon which it preys. If filth, according to the archdeacon, everywhere engenders disease, when the poor man has

it for his own free heritage, why may it not do so when it is maintained for him by free-worshipping dignitaries of the church as a foundation of religion and good morals?

If we have not said enough to prove that this is not really a charge of the Archdeacon of London to his clergy, but a harsh satire by some person against a clergyman upon whose good livings his mind is too much fixed, the evidence of a malicious intent in the concluding passages is irresistible. The speaker is supposed to call attention to his experience of the moral advantage derived from his own contemplation of the tombs. In the chapel of the Charter-house, how interesting to the members of the foundation are the memorials of the dead! There our founder has reposed beneath a splendid tomb for nearly two centuries and a half; and, being dead, yet speaketh to us all, — both old and young — reminding us not to disgrace his bounty and exciting us to thankfulness.

After showing how the tomb of the founder has enabled him to feel thankful for moneys received, the master of the Charter-house is made to regret that no future Carthusian can consign his body, as the late Lord Ellenborough did, to be interred in the founder's vault in token of his affection for the place of his education, and to be even in death an example to stimulate his schoolfellows to exertions like his, in the hope of a like reward. Noble reward, truly! to lie in the grave beside a man whose only virtue was that after he made heaps of money by unchristian practices — by usury and by the fitting out of privateers — he hoped to benefit his soul by getting men to spend it piously when he was dead. But for his legacy he shall be accounted holy. Does not the archdeacon eat thereof, and is not the charity notoriously subject to mismanagement? The stroke of satire was too sharp; but his enemy, had he missed it, would have certainly resisted great temptation.

The other tombs, by the contemplation of which the archdeacon is made to declare that he has been benefited, are at St. Giles's, Cripplegate: — "I go to my parish church — there is the grave of Milton; in my parish he lived and died." The grave of Milton! at the end of a charge like this of all things under the sun, is it the grave of Milton that still forcibly reminds the Pluralist that his course also is to end? Does he know what language rings through the broad world out of the grave of Milton, about ministers who, "having a Gospel and church government set before their eyes, as a fair field wherein they might exercise the greatest virtues and the greatest deeds of Christian authority, in mean fortunes and little furniture of this world; they understand it not, and think

no such matter, but admire and dote upon worldly riches and honours, with an easy life, to the bane of Christianity. Yea, they and their seminaries shame not to profess, to petition, and never leave pealing our ears, that unless we fat them like boars and cram them as they list with wealth, with deaneries and pluralities, with baronies and stately preferment, all learning and religion will go under foot. Which is such a shameless, such a bestial plea, and of that odious impudence in churchmen, who should be to us a pattern of temperance and frugal mediocrity."

Milton speaks from his grave with a loud voice, in sooth. But what does he say even of burial-fees to the vicar who derives so much advantage from the contemplation of his tomb? These are the words of Milton, which the satirist had well in mind when he prevented the archdeacon summing up his argument with this example: —

If the minister be maintained for his whole ministry, why should he be paid twice for any part thereof? Why should he, like a servant, seek vails over and above his wages? . . . Far less becomes it these, now with a greediness lower than that of tradesmen calling passengers to their shop, and yet paid beforehand, to ask again for doing that which their founders did freely. . . . Burials and marriages are so little to be any part of their gain, that they who consider well may find them to be no part of their function. At burials their attendance they allege on the corpse; all the guests do as much unhired. But their prayers at the grave — superstitiously required; yet, if required, their last performance to the deceased of their own flock. But the funeral sermon, — at their choice, or, if not, an occasion offered them to preach out of season, which is part of their office. . . . But the ground is broken. To sell that will not only raise up in judgment the council of truth against them, but will lose them the best champion of tithes, their zealous antiquary, Sir Henry Spelman; who, in a book written to that purpose, proves that fees exacted or demanded for sacraments, marriages, burials, and especially for interring, are wicked, accursed, simoniacal, and abominable.

No doubt that last was a conclusion founded on false premises; but who can doubt what Milton would have said about this pamphlet, if it were indeed the publication of a solemn charge to the archdeaconry of London?

AN EXCURSION TRAIN.

Travel in an open carriage by an excursion train? We know the thing is horribly plebeian — low. The price at which the railway companies convey their passengers in these carriages — something like half-a- crown per hundred miles — is in itself a sufficient argument against any one of a right way of thinking, ever condescending to be carried at so disgracefully cheap a figure. Then, the open carriages themselves — although it is true they are not called "third class," and are not fitted with a stifling low roof, with wooden shutters that keep the light out, and louvre boards that let the draught in, or with other appliances inserted

upon to regulate the amount of discomfort to which third-class passengers are entitled — the open carriages themselves, we say, are always looked upon as being the third-class — if not the fourth. No, on the whole, the thing is so disgraceful, that — and yet, it must out — we have done it. More than that — it must out again — we have done it on a Sunday!

Still, O, my highly respectable brother, there is much that you and I might learn, even from the extremely common people in this vulgar open railway-carriage. It would be better for us all, sometimes, if we stood less upon our first-class notions; and, in our journeying through life, could find enjoyment by the way, even though offered us as cheaply as an excursion at half-a-crown per hundred miles: even though freely shared by those who never saw the inside of a London club, and who know nothing of the merits of well-fitting gloves, or patent leather boots — except, perchance, from having made them.

One lovely Sunday morning, a few weeks back, we had risen somewhat earlier than usual. We felt heavy, dull, and (if we may so express it) cobwebby. We had been working very hard for several weeks; business had kept us all the summer closely shut up in London. In fact, we wanted change of air — if only long enough for our respiratory organs to get filled with air instead of dust and smoke. We thought of a long walk; but it would require a very long one before we reached an atmosphere such as we wanted. Where could we go, and yet get back again in time to recommence our labours on the Monday morning? At once, we thought of an excursion train. We recollected that for a few shillings we could visit one of the fairest spots in England; could travel many miles through waving corn-fields and green meadow lands; could drink our fill of pure sea air; could even cross and recross salt water and yet be back in London the same night. We recollected an excursion train through Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight.

There was time to snatch a hasty breakfast; and, at thirty-five minutes past seven, a. m., precisely, we were standing in the midst of a dense crowd of pleasure-seekers at the Waterloo terminus of the South Western Railway. It was a dense crowd truly, and the pushing to get tickets was, we admit, not the most agreeable thing to undergo. We have seen still denser crowds; have undergone more pushing on a Jenny Lind, or Grisi night at the Italian Opera; yet the crowd —forgive us, opera-going reader — was not a whit more unmannerly at the doors of the Waterloo booking-office, than that at the entrance to the opera.

At length we started — many hundreds of us. All very common people, doubtless, but all

bent alike, on a day's thorough happiness. And, after a brief interval of chimney-pots, and Lambeth factories, we found the sun shining brightly upon us, the trees and fields looking absolutely green, and the clouds coloured only by the morning sun's reflection, untinted by the smallest particle of soot. We were in the country.

And now we all began to look about us, and to set ourselves to work in earnest, at the business we had come about. We had left London for the sole purpose of enjoying ourselves, and so the sooner we commenced doing it the better. Acquaintances were quickly formed amongst the fellow-passengers; the etiquette of introduction not being indispensable in excursion trains, we had not left London half an hour, before we were in friendly communion with all around us, chatting away as busily as though we had been friends for years; albeit, we are somewhat taciturn by nature, and have travelled the whole distance between Liverpool and London shut up with five others, in a first-class carriage, and have heard no single word exchanged on all the journey, further than every one on starting, saying it was a fine morning, and every one replying, "Very." We have, therefore, come to the conclusion that there is some hidden excitant in excursion trains to conversation.

Our nearest neighbour, we blushed to believe, was a shoemaker. We fear, indeed, that that was not the worst; and that, moreover, he must have been a depraved shoemaker; for, not content with travelling on a Sunday, he had the further villany openly to violate the law, in defiance of the railway regulations, forty-shilling fines, and all statutes and bye-laws in that case made and provided, coolly to pull out his tobacco-pouch, and hope that no one objected to smoking?

Object to smoking! Not a bit of it. No one objects to anything in an excursion train. Even the railway officials themselves did not object; for, as we stopped at different stations — our friend's example having been pretty generally followed — cigars and pipes innumerable were openly smoked in the very face of the hostile bye-law, sometimes (by accident) even in the faces of the railway porters. And, as the fresh strong breeze sweeping through those open carriages, carried far away the clouds as soon as formed, the daintiest maiden could not have objected.

All this, it must be owned, was very low. Nor was the character of the assembly much improved by the production from various coat-pockets of sundry bottles; some of which, we are afraid we must admit, were filled with beer, others it may be with the still less reputable gin-and-water. One thing we are convinced of — it was not claret, or burgundy, or champagne.

Facing us sat an old woman,

dressed in a gown of very seedy black. For some time she had been silent; but, as the train went on, she too had yielded to the mysterious influence, and had become quite chatty. Her first attempt at conversation occurred when we were about half-way on our journey. She had then timidly ventured to inquire, if we were not near Portsmouth. On being answered in the negative, she once more sank back into silence. Again and again, at intervals of very few minutes, the same question was put; until, being told that she must wait at least another hour, she seemed resolved to make the best of it, and set hard to work at eating bread-and-butter. All kinds of luggage, were strictly prohibited in the excursion train; but by a dexterous adjustment of her shawl at the station, the old lady had managed to smuggle in her basket. As time went on, she grew impatient, and often strained her eyes across the landscape in hopes to catch a glimpse of anything that looked like Portsmouth. No wonder she was anxious. When she, at last, became communicative, we learned that she was going down to see her son. His ship had arrived at Spithead but the day before, and as "she hadn't seen the poor dear boy for nigh upon two year, she thought she might spare a few shillings just to see him now he was in England. It wasn't often that she spent money for her own pleasure, for she had three other children quite dependent on her, and it was very little she could do for them." Poor woman! A very common person we have no doubt. In fact, we know she was, for she accepted beer when the bottle was handed to her by a neighbour, and thanked him kindly for it. Common though she was, the mother's heart blessed the invention of excursion trains.

There was a young gentleman seated in a corner of our carriage, who studiously avoided any intercourse with his fellow-passengers. He must have been a lawyer's clerk, or some one else accustomed to move in good society. He smoked cigars, which he carried in an elaborately-embroidered case, and drank brandy-and-water, to which he used a glass,—a luxury not common in that carriage; the majority drinking from the neck of the bottle. This poor young gentleman we felt for deeply. He was so obviously out of his element; he seemed so very much afraid that any one should see him in such company, and was so evidently there under protest and without prejudice, that it was really pitiable. We trust that he enjoyed himself when he arrived in Portsmouth. He certainly did not upon the journey.

Neither did an old gentleman who sat beside him. While all around were chatting, laughing, and drinking in draughts of hap- were whirled across the fair landscape, he seemed to

think the whole affair a nuisance; a disagreeable necessity, the sooner fulfilled the better. For a long way he slept. Then he tried to read. Then again sat bolt upright on his seat, his hands in his pockets, and, looking straight before him, frowned upon those who were so very merry all around him. What did this man here? While every one else had come out expressly to be happy, what business had that frowning face amongst them? It was clear that he was no excursionist, — not he. We felt convinced at once that his journey to Portsmouth was purely a matter of business, and that he had taken our train for cheapness — not for jollity. Out upon this obtaining carriage under false pretences!

Who is that singing? For shame, you naughty little pale-faced boy! This is Sunday. What right have you — you, whose complexion, blanched by long confinement in close crowded courts, suggests the idea that you are made of pipe-clay instead of the red earth that formed your father Adam — what right have you to give vent to your unaccustomed joy thus sinfully? No more right than those birds, which, as we stop at this quiet little station, we now hear also singing as loudly as yourself — ay, and if happiness be sin, as wickedly. O! for some Sunday legislation that will stop the birds!

There was one man who puzzled us. He seemed so thoroughly well up in all connected with the train; he was very learned in all the mysteries of railway signals, branch lines, sidings, switches, points, and all the rest of it. He kept a sharp look-out the whole way down, telling us, as we passed each signal-post, whether it said "All right," or "Caution." Once he nearly frightened the whole carriageful into fits by telling us he saw the danger signal on; but soon allayed our fears by adding that it only meant we were to stop, and not that there was any real peril. At first we thought he must be one of the officials of the railway; but he was smoking — we have already mentioned the sad fact that many were — and however indulgent the authorities might be in this respect to the excursionists, it was hardly likely, we thought, that one of their own servants would have run the risk. He soon explained the matter. "Why, you see," he said, when we remarked upon his extensive knowledge, "I travel a good deal by these excursion trains. P'raps once a-month, it may be once in three weeks, I go out somewhere, sometimes by one line, sometimes by another. The old girl here is rather delicate." — She looked so. A pale, sickly young woman, with an infant in her arms, smiled up gratefully at him as he went on:

"You see, sir, I work very hard all the week; and on Sundays, somehow, I seem to want a little change now and then. Our place in town isn't much of a one to

spend a comfortable day in, though there are many folks worse off in that way than ourselves. So, as I said before, we just come out as often as we can. I can smoke my pipe as we go along (hope it don't annoy you; they're not particular in these open carriages) and so I have the missis with me all day long. It does her good, I'm convinced; and, after all, it doesn't cost much more than p'raps I might spend if I went to publics instead. And then she'd be left poking at home all by herself. Ah! they're fine things, these excursion trains. But here we're going to stop, sir, to show our tickets."

He was right. In a few minutes more we were in Portsmouth.

We are not going to write a guide-book to the sights of this important naval port; nor do we feel inclined to launch out into any rhapsodies about the sea. It has been done before. We will not, therefore, stop to tell how we employed our time while there. All that we have to do with at present is the excursion train. We are once more seated in it, on our way back to London.

We met one or two of our acquaintances of the morning on the platform. There was one of our fellow-passengers whom it would have been madness to expect: — We mean the business man. He never meant to come back the same evening, we are sure. No doubt the fellow had sold his return ticket in Portsmouth to some one wishing to come up to London cheaply, and thus had made a good thing of the speculation both ways. The poor woman who had been to see her son returned in the same carriage with us. O, how happy she was! O, how thankful! She had seen her boy, and he was safe! She was so full of joy, she longed for somebody to share it with her, although that somebody were a stranger; and selected us. How he had grown! What a fine lad he was! And O! how pleased he was to see his mother! She never tired of repeating it. The boy had been out to the Baltic — right to the seat of war itself — she told us, as she wiped her spectacles and put them on again, when they at once required wiping more than ever. He had been out with stores for the fleet. And now he had returned — was safe! — and O, so well! — so much improved since she last saw him! Once more the spectacles were wiped, and once more immediately dimmed again.

Poor mother! You will go home very happy to your bed to-night. Will you go less willingly to your washing-tub to-morrow morning — we must confess, our friend had very much the appearance of a laundress — for having seen your son to-day? And will our other friend, that dreadful shoe-maker who was the first to smoke, feel more unfitted for to-morrow's work for having thoroughly enjoyed himself to-day? Will any one, of all the

hundreds in that train, be the worse for it?

Yes; one, at least, we know will. One man — we are pleased and proud to say, the only one who came within our own observation — the wisdom of the mighty, virtuous Mr. Hall of Bow Street notwithstanding — one man was tipsy!

ANOTHER TIGHT LITTLE ISLAND.

In my first and last work of Geography, these names occurred in the following order, and are the only pieces of knowledge, perhaps, which ever retain their proper position in my memory, — Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. Of the Channel Islands, — which nature certainly intended to be satellites of France, but which fortune has assigned to England — the last of the four is hardly supposed to be worth mentioning, and indeed is the only one that has no production of consequence of its very own. Jersey has its pears, Guernsey its lilies, and Alderney its cows; but Sark has nothing peculiar, unless, perhaps, I may be allowed to say, its cockles. Nevertheless, Sark is the most remarkable of all.

It is, in the first place, very creditable, I think, to any island, that it is next to impossible to land upon it — to have no visible harbour, no beach, no sands, no pier, no anything. You may sail round it all day long and perceive nothing but precipitous, barren rocks, which are themselves defended by a cordon of foaming breakers. An inroad upon this bit of British dominion would be a most unprofitable and dangerous business to the most ardent invader, unless he was of a poetical turn of mind. In that case I cannot fancy any spot repaying him so well: if he sailed to the east side and sent out his boats'-crews in the direction of a very high seawall, they would perhaps get ashore and be very much astonished at finding themselves then only within a semicircle of perpendicular rocks; if their noses were turned up, and they followed them, further progress would be out of the question; but, supposing them to be otherwise, and that they poked them into every crevice and corner, they might hit upon a diminutive tunnel through which, by a very steep hill, they would reach the interior of Sark. I assert that this is the sole method of landing in this island to those who have not been brought up at a gymnasium, or been accustomed to give public entertainments on the tight and slack ropes. A crew of three of us, who arrived here in a little cutter from Guernsey, were deposited on a bare rock at the west end, and directed up an iron ladder which terminated only too soon; leaving us to climb fifty feet of precipice by the aid of a single cord. To get ourselves up — for we had not

the advantage of being acrobats — was toil and peril enough; but the conveyance of our portmanteaus would have been the act of determined suicides. A young native of the place, however, without spangles or even a fillet, brought our valuable chattels to the summit without any inconvenience. We carried them ourselves from that point, through what I still consider, after several days' acquaintance, to be Fairyland. Imagine us at such a height above the sea that the rest of the Channel Islands and France — both a long way off — could be distinctly seen from almost any stand-point; the hues of the waves beneath us are wonderfully diversified by sun and shadow; and, from the multitude of currents, the white breaker crosses the most level blue, and the calmest pool sleeps in the swiftest eddy. Our road, which is at first a narrow pathway, leads by large substantial cottages, as picturesque as those in Westmoreland then, by goodly farm-houses (where it is exchanged for a broad, green cart-lane), with large open court-yards. Both these dwellings are set in garden or shrubbery, and especially decked with untrained, but most luxuriant, fuchsias. We were enchanted and tricked out of our reason. Our luggage seemed to grow lighter on our backs, notwithstanding the noonday sun, and our walk of a mile or so, to good Mrs. Hayelhunt's hotel, was a mere May-day procession. Although the island is ridiculously small, we managed to lose our way more than once — to have (as I believe) an excuse for asking at two pretty cottages in gems of gardens and shaded by pleasant trees — which arbor or avenue would be the best to take; for the lanes of Sark are those deep, umbrageous ways of Devon, with the open downs of Berkshire breaking them, here and there. At last we arrived at a charming farm-house, having a thousand September scents about it. This we thought must surely be our haven; but the mistress, although she kept a rival establishment, pointed across the road with the most beaming smile, and we went a few yards up a carriage-sweep to one of the cleanliest and most beautifully situated inns I ever saw. Scale Hill, on Crummock Water, in Cumberland, is its only rival; and I am suspended, like Mahomet's coffin only with heaven on both sides), between these two. It is so sheltered from the four quarters of the wind that I am content to believe it snug in the depths of winter, although there is indeed something in the very name of Sark to forbid that faith. But now, at all events, the temperature is just as it should be — warmer but more bracing than in Jersey — and the grapes in the green-house on the south-side are bearing plentifully. Before the house there lies (not stretches) a tiny dell, thickset with elm and ash, above which rises the cattle-

sprinkled down. The pretty sitting-rooms look out in this direction; as do most of the bedrooms; which are large and airy as need be, with sheet and coverlet, and curtain, white as snow. Suppose, three Robinson Crusoes, with every comfort in life super-added, and there you have us.

Fallen mortals that we were, how could we have been so puffed up as to expect another Eden! In this hotel, misnamed as we thought, by reason of its beauty and retirement — whose door was unspotted with a licence, whose front undisfigured by a sign — there was not one drop of Beer! Sherry indeed there was, — soft pleasant drink, — different enough from the fiery tavern stuff in England, but to us Cantabs, fresh from climbing the climbing wave, sherry was a mere delicate insult. Upon inquiry, we heard that the Guernsey cutter-boat would probably bring some beer the next day, and in that hope we lingered on.

On the morrow we descended by the rope again, and embarked in a little rowing boat at early morn to circumnavigate the island. We had never seen such rocks, or holes in rocks, in our united existences; but there always was a cross current, and always a breaker a-head, so that for the first three-quarters of an hour our fear exceeded our admiration. Then we became accustomed to it, and could look upon the sheer precipices and slippery downs above, with an equal mind. When we reached the entrance of the Lesser Sheep (Moindre Mouton), we were again astonished rather than made happy; a hill of water, that rose in the mass without a wave, and swept for about a hundred yards straight inward, where it lost itself in gloom, took us upon it into the bowels of the rock. The fine old fellow and his handsome son, who rowed us, both declared no mortal had been further than where we lay at that present upon rested oars, just fending ourselves off the sides, and keeping our position as well as might be. The water dripped from the lofty roof above us with a melancholy sound into the sea; and, from the darkness beyond, there came a dreadful thunder, like the roar of a thousand monsters of the deep. If the feeding time at the Zoological Gardens were "unavoidably postponed" for a day or two, and we should take a ramble therein during a total eclipse of the sun, we might experience a similar but not more awful sensation. The return into the sunlight seemed like a rescue from the dead; and as we passed by natural archway and immemorial tower, the croak of the raven and the shriek of the goshawk seemed a pleasant music after those mournful surges. We threaded a hundred craggy islets, where gull and cormorant were congregated in voiceless council; and one of our party who had the bump of destruction and a gun dissolved

-a number of such conclaves, and lessened them by several representatives. The gulls fell principally upon the rocks whereupon they had deliberated, and we climbed their summits, bringing the fair white palpitating bodies into the boat; but the cormorants sought a watery tomb. Often too, when we were congratulating our comrade upon his success with these last, the supposed victim, after a submarine transit of sixty or seventy yards, would come up with his teeth chattering, but otherwise in good health. They are sneaking, low-foreheaded fellows, who set much too high a value on themselves, and are not, as the boatman told us and we readily believed, good eating.

Bay after bay we rounded, each one having some especial wonder of its own; fissures of gigantic size, into which no sun-ray penetrated; fantastic rocks, now aping some dreadful likeness of humanity, now rising up in pillar, dome and steeple, like palace and cathedral in one: an especially ecclesiastical fragment of great size was called the Chapel of Sea-gulls (des Mauves), the outside of which, however, rather than the in, those white-robed birds seemed to prefer. Three monstrous rocks — les Antelets — especially, stretched out at intervals some distance into the sea; huge altars, of an age of religion before history was, or pillars of some temple the very titles of whose gods are forgotten; everywhere, and here in particular, gape the dark mouths of caverns, and emit an awful sound. It seems, indeed — even if the general belief that Sark was once a part of France be false — that it must have been in ancient times four times larger that at present, and that the whole circumference of the island had been gradually clipped away by that devouring sea, which is even now eating out its rocky bowels, and undermining it as slowly but as surely as ever. How unnecessary do these adamantine sentinels, which stand like advanced guards around the shore, appear in this calm weather! They only serve to feed a sheep or two, who are drawn up by ropes and left to browse upon their summits through the summer. The broad blue deep, breaks not one tiny wave against our prow; and only by the fringe of foam along the rocky shore, can we detect the ground-swell, which in truth would make our landing perilous; and yet upon the Le Creux harbour a sea so terrible once broke, that, after carrying the large packet-cutter (torn from her moorings) out of the narrow opening, it cast the same vessel, with the next mountain-wave, right on the sea-wall, which is forty feet in height, into the harbour back again. She fell upon a small craft therein and crushed it to pieces, but without much damage to herself. When the wind blows at all, indeed, it

makes terrible music about the Sark cliffs. Such mutterings and thunderings are then heard under the whole island as only pent waters in the deep caverns of the earth can make, or, as the natives say, only devils and spirits of the storm. After many more caverns, whereof the principal are called The Shops (les Boutiques), — have been explored, we are landed, with difficulty enough, to see the Creux Terrible — a gigantic circular hole of some two hundred feet sheer ascent, the effect, I suppose, of some frightful convulsion of nature. To be caught by the tide in this place would be certain death to anybody without wings, for the sides are but little less steep than those of a brick well; and yet it is attested that a King Charles's spaniel, which had refused to follow its master's boat, did crawl up like a fly to the very summit. To lean over from the top is very horrible, and does not afford a good view; besides that, there is a savage bull in the same field with the Creux Terrible. The Coupé, a narrow edge of rock several hundred feet in height, is the only road between Great and Little Sark; and, I doubt not, will one day come down with a run, and leave them two separate islands. The width of the summit is from five to eight feet, and there is no protection on either side. Yet I saw a native gallop at full speed on it on horseback.

From the pleasant little palace where we board and lodge (at four shillings a-day) a pathway leads us through an enchanted dell, and over a fairy-haunted down to the Bay of Dixcart. It is on these especial sands that Thetis loves to bask, and watch her nymphs at play, for there is no way (that she knows of) down the cliffs, and no mortal would dare to peep at her over their overhanging brows. The long blue coasts that stand so clear against the sky, too, are much farther off than they seem to be; so she enjoys in peace a perfect privacy. We ourselves repair hither before the sun, so as to be dressed and away before her coming. My companions, as they parted the transparent water, or came up rosy from their dive into the deep, looked like mermen; while, above them, the black heights rose out of the sea, with grass and lichen over them, the heather on their topmost summits purpling in the sun.

Our walks inland were scarcely of less beauty; whether by the farmhouse hidden in the foliage, or the cottage glorious with fuchsia, or the minister's house, with the quaint old garden, or by the Seigneurie, which is the Palace of Sark. The laws of the Channel Islands are all more or less feudal; but those of Sark are so entirely. The Seigneur has almost every power, save that of life and death; and, more than that, he has authority. The simple people — who are given in marriage and are forbidden to marry by him, who are ex-

patriated or retained at his pleasure, and to whom the modern comforts and elegancies of his residence appear to be the possessions of a superior being — do absolutely pay homage and obedience willingly and without cavil. The present lord, as it happens, is a refined and courteous gentleman, as hospitable (we had early proof) as any lord of the isles can be; but he has only lately become possessed of the Seigneurie, and his surprise at his own powers is even greater than that of the inhabitants. He employs a vast quantity of workmen, is building and improving in all directions, and probably has as much good in his power to effect personally as any man in the British dominions. He chances to be a clergyman; but he is also the colonel of the militia, and has the appointment of all Sark offices — clerical and lay. The way in which the Seigneur is addressed by his subjects in the Sark dialect (a better patois, by-the-bye, than the Guernsey French) is such as would make one believe that he is a god. They have a firm faith that he is the right hand man and confidential adviser — but at the same time quite the equal in power and dignity — of Queen Victoria. All that the crown lays claim to in England in the way of mines and treasure-trove and royalties, are in Sark the Seigneur's. Half profits from the waifs and strays of wrecks are also paid to him; from which he derives no trifling income. The law of primogeniture is very strict; and, in case of there being no male issue, the eldest daughter inherits before the nephew. Where there is no issue at all, the property reverts to the Seigneur. His great trouble is with the younger sons; who, being portionless, must needs go forth into the world to seek their fortunes, and are afterwards desirous of returning to their native shore with their wives and families. He is obliged to prevent this, or the island would be soon over-populated; and this protectionist principle is, under the circumstances, necessary enough. He is compelled by his charter to have always forty men in Sark capable of bearing arms, although he has upwards of a hundred; the whole population of the place being more than seven hundred. These men are the best shots in the Channel Islands, and are provided even with two good six-pounders. They had a field-day lately; and, after excellent practice at white rocks, with the guns and a long range, they feigned two Russian men-of-war's boats, and picked the supposed invaders off, with their muskets, very creditably. They constantly fire volleys into the caverns, to bring down any overhanging rocks, which else would fall at less expected times and destroy the boats that harbour under them. The loading of some of their private weapons for this purpose terrified us not a little. The stock

was fastened to the breech by twine; so that it must have been rather hard to take the sight; and first, they put the percussion-cap on, and then they loaded the gun. The spring of the lock being also broken, an urchin stood behind with a stone, to hit the hammer down when aim had been taken by the chief performer. I doubt not, however, besides the standing army of Sark, that a most effective guerilla force exists to make invasion exceedingly hazardous. The pursuit which the natives are daily occupied in seems to afford a greater proof of personal courage than a hundred fights; — with an iron pin and a cow-rope, they are accustomed to go out alone, and to swing themselves over the highest precipices after birds'-eggs, or at the dreadful trade of sapphire gathering: they look, from the sea, like spiders, but I believe no kind of danger is so awful to the novice and so trivial to the adept as is this: their chief difficulty is to get up the last few inches, when they must strike themselves off the summit with their feet, in order to insert their hand between the rope and the ground.

Before we left the island we had a slight touch of this particular nettle Danger ourselves: and though, for my part, I did pluck the flower safely (if not with honour) in the end, it was accompanied, I confess, with an infinite variety of the weed Funk, or terror. We went to visit the Gouliot Cave, where the great (Sea) Lions of Sark live, and we disembarked unfortunately on the wrong, or southern, side of it: for, although it was low water, being only a neap-tide, it did not retire sufficiently, and we had to pass along the face of a perpendicular rock, beneath which, to judge by the dark green of its depths and the malicious smile just curling on its smooth visage, lay plenty of sea to drown us with every inclination to do so. There was no ledge, only little interstices, here and there, for the extreme tips of our toes; but the cliff was covered with very small limpets, and in them we had to trust. I well remember my feelings as I clung, like the spread-eagle of Prussia, to that rock, and strove for a safe lodgment of finger-tip or toe beyond, putting forth all my feelers like an anemone, and grasping at the limpets with all the tenacity of a crab. I firmly believe, indeed, I should have been drowned but for that beautiful and accomplished native youth, who accompanied us, and lent me his hand to tread upon. I gave him, upon reaching what may well be called terra firma, the sum of one florin, which seemed, to his Sarkite eye, a provision for life. On the other hand, the scene that awaited us, which appeared to us like a scene from the Arabian Nights, was, I doubt not, ordinary and common-place enough to him.

Imagine a vast cavern, some

sixty feet in height, with three arched openings — north, west, and south — commanding each a different sea view; a monotonous sort of organ music haunting it from the sleeping sea, and the sun-rays broken and intersected by a thousand shapeless shadows! Where they chiefly strike, however, a wall of the most exquisite beauty is revealed: the glories of the Pompeian and Egyptian Courts at Sydenham fade before it, as the stars pale before the dawn, and the rainbow itself might borrow from it many a hue. Green, red, blue, white, and scarlet are the prevailing tints; but, as we approach nearer, the more sombre colours appear even yet more numerous. Brown barnacles, mixed with scarlet and yellow sponges, form the principal paneling of this tremendous chamber; but, amongst these, are set a million sea anemones of the richest and rarest kind; the most exquisite, to my mind, being the green ones with the beautiful blue edgings — but it is hard to award the palm where all are perfect. Such adventurous votaries of science as have entered into the Gouliot Cave declare there is nothing equal to it, and remain there, hour after hour, as long as a spring-tide will permit.

The westernmost cavern is even still more wondrous; and contains, in addition to the riches of the larger treasure-house, zoophytes and corallines in immense abundance. The ceilings of both are like those of Aladdin's grotto, and their sides appear like masses of glittering gems. When the moaning of the tide got to be unpleasantly loud, and our guide insisted upon our departure, lest we should suffer a sea change, and our spectacles turn into barnacles, I confess to being as hard to move from the Gouliot Cave as one of its own limpets.

HALE A LIFE-TIME AGO.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

The vehemence with which Susan Dixon threw herself into occupation could not last for ever. Times of languor and remembrance would come — times when she recurred with a passionate yearning to past days, the recollection of which was so vivid and delicious, that it seemed as though it were the reality, and the present bleak bareness the dream. She smiled anew at the magical sweetness of some touch or tone which in memory she felt and heard, and drank the delicious cup of poison, although at the very time she knew what the consequence of racking pain would be.

"This time, last year," thought she, "we went nutting together — this very day last year; just such a day as to-day. Purple and gold were the lights on the hills; the leaves were just turning brown; here and there on the sunny slopes the stubble-fields looked

tawny; down in a cleft of yon purple slate-rock the beck fell like a silver glancing thread; all just as it is to-day. And he climbed the slender swaying nut-trees, and bent the branches for me to gather; or made a passage through the hazel copses, from time to time claiming a toll. Who could have thought he loved me so little? — who? — who?"

Or, as the evening closed in, she would allow herself to imagine that she heard his coming step, just that she might recall the feeling of exquisite delight which had passed by without the due and passionate relish at the time. Then she would wonder how she could have had strength, the cruel selfpiercing strength, to say what she had done; to stab herself with that stern resolution, of which the scar would remain till her dying day. It might have been right; but, as she sickened, she wished she had not instinctively chosen the right. How luxurious a life haunted by no stern sense of duty must be! And many led this kind of life; why could not she? O, for one hour again of his sweet company! If he came now, she would agree to whatever he proposed.

It was a fever of the mind. She passed through it, and came out healthy, if weak. She was capable once more of taking pleasure in following an unseen guide through briar and brake. She returned with tenfold affection to her protecting care of Willie. She acknowledged to herself that he was to be her all-in-all in life. She made him her constant companion. For his sake, as the real owner of Yew Nook, and she as his steward and guardian, she began that course of careful saving, and that love of acquisition, which afterwards gained for her the reputation of being miserly. She still thought that he might regain a scanty portion of sense, — enough to require some simple pleasures and excitement, which would cost money. And money should not be wanting. Peggy rather assisted her in the formation of her parsimonious habits than otherwise; economy was the order of the district, and a certain degree of respectable avarice the characteristic of age. Only Willie was never stinted or hindered of anything that the two women thought could give him pleasure for want of money.

There was one gratification which Susan felt was needed for the restoration of her mind to its more healthy state, after she had passed through the whirling fever, when duty was as nothing, and anarchy reigned; a gratification — that somehow was to be her last burst of unreasonableness; of which she knew and recognised pain as the sure consequence. She must see him once more, — herself unseen.

The week before the Christmas of this memorable year, she went out in the dusk of the early winter evening, wrapped up close in shawl and cloak. She wore her

dark shawl under her cloak, putting it over her head in lieu of a bonnet; for she knew that she might have to wait long in concealment. Then she tramped over the wet fell-path, shut in by misty rain for miles and miles, till she came to the place where he was lodging; a farm-house in Langdale, with a steep stony lane leading up to it: this lane was entered by a gate out of the main road, and by the gate were a few bushes — thorns; but of them the leaves had fallen, and they offered no concealment: an old wreck of a yew-tree grew among them, however, and underneath that Susan cowered down, shrouding her face, of which the colour might betray her, with a corner of her shawl. Long did she wait; cold and cramped she became, too damp and stiff to change her posture readily. And after all, he might never come! But, she would wait till daylight, if need were; and she pulled out a crust, with which she had providently supplied herself. The rain had ceased, — a dull still brooding weather had succeeded; it was a night to hear distant sounds. She heard horses' hoofs striking and plashing in the stones, and in the pools of the road at her back. Two horses; not well-ridden, or evenly guided, as she could tell.

Michael Hurst and a companion drew near; not tipsy, but not sober. They stopped at the gate to bid each other a maudlin farewell. Michael stooped forward to catch the latch with the hook of the stick which he carried; he dropped the stick, and it fell with one end close to Susan, — indeed, with the slightest change of posture, she could have opened the gate for him. He swore a great oath, and struck his horse with his closed fist, as if that animal had been to blame; then he dismounted, opened the gate, and fumbled about for his stick. When he had found it (Susan had touched the other end) his first use of it was to flog his horse well, and she had much ado to avoid its kicks and plunges. Then, still swearing, he staggered up the lane, for it was evident he was not sober enough to remount.

By daylight Susan was back and at her daily labours at Yew Nook. When the spring came, Michael Hurst was married to Eleanor Hebthwaite. Others, too, were married, and christenings made their firesides merry and glad; or they travelled, and came back after long years with many wondrous tales. More rarely, perhaps, a Dalesman changed his dwelling. But to all households more change came than to Yew Nook. There the seasons came round with monotonous sameness; or, if they brought mutation, it was of a slow, and decaying, and depressing kind. Old Peggy died. Her silent sympathy, concealed under much roughness, was a loss to Susan Dixon. Susan was not yet thirty when this happened, but she

looked a middle-aged, not to say an elderly woman. People affirmed that she had never recovered her complexion since that fever, a dozen years ago, which killed her father, and left Will Dixon an idiot. But besides her grey sallowness, the lines in her face were strong, and deep, and hard. The movements of her eye-balls were slow and heavy; the wrinkles at the corners of her mouth and eyes were planted firm and sure; not an ounce of unnecessary flesh was there on her bones — every muscle started strong and ready for use. She needed all this bodily strength to a degree that no human creature, now Peggy was dead, knew of: for Willie had grown up large and strong in body, and, in general, docile enough in mind; but, every now and then, he became first moody, and then violent. These paroxysms lasted but a day or two; and it was Susan's anxious care to keep their very existence hidden and unknown. It is true that occasional passers-by on that lonely road heard sounds at night of knocking about of furniture, blows, and cries, as of some tearing demon within the solitary farm-house; but these fits of violence usually occurred in the night; and whatever had been their consequence, Susan had tidied and redd up all signs of aught unusual before the morning. For, above all, she dreaded lest some one might find out in what danger and peril she occasionally was, and might assume a right to take away her brother from her care. The one idea of taking charge of him had deepened and deepened with years. It was graven into her mind as the object for which she lived. The sacrifice she had made for this object only made it more precious to her. Besides, she separated the idea of the docile, affectionate, loutish, indolent Will, and kept it distinct from the terror which the demon that occasionally possessed him inspired her with. The one was her flesh and her blood, — the child of her dead mother; the other was some fiend who came to torture and convulse the creature she so loved. She believed that she fought her brother's battle in holding down those tearing hands, in binding whenever she could those uplifted restless arms prompt and prone to do mischief. All the time she subdued him with her cunning or her strength, she spoke to him in pitying murmurs, or abused the third person, the fiendish enemy, in no unmeasured tones. Towards morning the paroxysm was exhausted, and he would fall asleep, perhaps only to waken with evil and renewed vigour. But when he was laid down she would sally out to taste the fresh air, and to work off her wild sorrow in cries and mutterings to herself. The early labourers saw her gestures at a distance, and thought her as crazed as the idiot-brother who made the neighbourhood a

haunted place. But did any chance person call at Yew Nook later, or in the day, he would find Susan Dixon cold, calm, collected; her manner curt, her wits keen.

Once this fit of violence lasted longer than usual. Susan's strength both of mind and body was nearly worn out; she wrestled in prayer that somehow it might end before she, too, was driven mad; or, worse, might be obliged to give up life's aim, and consign Willie to a madhouse. From that moment of prayer (as she afterwards superstitiously thought) Willie calmed — and then he drooped — and then he sank — and, last of all, he died, in reality from physical exhaustion.

But he was so gentle and tender as he lay on his dying bed; such strange childlike gleams of returning intelligence came over his face long after the power to make his dull inarticulate sounds had departed, that Susan was attracted to him by a stronger tie than she had ever felt before. It was something to have even an idiot loving her with dumb, wistful, animal affection; something to have any creature looking at her with such beseeching eyes, imploring protection from the insidious enemy stealing on. And yet she knew that to him death was no enemy but a true friend, restoring light and health to his poor clouded mind. It was to her that death was an enemy; to her, the survivor, when Willie died: there was no one to love her. Worse doom still, there was no one left on earth for her to love.

You now know why no wandering tourist could persuade her to receive him as a lodger; why no tired traveller could melt her heart to give him rest and refreshment; why long habits of seclusion had given her a moroseness of manner, and care for the interests of another had rendered her keen and miserly.

But there was a third act in the drama of her life.

CHAPTER V.

In spite of Peggy's prophecy that Susan's life should not seem long, it did seem wearisome and endless as year by year slowly uncoiled their monotonous circles. To be sure, she might have made change for herself, but she did not care to do it. It was, indeed, more than "not caring" which merely implies a certain degree of vis inertiæ to be subdued before an object can be attained, and that the object itself does not seem to be of sufficient importance to call out the requisite energy. On the contrary, Susan exerted herself to avoid change and variety. She had a morbid dread of new faces, which originated in her desire to keep poor dead Willie's state a profound secret. She had a contempt for new customs; and indeed her old ways prospered so well under her active hand and vigilant eye, that it was difficult to know how they could be improved upon. She was regularly present in Coniston

market with the best butter and the earliest chickens of the season. Those were the common farm produce that every farmer's wife about had to sell; but Susan, after she had disposed of the more feminine articles, turned to on the man's side. A better judge of a horse or cow there was not in all the country round. Yorkshire itself might have attempted to jockey her, and would have failed. Her corn was sound and clean; her potatoes well preserved to the latest spring. People began to talk of the hoards of money Susan Dixon must have laid up somewhere; and one young ne'er-do-well of a farmer's son undertook to make love to the woman of forty, who looked fifty-five, if a day. He made up to her by opening a gate on the road-path home, as she was riding on a bare-backed horse, her purchase not an hour ago. She was off before him, refusing his civility; but the remounting was not so easy, and rather than fail she did not choose to attempt it. She walked, and he walked alongside, improving his opportunity, which, as he vainly thought, had been consciously granted to him. As they drew near Yew Nook, he ventured on some expression of a wish to keep company with her. His words were vague and clumsily arranged. Susan turned round and coolly asked him to explain himself. He took courage, as he thought of her reputed wealth, and expressed his wishes this second time pretty plainly. To his surprise the reply she made was in a series of smart strokes across his shoulders, administered through the medium of a supple hazel-switch.

"Take that!" said she, almost breathless, "to teach thee how thou darest make a fool of an honest woman, old enough to be thy mother. If thou com'st a step nearer the house, there 's a good horse-pool, and there 's two stout fellows who'll like no better fun than ducking thee. Be off wi' thee."

And she strode into her own premises, never looking round to see whether he obeyed her injunction or not.

Sometimes three or four years would pass over without her hearing Michael Hurst's name mentioned. She used to wonder at such times whether he were dead or alive. She would sit for hours by the dying embers of her fire on a winter's evening, trying to recall the scenes of her youth; trying to bring up living pictures of the faces she had then known — Michael's most especially. She thought that it was possible, so long had been the lapse of years, that she might now pass by him in the street unknowing and unknown. His outward form she might not recognise, but himself she should feel in the thrill of her whole being. He could not pass her unawares.

What little she did hear about him all testified a downwards tendency. He drank, — not at

stated times when there was no other work to be done, but continually, whether it was seed-time or harvest. His children were ill at one time; then one died, while the others recovered, but were poor sickly things. No one dared to give Susan any direct intelligence of her former lover; many avoided all mention of his name in her presence; but a few spoke out either in indifference to, or ignorance of, those by-gone days. Susan heard every word, every whisper, every sound that related to him. But her eye never changed, nor did a muscle of her face move.

Late one November night she sate over her fire; not a human being besides herself in the house; none but she had ever slept there since Willie's death. The farm-labourers had foddered the cattle and gone home hours before. There were crickets chirping all round the warm hearth-stones, there was the clock ticking with the peculiar beat Susan had known ever since childhood, and which then and ever since she had oddly associated with the idea of a mother and child talking together, one loud tick, and quick — a feeble sharp one following.

The day had been keen, and piercingly cold. The whole lift of heaven seemed a dome of iron. Black and frost-bound was the earth under the cruel east wind. Now the wind had dropped, and as the darkness had gathered in, the weather-wise old labourers prophesied snow. The sounds in the air arose again, as Susan sate still and silent. They were of a different character to what they had been during the prevalence of the east wind. Then they had been shrill and piping; now they were like low distant growlings, not unmusical, but strangely threatening. Susan went to the window, and drew aside the little curtain. The whole world was white, the air was blinded with the swift and heavy downfal of snow. At present it came down straight, but Susan knew those distant sounds in the hollows and gullies of the hills portended a driving wind and a more cruel storm. She thought of her sheep; were they all folded? the new-born calf, was it bedded well? Before the drifts were formed too deep for her to pass in and out — and by the morning she judged that they would be six or seven feet deep — she would go out and see after the comfort of her beasts. She took a lantern, and tied a shawl over her head, and went out into the open air. She cared tenderly for all her animals, and was returning, when borne on the blast as if some spirit-cry — for it seemed to come rather down from the skies than from any creature standing on earth's level — she heard a voice of agony; she could not distinguish words; it seemed rather as if some bird of prey was being caught in the whirl of the icy wind, and torn and tortured by its violence. Again! up high

above! Susan put down her lantern, and shouted loud in return; it was an instinct, for if the creature were not human, which she had doubted but a moment before, what good could her responding cry do? And her cry was seized on by the tyrannous wind, and borne farther away in the opposite direction to that from which that call of agony had proceeded. Again she listened; no sound: then again it rang through space; and this time she was sure it was human. She turned into the house, and heaped turf and wood on the fire, which, careless of her own sensations, she had allowed to fade and almost die out. She put a new candle in her lantern; she changed her shawl for a maud, and leaving the door on latch, she sallied out. Just at the moment when her ear first encountered the weird noises of the storm, on issuing forth into the open air, she thought she heard the words, "O God! O, help!" They were a guide to her, if words they were, for they came straight from a rock not a quarter of a mile from Yew Nook, but only to be reached, on account of its precipitous character, by a round-about path. Thither she steered, defying wind and snow; guided by here a thorn-tree, there an old doddered oak, which had not quite lost their identity under the whelming mask of snow. Now and then she stopped to listen; but never a word or sound heard she, till right from where the copsewood grew thick and tangled at the base of the rock, round which she was winding, she heard a moan. Into the brake — all snow in appearance, almost a plain of snow looked on from the little eminence where she stood — she plunged, breaking down the bush, stumbling, bruising herself, fighting her way; her lantern held between her teeth, and she herself using head as well as hands to butt away a passage, at whatever cost of bodily injury. As she climbed or staggered, owing to the unevenness of the snow-covered ground, where the briars and weeds of years were tangled and matted together, her foot felt something strangely soft and yielding. She lowered her lantern; there lay a man, prone on his face, nearly covered by the fastfalling flakes; he must have fallen from the rock above, as not knowing of the circuitous path, he had tried to descend its steep, slippery face. Who could tell? it was no time for thinking. Susan lifted him up with her wiry strength; he gave no help — no sign of life; but for all that he might be alive: he was still warm; she tied her maud round him; she fastened the lantern to her apronstring; she held him tight: half-dragging, half-carrying — what did a few bruises signify to him, compared to dear life, to precious life! She got him through the brake, and down the path. There for an instant she stopped to take breath; but

as if stung by the Furies, she pushed on again with almost superhuman strength. Clasping him round the waist and leaning his dead weight against the lintel of the door, she tried to undo the latch; but now, just at this moment, a trembling faintness came over her, and a fearful dread took possession of her — that here, on the very threshold of her home, she might be found dead, and buried under the snow, when the farm-servants came in the morning. This terror stirred her up to one more effort. She and her companion were in the warmth of the quiet haven of that kitchen; she laid him on the settle, and sank on the floor by his side. How long she remained in swoon she could not tell; not very long she judged by the fire, which was still red and sullenly glowing when she came to herself. She lighted the candle, and bent over her late burden to ascertain if indeed he were dead. She stood long gazing. The man lay dead. There could be no doubt about it. His filmy eyes glared at her, unshut. But Susan was not one to be affrighted by the stony aspect of death. It was not that; it was the bitter, woeful recognition of Michael Hurst.

She was convinced he was dead; but after a while she refused to believe in her conviction. She stripped off his wet outer-garments with trembling, hurried hands. She brought a blanket down from her own bed; she made up the fire. She swathed him up in fresh, warm wrappings, and laid him on the flags before the fire, sitting herself at his head, and holding it in her lap, while she tenderly wiped his loose, wet hair, curly still, although its colour had changed from nut-brown to iron-grey since she had seen it last. From time to time she bent over the face afresh, sick and fain to believe that the flicker of the firelight was some slight convulsive motion. But the dim, staring eyes struck chill to her heart. At last she ceased her delicate busy cares, but she still held the head softly, as if caressing it. She thought over all the possibilities and chances in the mingled yarn of their lives that might, by so slight a turn, have ended far otherwise. If her mother's cold had been early tended so that the responsibility as to her brother's weal or woe had not fallen upon her; if the fever had not taken such rough, cruel hold on Will; nay, if Mrs. Gale, that hard, worldly sister, had not accompanied him on his last visit to Yew Nook, — his very last before this fatal stormy night; if she had heard his cry — cry uttered by those pale, dead lips with such wild, despairing agony, not yet three hours ago! O! if she had but heard it sooner, he might have been saved before that blind, false step had precipitated him down the rock! In going over this weary chain of unrealised possibilities Susan

learnt the force of Peggy's words. Life was short, looking back upon it. It seemed but yesterday since all the love of her being had been poured out, and run to waste. The intervening years — the long monotonous years that had turned her into an old woman before her time — were but a dream.

The labourers coming in the dawn of the winter's day were surprised to see the fire-light through the low kitchen-window. They knocked, and hearing a moaning answer, they entered, fearing that something had befallen their mistress. For all explanation they got these words:

"It is Michael Hurst. He was belated, and fell down the Raven's Crag. Where does Eleanor, his wife, live?"

How Michael Hurst got to Yew Nook no one but Susan ever knew. They thought he had dragged himself there with some sore, internal bruise sapping away his minuted life. They could not have believed the superhuman exertion which had first sought him out, and then dragged him hither. Only Susan knew of that.

She gave him into the charge of her servants, and went out and saddled her horse. Where the wind had drifted the snow on one side, and the road was clear and bare, she rode, and rode fast; where the soft, deceitful heaps were massed up, she dismounted and led her steed, plunging in deep, with fierce energy, the pain at her heart urging her onwards with a sharp, digging spur.

The grey, solemn, winter's noon was more night-like than the depth of summer's night; dim purple brooded the low skies over the white earth, as Susan rode up to what had been Michael Hurst's abode, while living. It was a small farm-house, carelessly kept outside, slatternly tended within. The pretty Nelly Hebthwaite was pretty still; her delicate face had never suffered from any long-enduring feeling. If anything, its expression was that of plaintive sorrow; but the soft, light hair had scarcely a tinge of grey, the wood-rose tint of complexion yet remained, if not so brilliant as in youth; the straight nose, the small mouth were untouched by time. Susan felt the contrast even at that moment. She knew that her own skin was weather-beaten, furrowed, brown, — that her teeth were gone, and her hair grey and ragged. And yet she was not two years older than Nelly, — she had not been in youth, when she took account of these things. Nelly stood wondering at the strange-enough horsewoman, who stood and panted at the door, holding her horse's bridle, and refusing to enter.

"Where is Michael Hurst?" asked Susan, at last.

"Well, I can't rightly say. He should have been at home last night, but he was off seeing after a public-house to be let at Ulverstone, for our farm does not answer, and we were thinking —"

"He did not come home last night?" said Susan, cutting short the story, and half-affirming, half-questioning by way of letting in a ray of the awful light before she let it full in, in its consuming wrath.

"No! he'll be stopping somewhere out Ulverstone ways. I'm sure we've need of him at home, for I've no one but lile Tommy to help me tend the beasts. Things have not gone well with us, and we don't keep a servant now. But you're trembling all over, ma'am. You'd better come in, and take something warm, while your horse rests. That's the stable-door, to your left."

Susan took her horse there; loosened his girths, and rubbed him down with a wisp of straw. Then she looked about her for hay; but the place was bare of food, and smelt damp and unused. She went to the house, thankful for the respite, and got some clap-bread, which she mashed up in a pail-full of lukewarm water. Every moment was a respite, and yet every moment made her dread the more the task that lay before her. It would be longer than she thought at first. She took the saddle off, and hung about her horse, which seemed somehow more like a friend than anything else in the world. She laid her cheek against its neck, and rested there, before returning to the house for the last time.

Eleanor had brought down one of her own gowns, which hung on a chair against the fire, and had made her unknown visitor a cup of hot tea. Susan could hardly bear all these little attentions; they choked her, and yet she was so wet, so weak with fatigue and excitement that she could neither resist by word or by action. Two children stood awkwardly about, puzzled at the scene, and even Eleanor began to wish for some explanation of who her strange visitor was.

"You 've may-be heard him speak of me? I'm called Susan Dixon."

Nelly coloured, and avoided meeting Susan's eye.

"I 've heard other folk speak of you. He never named your name."

This respect of silence came like balm to Susan; balm not felt or heeded at the time it was applied, but very grateful in its effects for all that.

"He is at my house," continued Susan, determined not to stop or quaver in the operation — the pain which must be inflicted.

"At your house? Yew Nook?" questioned Eleanor, surprised. "How came he there?" — half-jealously. "Did he take shelter from the coming storm? Tell me, — there is something — tell me, woman!"

"He took no shelter. Would to God he had!"

"O! would to God! would to God!" shrieked out Eleanor, learning all from the woeful import of those dreary eyes. Her cries thrilled through the house;

the children's piping wailings and passionate cries on "Daddy! Daddy!" pierced into Susan's very marrow. But she remained as still and tearless as the great round face upon the clock.

At last, in a lull of crying she said, — not exactly questioning — but as if partly to herself, —

"You loved him, then?"

"Love him! he was my husband! He was the father of three bonny bairns that lie dead in Grasmere Churchyard. I wish you'd go, Susan Dixon, and let me weep without your watching me! I wish you'd never come near the place."

"Alas! alas! it would not have brought him to life. I would have laid down my own to save his. My life has been so very sad! No one would have cared if I had died. Alas! alas!"

The tone in which she said this was so utterly mournful and despairing that it awed Nelly into quiet for a time. But by-and-bye she said, "I would not turn a dog out to do it harm; but the night is clear, and Tommy shall guide you to the Red Cow. But, O! I want to be alone. If you'll come back to-morrow, I'll be better, and I'll hear all, and thank you for every kindness you have shown him, — and I do believe you've showed him kindness, — though I don't know why."

Susan moved heavily and strangely.

She said something — her words came thick and unintelligible. She had had a paralytic stroke since she had last spoken. She could not go, even if she would. Nor did Eleanor, when she became aware of the state of the case, wish her to leave. She had her laid on her own bed, and weeping silently all the while for her lost husband, she nursed Susan like a sister. She did not know what her guest's worldly position might be; and she might never be repaid. But she sold many a little trifle to purchase such small comforts as Susan might need. Susan, lying still and motionless, learnt much. It was not a severe stroke; it might be the forerunner of others yet to come, but at some distance of time. But for the present she recovered, and regained much of her former health. On her sick-bed she matured her plans. When she returned to Yew Nook, she took Michael Hurst's widow and children with her to live there, and fill up the haunted hearth with living forms that should banish the ghosts.

And so it fell out that the latter days of Susan Dixon's life were better than the former.

TRUFFLES.

I PRESUME you are cognisant of the famous receipt for dressing cucumber, or cowcumber, as persons who are proud of their gentility pronounce it: pare it thick, slice it thin; add oil, pepper, vinegar and salt, and then throw it out of the window. Now, what do you think that dishful of ugly,

brown-black, mis-shapen balls in the restaurant's window is good for, except to toss scornfully on the rubbish heap, without any preliminary dressing at all — unless it were thought worth while to reserve them as missiles composed of desiccated dirt to cast at the head of the first perjured witness or receiver of stolen goods whom fate shall conduct to the pillory? Do they look like anything edible by the mouth of humanity? Would you not pronounce them as safe from attack by civilised jaws as the calcined loaves and the cinderfied fruits dug up from the housekeepers' rooms of Pompeii? Would you give a guinea a-pound for such repulsive-looking objects as those, except on the hypothesis of their rightful claim to a place in your own private museum of horrors, where they might rank with coprolites, fossilised spawn of gigantic antediluvian toads, or corns extracted from elephants' toes and laid to ripen in rotten sawdust? But you may safely pay your guinea a-pound for them, sometimes. Because, like hops and other capricious vegetables, their price will suddenly rise so high as to allow you to make a satisfactory transaction. Their price will also vary in the other direction — at the close of a productive black-ball summer — so as to render the transaction unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, you will have your stock of Truffles in hand, and their possession ought to recompense you for every other disappointment.

It is curious that the very name of things so distasteful to many palates, and so unsightly to most eyes should be a sort of watch-word which epitomises the perfection of good cheer and the acme of the culinary art amongst a people who pride themselves on excellence in that line. The phrases, truffled turkey-hen and partridge with truffles, are severally and separately sufficient to indicate that a grand gastronomic treat is impending. No one would combine the two together; it would be overdoing the thing — gilding refined gold, painting the lily, and adding perfume to the violet. Curious, again, that truffles are altogether a paradox, a mystery, a contradiction, an enigma — but I am diffidently of opinion that truffles derive their renown as a condiment not so much from their flavour as from the quality of their substance. It is not the sense of taste alone which is peculiarly gratified, but also that of feeling and of pleasurable action and exercise of the organs employed in mastication and deglutition. The Arab couriers prevent their salivary glands from falling asleep by perseveringly sucking pellets of gum. As a schoolboy I have chewed a lump of India-rubber for hours together. I have witnessed the performance of a similar operation, for a shorter period, on a mouthful of nuts. I have seen

toothless elderlies derive innocent satisfaction from the long-continued mumbling of a morsel of gristle. Truffle-eating borders upon these enjoyments, besides osculating or gently touching upon sundry others. Young people are rarely capable of appreciating truffles, nor are working-people. It requires an education to understand them properly. But for those gifted with the true faculty — respectable old gentlemen, for instance, who have no other thought or pleasure than eating and drinking — truffles are the superlative of edible substances. They are sought for with avidity; they are devoured with the eyes before they reach the mouth; their odour causes every nerve to tremble; and the effect on the palate of the ecstatic gourmand is a sensation of ineffable voluptuousness. To virgin palates a slight amount of apprehensive trepidation is combined with the foretaste of anticipated pleasure. On first receiving a piece of truffle into your mouth, you are afraid it should turn out nasty, and it proves tolerably nice; you doubt whether you can chew it properly, and your molars succeed beyond your expectation. It coquettes with your palate, plays with your tongue, and challenges your teeth with pleasing provocation. When you have got it safe, you don't know whether to treat it as a bit of gutta-percha, a slice of crisp carrot, a fleshy mushroom, or a solid Brazil nut. It is the puzzle which pleases — the perplexity which proves so piquant. With a slice of beef, a baked potato, the wing of a fowl, or a spoonful of green peas on your plate, you go on with your meal straight-forwardly enough; you chat your ordinary chat and finish your bottle of ordinary wine with every-day indifference. But with a coal-black slice of the subterranean fungus adorning the prongs of your fork, you assume the right to make gallant speeches to your fair neighbour opposite; you make ready, present, and fire your wit, if you have any, and find the best substitute you can if you haven't; you put middle-aged Bordeaux aside, and take to ancient Burgundy; in short, there are truffles on the dinner-table.

More contrarieties. It would be a shame and untrue to say, that women are greater epicures than men; and yet I think — I wouldn't positively affirm it as a Christian gentleman — but I have a great idea that truffles have been even more highly patronised by ladies than by their lords. The only person I know of as having believed she had succeeded in cultivating truffles is a female horticulturist, as you shall hear by-and-by. I once saw in the streets of a town that stands in the centre of a truffle-growing district, a truffle-hunter arrive one blazing afternoon, with his bag of treasure-trove hanging over his shoulder, followed by his pert little truffle-dog and his

attendant humble comrade, carrying the long-handled stub or spade wherewith the cryptogamic nuggets had been brought to light and to kitchen glory. The landlord of the hotel where I stayed (a cook worthy of apotheosis after death, which I hope won't take place till I have had the opportunity of eating a few more of his dinners) caught sight of him, and laid hands upon his bag.

"How much the pound?" he asked, in a quarter of a syllable and an eighth of a breath.

"Five francs," said the fungus-finder, indifferently.

"I will take them all," slowly and solemnly interposed from behind a richly-dressed, hat-wearing lady of fifty. "Follow me to the house, young man."

There was determination in her eye and command in her voice.

"But, madame, I —" protested the landlord-cook.

"Certainly, if monsieur absolutely cannot do without," rejoined the decided dame; till a contest of politeness rose as to who should yield the truffle of discord. She was so excessively polite, so thoroughly resolved not to vex and annoy M. Mayonnaise by robbing his table d'hôte of its handsomest dish, that the poor Frenchman had no help for it. She sailed away with the truffle-hunter, the wiry little dog, the spade-bearing Pylades, and the whole bag of truffles, driving them before her for safety's sake. We had no truffles for dinner that day.

Are truffles invigorating, restorative, and exciting meats? French popular literature sets up an unanimous shout in the affirmative; and yet the matter is far from clear. About truffles there is nothing proved nor certain; they are the Cynthias of the minute whom you must catch in a cloud, and do the best you can with them afterwards. My own medical attendant, whom I have confidentially consulted as to the constitutional effects of truffles, says: As restoratives, truffles are almost always taken in combination with Tokay, Burgundy, and other powerful wines; it may, therefore, be the wine alone which produces the beneficial effect, if any. They are not in themselves at all exciting, any more than mushrooms, morels, laver, cheese-mould, fern-root, bird's-nest soup, or any other cryptogamous condiment — and yet they are. You never dream of eating truffles when you are quietly supping or dining alone or in family. When you eat truffles, it is always at a grand entertainment, with abundance of succulent and high-seasoned dishes, with extra wine both in quantity and quality, and under the mental spur applied by cheerful, witty, and imaginative conversation. I therefore do think that after you have been feasting on truffles, it will be only prudent to exercise all the self control and circumspection you can

But he did not hint a single word about repudiating truffles, friendly dinners, or little suppers to a moderate amount.

My gentle readers will now perceive that there is more in truffles than they expected to find beneath their dingy warty skin. Well might the Messieurs Moynier fire up indignantly in the preface to their complete Treatise on the Truffle (only four hundred octavo pages): Many persons with whom we have conversed about our work, have held this language to us. But there can't be much to say about such a limited subject, can there? Observations like that caused us to re-read our manuscript several times; and we searched hard to discover lengthinesses and superfluities which required to be cut out or abbreviated. But we have found nothing of the kind. We have judged it indispensable to say all and to print all. In France, the influential effects of truffles spread like oil over the waters of society. They have even given their name to an epoch: Villèle's ministry was called the ministère truffé. A truffled pâté or a truffled fowl will suffice to soothe an angry friend, to open the doors of a future father-in-law, and even to turn the key inside the lock of official gateways. Turkeys in their natural state are a source of immense revenue. By their aid, many a farmer pays his rent, many a farmer's daughter saves her dowry. But in the mere financial view of the question, turkeys claim special notice. Thirty years ago it was calculated that from the beginning of November to the end of February there were consumed in Paris three hundred truffled turkeys per day, or a total of thirty-six thousand. The average price of every turkey so prepared was at least twenty francs, or seven hundred and twenty thousand francs in all — a pretty tolerable sum to be put in circulation by the partnership between a single species of bird and fungus. An equal amount of money was assumed to be laid out in the purchase of the truffled fowls, pheasants, chickens, and partridges which tantalise the appetites of francless men from the windows of restaurants, roasters, and charcutiers. The latter's displays have often caused me to observe that the close relations between truffles and pigs are both curious, retributive, and reciprocal. Piggy was the first to discover the truffle for his own private eating; man took the truffle away, and ate it himself; and man's dog pushed the pig on one side, and helped his master in truffle-hunting instead. The porkbutcher now unites the two old acquaintances in one common grave — the pâté, sausage, truffled pig's-feet, truffled boar's-head, or whatever other form of combination may be devised. As pigs were the first to uproot and destroy truffles, so truffles now enjoy the sweet revenge of increa-

sing the shouts of joy and triumph which are uttered over the carcases of innumerable pigs. It is a bloody mode of retaliation, especially in the cruel cases where black puddings are concerned.

For the few persons who do not know, it may be as well to state what truffles are. Tuber cibarium and lycoperdon tuber are learned names for a curious plant; a fungus which grows completely underground; a vegetable which has neither leaves, roots, flowers, nor stems, that we can perceive. Truffles have been found in England, in the downs of Wiltshire and Hampshire, and in the sandy districts of Norfolk, as at Holkham: but as drought and heat are necessary to their perfection, British-grown truffles are worth but little. Where the vine thrives, there thrive truffles; in Burgundy well — better move to the south. About Perigord, and at the foot of the Pyrenees, the truffle best produces its irregular lumps of vegetable flesh. There are animals that you would hardly take to be animals, and there are plants that few would believe to be plants. The truffle is one on the latter list, as wild and unmanageable in its nature as is possible to be. Pliny called it the excrement of the earth. It thrives best in a mixture of gravel and clay, on spots which the sun occasionally (and occasionally only) bakes to the heat of a natural oven. Favourable localities are the slopes of hills, the skirts of woods, the uncultivated brinks of summer torrents and unrestrained brooklets, and the shadowy places beneath the arms of vast oaks, poplars, birches, and willows. Like mushrooms, truffles like to make a sudden growth after thunderstorms and heavy summer showers. It was believed that storm-clouds lay them, as a hen lays eggs. Some say they are found more plentifully at full and new moon. It is clear that a night search at the former bright period must greatly aid the dogs in finding, by the dew on the ground causing the scent to lie. Hogs were used for the discovery of truffles — dogs are now. A tame grunter, who knew the taste of truffles, was taken out for a rural walk; he was sure to make a point at every spot where savoury odours arose from the ground; his proboscis went to work; a cry of exultation escaped him at the moment when the dainty morsel was attained; then came down upon him a shower of thundering blows with the stick; his master compelled him to relinquish the prize, and content himself with a handful of acorns. Truffle dogs do not require such severe discipline; they are better trained and better treated. They are little wiry, bright-eyed mongrel terriers, rather inclined to give themselves airs. They look as if they wanted to let you know, "You may patronise me or not, just as you like. I am a perfectly inde-

pendent dog. If truffle-finding should happen to fail, I can at any time earn my living (and a comfortable one, too) by rat-catching." They are taught the smell and taste of truffles; they scratch the ground when they scent the black pearl hidden beneath; and a few truffles are now and then given them for their pains; for man's propensity to truffles is shared in common by dogs, foxes, wolves, and swine.

There are many men who make a trade of truffle-gathering without any animal assistant whatever. Most of those with whom I have talked on the subject, refer the faculty (when manifested by men) to a kind of instinct, which they exercise without being able to give an account of it. As Fine-ear, in the fairy tale, could hear the grass grow, so these Fine-noses, or Fine-eyes, sniff or perceive the hidden tuber. They can look through a millstone which has no hole in the centre. They pretend to take rank with the treasure-discoverers or water-diviners whom the mysterious agency of a hazel rod conducts to their object. But in this there is nothing really miraculous; the human mind cannot always retrace the steps which itself has taken. Calculating boys have given correct arithmetical results, which they would have a difficulty in working out on paper. There are market-gardeners' children about Paris, who, on looking over a bed of seedling stocks only in their second leaf, will tell you which will turn out single and which double, though they cannot describe the signs by which they are guided. As old experience doth attain to something like prophetic strain, so truffle-hunters may acquire nicely-discriminating powers by practice. Outward symptoms for their guidance are far from being wanting. Where the gravelly surface is bare of vegetation; where, struck with a stick, it gives a hollow sound; where there are slight little swellings and bulgings of the soil; where there are certain unusual cracks; where tiny clouds of minute blue flies hover constantly over the same spot, as if they had found a nidus for their eggs; — there is the place to search for truffles. Not, however, in too great a hurry; for if the ground is broken before the truffles are ripe, the bed suffers, even although the earth be returned immediately, — truffles being, like others of their class, gregarious and social in their mode of growth. But the more numerous they are on the same spot, the less is the volume of the individual specimens. Truffles vary greatly in size, from two or three lines to five or six inches in diameter. Their average bigness is less than that of a hen's egg; they seldom weigh more seven or eight ounces, though much heavier specimens are on record. The chances are that

the fourteen pound truffle, seen by Haller, was not of genuine unsophisticated growth. As a general rule, the peasant extractors, the peasants who buy up and sell again, and the local speculators, whether in Perigord, Dauphiny, or Provence, are not over scrupulous. They have divers modes of fraud which they frequently employ to put off inferior merchandise instead of first-rate, which the purchaser fancies he is buying.

In the first place, they easily make large truffles out of little ones. The process is simple. They pin together, by means of thorns or small wooden skewers, a number of small truffles. The block of truffles once formed, they fill up all the gaps with moist earth; they cement with mastic or putty every chink till the cluster of ordinary truffles is taken for one enormous monster. Truffle-fanciers swallow the bait. The wonder circulates in the commercial world, and is bought and sold again, like the Pigot diamond. To the final consumer, when the phenomenon is washed, is revealed the bitter truth.

Although they refuse to grow on wet land (as well as in ground that has been manured) yet rainy summers and wet springs are favourable to their development. If accounts are correct, truffles must enter the catalogue of plants gifted with the power of motion. It has been remarked that in August, when the truffle begins to ripen, it rises nearer to the surface of the soil which covers it. It even appears to mount with an elasticity of sufficient force to cause it occasionally to come out of the ground into the open air. How this is effected has not been stated. It is generally believed that if truffles are once disturbed in the ground, although they have no root-fibres, they cease to grow, and remain stationary, imbibing no further nutriment from the earth. They seem to lie there like an animal in its matrix, or a seed in its capsule. If left in quiet, they increase insensibly. The season for truffle digging is from the month of October to the end of December, and sometimes even up to February. If not gathered when arrived at maturity, they rot, and their remains serve as the means of reproducing a future generation of tubers. At the beginning of summer—sooner or later, according to the warmth of the weather—the little truffles are found, about the size of peas, reddish without and white within. The subterranean peas gradually increase in bigness. At a later period, they are taken up in the shape of what are called white truffles, which are immature, and comparatively insipid in flavour. It has always been considered impossible to propagate truffles by artificial culture. It is nevertheless stated that Madame Nagel, the proprietress of the Château de la Moussière, at Biziat, Canton of Pont-de-Vegle, has discovered the solution of the problem. It

is just, however, to mention that the honour of the discovery (if a discovery there be) is due to her female servant, who advised Madame, in eighteen hundred and fifty-one, to plant little truffles, and the peelings of larger ones, at the foot of a hornbeam-hedge which grew in her garden. The attempt succeeded; the truffles increased and multiplied, and, in 'fifty-three, many amateur gardeners belonging to Mâcon verified the fact, and recorded it in the journal of the horticultural society of that town. The spell is therefore broken; truffles have been made subjects of horticulture. It now only remains to perfect the art by carefully studying, in the localities themselves, the nature of the soil where they grow spontaneously, and the conditions most favourable to their development.

In the kingdom of cooks, the truffle has sometimes been unjustly considered as an auxiliary only, and not as a principal. It has been asserted, "The truffle is a perfume like roses, thyme, vanilla, saffron, garlic, or lemon; it ought, therefore, to be employed as a substance communicating its special odour. Its flesh is strengthless and insipid, nearly as worthless as an orange from which the juice has been squeezed." But — say French culinary artists — the truffle being thus inadequately appreciated, it is easy to conceive into what serious errors cooks have fallen, and why so many of the profession are incompetent to dress the tubercule. Not to recognise precious qualities in the flesh of the truffle, not to consider it as capable of forming a dish without any foreign aid, is a grand and fatal mistake, which has prevented the due enjoyment of the fungus. The French are circumspect in communicating to strangers their modes, however imperfect, of dressing truffles. During the few years that the truffle has become better known, there has been much vain-boasting respecting modes of preparation, which were stumbled on by chance, and persevered in without attempting to discover something better. Consequently, the knowledge of truffles and their culinary treatment is still in a melancholy and benighted state in many countries of civilised Europe. In England, scarcely any but French cooks make use of truffles, which they procure from France. Of course, those gentlemen, when they emigrated, carried with them the dark-age, barbarous methods. To the evils of ignorance was joined the national obstinacy, which will not be persuaded that truffles do not want to enter into combination with cayenne pepper, Durham mustard, and high-spiced sauces, which deprive the truffles — already injured by their long journey — of whatever aroma is left remaining. It is only lately that the English have pronounced in favour of truffles, and that the consumption has mounted

beyond the merest trifle. All the truffles consumed in England by the gourmand world come from France. They are sent over fresh during the season, and are afterwards preserved in bottles. The fresh ones may be good; but the chances are against the quality of those in bottles. In general, the English are inferior connoisseurs in affairs of the table — they do not stand first-rate as gastrosophs. The alliance will probably enlarge their views and improve their faculties in that important respect. Hitherto, the British palate has not been apt to appreciate the perfection and delicacy of dishes finished off with the height of artistic excellence. The infatuation of eating underdone meat has rendered it insensible to the sublimities of gourmandise. But truffles are beginning to make their way.

Toulouse, from its position, has excellent truffles, which are more studiously manipulated than in many other parts of France. Toulouse has no truffle-merchants, properly so called; the preparation of the article is in the hands of persons, who make it up in pâtés, in terrines, or earthen pans covered with grease, in pots, and in tin-cases with fowl or game. In listening to the language and the Garonienne assurance of these gentry, you would believe them to be in possession of the most advanced secrets of the gastronomic art. They fix the price current, and despatch their circulars to every great person in the four quarters of the world. In all the towns and villages of Perigord, truffles are employed as at Toulouse, with the exception of a few slight differences. Fowls and game are manipulated "aux truffes," after a preliminary cooking in boiling fat, a seasoning, and a spicing. But in Perigord the atrocity is committed of peeling the truffles and pounding the rind to enter into the composition of stuffings — a villanous piece of roguery, seeing that the asperities of the tuber do not contain an atom of its perfume. A great number of small towns, all situated in this part of France, have an enormous renown for the preparation of truffles in the above-mentioned forms, and also in galantines, or boned fowls. Some of the principal are — Ruffec, Périgeux, Barbézieux, Angoulême (where naughty men steep truffles in water, to make them weigh heavier), Limoges, Brives, Sarlat, Souillac, Bergérac, and Nérac; but at the last place, they are apt to be too heavy-handed with bacon and spices. Cunning virtuosi hereabouts hold to the doctrine that to make a perfect truffled turkey, the truffles ought to be introduced immediately after the bird is killed and plucked.

The Alsacians, and notably the people of Strasbourg, have the merit of rendering due justice to truffles. Pastrycooks mostly rule the culinary art. Some half a score of these personages in

Strasbourg are the sole makers of the immense number of truffled goose-liver pies which are spread throughout the face of the globe. Some of them are extremely rich, and consider themselves of no little importance, in consequence of their frequent intercourse with nobles and millionnaires. A singular adventure happened to one of them. A distinguished person from Germany gave this pastry-cook an order for a truffled goose-liver pâté of enormous dimensions, which were indicated by making a circle with the finger on an unusually large dining-table. If historians do not err, six hundred francs was the price agreed on. Four-and-twenty hours were allowed for its delivery, a handsome sum on account was paid, and a penalty in case of failure was fixed, more to insure exactitude than as any indemnity to the illustrious personage. The artist was by no means surprised at receiving such a commission, because he was aware that the Germans are fond of setting large joints upon their table. It is not rare to see a whole roebuck figuring in the midst of a substantial dinner.

Our pâté-maker, overjoyed beyond measure at the order he had received, immediately went to work, suspended his other labours, slaughtered hecatombs of geese, procured the required supply of livers, recruited several supernumerary assistants, kneaded the paste, and began by laying the foundation of the pâté, which promised to assume the proportions of a brewer's mash-tub. That done, and the circumferential wall of crust built round it, he filled his pâté, trimmed it, affixed the decorative architecture, put the top on, and added the glazing. It was already a charming edifice, highly finished in the composite order. Night was far advanced when the exploit was completed. It was the proudest day of his life. He marched in ecstasy round his marvellous work. He regaled his aides-de-camp with bumpers of Rhine wine. One thing alone annoyed him; — that there would not be time to carry this masterpiece in triumph through every street of the town. In short, after a few moments' delay, naturally enough, spent in copious libations, the oven was heated, its temperature tested, and at last the pâté, borne by four of the most eminent disciples, presented itself at the oven-door. But, — overwhelming sorrow, — he abruptly retreated three paces backwards, smitten with sudden stupefaction. The oven-door was too narrow — too narrow by half! "Malediction, rage, despair," they shouted. "We are lost — undone!" "The reputation of my old-established house is destroyed," said the chief. "Kill me, my friends. I cannot survive the blow." They tried in vain, in all directions, to get the pâté in cornerwise or anyhow. The time was spent in useless lamentations,

until the moment of delivery arrived. "If I lose the pâté, I had better not lose my customer;" a reflection which helped to calm his agitation. He resigned himself to fate, waited on his patron, and cotton nightcap in hand, stated the unfortunate disappointment with the humblest expressions of penitent affliction. The great man only laughed, like an apathetic German as he was, gave up the instalment already paid, and dismissed him with the consolatory advice, "Mein Herr, de next time you make a grand pâté, you vill take your timentions petter!"

THE POST-MISTRESS.

The post-mistress at Moorbeck is retained by government at a liberal salary of five annual pounds. She has held her office, as she casually informed me, during four reigns, and has seen three great wars: the American, which she remembers hearing tell of when she was a child, because her mother's brother was killed in it; Bonaparte's wars; and now this war with the Russians,—not to mention the battles in India, where one of the old colonel's sons was badly wounded, and another was made captain for slaying a fabulous number of the enemy with his own hand.

I like a gossip about times gone by, and Ailie Jarvis likes a gossip too; perhaps that is the reason why I am so often to be found at the little rose-covered cottage, at the bottom of the hill when it is half-holiday.

My introduction to Ailie was on this wise;—I wanted stamps, and walked down to the post-office to purchase them with a shilling in my hand—I mention this because we do not carry purses usually; the only article of investment at Moorbeck being pipes and ale. I was accompanied by my amiable pupils, who formally named me to the post-mistress as their new governess. She was a little, well-made woman, verging on eighty, with a fine forehead and traces of a beauty which neither hard work, hard fare, nor a full meed of troubles had sufficed to obliterate. She received me with easy dignity, asked what country woman I was, and hoped I liked Wensleydale. Having replied to these questions, I preferred a mild request for stamps.

"How many do you want, miss?"

"Twelve."

"Then I'm sure I can't let you have them; I've only two left."

"Oh! indeed. Well, never mind; one will do for the present. Perhaps you will ask the mail-cart man to bring some;" and I gave up the shilling, at the same time feeling a tug at my sleeve from my eldest pupil, who is a girl of precocious shrewdness and vast second-hand worldly experience.

"How silly of you to give her the money," she whispers; "you will never get the stamps."

I cast a regretful look at the old woman's hand in which my coin is fast imprisoned, for my number of shillings is limited — I may say, very limited. Ailie assures me, as I go out, that I shall have my stamps without fail in the morning.

"I should think so," murmured Miss Amelia, incredulously.

I have now been at Moorbeck eighteen months and I have not received those stamps yet. The next day Ailie brought six, and left them with a small note couched in polite terms, explaining that she could not procure more then; but that the five which she still owed should follow shortly. I was satisfied. In the afternoon, however, another missive was presented to me, which ran thus: —

DEAR FRIEND, MISS GOVERNESS, — Ailie Jarvis will be much obliged if you will let her have the stamps back again; for Mr. West has sent for some, and I dare not tell him I have not got any.

I remain your dear friend,
AILIE JARVIS.

The spelling was correct and the writing legible, and with a smile I hand over the Queen's portraits to the maid, who departs therewith.

"Well, you *are* silly! I would not have let her have them," cried my pupil; "you are a goose!"

I deposit the note in my workbox; and, after slightly ruffling the sleek plumage of my wise and plain-spoken pupil, I return to the perusal of my thirty-year-old Review.

I shall never make a more profitable investment than that shilling; it has yielded exorbitant interest in the circulating medium of chat. When I am dull, or idly disposed, or wearied with the vivid sagacity of my young friends, I write a letter and carry it to the post myself; I enter the office, which is also Ailie's bedroom, and deposit it on the table with a penny, I do not wish the debt to be liquidated now, but it rests between us unforgotten; then I ask after the rheumatism, the finger-joints, and other chronic ailments of the venerable public servant, until we glide into the full channel of retrospective small-talk; for Ailie is the chronicle of Moorbeck. She tells me first that in this little cottage where we both stand she has brought up fourteen children and two grandchildren; that her husband for a long time before his death never did a hand's-turn; that one of her sons, Henry, — the handsomest and cleverest of them all, — lay wasting in bed seven years before he died. She shows me some letters that he wrote to her, and also his Bible filled with marginal notes, and the blank leaves covered with texts appropriate to his condition. There is a miniature portrait of him hanging over the chimneypiece. It represents a man with a face like Ailie's, strong and intellectual. What those seven helpless years must have been! Then, with a hot flush on her cheek and a sparkle in her faded eyes, she alludes to another son, who, having risen in

the world, is too proud to acknowledge his kin.

"I pray God Almighty might humble his pride yet!" she adds in a tone that has more of a curse than a blessing in it; but the indignant anger is quenched as she touches slightly, very slightly, on the favourite daughter, who, who —she pauses, and seeing that the unspoken story is known, says tremulously, "Oh! she was bonnie, real bonnie! neither gentle nor simple in all the dale was half so bonnie as my Alice."

Five of her children, she tells me, three sons and two daughters, lie buried with her husband in Moorbeck churchyard; Henry lies in the old graveyard on the hill at Scarbro', and of the rest, some are married and settled in the dale, some have emigrated, and one is in service. Having got to the end of her domestic relations, by no means to be measured by these few brief lines, she branches out in a general way on things that have been in Moorbeck since she remembers.

We go out into the September sunshine, and stand by the garden gate; every moment I am departing, but still I don't depart. Ailie points to Penhill, and asks me if I can see the beacon. I cannot; my eyes are not so young as they have been.

"Well, miss," she says, "I remember one night—it don't seem so long since to me, though it happened before you were born — Penhill top was all in a lowe. We were expecting Bonaparte and the French to land every day, and on the brow of every hill they piled a great heap of sticks and ling to set fire to, so as to alarm the country, you know. We were just going to bed, the fire was out and the door shut, when we heard somebody run by shouting, 'Penhill's blazing! Penhill's blazing! the French are coming!'

"You may just think what we must have felt. I turned as cold as a stone first, but the lads said, 'Keep up your heart, mother; we'll see them all driven into the sea. They'll never get to Moorbeck.'

"Then I helped 'em, and they all started out to go to meet the enemy. All the dale was up; men a-foot, men on horseback, and the old Colonel and the Squire amongst 'em. It was a wet night, and the church bells were going — it was dismal, mind. Well, the Colonel took his sword, and he heartened the men on, and they rade and they rade until they got nearly to Northallerton: and then, what do you think? Why, the French had never landed at all; it was a haystack on fire that did the mischief, and the beacons were lit for miles away. But the best of it was, that Bessie Heslop, who lived on Penhill, where her husband was watch, got her bed with the fright, and a finer boy you never saw! The old Squire would stand godfather for him, and gave a fine dinner at the christening. I was godmother, and the bairn was christened Penhill Heslop; ay, and I sat at table

with the gentlefolks, and drank wine with the old Colonel and the Squire too."

This is evidently a very proud reminiscence.

"These times are different," Ailie goes on, solemnly; "there are no such fine assemblies at the great house now as there were when I was a lass. I remember one night — I lived nursemaid at the rectory then, and mistress had sent us to bed — I got up and put on my gown, and stole across the paddock into the pleasure-grounds, and up to the window of the room where they were dancing. The blinds were not down, and as it was dark, I watched ever so long without anybody seeing me; but at last a gentleman and lady came suddenly to the window, and I suppose they must have seen me — I warrant I looked queer in my nightcap — for she screamed and fell down in a faint, and I heard the gentleman cry out, 'The Devil!' I didn't stand to be told to run, you may be sure; but got home as fast as I could, and then I did laugh. But it got about that a ghost haunted the gardens; and, if you believe me, the Squire had wooden shutters put to all the low windows immediately. I didn't tell, for I should have lost my place."

"But are there ghosts at Moorbeck, Ailie — real ones?" I ask, with interest; for if there is one thing I relish more than another, it is a ghost-story. Ailie is a rather enlightened character, but she admits that the old Grange, where the Colonel once lived, and which was burnt down two years ago, had a very bad name.

"The servants would not stay one while," she says; "and even the family did not like it. You see the old Colonel had done a wrong thing in leaving it as he did, and so people talked. There were footsteps tramping about at night, and sometimes a great sigh would be heard, though nothing could be seen; it came and sighed over them as they lay in bed, I have heard the girls tell, and then something was sure to happen. And before any of the family was going to die, there was always the noise of shutting down a coffin heard, followed by several people going down the great staircase, slow and heavy, as if they carried a burden. That happened before the old Colonel died, and the nurse told me herself, when I was streaking him for his coffin. He was a grim-looking corpse, with his thick grey moustaches, and his black brows. I've laid out I can't tell how many of that family; there was the Colonel's wife, and Miss Eleanor, who died of a waste — she was a beautiful girl, and as good as she was bonnie; then there was that sad scapegrace, Master Everard and the little boy; the old Colonel outlived 'em all, and was as bitter as aloes always. He got his nephew, Richard, to live with him when all the rest were gone, but I dare say he harried him almost to death. Richard

married a great lady for his wife, and so the old man was pleased and left the estate to him, instead of to his elder brother's family, who expected it; so the two sets quarrelled. Then Richard and his wife went abroad, and the house was let to Sir John Grafton. It was while he had it, and just before his youngest daughter was married, that it was burnt down; all her wedding-clothes were burnt, and as it happened at night, the girls escaped in their nightgowns, and took refuge at the Squire's. Miss Louisa was married from there a month after. There are a many people who say they saw the old Colonel walking about the house when it was burning, and that at the last he went off like a pillar of blue flame. I say myself that spirits no doubt there were, but they were in the cellar, and as they were not got out they made a fine lowe, as spirits always do."

"I am afraid you are right, Ailie, and that we cannot lay claim to a genuine ghost at Moorbeck, after all."

"I 'll tell you, miss, what I once saw my own self," Ailie recommences, laying an emphatic forefinger on my hand. "It was when my husband was took for death, and I had to fetch the doctor from Marston. Nothing would serve him but seeing Doctor Linley — he thought a vast of Dr. Linley. It was a misty October night, and I set off across the fields — it is three miles from Moorbeck to Marston. The doctor had been called out, but they promised to send him as soon as he came back; and as I was in a great fear for poor Willie, I didn't wait to see him. Well, I had got just by the stile in the river-closes, when I saw a light before me. It danced up and down in the mist like a live thing; but I said my prayers, and it kept going on and on, till I got out in the road, and then I missed it. Now, that's true, miss."

"Ailie, it was a will-o'-the-wisp, a marshlight."

"No, miss, it was a solemn warning; Willie died that day was a week."

The old woman was firm in her own superstition, so I made no further attempt to vanquish it.

"You 've been over the ruins of the Percies' castle, down yonder, miss?"

"Yes."

"Well, a light haunts them such as I saw — I 've seen it often."

"The ruins are not far from the marshy ground by the river, Ailie."

"What does that matter? And ever since I can remember, the folks have said there is a buried treasure watched by a raven. Penhill Heslop's father actually dug for it, but he only found some old coins, and rings, and bones, and the Squire was mightily put about that the ground should have been disturbed; for it seems Heslop had dug in the chapel. There is an old stone coffin that they use as a trough — you 've seen it?"

"Yes."

"I don't credit the talk of treasures and chests and what not, myself," Ailie adds, with serene dignity, to which I reply that such reports are usually unfounded.

"They are, miss — they are. Have you been to Scarthneck, miss?"

"Yes, Ailie; a couple of months since."

"There was a strange thing happened there once — it was to the squire's father. You remember, miss, that long, steep hill that goes down from the moor into the valley?"

I nod acquiescence.

"And you remember the low wood that covers the high slope on the right hand side?"

"Yes, perfectly."

"Well, one evening at dark, the Squire's father and the old Colonel were coming on horseback up the hill — where they had been to I don't know; but, however, Mr. Langdale had a great sum of money with him; they were talking and going slowly, when, just as they got to the brow, two men rushed out and seized Mr. Langdale's horse — one at the head, and the other at the tail. They never touched the Colonel, whose horse took fright, and started off. Well, what they wanted was the money, but the old Squire was tough and strong in the arm. They tried to drag him from his horse, but it was a high-mettled thing, and kicked and plunged until it shook both the villains off. They fired after the old gentleman, but he got clear and galloped away. He overtook the Colonel soon, and they made good haste home, you may think. The next day, nothing would serve them but they would go and look at the place, for the Squire was sure one of the men had been hurt; and, after looking about in the wood a little while, they found a grave dug, which had been got ready for Mr. Langdale, no doubt. Both the Squire and the Colonel had their suspicions about one man, but for the other they could not fix on anybody. Well, they went home again, and that evening there came a woman to the great house, to beg a drop of brandy for her husband, who was taken with a bad fit of colic. They were decent people as any at Moorbeck, and, of course, the wife got some brandy, and went home. All at once a fancy took the Squire, and he said to his wife that he would just walk up the village and see the poor man. He did not knock at the door, but walked straight into the kitchen, and there, talking with the wife, he saw the fellow he suspected of having been one of those who set upon him at Scarthneck. They seemed quite begone, and would not let him go into the bedroom where the man lay ill, for ever so long, but the Squire was determined, and, at last, he got to the bed where the miserable wretch was twisting about in pain. He cried out when he saw Mr. Langdale,

for the old gentleman was a magistrate, and, besides, his conscience pricked him hard. The Squire talked to him a bit, until the others seemed off their guard, and then he whispered, 'Don't you think it was my horse gave you your fit of colic?' He had not a word to say then, and he confessed it was. He died that same night — the other man was transported."

"I did not think you had had any such wicked people in all the dale, Ailie."

"Oh! miss, I think human nature is much of a muchness all the world over. There are both good and bad in the country as well as in the town."

"You keep up the old customs here, Ailie, don't you?"

"Some of them, miss. Have you heard anybody's banns published in church since you came? No; I don't think you will, for they must needs have a licence now. Well, in my time, after we had been asked in church the third time the old clerk sung out 'God speed 'em weel!' and when I was married his boy asked for my garter, and he got a fine white ribbon. Then the first Sunday Willie and me went to church after we were wed they sang that psalm about olive-branches — I daresay you know it — and always after a funeral they have dirges when the relations come to church. They don't do it in London, miss, do they?"

"No, Ailie — at least I think not, but I never was there to see."

"And I haven't either, and I think I never shall now. But I walked seven-and-twenty miles one day this summer to see a son of mine that was ill at Leeds. There isn't many going on for eighty could do that, miss."

"Indeed, Ailie, I could not do it myself."

"I dare say you could, miss, if need were that you should. You are small and light, like me, but then, to be sure, we have had different bringings-up. I 'm always well if I can get out of doors; for I've been used to a deal of walking. It is only lately that the mail-cart has come through Moorbeck, and left the bag at my door. I had to go to the corner of the road, near the bridge, which is a good mile off, every morning, rain or shine, to wait till the mail went by, and then I had a round of six or seven miles more to deliver the letters."

"All for five pounds a-year, Ailie?"

"No, miss, it was twenty then; and I 'll assure you I was main well off with it. But alterations were made: a post was set up at Alanby, and they only left me five pounds, — the other goes to the postmaster there; and maybe he has not above a dozen letters a month, while I've always, when the Squire's family is at home, as many as forty near, or fifty, sometimes."

"That seems too bad, Ailie."

"There is a deal of things too bad in this world, miss, that we have to bide. You 're young yet;

you don't know. How do you like your place, miss? This question is confidential."

"Very well, Ailie; I am quite contented."

"That's lucky, I am sure. But it must be dull for you at Moorbeck, isn't it, now?"

"No, Ailie, I 'm never dull; I have a kitten."

"A kitten — oh! yes; we all know your white kitten, with its red necklace; but you would not get a beau if you were to stop here for twenty years."

I laugh, and say it does not matter, and I do not care; a profession which the old woman scouts as utterly ridiculous and false. Then she bids me be of good heart, and never despair, for who knows what may happen, for I can't be so very, very old, after all. "Not much over thirty," I tell her, smiling.

"You thirty! Nay, that you're not; I 'll not credit it. You 're twenty-two, maybe."

"I am grey-headed, Ailie, and shall never see old maid's corner again."

"Old maids — I never could bide old maids. Don't you be one, whatever you are. Grey hairs are honourable, but old maids are abominable!"

"Then, the two together — the grey old maid — will be just tolerable."

"Nay, I don't agree to that."

A lurching country lad comes to the gate with a loosely-tied newspaper, and pushes it into the slit of the letter-box.

"You'll never get that in, lad. Just go into the house and bring the tongs to pull it out again."

While the youth drags his newspaper out of the slit, Ailie tells me that she always puts the poker down, lest any letters should have stuck, which is often the case. I wonder what is the state of my correspondence when it reaches the hands to which it is addressed. The intrusion of the boy with the paper has broken the thread of our discourse, so in earnest I say I must really go.

"Well, miss, thank you. It is very good of you to come and talk (?) to an old woman. Bless me, if there is not your kitten!"

I turn round and see my snowball Charlie hastily descending the orchard wall. He comes, and is duly petted and admired.

"The gamekeepers will shoot him," Ailie observes.

"No, they won't; I introduced him formally, and they promised not, and to let him out of traps, if he was caught."

"I lay you're fond of him, miss?"

"Very; he is so compassionable. He lies on the table watching me write, and sometimes he walks over the paper, and acts as very bad blotting-paper. We are great friends, Charlie and I."

"Some people don't like cats."

"Then I pity them. Good-bye, Ailie."

I take my little cat in my arms. Ailie calls after me that she is afraid it is a bad sign, as I saunter up the hill. Midway I encounter a group of small chil-

dren going home from school. They curtsey reverently before my face; but when they have got past I hear a little laugh, and one says: "It's her cat; she gave our Tom sixpence for getting it out of a tree."

At the turn to the gates I come suddenly on a group of young people — my pupils and some of their friends.

"Miss Lee and her cat, of course: ugly Charlie — horrible Charlie!" cries the owner of a fat terrier, which is pussy's sworn foe.

"You have had him out for a walk. I wonder what you will do next?" cries the amiable Amelia.

'I shall roll a ball on the lawn for him to run after;" and I go and do it defiantly. So ends my half-holiday. I recommend every governess to have a pet; it gives her a feeling of independence, and fills up spare moments when she would be likely to mope, and fancy herself miserable. I think the affection of even a kitten worth having.

A SLIGHT DEPRECIATION OF THE CURRENCY.

It was said by the wise and witty Sydney Smith, that many Englishmen appear to have a remarkable satisfaction in even speaking of large sums of money; and that when men of this stamp say of Mr. So-and-So, "I am told he is worth Two Hun-dred Thousand pounds," there is a relish in their emphasis, an unctuous appetite and zest in their open-mouthed enunciation, which nothing but the one inspiring theme, Money, develops in them.

That this is an accurate piece of observation, few who observe at all will dispute. Its application is limited to no class of society, and it is even more generally true of the genteel than of the vulgar. The last famous golden calf that disfigured this country, was set up for worship in the highest places, and was pampered to its face and made a standing-jest of behind its back throughout Belgravia, with an intensity of meanness never surpassed in Seven Dials.

But I am not going to write a homily upon that ancient text, the general deification of Money. The few words that I wish to note down here, bear reference to one particular misuse of Money, and exaggeration of its power, which presents itself to my mind as a curious rottenness appertaining to this age.

Let us suppose, to begin with, that there was once upon a time a Baron, who governed his estate not wisely nor too well, and whose dependents sustained in consequence many preventible hardships. Let us suppose that the Baron was of a highly generous disposition, and that when he found a vassal to have been oppressed or maltreated by a hard or foolish steward, who had strained against him some preposterous point of the discordant system on which the estate was administered, he immediately

gave that vassal Money. Let us suppose that such munificent action set the noble Baron's mind completely at rest, and that, having performed it, he felt quite satisfied with himself and everybody else; considered his duty done, and never dreamed of so adjusting that point for the future as that the thing could not recur. Let us suppose the Baron to have been continually doing this from day to day and from year to year — to have been perpetually patching broken heads with Money, and repairing moral wrongs with Money, yet leaving the causes of the broken heads and the moral wrongs in unchecked operation. Agreed upon these suppositions, whe shall probably agree in the conclusion that the Baron's estate was not in a promising way; that the Baron was a lazy Baron, who would have done far better to be just than generous; and that the Baron, in this easy satisfaction of his noble conscience, showed a false idea of the powers and uses of Money.

Is it possible that we, in England, at the present time, bear any resemblance to the supposititious and misguided Baron? Let us inquire.

A year or so ago, there was a court-martial held at Windsor, which attracted the public attention in an unusual manner; not so much because it was conducted in a spirit hardly reconcileable with the popular prejudice in favour of fair play, as because it suggested very grave defects in our military system, and exhibited us, as to the training of our officers, in very disadvantageous contrast with other countries. The result at which that court-martial arrived, was widely regarded as absurd and unjust. What were we who held that opinion, moved by our honest conviction, to do? To bestir ourselves to amend the system thus exposed? To apply ourselves to reminding our countrymen that it was fraught with enormous dangers to us and to our children, and that, in suffering any authorities whatsoever to maintain it, or in allowing ourselves to be either bullied or cajoled about it, we were imperiling the institutions under which we live, the national liberty of which we boast, and the very existence of England in her place among the nations? Did we go to work to point out to the unthinking, what our valiant forefathers did for us, what their resolute spirit won for us, what their earnestness secured to us, and what we, by allowing work to degenerate into play, were relaxing our grasp of, every hour? Did numbers of us unite into a phalanx of steady purpose, bent upon impressing these truths upon those who accept the responsibility of government, and on having them enforced, in stern and steady practice, through all the vital functions of Great Britain? No. Not quite that. We were highly indignant, we

were a little alarmed; between the two emotions we were made, for the moment, exceedingly uncomfortable; so we relieved our uneasy souls by — giving the subject of the court-martial, Money. In putting our hands into our pockets and pulling out our five-pound notes, we discharged, as to that matter, the whole duty of man. The thing was set right, the country had nothing further to do with it. The subscription amounted, sir, to upwards of Two Thou-sand pounds.

Now, I will assume that the cash could not have been better laid out. I will assume that the recipient in every such case is none the worse for the gift, but is all the more independent, high-spirited, and self-reliant. Still I take the liberty of questioning whether I have any right to be satisfied with my part in that subscription; whether it is the least discharge of my duty as a citizen; whether it is not an easy shirking of my difficult task in that capacity; whether it is not a miserable compromise leading to the substitution of sand for rock in the foundations of this kingdom; whether it does not exhibit my sordid appreciation of Money, and the low belief I have within me that it can do anything.

Take another case. Two labouring men leave their work for half a day (having given notice of their intention before-hand, and having risen betimes to make amends), and go to see a review: which review is commended to their fellows and neighbours as a highly patriotic and loyal sight. Under a foolish old act of Parliament which nobody but a country justice would have the kindred foolishness to enforce, the men are haled before country justices, and committed by those Brobdingnagian donkeys to jail — illegally, by the bye; but never mind that. An unconstitutional person in the neighbourhood, making this Bedlamite cruelty known, there arises a growl of wonder and dissatisfaction from all the other unconstitutional persons in the country. We try the Home Secretary, but he "sees no reason" to reverse the decision — and how can we expect that he should; knowing that he never sees any reason, hears any reason, or utters any reason, for anything. What do we then? Do we get together and say "We really must not in these times allow the labouring men to live under the impression that this is the spirit of our Law towards them. We positively must not, cannot, will not, put such a weapon in the hands of those who tamper with them constantly. These justices have made it necessary for us to insist on their dismissal from the bench, as an assurance to the order so ridiculously oppressed in the persons of these two men, that the common sense of the country revolts from the outrage. Furthermore, we must now exert ourselves to

prevent other such justices from being intrusted with like powers, and to take new securities for their moderate and reasonable exercise." Is this our course? Why no. What is our course? We give the two men Money — and there an end of it.

Try again. A countryman has a little field of wheat which he reaps upon a Sunday; foreseeing that he will otherwise have his tiny harvest spoiled. For this black offence he, too, is had before a country justice of the vast Shallow family, and is punished by fine. It is to be presumed that, with this new stimulant upon us, we are roused into an attitude against the Shallows, which has some faint approach to determination in it, and that we become resolved to take our laws and our people out of their hands. But, no. This would occasion us trouble, and we all have our business to attend to, and have a languid objection to being bored. We put our hands into our pockets again, and let the obsolete acts of Parliament and the evergreen Shallows drift us where they may.

It was remarked in these pages, some time ago, that the raising of a shout of triumph over the enactment of a wretched little law for the protection of women, punishing the greatest brutes on the earth with six months' imprisonment, surely suggested that our legislative civilisation must be very imperfect and bad. The insufficiency of this puny law, and the frequency of the offence against which it is directed, are matter of public notoriety. Do we take this subject into our own hands, then; declare that we will have the severity of the Law increased; examine the social condition laid bare in such cases, and plainly avow that we find great numbers of the people sunk in horrible debasement, and that they must be got out of it by (among other means), having more humanising pleasures provided for them, and better escapes than gin-shops afforded them from the wretchedness of their existence? That they even stand in need of cheerful relief without the Cant of instruction, and that Marlborough House itself, may be but a solemn nightmare to legions who, nevertheless, pay taxes, and have souls to be saved? Do we leave off blinking the real question, and manfully say, "We find the existence of these people — men, women, and children, all alike — to be most deplorable, and, as matters stand, we really do not know what it is made easy for them to do when they are not at work, but to lurk, and sot, and quarrel, and fight?" All of us who know anything of the facts know this to be God's truth; but, instead of asserting it, we send five shillings' worth of postage stamps to the police magistrate for the relief of the last unhappy woman who has been half-murdered; and go to church next Sunday with the adhesive plaster of those sixty

queen's heads, binding up our rickety consciences.

Neither is it we alone, the body of the people, who have this base recourse to Money as a healing balm on all occasions. The leaders who carry the banners we engage to follow, set us the example, and do the same. The last Thanksgiving Day was not so long ago but that we may all remember the advertising columns of the newspapers about that time, and the desirable opportunities they offered for devout investment. It was clear to the originators of those advertisements, manifest to the whole tribe of Moses (and Sons) who published those decorous appeals — that we must coin our thankful feelings into Money. If we wanted another victory, we could not hope to get it for nothing, or on credit, but must come down with our ready Money. There was not a church-organ unpaid for, not a beadle's cocked hat and blushing breeches for which church-wardens were responsible, not a chapel painting and glazing job, on any painters' and glaziers' books, but we were called upon to liquidate that obligation, and get a ticket in return, entitling us to the other side of Sebastopol. And we paid the money and took the ticket. Hosts of us did so. We paid the balance due upon that organ, we settled the bill for the cocked hat and blushing breeches, we settled the account of the painter and glazier, and we felt, in the vulgar phrase, that we had gone and been and done it.

So many of us parted with our small change to clear off these scores, because we found it much easier to pay the fine than undertake the service. The service required of us was severe. Paralysis had disclosed itself in the heart and brain of our administration of affairs; favour and dull routine were all in all, merit and exigency were nothing. A class had got possession of our strength, and made it weakness; and three-quarters of the globe stood looking on with a rather keen interest in the wonderful sight. The service demanded of us by the crisis, was the recovery of our strength through stedfastness in what was plainly right, and overthrow of what was plainly wrong. The service was difficult, ungentlemanly, unpopular in good society; and we paid the fine with pleasure.

But if every man drawn in a conscription paid a fine instead of going for a soldier, the country in which that happened would have no defenders. There are fights not fought by soldiers, O my countrymen, and they are no less necessary to the defence of a country, and the conscription for that war is on every one of us. Money is great, but it is not omnipotent. All the Money that could be piled up between this and the moon would not fill the place of one little grain of duty.

END OF VOL. XXXIV.

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